

37 Bodhipakkhiyā dhammā – Requisites of Awakening

We do not find the 37 Bodhipakkhiyā dhammā – requisites of awakening - in the Pāli Canon as a compilation. In AN 5. 56 and 6. 17 the Buddha speaks of Bodhipakkhiyā dhammā, which are to be developed, but he does not explain what they include. In SN 48. 51 and others he uses this term for the 5 faculties. However, we find the individual exercises in many suttas. They contain the entire path of practice taught by the Buddha. We find all 37 listed in MN 77 The Greater Discourse to Sakuludāyīn - Mahāsakuludāyīsuttam, but not with the name Bodhipakkhiya.

In MN 77, the wandering ascetic Sakuludāyīn enumerates five things on account of which he assumes the Buddha is honoured, respected, esteemed and revered by his disciples, on account of which they live with his support while honouring and respecting him.

These five things are: He eats little and appreciates to eat little. He is pleased with every kind of robe. He is satisfied with every kind of alms food. He lives in seclusion. He is satisfied with every kind of shelter.

The Buddha replies that he is not honoured and esteemed on the basis of these things, because there are others who live more ascetically than he does with regard to these five things.

He mentions various spiritual abilities on account of which he is revered, respected and appreciated. Among them are the 37 Bodhipakkhiyā Dhammā, which are known as factors belonging to awakening.

These include:

- 4 foundations of mindfulness - 4 *satipaṭṭhāna*.
- 4 right efforts - 4 *sammappadhānā*
- 4 paths of power - 4 *iddhipādā*
- 5 mental faculties - 5 *indriyāni*
- 5 mental powers - 5 *balāni*
- 7 awakening factors - 7 *bojjhaṅgā*
- noble 8-fold path - *ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*

At the end of the enumeration of each group of factors, it says, "And there many of my disciples now dwell, having attained perfection and perfection of direct knowledge (*abhiññā*).

These 37 things that are necessary for awakening should always be remembered and developed as individual groups and as individual factors. They can be developed and strengthened in both *samatha* and *vipassanā* meditation, as well as in mindfulness meditation, and in everyday activities. The following files contain more detailed information on the individual groups.