

Health-Care Principle of Navaharaguna by Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamvāro)

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Abstract

This research has three objectives: 1) to study the principle of Navaharaguna by Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamvāro), 2) to compare the sicknesses that had been recorded as treated by Navaharaguna with current sicknesses, and 3) to comment on the ancient words that had been recorded in Navaharaguna with the present understanding. This research is a qualitative research based on documents together with an in-depth interview. It was found that Navaharaguna was mainly used as a method for treating oneself. Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamvāro) used Navaharaguna by praying the nine keywords of “A, Sam, Vi, Su, Lo, Pu, Sa, Bu, Bha,” which is the Buddhist way of providing health-care treatments together with the knowledge of the Dhātu (Element) in Tipitaka and traditional medicine, especially with Thai traditional massage. There are 82 methods of Navaharaguna to treat various symptoms, which can be divided into four groups, namely, to balance the body elements, to treat physical sicknesses, to treat mental disorders, and other. There are 14 symptoms treated by Navaharaguna that are still found in the present day.

Keywords: Navaharaguna, Nine virtues of Buddha, Health care, Thai traditional medicine, Meditation

Introduction

The prosperity of the Threefold Training and the use of the Four Bhāvanā (cultivation) principles are some of the processes in Buddhist physical and mental health care or so called “the integrated Buddhist health care” (Phrasunthornkittikhun, 2016). This health care refers to a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being along with wisdom that matches the modern words of “holistic health care” by trying to keep the mind at peace first, and thereafter

the body will be healthy. One of the important ways to achieve peacefulness of the mind is through meditation. At present, there are many methods for practicing meditation, and one form is through the method of “*Kammaṭṭhanā Majjhimā Meditation*” or so called “the Sequential Middle Path Meditation.”

Kammaṭṭhanā Majjhimā Meditation (KMM) is the most ancient method, which originated during Buddha’s time and became widespread afterwards in the Suvarṇabhūmi territory including Dvaravatī, Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, and Thonburi through Bangkok. Moreover, this method can be found in Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Myanmar as well as Sri Lanka (Phrakhrū Siḍḍhisamvara, 2012). It can be said that KMM has flourished by the holy prestige of Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ḥñāṇasamvara), who was the Fourth Holy Patriarch of the Rattanakosin Period. The practice of KMM must follow sequentially without shortcuts or shifting the steps, which consist of Samatha Kammaṭṭhanā (Tranquility Meditation) to Vipassanā Kammaṭṭhanā (Insight Meditation). In addition to KMM, there are also many practical ways that can be considered as miscellaneous methods (or the annex method) and inheritance teaching since the reign of Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ḥñāṇasamvara) until the present time. One of the miscellaneous methods is determining the mental pathway to treat sicknesses, as so called “*Navaharaguna*” according to Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ḥñāṇasamvara) who had brought the Nine Buddhaguṇa (Nine Virtues of Buddha) as the primary base of practicing tranquility meditation. The Nine Virtues of Buddha are classified as *Buddhānussati* (Recollection of the Buddha), which is part of the Ten *Anussati* (Constant Mindfulness) (AN. EKA. (Thai) 20/296/37) and used to become a supreme Dharma for persons who want to induce actions to achieve Nirvana (AN. EKA. (Thai) 1/296/487). He induced *Navaharaguna* for MKK practitioners to apply the knowledge of the Dhātu (Element) not only in Tipitaka but also in Thai traditional medicine to heal sicknesses because of an imbalanced element or to relieve unpleasant symptoms without any drug treatments. The motivation of the researchers who conducted this research was to understand and study the use of *Navaharaguna* in health care and to compare the recorded symptoms in *Navaharaguna* scripture with present sicknesses that are found in modern medicine.

Materials and methods

This research is a qualitative research consisting of documentary research and field research by an in-depth interview as follows:

1. Studied and analyzed the principle of *Navaharaguna* from the documents compiled by retaining the old traditional language (Phrakhrū Siḍḍhisamvara, 2014),
2. Correlated the specific symptoms that were still found presently for analyzing how to cure such sicknesses by *Navaharaguna*,
3. Conducted an in-depth interview with the key informant, namely, Phrakhrū Siḍḍhisamvara, Vipassanā Master of MKK at the Ratchasittharam Ratchaworawihan Temple, and
4. Analyzed all contents and presented them in the essay.

Results and discussions

1. Principle of Navaharaguna by Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañña Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamāvāro)

Guidelines for maintaining health according to the methods of Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañña Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamāvāro) have the objective to use the power of the Buddhānussati consciousness to treat oneself first. People who wish to practice Navaharaguna must present themselves by ascending the tray with pedestal in order to be the disciples of KMM under the guidance of the Vipassanā Master at the Ratchasittharam Ratchaworawihan Temple. After they can either complete the course of KMM or at least pass through the Ānāpānassati (Mindfulness on Breathing) level, they can practice Navaharaguna. Therefore, the training of Navaharaguna cannot arbitrarily be practiced by oneself because he/she will not know the correct way and will not succeed in health care. The power of the treatment among the practitioners who pass the diverse stages of KMM will give them the different powers for health treatment. The higher the step of KMM, the more powerful the treatment, which can be seen by the immediate results. The use of Navaharaguna is suited for curing the imbalanced Dhātu or minor sicknesses such as headaches and stomach discomfort without medication. In the case of severe sickness, the use of Navaharaguna can support medication for helping the sickness decline more rapidly (In-depth interview with Phrakhrū Siññhisamvara, 2018).

2. Comparing sickness symptoms as recorded in Navaharaguna with current sicknesses

When starting to practice Navaharaguna, the practitioner must follow the sequence of the meditative training, namely, start with the apology and praise to the Triple Gems, perform the Buddhist chants, perform the Gāthā (Verses) of the Bñākaithian, Sundarīvāñī, perform the Gāthā for preferring loving kindness to the Five Māras (Five Evil Ones), and praise the Pāramī (Perfections) of the Lord Buddha. After that, the practitioner must sit in meditation and concentrate on Navaharaguna. When finished, the practitioner must extend peacefulness to all creatures (Phrakhrū Siññhisamvara, 2017). The guidelines for meditation and concentration on Navaharaguna can be divided according to the level of the practitioner as follows:

1. For those who have completed the course of KMM, they must start by sitting in meditation and by penetrating to Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana Jhāna (Sphere of neither Perception nor Non-Perception) and regress back to Tatiya-jhāna (Third Absorption). This will produce the most power for healing health.

2. For those who have not yet completed KMM, they must start the meditation with the Five Pīti (Rapture), the Six Yugala, and the Two Sukhasamādhi; and then proceed with the Nine Points of the Ānāpānassati and start Navaharaguna by setting up the Nimitta (Mental Image) such as blotch or color to focus the flows of the Dhātu at each point of Navaharaguna.

The flows of the Dhātu are mainly used to focus the mind, followed by the Vāyo Dhātu (Wind Element) that is blowing inside, such as the wind that moves along the nerves, the wind between the eyes, the wind between the eyebrows, the wind in the middle of the head, *etc.* (National Library, 1915). To set the wind for the first time, the practitioner must place the focus point at the two fingers under the naval because this is the point that combines the Pañchavī

Dhātu (Earth Element), Āpo Dhātu (Water Element), Tejo Dhātu (Fire Element), and Vāyo Dhātu. This point will take the four elements throughout the whole body. The flow of all four elements will rely on the mind; thereafter, the Prāṇa (Breathing) must always have the four elements together with the Nimitta in meditation.

3. Analyzing the principle of Navaharaguna

The analysis from the Navaharaguna scripture found that there are 82 methods of flowing the Dhātu to treat various symptoms by oneself (Phrakhrū Siḍḍhisamvara, 2014). They can be divided according to the objective of flowing the Dhātu as follows: 1) to balance the body, 2) to cure physical sicknesses, 3) to treat mental disorders, 4) to solve Guṇsai (Black Magic Spell), and 5) to build power for various usages during the Dhutaṅga (Austere Practices) of the monk. In the present day, there are 14 sicknesses that can be treated by the practice of Navaharaguna. Each case can be described as follows:

3.1 The use of Navaharaguna to flow the Dhātu in the case of normal health:

The objective of this case is to build more power at the Nine Points along the whole body. It can control the balance of the Dhātu by praying the heart (abbreviation of word) of Navaharaguna Gāthā together with flowing the Dhātu as described in Figure 1 and Table 1.

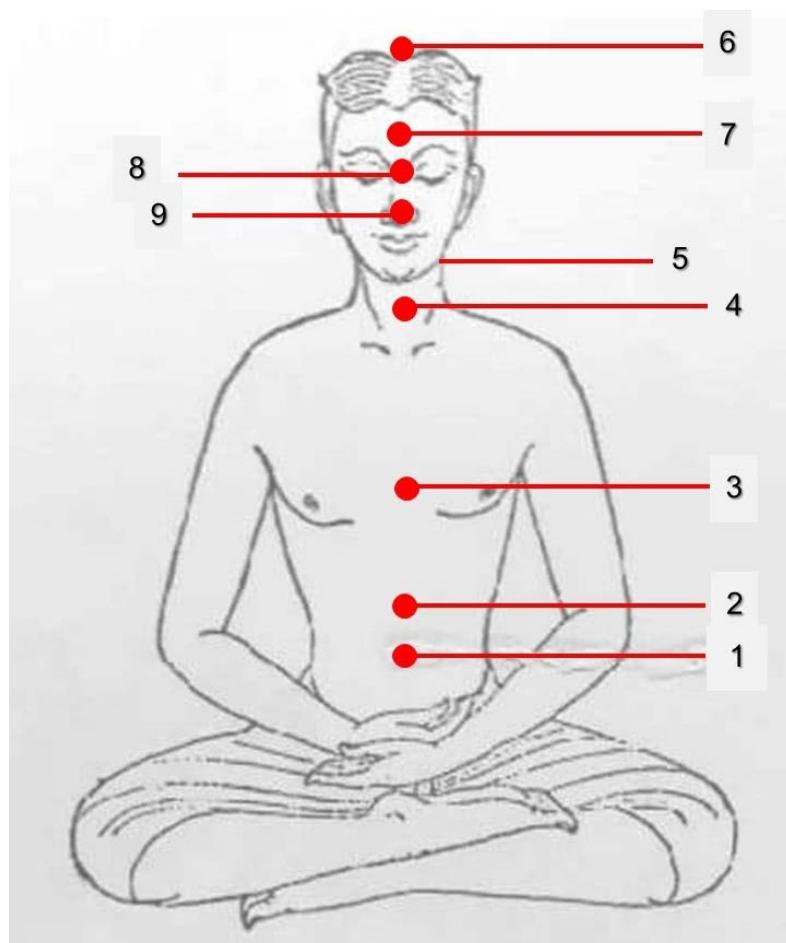


Figure 1 The Nine Points of Navaharaguna to flow the Prāṇa for balancing the four elements

Table 1 Position and qualification of Navaharaguna

Position and Praise Word	Name of the Point and Position	Qualification
1. A	Lower Ajjadākāś, Middle of naval	It is the point to suspend all Vedanā (Feeling) regarded as the position of setting the four elements.
2. Sam	Brabuddhaguṇa Room, One finger at the upper part of naval	It is the origination of all good and sins. This point is the highest power source because it is the gathering point of the four elements.
3. Vi	Hadaya-vatthu (heart-base) Room, Center of the chest or heart	It is the origination of Kusala (Good Deed) and Akusala (Bad Deed) that happened in the manner called Sampayutta (Association Condition), which emerged and became extinct simultaneously. This point is also the highest power source because it is the gathering point of the four elements.
4. Su	Sudkokluang (super hollow neck) Room, Pit under the larynx	It is a sleep point, a lack of flavored taste, the breaking point, and the complete extinction point.
5. Lo	Gotarabhūdaidoy (occipital), Rear position of the skull base	It is known as the point of all hidden Vedanā. It is the disconnect point of good and sins when one is nearly dead. It is the point that can extinguish snake venom and all pocks.
6. Pu	Upper Ajjadākāś, Above the crown of the head	It is the point that builds Khanti (Patience) and Soracca (Modesty).
7. Sa	Dibayasūñ (between the eyebrows), Middle of the forehead or the third eye	It is the point of execution for all sins and the point of self-control.
8. Bu	Mahāsūñ (between the eyes), Middle of the eyes or the nose bridge	It is the point of wisdom to understand the penalty of all sins.
9. Bha	Sūñnoi, Nose tip	It is the point of all rejoicing and leads to the fertilization of all creatures.

3.2 The use of Navaharaguna to flow the Dhātu in the case of health care:

The objective of this case is to cure sickness by focusing the flow of the Prāna at the points that have health problems as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 The use of Navaharaguna for health care (see also Figure 1)

Major Symptoms	Minor Symptoms	Focal Points in Navaharaguna
1. Flowing the Dhātu in the case of imbalanced Dhātu	1.1 Working with the Seven Bojjhaṅga (Enlightenment Factors)	Move flow from point No. 1 to 7, where each point must consider the essence of the Seven Bojjhaṅga (T. M. (Thai) 10/139/85-86).
	1.2 Working with Cakkasukittimā	Excise point No. 5 and each point must chant the Cakkasukittimā Gāthā (Phrakhrū Siḍḍhisamvara, 2014).
2. Flowing the Dhātu for mental healing	2.1 In the case of distraction or agitation	Flow only to points No. 2 and 4.
	2.2 In the case of a lot of Dosa (Hatred), Moha (Delusion), and Vitakka-carita (One of Speculative Temperament)	Excise points No. 5, 7, and 8.
3. Flowing the Dhātu for healing headaches	3.1 Normal headache	Flow only to points No. 1, 2, 3, and 5.
	3.2 Severe headache	Use all nine points.
4. Flowing the Dhātu for healing colds	4.1 Weather allergy	Use only points No. 1, 2, and 3.
	4.2 Common cold	Excise points No. 3 and 4.
	4.3 Influenza	Flow only to point No. 5 and use a special point at the bone groove behind the prominence of the left ear.
5. Flowing the Dhātu for healing the stomach	5.1 Constipation	Use only points No. 1, 2, and 3.
	5.2 Stomach disorder	Use only points No. 1, 2, 3, and 4.
	5.3 Diarrhea	Use only points No. 1, 2, and 3.
6. Flowing the Dhātu for healing sprains, pain in muscles and tendons	6.1 Painful penetration of the flank	Use only points No. 7 and 9.
	6.2 Leg sprains	
	6.3 Tendon sprains	Focus only on point No. 5.
	6.4 Upward gastric flow	Use the Caṅkama (Walking Meditation) in accordance with the pattern of Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañāṇa Somdej Phra Saṅgharāja (Suk ṇāṇasamvaro) together with flowing the Dhātu at points No. 1, 2, and 3.

3.3 Comparing the symptoms as recorded in Navaharaguna with current sicknesses: These results can be summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 Comparison of the symptoms as recorded in Navaharaguna with current sicknesses

Navaharaguna		
Major Symptom	Minor Symptoms	Current Sickneses
1. Mental disorder	1.1 In the case of distraction or agitation	Mental stress
	1.2 In the case of a lot of Dosa, Moha, and Vitakka-carita	Depression and bipolar disorder syndromes
2. Headache	2.1 Normal headache	Headache caused by sudden hot and cold impacts, headache from stress and fatigue from work, headache associated with sinusitis
	2.2 Severe headache	Cluster headache, migraine headache
3. Cold syndrome	3.1 Weather allergy	Weather allergy
	3.2 Common cold	Common cold
	3.3 Influenza	Influenza
4. Stomach disorder	4.1 Constipation	Constipation
	4.2 Stomach disorder	Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), Dyspepsia
	4.3 Diarrhea	Diarrhea, food poisoning
5. Sprains, pain in muscles and tendons	5.1 Painful penetration of the flank	Office syndrome
	5.2 Leg sprains	
	5.3 Tendon sprains	
	5.4 Upward gastric flow	Fainting, syncope from gastric flow up to the heart, belching

3.4 Commentary on the ancient words of Navaharaguna with the present understanding: In the analysis of Navaharaguna written by Somdej Phra Ariyavaiñsañāṇa Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ḥñāṇasamvaro), we found some ancient words that must be understood with commentary on the modern meaning as summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 The original words found in the scripture of Navaharaguna written by Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañña Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamīvaro) and the commentary on the modern meaning

The Original Language	The Present Commentary
Glī Oak Pen Baht (Unfolded into Baht)	The word “Baht” here is an ancient time unit, with one Baht equal to six minutes. Glī Oak Pen Baht means to make the Nimitta meditation in each points for six minutes. Once the concentration is well established, perform the Parikamma (Recite) by using only one minute per point, called Glī Oak Pen Nādī.
Glī Oak Pen Nādī (Unfold into Minute)	
Prāi Swās	Release the breath out slowly and then expel the breath throughout the soles of the feet and the nostrils.
Hai Ruay Loñ	Slowly relax, and breathe gently and slowly.
Pan Dīn Lek (Iron Earth)	Pull the mind down and chase away unwanted symptoms to the ground. Alternative medicine normally calls this method as “grounding,” which means transferring negative energy and draining excessive power into the ground.
Pīti Pravat	Pravat means to follow the step, which must progress KMM in the room of Five Pīti, the room of Six Yugala, and the room of Two Sukhasamādhi until the mind becomes calm before flowing the Dhātu. For one who has completed the course of KMM, Pīti Pravat will mean the growth of Samatha Kammaṭṭhanā from Paṭhama-jhāna (First Absorption) to Catuttha-jhāna (Fourth Absorption) and regress back to Tatiyta-jhāna to form the Sukha (Pleasure) first, then resulting in Pīti through the stage of Passaddhi (Relaxedness) until the mind focuses on only one mode of consciousness.
Hai Khāḍ Koñ	Set the mind firmly at the Sūñnoi Point until calmness of the mind happens.
Sūb Lom Khau (Inhale)	Breathe in gently, slowly, and consciously.
Tuñ Kra Sāy	Control breathing in the neck before gradually distributing the air little by little to the point of being hurt.

Conclusions

The main objective of Navaharaguna is for use in healing oneself and for the purpose of Dhutāṅga monks in cases when sickness happens in the forest and they are unable to find herbs or any medicine. The word “Navaharaguna” was created later in the reign of Somdej Phra Ariyavamsañña Somdej Phra Samgharāja (Suk ñāṇasamīvaro) when he brought the Nine Buddhaguṇa as a Buddhist method of health healing together with the knowledge of the Dhātu qualifications which were mentioned in the Tipitaka and Thai traditional medicine texts. The highest potential in using Navaharaguna is to heal the imbalance of the Dhātu without

medication. From the analysis of the text found, there are 82 methods to treat various symptoms by oneself. These methods can be grouped as flowing the Dhātu in cases with the objective to balance the body, to cure physical sicknesses, to treat mental disorders, to solve Guṇsai, and to build the power of the mind. Navaharaguna can be used consistently with Thai traditional massage. Therefore, the most important part of this health healing process is to behave according to the Buddhist way, which includes the nature of Vijjā (Enlightenment), Vimutti (Deliverance), Visuddhi (Purity), Santi (Peace), and the understanding of the law of Tilakkhaṇa (Three Characteristics). All of these contribute to the development of good quality of life or so called “holistic health treatment” in the context of Thai traditional medicine. Moreover, the results from this study can be further developed by applying them to volunteers to test the empirical results.

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