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SATI

(Mindfulness)

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All the suttas below have parallels in Chinese, Sanskrit or Tibetan.

Buddha:
“The abandoning of both
sensual perceptions and dejection;
the dispelling of dullness,
the warding off of remorse;
purified equanimity and mindfulness
preceded by reflection on the Dhamma:
this, I say, is emancipation by final knowledge,
the breaking up of ignorance.”
Pahānaṃ kāmacchandānaṃ,
Domanassāna cūbhayaṃ;
Thinassa ca panūdanaṃ,
Kukkuccānaṃ nivāraṇaṃ.
Upekkhāsatisaṃsuddhaṃ,
dhammatakkapurejavaṃ;
Aññāvimokkhaṃ pabrūmi,
avijjāya pabhedanaṃ.
Snp 5.13 or 5.14 (Udaya) - **AN 3.33**

How sati fits within the different progressions?:

Faculties + Powers

Confidence > energy > sati > concentration > wisdom.

Noble eightfold path

Right view > right thought > right speech > right action > right livelihood > right effort > right mindfulness (sammā sati) > right concentration.

Awakening factors

Sati > investigation-of-dhammas (dhamma-vicaya) > energy > joy > tranquillity > concentration > equanimity.
Note:
Contemplation of the dhammas (dhammānupassanā) emphasizes contemplation of the Hindrances [Sensory desire - Ill-will - Sloth-torpor - Restlessness-worry - Doubt,] & the contemplation of the Awakening Factors.

Mindfulness/Sati is the means to a reflection on the known - gate-keeping any new knowledge and phenomena from entering; and allowing in samatha and vipassana (SN 35.245 [a.k.a. 35.204]).

The process is the following:

1. Prerequisite:

Buddha:
"The four establishments of mindfulness, too, I say, have a nutriment; they are not without nutriment. And what is the nutriment for the four establishments of mindfulness? It should be said: the three kinds of good conduct."
AN 10.61

Buddha:
"Well then, Bahiya, purify the very starting point of wholesome states. And what is the starting point of wholesome states? Virtue that is well purified and view that is straight. Then, Bahiya, when your virtue is well purified and your view is straight, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, you should develop the four establishments of mindfulness."
SN 47.15

In other words, the more you have previously given concern to: confidence > energy > & > right view > right thought > right speech > right action > right livelihood > right effort; the better the mindfulness/sati will be; the better the dhammānupassanā and dhammāvicaya will be - (and "purified equanimity and mindfulness" will ensue - AN 3.33 above).

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"When arousing the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, friend, a bhikkhu understands: 'My mind is well liberated; I have uprooted sloth and torpor and thoroughly removed restlessness and remorse. My energy has been aroused. I attend as a matter of vital concern, not sluggishly.'"
SN 46.8

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When one attends carefully (yoniso manasikaroto), bhikkhus, unarisen sensual desire does not arise and arisen sensual desire is abandoned. When one attends carefully, unarisen ill will … sloth and torpor … restlessness and remorse ... doubt does not arise and arisen doubt is abandoned. Also, the unarisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness arises and the arisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness comes to fulfilment by development.
SN 46.24

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The enlightenment factor of mindfulness, bhikkhus, is a nonobstruction, nonhindrances, noncorruptions of the mind (citta).
SN 46.34

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The enlightenment factor of mindfulness is a maker of vision, maker of knowledge, promoting the growth of wisdom, free from vexation, leading towards Nibbāna.
SN 46.40

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There are, bhikkhus, things (dhammas) that are the basis for the enlightenment factor of mindfulness:
frequently giving careful attention to them is the nutriment for the arising of the unarisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness and for the fulfilment by development of the arisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness.
SN 46.51

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Whatever mindfulness there is of things internal is the enlightenment factor of mindfulness; whatever mindfulness there is of things external is also the enlightenment factor of mindfulness. (see also the other enlightenment factors).
SN 46.52

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With a mind that has developed the enlightenment factor of mindfulness he knows and sees things as they really are (as they have come to be-yathābhūtaṃ). This is a cause for knowledge and vision; it is in this way that knowledge and vision are with cause and condition.
SN 46.56

2. Sati:

Sati (from sarati: to remember,) enables memory.

Knowing the nutriments of each of the four establishments of mindfulness [active]:

Buddha:
... enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release.
AN 4.14

Buddha:
The Blessed One said, "I will teach & analyze for you the origination and subsiding of the four establishments of mindfulness. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."
"As you say, lord," the monks responded to him.
The Blessed One said, "And what, monks, is the origination of the body?
From the origination of nutriment is the origination of the body. From the cessation of nutriment is the subsiding of the body.
"From the origination of contact is the origination of feeling.
From the cessation of contact is the subsiding of feeling.
"From the origination of name-&-form is the origination of the mind (citta).
From the cessation of name-&-form is the cessation of the mind.
"From the origination of attention is the origination of mental qualities (dhamma).
From the cessation of attention is the subsiding of mental qualities."
SN 47.42

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Then Sati calls the recollective function. [active]

Buddha:
Here, a bhikkhu is mindful, possessing supreme mindfulness and alertness, one who remembers and recollects what was done and said long ago (cirakatampi cirabhāsitampi saritā anussaritā).
AN 8.30
See also SN 7.4, SN 7.67, SN 48.50.

Let's take Ill-will for instance. It must be called in from memory as a whole. That bad feeling in which consciousness has found its home (SN 22.3;) that particular ill-will, must unveil its entire nature. Consciousness that has settled (SN 12.39,) must bring out all the cumulated "qualities" of ill-will.

Like the cowherd in AN 10.20, sati must render (actively) the big picture.

3. Contemplation and investigation:

Then comes the contemplation (passive) and the investigation (active) (anupassati & vicaya).

In our particular example, the meditator contemplates the hindrances; which is a sub-category of the fourth reflection, that is the reflection on dhammas (that comes after the contemplations on body, feeling and mind (citta)). [passive]

Buddha:
"Come you, monk, fare along contemplating the mental states (e.g. ill-will) in mental states, but do not apply yourself to a train of thought connected with mental states

(vitakkaṃ vitakkesi)."
MN 125

Then he investigates them. (And realizes them).[active]

Finally, the meditator contemplates (samanupassati) the disappearance of the five hindrances within himself.[passive]
It is because the dhammas are cognized and realized properly, that there is an abandonment of the defiling mental qualities.

Buddha:
As he remains thus focused on mental qualities in & of themselves, his mind becomes concentrated, his defilements are abandoned. He takes note of that fact. As a result, he is rewarded with a pleasant abiding here & now, together with mindfulness & alertness. Why is that? Because the wise, experienced, skillful monk picks up on the theme of his own mind (citta*)."
SN 47.8

** Citta = feeling and perception,as per definition in MN 44.*

His mindfulness is purified.

Then again, the meditator pursues his quest for perfection:

Buddha:
"With mindfulness as his gate-keeper, the disciple of the ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity."
AN 7.63

Recursive process applies here, until perfection is attained.

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Note

Vipassana people often think that, what is said in MN 10, about being able to reach nibbāna doing Satipaṭṭhāna only, is possible.
They should read **SN 46.16**.

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