



Once Again on External Mindfulness

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Abstract

The proposal to understand an external application of mindfulness to refer to being objective rather than subjective is not well supported by the relevant sources and fails to be directly applicable to actual meditation practice. The most commonly accepted understanding in Buddhist sources and contemporary research, which considers external mindfulness to refer to being aware of other persons, remains the most meaningful and applicable explanation. Adopting this understanding can open the door to new avenues in mindfulness research, proceeding from the widely recognized internal dimensions of mindfulness, concerned with what happens within a practitioner, to giving more explicit room to the potential of the same mental quality in understanding and relating to others.

Keywords External mindfulness · Prosocial dimensions of mindfulness · *satipaṭṭhāna* · *smṛtyupasthāna* · subjective and objective

According to Buddhist sources, mindfulness can be cultivated internally and externally. The implications of an external application are of considerable interest, which has stimulated two recent publications that came out nearly simultaneously: Anālayo 2020b (published online 15 May 2020) and Lin (2019) which, in spite of its official date, was actually published in 2020 (the online publication was first announced on H-Buddhism on 20 May 2020). Following up some of the suggestions that have emerged in this way can help to ascertain the probable significance of cultivating mindfulness externally in early Buddhist meditation theory.

A New Perspective?

Acknowledging the fact that contemporary scholarship tends to be in general agreement that externally practiced mindfulness refers to other persons, Lin (2019, p. 350) argued in support of a different interpretation on the grounds that the grammar involved had so far not been understood correctly by traditional exegesis and modern scholars:

previous scholarship has not taken sufficient account of the fact that “internally” (*adhyātmikaṃ/ajjhataṃ*) and “externally” (*bahirdhā/bahiddhā*) in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* are adverbs. Because they deal with these two terms as if they are adjectives qualifying the nouns for the four objects of contemplation, most of the commentaries and most modern studies alike focus on distinguishing what objects are internal and what are external.

This in itself interesting suggestion could be explored by surveying how the relevant Pāli instruction has been translated by previous scholarship. This would show if the prevalent understanding is indeed based on confusing an adverb with an adjective. As an example, the phrase that in Pāli discourses describes contemplation of the body can be taken up (the phrase in Pāli takes two forms; one is *iti ajjhataṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati*, *bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati*, *ajjhatabhiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati*, as found in DN 22 and MN 10. Another form presents the same distinction phrased as an injunction, as found in SN 47.3).

The question would be whether recognized translators and scholars have indeed rendered this as an adjective that qualifies the body by speaking of an “external body,” for example. Below are several renderings of the Pāli phrase in English and German, presented in the sequence of the time of their publication:

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So does he, as to the body, continue to consider the body, either internally or externally, or both internally and externally (Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1910, p. 328).

So wacht er nach innen beim Körper über den Körper, so wacht er nach außen beim Körper über den Körper, nach innen und außen wacht er beim Körper über den Körper (Neuman 1912/2004, p. 384).

Herein, monk, as regards your own self, in body contemplating body ... or as regards externals ... or, both as regards your own self and as regards externals (Woodward 1930/1979, p. 121).

Thus he lives contemplating the body in the body internally, or he lives contemplating the body in the body externally, or he lives contemplating the body in the body internally and externally (Soma 1941/1981, p. 2).

Thus he dwells practising body-contemplation on the body internally, or externally, or both internally and externally (Nyanaponika 1962, p. 118).

In this way, monks, he fares along contemplating the body in the body internally, or he fares along contemplating the body in the body externally, or he fares along contemplating the body in the body internally and externally (Homer 1967, p. 72).

So he abides contemplating body as body internally, contemplating body as body externally, contemplating body as body both internally and externally (Walshe 1987, p. 336).

Da wache, o Mönch, beim Körper über den Körper ... und zwar nach innen, nach außen, nach innen und außen (Hecker 1992/2003, p. 289).

In this way he abides contemplating the body as a body internally, or he abides contemplating the body as a body externally, or he abides contemplating the body as a body both internally and externally (Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005, p. 146).

Here, bhikkhu, dwell contemplating the body in the body internally ... dwell contemplating the body in the body externally ... dwell contemplating the body in the body internally and externally (Bodhi 2000, p. 1629).

In this way he dwells contemplating the body as a body internally, or he dwells contemplating the body as a

body externally, or he dwells contemplating the body as a body internally and externally (Kuan 2008, p. 109).

The above survey gives the impression that, at least as far as modern scholars are concerned, the prevalent understanding of external mindfulness as referring to others does not appear to be attributable to a confusion of an adverb with an adjective.

Subjective and Objective

Regarding the implication of mindfulness practice being done internally or externally, the basic proposal presented by Lin (2019, p. 354) is that “to contemplate internally is to take the meditative object as pertaining to the subjective aspect of experience, and to contemplate externally is to take that object as pertaining to the objective aspect.” This interpretation is meant to express one of several alternative explanations provided in a Sarvāstivāda exegetical work, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* (T 1545). The relevant explanation in this work concludes with the following statement:

That is, the bases of the mind and mental factors are called internal, their objects are called external.
(T XXVII 714a: 謂心心所所依名內, 所緣名外).

Lin (2019, p. 319) combined his translation of this passage with a personal gloss (which unfortunately is not marked as something that no longer translates the original text) that conveys the main import in this way: “In other words, if a *dharma* is classified as belonging to one of the sense bases (*āyatana*), it is internal; if it is an object of the six senses, it is external.”

Comparing his own gloss with the interpretation proposed by him, it is not entirely clear how far a distinction between the senses and their objects, as correctly presented in his gloss on the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, can be adequately captured with the terms “subjective” and “objective” aspects of experience. The problem is that, in their general usage, these two terms can convey the difference between being biased or attached (“subjective”) and not being biased or attached (“objective”). Such a sense, however, would differ from the distinction proposed in the passage quoted from the **Mahāvibhāṣā*.

Early Buddhist thought envisages the arising of biases and attachments in the form of craving and fetters in relation to both the senses and their objects. An example in case is a passage from the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* which, although in itself clearly a later addition to the discourse, can be taken to illustrate this position. For the case of the eye and visible forms, the relevant part proceeds in this manner:

In the world the eye is of a pleasing nature and an agreeable nature; when arising, it is here that this craving

arises; when establishing itself, it is here that it establishes itself ... in the world forms are of a pleasing nature and an agreeable nature; when arising, it is here that this craving arises; when establishing itself, it is there that it establishes itself.

(DN 22: *cakkhuṃ loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etth' esā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati ... rūpā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etth' esā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati*).

Another example is the description of the contemplation of the six senses in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* itself, a practice also found in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. This practice is absent from another discourse parallel extant in the *Ekottarika-āgama* and for this reason appears to reflect a later stage in the textual evolution of the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*. For the case of the eye, the first part of the respective instructions in the two versions that cover this practice proceeds as follows:

One knows the eye, one knows forms, and one knows the fetter that arises dependent on both.

(MN 10: *cakkhuñ ca pajānāti, rūpe ca pajānāti, yañ ca tad ubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañ ca pajānāti*).

In dependence on the eye and forms, a fetter arises internally.

(MĀ 98: 眼緣色生內結).

This shows that the senses and their objects can both lead to craving and to the arising of a fetter. It follows that both can occasion a reaction that is “subjective,” in the sense of being with attachment. In contrast, with the complete eradication of defilements, in the case of an arahant, neither the senses nor their objects can lead to craving, fetters, or attachments.

It follows that the interpretation proposed in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* could better be captured by simply distinguishing between the senses and their objects. In contrast, a distinction between what is subjective and what is objective remains ambiguous, as it can be interpreted in different ways.

Practical Application

Lin (2019, p. 351) explained his interpretation to imply that “when contemplating the body externally, one should take the body as the object, and conduct one’s observations (1) in accordance with the principle that the body is the object of experience, and (2) from a viewpoint that is not identified with

the body.” The second point made here shows that his distinction between what is subjective and what is objective goes beyond the interpretation proposed in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, as the difference between the senses and their objects is not about being identified with something in contrast to not being identified with it. The same departure from the **Mahāvibhāṣā*’s explanation can be seen in relation to the next two establishments of mindfulness (Pāli *satipaṭṭhāna*, Sanskrit *smṛtyupasthāna*, Chinese 念處, Tibetan *dran pa nye bar gzhag pa*), in relation to which Lin (2019, p. 352) explained his understanding in this way:

In light of the interpretation I have proposed, one can observe them from a point of view that is identified with *vedanā* or *citta*, which is to contemplate them internally; and then, one can observe them as the objects of experience, without identifying oneself as the feeler regarding *vedanā* or the perceiver regarding *citta*, which is to contemplate them externally.

This proposal differs from the **Mahāvibhāṣā* passage presented as the source of this interpretation. The early discourses encourage an application of the characteristic of not self to the senses but also to their objects (SN 35.6 and SĀ 195), which implies that the tendency to identify needs to be countered even with the objects of the senses (see also Lin 2019, p. 344). Elsewhere, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* also reflects the position that not only the eye (to take the case of visual experience as an example) but also visible forms can be identified with as a self (T XXVII 994b). It follows that the problem of identification cannot be confined to the senses only.

Promoting Identification?

Another problem with the proposed interpretation is that it risks turning the arousing of identification into a commendable practice. The *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its parallels recommend the internal mode of practice just as much as the external mode (the mode that combines the two is absent from the *Madhyama-āgama* version). The instructions cover each of these two (or three) modes of practice similarly and without evincing any particular evaluation. If internal means to be subjectively identified, it follows that the instructions to cultivate mindfulness internally encourage the practitioner to identify with the body, feeling tones, mental states, and dharmas.

Lin (2019, p. 355) argued that a way of practice following his interpretation “would be an effective way of teaching a practitioner how one habitually and arbitrarily takes certain phenomena as self and other phenomena as related to self.” To become aware of such habitual and arbitrary tendencies just requires observing those that are already there. It does

not necessitate intentionally arousing identification. In fact, it would be difficult to find a passage in the early discourses which recommends the intentional cultivation of identification with the objects of meditative experience. Although the idea of intentionally promoting identification (in order to then counter it) would probably find resonance in some strands of Buddhist modernism, it does involve a departure from the approach evident in the early texts.

Lin (2019, p. 355) also argued that “this understanding of the purpose of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice has already been proposed in the *Mahāvibhāṣā*,” followed by citing a passage that relates internal contemplation to views about a self and its external counterpart to views about appropriation as “mine.” Yet, this proposal in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* rather confirms that both forms of practice should lead to diminishing identification, instead of the internal becoming a way of fostering identification by adopting a subjective perspective.

In sum, the proposed interpretation does not seem to yield a viable understanding, as it invests internal contemplation with a tendency to encourage attachment in the form of identification rather than to counter it. This is out of keeping with the overall thrust of mindfulness meditation as described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, which throughout is concerned with overcoming attachment.

The Senses and Their Objects

The interpretation proposed originally in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* passage in question is also problematic, as it is not readily applicable to all four *satipaṭṭhānas*. For example, contemplation of the anatomical parts or the elements, two exercises common to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its parallels (Anālayo 2013), could hardly be distinguished into being undertaken first from the perspective of the senses and then from the viewpoint of their objects.

Although not providing an understanding of the distinction between what is internal and what is external that works for all four establishments of mindfulness, the interpretation proposed in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* passage is of considerable relevance for developing a historical perspective on the question of external mindfulness. This significance emerges once such a historical perspective is brought to bear on the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* itself, considered in light of its parallels and of interpretations found in early Abhidharma works. Such comparison points to the apparent addition of contemplation of the sense spheres to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and one of its two parallels. This apparent addition may well have provided a starting point for the devising of alternative interpretations regarding the significance of internal and external mindfulness (Anālayo 2020b).

Such an addition would in itself be entirely natural, given that the importance of mindfulness in relation to sense experience forms a recurrent topic in other discourses. Once such an addition is in place, the circumstance that this contemplation

brings in the senses and their objects almost inevitably leads to an expansion of the notion of what is external. This expansion appears to have triggered the devising of alternative explanations, such as the one discussed above from the **Mahāvibhāṣā*.

External Mindfulness in the Early Discourses

The arising and spread of alternative interpretations is in itself less surprising, given that the early discourses provide only a few specific indications regarding the significance of an internal and an external cultivation of the establishments of mindfulness. A discourse that does provide such an indication is the *Janavasabha-sutta* (DN 18), which in agreement with its *Dirgha-āgama* parallel (DĀ 4) indicates that external refers to directing mindfulness to the body, feeling tones, mental states, and dharmas of other persons. Another parallel preserved as an individual translation (T 9), however, has no such indication (Anālayo 2013, p. 17–19 and 2020c, p. 89–91). Lin (2019, p. 341) takes this to imply that the explicit indication in the other two versions, according to which external mindfulness practice concerns others, “is unlikely to belong to the early stratum of this text.”

This is certainly a possibility to be taken into account. At the same time, however, it could also be noted that the individual translation is rather late, stemming from the tenth century, and the same passage also contains a late phrasing, which combines an apparent misunderstanding of the term *ekāyana* (Nattier 2007, p. 190) with references to *bodhi* and *saddharma*, resulting in “the awakening through the one vehicle of the right Dharma” (T I 216a: 菩提一乘正法). It seems quite possible that this passage in the individual translation could be reflecting later times, rather than testifying to a stage earlier than the other two versions.

Lin (2019, p. 340) also highlighted a difference between the formulation in the *Janavasabha-sutta* and its *Dirgha-āgama* parallel, as these mention what is essentially the same interpretation in slightly different ways. However, the actual variations are fairly normal in oral literature and need not be considered as reflecting substantial differences.

Nevertheless, even if one were to consider the individual translation as a testimony to an earlier stage in textual development, the agreement between the *Janavasabha-sutta* and its *Dirgha-āgama* parallel on explicitly defining external cultivation of the four establishments of mindfulness to involve others would still be substantially earlier than the time of the compilation of the **Mahāvibhāṣā*.

The Three Establishments of Mindfulness

Another passage of relevance to the question of external mindfulness involves three establishments of mindfulness practiced

by the Buddha himself. These occur in the *Saḷāyatanavibhaṅga-sutta* (MN 137), its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel (MĀ 163), a quotation extant in Tibetan (Up 7015), as well as in a range of later texts (Anālayo 2011, p. 785–787). As, in the context of the present article, it would become rather unwieldy to present a full translation of all parallel versions, suffice it for the present purpose to take up only the *Madhyama-āgama* version as exemplifying the basic idea (Lin 2019, p. 341, who takes up the Pāli version, noted that the discrepancies between the Pāli and Chinese version are of no further relevance to the present discussion).

The description given below from the *Madhyama-āgama* version concerns a situation in which the Buddha (referred to as the “Tathāgata”) is giving teachings to his disciples:

Suppose the Tathāgata teaches the Dharma to his disciples with thoughts of sympathy and consideration, seeking their benefit and welfare, seeking their peace and happiness, with a mind full of benevolence and compassion, [telling them]: “This is for your welfare, this is for your happiness, this is for your welfare and happiness.” (MĀ 163: 若如來為弟子說法, 憐念愍傷, 求義及饒益, 求安隱快樂, 發慈悲心: 是為饒益, 是為快樂, 是為饒益樂).

If the disciples are not respectful and do not act accordingly, do not become established in knowledge, their minds do not incline toward the Dharma and follow the Dharma, they do not accept the right Dharma, they disregard the Blessed One’s instruction and are unable to attain certainty in it, then the Blessed One is not sad or sorrowful because of this. Instead, the Blessed One is equanimous and unaffected, constantly mindful and constantly knowing. This is reckoned his first establishment of mindfulness ...

(MĀ 163: 若彼弟子而不恭敬, 亦不順行, 不立於智, 其心不趣向法, 次法, 不受正法, 違世尊教, 不能得定者, 世尊不以此為憂感也, 但世尊捨無所為, 常念, 常智. 是謂第一意止).

If the disciples are respectful and act accordingly, become established in knowledge, their minds surrender and incline toward the Dharma and follow the Dharma, they accept and uphold the right Dharma, they do not disregard the Blessed One’s instruction and are able to attain certainty in it, then the Blessed One is not glad or joyful because of this. Instead, the Blessed One is equanimous and unaffected, constantly mindful and constantly knowing. This is reckoned his second establishment of mindfulness ...

(MĀ 163: 若彼弟子恭敬順行而立於智, 其心歸趣向法, 次法, 受持正法, 不違世尊教, 能得定者, 世尊不以此為歡喜也, 但世尊捨無所為, 常念, 常智. 是謂第二意止).

[If] some disciples are not respectful and do not act accordingly, do not become established in knowledge, their minds do not incline toward the Dharma and follow the Dharma, they do not accept the right Dharma, they disregard the Blessed One’s instruction and are unable to attain certainty in it; and some disciples are respectful and act accordingly, they become established in knowledge, their minds surrender and incline toward the Dharma and follow the Dharma, they accept and uphold the right Dharma, they do not disregard the Blessed One’s instruction and are able to attain certainty in it, then the Blessed One is not sad or sorrowful and also not glad or joyful because of this. Instead, the Blessed One is equanimous and unaffected, constantly mindful and constantly knowing. This is reckoned his third establishment of mindfulness ...

(MĀ 163: 或有弟子而不恭敬, 亦不順行, 不立於智, 其心不趣向法, 次法, 不受正法, 違世尊教, 不能得定者; 或有弟子恭敬順行而立於智, 其心歸趣向法, 次法, 受持正法, 不違世尊教, 能得定者, 世尊不以此為憂感, 亦不歡喜, 但世尊捨無所為, 常念, 常智. 是謂第三意止).

This description thus presents three establishments of mindfulness, differing from the standard reference to four establishments of mindfulness in other discourses. Regarding the modality of mindfulness in these three cases, Lin (2019, p. 342) argued:

in the case of the three *satipaṭṭhānas*, it would be reasonable to regard the immediate objects of contemplation as the Buddha’s own mental states, e.g., the absence or presence of satisfaction, and to understand that the Buddha as a teacher is constantly aware of his own mental states and not disturbed by external circumstances. Thus, I suggest that this *satipaṭṭhāna* is a special case of the contemplation of one’s own mind (*citta*).

No doubt, the passage implies that the Buddha was mindful of his own mental condition; otherwise, he would hardly have been able to describe his equanimity (or satisfaction in the Pāli version). At the same time, however, for him to be able to describe the attitude of his disciples, he would have to have been aware of that as well. Given that his equanimous attitude remains the same but the attitudes of the disciples differ, the rationale for the count of *three* establishments of mindfulness must reflect the *three* different types of audience.

It follows that the key point of this description is indeed mindful recognition of the mental attitude of others, be it through telepathic abilities or otherwise. In other words, in addition to the explicit indication in the *Janavasabha-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel (absent from a third parallel), the present passage unambiguously considers awareness of the attitude of others to be an establishment of mindfulness.

The same type of interpretation would also suit a description in the *Sāmagāma-sutta* and its parallels, which is concerned with the relationship between the arising of a litigation among the monastic community and mental states such as anger, envy, deceit, etc. (Anālayo 2011, table 11.4). The *Sāmagāma-sutta* describes what should be done if monastics “were to observe such a root of litigation internally or externally” (MN 104: *evārūpañ ce ... vivādamūlaṃ ajjhataṃ vā bahiddhā vā samanupasseyyātha*). Roots of litigation like anger, etc., are clearly “mental states” (*citta*). These should be “observed” (*sam + anupassati*) internally or externally, a description that can conveniently be related to the term *anupassin* (from the same verb *anupassati*) employed in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (MN 10) to describe “contemplating” mental states internally or externally. In fact, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Sāmagāma-sutta* explicitly brings in right mindfulness in this context (MĀ 196: 如是鬪諍, 汝於內外見而不盡者 ... 正念正智). This makes it reasonable to propose that the task described here can be considered a specific implementation of the third *satipaṭṭhāna* of contemplation of the mind.

From a practical viewpoint, the passage in the *Sāmagāma-sutta* is probably best understood along the lines of what emerged from the three *satipaṭṭhānas* cultivated by the Buddha, in the sense that here “external” refers to the mental states of others. An interpretation based on distinguishing between being subjective and objective (or between the senses and their objects) fails to provide a meaningful reading of this passage. Instead, the task is to recognize if anger, envy, deceit, etc., are present in one’s own mind (or among those who belong to one’s own faction) or else in the minds of members of the opposing faction.

Direct Experience

According to Lin (2019, p. 317), directing mindfulness to the mental state of another would either require telepathy or else, if it were to rely on drawing inferences, then this would conflict with the impression “that the practice of contemplation appears to be rooted in basic, direct experience.” The idea that mindfulness practice should invariably involve some form of direct experience does not fully reflect the range of practices described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its parallels. This can be seen particularly well in the following modality of contemplation of the body, an exercise covered in all three versions:

As though one were to see a corpse thrown away in a charnel ground ... one compares this same body with it: ‘This body too is of the same nature, it will be like that, it is not exempt from that fate.’

(MN 10: *seyyathā pi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya*

chaḍḍitaṃ ... so imam eva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ayam pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī etaṃ anatīto ti).

One contemplates another’s corpse ... having seen it, one compares oneself to it: ‘This body of mine now is also like this, it is of the same nature, and in the end cannot escape [this fate].’

(MĀ 98: 觀彼死屍 ... 見已自比: 今我此身亦復如是, 俱有此法, 終不得離).

One contemplates a corpse ... one contemplates that one’s own body is not different from that: ‘My body will not escape from this calamity.’

(EĀ 12.1: 觀死屍 ... 自觀身與彼無異: 吾身不免此患).

The contemplation of the body described here is indubitably a matter of seeing the body of another, rather than having some direct experience of one’s own body. Based on such a vision, this mindfulness practice then requires drawing an inference, namely that one’s own body will similarly become a corpse in the future. Lin (2019, p. 325) is clearly aware of this type of exercise, whose instructions show that the cultivation of mindfulness need not invariably be a matter of direct experience and instead can rely on inference.

Given this precedent, found in *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and both of its parallels, the idea of relying on inferences in order to contemplate the mental state of another need not be seen as problematic in itself. Body language, facial expression, and tone of voice are obvious markers that can be relied on to draw such inferences. The same applies to the situation described in the *Sāmagāma-sutta* and its parallels, where behavior and ways of speech exhibited in a situation prone to lead to litigation can reveal the presence of anger, envy, deceit, etc., which can be recognized even by those unable to avail themselves of telepathic abilities.

The Potential of External Mindfulness

In sum, the interesting suggestion to understand external mindfulness to involve an objective as distinct from a subjective perspective does not seem to yield a commendable form of practice from the viewpoint of early Buddhist meditation theory and also fails to do justice to the sources. In addition, the perceived problem of needing to achieve some form of direct experience through external mindfulness can be set aside as an unwarranted assumption, a reflection of Buddhist modernism rather than of early Buddhist thought.

Adopting the perspective that mindfulness can be employed to ascertain the mental condition of others has the potential of leading to a broadening of perspective in

contemporary research. It enables more closely relating mindfulness to the cultivation of prosocial attitudes and improved abilities in social interaction. It can also help in fostering recognition of unconscious biases, whose acting out can more easily be detected if their impact on others is noted with mindfulness. A case in point is racial prejudice, where the cultivation of external mindfulness could make a substantial contribution to countering the pervasive harm caused by systemic racism (Anālayo 2020a). In any of these cases, a basic requirement remains a conscious broadening of the range of applicability of mindfulness from what is internal to what is external, a broadening that can eventually culminate in a seamless interrelation of the two as both internal and external.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval This article does not contain any studies performed by the author with human participants or animals.

Conflict of Interest The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Abbreviations DN, *Dīgha-nikāya*; EĀ, *Ekottarika-āgama* (T 125); MĀ, *Madhyama-āgama* (T 26); MN, *Majjhima-nikāya*; SĀ, *Saṃyukta-āgama* (T 99); SN, *Saṃyutta-nikāya*; T, Taishō edition

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