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EVOLUTION

MAGHAPUJA SEASON 1991



LIBERATION

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EVOLUTION/LIBERATION is published in order to:

- * maintain contact with friends;
- * print new translations of Ajahn Buddhadasa's work:
 - talks given to Western retreatants,
 - translations from the Pali *suttas*,
 - writings from the early days of Suan Mokkh,
 - poetry, proverbs, and what-have-you;
- * answer questions about Dhamma practice;
- * update information on our books & tapes;
- * inform about activities at Suan Mokkh;
- * combat selfishness for the sake of world peace;
- * quench *dukkha* here & now.

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EDITOR'S REMARKS . . .

This issue is later than we would have hoped, but not depressingly so. Unfortunately, our staff has been beset with some fundamental *dukkha*: recurrent fevers and colds. On top of that, there are more and more things happening at Suan Mokkh, which take up a lot of time and energy. Nonetheless, we find some time for literary pursuits. Thus, the usual smorgasbord of articles awaits the reader.

A note on the selection of articles: The criteria for choosing what goes into *Evolution/Liberation* are the needs of the translator's practice. Whatever the translator is trying to fathom, uproot, or abandon determines what he translates. Also, when requested by other residents of Suan Mokkh or Suan Atammayaráma for information on a particular subject, we try to help.

Our first article comes from the pamphlet "*Nibbána For Everyone.*" There are ways of looking at *nibbána* which bring it much closer to life. Too often, we push it away into some metaphysical no-man's land. The serious practitioner, however, must make *nibbána* live here & now with every breath.

Next, we have a reflection on human rights. Some questions came up at a conference we recently attended; perhaps you can help answer them. Later in this issue is a brief report on that conference.

Then, comes a translation of a talk given in January 1988. At that time a group of students from the University of Puget Sound (Washington, USA) was studying at Suan Mokkh. They were confused by the seeming contradiction between teachings on *anattá* and teachings about rebirth. Following upon three talks given during that month's retreat, Tan Ajahn pointed out that there is no contradiction once you know what Buddhism is teaching: the way to quench *dukkha*.

Many friends have appreciated the "From His Own Lips" selections. In this issue, we have chosen the Buddha's descriptions of his practices previous to the Great Awakening. We hope that these will inspire you to follow in his footsteps and that they will clarify what goes into successful Dhamma practice.

When Tan Ajahn's major work on meditation, *Ānápánasati-Bhāvaná*, was printed, some important chapters were inadvertently left out. Here, we include the first of them, the one dealing with the contemplation of impermanence (lesson thirteen). We will publish the rest of the missing chapters in subsequent issues.

We ran out of space this issue. There is only room for a few pages of *Dawning of Legacies We Would Leave With You*. There's a bit of news, a report on the Third Annual Conference of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, and information about books. Next time we'll include Tan Ajahn Buddhadasa's responses to

questions asked during meditation retreats, which we had to leave out this time.

Lastly, we have included a Glossary in this issue. Rather than explain Pali terms in footnotes, we gather them together at the back of the journal. This is part of a long term project to compile a new handbook of Dhamma terms.

In Pali, plurals are not formed by adding an "s." Nonetheless, we have done so here to make the text sound better to the English ear.

Within the limits of our printer, we have tried to include proper diacritical marks in the Pali terms. Here they are (the way they should look are in*parenthesis): ā (á), ī (í), ū (ú), ñ (ń), ñ, ṇ (ṅ), ṭ (ṭ), ḍ (ḍ), ḷ (ḷ), ṁ (ṁ). Sorry that we can't make them any prettier than this.

Unless otherwise noted, all contributions are from the editor, Santikaro Bhikkhu. For the most part, they are translated from writings and talks of Ajahn Buddhadasa. Newsy items are the obvious exception.

Finally, we must thank the friends who have helped with this issue. The drawings scattered through out are the work of Pierre Whittman. Sean McCarthy, Daniel Kalish, Katherine Kulchyski, Rosalie Tooth, and Sister Dhammadinna have helped with transcribing, editing, typing, and proofreading. Venerable Sukhacitto has helped in other ways. Financing has come from many contributions, including large one's from Ueli Keller (Switzerland) and the Bodhi Dhamma Society (LA).

May all beings be cool and free.

Suan Atammayārāma

*Oops, make that outside parenthesis.

NIBBANA FOR EVERYONE

(A Truth Message from Suan Mokkh)

by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu

When you hear the words "*nibbāna* for everyone," many of you will shake your heads. You'll think that I'm trying to "dye cats for sale."¹ Maybe you don't have any interest in the subject. This only happens because you understand the meaning of such words too narrowly and out of line with the truth.

In the schools children are taught that *nibbāna* is the death of an Arahant.² The ordinary man in the street has been taught that it's a special city empty of pain and chock full of the happiness of fulfilled wishes, supposedly reached after death by those who store up perfections (*parami*) over tens of thousands of births. Modern social activists see it as an obstruction to progress that we shouldn't get involved with or even discuss. Students in general consider it a matter for devout old folks at the temple with nothing of relevance for them. Young men and women think it's bland and unexciting, awful and frightening. All the candidates for the monkhood merely mouth, "May I go forth in order to awaken to *nibbāna*." The old monks say it can't happen anymore in this day and age, the same as with the Arahants who they claim don't exist

¹ "Dyeing cats for sale" is a Thai expression similar to "window dressing": to dress up something shabby and inferior in order to trick the customer. (All notes are added by the translator.)

² Please turn to the Glossary for explanation of unfamiliar terms.

anymore. So finally, *nibbána* has become a secret that no one cares about. They've turned it into something barren and silent, buried away in the scriptures, to be paid occasional lip-service in sermons while no one really knows what it is.

In fact, without this business of *nibbána*, Buddhism would be as good as dead. When nobody is interested in *nibbána*, then nobody is genuinely interested in Buddhism. When nothing about *nibbána* interests us, then we can't get any benefits at all from Buddhism. I feel that it's about time for us to get interested and bring about the highest benefit, as fits the words, "*Nibbána* is the Supreme Thing," namely, the highest goal of living things, which is always involved with our daily life.

Nibbána has nothing in the least to do with death. The word *nibbána* means "cool." Back when it was just an ordinary word which people used in their homes it meant "cool." When it is used as Dhamma language, in a religious context, it still means "cool," but refers to cool from the fires of defilement (*kilesa*), while in the common people's usage it means cool from physical fires.

Throughout the Pali scriptures, the word *nibbána* is never used in the sense of death. When death is discussed, the word *marapa* is used. Otherwise, the word *parinibbána* is used, such as when the Buddha said, "The *parinibbána* will occur three months from now."

Nibbána is one of the *dhátus*, that is, the coolness when the defilements are ended. Two types can be distinguished. In the first, the defilements are exhausted and cooled, but the sensory system, the organs that receive sensory stimuli, aren't yet cool. In the second, this sensory system is also cooled. A white hot charcoal illustrates the difference. When it first goes out, it is still too hot to be handled. We must wait a while longer until it is thoroughly cool and can be touched. Through the explanations of later generations the meaning of this word has changed to

"death." Such changes and lapses are commonplace in this world, so nowadays we Thais use this distorted meaning. I myself was taught this way when I was a child. When I first became a *bhikkhu*, I still understood it this way, and told my friends and students to understand it likewise. Only when I could study the original Pali texts did I discover that *nibbána* was a whole other matter than death. Instead, it's a kind of life that knows no death and is the thing which sustains life preventing death. It itself can never die, although the body must die eventually.

As things are, other Indian religions contemporary with Buddhism used the word "*nibbána*," also. In the Pali texts there's a passage where the leader of another sect (from Southern India, around the Godavari River) sent sixteen students to ask the Lord Buddha about his version of *nibbána*. Their own understanding of *nibbána* may just as well have meant "death." This story is well-known (in Theravada countries) under the name *Soḷasapaphá*, the "Sixteen Questions" at the end of the *Sutta-nipáta*. The point here is that the issue of *nibbána* was the highest concern of the Indian religions contemporary with Buddhism. There must have been at least one group that interpreted it as "death" and spread their teaching in the vicinity of *Suvarnabhumi* ("The Golden Land," the ancient name of Siam) before Buddhism arrived here, leaving it behind as the general understanding of the common folk (similarly to what happened with *attā* (self) or *atman* (soul)). Now we had better return to our examination of *nibbána* as taught by Buddhism.

When Prince Siddhartha first look up the homeless spiritual life, he wandered in search of the *nibbána* which is the total quenching of all *dukkha* (not death). From the famous teachers of India at that time, he learned nothing higher than *nevasaññánásaññáyatana* (the experience of neither perception nor non-perception) a degree of mental tranquility so deep that we can describe it neither as "death" nor as "non-death." He couldn't accept that as the supreme *nibbána*. So he went off to search on his own until he

discovered the *nibbána* which is the coolness at the final end of defilement. He called it, "THE END OF *DUKKHA*," meaning the exhaustion of all the heat produced by defilement. However much the defilements are exhausted, there's that much coolness, until there is perfect coolness due to the defilements being finished completely. In short, ending defilement however much, will be cool that much, or *nibbána* that much. That is, *nibbána* is the coolness which results from the quenching of defilement, whether they quench on their own or someone quenches them. Whenever the defilements are quenched, then there is the thing called "*nibbána*," always with the same meaning -- "coolness."

Next, notice that the defilements are concocted things (*sankhára-dhammas*), they arise and cease. As it says in the Pali,

Yañkiñci samudayadhammañ sabbantañ nirodhadhammañ. (Whatever things are originated, all those will cease.)

Any defilements which have arisen cease when their causes and conditions are finished. Although it may be a temporary quenching, merely a temporary coolness, it still means *nibbána*, even if only temporarily. Thus there's a temporary *nibbána* for those who still have some defilements they can't avoid. Just this is the temporary *nibbána* that sustains the lives of beings who are still hanging onto defilement. Anyone can see that if the defilements exist night and day without any pause or rest, no life can endure it. If it didn't die, it would go crazy and then die in the end. You ought to consider carefully the fact that life can survive only because there are periods when the defilements don't roast it, which, in fact, outnumber the times when the defilements blaze.

These periodic *nibbánas* sustain life for all of us, without exception, not even animals, who have their levels of *nibbána*, too. We are able to survive because this kind of *nibbána* nurtures us, until it becomes the most ordinary habit of life, or of the mind. Whenever

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there is freedom from defilement, then there is the value and meaning of *nibbána*. This must occur often enough for living things to survive. That we have some time to relax both bodily and mentally gives us the freshness and vitality to live:

Why don't we understand and feel thankful for this kind of *nibbána* a little? We're lucky that the instincts can manage by themselves. See, things with minds naturally search for periods that are free from defilement or thirst. If there is unremitting thirst, life must die. Thus, infants know how to suck the breast and mosquitos know how to buzz around sucking blood to sustain their lives until they are slapped to death. Our instincts have this virtue built in: they search for periods of time sufficiently free from defilement or free from thirst to maintain life. Whenever there is freedom and voidness there is always this little *nibbána*, until we know how to make it into the permanent or perfect *nibbána* of the Arahant. It isn't death, but rather is deathlessness, in particular, psychical or spiritual deathlessness. If anyone sees this fact, they'll personally experience that we can survive only through this kind of *nibbána*. We don't survive just because of that rice and food which people are so infatuated about. We will realize that everybody must have this thing called "*nibbána*" and must depend on it as their lives' sustenance. So who can object to us talking about "*nibbána* for everyone."?

In order to better understand the meaning of the word "*nibbána*," we ought to look at it from the perspective of linguistics. A material sense of the word is found in the words "*pajjotasseva nibbánaṃ*." This "*nibbána*" refers to the ordinary quenching of fire. When the rice porridge is still hot, the cook yells out from the kitchen, "wait a moment, let it *nibbána* a bit." When the goldsmith melts down gold and pours it into a mold, he sprinkles water on it to cool it down. The word used in Pali here is *nibbapeyya*, to first make it *nibbána* or cool before working it into some shape or form.

Even the wild animals which are captured from the jungle and made tame like a pussycat, are said to have been "made *nibbána*." Sensual pleasures cool down foolish people in a way appropriate for them. The unwavering concentrations on material forms (*rúpajhánas*) bring a coolness free from the fire of sensuality. Although temporary, they are certain levels of *nibbána*. The "experience of nothingness" (*ákiñcaññáyātana*) and the other *arúpajhánas* bring a coolness free from the fire that arises out of attractive material things. *Nibbána* due to the ending of all defilements brings the final coolness which is the ultimate in all respects.

Certain groups of teachers have come up with the word "*sivamokkhamahánibbána*," which they explain as some kind of town or city. Although no one can make any sense of it, they keep it around as something to bow to when this strange word is exclaimed from the pulpits of your run of the mill temples.

There is also the word *nibbuti*, which means an ethical level of *nibbána*. It refers to the cool heart or cool life that impressed a young woman on seeing Prince Siddhartha. She said, "Whoever's son this gentleman is, his mother and father are *nibbuta* (that is, cool); whoever's husband he is, that woman is *nibbuta* (once again, cool). These have the meaning of *nibbána*, too. Nowadays the monks in Thailand chant the benefits of ethical behavior with "*sílena nibbutim yanti*," *nibbuti* is achieved through *síla* (ethics). This comes after the lesser benefits of *síla*, such as, acquisition of wealth and getting to *sugati* (happy births). The purpose here is for *nibbána* to have a place in ordinary daily life.

That coolness of heart and peace of mind which everyone desires is the meaning of *nibbána*. But people misunderstand it and aim only for sex, which is hot stuff. So they get a deceptive *nibbána*. People have clung to such an interpretation since, or even before,

the Buddha's time, such as can be found among the sixty-two wrong views listed in the Brahmajāla Sutta.

Look for a moment. What is the history and basic meaning of the word "*nibbāna*"? In all cases it points to coolness of heart and mind, according to the higher or lower feelings of each person. The essential meaning, however, is always in the nurturing and sustaining of life. It lessens the time when fires are burning the mind just enough for us to survive, and eventually develops to the highest level which absolutely quenches all fires. The highest degree of realization in Buddhism, according to the Buddha, is the end of lust, the end of hatred, and the end of delusion, which is the final quenching of all fires and the coolest cool which life can be.

Nibbana is not the mind, but is something which the mind can experience, or, as the Buddha put it, is a certain *āyatana* which wisdom can experience. Forms, sounds, odors, flavors, and tactile sensations are material or physical *āyatana*, things the body can experience. *Ākāsānañcāyatana* (the experience of endless space) up to and including *nevasaññānāsaññāyatana* are mental *āyatana* for the mind to experience. Then, *nibbāna* is a spiritual *āyatana* for mindfulness and wisdom to contact or realize. It should be considered something which Nature has provided for human beings at the highest level. We should know it so that *nibbāna* and our lives are not in vain. Everyone of us has mindfulness and wisdom in order to touch *nibbāna*. Don't let it go to waste!

The *nibbāna* element exists naturally so that there will be realization of *nibbāna*, like a precious medicine which ends all *dukkha*. There is the *dukkha* or disease which ordinary medicines cannot cure, namely, the disease of defilement which must be cured by the extinction of defilements, through which this *nibbāna-dhātu* is realized. This highest spiritual illness lies deeply hidden in us and torments us secretly. Anyone who can quench it has come to the pinnacle of being human.

The words "there is no *nibbána*" are more wrong than wrong because the *nibbána* element exists naturally everywhere always, only nobody is interested enough to find it. The Lord Buddha discovered and revealed it to us through his enormous compassion, but we cut the story short thinking that in this era there is no *nibbána* anymore, when we should say that nobody understands or is interested in it. By merely becoming proper followers of the Buddha, *nibbána* will appear. It is already waiting for people to find it.

We cannot create *nibbána* because it is beyond all causes and conditions, but we can create the conditions for realizing *nibbána*, namely, all actions which lead to the abandonment of the defilements. We won't speak as others do by saying "doing good is a condition for *nibbána*."³ The right words are "it is a condition for realizing *nibbána*," which can be done in any age or period. Old folks like the words "Stairway to *Nibbána*" because they think it is a place or city. That's what they have been taught. Still, it is an acceptable enough phrase, meaning simply "condition for the realization of *nibbána*."

There are many synonyms of *nibbána*, dozens of them, for example, the Deathless, Permanence, Peace, Safety, Health, Diseaselessness, Freedom, Emancipation, Shelter, Refuge, Immunity, Island (for those fallen into water), Highest Benefit, Supreme Joy, the Other Shore, that which should be reached eventually, and the End of Concocting. All of these are thoroughly cool, because there aren't any fires to make them hot. Peaceful coolness is their meaning or value, unfortunately it is a value too subtle to interest people who are still overly enveloped in defilements. When brushing aside the defilements for the first time, you will be delighted by *nibbána* more than anything else.

³ Condition (*paccaya*) implies causal necessity, but there is nothing which has such power over *nibbána*.

This is certain, and possible for everyone. May we take the word "cool" as the highest value.

The expression which best conveys the meaning of *nibbána* is "the end of *dukkhá*." Although the Buddha used this term, it's of no interest for those people who don't feel that they have any *dukkha*. They don't feel they have *dukkha*: they want the things they want and there isn't any *dukkha* to quench. And so they don't care about quenching *dukkha* or about the end of *dukkha*. Even a large number of the many foreigners who come to Suan Mokkh have that feeling. But once we tell them it is new life, or the quenching of thirst, or life which is beyond positive and negative, they become extremely interested. This is the difficulty of language, which we must use to get people interested in *nibbána*. For each person, there must be one translation of the word "*nibbána*" especially for that person. This is not a small difficulty. Yet deep down, without being conscious of it or having any intention, everyone wants *nibbána* purely through the power of instinct.

Training *nibbana* in daily life is possible in order to better understand and have greater interest in *nibbána*'s meaning. When seeing a fire go out or something hot cooling down, look for the meaning of *nibbána*. When bathing or drinking ice water, when a breeze blows or rain falls, take notice of the meaning of *nibbána*. When a fever subsides, a swelling goes down, or a headache goes away, recognize the meaning of *nibbána* as being found in those things. When perspiring, sleeping comfortably, or eating one's fill, see the meaning of *nibbána*. When seeing an animal with all its fierceness and danger tamed out, see the meaning of *nibbána*. All of these are lessons to help us understand the nature of *nibbána* in every moment. The mind will regularly incline towards contentment with *nibbána* and this helps the mind to flow more easily along the path of *nibbána*.

Whenever finding coolness in your experience, mark that coolness firmly in your heart, and breathe out

and in. Breathing in is cool, breathing out is cool. In cool, out cool, for a little while. This is an excellent lesson which will help you to be *Nibbánakámo* (Lover of *Nibbána*) more quickly. The instincts will develop in an enlightened (*bodhi*) way more than if you don't practice like this. Natural *nibbána* -- the unconscious quenching of defilement -- will occur more often and easily. This is the best way for the mind to help nature.

In conclusion, *nibbána* is not death. It is the coolness and deathlessness which is full of life. In the Pali scriptures, the word "*nibbána*" is never used regarding death. *Nibbána* is a natural element always ready to make contact with the mind in the sense of being one kind of *áyatana* (sensible thing). If there were no *nibbána*, Buddhism would have no meaning. The genuine kind of *nibbána*, different from the *nibbána* of other sects, was discovered by the Buddha. Natural *nibbána* can happen simply because the defilements arise and end in their nature of being just another kind of concocted nature. Every time the defilements don't appear, *nibbána* manifests to the mind. This kind of *nibbána* nourishes the lives of living things so they survive and don't go crazy. At least, it lets us sleep at night. *Nibbána* isn't any kind of special city anywhere. It is in the mind which is now void of besieging defilements. For the morality of ordinary people at home, it's name is "*nibbuti*." *Nibbána* isn't the mind, but it appears to the mind as a certain *áyatana*. We can experience *nibbána* here and now by breathing in cool and breathing out cool. It is the automatic quenching of heat, of thirst, of *dukkha* in ordinary life, without it having to be conscious. It is the eternal nourishment and sustenance of life.

I hope that you all will begin to know that *nibbána* for everyone isn't just dyeing cats for sale," but is the genuine cat for catching rats -- that is, *dukkha* and anxiety -- according to the mindfulness and wisdom of each person!

translated by Santikaro Bhikkhu

HUMAN RIGHTS: A Buddhist Response

At a meeting of engaged buddhists from around the world in late February, the subject of Human Rights kept coming up. This is no wonder what with all the atrocities going on in our countries. We are practicing Dhamma for the sake of wisdom and compassion, for *nibbāna* the highest peace, yet there is much *dukkha* going around. Even the minority who are materially well off often find themselves less than happy.

Some questions were posed at the meeting: Is the idea of "Human Rights" universal or merely a Western invention? Does the emphasis on individual rights fit with Buddha-Dhamma? Does Buddhism have anything to contribute to the human rights movement?

Some ideas were circulated: Buddha-Dhamma respects the lives of all beings, not just humans, although each species has a special responsibility toward its own kind. The Law of Nature governs all and therefore must be the ground in which "human rights" are grounded. In the universal flow of causes and conditions there is endless inter-relationship and inter-being. The more deeply one experiences this law and its universality, the more one feels friendliness toward all other beings. That friendliness cannot remain solitary, it must reach out when there is cause and need. This "kind-ness" is natural, it arises out of seeing natural law in action. Out of this friendliness, kindness, and compassion one feels a responsibility towards others, for none of us can live alone, regardless of what ego might say to the contrary. Perhaps this sense of responsibility or duty is the Buddhist response to human rights. One friend suggested the term "Human Dhamma," since Dhamma means Duty.¹

Somehow, what happens to others happens to me, and what happens to me happens also to others. Life in

¹ Duty here is not something imposed from outside. It is to be known in our own hearts through our understanding of *dukkha* and its quenching.

this world is just this way (*tathatá*) and we must learn to live accordingly. If we are bound together by Dhamma (the Truth of Nature), then our Dhamma (Duty) must include others. When others are being tortured, raped, and murdered, what are we to do? When Tamil women in Sri Lanka are not paid the wages they have earned, what can we do? When forests are cut merely to satisfy greed, what can we do? When oil companies don't clean up their messes, what can we do? When presidents lie to us, what can we do? How can we find Dhamma in these things?

We must begin to protect each other. The trees, grasses, herbs, and other plants have sustained us for millenia. The wonderful menagerie of animals have taught, fed, and accompanied us since our species first emerged. What have we given back? Even to each other, what have we really done for the well-being of humanity? It is time to protect what is left.

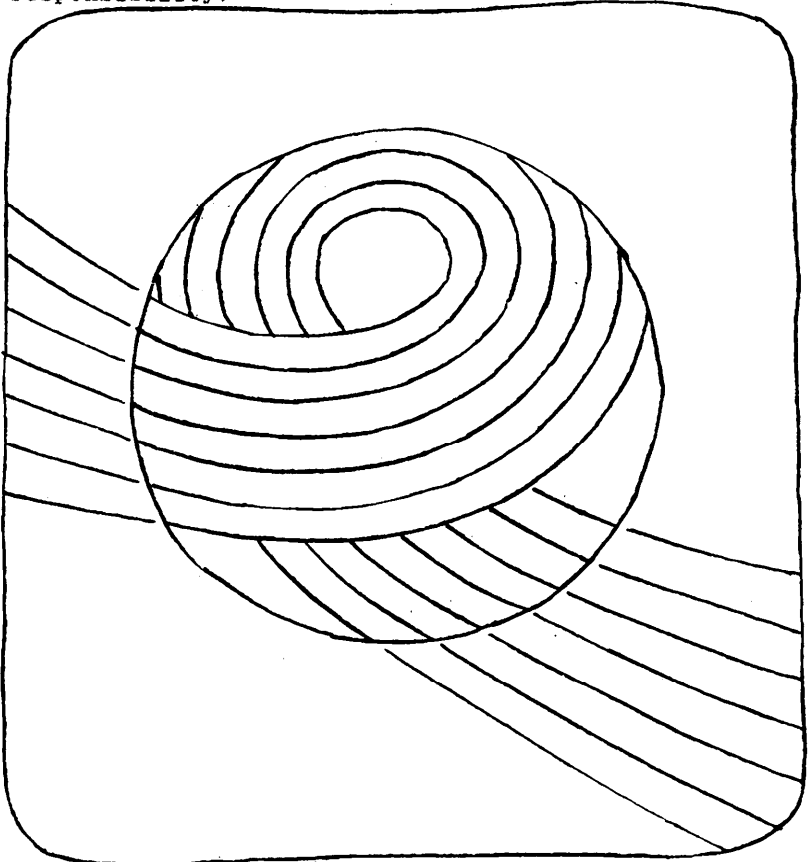
Physically, economically, politically, and, above all, spiritually, we must stand up for all beings. Can I really live when so many friends are dying a tortured unnatural death? Can I laugh while they cry? Can I eat while they starve? Can I breathe while they suffocate? I cannot. I must stand up for all if I am to survive. Until I disappears into We and the We is found to be Void.

Buddha-Dhamma on the highest level is practiced in the depths of the heart where wisdom slowly roots out ignorance. Yet every fruit has its skin, a branch from which it hangs, an earth that roots the tree, a sky that showers rain, and a sun that powers all life. The fruit of Buddha-Dhamma, then, must extend to the branches, forests, rivers, earth, sky, and sun, to the families, tribes, communities, and nations, to all of them, to all beings. Otherwise the fruit will rot.

All beings have a right to live, to breathe, to grow, to learn, to be liberated. Thus all beings have the duty to help each other live, breathe, grow, learn, and get liberated. We must work together. In

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fact, we have always been working together, but mostly through the folly of our egos. We are coming close to our last chance to get it right. Will we accept the responsibility?



This is merely a reflection by one person who longs for peace in this world. If you have any suggestions concerning how to do it, please write.)

ANATTĀ & REBIRTH⁴

by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu

Today, we will speak about *anattā* and rebirth. We'll discuss *anattā* first, and then discuss rebirth. If we understand *anattā* properly, it will be easy to understand rebirth correctly. [1]

The feeling that one is a self occurs naturally and instinctually. Hence, people say "self." Then they teach that there's a higher self, one more special or more profound. Through this process of teaching and educating, the belief in self develops into the highest self, an eternal soul. This kind of belief and teaching has been quite common. When the Buddha appeared, however, he taught the opposite, that those things are *anattā*, not-self. [2]

The primitives who long ago lived in forests and caves believed there was *attā*. They also believed in spirits, powers, and ghosts, which were taken to be selves; also. This common belief occurs easily in the human mind. Thus, there happened the teaching of *attā*, then there appeared the ceremonies, rituals, and rites in relation to all those spirits, angels, demons, and things. As civilization developed further, the beliefs about self and spirits also developed, as do the corresponding ceremonies and rituals. The highest, most fully developed version of such beliefs occurred in India during the era of the Upanishads, which taught *attā* as it is believed today: that there is a self --

⁴ Given to a group of students from Puget Sound University. The explanations of rebirth that they had heard seemed to contradict the principle of *anattā*. They asked Tan Ajahn to clarify the seeming contradiction.

a fundamental basis for reality -- in living things which is successively reincarnated, which is slowly purified through this long succession of births until it finishes in eternity. This is the most highly developed theory of the primitive belief in self. This is how the highest *attá* must be taught. [3]

This teaching of self and soul spread from India into other cultures, as far as it could go. Most cultures were receptive to this idea even though their teachings weren't previously connected to India. So they welcomed it. Other cultures accepted this belief and it spread around the world. Even in Thailand, the Upanishadic teaching on the existence of self was taught to the fullest extent before Buddhism arrived. [4]

The teaching of the existence of *attá* progressed to its highest form in India during the Upanishad era. The Vedanta, in particular, taught the highest self. When there is the highest *attá*, the eternal self, it is called "*sammá*." This is a different meaning of *sammá* than we're accustomed to in Buddhism. It has the same meaning as "*paramatman*" (Supreme Self). This then, in India at that time, was considered the highest, newest, most excellent teaching. Such was the situation as the Buddha was about to appear. [5]

When the Buddha appeared, he thought in a new way. He saw that this teaching of *attá* and self was not true. First, the thing they were talking about did not actually exist. Second, the belief in *attá*, the teaching that *attá* exists, is the cause of *dukkha*. He pointed out that all *dukkha* is based on what we call the "self." The Buddha taught *anattá* for these two reasons: *attá* is wrong and it is the cause of *dukkha*. Thus, there appeared the teaching of *anattá*. [6]

We also should know that non-Buddhist groups had already begun to speak of *anattá* to some extent, but theirs was *anattá* in minor things, only in little things. They still held to a "true self" and distinguished some things as *anattá*, but only minor things,

such as, the body, wealth, possessions, food, and different stimulants & delusions. They also taught some *anattá*, but held to a "self" as existing in people. This self would change, be reborn, get better and better, until it reached the ultimate as "eternal *attá*." [7]

Now, we will consider, in particular, why the feeling that there is an *attá* occurs. Please give special attention to this matter. It happens because the instincts⁵ feel or sense that there is a self in life. This happens by itself and is a survival mechanism that we can find in all organisms. But please understand that instinctual knowledge is not correct. It still lacks *viññá* (correct knowledge); *avijñá* (ignorance) remains.⁶ Thus, experiences that follow the instincts exclusively belong to *avijñá*. They cause us to feel that there is a self, which is the most important awareness in living. We can see that it is necessary for survival. Life bases itself on the aim which wants to be a self. Instincts are the cause of feeling that there's a self, although it isn't correct. [8]

Now, on the second level of the development of *attá*, *avijñá* increases and the sense of self builds. For example, the infant is born at first with a basic feeling of self -- a natural, instinctual feeling. But then the infant is totally surrounded by all kinds of things which are good and bad, agreeable and disagreeable, positive and negative. As there is increasing experience of pleasure and pain, the instinctual sense of self grows stronger and develops preferences. Since the child does not have enough understanding to know

⁵ Tan Ajahn's use of terms such as this is not necessarily the same as their use in Western biology and psychology.

⁶ *Avijñá* is the opposite of *viññá*, which is correct knowledge of the things and facts we need to know (in order to survive spiritually), while *avijñá* is the lack of such right knowledge or is wrong knowledge, knowledge in conflict with the way things are.

better, *avijjá* increases and the feeling of self is confirmed and consolidated. This self is strengthened by ignorance. This is the second matter. [9]

On the third level in this development of self, of *attá*, there is the cultural teaching, the knowledge passed along by parents and teachers, that there is *attá*, that we have selves. This is the cultural conditioning every child increasingly receives from parents, teachers, and other cultural elements. This happens even in religious teachings. When the religion holds there is an *attá*, the existence of *attá* is taught more and more. From all this instruction, the child strengthens the belief in self until it becomes a deep conviction. So in the third stage, through all the cultural conditioning of parents, teachers, and religions, the belief in self puts down deep, strong roots. [10]

Carefully, notice that there are three main causes or conditions for this belief in *attá*. The first is the instinctual feeling, just that basic sense of a self. Then, once born, we are surrounded by environmental things and the foolishness about *attá* increases to become *avijjá*. This is encouraged through all the positive and negative factors with which the child is confronted. Next, on the third level we are taught to believe in it all. Self is further established, solidified, and deepened through our being taught to believe in it. In all homes, all families, all religions; in the schools, the temples, the synagogues, and the churches everywhere; this belief in self and soul is very firmly established and driven into the child's mind. Thus, this ignorant understanding grows to its fullest extreme. [11]

The feeling that there is self is a firm foundation in everyone. Further, every language has "self" buried within it. All languages are full of words for self, soul, and ego. Firmly fixed in our words and experiences, the self is very hard to give up. Although Buddhism teaches *anattá*, it must do so with ordinary *attá* words. Sometimes the word *attá* is borrowed for

use in Buddhism. Although we use the word *attá* in Buddhism, it only refers to the *attá* which is not *attá*, that is, *attá* which is *anattá*. Even in Buddhism we must talk about *attá* a lot. [12]

Buddhists out of necessity must use the word "*attá*," but with another meaning: the *attá* which is not-self, the self which is *anattá*. For instance, "self is the refuge of self; *attá* is the refuge of *attá*," which means that the *attá* which is not *attá* must help itself to realize the truth of not-*attá*; then problems end and *dukkha* quenches. Thus, in Buddhism the word *attá* is used, but with a new meaning: the self which is not-self, the *attá* which is *anattá*. Please, understand carefully this word "*attá*" which is "not-*attá*." [13]

There is also a third type of viewpoint, one which denies the existence of anything at all. The *attá* which is *attá* is not there. The *attá* which is *anattá* is not there. There is nothing having to do with *attá* and *anattá*. People who think this way are called "nihilists." They hold that nothing exists at all. [14]

So in this matter, we can distinguish three viewpoints. You ought to know all three in order to understand easily. The first holds that there is an *attá* which is really a self in the fullest meaning of the word. The second says there is an *attá* which is *anattá*, which can't be taken as the first kind of self, but which does exist. This is the "*attá* which is in the "not-*attá*" group. The third has nothing, says there is nothing at all. Please consider this matter until seeing clearly the three teachings on this subject. One group teaches existence, that *attá* exists, *attá* according to that meaning, one-hundred percent. Another group -- Buddhism -- teaches that there is *attá* which is not an *attá*, which is *anattá*. The third group teaches there isn't anything at all, it teaches non-existence. [15]

If students would like to remember the specific technical terms, there are three. The first term is

"attá": there is attá which is attá. The second term is anattá: there is attá which is not-self, which is anattá. The third term is nirattá: without any kind of attá at all, nothingness. One extreme of attá is that it exists fully. The other extreme is no attá at all. Anattá, the self which is not self, is neither extreme, and is correct. There are three words: attá, anattá, and nirattá. They're totally different. Understand the meaning of these three words, then you'll understand everything. [16]

The first group is the positive extreme. They believe there is attá in the full meaning of attá. This is called sassatadiṭṭhi, the belief in full, lasting existence or being. The second sort is the middle. There is the thing which you call "attá" but it isn't really attá, it's anattá. This is the middle or correct view. It's called sammádiṭṭhi. Then the negative extreme holds that there is no existence of any kind. There's no attá in any sense. This is called natthikadiṭṭhi. Sassatadiṭṭhi is full, unchanging existence; natthikadiṭṭhi isn't anything at all. In the middle is correct Buddhism. There exists the thing which you all call "attá." Something is there to be called "attá" or "anattá." That is, there is everything, but we don't call it or its constituent parts "attá." They are anattá. Right here is sammádiṭṭhi. This extreme is sassatika (eternalism), which is wrong. That extreme is natthitá (nihilism), which is wrong. In the middle are only the things which shouldn't be called attá, which are anattá. This is the point we must especially study and learn. [17]

Here, I'd like to go ahead to tell you that this nothingness or nihilism (natthikadiṭṭhi) is not the meaning we're after. Don't confuse the nihilistic teaching with the Buddha's teaching of suññatá (voidness). The correct word, voidness, still has existence, but nothing existing as a self. Everything is void of self. There is a big difference between nothingness and suññatá, which holds that things exist void of selfhood. To mix up and confuse natthikadiṭṭhi with suññatá is to misunderstand Buddhism even more.

Please distinguish the one group of views as *natthika-diṭṭhi* and keep it separate. [18]

To remember easily: nothingness, no thing at all, is called "*natthikadiṭṭhi*"; existence or being without *attá* is called "*suññatá*." With *natthikadiṭṭhi* there is nothing. *Suññatá* exists but is void of self. *Natthika-diṭṭhi* and *suññatá* are not the same thing, so don't confuse them. You must understand this properly. [19] *Anattá*, *suññatá*, and *tathatá* are, they exist, but their beings are not-self. [20]

Now, we come to the question of what is *anattá*. What are the things which are *anattá*? The first one to mention is that body-mind is *anattá*. The body is a physical thing that performs its various bodily functions. It can do all the physical functions needed for life, without requiring a self. This mind can do all the duties of mind without requiring an *attá*, self, soul, or *atman*. If we put a self or soul in the body, thinking that there is some *attá*, that is a misunderstanding. Actually it's just the body that functions in all the appropriate ways of the body. It is sensitive to things in line with the functions of a body which has a nervous system. The thing we call "mind" or "heart" can do all of the duties natural for a "mind" or "heart." The body and mind function perfectly well by themselves and there is no need for a third thing -- this thing people call "self" -- to take possession of or control the mind. The heart exists in its own way. Its nature is to feel. It can do its duties within itself, according to its own conditions and causes. Hence the body and mind are not selves, they are *anattá*. [21]

We may divide life in two -- body and mind -- each one is *anattá*. If we divide life into five -- the five *khandhas* (aggregates) -- each one of them is *anattá*. *Rūpa*, this body which we've discussed is *anattá*. Then, the mind or heart can be divided into four. There is *vedaná* (feeling) which is *anattá*. It itself feels, according to the meaning of *vedaná*, with the value of

vedaná. *Saññá* (recognition, perception) perceives in itself, by itself. That which is *sankhára* can think, can conceive within itself. *Viññápa* (consciousness) cognizes by itself. These four are purely mental matters, yet they are still *anattá*. [22]

Now we come to the word "life." You can take two aspects -- body and mind -- as life. You can take all five aspects -- the five *khandhas* -- as life. Or, you can name it all in one short word -- "life." Still, life is *anattá*, just as body and mind are *anattá*, and the five *khandhas* are *anattá*. Thus, please look carefully in order to know the real thing called "life." It's *anattá*. [23]

Now we will observe the important thing called "*citta*," "mind," or whatever you wish in other languages. Regarding this *citta*, we can observe that the significance of everything comes down to the mind. Its meaning and value is in the mind. All things have to be known through the mind. Because of the centrality of mind, of consciousness, there are those who say this mind is self. Since it can do things and feel things, and because of its many other functions, *citta* is taken to be *attá*. But in Buddhism, "*attá*" is not-*attá*. The mind is capable of all this awareness, of all these functions, for that is just the way the mind is. Although it can do so many different things, all those functions are just like that, they're just what they are. There is no self to be found in any of it, so this thing called "mind" is also *anattá*. [24]

In short, you may regard everything that we have mentioned, whether mental or physical, whichever *khandha* they may be, as having within them a virtue, or quality, that allows them to do whatever it is that they do. They all have a mechanism within themselves. Whether material, physical, mental, or what have you, on whatever level, they have mechanisms within themselves. They can perform their function within themselves, so they don't need an *attá* to get involved. Allow us to give a tangible example of how material things can feel within themselves through their own

nervous systems. A certain kind of grass⁷ which you have probably seen (it's all around here), opens with its leaflets fully spread like open fingers. Touch it with your hand and the leaflets close up, folding together like the pages of a book. This grass can close up on itself. Although it's thoroughly material, it still has a mechanism which can feel or experience. It closes up just as if it can feel. Those who believe in *attá*, believe that there's an *attá* or *atman* in this grass. Buddhism, however, holds that there's no *attá* in it, that it's not-*attá*. It merely has a virtue in itself that it can do such a thing. In this bodily system there's a nervous system through which it can do things just as if it were a self, soul, or whatever. So it is on every level, from the lowest material life having body, mind, and feelings, to the highest, nothing needs to be *attá*. If *attá*'s existence is believed in -- any kind of *attá* in anything -- that isn't Buddhism. It becomes animism instantly. [26]

Now we come to some further important questions. First, if there is no self, what is this thing we call a "person"? What are we? We can say that this is a collection of ingredients, of various parts compounded together. We can talk about mind and body if we wish, the two primary ingredients. We can also talk about the five *khandhas*: body, feeling, perception, thought, and consciousness. We can talk in terms of the elements (*dhátus*), both physical and non-physical. What we call "a person" is these ingredients and components which have been brought together. Still, they are *anattá*. If each of those parts, *khandhas*, and elements are not self, then their combination is also not self. Simply having a collection of things holding together for a little while does not mean that one has a self. [27]

The second question is: If there is no self, then who acts? Who produces all these physical, verbal, and

⁷ In Thai, *yaa maiyarap*.

mental *kammas* (actions) and receives the results of those actions (*kamma-vipáka*)? Who experiences happiness and *dukkha*? The "who" is "nobody." There isn't a need for anybody. In fact, we need not use the word "who" at all. The mind can feel, be aware, and think. It has its needs and can make the body act or the mouth speak accordingly. The mind thinks and as a result of that thinking there is an action: a physical, verbal, or mental action (*kamma*). The mind that thinks is not self, the body that acts is not self, the mouth that speaks is not self, so that action is not self. The action really happens, but it is not self. Then there's a reaction that happens as *kamma-vipáka*. If it affects anything, just that thing is the receiver of the fruit of *kamma*. But really, if we speak correctly and straight-forwardly, there is nobody who receives the result of *kamma*. Although a reaction occurs, it happens to the next thing. It is a process of one thing or event conditioning the next.

If we look carefully, we see that there is one mind that thinks, that has the intention behind the action, but the reaction is experienced by a different mind. From one moment to the next there are completely different minds. It is never the same mind, let alone a self or a "who." ("Who" implies self.) This *citta* is the maker of the *kamma*; the fruit of *kamma* happens to that (next) *citta*. It isn't the same *citta* anymore. Still, without any *attá*, the *citta* can make *kamma*, it can act. And the *citta* which isn't self can experience the fruit of *kamma*. Whether happiness or *dukkha* is experienced, there is just mind experiencing it. One doesn't need an *attá*, there is only experience. There is only foolishness or intelligence. Take it as happy, it's happiness (*sukha*); take it as *dukkha*, it's *dukkha*. The mind alone feels *sukha* and *dukkha*, it doesn't need an *attá*. Thus we say that "nobody" makes *kamma*. If we speak in line with Buddhist principles, "nobody makes *kamma*." Although there is the acting of *kamma*, there is nobody who makes it, or receives its fruit, or is the happy one or the miserable one. There's merely *citta* together with body; that's all that's needed for experience. And all of it is not-self. [28]

Now we come to the third question which they will ask: When there is no attá, then what is reborn? What or who is reborn? Forgive us for being forced to use crude language, but this question is absurd and crazy.⁸ In Buddhism, there is no point in asking such a thing. There is no place for it in Buddhism at all. If you ask what will be reborn next, that's the craziest, most insane question. If right here, right now, there is no soul, person, self, or attá, how could there be some "who" or "someone" that goes and gets reborn? So there is no way one can ask "who will be reborn?" Therefore, the rebirth of the same person does not occur. But the birth of different things is happening all the time. It happens often and continuously, but there is no rebirth. There is no such thing, in reality, as rebirth or reincarnation. That there is one person, one "I" or "you," getting reborn is what reincarnation is all about. If all is anattá, there is nothing to get reborn. There is birth, birth, birth, of course. This is obvious. There is birth happening all the time, but it is never the same person being born a second time. Every birth is new. So there is birth, endlessly, constantly, but we will not call it "re-birth" or "re-incarnation." [29]

While we have the chance, let's spill all the beans -- there isn't much time left -- there's no "person" or "being" (*satva*), either. What we call a person is merely a momentary grouping that does not last. It does not have any independent reality and is merely a stream or process of causes and effects, which is called the "dependent origination of 'no person.'" Buddhism teaches dependent origination -- this process of causes and effects, of things continuously arising out of causes, the causes being dependent on previous causes, the whole flow unfolding on and on. Thus, Buddhism is the teaching of "no man," the teaching of "no person." There's no person to live or to die or to be reborn. Now, there's no person. It's merely the

⁸ This is the topic which Tan Ajahn was asked to explain.

grouping of body and mind, or of the five *khandhas*, or whatever you want to call it. But this grouping which temporarily appears according to causes and conditions is not a person. Would you please understand well that it is no person who makes *kammas*, who receives fruits of *kammas*, who is happy, who is *dukkha*, who dies, who gets reborn. These lives don't exist like that. There is no birth or incarnation of the same person. [30]

Consider the meaning of the word "birth." Birth is an important word which we hardly understand at all. There are three kinds of birth. The first is the kind of birth that everybody knows about -- physical birth. The body is born out of the womb, and then grows older and older, and then dies and is put in a coffin. That is physical birth, it leads to physical death. The second kind of birth is mental. It happens within the mind following the stream of dependent origination. Whenever there is the thought "I am," "I do," "I act," "I have," "I own," "I want," "I get," "I exist," the birth of any one of these "I" thoughts is one birth. This is the "birth" of *upádána* along the stream of *pañicca-samuppáda*, which is the birth of the ego. Such mental or spiritual birth is another kind of birth. The third kind of birth is very difficult for most people to understand. It is when one of the *áyatana* (sense bases) performs its respective function. Performing some function means "that thing is born." You might not understand that when the eye performs the function of seeing, then the eye is born. When the eye stops functioning, then we say it ceases. When the ear performs its function, the ear is born; when it stops, the ear ceases. It is the same with the nose, tongue, and so forth. There is the arising and ceasing, arising and ceasing, of the *áyatanika-dhammas*. Whenever something does its function, it is born, and when it is no longer in action, then it ceases, it ends. Each time the eye functions and ceases then functions again, it is a different eye. Can you see how the physical eye itself from one function to the next is not the same eye? How it is never the same ear, never the same nervous system? All these things are happening in this way but each time there is a birth, a

different thing is born. There are only these functions, these processes, these activities happening over and over again. However, there is no same thing holding it all together that we could call a self. There are these three kinds of birth, nonetheless, they are never the birth of the same person or of the same thing. So there is no rebirth. Please get to know these three kinds of birth: the physical birth, the mental birth through attachment, and lastly, the third kind of birth happening whenever there is a sensory function. [31]

One group of people believes that there is self, there is *atman*, there is a soul which is born as this person. Once the body dies, this thing doesn't die. It goes to a new birth. Most people believe this, they take it as the basis of their beliefs. The Upanishad texts believed this. In Buddhism, however, there isn't such a thing. Buddhism does not believe there is a self or soul which is born and then dies. Thus, the rebirth of this or that person doesn't occur, because that person doesn't exist here in the first place. This is called "physical rebirth." It is something that should not be spoken of as "rebirth." The Lord Buddha forbade his disciples to believe that consciousness or a spirit (*viññāpa*) goes to be born:

"*Paveritam viññāpaṃ saṃsāritaṃ cavitaṃ.*
Don't say this consciousness is born."⁹

Sadly there are passages even in the *Tipiṭika* itself which say "this person was born" in such and such a place. When there are these contradictions, you must find out which understanding is correct. As to which one is correct, look for yourself. According to the main principles there is no *attá* or *atman*. So one can't really speak of physical birth as "rebirth." Mental birth can't be spoken of as "rebirth," because it's the birth of a different *citta*. The material or

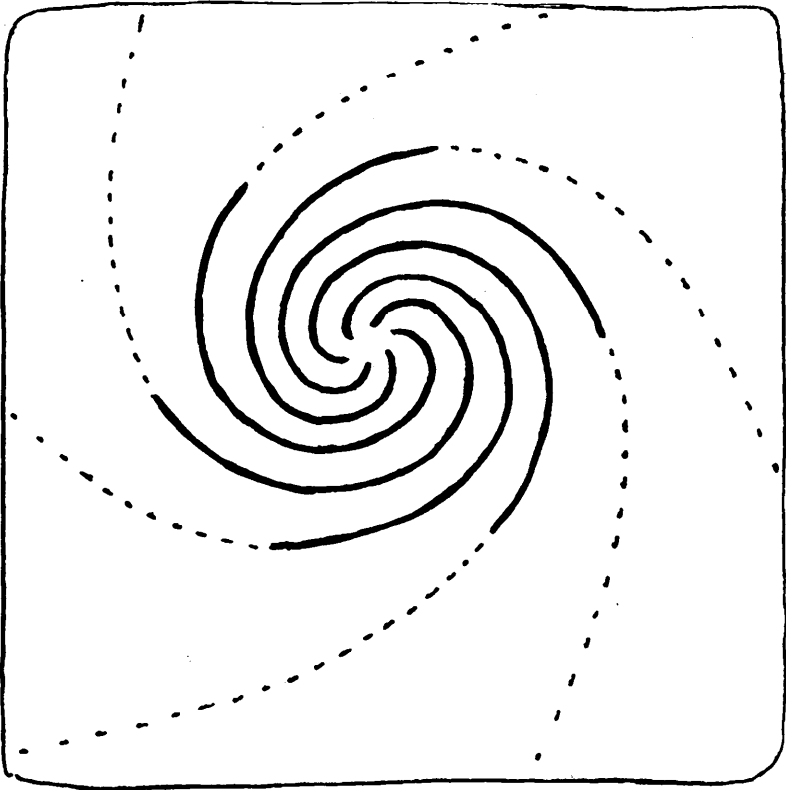
⁹ Mahátaphásaṅkhaya Sutta, Mūlapappasaka, Majjhima-Nikáya.

functional birth of the *áyatana* is not the same thing, either. For example, the eye that sees a form this moment and the eye that sees a form another moment is not the same eye. Hence, we do not speak of repeated births because it's never the same eye. There's no essence or self to any of these three eyes. There's no "new" and no "repeat," there's only the *hetu-paccaya* (causes and conditions) at some time and there is birth. Only when there are the *hetu-paccaya*, is there birth. A hundred births, a thousand births, ten thousand, a million, but never of the same person. Never of the same *attá* and never of the same thing. This is the non-existence of rebirth. [32]

Now we come to the most important matter. The Buddha said that, "I teach only one thing: *dukkha* and the quenching of *dukkha*." That is what all the teachings are about, *dukkha* and the quenching of *dukkha*. He didn't talk about other things. Whether or not there is rebirth is not the fundamental question, because once one is born here and now, there is *dukkha* like this and it must be quenched like this. Even if you are born again, *dukkha* is like this and must be quenched in the same way. Why bother talking about birth or no birth? Talk only about how *dukkha* arises and how *dukkha* is quenched. Just this is already enough. For this reason the Buddha taught *anattá*. Once *anattá* is fully realized, there is no *dukkha*. When there is no *attá*, *dukkha* isn't born, anymore. Therefore, he taught the quenching of *dukkha*, that is, he taught this matter of not-self. The teaching of *anattá* is essential for the ending of *dukkha*. Arguments and discussions about whether there is rebirth or not are a waste of time. Whether "it" will be born or not, there is still this business of quenching *dukkha* like this. It's better to speak about this quenching of *dukkha* instead. This quenching of *dukkha* is the fact that there is no *attá*, is the understanding that everything is *anattá*. (33)

We can conclude by saying that if you understand *anattá* correctly and truly, then you will discover for yourself that there is no rebirth and no reincarnation. So the matter is finished.

May we end today's lecture. Time is up and it's time to eat. I must take some nursing food, according to doctor's orders. (34)



THE BUDDHA'S LIFE FROM HIS OWN LIPS¹

EXPERIENCES & PRACTICES LEADING UP TO THE GREAT AWAKENING

1. PAMPERED & INDULGED²

Bhikkhus, we are a refined, a very refined, a most refined person, as we will explain. Bhikkhus, they dug three ponds in our father's palace. In one pond they planted blue lotuses, in another they planted royal lotuses, and in the third they planted white lotuses solely for our benefit.

Bhikkhus, not only did the sandalwood powder which we wore come from Kásí, even our turbans, shirts, robes, and blankets came exclusively from Kásí.³ Bhikkhus, they protected us day and night with the umbrella of state hoping that no cold, heat, dust, weed, or dew would touch us.

Bhikkhus, there were three palaces for us: one for winter, one for summer, and one for the rains. We stayed within the rainy season palace for all four months of that season without once leaving that palace. None but female musicians entertained us.

¹ This compilation of passages translated from the Pali is the first in the "From His Own Lips Series." It was used for the education of *bhikkhus* and has been printed many times. In this issue of *Evolution/Liberation* we begin to offer some translations from it. References are to the Pali Text Society editions (when we could track them down); the Thai script Siam Rath edition of the Pali *Tipiṭaka* (volume/page/article); and *The Buddha's Life From His Own Lips* (available in Thai only).

² *Aṅguttara-Nikáya*, Tika-Nipáta Paṭhama-Pappasaka, Devaduta-Vagga, Navama-Sutta, 20/183/478; *Life*, p. 40.

³ The city then most famous for its fine goods. (English translator)

Bhikkhus, in our father's palace they abundantly gave steamed wheat mixed with meat to the servants and workers, just as in other places they gave broken rice and vinegar to the servants and workers.⁴

Bhikkhus, while our wishes were fulfilled to this degree and nursed to this extent, still the thought occurred to us that "the thick ones who neither hear nor listen, while they themselves will get old and cannot escape old age, when seeing someone else who is old, they feel weariness and revulsion without considering themselves at all. We too are the same, we must grow old and cannot escape old age. But when we must grow old and cannot escape it, to forget ourself and be wearied and repelled at the sight of old people is not befitting us." Bhikkhus, when we reflected in this way, intoxication with our youth disappeared totally.

Bhikkhus, "the thick ones who neither hear nor listen, while they themselves will fall ill and cannot escape disease, when seeing someone else who is sick, they feel weariness and revulsion without considering themselves at all. We too are the same, we must fall ill and cannot escape disease. But when we must fall ill and cannot escape it, to forget ourself and be wearied and repelled at the sight of sick people is not befitting us." Bhikkhus, when we reflected in this way, intoxication with our health disappeared totally.

Bhikkhus, "the thick ones who neither hear nor listen, while they themselves will die and cannot escape death, when seeing someone else die, they feel weariness and revulsion without considering themselves at all. We too are the same, we must die and cannot escape death. But when we must die and cannot escape it, to forget ourself and be wearied and repelled at the sight of someone dying is not befitting us." Bhikkhus, when we reflected in this way, intoxication with our life disappeared totally.

⁴ This is a Pali convention for pointing out wealth regarding food.

2. SENSUAL PLEASURE & ITS FADING⁵

Mágaṅḍiya, while we were still a householder and keeping a home, we were fully gratified with the five sexual qualities (*kāmaguṇa*⁶). They entertained us with forms seen by the eye, with sounds heard by the ear, with fragrances smelled by the nose, with flavors tasted by the tongue, and with touches felt by the body, all of which were agreeable, desirable, delightful, lovely, sensuous, and enticing.

Mágaṅḍiya, we had three palaces: one for winter, one for summer, and one for the rains. We stayed within the rainy season palace for all four months of that season without once leaving that palace. None but female musicians entertained us. As time passed, we came to see as they truly are *kāma*'s origin, *kāma*'s instability, *kāma*'s deliciousness, *kāma*'s lowly harm, and the skillful means for getting free of *kāma* (sex and sensuality). Consequently, one should abandon desire for *kāma* and lessen anxiety due to *kāma*, then without thirst for *kāma* live with a mind inwardly peaceful. We saw that other beings were not yet without passion for *kāma*, were devoured by desire for *kāma*, were burned by anxiety over *kāma*, yet continued to indulge in *kāma*. We did not long after and did not

⁵ M.i.504; Mágaṅḍiya-Sutta (#75), Paribbājaka-Vagga, Majjhima-Pañhasāka, Majjhima-Nikāya, 13/274/281; *Life*, p. 42. Once, the Buddha was staying in the district of Kammāsadhama among the Kuru people, in the fire-worshipping room of the Brahmin Bhāradavarāja Gotara. The wanderer Mágaṅḍiya, a friend of the Brahmin Bhāradavarāja, came to visit and eventually waited upon the Lord. When the Lord, in order to arouse interest in the wanderer, said he had destroyed all delight in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, and touches, he told of this episode in his life to show that he had once experienced much sensual pleasure and then grew weary of that sensuality.

⁶ In Pali, plurals are not formed by adding an "s"; nonetheless, we have done so here to make the text sound better to the English ear.

delight at all in experiencing *kāma*. For what reason was that? Mostly, because we humans, even when we are delighted with a delight free of *kāma* and free of unwholesomeness,⁷ would still be considered lowly beings. So we did not envy those beings or indulge in *kāma* ever again.

Magañḍiya, a wealthy householder or householder's son, having plenty of wealth and replete with the five *kāmaguṇas*, has others entertain him with forms, sounds, odors, flavors, and touches which were agreeable, desirable, delightful, lovely, sensuous, and enticing. If he should behave well in body, speech, and mind before the dissolution of the body, he ought to enter the happy world of Paradise and be friends with the Devas in Tāvatiṃsa Heaven. That (new) Deva then lives surrounded by heavenly maidens in *Nandavāna* (Indra's Pleasure Garden) fully gratified and replete with sensuality, the maidens entertaining him with the five divine *kāmaguṇas* in that Tāvatiṃsa Heaven. If that Deva sees a householder or householder's son (in the human realm) fully gratified and replete with sensuality, being entertained with the five *kāmaguṇas*; Magañḍiya, what do you think, would that Deva long for the householder or householder's son's *kāmaguṇa*, or come back for the *kāma* of humans?

"Venerable Gotama, that could not be, for the divine *kāma* is more lovely and refined than the *kāma* of humans."

3. FALLEN FOR KĀMA AND FREED FROM KĀMA⁹

Mahanāma, before the awakening, while we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, although able to recall that "all *kāma* has little delightful flavor

⁷ For instance, delight in the *rūpajhānas*, which is considered to be *bhavataṭṭhā* (desire for existence).

⁸ M.i.92; Cūḷadukkhakkhandha-Sutta (#14), Sihanāda-Vagga, Mūḷa-Paṇṇasāka, Majjhima-Nikāya, 12/180/211; *Life*, p. 44. Spoken to King Mahanāma at Nigoradhārāma in Kapilavatthu.

and much *dukkha*, is very narrow, and has a terrible danger with it," we still could not attain the *sukha* coming from *pīti*, or other *dharmas* more peaceful than that *pīti* and *sukha*. We tasted only *kāma* and unwholesome *dharmas*, so we could not stop falling back into *kāma* and did not understand *kāma* clearly.

Mahánāma, whenever it happened that we saw this fact well through right wisdom according to reality that "all *kāma* has little delightful flavor and much *dukkha*, is very narrow, and has a terrible danger with it," then, we never again fell back into " *kāma* and clearly understood all *kāma*."

4. THE FEELING THAT MADE HIM LEAVE HOME⁹

Bhikkhus, in this world before the awakening, while we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, we ourself were naturally subject to birth, yet blindly sought that which is subject to birth; were naturally subject to ageing, yet blindly sought that which is subject to ageing; were naturally subject to illness, yet blindly sought that which is subject to illness; were naturally subject to death, yet blindly sought that which is subject to death; were naturally subject to sorrow, yet blindly sought that which is subject to sorrow; were naturally subject to all-round defilement, yet blindly sought that which is subject to all-round defilement.

Bhikkhus, and what is it that is naturally subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement?

Bhikkhus, children and wives are naturally subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-

⁹ M.i.163; Páasarási-Sutta (#26), Opamma-Vagga, Múla-Pappasáka, Majjhima-Nikáya, 12/316/316; *Life*, p. 44. Spoken to *bhikkhus at the Ashram of Brahmin Rammaka near Sávatthí*.

round defilement; female and male servants and slaves ... ; sheep and goats ... ; chickens and pigs ... ; elephants, cattle, horses, and asses ... ; and gold and silver are naturally subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement. These things which human beings esteem are the very things which are naturally subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement, which people in this world get stuck in, get drunk on, and are infatuated with. Consequently, they cause themselves, although subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement, still to blindly seek things which are subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement.¹⁰

Bhikkhus, the thought occurred to me that "Why should we who are naturally subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement, go blindly seeking after things which are subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement? Once we become aware of the lowly harm of being subject to birth, ageing, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement, we should seek *nibbāna*, which is unborn, which is secure from constrictions, which nothing surpasses."

Bhikkhus, we, at another time, still thoroughly young, hair jet black, full of thriving youth, still in the prime of life; although our mother and father did not share our aim and together bathed their faces in tears; we cut off our hair and beard, put on dun-colored robes, left home, and entered the homeless life.

¹⁰ In this sutta, this discussion of the things subject to birth, aging, illness, death, sorrow, and all-round defilement comes before the Lord's mention of himself, but we put it after for easier understanding. In the Buddha's time, highly regarded things were listed as above. The reader can think for himself what things are nowadays esteemed in the world.

[in the Sagárama-Sutta,¹¹ he put it briefly:]

Bháradvája, in this world, before the awakening, while we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, this thought occurred to us: "The home life is narrow, a dusty path. Leaving home is an opportunity for freedom. For one living at home, to practice the *brahmacariya* purely and completely like a well-polished conch is not easily done. What if we should cut off our hair and beard, put on dun-colored robes, leave home, and enter the life of one without any connections to home?" Bháradvája, we at another time, still thoroughly young, hair jet black, full of thriving youth, still in the prime of life; although our mother and father did not share our aim and together bathed their faces in tears; we cut off our hair and beard, put on dun-colored robes, left home, and entered the homeless life.

5. LEAVING HOME¹²

Prince, before the awakening, while we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, the consideration occurred to us that "what they call 'happiness,' is not easily attained by those who would do so, happiness is something difficult to realize." Prince, at a later time, still thoroughly young, hair jet black, full of thriving youth, still in the first stage of life; although our mother and father did not share our aim and together bathed their faces in tears; we cut off our hair and beard, put on dun-colored robes, left home, and entered the homeless life.

¹¹ M.ii.211; Sagárama-Sutta (#100), Múla-pappasá, Majjhima-Nikáya, 13/669/738; *Life*, p.46. This passage appears in other suttas as well.

¹² M.ii.93; Bodhirájakumára-Sutta (#85), Rája-Vagga, Majjhima-Pappasáka, Majjhima-Nikáya, 13/443/489; *Life*, p.47. Spoken to the youth of that name at his newly built palace.

6. LEFT HOME AT AGE 29¹³

Subhadda, when our age was thirty less one in years, we left home in search of "the good, the good (*kusala*)."¹⁴

7. SEARCHING FOR "ENLIGHTENMENT"¹⁵

Bhikkhus, we have wandered in search of the world's deliciousness (for tempting beings). We have found that deliciousness of the world. To the extent there is deliciousness in this world, we have seen it well with our own wisdom.

Bhikkhus, we have wandered in search of the world's injury (its harmfulness). We have found that injury of the world. To the extent there is injury in this world, we have seen it well with our own wisdom.

Bhikkhus, we have wandered in search of the world's skillful means of escape from the world. We have found that skillful escape of the world. To the extent there is an escape from this world, we have seen it well with our own wisdom.

Bhikkhus, for however long that we did not really understand according to reality the deliciousness of the world as being delicious (seductive), did not know the injury of the world as being harmful, and did not know the skillful way out as the means of escape, for that long we did not yet experience that we had fully realized *anuttara-sammásambodhi-ñāpa* (knowledge of unsurpassed perfect self-awakening) in this world, together with the celestial, tempting, and divine

¹³ Spoken to Subhadda in the Maháparinibbána-Sutta, Mahá-Vagga, Digha-Nikáya, 10/176/139; *Life*, p. 47.

¹⁴ He left home in the lifestyle of a wanderer searching for the good (*kusala*, that which is wholesome and safe), which was a custom in those days.

¹⁵ Dutiya-Sutta, Sambohhi-Vagga, Tatiya-Pppásaka, Tika-nipáta, Anguttara-Nikáya, 20/333/544; *Life*, p. 70.

beings, including both wanderers and Brahmins, humans and celestials.¹⁶

Bhikkhus, once we really knew according to reality the deliciousness of the world as being tempting, the injury of the world as being harmful, and the skillful way out as the means of escape, then we experienced that we had fully realized *anuttara-sammásambodhi-ñāpa* (knowledge of unsurpassed perfect self-awakening) in this world, together with the celestial, tempting, and divine beings, including both wanderers and Brahmins, humans and celestials.

And so, *ñāpadassana*, knowing and seeing, arose within us that our liberation would not fall back, that this birth is the final birth, and that now there are no further existences.

8. GUARDED THINKING BEFORE AWAKENING¹⁷

Bhikkhus, before the awakening, while we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, the intuition occurred to us that we ought to separate all thinking into two categories. Bhikkhus, we put *kāma-vitakka* (thinking about sex), *vyāpāda-vitakka* (hostile thinking), and *vihimsā-vitakka* (thinking which will hurt others) into one group and put *nekkhama-vitakka* (thinking about renunciation), *avyāpāda-vitakka* (non-hostile thinking), and *avihimsā-vitakka* (non-hurtful thinking) into another group.

Bhikkhus, when we lived mindfully, energetically, and with mind resolved so that if any *kāma-vitakka*

¹⁶ The stock Pali phrase "in this world together with ..." signifies that the Buddha's Awakening applies to all possible states of conscious existence.

¹⁷ M.i.114 ff.; *Devdhāvitakka-Sutta* (#19), *Sīhanāda-Vagga*, *Mūla-Pappāsa*, *Majjhima-Nikāya*, 12/232/252; *Life*, p. 71. Spoken at Jetavana.

occurred, we knew clearly that sexual thinking had happened to us; that this sexual thinking was harmful for ourself, harmful for others, and harmful for both sides (both oneself and others); that it leads towards the extinction of wisdom, puts one in dire straits, and does not lead readily to *nibbána*. Bhikkhus, when we were examining ...¹⁸ in this way, *káma-vitakka* naturally could not establish itself. Bhikkhus, we let go of and decreased the thinking about sex that arose again and again, then made an end of it.

Bhikkhus, when we lived mindfully, energetically, and with mind resolved so that if any *vyápáda-vitakka* occurred, we knew clearly that hostile thinking had happened to us; that this hostile thinking was harmful for ourself, harmful for others, and harmful for both sides; that it leads towards the extinction of wisdom, put one in dire straits, and does not lead readily to *nibbána*. Bhikkhus, when we were examining ... in this way, *vyápáda-vitakka* naturally could not establish itself. Bhikkhus, we let go of and decreased the hostile thinking that arose again and again, then made an end of it.

Bhikkhus, when we lived mindfully, energetically, and with mind resolved so that if any *vihimsá-vitakka* occurred, we knew clearly that thinking which would hurt others had happened to us; that this hurtful thinking was harmful for ourself, harmful for others, and harmful for both sides; that it leads towards the extinction of wisdom, puts one in dire straits, and does not lead readily to *nibbána*. Bhikkhus, when we were examining ... in this way, *vihimsá-vitakka* naturally could not establish itself. Bhikkhus, we let go of and decreased the hurtful thinking that arose again and again, then made an end of it.

Bhikkhus, whatever object a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders upon a great deal, the mind naturally inclines along with that movement. If a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders over *káma-vitakka* a lot, it so hap-

¹⁸ Seeing in this way means that it harms oneself, others, and both parties, as stated above.

pens that *nekkhama-vitakka* is given up and much is made of *kāma-vitakka*. His mind tends towards thinking about *kāma* (sex). If a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders over *vyāpāda-vitakka* a lot, it so happens that *avyāpāda-vitakka* is given up and much is made of *vyāpāda-vitakka*. His mind tends towards thinking about *vyāpāda* (hostility, ill-will). If a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders over *vihimsā-vitakka* a lot, it so happens that *avihimsā-vitakka* is given up and much is made of *vihimsā-vitakka*. His mind tends towards thinking about *vihimsā* (trouble for other beings).

Bhikkhus, in the time of the festivals, during the last month of the rainy season, a herdsman must raise his herd of cattle in confined places because the land is covered with rice. He must strike, drive, and restrain the herd with sticks to keep them from the rice, because he sees the penalties, namely, being executed, being arrested, being fined, and being criticized because of the rice (being eaten by his herd). As with him, bhikkhus, so with us. We saw the lowly, defiled, wicked harm of unwholesome *dhammas*, and saw the advantage of renouncing sex and being on the side of the purity of wholesome *dhammas*.

Bhikkhus, when we lived mindfully, energetically, and with mind resolved (as has been described), *nekkhama-vitakka* naturally occurred ...¹⁹ *avyāpāda-vitakka* naturally occurred ... *avihimsā-vitakka* naturally occurred. We knew clearly that harmless thinking had happened to us; that this harmless thinking was not harmful for ourself, was not harmful for others, and was not harmful for both sides; that it leads readily to the growth of wisdom, does not put one in dire straits, and leads readily to *nibbāna*. Even if we thought and pondered about *avihimsā-vitakka* all night long, we would not see any danger that could occur

¹⁹ Each ellipsis signifies that the Buddha spoke of each kind of thinking separately, but in an identical manner. Only the name of each kind of thinking changed.

because of that harmless thinking. Even if we thought and pondered about *avihiṃsā-vitakka* all day long, or throughout both the day and the night, we would not see any danger that could occur because of that harmless thinking.

Bhikkhus, because we saw that when we think and reflect for too long, the body is fatigued; and when the body is fatigued, the mind is weak; and when the mind is weak, it is far from *samādhi*; so we kept the mind inwardly still and securely established upon a single object with the aspiration that "our mind will not stir up at all."

Bhikkhus, whatever object a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders upon a great deal, the mind naturally inclines along with that movement. If a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders over *nekkhama-vitakka* a lot, it so happens that *kāma-vitakka* is given up and much is made of *nekkhama-vitakka*. His mind tends towards thinking about *nekkhama* (giving up). If a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders over *avyāpāda-vitakka* a lot, it so happens that *vyāpāda-vitakka* is given up and much is made of *avyāpāda-vitakka*. His mind tends towards thinking about *avyāpāda* (good-will). If a *bhikkhu* thinks about and ponders over *avihiṃsā-vitakka* a lot, it so happens that *vihiṃsā-vitakka* is given up and much is made of *avihiṃsā-vitakka*. His mind tends towards thinking about *avihiṃsā* (harmlessness).

Bhikkhus, during the last month of the hot season all the rice has been taken away into the homes and the herdsman can raise his cattle (with ease). When he rests in the shade of a tree or in an open field, he need only notice "there's the herd of cattle." As with him, bhikkhus, so with us. A *bhikkhu* need only recollect that "these are the *dhammas*," (which is enough).

Bhikkhus, the effort we aroused did not slacken, our mindfulness carried on without wavering, the body calmed all agitation, and the mind established securely in a single object. Bhikkhus, because secluded from *kāma* (sensuality) and unwholesome *dhammas*, we entered

the first *jhāna* with *vitakka* and *vicāra*, with *pīti* and *sukha*, born of solitude, and dwelled therein.²⁰

9. PROTECTED MIND FROM PAST SENSUALITY²¹

Bhikkhus, before the awakening, when we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, awareness arose concerning the five past *kāmaguṇas* which we had experienced previously, although they had ended due to alteration and change, still our mind, when it would sail, mostly sailed after those past *kāmaguṇas*. Rarely did it sail after present and future *kāmaguṇas*. Bhikkhus, the commitment occurred to us that heedfulness and *sati* are the things which we who seek our (true) purpose ought to take as "mental protectors" against the past five *kāmaguṇas* which had been experienced and then ceased due to that change.

Bhikkhus, for this reason, even with your minds, when they will sail, they probably will sail mostly after the past five *kāmaguṇas* which you have experienced previously and which ceased due to alteration and change. Rarely will it sail after present and future *kāmaguṇas*. Bhikkhus, for this reason, heedfulness and *sati* are things which you who seek your own purpose ought to take as "mental protectors" against the past five *kāmaguṇas* which have been experienced and then ceased due to that change.

²⁰ The text continues the same as the passage about the awakening on page 103 ff. (to be translated later).

²¹ Catutatha-Sutta, Lokakāmagguṇa-Vagga, Saḷāyatana-Vagga, Saṃyutta-Nikāya, 18/121/173, *Life*, p. 80.

10. SEARCHED OUT THE MODES OF *DUKKHA*
BEFORE AWAKENING²²

Bhikkhus, before the awakening, while we were as yet unawakened and still a Bodhisatva, this intuition arose. "This world's beings are immersed in difficulties, naturally are born, age, die, move on, and arise again. When the world's beings do not know the *upāya*, the escape beyond *dukkha* -- that is, *jarāmaraṇa* (old age and death) -- how will release from *dukkha* (old and death) ever happen?"

Bhikkhus, the question occurred to us that "with the existence of what, does *jarāmaraṇa* exist? Old age and death exist because of what *paccaya* (condition)?"

Bhikkhus, through careful reflection the wise insight arose for us that "Because just this *jāti* (birth) exists, there is *jarāmaraṇa*. Old age and death exist with birth as their condition."

... "Because just this *bhava* (becoming) exists, there is *jāti*. Birth exists with becoming as its condition.

... "Because just this *upādāna* (attachment) exists, there is *bhava*. Becoming exists with attachment as its condition.

... "Because just this *taphā* (desire) exists, there is *upādāna*. Attachment exists with desire as its condition.

... "Because just this *vedanā* (feeling) exists, there is *taphā*. Desire exists with feeling as its condition.

... "Because just this *phassa* (contact) exists, there is *vedanā*. Feeling exists with sense contact as its condition.

²² Dasama-Sutta, Buddha-vagga, Abhisamaya-Saṃyutta, Nidāna-Vagga, Saṃyutta-Nikāya, 16/11/26; *Life*, p.86.

... "Because just these *saḷāyatanas* (senses) exist, there is *phassa*. Sense contact exists with the senses as its condition.

... "Because just this *nāmarūpa* (mind-body) exists, there are *saḷāyatanas*. The senses exist with mind-body as their condition.

... "Because just this *viññāpa* (consciousness) exists, there is *nāmarūpa*. Mind-body exists with consciousness as its condition.

... "Because just this *sankhāra* (power of concocting) exists, there is *viññāpa*. Consciousness exists with *sankhāra* as its condition.

... "Because just this *avijjā* (ignorance) exists, there are the *sankhāras*. The *sankhāras* exist with *avijjā* as their condition. With ignorance as the condition, there are the *sankhāras*;

with the *sankhāras* as the condition, there is consciousness;

with consciousness as the condition, there is mind-body;

with mind-body as the condition, there are the senses;

with the senses as the condition, there is contact;

with contact as the condition, there is feeling;

with feeling as the condition, there is desire;

with desire as the condition, there is attachment;

with attachment as the condition, there is becoming;

with becoming as the condition, there is birth;

with birth as the condition, there are old age and death, sorrow, grief, pain, lamentation, and despair.

The dependent origination of the entire mass of *dukkha* happens in just this way.

Bhikkhus, the eye (*cakkhu*) arose, knowledge (*ñāṇa*) arose, understanding (*paññā*) arose, insight (*viññā*) arose, and light appeared in us regarding something we had never heard before that there is this "dependent origination, dependent origination."

Bhikkhus, the question occurred to us, "with the non-existence of what, does *jarāmaraṇa* not exist? Due to the quenching of what, does old age and death quench?"

Bhikkhus, through careful reflection the wise insight arose for us that "Because just this *jāti* does not exist, *jarāmaraṇa* will not exist. Old age and death quench because birth quenches.

... "Because just this *bhava* does not exist, *jāti* will not exist. Birth quenches because becoming quenches.

... "Because just this *upādāna* does not exist, *bhava* will not exist. Becoming quenches because attachment quenches.

... "Because just this *taphā* does not exist, *upādāna* will not exist. Attachment quenches because desire quenches.

... "Because just this *vedanā* does not exist, *taphā* will not exist. Desire quenches because feeling quenches.

... "Because just this *phassa* does not exist, *vedanā* will not exist. Feeling quenches because contact quenches.

... "Because just these *saḷāyatana*s do not exist, *phassa* will not exist. Contact quenches because the senses quench.

... "Because just this *nāmarūpa* does not exist,

the *saḷāyatanas* will not exist. The senses quench because mind-body quenches.

... "Because just this *viññāpa* does not exist, *nāmarūpa* will not exist. Mind-body quenches because consciousness quenches.

Bhikkhus, the question occurred to us "with the non-existence of what, does *viññāpa* not exist? Due to the quenching of what, does consciousness quench?"

Bhikkhus, through careful reflection, the wise insight arose for us that "Because just this *nāmarūpa* does not exist, *viññāpa* will not exist. Consciousness quenches because mind-body quenches.

Bhikkhus, the insight occurred to us that "the path to perfect awakening which we have finally reached is the following:

due to the quenching of mind-body, consciousness quenches;

due to the quenching of consciousness, mind-body quenches;

due to the quenching of mind-body, the senses quench;

due to the quenching of the senses, contact quenches;

due to the quenching of contact, feeling quenches;

due to the quenching of feeling, desire quenches;

due to the quenching of desire, attachment quenches;

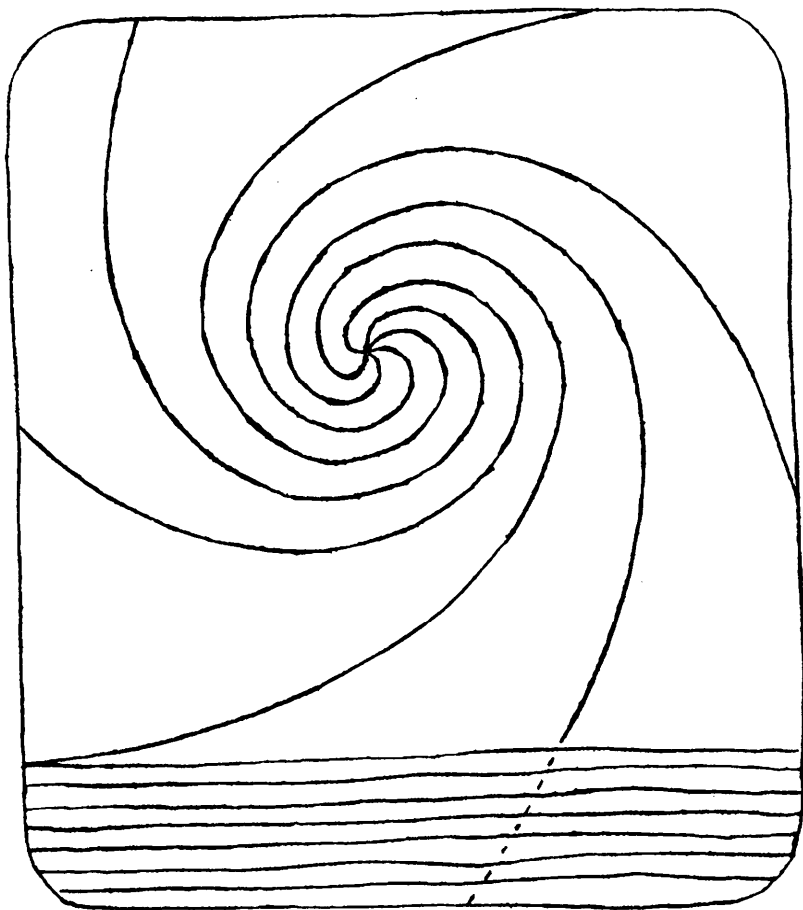
due to the quenching of attachment, becoming quenches;

due to the quenching of becoming, birth quenches;

due to the quenching of birth; old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair quench.

The quenching of the entire mass of *dukkha* happens in just this way.

Bhikkhus, the eye (*cakkhu*) arose, knowledge (*ñāpa*) arose, understanding (*paññā*) arose, insight (*vijjā*) arose, and light appeared in us regarding something we had never heard before that there is this "remainderless quenching, remainderless quenching (*nirodha*)."



THE FOURTH TETRAD:

DHAMMĀNUPASSANĀ— SATIPAṬṬHANA

(From the Contemplation of Impermanence up to the
Contemplation of Tossing Back All *Sankhāras*)

Now we come to the practice of the Fourth Tetrad of *Ānāpānasati*, which discusses the last four stages of Mindfulness With Breathing, as follows:

- XIII. Continually contemplating impermanence while breathing in and out;
- XIV. Continually contemplating fading away while breathing in and out;
- XV. Continually contemplating total quenching while breathing in and out;
- XVI. Continually contemplating letting go while breathing in and out.

These four stages together form the tetrad of mental development which examines Dhamma (Truth, Reality) -- that is, truths which manifest themselves as objects to train upon -- rather than scrutinizing the body (the breath), feelings (*pīti* and *sukha*), and the mind according to its different features, as was done in the first, second, and third tetrads, respectively.¹

In this the fourth tetrad, the first point of interest is that the Buddha mentioned four *dhammas*: *aniccam* (impermanence), *virāga* (fading away), *nirodha* (quenching), and *pañinissagga* (letting go), without saying anything about *dukkham* and *anatta*. Thoughtful people will raise their eyebrows at this and wonder whether or not unsatisfactoriness and not-self are of

¹ For a discussion of the first three tetrads see *Mindfulness With Breathing: Unveiling the Secrets of Life* (details in "Books & Tapes" section).

any importance. We should understand that they are of great importance, but in this instance, the Buddha included them both within *aniccaṃ* because of the fact that, if we fully realize impermanence, we will naturally realize *dukkhaṃ* within it; and if we fully realize both impermanence and unsatisfactoriness, then we'll realize *anattá* -- that there is nothing to attach to as "self" or as "ourselves." For example, when we see water flowing, then we naturally see the fact that the water carries various things with it, or that this single-minded flowing of water doesn't listen to anyone. This example illustrates how these three facts are inseparably associated. In essence, when we fully see one characteristic, we must also see the remaining two included with it. For this reason the Buddha spoke only of *aniccaṃ*, then passed on to *virága* and *nirodha* without mentioning *dukkhaṃ* and *anattá* specifically. In another place, the Pali scriptures record that the Buddha said: "Medhiya, perception of not-self (*anattá-saññá*) appears to one who has perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññá*); one who perceives not-self removes ego conceit (*asmi-mána*) and experiences *nibbána* here and now (*diṭṭha-dhamma*)." This shows that the Blessed One held that when there is perception of impermanence there is perception of not-self, ego-conceit is abandoned, and *nibbána* is realized. To put it more succinctly, one who perceives impermanence realizes that very *nibbána*.

It must be understood, however, that contemplation here is no partial perception of impermanence like in other, non-Buddhist sects, as mentioned in the Pali texts. Although some sects spoke of *aniccaṃ* in detail, for example, that of the teacher Araka, their manner of realizing impermanence no matter how sophisticated is not what we're speaking of here. That is still a kind of *aniccaṃ* which is external to the Buddha's teaching. Therefore, the realization of impermanence in the thirteenth stage of *ánápánasati* has its own specific meaning, different from that of other teachers in other places. Here we see more deeply to the degree of *dukkhaṃ* and *anattá*. This meaning of *aniccaṃ* appears in many other places in the scriptures, even

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though the general meaning refers to *aniccaṃ* alone. We should follow the following standard:

whenever all three characteristics are mentioned, *aniccaṃ* then has the narrow meaning, referring only to itself;
when only *aniccaṃ* is mentioned, know that the Buddha included *dukkhaṃ* and *anattá* with it.

The Buddha gave us this standard for use in cases such as this thirteenth stage of *ánápánasati*.

Ánápánasati's fourth tetrad, in essence, is purely *vipassaná* (insight) and *paññá* (wisdom), unlike the previous stages which are either *samatha* (tranquility) or *samatha* mixed with *vipassaná*. Therefore, this tetrad of the practice of *ánápánasati*, which begins with scrutinizing impermanence, is known as the Contemplation of Dhamma Foundation of Mindfulness (*dhammánupassaná-satipaṭṭhána*) which we will now consider step by step.

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CHAPTER 17 :

LESSON THIRTEEN OF

ÁNÁPĀNASATI

(Continually Contemplating Impermanence)

The object or topic of the thirteenth lesson of *ánápánasati*, the first lesson of the fourth tetrad, is:¹

¹ "Lesson" translates a Thai word (*khan*) which usually means step, stage, or level. As many Western meditators tend to be impatient and see "steps" as things to hurriedly climb, we

"That *bhikkhu*, trains himself: continually contemplating impermanence, I will breathe in; Trains himself, continually contemplating impermanence, I will breathe out."²

The words "trains himself" here, should be taken to mean that when impermanence is seen there is no opportunity to concoct any immoral volition. Thus, one is unable to violate any moral precept and there is automatic *síla-sikkhá*. While contemplating in the manner of this lesson, there is the kind of *samádhi* which is immediately connected with *paññá* and equal to its strength, and so *citta-sikkhá* is included, also. Peering into or penetrating³ the *aniccalakkhaṇa* (characteristic of impermanence) is already *paññá-sikkhá*. Thus, our *bhikkhu* is complete in the threefold training while practicing this step.

Regarding the words "continually contemplating impermanence," that is, *aniccánupassí*,⁴ the following questions must be considered:

1. What things are impermanent?
2. What is the nature of the condition of impermanence?
3. How do we contemplate impermanence?
4. Who is "the contemplator of impermanence" (the *aniccánupassí*)?

use the word "lesson" and emphasize that these are lessons to study for one's entire life.

² *Aniccánupassí assasissámíti sikkhati;*
Aniccánupassí passasissámíti sikkhati.

(*Ānápānasati-Sutta*, M.iii.82.)

³ The Thai word *peng* is used to translate the Pali word *jháyati* (the verb form of *jhána*) which is hard to render. It can mean to stare, to fix upon, to peer at or into, to focus upon, to hunt after. We use penetrate here because it relates to *paññá* and insight, and to getting deeply into natural facts.

⁴ *Aniccánupassí* is formed from *anicca*, impermanence; *anu*, along, after; and *passa*, one who sees; thus: "the one who sees and looks into impermanence," "the contemplator of impermanence."

For a start, we may answer that all *sankhāras* (concocted things) are the impermanent things. Originating, existing, and ceasing are the conditions of impermanence. Using *sati* to scrutinize⁵ the fact of impermanence is *aniccānupassanā* (contemplation of impermanence). The person who does this with every inhalation and exhalation is named "*aniccānupassī*" (one who continually contemplates impermanence).⁶

Now, we'll consider the things that have the condition of impermanence.

I. WHAT THINGS ARE IMPERMANENT?

A succinct and comprehensive reply is that all *sankhāras* are the things which are impermanent. Such an answer, however, is not very useful for the practical examination of impermanence. We require a clearer answer than that. Thus, while speaking within the boundaries of this step of developing *ānāpānasati* and when asked what things are impermanent, the "experts"⁷ replied with the principle that the five *khandhas*, the six inner *āyatanas*, and the twelve modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda* are the things which are impermanent. Their intention was that we take up these *dhammas* for examination one by one and group by group.

A. THE FIVE KHANDHAS: This first group consists of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankhāra*, and *viññāpa*. This is a broad and general examination encompassing the many things of this world. We can speak even more concisely of *nāma* and *rūpa*, which, nonetheless, refer to all things in the world, both mental and material. All of these things are considered to be categories of sense

⁵ *Kamnod* (Thai): to scrutinize, to focus attention on, to fix or set (a date), to observe, to note.

⁶ The first three questions will be examined in detail. The fourth need not.

⁷ The ancient meditation masters and subsequent commentators, shorthand for accepted traditional knowledge.

jects, that is, the things watched, seen, heard, listened to, smelled, thought, etc. and including the objects of all actions. No matter how many dozens or hundreds of categories we arrange them in, they are always included in the terms "five *khandhas*" or "*nāma-ūpa*." These are the general objects of *vipassanā*.

6. THE SIX INTERNAL SENSES: This second group consists of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind-sense, together with the consciousness (*viññāpa*) which rises at the six sense doors, and including the other things which arise in conjunction with the senses. All of these things are arranged within the categories of "Actors" and "The Subjects of Actions," namely, watcher, listener, smeller, taster, thinker, and the other contactors of the above mentioned sense objects. That side consists of the objects or receivers of the sense activity; this side consists of the subjects or doers. The experts advised us to examine both groups in order to completely and finally see the utter impermanence of both groups. Then, we won't attach to either. Thus for example, when the eyes see a form, observe that the form which is the object seen is impermanent, and that the eyes which are the subjects seeing are impermanent.

7. THE TWELVE MODES⁸ OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION: This last group focuses on every aspect or process of conditioning which interdependently arises in the moment, for example, of seeing a form. In that moment, no matter how many levels of concocting there are and how many factors are involved, each one must be examined to see impermanence. Every movement in the process must be observed and fully seen: *avijjā* (ignorance) conditions *sankhāra* (mental concocting); *sankhāra* concocts *viññāpa* (consciousness), consciousness

⁸ *Ākāra*, Tan Ajahn uses this term frequently and in a variety of ways, but we have had difficulty translating it properly. Literally, it means "the (way of) making," way of acting or being, mode, condition, factor. We alternately translate *ākāra* as mode, condition, movement, and factor. (ET)

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concocts *nāmarūpa* (mind-body), *nāmarūpa* concocts the *saḷāyatanas* (six senses), the senses concoct *phassa* (contact), contact concocts *vedanā* (feeling), feeling concocts *taṇhā* (desire), desire concocts *upādāna* (attachment), attachment concocts *bhava* (existence), existence concocts *jāti* (birth), birth concocts ageing and death (*jarāmaraṇa*), sorrow, lamentation, grief, pain, and so on, all of which are the arising side of dependent origination, the side which concocts *dukkha*. As for the modes of the quenching side of dependent origination, the same approach is used but in the opposite direction, that is, in the direction of inducing quenching: the quenching of ignorance quenches *sankhāra*, the quenching of *sankhāra* quenches *viññāpa*, the quenching of consciousness quenches *nāmarūpa*, and so on until the quenching of birth leads to the quenching of ageing, death, and the rest, so that the whole thing, including *dukkha*, finishes. The twelve modes in the arising side and the twelve modes in the quenching side must be brought under examination so that the impermanence of each mode is seen. In other words, when seeing the external *āyatanas*, such as forms; the inner *āyatanas*, such as the eyes; and the fact that the interaction between the two *āyatanas* leads to the arising of a variety of other conditions, realize that all of these things are impermanent. This leads to the complete, clear cut realization that everything is impermanent. Such a realization is more complete and final than can be examined in any other way.

To summarize in one more brief example, when the eyes see a form, there arise various experiences in sequence. We can distinguish three sides to our examination: (1) the object or external *āyatana*, the form, which is seen; (2) the subject or inner *āyatana*, the eyes and all of the nervous system concerned with vision; and (3) the different conditions which arise out of the relationship between the two, such as, the movement of the eyes being stimulated by form, the movement causing eye-consciousness to be born, the movement of contact between these three things ("eye-contact"), and the movement in which eye-contact causes *vedanā* (as *cakkhusamphassajāvedanā*) and the

movement of *vedanā* concocting the arising of perception, volition, thought, pondering, and so forth on up to the making of actions (*kamma*) and receiving the results of actions in the myriad kinds of *dukkha*. All of these movements, conditions, stages, and aspects must be investigated and seen as nothing but impermanence, just as with the outer and inner *āyatanas*. In short, realize the impermanence of the external *āyatanas*, of the internal *āyatanas*, and of all the conditions related to them.

Only by realizing the impermanence of these things in this manner will we reach a genuine realization of *dukkhaṃ*, *anattā*, and *suññatā* which in turn leads to disenchantment (being fed up) and the fading away (dissolution) of desire. Any approach other than this is just a half-baked understanding of impermanence in which one gets stuck at that point, the same as with the seeing of impermanence in sects outside of Buddhism, as discussed above.

To summarize the point under consideration here once again, when asking "What is impermanent?" the answer is: things which are experienced, the things which perform the function of experiencing, and the various modes and conditions associated with that experience. These three categories together comprise all the things which are impermanent, which we like to call "all *sankhāras*." Analyzing these things into dozens or hundreds of categories is not important. The only important matter is to see the impermanence of the *sankhāras* truly, in the way explained here.

II. WHAT IS THE CHARACTERISTIC OF IMPERMANENCE?

The essence of this matter is found directly within the phenomena of arising, the phenomena of decay, and the phenomena of cessation, which in Pali is expressed, "All things are impermanent, naturally arising

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and passing away; once they arise, they cease."⁹ This quotation exactly expresses the meaning of impermanence. Things do not exist in a single unchanging state forever, rather they are continuously changing. When there is change, there naturally must be arising and ceasing. If there is no cessation, change leading to new kinds of arising could not happen. Thus, the word "change" means arising then ceasing in order to arise anew in other forms endlessly. For this reason, the word "impermanence" has two meanings:

1. continual arising and ceasing,
2. the fact that no arising repeats itself because new causes and conditions are continually intervening.

In order to see the meaning of "impermanence," both meanings must be investigated until seen clearly and truly.

III. THE LEVELS OF CONTEMPLATING IMPERMANENCE

What are the different levels of contemplating impermanence? Impermanence can be examined on successively deeper levels of contemplation. The first and easiest level, which anyone can see, is to observe the impermanence of groups of *sankhāras*. We take groups because they're easy to see. For example, in a collection of aggregates which we call a "human being," we easily see birth as a child, growth up to old age, and death. Or to break this into smaller parts, we can separate human life into three stages: youth, middle-age, and old age. Then we specifically observe that even in one stage of life there is plenty of change. However, observing in this way is still coarse. We must know how to examine in such detail that we don't see those things as changing only everyday, or every hour, or every minute, or even every second, but that

⁹ *Aniccā vata saṅkhārā uppādavayadhammino uppajjhivā nirujjhanti.*
(Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta, Dīgha-Nikāya)

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they change every mind-moment. A mind-moment is a period of time which can't be measured by the usual standards explainable in everyday language. In Dhamma language, in the ultimate sense, however, mind-moment denotes a period of time which is extremely short, so short that we can't be aware of the divisions between them. We probably can't explain this in a way that can be directly understood. We must use comparisons which can't really be made, such as, faster than a lightning flash. This is as deep and detailed as we can go, such that the eye can't see the changes happening in material and mental things with every mind moment. Every material atom is in tumultuous change, too fine for the eye to see; and the mental elements are even more finely and rapidly changing than the material. All of these are ways to look at change from the viewpoint of time. We use time to grab things so that change can be seen from this perspective, which is related to measurement. This leads us to say there is change in even the smallest thing, that which can't be divided any further, and in the shortest period of time which we can conceive.

Another method for contemplating impermanence, one more refined than the first, is to contemplate that each and every thing in the world, whether material or mental, whether outside the body or inside it, arises before a single mind, namely, that mind which is acting in contact with or in awareness of that thing. Whatever the sense door (eye, ear, etc.), we only experience that the thing is in the world because mind is aware of it. Without mind, it would be as if that thing didn't exist. Thus we can say that because there is mind, there is that thing; because mind arises (that is, in awareness of those things), that thing arises (appears to awareness). When mind ceases, that thing ceases also, and has no more value for the person involved than non-existent things. For this particular reason, we say that all things always depend on mind, are within the power of mind, have significance only in regard to mind, and arise and cease following mind. Therefore, as mind is a thing which arises and ceases from moment to moment, all of those things only

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have meaning as things which arise and cease with each mind-moment. We should not forget that this is true whether they are material or mental, outside the body or within it. This approach is a more subtle realization of the characteristic of impermanence.

Another means by which we can successively see impermanence more deeply is to see that each thing is compounded by levels of causes (*hetu*) and conditions (*paccaya*). Impermanence, or change, from this perspective isn't directly there in that thing, but is in the causes and conditions which concoct it. In turn, those causes and conditions are absolutely impermanent, for they too are conditioned by another level of impermanent causes and conditions. Let's look at this example: Why do the skin and flesh of human beings change? They change because they arise from food which is itself impermanent and changing, for food originates from elements and weather conditions which are also constantly changing. Weather, too, has it's origins in other causes and conditions which are endlessly changing. (There is no end to backtracking through successive levels of causes and factors.) When material phenomena are like this, mental phenomena are even more so, because they are lighter and quicker than the material phenomena. In summation, each thing changes because it is established upon other things, which are also changing in endless causal succession. Seeing *aniccā* in this manner expands to include the realization of *dukkhā* and *anattā* within it.

A further method is to contemplate impermanence with the meaning that each *sankhāra* is conditioned by many other things. Each of these things can be further divided into smaller parts *ad infinitum* until they are nothing. Only because there is, in each moment, a coincidence or relationship appropriate to the conditions, does any given *sankhāra* appear to be a "self," or an individual entity, or something desirable and satisfying. Whenever the relationship of things transforms in some other way, the lucky coincidence breaks up and dissolves. Please notice that the movement whereby many things come together in a relationship

cannot result in any permanent entity. Rather, these compounds break up and change more easily than ever. When many people work together, the cases in which differences of opinion occur is proportional to the amount of people involved. The impermanence of the relationship increases as sure as a shadow follows a body. The aim here is to point out that the impermanence of relationship is different than the previous point made. Here, impermanence is seen within the very thing which is observed. We've now brought up enough examples to point out varying forms of the characteristic of impermanence. Next, we must consider the ways of contemplating impermanence.

IV. THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The general way to examine impermanence is to see the arising, existing, and ceasing of all things. However, our objective here is not to send the mind off to examine everything, ponder them and related matters with our reasoning, and then conclude or deduce that they are "impermanent." That is something for philosophers and logicians to do, not for cultivators of the mind. That approach results merely in the different theories and standards which have been laid down by thinkers over the years, but doesn't result in the clear, penetrating realization which leads to disenchantment (*nibbidā*) and fading away (*virāga*).

The way of contemplation which fits with mental cultivation must turn inward. It focuses upon the things which are existing within, which one actually has caused to appear or to arise within oneself. Then, observe the transformation that manifests within those things and simultaneously manifests in one's experience of those things in the mind.

All of this must happen in the present. First, they are directly present to us; then they become past. Or compare them against the about-to-happen future by observing that the present we are scrutinizing was something future just a moment ago. When we practice

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in this way, we will penetrate into and soak up the fact of impermanence genuinely and totally.

When, for example, we contemplate one of the five *khandhas*, we first must cause the actual thing to appear. When observing *rūpa-khandha* (form-aggregate), we take one specific component of the body which is vital for the body's existence. This is why the Buddha advised taking the breathing as the body, or *rūpa-khandha*, in the early stages of *ānāpānasati*, so that we can gain clear, penetrating understanding of the fact that the body is impermanent and so on, until there is genuine disenchantment and dispassion. This is altogether different from contemplating with the mouth -- such as, repeating "body, body" endlessly -- or dividing the body into more details and facts than we can keep track of. Neither of these intellectual "examinings" is capable of reaching the real body and its impermanence.

The breath is wind-element, that is, one element of the four elements which make up the body. More significantly, it is the most important *paccaya* (condition, influence, support) of all the bodies -- those consisting of earth-element, water-element, and fire-element¹⁰ -- which make up the body. If the breath is just slightly abnormal, the other parts will be affected, possibly even damaged. Therefore, taking the breath as the part of the body to contemplate is the most intelligent and appropriate thing to do, because using this essence or reality of the body is the most important, as well as the most convenient. Focusing on every inhalation and exhalation is equal to directly focusing on the body's reality in the most intimate way possible. One might even be able to contemplate its impermanence and other characteristics to the fullest extent, as was explained in the earlier lessons of *ānāpānasati*.

¹⁰ Representing, respectively, the physical properties of dimension ("eating space"), cohesion, and temperature. Wind-element represents movement.

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All of this forms a skillful means (*upāya*) which enables us to penetrate to the thing we are observing, to observe it genuinely, and finally to see it in its utmost reality. Anyone can see that this is not the same as memorization, recitation, and logical calculation, none of which can be compared with genuine contemplation, for they are too far away from the reality that we call "*kāya*" (body).

Even when examining one of the mental *khandhas*, such as *vedanā*, the principal is identical. First, we must cause feeling to actually appear to the mind, in particular, by developing *samādhi* so that the feelings of *pīti* and *sukha* arise. Then, search out and observe the characteristic of impermanence and the causes of impermanence, as discussed in the above section about the conditions of impermanence¹¹. All of this points to the importance of the fact that contemplating something requires that we first must make that thing appear in order to look into it with the concentrated mind. Then the characteristics and facts associated with that thing will be seen with certainty. Merely thinking of something's name, remembering and pondering all the details and facts we've been taught about it, then piling on our own reasoning and conjectures that "it must be like this and like that" is the method of scholars and academics. No matter how much we examine something in this intellectual way, it will not lead to a thoroughly convincing experience of truth, unlike the method we are discussing here.

THREE WAYS OF PRACTICE

FOR GETTING TO THE ESSENCE OF THOSE THINGS

We have already categorized the objects of contemplation into three groups, each of which has many, many sub-groups; nonetheless, there is a way of practice which will get to the heart of all of the things in those groups. We can apply this method to each of the three categories.

¹¹ Section II.

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A. Five *Khandhas*: We get to the heart of the *rūpa-khandha* (form aggregate) by scrutinizing the breath as explained earlier.¹² We can reach the essence of *vedanā-khandha* (feeling aggregate) by concentrated examination of the *pīti* (rapture) and *sukha* (bliss) that arise when there is *samādhi*. We can also use any other feelings which truly arise in oneself, that actually manifest to the mind. In a coarse way, we get to the essence of *saññā* by examining the recognitions and evaluations which are occurring within ourselves and see how these are changing. The more refined way is to fix on the things which arise out of *vedanā*: the perceptions, recognitions, and evaluations of the feelings. We consider the manner of their existence, that is, how they arise, change, and pass away.

To reach the essence of *sankhāra-khandha*, use the same method as with *saññā*. In a general way, we fix on the mind which is involved in thinking (*vitakka*: it doesn't matter what the thinking is about), then we examine why it is that the mind thinks and how thoughts arise, change, function, and cease. The more refined way is to cause *vedanā* to arise, such as the *pīti* or *sukha* of *jhāna*, then vigilantly guard and observe the perceptions and thinking which arise toward those feelings. Experience their impermanence in the way described under lessons seven and eight of *ānāpānasati*. The thinking (*vitakka*) just mentioned is what we mean by *sankhāra-khandha*.

With *viññāpa-khandha*, in general, we examine the clear and immediate seeing or knowing of any object which contacts the inner sense bases. Regarding this clear seeing or knowing: due to what causes and by what conditions does it arise? How does it appear? and how does it cease? But all of this is very difficult to do, because it happens too quickly. It is better, more subtle, and more convenient to examine that mind itself. Scrutinize the mind as it performs its complex

¹² Chapters IV through XII, which cover the first four lessons of *ānāpānasati*. (Not translated here.)

duties: now -- functioning as consciousness of the object; now -- functioning as consciousness of *vedanā*; now -- functioning as thinking in various ways; now -- the further conditioning which leads to lust or freedom from lust, hatred or freedom from hatred, delusion or freedom from delusion, to give a few examples. In this way, we scrutinize the mental behavior, the mind's activity of all kinds, in all periods, and in all its different forms. This is the most certain and complete contemplation of the consciousness aggregate. All of the possible sense objects (the six external *āyatana*s) are covered by the term "five aggregates." They must be examined in the exact moment in which they function as objects of sense contact (*phassa*).

B. Internal Sense Bases: The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind make up the group of things (inner *āyatana*s) which experience the sense objects (outer *āyatana*s). Here, the principle remains the same as above: contemplate during the actual moment of experiencing the object, at whichever sense door it appears. For example, let's take the eyes seeing a form, the eyes genuinely experiencing a form. Before this, in a moment when the eyes have not yet seen any form, it is as if the eyes didn't exist. In such a moment, the eyes have no meaning whatsoever. But when a form makes contact, it is as if the eyes instantly arise. This is called the "birth" of the eyes, which continue to exist as long as the form is seen. When the seeing ends, the eyes cease. Then, it is as if the eyes don't exist, until a new form comes along to make a new contact. In this way, we can clearly examine and perceive the arising, continuing, and ceasing of the eyes. It is the same with the ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Thus, we can say that we must see them in the moment of functioning, and only then, in order to genuinely see them and their impermanence.

C. The Modes of Dependent Origination: Regarding the various modes which interact and concoct among material and mental phenomena, which we call "*paṭicca-samuppāda*" (dependent origination), the standard is the same as above. In order to scrutinize each of

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these modes and their impermanence, we must examine them in the exact moment of their activity, and only then. Once again using the example of the eyes contacting a form, we must see the following: In that moment of contact between the eyes and a form, how is our *avijjā* (ignorance) present? How does this ignorance push on to condition *sankhāra* (concocting, mental activity)? How is the force that causes mental activity conditioned? How then is *viññāpa* (consciousness) made to appear? How then is the appearance of *nāmarūpa* (mind-body) conditioned? How are the *āyatana*s (senses) conditioned so as to perform their functions? In what way is *phassa* (contact) conditioned so that its function is complete? Then, how is *vedanā* (feeling) conditioned? By what means is the wanting and desiring (*taṇhā*) related to that feeling conditioned into arising? How does attachment to that thing come to be completely formed? How does this lead to the becoming or existence of some "story" and then to *jāti* (birth)? Finally, how does the degeneration known as ageing and death, along with the various other forms of *dukkha*, such as sorrow and grief, come about? These are the modes of one complete cycle in the dependent origination of *dukkha*.

We must examine all of these factors exactly when each is conditioning the next factor, when each is involved in the process, in order to see each one in its reality. See the reality of ignorance in the moment that it functions through the power of its stupidity and not-knowing to concoct the mental activity. See the reality of concocting in the moment that it acts to condition consciousness through the power of *sankhāras* inability to keep still once it has arisen and its need to continually concoct. We will see actual consciousness, when it conditions, through the natural power of the consciousness-element (*viññāpadhātu*), the arising of the sort of mind-body which completely fulfills the meaning of the word "mind-body." By itself, the consciousness-element has no effect, but when it comes into relation with the thing called "mind-body," then it expresses its marvelous influences through that mind-body. The mind-body is

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the same. Without its reliance on consciousness-element, it could not arise as mind-body, because there would be no consciousness of either the material or mental elements. And we know actual mind-body only when it functions as the sense bases or as consciousness through the sense bases, that is, when the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind are foundations for the arising of sense consciousness. Even with contact, feeling, desire, attachment, becoming, birth, and each kind of *dukkha* (such as ageing and death), the meanings and explanations are the same. We know the reality of each thing when that thing is actually performing its function of causing an effect, namely, some new thing. Here we say it concocts the other thing. This is how we can see, with certainty, the reality and impermanence of each thing.

We must not forget that all of this must be observed in the mind, only in our actual awareness. The practice of the third tetrad of *ánápánasati*¹³ will help a great deal here. It helps us to see more easily the twists, trickery, and conditioning of the mind, because more than a few of the modes of dependent origination are included there. When we have practiced as is described here, then we will clearly see that ignorance itself is impermanent, the act of concocting mental activity is impermanent, the mental activity which is concocted is impermanent, and so on, mode by mode for the entire cycle of dependent origination. It should be mentioned that this examination of impermanence is finer, more subtle, and more detailed than the examination described in Section A, where we focused exclusively on the external sense objects, and in Section B, where we focused exclusively on the internal sense bases.

SUMMARY: In the contemplation of impermanence, we must concentrate upon and examine actual, existing things. First we cause each thing to manifest clearly.

¹³ Contemplation of the mind: experiencing its many "states," delighting it, concentrating it, and liberating it.

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Then we observe how it arises and from what it arises; how it is established and what its function is in that moment; and finally, how and due to what causes it ceases. Contemplating impermanence from the perspective of dependent origination is more detailed and refined than all other methods.

CONTEMPLATING *DUKKHAṂ*

We've been discussing methods of contemplating impermanence alone, however, true experience of impermanence finds *dukkhaṁ* and *anattá* within that impermanence. How does this happen? Seeing the deeper aspects of impermanence, so that we also see *dukkhaṁ*, can be categorized according to various meanings of the word *dukkhaṁ*. We will look at three of these meanings.

A. *Dukkhaṁ* as "Enduring Suffering": In the word *dukkhaṁ*, many meanings can be inferred. It is composed of two components: *du* and *kha* (or *khaṁ*). If we take *du* to mean "difficult" and *khaṁ* to mean "endure," then *dukkhaṁ* means "difficult to endure." We will see this clearly when we observe that impermanence means *játi*, *jára*, and *marapa* (birth, old age, and death). If there was permanence and no change, then how could there be birth, decrepitude, and death? The *dukkha* that arises through birth, old age, and death arises directly out of impermanence and change. Further forms of *dukkha*, such as sorrow, lamentation, grief, and despair are all due to the fact that things don't happen as we wish. We don't get the things that we desire, we experience things that we do not want, and we are always separated from the things we do want. The cause of this comes from the fact that all animals and all conditioned things are constantly changing according to their causes and conditions.

Even the miscellaneous, everyday *dukkha* of householders, such as cold, heat, hunger, thirst; and the need to eat, bathe, and excrete; exists only because the body is a compound of many impermanent and conditioned things (*sankháras*). We change with every mind

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movement. We need this, we need that, we need to change in this way and in that way -- all the time. This causes all sorts of concerns about the care of the body, which again shows clearly that these difficulties which we must bear are due to the change of the body.

When we observe that *dukkha* is disease, whether of children or adults, of healthy or vulnerable people, we realize that these too are because of the changes in the *sankhāras* that form and surround the body. If there was nothing changing, illness probably wouldn't occur.

There is the *dukkha* of having to eat food, wear clothing, and use shelter. We must try to earn a living in order to acquire them. We must suffer through exhausting hardships. Or we struggle and compete with others in many ways until we end up quarrelling and becoming enemies. Even these forms of *dukkha* are caused by the endless impermanence and change of the body, of the mind, of the mental defilements, of desire, and of learning, all of which are *sankhāras* just the same. So we must say that even these forms of *dukkha* are caused by the change of conditioned things. When we observe change with clarity, we clearly see, as a matter of course, that *dukkha* must arise within that change.

Now, if we look at mental phenomena in more detail, that is, examine the *dukkha* that comes from the burning of the mental defilements (lust, hatred, delusion, etc.), which cause beings to anxiously struggle in search of peace and happiness, we will probably find that they are directly caused by impermanence, also. This first type, which can be seen easily in livestock, is bodily changes. When the body grows to a certain point, or reaches a certain place in its cycle, various sexual problems occur. These cannot be avoided. They are caused by natural, bodily changes. On a higher level, there are changes which are outside of nature. Eating and living improve. Learning and thinking broaden and expand. The problems about sexual

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matters and mental impurities change accordingly. As they become more intricate and complex, the *dukkha* caused by them also grows more complicated. This is mental change. When the bodily and mental changes come together, it is a natural foundation for *dukkha*, because we're extensively and profoundly burned from two sides. But we look in the opposite direction and overlook the truth that this *dukkha* is the result of change and the delusions of the defilements, which are also derived from bodily and mental change. If anyone sets his mind to scrutinizing these physical and mental changes within himself, he will clearly see the sort of *dukkha* that we are talking about. One will see it as solely a result of change, or as a thing changing within itself, and will no longer be deluded by the deceptions of change. Then one will solve problems in an undefiled way. Otherwise, the problems will grow heavier and unsolvable, and will become more and more destructive for oneself.

If we go still deeper and examine the *dukkha* that arises from having to receive the effects of our actions, or that happen due to the diverse actions of all beings, we will still see that it is a matter of change. Actions are impermanent, are things which change. Therefore, the results of actions are impermanent; they change just the same as the actions. The doers of the actions are impermanent things. Receiving the effects of the actions is impermanent. Everything is always changing, consequently we humans receive the fruits of actions according to the circumstances of change. When receiving the fruit of evil actions, we suffer openly. When receiving the fruit of good actions, we suffer most secretly, so that we're not even aware that it is torment. But both of these, whether hell or heaven, equally mean that we must endure whirling around within the flow of *samsāra* (cycling around through death and birth). All of this can be called impermanence or the results of impermanence, but their value is the same -- the *dukkha* of change. The more we contemplate, the more we'll see that the more there is change, the more there is *dukkha*, because that change is not peaceful. Happiness is merely a kind of change;

consequently, it can't really be happiness. It can only be the kind of *dukkha* that deludes and deceives us enough for us to misunderstand it.

When we contemplate *dukkha* to its furthest degree, on the level which is its essence, which the Buddha expressed: "In summary, the five *khandhas* compounded with attachment are *dukkha*," we see most fully, once again, that it directly originates from impermanence. Attachment to the five *khandhas* is *dukkha*, because the *khandhas* are impermanent. The very impermanence of the *khandhas* is what causes any one who attaches to them to experience *dukkha* directly. Another thing which should not be forgotten is that attachment is also impermanent, or, if we speak conventionally, the individual who attaches is impermanent. When the object of attachment and all things involved with it are solely impermanent things, the condition of *dukkha* is something that cannot be avoided. All of this shows that impermanent things naturally produce the condition of suffering from out of themselves and within themselves all the time. This causes suffering within these things and for any person who attaches to them, the two being unavoidable and inseparable. This is the first meaning of *dukkham*.

B. *Dukkham* as "Disgusting to See": If we take *du* to mean "ugly" or "evil" and *kha* (from *ikkha*) to mean "look," then this aspect has the meaning "once seen, it is ugly." When one really sees it, it's abhorrent and repulsive. The meaning of this aspect of *dukkham* is that the more we observe it, the uglier it gets; the deeper we see, the more repulsive it becomes. No matter what group of *sankhāras* is observed, it will grow more disgusting as we see more deeply into its impermanence, into the illusion of those *sankhāras*. This feeling of hate or repulsion is one more side of *dukkham*.

When we say that all compounded things (*sankhāras*) are *dukkham*, it means that all *sankhāras* when they are seen in their naked truth are repulsive. In what way are they repulsive? They are repulsive in their

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impermanence, in their violent change with every mind moment, and in their condition which deludes us into mistaking them for permanent substances. Simultaneously, the condition of suffering is thrown and poured in without pause, or let up for the owner of any particular *sankhára*, as explained above. Thus, we should see to what degree all *sankhāras* are repulsive, when we examine them with mindfulness and wisdom, not with the closed eyes and ears of our defilements and desires.

In summary, we can say that the condition of impermanence (*aniccaṃ*) is the condition of "once seen, it's ugly." The more we look and the more we see, the more disgusting and repulsive it is. Therefore, we can say that the conditions of impermanence and "once seen, it's ugly" are gathered together in the same things, that is, in all *sankhāras*. When speaking about impermanence, repulsiveness is also meant. When speaking of repulsiveness, impermanence is implied. Here, then, is a second implication of the word "*dukkhaṃ*."

C. *Dukkhaṃ* as "Uglily Void, Wickedly Empty": By separating the components of *dukkhaṃ* and taking *du* to mean "ugly" and *khaṃ* to mean "void, empty," we arrive at the meaning "uglily void." The condition we call "wickedly empty" refers to the fact that all *sankhāras* have nothing but impermanence, namely, swiftly flowing, endless spirals of change. We can go so far as to say that in these *sankhāras* there is only impermanence and change, that is, the flow of change is itself these things. Besides this, we can't find any abiding substance within them. Consequently, all *sankhāras* have only this condition of being "uglily empty." However, such a meaning of *dukkhaṃ* as this broadens to include *anattá*.¹⁴ Therefore, we will consider it in detail in connection with the fact that when impermanence is seen, then *anattá* must be seen. (To be discussed subsequently.) Here we simply intend to point out that even this third meaning of *dukkhaṃ* is included in the word "*aniccaṃ*," because impermanence

¹⁴ This voidness or emptiness is synonymous with *suññatá*.

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is thoroughly void. There is only this change which stops for nothing.

Thus, within impermanence there are three conditions: the state of suffering, the state of "once seen, it is ugly," and the state of "ugly void." These are gathered together fully in the same place and at the same moment. In order to realize impermanence genuinely, one must clearly and unavoidably see these three conditions within it. Therefore, we ought to say that when we see impermanence, we without a doubt see *dukkhaṃ*, also. This explains why the Buddha spoke only of impermanence, and not *dukkhaṃ*, in this fourth tetrad of *ánápánasati*. The reason is that *dukkhaṃ* is included within impermanence in such a way that the two cannot be separated.

CONTEMPLATING ANATTÁ

Now we'll consider how it is that we find *anattá* included within *aniccaṃ*. The characteristic of impermanence naturally indicates for the most part the characteristic of not-self, that is, and the fact that impermanent things are illusory and have no abiding substance. Characteristics such as these fully demonstrate the voidness of self that we call "*suññatā*." This is the essence of the fact that impermanence demonstrates not-self within itself. Thus, it isn't necessary to say that because of impermanence there is *anattá*. The truth is already apparent that impermanent things have no real substance, that their real nature is merely the flow of change. This is the first point. Now we can further examine according to various implications of the word "*anattá*." We will consider four of them.

A. *Anattá* Because There is Nothing Independent of Causes and Conditions: There is no independent self. Impermanent things are dependent on the factors which have conditioned them. Or from another angle, each thing is only the causal factor for the further conditioning of that other thing which is next in the line of successions. This demonstrates that all things

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fall under the power of this natural law; they change endlessly, alternately being causes and conditions for each other. According to this view, *anattá* is a further aspect of impermanence. It is the continual change -- according to the Law of Change -- of all causes and conditions. Each of these must always have the conditions of arising, existing, and ceasing within themselves. Whenever they halt or change, that is the end of their being "selves" or lasting substances. In summary, there is *anattá*, because there is only the impermanence of the things which are causes and conditions.

B. *Anattá* Because Uncontrollable: This point aims at change, once again, which no one can control. Furthermore, its meaning encompasses the various aspects of *dukkhañ* which arise out of the uncontrollability of change. Ordinarily, we humans want to be free of *dukkha*, but we are not in control and *dukkha* naturally arises out of impermanence. This uncontrollability of things is based in impermanence. Thus, impermanence is the complete and sole cause of *anattá*. When there is awareness of the fact of non-control, the awareness of *dukkhañ* and impermanence comes up immediately. It's the same as when we're burnt and feel pain; we feel the fire's heat simultaneously. There is no way to separate them.

C. *Anattá* Because Ownerless: Things are ownerless because theirs is the condition of being things whose owners cannot be found and because nobody is able to own them. Again, this is due to the power of impermanence which answers to no one and simply changes unremittingly. Its reality is such that nobody can make himself its owner. Even one who has so much power that we suppose him to be God is unable to own impermanence. Rather, this thing holds God within its power, which is to say that God is impermanent. *Aniccañ* has the "right" and the power to be like this, to refuse all would-be owners. It is the same as *anattá*, only different in name and spelling. As for reality, *aniccañ* and *anattá* refer to the same thing -- refusal to have an owner.

D. The General Meaning of *Anattā*: This meaning refers to the fact of having the characteristic of being in conflict with or opposing *attā* (self, soul), which is the meaning which summarizes all the other meanings as well as the way to verify them. By "all of these meanings," we mean all the features of *aniccaṃ* and *dukkhaṃ* which have been explained in this chapter. In this respect there are the definitions:

1. if something is *attā*, then it is permanent and pleasant;
2. if something is both impermanent and *dukkhaṃ*, then it is *anattā*.

When the facts are such, it is clearly assured within themselves that *anattatā* (selflessness) is impermanence and *dukkhaṃ*, or that being *anattā* is equivalent to being impermanent and painful. Therefore, all *sankhāras*, which are without exception made up of impermanence and *dukkhaṃ*, are fully *anattā*. Observing and realizing the selflessness of all compounded things is the same as realizing the impermanence and *dukkhaṃ* of them all. Or, to put it the other way, when seeing the impermanence of all *sankhāras*, we must also see their *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā*. We cannot avoid doing so. Thus, the short two-word phrase "seeing impermanence" naturally points further to seeing the impermanence of all *sankhāras* and seeing them in their character of being unavoidably painful and not-self as well.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Although the Lord Buddha spoke only the words "*aniccānupassī*" (the contemplation of impermanence), the heart of the matter in itself points to larger implications. First, see the impermanence of all conditioned things, because there is no impermanence for us to see in that which is unconditioned. Second, see impermanence according to *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā*, for they are the constant, eternal conditions of all impermanent things. For these reasons, the Lord Buddha only spoke of impermanence without needing to mention *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā* by name in this fourth and final

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tetrad of *ánápánasati*. Therefore, we should understand that this thirteenth lesson aims at the *tilakkhapa* (three inherent characteristics) or *sámaññalakkhapa* (universal characteristics) fully, in accordance with the facts explained above.

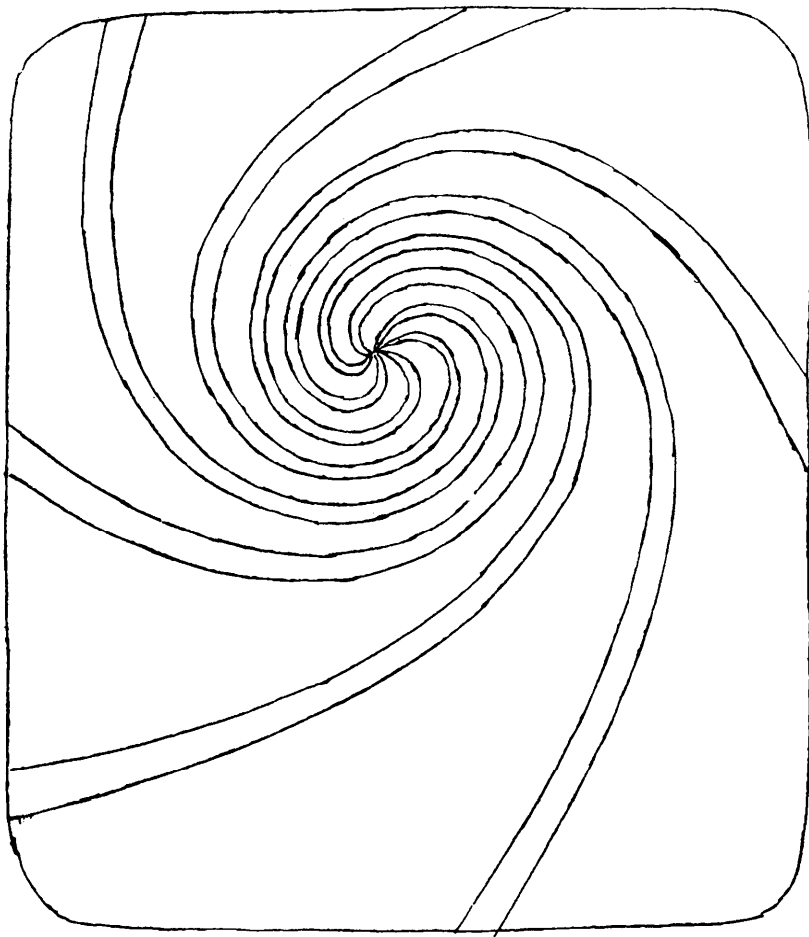
The practitioner of *ánápánasati* has a practical way for seeing the impermanence of all *sankháras*. Impermanence appears from the very beginning of the practice and through each succeeding step. The breaths are *sankháras*. The mind and mindfulness (*sati*) which attend to the breathing are *sankháras*. The various objects and images which appear from stage to stage are *sankháras*. The *vedaná*, such as *píti* and *sukha* which arise out of concentration on the breathing, are *sankháras*. The *nivaraṇas* (hindrances) are *sankháras*. The factors of *jhána* and every level of *jhána* are *sankháras*. The various *dhammas* which are gathered or integrated (*samodhána*) in that moment are *sankháras*.¹⁵ Even the scrutiny itself is a *sankhára*. The fact that the scrutiny changes is a *sankhára*, too. All the *dhammas* which are being investigated as the objects of each stage and level of the meditation are purely *sankháras*. For these reasons, we have the opportunity to note impermanence (which include *dukkha*-ness and *anatata* fully within it) in every step of *ánápánasati*. And in each step there are many ways in which we can investigate it, depending on how we will choose to do so. However, we can summarize the ways to contemplate in the following categories: contemplate some groups of *sankháras* as the objects of experience (external *áyatanas*); contemplate some groups of *sankháras* as the experiencers (internal *áyatanas*) of the objects; and contemplate some groups of *sankháras* as the conditions

¹⁵ The integration of *dhammas*, generally given as twenty-nine, is explained in detail in the chapter concerning lesson five ("experiencing *píti*"). "In the moment when the meditator is breathing in and out with clear comprehension of the *vedaná* as being impermanent, painful, and not-self, the mind attains to twenty-nine different *dhammas* (virtues, qualities). In other words, all these things can be found in the mind in that moment.

for a continual concocting, one after the other, of new things -- for example, concentrating on a *nimitta* (imaginary image) brings up the factors of *jhāna* -- that is, as dependent origination. Altogether, there are these three categories. In this way, our contemplation of *sankhāras* is comprehensive and complete. Further, in seeing impermanence, painfulness and not-self are seen fully, as explained above. Practicing in this way makes it unnecessary to wander aimlessly outside the framework of *ānāpānasati* meditation which is a comprehensive contemplation of all *sankhāras*, since it contemplates the realities of these natural things rather than just contemplating the names of things as is done in the schools. No matter how much people contemplate in that way, it will never be enough. The results will be no better than contemplating nothing at all.

When the practitioner contemplates the impermanence of any one of the conditioned things which appear during the development of *ānāpānasati*, there will naturally be penetration into the facts of *aniccaṃ*, *dukkhaṃ*, and *anattā* which is profound enough to lead to genuine *nibbidā* (disenchantment) and *virāga* (fading away) for the practice of the following lesson. When there is this realization, in the way we have explained, which is a seeing of *aniccaṃ* more profound and clear than in previous steps of *ānāpānasati*, one will likewise be able to induce the twenty-nine *dharmas* to a higher and more refined degree than in the previous steps, which puts the meditation of this step on a higher level. This lesson is classified as *dharmānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* (the foundation of mindfulness which is contemplation of Dhamma), because Dhamma has been contemplated rather than the breath, feelings, or mind, as in earlier tetrads. This ends our examination of the thirteenth lesson of *ānāpānasati*. Next, we will examine the fourteenth lesson.¹⁶

¹⁶ The translation of the following chapter will appear in the next *Evolution/Liberation*.



DAWNING OF LEGACIES

WE WOULD LEAVE WITH YOU

PART I: LEGACIES MATERIAL AND CEREMONIAL

Legacy 1: Everyone can be a Buddhadasa (Servant of the Buddha), if one wants to with a pure heart, just serve in the propagation of Buddhism by setting an example in practice and living happily that others may see, until they follow along.

Legacy 19: The Literary Works: the Dhamma Proclamation Series, From His Own Lips Series, Floating Lotus Series, and Turning of the Dhamma Wheel Series: may we leave them as memorial legacies of a poetic mind which has released them with the greatest care into the Sea of Dhamma -- the hearts of all you Good People throughout the land -- for them to thrive in the reservoir of that Dhamma Sea for unending time.

Legacy 31: The Mahápadesa (Great Standards) concerning Dhamma, from the Maháparinibbána Sutta¹, are things we must use together with the Gotami Sutta's² principles for judging Dhamma-Vinaya in order to decide what is most rightly and completely correct. Such clarification is most needed by modern Buddhists, whose troubles are increasing day by day. This approach has already been used with excellent results, so we ask to leave it as a legacy to be used further.

Legacy 32: "Humming Dependent Origination"³ is taught in a way easier to understand and

¹ Digha-Nikáya, Sutta 16.

² Saṃyutta-Nikáya, Saḷáyatana-saṃyutta, Yogakkhema-vagga.

³ The dependent origination which begins with a sense organ and sense object interacting, due to which sense-consciousness arises. The three meeting together are contact. From there the stream of concocting brews up into *dukkha*.

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practice than the usual formula. You ought to understand this form first, then examine the usual one. In either case, the practice is the same: be mindful at *phassa*. (You can find the details in *Dependent Origination From His Own Lips*.)⁴

Legacy 39: "Beauty in the corpse, goodness in giving up, the monk in truth, *nibbána* in dying before death." We have dusted off and recycled these antiques in order to preserve the intelligence of our ancestors, to show how sharp, direct, and profound their understanding was, and so that their children and grandchildren will have no less *satipaññá* than our ancestors and will fully live up to the meaning of *Buddha-parisa* (those who accompany the Buddha) by not locking away *nibbána* so that they must die over and over for thousands and millions of lives before getting any results. Please help to preserve this legacy of our ancestors.

Legacy 41: Even if all the people in the world disagree about bringing Dhamma into the world because they think it's impossible, that's their decision. We alone ought to make ourself quench all misery and pain with Dhamma that's up to the mark. Don't be disappointed that so few people are interested in Dhamma.

PART II: LEGACIES SPIRITUAL (FOR SATI-PAÑÑÁ)

Legacy 45: The Buddha in the view of most individuals usually becomes a Himalayan mountain range which blocks the Dhamma for them because theirs is the Buddha of *upádána*, the Buddha according to their own attachments. Thus one ought rightly to understand the real Buddha.

Legacy 47: He said, "Whether in the past or now, we teach only the matters of *dukkha* and the

⁴ Being translated for *Evolution/Liberation*.

remainderless quenching of *dukkha*." Thus we had better not waste any more time in studying, questioning, and debating matters other than these two.

Legacy 49: Having the Buddha, The Dhamma, and The Sangha which are concocted according to personal views creates many problems but does not even touch the real Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, whose heart is cleanness, clarity, and calm through being void of any whiff or trace of "Me!" and "Mine!"

Legacy 50: *Saiyasástra* is the Creed of Sleeping (through *avijjá*), *Buddhasástra* is the Creed of Awakening from Sleep (through *vijjá*). So be careful of activities concerning Buddha images and amulets, for there are those which are *Buddhasástra* and those which are *Saiyasástra*, depending on whether that person acts with *vijjá* or with *avijjá* and *upádána*.

Legacy 51: The true principles of practice need not extend over the kind of lifetimes which end in coffins. They are exclusively *sandiṭṭhiko* and *akáliko*, that is, immediately apparent to the mind that acts and receives the results of the actions. The later aspects are just material by-products experienced by ordinary Thicksters.

Legacy 52: The thing which is called "self" is merely an illusion (*máyá*), that is, merely a sensation that arises in the mind which is concocted by *taphá*, the desire influenced by *avijjá*, through which it appears in the mind naturally and automatically. It is merely a misperception by the thing called "*upádána*" which comes from *taphá*. It is not a real self, but is only a sensation blowing hot and cold, yet with an intensity which the experienter feels to be "self."

Legacy 53: Distinguishing four understandings of Dhamma makes a comprehensive study of Dhamma convenient: know Nature itself, the Law of Nature, Duty according to the Natural Law, and the

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Fruits which come from practicing that Duty, until able to live life in harmony with nature and without any problems.

Legacy 54: "Natural Truth" has many meanings, but its essence is the Duty to be performed correctly regarding the practitioner's situation, according to the Law of Nature, leading to peace for everyone no matter the time or place.

Legacy 55: All of the Dhammas to be practiced may be categorized into two kinds: Dhamma tools and Dhamma objectives. *Sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* are Dhamma tools; *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* are Dhamma objectives. The Dhamma tools can be divided further into two kinds: primary Dhammas such as the four *sati-paṭṭhāna*, and the supplementary Dhammas, such as, the four *iddhipāda*, and the four *sammāppadhana*. Know the Dhammas to be used in practice correctly according to the circumstances.

Legacy 56: You ought to turn every piece and particle of your work into Dhamma through *satisampajañña*, aware that duty itself is Dhamma, doing duty alone is practicing Dhamma. Then you will have Dhamma with you in all movements, at all times, in all places. All your work will be as enjoyable as playing sports. Already happy in the moments you work, you need not indulge in pleasure houses, night life, and addictions.

Legacy 57: Dhamma is the thing called, in English, the "Duty of all living things," that which they must do to survive both physically and mentally, both for their own sake and for society's. Even when translating this word as "teaching," "learning," or "practice," the important understanding is still in its being the duty of salvation. Whenever duty is done, that is Dhamma practice.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF ENGAGED BUDDHISTS

I recently attended the Third Annual Meeting of INEB. "Members" (so far, membership is informal) came from eleven Asian countries and six Western countries: lay men and women, monks, and one nun (from Japan). This very loose and egalitarian group is gradually developing a solid membership of committed people. It is clarifying its purpose, and learning what it can and cannot do. What follows is a brief and incomplete report which mentions only a few of the things learned at the meeting.

The aim of INEB is to bring all forms of Buddhist practice into more direct relationship with the problems of our modern world. Unfortunately, there is a lot of *dukkha* going around and around. If Dhamma practitioners can't help solve the problems, it is doubtful that anyone will, let alone corrupt and ignorant governments. Those of us who are finding more freedom and peace through Dhamma practice are asking: What is my responsibility towards the suffering of others? How can I "help" without doing more damage to myself and others?

Allow me to give a brief run down on some major problems, told us by people directly involved, and ways little people like us can do a little good (*puñña*).

CAMBODIA continues to be ravaged by war and heartless political leaders who care only for power. Many governments continue to send in weapons, although they claim they do not. The Khmer Rouge is gaining strength, with direct help from the US and others. The Khmer Rouge use "humanitarian aid" (which is denied the Phnom Pehn regime) to build up and extend their power base. Ordinary Khmers are ignored, except when they are to be tortured or shot. Each day innocent children and adults have legs, arms, stomachs, eyes, and other precious life blown off or out by land mines.

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What can you do? Write to the non-partisan Coalition for Peace & Reconciliation, P.O. Box 1, Sanam Pao, Bangkok 10406, Thailand for information. Support them in their work to bring about a non-violent resolution to the war. Contact the people who represent you in your national government. Write to them asking what is being done to resolve the Cambodian War. Can your government certify that it is not aiding the warring factions, especially the Khmer Rouge?

BURMA remains in the hands of a brutal military regime (SLORC), the same people who turned SE Asia's richest country into the poorest. Despite a massive election victory by the "opposition," SLORC refuses to allow the legally elected government to take up their duties. SLORC has become so flagrant in its corruption and violence that monks in many cities have followed a stipulation in the monastic discipline by which they do not accept alms from the military. This boycott is supported by a large majority of Burmese monks. Although this boycott is proper in the Theravada Buddhist tradition, the military has accused the monks of being terrorists (for not accepting food!), has forcibly disrobed hundreds since the boycott began, and has murdered dozens of the monks. To make matters worse, SLORC has been stockpiling modern weapons. These are purchased from countries like China with money earned for them by Western (especially Japanese) companies exploiting Burma's natural resources. With modern weapons the government destroys large areas of forest in order to smoke out freedom fighters. Along with the guerillas, innocent ethnic peoples lose their homes.

What can you do? Find out if your country is supporting SLORC directly or indirectly. Write to your elected national representatives. Are any of your companies doing business in Burma? What kind? Let them know you disapprove. You can support the All Burma Young Monks Union, particularly those monks who have been forced into the jungle, through INEB (address below). They need funds for shelter and medicine.

SRI LANKA suffers under an oppressive rule masquerading as a Buddhist government. It is sad that people will commit crimes in the name of Dhamma, but it is happening. Still, there are many Sri Lankans, both Tamil and Singhalese, who are risking their lives to help others and bring peace to a former paradise.

What can you do? Insist that your government pressure the Sri Lankan government to follow its own laws and respect all human rights for all its citizens. You might want to support -- through INEB -- the work of a network of monks who are working to protect lives, forests, and truth. Also, the Dhammacedi Institute plans to open a school for Tamil and Singhalese children to learn the mutual understanding their elders lack. Books, supplies, and funds are needed.

Then there is the Persian Gulf War. As one friend commented, "*upádánakkhandhas* all over the place," which means selfishness. The selfishness on different sides may take different forms, but we can be certain that Dhamma, justice, love, and peace are missing in all the decision makers, though perhaps not in the unfortunate men and women, military and civilian, who pay the actual price of the war. Send *mettá* to them all. After meditating, spend some time thinking what you can do to end the senseless violence, fear, and hatred.

There isn't space here to mention all the troubles in Tibet, Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts, India's Untouchable community, American cities, Bangkok brothels, and the world's rapidly disappearing forests. Nor is there time to describe what dedicated people of all religions are doing to nurture a peaceful, just, and friendly world. May we all join them and create the conditions for inner and outer peace.

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For more information on these issues:

Amnesty International
(find your local or national chapters)

Asia Watch
1522 K St. NW, Suite 910, Washington, DC 20005
USA

Buddhist Peace Fellowship (USA)
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704 USA
(415) 548-3735

Australia BPF
P.O. Box 368
Lismore 2480, NSW
Australia

Cultural Survival Quarterly
11 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
USA

Greenpeace
1436 4th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
USA

**International Campaign
for Tibet**
1511 K Street NW, Suite 739
Washington, DC 20005 USA

INEB
117 Fuang Nakhon Road
Bangkok 10200
Thailand

Peace Brigades International
Woolman Hill, Keets Road
Deerfield, MA, USA
(413) 773- 9738

PBI (Deutsche-Schweiz)
c/o Ueli Wildberger
Agnesstrasse 25
8004 Zurich, Switzerland
Tel. 01 242 2059

**Int'l Fellowship of
Reconciliation**

Spoorstraat 38
1815 BK Alkmaar
The Netherlands
Tel. (31-72) 12 30 14.

Please do whatever you can to help our poor, sad world.

Santikaro Bhikkhu

NEWS & DATES

The Buddha-Dhamma Meditation Center in Hinsdale, Illinois (southwest suburb of Chicago) has invited Santikaro Bhikkhu to lead a retreat there. The format will be much like the retreats at Suan Mokkh. Dates are April 7 - 14. For details call (708) 789-8866.

The Christian-Buddhist Meditation Retreat mentioned in the last issue was a success. A mixed group of Thais and foreigners, Christians, Buddhists, Jews, and others attended. We would like to do another one in late 1991, perhaps in North America. If it happens, The Benedictine Priory in Montreal, (514) 849-2728, will have information around September.

INTERNATIONAL DHARMA HERMITAGE

Monthly retreats continue at "Suan Mokkh International." In fact, the January & February 2534 courses were filled to overflowing, and then some. Unfortunately, many people had to be turned away. It's hard to say what will happen in future months. Perhaps the insanity and selfishness in the Persian Gulf will begin to affect the number of people who come here, perhaps not. If however we continue to have so many applicants, you will need to arrive two or three days in advance to get a place. The day before the retreat begins is no longer soon enough. At this time, it is not possible to make reservations.

We have been experimenting with the layout of the courses. We are trying to have as many of the lectures as possible in the early days, in order to have quieter and more intensive meditation the rest of the retreat. The result is a more rigorous course. Discipline regarding silence, the schedule, practice, and precepts is being strengthened. To balance this, we are making more use of the natural facilities. Of course, these changes will continue to change in unforeseeable ways.

BOOKS & THINGS

THE LIFE & WORK OF BUDDHADASA BHIKKHU

The Foundation For Children's video documentary is available in English (script by Santikaro Bhikkhu). It lasts 25 mins. and comes in the NTSC coding system. The price is about US\$25.00. You can order it from: Foundation For Children, 1492/3 Chareon Nakorn Road, Klongsarn, Bangkok 10600, Thailand. Tel: 437-7201, 437-4318.

books

MINDFULNESS WITH BREATHING, tr. Santikaro Bhikkhu

Ajahn Buddhadasa discusses the system of meditation taught & practiced by the Buddha. All aspects of this comprehensive practice are discussed, with an emphasis on practice rather than theory. (1989) 170 pp., \$7.00

BUDDHA-DHAMMA FOR STUDENTS, tr. Roderick Bucknell

An excellent aid for sorting out what Buddhism is really about. In Question & Answer format, Ajahn Buddhadasa explores the basic issues of Buddhism: suffering & its quenching, clinging & non-clinging, *kamma*, ego & voidness, void-mind, the awakened being, and *nibbana*. (1988) 82 pp., \$4.00

KEYS TO NATURAL TRUTH, various translators

Five articles help us to distinguish the spiritual essence of the Buddha's teaching from cultural and superstitious additions. (1988) 155 pp., \$7.00

HANDBOOK FOR MANKIND, tr. Roderick Bucknell

An overview of all that Buddhism offers humanity. Tan Ajahn Buddhadasa shows how Buddhism responds to human fear, especially of suffering, with a practical system of understanding and discipline. (1989) 126 pp., \$5.00

You may order the above books directly from:

Mr. Niti Issaranititham
309/49 Moo 2
Vibhavadi Rangsit Road
Thung Hong Song, Bang Khen
Bangkok 10210, THAILAND

You may also contact him for the Group's expanding catalogue.

Wisdom Publications in Boston, USA is raising funds to publish *Heartwood From The Bodhi Tree: The Essential Teachings of Buddhism. Practical Dependent Origination* (published in 1986 as *Dependent Origination*) will be ready soon. Also expected this year is a completely reworked edition of *Christianity & Buddhism*.

WISDOM PUBLICATIONS carries all of these books in their catalogue and will pick up our future publications as well. You can order these books from their following addresses:

UK (& Europe): 23 Dering St.; London W1.
Tel: (01) 499 0925

USA: 361 Newbury Street, 4th Fl.; Boston,
MA 02115. Tel: (617) 536-3358.

Australia¹: PO Box 1326; Chatswood NSW 2067.

Another address of interest is that of our good friends at The Buddha-Dhamma Meditation Center outside of Chicago (8910 S. Kingery Highway, Hinsdale, IL 60521, USA). They distribute a large number of Ajahn Buddhadasa's tapes throughout the USA. These include tapes in Thai, Thai with English translation, & English only (Thai edited out). They also carry tapes by other speakers, including some from Suan Mokkh, in English and Thai. There is a not-for-profit service (donations are welcome).

¹ We aren't sure if their Australian office has got the books in stock yet. They need encouragement.

GLOSSARY

ánápánasatī, mindfulness with breathing in and out: the only meditation or *vipassanā* system expressly taught by the Buddha; it covers all four foundations of mindfulness and perfects the seven factors of awakening, leading to liberation.

aniccaṃ, impermanent, (or *aniccatā*, impermanence), flux, instability: conditioned things are ever-changing, constantly arising, and ceasing.

anattá, not-self: the fact that all things, without exception and including *nibbāna*, are not-self and lack any essence or substance that could properly be called a "self." This fact does not deny the existence of things, but denies that they can be owned or controlled, that they can be the owner or controller, in any but a relative, conventional sense.

anupassanā, contemplation, spiritual experience: following up and penetrating more deeply into an insight. Sustained, non-verbal, non-reactive, even-minded scrutiny of a *dhamma*.

Arahant, the fully awakened and perfected human being wherein there is no possibility of ego and selfishness occurring.

ariyasacca, noble truth: truth which frees one from enemies, namely, defilements and *dukkha*. Usually expressed in the fourfold formula: the noble truths of *dukkha*, of the origin of *dukkha*, of the quenching of *dukkha*, and of the practice leading to the quenching of *dukkha*. Although the traditional formula is fourfold, "Truth is but One, there is no second."

atman, Sanskrit equivalent of *attá*.

attá, self, soul: while many religions teach that there is some essence in life which persists from

moment to moment, which is "me" or "mine," Buddhism recognizes that all things are not-*attá*.

avijjá, ignorance, not-knowing, wrong knowledge, foolishness: the lack, partial or total, of *vijjá* (correct knowledge) regarding the things that need to be known (the four noble truths, impermanence and *anattá*, dependent origination), as well as knowing things in the wrong way, i.e., as being permanent, satisfying, and self.

āyatana, senses, sense media, "experiencibles": most commonly, the inner *āyatanas* (sense organs, including the mind-sense) and outer *āyatanas* (sense objects, including those of the mind). Also, applied to the *arūpajhānas* in that they are objects of experience. Lastly, *nibbána* is called an "*āyatana*" in that it can be experienced.

bhikkhu, "one who sees the danger of the world": one who has left home to undertake the spiritual life within the Buddha's training (*Dhamma-Vinaya*).

brahmacariya, the Sublime Life: living life on the highest level, the noble eightfold path.

citta, mind, heart: all aspects of the living being which are not material-physical, namely, the four mental *khandhas*. *Citta* is what "thinks," can be defiled by *kilesa*, can be developed, and can realize *nibbána*.

dhamma, thing, nature, natural thing: all things, without any exception, mental and physical, conditioned and unconditioned, are *dhammas*.

Dhamma, Truth, Nature, Law, Natural Truth, Duty, Order, "the way things are": this impossible to translate word has many meanings, the most important of which are Nature, the Law of Nature, our Duty according to Natural Law, and the Fruits of doing that Duty correctly according to Natural Law.

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dhātu, "elements" or "natural essences": everything is and is composed of nothing but naturally occurring "elements."

dukkha, pain, suffering, misery, dissatisfaction: the spiritual dilemma of human beings. In its experiential sense, *dukkha* is the quality of experience that results when the mind is concocted by *avijjā* into desire, attachment, egoism, and selfishness. This feeling takes on forms -- from the crudest to the most subtle levels -- such as disappointment, dissatisfaction, frustration, agitation, anguish, dis-ease, despair. (See p. 70 ff.)

jhāna, peering, contemplation, absorption, meditation: one-pointed focus of the mind on an object to develop tranquility or on impermanence for the sake of insight. There are two kinds: *rūpajhāna*, the *jhānas* dependent on the forms of material objects, mental absorption into objects of finer materiality; and *arūpajhāna*, the four *jhānas* dependent on immaterial or formless objects.

kāma, sexuality, sensuality, sex.

kamma, action, (Sanskrit, *karma*): actions of body, speech, and mind caused by wholesome and unwholesome volitions. Bad intentions and actions bring bad results, good intentions and actions bring good results. Even good *kamma* is *dukkha*, so the Buddha taught the *kamma which ends all good and bad kamma*, namely, the noble eightfold path.

kamma-vipāka, result of action, *kamma*-fruit: the happiness and sadness arising from "good" and "bad" intentions.

khandha, aggregates, heaps, groups: the five sub-systems or basic functions which constitute the human being. These groups are not entities in themselves, they are merely categories into which all aspects of our lives can be analyzed. None of them are "self," "of self," "in self," or "my self"; they

have nothing to do with "selfhood" and there is no "self" apart from them. When they attach or are attached to the five are known as the "*upádána-khandha*" (aggregates of attachment). *Nibbána* is the only thing not covered by the five *khandha*. (See p. 66 f.)

kilesa, things which cloud and pollute the mind: greed, lust, anger, hatred, fear, worry, excitement, envy, confusion, guilt, etc..

natthikadiṭṭhi, nihilism: the belief that nothing exists.

nibbána, coolness, quenching: the Absolute, the Supreme, the Ultimate Reality in Buddhism; the "goal" of Buddhist practice and highest potential of humanity. *Nibbána* manifests when the fires of attachment, defilement, and *dukkha* are cooled. When they are permanently cooled, *nibbána* manifests perfectly, totally, timelessly. Not a place, not even a state of mind, for *nibbána* is neither mental nor physical, but a *dhamma* the mind can realize and experience. To be realized in this life.

nirattá, "no self": the misunderstanding that nothing exists, not even the things which are *anattá*.

paccaya, condition: something needed for the existence of something else.

paññá, wisdom, insight, intuitive understanding: correct seeing, knowing, and understanding of the things we must know in order to quench *dukkha*. The various terms used for "knowing" are not meant to express an intellectual activity, although the intellect has its role. The emphasis is on direct, intuitive, non-conceptual comprehending of life as it is here and now.

parami, ten virtues traditionally believed to be developed and perfected over countless lifetimes and on which depend our spiritual chances in this life.

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pañicca-samuppāda, dependent origination, conditioned arising: the profound and detailed causal succession, and its description, which concocts *dukkha*. (See p. 47 ff. for details.)

samādhi, concentration, collectedness: secure establishment of the mind, the gathering together of the mental flow. Proper *samādhi* has the qualities of purity, clarity, stability, calmness, readiness, and gentleness. It is perfected in one-pointedness (*ekagattā*) and *jhāna*. The supreme *samādhi* is the one-pointed mind with *nibbāna* as its sole concern.

sammadiññhi, right understanding, right view: any knowledge regarding the four noble truths is the start of right understanding, which is perfected in full realization of the noble truths.

sañjatanāna, instincts: knowledge we are born with, as opposed to the things we learn during life.

sankhāra-dhammas, concocted things, conditioned things: things which exist dependent on other things, impermanently, and subject to the Law of Nature.

sassatadiññhi, eternalism: the belief that there is an eternal soul which survives death.

sati, mindfulness, attention, recall: the mind's ability to know and observe itself. In Thai, *sati* can be rendered as "recall" or "recollection." This is a sense of *sati* which is often overlooked. The awareness recalls or brings back wisdom. This recall is not the same as memory for it does not recall concepts or beliefs, but intuitive wisdom which is experienced rather than thought.

satipaññhāna, the four foundations of mindfulness: the four bases on which *sati* must be established in mental development. We investigate life through these four subjects of spiritual study: contemplation of body (in bodies); contemplation of feeling

(in feelings); contemplation of mind (in mind states); and contemplation of Dhamma (in *dhammas*).

atva, being.

ikkhá, training.

síla, normality, morality, right conduct: verbal and bodily action in line with Dhamma, the way of living in society which is truly peaceful. Much more than following rules or precepts, true *síla* comes from wisdom and is undertaken joyfully.

sukha, happiness, joy, bliss.

suññatá, voidness: all things, without any exception, are void of "self" and "belonging to self," are void and free of "I" and "mine." Voidness is an inherent quality or characteristic of everything, including "Ultimate Reality," "God," and *nibbána*. Voidness also refers to the mind which is free of attachment, which is void of greed, anger, and delusion. *Nibbána* is the "supreme voidness," free and void of *attá* and *attanfyá*, void of ignorance, desire, attachment, ego, defilement, and *dukkha*.

sutta, discourse: literally, "thread," the term is used, in Theravada Buddhism, for discourses attributed to the Buddha and certain disciples.

tathatá, thusness, suchness: the fact of being merely thus; being free of this and that, positive and negative, and all other dualities.

upádaná, attachment, clinging, grasping: to hold onto something foolishly, to regard things as "I" and "mine," to take things personally. Not the things attached to, but the lustful-satisfaction (*chandarága*) regarding them.

vedaná, feeling: the mental reaction to or coloring of sense experience (*phassa*). Feeling comes in three forms: pleasant or agreeable, unpleasant or pain-

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ful, and indeterminate, neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant. *Vedaná* is a mental factor and should not be confused with physical sensations. This primitive activity of mind is not emotion, which is far more complex and involves thought, or the more complicated aspects of the English "feeling."

viññāpa, consciousness: knowing sense objects through the six doors (eyes, ears, etc.). The most basic mental activity required for participation in the sensual world (*loka*), without it there is no experience.

vipassaná, insight, seeing clearly: to see directly into the true nature of things, i.e., impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self; dependent origination, thusness, and voidness. *Vipassaná* popularly means mental development practiced for the sake of insight. In such cases, the theory and technique of particular practices must not be confused with actual experience of impermanence.



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THAILAND

ADDRESSEE:

"All things ought not to be attached to as I or mine."

"All Buddhas say that *Nibbana* is the Supreme Thing."

"In the past, as well as now, I teach only *dukkha* and *dukkha's* quenching."