



Introduction to Abhidhamma

[ATHULA DASSANA DHAMMA SCHOOL -HEATHROW](http://www.athuladassanatemple.org/dhamma-school/)

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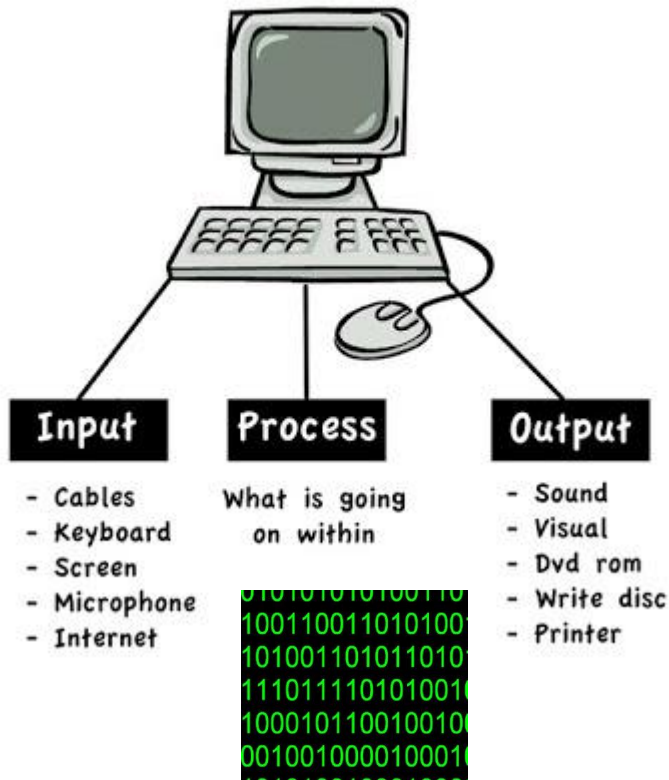


What is Abhidhamma



- ~~Complex jargon and grouping - very difficult to understand and remember ?~~
- Extensive explanation of how the mind works
- Much superior than modern psychology
- A science that completely explain the origination of matter and many more
- Very useful to interpret and clarify Buddhist teaching

Analogy : Computer

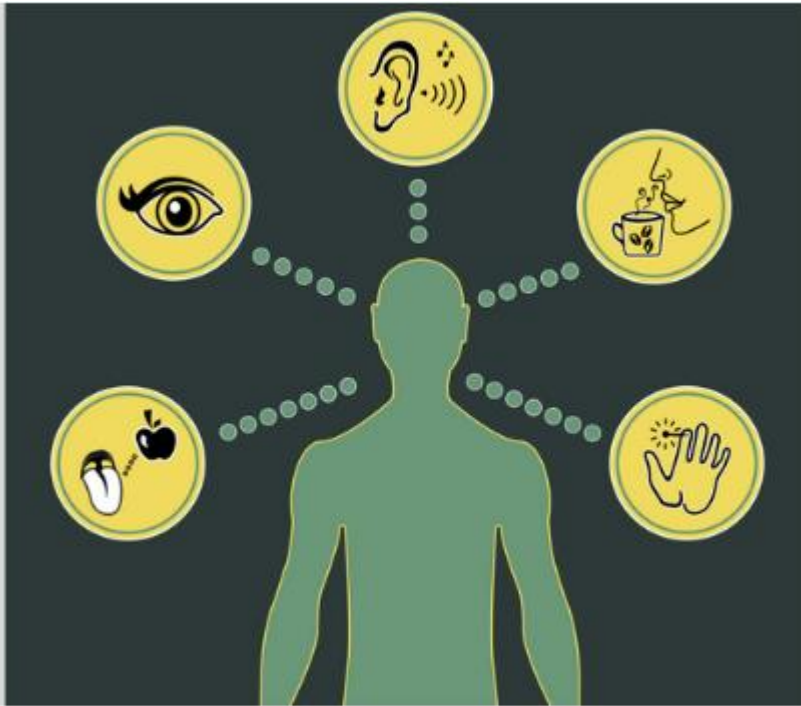


- We all use computers
- They have input devices such as keyboard , mouse , microphone
- Users use those input devices to interact with the computer
- Input devices pick user inputs and send them as electric signals
- As machines can only have two states “on” (1) and “off” (0) , different signals are transmitted using different “1” ,”0” patterns
- Computer process them and send it back to output devices as series of “1” ,”0” patterns
- Out put devices such as display , speakers produce respective visual and sound effects by reading “1” ,”0” patterns
- Those 1 0 patterns are called Binary codes



Key learning : binary codes or “1” ,”0” electrical signals are used within computer to pick user input (e.g. press a key on a keyboard) , process and display on output Device (e.g. letter shown on computer monitor)

Mind



- Similar to computers we have input devices – called senses
- We use them to interact with external and internal objects
- External things (people , animals , trees , rocks , rivers) are made out of some elements.
- Even the vision , sound, smell ,taste etc are also made out of some finer **“element of matter”**
- Our senses pick the signals (vision , sound, smell ,taste etc) from external objects
- Those signals are proceed by mind and brain to understand about that signal/object (e.g sound of a bird , smell of a perfume). This awareness of objects are called **“consciousness”**
- Some awareness's (Consciousness) can be pleasant and some are unpleasant

Mind (continued ...)



- If someone receive a present , he use his senses to pick information about the present. shape/size/colour of the wrapping will be picked by the eyes(vision). This vision and present it self are made out of element of matter
- Recipient is now aware (conscious) about the present and is very happy



- Now think about a child with a toy
- Its broken , he use eyes to pick the state of the Toy (broken to pieces)
- He realised (awareness/ consciousness) that his favourite toy is broken
- Boy is very sad and start crying

In both the above examples same sense (eye) was used to understand the situation but in one case recipient is very happy and the other child is very sad.
i.e happy awareness(consciousness) , other is sad awareness(consciousness).

The ingredients that make the awareness special (e.g sad/happy) are called “**Mental factors**”



Summary

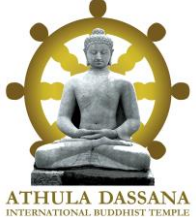


- Objects (e.g . tree , animals etc) generate signals in the form of vision , sound , smell, taste etc.
- We have senses (e.g eye , ear ,nose etc) to pick those signal , process and understand.
- All those objects, signals and senses are made out of **“Element of Matter”**
- Understanding/awareness of the object is called **“consciousness”**
- There are some added ingredients to the consciousness(awareness) that make those awareness pleasant or unpleasant – are called **“mental factors”**

Similar to use of **binary** in **computer coding** , our **mind coding** system consist of **“Element of Matter”**, **“consciousness”** and **“mental factors”**

In next sections we will learn followings in detail

- **Consciousness (Chitta/ චිත්ත)**
- **Mental factors (Chethasika/ චෛතසික)**
- **Element of Matter (Rupa/ රූප)**



Thank You

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