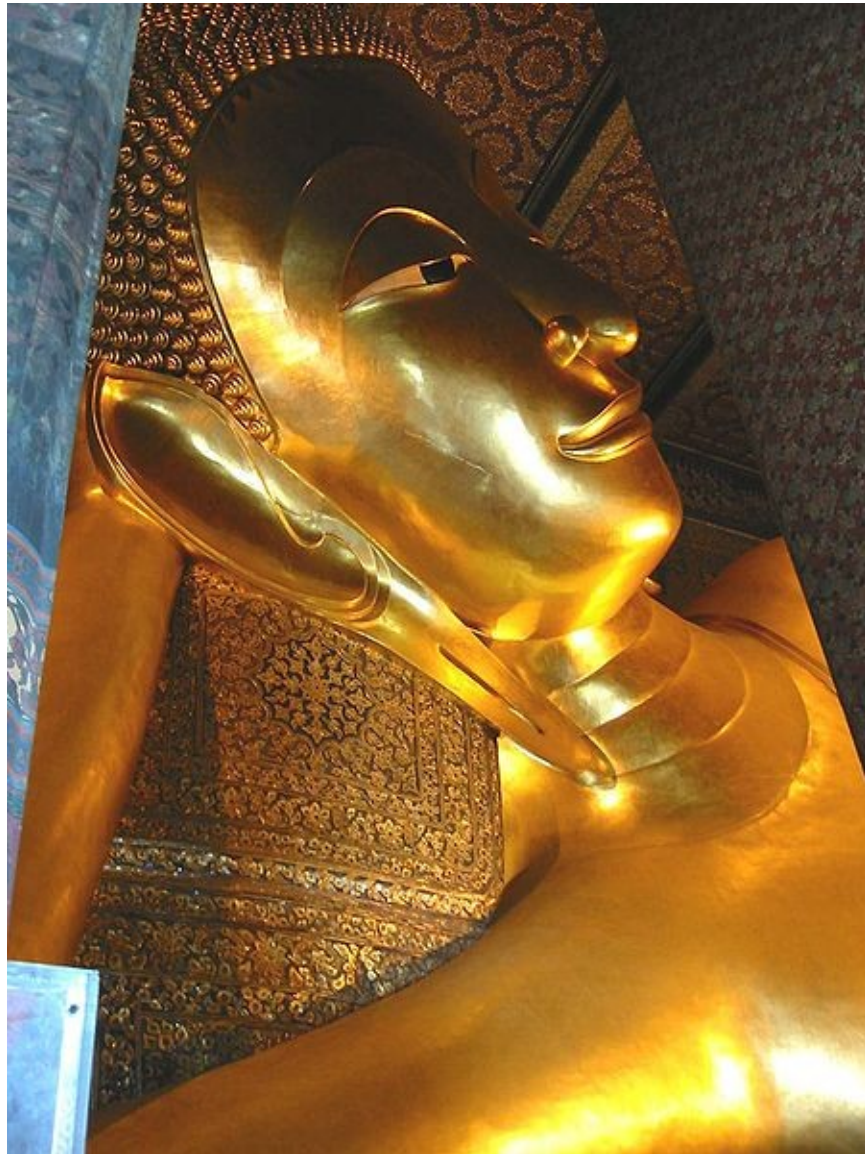


# How to Become a First Stage Arahant

A Dummy's guide to “Stream Entry”



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What is the “Stream”? When you enter the first Jhana several changes occur. Primarily the gross material form of the body is transformed into its essential nature, which is felt as bliss and pleasure. There is liberation from the fetters caused by the perception of a gross material body. The scholars and the believers love the body/mind, and not knowing the “Stream”, only have empty words and methods. The Jhana practitioners experience and know the Stream of bliss and pleasure. They abide there and have no need to quote scriptural references for what they know is happening in their life. They can feel the Stream in themselves and see the “Stream” in others.

When the gross material body is transformed by First Stage Jhana, the body becomes full of bliss and pleasure. Bliss, or Rapture, is a quick flash of ecstasy somewhere in the body. Pleasure is the steady blissful feelings throughout the body. These feelings are the result of the transformation of the gross material body cognition.

First Stage Jhana is also a transformation of

consciousness. With this transformation the nature of consciousness begins dissolution into its essential nature. When this happens the light of the essential nature begins to appear within the consciousness of the individual, and the awareness expands into that light. Without Jhana transformation there is no light exuded from the individual. With Jhana there is transformation and a corona of light begins to form around the head. Sensitive individuals and fellow Jhana practitioners are able to see the presence of the corona, providing the evidence of initial Jhana. This light is the Stream of divinity, from which all stages of the Arahant depend.

When the awareness expands into the light created by Jhana, the practitioner also experiences changes in the limits of the mind and body. Sometimes people feel that the edges of the physical body have melted or dissolved into the air. They may feel an energy at the edges of their body, or feel the physical form has expanded into the air. Sometimes people feel that their consciousness has expanded beyond the edges of their head. They may feel

themselves outside of their head moving into the air around their head. Many people feel they are behind and above their heads. Because of this expanding light and new awareness, they may get psychic impressions, visions, and experiences. This are the results of Entering the Stream of Buddha's light.

The First Jhana is relatively easy to enter, but is rarely done. This is because of our complete dependence and attachment to thinking, mental images, and knowledge. The power of delusion created by knowledge and thinking is virtually inexhaustible, and the dream world of the mind is the greatest danger for Jhana Stream Entry.

Whenever you try a meditation method, you will find that they activate thinking, thus enhancing the very thing they say is the problem, so the methods never produce Jhana Stream Entry. Soon the method devolves into a system of thoughts, images, and directed day-dreams. Let me give an example. A Vipassanna teacher says to follow 5 precepts to begin calming the mind, then spend 3 days

watching the breath to control an unruly mind. This immediately shows they are activating the mind with their method. If they experience an unruly mind, and need 3 days of watching breath to help, they are on the wrong path and have activated the mind, mind consciousness.

You can deactivate the mind in a second, if you don't use thinking consciousness. Listen to some soft music carefully, becoming engrossed in it, and you will discover your thinking has gone by the wayside. You are still conscious, but the thinking process is deactivated. Thinking is not unruly! It is only unruly, when you use the mind to calm the mind. Then it is very unruly, because you are forcing the mind into action. For instance, have you ever been engrossed in a TV program, and found yourself saying, "Oh my mind is so unruly, I cant watch TV"? Has an artist ever said, "My mind is so unruly that I can't paint?" I think not.

So why is there this passion for thinking. Within thought is the image of Self, Me. This is the passion, the passion for replaying the image of Me

and world, which is embedded in each thought. For the artist, he gets lost in his work. He forgets himself as he creates. As he creates, he does not have an unruly mind. When you are on vacation and see incredible vistas in the distance and feel awe, you are not plagued by an unruly mind, but when you sit down to meditate and activate the mind, suddenly you have an unruly mind. This is not meditation. It is thinking.

So if you are serious about understanding Buddhism and the spiritual results of Buddha Jhana, you will give up this game of the mind trying to overcome the mind, or the ego attaining some altered state. There are 6 consciousnesses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. The mind consciousness is the least usable for meditation as it makes images and dreams, is the source of ego, and is too dynamic and changeable. Any other consciousness has less problems. The mind, thinking, can create the delusion that it is conscious of itself. The mind accumulates memories of its investigations into itself. Then the mind creates a dream, a gestalt, of what meditation is. In that

dream of meditation, is created the delusion that you are aware of the mind, have gained and continue to gain knowledge of the mind. This is why this method fails, why it is so popular, and why it always fails to produce any liberation.

Hearing can not create the delusion that you can hear hearing. You simply hear. Seeing is automatic, the eyes function, but there is no seeing your seeing. You simply see. Feeling is just feeling, and does not develop the delusion that feeling is feeling feeling. You simply feel. This is why mental meditation is so dangerous and so popular. The ego is enhanced, nothing is lost, we remain in control, and we feel comfortable with our knowledge, but we are lost in delusion, and nothing changes.

Moreover, what is it that causes the transformation of consciousness back into light? The artist has stopped thought and become engrossed in eye or ear consciousness, but he does not enter Jhana. Eye consciousness does not transform eye consciousness. It is light which transforms consciousness, just as a shadow disappears when

light is shined upon it, or the darkness of a room disappears when the light is turned on. It is this light which creates the corona around the head of a person who enters the First Stage Jhana and becomes a First Stage Arahant, as the body image is transformed from from materiality into a vapor or cloud, just as the sun's light penetrates the clouds in the sky.

So First Stage Jhana is a simple, natural process when done correctly, when the mind is not activated, and knowledge is not sought. This light is already operating continually, just as the sun is always shining. What creates the shadow of materiality is the mind activating and creating the image of gross materiality. This light would normally illumine the vaporous clouds and penetrate them, but the mental fabrications create a three dimensional dream world and we ignore the light and believe and enhance the dream. It is as if on a cloudy night, a huge searchlight is pointed at the sky and the only clouds are seen everywhere.

Your life is just this process. The light is always

illuminating and penetrating the clouds of the world. This illumination is the concept we call life or existence. The cloud of this human machine and it's 6 consciousnesses are made visible by this light. The five sense consciousnesses are analyzed and evaluated by the mind, which generates a three dimensional dream world vision, in which you exist as a body/mind individual in a colorful world with space/time. The knowledge of this world vision is so powerful, that we wholeheartedly believe and think we live there. The light allows visibility of the cloud of this human machine, and the mind generates it's own space-time me-world dream. This is life. It is also the dream of death, reincarnation, heaven and hell.

So where is this light, how do we get to it and allow it to vaporize consciousness, and allow us to become a First Stage Arahant? In a seriously real looking dream, it will be difficult to define clearly what is outside the dream world, but there must be some clue. The clue is very faint but it's result is your attention or focus, but this is still part of the dream. More refined is your ability to witness, and

even more refined is your Intent. The words are difficult to find which will allow you to see the exit strategy to the dream world. But in my experience, Intent is a fairly accurate description. Intent comes first, then illumination or light, which is the ability to witness, which gives visibility to the machine-like world. These events happen long before consciousness occurs, so don't try to be conscious of them. They happen before the dream world is created.

This is where it gets crazy. Mara, the meditators and intelligent teachers of meditation, who have mind dream activating techniques, will read this and say to themselves, “Yes, this is what I am already doing and teaching!” They will incorporate these ideas into their dream world as soon as they hear it and agree. They will juxtaposition time so that they think they already see this happening in their meditation in the past. The ideas may become part of their standard teaching jargon. This is the power of delusion, Mara. Yes, I believe Mara herself, who has destroyed Buddhism before, will again try to destroy Buddha Jhana again. Luckily

the light of Jhana will be visible to those who have entered Jhana, and there is hope.

Recently I saw a meditation teacher speaking incredibly well about meditation and Jhana, as if he had great experience. He had a Phd and was very intelligent. Then I saw him meditate, and all he did was grind away with his mind until the left side of his head started to bulge out and looked like it might explode. His students did the same thing. While he talked Jhana, and quoted the Buddha Suttas well, the game was the same, activating the mind and pressuring the brain for insight and knowledge. Thus no light engulfed his consciousness, and no Jhana developed. First Jhana people can see Jhana light in others, and will know whether a teacher is cleverly parroting ideas or has entered Jhana. The power of Mara and delusion should not be encouraged, I think.

So lets take an example of Intent, witness, and attention so we can get some hint of how it operates. Blankly stare in front of you. Pause and wait, staring blankly. Suddenly one object is chosen

without you doing anything. This is Intent. If you watch closely, at that moment of Intent there is no consciousness of anything. Then illumination occurs creating visibility and witnessing occurs. Consciousness has not yet arrived. Your eyes move to whatever object is witnessed. Attention and focus occur, and over the next second or two knowledge slowly builds and then consciousness occurs. You now have the feeling of you seeing an object and you have identified it with knowledge.

First Jhana requires this cycle to break after attention and focus, at a minimum, before knowledge builds and consciousness occurs. The eyes may move involuntarily and First Jhana will not be disabled. In this example we will use body consciousness to allow Jhana. This does not exclude ear, eye, nose, tongue consciousnesses in that order of preference, but as the first Jhana described by Buddha is creating ecstasy in the body, he is using body consciousness, or feeling as the doorway.

1. So completely relax the mind and body, and

2. Begin witnessing the feeling of the air in the nostrils.
  - (a) We are short circuiting everything after the witness.
  - (b) Your eyes may move in that direction involuntarily, but don't try to look, just witness the feelings blankly.
3. Relax the breath, and witness the feelings.
  - (a) The feelings start to change and enhance
  - (b) The feelings becomes more sensitive. Maybe they are hot, cold, dry, but it becomes more sensitive.
4. Relax and Witness the pleasure feeling.
  - (a) Soon the feelings generate a pleasurable feeling. This is the doorway.

When you witness feelings of pleasure or rapture, you have opened the door. The light of illumination has converted some small part of consciousness from materiality into it's true nature. Now we are ready to continue into Jhana.

1. Witness the head, gently mixing pleasure with the head. (3 times)

2. Witness the right shoulder, gently mixing pleasure with the right shoulder. (3 times)
3. Witness the right arm, mixing pleasure with the right arm. (3 times)
4. Witness the right torso, mixing pleasure with the right torso. (3 times)
5. Witness the right leg, mixing pleasure with the right leg. (3 times)
6. Witness the head, gently mixing pleasure with the head. (3 times)
7. Witness the left shoulder, gently mixing pleasure with the left shoulder. (3 times)
8. Witness the left arm, mixing pleasure with the left arm. (3 times)
9. Witness the left torso, mixing pleasure with the left torso. (3 times)
10. Witness the left leg, mixing pleasure with the left leg. (3 times)
11. Witness from the head to the base of the spine, mixing pleasure from the head to the base of the spine. (10 or more times)

Each step of this process is to be repeated, until each step produces rapture and pleasure in that part of your body. The rapture and pleasure

experienced should be very extreme, such that you may find it difficult to sit, stand, or keep your eyes open. You may need someone to read it to you.

You should soon feel the edges of the body melt or expand, and you may sense the self just outside the head as the witness expands into the corona of light around the head. Many such feelings can happen. If you get nothing from the technique, you have activated the mind somehow and are thinking, not witnessing. If you followed the instructions carefully, relaxed, and broke the connection after the focus/attention and a spontaneous eye movement, only witnessing the feeling, you will get rapture and pleasure in every part of your body spontaneously.

Now you have entered the First Jhana, and to confirm your accomplishment, you should find a Jhana teacher who can see Jhana and confirm your light of Jhana and to what extent it has expanded.

Now the advanced question needs to be answered. Have you entered the First Jhana or are you a First Stage Arahant. You have Entered the Stream of Buddha Light, but do you have the attainment?

Have you graduated? It is like going to someone's house for dinner. You had great food and feel satisfied. If you left the house after eating, you have visited the First Jhana. If you stay in the house, and can always be satisfied, and never leave, you are a First Stage Arahant.

May everyone find great happiness and success.

My best,

Sukha

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