



RECOGNIZING THE DHAMMA

Thanissaro Bhikkhu

VIHARA BUDDHA GOTAMA

REVITALISING SUTTA-VINAYA

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Vihara Buddha Gotama is a 15-acre forest monastery founded in 1998 by Venerable Dhammavuddho Thero. It establishes a forest tradition which focuses on the study and practice of the Buddha's discourses (Sutta), monastic discipline (Vinaya), and meditation according to the original teachings of the Buddha. The serene forest setting is an ideal place for monks, nuns (maechees or anagarinis), and laypeople seeking quiet and solitude.

The Vihara caters mainly to the residential community of monks and nuns, and those training to be monks and nuns. Thus the daily routine includes about four hours of group meditation, two hours of work, and one hour of Sutta-Vinaya study.

It is located outside Temoh town, near Kampar, in the state of Perak, Malaysia. Visiting hours are from 8am-1pm daily, and visitors who wish to visit outside these hours should call up beforehand at +60 12 469 7483 to ensure that it is convenient and the gates are opened.

The Vihara is run entirely on donations received from well-wishers. Donations are welcome for the continued work and development of the Vihara

Recognizing
the
Dhamma

A STUDY GUIDE

prepared by

Thanissaro Bhikkhu

for free distribution

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Introduction

SHORTLY AFTER HER ORDINATION, the Buddha's step-mother, Mahapajapati Gotami, asked him for a short Dhamma-instruction that would guide her in her solitary practice. He responded with eight principles for recognizing what qualifies as Dhamma and Vinaya, and what does not. The commentary tells us that after her instruction, Mahapajapati Gotami in no long time became an arahant.

The eight principles have been widely cited ever since. One Thai writer has called them the "constitution of Buddhism," as they form the standards against which the validity of any interpretation of the Dhamma or Vinaya must be judged. Perhaps the most important point that these principles make is that any teaching has to be judged by the results that come when putting it into practice. They are an excellent illustration of the teachings given in the well-known Kalama Sutta (AN III.65), as well as in the teachings that the Buddha gave to his son, Rahula (MN 61).

The Canon illustrates these principles not only with abstract discussions but also with stories, and the stories are often more memorable than the discussions. Thus this study guide differs from its companions in that it is predominantly composed of stories. Bear in mind as you read the stories that they are often framed in somewhat extreme terms to drive their points home. Sister Subha [§1.4], Kali [§2.10], Prince Dighavu [§3.3], and the monk whose limbs are being removed by a saw [§2.10] would not be as memorable if their stories were framed in more realistic terms.

Also bear in mind that there is some overlap among the principles, and that a passage may illustrate more than one at a time. Thus, for instance, the story of Ven. Isidatta [§2.11]. His answer to Citta's question analyzes the fetter of self-identity views, while his behavior illustrates the principles of modesty and non-entanglement. The most extensive overlap is between the principle of dispassion and that of not being fettered, as passion in its various forms covers three of the ten fetters that bind a person to the round of rebirth. Thus the section on dispassion contains passages dealing with how to overcome the three "passion fetters"—sensual passion, passion for the sense of form experienced in the jhanas of form, and passion for the sense of formlessness experienced in the formless jhanas—whereas the section on being unfettered treats the remaining seven fetters.

The Eight Principles

I have heard that at on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Vesali, in the Peaked Roof Hall in the Great Forest.

Then Mahapajapati Gotami went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, stood to one side. As she was standing there she said to him: "It would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One would teach me the Dhamma in brief such that, having heard the Dhamma from the Blessed One, I might dwell alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute."

"Gotami, the qualities of which you may know, "These qualities lead:

to passion, not to dispassion;
to being fettered, not to being unfettered;
to accumulating, not to shedding;
to self-aggrandizement, not to modesty;
to discontent, not to contentment;
to entanglement, not to seclusion;
to laziness, not to aroused persistence;
to being burdensome, not to being unburdensome':

You may definitely hold, 'This is not the Dhamma, this is not the Vinaya, this is not the Teacher's instruction.'

"As for the qualities of which you may know, 'These qualities lead:

to dispassion, not to passion;
to being unfettered, not to being fettered;
to shedding, not to accumulating;
to modesty, not to self-aggrandizement;
to contentment, not to discontent;
to seclusion, not to entanglement;
to aroused persistence, not to laziness;
to being unburdensome, not to being burdensome':

You may definitely hold, 'This is the Dhamma, this is the Vinaya, this is the Teacher's instruction.'"

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Mahapajapati Gotami delighted at his words.

Dispassion

§ 1.1 I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Gaya, at Gaya Head, with 1,000 monks. There he addressed the monks:

“Monks, the All is aflame. What All is aflame? The eye is aflame. Forms are aflame. Consciousness at the eye is aflame. Contact at the eye is aflame. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the eye—experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—that too is aflame. Aflame with what? Aflame with the fire of passion, the fire of aversion, the fire of delusion. Aflame, I tell you, with birth, aging & death, with sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs.

“The ear is aflame. Sounds are aflame...

“The nose is aflame. Aromas are aflame...

“The tongue is aflame. Flavors are aflame...

“The body is aflame. Tactile sensations are aflame...

“The intellect is aflame. Ideas are aflame. Consciousness at the intellect is aflame. Contact at the intellect is aflame. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the intellect—experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—that too is aflame. Aflame with what? Aflame with the fire of passion, the fire of aversion, the fire of delusion. Aflame, I say, with birth, aging & death, with sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs.

“Seeing thus, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with the eye, disenchanted with forms, disenchanted with consciousness at the eye, disenchanted with contact at the eye. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the eye, experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain: With that, too, he grows disenchanted.

"He grows disenchanted with the ear...

"He grows disenchanted with the nose...

"He grows disenchanted with the tongue...

"He grows disenchanted with the body...

"He grows disenchanted with the intellect, disenchanted with ideas, disenchanted with consciousness at the intellect, disenchanted with contact at the intellect. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the intellect, experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain: He grows disenchanted with that too. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is fully released. With full release, there is the knowledge, 'Fully released.' He discerns that 'Birth is depleted, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'"

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted at his words. And while this explanation was being given, the hearts of the 1,000 monks, through no clinging (not being sustained), were fully released from fermentation/effluents.

—SN XXXV.28

§ 1.2 "And how does a monk guard the doors of his senses? On seeing a form with the eye, he does not grasp at any theme or details by which—if he were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the eye—evil, unskillful qualities such as greed or distress might assail him. On hearing a sound with the ear On smelling an odor with the nose One tasting a flavor with the tongue On touching a tactile sensation with the body On cognizing an idea with the intellect, he does not grasp at any theme or details by which—if he were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the intellect—evil, unskillful qualities such as greed or distress might assail him. Endowed with this

noble restraint over the sense faculties, he is inwardly sensitive to the pleasure of being blameless. This is how a monk guards the doors of his senses.”

—DN 2

§ 1.3 *Sister Nanda:*

“Sick, putrid, unclean:
look, Nanda, at this physical heap.
Through contemplation of the foul,
develop your mind,
make it one, well-centered.

As this [your body], so that.

As that, so this.

It gives off a foul stench,
the delight of fools.”

Considering it thus,
untiring, both day & night,
I, with my own discernment
dissecting it,
saw.

And as I, heedful,
examined it aptly,
this body—as it actually is—
was seen inside & out.

Then was I disenchanted with the body
& dispassionate within:
Heedful, detached,
calmed was I.

Unbound.

—Thig V.4

§ 1.4 As Subha the nun was going through Jivaka's delightful mango grove, a libertine (a goldsmith's son) blocked her path, so she said to him:

'What wrong have I done you
that you stand in my way?
It's not proper, my friend,
that a man should touch
a woman gone forth.
I respect the Master's message,
the training pointed out by the one well-gone.
I am pure, without blemish:

 Why do you stand in my way?
You—your mind agitated, impassioned;
I—unagitated, unimpassioned,
with a mind entirely freed:

 Why do you stand in my way?'

'You are young & not bad-looking,
what need do you have for going forth?
Throw off your ochre robe—

 Come, let's delight in the flowering grove.
A sweetness they exude everywhere,
the towering trees with their pollen.
The beginning of spring is a pleasant season—

 Come, let's delight in the flowering grove.
The trees with their blossoming tips
moan, as it were, in the breeze:
What delight will you have
if you plunge into the grove alone?
Frequented by herds of wild beasts,
disturbed by elephants rutting & aroused:
you want to go

 unaccompanied
into the great, lonely, frightening grove?

Like a doll made of gold, you will go about,
 like a goddess in the gardens of heaven.
 With delicate, smooth Kasi fabrics,
 you will shine, O beauty without compare.
 I would gladly do your every bidding
 if we were to dwell in the glade.
 For there is no creature dearer to me
 than you, O nymph with the languid regard.
 If you do as I ask, happy, come live in my house.
 Dwelling in the calm of a palace,
 have women wait on you,
 wear delicate Kasi fabrics,
 adorn yourself with garlands & creams.
 I will make you many & varied ornaments
 of gold, jewels, & pearls.
 Climb onto a costly bed,
 scented with sandalwood carvings,
 with a well-washed coverlet, beautiful,
 spread with a woolen quilt, brand new.
 Like a blue lotus rising from the water
 where there dwell non-human beings,
 you will go to old age with your limbs unseen,
 if you stay as you are in the holy life.'

'What do you assume of any essence,
 here in this cemetery grower, filled with corpses,
 this body destined to break up?
 What do you see when you look at me,
 you who are out of your mind?'

'Your eyes
 are like those of a fawn,
 like those of a sprite in the mountains.
 Seeing your eyes, my sensual delight
 grows all the more.
 Like tips they are, of blue lotuses,

in your golden face
—spotless:
Seeing your eyes, my sensual delight
grows all the more.
Even if you should go far away,
I will think only of your pure,
long-lashed gaze,
for there is nothing dearer to me
than your eyes, O nymph with the languid regard.'

'You want to stray from the road,
you want the moon as a plaything,
you want to jump over Mount Sineru,
you who have designs on one born of the Buddha.
For there is nothing anywhere at all
in the cosmos with its gods,
that would be an object of passion for me.
I don't even know what that passion would be,
for it's been killed, root & all, by the path.
Like embers from a pit—scattered,
like a bowl of poison—evaporated,
I don't even see what that passion would be,
for it's been killed, root & all, by the path.
Try to seduce one who hasn't reflected on this,
or who has not followed the Master's teaching.
But try it with this one who knows
and you suffer.
For in the midst of praise & blame,
pleasure & pain,
my mindfulness stands firm.
Knowing the unattractiveness
of things compounded,
my mind cleaves to nothing at all.
I am a follower of the one well-gone,
riding the vehicle of the eightfold way:

My arrow removed, effluent-free,
 I delight, having gone to an empty dwelling.
 For I have seen well-painted puppets,
 hitched up with sticks & strings,
 made to dance in various ways.
 When the sticks & strings are removed,
 thrown away, scattered, shredded,
 smashed into pieces, not to be found,
 in what will the mind there make its home?
 This body of mine, which is just like that,
 when devoid of dhammas doesn't function.
 When, devoid of dhammas, it doesn't function,
 in what will the mind there make its home?
 Like a mural you've seen, painted on a wall,
 smeared with yellow orpiment,
 there your vision has been distorted,
 meaningless your human perception.
 Like an evaporated mirage,
 like a tree of gold in a dream,
 like a magic show in the midst of a crowd—
 you run blind after what is unreal.
 Resembling a ball of sealing wax,
 set in a hollow,
 with a bubble in the middle
 and bathed with tears,
 eye secretions are born there too:
 The parts of the eye
 are rolled all together
 in various ways.'

Plucking out her lovely eye,
 with mind unattached
 she felt no regret.

'Here, take this eye. It's yours.'

Straightaway she gave it to him.
 Straightaway his passion faded right there,
 and he begged her forgiveness.

'Be well, follower of the holy life.
 This sort of thing
 won't happen again.
 Harming a person like you
 is like embracing a blazing fire.
 It's as if I have seized a poisonous snake.
 So may you be well. Forgive me.'

And released from there, the nun
 went to the excellent Buddha's presence.
 When she saw the mark of his excellent merit,
 her eye became
 as it was before.

—*Thig XIV*

§ 1.5 Now at that time Ven. Anuruddha, going through the Kosalan countryside on his way to Savatthi, arrived in the evening at a certain village. And at that time a rest house had been set up by a woman in that village. So Ven. Anuruddha went to the woman and, on arrival, said to her, "If it is no inconvenience for you, sister, I will stay for one night in the rest house."

"You are welcome to stay, venerable sir."

Then other travelers went to that woman and, on arrival, said, "If it is no inconvenience for you, lady, we will stay for one night in the rest house."

"This master has arrived first. If he gives his permission, you may stay."

So the travelers went to Ven. Anuruddha and on arrival said to him, "If it is no inconvenience for you, venerable sir, we will stay for one night in the rest house."

"You are welcome to stay, friends."

Now it so happened that the woman had fallen in love with Ven. Anuruddha at first sight, so she went to him and said, "The master will not be comfortable, crowded with these people. It would be good if I were to prepare a bed inside for the master."

Ven. Anuruddha consented by remaining silence.

Then the woman, having herself prepared a bed inside for Ven. Anuruddha, having put on her jewelry and scented herself with perfumes, went to him and said, "Master, you are beautiful, good-looking, and appealing. I, too, am beautiful, good-looking, & appealing. It would be good if I were to be your wife."

When this was said, Ven. Anuruddha remained silent. So a second time... A third time she said to him, "Master, you are beautiful, good-looking, & appealing. I too am beautiful, good-looking, & appealing. Please take me together with all my wealth."

A third time, Ven. Anuruddha remained silent. So the woman, having slipped off her upper cloak, paraded up & down in front of him, stood, sat down, & then lay down right in front of him. But Ven. Anuruddha, keeping control of his faculties, didn't as much as glance at her or say even a word.

Then the thought occurred to her: "Isn't it amazing! Isn't it astounding! Many men send for me at a price of 100 or even 1,000 (a night), but this contemplative, even when I myself beg him, doesn't want to take me together with all of my wealth!" So, putting her upper cloak back on and bowing her head at his feet, she said to him: "Venerable sir, a transgression has overcome me in that I was so foolish, so muddle-headed, & so unskillful as to act in such a way.

Please accept this confession of my transgression as such, so that I may restrain myself in the future.”

“Yes, sister, a transgression overcame you in that you were so foolish, so muddle-headed, & so unskillful as to act in such a way. But because you see your transgression as such and make amends in accordance with the Dhamma, we accept your confession. For it is a cause of growth in the Dhamma & discipline of the noble ones when, seeing a transgression as such, one makes amends in accordance with the Dhamma and exercises restraint in the future.”

Then, when the night had passed, the woman, with her own hand, served & satisfied Ven. Anuruddha with excellent staple and non-staple food. When Ven. Anuruddha had eaten & removed his hand from his bowl, she sat to one side. As she was sitting there, Ven. Anuruddha instructed, urged, roused, & encouraged her with a talk on Dhamma. Then the woman, having been instructed, urged, roused, & encouraged by Ven. Anuruddha with a talk on Dhamma, said to him, “Magnificent, venerable sir! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what had been overturned, were to reveal what was hidden, were to show the way to one who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see shapes, in the same way Ven. Anuruddha has—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Community of monks. May the master remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge from this day forward for life.”

—*Pacittiya 6*

§ 1.6 “Quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, he enters and remains in the first jhana: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation. He

permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal. Just as if a skilled bathman or bathman's apprentice would pour bath powder into a brass basin and knead it together, sprinkling it again and again with water, so that his ball of bath powder—saturated, moisture-laden, permeated within and without—would nevertheless not drip; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of withdrawal. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal. This is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

“Furthermore, with the stilling of directed thought and evaluation, he enters and remains in the second jhana: rapture and pleasure born of composure, one-pointedness of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation—internal assurance. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of composure. Just like a lake with spring-water welling up from within, having no inflow from the east, west, north, or south, and with the skies supplying abundant showers time and again, so that the cool fount of water welling up from within the lake would permeate and pervade, suffuse and fill it with cool waters, there being no part of the lake unpervaded by the cool waters; even so, the monk permeates... this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of composure. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture and pleasure born of composure. This, too, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

“And furthermore, with the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful and alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters and remains in the third jhana, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous and mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.’ He permeates and pervades, suffuses

and fills this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. Just as in a lotus pond, some of the lotuses, born and growing in the water, stay immersed in the water and flourish without standing up out of the water, so that they are permeated and pervaded, suffused and filled with cool water from their roots to their tips, and nothing of those lotuses would be unpervaded with cool water; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded with pleasure divested of rapture. This, too, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

“And furthermore, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation and distress—he enters and remains in the fourth jhana: purity of equanimity and mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain. He sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. Just as if a man were sitting covered from head to foot with a white cloth so that there would be no part of his body to which the white cloth did not extend; even so, the monk sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by pure, bright awareness. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.”

—DN 2

§ 1.7 “‘I tell you, the ending of the effluents depends on the first jhana.’ Thus it has been said. In reference to what was it said?... Suppose that an archer or archer’s apprentice were to practice on a straw man or mound of clay, so that after a while he would become able to shoot long distances, to fire accurate shots in rapid succession, and to pierce great masses. In the same way, there is the case where a monk...

enters & remains in the first jhana: rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. He regards whatever phenomena there that are connected with form, feeling, perceptions, fabrications, & consciousness, as inconstant, stressful, a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction, alien, a disintegration, a void, not-self. He turns his mind away from those phenomena, and having done so, inclines his mind to the property of deathlessness: 'This is peace, this is exquisite—the resolution of all fabrications; the relinquishment of all acquisitions; the ending of craving; dispassion; cessation; Unbinding.'

"Staying right there, he reaches the ending of the mental effluents. Or, if not, then through this very Dhamma-passion, this Dhamma-delight, and through the total wasting away of the five lower fetters: [self-identity views, grasping at precepts & practices, uncertainty, sensual passion, and irritation]—he is due to be reborn [in the Pure Abodes], there to be totally unbound, never again to return from that world.

"I tell you, the ending of the effluents depends on the first jhana.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

(Similarly with the other levels of jhana up through the sphere of nothingness.)

"Thus, as far as the perception-attainments go, that is as far as gnosis-penetration goes. As for these two spheres—the attainment of the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception & the attainment of the cessation of feeling & perception—I tell you that they are to be rightly explained by those monks who are meditators, skilled in attaining, skilled in attaining & emerging, who have attained & emerged in dependence on them."

§ 1.8 “[On attaining the fourth level of jhana] there remains only equanimity: pure & bright, pliant, malleable & luminous. Just as if a skilled goldsmith or goldsmith’s apprentice were to prepare a furnace, heat up a crucible, and, taking gold with a pair of tongs, place it in the crucible. He would blow on it periodically, sprinkle water on it periodically, examine it periodically, so that the gold would become refined, well-refined, thoroughly refined, flawless, free from dross, pliant, malleable & luminous. Then whatever sort of ornament he had in mind—whether a belt, an earring, a necklace, or a gold chain—it would serve his purpose. In the same way, there remains only equanimity: pure & bright, pliant, malleable & luminous. He [the meditator] discerns that ‘If I were to direct equanimity as pure & bright as this toward the dimension of the infinitude of space, I would develop the mind along those lines, and thus this equanimity of mine—thus supported, thus sustained—would last for a long time. (Similarly with the remaining formless states.)’

“He discerns that ‘If I were to direct equanimity as pure & bright as this toward the dimension of the infinitude of space and to develop the mind along those lines, that would be fabricated. (Similarly with the remaining formless states.)’ He neither fabricates nor wills for the sake of becoming or un-becoming. This being the case, he is not sustained by anything in the world (does not cling to anything in the world). Unsustained, he is not agitated. Unagitated, he is totally unbound right within. He discerns that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’”

Being Unfettered

§ 2.1 “There are these ten fetters. Which ten? Five lower fetters & five higher fetters. And which are the five lower fetters? Self-identity views, uncertainty, grasping at precepts & practices, sensual desire, and ill will. These are the five lower fetters. And which are the five higher fetters? Passion for form, passion for what is formless, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. These are the five higher fetters. And these are the ten fetters.”

—AN X.13

§ 2.2 “There are in this community of monks, monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three Fetters, are stream-winners, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening....

“There are...monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three fetters and the thinning out of passion, aversion, & delusion, are once-returners. After returning only once to this world they will put an end to stress....

“There are...monks who, with the total ending of the first five of the Fetters, are due to be reborn [in the Pure Abodes], there to be totally unbound, never again to return from that world....

“There are...monks who are arahants, whose mental effluents are ended, who have reached fulfillment, done the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, totally destroyed the fetter of becoming, and who are released through right gnosis.”

—MN 118

§ 2.3 “And what are the effluents that are to be abandoned by seeing? There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person...does not discern what ideas are fit for attention, or what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he does not attend to ideas fit for attention, and attends [instead] to ideas unfit for attention. And what are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen effluent of sensuality arises, and the arisen effluent of sensuality increases; the unarisen effluent of becoming...the unarisen effluent of ignorance arises, and the arisen effluent of ignorance increases....This is how he attends inappropriately: ‘Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?’ Or else he is inwardly perplexed about the immediate present: ‘Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?’

“As he attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of view arises in him: The view *I have a self* arises in him as true & established, or the view *I have no self*...or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self*...or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self*...or the view *It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self* arises in him as true & established, or else he has a view like this: *This very self of mine—the knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions—is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will endure as long as eternity.* This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is not freed from birth, aging, & death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from stress.

“The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones...discerns what ideas are fit for attention, and what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he does not attend to ideas unfit for attention, and attends [instead] to ideas fit for attention.... And what are the ideas fit for attention that he attends to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen effluent of sensuality does not arise, and the arisen effluent of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen effluent of becoming...the unarisen effluent of ignorance does not arise, and the arisen effluent of ignorance is abandoned....He attends appropriately, *This is stress...This is the origination of stress...This is the cessation of stress...This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.* As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: identity-view, uncertainty, and grasping at precepts & practices. These are called the effluents that are to be abandoned by seeing.

—MN 2

§ 2.4 “There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person ... assumes form (the body) to be the self. That assumption is a fabrication. Now what is the cause, what is the origination, what is the birth, what is the coming-into-existence of that fabrication? To an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person, touched by that which is felt born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That fabrication is born of that. And that fabrication is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. That craving... That feeling... That contact... That ignorance is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. It is by knowing & seeing in this way that one without delay puts an end to the (mental) fermentations.

“Or he doesn’t assume form to be the self, but he assumes the self as possessing form ... form as in the self ... the self as in form.

"Now that assumption is a fabrication. What is the cause...of that fabrication? To an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person, touched by the feeling born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That fabrication is born of that. And that fabrication is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. That craving ... That feeling ... That contact ... That ignorance is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. It is by knowing & seeing in this way that one without delay puts an end to the (mental) fermentations.

(Similarly with feeling, perception, fabrications, & consciousness.)

"Or ... he may have a view such as this: "This self is the same as the cosmos. This I will be after death, constant, lasting, eternal, not subject to change." This eternalist view is a fabrication.... Or ... he may have a view such as this: "I would not be, neither would there be what is mine. I will not be, neither will there be what is mine." This annihilationist view is a fabrication.... Or ... he may be doubtful & uncertain, having come to no conclusion with regard to the true Dhamma. That doubt, uncertainty, & coming-to-no-conclusion is a fabrication.

"What is the cause ... of that fabrication? To an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person, touched by what is felt born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That fabrication is born of that. And that fabrication is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. That craving ... That feeling ... That contact... That ignorance is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. It is by knowing & seeing in this way that one without delay puts an end to the (mental) fermentations."

—SN XXII.81

§ 2.5 "Imagine a bowl of water mixed with lac, yellow orpiment, indigo, or crimson, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same

way, when one remains with awareness possessed by *sensual passion*, overcome with sensual passion, and neither knows nor sees the escape, as it is actually present, from sensual passion once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both....

"Now imagine a bowl of water heated on a fire, boiling & bubbling over, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by *ill will*, overcome with ill will, and neither knows nor sees the escape, as it is actually present, from ill will once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both....

"Now imagine a bowl of water covered with algae & slime, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by *sloth & drowsiness*, overcome with sloth & drowsiness, and neither knows nor sees the escape, as it is actually present, from sloth & drowsiness once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both....

"Now imagine a bowl of water ruffled by the wind, disturbed, & covered with waves, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by *restlessness & anxiety*, overcome with restlessness & anxiety, and neither knows nor sees the escape, as it is actually present, from restlessness & anxiety once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both....

"Now imagine a bowl of water stirred up, turbid, muddied, & left in the dark, such that a man with good