

## 4

Pañc'indriya<sup>1</sup>

The 5 spiritual faculties  
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1 Dynamics of meditation

## SD 10.4(1)

## (Indriya) Suddhika Sutta

The 1<sup>st</sup> (Indriya) Discourse on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.6/5:194 f  
Theme: The 5 spiritual faculties (basic list)

- 1 At Sāvattthī.
- 2 There the Blessed One said this:
- 3 Bhikshus, there are these 5 faculties. What are the five?

(1) The faculty of faith	<i>saddh'indriya</i>
(2) The faculty of effort [energy].	<i>viriy'indriya</i>
(3) The faculty of mindfulness.	<i>sat'indriya</i>
(4) The faculty of samadhi [mental stillness].	<i>samādh'indriya</i>
(5) The faculty of wisdom.	<i>paññ'indriya</i>

These, bhikshus, are the 5 faculties.

— paṭhamam —

**1.1 MEANING OF INDRIYA**

**1.1.1 Vedic background.** In Pali and Sanskrit, the word *indriya* refers to the sense-organs, powers or faculties of a human being. This concept is common in Indian thought in its generality. In fact, the word *indriya* is derived from Indra (P *Inda*),<sup>2</sup> the chief of the Vedic gods, the thunderbolt bearer (*vajra, dhara*). Among his numerous mighty deeds is the slaying of the dragon Vṛta (Wreeta).

An *indriya*, then, might be basically thought of as anything that has something of the quality of the mighty god Indra. Thus in its application to a variety of categories in different systems of Indian thought, an *indriya* should be understood as an item or faculty that is seen as exercising some kind of power, force, influence or control over whatever is its domain; “(controlling) faculty” seems a more or less apt translation. (Gethin 2001:104)

**1.1.2 Buddhist psychology**

**1.1.2.1** In Indian literature and early Buddhist psychology, the word *indriya* usually refers to **the 5 physical sense-organs**, namely, the eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. Often, a 6<sup>th</sup>—the mind—is added, forming the 6 sense-bases (*saḷ-āyatana*), such as in **the (Indriya) Araḥanta Sutta 1** (S 48.27).<sup>3</sup> The various

<sup>1</sup> Also called **Saddha S**, “the discourse on the faithful.”

<sup>2</sup> See M Mayrhofer, *A Concise Etymological Sanskrit Dictionary*, Heidelberg, 1956-80: indrah, indriyam.

<sup>3</sup> S 48.27/5:205 (SD 56.16).

schools of Indian thought, including Buddhism, each had their own list of *indriya* items beyond these common six.<sup>4</sup>

**1.1.2.2** In the **Āpaṇa Sutta** (S 48.50), Sāriputta, in response to the Buddha’s question, answers confirming the importance of the 5 spiritual faculties in *mental concentration and freedom*:

It is indeed to be expected, bhante, that a faithful noble disciple whose energy is roused and whose mindfulness is established that, having made relinquishment the support, he will gain samadhi, he will gain one-pointedness of mind [mental unification]. [§3(2)]

**1.1.2.3** Over time, even the canonical term, *indriya*, evolved to cover a wider range of senses relating to our human nature and spirituality [4]. The term *indriya* comes from **indra**, “leader, lord,” often used in connection with the Sakka Devānam-inda, “Sakra, lord of the devas.”<sup>5</sup>

In early Buddhist usage, *indra* was applied to the senses, our 6 sense-bases, since they each exercise a controlling power (Skt *indra*) in its sphere. Each of these sense-bases controls the coexistent material phenomena in exercising its specific function, such as seeing, hearing, and so on.

The sex faculty controls the manifestation of masculinity or femininity in a being. The life-faculty controls the coexistent types of matter, just as a pilot steers his ship.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.1.3 Definition of the 5 spiritual faculties**

**1.1.3.1** The suttas regularly present the 5 faculties (also called “spiritual faculties” or “controlling faculties”) as a teaching complete in itself, capable of leading to the destruction of the influxes,<sup>7</sup> that is, the attainment of arhathood, as stated at the close of **the Saketa Sutta** (S 48.43).<sup>8</sup> That the faculties embody the 3 trainings is very clear from this table:

<u>the 5 faculties</u> ( <i>pañc’indriya</i> )		<u>the 3 trainings</u> ( <i>sikkha-t, taya</i> )
(1) The faculty of faith	<i>saddh’indriya</i>	} moral virtue ( <i>sīla, sikkhā</i> )
(2) The faculty of effort [energy].	<i>viriy’indriya</i>	
(3) The faculty of mindfulness.	<i>sat’indriya</i>	} concentration ( <i>samādhi, sikkhā</i> )
(4) The faculty of samadhi [mental stillness].	<i>samādh’indriya</i>	
(5) The faculty of wisdom.	<i>paññ’indriya</i>	— wisdom ( <i>paññā sikkhā</i> )

**1.1.3.2** Hence, as explained by Sāriputta in **the Āpaṇa Sutta** (S 48.50), these faculties naturally evolve in a progressive manner [4.4 §§3-8]. Among these 5, **mindfulness** is significantly listed in the middle, since it is the moderator, keeping the faculties in harmonious balance for a truly effective practice, an important function we will examine in some detail [2].

<sup>4</sup> Cf the 5 *jñāna, indriyā* and 5 *karma, indriyā* in Saṁkhyā.

<sup>5</sup> On *devānaṁ-inda*, see SD 54.2 (3.2.3.6).

<sup>6</sup> For further technical details, see Abhs:BRS 245 f.

<sup>7</sup> The mental influxes (*āsava*) are those of (1) sense-desire (*kāma’āsava*), (2) existence (*bhava’āsava*), (3) views (*diṭṭh’āsava*) and (4) ignorance (*avijjāśava*): SD 56.13 (1.1.2).

<sup>8</sup> S 48.43/5:219 f (SD 104.14).

**1.1.3.3** Both **the 5 faculties** (*pañcīndriya*) and **the 5 powers** (*pañca, bala*) have the same components: faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. Apparently, the faculties are the basic and less sturdy qualities, while the powers are more evolved and stable (DhsA 124).

However, the Buddha actually declares the 2 sets to be actually identical: the terms “faculties” and “power” are merely used to highlight their different aspects. **The Sāketa Sutta** (S 48.43) says that they are like 2 streams of the same river, one flowing around the north bank, the other around the south bank of the same island.<sup>9</sup>

## SD 10.4(1.1.3)

## (Indriya) Daṭṭhabba Sutta

The Discourse on (the Faculties) To Be Seen | S 48.8/5:196

Traditional: S 5.4.1.8 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahā Vagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 1, Suddhika Vagga 8

Theme: Definitions of the 5 spiritual faculties

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

(1) The faculty of <b>faith</b>	<i>saddh'indriya</i>	[2.2]
(2) The faculty of <b>energy</b> [effort].	<i>viriya'indriya</i>	[2.3]
(3) The faculty of <b>mindfulness</b> .	<i>sati'indriya</i>	[2.1]
(4) The faculty of <b>concentration</b> [samadhi].	<i>samādh'indriya</i>	[2.4]
(5) The faculty of <b>wisdom</b> .	<i>paññ'indriya</i>	[2.5]

**3** And where, bhikshus, is **the faculty of faith** to be seen?

Here, bhikshus, the faculty of faith is to be seen in the 4 limbs of streamwinning.<sup>10</sup>

**4** And where, bhikshus, is **the faculty of effort** to be seen?

Here, bhikshus, the faculty of effort is to be seen in the 4 right strivings.<sup>11</sup>

**5** And where, bhikshus, is **the faculty of mindfulness** to be seen?

Here, bhikshus, the faculty of mindfulness is to be seen in the 4 focuses of mindfulness.<sup>12</sup>

**6** And where, bhikshus, is **the faculty of samadhi** to be seen?

Here, bhikshus, the faculty of samadhi is to be seen in the 4 dhyanas.<sup>13</sup>

**7** And where, bhikshus, is **the faculty of wisdom** to be seen?

Here, bhikshus, the faculty of wisdom is to be seen in the 4 noble truths.<sup>14</sup>

**8** These, bhikshus, are the 5 spiritual faculties.<sup>15</sup>

— *aṭṭhamam* —

<sup>9</sup> S 48.43/5:219 f (SD 104.14).

<sup>10</sup> *Catusu sotāpatti-y-aṅgesu*. Traditionally, these are: wise faith in the 3 jewels, and moral virtue dear to the noble ones (SD 47.1 (2.2)); or (1) association with true individuals, (2) hearing the true teaching, (3) wise attention, and (4) practising the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma (SD 47.1 (2.1+2.3). See also SD 3.3 (4.1.1).

<sup>11</sup> *Catusu samma, padhānesu*, or the 4 right efforts, viz: (1) the effort to *prevent* the arising of unarisen unwholesome states, (2) the effort to *abandon* arisen unwholesome states, (3) the effort to *cultivate* unarisen wholesome states, and (4) the effort to *maintain* [guard] arisen wholesome states: see (**Catu**) **Padhāna S** (A 4.14/2:16 f = D 33,1.11(10)), SD 10.2.

<sup>12</sup> *Catusu sati'paṭṭhānesu*, viz, the contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassana*), the contemplation of feelings (*vedanā'nupassanā*), the contemplation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*) and the contemplation of dharmas [phenomena] (*dharmānupassanā*). See SD 13.

<sup>13</sup> *Catusu jhānesu*, viz, the 1<sup>st</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyanas. See **Dhyana**, SD 8.4.

<sup>14</sup> *Catusu ariya, saccesu*, viz, the noble truths that are suffering, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending: see **Dhamma.cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11), SD 1.1.

For the same qualities in terms of the spiritual powers (*bala*), framed in an identical manner, see **the (Pañcaka) Daṭṭhabba Sutta** (A 5.15/3:11 f).

**1.1.4 Dhammapāla**, in his Udāna Commentary (UA 220 f) gives these 15 factors conducive for effecting the purification of the faculties:

To cultivate	We should avoid	We should associate with	We should review
1 <b>faith</b>	the faithless	the faithful	suttas inspiring faith ( <i>pasādanīya suttanta</i> )
2 <b>effort</b>	the indolent	those who exert effort	the 4 right efforts ( <i>samma-p, padhāna</i> )
3 <b>mindfulness</b>	the unmindful	the mindful	the 4 focuses of mindfulness ( <i>satipaṭṭhāna</i> )
4 <b>concentration</b>	the unconcentrated	those mentally stilled	the dhyanas and liberations ( <i>jhāna, vimokkha</i> )
5 <b>wisdom</b>	the unwise	the wise	the conduct of profound wisdom ( <i>gambhīra.ñāṇa, -cariya</i> )

In the last column (“Reviews”), “suttas inspiring faith” can mean either refer to specific discourses (such as **the Sampasadaniya Sutta**, D 28),<sup>16</sup> or more usually any texts that inspire faith in one. “The right efforts” are discussed, for example, in **the (Cattāro) Padhāna Sutta** (D 33).<sup>17</sup>

The classics for “the focuses of mindfulness” are the two **Satipaṭṭhāna Suttas** (D 22; M 10).<sup>18</sup>

Dhyanas (jhāna) are described, for example, in **the Sāmañña, phala Sutta** (D 2),<sup>19</sup> and the 8 liberations (vimokkha) are mentioned in **the Mahā, parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16).<sup>20</sup>

“The conduct of profound wisdom” (*gambhīra.ñāṇa, cariya*), that is, personal conduct shaped by full understanding of the 5 aggregates, etc, and by spiritual liberation, is mentioned in **the Paṭisambhidā, -magga**.<sup>21</sup>

### 1.1.5 Indriya as an Abhidhamma category

**1.1.5.1** Except the Indriya Saṃyutta (S 48), the other saṃyuttas of **the Mahā, vagga** (the 5<sup>th</sup> and last Saṃyutta chapter), each deal with a single closed group made up of a fixed number of items. The Indriya Saṃyutta, for its part, deals with a *variety* of sets collected under the general rubric of *indriya*, “faculties.” The most important of these groups is that of **the 5 spiritual faculties**, which probably formed the original core of the saṃyutta.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>15</sup> On the relationship of the 5 faculties to the 7 awakening-factors, see SD 51.13 (1.1.3).

<sup>16</sup> D 28/3:99-116 (SD 14.14).

<sup>17</sup> D 33,1.11(10)/3:225 f (SD 10.2).

<sup>18</sup> **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22/2:290-315 @ SD 13.2); **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10/1:55-63), SD 13.3.

<sup>19</sup> D 2,75b-82/1:73-76 (SD 8.10). Also see **The layman & dhyana**, SD 8.5.

<sup>20</sup> D 16,3.33/2:111 f @ SD 9, where see n.

<sup>21</sup> Pm 1.387/1:79-83, 4.30-46/2:19-21, 21.11/2:193.

<sup>22</sup> See S:B 1508 f (Intro to Part V).

**1.1.5.2** With the growing interest in classification of suttas and teachings, the canon compilers probably felt obliged to include in this *saṃyutta* the other sets of faculties, thus giving it a heterogeneous character. The full list of 22 faculties is found at **Vibh 122**, and commented on at **VbhA 125-128**.<sup>23</sup>

The Vibhaṅga does not have a Suttanta analysis for an Indriya Vibhaṅga but only an Abhidhamma analysis. This, interestingly and clearly, shows that the indriyas, as a general category, actually belongs to **the Abhidhamma** proper rather than to the suttas.

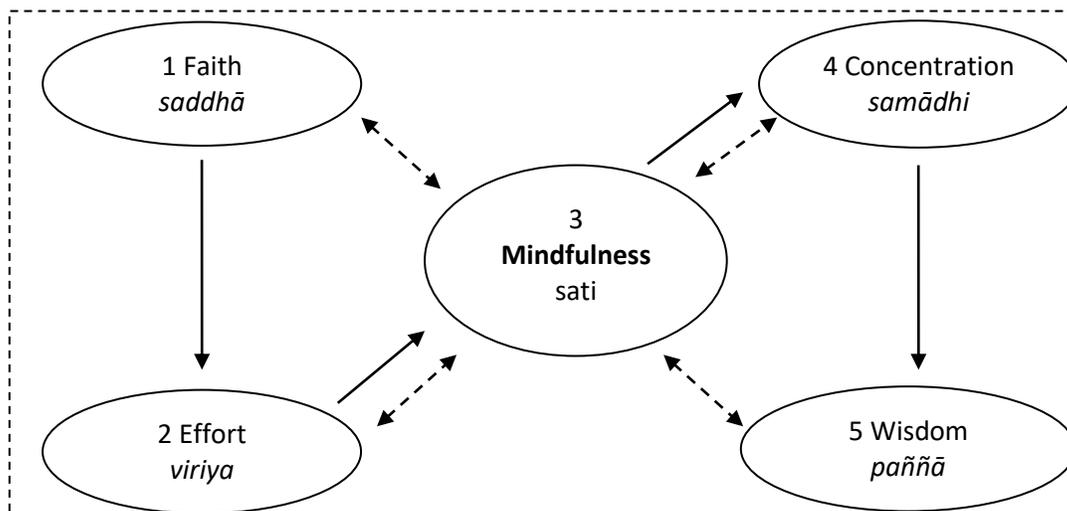
**1.1.5.3 The faculties** (*indriya*) alone, among the various “awakening-limbs” (*bodhi, pakkhiya’āṅga*), are treated in terms of the “gratification triad” (*assāda*, S 48.2+4+6), the “origin triad” (*samudaya*, S 48.3) and “the noble-truth triad” (*sacca*, S 48.7), the “origin pentad” (S 48.3+5) and “the noble-truth tetrad” (S 48.8). The reason for this is probably the fact that the 5 faculties are included in the broader list of **22 faculties** [4] intended as a “catalogue of phenomenal reality,” and thus had to be expounded in terms of the wider categories used to analyse the constituents of true reality.<sup>24</sup>

## 2 Balancing the practice<sup>25</sup>

### 2.1 MINDFULNESS AS MODERATOR

#### 2.1.1 The 5-faculty model

**2.1.1.1** We have already noted how the 5-faculty model of spiritual development is complete in itself, leading all the way to the destruction of the mental influxes, that is, arhathood [1.1.3.1]—as clearly stated in **the Sāketa Sutta** (S 48.43),<sup>26</sup> and number of others in the same *Saṃyutta* (S 48) [3.1.1]. In **the Āpaṇa Sutta**, Sāriputta explains that the faculties unfold in a progressive way, faith leading to effort, effort to mindfulness, mindfulness to concentration, and concentration to wisdom [4.4 §§3-8], as shown in the diagram here:.



**Diagram 2.1** Harmonizing and completing the 5 faculties.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See also *Vism* 16.1-12/491-493.

<sup>24</sup> For a fuller discussion, see Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:123-125.

<sup>25</sup> A useful article here is Lily de Silva, “Cetovimutti paññāvimutti and ubhatobhagavimutti,” 1978:134-136.

<sup>26</sup> S 48.43/5:419 f.

<sup>27</sup> See SD 54.2f [3.2.2.1]; SD 101.7 (2.2.3).

**2.1.1.2** Of these 5 faculties—in teleological terms (attaining the goal)—that of **wisdom** is the most highly valued, as it stabilizes all the other four faculties so that they become “faculties” in the proper sense, as shown in **the Pubb’ārāma Sutta 1** (S 48.45)<sup>28</sup> and **the Mallika Sutta** (S 48.52).<sup>29</sup> It is called the chief among the states that conduce to awakening and extolled in delightful similes.<sup>30</sup> Technically, however, wisdom is contrasted with concentration: the purpose of concentration is to bring calm and clarity that leads to seeing into the true nature of things, so that wisdom arises.

**2.1.1.3** However, on a practical level, we usually need to begin with **mindfulness**, that is, properly directing our attention to the meditation and keeping it there. Mindfulness, as it were, must always be there, ever ready to keep the whole practice in a balance. Hence, this vital mental moderator is strategically placed in the centre of the whole set.

**2.1.2 Pairing of the faculties.** A significant point regarding the faculties, not directly mentioned in the suttas but discussed in the Commentaries, concerns their mutual and complementary pairing, which keep the faculties in harmonious balance (*indriya,samatta*). The faculties work in pairs, under the moderation of mindfulness.<sup>31</sup>

**Faith** is paired with **wisdom**, balancing the emotional and the intellectual sides of the spiritual life; **effort** is paired with **concentration**, balancing the activating and the restraining aspects of mental cultivation. **Mindfulness** sits in the middle, as it were, moderating between each end of the two pairs of faculties, holding them together in a harmonious interaction.<sup>32</sup>

Although faith and wisdom are psychologically different, they are complementary. In Buddhist training, faith is the initiator of the spiritual process that culminates in wisdom, as noted by J R Carter:

*Saddhā* and *paññā* when taken together do not fit into “faith and reason.” Rather, they express a dynamic process where *saddhā* is active in one wanting to know, coming to know in part[,] and *paññā* becomes more pervasive in one coming to know and knowing fully, in truth.

(*Dhamma* 1978:104)<sup>33</sup>

### **2.1.3 The doer and the knower**

**2.1.3.0** The imageries of the “doer” and the “knower” are helpful in meditation strategy because it helps us to identify which of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*) is dominating our meditation in a negative way, and what to do about it in order to balance and harmonize our practice. While the “doer” may be said to be the effect of our past conditionings, the “knower” is our present-moment awareness.

<sup>28</sup> S 48.45/5:222 f.

<sup>29</sup> S 48.52/5:228 f.

<sup>30</sup> The faculty of wisdom is compared to a lion as the king of the beasts, **Sāla S** (S 48.51/5:227 f); to the elephant’s footprint, **Pada S** (S 48.54/5:231); to heartwood, **Sāra S** (S 48.55/5:231), SD 42.19; to the rose-apple tree, **Rukkha S 1** (S 48.68/5:238); to the coral tree in Tāvātimsa, **Rukkha S 2** (S 48.68/5:239); to the trumpet-flower tree, **Rukkha S 3** (S 48.69/5:239); to the silk-cotton tree, **Rukkha S 4** (S 48.70/5:239 f).

<sup>31</sup> DA 3:787 f; MA 1:290 f; SA 3:155 f; AA 2:55 f; VbhA 276 f.

<sup>32</sup> **Kīṭa,giri S** (M 70,13/1:477), SD 11.1.

<sup>33</sup> **Gethin** points out Jayatilleke’s serious error in assuming “that one can understand *saddhā* as having a straightforward cognitive value like ‘belief’...with which the *bhikkhu* or *ariya-sāvaka* starts with, being ‘replaced by direct personal knowledge’ [Jayatilleke 1963:399]. But this is to ignore much of the treatment of the five *indriyas* in the *Nikāyas*.” (2001:111). See also esp **J R Carter**, *Dhamma* 1978:103-106; cf **J T Ergardt**, *Faith and Knowledge in Early Buddhism*, 1977:144-146.

**2.1.3.1** In terms of the spiritual faculties, the “doer” is a term for predominance of faith or of wisdom, while the “knower” is the predominance of effort or of concentration. They need to be balanced by mindfulness.

If faith is predominant (and wisdom is weak), we are likely to slavishly carry out our instructions but fail to notice what is really going on in our minds, or we fail to investigate or inquire into the actual difficulty we are facing and what to do about them. Or, we simply take meditation as a ritual, instead of simply enjoying it.

Wisdom can be too strong if we are intellectually inclined or perfectionist by nature. If we are intellectually inclined, we are likely to think too much rather than actually feel the meditation. (To “feel” here means to directly experience the meditation rather than think about it.) If we are a perfectionist, we might be inclined to be fault-finding, and fail to simply “let go” of the thought, so that we miss the good aspects of our meditation.

The doer is often strongly controlled by **past conditionings**: the faith-inclined by what he has been taught or what he believes in, and the wisdom-inclined by what he has learned or thought (or reasoned) about. In either case, mindfulness helps in teaching us to let go of the past or conditioning, and to simply watch the present moment, say, by simply smiling at it, which displaces our thinking inclination.

In simple terms, we can say that while the faith-inclined doer fails to do anything about his meditation, the wisdom-inclined is doing too much. Hence, mindfulness is needed for us to be aware of the actual weakness in either case. Ideally, a meditation teacher or spiritual friend can be very helpful here to help us balance our practice.

**2.1.3.2** The “knower” is our present-moment awareness that is not doing it rightly, or we are simply unable to keep our focus on what is really going on in our meditation (the knower is then said to be weak). The knower is said to be weak when it is dominated by effort or by concentration.

Often, when too much effort is put into our meditation, we may fail to allow calmness to arise. In fact, we are overwhelmed by the *thought* of doing something, rather than simply *feel* whatever is arising at the moment, and then letting it go. In this sense, we are “future”-oriented, and getting excited about our goal. Our mental energies are going “out there,” rather than working gently in “here” to what is at hand.

When concentration, or rather the *idea* of it, predominates, we tend to be so engrossed in watching or noting what we see as going on now in our meditation, but it is not the proper meditation sign (*nimitta*). In other words, our attention is in the wrong place. For example, we force ourselves to keep on watching the breath while we are being distracted by an unhappy thought. We need instead to deal with the distracting thought first, say, by cultivating lovingkindness.

Our mindfulness here should moderate us in harmonizing our effort with what is arising in our mind, such as simply smiling at the distraction. Joy is a vital harmonizer of our meditative energies. Similarly, when we are stuck in “concentration,” we should simply smile at “being stuck,” and feel the joy of that smile. In either case, we are giving our mind the space it needs to re-adjust itself to the proper mental object.

## 2.2 FAITH

**2.2.1 THE 2 KINDS OF FAITH.** Psychologically, we can speak of **2 kinds of faith** (*saddhā*):

- (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlaka, saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith,<sup>34</sup>
- (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravati, saddhā*), faith founded on seeing,<sup>35</sup> also called *avecca-p, pasāda*.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Caṅkī S (M 95,14/2:170), SD 21.15.

**2.2.1.1 ROOTLESS FAITH.** In “rootless faith,” the qualifier *rootless* (*amūlaka*) is explained in the texts as “not seen, not heard, not suspected.”<sup>37</sup> In other words, it is blind faith, especially common in God-centred religions and person-centred cults. This first kind of faith, generally speaking, is essentially a sublimation of desire in its various forms, or more simply, faith is sanitized desire.

Often faith *in* someone or something (a product, religion, etc) arises in us when we think that such a person or such a thing has fulfilled one’s desire, or come up to one’s expectations. The greatest flaw in such a faith is that the object of faith is *outside* of oneself, which, as such, is easily controlled and manipulated by those who define that object of faith or whoever wields power over the belief system.

In fact, such a faith or belief system is neither religious nor spiritual, it is a political system of sorts since it is power-based. Political systems are ephemeral and can provide only worldly benefits at best.

**2.2.1.2 WISE FAITH.** The second kind of faith—the faith with a good cause—is also called “wise faith” (*avecca-p, pasāda*). While rootless faith is founded on an external object (God, guru, product, etc), wise faith is an internal feeling. It begins with an overpowering experience (*samvega*) of true reality, especially an encounter with impermanence or a near-death experience, that leads one to ask life’s basic questions.

The kind of questions that arise here would decide the quality of faith in the person. If the question is framed by “what” (What is this?) or “who” (Who created all this?), we presume a “thing” or a “being” merely as mental constructs. These are “closed” questions that keep us in a transcendental loop, a samsaric cycle, where no meaningful questions can be asked, and no real answers can be found.

**2.2.1.3 WHY?** A better question here is “why” (Why suffering?), which initiates a series of questions that can go as far as “the source,” as it were. The *source* here refers to spiritual ignorance, not knowing true reality, and falling on unwholesome emotions and mental constructs. The most revealing formulation of this situation is found in dependent arising (*paṭicca, samuppāda*).<sup>38</sup>

**Diagram 2.2** [above] shows the cycle of dependent arising, which shows suffering (*dukkha*) as life’s turning-point. When one faces suffering, one could remain in ignorance and look for causes outside oneself and continue to spin and sink in the negative cycle of dependent arising (clockwise), resulting in ever more suffering.

But what happens when we take suffering as a turning-point, an opportunity to seek a new vision of life, or at least refusing to fall back on childhood conditioning or religious indoctrination or self-centred notions. This brave new step out of the false comfort of cyclic life leads us to the understanding that there is nothing to be found in such a self-centred life seeking to dominate others or the external world (such as through the God-idea) or seeking the approval of others (as through blind faith). We then break out of the negative dependent arising.

## **2.2.2 Breaking out of the chains of dependent arising**<sup>39</sup>

**2.2.2.1** A remarkable but rarely quoted discourse in the Nidāna Saṃyutta provides insight into what happens when the chain is broken by giving a “positive” counterpart to the Wheel of Life. **The Upanisā Sutta** (S 12.23) gives 3 expositions of the “transcendental dependent arising” or “spiral path” out of the Wheel of Life. The 1<sup>st</sup> is given in reverse sequence; the 2<sup>nd</sup> in direct order (which are then repeated).<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> **Vimāṃsaka S** (M 47,16/1:320,8), SD 35.6; **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60,4/1:401,23) SD 35.5.

<sup>36</sup> **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11/2:69), SD 10.4 (2.2). See *Ency of Religion & Ethics* (ERE): Faith, & Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963:387.

<sup>37</sup> V 2:243 3:163 & Comy.

<sup>38</sup> See SD 5.16.

<sup>39</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see **Dependent arising**, SD 5.16 (18).

<sup>40</sup> See Bodhi, “Transcendental Dependent Arising,” 1980:14 f & Gethin 1998:157-159.

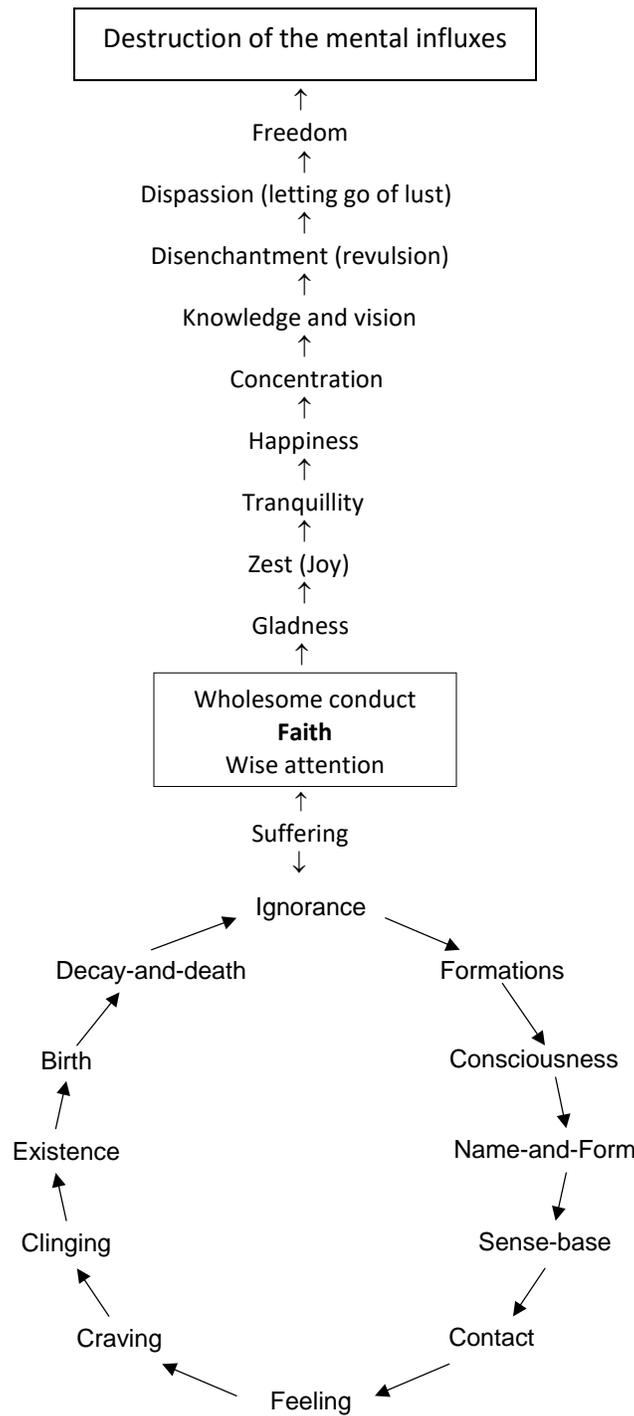


Diagram 2.2 Breaking out of the suffering cycle.

[Source: Payutto 1994:97]

Suffering	is the condition for faith ( <i>saddhā</i> );
Faith	is the condition for gladness ( <i>pamojja</i> );
Gladness	is the condition for zest ( <i>pīti</i> ); <sup>41</sup>
Zest	is the condition for tranquillity ( <i>passaddhi</i> );
Tranquillity	is the condition for happiness ( <i>sukha</i> );
Happiness	is the condition for concentration ( <i>samādhi</i> );
Concentration	is the condition for knowledge and vision of reality ( <i>yathā, bhūta.ñāṇa.dassana</i> );
Knowledge and vision of reality	is the condition for revulsion ( <i>nibbidā</i> ); <sup>42</sup>
Revulsion	is the condition for dispassion [letting-go of lust] ( <i>virāga</i> );
Dispassion	is the condition for freedom ( <i>vimutti</i> ); and
Freedom	is the condition for the knowledge of the destruction of the influxes ( <i>āsava-k, khaya, - ñāṇa</i> ). (S 12.23/2:29-32)

**2.2.2.2** A true understanding of suffering entails four steps, in the spirit of the 4 noble truths:

- (1) one clearly sees suffering for what it really is: it is *mind-made*;
- (2) one understands that suffering is conditioned by craving, which one has to *abandon*;
- (3) one *sees* that there is true inner peace; and
- (4) one makes the *effort* towards abandoning those conditions conducive to suffering.

In short, one has faith in one's own effort, beginning with the understanding of the true nature of being (the 5 aggregates)<sup>43</sup> and how one's mind works. This faith is not merely that of one's knowing that one is liberated or on the path to freedom, but more importantly, it is the lucid joy (*pasāda*) as a result of that direct knowledge.

### **2.2.3 Faith, cognitive and affective**

**2.2.3.1** In this connection, we can now look at **Gethin's** notion of 2 kinds of faith: the cognitive and the affective:

Faith in its cognitive dimension is seen as concerning belief in propositions or statements of which one does not—or perhaps cannot—have knowledge proper (however that should be defined); cognitive faith is a mode of knowing in a different category from that knowledge.

Faith in its affective dimension is a more straightforward positive response to trust or confidence towards something or somebody ... the conception of *saddhā* in Buddhist writings appears almost, if not entirely affective, the cognitive element is completely secondary.

(Gethin 2001:207; my emphases)

**2.2.3.2 “Cognitive faith”** results from knowing or accepting facts, or being conditioned by them, as in the theistic religions. The words, “believe that we may understand,” cleverly summarize this notion. But this is like forcing a large square peg into a small round hole. With much force, it might fit, but never too well; it would be too tight or too loose. It is not meant to fit together anyway. Such a faith is psychologically unwholesome and emotionally unhealthy, as it is the basis for fear (of the wrath of God and of hell) and for guilt-feeling (a negative feeling that we have offended an almighty God, or some dead ancestor, or some patriarch or matriarch, or some power figure).

<sup>41</sup> “Zest.” *pīti*, also as “joy,” ie “joyful interest and energy.”

<sup>42</sup> On revulsion, see *Nibbidā*, SD 20.1.

<sup>43</sup> See *Khandha S* (S 22.48), SD 17.1.

**2.2.3.3 “Affective faith,”** on the other hand, is based on a proper understanding of the natural facts of life (not the conventional or prescribed teachings of a religion or preacher, even a holy book). In Buddhism, these natural truths are those formulated as the 4 noble truths—the reality of suffering, its arising, its ending, and the way to its ending<sup>44</sup>—which are closely connected with the 3 universal or natural characteristics of all existence: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self.<sup>45</sup>

This is a personal and gradual process of seeing and understanding what is true and real before us and within us. Here, then, we “understand that we may believe,” meaning that we can now fully, knowingly and joyfully accept it as a vision of true reality. In an important sense, this realization is an understanding and freedom that is beyond words and ideas, as they are a direct experience of true reality. Only we can know the food when we taste it, only we would be nourished when we properly chew and digest it. It is a healthy and joyful meal that leads not to drowsiness or doubt but to self-awakening.

**2.2.4 Ledi Sayadaw**, too, speaks of 2 kinds of faith: “ordinary faith” (*pakati saddhā*) and “faith through cultivation” (*bhāvanā saddhā*).<sup>46</sup> “Ordinary faith” is mainly based on giving and pious acts (which can be either wholesome or unwholesome, depending on the intention). “Faith through cultivation” is founded on mindfulness practice and meditation, that leads one to a direct knowing of reality and spiritual freedom.

**2.2.5 Vakkali.** As a young brahmin, **Vakkali**, is immediately attracted to the Buddha when he sees him for the first time in Sāvattihī. Vakkali becomes a monk so that he could constantly gaze on the Buddha in admiration. In due course, the Buddha admonishes him: “Vakkali, what is there in looking upon this filthy body? Vakkali, he who sees Dharma sees me.” In due course, upon the Buddha’s further admonition, Vakkali becomes an arhat,<sup>47</sup> and is declared the foremost of those monks who show faith (*saddhā’dhimutta*) (A 1:24).

## 2.3 EFFORT

**2.3.1 Wrong effort.** Zeal without wisdom is a runaway horse: one easily loses control of one’s spiritual practice. This zeal is fueled by craving, goaded on by the promise of personal benefit. The latent tendency of sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*), on the other hand, is the fuel for sheer physical but mindless exertion towards a goal.

Wrong effort arises on account of the false notion that suffering is overcome simply through external action such as through religious ceremonies, rituals and superstitions. It is clear here that the true disciple, especially a streamwinner, is not superstitious. The mental fetter of “attachment to rules and rituals,” in essence, refers to relying on external means of dealing with problems, instead of looking within and understanding the nature of the mind, and dealing directly with it at the source (*yoniso,manasikāra*).

**2.3.2 Right effort.** From Diagram 2.2.2.1 we can see that when one understands suffering, faith (*saddhā*) arises, which is the basis for gladness (*pamojja*), leading to zest (joyful interest) (*pīti*), leading to tranquility of mind and body (*passadhi*), leading on happiness or joy (*sukha*), leading on to samadhi, leading on to a vision of reality and freedom. We see here a recurrence of *joy* in some form. In short, one has to *enjoy* one’s practice, that is, put joy into our practice and bring out joy from it for it to succeed. (Even the simple gesture of gently smiling at distractions is helpful in overcoming them when one meditates.)

<sup>44</sup> See **Dhammacakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11), SD 1.1.

<sup>45</sup> See **Atam,mayatā**, SD 19.13 (1).

<sup>46</sup> *The Manuals of Buddhism*, 1965:339 f.

<sup>47</sup> DhA 25.11/4:118 f (SD 8.8).

**2.3.3 Sona Kolivīsa.** As a layman, Soṇa Koḷivīsa plays the lute (*vīṇa*). While living in the Cool Forest, near Rājagaha, Soṇa tries to meditate but is distracted by numerous visitors. He puts in great effort in his walking meditation until his feet burst into sores. The Buddha visits him, beginning his instruction with the famous simile of the lute: when tuned too tightly or too loosely, it is not possible to play the lute, but when well tuned, it gives good music (Tha 638-644). Soṇa balances up his practice, attains his goal, and in due course is declared by the Buddha to be the foremost of those monks who exert effort (*ārad-dha, viriyānaṃ*) (A 1:24).<sup>48</sup>

## 2.4 CONCENTRATION

**2.4.1 Wrong concentration.** There is such a thing as wrong concentration, and it is compared, in **the (Pabbata) Gāvī Sutta** (A 9.35), to the fruitless wandering of a foolish mountain cow seeking a new pasture but failing to find one.<sup>49</sup> In **the Sandha Sutta** (A 11.10), the Buddha shows the monk Sandha the difference between an unbuddhist meditator (a restless horse) and a Buddhist meditator (the thoroughbred of men), using the well known simile of the restless horse and the thoroughbred horse and how they recall their true duty.<sup>50</sup>

**2.4.2 Basis for wisdom and freedom.** In **the Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 3** (A 11.9), the Buddha explains to Ānanda that although an unskilled practitioner may gain samadhi by fixing his mind on various meditation objects and states—the 4 elements, the 4 formless states, and “what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, attained, sought after, thought out by the mind”—but he fails to properly attend to that samadhi.<sup>51</sup>

While it is true that samadhi often leads to dhyanas, by themselves, they can be an obstacle (*sambā-dha*) to freedom—as pointed in **the Navaka) Sambādha Sutta** (A 9.42). However, they become the basis for wisdom and freedom when they are progressively surmounted until the mind is fully liberated.<sup>52</sup>

**2.4.3 Right concentration.** Again here—as with faith, effort and mindfulness—for *right* concentration to arise, there is the need for the presence of the faculty of wisdom. In **the Mallikā Sutta** (S 48.52), the Buddha declares:<sup>53</sup>

Bhikshus, so long as noble knowledge [that is, the wisdom faculty] has not arisen in the noble disciple, there is as yet no stability (*saṅghīti*) in the other four faculties, no steadiness (*avaṭṭhīti*) in the other four faculties.

But, bhikshus, when noble knowledge has arisen in the noble disciple, there is stability in the other four faculties, steadiness in the other four faculties. (S 48.52/5:228)

<sup>48</sup> V 1:179-185 detailed account; A 6.55/3:374-379; Tha 632-633.

<sup>49</sup> A 9.35/4:418-422 (SD 24.3).

<sup>50</sup> A 11.10,5-6/5:322-326 f (SD 82.5).

<sup>51</sup> A 11.9/5:321 f.

<sup>52</sup> A 9.42/4:449-451 (SD 33.2).

<sup>53</sup> *Yāvakivaṇ ca bhikkhave ariya, sāvakassa ariya, ñāṇaṃ na uppannaṃ hoti, n’eva tāva catunnaṃ indriyānaṃ saṅghīti hoti, n’eva tāva catunnaṃ indriyānaṃ avaṭṭhīti hoti. Yato ca kho bhikkhave ariya, sāvakassa ariya, ñāṇaṃ uppannaṃ hoti, atha catunnaṃ indriyānaṃ saṅghīti hoti, atha catunnaṃ indriyānaṃ avaṭṭhīti hoti.* Here, “noble knowledge” (*ariya, ñāṇa*) clearly refers to the wisdom faculty (*pañc’indriya*). Comy says that the other four faculties are mixed (mundane and supramundane), while noble knowledge is supramundane (ie, knowledge of the path) (SA 3:248). Bodhi however says “it is possible to consider it [noble knowledge] as mixed too if it is understood to be based on the other four faculties” (S:B 1937 n236). Here *Mallikā* refers to the Mallika tribe members of Uruvela, -kappa, Malla country.

**2.4.4 Moggallāna.** On the seventh day of his joining the order, Moggallāna goes into an intensive retreat. Fatigue and torpor overcome him during his meditation. **The Pacalā Sutta** (A 7.58) relates how the Buddha admonishes him on how to overcome his difficulties.<sup>54</sup> While listening to the Buddha expounding these teachings on the meditation of the elements (*dhātu,kamma-ṭ,thāna*), Moggallāna wins the three higher paths and the chief disciple's perfection by attaining arhathood.<sup>55</sup>

Moggallāna's power of mental concentration is so great that he is able to enter rapidly into the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana so that he could summon his psychic powers at will. The Buddha declares him to be the foremost of those monks who have psychic power (*iddhi,mantānam*) (A 1:23).

## 2.5 CENTRALITY OF WISDOM

**2.5.1** On meeting Assaji, one of the first five monks, **Sāriputta** is impressed by the former's calm demeanour. When Sāriputta persists in asking for a teaching from Assaji, he utters this famous verse:

Of all things that arise from a cause, Their cause the Tathāgata has told.	<i>Ye dhammā hetu-p,pabhavā tesaṃ hetuṃ tathāgato āha</i>
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As soon as Sāriputta (then called Upatissa) hears these first two lines, he is established in the fruit of streamwinning.

**2.5.2** Then Assaji completes the stanza:

And also their cessation— This too the great sage has told.	<i>tesaṃ ca yo nirodho evaṃ vādī mahā,samaṇo</i> (V 1:40; J 1:85)
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**2.5.3** Two weeks later, **the Dīgha,nakha Sutta (M 74)** records Sāriputta standing behind the Buddha fanning him,<sup>56</sup> listening to the Buddha's exhortation to Dīgha,nakha. As he stands there listening, he awakens to arhathood.<sup>57</sup>

**2.5.4 The Sāriputta Moggallāna Sutta 2** (A 4.168) describes Sāriputta's cultivation of insight by way of dhyanas as being one of "easy progress with quick intuition" (*sukha,paṭipadā khippābhiññā*),<sup>58</sup> which is explained by **the (Paṭipadā) Asubha Sutta** (A 4.163) as that the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*)—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom—arise easily in him.<sup>59</sup> The Buddha declares Sāriputta as being the foremost of those monks who have wisdom (*mahā,paññānam*) (A 1:23).

<sup>54</sup> A 7.58/4:85-91.

<sup>55</sup> A 4:85 f; AA 4:42.

<sup>56</sup> The Pali Canon records at least 6 instances of a monk fanning the Buddha: (1) Nāga,samāla (**Mahā Sīhanāda S**, M 12,64/1:83); (2) Sāriputta (**Dīgha,nakha S**, M 74,14/ 1:501 f); (3) Ānanda (2 instances): **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,1.4/2:73) & **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20,2/4:18); (4) Upavāṇa (2 instances): **Pāsādika S** (D 29) mentions Upavāṇa fanning the Buddha, ie, just after the Buddha has instructed Cunda Samaṇ'uddesa on the 4 satipatthanas (D 29,41/-3:141), which is probably on a different occasion from the instance reported in **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,5.4/2:-138), when again he fans the dying Buddha. Comy says that although the Buddha is fanned, he feels neither warm nor cold (AA 4:14). Analayo notes that while the Majjhima rarely mentions a monk fanning the Buddha, the Madhyama Āgama (in Chinese tr) regularly depicts the Buddha being fanned, eg MĀ 33 (T1.474a19) || M 106; MĀ 204 (T1.775c17) || M 26; MĀ 205 (T1.779a10) || M 64; MĀ 212 (T1.793a1) || M 90; MĀ 213 (T.1.797b19) || M 89 (2005:54 n83). Cf THICH Minh Chau, *The Chinese Madhyama Āgama and the Pāli Majjhima Nikāya*, 1991:30.

<sup>57</sup> M 74,14/1:500 f.

<sup>58</sup> A 4.168/2:155. See **Vitthāra Paṭipadā S** (A 4.162), SD 18.3.

<sup>59</sup> A 4.163/2:151 f.

**2.5.5** It is clear from the Sāriputta story that wisdom is different from the other four faculties. In fact, it is the most important of the 5 faculties. Indeed, in **the Pubb'ārāma Sutta 1** (S 48.45), the Buddha says this of the fruit of the spiritual faculties (*phal'indriya*) with regards to the key role of wisdom:<sup>60</sup>

Bhikshus, it is because he has cultivated and developed the one faculty that a monk who has destroyed the influxes declares final knowledge thus ["I understand: Destroyed is birth. The holy life has been lived. What needs to be done has been done. There is no more of this state of being."]. What is that one faculty?

The faculty of wisdom.<sup>61</sup>

For a noble disciple who has wisdom,

the faith that follows from it becomes stable [is established];

the effort that follows from it becomes stable;

the mindfulness that follows from it becomes stable;

the concentration that follows from it becomes stable. (S 48.45/5:222)

**2.5.6** The 4 **Rukkha Suttas** (S 48.67-70) in the Indriya Saṃyutta further declare thus:

Among the states conducive to awakening [on the side of awakening], the faculty of wisdom is said to be foremost, that is, for the sake of awakening.<sup>62</sup>

(Rukkha Sutta 1-4, S 48.67-70/5:237-239)

**2.6 THE 5 SPIRITUAL FACULTIES AND BREAKTHROUGH. The (Sotāpanna) Nandiya Sutta** (S 55.40) is an important text we should reflect on in connection with not ritualizing the 4 factors of streamwinning, or remaining stuck without making further effort to reflection on impermanence, or better (especially for monastics), to properly practice meditation to attain dhyana. This topic should be separately studied in its own time.<sup>63</sup>

### 3 Levels of faculties

#### **3.1 INTERACTION OF THE 5 FACULTIES.**

##### 3.1.1 The relative grading of the 5 faculties

#### **SD 10.4(3.1.1)**

### **(Bāhira) Paṭipanna Sutta**

The Discourse on Practising (outsiders) | **S 48.18/5:202** = SD 47.19

Traditional: S 5.4.2.8 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahā Vagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 2, Mudutara Vagga 8

Theme: The 5 spiritual faculties bring us to the path of awakening

**1** Bhikshus, there are these 5 spiritual faculties. What are the five?

(1) The spiritual faculty of faith.

(2) The spiritual faculty of effort.

(3) The spiritual faculty of mindfulness.

<sup>60</sup> Summarized in **Mallikā S** (S 48.52) [2d].

<sup>61</sup> This phrase is missing from the PTS ed but found in other eds.

<sup>62</sup> *Ye keci bodhi, pakkhikā dhammā paññ'indriyaṃ aggaṃ akkhāyati yad idaṃ bodhāya.*

<sup>63</sup> See **(Sotāpanna) Nandiya S** (S 55.40), SD 47.1 esp (1.1.3.2).

- (4) The spiritual faculty of concentration.
- (5) The spiritual faculty of wisdom.

### 3 Bhikshus,

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1) when the 5 spiritual faculties are harmonized <sup>64</sup> and complete, one is | <b>an arhat.</b> <sup>65</sup>               |
| (2) One who is weaker than that is practising for                                    | the <u>fruit</u> of arhathood. <sup>66</sup> |
| (3) One who is weaker than that is   | <b>a non-returner</b>                        |
| (4) One who is weaker than that is practising for                                    | the <u>fruit</u> of non-returning            |
| (5) One who is weaker than that is   | <b>a once-returner.</b>                      |
| (6) One who is weaker than that is practising for                                    | the <u>fruit</u> of once-returning.          |
| (7) One who is weaker than that is   | <b>a streamwinner.</b>                       |
| (8) One who is weaker than that is practising for                                    | the <u>fruit</u> of streamwinning.           |

But, bhikshus, in whom these 5 spiritual faculties are all in all, all and sundry absent, that one is an outsider, who stands on the side of worldlings, I say!<sup>67</sup>

— evaṃ —

**3.1.1.0** In this relative grading of the 5 spiritual faculties, they are presented as being supramundane (*lok'uttara*), found only in the noble saints (SA 3:237).<sup>68</sup> Technically, we would have expected the term “spiritual power” (*bala*) to be used in these contexts. Here again, we see the effective simplicity of the early Buddhist texts, where technical terms are mostly absent.

In due course, apparently, the doctrine of the “**spiritual powers**” (*bala*) were introduced to refer to the exclusive faculties of the noble saints. The term “spiritual faculty” (*indriya*) then took on a more general sense, applicable also to worldlings. It is likely that it is during the second period of the ministry<sup>69</sup> that the two terms, *indriya* and *bala*, became current. Indeed, in the Abhidhamma and later times, the two terms became technical, with *indriya* applying to worldlings and learners, while *bala* is used only for the arhat.<sup>70</sup>

#### 3.1.1.1 The Indriya Saṃyutta (S 48) has 8 suttas, each of which presents a variation on this passage:

Bhikshus, due to the harmonizing and fulfilling of these 5 spiritual faculties, one is an arhat.

With the spiritual faculties weaker than this, one is a non-returner.

With the spiritual faculties weaker than this, one is a once-returner.

With the spiritual faculties weaker than this, one is a streamwinner.

With the spiritual faculties weaker than this, one is a truth-follower.

With the spiritual faculties weaker than this, one is a faith-follower. (S 48.12/5:200)

<sup>64</sup> Here, *samattā* is better tr as “harmonized” (from *sama*, “even, level”) rather than “fulfilled, complete” (Skt *samāpta* or BHSD *samasta*). “Complete” is supplied by *paripūrattā*. See Bdict: indriya-samattā.

<sup>65</sup> *Imesaṃ kho bhikkhave pañcannaṃ indriyānaṃ samattā paripūrattā araham hoti.*

<sup>66</sup> *Tato mudutarehi arahatta, phala, sacchikiriyāya paṭipanno hoti.*

<sup>67</sup> These 2 lines: *Yassa kho bhikkhave imāni pañc'indriyāni sabbena sabbam sabbathā sabbam n'atthi, tam aham bāhiro puthujjana, pakkhe ṭhito'ti vadāmīti.* Cf a parallel in (**Sotāpanna**) **Nandiya S** (S 55.40,3), SD 47.1, but where **the 4 limbs of streamwinning** (*sotāpatti-y-aṅga*) are listed.

<sup>68</sup> *Imasmim sutte lokuttarāneva indriyāni kathitāni* (SA 3:237). This n recurs at SD 47.19 (1.1).

<sup>69</sup> On **the 2 periods of the Buddha's ministry**, see **Notion of diṭṭhi**, SD 40a.1 (1.3).

<sup>70</sup> See R Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:126-138.

**3.1.1.2** These Suttas, as noted by **Rupert Gethin**, in his short but useful study of the faculties, give the variations in two ways: “First by varying the types of different person who correspond in descending order to the relative strength of the five spiritual faculties; the relevant different lists of persons are set out in the table on page 127 [*The Buddhist Path of Awakening*]. Secondly by [an] occasion adding different closing comments; these are three in number” (2001:126):

Thus, bhikshus, difference in faculties means difference in the fruits. Difference in the fruits means difference in persons. (S 48.13/5:200, 48.16/5:201)

Thus, bhikshus, the one who does the full amount achieves the full amount. The one who does part achieves part. These 5 faculties, bhikshus, are not barren, I say. (S 48.14/5:201, 48.17/5:202)

But, bhikshus, the one in whom these 5 faculties are all in all, all and sundry absent, is an outsider, I say, who stands in the ranks of the worldling (*puthujjana*)! (S 48.18/5:202) [3.1.1]

The point here is clear: the one who is totally without the 5 faculties is a worldling, a notion which is also shared by post-Nikāya Buddhist literature: they all agree that the term *puthujjana* refers to anyone who has not attained one of the 4 paths or 4 fruits.<sup>71</sup>

### **3.1.2 Ledi Sayadaw’s teachings on the faculties**

**3.1.2.1 Ledi Sayadaw**,<sup>72</sup> in his chapter on “The Five Indriyas” in *The Manuals of Buddhism*, makes an interesting contemporary contribution to our understanding of the faculties. Ledi speaks of **2 kinds of faith** (*saddhā*):

The *saddhā* (faith and confidence) that leads ordinary men and women to perform acts of *dāna* (alms-giving), *sīla* (morality), and “imitation” *bhāvanā* (mental concentration) is called *pakati-saddhā* [natural faith]. Here, as was shown in the case of the mad man, although *saddhā* is said to be a controlling factor, the control does not extend to the extent [sic] of controlling the unstable minds in ordinary folk in the work of *bhāvanā*. Control is exercised over the instability only to the extent of leading to acts of *dāna*. (Ledi Sayadaw, 1965:339 f) [2.2.1]

**3.1.2.2** Ledi’s typology of *pakati,saddhā* and *bhāvanā,saddhā* loosely parallels that of the canonical typology of *amūlaka,saddhā* (rootless faith), that is, unfounded faith, and *ākāravati,saddhā* (reasoned faith), better known as *avecca-p,pasāda* (wise faith). Ledi’s innovative typology also reminds one of the commentarial tradition, where we find the teaching of **the 2 kinds of moral virtue**:

- (1) “conventional morality” (*paṇṇatti,sīla* or *paññatti,sīla*), that is, promulgated morality based on the promulgated training rules (*paṇṇatti,sikkhāpada*, Vism 1.40/15);
- (2) “natural morality” (*pakati,sīla*), that is, universal moral virtues (Nett 191; Vism 1.41/15).

**3.1.2.3** However, while the commentarial definition of *pakati* is “natural or universal,” *pakati* as used by Ledi has a different meaning, that of “ordinary” as opposed to *bhāvanā*, that is, a quality attained through mental cultivation. As such, *pakati,saddhā* is ordinary faith as opposed to *bhāvanā,saddhā*, faith

<sup>71</sup> Eg Pug 12; Vism 22.5/672; Abhidhammattha, hṛdaya (tr I Amelin, *Le Coeur de la loi suprême*) Paris, 1978: 159; Abhidharma, samuccaya (tr W Rahula, *Le Compendium de la Super-doctrine (philosophie) (Abhidharmasamuccaya) d’Asaṅga*. Paris) 1971:158. Further see (Indriya) Paṭilābha S (S 48.11) + SD 56.8 (1).

<sup>72</sup> 1846-1923, a renowned reformist scholar monk of Burma.

arising from mental cultivation. Apparently, this formulation is based on the teaching of **the threefold wisdom** or 3 levels of knowledge, that is,

- (1) philosophical knowledge (*cintā, mayā paññā*), “wisdom through thinking,” that is, knowledge arising through thought and reflection, which might be called “second-hand knowledge”;<sup>73</sup>
- (2) intellectual knowledge (*suta, mayā paññā*), “wisdom through listening,” that is, knowledge arising through receiving teachings, reading and other external sources like the mass media (in our modern lingo, we would say such a person as being “well-read,” that is, steeped in book learning); this might be called “third-hand knowledge”;
- (3) spiritual knowledge (*bhāvanā, mayā paññā*), “wisdom through mental cultivation,” that is, the understanding arising through a direct experience of reality, which might be called “first-hand knowledge.”  
(D 33,1.10(43)/3:219; Vbh 324)

The rationale for the above sequence probably reflects how we actually think. The unawakened often think a lot, but most of which is really worry and speculating. The more useful mode of thinking is what we call “philosophical” here, that is, either original ideas or insightful thinking. Since this way of thinking (in a broad sense) is the most common, it is placed first. *Learned thinking* comes second, and thought-free insight or spiritual knowledge, third.

**3.1.2.4** It should be noted here that **wisdom** (*paññā*) is also one of the 5 faculties, one that needs to be balanced by faith.

From this canonical teaching we can derive the notion of **the 3 kinds of faith**, namely,

- (1) philosophical faith (*\*cintā, maya saddhā*),<sup>74</sup> that is, faith through one’s own thinking and ideas, which might be called “second-hand faith”;
- (2) intellectual faith (*\*suta, maya saddhā*), that is, faith through learning (including reading), which might be called “third-hand faith”;
- (3) spiritual faith (*\*bhāvanā, maya saddhā*), that is, faith through mental cultivation,” that is, the understanding arising through a direct experience of reality, which might be called “first-hand faith.”

In this case, 1 and 2 would be classed as “rootless or unrooted faith” (*amūlaka, saddhā*), as they are not rooted in a direct experience of reality, but merely based on the word of another or through personal opinion. This is probably what Ledi means by “ordinary faith” (*pakati, saddhā*).

“**Spiritual faith**” clearly is “rooted faith” (*mūlaka, saddhā*), rooted in a direct spiritual experience, or “reasoned faith” (*ākāra, vatī, saddhā*), resulting from a clear understanding of conditionality, or “wise faith” (*avecca-p, pasāda*), one based on a true understanding of reality, which as such is unshakable: all this defines a streamwinner’s faith.<sup>75</sup> **The Vīmaṃsaka Sutta** (M 47) describes the streamwinner’s faith,

<sup>73</sup> Most modern teachers would present *suta, maya paññā* as the first, ie most common level of knowing, as most of what we know (as unawakened worldlings) come from external sources, from others (*parato, ghoso*) and from the mass media (3<sup>rd</sup>-hand knowledge). When we reflect on such information, we have a better understanding, or we might even come up with original notions (rightly or wrongly), as such this is 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand knowledge, when compared to *bhāvanā, maya paññā*, which is a direct 1<sup>st</sup>-hand experience of reality.

<sup>74</sup> An asterisk (\*) before a Pali or Sanskrit term means that it is a neologism or a reconstruction of which the orig is unknown or non-existent.

<sup>75</sup> Defined in **Vīmaṃsaka S** (M 47) as “his faith is strong, supported by reasons, rooted in vision” (*ākāra, vatī saddhā dassana, mūlikā daḥhā*, M 47,16/ 1:320).

thus: “His faith is strong, supported by reasons, rooted in vision” (*ākāra, vatī saddhā dassana, mūlikā dalhā*, M 47).<sup>76</sup>

**3.1.2.5** Ledi further mentions *pakati, viriya* (ordinary effort) and *bhāvanā, viriya* (effort through cultivation) (1965:349). We could take this in two ways: the effort used *in* the practice or the effort resulting *from* the practice. From what Ledi has written earlier, we could surmise that “ordinary effort” (*pakati, viriya*) here refers to that of a worldling (*puthujjana*) or one who has not won the spiritual path. Such an effort may be weak and unsustainable, and even directed in the wrong way. “Effort through cultivation” (*bhāvanā, viriya*), on the other hand, is wholesome energy properly directed in mental cultivation, and the energy resulting from such a cultivation.

These two types of effort are alternatively called *kāyika, viriya* (physical effort) and *cetasika, viriya* (mental effort) by Ledi. Here again we can interpret the former as referring to effort in worldly or material pursuits, while the latter as the task of mental cultivation. Ledi however used *kāyika, viriya* in a narrow positive sense, as evident here:

The *dhūtaṅgika* of *piṇḍapātik’āṅga* (the alms-food-eater’s ascetic practice), *nesājjik’āṅga* (the sitter’s ascetic practice), *rukkha, mūlik’āṅga* (the tree-root-dweller’s ascetic practice), *abbhokāsik’āṅga* (the open-air dweller’s ascetic practice), *sosānik’āṅga* (the cemetery-dweller’s ascetic practice) are *kāyika-viriya-bhāvanā*.  
(Ledi 1965:340)

**3.1.2.6** Ledi goes on to explain that “physical effort” includes any other action (proper meditation object) or habit (such as not over-sleeping), and that “[i]n *kammaṭṭhāna* [meditation] work, quick success is only obtained by one endowed with both *kāyika, viriya* and *cetasika, viriya*” (1965:340 f). In other words, the former serves as a preparation and support for the latter. Such energy is strong and sustained, that is, it keeps the person mindful and on the path towards awakening.

**3.1.2.7** The faculty of mindfulness (*sat’indriya*) here refers to *satipaṭṭhāna* (the focuses of mindfulness), especially the mindfulness of the body (*kāya, gatā, sati*),<sup>77</sup> beginning with breath meditation (*ānāpāna, sati*) until one attains the “right mindfulness” (*sammā, sati*) of the path, that is, in simple terms, at least the understanding of impermanence of a streamwinner.<sup>78</sup>

## 3.2 THE FACULTIES AND MEDITATION

### 3.2.1 Calm and insight

**3.2.1.1** The faculties of faith, of effort and of mindfulness, initiate and support the faculty of concentration (*samādh’indriya*). The faculty of concentration is closely related to the faculty of wisdom (*paññ’indriya*). When the faculty of concentration is applied to satipaṭṭhāna practice, such as the breath meditation, mental restlessness is dispelled. The faculty of wisdom, similarly applied, removes confusion and uncertainty. Working together, they transform themselves from being ordinary faculties into “spiritual faculties” (*indriya*), the qualities of a spiritual leader (*inda*).

**3.2.1.2** The Abhidhamma tradition goes into great details to show how the spiritual faculties bring about awakening. Ledi, for example, speaks of the practitioner’s progress in terms of *samatha* (calmness) path and of *vipassanā* (insight) path. In the case of the way of calmness, after the setting up of the mind-

<sup>76</sup> M 47,16/1:320 (SD 35.6).

<sup>77</sup> See *Kāya, gatā, sati S* (M 119/3:88-99), SD 12.21.

<sup>78</sup> See eg *Cakkhu S* (S 25.1/3:225), SD 16.7.

fulness of the body and mastering one's mind, the faculty of concentration becomes the 8 attainments (*atthā samāpatti*),<sup>79</sup> while the faculty of wisdom becomes the 5 super-knowledges (*pañc'abhiññā*).<sup>80</sup>

**3.2.1.3** Following **the way of insight**, then, *the faculty of concentration* becomes the 3 mental concentrations (*ceto,samādhi*)<sup>81</sup> and *the faculty of wisdom* becomes as follows:

the 5 purifications of wisdom (beginning with the purification of view);	<i>diṭṭhi,visuddhi</i>
the 2 reflective knowledges;	<i>anupassanā,ñāṇa</i>
the 10 insight knowledges;	<i>vipassanā,ñāṇa</i>
the 4 path knowledges;	<i>maggā,ñāṇa</i>
the 4 fruition knowledges; and	<i>phala,ñāṇa</i>
the 19 review knowledges.	<i>paccavekkhaṇa,ñāṇa</i>

**3.2.1.4** **The faculty of wisdom** is analyzed in full into the following components:

1. the 5 purifications of wisdom (*visuddhi*):<sup>82</sup>

(1) the purification of view;	<i>diṭṭhi visuddhi</i>
(2) the purification by overcoming doubt;	<i>kankhā,vitarāṇa visuddhi</i>
(3) the purification by knowledge and vision of what is and what is not the path;	<i>maggāmagga,ñāṇa,dassana visuddhi</i>
(4) the purification by knowledge and vision of the way [of path-progress];	<i>paṭipadā,ñāṇa,dassana visuddhi</i>
(5) the purification by knowledge and vision.	<i>ñāṇa,dassana visuddhi</i>
2. the 3 reflective knowledges (*anupassanā,ñāṇa*):

(1) contemplation of impermanence;	<i>aniccānupassanā</i>
(2) contemplation of unsatisfactoriness;	<i>dukkhānupassanā</i>
(3) contemplation of non-self;	<i>anattānupassanā</i>

<sup>79</sup> This refers to the attainment of dhyanas. **The 8 attainments** (*samāpatti*) are the 4 form dhyanas (*rūpa-j,jhānā*) and the 4 formless attainments (*ārūppā*) (D 33.1.11(4)/3:221 & (33)/3:224; S 36.19/4:226 f).

<sup>80</sup> **The 5 mundane super-knowledges** (*abhiññā*) are: (1) psychic power (*iddhi,vidhā*); (2) the divine ear (*dibba,-sota*); (3) knowledge of mind-reading (*para,citta,vijāna*); (4) the recollection of past lives (*pubbe,nivāsānussati*); (5) the divine eye (*dibba,cakkhu*) (*Sāmañña,phala S*, D 2.87-97/1:77-83), SD 8.10.

<sup>81</sup> **Ceto,samādhi**. Dīgha Comy says that they have to do with insight concentration (*vipassanā,samādhi*): One who, on attaining advanced insight, contemplates things as not self, gains the emptiness concentration (*suññata,-samādhi*) on arriving at the path and fruit (as he has seen things as empty of self); one who thus contemplates things as impermanent, gains the signless concentration (*animitta,samādhi*) on arriving at the path and fruit (as he has seen through the "sign of permanence"); one who thus contemplates things as unsatisfactory, gains the undirected concentration or concentration on the desireless (*appaṇihita,samādhi*) on arriving at the path and fruit (as he has inclination towards things seen as painful). See **Animitta S** (S 40.9/4:268 f); **Go,datta S** (S 41.7/4:297); **Suññata Samādhi S** (S 43.4/4:361), where it is stated that the signless concentration is the path to the unconditioned. See also D 3:219; A 1:299; Pm 1:49. For a general survey on signless meditation, see Peter Harvey, "Signless meditation in Pāli Buddhism," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 9 1986:28-51.

<sup>82</sup> These are the last 5 of "the 7 purifications" (*satta visuddhi*), a list found only in **Ratha,vinīta S**, M 24/1:145-151 (SD 28.3). The first 2 purifications are: (1) the purification of moral virtue (*sīla visuddhi*) & (2) the purification of mind (*citta visuddhi*); ie the proper practice of the precepts, and success in one's mental cultivation, respectively, resulting in the 5 purifications listed here. In terms of the faculties (*indriya*), (1) here would be motivated by the faculty of faith (*saddh'indriya*); (2) would be the result of all the 5 faculties working together. See **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.12(11).

3. the 10 insight knowledges (*vipassanā, ñāṇa*):<sup>83</sup>
- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| (1) full insight (into the 3 characteristics of existence);   | <i>sammasana, ñāṇa</i>              |
| (2) insight into the rising and ceasing of phenomena;         | <i>udaya-b, bayânupassanā, ñāṇa</i> |
| (3) insight into the passing away of existence;               | <i>bhaṅgânupassanā, ñāṇa</i>        |
| (4) insight into the fearfulness (danger) of existence;       | <i>bhayânupassanā, ñāṇa</i>         |
| (5) insight into the disadvantages of existence;              | <i>ādīnavânupassanā, ñāṇa</i>       |
| (6) insight into the disenchantment with existence;           | <i>nibbidā'nupassanā, ñāṇa</i>      |
| (7) insight arising from the desire to be liberated;          | <i>muñcitu, kamyatā, ñāṇa</i>       |
| (8) insight consisting in reflective contemplation;           | <i>paṭisaṅkhânupassanā, ñāṇa</i>    |
| (9) insight arising from equanimity regarding formations; and | <i>saṅkhār'upekkhā, ñāṇa</i>        |
| (10) adaptation knowledge.                                    | <i>anuloma, ñāṇa</i>                |
4. the 4 path knowledges (*magga, ñāṇa*):
- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) the path of streamwinning;  | <i>sotapatti, magga</i>  |
| (2) the path of once-returning; | <i>sākadāgāmī, magga</i> |
| (3) the path of non-returning;  | <i>anāgāmī, magga</i>    |
| (4) the path of arhathood.      | <i>arahatta, magga</i>   |
5. the 4 fruition knowledges (*phala, ñāṇa*):
- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| (1) the fruition of streamwinning;     | <i>sotāpatti, magga</i>  |
| (2) the fruition of once-returning;    | <i>sākadāgāmī, magga</i> |
| (3) the fruition of non-returning; and | <i>anāgāmī, magga</i>    |
| (4) the fruition of arhathood.         | <i>arahatta, magga</i>   |
6. the 19 review knowledges (*paccavekkhana, ñāṇa*):
- (1) He reviews the path, thus: "So this is the path I have attained."
  - (2) He reviews the fruition, thus: "This is the blessing I have obtained."
  - (3) He reviews the defilements that have been abandoned, thus: "These are the defilements abandoned by me."
  - (4) He reviews the defilements that remain to be eliminated by the three higher paths, thus: "These are the defilements still remaining in me."
  - (5) He reviews the deathless nirvana, thus: "This is the state that has been penetrated by me."

**3.2.1.5** So the noble disciple who is a streamwinner has five kinds of reviewing; so too the once-returner, and the non-returner. The arhat has no reviewing of remaining defilements. As such, all these types of reviewing total 19.

<sup>83</sup> Except for (1), the remaining 9 items form the "purification by knowledge and vision of the path-progress" (*paṭipadā, ñāṇa, dassana, visuddhi*) (which is the 6<sup>th</sup> of the 7 purifications, **Ratha, vinīta S**, M 24/1:145-151). These 9 are found in the Canon only in **Paṭisambhidā, magga** ch 1 (Ñāṇa, kathā), but not as a set or group; details at Vism 21/639-671. See Mahasi Sayadaw, "The Progress of Insight, *Visuddhiñāṇa-kathā*: a modern treatise on Buddhist satipatthana meditation." Tr from Pali with nn by Nyanaponika. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Soc, 1994: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/bps/misc/progress.html>; Lee Dhammadharo, "The Craft of the Heart." Tr from the Thai by Thanissaro, 1994: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/thai/lee/craft.html>.

## 4 The 22 faculties

**4.1 A full list of *indriyā***, treated in the suttas and the Abhidhamma (first appearing in **the Vibhaṅga**),<sup>84</sup> totals 22, comprising both physical and mental items. These 22 faculties (*bāvīsat'indriyāni*)<sup>85</sup>—sets of 6 + 3 + 5 + 5 + 3—comprise:

the <b>6</b> sense-faculties or sense-bases,	<i>cha-ḷ-indriya</i>
the <b>3</b> faculties of being, or being triad,	<i>bhava</i>
the <b>5</b> faculties of feelings, or feeling pentad,	<i>vedanā</i>
the <b>5</b> spiritual faculties,	<i>pañc'indriya</i>
the <b>3</b> principles of knowledge, or knowledge triad.	<i>aññā</i>

These serve as a summary of the constituents of our mind-body being, and how we are able to be free of it through wisdom (the last of the 5 faculties).

These 22 faculties are first listed in **the Indriya Vibhaṅga** (ch 5) of the Vibhaṅga, and the explained (Vbh 122-124) in the “Abhidhamma division” [explanation] (*abhidhamma, bhājanīya*), followed by the “questionnaire” (*pañha, pucchaka*), without any “sutta division” (*sutta, bhājanīya*), as is the rule, in the other Vibhaṅga chapters. This probably means that the *indriya* sets arose in the Abhidhamma tradition (systematizing and elaborating on the *indriya* teachings in the suttas).

The 22 faculties are further explained in **the Vibhaṅga Commentary** (Vbha 125-129). This has been translated in *The Dispeller of Delusion* by Ñāṇamoli (1996, VbhA:Ñ 1:154-160). The sets forming the 22 faculties and their components are as follows:

### The 22 faculties<sup>86</sup>

Vbh §219 f/122,6-9

*Bāvīsat'indriyāni:*

#### **(1) The 6 sense-bases (*āyatana*)**

		<b>the basic terms</b>
1. <i>cakkhu'ndriyaṃ</i>	the eye-faculty	<i>cakkhu</i>
2. <i>sot'indriyaṃ</i>	the ear -faculty	<i>sota</i>
3. <i>ghān'indriyaṃ</i>	the nose-faculty	<i>ghāna</i>
4. <i>jivh'indriyaṃ</i>	the tongue-faculty	<i>jivhā</i>
5. <i>kāy'indriyaṃ</i>	the body-faculty	<i>kāya</i>
6. <i>man'indriyaṃ</i>	the mind-faculty	<i>mano</i>

#### **(2) The 3 faculties of being (*bhāva*)**

7. <i>itth'indriyaṃ</i>	the female faculty or femininity	<i>itthatta</i>
8. <i>puris'indriyaṃ</i>	the male faculty or masculinity	<i>purisatta</i>
9. <i>jīvit'indriyaṃ</i>	the life-faculty, vitality or “life-force” <sup>87</sup>	<i>jīvita</i>

<sup>84</sup> Eg Vbh 122,3-9 (VbhA \*\*\*); Vism 491,5; Abhs 33,13. See also Abhidhāna-p, padīpikā 149b: *visayi tv akkham ~am* (cf Amara, kośa 3.2.28 *pratyakṣaṃ syād aindriyakam*). On *indriya* & form (*rūpa*), see Dhs 125,21, 127,20; 147,9-15, 146,12, 175-179 passim; Vbh 13,6. Cf E Lamotte, *Traité* 3:1494.

<sup>85</sup> For their etyms, defs, explanations, exegeses, see S 5:193-243 (Indriya Saṃyutta); *indriyānaṃ ādhipateyy'aṭṭho abhiññeyyo*, Pm 1:17,4 (≈ 21,6; 74,21; 2:21,26; 161,13); Vbh 122-134 (Indriya Vibhaṅga); Vism 491-493; DhsA 119-123 (cf DhsA:PR 157-163); AA 1:106,29-107,2; Sadd 785,18-786,2 (qu Vism); see also CPD: ind'aṭṭha.

<sup>86</sup> Table 4.3 is also found at SD 101.7 (1.2.3.3).

**(3) The 5 feelings (*vedanā*)**

10. <i>sukh'indriyaṃ</i>	bodily pleasurable feeling faculty	<i>sukha</i>
11. <i>dukkh'indriyaṃ</i>	bodily painful feeling faculty	<i>dukkha</i>
12. <i>somanass'indriyaṃ</i>	mental pleasurable feeling faculty	<i>somanassa</i>
13. <i>domanass'indriyaṃ</i>	mental painful feeling faculty	<i>domanassa</i>
14. <i>upekkh'indriyaṃ</i>	indifference faculty	<i>upekkhā</i>

**(4) The 5 spiritual faculties (*indriya*)<sup>88</sup>**

15. <i>saddh'indriyaṃ</i>	(1) faculty of faith	<i>saddhā</i>
16. <i>viriy'indriyaṃ</i>	(2) faculty of effort	<i>viriya</i>
17. <i>sat'indriyaṃ</i>	(3) faculty of mindfulness	<i>sati</i>
18. <i>samādh'indriyaṃ</i>	(4) faculty of concentration	<i>samādhi</i>
19. <i>paññ'indriyaṃ</i>	(5) faculty of wisdom	<i>paññā</i>

**(5) The 3 supramundane faculties (*lok'uttara*)**

20. <i>anaññātañ,ñassāmīti'indriyaṃ</i>	the faculty of assurance, “I shall know what I did not know!” <sup>89</sup>
21. <i>aññ'indriyaṃ</i>	the faculty of highest knowledge ( <i>aññā</i> )
22. <i>aññātāv'indriyaṃ</i> .	the faculty of the one who knows [has the highest knowledge]. <sup>90</sup>

**(6)** Faculties 1-5 and 7-8 above are physical; (9) “vitality” is either physical or mental. All the rest are mental. (14) *upekkhā* is here merely indifferent feeling (*adukkham-asukhā vedanā*), ie neither painful nor pleasant feeling, and not identical with the high wholesome state of mental equipoise (*tatra,majjhata-tā*), that is, “keeping to the middle of it,” but also called *upekkhā* which belongs to the group of mental formations (*saṅkhāra-k,khandha*).<sup>91</sup>

(20) arises at the moment of the path of streamwinning (*sotāpatti,magga*); (21) on reaching the fruition of streamwinning (*sotāpatti,phala*); (22) on attaining the fruition of arhathood (*arahatta,phala*). The last three of course refers to the noble saints (*ariya,puggala*)

**4.2** The list of 22 faculties is also found in **the Abhidhamm'attha,saṅgaha**, a well known scholastic manual (Sri Lanka, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century). It lists the 22 faculties (*bāvisat'indriyāni*) differently—as 5 + 5 + 3 + 5 + 3 + 1—comprising:

the 5 sense-faculties,	<i>pañc'indriya</i> (1)
the 5 spiritual (or mental) faculties	<i>pañc'indriya</i> (2)
the 3 controlling principles,	<i>indriya</i>
the 5 faculties of feeling,	<i>vedanā</i>
the 3 principles of knowledge, and	<i>aññā</i>
the 1 life-faculty. <sup>92</sup>	<i>jīvit'indriya</i>

<sup>87</sup> The Vaibhāṣika take this “life-force” as the “intermediate state,” *antarā,bhava*.

<sup>88</sup> On the 5 spiritual faculties (15-19), see “The Way of Wisdom” (BPS Wheel 65/66).

<sup>89</sup> *Anaññātañ,ñassāmīti*. This arises on the attaining of the path of streamwinning (*sotāpatti,magga*). [4.3.6]

<sup>90</sup> *Aññātāvi = aññāta + (ā)vi(n)* (BHS *ājñātāvin*); *aññā* is the arhat's liberating knowledge, that arises on the attaining of the fruit of arhathood (*arahatta,phala*). [4.3.6]

<sup>91</sup> See BDict Table II.

<sup>92</sup> For details, see below [4.3] & **Sāra S** (S 48.55) @ SD 42.19 (1).

In the English translation of the guide to **the Abhidhamm’attha Saṅgaha**, its editor, Bh Bodhi, says:

The faculties are phenomena which exercise control in their respective domains over their associated states. The first five faculties are identified with the five physical sensitivities (1-5); the two sexual faculties (6-7) with the two material phenomena of sex; the life faculty (8) is twofold, as the mental life faculty and the physical life faculty. The mind faculty (9) [no 6 in the Abhidhamma list] is consciousness (*citta*) in its entirety, that is, all eighty-nine cittas [Abhs:BRS 27-32]. The five faculties of feeling are discussed above [ie in Abhs 3.2 = Abhs:BRS 115 f]. The five spiritual faculties (15-19) reappear below [at Abhs §27], and the last three are explained at §22.

(Abhs:BRS 273 f)

These faculties, except for (7) and (8), form one (no 16) of the 24 conditions (*paccaya*), that is, **indriya, paccaya**.<sup>93</sup>

**4.3 In the Vibhaṅga** (Vbh 5) all these faculties are treated as in the order given in the Bāvīsati’indriyāni list below. **The Saṃyutta** ch 48, however, lists and explains them by way of the group titles, omitting only (20-22) (probably added later to complete the set).

#### 4.4 THE ĀPAṆA SUTTA (S 48.50)

### SD 10.4(4.4)

## Āpaṇa Sutta<sup>94</sup>

The Discourse at Āpaṇa or **Saddhā Sutta** The Discourse on Faith | **S 48.50/5:225 f**  
 Traditional: S 5.4.5.10 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahā Vagga 4, Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta 5, Jarā Vagga 10  
 Theme: The senses, spiritual faculties and powers of a practitioner

[225] 1 Thus have I heard.

### The Buddha questions Sāriputta

1.1 At one time, the Blessed One was staying among the Aṅgas.<sup>95</sup> There was a town of the Aṅgas called Āpaṇa.<sup>96</sup>

2 There the Blessed One addressed the venerable Sāriputta thus:

2.2 “Sāriputta, would the noble disciple—one utterly dedicated<sup>97</sup> to the Tathagata and has deep faith in him—be perplexed with or doubt the Tathagata or the Tathagata’s teaching?”

### Sāriputta speaks on the 5 spiritual faculties

#### THE FACULTY OF FAITH

3 “(1a) Bhante, the noble disciple—one deeply dedicated to the Tathagata and has deep **faith** in him—*would not* be perplexed with nor doubt the Tathagata or the Tathagata’s teaching.

<sup>93</sup> See BDict: paccaya.

<sup>94</sup> Also called **Saddha S**, “the discourse on the faithful.”

<sup>95</sup> Aṅga country was to the east of Magadha, and their capital was Champā (near modern Bhagalpur).

<sup>96</sup> Āpaṇa, “market.” Cf ThA:RD 310 n. See V 1:29; M 2:163; Comy ad S 1:1; KhA 115.

<sup>97</sup> “Utterly dedicated,” *ekanta, gato = acala-p, patto*, “attained to unshakability” (AA 3:361).

## THE FACULTY OF EFFORT

(2) It is indeed to be expected, bhante, that a noble disciple who has faith will dwell with **effort [energy]** roused for the abandoning of unwholesome states and the acquisition of wholesome states;

3.2 that he will be steadfast, resolute in his effort and not shirking from the task of cultivating wholesome states.<sup>98</sup>

4 That energy of his, bhante, is his faculty of effort.

## THE FACULTY OF MINDFULNESS

(3) It is indeed to be expected, bhante, that a noble disciple who has faith, and whose effort is roused,

4.2 will be **mindful**, having supreme mindfulness and discretion,<sup>99</sup>

one who remembers, who recollects what was done long ago, what was said long ago.

5 That mindfulness of his, bhante, is his faculty of mindfulness.

## THE FACULTY OF SAMADHI

(4) It is indeed to be expected, bhante, that a faithful noble disciple whose energy is roused, and whose mindfulness is established that, having made relinquishment [letting go]<sup>100</sup> the support,

5.2 he will gain **samadhi** [mental concentration], he will gain one-pointedness of mind [mental unification].<sup>101</sup>

6 That samadhi of his, bhante, is his faculty of samadhi.

## THE FACULTY OF WISDOM

(5) It is indeed to be expected, bhante, that a faithful noble disciple whose energy is roused, and whose mindfulness is established, [226] and whose mind is concentrated,

6.2 will **know** [understand] thus:

‘Without a discoverable beginning is this samsara [cycle of existence]. Undiscernible is a first point of beings roaming and wandering on, hindered by ignorance, fettered by craving.

6.3 But the remainderless fading away and ending of ignorance, the mass of darkness

<sup>98</sup> *Āraddha, viriyo viharati akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pahānāya kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ upasampadāya thāma-vā daḥha, parakkamo anikkhitta, dhuro kusalesu dhammesu.*

<sup>99</sup> “Mindfulness and discretion,” *sati, nepakka (nepakka, fr nipaka)* (M 1:356; S 5:197 f; A 3:11, 4:15; Nc 629B; Vbh 244, 249; Vism 3 = *paññā*; DhA 4:29). Here I follow Bodhi’s tr.

<sup>100</sup> “Having made relinquishment the support,” *vossagg’ārammaṇaṃ karitvā*. Clearly here, “mental release” is meant, viz the overcoming of the 5 mental hindrances [SD 3.12]. SA 3:234 says, “Having made nirvana the support or object,” where we see a semantic shift: the Sutta sense of *ārammaṇa* is non-technical, meaning simply “support,” but the Commentarial sense is “object, goal.” Cf MA 1:108 f on *vipassanā* and *samatha*, where it says *jātānaṃ dhammānaṃ vossagg’ārammaṇatā*, “through the support by way of letting go of states that have arisen” (MA 1:109). **Sujato** suggests: “In *ānāpānasati*, ‘relinquishment’ [*vossagga*] might have been preferred over ‘release’ to avoid confusion with the (lesser) sense of ‘mind release’ (= jhana) in the contemplation of the mind. Or alternatively, ‘relinquishment’ may have been intended to evoke the enlightenment-factors, which include this word in their standard formula.” In his further fn, Sujato adds: “The Pali terms are slightly different: **paṭinissagga** in *ānāpānasati* and **vossagga** in the enlightenment-factor formula, but I do not see any significance in this variation. Bhikkhu Bodhi [S:B 1892 n7] tries to distinguish them, while acknowledging that this does not find support in the commentaries. He suggests that *paṭinissagga* refers to the final stages of insight, whereas *vossagga* comes close in meaning to Nibbāna. This interpretation, however, is untenable, for *paṭinissagga* in fact occurs in two of the main definitions of Nibbāna: in the third noble truth definition, and as the ‘relinquishing of all belongings’ (*sabbūpadhi, paṭinissaggo*).” (2004:237 n360).

<sup>101</sup> “Whose energy is roused...one-pointedness of mind,” *āraddha, viriyassa upaṭṭhita, satino etaṃ ... yaṃ vossagg’ārammaṇaṃ karitvā labhissati samādhim cittaṃ ekaggataṃ*.

—this is the peaceful state; this is the sublime state; that is, the stilling of all formations, the letting-go of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, nirvana.’

7 That wisdom of his, bhante, is his faculty of wisdom.

#### THE FACULTY OF FAITH

(1b) And, bhante, when he has again and again strived in this way, again and again recollected in this way, again and again concentrated his mind in this way, again and again knows [understands] with wisdom in this way, that noble disciple wins deep faith thus:

7.2 ‘As regard those things that I have previously (only) heard about, now I dwell having touched them with the body [personally experienced them] and, having penetrated them through with wisdom, I see.’

8 That faith of his, bhante, is his faculty of faith.<sup>102</sup>

### The Buddha endorses Sāriputta’s remarks

9 “Good [Sadhu], Sāriputta, good!

Sāriputta, the noble disciple who is utterly dedicated to the Tathagata and has full faith in him would not be perplexed nor doubt the Tathagata or the Tathagata’s teaching.

#### THE FACULTY OF FAITH

(1a) Sāriputta, the noble disciple who is deeply dedicated to the Tathagata and has deep **faith** in him would not be perplexed with nor doubt the Tathagata or the Tathagata’s teaching.

#### THE FACULTY OF EFFORT

(2) It is indeed to be expected, Sāriputta, that a noble disciple who has faith will dwell

9.2 with **effort** roused for the abandoning of unwholesome states and the acquisition of wholesome states;

that he will be steadfast, resolute in his effort and not shirking from the task of cultivating wholesome states.

10 That energy of his, Sāriputta, is his faculty of effort.

#### THE FACULTY OF MINDFULNESS

(3) It is indeed to be expected, Sāriputta, that a noble disciple who has faith, and whose effort is roused,

10.2 will be **mindful**, having supreme mindfulness and discretion, one who remembers, who recollects what was done long ago, what was said long ago.

11 That mindfulness of his, Sāriputta, is his faculty of mindfulness.

#### THE FACULTY OF SAMADHI

(4) It is indeed to be expected, Sāriputta, that a faithful noble disciple whose energy is roused, and whose mindfulness is established that, having made relinquishment the support,

11.2 he will gain **samadhi** [mental concentration], he will gain one-pointedness of mind [mental unification].

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<sup>102</sup> Comy says that this is “reviewing faith” (*paccavekkhaṇa, saddhā*) (SA 3:247 f). Bodhi notes, “Since the disciple has ‘pierced [penetrated] with wisdom’ the things ‘previously heard,’ the precise role of faith here is unclear.” (S:B 1937 n234). The context here, however, is quite clear, as there are 2 kinds of faith (*saddhā*): See above (2.2). The faith mentioned at **1a** evidently refers to “rootless faith” (*amūlaka saddhā*) or “ordinary faith” (*pakati saddhā*), while **1b** refers to “wise faith” (*avecca-p, pasāda*). We see the same pattern—beginning with faith and ending with faith again—in the 12 steps to wisdom as taught in **Caṅkī S** (M 95,20/2:173), SD 21.15, also Intro (5).

**12** That samadhi of his, Sāriputta, is his faculty of samadhi.

#### THE FACULTY OF WISDOM

(5) It is indeed to be expected, Sāriputta, that a faithful noble disciple whose energy is roused, and whose mindfulness is established, and whose mind is concentrated, will **know** [understand] thus:

12.2 ‘Without a discoverable beginning is this samsara [cycle of existence]. Not discernible is a first point of beings roaming and wandering on, hindered by ignorance, fettered by craving.

12.3 But the remainderless fading away and ending of ignorance, the mass of darkness

—this is the peaceful state; this is the sublime state; that is, the stilling of all formations, the letting-go of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, nirvana.’

**13** That wisdom of his, Sāriputta, is his faculty of wisdom.

#### THE FACULTY OF FAITH

(1b) And, Sāriputta, when he has again and again strived in this way, again and again recollected in this way, again and again concentrated his mind in this way, again and again,

knows [understands] with wisdom in this way, that noble disciple wins deep faith thus:

13.2 ‘As regard those things that I have previously (only) heard about, now I dwell [227] having touched them with the body [personally experienced them] and, having penetrated them through with wisdom, I see.’

**14** That faith of his, Sāriputta, is his faculty of faith.<sup>103</sup>

— evaṃ —

### 4.5 THE (INDRIYA) SAMPANNA SUTTA

**1** The (Indriya) Sampanna Sutta, the (Indriya) Discourse on the accomplished, is also called the (Saṅkhitta) Sampanna Sutta (S 48.19), the short discourse in the accomplished. It is a short text on the 5 spiritual faculties—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom—and how they are “accomplished” (*sampanna*) in the sense of “leading to peace, leading to self-awakening” (*upasama, gāmiṃ sambodha, gāmiṃ*).

**2** Both *upasama* and *sambodha* are here synonyms for nirvana, as evident from the Saṃyutta commentary on the closely related **Indriya Sampanna Sutta** (S 35.153), where the Buddha answers the same question. [4.6]

## SD 10.4(4.5)

## (Saṅkhitta) Sampanna Sutta

The (Short) Discourse on the Accomplished | **S 48.19/5:203** f<sup>104</sup>

**(Indriya) Sampanna Sutta** The (*indriya*) discourse on the accomplished

Traditional: S 5.4.2.9 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahā Vagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 2, Mudutara Vagga 9

Theme: The spiritual faculties and their accomplishment

**1** Then, a certain monk approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he saluted the Blessed One, and then sat down at one side.

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

<sup>103</sup> On the ending with faith here, see §8 n.

<sup>104</sup> Repeated at SD 56.12.

2 “Bhante, it is said, ‘**Accomplished in the faculties** (*indriya, sampanna*), accomplished in the faculties.’ In what way, bhante, is *one accomplished in the faculties*?”

3 “Here, bhikshu, a monk

- |  |  |                       |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| (1) cultivates <u>the faculty of faith</u> ,         | leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; | <i>saddh’indriya</i>  |
| (2) cultivates <u>the faculty of energy</u> ,        | leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; | <i>viriy’indriya</i>  |
| (3) cultivates <u>the faculty of mindfulness</u> ,   | leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; | <i>sat’indriya</i>    |
| (4) cultivates <u>the faculty of concentration</u> , | leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; | <i>samādh’indriya</i> |
| (5) cultivates <u>the faculty of wisdom</u> ,        | leading to peace, leading to self-awakening. | <i>paññ’indriya</i>   |

4 Thus far, bhikshu, a monk is said to be accomplished in the faculties.”

— evaṃ —

#### 4.6 THE INDRIYA SAMPANNA SUTTA

4.6.1 The Indriya Sampanna Sutta (S 35.153) is a short text on the 6 sense-faculties—those of eye, of ear, of nose, of tongue, of body and of mind—and how they are “accomplished” (*sampanna*) in the sense of watching the “rise and fall” of these 6 faculties. These are usually known as the “6 sense-bases” (*saḷ-āyatana*).

4.6.2 There is a wordplay on “faculty” (*indriya*), as it can also mean “spiritual faculty,” when it refers to the 6 sense faculties. In other words, through **faith** and **effort** in meditation (or mindfulness), what are sense-based (or worldly) transforms us to become sense-free (supramundane) with **mindfulness**, leading to **concentration**, bringing about **wisdom**.

4.6.3 The key term “**accomplished in the faculties**” (*indriya, sampanna*) is glossed by the Sutta commentary as “fully endowed with the faculties” (*paripuṇṇ’indriya*). One who has attained arhathood by examining the 6 sense-faculties with insight is said to be “accomplished in faculties” because his faculties are tamed [disciplined], or because he has the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*) of faith, etc [4.5], which has arisen on account of examining the 6 sense-faculties (*cha indriya*)—the eye, etc—with insight. (SA 2:403,28, 3:327,5)<sup>105</sup>

4.6.4 The Sutta mentions that “**he is revulsed**” (*nibbindati*), meaning that he is dissatisfied, disgusted, marks the culmination of insight, just before the attainment of the supramundane path (Vism 722 f).

“**He is dispassionate** [His lust fades away]” marks the attainment of the supramundane path (*magga*), when the mental fetters are finally eliminated.

“**It is freed**” refers to the full manifestation of the supramundane path, that is, full awakening. The arhat’s subsequent review knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa, ñāṇa*) is shown by the phrase “**there comes the knowledge**” and “**he understands: ‘Birth is destroyed ...’**,” in the following paragraph, declaring his awakening as an arhat.<sup>106</sup> [§4]

4.6.5 As stated in **the (Sāṅkhitta) Indriya Sutta** (S 48.18), the spiritual faculties are then said to have been complete or accomplished, when they are said to be “leading to peace, leading to self-awakening” (*upasama, gāmiṃ sambodha, gāmiṃ*) [4.5]. In this Sutta (S 48.18), the teaching is given by the Buddha in answer to the same question, confirming the close connection between the two Suttas, that is, S 45.153 and S 48.19.

<sup>105</sup> See SD 56.12 (1.1.2).

<sup>106</sup> Also MA 2:144; Vism 21.43-44/650 f. See SD 20.1 Appendix for a list of suttas relating to revulsion.

## SD 10.4(4.6)

## Indriya Sampanna Sutta

The Discourse on the Faculty-accomplished | S 35.153/4:140<sup>107</sup>Traditional: S 4.1.3.5.9 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 4, Saḷāyatana Vagga 1, Saḷāyatana Saṃyutta 3,  
Tatiya Paṇṇāsaka 5, Nava Purāṇa Vagga 9

Theme: Mastering the spiritual faculties through the sense-faculties

1 Then, a certain monk approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he saluted the Blessed One, and then sat down at one side.

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

2 “**Accomplished in the faculties** (*iindriya,sampanna*), accomplished in the faculties. So it is said, bhante. In what way, bhante, is one accomplished in the faculties?”<sup>108</sup>

3 “Bhikshu,<sup>109</sup>

(1) if, while he dwells contemplating rise and fall<sup>110</sup> in the eye faculty, *cakkhu’indriya*  
he is revulsed<sup>111</sup> towards the eye faculty;

(2) if, while one dwells contemplating rise and fall in the ear faculty, *sot’indriya*  
he is revulsed towards the ear faculty;

(3) if, while one dwells contemplating rise and fall in the nose faculty, *ghān’indriya*  
he is revulsed towards the nose faculty;

(4) if, while one dwells contemplating rise and fall in the tongue faculty, *jivhī’indriya*  
he is revulsed towards the tongue faculty;

(5) if, while one dwells contemplating rise and fall in the body faculty, *kāy’indriya*  
he is revulsed towards the body faculty;

(6) if, while one dwells contemplating rise and fall in the mind faculty, *man’indriya*  
he is revulsed towards the mind faculty;

4 Revulsed, he is dispassionate [lust fades away].

Through dispassion [the fading away of lust],

When it is freed,

There is the knowledge,

the holy life has been lived,

there is no more of this state of being,”

(his mind) is freed.

he knows: “It is freed.”

“Birth is destroyed,

what should be done is done,

so he knows

5 Thus far, bhikshu, a monk is said to be accomplished in the faculties.”

— evaṃ —

<sup>107</sup> Cf (Saṅkhitta) Sampanna S (S 48.19) [4.5] = SD 56.12.

<sup>108</sup> The same question is asked in (Saṅkhitta) Sampanna S (S 48.19), SD 10.4(4.5). On “accomplished in the faculties” (*indriya,sampanna*), see (3).

<sup>109</sup> The foll passages [§§3-4] parallels Alagaddûpama S (M 22,26-26), SD 3.13, where the formula is applied to the 5 aggregates (form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness) instead (= SD 20.1 (3.1.1)).

<sup>110</sup> “Contemplate rise and fall,” *udaya,vyayānupassī* = (*udaya-b,baya*): *udaya* (“rising”) + *vaya* (“falling”) + *anu-passī* (“who contemplates,” lit “keeps seeing after”). See S 1:46,25\*; A 2:15,9\*; Dh 374; U 38,9\*. See SD 17.2b (1.1.1.1).

<sup>111</sup> “Experiences revulsion,” *nibbindati* [4]. On revulsion, see *Nibbidā*, SD 20.1.

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