

Wilderness Suttas

BASIC PRINCIPLES

“These four traditions of the noble ones—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmans. Which four?

“There is the case where a monk is content with any old robe cloth at all. He speaks in praise of being content with any old robe cloth at all. He doesn’t, for the sake of robe cloth, do anything unseemly or inappropriate. Not getting cloth, he isn’t agitated. Getting cloth, he uses it unattached to it, uninfatuated, guiltless, seeing the drawbacks (of attachment to it), and discerning the escape from them. He doesn’t, on account of his contentment with any old robe cloth at all, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, & mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones.

“And further, the monk is content with any old almsfood at all. He speaks in praise of being content with any old almsfood at all. He doesn’t, for the sake of almsfood, do anything unseemly or inappropriate. Not getting almsfood, he isn’t agitated. Getting almsfood, he uses it unattached to it, uninfatuated, guiltless, seeing the drawbacks (of attachment to it), and discerning the escape from them. He doesn’t, on account of his contentment with any old almsfood at all, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, & mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones.

“And further, the monk is content with any old lodging at all. He speaks in praise of being content with any old lodging at all. He doesn’t, for the sake of lodging, do anything unseemly or inappropriate. Not getting lodging, he isn’t agitated. Getting lodging, he uses it unattached to it, uninfatuated, guiltless, seeing the drawbacks (of attachment to it), and discerning the escape from them. He doesn’t, on account of his contentment with any old lodging at all, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, & mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones.

“And further, the monk finds pleasure & delight in developing (skillful qualities), finds pleasure & delight in abandoning (unskillful qualities). He doesn’t, on account of his pleasure & delight in developing & abandoning, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, & mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones.

“These are the four traditions of the noble ones—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—which

are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmans.” — *AN 4:28*

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda, “Ānanda, the twin Sal trees are in full bloom, even though it’s not the flowering season. They shower, strew, & sprinkle on the Tathāgata’s body in homage to him. Heavenly coral-tree blossoms are falling from the sky.... Heavenly sandalwood powder is falling from the sky.... Heavenly music is playing in the sky.... Heavenly songs are sung in the sky, in homage to the Tathāgata. But it is not to this extent that a Tathāgata is worshipped, honored, respected, venerated, or paid homage to. Rather, the monk, nun, male lay follower, or female lay follower who keeps practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, who keeps practicing masterfully, who lives in accordance with the Dhamma: That is the person who worships, honors, respects, venerates, & pays homage to the Tathāgata with the highest homage. So you should train yourselves: ‘We will keep practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, we will keep practicing masterfully, we will live in accordance with the Dhamma.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” — *DN 16*

“If a monk practices for the sake of disenchantment, dispassion, & cessation with regard to aging-&-death... birth... becoming... clinging/sustenance... craving... feeling... contact... the six sense media... name-&-form... consciousness... fabrications... ignorance, he deserves to be called a monk who practices the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma.” — *SN 12:67*

“For a monk practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, what accords with the Dhamma is this: that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to form, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to feeling, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to perception, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to fabrications, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to consciousness.” — *SN 22:39*

[*SN 22:40–41* add that this is to be done by remaining focused on stress, inconstancy, and not-self with regard to the five aggregates.]

The Blessed One said: “Once, monks, the devas & asuras were arrayed for battle. Then Sakka, lord of the devas, addressed the devas of the Thirty-three: ‘If, dear sirs, when the devas are engaged in battle, there should arise fear, terror, or horripilation, then on that occasion you should look up at the top of my standard. For when you look up at the top of my standard, any fear, terror, or horripilation you may have will be abandoned.

“‘If you don’t look up at the top of my standard, then you should look up at the top of the standard of Pajāpati the deva-king... Varuṇa the deva-king... Īsāna

the deva-king. For when you look up at the top of the standard of Īsāna the deva-king, any fear, terror, or horripilation you may have will be abandoned.

“Monks, in those who look up at the top of the standard of Sakka, lord of the devas; in those who look up at the top of the standard of Pajāpati the deva-king; in those who look up at the top of the standard of Varuṇa, the deva-king; or in those who look up at the top of the standard of Īsāna, the deva-king, any fear, terror, or horripilation they may have might be abandoned, or it might not. Why is that? Because Sakka, lord of the devas, is not free of passion, free of aversion, or free of delusion. He can be frightened, terrorized, cowardly, quick to flee.

“But, monks, I tell you this: If, when you have gone to the wilderness, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty dwelling, there should arise fear, terror, or horripilation, then on that occasion you should recollect me thus: ‘Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed.’ For when you recollect me, monks, any fear, terror, or horripilation you may have will be abandoned.

“If you don’t recollect me, then you should recollect the Dhamma thus: ‘The Dhamma is well taught by the Blessed One, to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be experienced by the observant for themselves.’ For when you recollect the Dhamma, monks, any fear, terror, or horripilation you may have will be abandoned.

“If you cannot recollect the Dhamma, then you should recollect the Saṅgha thus: ‘The Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples who have practiced well, practiced straightforwardly, practice methodically, practiced masterfully, i. e., the four pairs, the eight-types (of noble ones): That is the Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples—worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the unexcelled field of merit for the world.’ For when you recollect the Saṅgha, monks, any fear, terror, or horripilation you may have will be abandoned.

“Why is that? Because the Tathāgata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, is free of passion, free of aversion, free of delusion. He is fearless, cannot be terrorized, bold, not quick to flee.” — *SN 11:3*

Ven. Vakkali:

Stricken by sharp, wind-like pains,
 you, monk, living in the forest grove
 —harsh, with limited range for alms—
 what, what will you do?

Suffusing my body
 with abundant rapture & joy,
 & enduring what’s harsh,
 I’ll stay in the grove.

Developing the establishings of mindfulness,

strengths, faculties,
 the factors for awakening,¹
 I'll stay in the grove.

Reflecting on those who are resolute,
 their persistence aroused,
 constantly firm in their effort,
 united in concord,
 I'll stay in the grove.

Recollecting the One Self-Awakened,
 self-tamed & centered,
 untiring both day & night,
 I'll stay
 in the grove. — *Thag 5:8*

On one occasion a certain monk, a Vajjian princeling, was staying near Vesāli in a forest grove. And on that occasion an all-night festival was being held in Vesāli. The monk—lamenting as he heard the resounding din of wind music, string music, & gongs coming from Vesāli, on that occasion recited this verse:

“I live in the wilderness
 all alone
 like a log cast away in the forest.
 On a night like this,
 who could there be
 more miserable
 than me?”

Then the devatā inhabiting the forest grove, feeling sympathy for the monk, desiring his benefit, desiring to bring him to his senses, approached him and addressed him with this verse:

“As you live in the wilderness all alone
 like a log cast away in the forest,
 many are those who envy you,
 as hell-beings do,
 those headed for heaven.”

The monk, chastened by the devatā, came to his senses. — *SN 9:9*

THE THREE PERCEPTIONS AS NOT CATEGORICAL

Potaliputta the wanderer: “Having intentionally done an action with body, with speech, or with mind, what does one experience?”

Ven. Samiddhi: “Having intentionally done an action with body, with speech, or with mind, one experiences stress.”

Then Potaliputta the wanderer neither delighted in nor scorned Ven. Samiddhi’s words. Neither delighting nor scorning, he got up from his seat and left.

Then, not long after Potaliputta the wanderer had left, Ven. Samiddhi went to Ven. Ānanda and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he reported to Ven. Ānanda the entirety of his discussion with Potaliputta the wanderer. When this was said, Ven. Ānanda said to him, “Friend Samiddhi, there is warrant here for seeing the Blessed One. Let’s go to the Blessed One and, on arrival, report this matter to him. However he explains it to us, that’s how we should bear it in mind.”

“As you say, friend, Ven. Samiddhi responded to Ven. Ānanda.

So Ven. Samiddhi and Ven. Ānanda went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As they were sitting there, Ven. Ānanda reported to the Blessed One the entirety of the discussion between Ven. Samiddhi and Potaliputta the wanderer.

When this was said, the Blessed One said, “I do not recall even having seen Potaliputta the wanderer, much less having that sort of discussion. And his question, which deserved an analytical answer, has been given a categorical answer by this worthless man, Samiddhi.”

When this was said, Ven. Udāyin said to the Blessed One, “But what if Ven. Samiddhi was speaking in reference to this: ‘Whatever is felt comes under stress?’”

When this was said, the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda, “Look, Ānanda, at how this worthless Udāyin interrupts. I knew just now that he would interrupt in an inappropriate way. From the very beginning, Potaliputta the wanderer was asking about the three kinds of feeling. When this worthless Samiddhi was asked by him in this way, he should have answered, ‘Having intentionally done—with body, with speech, or with mind—an action that is to be felt as pleasure, one experiences pleasure. Having intentionally done—with body, with speech, or with mind—an action that is to be felt as pain, one experiences pain. Having intentionally done—with body, with speech, or with mind—an action that is to be felt as neither-pleasure-nor-pain, one experiences neither-pleasure-nor-pain. Answering this way, this worthless Samiddhi would have rightly answered Potaliputta the wanderer.’ — *MN 136*

“Mahāli, if form were exclusively stressful—followed by stress, infused with stress and not infused with pleasure—beings would not be infatuated with form. But because form is also pleasurable—followed by pleasure, infused with pleasure and not infused with stress—beings are infatuated with form. Through infatuation, they are captivated. Through captivation, they are defiled. This is the cause, this the requisite condition, for the defilement of beings. And this is how beings are defiled with cause, with requisite condition.

[Similarly with the aggregates of feeling, perception, fabrications, and consciousness.]

“Mahāli, if form were exclusively pleasurable—followed by pleasure, infused with pleasure and not infused with stress—beings would not be disenchanting with form. But because form is also stressful—followed by stress, infused with stress and not infused with pleasure—beings are disenchanting with form. Disenchanted, they become dispassionate. Through dispassion, they are purified. This is the cause, this the requisite condition, for the purification of beings. And this is how beings are purified with cause, with requisite condition.

[Similarly with the aggregates of feeling, perception, fabrications, and consciousness.] — *SN 22:60*

Your own self is
 your own mainstay,
 for who else could your mainstay be?
 With you yourself well-trained
 you obtain the mainstay
 hard to obtain. — *Dhp 160*

“And what is the self as a governing principle? There is the case where a monk, having gone to a wilderness, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty dwelling, reflects on this: ‘It is not for the sake of robes that I have gone forth from the home life into homelessness; it is not for the sake of almsfood, for the sake of lodgings, or for the sake of this or that state of (future) becoming that I have gone forth from the home life into homelessness. Simply that I am beset by birth, aging, & death; by sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs; beset by stress, overcome with stress, (and I hope,) “Perhaps the end of this entire mass of suffering & stress might be known!” Now, if I were to seek the same sort of sensual pleasures that I abandoned in going forth from home into homelessness—or a worse sort—that would not be fitting for me.’ So he reflects on this: ‘My persistence will be aroused & not lax; my mindfulness established & not confused; my body calm & not aroused; my mind centered & unified.’ Having made himself his governing principle, he abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is unblameworthy, and looks after himself in a pure way. This is called the self as a governing principle.” — *AN 3:40*

Ven. Ānanda: “‘This body comes into being through conceit. And yet it is by relying on conceit that conceit is to be abandoned.’ Thus it was said. And in reference to what was it said? There is the case, sister, where a monk hears, ‘The monk named such-and-such, they say, through the ending of the effluents, has entered & remains in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now.’ The thought occurs to him, ‘The monk named such-&-such, they say, through the

ending of the effluents, has entered & remains in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now. Then why not me?' Then, at a later time, he abandons conceit, having relied on conceit. 'This body comes into being through conceit. And yet it is by relying on conceit that conceit is to be abandoned.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said." — *AN 4:159*

THE TRIPLE TRAINING INTERTWINED

"Brahman, just as one hand would wash the other hand, or one foot would wash the other foot, in the same way, discernment is well-washed by virtue, virtue is well-washed by discernment. Where there is virtue, there is discernment. Where there is discernment, there is virtue. A virtuous person has discernment; a discerning person, virtue. And further, virtue & discernment are reckoned as supreme in the world.

[The passage goes on to define virtue with a long list of virtues, sense restraint, mindfulness & alertness in one's activities, contentment, and the abandoning of the hindrances. It defines discernment as the practice of *jhāna* together with the direct knowledges based on *jhāna*, culminating in the knowledge of the ending of the effluents.] — *DN 4*

Then Ven. Rāhula, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to the Blessed One and, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "How, lord, is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing to be developed & pursued so as to be of great fruit, or great benefit?"

{“Rāhula, any form whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: Every form is to be seen as it has come to be with right discernment as: ‘This is not mine. This is not my self. This is not what I am.’ There are these five properties, Rāhula. Which five? The earth property, the water property, the fire property, the wind property, & the space property.

“And what is the earth property? The earth property may be either internal or external. What is the internal earth property?}² Anything internal, within oneself, that's hard, solid, & sustained (by craving): head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, feces, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's hard, solid, and sustained: This is called the internal earth property. Now both the internal earth property & the external earth property are simply earth property. And that should be seen as it has come to be with right discernment: ‘This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.’ When one sees it thus as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the earth property and makes the earth property fade from the mind.

“And what is the water property? The water property may be either internal or external. What is the internal water property? Anything internal, belonging to

oneself, that's water, watery, & sustained: bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, oil, saliva, mucus, oil-of-the-joints, urine, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's water, watery, & sustained: This is called the internal water property. Now both the internal water property & the external water property are simply water property. And that should be seen as it has come to be with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the water property and makes the water property fade from the mind.

"And what is the fire property? The fire property may be either internal or external. What is the internal fire property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's fire, fiery, & sustained: that by which (the body) is warmed, aged, & consumed with fever; and that by which what is eaten, drunk, chewed, & savored gets properly digested; or anything else internal, within oneself, that's fire, fiery, & sustained: This is called the internal fire property. Now both the internal fire property & the external fire property are simply fire property. And that should be seen as it has come to be with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the fire property and makes the fire property fade from the mind.

"And what is the wind property? The wind property may be either internal or external. What is the internal wind property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's wind, windy, & sustained: up-going winds, down-going winds, winds in the stomach, winds in the intestines, winds that course through the body, in-and-out breathing, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's wind, windy, & sustained: This is called the internal wind property. Now both the internal wind property & the external wind property are simply wind property. And that should be seen as it has come to be with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the wind property and makes the wind property fade from the mind.

"And what is the space property? The space property may be either internal or external. What is the internal space property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's space, spatial, & sustained: the holes of the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the (passage) whereby what is eaten, drunk, consumed, & tasted gets swallowed, and where it collects, and whereby it is excreted from below, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's space, spatial, & sustained: This is called the internal space property. Now both the internal space property & the external space property are simply space property. And that should be seen as it has come to be with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the space property and makes the space property fade from the mind.

“Rāhula, develop the meditation in tune with earth. For when you are developing the meditation in tune with earth, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when people throw what is clean or unclean on the earth—feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood—the earth is not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing the meditation in tune with earth, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind.

“Develop the meditation in tune with water. For when you are developing the meditation in tune with water, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when people wash what is clean or unclean in water—feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood—the water is not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing the meditation in tune with water, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind.

“Develop the meditation in tune with fire. For when you are developing the meditation in tune with fire, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when fire burns what is clean or unclean—feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood—it is not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing the meditation in tune with fire, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind.

“Develop the meditation in tune with wind. For when you are developing the meditation in tune with wind, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when wind blows what is clean or unclean—feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood—it is not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing the meditation in tune with wind, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind.

“Develop the meditation in tune with space. For when you are developing the meditation in tune with space, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind. Just as space is not established anywhere, in the same way, when you are developing the meditation in tune with space, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind.

“Develop the meditation of goodwill. For when you are developing the meditation of goodwill, ill-will will be abandoned.

“Develop the meditation of compassion. For when you are developing the meditation of compassion, cruelty will be abandoned.

“Develop the meditation of empathetic joy. For when you are developing the meditation of empathetic joy, resentment will be abandoned.

“Develop the meditation of equanimity. For when you are developing the meditation of equanimity, irritation will be abandoned.

“Develop the meditation of the unattractive. For when you are developing the meditation of the unattractive, passion will be abandoned.

“Develop the meditation of the perception of inconstancy. For when you are developing the meditation of the perception of inconstancy, the conceit ‘I am’ will be abandoned.

“Develop the meditation of mindfulness of in-&-out breathing. Mindfulness of in-&-out breathing, when developed & pursued, is of great fruit, of great benefit.” — *MN 62*

There’s	no jhāna
for one with	no discernment,
	no discernment
for one with	no jhāna.
But one with	both jhāna
	& discernment:
<i>He’s</i> on the verge	

of unbinding. — *Dhp 372*

“Just as—as long as the ridge-beam of a house with a ridged roof, is not in place—the rafters are not stable, the rafters are not firm, but when the ridge-beam of the house with a ridged roof is in place, the rafters are stable, the rafters are firm; in the same way, as long as noble knowledge has not arisen in a disciple of the noble ones, four faculties are not stable, four faculties are not firm; but when noble knowledge has arisen in a disciple of the noble ones, four faculties are stable, four faculties are firm. Which four? The faculty of conviction, the faculty of persistence, the faculty of mindfulness, & the faculty of concentration.

“When a disciple of the noble ones is discerning, the conviction that follows from that is stable. The persistence that follows from that is stable. The mindfulness that follows from that is stable. The concentration that follows from that is stable.” — *SN 48:52*

MINDFULNESS & CONCENTRATION

“And how is mindfulness the governing principle? The mindfulness that ‘I will make complete any training with regard to good conduct that is not yet complete, or I will protect with discernment any training with regard to good conduct that is complete’ is well established right within. The mindfulness that ‘I will make complete any training with regard to the basics of the holy life that is not yet complete, or I will protect with discernment any training with regard to the basics of the holy life that is complete’ is well established right within. The mindfulness that ‘I will scrutinize with discernment any Dhamma that is not yet scrutinized, or I will protect with discernment any Dhamma that has been scrutinized’ is well established right within. The mindfulness that ‘I will touch through release any Dhamma that is not yet touched, or I will protect with discernment any Dhamma that has been touched’ is well established right within. This is how mindfulness is the governing principle.” — *AN 4:245*

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has a gatekeeper—wise, competent, intelligent—to keep out those he doesn’t know and to let in those he does, for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way a disciple of the noble ones is mindful, endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & able to call to mind even things that were done & said long ago. With mindfulness as his gatekeeper, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity.”
— AN 7:63

“Now suppose that there is a wise, competent, skillful cook who has presented a king or a king’s minister with various kinds of curry: mainly sour, mainly bitter, mainly peppery, mainly sweet, alkaline or non-alkaline, salty or non-salty. He takes note of his master, thinking, ‘Today my master likes this curry, or he reaches out for that curry, or he takes a lot of this curry or he praises that curry. Today my master likes mainly sour curry.... Today my master likes mainly bitter curry... mainly peppery curry... mainly sweet curry... alkaline curry... non-alkaline curry... salty curry... Today my master likes non-salty curry, or he reaches out for non-salty curry, or he takes a lot of non-salty curry, or he praises non-salty curry.’ As a result, he is rewarded with clothing, wages, & gifts. Why is that? Because the wise, competent, skillful cook takes note of his own master.

“In the same way, there is the case where a wise, competent, skillful monk remains focused on the body in & of itself... feelings in & of themselves... the mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. As he remains thus focused on mental qualities in & of themselves, his mind becomes concentrated, his defilements are abandoned. He takes note of that fact. As a result, he is rewarded with a pleasant abiding here & now, together with mindfulness & alertness. Why is that? Because the wise, competent, skillful monk takes note of his own mind.” — SN 47:8

Sister Dhammadinnā: “Singleness of mind is concentration; the four establishings of mindfulness are its themes; the four right exertions are its requisites; and any cultivation, development, & pursuit of these qualities is its development.” — MN 44

“Then, monk, you should train yourself thus: ‘My mind will be established inwardly, well-composed. No evil, unskillful qualities, once they have arisen, will remain consuming the mind.’ That’s how you should train yourself....

“Then you should train yourself thus: ‘I will remain focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.’ That’s how you should train yourself. When you have developed this

concentration in this way, you should develop this concentration with directed thought & evaluation, you should develop it with no directed thought & a modicum of evaluation, you should develop it with no directed thought & no evaluation, you should develop it accompanied by rapture... not accompanied by rapture... endowed with a sense of enjoyment [*sāta*]; you should develop it endowed with equanimity. [Similarly with the other three establishing of mindfulness.]” — AN 8:63 (*Thai: AN 8:70*)

“Having abandoned the five hindrances—imperfections of awareness that weaken discernment—the monk remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings... mind... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. Just as if an elephant trainer were to plant a large post in the ground and were to bind a forest elephant to it by the neck in order to break it of its forest habits, its forest memories & resolves, its distraction, fatigue, & fever over leaving the forest, to make it delight in the town and to inculcate in it habits congenial to human beings; in the same way, these four establishing of mindfulness are bindings for the awareness of the disciple of the noble ones, to break him of his household habits, his household memories & resolves, his distraction, fatigue, & fever over leaving the household life, for the attainment of the right method and the realization of unbinding.

“Then the Tathāgata trains him further: ‘Come, monk, remain focused on the body in & of itself, but do not think any thoughts connected with the body. Remain focused on feelings in & of themselves, but do not think any thoughts connected with feelings. Remain focused on the mind in & of itself, but do not think any thoughts connected with mind. Remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves, but do not think any thoughts connected with mental qualities.’ With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters the second jhāna.” — MN 125

“And how is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing developed & pursued so as to bring the four establishing of mindfulness to their culmination?

“[1] On whatever occasion a monk breathing in long discerns, ‘I am breathing in long’; or breathing out long, discerns, ‘I am breathing out long’; or breathing in short, discerns, ‘I am breathing in short’; or breathing out short, discerns, ‘I am breathing out short’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&... out sensitive to the entire body’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out calming bodily fabrication’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *body* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—the in-&-out breath—is classed as a body among bodies, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[2] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to rapture’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to pleasure’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to mental fabrication’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out calming mental fabrication’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on *feelings* in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—careful attention to in-&-out breaths—is classed as a feeling among feelings, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on feelings in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[3] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to the mind’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out gladdening the mind’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out steadying the mind’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out releasing the mind’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *mind* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I don’t say that there is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing in one of lapsed mindfulness and no alertness, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the mind in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[4] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on inconstancy’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on dispassion’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on cessation’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on relinquishment’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on *mental qualities* in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He who sees with discernment the abandoning of greed & distress is one who watches carefully with equanimity, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“This is how mindfulness of in-&-out breathing is developed & pursued so as to bring the four establishings of mindfulness to their culmination.” — *MN 118*

“And how is a monk calmed in his bodily fabrication? There is the case where a monk, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is how a monk is calmed in his bodily fabrication.” — *AN 10:20*

“When one has attained the fourth jhāna, in-and-out breaths have ceased.” — *AN 9:31*

See also the entirety of MN 119

CONCENTRATION & INSIGHT

“If a monk would wish, ‘May I attain—whenever I want, without strain, without difficulty—the four jhānas that are heightened mental states, pleasant abidings in the here-&-now,’ then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn’t neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings....

“If a monk would wish, ‘May I—with the ending of effluents—remain in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for myself right in the here-&-now,’ then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn’t neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.” — MN 6

“Suppose, monk, that there were a royal frontier fortress with strong ramparts, strong walls & arches, and six gates. In it would be a wise, competent, intelligent gatekeeper to keep out those he didn’t know and to let in those he did. A swift pair of messengers, coming from the east, would say to the gatekeeper, ‘Where, my good man, is the commander of this fortress?’ He would say, ‘There he is, sirs, sitting in the central square.’ The swift pair of messengers, delivering their accurate report to the commander of the fortress, would then go back by the route by which they had come. Then a swift pair of messengers, coming from the west... the north... the south, would say to the gatekeeper, ‘Where, my good man, is the commander of this fortress?’ He would say, ‘There he is, sirs, sitting in the central square.’ The swift pair of messengers, delivering their accurate report to the commander of the fortress, would then go back by the route by which they had come.

“I have given you this simile, monk, to convey a message. The message is this: The fortress stands for this body—composed of the four great elements, born of mother & father, nourished with rice & barley gruel, subject to constant rubbing & abrasion, to breaking & falling apart. The six gates stand for the six internal sense media. The gatekeeper stands for mindfulness. The swift pair of messengers stands for tranquility [*samatha*] and insight [*vipassanā*]. The commander of the fortress stands for consciousness. The central square stands for the four great elements: the earth-property, the liquid-property, the fire-property, & the wind-property. The accurate report stands for unbinding [*nibbāna*]. The route by which they had come stands for the noble eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.” — SN 35:204

FOUR TRUTHS BECOMING ONE

When this had been said, one of the wanderers said to Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, “The cosmos is eternal. Only this is true; anything otherwise is worthless. This is the sort of view I have.”

Another wanderer said to Anāthapiṇḍika, “The cosmos is not eternal. Only this is true; anything otherwise is worthless. This is the sort of view I have.”

Another wanderer said, “The cosmos is finite...”...“The cosmos is infinite...”...“The soul & the body are the same...”...“The soul is one thing and the body another...”...“After death a Tathāgata exists...”...“After death a Tathāgata does not exist...”...“After death a Tathāgata both does & does not exist...”...“After death a Tathāgata neither does nor does not exist. Only this is true; anything otherwise is worthless. This is the sort of view I have.”

When this had been said, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder said to the wanderers, “As for the venerable one who says, ‘The cosmos is eternal. Only this is true; anything otherwise is worthless. This is the sort of view I have,’ his view arises from his own inappropriate attention or in dependence on the words of another. Now this view has been brought into being, is fabricated, willed, dependently co-arisen. Whatever has been brought into being, is fabricated, willed, dependently co-arisen: That is inconstant. Whatever is inconstant is stress. This venerable one thus adheres to that very stress, submits himself to that very stress.” [Similarly for the other positions.]

When this had been said, the wanderers said to Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, “We have each & every one expounded to you in line with our own positions. Now tell us what views you have.”

“Whatever has been brought into being, is fabricated, willed, dependently co-arisen: That is inconstant. Whatever is inconstant is stress. Whatever is stress is not me, is not what I am, is not my self. This is the sort of view I have.”

“So, householder, whatever has been brought into being, is fabricated, willed, dependently co-arisen: That is inconstant. Whatever is inconstant is stress. You thus adhere to that very stress, submit yourself to that very stress.”

“Venerable sirs, whatever has been brought into being, is fabricated, willed, dependently co-arisen: That is inconstant. Whatever is inconstant is stress. Whatever is stress is not me, is not what I am, is not my self. Having seen this well with right discernment as it has come to be, I also discern the higher escape from it as it has come to be.”

When this was said, the wanderers fell silent, abashed, sitting with their shoulders drooping, their heads down, brooding, at a loss for words. — *AN 10:93*

“By & large, Kaccāna, this world is supported by [takes as its object] a polarity, that of existence & non-existence. But when one sees the origination² of the world as it has come to be with right discernment, ‘non-existence’ with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it has come to be with right discernment, ‘existence’ with reference to the world does not occur to one.

“By & large, Kaccāna, this world is in bondage to attachments, clingings [sustenances], & biases. But one such as this does not get involved with or cling to these attachments, clingings, fixations of awareness, biases, or obsessions; nor is he resolved on ‘my self.’ He has no uncertainty or doubt that mere stress, when arising, is arising; stress, when passing away, is passing away.⁴ In this, his knowledge is independent of others. It’s to this extent, Kaccāna, that there is right view.” — *SN 12:15*

UNBINDING

The Buddha: “‘Having directly known the all as the all, and having directly known the extent of what has not been experienced through the allness of the all, I wasn’t the all, I wasn’t in the all, I wasn’t coming forth from the all, I wasn’t ‘The all is mine.’ I didn’t affirm the all. Thus I am not your mere equal in terms of direct knowing, so how could I be inferior? I am actually superior to you.’

Baka Brahmā: “‘If, good sir, you have directly known the extent of what has not been experienced through the allness of the all, may it not turn out to be actually vain and void for you.’

The Buddha: “‘Consciousness without surface, endless, radiant all around, has not been experienced through the earthness of earth... the liquidity of liquid... the fieriness of fire... the windiness of wind... the allness of the all.’” — *MN 49*

Consciousness without surface, without end
 luminous all around:
 Here water, earth, fire, & wind have no footing.
 Here long & short,
 coarse & fine,
 fair & foul,
 name & form
 are all brought to an end.
 With the cessation
 of [the aggregate of] consciousness,
 each is here brought to an end. — *DN 11*

“Monks, that dimension should be experienced where the eye [vision] ceases and the perception [mental label] of form fades. That dimension should be experienced where the ear ceases and the perception of sound fades... where the nose ceases and the perception of aroma fades... where the tongue ceases and the perception of flavor fades... where the body ceases and the perception of tactile sensation fades... where the intellect ceases and the perception of idea fades: That dimension should be experienced.” — *SN 35:114*

“If anyone were to say with regard to a monk whose mind is thus released that ‘The Tathāgata exists after death,’ is his view, that would be mistaken; that

‘The Tathāgata does not exist after death’ ... that ‘The Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death’ ... that ‘The Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death’ is his view, that would be mistaken. Why? Having directly known the extent of designation and the extent of the objects of designation, the extent of expression and the extent of the objects of expression, the extent of description and the extent of the objects of description, the extent of discernment and the extent of the objects of discernment, the extent to which the cycle revolves: Having directly known that, the monk is released. The view that, ‘Having directly known that, the monk released does not see, does not know’: That would be mistaken.” — *DN 15*

Upasāva:

He who has reached the end:
 Does he not exist,
 or is he for eternity
 free from dis-ease?
 Please, sage, declare this to me
 as this phenomenon has been known by you.

The Buddha:

One who has reached the end
 has no criterion
 by which anyone would say that—
 for him it doesn’t exist.
 When all phenomena are done away with,
 all means of speaking
 are done away with as well. — *Sn 5:6*

“All phenomena are rooted in desire....

“All phenomena have release as their heartwood.

“All phenomena gain footing in the deathless.

“All phenomena have unbinding as their final end.” — *AN 10:58*

“Of these eight dimensions of mastery, this is supreme: when one percipient of the formless internally sees forms externally as white, white in their color, white in their features, white in their glow. And there are beings who are percipient in this way. Yet even in the beings who are percipient in this way there is still aberration, there is change. Seeing this, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with that. Being disenchanted with that, he becomes dispassionate toward what is supreme, and even more so toward what is inferior.

“There are some contemplatives & brahmans who proclaim the foremost unbinding in the here & now. Now, of those who proclaim the foremost unbinding in the here & now, this is supreme: liberation through non-clinging, having known, as they have come to be, the origination, the passing away, the

