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(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta

The Discourse to Saṅgārava (on the mental hindrances) | S 46.55

Theme: Calm and clear mind through clearing emotional blocks

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2003

1 The brahmin youth Saṅgārava

1.1 Saṅgārava is a deeply learned brahmin youth of Caṇḍala, kappa in Kosala. The Aṅguttara Commentary says that he is an overseer of repairs of old buildings in Rājagaha (*Rājagaha, nagare jīṇṇa., paṭisaṅkharāṇa, kārako āyuttaka, brāhmaṇo*, AA 2:266). The Majjhima Commentary says that Saṅgārava is the youngest of the Bhāradvājas, brothers of Dhānañjāni's husband.¹ It may be this very same Saṅgārava who is mentioned several times in the Anguttara Nikāya (A 1:168 f, 3:230 f, 5:232, 252).²

The (Deva) Saṅgārava Sutta (M 100) recounts how once the young brahmin student Saṅgārava sees the lady Dhānañjāni trip and hears her exclaiming three times, "Homage to the Buddha, the Arhat, the perfect self-enlightened one" (*namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā, sambuddhassa*). He chides her for extolling a shaveling monk, but when she tells him of the Buddha's marvellous qualities, he desires to see him.

When the Buddha visits Caṇḍala, kappa and stays in Todeyya's mango grove, Dhānañjāni tells Saṅgārava about it. Saṅgārava visits the Buddha and questions him on his views on brahmins. The Buddha says he has great regard for brahmins who have here and now won the goal, having discovered by their own effort a doctrine unknown before. He himself is one of these. He then proceeds to describe how he came to leave the household life and how, in due course, won awakening.

Saṅgārava then asks whether there are any gods. The Buddha answers that of that there is no doubt that the whole world is in agreement on that point. Saṅgārava is pleased and accepts the Buddha as his teacher (M 2:209 ff).

1.2 The Saṅgārava of **the (Udaka Suddhika) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 7.11) is probably distinct from the above. He lives in Sāvattī and is a "bath ritualist," who believes in purification by water, bathing morning and evening. The Buddha, at Ānanda's request, visits his house and teaches him the Dharma, after which he takes refuge (S 1:182 ff). The Saṃyutta Commentary explains that Ānanda and Saṅgārava have friends as laymen, and Ānanda is worried that his wrong views may lead him to hell. "This wretch (*varāka*) who, despite our friendship, has fallen into wrong views, and will be a hell-filler. Moreover, he has a great retinue of 500 families who have faith in him, who will surely follow him (when he is converted)." (SA 1:266).³

1.3 In our **(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 5:121 f), the brahmin Saṅgārava visits the Buddha and asks him why he can easily remember certain mantras⁴ but not others. The Buddha then expounds on the nature of mental hindrances. The penultimate section [§§10-14] of this sutta, on overcoming the mental hindr-

¹ The brahminee Dhānañjāni was married to the eldest of the Bhāra, dvāja, but whose name is not mentioned. The other Bhāra, dvāja brothers were Akkosaka Bhāra, dvāja, Asur'indaka Bhāra, dvāja, Bīlaṅgika Bhāra, dvāja, Saṅgārava Bhāra, dvāja (S 1:160 ff; SA 1:229 f which also say their first-names were given by the Council elders (*saṅgīti, kāṛā*); MA 3:452 f); Sundarika Bhāra, dvāja (DhA 4:163); Piṅgala Bhāra, dvāja (MA 3:452).

² For details, see Saṅgārava Suttas 4-7.

³ See SD 50.41 (1.2.1.2).

⁴ On the meanings of *manta*, see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7 (3.10).

ances, should be studied with **the Mahā Assa,pura Sutta** (M 39.14/1:275 f) where even more vivid similes are given.⁵

2 The Saṅgārava Suttas

The Dictionary of Pali Proper Names (DPPN) lists a total of 7 “Saṅgārava Suttas.” They are here listed with some notes:

(1) **(Deva) Saṅgārava Sutta** (M 100). A discussion between the Buddha and the brahmin youth Saṅgārava of Candala,kappa. (M 100/2:209 ff), SD 10.9

(2) **(Udaka Suddhika) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 7.11). Ānanda invites the Buddha to meet and instruct the bath-ritualist, Saṅgārava. The Buddha speaks to him of the greater truth and goodness of purity of moral virtue. (S 7.11/1:182 f), SD 50.41.

(3) **(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 46.55). The Buddha explains the mental hindrances to brahmin youth Saṅgārava. (SD 3.12).

(4) **(Pātihāriya) Saṅgārava Sutta** (A 3.60). Saṅgārava visits the Buddha and states that a brahmin brings more benefits than a wanderer (*paribbājaka*) because he not only performs sacrifices himself, but makes others do likewise. The Buddha says that the appearance of a Tathāgata in the world is of benefit to many beings. Ānanda asks Saṅgārava which of the two practices appears to him the simpler and of greater benefit. Saṅgārava evades a straight answer, even though asked three times. The Buddha then tells him of the miracles (*pātihāriya*) of psychic marvels (*iddhi*), of mind-reading (*ādesanā*) and of teaching (*anusāsanā*) possessed by monks, and describes them in detail. Saṅgārava admits that “the miracle of teaching” (*ādesanā pātihāriya*) appeals most to him. The Buddha tells him that numerous monks in the Order possess all the three miraculous powers. (A 3.60/1:168 ff), SD 16.10.

(5) **(Manta) Saṅgārava Sutta** (A 5.193). Saṅgārava visits the Buddha and questions him on the power of remembering mantras. Same as sutta 3 above but without the last paragraph on the awakening-factors (*bojjhaṅga*). This Sutta is identical with the (Nīvaraṇā) Saṅgārava (S 46.55), except without the section on the 7 awakening-factors [§§16-17]. (A 5.193/3:230 f), SD 73.3

(6) **(Magga) Saṅgārava Sutta** (A 10.117). In reply to Saṅgārava’s question, the Buddha says that wrong view, wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, wrong concentration, wrong knowledge and wrong release, are the “hither shore” and their opposites are the “farther shore.” (A 10.117/5:232 f), SD 18.7.

(7) **(Kamma,patha) Saṅgārava Sutta** (A 10.169). The Buddha tells Saṅgārava that harming life, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, divisive speech, harsh speech, idle talk, coveting, ill will, and wrong view, are the “hither shore” and abstention from them is the “farther shore.” (A 10.169/5:252 f), SD 18.7(8a)

3 (Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta

In **the (Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 46.55), the Buddha explains to Saṅgārava that mantras learnt at a time when the heart is possessed by sensual lust, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, doubt, are easily forgotten; as is the case of a man who tries to see his reflection in a bowl of water, either mixed with some dye, or heated over a fire, or overspread with moss, or ruffled by the wind, or muddied and left in the dark. The cultivation of the seven awakening-factors (*bojjhaṅga*) will remove

⁵ For comy on these similes of the 5 hindrances (MA 2:318-321), see SD 10.13 Appendix.

these disadvantages (S 46.55/5:121 ff = sutta 5 which however omits last paragraph on the awakening-factors; cf J 185/2:99-101).

The (Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta passages on overcoming the mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) [§§10-14] should be studied especially with **the Nīvaraṇa, pahāna Sutta** (A 1.2), which deals with the causes and abandoning of the hindrances.⁶ The sutta should also be compared with similar passages in **the Sāmañña, phala Sutta** (M 2.67-73/1:71-73) which also parallel those in **the Mahā Assa, pura Sutta** (M 39.14/-1:275 f). The Nīvaraṇa Saṅgārava Sutta only makes a brief mention of the seven awakening factors (*bojjhaṅga*), for which one should study **the Āhāra Sutta** (S 46.51(BD)/5:103-105, 106 f), which also discusses how the hindrances are “fed” (nourished) and how they are “starved.”⁷

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(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta

The Discourse to Saṅgārava

(on the Mental Hindrances)

S 46.55

[121] At Sāvattihī.

2 At one time the brahmin Saṅgārava approached the Blessed One, exchanged greetings and then sat down at one side.

Sitting thus at one side, the brahmin Saṅgārava said this to the Blessed One:

3 “Master Gotama, what is the cause, what is the reason, why sometimes even the mantras⁸ that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited?”

A. WHY ONE CANNOT RECALL THE MANTRAS

(1) Sensual lust

4 “Brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by **sensual lust** (*kāma, rāga*), overcome by sensual lust, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),⁹

⁶ A 1.2/1:3-5 (SD 16.3).

⁷ For a discussion on *nīvaraṇā*, see Gethin, 2001:57-9, 83 f, 113 f, 173-178.

⁸ It is likely here that the brahmin Saṅgārava is referring to the Vedas. On the meanings of *manta*, see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7 (3.10).

⁹ Comy applies the threefold escape (*nissaraṇa*)—(1) by suppression (*vikkhambhana nissaraṇa*) on attaining the 1st absorption (*jhāna*), (2) by the substitution with the wholesome opposite state (*tad-aṅga nissaraṇa*) by insight (*vipassanā*), (3) by cutting off (*samuccheda nissaraṇa*) on attaining arhathood—to each of the hindrances. In this case, *nissaraṇa* (escape), *pahāna* (abandonment), *nirodha* (ending), *viveka* (seclusion), *virāga* (fading away), *vos-sagga* (relinquishing) are all synonymous, in which case (eg the 5 *nirodhā*), two more factors—(4) by tranquillization (*paṭipassaddhi nirodha*) and (5) by escape (*nissaraṇa nirodha*)—are added (Pm 1:27.220 f; Vism 410). As regards the hindrances: (i) **sensual lust** is suppressed by the 1st absorption based on foulness and cut off by the path of arhathood (*kāma-c, chanda* here includes desire for any object, not only for sensual pleasures); (ii) **ill will** is suppressed by the 1st absorption based on lovingkindness and cut off by the path of non-returning; (iii) **sloth and torpor** are suppressed by the perception of light (visualization of a bright light like the disc of the sun or the full moon)

one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—

so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited.

4.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water,¹⁰ mixed with lac or turmeric or blue colouring or crimson colouring,¹¹ would neither know nor see it, as it really is,¹²—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by sensual lust,
 overcome by sensual lust, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit, [122]
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—

so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited.

(2) Ill will

5 Furthermore, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by **ill will** (*vyāpāda*),
 overcome by ill will, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—

so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited.

5.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, heated up by a fire, keeps boiling over with hot water, would neither know nor see it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by ill will,
 overcome by ill will, then one understands not, as it really is,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,

and cut off by the path of arhathood; (iv) **restlessness and guilt** are suppressed by calm, worry is cut off by the path of non-returning and restlessness by the path of arhathood; and (v) **doubt** is suppressed by the defining of physical and mental states (*dhamma, vavatthāna*, Vism 18.3-8/587-587) and cut off by the path of streamwinning. (SA 3:174)

¹⁰ "A bowl of water," *uda, patto*, which Comy glosses as *udaka, bharitā pāti*, "a vessel full of water" (SA 3:175).

¹¹ These are 4 of the 5 painting media of the ancient Indian artist, ie, plant products: viz dye, lac, turmeric, indigo and crimson. **Dye** (*rajana*) comes from various sources: the 6 dyes allowed for monastics are from plant-parts, viz, root-dye (*mūla*~), trunk dye (*khandha*~), bark dye (*taca* ~), leaf-dye (*patta*~), flower-dye (*puppha*~), and fruit-dye (*phala*~) (V 1:286; cf Tha 965). **Lac** (*lākha*), ie the *lākṣā* plant, whence a reddish dye (SnA 577; Vism 261). **Turmeric** (*haliddī*), is the turmeric plant, whence a yellow dye (M 1:127; S 2:101; A 3:230, 233; KhpA 64). **Indigo** (*nīli*, Skt *nīl-īṇī*), is the indigo plant (A:230, 233). **Crimson** (*mañjittṭha*) is a tree, *Vitex negundo*, *sindhavāra*, source of a colour like that of the *kaṇavīra*-bud (Vv 39.1; VvA 177; DhsA 317). The usu primary-colour pericope is: indigo (or sky grey) (*nīla*), golden yellow (or orange) (*pīta*), crimson (*mañjettṭhaka*), blood red (*lohita*), and white (*odāta*) (M 1:509; J 6:185; Dhs 617). See **Atthi, rāga S** (S 12.64.8/2:102); **Gaddula, baddha S 2** (S 22.100, 11/3:152); **(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55.4b/5:121); **(Manta) Saṅgārava S** (A 5.193.3/3:230).

¹² Cf similes of the mirror (D 2,92/1:80; M 15,8/1:100; A 10.51,3/5:92).

*one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—
so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that
have not been recited.*

(3) Sloth and torpor

6 Furthermore, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by **sloth and torpor** (*thīna, middha*), overcome by sloth and torpor, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

*so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that
have not been recited.*

6.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face [123] in a bowl of water, overgrown with seval and water plants,¹³ would neither know nor see it, as it really is, —

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by sloth and torpor, overcome by sloth and torpor, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

*so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that
have not been recited.*

(4) Restlessness and worry

7 Furthermore, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by **restlessness and worry** (*uddhacca, kukkucā*),

overcome by restlessness and worry, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

*so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that
have not been recited.*

7.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, stirred by the wind, trembling, swirling, rippling, would neither know nor see it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by restlessness and worry,

overcome by restlessness and worry, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

¹³ "Overgrown with seval and water plants," *sevāla, paṇṇaka, pariyanaddho*. *Sevāla* (Epic Skt *śaivāla, saivāla, śevāla, avakā*) is *Blyxa octandra* (variously called *sevar, seval, sebal, sevaru, sivalu*, etc, in south Asia), a waterweed, a moss-like water-plant; *paṇṇaka*, vl *paṇṇaka*, simply means "water plant(s)." See **Āghāta Paṭivīnaya S** (A 5.162, 11.1/-3:187), SD 39.5 nn.

so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited.

(5) Doubt

8 “Brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by **doubt** (*vicikicchā*), overcome by doubt, then, one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one’s own benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others’ benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—
 so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited.

8.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, turbid, agitated, muddy, left in the dark, would neither know [124] nor see it, as it really is, —

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind seized by doubt, overcome by doubt, then one understands not, as it really is, the escape (from it),
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, one’s own benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, others’ benefit,
one neither understands nor sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—

9 so, too, the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited. This, monks, is the cause, the reason, why sometimes even the mantras that have been recited over a long time do not come to mind, let alone those that have not been recited

B. WHY ONE CAN RECALL THE MANTRAS

(1) Without sensual lust

10 “Brahmin, when one dwells with a mind *not* seized by **sensual lust**, not overcome by *sensual lust*, then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

one understands and sees, as it really is, one’s own benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, others’ benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

10.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water not mixed with lac or turmeric or blue colouring or crimson colouring,¹⁴ would know and see it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind not seized by sensual lust, not overcome by *sensual lust*, then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),
one understands and sees, as it really is, one’s own benefit,

¹⁴ **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39) compares the overcoming of sensual lust to a person whose loan helps him in a successful business, bringing profit with which he could maintain a wife—as a result, he is joyful and happy (M 39,14-/1:275).

*one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—
so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.*

(2) Without ill will

11 Furthermore, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind *not* seized by **ill will**,
not overcome by *ill will*,

then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

11.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, not heated up by a fire, not boiling over with hot water,¹⁵ would know and see¹⁶ [125] it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind not seized by ill will,
not overcome by *ill will*,

then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

(3) Without sloth and torpor

12 Furthermore, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind *not* seized by **sloth and torpor**,
not overcome by sloth and torpor,

then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

12.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, not overgrown with moss or water plants,¹⁷ would know and see it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind not seized by sloth and torpor,
not overcome by *sloth and torpor*,

then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

¹⁵ **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39) compares the overcoming of ill will to a sick man who has recovered and whose food now agrees with him and he gains strength—as a result of which he is joyful and happy (M 39,14/1:275).

¹⁶ “Would know and see,” *jāneyya passeyya*. PTS ed has only *passeyya*, “would see.”

¹⁷ **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39) compares the overcoming of sloth and torpor to a prisoner who has been released, safe and secure, with no loss of property—as a result of which he is joyful and happy (M 39,14/1:275).

*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

(4) Without restlessness and worry

13 Furthermore, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind *not* seized by **restlessness and worry**, not overcome by *restlessness and worry*, then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

13.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, not stirred by the wind, not trembling, not swirling, not rippling,¹⁸ would know and see it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind not seized by restlessness and worry, not overcome by *restlessness and worry*,

then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),
*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

(5) Without doubt

14 “Brahmin, when one dwells with a mind *not* seized by **doubt**, not overcome by doubt, then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),

*one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
 one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—*

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

14.2 Brahmin, just as when a person with good sight, looking for the reflection of his own face in a bowl of water, clear, settled, limpid, left in the light,¹⁹ would know and see it, as it really is—

even so, brahmin, when one dwells with a mind not seized by doubt,

¹⁸ **Mahā Assa,pura S** (M 39) compares the overcoming of restlessness and guilt to a slave who has been freed, so that he is independent of others, free to go where he wants—as a result of which he is joyful and happy (M 39,14/1:276).

¹⁹ **Mahā Assa,pura S** (M 39) compares the overcoming of doubt to a rich man crossing a desert finds a road that leads him out of it, safe and secure, with no loss of property—as a result of which he is joyful and happy (M 39,14/1:276).

not overcome by *doubt*,
 then one understands, as it really is, the escape (from it),
one understands and sees, as it really is, one's own benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, others' benefit,
one understands and sees, as it really is, the benefit of both—

so, too, the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited. [126]

15 This, monks, is the cause, the reason, why sometimes even the mantras that have not been recited over a long time come to mind, let alone those that have been recited.

The 7 awakening-factors

16 Monks, these **7 awakening-factors**²⁰ are not obstructions, not hindrances, not corruptions of the mind. When cultivated and often developed they lead to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.²¹

What are the seven?

17 THE 7 AWAKENING-FACTORS

- (1) The awakening-factor of **mindfulness** *sati sambopjjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.
- (2) The awakening-factor of **dharma-investigation**²² *dhamma,vicaya sambojjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.
- (3) The awakening-factor of **energy**²³ *viriya sambojjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.

²⁰ The 7 awakening-factors or factors of awakening (*satta bojjhaṅga*) are the “factors” that can be collectively be called “awakening” (*bodhi*). They are also seen as “limbs” (*aṅga*) of “one who is awakening” (*bodhī*) or “a person waking up” (*bujjhanako puggalo*). See **Mahā Sakul’udāyī S** (M 77.20). See Gethin 2001:146-189 (ch 5).

²¹ “The fruit of true knowledge and freedom,” *vijjā,vimutti,phala,sacchikiriyā*.

²² *Dhamma,vicaya*. Sometimes this is taken as “investigation of the Doctrine,” but the meaning here actually is “investigation of bodily and mental phenomena” (Walshe 1995n690). This is the key awakening-factor, ie, “awakening” itself, while the others are the “factors” that help this awakening to be realized (Nm 456). **Milinda,-pañha** compares *dhamma,vicaya sambojjhaṅga* to a sword, which in order to cut relies on the use of the hands (representing the other 5 factors) (Miln 83). See Gethin 2001:185.

²³ *Vīriya sambojjhaṅga*. This is identical to the 4 right efforts of the noble eightfold path.

- (4) The awakening-factor of **zest**²⁴ *pīti sambojjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.
- (5) The awakening-factor of **tranquillity** *passaddhi sambojjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.
- (6) The awakening-factor of **concentration** *samādhi sambojjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.
- (7) The awakening-factor of **equanimity** *upekkhā sambojjhaṅga*
 is not an obstruction, not a hindrance, not a corruption of the mind.
 When cultivated and often developed,
 it leads to the realization of the fruit of true knowledge and freedom.”

Saṅgārava takes refuge

18 When this was said, the brahmin Saṅgārava said this to the Blessed One:
 “Excellent, master Gotama! Excellent, master Gotama!
 Just as if, master Gotama, one
 were to place upright what had been overturned, or
 were to reveal what was hidden, or
 were to show the way to one who was lost, or
 were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms,
 in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the master Gotama.
 I go to the master Gotama for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks.
 May the master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge from this
 day forth for life.”

— evaṃ —

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²⁴ *Pīti*. Sometimes tr as “rapture,” but “zest” is closer to evoking the more subtle yet enthusing nature of *pīti*. One experiences zest in two ways: by attaining either the 1st or 2nd dhyana in which zest is present, one experiences it in the mode of calm (*samatha*); by emerging from that *jhāna* and reflecting that zest is subject to destruction, one experiences zest in the mode of insight (*vipassanā*). Psychologically, zest is a kind of “joyful interest,” as such may be associated with wholesome, unwholesome or neutral states (BDict: *pīti*). Zest belongs to the formation group (*saṅkhāra-k, khandha*) while happiness (*sukha*) belongs to the feeling group (*vedanā-k, khandha*). Zest is compared to when a thirsty man lost in the desert finds water; happiness is what he feels when he is drinking the water. See Vism 4.94 ff.