Goal for today:

1. How does concentration work from the perspective of the Abhidhamma?
2. To share a concentration meditation method I have been practicing for a long time.
Abhidhamma (1)

At the heart of the Abhidhamma philosophy is the Pitaka, or the Three Baskets (Pali Canon, Theravada Buddhism)

1. Vinaya Pitaka- the Book of Discipline (rules of conduct)
2. Sutta Pitaka- the Buddha’s discourses
3. Abhidhamma Pitaka- Higher or Special doctrine

The Abhidhamma Pitaka consists of seven books.

The information in this presentation comes from Abhidhammatha Sangaha, a Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma. It is an abstract of the seven books.
Abhidhamma (2)

The Abhidhamma Pitaka is a philosophy, a psychology and an ethical framework

- A philosophy
  It proposes an ontology, a perspective on the nature of reality. This perspective is called the dhamma theory.

- A psychology
  It aims at understanding the nature of experience, and thus the reality on which it focuses is conscious reality, the world as given in experience, compromising both knowledge and the known.

- An ethical framework
  Mental states are distinguished on the basis of ethical criteria: the wholesome and the unwholesome, the beautiful factors and the defilements. All three dimensions have their place in the cornerstone of the Buddha’s teaching, the program of liberation based on the Four Noble Truths.
We live with a wrong perception of reality.

(Matthieu Ricard)
According to the Abhidhamma, the ultimate reality consists of: matter, consciousness, mental components and an unconditioned element, Nibbāna.

**Matter**: the physical world such as visual objects, sound, the human body, etc. *(rupa)*

**Consciousness** *(citta)*: the knowing of an object

**Mental components** *(cetasika)*: they colour consciousness.

Examples are anger, doubt, desire, friendliness, compassion, etc. There are 52 cetasikas. Consciousness and mental components have the same object, they appear and disappear at the same time and they have the same physical base (like the heart).

**Nibbāna**: it is impossible to describe what it is, but what you can say is that all unwholesome citta’s and cetasika’s have been destroyed and can never arise again.
Mental factors (Cetasikas) grouped on ethical division

**Unwholesome mental components**
Restrict mental space (Akusala-cetasikas)

14. Ignorance (Moha)
15. Shamelessness (Ahirika)
16. Restlessness (Uddhacca)
17. Desire (Lobha)
18. Unjust convictions (Dīṭhi)
19. Pride, haughtyness (Māna)
20. Anger (Dosa)
21. Envy (Issā)
22. Stinginess (Macchariya)
23. Worry (Kukkucca)
24. Dullness (Thina)
25. Sleepyness (Middha)
26. Doubt (Vicikicchā)

14 - 17 always present in unwholesome consciousness

**Wholesome mental components**
Expand mental space (Sobhana-cetasikas)

28. Trust (Saddhā)
29. Mindfulness (Sati)
30. Shame (Hiri)
31. Afraid of doing wrong (Ottappa)
32. Generosity (Alobha)
33. Friendliness (Adosa)
34. Neutrality (balance) (Tatramajjhatatā)
35,36 Calm (antidote for restlessness and worry) (Passaddhi)
37,38 Lightness (antidote for dullness and sleepiness) (Lahuta)
39,40 Malleability (antidote for rigidity) (Mudutā)
41,42 Wieldiness (antidote for the rest of the hindrances) (Kammaññatā)
43,44 Proficiency (antidote for a lack of trust) (Pāguññatā)
45,46 Truthfulness (antidote for hypocrisy and fraud) (Ujjukatā)
47. Right speech (Sammāvācā)
48. Right action (Sammākamanta)
49. Right livelihood (Sammā-ājīva)
50. Compassion (Karunā)
51. Being glad for someone else (Muditā)
52. Wisdom (Pañña)

28 - 46 always present in wholesome consciousness

**Restrict or Expand mental space depending on circumstances**
(Aññāsambāna cetasikas)

- Present in all consciousness: (Sabbacittassadharana)
  1. Contact (Phassa)
  2. Feeling (Vedana)
  3. Perception (Sañña)
  4. Intention (Cetanā)
  5. One-pointedness (Ekaggatā)
  6. Mental vitality (Jivitindriya)
  7. Attention (Manasikāra)

- Sometimes present (Pakīnakka):
  8. Initial application (Vitakka)
  9. Sustained application (Vicāra)
  10. Decision (Adhimokkha)
  11. Energy (Viriya)
  12. Zest (Piti)
  13. Desire to act (Chanda)

**Ethical division**

- P&I Amersfoort 6 oktober 2003
Unwholesome cetasikas

14-17 always present

14. Ignorance (Moha)
15. Shamelessness (Ahirika)
16. Recklessness (Anotappa)
17. Restlessness (Uddhatca)
18. Desire (Lobha)
19. Injust convictions (Diṭṭhi)
20. Pride, haughtiness (Māna)
21. Anger (Dosa)
22. Envy (Issā)
23. Stinginess (Macchariya)
24. Worry (Kukkucca)
25. Dullness (Thīna)
26. Sleepyness (Middha)
27. Doubt (Vicikicchā)

Restrict mental space (Akusala-cetasikas)

Hindrances (in blue) obstruct concentration (samādhi)

Themabijeenkomst- P&I
### Unwholesome/wholesome cetasikas

#### Present in all consciousness: 
(Sabbacittasādhāraṇa)

1. Contact (Phassa)  
2. Feeling (Vedana)  
3. Perception (Sañña)  
4. Intention (Cetanā)  
5. Onepointedness (Ekaggatā)  
6. Mental vitality (Jivitindria)  
7. Attention (Manasikāra)  

#### Sometimes present (Pakīṇṇaka):
8. Initial application (Vitakka)  
9. Sustained application (Vicāra)  
10. Decision (Adhimokkha)  
11. Energy (Viriya)  
12. Zest (Pīti)  
13. Desire to act (Chanda)

#### Variable towards mental space 
(Aññāsamāna cetasikas)

Components in blue are important for developing concentration (samādhi).
The main components that make up the concentration process

- **Onepointedness** (Ekaggatā) This is the essence of concentration, but this cetasika can’t do the job alone.
- **Counteracts desire**

- **Initial application** (Vitakka) Counteracts sloth and torpor

- **Sustained application** (Vicāra) Counteracts doubt

- **Zest** (Pīti) Counteracts anger

- **Happiness** (Sukha) Counteracts worry and restlessness
Initial application (Vitakka)

Characteristic: directing the mind onto the object
Function: to strike at and to thresh the object
Manifestation: leading of the mind onto the object
Proximate cause: the object
Sustained application (Vicāra)

Characteristic: continued pressure onto the object
Function: sustained application of the associated mental phenomena to the object
Manifestation: anchoring of those phenomena in the object
Proximate cause: the object
The difference between zest and happiness

**Characteristic:** endearing
**Function:** refresh mind and body
**Manifestation:** elation
**Proximate cause:** mind and body

**Characteristic:** experiencing a desirable object
**Function:** partaking of the desirable aspect of the object
**Manifestation:** mental enjoyment
**Proximate cause:** tranquillity
Onepointedness (Samādhi)

**Characteristic:** non-distraction

**Function:** unite the associated states

**Manifestation:** peace

**Proximate cause:** happiness
Wholesome cetasikas

28. Trust
29. Mindfullness
30. Shame
31. Afraid of doing wrong
32. Generosity
33. Friendly
34. Neutrality (balance)
35,36 Calm (antidote for restlessness and worry)
37,38 Lightness (antidote for dullness and sleepiness)
39,40 Malleability (antidote for rigidity)
41,42 Wieldiness (antidote for the rest of the hindrances)
43,44 Profiency (antidote for a lack of trust)
45,46 Truthfullness
47. Right speech
48. Right action
49. Right livelihood
50. Compassion
51. Feeling joy for someone
52. Wisdom

(Saddhā)
(Sati)
(Hiri)
(Ottappa)
(Alobha)
(Adoṣa)
(Tatramajjhatatā)
(Passaddhi)
(Lahuta)
(Mudutā)
(Kammaññaṭā)
(Pāguññaṭā)
(Ujjukatā)
(Sammāvācā)
(Sammākamanta)
(Sammā-ājīva)
(Karuṇā)
(Muditā)
(Pañña)

Expand mental space
(Sobhana-cetasikas)

28-46 always present
An untrained mind in daily life

Where are you going today?

I don't know, asks the horse.
Concentration Method Tamatha (1)

What is it?
The development of concentration *(samādhi)* by listening to a sound.

How is it practiced?
Listen to the sound ‘buddho’ which you make yourself. Buddho refers to the qualities of the Buddha. It is one of the 40 meditation subjects the Abidhamma has given to develop *samadhi*. At the same time you have a chain of beads in your hands which you turn smoothly through your hands. The beads helps you to stay with the proces in the here and now. You keep your eyes closed during meditation.

What to do when your mind strays?
As soon as your mind strays from the sound and you become aware of it, you try to stop the other object mentally and go back to the listening proces. Of course you do that in a friendly manner towards yourself.
Concentration Method Tamatha (2)

The qualities of the Buddha

1. Free from any mental obstruction or impurity;
2. The Perfectly Enlightened One;
3. The Endowed One with Knowledge and Conduct;
4. The Well-gone One or The Well-spoken One;
5. The Knower of the Worlds;
6. The Incomparable Leader of men to be Tamed;
7. The Teacher of Celestial and Human Beings;
8. The Enlightened One;
9. The Blessed One. He has full control over his own mind and body.
Concentration Method Tamatha (3)

Results when reaching concentration (samādhi)

1. The mind becomes crystal clear and experiences (complete) inner silence and peace. It is possible to have no thoughts at all during concentration. Cetasika’s 28 t/m 46 (the beautiful ones) are activated.

2. The hindrances disappear temporarily (anger, desire, doubt, restlessness, worry, sloth and torpor).

3. The mind experiences a complete presence in the here and now.

4. Because the focus is on the qualities of the Buddha, the maximum level of concentration is access concentration (upacāra).
Concentration Method Tamatha (4)

Access versus Absorption concentration

Access concentration (upacāra-samādhi)
The mind is able to stay on the chosen object but does not sink in it;

Absorption concentration (appanā-samādhi)
These are the jhānas, very high levels of concentration. The mind is completely absorbed in the chosen object;

The reason why only access concentration can be attained with this method is because the mind is practising conscious reflection on the different qualities and this endeavor demands an intense application of ‘initial application’ (vitakka).
This prevents concentration to reach the level of absorption.
Demo Concentration Method
If it is possible to see when there is desire or anger (for example) in the brain in a person who has not developed concentration and you compare this in the brain of someone who has developed concentration then according to the Abhidhamma there should be significant difference to notice.

(besides fycical differences like bloodpressure, breathrate, etc)
(besides repetative taskhandling, I think already been adressed in research)
Questions?
3. Wat gebeurt er tijdens een cognitief waarneemproces
14. Ignorance (Moha) 
15. Shamelessness (Aññāsamāna cetasikas) 
16. Recklessness (Aññāsamāna cetasikas) 
17. Restlessness (Aññāsamāna cetasikas) 
18. Desire (Lobha) 
19. Unjust convictions (Dīṭṭhi) 
20. Pride, haughtyness (Māna) 
21. Anger (Dosa) 
22. Envy (Issā) 
23. Stinginess (Macchariya) 
24. Worry (Uddhacca) 
25. Dullness (Thīna) 
26. Sleepyness (Middha) 
27. Doubt (Vicikicchā) 
28. Trust (Saddhā) 
29. Mindfulness (Sati) 
30. Shame (Hiri) 
31. Afraid of doing wrong (Ottappa) 
32. Generosity (Alobha) 
33. Friendlyness (Adosa) 
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41,42 Wieldiness (antidote for the rest of the hindrances) (Kammaññatā) 
43,44 Profiency (antidote for a lack of trust) (Pāguññatā) 
45,46 Truthfullness (antidote for hypocrisy) (Ujjukatā) and fraud (Pāguññatā) 
47. Right speech (Sammāvācā)