

SD 62.1

(Chakka) Āsava Sutta

The (Sixes) Discourse on the Influxes

A 6.58

Theme: The ways of overcoming the influxes for attaining the path

Translated by Piya Tan ©2009, 2024

1 Sutta summary and significance

1.1 The (Chakka) Āsava Sutta (A 6.58) lists 6 methods of overcoming mental influxes (*āsava*)—those of *sense-desire, existence, views and ignorance*—that is, as follows:

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| (1) influxes to be abandoned by <u>restraint</u> , | <i>āsavā saṃvarā pahatabbā;</i> |
| (2) influxes to be abandoned by <u>reflective use</u> , | <i>āsavā paṭisevanā pahatabbā;</i> |
| (3) influxes to be abandoned by <u>endurance</u> , | <i>āsavā adhvāsānā pahatabbā;</i> |
| (4) influxes to be abandoned by <u>avoidance</u> , | <i>āsavā parivajjanā pahatabbā;</i> |
| (5) influxes to be abandoned by <u>removal</u> , | <i>āsavā vinodanā pahatabbā;</i> |
| (6) influxes to be abandoned by <u>cultivation</u> , | <i>āsavā bhāvanā pahatabbā.</i> |

The key function of these methods is the overcoming of *personality view, doubt and attachment to rituals and vows*. This is *the first stage* of training for the path, for both ordained and lay. [2.1.2.1; 3]

1.2 THE 2 TRAININGS: FOR THE LAITY AND FOR THE RENUNCIANT

1.2.1 The training for the laity

1.2.1.1 The (Chakka) Āsava Sutta's (A 6.58) explanations for the 6 common methods of overcoming mental defilements [1.1] are the same as those given in the Sabb'āsava Sutta (M 2) [1.2.2]. While the teaching of the Sabb'āsava Sutta is addressed to renunciants, the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta, preserved in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, is specially addressed to the laity for the attaining of the path, that is, streamwinning, in this life itself.¹

1.2.1.2 The (Chakka) Āsava Sutta is located in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, whose teachings are mainly geared for the laity. Like the Saṃyutta Nikāya, the Aṅguttara contains mostly short easy suttas, often parts of longer teachings of the Majjhima and to some extent of the Dīgha. Understandably, the Aṅguttara has the greatest number of suttas for the laity in the Pali canon.² [3.1.4]

1.2.2 The Sabb'āsava Sutta (M 2), SD 30.3

1.2.2.1 The Sabb'āsava Sutta lists the same 6 ways of overcoming the influxes as stated in the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta (A 6.58) but adds another way—"seeing" the influxes and removing them (*āsavā dassanā pahatabbā*)—as the first of these. These **7 methods** [1.1] are for the practice of renunciants to

¹ Much of the Aṅguttara suttas deal with Dharma-spirited living in the world; such teachings are of course meant for the laity. Such suttas however go on to point the way to both personal development and spiritual liberation. See A:B 24 f.

² See John Kelly, "The Buddha's teachings to lay people," *Buddhist Studies Review* 28 2011:3-77. Qu in A:B Intro 35-40.

expedite their attaining the path, especially arhathood in this life itself; hence, the primary position of the method of **seeing** or *dassana*.

Dassana as “vision” is the opposite of *diṭṭhi* (view). While views are what the sense-based influxes conjure in our minds and with which the influxes fetter us to samsara, **vision** refers to the “seeing” of the path of freedom. This is the same as “seeing nirvana,” like a thirsty traveller coming up to a deep well and seeing cool clean water at the bottom of it. In short, this is **streamwinning** (*sotāpatti*).

1.2.2.2 Streamwinning can thus be said to be **the path of seeing** (*dassana, magga*). The laity or the weak renunciant³ should at least learn to cultivate this seeing or vision of the path. All the 6 methods of overcoming the influxes are to train the laity to *see* true reality and the path in this life itself. The goal of **the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** is just this: the path of seeing for the laity.

The primacy of the path of seeing is highlighted in **the Sabb’āsava Sutta** (M 2) with the addition of “**seeing**” (*dassana*) as the very first method of the 7 listed in that Sutta. This means that a renunciant should not only gain streamwinning, but go further up the path; for, “there is more to be done here” (*atthi c’ev’ettha uttarim karaṇīyam*),⁴ declares the Buddha, for “progressively higher distinction” (*uḷāraṃ pubbenāparam visesaṃ*).⁵ This is the practice of the renunciant.⁶

2 The influxes (āsava) and the fetters (saṃyojana)

2.1 THE MENTAL INFLUXES

2.1.1 What the influxes (āsava) do

2.1.1.1 The Udāna Commentary on the Nanda Sutta (U 3.2) gives a long analysis of the influxes (*āsava*), which gives an overview of our Sutta’s main topic. The key points we should note for our study here are as follows:

- (1) *āsava* as karmic defilement (*kamma, kilesa*) (**Pāsādika Sutta**, D 29,22; **Pāda Doṇa Sutta**, A 4.36,4);
- (2) *āsava* as present defilements and those of future states (V 3:21,19);
- (3) *āsava* as sense-desires, existence and ignorance (**Ti Āsava S**, S 38.8);
- (4) the Abhidhamma list: the 3 *āsavas* + view [see preceding];
- (5) *āsava* as conducive to the 5 realms (**Nibbedhika Pariyāya S**, A 6.63,10.2);
- (6) *āsava* to be abandoned in 6 ways (restraint, etc) (**Chakka Āsava S**, A 6.58);
- (7) *āsava* abandoned in 7 ways (seeing, etc) (**Sabb’āsava S**, M 2,4). (UA 176 f)⁷

2.1.1.2 (1) Āsava as karma (P *kamma*) is covered by the first 2 points. **Point (1)** speaks of *āsava* as “karmic defilements” (*kamma, kilesa*) that we experience in our daily habits rooted in the latent tendencies (*anusaya*)—as lust, repulsion and ignorance (the deepest of the unwholesome roots)—and driven by

³ A weak lay or monastic practitioner is one who despite keeping the precepts or Vinaya, is unable to meditate. Such a person should at least practise the perception of impermanence to gain streamwinning in this life itself. See (**Anicca Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 25.1

⁴ See (**Ānanda**) **Subha S** (D 10,1.31 + passim), SD 40a.13; **Assa, pura S** (M 39,3.5/1:271), SD 10.13; (**Gaha, pati**) **Potaliya S** (M 54,14), SD 43.8; **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114), SD 39.8 (1.1.1.8); SD 51.17 (3.4.2.5).

⁵ See **Dhamma, cetiya S** (M 89,12+18), SD 64.10; **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10,3), SD 24.2; **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118,-2.2+6.2), SD 7.13. As *uḷāraṃ visesaṃ*, **Lohicca S** (D 12 *passim*), SD 34.8.

⁶ On “seeing” (*dassana*), see **SD 30.3** (2.1) influxes abandoned by seeing.

⁷ For the tr comy, see U:M 1:459-462.

them. We see this as perception (*saññā*) when we *recognize* a present mental state in terms of **the past**: we measure the level of like or dislike of the present state by its resemblance and evocation of the past. Hence, we know no present; we live in the past. We are “dead” to the present; the world is our graveyard.

2.1.1.3 (2) Failing to experience **the present** as it arises, we hold on to it after we have shaped it in the manner of *the past*. When we are not satisfied with this “monster” that *was* the present, we hope it will have some kind of **future**: some pleasure, existence or power we can have. We are like that proverbial donkey on whose head Māra has tied a stick dangling a carrot just before the nose; we keep running zestfully after that “carrot dream.” Then, when age catches up, or even before that, when we lose someone or something that we treasure, we simply lose all meaning and purpose in life, too.

2.1.1.4 (3) In the early texts, such as **the Ti Āsava Sutta** (S 38.8), only 3 āsavas—those of sense-desires (*kāma’āsava*), of existence (*bhav’āsava*) and of ignorance (*avijjāsava*)—are mentioned. The *āsavas* as **sense-desires** arise from the 5 physical senses and our perception of them, and our attachment to these sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches and thoughts. Due to our desire and clinging to them we **become** them: we are caught in sense-existence. When these desires are refined, that is, we crave for higher things, we attain those states, even up to the form or the formless worlds. However, despite attaining such high states, we remain caught in fundamental **ignorance** that fetters us to this cycle of rebirths and redeaths in the 5 realms [2.1.1.5].

(4) We will see below why **view** (*diṭṭh’āsava*) is added to make it a tetrad of *āsavas* [2.4.1.6].

2.1.1.5 (5) **The 5 realms** or destinies (*pañca,gati*) are the states of existence that we often fall into on account of the influxes (sense-desires, existence and ignorance).

- On account of violence due to our sense-experiences, we are likely to arise in **hell** even now.
- On account of habitual ignorance, we are likely to arise as **animals** even now.
- On account of habitual desire, we are likely to arise as **pretas** even now.
- On account of good habits (especially faith and wisdom), we are likely to be reborn as **humans**.
- On account of mastering our senses, we are likely to arise as **gods** (devas and brahmas) even now.

The first 3 destinies are those of suffering (*duggati*). To these 3 sometimes a 4th state—**the asuras**—is added. They have powers like the sense-world gods, but are beings who do not know true happiness, and are characterized by violent exploitation of others. The gods are regarded as enjoying great bliss, beauty and power while they live; the gods then must *fall* from their heavenly state, and when they do, they fall into the lower states. The human state, insofar as we are willing and able to learn from true reality, allows us to train our minds so that we can free ourselves from these cyclic lives and patterns.⁸

The Mahā Sīha,nāda Sutta (M 12) speaks of a “6th destiny,” that of the destruction of the influxes (*āsava-k,khaya*), that is, arhathood or nirvana.⁹

2.1.2 Overcoming the influxes

2.1.2.1 (6) **The (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** (A 6.58) describes the 6 ways of overcoming the influxes, that is, by ways of *restraint, of using, of endurance, of avoidance, of removal and of cultivating*, especially for

⁸ **Pañca,gati S** (A 9.68), SD 2.20; **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,37-41), SD 49.1 = SD 2.24; SD 5.16 (14.3).

⁹ **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,37-42), SD 49.1 (also SD 2.24, briefly, M 12,35 f).

the laity, that is, for the attaining of streamwinning. These 6 ways are the same as the last 6 of the 7 methods listed in **the Sabb'āsava Sutta** (M 2,12-22),¹⁰ which should be consulted for details [2.1.2.2].

2.1.2.2 (7) The Sabb'āsava Sutta (M 2) describes the 7 ways of overcoming the influxes, that is, by ways of seeing, of restraint, of using, of endurance, of avoidance, of removal and of cultivating, especially for renunciants, for attaining arhathood. (SD 30.3)

2.2 HOW WE CREATE OUR SELF

2.2.1 The flow of the senses

2.2.1.1 The various kinds of **existence** (*bhava*)—the 31 planes of beings—are characteristically described as “flowing on” (*saṃsarati*); they move on continuously and repeatedly. Within the same life, we may notice physical changes within ourselves but we basically remain as variations on the same themes of *greed, hatred and delusion*. Even when we do transmigrate into other life-forms, we are likely to retain and replay our old habits rooted in unwholesome ways and bents.

In this sense, we are also in a state of “**being**” (*bhava*) but never *becoming* anything. “Being” means that we tend to be caught in the same routine, and habitually see things as we have done before. **Becoming** (*bhāvanā*), on the other hand, is to mindfully take up a practice that frees us from being habitually rooted in greed, hatred and delusion. It means that we observe and understand *clinging*, especially self-clinging.

By “**self-clinging**” (*atta, gāha*) is meant that we are our own agent, negotiating or projecting our own world through our senses, doing what we need to glean a nip of quick pleasure and avoid displeasure. When we induce others to believe and act in the same way, we have taken the role of **Māra** by getting ourselves all caught up in the workings of the 5 aggregates in our lives. The senses project form: feelings rouse liking and disliking; memory intrude as perception; karma arise as formations, and they all feed and home consciousness.¹¹

2.2.1.2 Our **6 physical senses** or sense-faculties (*saḷ-āyatana*) have been inherited from our evolutionary past. While our mind feeds on the past, on our memories, our body (the senses) feasts on the present, on its own image, like Narcissus being swallowed up by his own form. We are an eternal creator from birth, lorded and led by our own creations, adoring them, worshipping them, seeing solace and salvation in them. We are a perpetual process of *becoming and being* until—by some blessed turn of events—we are jolted into awakening to turn to the path of freedom. So long as we have not reached the path, we are lost and wandering as creators and creations, seeking and creating our selves, and suffering in the process because the process never ceases, biting and devouring its own tail.

Evolution has taught us only to *instinctively, faithfully*, see, hear, smell, taste or touch **our past**. It is our memory of past experiences that has brought us thus far to become humans. We only have knowledge of the past, with which we construct our present, and with that we try to predict the future. Since our mind tends to live in its own time, it does not always get the sequence of events right: we rearrange our memories as a poorly fitting jigsaw of images and imagination.

¹⁰ M 2,12-22/1:9-12 + SD 30.3 (2.2-2.7) for notes on the 6 methods.

¹¹ On Māra as the 6 sense-bases, see (**Sal'āyatana**) **Samiddhi S 1** (S 35.65), SD 61.27; on Māra as the 5 aggregates, see (**Māra**) **Rādhī S** (S 23.1), SD 61.28. On the “home” (*oka*) of consciousness, see SD 6.15 (4.4); SD 17.8a (1.2); SD 23.14 (2.1).

2.2.1.3 The uniqueness and value of early Buddhism is in its recognition of this existential quirk of the mind. It teaches **mindfulness** (*sati*) as the basic mental discipline to set this temporal flaw right so that we will be synchronized with the present. **Clear awareness** (*sampajaññā*) is our courage to see and stay in the present, this moment, so that we know what we really are *right now* without being fooled by the past or the future, free of creator and creating. All this is, of course, vital knowledge, *the* living skill, we need to cultivate to know ourself and so be free from delusion and its unwholesome roots.

This is the wisdom of living well here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*) and which leads us onwards (*opanayika*) to the path and its goal. The foundation of this wisdom is our understanding of how we rely on the past to know the present and how this false memory drives us into self-clinging [2.2.1.1].

2.2.2 Self-clinging and crowd-chasing

2.2.2.1 Self-clinging is our ongoing reliance on the body to read the mind. We tend to feed on our memories:

- to create and affirm our self-image and selfhood, and
- to construct images of others and our environment.

The task and routine of our senses are to recreate themselves, to attract and affirm their own kind.¹² In simple terms, this is what the evolutionary process of “natural selection” does.¹³ In the Buddhist perspective, the species selects, keeps and builds on the habits and characteristics that feed and build a notion of **self** so that we evolve into a dominant species among species, and an **alpha** amongst our own herd. Although we are driven by a profound sense of self, we are also overwhelmingly shaped by others and other species. Our behaviour spans human, asura, animal, preta, hell-being, and more rarely divine being. This is evolution of our self, or rather selves.

This self-clinging is relentlessly acted out in 5 ways the Buddha calls **the 5 aggregates of clinging** (*pañc’upādāna-k, khandha*). This process for humans (as a result of biological evolution) is a total dependence on **the body**, both individually and collectively, unified in this dual function by the term **form aggregate** (*rūpa-k, khandha*). We transcend our biological evolution when we are able to think and know ourself; when we have **reflexive consciousness**. We are perhaps the only species to scrutinize our reflections in a mirror every day.¹⁴

2.2.2.2 In recognizing ourself, we fully depend on our sense-faculties; we *are* our senses. At this early near-human stage, we do not really know what this means; we are simply driven to act and react through our faculties to *sense and make sense* of things. With this self-awareness, we experience or “feel” others as being external to us, as *sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches and thoughts*. We have conditioned ourselves to sense or seek *pleasure* in the familiar—what is rooted in the past—that was safe and fun. We reject or ignore, or are even driven to remove or destroy, the different or the unfamiliar. This is how our **aggregate of feeling** (*vedanā-k, khandha*) habitually works in our lives.

2.2.2.3 At the very moment of feeling an experience, we also *recognize* past moments or familiar images of well-being or pleasure. This is how we *recognize* people, things and states with which we fabricate our self-image or self-view. This is called **the aggregate of perception** (*saññā-k, khandha*).

¹² A modern concept of this is that of the “meme”: **Memes** (SD 26.3).

¹³ I’m not explaining scientific evolution here, but applying evolution to explicate a Buddhist teaching.

¹⁴ However, we are not the only ones to recognize ourselves in reflective surfaces. A few other species, esp primates, seem able to recognize themselves in experiments with mirrors. [[LiveScience](https://www.livescience.com/67110-primates-mirrors.html)] Thanks, Ben Zhivan for pointing this out. 22 Feb 2025.

With perception, we *recognize by projecting* a familiar pleasure or displeasure of others. It is this proclivity of ours that has successfully driven our human evolution as a species. We have become the most successful crowd that is capable of overwhelming any other crowd of beings, even Nature herself (but that is another story).

The crowd is a dense darkness in which we are but a dot of light. When we stare into this darkness, it stares back at us.¹⁵ Our light is snuffed out; the crowd swallows us up whole.

2.2.2.4 As a human species, we are thus very much a **crowd event**: we exist in relation to other beings. Evolution has so successfully herded us together that we are, in some way, daily, moment to moment, dependent on the crowd. In such a crowd, pleasure also defines what is felt to be “the best,” which we are driven to and we dream to *create, re-create, procreate*. We are thus caught in this biological process, even as humans, yet herded with other animals and nonhumans, driven by self-creation (our “self”) and other-creation (procreation).

Stifled by the crowd, we value space and aloneness. Our humanity, the quality of being truly human, depends on how well we value spacious and bright aloneness. Crowd-chasing is fun when you do not catch up; but when you do, you find that it is not really worth it. This is samsara.

2.2.2.5 We can of course choose not to be baited or gulped down by the madding crowd, to stay far away from its ignoble pleasures and displeasures. This choice is of course best made *before* we perceive or recognize the pleasures and displeasures of the past in the present. We can choose merely to feel pleasure like passing sunshine in a cold dark crowd, or to taste displeasure as the hungry touch of that cold faceless mob—before we lose or forget our humanity. Only one tamed in body and mind, or training to be so, can keep pleasure and displeasure in proper measure. This is a basic Buddhist training in crowd control; it is called **moral ethics** (*sīla*).

For most of us, once we have recognized pleasure or displeasure, we are very likely to seek familiarity with it from our past and hopes. We go on to mentally form ideas and views of harvesting great pleasures or sowing vicious violence towards our displeasures. We have fallen under the karmic hammer of the judge of our every thought, word and deed: **the aggregate of formations** (*sankhāra-k, khandha*).

Once we embrace our pleasures with lust, we feed our **latent tendency of lust**, deepening it. When we spurn our displeasures with hatred, we feed our latent tendency of repulsion, darkening it. When we ignore the unfamiliar that is neither pleasurable nor displeasurable, we feed the latent tendency of ignorance. Our unwholesome roots only grow deeper, darker and stronger this way.

Our safest and happiest response to any pleasure or displeasure or neutral feeling is that of accepting it unconditionally, *letting it come, letting it go*, with lovingkindness (*mettā*). This unconditional love is the basis for seeing the good, even the best, in oneself, fruiting in self-acceptance.

We love *life, happiness, freedom, truth and wisdom*; so do others—this unconditional love is also the basis for other-embrace. Hence, we respect **life** and let *live*; we respect **property** and let *have*; we respect **freedom** and let *be*; we respect **truth** and let *know*; and we respect **wisdom** and let *go*. This is the foundation of moral ethics.

2.2.3 The conscious body

2.2.3.1 The fundamental human reality is that we have a **conscious body** (*sa, viññāṇaka kāya*), that is, a body with a mind.¹⁶ Our body is the form aggregate [2.2.2.1], composed of the 4 primary elements—

¹⁵ Based on Nietzsche: “Whoever fights with monsters should see to it that he does not become one himself. And when you stare for a long time into an abyss, the abyss stares back into you.” (*Beyond Good and Evil* [1886], tr J Norman, Cambridge, 2002:69 (no. 146)). Cf SD 60.1e (13.1.5.1 f).

earth, water, fire and wind—or in modern scientific terms: solidity, fluidity, heat and motion. The Buddha is not using any scientific language but reminding us that we are made up of the same elements as everything else around us. We breathe in *wind* and give it back with some vapour (*water*) and carbon dioxide; we take in solid food (*earth*) and liquid (*water*), process them and return them as elemental waste. Whatever we take in is consumed by our internal *fire*, combusted or oxidized. We begin to decay from the moment we are born until our body fails in some way or falls apart; then, there is death and rebirth.

Like plants, we grow and die, our seeds are planted and grow again, and again.

We are thus as vulnerable as plants; but we are thinking plants. Our mind transforms us.

2.2.3.2 What is reborn is our mind? **Rebirth** may seem to be like the turning of the last page, the closing of the back cover, of our book. Viewed from this life, we call it *death*; viewed from the next life it is *rebirth*. But the book is from the same library. It may find itself relocated on a new shelf. This idea of “shelving” entices the word-at-best believer¹⁷ to conclude that there must be a Librarian, a Head Librarian, to be exact. We need to be told this is merely a metaphor.

There is of course *no* book or Book: we are simply a series of conscious moments. Death is merely a moment’s break in an endless series of moments. From this life’s perspective, it is called “death”; from the new life, it is “birth.” We give all sorts of names to the various moments of consciousness for a better understanding of it as part of an endless process.

2.2.4 The library of life

2.2.4.1 Argentine author and librarian, Jorge Luis Borges’ (1866-1886) short story, *The Library of Babel* (Spanish: *La biblioteca de Babel*, 1941), is an insightful representation of samsara (our universe) as an unimaginably vast library containing all possible 410-page books of a certain format and character set.¹⁸ The story’s narrator describes how his universe consists of an enormous expanse of adjacent hexagonal (6-sided)¹⁹ identical galleries, each with the same number of books and bookshelves that connect to one another through vestibules, where people can sleep or go to the restroom.

Though the books’ order and content are random and appear completely meaningless, the inhabitants believe that the books contain every possible ordering of just 25 basic characters (22 letters, the period, the comma, and space). Though most of the books are pure gibberish (one book has nothing but the letters “MCV”), the laws of probability dictate that the library must contain, somewhere, every coherent book ever written, or that might ever be written, and every possible version, even if slightly erroneous version, of every book. In other words, we will be able to read about every act or event, historical or imagined, if we search the books well enough.

The narrator notes that the library must contain all useful information, including predictions of the future, biographies of anyone, and translations of every book in every language. Further, for many of the texts, some language could be devised that would make it readable with any of a vast number of different contents.

¹⁶ SD 17.8a (12.3); SD 56.1 (4.3.2.2) n.

¹⁷ There are 4 kinds of learners or students: (1) “**The word-at-best**,” or “word-learner” (*pada,pārama*), one who only remembers a few words of the teaching is said to be the slowest kind of the 4 kinds of student; broadly this includes those who take scripture literally without proper understanding, thought or love. (2) **The tractable** (who needs guidance) (*neyya* or *ñeyya*); (3) who gains understanding when **instructed in detail** (*vipañcitaññū*); and (4) **the quick learner** (who at once grasps the idea) (*ugghaṭitaññū*): see **Ugghaṭitaññū S** (A 4.143), SD 3.13(3.3).

¹⁸ On character set or character encoding, see [Wiki]. 22 Feb 2025.

¹⁹ The 6 sides familiarly remind us of the 6 sense-faculties: the 5 physical senses and the mind; ie, a human being.

2.2.4.2 Despite these theories, all books are functionally totally useless to the reader, as any correct, legible text that can exist occurs due to pure chance and must exist alongside countless completely incorrect versions. This spawned many *superstitions, cults, and heresies* within the wider organized religion of the library. The “Purifiers” arbitrarily destroy books they deem nonsense as they scour the library seeking the “Crimson Hexagon” and its illustrated, magical books.

Others believe that since all books exist in the library, somewhere there must be a perfect index of the library’s contents; some even believe that a messianic figure known as the “Man of the Book” has read the index, and they roam the library seeking him.

The narrator notes the population of the library has been gravely decimated by centuries of religious conflict and disease, but maintains his faith in the library’s beauty, organization and vastness as undeniable proofs of a God or some demiurge, reaffirming his own attempts to find some ultimate meaning to the library and humanity’s existence within it.

At first, the librarians rejoice at the fact that no text in the immense library is alike. All information in the universe is theoretically at their disposal. However, this fact becomes overwhelming to the librarians, as most of the books are nonsense, and it would be impossible to search through all of them for meaning.

The narrator himself is an old man. When he dies, another librarian will throw him into an abyss. He expects his fall to be “infinite.”²⁰

2.2.5 The lone body

2.2.5.1 We have spoken of the body [2.2.3.1]. Then, there is consciousness, that is, **the aggregate of consciousness** (*viññāṇa-k, khandha*), comprising the aggregates of *feeling, perception, formations* and of course *consciousness* itself; that is, the 4 conscious aggregates. Hence, consciousness is not a single fact or process; it is a process of interlinking with all the other aggregates, bodies and minds.

Our body is not unique; it is made up of the 4 elements [2.2.3.1]. Since we have a body, we are able to recognize and know other bodies or their parts thereof. What we see are merely the 4 elements, including space (and vacuum), the 5th element, which provides nothing interesting (except perhaps for a scientist or deep meditator).

In fact, none of the other aggregates—*feeling, perception, formations and consciousness* itself—is unique. We all are made up of them, the same aggregates. We can thus recognize them, or know how they each work when we direct our mind to it. We can know other aggregates; or, simply, we can know “others.” Hence, we are not alone, and *know* that we are not alone. We are in fact dependent on this **otherness** to imagine or wish that there is a self, *our self*.

Humans are characterized by this knowledge of otherness. I am writing this knowing well that you will read it. It is about my mind and yours, and other minds. Considering how I have learned to write this, and how I have learned to write and to speak before that, I don’t think I could have done this alone, or that this is worthwhile writing if I were the only mind around! We are a universe of minds with everyone and everything interacting. Only by interacting and interbeing, by being a part, we become whole. Our body act and move in harmony with others; our mind melds harmoniously with the here and how; we awaken to true reality.

2.2.5.2 One must imagine how **alone** young Siddhattha (Skt *siddhārtha*) must have felt when he first saw a really old man, or should we say when he had an epiphany of **old age**; we lose almost all the powers and joys of our earlier years, and we lose our old friends and acquaintances. We are going to be *alone* in this busy, noisy, crowded world: this noise and crowd seem to become meaningless to us.

²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Library_of_Babel. [Evergreen]. Thanks to Matt Jenkins for suggesting Borges’ book. 22 Feb 2025.

How alone Siddhattha must have felt when he had an epiphany of **disease**, sufferings of the worst kinds when our body is no longer as healthy as it was. In due course, he learns that we may often see how sick the body is, but there is a prevailing sickness that we are stricken with even now that we do not see. This is sickness of the mind, a mind that is ridden with *greed, hatred and delusion*. Without a healthy mind, we lose all meaningful communication with the world. Without meaning, we are unlikely to see any purpose in life. We will be sadly alienated.

Then, Siddhattha had an epiphany of **death**, the end of here-and-now for some, the end of everything for other; it means losing everything we are and have. When we see a dying person, we may wonder what his or her thoughts are. Perhaps death may come like a thief in the night. Yet, we often see or are told about violent deaths, unexpected and terrifying, such as in a war. On a positive note, the Buddha reminds us that such a reflection should move us to work for a better life, one of spirituality, here and now. A spiritual person learns to cultivate a calm and clear mind, one that delights neither in life nor in death, but welcomes one's time as a servant his wages.²¹

2.2.6 The lone Buddha

2.2.6.1 Siddhattha's 4th vision was that of another lone figure—a wandering renunciant, at peace and joyful—who seemed to know where he was going. It gave Siddhattha a vision of the journey that he must take. Surely, he knew at that moment, he was the centre of the crowd, the Sakya crowd; they had made him what he was. The 4 sights made him see through what the crowd saw in him. He might be the centre of the crowd but without the crowd, he was nothing.

The crowd moves without a mind; it beats without a heart. The crowd is the suffering right here surrounding us. We become the crowd when we are caught in it; we become *pretas*, never satiated; we become *animals*, routinely rising, killing, feeding, mating and dying; we become *hell-beings*, violently harming one another. For a moment we may see the crowd destroy evil, but then the crowd becomes blind again to good and bad, knowing neither the wholesome nor the unwholesome. The crowd neither feels nor thinks; it is heartless and mindless; it reacts like an open wound.

2.2.6.2 Siddhattha had to leave the crowd to find himself. During the years of Siddhattha's single-minded quest (nisus) for awakening, he was *the most alone of persons*, one seeking self-awakening within himself, in his own mind. The **aloneness** of the Bodhisattva and the Buddha—famously depicted in Buddha images, especially in meditation posture—is far from being an “anti-social” gesture: anti-crowd perhaps but not misanthropic. We see many other depictions of the Buddha-figure engaged in teaching Dharma and various other activities such as performing a miracle before a crowd or simply receiving alms. A Buddha image is, as a rule, one of radiant stillness, and an invitation to an inner quest we must make for our good and the good of others.

The Buddha's aloneness famously announces that the final human struggle is with oneself, with one's own mind. We must confront our true maker, the mind. The Maker with the big M is crowd-created and creator of crowds, a bigness rooted in *greed, hatred, delusion and fear*. We have ourselves suffered from this and we often see this even today in an organized crowd called religion. Only when we taste spirituality do we taste true freedom.²²

When we see our own mind for ourself, we then free ourself from the crowd and its crowded ways. How do we explain this freeing process by way of the Buddha's teachings?

²¹ See **Sāriputta Tha** (Tha 1002 f),

²² Like the ocean, the Dharma has one taste, the taste of freedom (*vimutti, rasa*): **Pahārāda S** (A 8.19,16) + SD 45.18 (2.6).

2.3 THE AGGREGATES, THE INFLUXES AND THE FETTERS

2.3.1 The aggregates crowd our lives

2.3.1.1 We have seen how the 5 aggregates of clinging (*pañca-k,khandha*)—*form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness*—crowd our lives [2.2.3] and how the Buddha freed himself from the crowd, that is, the 5 aggregates, the world of body and mind [2.2.4]. We will here briefly review how we can rid ourselves of the clinging aggregates to gain mental focus and freedom in our lives.

2.3.1.2 One effective and practical method for rising above the 5 aggregates is **the breath meditation** (*ānāpāna,sati*).²³ In this practice, we simply *free* the breath, letting it be just as it is. It is helpful to see this meditation as renunciation in practice: we are renouncing the breath. We merely watch the breath as it arises and falls away, *as we take it into our body and as we give it back to the elements*.

In the first stage, we experience the breath as **in and out**, moving with the rise and fall of the body; that is, as a bodily event. Whatever thoughts that arise, we simply see them as thoughts; we do not even feel them as pleasant or unpleasant. Hence, we do not link them to any past memory. That way, we are not distracted by thinking about the past.

Should we perceive some mental state as being pleasant or unpleasant, we simply note it just as it is, neither drawn to it nor repelled by it. Or, we can just smile in the heart at what the mind presents, attending to it only so long as it rises and falls here and now. Whenever the mind strays outside this safe pasture of mindfulness, we at once bring the attention back to the beautiful breath. This is itself an act of *mindfulness and awareness*.

2.3.1.3 As the mind stays focused on the breath, we begin to notice growing **spaces of stillness** in between the in- and the out-breaths. We simply note these spaces with a smile, feeling the peace, joy, even light of the beautiful breath. At the same time, we will notice that the breathing is slowing down and becoming more subtle. The spaces are also growing longer with love, light and life.

In time, our breathing becomes even subtler, more effortless, more peaceful. Then, there comes a point when we do not have to note the breathing anymore; there is then nothing to note. There is no more in-and-out or rising-and-falling to note. This is when the breath has become mental. The breath is still there, but it is too subtle to be noticed. All we can do is *silently* watch the mind just as it is. In fact, at this point, there is no more “I” to watch; there is only the still mind, almost free of all the aggregates.

Technically, this state is that of **formations**, that is, wholesome karma-formations because the mind is focused and free from greed and hatred, and perhaps even from delusion. When we do this exercise properly, we will go on to attain samadhi, even dhyana. This is the finest **consciousness** we can attain at this stage. Once we have this ability, we should keep up the momentum of mental training, so that it becomes a skill, directing us to the path of full freedom.

2.3.2 The influxes and the fetters

2.3.2.1 During deep meditation, when the mind is free from the physical senses, it is also free from sense-desires. When we sustain this wholesome state, it deepens to a point and then stabilizes; we have samadhi. When we emerge from such a state and review it, we see profound calm and clarity. We are to that extent free from ignorance. For that moment, we are free *momentarily* from the 3 influxes [Table 2.3.2].

²³ The classic text for breath meditation is **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118), SD 7.13.

The 3 influxes (*āsava*)**The 10 fetters (*saṃyojana*)**

(1) the influx of sense-desire (<i>kāma'āsava</i>)	{	(1) personality view	<i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i>
		(2) spiritual doubt ²⁴	<i>vicikicchā</i>
		(3) attachment to rituals and vows	<i>sīla-b, bata parāmāsa</i>
		(4) sensual lust	<i>kāma, rāga</i>
		(5) repulsion	<i>paṭigha</i>
(2) the influx of existence (<i>bhav'āsava</i>)	{	(6) greed for form existence	<i>rūpa, rāga</i>
		(7) greed for formless existence	<i>arūpa, rāga</i>
(3) the influx of ignorance (<i>avijjāsava</i>)	{	(8) conceit	<i>māna</i>
		(9) restlessness	<i>uddhacca</i>
		(10) ignorance	<i>avijjā</i>

Table 2.3.2 The influxes and the fetters²⁵(S 5:61; A 5:13; Vbh 377)²⁶

2.3.2.2 Such a beautiful state [2.3.2.1] rarely occurs outside of meditation. Normally we are likely to be attending to one of the 5 sense-experiences or thinking about something. We are caught in liking or disliking or being bored with that process. We are caught in **the influx (or flood) of sense-desire**.

Often, we are so caught up with either liking or disliking the sense-experience or thought, that we seem oblivious of everything else. We have *become* that state! Unawakened, even now (synchronically), we are caught in **the influx of existence**, drowning in the flooding currents of life.

We are simply unable to know the next level or aspect—**the influx of ignorance**—we are so lost in it that we are ignorant of it! We can only know its existence by way of review. We realize that we have been unmindful. This reviewing is a good habit in our mental cultivation and spiritual training; it leads to the wisdom that cuts down such incidents of influxes, at least that of ignorance.

2.4 THE 3 INFLUXES THAT FLOOD OUR LIVES AND BIND US TO SUFFERING**2.4.1 The influx of sense-desire (*kām'āsava*) and the streamwinner**

2.4.1.1 The influx of sense-desire, psychologically, brings about an over-dependence on or fixation with sense-experiences on account of our craving (*taṇhā*). This means that we are reactively drawn to sensual pleasure, instinctively repulsed by displeasure, and simply dulled by the lack of stimulation from either of them. Under the driving power of craving, we become predictably reactive beings.

From **Table 2.3.2** we can see that the first 2 of the 3 influxes are rooted in craving, one of the twin roots of suffering (the other is ignorance, the 3rd influx).²⁷ **The influx of sense-desire** drives us to be caught in the first 5 fetters: *personality view, doubt, attachment to rituals and vows, sensual lust and repulsion*. These 5 are also called the “5 lower fetters” (*orambhāgiya saṃyojana*) since they fetter or chain us to sense-world existence.²⁸

²⁴ Doubt is regarded as a fetter, not an influx, prob because doubt arises from personality view: SD 30.3 (1.3.3.3).

²⁵ Cf Table 1.3.3.5 The fetters and the influxes (SD 30.3).

²⁶ On how the 4 influxes fit into the 10 fetters, see SD 50.12 (2.5.2.2) + Table.

²⁷ See **Bālena Paṇḍita S** (S 12.19,2), SD 21.2; SD 40a.8 (2.1.1).

²⁸ See SD 10.16 (1.6.7); **Ajjhatta Bahiddhā Saññojana Sutta** (A 2.4.5), SD 80.5.

2.4.1.2 On account of our over-dependence on sense-experiences—and a lack of proper understanding of how the mind works or what consciousness is—we are led to believe that the 5 senses and the mind (the 6 sense-bases, *saḷ-āyatana*) are all that there is [2.4.1.3]. In itself, this belief is not wrong; in fact, it is given as a teaching in **the Sabba Sutta** (S 3.5.23).²⁹ This is all that there *is* and this is all that we can *know*. In short, these are the tools of knowing and living which need to be properly understood to minimize suffering, even to be rid of it.

According to **the (Lujjati) Loka Sutta** (S 35.83), the “all”³⁰—the sense-bases and their respective objects and consciousnesses—are all subject to contact (*phassa*) or sense-stimuli that produce feelings, pleasant, painful or neutral. They are thus all conditioned and subject to breaking up.³¹ In **the Avijjā Pahāna Sutta** (S 35.80), the Buddha echoes the teaching of “the all,” that having understood this, we should also understand that “nothing is worth clinging to.”³²

2.4.1.3 When we hold the view that the physical senses and the mind are all that there is, without understanding the significance of their conditioned and impermanent nature [2.4.1.2], we are likely to identify with any of them. Even if we do not identify with the physical senses themselves. We may identify with how they function, that is, as any of the 5 aggregates. We may hold the self-view that we are our *form* (the body), our *feelings*, our *perceptions*, our *actions* (formations), or our *mind* (consciousness).

We may then go by some impressive label so that we appear professional or holy, that is,

as an artist or a materialist ,	one who identifies with the <u>body</u> (form);
as a poet or an aesthete ,	one who identifies with <u>feelings</u> (liking and disliking);
as a psychic or a mentalist , ³³	one who identifies with <u>perceptions</u> (memories and thoughts);
as a moralist or a politician ,	one who identifies with <u>actions</u> (including speech) (formations); ³⁴
as a philosopher or a psychologist ,	one who identifies with the <u>mind</u> (consciousness).
or as a theologian or prophet ,	one who identifies with any, some or all of these <u>5 aggregates</u> , whether our own or those of others.

These can be helpful ways of describing the kind of idea that one holds in describing human experiences. However, when one actually identifies with any of the 5 aggregates—when they are taken to be ultimate realities, or one actually sees any or all of them as the only truth or reality—it may effectively be a **personality view** (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*) or self-identity view, the 1st mental fetter (*saṃyojana*), of the 3 that prevent one from attaining the path of awakening.³⁵

2.4.1.4 Once we identify with any of the 5 aggregates and construct our life and world thereby, we are likely to **doubt** how the other aggregates function. We will see the world through our own coloured lens of aggregate-identity. Our doubting the other aggregates only limit other possible sources of know-

²⁹ S 35.23/4:15 (SD 7.1): see (7) for connected suttas; SD 57.10 (1.2.2.4).

³⁰ **Sabba S** (S 35.23), SD 7.1.

³¹ S 35.83/4:52 (SD 7.3).

³² S 35.80/4:50 (SD 16.9).

³³ A mentalist in the sense of one who upholds “the theory that physical and physiological phenomena are ultimately only explicable in terms of a creative and interpretative mind” (OED mentalism 2).

³⁴ We inherit our karma (we become or feel its fruits) in 2 ways: (1) passively, by experiencing the fruits of past karma; and (2) actively, by our present actions which become our habits or affect us karmically.

³⁵ See SD 17.2a (14); SD 43.10 (2.3.2).

ledge and wisdom; or we are able to only *know* and accept them as theory and leave it at that. We have been effectively limited by our own knowledge and learning.

When we doubt the Buddha’s inquiry into true reality, and fail to see the significance of the universal characteristics of *impermanence, suffering and nonself*, our doubt takes the dimension of **spiritual doubt** (*vicikicchā*). We will then doubt the Buddha as an awakened being, the Dharma as the teaching of awakening, and the sangha as the path to awakening. Such doubting prevents us from seeing into the conditionality of all existence, so that we then fail to see the path, too.

2.4.1.5 When we identify with our body or feelings or perceptions or actions or mind, we tend to measure everything else by that rod of “my Self.” But it is a self-constructed virtual reality, a private truth or pious theology that is neither real nor true even for oneself. The most common way that people try to convince themselves of their belief or view is through repeating its statement, and to collect every imaginable or suggestive “evidence” of it. When we look into a mirror what can we expect to see?

This repeated documentation and declaration of belief is best seen in a religious act of unquestioning faith [2.4.1.3]. Religions rooted in craving—they crave and impose their presence in our lives in every way—demand that we “believe that we may understand,”³⁶ to surrender our will to an external agency, such as a God-idea or a power-figure who is viewed as representing him. This is a power relationship, where we surrender ourselves totally to that agency, or simply obey religious fiats. We might even feel a sense of false security, as if being sheltered by some parent-like higher power.

When we do act, it seems to be for only one purpose, to ritually affirm our belief and faith; we even vow to uphold our beliefs so that they seem true to others, too. This is **attachment to rituals and vows** (*sīla-b, bata parāmāsa*).³⁷ We are driven by craving; we *ritually* deny what we dislike; we piously *vow* by our own self-defined delusion.

2.4.1.6 The first 3 of the 10 fetters [Table 2.3.2]—those defilements that hold us back in samsara—form a famous triad: the 3 fetters of *personality view, spiritual doubt, and attachment to rituals and vows*. The fact that the 3 fetters are headed by personality view means that their underlying defilement is that of views (*diṭṭhi, kilesa*). Both the 2nd fetter, spiritual doubt, is rooted in the defilement of views, and the 3rd fetter, attachment to rituals and vows, are rooted in the defilement of views.³⁸

The primacy of the position of these 3 amongst the 10 fetters is because the triad prevents one from even *seeing* the path. The one who breaks these 3 fetters is called **the streamwinner** (*sotāpanna*), one who moves upstream “against the currents (of samsara)” (*paṭisota, gāmī*), heading for nirvana. The significance of overcoming views might be why Abhidhamma texts added views as an influx along with the influxes of sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), of existence (*bhav’āsava*), of views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), and of ignorance (*avijjāsava*), making the triad of influxes into a tetrad.³⁹

2.4.2 The influx of sense-desire (kām’āsava), the roots and the once-returner

2.4.2.1 The streamwinner—we have noted [2.4.1.6]—has overcome the 3 fetters: (1) personality view, (2) spiritual doubt, and (3) attachment to rituals and vows. In simple terms, the streamwinner does not identify with either body, mind or anything else; they rely on self-effort in their practice; and

³⁶ A God-believer, Anselm of Canterbury (1033/34-1109), wrote: “Nor do I seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe that I may understand. For this too I believe, that unless I first believe, I shall not understand.” See **Kesa,puttiya S** (A 3.65), SD 35.4a come on §3.1 (6) pt 4: Faith in Buddhism. See also SD 61.13 (4.2.2.1).

³⁷ SD 49.2 (3.5.2); SD 56.18 (1.2.1.2).

³⁸ On “defilements of views” (*diṭṭhi, kilesa*): Peṭk 29; Nett 128; PmA 1:133 f; DhSA 335 f.

³⁹ For further explanations on 3 or 4 *āsavas*, see SD 30.3 (1.3.2).

they are not superstitious. However, note that the next 2 fetters are those of (4) sensual lust and (5) repulsion; these defilements remain active.

In other words, the streamwinner may still have some level of *desire and hatred*. In fact, **the Mahā Vaccha, gotta Sutta** (M 73) records the Buddha as declaring that he has numerous disciples (*sāvaka*), male and female, who are:

“... householders dressed in white, who enjoy sense-pleasures,
 who are doers of the teaching, followers of instructions,
 crossed beyond doubt, become free of uncertainties,
 gained fearless confidence, and independent of others, dwell in the teaching.”
 (M 73,10+12/1:491), SD 27.4; SD 54.9 (4.2)

Streamwinners thus include disciples “who enjoy sensual pleasures” (*kāma, bhogī*), that is, those who have relationships, have families, engage in gainful employment, and may even be kings or other persons of the world. They have all attained the path and are sure of reaching nirvana within 7 lives.⁴⁰

2.4.2.2 The (Sekha) Uddesa Sutta 2 (A 3.86) defines a once-returner (*sakad-āgāmī*) thus:

With the utter destruction of 3 fetters and with *the diminishing of greed, hatred and delusion*, he is a **once-returner** who, after returning to *this* world only one more time, will make an end of suffering.
 (A 3.86), SD 80.13⁴¹

In other words, a streamwinner who weakens the unwholesome roots of greed, hatred and delusion becomes a once-returner. Unlike a streamwinner, however, a once-returner would not be inclined to enjoy sensual pleasures at all, and they would be totally celibate.⁴²

2.4.3 The influx of existence and the non-returner

2.4.3.1 A streamwinner or a once-returner who is able to attain dhyana, who then goes on to break the fetters of (6) greed for form existence and (7) greed for formless existence—overcoming all the 5 lower fetters [2.4.1.1]—free themselves from rebirth in the sense-world.⁴³ Since they will never return to be reborn in the sense-world, they go on to become **non-returners** (*anāgāmī*), the 3rd kind of path-attainer.⁴⁴

Lay practitioners living morally virtuous lives, like good renunciants, can also attain non-returning. **The Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16) mentions over 50 lay non-returners.⁴⁵ Other recorded cases of lay non-returners include:

Ghaṭikāra	(Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta (M 81,18.14/2:51)	SD 49.3
Upaka (<i>ājīvaka</i>)	in <i>Suddh’āvāsa</i> (S 1.50/1:35, 2.24/1:60)	SD 12.1 (4+5)
Citta Gahapati	Citta Saṃyutta (S 41.1-10/4:281-304)	SD 16.16 (1)
(Vesālika) Ugga	(Aṭṭhaka) Ugga Sutta 1 ⁴⁶ (A 8.21/4:208-212)	SD 70.3

⁴⁰ See SD 61.3 (2.4.2).

⁴¹ See also **Sa, upādi, sesa S** (A 9.12/4:380 f), SD 3.3(3); SD 10.16 (12.1.2.1).

⁴² On the types of once-returners, see SD 61.3 (2.3.2).

⁴³ See SD 23.16 (1.1) n.

⁴⁴ See SD 10.16 (13).

⁴⁵ Among them were the laymen Kakudha, Kālīṅga, Nikāṭa, Kaṭṭissabha, Tuṭṭha, Santuṭṭha, Bhadda and Subhadda: D 16,2.6/2:92 (SD 9); SD 8.6 (13,2).

(Hatthi,gāmaka) Ugga	(Aṭṭhaka) Ugga Sutta 2 (A 8.22/4:212-216)	SD 45.15
Bāvarī (teacher of the 16 youths)	Sn 1120-1123	(SD 45.11 (2.2.2.3))
Visākha (Dhammadinnā's husband)	Cūḷa Vedalla Sutta (M 44)	SD 40a.9
Pukkusāti	Dhātu Vibhaṅga Sutta (M 140,35.2/3:247) ⁴⁷	SD 4.17
Sirivaḍḍha	Sirivaḍḍha Sutta (S 47.29/5:177)	(SD 4.23 (23.1))
Mānadinna	Mānadinna Sutta (S 47.30/5:178)	(SD 4.23 (23.1))
Sandhāna of Rājagaha	Udumbarikā Sīhanāda Sutta (D 25,1/3:36) ⁴⁸	SD 1.4

2.4.3.2 Human non-returners, upon dying, are reborn in one of **the pure abodes** (*suddh'āvāsa*), the highest of the form worlds.⁴⁹ The non-returners attain arhathood or nirvana in one of these 5 ways:⁵⁰

- (1) *antarā,parinibbāyī*; upon dying as a human they attain nirvana in “the intermediate state,” that is, while in transit to being reborn in the pure abodes.
- (2) *upahacca,parinibbāyī*; they attain arhathood as soon as they are reborn in any of the pure abodes.
- (3) *asaṅkhāra,parinibbāyī*; reborn in a pure abode, they continue in dhyana and pass away as arhat without any effort.
- (4) *sa,saṅkhāra,parinibbāyī*; reborn in a pure abode, they contemplate on the foulness of the body (*asubha*) or the loathsomeness of food (*āhāre paṭikkūla,saññā*) and pass away into nirvana there.⁵¹
- (5) *uddham,sota*; once reborn in a pure abode they are “bound upstream” towards Akaniṭṭha (the highest of the pure abodes) and attain arhathood there.

Since the non-returners will never be reborn in the sense-world again, and they are certain to attain nirvana in the pure abodes, they are said to have broken “the fetters of existence.”

2.4.4 The influx of ignorance and the arhat

2.4.4.1 So long as a non-returned continues to live, they will, in one of the 5 ways mentioned [2.4.3.2], overcome the last 3 fetters: (8) conceit, (9) restlessness and (10) ignorance. Even the “true learners” (*sekha*)—as those on the path, short of the arhats, are called—have some lingering level of **conceit** (*māna*) on account of the remnants of self-notion. A streamwinner, a once-returned or a non-returned will each be able to recognize their own kind and see that they are the same in attainment.

On account of their path attainment, they are able to see how disadvantaged the “outsiders” (*bāhira*)⁵²—those who have not attained the path—are, despite all their great learning and high status. These path saints know that they are as such fully liberated and rejoice in it.

2.4.4.2 Even as the true learners, the saints of the path who are not yet arhats, rejoice in their spiritual freedom, they feel compassion towards foolish worldlings, especially the laity caught up in their worldly pursuits, and those worldly renunciants running after gain, praise and status (*lābha,sakkāra,siloka*), who pretend to be holy or noble but not really any better than the laity themselves.

⁴⁶ Also called (Hatthi,gāmaka) Ugga S or Ugga S 2.

⁴⁷ Also MA 5:62; DhA 2:35.

⁴⁸ See n ad loc. Also A 3:451.

⁴⁹ See SD 10.16 (13.1.6); SD 23.14 (Table 3); also SD 61.3 (2.2).

⁵⁰ See SD 61.3 (2.2.2.2).

⁵¹ See **Sa,saṅkhāra S** (A 4.169,1+4), SD 50.7; SD 8.5 (11.3).

⁵² See **(Sotāpanna) Nandiya S** (S 55.40,4) + SD 47.1 (1.1.2); **Cūḷa Hatthi,padōpama S** (M 27,25.4) n + SD 40a.5 (1.1.2); **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142,5(11)) + nn, SD 1.9; SD 47.1 (1.1.2).

In their compassion, these true learners feel **restless** (*uddhatta*) but this is not ordinary restlessness; it is rooted in Dharma; hence, it is called “dharma-rooted restlessness” (*dhamm’uddhacca*).⁵³ We see this famously expressed by the non-returner brahma Sahampati, who appears before the newly awakened Buddha, inviting him to teach the Dharma for the benefit of the world.⁵⁴

2.4.4.3 The final hurdle cleared by the non-returner is that of **ignorance**—not understanding the true nature of the world and reality, as essentially defined in the 4 noble truths, fully realized by the Buddha on his awakening. Upon fully penetrating the 4 noble truths, the non-returners become **arhats**. Their awakening is no different from that of the Buddha’s awakening, except that the Buddha is *the first arhat* of his epoch.

3 The purpose of the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta

3.1 ANALAYO’S ANALYSIS OF THE SABB’ĀSAVA SUTTA (M 2) AND THE (CHAKKA) ĀSAVA SUTTA (A 6.58)

3.1.1 Summary of Analayo’s views regarding the 2 Suttas

The prodigious German scholar monk, Analayo, concludes his study of **the Sabb’āsava Sutta** (M 2), in his *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya* (Taiwan 2011), with this intellectually convincing comparison of the Sabb’āsava Sutta and **the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** (A 6.58):

A closer examination of **the Sabbāsava-sutta** brings to light a noteworthy difference between its treatment of the method of “seeing” and its treatment of the other methods. While one who undertakes the six other methods is a “monk,” the one who undertakes the first method of “seeing” is a “noble disciple.”⁵⁵ The expression “noble disciple” covers not only monastics, but also lay disciples. (1)

This presentation would thus agree with **the Āsava-sutta** in associating the remaining six methods more closely to monks. The implication could be that whereas “seeing” the four noble truths is mainly a matter of attaining stream-entry, the remaining methods are more closely related to undertaking mental training and practice towards achieving the higher stages of awakening, for which, from an early Buddhist perspective, going forth as a monk or a nun provides the best conditions. (2)

Understood in this way, the Āsava-sutta might be concerned with a monk who is already a disciple in higher training (*sekha*), whereas the Sabbāsava-sutta and its parallels would be broader in scope, since by including the method of “seeing” they also cover the method most closely related to becoming a disciple in higher training. (3)

(Analayo 2011:34; highlights and paragraphing added)

[I have broken up the above excerpt into 3 paragraphs and numbered them terminally for easier reference in my comments that follow [3.1.2], where the numbers (within parentheses) refer to the excerpt from Analayo’s study quoted above.]

⁵³ SD 41.5 (5); SD 32.7 (2.1.4, 2.2.3); SD 41.4 (2.2.1).

⁵⁴ Mv 1.5.1-1.6.9 (V 1:4-8); SD 12.1 (2.3.4); SD 12.2 (2); SD 54.18 (2.1.1.1).

⁵⁵ M 2/1: 8,32: *sutavā ... ariya,sāvako*. (Analayo’s n; standardized).

3.1.2 Alternatives to Analayo's views

3.1.2.1 PRACTICE AND PURPOSE

(1) Analayo thinks that those who practise “seeing” to abandon the influxes are the noble disciples (who may be renunciants or the laity), while the practitioners of the other 6 methods are monastics.

(2) Analayo thinks that “‘seeing’ the 4 noble truths is mainly a matter of attaining stream-entry [streamwinning],” and that “the remaining [6] methods [those stated in the Āsava Sutta] are more closely related to undertaking mental training and practice towards achieving the higher stages of awakening.”

We will discuss each of these 2 views of Analayo, and provide a possible alternative view.

3.1.2.2 DISCUSSION ON ANALAYO'S VIEW (1)

While it is true that “**seeing**” (the 4 noble truths) leads to streamwinning (that is, the “path of seeing”), it should be understood that the “seeing,” which is the 1st of the 7 methods of abandoning influxes listed in **the Sabb’āsava Sutta**, *also* has a more basic or broader purpose of dealing with *each* of the 3 influxes—those of sense-desire, of existence, and of ignorance—on a simpler level (in our daily lives), that is, as the “practice of seeing.”

The close study of Sabb’āsava Sutta’s section on **influxes to be abandoned by seeing** [M 2,5-11] shows just the instructions on how the 3 influxes are to be abandoned by “seeing.” According to the Sabb’āsava Sutta, we should practise wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*), which is basically the perception of suffering (§11).

This perception should be directed to the 3 influxes when they manifest themselves as **the 16 doubts** about oneself—comprising 5 doubts about the past, 5 about the future, and 6 about the present (§7)—and the 6 self-views (§8) called the “fettters of view” (§8.2).

The practice strategy can be applied in this manner:

	<u>influx abandoned</u>	
(1) by seeing the current unwholesome state as “ <u>suffering</u> ”;	the 3 rd influx	view ⁵⁶
(2) by seeing that this suffering is rooted in <u>craving</u> ;	the 1 st influx	sense-desire
(3) by seeing that this suffering can be <u>ended</u> (and ending it);	the 2 nd influx	existence
(4) by <u>abandoning</u> the current wrong view (the path is won);	the 4 th influx	ignorance

If one finds the reflection on suffering difficult, one should reflect on **impermanence** so that unarisen influxes do not arise, and arisen influxes are abandoned (§6.2). In short, the reflection on impermanence prevents one from attending to any unwholesome states.

3.1.2.3 DISCUSSION ON ANALAYO'S VIEW (2)

Analayo thinks that “‘seeing’ **the four noble truths** is mainly a matter of attaining stream-entry [streamwinning],” and that “the remaining [6] methods [those stated in **the Āsava Sutta**] are more closely related to undertaking mental training and practice towards achieving the higher stages of awakening.”

However, the Sabb’āsava Sutta passage on “the influxes to be abandoned by seeing (*dassanā*)” (M 2,5-11) is basically about avoiding unwise attention (*ayoniso manasikāra*) and applying wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*). My understanding is that this teaching is first applied to overcoming 16 doubts and 6 self-views [3.1.2.2], and then to the perception of suffering, that is, on the 4 noble truths (§11). “Doubt” (in the case of the 16 doubts) is only one of the 3 fetters hindering streamwinning. Properly reflecting on the 4 noble truths, on the other hand, can lead to stream-winning (§11).

⁵⁶ A 4th influx—that of views (*diṭṭh’āsava*)—was added as influx no. 3 in later canonical texts and the Abhidhamma. See **Cūḷa Gopālaka S** (M 34,6) n, SD 61.3; SD 30.3 (1.4.2); SD 56.4 (3.8).

Strictly speaking, none of the first 5 methods (the Āsava Sutta) will, in themselves, uproot the influxes. They can only act as a temporary restraint or as preparatory stages of practice, and so facilitate the eventual destruction of the influxes by the supermundane paths. However, the first of the 7 methods and the last—seeing (*dassana*) and cultivation (*bhāvanā*) respectively—between them comprise the 4 supramundane paths.⁵⁷

3.1.3 The purposes of the various methods

3.1.3.1 ANALAYO'S VIEW (3) [3.1.1]

Here we discuss Analayo's 3rd view, that

[u]nderstood in this way, the Āsava-sutta might be concerned with a monk who is already a disciple in higher training (*sekha*), whereas the Sabbāsava-sutta and its parallels would be broader in scope, since by including the method of “seeing,” they also cover the method most closely related to becoming a disciple in higher training. (3)

While Analayo is not wrong, such an interpretation would limit the purpose of the teachings of these two Suttas—one for streamwinners, the other for one heading for that path. Furthermore, this limited application may only work with “seeing” or with “cultivation,” since the other methods are merely auxiliary [3.1.2.3].

3.1.3.2 The Sabb'āsava Sutta (M 2) opens with the Buddha declaring that he will teach “**the means of restraining all the influxes**” (*sabb'āsava, samvara, pariyaṃya*), where the word “**restraining or restraint**” (*samvara*) has the sense of “to be abandoned” (*pahatappa*)—as evident from the question at the start of each of the 7 sections [eg §5]. The Sutta also specifies that these methods only work “for one who knows, who sees, not for one who neither knows nor sees”⁵⁸ (*jānato ... passato ... , no ajānato no apassato*) [§3]. It is also significant that the Sutta lists 7 methods. After carefully examining each of these methods, we will see that only the 1st method, “seeing” and the 7th method, “cultivation,” can each work by itself.

The Commentator, Buddhaghosa, in reference to the phrase *sabb'āsava, samvara*, helpfully explains the key term, *samvara* (“restraint”), following a well-known commentarial set, as being fivefold, that is, through *moral virtue, mindfulness, knowledge, effort and patience*. In fact, both the Sabb'āsava Sutta (M 2) and the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta (A 6.58) each include, in its own set of methods, these very same **5 restraints** (*samvara*), as follows:

<u>restraint through</u>		<u>influxes abandoned by</u>		
(1) moral virtue	<i>sīla samvara</i>	restraint	<i>samvara</i>	[§3]
(2) mindfulness	<i>sati samvara</i>	reflective use	<i>paṭisevana</i>	[§4]
(3) knowledge	<i>ñāṇa samvara</i>	cultivation	<i>bhāvana</i>	[§8]
(4) effort	<i>virīya samvara</i>	avoidance + removal	<i>parivajjana + vinodana</i>	[§§6+7]
(5) patience	<i>khanti samvara</i>	endurance	<i>adhivāsana</i>	[§5]

(Vism 1.18/7; MA 1:62 f; PmA 14.447; VbhA 330; DhsA 315)

The Commentaries, in other words, interpret these practices for abandoning the influxes by way of strategy and sustained effort, using any or all of them as necessary.

⁵⁷ See SD 30.3 (2.0.2).

⁵⁸ Cp this statement with Anselm's dictum [2.4.1.5].

3.1.4 A teaching for the laity

3.1.4.1 For the bulk of the introductory notes [section 2], “The influxes (*āsava*) and the fetters (*samyojana*),” I have interpreted the 5 methods of abandoning the influxes of **the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** (A 6.58) in terms of lay practice. This interpretation also applies to unawakened monastics who are keen in Dharma practice.

My understanding of the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta is that its teaching can easily apply to both the renunciant and the laity. My arguments for this will be given below.

The Sutta opens with the Buddha declaring:

“Bhikshus, possessing **6 qualities**, a monk is *worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of salutation with lotus palms, a peerless field of merit for the world.*” [§1]

3.1.4.2 The Buddha states in **the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** (A 6.58) that one who practises the 6 methods of abandoning the influxes detailed in the Sutta is said to have the last 5 of the 9 virtues of sangha.⁵⁹ The Pali formula for **the 9 virtues of the sangha** with a translation are as follows:

(1) <i>supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i>	The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised];
(2) <i>uju,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i>	the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight way;
(3) <i>ñāya,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i>	the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the true way;
(4) <i>sāmīci,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i> ⁶⁰	the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way. ⁶¹
<i>yad idaṃ cattāri purisa,yugāni aṭṭha,purisa,puggalā</i> [62]	These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:
<i>esa bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i>	<i>this</i> community of disciples of the Blessed One is
(5) <i>āhuneyyo</i>	worthy of offerings,
(6) <i>pāhuneyyo</i>	worthy of hospitality,
(7) <i>dakkhiṇeyyo</i>	worthy of gifts,
(8) <i>añjali,karaṇīyo</i>	worthy of salutation with lotus-palms,
(9) <i>anuttaraṃ puñña-k,khettaṃ lokassā ti</i>	a supreme field of merit for the world.

(Full formula, S 11.3,15/1;220), SD 15.5; (lines 5-9, M 7,7/1:37; A 6.10,4/3:286)

In the context of **the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** (A 6.58)—with the Buddha’s mention of the last 5 of the 9 sangha virtues—the practitioner will be worthy of offerings and respect from others, and those giving such gifts and respect will themselves earn great merit on account of the virtues of such a person. The

⁵⁹ In the opening of **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2,2), the Buddha declares that he will teach “the means of restraining all the influxes” (*sabb’āsava,samvara,pariyāya*). See SD 30.3 (2).

⁶⁰ On the recluse’s proper way of training (*samaṇa,sāmīci-p,paṭipadā*), see **Cūḷa Assa,pura S** (M 40/1:281-284), SD 41.8.

⁶¹ There seems to be an abrupt break here, with the mention of “These 4 pairs of persons ... “ which seems to refer back to some missing passage, which evidently is found in the Skt version: see (3): **Saṅghānusmṛti & Aṭṭha,-puggala S 1** (A 4:292 = D 33,3.1(3)/3:255) in **Saṅghānussati** (Vism 7.89-100 n), SD 15.10a.

⁶² On the purported hiatus here, see SD 15.5 (2.4 f).

idea here is not only a mere ritual practice of these 5 methods of abandoning the influxes, but more so for one who benefits from such a practice, that is, attaining the path, at least as a streamwinner.⁶³

Secondly, it should be noted that **the 5 sangha virtues** mentioned in the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta are those of the noble sangha. This would be appropriate when the practitioner—monastic or lay—becomes a streamwinner, who is a part of the noble sangha. This means that the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta is a teaching given to benefit the laity who goes on to become a streamwinner (and thus joining the noble sangha).

Thirdly, it should be noted that the omission of “seeing” (*dassana*), the 1st of the 7 methods of abandoning the influxes, is both as a reminder to monastics to keep up their practice of at least attaining streamwinning (like the laity); and also a reminder to the laity that they are capable of abandoning the influxes with those methods easier than “seeing.” They are exhorted to follow the example of the good monastics with the omission of the “seeing” method (which needs the commitment of a monastic). The other 6 methods—even with the 7th, on “cultivation”—may be done *ad hoc* at the convenience of the laity.

Fourthly, that **the (Chakka) Āsava Sutta** is located in the Aṅguttara Nikāya clearly suggests that the teaching is for the laity. Like the Saṃyutta Nikāya, the Aṅguttara contains mostly short easy suttas, often parts of longer teachings of the Majjhima and to some extent of the Dīgha. Understandably, the Aṅguttara has the greatest number of suttas for the laity in the Pali canon.⁶⁴

3.1.4.3 Fifthly and finally, a note on the vocative *bhikkhave* (“O monks”) and agent nouns, *bhikkhu* (sg, “monk”) or *bhikkhū* (pl, “monks”) and their various forms. Note that in almost all the suttas, the Buddha is recorded as using these Pali nouns, seemingly addressing “the monks.” The commentator Buddhaghosa helpfully informs us that “**monk/s**” or “**bhikshu/s**” and their various forms refers to the following:

- a true practitioner is a monk at heart **Dhammapada**: Dh 142, 362, also 260-270. Cf **Bhikkhu Vagga** (ch 25) and **Brāhmaṇa Vagga** (ch 26) of the Dhammapada.
- *all* who are present SD 4.9 (5.3); SD 13.1 (3.1.1);
- *meditators* **Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta** (M 10,3A) n, SD 13.3; SD 13.1 (3.1.1.5); SD 16.7 (1.1.1.2), see note on *bhikkhu, bhāva*; Comy on **Mahā Sati-’paṭṭhāna S** with the identical context here says that “monk” (*bhikkhu*) indicates “whoever undertakes that practice ... is here comprised under the term *bhikkhu*.”⁶⁵
- a non-monk addressed as *bhikkhu* the Buddha to Pukkusāti, who is a self-ordained monk, **Dhātu Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 140,3.2), SD 4.17.

It should also be mentioned and noted that being academically correct is not as vitally significant as *trying out the teachings for oneself*. After all, these teachings are not merely for discursive evaluation, and then abandoned with the classroom or study notes upon graduation or at the end of the lesson. They are meant to be done *daily and habitually* to identify and abandon the influxes, the key one of which is the influx of ignorance.

— — —

⁶³ This is mentioned in **Sabb’āsava Sutta** (M 2,11), SD 30.3, but this is in the section dealing with “seeing” (the 1st of the 7 methods there) which is omitted from (Chakka) Āsava S.

⁶⁴ See John Kelly, “The Buddha’s teachings to lay people,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 28 2011:3-77. Qu in A:B Intro 35-40.

⁶⁵ DA 3:756; MA 1:241; VbhA 216 f; cf SnA 251.

(Chakka) Āsava Sutta

The (Sixes) Discourse on Influxes

A 6.58

(Originating in Sāvattthī.)

1 “Bhikshus, possessing **6 qualities**, a monk is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of salutation with lotus palms, is a peerless field of merit for the world. [3.1.4.2]

What are the six?

2 Here, bhikshus,

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| (1) by <u>restraint</u> | a monk has abandoned those influxes that are to be abandoned | by restraint; |
| (2) by <u>reflective use</u> | he has abandoned those influxes that are to be abandoned | by reflective use; |
| (3) by <u>endurance</u> | he has abandoned those influxes that are to be abandoned | by endurance; |
| (4) by <u>avoidance</u> | he has abandoned those influxes that are to be abandoned | by avoidance; |
| (5) by <u>removal</u> | he has abandoned those influxes that are to be abandoned | by removal; and |
| (6) by <u>cultivating</u> | he has abandoned those influxes that are to be abandoned | by cultivating. ⁶⁶ |

(1) And what, bhikshus, are **the influxes to be abandoned by restraint** that have been abandoned by restraint?⁶⁷

3 Here, bhikshus,

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) wisely reflecting, a monk dwells <u>restrained</u> in
Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, ⁶⁸
may arise in one who dwells <i>unrestrained</i> in
even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish,
in one who dwells restrained in | the eye faculty. [388]

the eye faculty,

the eye faculty. ⁶⁹ |
| (2) Wisely reflecting, he dwells <u>restrained</u> in
Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish,
may arise in one who dwells <i>unrestrained</i> in
even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish,
in one who dwells restrained in | the ear faculty.

the ear faculty,

the ear faculty. |
| (3) Wisely reflecting, he dwells <u>restrained</u> in
Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish,
may arise in one who dwells <i>unrestrained</i> in
even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish,
in one who dwells restrained in | the nose faculty.

the nose faculty,

the nose faculty. |

⁶⁶ *Āsava saṁvarā pahātabbā, āsavā paṭisevanā pahātabbā, āsavā adhvāsanaṁ pahātabbā, āsavā parivaḥḥanā pahātabbā, āsavā vinodanā pahātabbā, āsavā bhāvanā pahātabbā*. These 6, preceded by “influxes to be abandoned by seeing” (*āsavaṁ dassanā pahātabbā*), are treated in detail in **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2), with the same explanations as here.

⁶⁷ Cf **Sabb’āsava S** (M 212-21/1:912), SD 30.3. Strictly speaking, this method and the foll 4, in themselves, do not uproot the influxes, but only act as a temporary restraint: see SD 30.3 (2.0.2).

⁶⁸ This fever (*pariḥāha*) is that of defilements and of their karmic fruits (MA 1:77)

⁶⁹ Clearly here, the primary factor behind the effectiveness of such restraint is mindfulness: see SD 30.3 (2.2.2).

- (4) Wisely reflecting, he dwells restrained in Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who dwells unrestrained in even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who dwells restrained in **the tongue faculty.**
the tongue faculty,
the tongue faculty.
- (5) Wisely reflecting, he dwells restrained in Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who dwells unrestrained in even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who dwells restrained in **the body faculty.**
the body faculty,
the body faculty.
- (6) Wisely reflecting, he dwells restrained in Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who dwells unrestrained in even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who dwells restrained in **the mind faculty.**
the mind faculty,
the mind faculty.

Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who dwells unrestrained, even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who dwells restrained.⁷⁰

These, bhikshus, are called the influxes to be abandoned by **restraint** that have been abandoned by restraint.

(2) And what, bhikshus, are **the influxes to be abandoned by reflective usage** that have been abandoned by reflective usage?

4 Here, bhikshus,

- (1) wisely reflecting, he uses **the robe**:
only for warding off heat, for the sake of warding off cold,
for the sake of warding off the touch of mosquitoes, flies,
the wind, the burning sun, and creeping things;
only for the purpose of covering up the privates, out of moral shame.

- (2) Wisely reflecting, he uses **almsfood**:
not for amusement,⁷¹ not for intoxication, not for fattening, not for beautifying,
but only for keeping this body going and enduring, for ending hunger pangs,⁷²
for the sake of supporting the holy life,⁷³ considering,
‘Thus I shall get rid of an old feeling,⁷⁴ and not let a new feeling arise,
and, in this way, I will be blameless, and live at ease.’⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Ce Ee *yaṃ hi’ssa bhikkhave saṃvaraṃ asaṃvutassa viharato uppajjeyyurū āsavā vighāta, pariāhā, saṃvaraṃ saṃvutassa viharato evaṃ sa te āsavā vighāta, pariāhā na honti*. Be Se omit this sentence; but it has parallels in the texts for the other methods of overcoming the influxes.

⁷¹ This stock: M 1:355; A 2:40, 145; Dhs 1346; Pug 21; Vbh 249.

⁷² Vism 1.92/32.

⁷³ Buddhaghosa distinguishes 2 kinds of holy life (*brahma, cariya*): the teaching (*sāsana*) as a whole, and the holy life of the path (*magga brahma, cariya*), ie sainthood (Vism 1.92/32).

⁷⁴ The “old feeling” is that of hunger, the “new feeling” refers to not over-eating.

- (3) Wisely reflecting, he uses **a lodging**
 only for warding off cold, for warding off heat;
 for warding off the touch of mosquitoes, flies,
 the wind, the sun, and creeping things, only for avoiding weather hazards,
 for the purpose of enjoying solitude. [389]
- (4) Wisely reflecting, he uses **medicine, support and necessities for the sick**,
 only for warding off feelings of illness that have arisen,
 only for the sake of non-affliction at most.

Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise for one who uses them not,⁷⁶
 even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, for one who uses them (with reflection).

These, bhikshus, are called the influxes to be abandoned by **reflective usage** that have been abandoned by reflective usage.

(3) And what, bhikshus, are **the influxes to be abandoned by endurance** that have been abandoned by endurance?

5 Here, bhikshus, a monk, wisely reflecting,
 bears cold, heat, hunger, thirst, the touch of mosquitoes, flies, the wind, the sun, and creeping things.
 He endures the ways of words ill-spoken, unwelcome,
 and arisen bodily feelings that are painful, racking, sharp, piercing, repugnant, disagreeable, deadly.⁷⁷

Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who lacks endurance,
 even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who endures them.

These, bhikshus, are the influxes that are to be abandoned by endurance that have been abandoned by endurance.

(4) And what, bhikshus, are **the influxes to be abandoned by avoidance** that have been abandoned by avoidance?

6 Here, bhikshus, a monk, wisely reflecting,
 avoids a wild elephant,
 avoids a wild horse,

⁷⁵ "Live at ease" (*phāsu, vihāra*) refers to bodily ease or comfort, free from pain and distraction, so that we could direct our mind to meditation.

⁷⁶ One who has *no* medicine to use will suffer in various ways, even causing unwholesome mental states; but for the one who use it reflectively, there is nothing negative about it.

⁷⁷ *Uppannānaṃ sārīrikānaṃ vedanānaṃ dukkhānaṃ tibbānaṃ kharānaṃ kaṭukānaṃ asātānaṃ amanāpānaṃ pāṇ'aharānaṃ adhvāsaka, jātika hoti.* A person under 20 is unlikely to be able to endure these hardships, and is therefore not allowed to be ordained (V 4:130). The passage (beginning "bears heat..." to here) recurs in **Sabb'āsava S** (M 2/1:10), SD 30.3; **Kāya, gata, sati S** (M 119,35/3:97), SD 12.21; **Danta, bhūmi S** (M 125,30/3:136 f), SD 46.3; **(Rāja) Nāga S** (A 4.114/2:117 f), SD 46.8; **Ātappa, karaṇīya S** (A 3.49/1:153) ×2; **(Rāja) Nāga S** (A 4.114/2:118), SD 46.8; **(Dve) Roga S** (A 4.157/2:143), SD 42.16; **Khama Paṭipadā S 2** (A 4.165/2:153) ×2; **Upaṭṭhāka S 1** (A 5.123/-3:144); **(Pañcaka) Sota S** (A 5.140(5)/3:163), SD 51.13; **(Chakka) Āsava S** (A 6.58(3)/3:389). SD 62.1; **Ākaṅkha S** (A 10.71(6)/5:132), SD 82.12; **Nm 2:487**; **V 1:78×2, 302+303 (uppannānaṃ...etc)**, 3:321, 322×2, 327, 4:130. See **Sabba, kamma, jaha S** (U 3.1.4/21), SD 37.3 n, for detailed refs.

avoids wild cattle,
 avoids a wild dog, a snake, a stump, a thorny spot, a chasm, a cliff, a cesspit, a sewer.⁷⁸
 Wisely reflecting, (he avoids) whatever **place** that is unsuitable for sitting,⁷⁹
 whatever place that is unsuitable for going,⁸⁰
 whatever kind of association with **bad friends**.⁸¹
 Since if he were to sit on an unsuitable seat, to go to an unsuitable place, to associate with bad friends,
 that wise colleagues in the holy life would regard for sure to be a basis for bad;⁸²
 then, wisely reflecting, he avoids
 that place that is unsuitable for sitting,
 that *place* that is unsuitable for going,
 that kind of *association* with bad friends.⁸³

Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who does not avoid such things,
 even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who avoids them. [390]

These, bhikshus, are called the influxes to be abandoned by **avoidance** that have been abandoned
 by avoidance.

(5) And what, bhikshus, are **the influxes to be abandoned by removal** that have been abandoned by
 removal?

- 7 Here, bhikshus,
- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| (1) wisely reflecting, a monk does not tolerate an arisen | <u>sensual thought</u> , |
| he abandons it, removes it, ends it, brings it to nought. | |
| (2) Wisely reflecting, he does not tolerate an arisen | <u>thought of ill will</u> , |
| he abandons it, removes it, ends it, brings it to nought. | |
| (3) Wisely reflecting, he does not tolerate an arisen | <u>thought of violence</u> , |
| he abandons it, removes it, ends it, brings it to nought. | |

⁷⁸ *Ahiṃ khāṇuṃ kaṅṭhaka-ṭṭhānaṃ sobbhaṃ papātaṃ candanikaṃ oḷigallaṃ*. The last 2 words occur in M 1:11, 73, 448, 3:168; A 1:161, 3:389; *caṅḍanika* at Tha 567.

⁷⁹ Comy says this refers to an improper seat, ie, the 2 “indeterminate” (*aniyata*) rules (V 3:188 191). The first *aniyata* forbids a monk sitting alone with a woman in a hidden place; the second forbids a monk sitting in a secluded spot with a woman where their conversation cannot be heard by others. Besides these, there are other rules that forbid a monk fraternizing with a woman in any way (such as Saṅghādisesa 2-4 = V 3:120, 128, 133). See Vism 1.45-48/18 f. For tr, see V:H 1:332 f.

⁸⁰ Comy alludes to 5 such places unsuitable for making the almsround (MA 1:80). Actually 6 such places are listed by Vbh, ie the haunts (incl dwellings) of prostitutes (*vesiyā gocara*), of widows (*vidhavā gocara*), of spinsters (*thulla, kumārī gocara*), of eunuchs (*paṇḍaka gocara*), of nuns (*bhikkhuṇi gocara*), and public houses (*pān’āgāra gocara*): these terms can also be translated as “resorting to” (*gocara*) such people or place for alms. The first five are all women (ie, there is the danger of being accused of consorting with them, etc), and public houses often have inebriate and unreligious people. Vbh also lists palaces, dwellings of ministers and other sectarians who are hostile to Buddhists as unsuitable resorts. (Vbh 247).

⁸¹ *Yathā, rūpe pāpake mitte bhajantaṃ*. See **Spiritual friendship: A textual study**, SD 34.1 esp (3.1).

⁸² *Viññū sabrahmacārī pāpakesu ṭhānesu okappeyyuṃ*.

⁸³ The whole sentence here: *Yathā, rūpe anāsane nisinnaṃ yathā, rūpe agocare carantaṃ yathā, rūpe pāpake mitte bhajantaṃ viññū sa, brahmacārī pāpakesu ṭhānesu okappeyyuṃ, so tañ ca anāsanaṃ tañ ca agocaraṃ te ca pāpake mitte paṭisaṅkhā yoniso parivajjeti*: as at **Āsava S** (A 6.58.6/3:389), SD 62.1. A difficult sentence which apparently eluded I B Horner (M:H), E M Hare (A:H 3:277) and Ñānamoli/Bodhi (M:ÑB), all of whom take *okappeyyuṃ* as meaning “would/might suspect.” On *okappeyyuṃ* as opt 3 pl of *okappeti*, “to hold as right, fix one’s mind on,” see MA 1:81,3 (*okappeyyuṃ ti saddaheyuṃ*, “were to have faith in”) & CPD.

7.2 Here, bhikshus, wisely reflecting, a monk does not tolerate any bad, unwholesome state that arises now and then; *he abandons it, removes it, makes an end of it, brings it to nought.*⁸⁴

Bhikshus, while influxes, vexation and fever may arise in one who does not remove such things, even so, there are no influxes, vexation and fever in one who removes them.

These, bhikshus, are called the influxes to be abandoned by **removal** that have been abandoned by removal.

(6) And what, bhikshus, are **the influxes to be abandoned by cultivation** that have been abandoned by cultivation?

- 8** Here, bhikshus,⁸⁵
- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) wisely reflecting, a monk cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. ⁸⁶ | <u>the awakening-factor of mindfulness,</u> |
| (2) Wisely reflecting, he cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. | <u>the awakening-factor of discrimination of states,</u> |
| (3) Wisely reflecting, he cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. | <u>the awakening-factor of effort,</u> |
| (4) Wisely reflecting, he cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. | <u>the awakening-factor of zest,</u> |
| (5) Wisely reflecting, he cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. | <u>the awakening-factor of tranquillity,</u> |
| (6) Wisely reflecting, he cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. | <u>the awakening-factor of concentration,</u> |
| (7) Wisely reflecting, he cultivates which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, ripening in letting go. | <u>the awakening-factor of equanimity,</u> |

Bhikshus, while influxes, vexing and feverish, may arise in one who does not cultivate such things, even so, there are no influxes, vexing and feverish, in one who cultivates them.

⁸⁴ *Idha bhikkhave paṭṭisaṅkhā yoniso uppann'uppanne pāpake akusale dhamme nādhivāseti pajahati vinodeti byantikaroti anabhāvaṃ gameti.* Cf a briefer version at **Sabb'āsava S** (M 2,20.2), SD 30.3. This additional sentence seems to allude to the 4th of the 4 biases (*agati*), fear. As 4 motives": **Āgati S 1** (A 4.17), SD 89.7; **Saṅgaha Bala S** (A 9.5,6.4) n, SD 2.21. Called "motives" (*thāna*) in **Sigal'ovāda S** (D 31,5), SD 4.1; SD 1.12 (6.4.1.3); SD 53.5 (2.2.1.1).

⁸⁵ On the 7 awakening-factors (*satta bojjhaṅga*), see **(Bojjhaṅga) Sīla S** (S 46.3), SD 10.15; **Mahā Sakul'udāyī S** (M 77,20) + SD 6.18 (7); **Aggañña S** (D 27,30), SD 2.19.

⁸⁶ The 2 lines: *viveka,nissitaṃ virāga,nissitaṃ nirodha,nissitaṃ vossagga,pariṇāmiriṃ.* On this *viveka,nissita* formula, see SD 30.3 (2.7.3).

9 These, bhikshus, are called the influxes to be abandoned by cultivation that have been abandoned by cultivation.

Possessing these 6 qualities, bhikshus, a monk is *worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of salutation with lotus palms, a peerless field of merit for the world.*" [391]

—evaṃ—

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