Micchā,diṭṭhi Sutta
The Discourse on Wrong View | S 22.153 [Be 22.154]
Theme: Wrong view is the grasping of views
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2012, 2018

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Study method
The Micchā,diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.164) & the Micchā,diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.153) [SD 53.11]
The Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.165) & the Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.154) [SD 53.12]
The Attānudiṭṭha Pahāna Sutta (S 35.166) & the Attānudiṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.155) [SD 53.13]

These are 3 pairs of Suttas dealing with wrong view and how to overcome it. For each pair, the Sutta in the left column is an introduction to the one in the right column.

Ideally, they should be studied according to the above sequence. Even then, the first pair (SD 53.11) should be studied carefully first—this is also the chapter to study if you decide to choose only one pair of Suttas. Study S 35.164 first, then S 22.153, or only the latter at least.

For daily or periodical reflection, you should read or record and listen to S 22.153 (§§4-5). For a double reflection, read or record and listen to S 35.164 (§§3-9) first, followed by S 22.153.

The Introductory Notes may be read whenever you need to or are inclined to.

1 Sutta summaries and significance

1.1 Sutta summaries

1.1.1 The Micchā Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.164) is about how to abandon wrong view, that is, through knowing and accepting the fact:

(1) that the 6 sense-bases—the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind—are impermanent;
(2) that their respective sense-objects—sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought—are impermanent;
(3) that their respective consciousnesses, too, are impermanent;
(4) that their respective contacts, too, are impermanent; and
(5) that their respective feelings, too, are impermanent.

These 30 elements (dhātu)—the 6 internal senses, the 6 external objects, their respective consciousnesses, their respective contacts and their respective feelings—are all impermanent. Knowing and accepting this brings about the abandonment of wrong view (the notion that they are in some way permanent or eternal).

1.1.2 The Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.153) is about how wrong view (micchā,diṭṭhi) arises, that is, by way of clinging (upādāna) any of the 5 aggregates—form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness [§4]. Since these aggregates are all impermanent, trying to grasp them would prove futile, bringing about suffering and displeasure [§5]. Hence, the wise disciple is revulsed with the aggregates, that is, he knows them for what they really are and is detached from them [§6]. On account of this detachment, he is free of craving and suffering, and attains awakening [§7].
1.2 RELATED SUTTAS AND TEACHINGS

1.2.1 Related suttas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflecting on impermanence</th>
<th>Seeing the 3 characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S 35.164² Micchā Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta SD 53.11(2)</td>
<td>S 22.153³ Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta SD 53.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S 35.165⁴ Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta SD 53.12(2)</td>
<td>S 22.154⁶ Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta SD 53.12</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2.1. Views and overcoming them

1.2.1.1 This chapter (SD 53.11) contains two related Suttas—the Micchā Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.164) [1.1.1] and the Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.153) [1.1.2]. While the former defines wrong view, the latter shows us how to overcome it by a reflection on impermanence. While the former uses the model of the 30 elements [1.1.1], the latter uses that of the 5 aggregates [1.1.2].

Both the 30 elements and 5 aggregates have the 3 characteristics (lakkhāna) of impermanence, suffering and non-self.⁸ Hence, wrong view (micchā,diṭṭhi) can be defined as the notion that any state or existence can be permanent, fully satisfying and is or has an abiding self. Right view is that all states and existences have the 3 characteristics, and are conditioned as well as conditioning.

1.2.1.2 SD 53.12 comprises two related Suttas—the Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 22.165) and the Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.166). While the former defines self-identity view, the latter shows us how to overcome it. Self-identity view (sakkāya,diṭṭhi),⁹ is, in simple terms, the identifying of ourself with our bodies or minds, that is, seeing some sort of abiding entity in any of the 5 aggregates—our body, feelings, perception, karma and consciousness.¹⁰

Self-identity view is the 1st of 3 fetters,¹¹ the breaking of which brings about streamwinning.¹² These 3 fetters arise in connection with the 5 aggregates by way of the 4 kinds of self-identity views,¹³ that is, in terms of regarding:¹⁴

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¹ SD 53.11 was previously SD 97.22; SD 53.12, previously SD 97.23; SD 53.13, previously SD 97.24.
² Ee S 35.164 = Be S 35.165.
³ Ee S 22.153 = Be S 22.154.
⁴ Ee S 35.165 = Be S 35.166.
⁵ Ee S 22.154 = Be S 22.155.
⁶ Ee S 35.166 = Be S 35.167.
⁷ Ee S 22.155 = Be S 22.156.
⁸ See SD 1.2 (2); SD 18.2 (2.2).
⁹ See SD 40a.8 (3); SD 40a.12 (3.2.4).
¹⁰ On the 5 aggregates (pañca-khandha), see (Dve) Khandhā S (S 22.48/3:47 f), SD 17.1a.
¹¹ The 3 fetters (sānyojana) are (1) self-identity view, (2) spiritual doubt and (3) attachment to rituals and vows: see SD 3.3 (5); Abhābha Tāyo, dhamma S (A 10.76,6), SD 2.4; Emotional independence, SD 40a.8. These 3 fetters are, in turn, part of the 10 fetters (dasa sānyojana): SD 10.16 (1.6.6-1.6.8); Kiṭṭa, giri S (M 70), SD 11.1 (5.1.4); (Ser-kha) Uddesa S (A 4.85), SD 3.3 (2).
¹² On streamwinning, see Entering the stream, SD 3.3.
¹³ Pārīleyya S (M 44.8,31), SD 6.1; SD 40a.8 (3.3). The first is rooted in annihilationist view (uccheda,diṭṭhi); the rest, in eternalist view (sassata,diṭṭhi).
¹⁴ When each of these views is applied to the 5 aggregates, we get the 20 kinds of self-identity views: Cūḷa Vedala S (M 44.8,31), SD 6.1; Mahā Punnama S (M 109,10), SD 17.11; Nādi S (S 22.93) @ SD 42.18 (2.2.1); “I”: the nature of identity, SD 19.1 esp (2.2).
(1) (an aggregate) as the self;
(2) the self as possessing (an aggregate);
(3) (an aggregate) as in the self;
(4) the self as in (an aggregate).

None of these aggregates—indeed no part of our existence—exists in itself. Both body and mind are closely interrelated and mutually conditioning, as are all the 5 aggregates—they are conditioned as well as conditioning us. Hence, we really are all interdependent and changing processes.

1.2.1.3 SD 53.13 comprises two related Suttas—the Attā’nudiṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.166) and the Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.155). While the former defines self-view, the latter shows us how to overcome it. Self-view or self-based view (attānudiṭṭhi) is essentially a belief in an enduring self or soul, that is, some kind of abiding essence that survives death just as it is. Basically, such a wrong view is applied to each of the 6 sense-faculties: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.15

Essentially, self-view is the same as self-identity view (sakkāya,diṭṭhi) [1.2.1.2].16 The only difference is that while self-view is broadly applied to any kind of existence in terms of the 5 aggregates, viewing it as a self, self-identity view is specially applied to our own self. It is also highlighted as the 1st fetter that needs to be broken before we can walk the path of streamwinning. [1.2.1.2]

Broadly, the term self-view is applied to all kinds of existential views, known as the “6 grounds for views” (diṭṭhi-ṭ,ṭhāna). These 6 grounds for wrong views are when the self-notion is applied to the first 4 aggregates (form, feeling, perception, formations), self, the nature of the universe and survival, as defined in this pericope from the Alagaddūpama Sutta (M 22):

“Here, bhikshus, an ignorant ordinary person, who has no regard for noble ones and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dharma, who has no regard for the true individuals17 and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dharma,

(1) regards form thus, ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’18
(2) He regards feeling thus, ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’
(3) He regards perception thus, ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’
(4) He regards formations thus, ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’
(5) He regards what is seen, heard, sensed, and known,19 found, sought after, mentally pursued,20 thus, ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’
(6) And this ground for views, namely, ‘The world is the self; after death I will be permanent, everlasting, eternal, unchanging in nature, eternally the same; I will endure as long as eternity’—this, too, he regards thus, ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’”

(M 22.15) SD 3.13 (5.1.1); SD 6.1 (5.2)

The remedy for these 6 grounds for wrong views is the understanding and acceptance that, as regards any of them:

“This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self” (etam mama, eso’ham asmi, eso me attāti).21

15 Attā’nudiṭṭhi Pahāna S (S 35.166), SD 53.13.
16 See comy ad Sn 1119 (SnA 602).
17 “True individuals” (sappurisā). For def, see Sappurisa S (M 113), SD 23.7 (3).
18 These are the threefold grasping (ti, vidha gāha) [1.2.2.1]: see §15 ad loc.
19 See SD 3.13 (5.2.1.2); for details, see Diṭṭha sutta muta viññāta, SD 53.5.
20 See SD 3.13 (5.2.3).
1.2.2 Related teachings

1.2.2.1 The 3 related false self-notions are at the root of the 3 graspings (ti, vidha gaha), thus:\^22

(1) “This is mine” (etam mamati) the grasping of craving (tanha, gaha)
(2) “This I am” (eso’ham asmitti) the grasping of conceit (mano, gaha)
(3) “This is my self” (me attati)\footnote{See Anatta, Lakkhana S (S 22.59,12), SD 1.2. For detailed studies on the 3 graspings, see I: The nature of identity, SD 19.1; Me: The nature of conceit, SD 19.2a; Mine: The nature of craving, SD 19.3.} the grasping of views (diṭṭhi, gaha)

1.2.2.2 The root-factor underlying the 3 self-notions is conception (mañña), which is synonymous with the teaching of mental proliferation (papañca). Both conception and mental proliferation are rooted in latent tendencies (anusaya), the deepest darkness of our unconscious mind. These latent tendencies are said to be “unconscious” because they are our karmic potential that works without our even knowing it.\footnote{See SD 6.1 (5); Anatta Lakkhana S (S 22.59), SD 1.2, applied to the 5 aggregates (§17-21).}

The 3 “creative” or projective aspects of our latent tendencies, known as ahaṅ.kara, mamaṅ.kara, mānānusaya,\footnote{The traditional sequence here is (2) “This I am” followed by (3) “This is my self.” This rearrangement is to fit in with the 3 graspings.} are related to the 3 false notions and the 3 graspings [1.2.2.1] as follows:

(1) “mine”-making (mamaṅ,kārānusaya) “This is mine” the grasping of craving
(2) “I”-making (ahaṅ,kārānusaya) “This is my self” the grasping of views
(3) conceit (mānānusaya) “This I am” the grasping of conceit

1.3 Latent Tendencies and Grasping

1.3.1 The 3 latent tendencies

1.3.1.1 To have a better understanding of how craving, views and conceit arise and work, we should study their relationship in this schema:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>self-notions</th>
<th>the 3 graspings (gaha)</th>
<th>the 3 latent tendencies (anusaya)\footnote{Traditionally arranged as the latent tendencies of “sensual lust,” “of aversion” and of “ignorance.”}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) “mine”-making (“This is mine”)</td>
<td>craving (tanha)</td>
<td>sensual lust (kama, raga-nusaya)\footnote{Also called raga-nusaya Pahana S (S 36.3/4:204-206), SD 31.1.}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) “I”-making (“This is my self”)</td>
<td>views (diṭṭhi)</td>
<td>ignorance (avijja’lusaya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) conceit (“This I am”)</td>
<td>conceit (māna)</td>
<td>aversion (paṭighānusaya)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.1.2 Whenever we feel a clinging (upadana) for anything (any thing or person that we objectify), it is always rooted in one or more of the 3 pairs of self-notions—“I”-making (This I am), “mine”-making (This is mine) and conceit (This is my self). Our clinging—the effort to appropriate and accumulate experiences of a person or thing—is rooted in craving, views or conceit. We may be drawn to an object of clinging because we perceive pleasure in it (a person, a thing or an experience)—this is an affective clinging (rooted in hedonic feelings) [1.3.2].

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\cite{21} See Anatta, Lakkhaṇa S (S 22.59,12), SD 1.2. For detailed studies on the 3 graspings, see I: The nature of identity, SD 19.1; Me: The nature of conceit, SD 19.2a; Mine: The nature of craving, SD 19.3.
\cite{22} See SD 6.1 (5); Anatta Lakkhaṇa S (S 22.59), SD 1.2, applied to the 5 aggregates (§17-21).
\cite{23} The traditional sequence here is (2) “This I am” followed by (3) “This is my self.” This rearrangement is to fit in with the 3 graspings.
\cite{24} On latent tendencies, see Anusaya, SD 31.3.
\cite{26} Traditionally arranged as the latent tendencies of “sensual lust,” “of aversion” and of “ignorance.”
Or, we may be drawn to it on account of a view or belief—this is an intellectual clinging (rooted in how we think and reason) [1.3.3].

Or, we may be drawn to it on account of measuring another—a feeling of being superior to, or inferior to, or equal to someone—which is an emotive clinging (rooted in a powerful sense of arrogance, jealousy, low self-esteem or misperceptions) [1.3.4].

1.3.1.3 Now, we will attempt to link the 3 pairs of Suttas [1.2.1] with what the teachings we have thus far discussed:

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S 35.165</strong> Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta SD 53.12(2)</td>
<td><strong>S 22.154</strong> Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta SD 53.12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S 35.166</strong> Attânudiṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta SD 53.13(2)</td>
<td><strong>S 22.155</strong> Attânudiṭṭhi Sutta SD 53.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three pairs of Suttas can be usefully studied in connection with the 3 graspings, the 3 latent tendencies, the 3 characteristics and related teachings in the following way:

(1) **The Micchā Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta** (S 35.164) applies the reflection on impermanence (anicca), and together with **the Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta** (S 22.153) deal with “mine”-making (This is mine), characterized by craving, rooted in sensual lust [1.3.2].

(2) **The Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta** (S 35.165) applies the reflection on suffering (dukkha), and together with **the Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta** (S 22.154) deal with conceit (This I am), characterized by conceit, rooted in aversion. [1.3.4]

(3) **The Attânudiṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta** (S 35.166) applies the reflection on non-self (anattā), and together with **the Attânudiṭṭhi Sutta** (S 22.155) deal with “I”-making (This my self), characterized by views, rooted in ignorance. [1.3.3]

All this is graphically represented in this schema:

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>craving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) “I”-making</td>
<td>“This is my self”</td>
<td>views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) conceit</td>
<td>“This I am”</td>
<td>conceit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.2 The latent tendency of sensual lust (kāma,rāgānusaya)

**Keywords:** “mine”-making (This is mine); grasping of craving (taṇhā,gaha); latent tendency of sensual lust (kāma,rāgānusaya).

1.3.2.1 **The Micchā Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta** (S 35.164) and **the Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta** (S 22.153) deal with how wrong view arises through “mine”-making (mamaṅ,kārānusaya)—“This is mine” (etam mama), characterized by craving (taṇhā), deeply rooted in sensual lust (kāma,rāgānusaya). Suffering arises when, driven by sensual desire—attachment to any sense-based pleasure—we grasp, craving to make form, feeling, perception, formations or consciousness—the 5 aggregates\(^{29}\)—as “mine”: we try to own them or any of them.

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\(^{28}\) SD 53.11(2) was previously SD 97.22; SD 53.12(2), previously SD 97.23; SD 53.23(2), previously SD 97.24.

\(^{29}\) On the 5 aggregates, see SD 17.
1.3.2.2 The Miccha Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.164) instructs on the nature of wrong view—how we fail to see impermanence, suffering and non-self—in terms of the 30 elements (dhātu)—the 6 sense-bases, their respective sense-objects, the 6 consciousnesses, the 6 sense-contacts, and the 6 kinds of feelings. If we take each feeling as being of 3 kinds (pleasant, unpleasant and neutral), then, we have 18 kinds of feelings, and a total of 42 elements. None of these, singly, as a set, or as a whole, or outside of them, is permanent, fully satisfactory, that can be said to be an abiding essence or related to such an essence.

1.3.2.3 The Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.153) instructs on how to abandon wrong view, that is, to see impermanence, suffering and non-self in all existence. Its teaching opens by saying that wrong view arises on account of our clinging to any of the 5 aggregates (form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness).

Clinging, as we well know, is rooted in craving, a thirst for things, which once we have acquired, we grasp (gaṇhāti) tenaciously. What we grasp simply takes the shape of our hand, and we have no other use for it. Hence, we keep looking for things, for ever more things, to run after, to cling to, to grasp. And finding them unsatisfactory, we continue with our endless quest for more things.

The aggregates are all impermanent; hence, suffering or unsatisfactory, not fit to be regarded as: “This is mine, this I am, this is my self.” They are all of the nature of arising and ending; we cannot own any of them—they are non-self. Nothing in this world is ours—the 5 aggregates are all there is that is the world.30 When we understand and accept this, we go on to awaken to liberation.

1.3.3 The latent tendency of ignorance (avijjā’nusaya)

Keywords: “I”-making (This is my self); grasping of views (diṭṭhi,gaha); latent tendency of ignorance (avijjā’nusaya).

1.3.3.1 The Attānudiṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.166) and the Attānudiṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.155) deal with “I”-making (ahaṅ,kārā’nusaya)—“This my self” (me attā’ti)—characterized by grasping of views (diṭṭhi), deeply rooted in the latent tendency of ignorance (avijjā). Here, “self” (attā) refers to something permanent, eternal, some divine essence or immortal soul.

The Buddha unequivocally rejects any such “I”-making notions that leads to the “I-Thou” dichotomy. Such pronouns are simply conventions (sammati) and current usages (vohāra) as a means of effective communication. These conventions and usages refer to the 5 aggregates—form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness31—one of which is permanent or have any abiding essence.

Whatever exists or can exist, does so in time; hence, it is impermanent. Whatever is said to exist outside of time, or beyond time and space, is either purely imaginative or something unconditioned—there is only one such state, that is, nirvana. It is meaningless to speak of a being or Being that exists eternally (timeless, beyond time) and is immutable (does not change)—then, it has no experience, and we cannot experience it. To exist is to be impermanent and conditioned by time.32

1.3.3.2 The Attānudiṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.166) instructs on the nature of self-view, that is, holding the view of some kind of “self” (attā) or essence that is permanent, eternal, some divine essence or immortal soul. We tend to see or look for such an “entity” in the 30 elements (dhātu)—the 6 sense-bases, their respective sense-objects, the 6 consciousnesses, the 6 sense-contacts, and the 6 kinds of feelings. If we take each feeling as being of 3 kinds (pleasant, unpleasant and neutral), then, we have 18 kinds of feelings, and a total of 42 elements. None of these, singly, as a set, or as a whole, or outside of them, is permanent, fully satisfactory, that can be said to be an abiding essence or related to such an essence.

30 Alagaddūpama S (M 22,40), SD 3.13.
31 On the 5 aggregates, see SD 17.
32 See SD 49.8b (7.1.6).
feelings. If we take each feeling as being of 3 kinds (pleasant, unpleasant and neutral), then, we have 18 feelings, and a total of 42 elements. None of these, singly, as a set, or as a whole, or outside of them, have such an essence or entity.

1.3.3.3 The Attānudīṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.155) instructs on how to abandon self-view, that is, to see impermanence, suffering and non-self in all existence—hence, it is all without any abiding self or essence. The Sutta teaching opens by saying that self-view arises on account of our clung to any of the 5 aggregates (form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness).  

Clinging, as we well know, is rooted in craving, a thirst for things, which once we have acquired, we grasp (gaṇhāti) tenaciously. What we grasp simply takes the shape of our hand, and we have no other use for it. Hence, we keep looking for things, for ever more things, to run after, to cling to, to grasp. And finding them unsatisfactory, we continue with our endless quest for more things.

The aggregates are all impermanent; hence, suffering or unsatisfactory, not fit to be regarded as: “This is mine, this I am, this is my self.” They are all of the nature of arising and ending; we cannot own any of them—they are non-self. Nothing in this world is ours—the 5 aggregates are all there is that is the world. When we understand and accept this, we go on to awaken to liberation.

1.3.4 The latent tendency of aversion (paṭighânasaya)  

Keywords: conceit (This I am); grasping of conceit (māna, gaha); latent tendency of aversion (paṭighânasaya).

1.3.4.1 The Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.165) and the Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.154) deal with conceit (māna)—“This I am” (eso’ham asmi), characterized by grasping of conceit, deeply rooted in aversion (paṭighânasaya). The habit of measuring people, experiences and things—this is called “conceit”—is rooted in the false notion “I am” whatever quality or quantity we choose as our baggage. Invariably, “this” conceit is a vain attempt at measuring form (bodies and things), feelings (how we react to others), perception (how we preconceive others), formations (what we think of them) and consciousness (where we direct our attention). It is, as if, we are claiming: “I am this!”

Ironically, we can say that “I” am the measure of man and the world. If we are compelled to measure ourself against others, we need to be wholesomely mindful of what and how we are measuring. Our true measure, then, is how we are kind to those we whom we see as inferior, how we respect those who are our equals, and how we learn from those who are better than us.

Our measuring tendency, as a rule, is an appropriative one. Hence, it is a reactive attitude towards others (people, things and experiences) as whether they are worth “having” or not worth having. The danger of this reactivity (patigha) is clear: When we are nothing but what we have, what are we when we lose what we have? We are left with nothing!

1.3.4.2 The Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.165) instructs on the nature of self-identity view. Fail to see or understand impermanence, suffering and non-self, we identify with one, a set or all of the 30 elements (dhātu)—the 6 sense-bases, their respective sense-objects, the 6 consciousnesses, the 6 sense-contacts, and the 6 kinds of feelings. If we take each feeling as being of 3 kinds (pleasant, unpleasant and neutral), then, we have 18 feelings, and a total of 42 elements.

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33 On the 5 aggregates, see SD 17.
34 Alagaddūpama S (M 22.40), SD 3.13.
35 On the 5 aggregates, see SD 17.
When we understand and accept the 3 characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self—or even understand and accept just the first of them—we will be able to see that although we are composed of these 42 elements, they are impermanent, suffering (unsatisfactory), and we do not “own” any of them, as they have no abiding essence.

Since none of the 42 elements is singly, as a set, or all the elements together, or outside of them, is permanent, fully satisfactory, there can be no abiding essence or anything related to such an essence. Hence, there is no way we can really or effectively identify with any of these 42 elements as permanent self or abiding entity.

1.3.4.3 The Sakkāya Diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.154) instructs on how to abandon self-identity view, that is, not to “own” any of the 5 aggregates—form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness—but to see them as being impermanent, suffering and non-self. Its teaching opens by saying that wrong view arises on account of our clinging to any of the 5 aggregates.

Clinging, as we well know, is rooted in craving, a thirst for things, which once we have acquired, we grasp (gaṇhāti) tenaciously. What we grasp simply takes the shape of our hand, and we have no other use for it. Hence, we keep looking for things, for ever more things, to run after, to cling to, to grasp. And finding them unsatisfactory, we continue with our endless quest for more things.

The aggregates are all impermanent; hence, suffering or unsatisfactory, not fit to be regarded as: “This is mine, this I am, this is my self.” They are all of the nature of arising and ending; we cannot own any of them—they are non-self. We are nothing but the 5 aggregates—we are form, feelings, perceptions, formations and consciousness—this is “our world,” so to speak, but we own none of them, in that we have no control whatsoever over them. When we understand and accept this, we go on to awaken to liberation.

1.3.5 The 3 unwholesome roots (akusala,mūla)

1.3.5.1 We have so discussed how our mind works mostly with the latent tendencies (anusaya) [1.2.2.2]. This is on an unconscious level, that is, these are a kind of reflexive or reactive processes responding to causes and conditions, and their effects, which, in turn, become new causes and conditions, and so on. In other words, we are not usually even conscious of such processes—such as being powerfully drawn to certain attractions or being overwhelmed with a dark sense of anger and hate.

The roots of such reactive states go down into the dark unconscious depths our latent tendencies of lust, ignorance and aversion [1.3.1.1]. However, we can, with some mindfulness, be aware of their presence on a preconscious level—as the 3 unwholesome roots of greed, hate and delusion. With strong moral virtue (siṣa), good attention (manasikāra) or ready wisdom (paññā), we will be able to defuse these unwholesome thoughts before they turn into karmically potent speech and action.

The careful study of such Suttas and constantly reflecting on the spiritual exercises they have preserved for us will greatly benefit us here and now, even prepare us for the path of streamwinning.

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36 Alagaddūpama S (M 22,40), SD 3.13.
2 Micchā,diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.164)

The Micchā,diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta (S 35.164) serves as an introduction to the Micchā,diṭṭhi Sutta (S 22.153) which follows. While the former reflects on the 30 elements as impermanent [1.1.1], the latter reflects on the 5 aggregates as impermanent.

SD 53.11(2) Micchā,diṭṭhi Pahāna Sutta
The Discourse on the Abandoning of Wrong Views | S 35.164/4:147 [S:B 35.165]
Traditional: S 4.1.4.1.10 Samyutta 4, Saḷāyatana Vg 1, Saḷāyatana Saṁy 4, Catuttha Pṇsk 1, Nandikkhaya Vg 10
Theme: The 6 senses are impermanent

1 Then, a certain monk approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side.
Sitting at one side, the monk said to the Blessed One:
2 “Bhante, how should one know, how should one see, so that wrong view is abandoned?”

(1) THE EYE IS IMPERMANENT
3 “Bhikshus,
when one knows, one sees that the eye is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
When one knows, one sees that forms are impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
When one knows, one sees that eye-consciousness is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
When one knows, one sees that eye-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
Whatever that is felt arising with the eye as condition—pleasant or unpleasant or neither—when one knows, one sees it to be impermanent, wrong view is abandoned.

(2) THE EAR IS IMPERMANENT
4 “Bhikshus,
when one knows, one sees that the ear is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
When one knows, one sees that sounds are impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
When one knows, one sees that ear-consciousness is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
When one knows, one sees that ear-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
Whatever that is felt arising with the ear as condition—pleasant or unpleasant or neither—when one knows, one sees it to be impermanent, wrong view is abandoned.

37 Kathāṁ na kho bhante jānato kathaṁ passato micchā,diṭṭhi pahīyatīti.
38 This is the beginning of the series on the reflection on impermanence [1.2.1.1].
39 The eye is the 1st of the 30 elements (dhātu), listed here as being “impermanent” [1.1.1].
(3) The Nose is Impermanent

5 “Bhikshus, when one knows, one sees that the nose is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

When one knows, one sees that

- smells are impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- nose-consciousness is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- nose-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

Whatever that is felt arising with the nose as condition—pleasant or unpleasant or neither—when one knows, one sees it to be impermanent, wrong view is abandoned.

(4) The Tongue is Impermanent

6 “Bhikshus, when one knows, one sees that the tongue is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

When one knows, one sees that

- tastes are impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- tongue-consciousness is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- tongue-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

Whatever that is felt arising with the tongue as condition—pleasant or unpleasant or neither—when one knows, one sees it to be impermanent, wrong view is abandoned.

(5) The Body is Impermanent

7 “Bhikshus, when one knows, one sees that the body is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

When one knows, one sees that

- touch is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- body-consciousness is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- body-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

Whatever that is felt arising with the body as condition—pleasant or unpleasant or neither—when one knows, one sees it to be impermanent, wrong view is abandoned.

(6) The Mind is Impermanent

8 “Bhikshus, when one knows, one sees that the mind is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

When one knows, one sees that

- thoughts [mind-objects] are impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.
- mind-consciousness
When one knows, one sees that mind-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

When one knows, one sees that mind-contact is impermanent, then, wrong view is abandoned.

Whatever that is felt arising with the mind as condition—pleasant or unpleasant or neither—when one knows, one sees it to be impermanent, wrong view is abandoned.

When one knows and sees thus, wrong view is abandoned.

― evaṃ —

Micchā Diṭṭhi Sutta
The Discourse on Wrong View
S 22.153

1 At Sāvatthī.

2 "Bhikshus, when what exists, clinging to what, does wrong view arise?"

3 "Bhante, our teachings are rooted in the Blessed One, guided by the Blessed One, have the Blessed One as refuge. It would be good indeed if the Blessed One were to explain its meaning. Having heard the Blessed One, the bhikshus would remember it.”

The 5-aggregate clinging pericope

4 “Bhikshus,
(1) when there is form, on account of clinging to form, by adhering to form, wrong view arises.
(2) When there is feeling, on account of clinging to feeling, by adhering to feeling, wrong view arises.
(3) When there is **perception**, bhikshus,
    on account of clinging to **perception**, by adhering to **perception**, wrong view arises

(4) When there is **formations**, on account of clinging to **formations**, by adhering to **formations**, wrong view arises.

(5) When there is **consciousness**, on account of clinging to **consciousness**, by adhering to **consciousness**, wrong view arises.

**The aggregate-characteristic**\(^{47}\) **pericope**\(^{48}\)

5 What do you think, bhikshus:

(1) **Is form permanent or impermanent?**
   “Impermanent, bhante.”
   “Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [suffering] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?”\(^{49}\)
   “Unsatisfactory, bhante.”
   “But without clinging to what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change would wrong view arise?”\(^{50}\)
   “No, bhante.” [Mv 1.6.42]

(2) **Is feeling permanent or impermanent?**
   “Impermanent, bhante.”
   “Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [suffering] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?”
   “Unsatisfactory, bhante.”
   “But without clinging to what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change would wrong view arise?”
   “No, bhante.”

(3) **Is perception permanent or impermanent?**
   “Impermanent, bhante.”
   “Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [suffering] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?”
   “Unsatisfactory, bhante.”
   “But without clinging to what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change would wrong view arise?”
   “No, bhante.”

(4) **Are formations permanent or impermanent?**
   “Impermanent, bhante.”

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\(^{47}\) On the 3 characteristics, see (1.2.1.1).

\(^{48}\) A shorter version of this and foll sections are given as *Arahata S 1* (S 22.76/3:82 f @ SD 26.7) = *Arahata S 2* (S 22.77/3:84, without verse).

\(^{49}\) Dukkhaṁ vā sukhaṁ vā. Here, the alternative tr, “painful,” reminds us that whatever brings us pain or discomfort (bodily or mentally) is not liked by us. When the pain is gone, we feel some pleasure. However, even the pleasant is impermanent, and when it is gone, we feel pain. Hence, both the painful and the pleasant are “suffering” (dukkha). It is useful to understand this difference between pain and suffering. Simply put, pain is natural (we have a physical but conscious body, so we feel pain, whether tolerable or intolerable, which is a sign of irritability or sensitivity of our experiences); suffering is optional (we can train our minds not to be attached to what is pleasant or to reject what is unpleasant, and to regard even the neutral as being impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.)

\(^{50}\) Yaṁ paṇāniccam dukkhaṁ, viparināma,dhammaṁ api nu taṁ anupādāya micchā,diṭṭhi uppajjeyyāti
“Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [suffering] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?”
“Unsatisfactory, bhante.”
“But without clinging to what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change would wrong view arise?”
“No, bhante.”

(5) “Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
“Impermanent, bhante.”
“Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [suffering] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?”
“Unsatisfactory, bhante.”
“But without clinging to what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change would wrong view arise?”
“No, bhante.”

Revulsion

6 Seeing thus, bhikshus, the tutored noble disciple is revulsed [disenchanted] con with form, is revulsed with feeling, is revulsed with perception, is revulsed with formations, is revulsed with consciousness.

Liberation: The arhat’s review knowledge

7 Through revulsion, he becomes dispassionate.
Through dispassion, he is free.
Freed, there arises the knowledge: ‘Free!’

He understands:
‘Destroyed is birth.
The holy life has been lived.
What needs to be done has been done.
There is no more of this state of being.’” [Mv 1.6.46]

— evam —

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51 On revulsion, see Nibbidda, SD 20.1.
52 Vimuttismim vimuttam iti naārāh hoti, or “When free, there is the knowledge, it (the mind) is free.” Note that the self is not addressed here. On “Free!” see SD 50.1 (3.1.2.2).