

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

Development of the Mental Faculties (Indriyabhaavanaasuttam)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in the Mukhelu forest in Kajangala. Then the young man Uttara a pupil of Parasariya approached the Blessed One, exchanged friendly greetings and sat on a side. The Blessed One said to Uttara. ‘Uttara, does the brahmin Parasariya preach the development of the Mental Faculties to his disciples?’

‘Good Gotama, the brahmin Parasariya preaches the development of the Mental Faculties to his disciples.’

‘Uttara, how does the brahmin Parasariya preach the development of the Mental Faculties to his disciples?’

‘Here, good Gotama, forms should not be seen with the eye, sounds should not be heard with the ear. The brahmin Parasariya preaches the development of the Mental Faculties to his disciples in this manner.’

‘Uttara, according to the words of the brahmin Parasariya a blind man will be developed in mental faculties and a deaf man will be developed in mental faculties, for a blind man does not see forms and a deaf man does not hear sounds.’

When this was said the young man Uttara the pupil of Parasariya became silent, confused, with a drooping body turned his face downwards and sat unable to reply.

The Blessed One seeing the young man Uttara the pupil of Parasariya had become silent, confused, with a drooping body had turned his face downwards and sat unable to reply, addressed venerable Ananda: ‘Ananda, the brahmin Parasariya teaches a different development of the mental faculties to his disciples. The incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones’ discipline is something different.’

‘Venerable sir, this is the right time, to teach the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones’ discipline, to the bhikkhus. They hearing it from the Blessed One will remember it.’

Then Ananda, listen carefully and attentively, I will teach.

‘Ananda, to the bhikkhu seeing a form arises like, or dislike or like and dislike. (*1) He knows, this like, or dislike, or like and dislike has arisen to me. It is compounded, rough and dependently arisen. Equanimity is peaceful. Then the arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fade and equanimity gets established. Like one who could see, would open his eyes and close them, or close his eyes and open them. Ananda, if arisen like, or dislike, or like and dislike fade so quickly and so easily and equanimity gets established, it is called the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones’ in forms cognizable by eye-consciousness.

Again Ananda, to the bhikkhu hearing a sound arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. He knows, this like, or dislike, or like and dislike has arisen to me. It is compounded, rough and dependently arisen. Equanimity is peaceful. Then the arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fades and equanimity gets established. Like a strong man would quickly snap his fingers. In the same manner, Ananda, if arisen like, or dislike, or like and dislike fades so quickly and so easily and equanimity gets established, it is called the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones’ in sounds cognizable by ear-consciousness.

Again Ananda, to the bhikkhu scenting a smell arises like, or dislike or like and dislike. He knows, this like, or dislike, or like and dislike has arisen to me. It is compounded, rough and dependently arisen. Equanimity is peaceful. Then the arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fades and equanimity gets established. Like the slanting lotus leaf on which fallen drops of water do not remain. In the same manner, Ananda, if arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fades so quickly and so easily and equanimity gets established, it is called the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones' in scents cognizable by nose-consciousness.

Again Ananda, to the bhikkhu experiencing a taste arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. He knows, this like, or dislike, or like and dislike has arisen to me. It is compounded, rough and dependently arisen. Equanimity is peaceful. Then the arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fades and equanimity gets established. Like a strong man collecting a ball of spit at the root of his tongue would quickly spit it out. In the same manner, Ananda, if arisen like, or dislike, or like and dislike fades so quickly and so easily and equanimity gets established, it is called the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones' in tastes cognizable by tongue-consciousness.

Again Ananda, to the bhikkhu experiencing a touch arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. He knows, this like, or dislike, or like and dislike has arisen to me. It is compounded, rough and dependently arisen. Equanimity is peaceful. Then the arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fades and equanimity gets established. Like a strong man would quickly stretch a bent arm, or bend a stretched arm. In the same manner, Ananda, if arisen like, or dislike, or like and dislike fades so quickly and so easily and equanimity gets established, it is called the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones' in touches cognizable by body-consciousness.

Again Ananda, to the bhikkhu cognizing an idea arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. He knows, this like, or dislike, or like and dislike has arisen to me. It is compounded, rough and dependently arisen. Equanimity is peaceful. Then the arisen like, or dislike or like and dislike fades and equanimity gets established. Like two or three drops of water dropped on an iron plate heated

through out the day would quickly vanish. It would take time for the drops of water to fall, but would vanish instantly. In the same manner, Ananda, if arisen like, or dislike, or like and dislike fades so quickly and so easily and equanimity gets established, it is called the incomparable development of the mental faculties of the noble ones' in ideas cognizable by mind-consciousness.

Ananda, this is the incomparable development of the mental faculties in the noble ones' dispensation.

Ananda, what is the method of training for a trainer? Ananda, to the bhikkhu seeing a form arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. He becomes worried, ashamed and loathes that like, or dislike or like and dislike. To the bhikkhu hearing a sound,...re....scenting a smell,...re... tasting a taste,...re....experiencing a touch,... cognizing an idea arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. He becomes worried, ashamed and loathes that like, or dislike or like and dislike. Ananda, this is the method for a trainer.

Ananda, how is the noble one with developed mental faculties? Ananda, to the bhikkhu seeing a form arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. If he desires, in the loathsome he abides seeing the non-loathsome. (*2) If he desires, in the non-loathsome he abides seeing the loathsome. (*3) If he desires, in the loathsome and the non-loathsome, he abides seeing the non-loathsome. (*4) If he desires, in the non-loathsome and loathsome he abides seeing the loathsome. (*5) If he desires, overcoming both the loathsome and the non-loathsome he abides in equanimity mindful and aware.

Again, Ananda, to the bhikkhu hearing a sound...re... scenting a smell...re... tasting a taste,...re...experiencing a touch, ...re... or cognizing an idea arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. If he desires, in the loathsome he abides seeing the non-loathsome. If he desires, in the non-loathsome he abides seeing the loathsome. If he desires, in the loathsome and the non-loathsome, he abides seeing the non-loathsome. If he desires, in the non-loathsome and loathsome he abides seeing the loathsome. If he desires, overcoming both the loathsome and the non-loathsome he abides in equanimity mindful and aware.

Ananda, thus is the noble one with developed mental faculties.

Ananda, I have taught, the development of the mental faculties in the noble ones' dispensation, the method of training for the trainer, and the noble ones with developed mental faculties. Whatever a teacher has to do

for his disciples, out of compassion, I have done that for you. These are the roots of trees, and these, the empty houses. (*6) Concentrate! Ananda. Do not be negligent and be remorseful later. This is my advice to you.

The Blessed One said thus and venerable Ananda delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

Notes.

1. To the bhikkhu seeing a form arises like, or dislike, or like and dislike. 'cakkhuna ruupa.m disvaa bhikkhuno upajjati manaapa.m upajjati amanaapa.m upajjati manaapaana.m' Someone encountering a sight, sound, scent, taste, touch or an idea, at one or the other of the doors of mental contact, either likes it, or dislikes it, or likes and dislikes it. This is what usually happens to anyone.

2. In the loathsome he abides seeing the non-loathsome. 'pa.tikuule appa.tikkuulasa~n~nii vihareyyu.m' To a worthy one the things that are loathsome are greed, hate and delusion. While living in this world, he has to co-exist with them, until death comes. That is he has to bear up with the greed, hate and delusion of others patiently.

3.. In the non-loathsome he abides seeing the loathsome.'appa.tikkuule pa.tikkuulasa~n~nii vihareyyu.m' There is nothing to loathe in non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion. Yet until death he

would have to live in a world of greed, hate and delusion and would have to cope with them, some times loathing non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion.

4. In the loathsome and the non-loathsome, he abides seeing the non-loathsome. ‘pa.tikuule ca appa.tikuule ca appa.tikuulasa~n~nii vihareyyan.’ The loathsome are greed, hate and delusion, the non-loathsome are non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion. The worthy one living in a world of greed, hate and delusion, would have to accept either group without loathing them. If he loathes them, he would have to end his life.

5. In the non-loathsome and the loathsome he abides seeing the loathsome. ‘appa.tikuule ca patikuule ca pa.tikuulasa~n~n vihareyyu.m’ The worthy one some times loathes both the groups described in Note 3 and even thinks to end his life. Several instances could be found in the Buddhist literature to prove this fact.

6. These the empty houses.’etaani su~n~naagaaraani’ The empty houses are the concentrations above the first jhaana, as they are without thinking and discursive thinking.

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