

The four jhānas pericope (DN 2, MN 77 etc.)

So vivicc-eva kāmehi, vivicca akusalehi dhammehi, sa-vitakkaṃ sa-vicāraṃ viveka-jāṃ pīti-sukhaṃ paṭhamāṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.

<p>so – sā – taṃ <i>pron</i>: he – she – it [one] viviccati: to separate oneself, depart from, to be alone, to separate (<i>intrans.</i>) – <i>gerund</i> vivicca; separating oneself from (+<i>inst.</i>), aloof from (PED) – + eva: emphatic <i>adv.</i> kāma <i>m</i>: 1. (mostly <i>sg.</i>) wish, desire, pleasure; 2. (mostly <i>pl.</i>) the objects of sensual [sensory] pleasure (CPD) – <i>inst. pl.</i> a-kusala: 1. i (<i>adj</i>) not good, not right; evil, harmful, not conducing to well-being; acting wrongly; dhamma: 1. (psychologically) ‘mentality’, ‘objects’ of the imagination, idea, mental</p>	<p>phenomenon – <i>pl.</i> mental phenomena, objects, ideas, qualities (PED) sa- prefix: with, possessed of, having, same as – sometimes pleonastic (redundant) vitakka <i>m</i>: reflection, thought, thinking, ‘initial application’ – characterised by fixity and steadiness vicāra [vi+cāra] <i>m</i>: discursive thinking (BD); investigation, examination, deliberation viveka <i>m</i>: detachment, seclusion, separation, [solitude] + ja [suffix] <i>adj</i>: born, produced, sprung, arisen from pīti <i>f</i>: joy, pleasure (DOP) – [exhilaration, bliss] [enhanced sensitivity GH]</p>	<p>sukha <i>adj</i>: pleasant, happy; sukhavihāra: dwelling at ease – <i>n</i>: well-being, happiness, ease (PED) pīti-sukha: <i>coordinated compd?</i> joy and happiness [RG], zest and happiness, intrinsic joy; rapture and bliss (PTS) – or <i>determinative compd (subst. for gen. or inst. case)?</i> [well-being of/from the enhanced sensitivity GH] upa-sampajjati: to attain, enter upon, acquire (PED) – <i>ger.</i> upasampajja viharati: to stay, abide, dwell, sojourn (in a certain place); in general: to be, to live; applied: to behave, lead a life (PED) – when used with a gerund it becomes an auxiliary verb expressing duration or continuous action (Jo. 91)</p>
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Separated indeed from sensory pleasures and harmful qualities of mind, one enters and stays in the first stage of meditation, i.e. enhanced body-sensitivity and well-being, born of separation, with intention and attention.

Truly separating oneself from sensory pleasures and from harmful qualities of mind, one attains and practises the first stage of jhāna, that is, an enhanced body-sensitivity and well-being, born of seclusion and accompanied by intention and attention.

Bhikkhu vitakka-vicārānaṃ vūpasamā ajjhattaṃ sampasādanaṃ cetaso ekodibhāvaṃ a-vitakkaṃ a-vicāraṃ samādhijāṃ pītisukhaṃ dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.

<p>vūpasama <i>m</i>: allaying, relief, suppression, mastery, cessation, calmness; quenching (of thirst) – <i>abl.</i> ajjhatta <i>adj, adv</i>: inwardly, personally sampasādana [saṃ+pasādana] <i>n</i>: tranquillising; happiness, joy citta <i>n</i>: 1. the process of thinking, thinking, thought, thoughts; intention; state of mind (DOP) – <i>gen.</i> cetaso</p>	<p>ekodibhāva: integration, unification; apartness, withdrawal (DOP) – the feeling (bhāva) which can be verbalised by the word ‘one’ (eko), the sensation of unity that characterises mystical experience the world over (Gombrich WBT 204) bhāva <i>m</i>: 1. being, becoming, condition, nature (usu. as suffix denoting state or condition of, representing an abstract derived from the first part of the compound); ... (PED)</p>	<p>samādhi: [from saṃ+√ā+√dhā] concentration; a concentrated, self-collected, intent state of mind and meditation (PED) – defined as cittaṃ ekaggatā (MN 44 i 301: “oneness of mind”) – lit. “put together” or “collected” (Anālayo G2E 115) – “collecting” oneself, in the sense of composure or unification of mind’ (Anālayo SDP 72)</p>
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From the cessation of intention and attention a mendicant (one) enters and stays in the second stage of meditation, i.e. enhanced body-sensitivity and well-being born of samādhi, an inner tranquility of mind, a state of unification without intention or attention.

From the cessation of intention and attention, one attains and practises the second stage of jhāna, that is, an enhanced body-sensitivity and well-being born of samādhi (an inner tranquility of mind, a state of integration), without intention or attention.

Bhikkhu pītiyā ca virāgā upekkhako ca viharati sato sampajāno, sukhañca kāyena paṭisaṃvedeti, yaṃ taṃ ariyā ācikkhanti: ‘upekkhako satimā sukhavihārī’ti, tatiyaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.

<p>virāga <i>m</i>: 1. absence of rāga, dispassionateness, indifference towards (<i>abl.</i> or <i>loc.</i>) disgust, absence of desire, destruction of passions; waning, fading away; – <i>abl.</i> upekkhaka <i>adj</i>: disinterested, unaffected, uninvolved (DOP) sata <i>adj</i>: remembering, mindful, conscious (PED) – being aware of sense objects in a particular way, i.e. devoid of any emotional and/or intellectual content (Wynne OBM 72)</p>	<p>sampajāna [saṃ+pajāna, c.f. pajānāti] <i>adj</i>: thoughtful, mindful, attentive, deliberate – almost synonymous with sati (PED) – alert, fully alert (Thanissaro) – awareness (Bronkhorst) – an intensified form of knowing: “clearly knowing” (Anālayo SDP 39-41) paṭisaṃvedeti: to experience, feel, be aware of (DOP) yantaṃ = yaṃ taṃ: ‘one whom’ ‘that which’ – “just so as” (Jo. 96)</p>	<p>ācikkhati: to tell, give information about, declare, make known, describe, point out, assign (DOP) satimant [sati] <i>adj</i>: mindful, thoughtful, contemplative – <i>nom. sg.</i> satimā – being aware of sense objects in a particular way, i.e. devoid of any emotional and/or intellectual content (Wynne OBM 72) vihārin <i>adj</i>: (as suffix) dwelling, living; being in such & such a state or condition (PED)</p>
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From both the fading of exhilaration and by dwelling with equanimity, aware and attentive, one enters and stays in the third stage of meditation, of which the noble ones declare, “One dwells pleasantly, with equanimity and mindful awareness,” experiencing well-being through the body.

From both the fading of the enhanced body-sensitivity and by remaining mindful and attentive, one attains and practices the third stage of jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, “Dispassionate and mindful is one who lives at ease,” who also experiences well-being in the body.

Bhikkhu sukhassa ca pahānā dukkhassa ca pahānā pubbeva somanassa-domanassānaṃ atthaṅgamā adukkham-asukhaṃ upekkhā-sati-pārisuddhiṃ catutthaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati

bhikkhu <i>m</i> : mendicant, Buddhist monk pahāna [from pajahati] <i>n</i> : giving up, abandoning, getting rid of (DOP) – <i>abl. sg.</i> sukha <i>adj</i> : pleasant, happy; – <i>n</i> : well-being, happiness, ease (PED) – the opposite of dukkha: the whole positive range from being pleasant or OK to bliss (Gombrich WBT 68)	pubba <i>adj</i> : previous, before – <i>pubbe (loc)</i> : formerly, in the past somanassa [su+mano] <i>n</i> : “glad-mindedness,” (BD) mental ease, happiness, joy (PED) domanassa <i>n</i> : “sad-mindedness” – (mental) distress, dejection, unhappiness; ill-humour (DOP) – distress, dejectedness, melancholy, grief (PED)	atthaṅgama : annihilation, disappearance, opposed to samudaya (coming into existence) pārisuddhi , parisuddhi <i>f</i> : 1. purity, perfection, flawlessness; being without fault (i.e. arahantship) (DOP)
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From abandoning well-being and the former abandoning of distress, from the disappearance of joy and grief, one enters and stays in the fourth stage of meditation, a neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant purity (arising) from equanimity and mindful awareness.

From both abandoning well-being and previously abandoning distress, from the passing away of glad-mindedness and sad-mindedness, one attains and practises the fourth stage of jhāna, a neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant perfection of equanimity and mindfulness.

The four jhānas, four formless attainments, and cessation (from MN 25, Nivāpa Sutta)**The four jhānas**

Kathañca, bhikkhave, agati mārassa ca māraparisāya ca? **Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu viviccevakāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi savitakkam savicāram vivekajam pītisukham paṭhamamjhānam upasampajja viharati.** Ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, bhikkhu andhamakāsi māraṃ, apadaṃ vadhitvā māraccakkhum adassanaṃ gato pāpimato.

agati [a+gati] *f*: 1. where one does not go or move; what is not one's sphere ... (DOP)
parisā *f*: 1. assembly, meeting, gathering, audience, group; 2. a surrounding group, followers, entourage; ... (DOP)
andha *adj*: 1. blind/blinded; mentally blind, foolish, unenlightened; dark, blinding (DOP)

akāsi – *aor.* of karoti: to make, do
apada *adj, n*: 1. what is without feet, the group without feet; 2. without a footing, where there is no footing, where there is no track or site; 3. leaving no footprint; not to be tracked (DOP)
vadhati: to strike, punish; kill, slaughter, slay (PED) – gerund vadhitvā

cakkhu *n*: 1. the eye; the organ of sight; the faculty of seeing, sight; 2. insight, knowledge, understanding; (DOP)
adassana: 1. (n) i) not seeing, not recognising, not being seen, being invisible; ii) lack of proper perception; 2. (*adj*) invisible (DOP)
pāpima(t), pāpimā *m*: the evil one (an epithet of Māra) (DOP)

And what, bhikkhus, is not the sphere of Māra and his followers? Here a meditator separated indeed from sensory pleasures and harmful qualities of mind, enters and stays in the first jhāna, a state of exhilaration and well-being born of separation, with intention and attention. This is said to be one who has blinded Māra, having struck the eye of Māra without trace, (so) the evil one is unable to see.

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vitakkavicārānaṃ vūpasamā ajjhataṃ sampasādanaṃ cetaso ekodibhāvaṃ avitakkam avicāram samādhijam pītisukham dutiyaṃ jhānam upasampajja viharati.

Furthermore, from the cessation of intention and attention, one enters and stays in the second jhāna, a state of exhilaration and well-being born of samādhi, an inner tranquillity of mind, a state of unification without intention or attention. This is said ...

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu pītiyā ca virāgā upekkhako ca viharati sato ca sampajāno, sukhañca kāyena paṭisaṃvedeti yaṃ taṃ ariyā ācikkhanti ‘upekkhako satimā sukhavihārī’ti tatiyaṃ jhānam upasampajja viharati.

Furthermore, from both the fading of exhilaration and by dwelling with equanimity, aware and attentive, one enters and stays in the third jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, “One dwells pleasantly, with equanimity and awareness”, experiencing well-being through the body. This is said ...

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sukhassa ca pahānā dukkhassa ca pahānā, pubbeva somanassadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamā, adukkhamasukham upekkhāsati pārisuddhiṃ catutthaṃ jhānam upasampajja viharati.

Furthermore, from abandoning happiness and the former abandoning of distress, from the disappearance of joy and grief, one enters and stays in the fourth jhāna, the neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant perfection of equanimity and awareness. This is said ...

The four formless attainments

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbaso rūpasāññānaṃ samatikkamā paṭighasaññānaṃ atthaṅgamā nānattasaññānaṃ amanasikārā ‘ananto ākāso’ti ākāsañcāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati.

sabba *adj*: whole, entire, all, every – *abl.* sabbato, sabbaso: altogether, throughout
rūpa *n*: form, figure, appearance; ... 3. of such a form, kind, appearance; 4. tech. term for the principle of material form, materiality, visibility:
samatikkamati: to cross over, transcend, elapse (time), escape from (~PED) – *gerund* samatikkamma
samatikkama *adj*: passing beyond, overcoming
paṭigha *m, n*: 1. reacting against, recoiling from; hostility, anger, aversion; 2. impact, sensory reaction; what is experienced (through sensory reaction) (DOP)

paṭighasaññā *f*: 1. the apperception of aversion; 2. the apperception of sensory reaction (DOP)
atthaṅgama, atthagama *m*: annihilation, disappearance (DOP) – opposed to samudaya (coming into existence) (PED)
nāna *adj*: different, separate, various (DOP)
nānatta *adj*: various, different, separated (DOP)
manasikāra *m*: attention, pondering, fixed thought (PED)
anta *m*: 1. end, limit; conclusion, death, destruction; edge, boundary ... (DOP)

ananta *m*: infiniteness, limitless (DOP) – *adj*: infinite, endless, boundless (CPD)
ānañca [from ananta] *adj, n*: endless, endlessness, infinity (DOP)
ākāsa *m, n*: the ether; air, sky, space, open space (DOP)
āyatana *n*: 1. resting-place, abode, source, region, sphere, field, area; 2. transcendental sphere, plane or experience; transcendental state of mind in meditation; 3. sphere of perception, the sense organs (including the mind) and their objects (DOP)

Furthermore, from passing beyond all material [sensory] perceptions, from the disappearance of perceptions of sensory reactions, from not attending to perceptions of difference, [aware that] ‘space is limitless’, one enters and stays in the experience of limitless space. This is said ...

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbaso ākāsañcāyatanaṃ samatikkamma ‘anantaṃ viññāṇaṃ’ti viññāṇañcāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati.

viññāṇa [vi+v+jñā] *n*: individuality, consciousness, the apperceptual or energizing principle (PED) – transitive awareness (of objects) (Wynne BI 62)

– the process of being conscious or aware: ‘awareness’ or ‘consciousness of’ – not a continuing entity: it can evolve as one makes spiritual progress, but it is as impermanent as everything else (Hamilton A 59)

Furthermore, from passing beyond the experience of limitless space, [aware that] ‘consciousness is limitless’, one enters and stays in the experience of limitless consciousness. This is said ...

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbaso viññāṇaṇcāyatanam samatikkamma ‘natthi kiñci’ti ākiñcaññāyatanam upasampajja viharati.

kiñci (kiṃ+ci) *indef. pr*: something, anything

ākiñcañña: 1. (*n*) i) the state of having nothing, complete absence of possessions; ii) the state of nothingness; 2. (*adj*) associated with nothingness or with having nothing (DOP)

Furthermore, from passing beyond the experience of limitless consciousness, [aware that] ‘there is nothing’, one enters and stays in the experience of nothingness. This is said ...

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbaso ākiñcaññāyatanam samatikkamma nevasaññānāsaññāyatanam upasampajja viharati.

neva (na eva) ... na: neither ... nor
asaññā f: non-consciousness (CPD)

nevasaññā-nāsaññā: neither consciousness nor unconsciousness (PED saññā)

Furthermore, from passing beyond the experience of nothingness one enters and stays in the experience of neither-consciousness-nor-unconsciousness. This is said ...

Cessation

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbaso nevasaññānāsaññāyatanam samatikkamma saññāvedayitanirodham upasampajja viharati. Paññāya cassa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti. Ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, bhikkhu andhamakāsi mārāṃ, apadaṃ vadhivā mārācakkhum adassanaṃ gato pāpimato tiṇṇo loke visattikaṃ”ti.

saññāvedayitanirodha: ‘the cessation of perception and feeling’
– which was regarded as the same thing as ‘touching the deathless realm with the body’ (see Iti 51) (Wynne 2018 82)
paññā f: intelligence, reason, wisdom, insight, knowledge – *inst.* paññāya: understanding fully, knowing well (PED)
– understanding, in a very limited and specific sense: seeing things as they are: as impermanent, unsatisfactory and devoid of essence (Gombrich WBT 84)

cassa = ca assa – gen/dat. sg. of ayaṃ: this
dassati: to see, perceive – *gerund* disvā: having seen
āsava m, n: 1. “inflowing”, influence (the concerns, attitudes, predispositions, listed as kāma, bhava, avijjā, and sometimes diṭṭhi, which form an obstacle to the realisation of the truth of things ...; their ending or destruction is arahatship) (DOP)
b) tech. term for the obstacle to attainment of arahantship. (CPD)

– ‘blinding tendencies’, harmful inclinations of the mind – a tolerably good word might be “obsessions” (Jo 103)

parikkhīyati: to waste away, diminish, become exhausted; come to an end – *pp.* parikkhīna: adj: exhausted, used up; diminished, come to an end (DOP)

Furthermore, from passing beyond the experience of neither-consciousness-nor-unconsciousness one enters and stays in the cessation of perception and feeling.

When one has seen this with insight one’s intoxicated tendencies are brought to an end.

This is said to be one who has blinded Māra, having struck the eye of Māra without trace, (so) the evil one is unable to see.

“There is a state where form ceases to exist ... It is a state without ordinary perception and without disordered perception and without no perception and without any annihilation of perception. It is perception, consciousness, that is the source of all the basic obstacles.’” (Snp v. 874, tr. Saddhatissa, 1985)

This was said by the Lord, “Bhikkhus, there are these three elements. What three? The form element, the formless element, and the element of cessation. These are the three.”

By fully understanding the form element
Without getting stuck in the formless,
They are released into cessation
And leave Death far behind them.
Having touched with his own person
The deathless element free from clinging,
Having realized the relinquishment of clinging
His taints all gone,
The Fully Enlightened One proclaims
The sorrowless state that is void of stain.

(Itivuttaka 51, tr. John D Ireland)