

That 'first' having thought and pondered afterwards one breaks into speech, clearly indicates that it is a 'preparation'. This point has been overlooked by Venerable Nāṇavīra Thera who rhetorically poses the question "Is thinking and pondering verbal action? For him, the emphasis on the words 'pubbe' ('first') and 'pacchā' (afterwards) signifies a relationship of 'determination' (See 'Notes on Dhamma P.5. Private edition-Sept. 1963).

Perception and feeling are, likewise, an incipient stage in mental activity (or thought activity). With 'saññā' and 'vedanā', the 'thinking apparatus' is already 'buzzing'. 'Saññā' strikes the cognitive note and 'vedanā' the affective note, which prepare (or pave the way for) 'cetanā' - the conative. The fact that 'saññā' and 'vedanā' are 'cetasika' and 'cittapātibaddha' of course needs emphasis (and perhaps re-emphasis too, for Venerable Nāṇavīra misses this point as well).

Visākha's questioning on these subliminal levels of bodily verbal and mental preparations is a preamble to his next question regarding the cessation of perception and feeling. Hence the above discussion is a spotlight on the infrastructure of 'Preparations' - *Sankhārā*.

27. Kāyasankhārā - Vacīśankhārā - Manosankhārā

Bodily, verbal and mental preparations that are ethically significant, and come under the purview of 'kamma' are referred to as 'kāyasankhārā', 'vacīśankhārā' and 'Manosankhārā' - 'mano' signifying ideational activity. These 'preparations' which, unlike those discussed above (26) are grosser, more articulate, and more deliberate, are 'puññābhīśankhārā', 'apuññābhīśankhārā' and 'āneñjābhīśankhārā' (i.e. meritorious, demeritorious and imperturbable specific preparations). As a rule, the prefix 'abhi' is added either to the noun (*abhisankhārā*) or to the verb (*abhisankharoti*) to signify these special categories of preparations. If, for instance, the in-breathing and out-breathing are the 'warming-up' of the 'machine', with *puññābhīśankhārā* and *apuññābhīśankhārā* an ethical preparation is made for progress and regress in the saṃsāric context. These preparations go a long way and are the

inheritance, as it were, of beings ('.....*kammadāyādā suttā-Kukkuravatiya S.M.N I 389*) 'āneñjābhīśankhārā' which pertain to *jhānic* realms, are more or less like the rotation of a top which keeps it upright and (apparently) 'im-perturbable'.

Kamma has been defined in terms of 'cetanā' or intention. 'Cetanāham bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi, cetayitvā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā' A.N. III 415. "Intention, monks, I say is action, intending one does action by body, by speech, by mind. "The term 'sankhārā', however, has its own points of emphasis. If, by 'cetanā' one is gathering or 'piling up' the *kamma* heritage, by 'sankhārā' one is making preparations to reap the specific good or bad results of his actions. A clear illustration of these points of emphasis in the context of *Kamma* and its result, is provided by the following reference:

Micchādīṭṭhikassa purisapuggalassa micchāsankappassa, micchāvācassa micchākammantassa micchājjivassa micchāvāyāmassa micchāsattissa micchāsamādhissa micchhānānassa micchāvimuttissa yañceva kāyakammaṃ yathādīṭṭhisamattam samādinnaṃ, yañca vacīśammaṃ yathādīṭṭhisamattam samādinnaṃ yañca manokammaṃ yathādīṭṭhi samattam samādinnaṃ yā ca cetanā yā ca pathanā yo ca pañidhi ye ca sankhārā sabbe te dhammā anīṭṭhāya akantāya amanāpāya ahitaya dukkhāya saṃvattanti. Tam kissa hetu. Dīṭṭhihi bhikkhave pāpikā."

A.N.V. 212

Monks, for a man, a person, who has wrong view, wrong thinking, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, wrong concentration, wrong knowledge, wrong release, whatsoever bodily action is undertaken and carried out in accordance with that view, whatsoever verbal action is undertaken and carried out in accordance with that view, whatsoever mental action is undertaken and carried out in accordance with that view, whatsoever intention, whatsoever aspiration, whatsoever determination and whatsoever preparations there may be - all those states conduce to what is unpleasant, not delightful, not agreeable not beneficial, to what is painful. What is the cause of that? Monks, the view is bad'.

The sequence of mental states mentioned here, is also noteworthy. While 'cetanā' - (intention) imparts the ethical significance to the whole trend, 'patthanā' (aspiration) and 'paṇidhī' (determination) decide its direction and aim, and 'saṅkhārā' (preparations) - as it were-gives it the 'stream-line'.

In respect of these ethically significant 'saṅkhāras' which are in some way or other prefixed with 'abhi', the term 'formations' is not strong enough as a rendering, due to its shade of passivity. Even the words 'cetanā' and 'sañcetanā' are sometimes coupled with words meaning fabrication, construction or preparation., ('ceteṭi' 'pakappeti' 'abhisankhataṃ' abhisañcetaṃ') As such, the dynamic significance of the word 'saṅkhāra' must never be ignored.

28. **Samkhārā and Dhammā**

*sabbe saṅkhārā aniccāni
yadā paññāya passati
atha nibbindati dukkhe
esa maggo visuddhiyā*

*sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhāni
yadā paññāya - passati
atha nibbindati dukkhe
esa maggo visuddhiyā*

*sabbe dhammā anattāni
yadā paññāya passati
atha nibbindati dukkhe
esa maggo visuddhiyā*

Dhp. vv 277 - 279

'All preparations are impermanent'. when one sees this with wisdom, then one becomes disgusted with suffering. This is the Path to Purity.

'All preparations are suffering'. When one sees this with wisdom, then one becomes disgusted with suffering. This is the Path to Purity.

'All things are not-self'. When one sees this with wisdom, then one becomes disgusted with suffering. This is the Path to Purity.

These three verses touching upon the 'Tilakkhana' (the three characteristics of existence), have posed a question to many. "Why" it is often asked- "is it that 'saṅkhārā' is used only with reference to 'anicca' and 'dukkha' and the word 'dhammā' is introduced with reference to 'anattā'. What is the 'logic' behind this?

True enough, to many, it is simply a question of 'logic', but the value of these three verses lies in the fact that they state a psychological necessity, in the interests of 'nibbidā' (disgust or 'disenchantment')

Even to the average man or woman conscious of the grosser aspects of 'saṅkhārā' ('preparations') it may appear that life is an endless series of preparations. But the pity of it is that to them these preparations seem so 'essence-tial', and 'pithy' like the plantain trunk which simulates something substantial. So all the routine 'make-ups' 'concoctions' and 'preparations' are recognized as part and parcel of life. 'Variety is the spice of life' - they say. For them, the 'rat-race' promises so much 'pep', that sans preparations, life seems dull. On the debris of one shattered 'Castle-of Hope' they will readily build another. And for every castle built on this earth, a thousand or more are built 'in-the-AIR."

But there comes a time-at least to some of them- to take stock of the situation they are in. Either it is a case of 'yonisomanasikāra' (radical - reflection) aroused in the clarity of 'saddhā' on hearing the Dhamma, or it is some rude shock in life like the loss of the beloved as in the cases of Patācārā and Kisā Gotamī. Bereavement gives such a powerful object lesson in impermanence and suffering that one is either driven to near-insanity or to the search for deliverance ('sammohavepakkāham bhikkhave dukkhaṃ vadāmi pariyeṭṭhivepakkaṃ vā -A.N. III 416) Monks, suffering, I say, has either delusion or search as its result.....') If one is fortunate enough to come across the Dhamma at this juncture, one stands a better chance to make a good start.

The important point, however, is to see that all preparations are impermanent, and it calls for clarity and wisdom to see this. It is said that 'preparations' are the most subtle form of suffering, even as hunger is the subtlest of diseases.

*Jighacchāpāramā roḡā
sankhāraparamā dukkhā
etaṃ ṇatvā yathābhūtam
nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*

Dhp. v.203

'Hunger is the farthest of diseases. Preparations are the farthest in the case of sufferings. Knowing this as it really is, Nibbāna is the highest bliss.'

Just as much as 'hunger' is taken for granted as part and parcel of life and is even prided on with the euphemism 'appetite', so are sankhāras' or 'preparations'- particularly those subliminal levels discussed above (26). If ever the question is raised why the word 'dhamma' is not introduced into the first or the second verse quoted above, one has only to point out that the range of suffering extends only up to 'sankhāras' as Dhp. v 203 specifically states. (Note that the word 'parama' as expressing the 'upper-limit' can mean either 'highest' or 'worst' according to the context.) It is, as though, 'Dukkhā' as 'distress' has coincided with the element of 'stress' in 'sankhāra'.

Then what is the provocation for looking upon all dhammas as 'anattā'? it may be asked. Now it is said that even pre-Buddhistic sages- and as a matter of fact, Ājāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta- had reached the higher Jhanic levels of ākiñcaññāyatana (sphere of Nothingness) and 'nevasaññā nāsaññāyatana (sphere of neither perception nor non perception). The Buddha, soon after his Enlightenment even thought of them as the fittest persons to be taught the Dhamma first, (see Ariyapariyesana S.M.N.) because they had already become acquainted with the sublime levels of 'sankhāra'. Blinded with the self-bias, those sages, however, were unable to distinguish 'sankhāras' as such and hence they clung to those mental phenomena as states of some permanent 'soul'. These, therefore, became the 'wherewithal' for fresh 'preparations'. Unless one 'lets go' of these 'dhammas' there is no escape from 'sankhāras' - from preparations, stress and distress. Like a cancer, sankhāras have so blighted this existence that they thrive on the minutest trace of a thing viewed-as-self. The ignorance and craving regarding the 'things' presented to

consciousness have to be done away with, in order that the seemingly unending process of 'preparations (sankhārasantati)' and with it 'Dukkhā' - may cease. To see all dhammas as 'not-self', is therefore a necessity. Without that insight, whether one likes it or not, sankhāras will go on, true to the simile of the man forcibly and unwillingly dragged towards a pit of embers, given as an illustration of the nature of 'manosañcetanā' (see S.N. II.11). So powerfully insatiable is craving that the Samsāric individual is for ever 'inclined' ('nati') like the 'Leaning-Tower-of-Pisa.'

In Venerable Nānavira's explanation of the relevance of these three verses to the problem of 'sankhāras, a reversal of the order is evident. The important word 'sankhāra' is defined as 'something upon-which-something else depends'- a determinant or a determination (Notes on Dhamma' P.10) and the word 'dhamma' as all things dependent upon other things. 'With this definition, the seeing of the impermanent and suffering nature of sankhāras becomes a manoeuvre of levering out the notion of self-an indirect method to see 'dhammas' as impermanent. As he puts it.....' he must first see that this thing is dependent upon or determined by, some other thing, and he must then see that this other thing, this determination or sankhāra is impermanent. When he sees that the other thing, the sankhāra, on which this thing depends, is impermanent, he sees that this thing too, must be impermanent and he no longer regards it as 'self' (ibid).

The Path to Purity is not that circuitous. The giving up of 'dhammas by seeing them as 'not-self' is a question of 'calming down' sankhāras thereby ending all suffering, as the expressions 'sankhārūpasama' and 'dukkhūpasama suggest'. (Note that the word 'upasama is suggestive of something more dynamic than a 'determinant). The 'giving-up', the 'letting-go' thus becomes a matter of necessity. Hence, instead of resorting to a legerdemain, the Buddha plainly asks us to face the problem of 'anattā' fairly and squarely and to assiduously develop 'anattasaññā' ('perception of not-self') from the very outset in as comprehensive a manner as possible. 'Sammāditṭhi' has always to be in the vanguard ('samamāditṭhi pubbaṅgamā hoti-Mahācattārisaka S.M.N.) and not inveigled

from behind. One of the most effective formulas recommended by the Buddha for constant reflection on the 'anattā' characteristic, not only dispenses with the need for 'a lever' but on the contrary goes so far as to exhaust the latencies to the conceit of 'I' and 'mine'. It occurs in a number of suttas in the Canon. The Mahāpuṇṇama Sutta, for instance, introduces it as follows:

Kathaṃ pana bhānte jānato kathaṃ passato imasmiṃca saviññāṇake kāye bahiddhā ca sabbanimittesu ahaṃkāra-mamaṃkāramānānusayā na hontīti'.

'Yaṃ kiñci, bhikkhu, rūpaṃ atītānāgatapaccuppannaṃ ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā olārikaṃ vā sukhumaṃ vā līṇaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā yaṃ dūre santike vā, sabbaṃ rūpaṃ netaṃ mama nesohamasmi na meso attāti, evamevaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya passati. Evaṃ kho bhikkhu jānato evaṃ passato imasmiṃca saviññāṇake kāye bahiddhā ca sabbanimittesu ahaṃkāra-mamaṃkāra-mānānusayā na hontīti

M.N. III 18f

'But, lord, in what manner should one know and see so that there come to be in him no underlying tendencies to conceive this body with its consciousness and all its external signs in terms of 'I' and 'mine'?

'Any kind of **form**, monk, whatever, whether past, future or present, in oneself or External, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, he sees all of it with right wisdom as it is thus: 'This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself'

'Any kind of **feeling** whatever.....

'Any kind of **perception** whatever.....

'Any kind of **preparations** whatever.....

'Any kind of **consciousness** whatever.....

.....this is not my self'.

It is when a man knows and sees thus, monk, that there come to be no underlying tendencies in him to conceive this body with its consciousness and all external signs in terms of "I" and 'mine'.

One who effectively wields this formula in combatting the notion of self, is compared at A.N. II 202 to a skilled archer (i) who shoots afar ('dūre pāṭi) (ii) by the flash of lightning (akkaṇavedhī) and (iii) rents asunder even a huge body (mahato kāyassa padāletā). That is to say (i) he attains "Sammā samādhi" or 'Right Concentration, (ii) becomes one of the Right View (Sammādiṭṭhi) and (iii) attains to Right Freedom (Sammāvimutti), with which the huge mass of Ignorance is rent asunder.

This kind of reflection which sweeps the entire range of "dhammas" including possible future ones, and puts the imprint, "This is not mine", "This is not I", "This is not myself" in such a way as to prevent breeding fresh preparations (Sankhāras) reveals the immense importance of the line 'sabbe dhammā anattāti. It is as if the 'raw-material' for 'preparations' is condemned well in advance to stem the gushing currents of craving. The insight into 'not-self' dispels the darkness of ignorance which sustains the 'make-up' activities of 'sankhāras'. Whereas earlier the 'preparations' were looked upon with the conceit 'am' (asmimāna) as so many 'I-do's and 'my-doings' (ahaṃkāra mamaṃkāra-lit. 'I-ing' and 'mine-ing') the insight into 'not-self', as it deepens, reveals that 'preparations' are simply conditioned by or are dependent upon Ignorance (avijjā). Hence it is that with the right understanding of the nature of this conceit, one puts an end to suffering. (sammā mānābhisamayā antamakāsi dukkhassa'.....)

*"suddhaṃ dhammasamuppādaṃ
suddhaṃ sankhāra santatiṃ
passantassa yathābhūtaṃ
na bhayaṃ hoti gāmaṇī.*

Adhimitta Thera-Thag.

'To one who sees as-it-is, the arising of pure phenomena, and the succession of pure preparations, there is no fear, O! headman.'

29. Heave! - and - Sigh!

Supposing we 'sit' after doing some strenuous work. We want calm and repose. We are tired of activity- of endless

preparations. But it seems we cannot help breathing. As if to 'have-done' with even this laborious activity of our lungs, we take one d-e-c-p breath-like packing up into a bundle so many possible tiny breaths. That is, we 'heave' to grab a moment of calm and repose even from this tedious 'work' of breathing. But do we really get what we want? No. We have to 'let-go' of the hard-won stock of air now choking our lungs. Hoping to get the longed-for repose at the other end of the 'see-saw', we release the breath and empty out our lungs. But do we find calm and repose here- in this 'sigh' of relief? No, we have to breathe again, and again. How convulsively we grasped (or gasped) for breath. But how we have to give it up perforce.

And so-

we go on-and on
in-and out -

we "HEAVE" and "SIGH"

*aniccā vata sankhāṇā
uppādayadhammino
uppajjivā nirujjhanti
tesaṃ vūpasamo sukho'*

Transient indeed are preparations
to rise-to fall-there nature is
They arise only to pass away
Bliss it is to calm them down.

*"Vayadhammā sankhāṇā
appamādena sampādettha
Preparations are subject to decay
-accomplish your TASK without delay'
- Mahā Parinibhāna S., D.N.*

30. **The 'Shuttle-free Mind**
"There seems to be a seam, but there is no seam'.

*Yo ubhante viditvāna
majjhe mantā na lippati
taṃ brūmi mahāpurisoti
so' dha sibbanimaccagā'
- Tissametteyya S., Sn.*

'He who having known both ends, with wisdom does not get attached to the middle, him I call a Great Man. He has gone beyond the seamstress in this world'.

This verse which was uttered by the Buddha in reply to a question that occurred to the Brahmin ascetic Tissametteyya, gets an interesting canonical commentary at Anguttara Nikaya, III. 399. It was the topic of discussion in an assembly of monks at Deer Park in Isipatana. Quoting the verse in question, those Elder monks raised the point:

"What, friends, is 'one end' what is the 'second end', what is the 'middle' and who is the 'seamstress'?"

As many as six interpretations were offered by individual monks, each of which, they claimed, is sufficient admonition for one to make and end of suffering here and now. Then at the suggestion of another monk, they all approached the Buddha and presented him with the 'report' of this 'symposium' to get his ratification.

The Buddha ratified them all as 'well-said' each in its own way, but explained what exactly he meant when he uttered that verse to Metteyya. His explanation happened to coincide with the first interpretation that came up at the symposium. Conveniently tabulated, the six different interpretations are as follows:

One-end	Second end	Middle	Seamstress
1. Contact	Arising of contact	Cessation of contact	Craving
2. Past	Future	Present	Craving
3. Pleasant feeling	Unpleasant feeling	Neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling	Craving
4. 'Name'	'Form'	Consciousness	Craving
5. Six internal sense bases	Six external sense bases	Consciousness	Craving
6. Personality	Arising of Personality	Cessation of Personality	Craving

A sewing-machine illustrates the seamstress at work. As the needle pierces through one fold making the contact on the second fold, the shuttle hastens to make a stitch ('in time'), lest there be a cessation of contact' in between. And so the needle comes up with the same thread to go down again and again-stitch after stitch. The shuttle works unseen, connecting up the stitches as long as its own load of cotton lasts.

Supposing some 'fine day' the shuttle runs out of its load of cotton and is not replenished in time. What will happen as the machine goes into action? the needle will pierce through one fold, giving a 'semblance' of contact to the second fold, but as it comes up, there is a cessation in the middle-which may pass unnoticed for a while by one unacquainted with the mechanism. The needle seems to work alright for him- as before-and apparently, there are the stitches too to connect up. But those who 'KNOW,' know what has happened. **There seems to be a seam, but there is no seam.**

Now, as for the 'seamstress'-craving' she has the following 'qualifications', according to the Buddha.

'yayāṃ taṅhā ponobhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatratrābhinandinī.....' (Saccavibhanga S. M.N. etc)

'And that craving which is the perpetrator of re-becoming, which is allied to delight and lust, and which rejoices now-here-now-there.'

In this particular context too, 'craving' is defined in all the six interpretations with the words:tanhā hi naṃ sabbatā tassa tasaveva bhavassa abhinibbattiyā.....' ('..... for it is craving that 'stitches' him so that he is born into this and that state of existence.....') In the formula of Paṭicca Samuppāda, 'craving' is the condition for 'grasping' (upādāna) which in its turn conditions 'becoming' or 'existence' (bhava).

So the 'seamstress' is fully qualified for her job. Whether it is a case of 'contact' and the 'arising of contact' or any of the other dualities mentioned in the five subsequent explanations, the 'seamstress' sees to it that a recurrence is maintained ('ponobhavikā') by linking up the two and introducing delight and lust ('nandirāgasahagatā'). Notoriously licentious

('tatratrābhinandinī') she reaches out ('upādāna) and even outreaches- to bring about ever new states of existence.'

The "middle" represents the domain of the 's-l-u-r' where "Ignorance" lurks to give a 'spur'-hence, "avijjā paccayā sankhārā." Whether it is a cessation of a specific contact or any of the other members in the middle (i.e. Present, neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant feeling, consciousness, cessation-of-personality), the usual tendency is to 'ignore'-to 'slur-over'. When this habit of 'slurring-over' is carried on for aeons and aeons, a latency or an underlying tendency ('anusaya') is built up, which is difficult to root out. But, luckily, it is in this very domain that the secret of emancipation lies. Perhaps the best illustration of this principle is found in the Cūla Vedalla Sutta. (M.N.) in the form of a dialogue between Dhammadinnā Therī and Visākha Upāsaka. It concerns the inter-relation between the three grades of feeling-'pleasant', 'unpleasant', 'neither unpleasant nor pleasant'.

I

'Sukhā panayye vedanā kiṃ sukhā kiṃdukkhā dukkhā vedanā kiṃ dukkhā kiṃ sukhā, adukkhamasukhā vedanā kiṃ sukhā kiṃ dukkhāti'

'Sukhā kho āvuso Visākha vedanā tītisukhā vipariṇāmadukkhā dukkhāvedanā tītīdukkhā vipariṇāmasukhā adukkhamasukhā vedanā nāṇasukhā aññādukkhāti.'

'But, lady, in what respect is pleasant feeling pleasant and in what respect is it unpleasant? In what respect is unpleasant feeling unpleasant, and in what respect is it pleasant?. In what respect is neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant feeling pleasant and in what respect is it unpleasant?'

'Friend Visakha, pleasant feeling is pleasant in respect of presence and unpleasant in respect of change. Unpleasant feeling is unpleasant in respect of presence and pleasant-in respect of change. Neither unpleasant-nor-pleasant feeling is pleasant in respect of knowledge and unpleasant in respect of ignorance.

II

'Sukhāya panayye vedanāya kimanusayo anuseti, dukkhāya vedanāya kimanusayo anuseti adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya kimanusayo anuseti.

'Sukhāya kho āvuso Visākha vedanāya rāgañusayo anuseti, dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighānusayo anuseti adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya avijjānusayo anuseti.

'But, lady, the underlying tendency to what underlies in the case of pleasant feeling? The underlying tendency to what underlies in the case of the unpleasant feeling? The underlying tendency to what underlies in the case of the neither-unpleasant nor pleasant feeling?'

'Friend, Visakha, the underlying tendency to lust underlies in the case of pleasant feeling. The underlying tendency to the resistance underlies in the case of the unpleasant feeling. The underlying tendency to ignorance underlies in the case of neither unpleasant nor pleasant feeling'

III

'Sukhāya panayye vedanāya kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

'Sukhāya kho āvuso Visākha vedanāya dukkhā vedanā paṭibhāgoti'

Dukkhāya panayye vedanāya kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

Dukkhāya kho āvuso Visākha vedanāya sukhā vedanā paṭibhāgoti'

Adukkhamasukhāya panayye vedanāya kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

Adukkhamasukhāya kho āvuso Visākha vedanāya avijjā paṭibhāgoti'

Avijjāya panayye kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

Avijjāya kho āvuso Visākha, vijjā paṭibhāgoti'

Vijjāya panayye kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

Vijjāya kho āvuso Visākha vimutti paṭibhāgoti'

Vimuttiya panayye kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

Vimuttiya kho āvuso Visākha nibbānaṃ paṭibhāgoti'

'Nibbānassa panayye kiṃ paṭibhāgoti'

'Accasarāvuso Visākha paññaṃ nāsakkhi paññānaṃ pariyaṇānaṃ gahetum. Nibbānogaḍham hi āvuso Visākha brahmacariyaṃ nibbānaparāyaṇaṃ nibbana pariyaṇānaṃ'

'What is the counterpart of pleasant feeling, lady?'

'Friend Visākha, unpleasant feeling is the counterpart of pleasant feeling.'

'What is the counterpart of unpleasant feeling, lady?'

'Friend Visākha, pleasant feeling is the counterpart of unpleasant feeling.'

'What is the counterpart of neither unpleasant nor pleasant feeling, lady?'

'Friend Visākha, **ignorance** is the counterpart of neither unpleasant nor pleasant feeling.'

'What is the counterpart of ignorance, lady?'

'Friend Visākha, **knowledge** is the counterpart of ignorance'

'What is the counterpart of knowledge, lady?'

'Friend Visākha, **deliverance** is the counterpart of knowledge'

'What is the counterpart of deliverance, lady?'

'Friend Visākha, **Nibbāna** is the counterpart of deliverance'

'What is the counterpart of Nibbāna, lady?'

"Friend Visākha, you have pushed this line of questioning too far. You were not able to grasp the limit of questions. For, friend Visākha, the Holy life merges in Nibbāna, leads to Nibbāna, reaches its consummation in Nibbāna."

As this dialogue reveals, the neutrality, indifference and ignorance associated with the Middle in the context of feelings are transformed into knowledge, detachment and deliverance. The second line of the verse, '*majjhe mantā na lippati*' ('with **wisdom**, does not get attached to the middle') is to the same effect. The Middle path runs right through this domain of the S-L-U-R transcending its limitations.

This 'anguished world swayed by **contact**' (*ayaṃ loka santāpajāto phassapareto* - Ud. Nanda Vagga) slurs over each specific cessation of contact, which is conditionally arisen. For the worldling, the 'see-saw' alternation is between pain and pleasure (see S.N.IV 208), and this keeps him too busy to probe into the cessation of contact 'as such. The fact that it is just at this point that insight unfolds itself is best illustrated by the Nandakovāda Sutta (M.N.²)

A similar slurring over is found in the case of the second interpretation where 'Past' is 'One-end', 'Future' the 'Second-end' and 'Present' is in 'the Middle'. The Present is something elusive for the worldling hankering after the Past and yearning for the Future (see Bhaddekaratta S.M.N.) But here too it is the task of insight to discern the impermanence of the present phenomena without resort to a self-bias.

In the fourth and the fifth interpretations, Consciousness occurs in the middle, as its conditionally arisen nature is often overlooked. Its role is taken for granted by the worldling engrossed in 'name-and form' (*nāmarupā*) and in the six internal and external sense-bases (i.e. the six senses and their respective objects). The magical illusion (*māyā*) of consciousness is to be comprehended.

In the sixth interpretation, the 'cessation of personality' (*sakkāyanirodha*) stands in the middle. The worldling who finds himself leashed to a 'self' like a dog to a post, does not realize that the ambit of his 'personality' (*sakkāyo*) is confined to just the five Grasping-Groups. Nor does he realize that the 'arising of his personality' (*sakkāyasamadayo*) is 'desire' (*'chanda'*). Hence the 'cessation of personality' for him is tantamount to annihilation.

That is perhaps why the brahmins steeped in Eternalism (*sassataditṭhi*) mistook the Buddha for a Nihilist pure and simple, and disparaged him. (See Alagaddūpama S.M.N.) A cessation of personality' (*'Sakkāyanirodho'*) which is not tantamount to an annihilation will appear as a possibility only when one gets an insight into 'impermanence', 'suffering' and 'not-self.'

If, then, by any one of the six methods outlined above, one 'dismisses' the 'Seamstress' - abandons craving - how will his mind function? As some seem to think now a days, will he be reduced to a VEGETABLE? If all this time his mind had been 'Prepared' (*'sankhata'*) what will be the 'Un-prepared mind' like?

The 'Released Mind' (*vimuttaṃ cittaṃ*) or Influx-free mind (*anāsavaṃ cittaṃ*) is sometimes referred to as 'the mind gone to the state of non-preparation' (*visankhāragataṃ cittaṃ* - Dhp

v. 154). In at least one context it is called 'consciousness not having been prepared, set free. (*Vīññāṇaṃ anabhisankhacca vimuttaṃ* S.N. III 153) 'Consciousness which is non-manifestative' (*vīññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ*) - D.N. I. 213 M.N. I 329) is yet another way of referring to it.

This is the 'SHUTTLE-FREE MIND'. The 'machine' appears to 'work' as before. There are the apparent 'preparations'. But there is no 'end-product' as 'a prepared' (*sankhata*). The Perfect One is released from the "reckoning" of preparations. Though his six senses come in 'contact' with their objects there is no "SHUTTLE" to complete the stitch. In other words: There seems to be a seam - but there is no seam.....

- i. *Na kappayanti na purekkharonti
accantasuddhīti na te vadanti
āḍānaganthaṃ gathitaṃ visajja-
āsaṃ na kabbanti kuhuñci loke*

Suddhaṭṭhaka S.n.

They fabricate not, they proffer not, nor do they hold on to a 'highest purity', as a view. Letting go of the knotty tangle of grasping, they form no desire anywhere in this world'.

- ii. *'na me hoti ahosinti
bhavissanti na hoti me
sankhāra vibhavissanti
tatha kā paridevanā'*

Adhimutta Thera-Thag.

'It does not occur to me 'I-was'
Nor does it occur to me 'I will be'

Preparations will perish,

What is there to lament?

- iii. *'Suddhaṃ dhammasamuppādaṃ
Suddhaṃ sankhārasantaṃ
passantassa yathābhūtaṃ
na bhayaṃ hoti gāmaṇi*

- ibid.

'To one who sees as-it-is, the arising of pure phenomena and the succession of pure preparations, there is no fear, O! headman.

31. Attend to your 'Ins' and 'Outs' - until the In-lines fade away into Out-lines

- i. *Tiṇakatthasamaṃ lokam
yadā paññāya passati
mamattaṃ so asaṃvindaṃ
nathī meṭṭi na socati*

Adhimutta Thera - Thag.

'When one sees with wisdom, the world as comparable to grass and twigs, experiencing no 'mine-ness' one does not lament: O! I have nothing!'

- ii. *Kadā nu kaṭṭhe ca tiṇe latā ca
khandhe ime haṃ amite ca dhamme
ajjhakkāneva ca bahirānica
samaṃ tuleyyaṃ taddidaṃ kadā me*

Tālapuṭa Thera - Thag.

'When shall I weigh, as equal, twigs, grass and creepers - these aggregates and countless things internal as well as external - O! When will that be of me?'

(For the 'mode-of approach', see Mahā Hatthipadopama Sutta and Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya)

32. I Dancing on a frying-pan.

As one of the four '*vipallāsas*' (perversions) '*anicce niccasaññā*' (perception of permanence in the impermanent) is to be systematically counteracted with '*aniccasaññā*' ('perception of impermanence'). The perversion prevails at three levels - '*saññā*' (Sense-perception), '*citta*' (thought) and '*dīṭṭhi*' (view).

Ignorance or ignoring of the disintegrating nature of the '*Sankhata*' leads to chronic delusion ('*moha*') with its twin feelers 'attachment' ('*rāga*') and aversion ('*paṭigha*'). Thus curiosity, love and hate obsess the groping worldlings.

The '*Sankhata*'- facade has to be **penetrated through** with the Ariyan penetrative wisdom which sees the rise-and fall ('.....*udayatthagāminiyā paññāya ariyāya nibbedhikāya*)

'*Bhavanirodho sacchikatabho*' 'Cessation of becoming is something to be **realized**.' What prevents its realization is '*tanhā ponohavikā*' - craving which makes for re-becoming. With delight and lust it connects up and obscures the fact of cessation by delighting now-here-now there- like dancing on a frying pan. Hence it is that '*nibbidā virāga*' (disenchantment and dispassion) regarding the 'present' automatically lays bare the cessation of '*saṅkhāras*' which make up the facade.

'*Rūpaṃ kho Ānanda aniccaṃ sankhataṃ paṭiccasamuppannaṃ khayadhammaṃ vayadhammaṃ virāgadhammaṃ nirodhadhammaṃ. Tassa nirodhā nirodhoti vuccati..... vedanā..... saññā... sankhārā... vinñāṇam kho Ānanda, aniccaṃ.....'*

S.N. III 24

'Form, Ānanda, is impermanent, prepared, dependently arisen' of a nature to waste away, pass-away, fade away and cease by such ceasing, is there said to be cessation. FeelingPerception.....Preparations....Consciousness, Ānanda, is impermanent....'

II. Take a peep into your private museum where the relics of yesterday's treasured possessions and status symbols lie.

33. Phantasmagoria

Yesterday	=	last night's dream
Tomorrow	=	tonight's dream
Today	=	a day-dream

34. "Old-age"- a caricature of Youth

35. Bale out! No! S.O.S'

I *siṅca bhikkhu imaṃ nāvaṃ
sittā te lahumessati
hitvā rāgaṇca dosaṇca
tato nibbāna mehi*

- Dhṛp. v. 369

'Bale out this ship, O! monk. Emptied it will sail lightly for you. Giving up lust and hate, you will then arrive at Nibbāna.'

II. From El Dorado - (A parable).

A steamer is returning from El Dorado with a heavy cargo of gold nuggets in its hold. Adorning its cabin is a vast array of exquisite wood-carvings worth a fortune.

Still in mid-ocean it runs out of coal. Not a breath of wind to unfurl the sails. When every available piece of wood had become firewood, the wood carvings too follow suit to go up in smoke.

The ship is now moving and the sailors heave a sigh of relief. But then comes a Titanic disaster. Just when land hove in sight, the ship runs on rocks.

Water seeps in fast. No way to seal the damaged keel. Only the fate of the sailors looks sealed.

'S.O.S.' 'Save-our-souls' They signal in vain. Save our (Golden) Souls!

'Bale out!' Dump the gold into the sea! Some one suggests. "What? Dump all this precious gold into the sea?" The others retort. "We would rather die".

Water gushes in. 'Now-or-never' As a last resort they agree to 'let go' of the gold. And so the precious gold safely reached the bottom of the sea, and the sailors, eventually, the safety of dry land.....

Where were the sailors born?
Where will they die?
Where was that gold born?
Where will it die?
Where were the carvings born?
Where will they die?
Where were the carvings born?
There they will die.

36. If everything happens the way we want-then this is not 'Saṃsāra'.
37. When things look too 'rosy' there is a danger of a 'red' coming in.

38. Make an appointment with disappointment - then you will never meet with it.
39. When 'Past' and 'Future' crowd out the 'passage' of the present, thoughts cannot move in single file.
40. 'Sankhāras' are life-situations measured out in thought.
41. See the four elements in the 'melting-pot'.
42. Your biography is being filmed for you-even before it is written.
43. When one fully understands that one is 'acting'--- one is no longer acting.
44. When one becomes fully aware that one is reacting, one is no longer reacting.
45. 'Life' looks such a formidable "sum" we are set to work out for ourselves, with all its numerous 'additions' and 'subtractions', 'divisions' and 'multiplications' until we come to the last step:

- 'multiply by **NOUGHT**'

*suññato lokam avekkhassu
mogharāja sadā sato
attānudiṭṭhim ūhacca
evaṃ maccutaro siyā
evaṃ lokam avekkhantaṃ
maccurājā na passati*

- Sn v. 1119

'Look upon the world as void, *Mogharāja*,
And mindful ever, uproot
The lingering view of self
Thus will you cross the realm of Death,
For, the king of Death sees him not
Who thus looks upon the World (as void)

46. **I The Elusive Gem**
(A moral from Ummagga Jataka)

King Vedeha was informed that there is a gem in the pond by

the city-gate. He consulted one of his advisers, Senaka, as to the means of getting it. As suggested by the latter, the pond was emptied of its water and when they failed to find the gem, Senaka got the men to take even the mud out. Still, the gem could not be found. But once the pond got filled again, the elusive gem was visible there.

Then the king sought the help of his youngest adviser Bodhisatta Mahosadha, who agreed to solve the problem. He came to the pond and had a look, and understood that the gem is not in the pond but on the palm tree by the bank. He got one of the men to immerse a bowl into the water and showed that the gem is visible there too. "Where then, is the gem?" asked the King. "It is in the crow's nest on the palm tree" said Mahosadha. "Send someone up and get it down." And so it was got down and given to the king. It was only the reflection that they had sighted in the pond. They had failed to reflect wisely on the REFLECTION!

*'Anattani attamānīm
passa lokam sadevakam
niviṭṭham nāmarūpasmīm
idaṃ saccanti maññati*

- Sn. v 756 Dvyatānupassanā S.

Just see a world! with all its gods
Fancying a self, where naught, exists
Entrenched in name and form it holds
The conceit that this is the truth.

So it is the case with the 'self-image' 'Nāma-rūpa' reflected on consciousness. Many were the philosophers who traced it (metaphysically) to the bottom of the 'pond' of consciousness. But they could not 'fathom' it, for their perspective was wrong ('ayoniso manasikāra). They, too, had failed to reflect wisely on the reflection.

Those who 'craved' for the gem 'ignored' the nest as external because the precious gem shined so internal-though both were external, as a matter of fact. Only the Bodhisatta adjusted his perspective so, as to see the gem and the nest 'as-they-are' i.e. mere reflections of the external.

Likewise, only the Buddha, of all religious teachers, adjusted his perspective in such a way as not to get entangled in the reflection - 'Nāma rūpa'. As he put it: 'Sabbam taṇhī-phassapaccayā' - 'all that is due to contact.' (Brahmajāla S.D.N.) With his keen insight which was not blocked by any 'precious' object ('anārammaṇam') he discovered that the 'pond' of consciousness has the same crystal clear, lucid limpid nature it always had - for the keen-sighted.

II Some 'reflections' on seeing the REFLECTION

i. *Viññāṇam parinñeyyam
paññā bhāvetabbā*

- Mahāvedalla S.M.N.

'Consciousness should be comprehended, wisdom should be developed.'

ii. *Viññāṇam unidassanam
anantam sabbatopabham
ettha āpo ca paṭhavi
tejo vāyo na gādhati
ettha dīghañca rassañca
uṇum thūlam subhāsabhām
ettha nāmañca rūpañca
asesam uparujjhati
viññāṇassa-nirodhena
etthetam uparujjhati*

- Kevaddha S.D.N. 1 213

'Consciousness which is non-manifestative.
Endless, lustrous on all sides
Here it is that earth and water
Fire and air no footing find
Here again are long and short,
Fine and coarse, pleasant, unpleasant,
And name and form. all these are here,
Cut off without exceptions
When consciousness does come to cease
All these are held in check herein.

iii. *Yā ceva kho pana ajjhātikā paṭhavidhātu, yā ca bāhirā
paṭhavidhātu, paṭhavidhāturevesā....*

- Mahā Hatthipadopama S.M.N.

'And whatever earth element that is in oneself and whatever
earth-element that is external to oneself- it is just earth element
itself'.

iv *Passaṃ naro dakkhiti nāmarūpaṃ
disvāna vā ñassati tāni meva
kāmaṃ bahuṃ passatu appakaṃ vā
na tena suddhiṃ kusalā vadanti*

Sn - 908: Mahāvīyūha S.

'A seeing-man will see name and form, and having seen, he
will know those alone. Verily, let him see much or less. Yet
experts do not speak of purity thereby.'

v *Kadā nu kaṭṭhe ca.....*

- (See above p. 34)

vi *'Kodhaṃ jahe vippajaheyya mānaṃ
Saññojanaṃ sabhamatikkameyya
taṃ nāmarūpasmiṃ asajjamaṇaṃ
akiñcanaṃ nānupatanti dukkhā.*

- Dhṛ v.211

'Let one put wrath away conceit abandon
And get well beyond all fetters as well,
That one by name and form *untrammelled*
And possessionless - no pains befall.

vii *'Pabhassaramidaṃ bhikkave cittaṃ tañca kho
āgantukehi upkkilesehi upakkilīṭṭhaṃ.....'*

- A.N.I 10

'This mind, monks, is luminous, only, that it is defiled by
extraneous defilements....'

47. *Saññā* tries to put the 'two-and-two' together, but '*Sankhārā*
see to it that the total is not four but five.

48. '*Phassa*' is the apex of the *sankhata* - triangle.

49. '*Sankhata*': The element of artificiality in the word suggests
simulation, pretension, and verisimilitude as illustrated by
the five canonical similes, mass of foam, water bubble, mirage,
plantain tree and magical-illusion.

50. '*Sankhārā*': The vibrant forces that **impel, propel and compel**
the samsāric individual, may be put down to the **tension**
created by an **imagined** relationship between an internal and
an external sense base. It is like a rope strung up between two
pegs. Hence *sañjāyatananirodha* (cessation of the six sense-
bases) brings about '*sabbasamkhārasamatha*' (stilling of all
preparations). When the eye ceases, forms fade away
(.....*cakkuñca nirujjhati rūpā ca virajjanti.*)

(S.N. IV 98)3

'Knock-off the 'eye', from the **scene** (or the seen) and **'forms'**
will shrink into insignificance - at the other end - for lack of
perspective.

51. '*Nāma-rūpa*': The delusion created by *nāma-rūpa* as 'self-
image' is like my imagining that 'the fellow' appearing in the
mirror (i.e. my own reflection) is looking at me even when I
turn my back on him.

To understand *Paṭicca Samuppāda* is to become aware that 'the
fellow' looks at me, only when I care to look at the fellow:
(.....*kiṃ paṭicca?* '*Phassaṃ paṭicca*' Dependent on what?
Dependent on contact')

All speculative attempts to 'catch-the-fellow-napping' are
misguided. Hence the Buddha bundled out all the 62 views in
Brahmajāla Sutta (D.N.) with: '*tadapi phassa paccayā* - 'That
too is due to contact'

The advice to *Bāhiya* (Ud.) strikes at the root of this
fundamental delusion. ".....in the seen just the seen....." etc.
(.....*ditṭhe ditṭhamatṭam bhavissati...etc*)

i. '*Passaṃ naro dakkhiti nāmarūpaṃ*' etc.

(See above p. 40)

ii. 'Avijjānīvaraṇassa bhikkhave hālassa taṅhāsampayuttassa evaṃ ayaṃ kāyo samudāgato. Iti ayañceva kāyo bahiddhā ca nāmarūpaṃ. itthetāṃ dvayaṃ. Dvayaṃ pañca phasso salevāyatanāni yehi phuttho hālo sukhadukkhāṃ paṭisaṃvediyatī etesaṃ vā aññatarena.

- S.N.II 23 f

For the fool monks, cloaked by ignorance and tied to craving this body is wrought in this way - Thus there is this body and name and form without - thus this pair. Because of the pair, there is contact and just six spheres of sense, touched, by these or by one of them the fool experiences pleasure and pain.'

52. The Witch's Cauldron

Every little bit of experience becomes '**concocted**' in the '**Witch's cauldron** of one's mind, due to '**mindng**' (*maññanā*) So you are nearer '**Asankhata**' (Non-prepared', Non-concocted) - **if you don't mind!**

"Maññamāno kho bhikkhave baddho Mārassa, amaññamāno mutto pāpimato...'

S.N. IV. 2

'Minding' monks, one is bound by Mara, minding not he is freed from the Evil One.'

53. The Power-House

You are being shown round a hydro-electric scheme, for the first time.

The guide takes you first to the vast reservoir overlooking the dam (Stage I). You wonder how this sleepy reservoir can give you something like electricity, but the guide explains to you that these calm and placid waters are channelled almost unseen into a tunnel through the hills, at some point in the reservoir (Stage II). Then you are taken further down and shown the four big pipe-lines which run towards the power-house at the other end of the tunnel. (Stage III). You can also see now that last small pipe line which conveys all that vast stock of water into the power-house (Stage IV). Lastly, you are taken into the

power-house itself where you can see how that gushing current of water turns the huge turbine at a terrific speed to give you electricity (Stage V).

These five stages of the scheme are somewhat comparable to the five groups of grasping as '*sankhata-sankhārā*' or 'prepared-preparations', i.e. **the pent-up vibrant forces that impel, propel and compel.**

Stage I	-	The Grasping Group of Form
Stage II	-	The Grasping Group of Feeling
Stage III	-	The Grasping Group of Perception
Stage IV	-	The Grasping Group of Preparations
Stage V	-	The Grasping Group of Consciousness

54. Watch the scenes on the **eye-screen** and listen to the beat of the **ear-drum.**

55. Many a battle is fought and won at the **weakest** point in your fortress.

56. **Breathe** - as if every breath were your last - then you will never be '**breathless**'

57. **From the 'complex' - to the 'compound'**

The resolution of the 'perception-of-the-compact' (*ghanasaññā*) by developing the 'perception of the heap' (*rāsisaññā*) is a step in the passage from the complex to the compound. Every slight shift of focus is understood as a separate instance of perception - however minute.

58. **The 'Element-ary'**

'**This** and '**that**' = paṭhavi āpo tejo vāyo.

'**So**' and '**So**' = paṭhavi, āpo, tejo, vāyo, ākāsa, viññāna.

59. **Sankhārā - 'Ever-new, 'but - Never lasting'**

In this 'drama' of 'LIFE' you can never ask for a '**repeat-performance**'. When once a 'scene' is gone - it is gone, gone, gone forever.

'.....yāvañcidaṃ bhikkhave alameva sabbasaṃkhāresu nibbinditūṃ alaṃ virajjitūṃ alaṃ vimuccitūṃ.'

A.N. IV 102

'So much so, monks, it is enough to get disgusted of all preparations, enough to get detached, enough to get released from them.'

60. 'Sankhāre parato disvā hetujāte palokine'

Having seen the preparations as alien, causally arisen and brittle(Thig. Sakulā Therī)

Life expends itself through sankhārā - a pre-occupation with short lived identifications (*tammayatā*) courting after-images.

61. Sankhārā

No 'preparation' is 'final' and complete.

'.....aniccā bhikkhave sankhārā addhuvā bhikkhave sankhārā anassāsikā bhikkhave sankhārā....'

'.....impermanent, monks, are preparations, unstable, monks, are preparations, unsatisfying, monks are preparations....'

A.N. IV 102

62. 'Let-go-ism':

To see sankhāras as 'circum - stantial', not as 'sub-stantial'.

63. Non-identification (*atammayatā*):

To be like a brick in any wall.

64. A strip-tease- for 'nibbidā-virāga' (disenchantment-dispassion)-

Undress upto the skeleton!

(Stages: 1. head-hairs 2. body-hairs 3. nails 4. teeth 5. skin 6. flesh 7. sinews)

65. How to be 'measure-less':

Strike off the bottom and be free from reckoning.

.....yam kho bhikkhu anuseti tam anumīyati, yam anumīyati, tena saṅkham gacchati'. S.N. III 36 f.

'That which lies latent, monks, by that is one measured and that by which one is measured, by that is one reckoned.'

66. 'T-w-a-n-g'

(The world is in a whirl, but the winding comes only with 'upādāna' grasping!)

Suppose two persons are trying to wind up some strands into a long long rope, and some mischief-maker is keeping a tight hold at the middle, unseen by them. Somehow, the winding itself-queer enough- has started in the same direction from both ends, but to all appearance, a rope is being steadily made up owing to the tight hold at the middle. The two at either end are ignorant of the fact that their winding is at the same time, an unwinding. The 'Rope', however, gets more and more tensed, taut and vibrant.

'T-w-a-n-g'-

The mischief- maker suddenly 'lets go' of his hold at the middle. Now, where is the 'Rope'?

Was there a 'Rope' in truth and fact?

Find the answer in the following quotes:

1. *muñca pure, muñca pacchato
majjhe muñca bhavassa pārāgū
sabbattha vimuttamānaso
na puna jātijaram upehisi*

- Dh.p. v. 348.

Let go what has gone before
Let go that which comes after
Let go of thy hold at the middle as well
And get well beyond all existence
Thus with mind released in every way
Thou comest never more to birth and decay.

2. *Yassa pure ca pacchā ca
majjhe ca natthi kiñcanaṃ
akiñcanaṃ anādānaṃ
tamahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ*

- Dh.p. v. 421

'Who has naught before or behind him
And naught in the middle to call his own
Who owns naught and to naught will cling
Him do I call a Brahmin'.

67. 'One' or 'Two'?

Existence involves a duality which has to be transcended. The problem cannot be solved by grasping it as ONE, because by the very grasping, it becomes TWO. (See T-w-a-n-g- above)

The moment you **grasp** the 'rope' that is being **whirled** round with only a semblance of winding, it becomes a 'REAL' rope with two ends. The result is stress and tension (Dukkha)

upādāna paccayā bhavo'
'dependent on grasping, existence'

This **winding'** is a deviation caused by ignorance. All this is 'not-SUCH' (*'sabbam vitatham idam' - Uruga S.Sn.*)

The '**whirl'** of the world is the Norm ('Tathatā - Suchness), where every winding is, at the same time, an 'un-winding'.

Yam kiñci samudayadhammañ
sabbam tam nirohadhammañ'

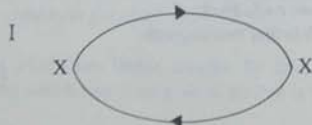
Whatever is of a nature to arise, all that is of a nature to cease'.

'Let-go' - and you return to Suchness. This is the end of all stress and tension.

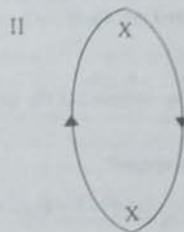
68. Ānāpānasati

'The long and the short of it'

When one is able to be mindful of the entire process of in-breathing and out-breathing thus:



More details of the phenomenon of breathing will become apparent. At this point, a breakthrough in 'vipassanā' may occur, as the 'rise' and 'fall' of breath is now clear. If the understanding of breath as 'long' and 'short' (I) is 'horizontal', its understanding as 'rise' and 'fall' is rather vertical (II).



The very uniformity of attention which negotiates the hitherto unseen 'bends' (x) in the process, ensures greater calm, hence the next step - ('calming down bodily preparations'.....etc)

It is a RHYTHM that makes for CALM. One that goes DEEP as well.

69. 'SATI' - 'memory' or 'mindfulness' or both?

The relation between 'memory' and 'mindfulness' is sometimes a point of controversy. While the Pali word 'sati' denotes both, there is a reluctance in some quarters to grant any connection between 'memory' and 'mindfulness'.

Suppose, instead of the term 'mindfulness' we use a term like 'collectedness' as the English equivalent for 'sati'. Then there would not be such a wide gulf between the two meanings so well expressed by the Pali original. 'Memory', then, could be represented by 're-collectedness' (c.f. 'anussati' - recollection), if verbal similarity is needed.

To be mindful is to be collected (i.e. 'not-distracted' - see **Oxford English Dictionary**), and this has strict relevance to the present moment as required by the finer nuance of the term in its Buddhist usage. But the net result of this diligent practice of living with a 'collected-mind' in the present moment is the

ability to re-call - to 'recollect' - things done and said long ago ('*cirakatampi cirabhāsītampi saritā anussaritā*) in accordance with the standard definition of the Pali term in its generic sense.

So, after all, it is only the conceit behind the English term 'mindfulness', that obscured the whole issue.

70. **Satipatthāna:**

An objective approach to understand the subjective in one's experience.

71. '*Asankhata*' - 'The Un-prepared'

To be 'unprepared' is to be prepared for anything.

72. '*Upādāna paccayā bhavo*'

(dependent on grasping, existence)

'WHAT' you grasp -
THAT you are.'

73. **The 'Purpose' of Life**

A misuse of the word? 'Excuse' would be a better substitute, because there is no purpose that does not itself presuppose some form of life. All so-called 'purposes' foisted on life by the worldling to brighten it up, are but mere 'excuses'.

Buddhism faces squarely the utter hollowness of life when it equates it with 'Dukkha' - the bitter truth (of suffering). According to its analysis, if one can speak of 'the' purpose of life', it is none other than the endeavour to bring about the cessation of saṃsāric existence - the vicious circle. This is the only excuse that is justifiable.

Appendix

1. *Athassa susiraṃ sīsāṃ
matthalungena pūritam
Subhato naṃ maññatī halo
avijjāya purakkhato.*

Vijaya S., Sn., v. 196

'And the cavity of his skull is filled with brain-matter. The fool led by ignorance, thinks of it as beautiful.'

2. *'Evameva kho bhaginiyo yo nu kho evaṃ vadeyya: cha hi
khome ajjhātikā āyatanā aniccā, yañca kho cha ajjhātikā
āyatane paṭicca paṭisaṃvedeti sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā
adukkhamasukhaṃ vā taṃ niccaṃ dhuvaṃ sassataṃ
aviparināmadhamanti sammā nu kho so bhaginiyo
vadamāno vadeyyāti. No hetāṃ bhante. Taṃ kissa hetu?
Tajjaṃ tajjaṃ bhante paccayaṃ paṭicca tajjā tajjā vedanā
uppajjanti, tajjassa tajjassa paccayassa nirodhā tajjā tajjā
vedanā nirujjhantīti.'*

Nandakovāda S., M.N..

'So, too, sisters, would anyone speak rightly who spoke thus: 'These six internal spheres are impermanent but that dependent on the six internal spheres which I feel as pleasant, unpleasant or neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant is permanent, everlasting, eternal and not liable to change?'

NO, Venerable Sir
'Why is that?'

'Because Venerable sir, specific feelings arise dependent on a specific condition, and with the cessation of the specific condition, specific feelings cease.'

3. 'Therefore, monks, that sphere should be known wherein the eye ceases and the perception of forms fades away; the ear ceases and the perception of sounds fades away, the nose ceases and the perception of smells fades away, the tongue ceases and the perception of tastes fades away, the body ceases and the perception of tangibles fades away, the mind ceases and the perception of ideas fades away - that sphere should be known, that sphere should be known'

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