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## (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Suttā 1-3

The Indriya Discourses on the Arhat

SD 56.21a (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 1 The 1<sup>st</sup> (Joy Faculty) Discourse on Analysis | S 48.36/5:209

SD 56.21b (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 2 The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Joy Faculty) Discourse on Analysis | S 48.37/5:209 f

SD 56.21c (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 3 The 3<sup>rd</sup> (Joy Faculty) Discourse on Analysis | S 48.38/5:210 f

Theme: Analyses of the 5 feeling faculties

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2020

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 SUTTA SUMMARIES AND SIGNIFICANCE

All the 3 (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Suttas (S 48.36+37+38) deal with the 5 feeling faculties—those of *pleasure, pain, joy, displeasure and equanimity*. While the triad of similar suttas with the prefix “Sukh'indriya” (the feeling faculties) in SD 56.20 deal with the need to fully understand these faculties, the triad here in SD 56.21 deal with their “analysis” (*vibhaṅga*), as their titles suggest.

The 1<sup>st</sup>, **the (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 1** (S 48.36), SD 56.21a, gives a basic analysis of the 5 feeling faculties. In other words, these faculties are first simply listed, and are then defined in an analytical manner. The translation here is a repeat since it has already been translated as SD 17.3(4.4).

The 2<sup>nd</sup>, **the (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 2** (S 48.37), SD 56b, has the same passages as S 48.36 (and S 48.38). The only difference is that it has an extra closing paragraph [§8 f], which tells us about the 3 root feelings: *pleasant feeling, painful feeling and neutral feeling* (stated as “neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling”).

The 3<sup>rd</sup>, **the (Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 3** (S 48.38), SD 56c, has the same passages as S 48.36 (and S 48.37). The only difference is that, like the preceding S 48.37, it has an extra closing paragraph which tells us about the 3 root feelings and how they become 5 [§8 f]: 2 bodily pleasant feelings and 2 mentally painful feelings, but only 1 neutral feeling [2].

### 2 The 5 kinds of feelings and equanimity

**2.1** According to the Abhidhamma, all bodily feelings, that is, feelings arising through bodily sensitivity (*kaya-p, pasāda*), are *either* pleasant or painful; there is no neutral feeling based on bodily sensitivity. Hence, the Commentary explains **bodily equanimity** as feeling arisen based on the other 4 senses, *the eye, ear, nose and tongue*.<sup>1</sup>

**2.2** The word *upekkhā*, often translated as “equanimity,” has 2 main senses. In relation to feeling, it denotes neutral feeling (*adukkha-m-asukhā vedanā*), feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant. As a mental quality, however, it denotes mental neutrality, impartiality or balance of mind (called *tatra, maj-jhattatā* in the Abhidhamma, which assigns it to the *saṅkhāra-k, khandha*). In this sense, it occurs as the 4<sup>th</sup> divine abode (impartiality towards beings), as the 7<sup>th</sup> awakening-factor (equanimity or mental equipoise), and as a quality of the meditative mind of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> dhyanas.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On the lack of a bodily neutral feeling, see also SD 56.20 (2.2.2.5).

<sup>2</sup> For details on the different types of *upekkhā*, see Vism 4.156-170/160-162.

**SD 56.21a****(Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 1**The 1<sup>st</sup> (Joy Faculty) Discourse on Analysis | S 48.36/5:209

S 5.4.4.6 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 4, Sukh'indriya Vagga 6

Theme: Brief analysis of the 5 feeling faculties

2 “Bhikshus, there are these **5 faculties**. What are the five?

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| (1) The pleasure faculty;                  | <i>sukh'indriya</i>     |
| (2) the pain faculty [physical pain];      | <i>dukkh'indriya</i>    |
| (3) the joy faculty;                       | <i>somanass'indriya</i> |
| (4) the displeasure faculty [mental pain]; | <i>domanass'indriya</i> |
| (5) the equanimity faculty.                | <i>upekkh'indriya</i>   |

3 And what, bhikshus, is **the pleasure faculty**?

Whatever bodily pleasure there is, whatever bodily comfort,<sup>3</sup> the pleasant, comfortable feeling born of body-contact:<sup>4</sup> this, monks, is called the pleasure faculty.

4 And what, bhikshus, is **the pain faculty**?

Whatever bodily pain there is, whatever bodily discomfort, the painful uncomfortable feeling born of body-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the pain faculty.

5 And what, bhikshus, is **the joy faculty**?

Whatever mental pleasure there is, whatever mental comfort, the pleasant comfortable feeling born of mind-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the joy faculty.

6 And what, bhikshus, is **the displeasure faculty**?

Whatever mental pain there is, whatever mental discomfort, the painful uncomfortable feeling born of mind-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the displeasure faculty.

7 And what, bhikshus, is **the equanimity faculty**?

Whatever feeling there is, whether bodily or mental, that is neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: this, bhikshus, is called the equanimity faculty.<sup>5</sup>

8 These, bhikshus, are the 5 faculties.”

*Chakkam*

<sup>3</sup> “Bodily comfort,” *kāyikaṃ sātamaṃ*. Comy: “Bodily” means based on bodily sensitivity (*kaya-p, pasāda, vatthuka*) [foll n]; “comfort” is synonymous with “(physical) pleasure” and means “sweet” (*madhura*). (MA 2:368,3; SA 3:241,9 f; PmA 2:519,32 f).

<sup>4</sup> “Body-contact” (*kāya, samphassa*) is any kind of bodily reaction in term of the 4 the elements. Earth is felt as solidity, hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness; water is cohesiveness (compactness of solids, magnetism, etc); fire is temperature (heat, coldness, etc), metabolism, bodily change and decay; and wind is motion, gaseousness, etc. For an Abhidhamma analysis, see Abhidhamm’attha, saṅgaha ch 6 :: Abhs:BRS VI, esp 235-240.

<sup>5</sup> On the equanimity faculty, see (2).

**SD 56.21b****(Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 2**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Joy Faculty) Discourse on Analysis | S 48.37/5:209 f = SD 17.3(4.4)  
 S 5.4.4.7 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 4, Sukh'indriya Vagga 7  
 Theme: The 3 root feelings

2 “Bhikshus, there are these **5 faculties**. What are the five?

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| (1) The pleasure faculty;                  | <i>sukh'indriya</i>     |
| (2) the pain faculty [physical pain];      | <i>dukkh'indriya</i>    |
| (3) the joy faculty;                       | <i>somanass'indriya</i> |
| (4) the displeasure faculty [mental pain]; | <i>domanass'indriya</i> |
| (5) the equanimity faculty.                | <i>upekkh'indriya</i>   |

3 And what, bhikshus, is **the pleasure faculty**?

Whatever bodily pleasure there is, whatever bodily comfort,<sup>6</sup> the pleasant, comfortable feeling born of body-contact:<sup>7</sup> this, monks, is called the pleasure faculty.

4 And what, bhikshus, is **the pain faculty**?

Whatever bodily pain there is, whatever bodily discomfort, the painful uncomfortable feeling born of body-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the pain faculty.

5 And what, bhikshus, is **the joy faculty**?

Whatever mental pleasure there is, whatever mental comfort, the pleasant comfortable feeling born of mind-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the joy faculty.

6 And what, bhikshus, is **the displeasure faculty**?

Whatever mental pain there is, whatever mental discomfort, the painful uncomfortable feeling born of mind-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the displeasure faculty.

7 And what, bhikshus, is **the equanimity faculty**?

Whatever feeling there is, whether bodily or mental, that is neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: this, bhikshus, is called the equanimity faculty.<sup>8</sup> [210]

#### THE 3 FEELINGS

8 Therein, bhikshus, the pleasure faculty and the joy faculty should be seen as **pleasant feeling**. The pain faculty and the displeasure faculty should be seen as **painful feeling**. The equanimity faculty should be seen as **neither-painful nor pleasant feeling**.

9 These, bhikshus, are the 5 faculties.”

*Sattamaṃ*

<sup>6</sup> “Bodily comfort,” *kāyikaṃ sātamaṃ* [§3] n.

<sup>7</sup> On “body-contact” (*kāya,samphassa*), see [§3] n.

<sup>8</sup> On the equanimity faculty, see (2).

**SD 56.21c****(Sukh'indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 3**The 3<sup>rd</sup> (Joy Faculty) Discourse on Analysis | S 48.38/5:210 f

S 5.4.4.8 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 4, Sukh'indriya Vagga 8

Theme: The 3 feelings, the 5 feelings

2 “Bhikshus, there are these **5 faculties**. What are the five?

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| (1) The pleasure faculty;                  | <i>sukh'indriya</i>     |
| (2) the pain faculty [physical pain];      | <i>dukkh'indriya</i>    |
| (3) the joy faculty;                       | <i>somanass'indriya</i> |
| (4) the displeasure faculty [mental pain]; | <i>domanass'indriya</i> |
| (5) the equanimity faculty.                | <i>upekkh'indriya</i>   |

3 And what, bhikshus, is **the pleasure faculty**?

Whatever bodily pleasure there is, whatever bodily comfort,<sup>9</sup> the pleasant, comfortable feeling born of body-contact:<sup>10</sup> this, monks, is called the pleasure faculty.

4 And what, bhikshus, is **the pain faculty**?

Whatever bodily pain there is, whatever bodily discomfort, the painful uncomfortable feeling born of body-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the pain faculty.

5 And what, bhikshus, is **the joy faculty**?

Whatever mental pleasure there is, whatever mental comfort, the pleasant comfortable feeling born of mind-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the joy faculty. [211]

6 And what, bhikshus, is **the displeasure faculty**?

Whatever mental pain there is, whatever mental discomfort, the painful uncomfortable feeling born of mind-contact: this, bhikshus, is called the displeasure faculty.

7 And what, bhikshus, is **the equanimity faculty**?

Whatever feeling there is, whether bodily or mental, that is neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: this, bhikshus, is called the equanimity faculty.

## THE 3 FEELINGS

8 Therein, bhikshus, *the pleasure faculty* and *the joy faculty* should be seen to be **pleasant feeling**. *The pain faculty* and *the displeasure faculty* should be seen to be **painful feeling**. *The equanimity faculty* should be seen to be **neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling**.<sup>11</sup>

9 Thus, bhikshus, in a manner of speaking, these 5 faculties, having been 5, become 3; and having been 3, become 5.”<sup>12</sup>

— Aṭṭhamam —

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<sup>9</sup> “Bodily comfort,” *kāyikaṃ sātamaṃ* [§3] n.

<sup>10</sup> On “body-contact” (*kāya,samphassa*), see [§3] n.

<sup>11</sup> On the nature of neutral feeling, see (2).

<sup>12</sup> *Iti kho bhikkhave imāni pañc'indriyāni pañca hutvā tīṇi honti, tīṇi hutvā pañca honti pariyāyenāti*. On “in a manner of speaking” (*pariyāyena*), see SD 56.11 (3.1).