

12

Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā

(The Uddham,bhāgiya Suttas,) The Discourses on the Higher (Fetters) | S 45.180

Theme: The 5 higher fetters and the noble eightfold path

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[Except for (2.3) and (3), much of the introductory notes here are similar to those for **the Oram,bhāgiya Suttā** (S 45.179), SD 50.11, with mutatis mutandis changes, here dealing with the 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana*).]

1 Sutta significance

1.1 THE PATH SCHEDULES

1.1.1 The Oram,bhāgiya Suttā (S 45.179)

1.1.1.1 We have already noted in the Oram,bhāgiya Suttā (S 45.179), “the discourses on the lower (fetters),” that these 5 lower fetters—self-identity view, spiritual doubt, attachment to rituals and vows, sensual lust and repulsion—are *the mental defilements that hold us back in the sense-world*. This prevents us from taking even the first step on the noble eightfold path.

1.1.1.2 The very first step on the noble eightfold path is made when we break the first 3 fetters—this makes us streamwinners (*sotāpatti*), those who have entered the stream flowing towards nirvana.¹ When, as streamwinners, we further weaken the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala,mūla*) of lust, hate and delusion,² we go on to attain once-returning (*sakadāgamitā*).³

When all **the 5 lower fetters** are broken, we become non-returners (*anāgāmī*), who, upon dying, are reborn in the pure abodes (*suddh’āvāsa*), without returning to the sense-world (that is, our world). Or, we may attain non-returning in this world, and after death, may attain arhathood in the intermediate state before we are reborn in the pure abodes.⁴

1.1.2 The Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā (S 45.180)

1.1.2.1 “**The discourses on the higher fetters**,” as the title suggests, deals with the 5 higher fetters (*pañca uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana*). When these fetters are broken, the practitioner completes his journey on the noble eightfold path and reaches nirvana: he becomes an **arhat** (*arahata*). Like the Buddha, he lives his last life, and when he dies, like a burn-out candle, he never burns again in this or any world. He has passed away into nirvana.

1.1.2.2 Note that the title, **Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā**, “the discourses on the higher fetters,” is in the plural: it comprises two closely connected suttas: the first is the very brief “abridged combined” discourse [§§1-3], and the second discourse, very much longer, lays out in full cycles by which these higher fetters are overcome according to **the “path schedule,”** that is,

¹ On breaking the first 3 fetters, see SD 50.11 (2.4).

² The 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala,mūla*) are lust (*rāga*) or greed (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*): **Mūla S** (A 3.69), SD 18.2; also SD 4.14 (1).

³ On the once-returner, see SD 50.11 (2.3.2.3).

⁴ This is the first of the 5 kinds of non-returners: see **Niṭṭha S** (A 10.63,3) SD 3.3(1.2) & SD 2.17 (4-5).

- (1) the “direct knowledge” (*abhiññā*) cycle;
- (2) the “full knowledge” (*pariññā*) cycle;
- (3) the “utter destruction” (*parikkhāya*) cycle; and
- (4) the “bending towards” (*nibbāna, ninna*) cycle.

1.1.3 The 4 noble truths

1.1.3.1 Just as in the Oram,bhāgiya Suttā, in this Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā, too, there are the “path schedules,” which are simply the cycles of **the 4 noble truths** applied to higher fetters, that is,

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| (1) the noble truth that is | suffering; | <i>dukkha</i> |
| (2) the noble truth that is | the arising of suffering; | <i>samudaya</i> |
| (3) the noble truth that is | the ending of suffering; and | <i>nirodha</i> |
| (4) the noble truth that is | the path leading to the ending of suffering. | <i>magga</i> |

This is **the “teaching model”**—where the truths are listed as 1-2-3-4, which is a later model. The older model is **the “practice model”**—where the truths follow the *natural* sequence of theory, full knowledge, practice (the path) and realization—that is arranged as 1-2-4-3.⁵

1.1.3.2 A keen-eyed student would have noticed that, in **the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttas** (S 45.180)—[1.2.1] as in the Oram,bhāgiya Suttas—the last two schedules in each of the 4 cycles (eg, Cycles 1.3 and 1.4) are not in a natural sequence, and should be rearranged as Cycle 1.4 followed by Cycle 1.3. Similarly, in the other cycles, the last pairs should be re-arranged, in practice, respectively as Cycles 2.4, then 2.3; Cycles 3.4, then 3.3; and Cycles 4.4, then 4.3. [1.2.1]

In other words, this follows the practice sequence of **the 4 noble truths**,⁶ which is as follows:

<u>The 4 noble truths</u>		<u>The path schedules</u>	
(1) suffering	(<i>dukkha</i>)	theory	(<i>abhiññā</i>)
(2) its arising	(<i>samudāya</i>)	full knowledge	(<i>pariññā</i>)
(3) its ending	(<i>nirodha</i>)	practice	(<i>parikkhaya</i>)
(4) nirvana	(<i>nibbāna</i>)	realization	(<i>nibbāna</i>).

1.1.4 The 3 good truths

1.1.4.1 The “path schedules” are an extended version of **the 3 “good truths”** (*saddhamma*),⁷ as follows:

<u>The 3 good truths</u>		<u>The path schedules</u>	
(1) theory	(<i>pariyatti</i>)	{	theory = direct knowledge (<i>abhiññā</i>)
(2) practice	(<i>paṭipatti</i>)		understanding = full knowledge (<i>pariññā</i>)
(4) realization	(<i>paṭivedha</i>)		practice = utter destruction (<i>parikkhaya</i>)
			realization = full awakening (<i>nibbāna</i>).

1.1.4.2 The first “good truth” is a “**direct knowledge**” of the theory (*pariyatti*) of the first noble truth, which refers to 2 levels of knowledge of *suffering* or unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*)—this is a short form

⁵ See SD 53.26 (2).

⁶ On the 4 noble truths in detail, see SD 1.1 esp (4).

⁷ See **The levels of training**, SD 40a.4 esp (2); also **Notion of diṭṭhi**, SD 40a.1 (3.4).

(synecdoche) for true reality itself. This reality comprises the 3 characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*).⁸ The 2 levels of understanding (direct knowledge) of these 3 characteristics are those of the word (*vyañjana*) level and the meaning (*attha*) level, that is, we understand both their meaning and the purpose of that understanding.

“**Full knowledge**” (*pariññā*) refers to the comprehension of the 4 noble truths in all their aspects [1.1.6]. This full knowledge is either a theoretical one (through learning) or an intuitive one (through meditation), or both. This full knowledge is vital for proper practice with the right results: it’s like knowing all that we need to know about proper driving and the basic working of our car or vehicle, so that we know how to drive safely and deal with vehicle problems—and, above all, go about safely to reach our destination and get our work done.

1.1.5 The 3 levels of wisdom

1.1.5.1 The word level of knowing is the **wisdom** (*paññā*) that is the understanding of the 4 noble truths or true reality through only theoretical or academic learning, that is, traditionally, through listening (*suta*) and through thinking (*cintā*), that is, reflection, or applying the word-learning to our experience. The highest level of wisdom into true reality is through mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*).

1.1.5.2 Technically, these kinds of understanding are called “**the 3 kinds of wisdom**” (*paññā*), thus:⁹

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|--|---------------------------|
| (1) wisdom through listening, | <i>suta,maya paññā</i> |
| (2) wisdom through thinking, | <i>cintā,maya paññā</i> |
| (3) wisdom through mental cultivation. | <i>bhāvanā,maya paññā</i> |

These **3 kinds (or levels) of wisdom** are actually a more “practical” analysis of the 3 trainings—those of moral virtue (*sīla,sikkhā*), mental concentration (*samādhi,sikkhā*) and wisdom (*paññā,sikkhā*). Ordinarily, these 3 levels refer to the spiritual training of unawakened worldlings (*puthujjana*), that is, most of us, who are not yet true “learners” (*sekha*) or saints of the path (*sekha,pāṭipada*).¹⁰ This is the kind of comprehensive understanding—theoretical, intuitive and practical—that gives us the *faith* and fills us with the *joy* to practise the Dharma.

1.1.5.3 In the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā, however, the 3 trainings are *the 3 levels of wisdom* applied to the progress of **the learners** (*sekha*), that is, the streamwinner, the once-returned, the non-returned and the arhat-to-be. They are the “true learners,” in the sense that they not only understand the teachings they are taught, but also put into practice these teachings and reap their fruits effectively—that is, they attain the various stages of sainthood. They are the true “saints of the path.” [1.1.5.2]

In **the Oram,bhāgiya Suttā** (S 45.179), the “path schedules” refer to the progress of the streamwinner, once-returned, non-returned and arhat-to-be—who still need to progress on the path to awakening. Here, in **the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā** (S 45.180), the teachings refer to only the attaining of the fruition of arhat (*arahatta,phala*), that is, full awakening—like that of the Buddha.¹¹

⁸ On the 3 characteristics (*ti,lakkhaṇa*), see SD 1.1 (4.0.2.4)

⁹ **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,1.10(43)/3:219); Vbh 324; see also SD 10.16 (8.2.4).

¹⁰ On the 8 kinds of individuals, see SD 10.16 (11). On the “learners of the path” (*sekha pāṭipada*), see **Sekha S** (M 53) + SD 21.14 (2.1).

¹¹ On the awakening of the arhat and that of the Buddha as being the same, see **Sambuddha S** (S 22.58), SD 49.10.

1.1.6 The 12 modes of the 4 noble truths

1.1.6.1 The “path schedules” are a more developed (that is, later) version of the analysis of the awakening process. Probably older than these “path schedules” are **the 12 modes** (*dvādas’ākāra*) of the 4 noble truths, that is, the 3 good truths (*saddhamma*) [1.1.3] applied to each of the 4 noble truths. This model, too, is a late canonical teaching, but which is helpful to our understanding of how the 4 truths are fully realized by us, so that we will be liberated from suffering.

1.1.6.2 The 12 modes of the 4 noble truths are given in the traditional first discourse, **the Dhamma,-cakkā Pavattanna S** (S 56.11). The Sutta presents **the 3 phases** or cycles (*ti,parivatta*) of each of the 4 truths, thus:

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|--|-------------------|
| (1) the knowledge (ie, understanding) of the truth, | <i>sacca,ñāṇa</i> |
| (2) the knowledge of the task to be done regarding each truth, and | <i>kicca,ñāṇa</i> |
| (3) the knowledge of the accomplishment of these tasks. | <i>kata,ñāṇa</i> |

The commentarial version of these phases, as we have already noted, is called “the 3 good truths” (*saddhamma*), that is, theory (*pariyatti*), practice (*paṭipatti*) and realization (*paṭivedha*) of awakening. [1.1.3]

1.1.6.3 When the 3 phases are applied to each of the 4 noble truths, we have the following **12 modes** (*dvādas’ākāra*) of the truths, that is, spiritual progress to awakening, as follows:

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|--|----------------------|
| (1) The first noble truth: suffering | <i>dukkha</i> |
| (2) Suffering should be known | <i>pariññeyya</i> |
| (3) Suffering has been known | <i>pariññāta</i> |
| (4) The second noble truth: craving | <i>taṇhā</i> |
| (5) Craving should be abandoned | <i>pahātabba</i> |
| (6) Craving has been abandoned | <i>pahīna</i> |
| (7) The third noble truth: nirvana | <i>nibbāna</i> |
| (8) Nirvana should be realized | <i>sacchikātabba</i> |
| (9) Nirvana has been realized | <i>sacchikata</i> |
| (10) The fourth noble truth: the path | <i>patipadā</i> |
| (11) The path should be cultivated | <i>bhāvetabba</i> |
| (12) The path has been cultivated | <i>bhāvita</i> |

The sequence here is that of the later canonical “teaching” (or theoretical) model. In the older “practice” model, the last triad (10-12) (the “fourth” truth) is placed before (7-9) (the “third” truth): the goal, nirvana, is thus properly placed last, as it is the goal of the path. This older (perhaps *the* oldest) sequence of the 4 truths, then, is 1-2-4-3.¹²

¹² On the 12 modes of the 4 truths, see SD 1.1 (6.2). On the “practice” model of the 4 truths (arranged as 1-2-4-3), see **Mahā Saḷ-āyatanika S** (M 149,11 etc) + SD 41.9 (2.4).

1.2 THE 16-CYCLE MODE

1.2.1 Like the Oram,bhāgiya Suttā (S 45.179), **the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā** (S 45.180), too, give us a 16-cycle analytical model of the path, which is later than that of the 12 modes [1.1.6]. In fact, the 16-cycle model probably evolved from the 12-mode model. In the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā's 16-cycle analytical model (the most detailed canonical model of the awakening process), each of the 4 path-schedules goes through 4 cycles, totaling 16 cycles, thus:

- 1 The direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) cycle**
 - Cycle 1.1** (1) The “dependent on solitude” (*viveka,nissita*) cycle [§§4-5]
The path schedule 1 [§§6-9]
 - Cycle 1.2** (2) The “abandoning of the roots” (*mūla,vinaya*) cycle [§§10-11]
The path schedule 2 [§§12-15]
 - Cycle 1.3** (3) The “plunging into the death-free” (*amat’ogadha*) cycle [§§16-17]
The path schedule 3 [§§18-21]
 - Cycle 1.4** (4) The “bending towards nirvana” (*nibbāna,ninna*) cycle [§§22-23]
The path schedule 4 [§§24-27]
- 2 The full knowledge (*pariññā*) cycle**
 - Cycle 2.1** (5) The “dependent of solitude” cycle [§§28-29]
The path schedule 5 [§§30-33]
 - Cycle 2.2** (6) The “abandoning of the roots” cycle [§§34-35]
The path schedule 6 [§§36-39]
 - Cycle 2.3** (7) The “plunging into the death-free” cycle [§§40-41]
The path schedule 7 [§§42-45]
 - Cycle 2.4** (8) The “bending towards nirvana” cycle [§§46-47]
The path schedule 8 [§§48-51]
- 3 The utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) cycle**
 - Cycle 3.1** (9) The “dependent of solitude” cycle [§§52-53]
The path schedule 9 [§§54-57]
 - Cycle 3.2** (10) The “abandoning of the roots” cycle [§§58-59]
The path schedule 10 [§§60-63]
 - Cycle 3.3** (11) The “plunging into the death-free” cycle [§§64-65]
The path schedule 11 [§§66-69]
 - Cycle 3.4** (12) The “bending towards nirvana” cycle [§§70-71]
The path schedule 12 [§§72-75]
- 4 The abandonment (*pahāna*) cycle**
 - Cycle 4.1** (13) The “dependent of solitude” cycle [§§76-77]
The path schedule 13 [§§78-81]
 - Cycle 4.2** (14) The “abandoning of the roots” cycle [§§82-83]
The path schedule 14 [§§84-87]
 - Cycle 4.3** (15) The “plunging into the death-free” cycle [§§88-89]
The path schedule 15 [§§90-93]
 - Cycle 4.4** (16) The “bending towards nirvana” cycle [§§94-95]
The path schedule 16 [§§96-99]

2 The fetters and arhathood

2.1 THE NATURE OF THE FETTERS

2.1.1 The 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojana*) [§2] are so called because they hold us back in the transphysical worlds of form (*rūpa, loka*) and of formlessness (*arūpa, loka*). Although the saints of the path—the streamwinner, the once-returner, the non-returner, and the arhat-to-be—have overcome the 5 lower fetters, this gives them only freedom from the sufferings of sense-world.

2.1.2 Although these saints are neither attracted to sensual pleasures nor distracted by physical worldliness, *the 5 higher fetters* still limit them from full awakening. In fact, they are said to be “higher” (*uddham, bhāgiya*) fetters because they hold back even the non-returner to the higher worlds: they are still reborn in the pure abodes, the highest of the form world. The once-returner will undergo only one more life, and then attain nirvana. The streamwinner will be reborn in the human world or the heavens as many as 7 times but no more.

2.2 THE FETTERS AND ARHATHOOD

2.2.1 The supramundane way (*lok’uttara, magga*) comprises the 4 paths: those of the noble individuals (*ariya, puggala*) or true saints, namely, the arhat (*arahata*), the non-returner (*anāgāmī*), the once-returner (*sākadāgāmī*) and the streamwinner (*sotāpanna*).¹³ The 10 fetters (*dasa saṃyojana*) block us from seeing the one true path, so that we are misled down other paths, those less taken, where we lose our way and wander about. The fetters stand between the worldlings (*puthujjana*) and the saints. [2.2.2]

2.2.2 The 10 fetters (*dasa saṃyojana*) are listed in **the (Sekha) Uddesa Suttā** (A 3.85), a definitive discourse on how the 3 trainings are related to the attaining of sainthood.¹⁴ This Sutta is also the locus classicus for how the 4 kinds of saints break the 10 mental fetters (*saṃyojana*), which are as follows:

The 5 lower fetters (*oram, bhāgiya saṃyojana*) [SD 50.11]

(1) <u>self-identity view</u>	<i>sakkāya, ditṭhi</i>
(2) <u>spiritual doubt</u>	<i>vicikicchā</i>
(3) <u>attachment to rituals and vows</u>	<i>sīla-b. bata, parāmāsa</i>
(4) sensual lust	<i>kāma, rāga</i>
(5) repulsion <i>or</i> ill will	<i>paṭigha (or, vyāpāda)</i>

The 3 fetters (underscored), overcome by the streamwinner and the once-returner (lust, hate and delusion are weakened).

The 5 lower fetters, overcome by the non-returner.

The 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojana*) [SD 50.12]

(6) lust for form existence	<i>rūpa, rāga</i>
(7) lust for formless existence	<i>arūpa, rāga</i>
(8) conceit	<i>māna</i>
(9) restlessness	<i>uddhacca</i>
(10) ignorance	<i>avijjā</i>

“fetters that obtain becoming”¹⁵

The 5 higher fetters: overcome by the arhat.

“fetters that obtain rebirth”¹⁶

Table 2.2.2. The 10 fetters and sainthood [= SD 56.13a Table 7.1.2.2]

(S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377)

¹³ On the 4 saints, see **Alagaddūpama S** (M 22,42-47) SD 3.13; **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118,9-12) SD 7.13; **Samaṇa-macala S 1** (A 4.87) SD 20.13 + 2 (A 4.88) SD 20.14.

¹⁴ A 3.85/1:231 f @ SD 3.3(2).

¹⁵ “Fetters that obtain existence,” *bhava, paṭilābha saṃyojana*. This and the “fetters that obtain rebirth” below are conjectured correlations: see **(Catukka) Saṃyojana S** (A 4.131), SD 50.19.

¹⁶ “Fetters that obtain rebirth,” *upapatti, paṭilābha saṃyojana*: see prec n.

2.2.3 Table 2.2.2 contains two interesting terms—“fetters that obtain becoming” and “fetters that obtain rebirth.” The suttas are curiously silent on these terms. Their correlation—with fetters 6-7 and with 8-10—is only as a matter of conjecture. The explanations for such a correlation will be discussed in the notes on **the (Catukka) Saṃyojana Sutta** (A 4.131).¹⁷

2.3 THE 5 HIGHER FETTERS

2.3.1 Supersensible worlds

2.3.1.1 The Uddham,bhāgiya (Saṃyojana) Suttā (S 45.180) give an analysis of the 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana*). The qualifier “higher” (*uddha*) means that these defilements fetter us to those realms “higher than” or beyond the sense world (whereto beings are bound by the “lower fetters” (*oram,bhāgiya saṃyojana*) [SD 50.11].

2.3.1.2 While the 5 lower fetters imprison us to the sense world, the 5 higher fetters keep us in the form [2.4.1] and the formless worlds [2.4.2]. These are worlds accessible only through dhyana, profoundly joyful mental states that transcend the physical senses. In other words, these are supersensible¹⁸ worlds.

2.3.2 Transcending form

2.3.2.1 A meditator masters the form dhyanas by transcending the physical senses, so that the mind is free from having to process any sense-data. These sense-data are the objects of our bodily faculties of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching [bodily feeling] and, of course, the mind. In the case of all the path saints or learners (*sekha pāṭipada*) [1.1.1.2], even the most developed of them—those who have attained the arhat path, that is, are arhats-to-be (*arahatta,magga*)¹⁹—they still, to some degree, have these higher fetters (*uddhambhāgiya saṃyojana*), that is:

(6) lust for form-existence,	<i>rūpa,rāga</i>
(7) lust for formless existence,	<i>arūpa,rāga</i>
(8) conceit,	<i>māna</i>
(9) restlessness and	<i>uddhacca</i>
(10) ignorance.	<i>avijjā</i>

2.3.2.2 Note how the 5 higher fetters are numbered: they run on from the first 5 lower fetters, which are discussed in **the Oram,bhāgiya (Saṃyojana) Suttā** (S 45.179), SD 50.11. Together, they form the famous set of 10 fetters (*dasa,samyojana*). This does not mean that the fetters need to be broken sequentially from the very first one.²⁰

The fetters are broken in sets, or more exactly, 2 or 3 sets—first as the “3 fetters” [1.1.1.2], then the “lower” fetters, and finally the “higher” fetters. Breaking the lower fetters (the first 5) frees us from being overwhelmed by our senses, especially our mind being crafted by our sense-experiences. Breaking

¹⁷ A 4.131 (SD 50.19).

¹⁸ OED defines supersensible as “that is above the sensible; beyond what is perceptible by the senses.” It is also possible to use the neologism, “transsensory.”

¹⁹ On the “path arhat” and the “fruition arhat,” see SD 51.10a (1.0.4).

²⁰ For the 5 lower fetters (*oram,bhāgiya saṃyojana*), see **Oram,bhāgiya (Saṃyojana) S** (S 45.179,2) + SD 50.11 (2) for an overview on the fetters and sainthood.

the higher fetters—specifically, numbers (6) and (7)—frees us from both the form and the formless worlds, that is, the rest of worldly existence.

The remaining higher fetters—numbers (8)-(10)—are very subtle ones, found even in the non-returner and the arhat-to-be. Even the arhat-to-be may have some conceit (measuring of individuals), mental restlessness and spiritual ignorance that must be overcome before full arhathood is attained. Let us examine these points further.

2.3.2.3 A clarification on the nature of **the “8 dhyanas”**—the 4 form dhyanas (*rūpa, jhāna*) and the 4 formless attainments (*arūpa, samāpatti*)—is helpful for a better understanding of the fetters of lust for form (*rūpa, rāga*) and for formlessness (*arūpa, rāga*). Below [2.3.2.4] is a table showing the essential nature of the 8 dhyanas (as they are collectively called).

The mind, when in a dhyana, totally transcends all sensuality, that is, it is free of all input and processing of the 5 physical senses and the mind. **The 1st dhyana** has 5 dhyana-factors (*jhān’āṅga*):²¹ initial application and sustained application (*vitakka, vicāra*), zest (*pīti*), joy (*sukha*) and one-pointedness of mind (*ek’aggatā*).

2.3.2.4 As the mind progresses deeper from one dhyana to the next, it has less dhyana-factors in each new dhyana. This table shows how the various **dhyana-factors** (*jhān’āṅga*) are progressively resolved as the mind progresses through the dhyanas:

<u>The form dhyanas</u> (<i>rūpa, jhāna</i>)	<u>The factor resolved (let go of)</u>		
(1) The 1 st dhyana	sensuality,	<i>kāma</i>	[2.4.1.3]
(2) The 2 nd dhyana	initial application and thinking,	<i>vitakka</i>	[2.4.1.4]
(3) The 3 rd dhyana	zest [joyful interest]	<i>pīti</i>	[2.4.1.5]
(4) The 4 th dhyana	happiness.	<i>sukha</i>	[2.4.1.6]
<u>The formless dhyanas</u> (<i>arūpa, jhāna</i>) ²²	<u>The factor resolved (let go of)</u>		
(5) The base of infinite space	form,	<i>rūpa</i>	[2.4.3.1]
(6) The base of infinite consciousness	the base of infinite space,	<i>ākāsānañc’āyatana</i>	[2.4.3.2]
(7) The base of nothingness	the base of infinite consciousness,	<i>viññāṇañc’āyatana</i>	[2.4.3.3]
(8) The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception		<i>n’eva, saññā, nāsaññ’-āyatana</i>	
(9) The signless concentration of mind ²³	the base of nothingness, the signs.	<i>ākiñcaññ’āyatana nimitta</i>	[2.4.3.4]

How the various dhyana-factors are resolved for each of the 4 form dhyana will be described below [2.4].

²¹ On dhyana-factors (*jhān’āṅga*), see SD 8.4 (6).

²² Technically, the form dhyanas are simply known as “dhyana” (*jhāna*), while the formless dhyanas are known as “formless states” (*ārūpa*) or “attainments” (*samāpatti*).

²³ The “signless concentration of mind” (*animitta ceto, samādhi*) is a profound state of meditation experienced by an unawakened person that is similar to the cessation of perception and feeling [2.4.2.5] experienced by arhats. See **Animitta Ceto, samādhi Pañha S** (S 40.9) + SD 24.19 (2).

2.4 BREAKING THE 5 HIGHER FETTERS

2.4.1 Overcoming sensuality and form

2.4.1.1 “Lust for form existence” (*rūpa,rāga*) is the 6th of the 10 mental fetters, and the 1st of the “higher fetters” (*uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana*). *Rūpa,raga* is the desire to be reborn as a divinity (*deva*) in a form realm (*rūpa,dhātu*), or the desire to attain and enjoy that state (*rūpa,bhava*).²⁴ Hence, this fetter can be either an existential defilement (we are caught up in it) or a psychological one (we are mentally drawn to it), or both.

Beings of **the form state** have *refined or subtle material bodies*, free from physical passions, and have minds that are perpetually absorbed in the comfort, bliss and equanimity of dhyana. By existential defilement is meant that these states are *conditioned*, and hence, impermanent, ultimately unsatisfactory, and without an abiding self (beyond our control).

On account of such wholesome subtleties, the path saints, even the non-returners—what more to say of unawakened meditators—may still harbour such a desire, often as an unconscious latent tendency (*anusaya*).²⁵ This subtle desire for form existence is only transcended in the arhat.²⁶ This is what is meant by psychological defilement.

2.4.1.2 Interestingly, access to these form and formless states are *only from the human world*, that is, the sense world (*kāma,loka*). These states are best understood in contrast to the human state in the sense world where it is possible for the mind to be trained and to evolve spiritually. Although such a view may appear homocentric—human-centred—this is the most convenient starting-point for understanding the nature of spiritual evolution. We can, of course, theoretically say that when we are able to get the physical sense faculties to shut down, we will be able to attain these higher meditative states.

The human state stands midway, as it were, between the subhuman underworlds of the animals, asura, pretas, and hell-beings, and the sense-world heavens, on the one hand, and the transhuman realms of the brahmas (higher devas), that is, the form world and the formless world, on the other hand. Humans who fail to live a wholesomely moral life will *devolve*, even in this life and even more likely in the next and subsequent lives into the subhuman states. If we habitually cultivate wholesome meditation habits or live happy mindful lives, we are likely to evolve into and within these divine states even in this life, or in the next and subsequent lives.

2.4.1.3 When we are able to fully, even if temporarily, transcend our physical senses—that is, to leave all sensuality behind in some kind of stasis through deep meditation—we attain **the 1st dhyana**. This state is characterized by rudimentary cognitive processes known as “initial application” (*vitakka*) and “sustained application” (*vicāra*).

Essentially, in the absence of thought (or “normal” cognitive processes), we are still able to direct our mind to the mental object (initial application), or to keep it stable and focused (sustained application). On account of this thought-free and sensuality-free state and mental oneness (*ek’aggatā*), our mind is pervaded with zest (joyful interest) (*pīti*) and blissfully at ease, which is meditative happiness (*sukha*).

²⁴ Besides *rūpa,dhātu* (form realm, D 3:215) and *rūpa,bhava* (form state, D 2:57). Later terms (Abhidhamma & comy) include *rūpa,loka* (form world; commentarial; in the Canon, only as *rūpa,lokiya*, Vbh 436), *rūpa,bhūmi* (form plane, lit, “form ground,” Pm 1:83) and *rūpāvacara* (form sphere), even *rūpāvacarā bhūmi* (form-sphere ground, Pm 1:83 f). On these, see Saddhammopāyana (JPTS 1887 vv 228, 236).

²⁵ On the latent tendencies (*anusaya*), see SD 31.3.

²⁶ On the technical details of the form states, see Ency Bsm, sv rūpa-bhava.

2.4.1.4 As we become more familiar with the 1st dhyana, we are able to gently resolve or let go of the subtle remnants of thought, that is, *initial application* and *sustained application*. After all, the mind is already naturally and easily “fixed” on the mental object, that is, in full samadhi, enjoying *zest* (*pīti*) and *joy* (*sukha*). This is **the 2nd dhyana**, when the mind is fully and blissfully concentrated on itself. This dhyana is sometimes called “the noble silence” (*ariya, tuṅhī, bhāva*) because the mind therein is totally free of all chatter and thoughts.²⁷ All such resolve can only be made after we have emerged from a dhyana—neither thinking nor knowing (as we know them) occurs in the dhyanas.²⁸

2.4.1.5 After mastering the 2nd dhyana, we go on to resolve another dhyana-factor, that is, *zest* (*pīti*). This is a kind of subtly rapturous state. Now, free from initial application and sustained application, and with the resolution of zest, only *joy* (*sukha*) remains in a profoundly stable samadhi. This is **the 3rd dhyana**.

2.4.1.6 In **the 4th dhyana**, even *happiness* is resolved, freeing the mind of all hedonic objects. Far from being “unfeeling,” the mind is simply free from having to objectify joy, as it were. Another way to understand this is that *joy* settles into a profound stable peace, that is, total *equanimity* (*upekkhā*). We could, in a figurative sense, imagine such a state to be like that of a perfectly clear sphere resting at a tangent on a perfectly flat plane.

2.4.1.7 Common throughout all these 4 dhyanas is that willfulness and ability to progressively resolve or let go of a significant factor or two, as illustrated in the table above [2.3.2.4]. In fact, even the word “willingness” is used provisionally, as our conative faculty²⁹ is gradually being disarmed. Instead of *instinctively* seeking what delights us and pushing away what does not, the mind is naturally directed to its mental object by the resolution of the grosser mental aspects, beginning with sensuality [2.4.1.3].

In other words, far from being an “achievement” or accumulation of powers, dhyanic meditation is the mind letting go of itself more and more, a sort of self-forgetting, or better, a self-renunciation. This “will-free” natural progression of dhyanic meditation (indeed of all early Buddhist meditations) is well described in **the Cetanā’karaṇīya Suttas** (A 10.2; A 11.2).³⁰

2.4.1.8 In terms of the mental fetters (*saṃyojana*), we should understand the 6th fetter of “**lust for form existence**” (*rūpa, rāga*) as the will to continue to enjoy the bliss and benefits of the form dhyana, even the desire for rebirth in the form realms. Such an attitude is clearly against the nature of mental cultivation and growth, one that is based on the resolution or letting go of mental factors, a kind of self-emptying.

Only in fully letting go of our attachment to sensual pleasures are we able to attain the 1st dhyana. By resolving initial application and sustained application, we ascend to the 2nd dhyana. By resolving zest in the 2nd dhyana, we move on to the 3rd dhyana. Then, resolving joy itself, we attain the profoundly blissful equanimity of the 4th dhyana. Logically, then, by resolving this equanimity, we progress beyond even the form dhyanas into the formless attainments.

²⁷ On the noble silence in meditation, see SD 8.4 (5.1.3).

²⁸ On thinking and knowing not occurring during dhyana, see **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (6.2.2).

²⁹ Conation is that aspect of the mental process having to do with volition, striving and willing. In early Buddhist psychology, this includes our deliberate acts—both conscious and unconscious (habitual)—or what is traditionally known as *karma*.

³⁰ (**Dasaka**) **Cetanā’karaṇīya S** (A 10.2), SD 41.6; (**Ekā, dasaka**) **Cetanā’karaṇīya S** (A 11.2), SD 33.3b.

2.4.2 Overcoming lust for formlessness [2.3.2.4]

2.4.2.1 “Lust for formless existence” (*arūpa,rāga*) is the 7th of the 10 mental fetters, and the 2nd of the “higher fetters” (*uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana*). This is the desire to be reborn as a divinity (*deva*) in a formless realm (*arūpa,dhātu*), or the desire to attain and enjoy this state (*arūpa,bhava*).³¹ Hence, this fetter can be either an existential defilement or a psychological one, or both. [2.4.1.1]

2.4.2.2 Beings of the formless state do not have any kind of material body. If the beings of the form states appear as various kinds and degrees of radiance, then, the formless beings are said to comprise of invisible energy. Like the form beings, the formless beings are free from physical passions, and their minds are perpetually absorbed in the profound and joyful peace of the formless attainments.

2.4.2.3 The 4 formless attainments (*arūpa samāpatti*) are mentioned as a set in **the Mahā,nidāna Sutta** (D 15). They are described as follows:

(1) There are, Ānanda, beings who,
through having utterly transcended *the perception of physical form*,
the passing away of perceptions of impingement, and
non-attention to the perception of diversity,
(contemplating,) ‘Space is infinite,’
arrive at the base of infinite space (*ākāsānañc’āyatana*).

This is the fifth station for the consciousness.³²

(2) There are, Ānanda, beings who,
through having utterly transcended the base of infinite space,
(contemplating,) ‘Consciousness is infinite,’
arrive at the base of infinite consciousness (*viññāṇañc’āyatana*).

This is the sixth station for the consciousness.

(3) There are, Ānanda, beings who,
through having utterly transcended the base of infinite consciousness,
(contemplating,) ‘There is nothing,’
arrive at the base of nothingness (*ākiñcaññ’āyatana*).

This is the seventh station for the consciousness.

(4) And there is the base of non-percipient beings (*asañña,satta*)³³
with the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*n’eva,saññā,nāsaññ’āyatana*)
as the second.

(D 15,33/2:69), SD 5.17

The seventh and last station—listed above as (4)—mentions “*the base of non-percipient beings*” together with *the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception*. They are listed together because of the

³¹ Besides *arūpa,dhātu* (formless realm, D 3:215) and *arūpa,bhava* (formless state, D 2:57). Later terms (Abhidhamma & comy) incl *arūpa,loka* (formless world; only comy, MA 3:123), *arūpa,bhūmi* (formless plane, lit, “formless ground,” only comy, VbhA 162) and *arūpāvacara* (formless sphere, Vbh 15), even *rūpāvacarā bhūmi* (formless-sphere ground, Pm 1:83 f). On these, see Saddhammopāyana (JPTS 1887 vv 228, 236, 463, 494). The suffix *-āyatana* (base) is often used for the 4 formless states, eg, the base of boundless space (*ākāsānañ,cāyatana*, S 1:158).

³² On the 7 stations for consciousness, see **Viññāṇa-ṭ,ṭhiti**, SD 23.14 & **Group karma?** SD 39.1 (1.4).

³³ On the non-percipient beings (*asañña,satta*), see **Brahma,jāla S** (D 1,68) + n (SD 25.2+25.3).

similarity in the nature of consciousness of the beings in these two realms. The non-percipient beings are bereft of any consciousness, while the consciousness of the neither-percipient-nor-non-percipient beings³⁴ is so subtle that it can be said to neither exist or not exist.

2.4.2.4 It should be noted that, unlike the form dhyanas (which are denoted by the suffix *-jhāna*, for example, the 1st dhyana is *paṭhama-jjhāna*), **the formless attainments** have the suffix *-āyatana* (base) (eg, the 1st attainment, that the base of infinite space, is *ākāsānañc'āyatana*, S 1:158). This is because these 4 formless attainments do not exist in themselves but are actually still part of the 4th dhyana³⁵— they are *based* on the 4th dhyana—as they all possess the same two constituents, *equanimity* and *one-pointedness of mind*.³⁶ These pure equanimity and one-pointedness of the 4th dhyana is the *base* or foundation for each of the formless attainments.³⁷

2.4.2.5 Further, it should also be noted that all **the 8 dhyanas** (or 9 attainments, if we include the cessation of perception and feeling)³⁸ are connected *successively* like an 8- or 9-storey building accessible only by a lift. In other words, to reach any of the formless attainments, we need to start from the very 1st dhyana and progress through the rest of the dhyanas³⁹ *successively* up to that attainment.⁴⁰

2.4.2.6 While the first three dhyanas take *different forms of bliss as their object*, and the fourth dhyana takes *a sublime state of pure peace* or equanimity as its object, each of **the formless attainments** takes a pure mental object. These objects are known as “mind-bases” (*āyatana*), so called because the mind in these attainments *rests* on them. These profoundly still mind-bases are progressively more refined and more empty than any of the form dhyanas.⁴¹

2.4.2.7 The formless attainments are so called because in all the four of them, form (*rūpa*) is perceived as being both infinite and empty, immeasurable and undefined. It is *form*, that is, our ideas of shape and colour, that *limits* space, but in the formless attainments, we transcend any such perception. Hence, they are called “formless” (*arūpa*).

2.4.3 Letting go of the formless attainments

2.4.3.1 The base of infinite space (*ākāsānañc'āyatana*)⁴² arises

(1) when we are in the 4th dhyana and able to resolve or let go of all perceptions of form (*rūpa*), that is, cease taking form as the mental object. This is done when we emerge from the dhyana, but our mind is still profoundly calm and clear, and know exactly what it is doing, and act almost effortlessly.⁴³

³⁴ The terms “conscious” and “percipient” are synonyms. Hence, the latter can also be called neither-conscious-nor-non-conscious. It should also be noted that some translators use “sphere” in either case (ie, *āyatana* and *avacara*). See SD 17.8a (8.2.7).

³⁵ On the 4th dhyana, see **Catuttha Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.4), SD 24.14.

³⁶ Ie, *upekkhā* and *ek'aggatā*. See **Dhyana**, SD 8.4 (5.4); also SD 17.8a (11.2).

³⁷ See SD 24.15 (1.2).

³⁸ On the cessation of feeling and perception (*saññā, vedayita, nirodha*), see SD 48.7 (3.2).

³⁹ An “attainment” (*samāpatti*) can also be called a “dhyana” (*jhāna*).

⁴⁰ On the secure 9-storey building accessible only by a lift, see SD 50.7 (1.2.1.3).

⁴¹ This and next para as at SD 23.15 (1.3+1.4).

⁴² The term *ākāsānañc'āyatana* is resolved as *ākāsa* (“space”) + *ānañca* (*anta*, “end,” + *ya*) + *āyatana* (“base”) (DhsA 204,20 = Vism 331,20. See CPD sv *ākāsānañca*).

⁴³ See SD 24.15 (2.1).

(2) Then, the perception of even the subtlest sense-stimulus or “sense-reaction” (*paṭigha*) disappears. As the 5 senses have already shut down with the disappearance of the hindrances in the 1st dhyana, this development refers to only the “perception” or recognition of very subtle mind-objects (*dhamma,saññā*). This is like some very soft background noise in an otherwise perfect recording of peacefully beautiful music. This also means that even outside of dhyana, we do not react to any sense-stimulus as a non-meditator or unmindful person would.⁴⁴

(3) Outside of dhyana, we do not have any “perception of diversity” (*nanatta saññā*). Although our senses are confronted with what we normally see as a “variety” of sense-objects with various hedonic tones or levels of pleasure or displeasure, we only see impermanent passing states. None of this objective variety troubles our dhyana in the least.⁴⁵

(4) In this profound dhyanic state of timelessness, with just enough mindfulness, we notice, “Space is infinite” (*ananto ākāso*). Time is here undefined, empty and immeasurable—it is infinite (*ananta*). Time is simply our perception of space; so, when time is seen as infinite, space, too, is felt as infinite.⁴⁶ This is the formless attainment of the base of the infinite space.⁴⁷

2.4.3.2 The pericope (stock passage) for **the base of infinite consciousness** (*viññāṇaṅc’āyatana*)⁴⁸ reads as follows:

“By completely transcending the base of infinite space, aware that ‘Consciousness is infinite,’ he attains and dwells in **the base of infinite consciousness**.”⁴⁹

In other words, having mastered the attainment of the base of infinite space, with a calm and clear mind, we resolve (let go of) the object or factor of “infinite space” itself [2.4.2.6]. In simple terms, we let go of the object of “infinite space” itself, and, in doing so, ascend into the formless attainment of the base of nothingness. It is like peeling the skin of an onion, layer after layer, or an eight- or nine-stage rocket shooting through space jettisoning each of its capsules as it has exhausted the fuel.⁵⁰

2.4.3.3 The pericope for **the base of nothingness** (*ākiñcaññ’āyatana*), goes thus:

“By completely transcending the base of infinite consciousness, aware that ‘There is nothing,’ he attains and dwells in **the base of nothingness**.”⁵¹

As we maintain a constant focus on the infinite consciousness, our consciousness begins to disappear. This leaves behind only the *infinity*, that is, of “nothingness” (*ākiñcañña*). Only in letting go of the perception of infinite consciousness can we proceed to the next level. Only in letting go of this attainment that we have mastered, do we progress on to the next attainment, the base of nothingness.

2.4.3.4 The pericope for **the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception** (*n’eva,saññā,nāsaññ’-āyatana*) reads as follows:

⁴⁴ See Vism 10.16 & SD 24.15 (2.2).

⁴⁵ See SD 24.15 (2.3).

⁴⁶ See SD 24.15 (2.4).

⁴⁷ For details, see **Ākāsaṅc’āyatana Pañha S** (S 40.5), SD 24.15.

⁴⁸ The term *viññāṇaṅc’āyatana* is resolved as *viññāṇa* (“consciousness”) + *anañca* (“infinity”) + *āyatana* (“mind-base, sphere”). See SD 24.16 (1.4).

⁴⁹ **Viññāṇaṅc’āyatana Pañha S** (S 40.6,4) + SD 24.16 (1).

⁵⁰ See SD 24.16 (1.2).

⁵¹ **Ākiñcaññ’āyatana Pañha S** (S 40.7,4), SD 24.17.

*“By completely transcending the base of nothingness, he enters and dwells in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.”*⁵²

As our experience of “nothingness” (*ākiñcañña*) [2.4.3.3] steadily deepens, we begin to understand that underlying it is a perception that goes beyond nothingness. If our mind is refined enough to see this, then, the perception of nothingness disappears and is replaced by that of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*n’eva saññā nāsaññā*). This consciousness is so refined that *it cannot be said whether there is perceiving or not*. In other words, our consciousness is at its most subtle. This is the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

2.4.3.5 From all these descriptions of the form dhyanas and the formless attainments, we will notice one clear resounding theme: the attainment progresses from “letting go” of what we now *are* in meditation. Dhyana, in short, is about *supreme letting go*—until there is *nothing* more to let go of. This is “true renunciation.” Then, we are ready for spiritual liberation.⁵³

All this shows how vitally significant it is not to be fettered by lust for formlessness (*arūpa rāga*). To lust after something is to be shaped by it, to see it as an entity, and to be stuck with it. There will be no progress, no further spiritual transformation. The spiritual path, then, is a path of ever more refined renunciation or letting go (*vossagga*) [§8 (1)].

2.4.4 Overcoming conceit

2.4.4.1 Now, we will examine the last 3 mental fetters that hold back even the arhat of the path (the last of the learners, *sekha*) in this world.

Conceit (*māna*) is a perception of self and others as disconnected objects, of measuring our self against others on account of our own sense of lack and a desire for acquiring what we lack. Measuring self versus others is based on the notion of *duality* (eg, of “I” and “you”)—inserting an existential chasm between self and others—this is a result of not understanding the pervasive reality of non-self (*anattā*).

2.4.4.2 When we measure ourselves against others, we are defined by others, we at least delight in wanting their approval. According to **the (Māna) Soṇa Sutta** (S 22.49), as long as we are unawakened, we are likely to be caught up in any or all of the 3 psychological complexes, that “I am better (than),” “I am equal (just as good as),” and “I am worse (than).”⁵⁴

Notice that these three phrases are incomplete: “I am better *than ...*,” and so on. There must always be the “other” for us to feel “meaningful.” In other words, we see no value or worth in ourselves or self-effort, but need the presence or approval of another. We may even feel a sense of “non-existence” without the other. This pathological condition, as a rule, occurs in a devotee hooked on to a guru in a cult, and the guru himself or herself has an unconscious need for the attention and presence of bodies and crowds.

2.4.4.3 Conceit is the 3rd of the higher fetters—which shows how subtle this problem is and how difficult it is to remove. It is a deep-seated psychological condition, and is also listed as one of **the latent tendencies** (*anusaya*). In other words, it occurs habitually with our knowing it.⁵⁵

Saints of the path still have some level of conceit, although it is never as bad as that of an unawakened worldlyling. Similarly, even good practitioners, too, whether they know it or not, often have some

⁵² *N’eva,saññā,nāsaññā’āyatana Pañha S* (S 40.8,4), SD 24.19.

⁵³ See **(Pañcāla,caṇḍa) Sambādha S** (A 9.42/4:449-451), SD 33.2.

⁵⁴ S 22.49 (SD 31.13); see also **Māna S** (S 4.15), SD 61,10.

⁵⁵ See **Anusaya**, SD 31.3 (4).

level of conceit. Such a conceit arises in a practitioner when he either lacks the understanding or wisdom to see his experience or progress in perspective, or his faith is strong but lacks wisdom, so that it is directed to his teacher or a person, instead of the Dharma.⁵⁶

2.4.4.4 When we think that we have understood some deep or difficult teaching, or mastered or experienced some meditation or ritual, we are likely to think that we are “better” than others in those connections. Such a conceit may seem as innocent as a feeling of how fortunate we are to know such teachings or master such techniques.

The error is not so much in the actual relative status that we are in, but rather our perception of *self and other*. This is not only a comparative bias, but is often also a competitive one. We may feel that we should be better than another for whatever reason. The problem with such an attitude is that we erroneously see the teaching *not* as a method for personal development, but as a mode of measuring our relative status. This is not helpful to our spiritual practice.

Conversely, even as good practitioners, we tend to think that we are not as learned or as skilled as some others who seem to know better or seem more skilled. Or, we could feel that we are just as good as some teacher because we think we have fully understood his teachings. We should acknowledge such thoughts—then, we see the “enemy”—and accepting it as a passing thought, let it go with lovingkindness.

2.4.4.5 The antidotes or preventives for conceit are meditations that arouse joy within ourselves and reflecting on non-self (*anattā*). The best “inner joy” meditation is the cultivation of lovingkindness,⁵⁷ especially when practised in connection with the breath meditation. There are also what are called *the 6 inspiring meditations*—that is, the recollections of the 3 jewels, on moral virtue, of charity, and of the devas—which are helpful in strengthening the previous two meditations.⁵⁸

Reflecting on non-self is one of the most difficult of practices, as it can be very abstract and easily intellectualized. However, a simplified form of the non-self reflection⁵⁹ is seeing *conditionality*—how causes and effects work as “events”—in daily life, and to smile at it with an inner smile. In fact, when we truly understand the nature of **non-self**, we are on the way to arhathood.⁶⁰

2.4.5 Overcoming restlessness

2.4.5.1 Restlessness (*uddhacca*) is both a psychological difficulty and a spiritual defilement. Mental restlessness hinders our meditation—it is the fourth of the 5 mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) and the ninth of the 10 spiritual fetters (*sāmyojana*). As a mental hindrance, restlessness is paired with *worry* to form the dvandva (twin compound), restlessness and worry (*uddhacca, kukkucca*). Basically, they are harping upon the past (which is gone) and hopping into the future (which never comes). Then, we lose touch of the present, where the meditation object is, or where true reality is.⁶¹

2.4.5.2 The technical aspects of **uddhacca** as a higher fetter (*uddham, bhāgiya sāmyojana*) has been discussed in some detail in the notes of **the Yuga, naddha Sutta** (A 4.170).⁶² At this level, the saint of the

⁵⁶ On how the early saints show “wise faith” (*avecca-p, pasāda*), see the cases of **Sāriputta**: SD 40a.8 (5.6.2); and of **Citta the houselord**: SD 40a.8 (5.6.3).

⁵⁷ See **Karaṇīya Metta S** (Khṇ 9 = Sn 1.8), SD 38.3.

⁵⁸ See **Mental Cultivation** (SD 15).

⁵⁹ See **Self & Selves** (SD 26.9).

⁶⁰ See **Anatta, lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59/3:66-68), SD 1.2. This para recurs at SD 31.13 (2.4).

⁶¹ **Uddhacca, kukkucca**, SD 32.7 esp (2).

⁶² A 4.170 @ SD 41.5 (5).

path or a serious meditator may be mentally excitable, but his mind is not really defiled because it is not drawn to the pleasure of external delights.

Rather, the saint or meditator, reflects on, say, the sufferings of those who do not love the suttas or do not know the Dharma. He is moved by compassion, feeling that they should not suffer so needlessly when they only need to learn the suttas and know the Dharma. When we think that we have failed to help solve such difficulties, we are then fettered to this idea of dissatisfaction or sorrow.⁶³

2.4.6 Overcoming ignorance

2.4.6.1 Doctrinally, **ignorance** (*avijjā*) is the deepest and darkest of the latent tendencies (*anusaya*) that lie at the bottom of the blind abyss of our unconscious mind, controlling almost all of our conscious actions.⁶⁴ Ignorance is the most primal of defilements, dark and blind, expressing itself through its lame and insatiable twin, craving (*taṇha*).⁶⁵ Together, they function as the 3 roots of unwholesome karma—greed (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*).⁶⁶

As such, ignorance is a mental hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*), although not listed as one,⁶⁷ but underlies all of them, preventing us from cultivating our minds. As a mental influx (*āsava*)—intoxicating our minds with sense-objects—we are washed and drown in the “floods” (*ogha*) of *sense-desire*, desire for *existence* and *ignorance*—feeding our views that fuel and fester our sufferings—and so act as “bonds” (*yoga*) to samsara. [2.5.2]

2.4.6.2 **Ignorance** underlies all our actions—through body, speech and mind—and pervades all unawakened beings. It insidiously feeds all other defilements and itself, too. Hence, it is the last of the 10 fetters (*dasa saṃyojana*) that bind us to samsara, the cycle of lives and deaths. We are thus conditioned to keep pushing the karmic rock up to the peak of our lives; then, it rolls down again, and we chase after it, imagining it to be such fun, and when it reaches the valley bottom and we catch up with it, we even deem it as our greatest achievement.

We actually enjoy—we like to think so—repeating this meaningless cycles through eternity. We are so used to pushing our karmic rock up the samsaric hill and running after it downhill, and then repeating the cycle over and over, that we actually don’t think that anything else is worth doing!⁶⁸ The Buddha then comes along and asks us, “What are you doing?” and teaches us to question all this. The spell of suffering begins to be broken.

2.4.6.3 Technically, ignorance refers to our total lack of understanding of **the 4 noble truths**. We do not really know what suffering is. We only know physical and mental sufferings, and vainly try to escape or ignore them by resorting to what we see as their opposites, that is, physical pleasure and mental delight. This only prolongs our suffering and habituate us to it, so that we do not even think that we can ever give it up, that there is no way out of this painful rut. It’s like we are living in the dark, and soon get so used to it, and think that we know our way around without truly seeing things as they really are.

We are so drowned in craving that we do not realize it is the very root of our sufferings. We do not realize that this craving is really within us, that it is self-generated, self-generating and self-perpetuating.

⁶³ On *dhamm’uddhacca*, see A 4.170 @ SD 41.5 (5); SD 32.7 (2.1.3, 2.2.3); SD 41.4 (2.2.1).

⁶⁴ On the latent tendency of ignorance, see *Anusaya*, SD 31.3 (8).

⁶⁵ Pn craving, see (*Āhāra*) *Avijjā S* (A 10.61) + SD 31.10 (2.6).

⁶⁶ On the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*), see *Mūla S* (A 3.69) SD 18.2; also SD 4.14 (1.5).

⁶⁷ On the 5 mental hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*), see *Nīvaraṇa*, SD 32.1; (*Nīvaraṇa*) *Saṅgārava S* (S 46.55) SD 3.12.

⁶⁸ This is a Buddhist take on the Greek myth of Sisyphus: see SD 23.3 (1); SD 48.3 (1.2.2.2); SD 49.2 (4.3.2.1); SD 50.8 (2.3.2.6).

Hence, we never think of ending suffering because of our craving and ignorance. So, we daily frolic in the playing-fields of our senses, spurred on by craving, and blinded by the dark night of ignorance. We are far away from the path to liberation and awakening.

2.4.6.4 The primacy of **ignorance** as *the root of all unwholesome states* is noted in a number of discourses. According to **the (Āhāra) Avijjā Sutta** (A 10.61), ignorance is without beginning, but is itself *conditioned*, as follows:

it is conditioned and fed by which are conditioned by which are conditioned by which is conditioned by which are conditioned by which is conditioned by which is conditioned by which is conditioned by	the 5 mental hindrances, the 3 kinds of misconduct (of body, speech and mind), a lack of sense-restraint, a lack of mindfulness and clear knowledge, unwise attention, a lack of faith, listening to what is not the true Dharma, associating with false persons.
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2.4.6.5 On the wholesome side, the dependent arising of **knowledge and liberation** occurs thus:

when we associate with a true individual, when we listen to the true Dharma, with faith, with wise attention, with mindfulness and clear knowledge, with sense-restraint, with the 3 kinds of good conduct, with the 4 focuses of mindfulness, with the 7 awakening-factors	listening to the true Dharma predominates; faith predominates; wise attention predominates; mindfulness and clear knowledge predominate; sense-restraint predominates; the 3 kinds of good conduct predominate; the 4 focuses of mindfulness predominate; the 7 awakening-factors predominate, <u>knowledge and liberation are fulfilled.</u>
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(A 10.61), SD 31.10

2.4.6.6 The (Pubbaṅgamā) Avijjā Sutta (S 45.1) (the first sutta of the Magga Saṃyutta) is divided into two practically equal sections: the first explains how unwholesome states arise from ignorance, while the second, how wholesome states arise from true knowledge—reflective of the second section of the Mahā Cattārisaka Sutta (M 117)⁶⁹—thus:

Ignorance comes first, bhikshus, in the attaining of unwholesome states, followed along by lack of moral shame and moral fear.⁷⁰

For one given to ignorance, for the unwise, bhikshus, wrong view appears.

For one of wrong view, wrong thought ... wrong speech ... wrong action ... wrong livelihood ... wrong effort ... wrong mindfulness ... wrong concentration appears.

Knowledge comes first, bhikshus, in the attaining of wholesome states, followed along by moral shame and moral fear.

For one given to knowledge, for the wise bhikshus, right view appears.

⁶⁹ See M 117,34 + SD 6.10 (2).

⁷⁰ “Lack of moral shame and moral fear” (*ahirikam anottappam*). In simple terms, *hiri* is self-respect or wholesome self-regard, while *ottappa* is the fear of karmic consequences, but also entails other-regard, respect for others and social mores. See **Moral shame and moral fear**, SD 2.5.

For one of right view, right thought ... right speech ... right action ... right livelihood ... right effort ... right mindfulness ... right concentration appears. (S 45.1), SD 94.1

2.4.6.7 A parallel pattern is found in **the (Dasaka) Vijjā Sutta** (A 10.105) and **the Vijjā'vijjā Sutta** (It 2.2.3). The (Dasaka) Vijjā Sutta gives the same twin cycle—the first passage on ignorance (*avijjā*) and the second on true knowledge (*vijjā*)—based the wrong path and the noble path respectively, but adds the last two factors, those of knowledge and liberation. Hence, true knowledge—the opposite of ignorance—brings right knowledge and right liberation. This is the full noble path of rightness (*sammatta*).⁷¹

The shorter Vijjā'vijjā Sutta—like the (Dasaka) Vijjā Sutta—repeats the theses of the (Pubbaṅgama) Avijjā Sutta (centering around ignorance and true knowledge), but closes with this verse:

<i>Tasmā chandañ ca lobhañ ca āvijjañ ca virājayaṃ vijjaṃ uppādayaṃ bhikkhu sabbā duggatiyo jahe'ti</i>	Therefore, the monk, in ridding himself of wanting, greed and ignorance, in giving rise to true knowledge, abandons all suffering destinies.	<i>cb a </i> (It 2.2.3), SD 94.13 ⁷²
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2.4.6.8 Ignorance, Ignorance is more than just not knowing. It inspires a sense of lack or instils a fear of what we do not know, a fear of the unknown. What we do not really know about, we want it if we fancy it as promising pleasure—we think that we lack it. Or, we fear it, thinking that it is undesirable—we think it will harm us just as we are capable of harming what we dislike.

We will not know why we fear the unknown unless we know why we fear in the first place. Our fear of the unknown arises from we think we know of the unknown. It is this inexactness and incompleteness that arouses the fear. We must understand that this fear and this unknown are all within us. The best way to overcome such a fear is unconditionally accept this unknown.

We will not know why we fear the unknown unless we know why we fear in the first place. Our fear of the unknown arises from we think we know of the unknown. It is this inexactness and incompleteness that arouses the fear. We must understand that this fear and this unknown are all within us. The best way to overcome such a fear is unconditionally accept this unknown.

This is the only way we can know fear and overcome it: by knowing oneself. For, this unknown is our own **non-self**, of which there is nothing to know, no need of knowing. Fear not the unknown, but examine what we think we know of the unknown. Then, we know what we really fear. Anyone who claims to know where there is nothing to know, falls way behind one who already knows nothing.

2.5 ARHATHOOD

2.5.1 The arhat

The 5 lower fetters⁷³ have to be broken first, before the 5 higher ones [2.2.2] can be broken. One who breaks the 5 higher fetters becomes **an arhat** (*arahata*), that is, one who has reached the goal of the noble eightfold path, and attains nirvana. The arhat, then, is one who has overcome the first 3 fetters of self-identity view, spiritual doubt, and attachment to rituals and vows, and fully eradicated the 3 unwholesome roots of greed, hate and delusion, so that he has no desire whatsoever for rebirth in any of the sense worlds.

⁷¹ See SD 10.16 (1.2.2).

⁷² See Gethin 2001:219 f.

⁷³ See **Oram, bhāgiya S** (S 45.179), SD 50.11.

2.5.2.3 Further, in terms of the later set of **4 influxes**, we can take the “3 fetters” of *self-identity view, spiritual doubt, and attachment to rituals and vows* as being subsumed under the influx of views—which is broken by streamwinning. Although, technically, the influx of ignorance encompasses the last 3 fetters, the reality is that ignorance underlies all the 10 fetters, and must itself be uprooted in the end—this results in arhathood.⁷⁹

3 Related suttas

3.1 SAME PATH SCHEDULES

Although **the (Agga) Tathāgata Suttā 1-4** (S 45.139) do not mention any of the mental fetters, they give the same “path schedules”⁸⁰ in this correlation, as shown in this comparative table:

<u>Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā</u> (S 45.180)		<u>(Agga) Tathāgata Suttā 1-4</u> (S 45.139)	
(1) direct knowledge	(<i>abhiññā</i>)	solitude	(<i>viveka</i>)
(2) full knowledge	(<i>pariññā</i>)	ending the roots	(<i>mūla,pariyosanā</i>)
(3) utter destruction	(<i>parikkhāya</i>)	plunging into the death-free	(<i>amat’ogadha</i>)
(4) tending towards nirvana	(<i>nibbāna,ninna</i>)	tending towards nirvana	(<i>nibbāna,ninna</i>)

3.2 TEACHING CYCLES AND PATH SCHEDULES

This comparative table is helpful in showing us the correlation between the “teaching” cycles of the (Agga) Tathāgata Suttā [2.1] and the “path schedules” of the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā (and of also **the Oram,bhāgiya Suttā** (S 45.179, SD 50.11). In terms of the awakening process, these two sets of 4 stages are identical. They follow the later familiar “teaching” sequence of the 4 noble truths, but, in practice, it follows the older “practice” sequence of 1-2-4-3. [1.1.3.1]

3.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ABOVE TABLE [3.1]

3.3.1 (1) “**Direct knowledge**” (*abhiññā*) in the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā is given as “solitude” (*viveka*) in the (Agga) Tathāgata Suttā. This pairing clearly shows that “direct knowledge” or personal experience of true reality can only be done when the mind is “all alone” by itself, undistracted by having to process data from the 6 sense-bases.⁸¹

Solitude here refers both to being wholesomely alone in meditation or mindfulness, and the aloneness of the mind seeing directly into itself.⁸² In this way, the mind sees and understands how it discerns and structures its own virtual reality of what lies outside of itself. Only when the mind grows out of this *ideation* process that it is ready for individuation (growth as a true individual).⁸³

3.3.2 (2) “**Full knowledge**” (*pariññā*) in the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā, according to the (Agga)Tathāgata Suttā, refers to “ending of the roots” (*mūla,pariyosanā*), that is, the destruction of the unwholesome roots of lust, hate and delusion. With the uprooting of these roots of karmic motivation, we are no more ruled reactively by the instincts of liking and disliking, or numbed by “neutral” emotion.

⁷⁹ For a diagram showing the relationship between the fetters and the influxes, see SD 30.3 (1.3.3.5).

⁸⁰ S 45.139 (SD 49.17).

⁸¹ On direct knowledge (*abhiññā*), see SD 27.5a (5.6.1).

⁸² On solitude (*viveka*), see SD 13.1 (4.2.3.3).

⁸³ On the individuation process, see SD 8.7 (4).

In other words, our mind begins to stop feeding on the emotion-laden karmic “formations” through the 6 sense-faculties (the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind). We are then surely on the way to arhathood. We only need to clear away the remnants of karmic potentials by way of the mental fetters, as shown here in the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā.

3.3.3 (4) Here, we will follow the older “practice” sequence of the 4 noble truths [1.1.3.1], and examine the 4th “path schedule” first. The Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā mention the saint as one “**tending towards nirvana**” (*nibbāna,ninna*), which is the same expression found in the (Agga)Tathāgata Suttā. Clearly, this expression does not refer to the full-fledged arhat, since it does not refer to one “who has plunged into the death-free [nirvana]” [3.3.4].

This is a broad term for one who has only had an initial taste of nirvana, or some deepening vision of it, short of plunging into it. In this Sutta, this refers to the last stage of the learners (*sekha*), namely, the arhat-path (*arahatta,magga*), that is, the stage of the arhat-to-be.

3.3.4 (3) “**Utter destruction**” (*parikkhāya*) in the Uddham,bhāgiya Suttā is given in the (Agga)Tathāgata Suttā as “plunging into the death-free” (*ama’ogadha*). This is, of course, the full-fledged arhat who has tasted the fruit of arhathood (*arahatta,phala*).⁸⁴

In **the Udakūpama Sutta** (A 7.15), the arhat is compared to a shipwreck survivor “who, having emerged (from the waters), is one who has crossed over the waters and *stands on dry land*.”⁸⁵ This is what is meant by the Sutta term “utter destruction,” that is, the total and permanent liberation from the mental fetters, that is to say, the attaining of nirvana.

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Uddham,bhāgiya (Saṃyojana) Sutta The Discourses on the Higher (Fetters)

S 45.180

[The abridged combined version]

The 5 higher fetters

- 1 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana*).
- 2 What are the five? They are:

(6) lust for form;	<i>rūpa,rāga</i>
(7) lust for formlessness;	<i>arūpa,rāga</i>
(8) conceit;	<i>māna</i>
(9) restlessness;	<i>uddhacca</i>
(10) ignorance.	<i>avijjā</i>

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

⁸⁴ See the 8 kinds of individuals: SD 10.16 (11).

⁸⁵ **Udakūpama Sutta** (A 7.15,9), SD 28.6.

The path schedule

- 3 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for
- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| (1) the direct knowledge | (<i>abhiññā</i>) | of these 5 higher fetters; |
| (2) the full knowledge | (<i>pariññā</i>) | of these 5 higher fetters; |
| (3) the utter destruction | (<i>parikkhāya</i>) | of these 5 higher fetters; |
| (4) the abandoning | (<i>pahānā</i>) | of these 5 higher fetters. |

[The full cycle]

I

CYCLE 1.1: The direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) cycle

- (1) The “dependent on solitude” (*viveka, nissita*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

- 4 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).
- 5 What are the five? They are:
- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 1 (“dependent on solitude”)

- 6 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge (*abhiññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.
- 7 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE *VIVEKA, NISSITA* FORMULA⁸⁶

- 8 Here, bhikshus, a monk
 (1) cultivates right view
⁸⁷that is dependent⁸⁸ on solitude,⁸⁹

⁸⁶ This whole section as at (**Agga**) *Tathāgata S 3* (S 45.139), SD 49.17. *Viveka, nissita*, “dependent on solitude”: see **Sāra, gandha S** (S 45.143,5(1) n), SD 42.24. For essay, see ***Viveka, nissita***, SD 20.4..

⁸⁷ This full whole section: *Viveka, nissitaṃ virāga, nissitaṃ nirodha, nissitaṃ vossagga, pariṇāmiṃ*.

⁸⁸ “Dependent on solitude ... ripening in letting go,” *viveka, nissitaṃ virāga, nissitaṃ nirodha, nissitaṃ vossagga, pariṇāmiṃ*. On the terms here, see Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:165-168. MA says that there are 2 kinds of letting go (of suffering) (*vossagga*): “giving up” (*pariccāga*), i.e. the abandonment of defilements, and “entering into” (*pakkhandana*), ie culminating in nirvana. Gethin notes that this phrase is not unique to the 7 *bojjhaṅgā*, but is also found in connection with the factors of the noble eightfold path, the *indriyā* and *balā* (2001:162 f). This formula shows that each *bojjhaṅga* is to be developed successively “as dependent on solitude, dispassion [fading away] and cessation” (Gethin 2001:166). See ***Viveka, nissita***, SD 20.4.

⁸⁹ **Solitude** (*viveka*) or seclusion ref to the overcoming of the 5 mental hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇā*): “dependent on solitude ... ” is called the ***viveka, nissita* formula**: see ***Viveka, nissita***, SD 20.4.

dependent on fading away (of lust) [on dispassion],⁹⁰
 dependent on cessation (of suffering),⁹¹
 ripening in letting go (of defilements);⁹²

(2) cultivates right intention

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(3) cultivates right speech

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(4) cultivates right action

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(6) cultivates right effort

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go.

9 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 1.2: The direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) cycle

(2) The “abandoning of the roots” (*mūla,vinaya*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

10 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya samyojana*).

11 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa,rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa,rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 2 (“abandoning of the roots”)

12 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge (*abhiññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

13 What is the noble eightfold path?

⁹⁰ “Fading away,” *virāga* also “dispassion”.

⁹¹ “Cessation,” *nirodha*, ie, “cessation of suffering”.

⁹² “Letting go (of defilements),” *vossagga*, effectively synonymous with *paṭinissagga*, “relinquishment,” eg in *Ān-āpāna,sati S* (M 118.21/3:83), SD 7.13; also *Eka,dhamma S* (S 54.1/5:313). See *Viveka,nissita*, SD 20.4 (7.3). On these 4 aspects of the *viveka,nissita* formula following the 4-truth model—ie *viveka,nissita* = 1st truth, *virāga,nissita* = 2nd truth, *nirodha,nissita* = 3rd truth, and *vossagga,nissita* = 4th truth—see *Viveka,nissita*, SD 20.4 (7.9).

THE *MŪLA, VINAYA FORMULA⁹³

14 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

which ends in the removal of lust,
ends in the removal of hate,
ends in the removal of delusion;⁹⁴

(2) cultivates right intention

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(3) cultivates right speech

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(4) cultivates right action

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(6) cultivates right effort

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

15 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 1.3 The direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) cycle

(3) The “plunging into the death-free” (*amat’ogadha*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

16 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

17 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 3 (“plunging into the death-free”)

18 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge (*abhiññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

19 What is the noble eightfold path?

⁹³ As in (**Agga**) **Tathāgata S 2** (S 45.139), SD 49.17.

⁹⁴ *Rāga, vinaya, pariyoṣānaṃ dosa, vinaya, pariyoṣānaṃ moha, vinaya, pariyoṣānaṃ.*

THE AMAT'OGADHA FORMULA⁹⁵

20 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

**that plunges into
that crosses over to
that ends in**

**the death-free,
the death-free,
the death-free;**⁹⁶

(2) cultivates right intention

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(3) cultivates right speech

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(4) cultivates right action

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(6) cultivates right effort

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free.

21 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 1.4: The direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) cycle

(4) The “bending towards nirvana” (*nibbāna, ninna*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

22 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

23 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 4 (“bending towards nirvana”)

24 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge (*abhiññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

25 What is the noble eightfold path?

⁹⁵ As in (**Agga**) **Tathāgata S 3** (S 45.139), SD 49.17.

⁹⁶ *Amat'ogadham amata'parāyaṇam amata'pariyosānam.*

THE *NIBBĀNA, NINNA* FORMULA⁹⁷

26 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

that bends

towards nirvana,

that slopes

towards nirvana,

that tends

towards nirvana;⁹⁸

(2) cultivates right intention

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(3) cultivates right speech

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(4) cultivates right action

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(6) cultivates right effort

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana.

27 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the direct knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

II

CYCLE 2.1: The full knowledge (*pariññā*) cycle

(5) The “dependent on solitude” (*viveka, nissita*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

28 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

29 What are the five? They are:

(6) lust for form;

rūpa, rāga

(7) lust for formlessness;

arūpa, rāga

(8) conceit;

māna

(9) restlessness;

uddhacca

(10) ignorance.

avijjā

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 5 (“dependent on solitude”)

30 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the full knowledge (*pariññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

31 What is the noble eightfold path?

⁹⁷ As in (**Agga**) *Tathāgata S 4* (S 45.139), SD 49.17.

⁹⁸ *Nibbāna, ninnam nibbāna, poṇam nibbāna, pabbhāram.*

THE VIVEKA,NISSITA FORMULA

32 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

**that is dependent on solitude,
dependent on fading away
dependent on cessation
ripening in letting go**

**(of lust) [on dispassion],
(of suffering),⁹⁹
(of defilements);¹⁰⁰**

(2) cultivates right intention

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(3) cultivates right speech

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(4) cultivates right action

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(6) cultivates right effort

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go.

33 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the full knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 2.2: The full knowledge (*pariññā*) cycle

(6) The “abandoning of the roots” (*mūla,vinaya*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

34 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya samyojana*).

35 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa,rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa,rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 6 (“abandoning of the roots”)

⁹⁹ “Cessation,” *nirodha*, ie, “cessation of suffering”.

¹⁰⁰ “Letting go (of defilements),” *vossagga*, effectively synonymous with *paṭinissagga*, “relinquishment,” eg in **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118.21/3:83), SD 7.13; also **Eka,dhamma S** (S 54.1/5:313). See **Viveka,nissita**, SD 20.4 (7.3). On these 4 aspects of the *viveka,nissita* formula following the 4-truth model—ie *viveka,nissita* = 1st truth, *virāga,nissita* = 2nd truth, *nirodha,nissita* = 3rd truth, and *vossagga,nissita* = 4th truth—see **Viveka,nissita**, SD 20.4 (7.9).

36 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the full knowledge (*pariññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

37 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE *MŪLA, VINAYA FORMULA¹⁰¹

38 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

which ends in the removal of
ends in the removal of
ends in the removal of
lust,
hate,
delusion;¹⁰²

(2) cultivates right intention

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(3) cultivates right speech

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(4) cultivates right action

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(6) cultivates right effort

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

39 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the full knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 2.3: The full knowledge (*pariññā*) cycle

(7) The “plunging into the death-free” (*amat’ogadha*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

40 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

41 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

¹⁰¹ As in (Agga) Tathāgata S 2 (S 45.139), SD 49.17.

¹⁰² *Rāga, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ dosa, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ moha, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ.*

The path schedule 7 (“plunging into the death-free”)

42 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the full knowledge (*pariññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

43 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE AMAT’OGADHA FORMULA

44 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

**that plunges into
that crosses over to
that ends in** **the death-free,
the death-free,
the death-free;**

(2) cultivates right intention

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(3) cultivates right speech

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(4) cultivates right action

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(6) cultivates right effort

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free.

45 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the full knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 2.4: The full knowledge (*pariññā*) cycle

(8) The “bending towards nirvana” (*nibbāna, ninna*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

46 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojana*).

47 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 8 (“bending towards nirvana”)

48 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the full knowledge (*pariññāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

49 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE NIBBĀNA, NINNA FORMULA

50 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

that bends	towards nirvana,
that slopes	towards nirvana,
that tends	towards nirvana;

(2) cultivates right intention

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(3) cultivates right speech

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(4) cultivates right action

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(6) cultivates right effort

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana.

51 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the full knowledge of these 5 higher fetters.

III

CYCLE 3.1: The utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) cycle

(9) The “plunging into the death-free” (*amat’ogadha*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

52 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

53 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 9 (“dependent on solitude”)

54 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

55 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE VIVEKA,NISSITA FORMULA

56 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

that is dependent on solitude,

dependent on fading away

dependent on cessation

ripening in letting go

(of lust) [on dispassion],

(of suffering),¹⁰³

(of defilements);¹⁰⁴

(2) cultivates right intention

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(3) cultivates right speech

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(4) cultivates right action

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(6) cultivates right effort

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go.

57 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the utter destruction of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 3.2: The utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) cycle

(10) The “abandoning of the roots” (*mūla,vinaya*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

58 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya samyojana*).

59 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa,rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa,rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 10 (“abandoning of the roots”)

60 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

¹⁰³ “Cessation,” *nirodha*, ie, “cessation of suffering”.

¹⁰⁴ “Letting go (of defilements),” *vossagga*, effectively synonymous with *paṭinissagga*, “relinquishment,” eg in *Ānāpāna,sati S* (M 118.21/3:83), SD 7.13; also *Eka,dhamma S* (S 54.1/5:313). See *Viveka,nissita*, SD 20.4 (7.3). On these 4 aspects of the *viveka,nissita* formula following the 4-truth model—ie *viveka,nissita* = 1st truth, *virāga,nissita* = 2nd truth, *nirodha,nissita* = 3rd truth, and *vossagga,nissita* = 4th truth—see *Viveka,nissita*, SD 20.4 (7.9).

61 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE *MŪLA, VINAYA FORMULA¹⁰⁵

62 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

which ends in the removal of
ends in the removal of
ends in the removal of
lust,
hate,
delusion,¹⁰⁶

(2) cultivates right intention

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(3) cultivates right speech

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(4) cultivates right action

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(6) cultivates right effort

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

63 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the utter destruction of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 3.3: The utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) cycle
(11) The “plunging into the death-free” (*amat’ogadha*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

64 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

65 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) self-identity view; | <i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i> |
| (2) spiritual doubt; | <i>vicikicchā</i> |
| (3) attachment to rules and rites; | <i>sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa</i> |
| (4) sensual lust; | <i>kāma, rāga</i> |
| (5) repulsion. | <i>paṭigha</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 11 (“plunging into the death-free”)

66 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

67 What is the noble eightfold path?

¹⁰⁵ As in (**Agga**) **Tathāgata S 2** (S 45.139), SD 49.17.

¹⁰⁶ *Rāga, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ dosa, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ moha, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ.*

THE AMAT'OGADHA FORMULA

68 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

that plunges into **the death-free,**
that crosses over to **the death-free,**
that ends in **the death-free;**

(2) cultivates right intention

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(3) cultivates right speech

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(4) cultivates right action

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(6) cultivates right effort

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free.

69 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the utter destruction of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 3.4: The utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) cycle

(12) The “bending towards nirvana” (*nibbāna, ninna*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

70 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

71 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 12 (“bending towards nirvana”)

72 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the utter destruction (*parikkhāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

73 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE NIBBĀNA, NINNA FORMULA

74 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

that bends **towards nirvana,**

**that slopes towards nirvana,
that tends towards nirvana;**

- (2) cultivates right intention
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;
- (3) cultivates right speech
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;
- (4) cultivates right action
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;
- (5) cultivates right livelihood
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;
- (6) cultivates right effort
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;
- (7) cultivates right mindfulness
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;
- (8) cultivates right concentration
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana.

75 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the utter destruction of these 5 higher fetters.

IV

CYCLE 4.1: The abandonment (*pahāna*) cycle

(13) The “dependent on solitude” (*viveka, nissita*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

76 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

77 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 13 (“dependent on solitude”)

78 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the abandonment (*pahanāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

79 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE *VIVEKA, NISSITA* FORMULA

80 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

**that is dependent on solitude,
dependent on fading away (of lust) [on dispassion],**

**dependent on cessation
ripening in letting go** **(of suffering),¹⁰⁷
(of defilements);¹⁰⁸**

- (2) cultivates right intention
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;
- (3) cultivates right speech
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;
- (4) cultivates right action
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;
- (5) cultivates right livelihood
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;
- (6) cultivates right effort
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;
- (7) cultivates right mindfulness
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go;
- (8) cultivates right concentration
that is dependent on solitude, on fading away, on cessation, on maturing in letting go.

81 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the utter destruction of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 4.2: The abandonment (*pahāna*) cycle
(14) The “abandoning the roots” (*mūla,vinaya*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

82 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya samyojana*).

83 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa,rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa,rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 14 (“abandoning the roots”)

84 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the abandonment (*pahanāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

85 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE *MŪLA,VINAYA FORMULA¹⁰⁹

86 Here, bhikshus, a monk

¹⁰⁷ “Cessation,” *nirodha*, ie, “cessation of suffering”.

¹⁰⁸ “Letting go (of defilements),” *vossagga*, effectively synonymous with *paṭinissagga*, “relinquishment,” eg in **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118.21/3:83), SD 7.13; also **Eka,dhamma S** (S 54.1/5:313). See **Viveka,nissita**, SD 20.4 (7.3). On these 4 aspects of the *viveka,nissita* formula following the 4-truth model—ie *viveka,nissita* = 1st truth, *virāga,nissita* = 2nd truth, *nirodha,nissita* = 3rd truth, and *vossagga,nissita* = 4th truth—see **Viveka,nissita**, SD 20.4 (7.9).

¹⁰⁹ As in (**Agga**) **Tathāgata S 2** (S 45.139), SD 49.17.

(1) cultivates right view

**which ends in the removal of
ends in the removal of
ends in the removal of** **lust,
hate,
delusion,¹¹⁰**

(2) cultivates right intention

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(3) cultivates right speech

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(4) cultivates right action

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(6) cultivates right effort

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that ends in the ridding of lust, ends in the ridding of hate, ends in the ridding of delusion;

87 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the abandonment of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 4.3: The abandonment (*pahāna*) cycle

(15) The “plunging into the death-free” (*amat’ogadha*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

88 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya samyojana*).

89 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 15 (“plunging into the death-free”)

90 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the abandonment (*pahanāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

91 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE AMAT’OGADHA FORMULA

92 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

that plunges into the death-free,

¹¹⁰ *Rāga, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ dosa, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ moha, vinaya, pariyosānaṃ.*

**that crosses over to
that ends in** **the death-free,
the death-free;**

(2) cultivates right intention
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(3) cultivates right speech
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(4) cultivates right action
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(5) cultivates right livelihood
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(6) cultivates right effort
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free;

(8) cultivates right concentration
that plunges into the death-free, that crosses over to the death-free, that ends in the death-free.

93 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the abandonment of these 5 higher fetters.

CYCLE 4.4: The abandonment (*pahāna*) cycle

(16) The “bending towards nirvana” (*nibbāna, ninna*) cycle

The 5 higher fetters

94 Bhikshus, there are these 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojana*).

95 What are the five? They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form; | <i>rūpa, rāga</i> |
| (7) lust for formlessness; | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit; | <i>māna</i> |
| (9) restlessness; | <i>uddhacca</i> |
| (10) ignorance. | <i>avijjā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 higher fetters.

The path schedule 16 (“bending towards nirvana”)

96 The noble eightfold path is to be cultivated for the abandonment (*pahanāya*) of these 5 higher fetters.

97 What is the noble eightfold path?

THE *NIBBĀNA, NINNA* FORMULA

98 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) cultivates right view

**that bends towards nirvana,
that slopes towards nirvana,
that tends towards nirvana;**

(2) cultivates right intention
that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(3) cultivates right speech

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(4) cultivates right action

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(5) cultivates right livelihood

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(6) cultivates right effort

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(7) cultivates right mindfulness

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana;

(8) cultivates right concentration

that bends towards nirvana, that slopes towards nirvana, that tends towards nirvana.

99 This noble eightfold path, bhikshus, is to be cultivated for the abandonment of these 5 higher fetters.

— evaṃ —

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