

9.3 Self-discovery Through Sutta Study

Sutta study, especially Dharma-inspired sutta study, is about self-discovery. Many of us are attracted to the physical aspects of Buddhism:

the large impressive temples: the people there must have very good karma; Buddha relics and holy images: they must have great power; anyone in their monastic robes: they must be holy.

So we try to connect to them, attracted to them, consciously or unconsciously, hoping that we too would have a share of such “blessings.”

Let us reflect on the words of the arhat, Lakunṭaka Bhaddiya, a dwarf with a golden voice:

Those people who have judged [measured] me by appearance and who follow me by voice,

Overcome by desire and passion, they know me not.
The foolish one, surrounded by mental hindrances,
neither knows the inside

Nor sees the outside—he is indeed misled by voice.
Who knows not the inside, but sees the outside:
Seeing only external fruits, he, too, is misled by voice.

Who knows the inside, and sees the outside:
Seeing without obstructions, he is not misled by voice.
(Tha 469-472 = A 2:71)¹

But we are only looking at external features, at the wrappings, without examining what is inside. “Inside” here meaning inside ourselves: why are we attracted to these external features? Asking such questions again and again, you will be surprised what you discover about yourself there.

In Dharma-guided Sutta Study, you are constantly challenged to ask yourself “why” you like or dislike something, what things happen. You are challenged to see causes and effects in your life, the rise and fall of events, of impermanence everywhere in your life.

Sutta study, especially Dharma-inspired sutta study, is about self-discovery: it is the discovery that there is no self, that suffering, its arising, its ending, and its path are all within ourselves.

The Minding Centre is about self-discovery through Suttas and mindfulness practice. The minding centre is everywhere, but if we gather together more often and more regularly in the right spirit, the still centre becomes stronger and clearer wherever you are. It promises liberation (stream-winning) here and now.

¹ See [SD 3.14\(6\)](#).

If you examine why you are thinking what you are thinking right now, it is the beginning of self-discovery: you are minding your centre.

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