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Jāgara Sutta

The Discourse on the Awake | S 1.6 of the **Naḷa Vagga**,¹ The Reed Group
 Theme: As we sleep we gather dust; awake, we are purified
 Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2018

1 Sutta highlights**1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE**

1.1.1 The Jāgara Sutta (S 1.6), like the Kati Chinda Sutta (S 1.5) preceding it, has only 2 verses, the first [S 9*] of which is a deity's riddle, followed by the Buddha's answer [S 10*] which is also a riddle. Interestingly, the Buddha's answer in both the Suttas plays on the number **5**. Moreover, in both the Suttas, he mentions 4 sets of "5s."

However, in the Jāgara Sutta, the pentad refers to only 2 sets of teachings: the 5 mental hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*) and the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*), as stated in the Commentary (SA 1:25). We will examine this in greater detail later [3].

1.1.2 Like **the Kati Chinda Sutta** (S 1.5), we have no way of knowing whether the verse [S 9*] was a riddle drawn from a common pool of **gnomes** and gnomonic sayings,² or whether the Buddha himself had composed this riddle as a mnemonic for remembering a set of teachings related to meditation.³ Anyway, the purpose of this Sutta is clear: to remind us of what hinders our meditative progress and what facilitates it, that is, respectively, the hindrances and the faculties. [3]

1.1.3 We do, however, have **the Jāgara Jātaka** (J 414) [4.2], which has a simpler verse—the riddle itself taking only lines a and b—which clearly shows that it belongs to a common pool of ancient riddles. Many of the Jātaka stories are based on well-known Indian fables (with talking animals, demons and gods) and riddles. Some of the stories parallel the Jain canonical accounts: "the similarities between them is so close that one version can be used to restore the text of the other."⁴

Many of the verses (which are canonical) and prose narrative (most of which are canonical) probably came from the Buddha's time or later (between 5th-2nd centuries BCE). Although some of the verses may possibly date back to the Vedic period, most of them, however, probably do not date earlier than the 3rd century BCE. Some of the stories may go back to the pre-Buddhist ascetic poetry, while some of them may give us "a picture of the narrative literature and the conditions of civilization at the time of the Buddha or a still earlier time."⁵

The Jāgara Jātaka 2-line riddle probably preserves (at least the essence) of an ancient riddle.⁶ However, since the riddle fits very well with the Bodhisattva teaching, it (the riddle) probably was the work

¹ *Naḷa*: A 4:169; J 1:392; VvA 43. Cf (1) *naḷī*, a hollow stalk, tube, pipe; a measure of capacity; (2) *nāḷikā*, a stalk, shaft; a tube, pipe or cylinder for holding anything; a small measure of capacity. On **Naḷa Vagga**, see SD 54.2a (1).

² See SD 54.2 (3.2.2.5). A **gnome** is "a short pithy statement of a general truth; a proverb, maxim, aphorism, or apophthegm" (OED). On **gnomes**, see **Sādhu S** (S 1.33), SD 22.10c (1.1).

³ See esp **Sambahula Bhikkhu Vatthu** (the story of some monks), DhA 25.7/4:101-112 (Dh 368-376).

⁴ Norman 1983:82.

⁵ Winternitz 1933:121.

⁶ On the Jātakas, see Winternitz 1933: 113-156; Norman 1983:77-84 (§3.5.10). For textual details, see Hinüber 1996:54-58 (§II.2.5.10).

of the early Buddhists. The Buddhist version could, of course, have been modelled on an older riddle on the sleeping and the awake. [4.2.2].

1.2 SUTTA COMMENTARY

1.2.1 The Commentary equates the two key ideas of the riddle thus:

- “being awake” (*jāgara*) refers to the application of **the 5 faculties**—faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom [3.2];
- “asleep, sleeping” (*sutta*) refers to being overcome by **the 5 hindrances**—sensual desire, ill will, restlessness and worry, sloth and torpor, and doubt [3.1].

The Samyutta Commentary explains that when the 5 faculties are “awake,” the 5 hindrances are “asleep,” and when *the 5 hindrances* are “asleep,” *the 5 faculties* are “awake.” Further, by the same *5 hindrances* one gathers, grasps and clings to dust, that is, the dust of defilement, and by *the 5 faculties* one is purified. (SA 1:25,1-13)

1.2.2 S 10* explained

1.2.2.1 At first blush, it may seem odd that the Buddha reply starts by saying “**Amongst the awake, 5 are asleep**” [S 10a] that is, while there are those awakening through mindfulness or awakened in wisdom. The meaning is that there are now in the world the arhats, the “**awake**,” that is, those who have been awoken from the sleep of *ignorance* and dream of *craving* of the world.

The arhats have awoken through cultivating the 5 faculties [3.2], which purifies them from the **dust** of defilements [S 10d]. Hence, the arhats are not only able to attain inner peace and clarity, but are also liberated from the world and suffering—despite the world, which still needs to be free from suffering.

1.2.2.2 However, it may seem more natural perhaps—leading from the worldly to the spiritual—that we should put line b [S 10b*] first: “**Amongst the sleeping, 5 are awake**,” that is, in the world shrouded in the sleep of ignorance and dreams of craving, overcome by the 5 hindrances [3.1]. Those who sleep, it is said, “gather dust,” that is the dust of the 5 hindrances blinds us crippling us, dependent on this body of physical senses [S 10c].

The 5 faculties [3.2] progressively clears away the dust of ignorance and craving, freeing us from the prison that is our physical senses. This helps our mind to focus itself in calm and clarity, until we are fully immersed in dhyana, when the mind, free from the body, fully experiences itself.

Despite all this handicap, there are those who are awakening or have awakened. They are those who have their own lights to see their way around and move into the sunlight of wisdom and freedom.

On a deeper level, we can say that **S 10b** refers to the world which remains as it is—turning on the hub of suffering. Only the awake, in leaving this world, renouncing worldliness, are truly free from it. They are the arhats, the “awake.”

1.2.2.3 There are at least 2 reasons for this arrangement, that is, for putting *the awake* first, followed by *the asleep* in the Buddha’s verse teaching [S 10*]. The Buddha is simply replying the deity’s riddle. Secondly, it is likely that the verse is an ancient pre-Buddhist riddle which the deity remembers, and he is curious about the Buddha’s answer. Either way, the Buddha answers in keeping to the flow of ideas in the deity’s verse.

2 Jāgara and its various forms

2.1 MEANING. *Jagara* is both an adjective (mfn) [1.1.2.1] and a masculine noun (ts) [1.1.2.2]. It comes from the verb *jagarati = jaggati* (Skt *jāgarti, jāgarati*; reduplicative perfect for *jājarti*; Amg *jaggai*):

2.1.1 Canonical meanings: “to be awake, to be watchful, to be on the alert” (cf *gutta, dvāra*, “with the sense-doors guarded”):

- “long is the night to the wakeful” (*dīghā jāgarati rattī*, Dh 60);
- “the influxes of those who are watchful ... they all come to an end” (*sadā jāqaramānānam ... attham gacchanti āsava*, Dh 226);
- *jāgarantā, jāgarita, jāgarato*: see **Jāgariya Sutta (It 47)** [5.2.3];
- “the one who is awake, not overcome by drowsiness” (*jāgaro na middha, samāpanno*, Miln 300,30);

2.1.2 Commentarial meanings: “watches over, looks after, attends to; takes care of, bring up, raise, rear”; these usages found only in the Commentaries:

- (King Pasenadi, in connection with Kumāra Kassapa) “Sirs (Bhante), it would be a problem for the nuns to raise the boy. We will raise him.” (*bhikkhunīnaṃ bhane dāraka, jagganan nāma palibodho, mayam nam jaggissāmāti, Nigrodha, miga Jātaka*, J 12/1:148,23);
- “An ascetic is keeping a serpent ... is it true that you are rearing a serpent? ... Don’t rear (such a thing).” (*eko kira tāpaso āsīvisam paṭijaggatīti ... saccam kira tvam āsīvisam jaggasīti ... mā evam jaggasīti, Veluka Jātaka*, J 43/1:245,15-18) [DP: *jaggati*]. [1.3]

2.2 USAGES OF JĀGARA

2.2.1 As an adjective

2.2.1.1 As an **adjective** (mfn), *jāgara* means “awake; watchful.” The following usages of *jāgara* as an **adjective** are found in the suttas and Commentaries:

- “The recluse is one conscious, awake” (*saññī samaṇo jāgaro*, D 16/2:130,28);
- *jāgaratam, jāgarā*: see **Jāgara Sutta** (S 9*+10* @ S 1.6/1:3) below;
- *jāgaro sa hi suttesu amogham tassa jīvitam*, Tha 203 [4.1.2];
- *ko’ dha jāgaratam sutto ko’ dha suttesu jāgaro* (J 3:404,3*) [4.2];
- “(The nuns) who were awake or have fallen asleep” (*jāgarā vā niddam okkantā*, VA 6:1295,12);
- “The 5 faculties are called wakefulness” (*pañc’indriyāni jāgarāni nāma*,⁷ SA 1:25,8);
- “The lengthiness of the night to you the wakeful is commonly known” (*jāgarassa tāva rattiya dīgha, bhāvo pākaṭo*, SA 1:144,17);
- “The accomplishment in the wakeful state that is the 5 beginning with faith is called wakefulness” (*sad-dhādihi pañcāhi jāgara, dhammehi samannāgatattā jāgaro nāma*, DhA 1:309,19 f).

2.2.2.2 The rare form ***jāgarika*** is found in the Vinaya:

- (Dabba Malla,putta) “I do not recall ever indulging in sexual intercourse even in a dream; much less so when I was awake” (*nābhijānāmi supinantena pi methunam dhammam paṭisevitā pag’eva jāgaro’ti*, V 3:162,38).

⁷ Be Ce Ee so; Se *jaggan’ti*.

2.2.3 *Jāgara* also appears as a suffix (ifc) as ***bahu,jāgara***, “wide awake,” is found in an ancient verse from **the Aṭṭhaka,vagga** [2.2.3.1] and from **the Dhammapada** [2.2.3.4], thus:

2.2.3.1 The 1st example is **Sn 972** from **the (Sutta Nipāta) Sāriputta Sutta** (Sn 4.16),⁸ whose interlinear translation is as follows:

<i>Okkhitta,cakkhu na ca pādalo</i>	With downcast eyes and not footloose, ⁹
<i>jhānānuyutto <u>bahu,jāgar'assa</u></i>	he should be wide awake, engaged in dhyana;
<i>upekham ārabha samāhit'atto</i>	with mind concentrated, absorbed in equanimity,
<i>takk'āsayam kukkucci'yūpacchinde</i> (Sn 972)	he should cut off worrying and the speculating habit.

2.2.3.2 The idiomatic or contextual¹⁰ translation of **Sn 972** is as follows:

With downcast eyes and not footloose,	he should cut off worrying and the habit of speculating;
with mind concentrated,	
absorbed in equanimity,	he should be wide awake, engaged in dhyana.
	(Sutta Nipāta) Sāriputta Sutta (Sn 972)

2.2.3.3 From the Pali of **Sn 972**, the interlinear translation helps us learn and know the textual language. However, it is clear that the key line of this verse is ***b*** (about attaining dhyana): this is obvious to one who is familiar with the Buddha Dharma and the suttas. We can easily see how the rest of the verse leads to this theme or supports it. However, since this may not be obvious in translation, especially to one unfamiliar with Pali verses and their licence, and with the versatility of the Buddha’s teaching style. This is helpful to rearrange the verse lines to highlight the key teaching, as shown in the contextual translation, which clearly shows how all the ideas converge on the theme of attaining dhyana.

2.2.3.4 The phrase ***bahu,jāgara***, “wide awake,” recurs in Dhammapada verse 29, thus:

<i>Appamatto pamattesu¹¹</i>	Heedful amongst the heedless,	
<i>suttesu <u>bahu,jāgaro</u></i>	widely awake amongst the sleeping,	
<i>abal'assarā va sīgh'asso</i>	the wise goes like a swift horse	<i>d</i>
<i>hitvā yāti sumedhaso</i> (Dh 29) ¹²	leaving behind a weak nag.	<i>c</i>

2.2.4 *Jāgara* as a masculine noun: “waking; watchfulness”; Abh 768 (*jāgaro jāgariyam*).¹³

- “Wisdom is a light in the world; the wakeful is mindfulness in the world” (*paññā lokasmim pajjoto sati lokasmi jāgaro*, S 1:44,20*);
- “non-devotion to wakefulness is non-engagement to being awake” (*jāgariyam ananuyuttāti jāgare ayuttā*, MA 1:152,18: Be, Se so; Ce, Ee *jāgaraṇe*);

⁸ Also called **Thera,pañha S**.

⁹ See Sn:N 126 (v972).

¹⁰ “**Idiomatic**” means keeping to the natural style and flow of modern English. “**Contextual**” means keeping to the way the teaching is given so that it is applicable to our own practice.

¹¹ Uttv 6.16c; Mahābharata 12.200.95a etc.

¹² Dh:G 118; Dh:P 18; Uv 19.4. For philological nn, see Dh:N 68 n27.

¹³ *Jāgarā* at UA 335,28 (Ce, Ee) is prob wr for *gārava* (Be Se, ItA 1:7.6 so).

- “wakefulness for the wakeful means having overcome sleep” (*jāgaraṇaṃ jāgaro, niddâtikkamo’ti attho*, ApA 203,14);

2.3 EVOLUTION IN WORD USAGE

2.3.1 Adjective and noun. The word *jāgara* makes an interesting study of how the meanings and usages of words evolve or change over time. In the Pali Canon itself, definitely in the suttas, *jāgaro*—functioning both as an adjective and as a noun—means “to be awake” (Dh 226) or “to be kept awake” (Dh 60). The word is still used in this sense in **the Milinda, pañha** (300,30), the core of which was probably composed during the 1st century of the Common Era (CE).

2.3.2 Canonical and commentarial. Interestingly, in the suttas, *jāgara* is used both as an adjective and a noun [2.1.1], but only in the sense of “being awake,” that is, in a mostly personal or psychological sense. In the later works, such as the Jātakas, Commentaries and later works, however, *jāgara* tends to be used in its verb forms, *jagarati* or *jaggati*, which has at least 2 important senses, mostly a secular activity: “he watches over, brings up (a child) or raises (a pet)” [2.1.2].

2.3.3 Interestingly, both these meanings—the old canonical and the later commentarial—are found in the modern Malay loanword “**jaga**”:

- (1) “berjaga”: unable to sleep;
- (2) “berjaga-jaga”: keep awake (throughout wedding dinner);
- (3) “menjaga”: (a) to watch over (in terms of patrolling or security); (b) raise (a child); (c) to be vigilant;
- (4) “terjaga”: to waken or be roused from sleep.

3 Sutta teachings

3.1 THE 5 HINDRANCES

3.1.1 Definition. The 5 hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*) or more fully, the 5 mental hindrances, are 5 psychological qualities arising on account of sense-experiences that hinder or obstruct wholesome mental development. Spiritually, the hindrances prevent us from focusing our mind in meditation to attain any kind of concentration, whether preliminary (“neighbourhood concentration,” *upacāra, samādhi*) or full (*appanā, samādhi*), that is, dhyana (*jhāna*).¹⁴ In other words, they prevent the arising of wisdom so that we are able to see or discern truth and reality from falsehood and delusion.

3.1.2 The set. The 5 hindrances are listed in the suttas and elsewhere as follows:¹⁵

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (1) sensual desire, | <i>kama-c, chanda</i> |
| (2) ill will, | <i>vyāpāda</i> |
| (3) restlessness and worry, | <i>uddhacca, kukkuccha</i> |
| (4) sloth and torpor, and | <i>thīna, middha</i> |
| (5) doubt. | <i>vicikicchā</i> |

¹⁴ On dhyana, see *Dhyana*, SD 8.4.

¹⁵ See *Nīvaraṇa*, SD 32.1; (*Nīvaraṇa*) *Saṅgārava S* (S 46.55), SD 3.12. Briefly at *Te, vija S* (D 13,30), SD 1.8 (each preceded by a parable). Detailed, with parables: *Sāmañña, phala S* (D 2,68-74), SD 8.10; (*Nīvaraṇa*) *Saṅgārava S* (S 46.55), SD 3.12.

The key hindrances are *the first 2—sensual desire and ill will*—which are famously mentioned as the dvandva (twin compound) of “covetousness and displeasure” (*abhijjhā, domanassa*), as a synecdoche (shorthand) for the whole set of 5 hindrances.¹⁶ This unwholesome pair can further be reduced to a *single* defilement, that is, **craving** (*taṇhā*), the active aspect of ignorance (*avijjā*), the root of all suffering.¹⁷

3.1.3 Body and mind. In spiritual terms, the 5 hindrances—although sometimes called “*mental* hindrances”—are really the dominance of the body over the mind. The set of hindrances epitomizes how our **body**, through our 5 physical senses (*indriya*), dominate all our existence so that we are merely reacting to them as being pleasant, painful or neutral. When we are drawn to the pleasant, or to the unpleasant, or neglect the neutral, we respectively feed the latent tendencies (*anusaya*) of lust, of aversion and of ignorance.¹⁸

The practice of meditation trains us to at least moderate or minimize the worldly effects of such a body-based existence. This vital practice is known as **sense-restraint** (*indriya, samvara*).¹⁹ When the physical senses are tamed through moral virtue (*sīla*), this facilitates the taming of the mind (the 6th of the 6 sense-bases, the 1st 5 being those of the 5 physical senses).²⁰ Through “concentration” (*samādhi*) or “meditation” (*bhāvanā*), we cultivate wisdom (*paññā*), the basis for our spiritual liberation. This is known as **the 3 trainings** (*sikkha-t, taya*).²¹

3.2 THE 5 FACULTIES

3.2.1 Definition. **The 5 faculties** (*pañc’indriya*) or more fully, the 5 “predominant” spiritual faculties, the wholesome psychological qualities that, when properly applied, bring about joy that conduces to mental concentration and dhyana [3.1.1]. Psychologically, the 5 faculties should be applied to reach a mental equilibrium between the body and mind, feeling and thinking, so that our meditation moves smoothly and quickly to arouse **the 7 awakening-factors** (*satta bojjhaṅga*) [3.2.3].

3.2.2 The 5 faculties and related teachings

3.2.2.1 The 5 faculties are listed in the suttas and elsewhere as follows:²²

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) faith, | <i>saddh’indriya</i> |
| (2) energy or effort, | <i>viriy’indriya</i> |
| (3) mindfulness, | <i>sat’indriya</i> |
| (4) concentration, and | <i>samādh’indriya</i> |
| (5) wisdom. | <i>paññ’indriya</i> |

Diagram 3.2.2 The 5 faculties and how they are harmonized [see SD 10.4, Diagram 2.2]

¹⁶ See **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,13), SD 13.2; **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,36), SD 13.3; SD 13.1 (4.2); **Nīvaraṇa** SD 32.1 (2.1); **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118,24.2), SD 7.13. See also **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39,13), SD 39.13.

¹⁷ On ignorance, see SD 50.12 (2.4.6); **Anusaya**, SD 31.3 (8) The latent tendency of ignorance.

¹⁸ On the latent tendencies, see SD 31.3. On how ignorance arises from neutral feeling, see **Sall’atṭhena S** (S 36.6,8.5), SD 5.5.

¹⁹ On sense-restraint, see **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,64), SD 8.10; also **Nimitta & anuvyañjana**, SD 19.14. See also SD 54.2c (2.1.1.5).

²⁰ This set is called the 6 sense-bases (*saḷ-āyatana*): see **Sabba S** (S 35.23), SD 7.1.

²¹ On the 3 trainings (*sikkha-t, taya*), see **(Ti) Sikkhā S** (A 3.88), SD 24.10c; **Sīla samādhi paññā**, SD 21.6; SD 1.11 (5).

²² See **Pañc’indriya**, SD 10.4; also SD 3.6 (3).

3.2.2.2 The 5 faculties work their best effect when they are properly harmonized by mindfulness [Diagram 3.2.2]. On a basic level, the 5 faculties should moderate our progress as practising Buddhists. We may begin our Buddhist life simply through the faculties in this manner:

- faith through wise belief in the truth of impermanence, or
- effort through participating in some good works, or
- wisdom through understanding impermanence or reading suttas; or
- concentration through practising meditation and feeling its peace and joy.

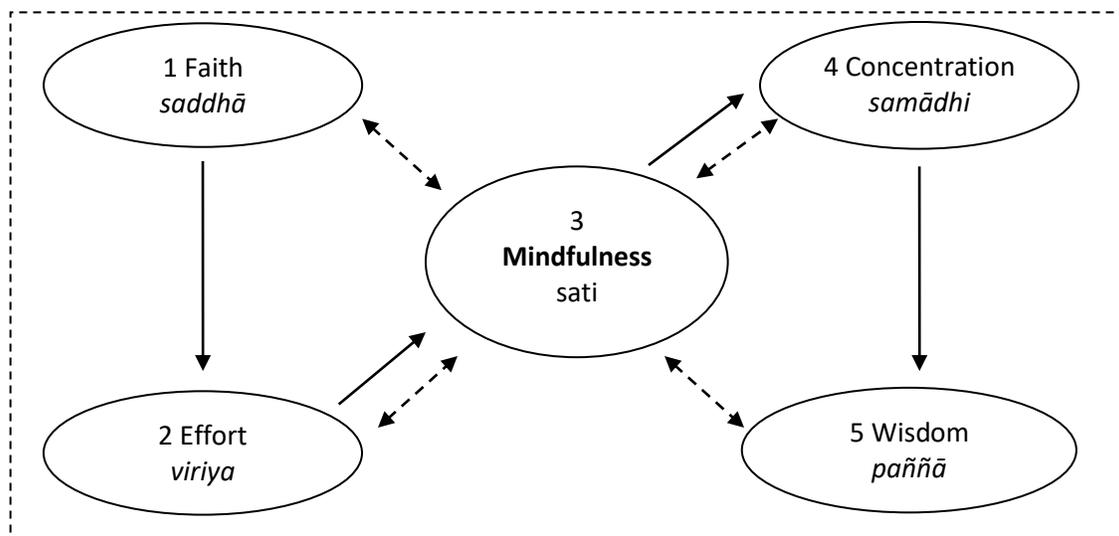
We need to apply **mindfulness** in all such practices. Basically, whichever of these 4 faculties predominant in us, it helps all the other weaker faculties to work together, harmonizing them, by the mindfulness of impermanence in our respective predominant faculties, whether we are faith-inclined or wisdom-inclined.

Our **faith** may sometimes be shaken with *doubt*: we need to make some effort to cultivate concentration (some simple meditation or mindfulness practice) and wisdom (some sutta study or sutta reflection).

We may find our **effort** sometimes taxing, even boring. We need to strengthen our faith, either through some wisdom (understanding) of the suttas, or doing some simple concentration exercise (meditation) to energize ourself through mental calm and joy.

When we only read the suttas or listen to talks, we may, after a while, notice our **wisdom** stagnating, or we wonder where this is all going. It helps to build up our faith, either through joining in some communal effort in good works. We should also deepen reflection on impermanence to gain some *concentration* that gives us a taste of its calm and joy.

When we only practise **concentration**, we may not have the wisdom of understanding some of our experiences, whether they are hindrances or the faculties at work. It helps to spend some time in wholesome effort to build up some wholesome merit (*puñña* or *kusala*)²³ that strengthens our faith in our practice.²⁴



²³ On *puñña* and *kusala*, see SD 54.2c (2).

²⁴ On the harmonizing of faculties (*indriya, samatta*), see SD 10.4 (2).

3.2.2.3 When the 5 faculties are properly cultivated and well-balanced, **mindfulness** (*sati*) becomes so well focused that it discerns our mental states fully and clearly. Our mindfulness strengthens itself into an awakening-factor (*bojjhaṅga*). We then go on to work with **the 7 awakening-factors** (*satta bojjhaṅga*), thus:

(1) mindfulness,	<i>sati sambojjhaṅga</i>
(2) investigation of states,	<i>dhamma,vicaya sambojjhaṅga</i>
(3) effort,	<i>viriya sambojjhaṅga</i>
(4) zest,	<i>pīti sambojjhaṅga</i>
(5) tranquillity,	<i>passaddhi sambojjhaṅga</i>
(6) concentration, and	<i>samādhi sambojjhaṅga</i>
(7) equanimity.	<i>upekkhā sambojjhaṅga</i>

In meditative terms, both **the 5 faculties** [3.2.2.2] and **the 7 awakening-factors** [above] can be used to help us understand our practice better and to enhance it. Their main difference is in their emphasis. While the 5 faculties help us to balance or harmonize our practice (a kind of “horizontal” strategy), the 7 awakening-factors help us in a “vertical” strategy.²⁵ Through the awakening-factors we apply the enhanced **mindfulness** to **investigate** our mental states, seeing them for what they really are, especially seeing them as being impermanent [3.2.2.2]. The secret to good meditation is patience, that is, repetitive application of **effort** to keep bringing our mind back to the meditation-object²⁶ or fully observing the impermanence of whatever state is before us.²⁷

4 Related riddles

4.1 THE DHAMMA,PĀLA THERA,GĀTHĀ (Tha 203)

4.1.1 Avantī. The Thera,gātha Commentary states that the elder **Dhamma,pāla** was born into a brahmin family in Avantī country (modern Malwa, Madhya Pradesh)²⁸ “after the teacher’s final passing” (*satthari parinibbute*, ThaA 2:70,12).²⁹ This means that his Thera.gāthā was included in the Canon between the times of the Buddha’s passing³⁰ and the 3rd council (the council of Pāṭaliputta) held during Asoka’s time.³¹

²⁵ On how, after overcoming the hindrances, we proceed to cultivate the awakening-factors, see **Anīvaraṇa S** (S 46.38b), SD 3.2(5.3).

²⁶ See **Vimutt’āyatana S** (A 5.26,6) where we are told to “properly grasp some concentration-sign” as a ground for at least a temporary “freedom” from mental defilements (SD 3.2(5.2)).

²⁷ On the 7 awakening-factors, see (**Bojjhaṅga**) **Sīla S** (S 46.3), SD 10.15; **Mahā Sakul’udāyī S** (M 77,20) + SD 6.18 (7); **Aggañña S** (D 27,30), SD 2.19.

²⁸ One of the 4 great kingdoms of the Buddha’s time; the other 3 being Magadha (capital, Rājagṛha), Kosala (capital, Sāvattihī) and Vāṃsa or Vatsa (capital, Kosambī). All these are among the 16 great states (*mahā,janapada*) of 6th century BCE India. See SD 33.5 (1.2.1.2).

²⁹ See Tha:N §14 (p xxvii).

³⁰ The Buddha is traditionally said to have died in 544 BCE (Sri Lanka) or 543 BCE (SE Asia), but scholars calculate a later date, between 410 and 400 BCE. See *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*: date of the Buddha.

³¹ This was around 250 BCE: see *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*: Council of Pāṭaliputra II (also Council of Pāṭaliputra I).

4.1.2 Story behind Tha 203

4.1.2.1 The Commentary tells us that Dhammapāla, having completed his training in the arts in Takka-silā, was returning home. Along his way, he saw a certain monk in a monastery, and having listened to a Dharma teaching from him, faith arose in him so that he renounced the world. Cultivating insight, he became an arhat with the 6 super knowledges.³²

4.1.2.2 One day, in the monastery (*vihāra*), he saw 2 novices on the top of a tree plucking flowers. The tree branch on which one was standing broke and he fell. The elder, applying his psychic power, with his own hand, caught the novice. After putting him down safely on the ground, he gave him a Dharma instruction beginning with this verse:

<p><i>Yo have daharo bhikkhu yuñjati buddha,sāsane jāgaro patisuttasu amoghan tassa jīvitam</i> (Tha 203)</p>	<p>The young monk who devotes himself to the Buddha's teaching is indeed awake amongst the sleeping. His life is not in vain.</p>	
<p><i>Tasmā saddhañ ca silañ ca pasādam dhammam,dassanam anuyuñjetha medhavi saram buddhāna,sāsananti</i> (Tha 204)</p>	<p>Therefore, let a wise man devote himself to faith and moral virtue and have a radiant heart, seeing the Dharma, remember the Buddha's teaching.</p>	<p><i>c</i> <i>a</i> <i>b</i></p>

4.2 THE JĀGARA JĀTAKA (J 414/3:403 f), abridged

4.2.1 Introduction. The story was related in reference to a certain layman who was a streamwinner (*sot-āpanna*). Once, he was travelling with a caravan along a forest road. When the caravan stopped for the night, it was attacked by robbers. However, seeing the layman walking to and fro all night, they stopped their attack and reported the matter to their leader. The layman was greatly honoured and, on arriving at Sāvattihī, told the Buddha about it. The Buddha replied by relating **the Jāgara Jātaka**, the birth-story on wakefulness (J 414). This is the story of the past.

4.2.2 Once, the Bodhisatta was a brahmin who, having studied at Takka,silā, became an ascetic in the Himalayas, living only in standing and walking postures.

One day, a dryad (tree-deva) appeared before him and asked him a riddle about waking and sleeping, which he solved to her satisfaction. Here is the story (abridged):

2 (The dryad:)

<p><i>Ko'dha jāgāram sutto ko'dha suttasu jāgaro ko mam'etaṃ vijānati ko taṃ paṭibhaṇāti me'ti</i> (J 135*)</p>	<p>Who here sleeps while others are awake? Who here is awake amongst the sleeping? Who understand this riddle of mine? Who can answer me this?</p>
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³² The 6 superknowledges (*cha-ḷ-abhiññā*): (1) psychic powers; (2) divine ear; (3) mind-reading; (4) retrocognition; (5) the divine eye; and (6) knowledge of the destruction of the influxes (arhatness): see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,89-99), SD 8.10; **Kevaḍḍha S** (D 11,55-66), SD 1.7; SD 27.5a (5).

3 The Bodhisattva, hearing these words, said:

<i>Ahaṃ jāgarataṃ sutto</i> <i>ahaṃ suttesu jāgaro</i> <i>ahaṃ etaṃ vijānāmi</i> <i>ahaṃ paṭibhaṇāmi te'ti</i> (J 136*)	Asleep am I while others are awake. Awake am I amongst the sleeping. I understand this, I will answer you.
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4 The tree spirit further spoke this verse:

<i>Kathaṃ jāgarataṃ sutto</i> <i>kathaṃ suttesu jāgaro</i> <i>kathaṃ etaṃ vijānāsi</i> <i>kathaṃ paṭibhaṇāsi me'ti</i> (J 137*)	How is it you sleep while others are awake? How is it you are awake amongst the sleeping? How do you understand this? How will you answer me?
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5 To explain the meaning of this verse that was asked, the Bodhisattva explained:

<i>Ye dhammaṃ na-p,pajānanti</i> <i>saṃyamo'ti damo'ti ca</i> <i>tesu suppaṃānesu</i> <i>ahaṃ jaggāmi devate</i> (J 138*)	Those who understand not the teaching, “This is restraint” and “This is the tamed,” they are amongst the sleeping: I keep awake, O deity!
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<i>Yesaṃ rāgo ca doso ca</i> <i>avijjā ca virājitā</i> <i>tesu jāgaramānesu</i> <i>ahaṃ sutto'smi devate</i> (J 139*)	For whom lust and hate and ignorance, too, have been overcome, they are amongst the wakeful: Asleep am I, O deity!
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<i>Evaṃ jāgarataṃ sutto</i> <i>evaṃ suttesu jāgaro</i> <i>evaṃ etaṃ vijānāmi</i> <i>evaṃ paṭibhaṇāmi te'ti</i> (J 149*)	Thus is the asleep amongst the wakeful, thus is the awake amongst the sleeping: this I understand thus, thus I answer you.
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6 When the great being had thus answered the question, the deity sang praises, and spoke this closing verse:

<i>Sādhu jāgarataṃ sutto</i> <i>sādhu suttesu jāgaro</i> <i>sādhu m'etaṃ vijānāsi</i> <i>sādhu paṭibhaṇāsi me'ti</i> (J 141*)	Good is the one asleep amongst the wakeful. Good is the wakeful amongst those sleeping. I understand this well. You have answered me well.
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7 The Teacher, having given this Dharma teaching, connected the Jātaka:

“At that time, the young female deity was Uppalavaṇṇā, and I was myself the ascetic.”³³

4.2.3 Commentary. This is a wordplay on both “asleep” (*sutta*) and “awake, waking” (*jagara*) in both verses. The Bodhisattva answered the riddle [§2] with a riddle [§3]. The meaning of the Bodhisattva’s enigmatic reply is this:

³³ *Satthā imaṃ dhamma,desanaṃ āharitvā jātakam samodhānesi tadā deva,dhītā uppala,vaṇṇā ahoṣi, tāpaso pana aham eva ahoṣin'ti.*

“Asleep am I while others are awake” [§3a] means while the world is caught in worldliness, the Bodhisattva is restful, at peace, although he is still not awakened.

“Awake am I amongst the sleeping” [§3b] means that while the world is overcome with the sleep of ignorance, the Bodhisattva diligently perseveres towards awakening.

5 The Jāgariya Sutta (It 47)

5.1 DEVOTION TO WAKEFULNESS. As a preamble to the Jāgariya Sutta, its commentary quotes **the Apaṇṇaka Paṭipada Sutta** (A 3.16), on the practice of the devotion of watchfulness, thus:

And how, bhikkhus, is a monk devoted to wakefulness (*jāgariyānuyogam anuyutto*)?

Here, during the day, while walking back and forth, while sitting, a monk purifies his mind of obstructive states.

In the first watch of the night, while walking back and forth, while sitting, he purifies his mind of obstructive states.

In the middle watch of the night, he lies down on the right side in the lion's posture, with one foot on top of the other, mindful and clearly comprehending, after noting in his mind the idea of waking up.

After awaking, in the last watch of the night, while walking back and forth, while sitting, he purifies his mind of obstructive states.

It is in this way that a monk is devoted to wakefulness. (A 3.16/1:114), SD 74.11³⁴

5.2 DHAMMAPADA VERSES. The Commentary further quotes 2 Dhammapada verses related to the joy of Dharma practice and attainment, thus:

<p>5.2.1 <i>Yato yato sammāsati khandhānaṃ udaya-b, bayam labhati pīti pāmojjaṃ amataṃ taṃ vijānataṃ</i></p>	<p>(Dh 374)</p>	<p>Whenever one masters the rise and fall of the aggregates, one attains joy and gladness: to the knowing, this is the death-free.³⁵</p>
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This verse is the 7th in a series of 9 verses uttered in connection with the elder **Soṇa Kūṭikaṇṇa** who gave a public teaching in the presence of his mother (a “lady lay-follower,” *upāsikā*, named **Kāṭiyāni**).³⁶ While she and her family were in the city listening to Soṇa’s teaching, a band of 900 robbers seized the opportunity to break into her well-fortified house containing immense wealth of copper coins, silver coins and gold coins.

Even though Soṇa’s mother was successively told by a servant-girl that the robbers had broken into each of the 3 treasuries and emptied them, she dismissed her as she did not want to be distracted from listening to the Dharma. The robber leader, who had been lurking near the lady, ready to kill her should she try to raise the alarm, was terrified at her calm and pious response.

The robber leader, fearing that his head would split on account of the lady’s virtue, at once ordered the robbers to return all the wealth to the treasuries. Then, he went before the lady and begged for forgiveness, confessing what they had done. When she forgave them, she implored her to allow all of them (the robbers) to renounce under her son, the elder Soṇa Kūṭikaṇṇa.

³⁴ See also (**Aṭṭhaka**) **Nanda S** (A 8.9/4:167 f), SD 84.14; Vbh §508/244.

³⁵ The “deathfree” (*amata*) is nirvana (DhA 4:110,20).

³⁶ AA 1:455,13.

She consented,³⁷ and asked Soṇa to accept them into the order. After being accepted into the order, they were each given a meditation subject. They left for a certain mountain for their solitary meditation, each under a certain tree.

It was at this time that the Buddha, in the great monastery in Jetavana, knowing what had occurred, appeared before the assembly in a radiant image and uttered the 9 verses (Dh 368-376).

(DhA 25.7/4:101-112)³⁸

<p>5.2.2 <i>Pamojja, bahulo bhikkhu pasanno buddha, sāsane adhigacche padaṃ santam saṅkhārūpasamaṃ sukhaṃ</i></p>	<p>(Dh 381)</p>	<p>A monk, full of joy, radiant in the Buddha's teaching, will attain the state of peace, the happy stilling of formations.</p>
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This verse was uttered by the Buddha in connection with the elder **Vakkali**. As a young man, he was fascinated by the Buddha's person. He became a monk just to gaze at the Buddha. Despite the Buddha advising him: "He who sees the Dharma, see me," he persisted in admiring the Buddha's person. When the time came for the Buddha to leave for the rains-retreat, Vakkali was so depressed that he attempted suicide by jumping off a cliff. The Buddha, perceiving him, projected a radiant image of himself and admonished Vakkali. Vakkali was joyful at the Buddha's dramatic presence. The Buddha spoke this verse in this connection. Vakkali then went into solitary retreat and attained arhathood. (DhA 25.11/4:117-119)³⁹

5.2.3 Jāgariya Sutta (It 47/2.2.10/41)

SD 54.2f(5)

Jāgariya Sutta

The Discourse on Wakefulness | It 47/2.2.10/41

It 2.2.10 Iti, vuttaka 2, Duka Nipāta 2, Dutiya Vagga 10

Theme: Being awake is safer than being asleep

- 1 This was indeed spoken by the Blessed One, spoken by the Arhat, thus have I heard:⁴⁰
- 2 "A monk,⁴¹ bhikkhus, should be wakeful, and should dwell mindful, clearly comprehending, focused, glad,⁴² with a bright mind:⁴³ who thereby cultivates timely insight and wholesome states.⁴⁴
- 3 Bhikkhus, for a monk who is *wakeful, and dwells mindful, fully aware, focused, glad, with a bright mind: who thereby cultivates timely insight and wholesome states—*
- 4 one of 2 fruits is to be expected: either true knowledge here and now, or, if he still has remnants of the substrates, non-returning.⁴⁵

³⁷ At the end of the teaching, she attained streamwinning (AA 456,24), and was later declared by the Buddha to be the foremost of laywomen disciples who have wise faith (*avecca-p, pasannānaṃ*, AA 457,10).

³⁸ On accounts of Sona Kūtikanna, see Mv 5.13.1-10 (V 1:194-197); U 5.6/57-59; AA 1:455,12-457,11 (Kāṭiyāni): note that AA:PTS pages are misprinted from 445-458, which should be 425-438). Referred to at J 6:15,12 f.

³⁹ For the full story, see **Vakkali S** (S 22.87), SD 8.8 (1.1 for other sources).

⁴⁰ This is said to be spoken by the laywoman **Khujj'uttarā**: see SD 16.14 (1).

⁴¹ "A monk," ie, the meditator. See **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,3A) + n, SD 13.3; SD 13.1 (3.1.1.5); SD 16.7 (1.1.1.2)..

⁴² "Glad" (*pamuditā*), one with abundant jubilation, as a result of seeing the advantages in the practice (ItA 173).

⁴³ *Jāgaro cassa bhikkhave bhikkhu vihareyya sato sampajāno samāhito pamudito vippassanno ca.*

⁴⁴ *Tattha kāla, vipassī ca kusalesu dhammesu.*

⁴⁵ *Dvinnam phalānaṃ aññataraṃ phalaṃ paṭīkaṅkham diṭṭ'eva dhamme aññā, sati vā upādisese anāgāmitāti.*

10 The Blessed One spoke on this matter. In this connection, he said this:

11 *Jāgarantā suṇath'etaṃ
ye suttā te pabujjhatha
suttā jāgaritaṃ seyyo
n'atthi jāgarato bhayaṃ*

You who are awake, hear this!
You who are asleep, awake!
Wakefulness is better than being asleep.
There is no danger for the wakeful.

12 *Yo jāgaro ca satimā sampajāno
samāhito mudito vippasanno ca
kālenasosammā dhammaṃ parivīmaṃsamāno
ekodi, bhūto vihane tamaṃ so*

Who is wakeful, mindful and fully aware,
concentrated, gladdened and insightful⁴⁶
in a timely way, examining mental states rightly,
become unified in mind, he abandons darkness.⁴⁷

13 *Tasmā have jāgariyaṃ bhajetha
ātāpī bhikkhu nipako jhāna, lābhī
saṃyojanaṃ jāti, jarāya chetvā
idh'eva sambodhim anuttaraṃ phuse'ti*

Therefore, indeed, cultivate wakefulness!
Be an ardent, discerning monk, a dhyana-attainer.
Having cut off the fetters of birth and decay,
he should right here touch supreme awakening.

14 This matter, too, was spoken by the Blessed One. Thus I have heard.

— evaṃ —

Jāgara Sutta

The Discourse on the Awake

S 1.6

1 Originating in Sāvattihī.

Standing at one side, the deity uttered this verse in the Blessed One's presence:

2 *Kati jāgarataṃ suttā
kati suttasu jāgarā
katibhi⁴⁸ rajam ādeti
katibhi parisujjhatīti.* (S 9)

Amongst the awake, how many are asleep?
Amongst the sleeping, how many are awake?
By how many does one gather dust?
By how many is one purified?

(The Blessed One:)

3 *Pañca jāgarataṃ suttā
pañca suttasu jāgarā*

Amongst the awake, 5 are asleep.⁴⁹
Amongst the sleeping, 5 are awake.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Comy says that despite often not finding a suitable abode, he practiced “uninterrupted contemplation of impermanence” and so on (ItA 1:174,19).

⁴⁷ Cf Sn 975.

⁴⁸ Be *katibhi*; Ce Ee *katīhi* throughout.

⁴⁹ See (1.2.2.1).

⁵⁰ See (1.2.2.2).

*pañcabhi*⁵¹ *rajam ādeti*
pañcabhi parisujjatīti

(S 10)

By 5 one gathers dust.⁵²
 By 5 one is purified.⁵³

— evaṃ —

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⁵¹ Be *pañcabhi*; Ce Ee *pañcahi* throughout.

⁵² See SD (1.2.2.2).

⁵³ See SD (1.2.2.1).