

The Three Existences, Part 2 of 4

DEPENDENT ORIGINATION IS THE BASIS OF THE THREE EXISTENCES

by Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

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In the late 80s and early 90s, until his health deteriorated too much, Ajahn Buddhadāsa gave regular lectures during the monthly international retreats held at Suan Mokkh and then Suan Mokkh International Dharma Hermitage. Usually, Ajahn spoke in Thai and Santikaro Bhikkhu interpreted into English live. All Ajahn's teachings are now available on:

www.suanmokkh.org,

<https://soundcloud.com/buddhadasa> and

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Today, we will speak about Dependent Origination, which in the Pāli language is known as *patīccasamuppāda*. This matter of Dependent Origination demonstrates how *bhava* or existence, which we spoke about yesterday, how it arises, how it can be managed, and how it quenches or ends. We ought to consider this matter as being a Law of Nature, a fundamental principle or the fundamental principle of nature. When speaking most broadly or universally, we speak of this law as *idappaccayatā*, which means conditionality. When we speak a bit more specifically about sentient being, conscious being which feels pleasure and pain, then we call this law “*patīccasamuppāda*” or “Dependent Origination.” We can look at this principle as being the cosmic law. However, what is most relevant to our own life is to approach it as Dependent Origination, that this law as it's applied to creatures which feel, which experience pleasure and pain, happiness and dissatisfaction. This is what is most relevant to our own life. It's a very difficult and profound matter. It's so difficult that at first after awakening to this Law, the Buddha thought that it wasn't possible to teach us. But then he considered carefully and understood that there were some people, some beings who could understand this law and so he decided to teach it, to find the best way of teaching it. And in the end, he decided it was worthwhile that if taught properly, some people would understand, and this would make the effort worthwhile.

This Law of Dependent Origination is what the great awakening of the Buddha was about – the realization of this law. And the Buddha taught solely this Law of Dependent Origination. This is so central in Buddhism that the Buddha said effectively, “whoever sees Dependent Origination, sees me.” To truly see the Buddha means we must see Dependent Origination. It's said if the Buddha was still living now so that we could meet and know him because it's always possible

for us to see and understand this Law just as if the Buddha was still here to teach us. And so, we take this principle of Dependent Origination as being the heart of Buddhism. So, this law of Buddhism will enable us to know ourselves, to know our own lives to the degree that we will have no more problems. But here today, we especially want to examine Dependent Origination to see how it can eliminate the *dukkha*, the pain that arises from the three kinds of existence which we discussed yesterday.

We need to see this fact of Dependent Origination as if it were some material objects which we hold in our hand, right in front of us. We need to see it in such a tangible way although it is something immaterial. It's not a physical matter but a spiritual one. We need to tangibly experience the fact that obvious constant flow or stream. Dependent origination is a stream that's flowing throughout our lives, but it flows in a circle. It's constantly recycle, so we need to experience this fact of this stream of cycle (of circle) as it happens in our lives right now.

In every cycle, there are twelve things or twelve conditions and each condition supports and promotes the next one. So, the first promotes the second and then those promote the next which promotes the next, stage by stage, step by step. We need to see this flowing cycle in these twelve aspects or these twelve conditions which arise supported by the previous one. And these twelve are linked or joined by eleven aspects of this promoting of the power of concocting. So there're the 12 objects or things, the twelve conditions and then the eleven activities of conditioning which link them. One's always promoting the next. This flows on endlessly in cycle.

Among those twelve things or conditions, one of them is *bhava* – the different kinds of existence we discussed earlier. And in the eleven activities of promotion of conditioning, there is the activity of *upādāna* (attachment) conditioning, concocting *bhava*. So, in every cycle of Dependent Origination, there is the condition of *bhava* and there is the concocting of it.

Now, for us who are studying Dependent Origination in this way but have not yet realized it fully, seen it clearly. It's kind of philosophy – our understanding is on the level of philosophy. But for those who have seen Dependent Origination totally, completely, thoroughly, such as the arahant, the human beings who have totally transcended *dukkha*, for them, it is purely a science. So, we can understand Dependent Origination on two levels. For us now, it's more about philosophy but ultimately it is to be understood as a science. This is something to observe carefully.

Now, we'll look at Dependent Origination, whether as being a stream or as being a circle as it occurs in each day of our lives. We have within us eyes, ears, noses, tongues, bodies, and mind – these six senses within. And outside are the things which stimulate the eyes, ears, noses, tongues, body, and mind; namely, forms, sounds, odors, tastes, flavors, touches, and mental objects. So, there are the inner senses and the outer objects which stimulate them. We need to observe these as they happen to us. When the eye is stimulated by some forms, there's the eye and when some form stimulates it, then consciousness arises based on the eye, and we call this “eye consciousnesses.” Consciousness doesn't exist all the time. It's just kind of some steady thing but consciousness arises when the eye is stimulated by a form. We're using the example of the eye to begin with. There are these three things: the eyes, the form, and eye consciousnesses. When these three things function together, when they work together, we call that “*phassa*” or “contact.” The meeting and functioning together of these three things is called “contact.”

There are two kinds of contact. There's the contact of the one who knows the Dhamma and there's the contact of the one who doesn't know the Dhamma. Or we can say there's the contact

of the one who understands Dependent Origination and the contact that the one who doesn't understand Dependent Origination. Or more simply, there is the contact of the person who is ignorant or ignorant contact. And there is the contact of one who is truly intelligent or wise contact. So, contact is finding the way at a fork in the road. There's a choice one can go one way or the other. One way is that of ordinary people which means all of us, people who are still ignorant about Dependent Origination, people who really don't know how things work. For the ordinary ignorant persons, then contact leads to *bhava*, to the kind of existence we've mentioned which then is the basis for *dukkha*, for painful experience. However, there's another way – the path of the truly intelligent persons – this doesn't lead to getting, falling into any of these existences. And so, there's no *dukkha* coming out of it. So, there's a kind of a crossroad. The mind has its choice which way it will follow.

Now, we'll look a bit further at what happens on the ignorant branch of the path or of our this little road. If there's ignorant contact, it leads to the arising of ignorant feeling or *vedanā*. Feeling is called "*vedanā*." And when this feeling is ignorant, it tricks us into feeling positive and feeling negative. So, ignorant contact tricks us into feeling positive and negative. However, if it's intelligent, one doesn't get tricked into positive and negative feeling. Now, if the feeling is ignorant, then it leads to ignorant desire which we call "*tanhā*." We call it "craving" or "desire." Because the mind is ignorant in feeling, then the wants that arise from this feeling are also ignorant, that is, desire. However, if the feeling is not ignorant, if it's wise, then any want that arises from it is also wise, which we don't call it "desire," we call it "wise want" or "aspiration." There's an important difference between aspiration and desire. One comes out of intelligence and the other results from ignorance, specially ignorance regarding feeling. It's already ignorant. That's why we call it "desire." Once it's arisen, it's ignorant. And this is called "desire." There's no ignorance involved, that we call it "aspiration." So, we can say want takes two paths also. If one takes the path of ignorance, we call it "desire." If follows the way of intelligent, we call it "aspiration." However, because we're currently ignorant, because we don't understand things yet, our want is always ignorant, that is, for us there is only desire.

Now, when there is this ignorant desire, it leads further to attachment. The ignorance of desire leads to the further ignorance of attachment, which means grasping at the positive or grasping at the negative. And also in the ignorance, there arises attachment or *upādāna*, which is always ignorant. There's no such thing as wise attachment. And this brings us to *bhava*. Through attachment, there arises *bhava*. If there's attachment to sex, this leads to sexual *bhava* or sexual existence (*kāmabhava*). If there's attachment to formageness, formness, then this leads to the formage existence (*rūpabhava*). And if there's attachment to the formless, to what has no form or the immaterial, this will lead to formless existence (*arūpabhava*). So, whatever kind of attachment or whatever we attach to will lead to corresponding existence and these existences are always ignorant.

We would like to remember our housewife from yesterday. When she's busy with her husband and there's this attachment to sexuality, this concocts or brings up the sexual existence. When she's involved with the kid or the house possession, material things which are not sexual, it's the material thing but there is not any sex involved, that attachment brings up the formage existence. And then, sometimes when she's not involved with anything sexual or anything material but with idea of goodness or good reputation or beauty and things like this, then this kind of attachment brings up formless existence. So, in whatever kind of involvement there is, this attachment brings up the corresponding kind of existence.

So now, let's look at which kind of existence doesn't bring suffering. Which kind of the existences is free of suffering? We look at sexual existence; all the effort, the nervousness, the waiting, the disappointment, the heart break, the worry, anxiety, all the effort and busyness that is concerned with sexual existence. We all know from our own experience that sexual existence involves many difficulties and problems.

As for formage existence, our possession, our wealth, we have to work hard for these things, we have to struggle to protect them, we're worried that the government is going to take too much taxes or there's thief, we have to get insurance policy. So, this involves lots of effort, sweat, worry, and so on. And so, they are caught up in many kinds of problem as well.

And then, formless existence, things like honor, power, faith, fortune, virtue, wise, sin – these things're also involved a lot of effort, concern, worry, take up our time, and they too create many problems. So, you'll see that all kinds of existence are fraud with trouble. They're all involved problems which are experienced by us as *dukkha*. Something we need to understand about *bhava* is whenever there is *bhava*, there will be *dukkha*. Even if there's just a little existence, there will be some *dukkha*. So, even there is itsy bitsy, a little bit of existence will have some *dukkha* involved. The Buddha compared it with excrement. Even a small bit of excrement or feces will stink. Even if it's so small you can't see where it is, maybe some on your hand or something you can't see it, but still it stinks. The Buddha used this to point out that even a tiny bit of *bhava* brings *dukkha*.

Now, what we've been talking about is the situation with ordinary people like us. Next, let's take a look at someone better level, or a higher level of human being. We can speak of the hermits, the Muni, or the sages, who have left aside the ordinary household life, and have trained their minds deeply in meditation. Some of them take some forms, some material objects as the subjects of meditation. And through that, they develop states based on these material objects. And they find great joy, great delight in this state – state of deep concentration and absorption. These are the highest levels of *rūpabhava*, of formage existence – the form existences which develop from deep meditation, into deep concentration on material objects. Further than that, there are those hermits or sages, whatever, who have taken formless objects and develop very deep meditation, concentration on these. And this leads to the highest kind of formless existences. There's great delight, a kind of bliss in this state. So, they lead to the most refined kind of formless existence. But notice here that there is very skillful meditators still involved in existence. If there's attachment to the formage existences, then there is *dukkha* in that. If there's attachment to formless existences, then there is *dukkha*, there is pain in those. Even there is the highest kind of formless existences – those of the *Brahmā* God – you might compare them to being in Olympia on the top of mount Olympics, even those highest formless realms are still *dukkha* if there is any attachment.

Let's speak in terms of heaven or paradise. There can be heaven here in this life, in this very world. When there is joy and delight in sexuality, then one is in a sexual heaven right here in this world, right in this very lifetime. One is in one of the sexual, sensual paradises. If we speak more traditionally, we take the conservative view, then there's some sexual heaven somewhere, some other world, some place we don't know exactly where, but there's some sexual paradise somewhere. Both of these are *dukkha*. We examine them – the sexual heaven right here or the sexual heaven in some other world, some other place – both of them are painful.

We go a little further back in this world. There is the heaven of wealth, of possession, the paradise of material things, and this too is *dukkha*. Even the highest kind of formage heavens, paradises, those that come from meditating on material objects – these too are *dukkha*. Or even if we speak of the formage paradises, who knows where that the conservative approach is interested in, those too are *dukkha*. Beyond the formage heavens, there are the formless heavens in this world of honor, fame, delighting in praise, flattering and so forth, or the highest kind of deep concentration on formless meditation objects – these too are *dukkha*. Even in those other worlds of the orthodox, who even to be a *Brahmā* God, this might be hard for westerners to understand but in the Indian conception, there are these various realms of heavens or paradises which become more and more refined. And the lower kind of sense, sexual realm, they speak of the angels living there. But in the higher level, they speak of the *Brahmā* God, the highest state of formless, lustless, radiant *Brahmā* God. It might be something like in the West, in Judaism and Christianity, they speak of realms and power in the minion. There are like nine levels of heavenly beings. There're thirty somethings of them in the traditional Indian conception. Whatever, whether it's in this world or other worlds, sexual paradises, formage paradises, formless paradises – all of them are *dukkha*. If there is the least little bit of *bhava*, there will be *dukkha* in all these kinds of paradise.

The only way to be free of *dukkha* is to be beyond all of these paradises, to transcend all of these heavens. This is the only way there is total freedom and peace, which means the arahant – the perfected human being who isn't tricked by any kind or level of paradise.

It's best to look at the heaven in this life, in this world – more easy to understand and more relevant. Please take a look around that our friends, especially those who are young, young men and women, and we see them scrambling after the sexual heaven, trying very hard, spinning around in the sexual paradises. And as soon as one gets one of these sexual heavens, before long, it bites. It's not very long that the sexual existence bites because there's jealousy, there's envy, there's competition, there's anxiety that one's lover will leave one or one's lover doesn't smile, and one gets depressed or gets angry when one doesn't get the attention one wants. So, very quickly the sexual paradises turn around and bite us. After a while, maybe one gets married and there are children, a home, and the various possessions. And then, when one has this formage paradise, before long it bites as well. One has to pay the bill. One has to punch a timeclock to earn the money to pay the bill. One worries about the children, whether one is finding good school for them, whether they behave properly, dressing them. One has to worry whether one's furniture is up to date, whether it's getting scratched, it has to be cleaned. At least one has to work hard to find the maid or parking place for one's car and on and on and on. So, the formage existences bite as well.

Even the formless paradise, when one is famous like a movie star, one is honored, one gets the Nobel prize, and then there is tremendous pressure to live up to expectation, to protect one's reputation. One's in the formless paradise, one's world famous, one gets the highest honored but there's pressure, there's expectation, there's anxiety that one might make a mistake or flob up, that one's reputation will drop, that one will no longer be number one on the pop chart and all these. So, the formless paradises, they too bite their owner. Whatever kind of heaven it is, sexual, formage, or formless, every kind of *bhava* turns around and bites. There's not any kind of *bhava* that is free of *dukkha*.

Now, the person with Dhamma, can say, has a family and has a home without any problems. The person who really has Dhamma taking care of the home, the car, paying the bill, having a job,

that won't bite, that won't be a problem. Or even being famous, getting the Nobel prize won't be a problem for the person who truly has Dhamma. Unfortunately, ordinary people don't really have Dhamma, and so all of these things become problems. There's even competition to get the Nobel prizes and things like that. All these paradises will bring *dukkha*.

We must observe and see that in all the heavens and every heaven, there are things that will bite. There are defilements that will give us headache, pains in the neck. In every kind of existence, there are things, there are angers, there're envy, there're competitions, confusions, worries and so on. In all of the heavens, there is pain. One cannot escape pain even in the highest heaven. In every heaven, in every kind of existence, there are things that bite us, things that make us suffer. We'd like to mention a few clear simple examples of these which you can see quite easily. We'll mention around ten of them.

In all the different forms and kinds of heaven, in all the different levels of existence, there is **love** – there is some kind of love in every one of these existences. You all know what love is. You all know how love bites, how heavy love can be. This is the first example. We'll mention them one by one.

Next is **anger**. When there's positive, we love it. When there's a negative, we get angry and then anger bites. There's anger in all the levels of heaven and they all bite. You know what this is like. You've all been angry before. You know how anger bites. This is the second example.

The third is **hate** – hating without any reason, so full of hate that we're totally annoyed, totally upset. We can't stand anything when there is hatred. It occurs in all the kinds of existence. It makes it very difficult to be there. Hatred is the third example.

Next is **fear** – foolish, irrational fear. In all the kinds of existence, there is fear, such as the fear of poverty, the fear of losing one's lover, the fear of having something stolen or lost or destroyed, or the person who is famous is afraid of losing their fame. There are millionaires who commit suicide because they're afraid of becoming poor and so on. In all the kinds of existence, there is fear.

Fifth is **excitement**. We always want things to come and stimulate us, looking for excitement and stimulation. All these European coming to Asia, wandering around looking for excitement and adventure, people going to sporting event in order to get excited, the movie filling our house with curious, strange, interesting things to stimulate us, reading novels to stimulate us. This is the fifth example – that of excitement.

The next example is **hope** for the future. People dreaming about the future, feeding their hope on something in the future – what is called “building castle in the sky.” Everyone is building castle in the sky, dreaming of some wonderful cake that they're going to eat or whatever. This is the sixth example.

Next, seventh is longing after the past – **missing** – a sense of missing something and longing for it especially things that we have loved in the past. We usually can't help it. If we've loved something, we long for it.

Next is **envy**. Envy stabs and pierces us while the person we envy of doesn't know a thing. One is feeling envy is burning us up and the other person isn't bothered in the least. We see something that somebody else has or things that somebody else is better, more talented, and we get envious. It doesn't bother the other in the least, but it really burns us up – envy.

The next is **jealousy** – kind of possessiveness, having something being jealous of it, not wanting to share it, being misery, afraid that people will ask for some of what we’ve got. A beggar might ask for some money or a friend might ask to share some food or whatever. In general, we call this “jealousy” or “possessiveness.”

The last example is another form of jealousy but a very special and powerful one. The Thai have a special word for it, “*heung (หึง)*,” which is to be jealous of something sexual, mainly one’s sexual partner, one’s husband, wife, lover, or whatever. A very strong kind of jealousy, **sexual jealousy**, sexual possessiveness – people often killed because of this one.

In this world, in this existence, there are all ten of these kinds of things and they bite us. Whenever one of them appears, they bite us. Even in heaven, you’ll find all ten of these. All of the heavens, even the highest heaven have all ten of them. Every kind of *bhava*, every existence without any exception, will have these ten kinds of thing. If there’s existence, we just can’t avoid these things and every time they bite us. And so, this stream of Dependent Origination has taken us to *bhava*, to existence, where we exist in one way or another, ‘I am this,’ ‘I am that,’ where we consider ourselves to be a man, a woman, a German, a French man, an Australian, or whatever. Where any kind of ‘I am this,’ ‘I am that’ – this is existence. And once there is existence, then the role it plays to the ??? 47.35. Once there is existence, then there is the person who exists in that way. There’re the different kinds of existence and then there is the one who plays that role, who is born into that role and acts it out fully. The birth of this person, the role we must play is called “*jāti*” or “birth”. This is the result of *bhava*.

In every cycle of Dependent Origination, there is *bhava* and *jāti* (birth). Every time this flow takes its spin, there is existence and birth. Whether Dependent Origination based on the eye, or the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, or the mind, the sense, every cycle will include existence and birth. And once, there is birth, there is the big fat ego, the ego playing this role or that. And that ego is heavy, that ego suffers. Whatever the form of existence, whatever sense experience is based on, there appears the birth of the ‘I am,’ the birth of the ego playing its little act, getting into trouble. This is something that we must begin now to play special attention. We’ve been overlooking this for all our lives. We haven’t been paying any attention to *bhava* and to this birth of ego. It’s been going on and we just ignore it. The time has now come to start paying attention to it, to understand it and find the way to get free of this aimless spinning around in circle of suffering.

The stream of Dependent Origination is the stream of life. The stream of life is nothing other than the stream of Dependent Origination. If you see this fact, you should see this fact clearly, deeply, one hundred percent that there’s no real difference between the stream of life and the stream of Dependent Origination. The positive thing, the positive draws us into the cycle of Dependent Origination much more easily and powerfully than the negative. The positive tricks us much more quickly than the negative into Dependent Origination. Nonetheless, it’s the positive that we’re infatuated with. We worship the positive. When we give a blessing, we only bless positive things, “May you’ll be happy and beautiful.” We never say, “May you be sad and ugly.” Our big concern is with the positive although it what trick us into Dependent Origination most of all. Be careful. Don’t fall for the positive. Don’t fall for the negative either. Don’t let them suck you into the maelstrom of Dependent Origination.

Now, we’ll look at this stream, this flow. It begins with what we call the “*āyatāna*” (the senses); the eye, the ear, the nose, tongue, body, and mind – these are within and they’re part of the

nervous system in our body. So, the stream of Dependent Origination starts off with the *āyatāna* (the senses). When the six senses interact with their six objects; the forms, sounds, odors, flavors, touches and mental objects, then consciousness arises. There are six kinds of consciousness, one for each sense; eye consciousness, ear consciousness, and so on.

So, the next thing is *phassa* (contact). When these senses are functioning with their objects, that is the first thing. Then, the second is the six kinds of consciousness. And then, there are the six kinds of contact. When there is contact, we can't avoid that there will be feeling (*vedanā*). When there is feeling, we meet up with the fifth thing – *taṇhā* (desire). When there is desire, we can't help ourselves, there will be *upādāna* (attachment). And once there's attachment, we can't help it, there is *bhava* (existence). And now, the eighth thing, once there is *bhava*, there arises, there happens *jāti* – the birth of the role player of the personality, the ego. And last of all, once there is birth, ego birth, there's nothing to be done about it, there will be suffering. It's inevitable that once there is ego, there will be suffering.

Physical birth out of our mother's womb is no problem. We have no difficulties with being born physically. The problems don't start until there is spiritual birth – the birth that happens because of ignorance, that happens through attachment. When there is the spiritual birth, when the 'me' is born, this is where the problems begin. So, let's run through this again. There are these senses which include their objects. Then, there's sense consciousness (*vinñāna*), and then the six kinds of contacts. Once there's contact, there will be feeling, and we can't help it that there will be desire arising towards the feeling. And then, because of desire, there is attachment. Through attachment, there is, then, existence arises. And then, there's birth, and then *dukkha*. So, altogether there are nine things, the *āyatāna* (the senses), consciousness, feeling, desire, attachment, and contact. Then, attachment is six. Existence, birth and *dukkha* is nine. So, there are these nine conditions. This is a simple, direct, immediate explanation of Dependent Origination in terms of these nine conditions, these nine factors. This is something that everyone here has the intelligence to understand because it can be clearly, directly observed in your own experience even right now. Everyone here, once you understand the meaning of these nine terms will be able to see what it's meant. So, we begin by understanding this version or this explanation of Dependent Origination. However, in the Dhamma way of speaking, we include *dukkha* in birth. The two are inseparable. As soon as ego is born, there is *dukkha*. You can't separate the two. Birth is painful. Birth is *dukkha* but we mean the spiritual birth, not physical birth. That needs eight things. In the Dhamma way of speaking, there are eight. As soon as there's birth, there's gonna be trouble – the way things are.

Now, at the beginning we mentioned that there were twelve conditions. Now, some people, the eight we've just mentioned are something easily observable by everyone who is willing to pay attention. But there are some who want to go even further, want to stretch the limit a bit and they go and ask, "Where do these senses come from?" And the senses come from *nāma-rūpa*, from the mind-body. Once, there are any senses of that, there is the mind-body. And then, one asks where this mind-body comes from. One could say the mind-body depends on the conditioning, the concocting of the consciousness element. So, when the kind of general element of consciousness which is kind of an inherent potential in things – when this is concocted or conditioned into consciousness of one specific sense such as eye consciousness or ear consciousness, there is kind of this inherent potential of consciousness which is then conditioned into a specific active consciousness. Where does that consciousness come from? Comes from what we call "*sankhārā*" which here means the power of concocting. Last of all, one asks,

“Where does that come from?” The power of concocting arises due to ignorance. So, due to ignorance, there is the power of concocting. Due to this concocting, the consciousness element is concocted into specific consciousness after the senses. Due to that, there is the mind-body. Because of the mind-body, there are the senses. Because of the senses, there is contact and so on.

So, we have the eight. If we look even more deeply into it, there are these other four – ignorance, the power of concocting, the consciousness, and then mind-body. So, the four plus the eight makes twelve. This is the more detailed and much more difficult way of seeing Dependent Origination. These early elements are incredibly settled and difficult to investigate. You don’t really have to know the first four. These first four are very deep secrets of life which are quite hard to see. It’s not necessary that you know these things but it’s absolutely necessary to know the latter eight, beginning with the senses, consciousness, contact, and so on. The latter part we must know because of this happening right here, right now. This is our experience. Our life is made up of these eight things. So, it’s necessary for us to investigate and understand them. This is something that all of us can do. To see the first four requires a very special investigation. We need to really train the mind and we must look very deeply. That is beyond the need and the ability of many. The latter eight is something we all must investigate until we see it for ourselves in our experience. Nonetheless, altogether there are twelve conditions or twelve aspects of things arising in Dependent Origination.

So, let’s consider the entire stream as it’s taught in Buddhism that covers all twelve elements or conditions. It begins with the state of not knowing – the state or condition that is without correct knowledge. There might be knowledge, but the knowledge is incorrect, is wrong, is misunderstanding. So, this is called “*avijjā*” or “ignorance.” They all begin with the state of not knowing things as they really are. Due to this, there is then the power of concocting. The mind that is wise doesn’t concoct but when there’s ignorance, the mind gets into concocting. So, you can call it a kind of crazy, insane power of concocting. Then, it touch off due to ignorance. Then, this power of concocting takes the natural consciousness element, that basic inherent element of consciousness, which is totally natural. The power of concocting takes this and cooks it up into a kind of unnatural consciousness which is then reaching out or jumping out after senses – the consciousness of eye, of ear. It’s not just this natural consciousness but it’s now been cooked up, stirred up so that it’s reaching out for the senses. This is the third condition.

Then, because there is this consciousness, there is *nāma-rūpa* (mind-body). Mind-body is like a car. Consciousness is like the driver. You’ve got a driver, but it needs something to drive – so, that is *nāma-rūpa*. *Nāma* is like a driver. *Rūpa* is the actual material, vehicle. This body is like the physical vehicle and *nāma* is the driver. A car is worthless without a driver, right? So, to speak of a complete car, you need the driver too. So, because of consciousness, then there arises *nāma-rūpa* – the vehicle for action, for movement. Then, the mind-body is the basis for the senses. Once there is this vehicle, the movement, then it has these various tools which are the senses. So, as the part of concocting flows, then the senses are conditioned, concocted. So, due to the mind-body, there are the senses. Once there are the senses, the *āyatāna* – both as sense organ and sense object, then this conditioned. The ordinary consciousness of everyday life – this ordinary consciousness of seeing, hearing, smelling and everything in our ordinary life which we’ve already mentioned, this is conditioned. This then becomes fully functional due to the senses. Normally, in this long version of Dependent Origination, we don’t mention consciousness specifically right here. It’s included in contact. Consciousness is already mentioned, so we don’t want to repeat it but it’s actually included implicitly in contact. It’s

usually said that due to the senses, there is contact – sense contact or sense experience. Once there is contact, then further there arises feeling, desire, attachment, existence, and birth. And that birth is *dukkha*.

If there is ignorance at contact, then the stream flows on through feeling into desire, attachment, existence, birth which is *dukkha*. However, if contact is wise, if there's no ignorant conditioning contact, then there's just contact and none of the problems of desire, attachment, existence, and birth occurs. This is going on. The ignorance form at least is going on over and over again in our ordinary life. In one day, this cycle spins around. Who knows how many times. Nobody cares, nobody pays any attention and so people are kept spinning around in *dukkha*. So, it's time to stop and study this. It's our life. This is our life. If one wants to know oneself, wants to know one's own life, that means stopping now and actually studying how this Dependent Origination spins around in our life. This is the only way there is to truly understand our situations and then solve our problems.

You can see quite easily that once we see these twelve things or these Dhammas which are dependently originating. Once we see these twelve Dhammas, we see that between them there are eleven links. Between the first and second is one link. Between the second and third is another link. Between third and fourth is a further link and so on. So, there are twelve things linked by eleven linkages. Some of you might think that this explanation is excessive, too difficult, or too much but we think that this is necessary. There is nothing excessive about this. This is the basic knowledge that we need if we're going to cope with the stream of Dependent Origination. If we don't understand what's been explained here, then there's no way that one can deal effectively with these cycles of Dependent Origination. The only way we can control existence. If existence is out of control, there're a lot of problems for us. But once we get existence under control, then it's no longer a sort of pain and suffering for us. The only way we can do this is if we fully understand Dependent Origination. And so, this explanation is necessary.

So, now you know what kinds of existence are, and you know how these existences are dependently originated. The thing that remains is to understand how to study this deeply and then how to train ourselves so that we can control, that we can manage this flow of Dependent Origination. So, in a later talk, we'll talk about the mindfulness with breathing practice of meditation which is a way of training so that we have the tool, the ability to manage this Dependent Origination. Now, we should warn you that in other places, they explain Dependent Origination differently. So, if you go and read some books on Buddhism, whether they're from Burma or Sri Lanka or Tibet, or even most of the places in Bangkok, they'll explain it differently than we've done here. It's up to you to examine the different explanations and see which one will actually solve our problems, which way of understanding Dependent Origination can actually end suffering. Now, if you see that this explanation can actually do that, then it may not be necessary to go reading lots of books on it. But if you do come across other explanations, you need to find out for yourself which way can actually extinguish suffering. This isn't meant to be just theory that we believe in, or we argue about. It's meant solely to be a practical means to free us from *dukkha*. And, once again we thank you very much for being very good listeners and allowing us to do our duty, thank you.

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