

Dependent Origination

The 12 Links

Bhava (Being)

By Delson Armstrong

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“Bhikkhus, there are these Four Noble Truths. What four? The noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the origin of suffering, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.

Saccasamyutta Sn 56.13(3) Aggregates

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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to help the truth seeker to understand the concept of *Dependent Origination*. This is the most important idea to be understood on your journey to Nibbāna. The Buddha used the term *paṭicca samuppāda*, which is Pāli for dependent origination. When one understands Dependent Origination one understands himself/herself and the world. It is truly the answer to the question of “Who am I?”

This is a 12-part series of small books - one for each of the 12 links. This book is on the 10th link of Bhava. Later all these booklets will be combined into a larger book or books.

But first, the definition of Dependent Origination from the Buddha.

Dependent Origination

Samyutta Nikāya 12.1.1

“Monks, I will teach you dependent origination. Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak.”—“Yes, venerable sir,” those monks replied.

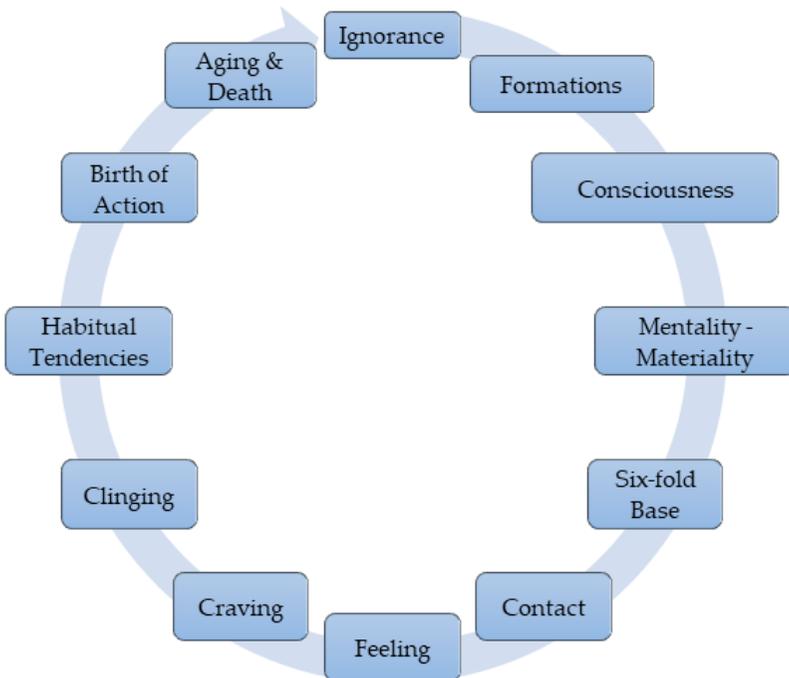
The Blessed One said this:

“And what, students, is dependent origination? With ignorance as condition, volitional formations come to be; with volitional formations as condition, consciousness; with consciousness as condition, name-and-form; with name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases; with the six sense bases as condition, contact; with contact as condition, feeling; with feeling as condition, craving; with craving as condition, clinging; with clinging as condition, existence; with existence as condition, birth; with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. This, students, is called dependent origination.

“But with the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance comes cessation of volitional formations; with the cessation of volitional formations, cessation of consciousness; with the cessation of consciousness, cessation of name-and-form; with the cessation of name-and-form, cessation of the six sense bases; with the cessation of the six sense bases, cessation of contact; with the cessation of contact, cessation of feeling; with the cessation of feeling, cessation of craving; with the cessation of

Dependent Origination

craving, cessation of clinging; with the cessation of clinging, cessation of existence; with the cessation of existence, cessation of birth; with the cessation of birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.”



Bhava -Being

Katamo panāvuso, bhavo, katamo bhavasamudayo, katamo bhavanirodho, katamā bhavanirodhagāminī paṭipadā?

And what is bhava, what is the origin of bhava, what is the cessation of bhava, what is the way leading to the cessation of bhava?

- MN 9, Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta

If jāti is the released arrow, then bhava is the state in which the arrow is drawn just before it is released. The pressure of the undrawn arrow is bhava in which is contained all of the karmic forces that are ready to push out an action in the form of expression. Bhava can be understood at many levels, primarily as a state of existence from one life to the next or from one moment to the next, and it is one of the links in which many feedback loops can be seen. In other words, as the karmic

stream of intention drives forward formations that activate consciousness, they establish into a sense of bhava – this word meaning both a life-form or sense of self and the state of being or becoming. From here, kamma ripens, and action is taken. Bhava is that which stores the effects of clinging and craving as well as conceit and ignorance; and while at the cosmic level it drives forward the birth of a being through conception, on the quantum level, it pushes out an action at the link of jāti. While this happens, the energy of this bhava feeds back to its precedents – the āsavas or taints, abhisāṅkhāras or fettered formations, fettered viññāna or consciousness – all of which have within them the karmic momentum of the anusāyas or underlying tendencies, as well as the upakkilesas or defilements spawned from kilesas or unwholesome roots. These processes affect the mind such that, with carelessness and lack of mindfulness of the tilakkhaṇa, craving and clinging are bound to occur, and those same precedents are then funneled into the storehouse that is bhava, which then repeats the process of pushing out a rebirth while at the same time strengthening that feedback loop for another round unless the cycle is broken with mindfulness and wisdom.

Here in bhava, there is also the sense of identity which has arisen as an accumulation of the anusāyas, defilements, kilesas, and fetters. The fetters are continually strengthened whenever one acts from this bhava as a satta or being who clings, craves, and expresses with a sense of personal self. In the previous chapter on jāti, we explored the various defilements as well as wholesome tendencies that resulted in various rebirths. For the purposes of understanding bhava and

how it relates to the process of Dependent Origination, we will revisit these defilements in greater detail, along with the latent tendencies, and the process of kamma that arises through intention, fettered formations, consciousness, and craving, as well as the āsavas and other subconscious conditions in the mind that all can result in jāti. In other words, while jāti explained the effects of these defilements as being born into a specific existence or resulting in an action, bhava will be explained as the repository of those causes that led to that jāti. This will open up the understanding of the process of habitual tendencies that cook up the various ingredients into an “I” fettered by conceit and strengthened by craving and ignorance, and we will see how that relates to both the rebirth from life to life and from moment to moment.

Meaning of Bhava

Bhava comes from the root word bhū, in Sanskrit, which means becoming, being, existing, the origin of cause, or production. Bhava, depending on context and usage can mean these things and more. Therefore, bhava can be understood as the process of coming into existence, of production, and, of coming into birth. Bhava is not a stationary effect but a dynamic process, much like the rest of the links of Dependent Origination. It is the process of becoming into something, and therefore is the intermediary between the karmic fuel from

craving, clinging and conceit, and the output of that fuel as birth into a new existence or the birth of mental, verbal, and physical actions. Bhava can also mean the acquisition, accumulation or possession of something, which is why it can also be referred to as the storehouse of tendencies. It's important to clarify there is a difference between bhava and bhāva. Bhāva denotes an emotion or some kind of affective disposition. It can also mean character, and sometimes bhāva is used to mean intent in usages outside of the Pali Canon but within the suttas bhāva is used in conjunction with other words to mean having become something, such as attabhāva, to mean having become a self.

For the purposes of understanding Dependent Origination, we will use the original word bhava and sometimes interchangeably the words being, becoming, existence, accumulation, or acquisition, and their related meanings to usage like – to be, to become, to exist, accumulate, or acquire. When one is looking at the word bhava it may prove useful to apply context. For example, in the application of rebirth from one life to the next, one can understand bhava to mean existence or state of existence, as in the sensual, luminous form, or formless states of existence. When one is looking at bhava from the context of karmic production, then it would make sense to see it as a process of accumulating the factors of identity, acquiring and producing a storehouse of habitual tendencies, and to be in the process of becoming an action that is completed at the level of jāti.

Bhava – the Storehouse of Inclinations

One must note that bhava isn't a storehouse for just unwholesome tendencies and their factors, but can also be a library of wholesome tendencies, but these will still be rooted in the fetter of conceit. These tendencies loop back from bhava towards the āsavas, which then influence avijjā, which then conditions the formations making them abhisāṅkhāras or fettered formations, which then condition the consciousness that then influences the factors of contact, feeling, perception, intention, and attention in nāmarupā, which then taint the contact that arises. When feeling arises from such contact, the potential for the underlying tendencies then continue to push the wheel further if the mind clutches at them and then tends towards craving instead of using the Path or the 6Rs, at which point they develop the elements of bhava to come together that are ready to be acted upon, thus exacerbating further Dukkha with that jāti of action.

In order to see how the Second Noble Truth of Taṇhā causes bhava, one must first understand the elements to this process, from the unwholesome side as well as the wholesome side, at which point it will then become clear how Dukkha-producing kamma or rebirth-producing kamma is caused. Once this is understood, then one can abandon these various elements and then experience release and therefore act from there, which will not produce any further rebirth. In other words, jāti is the rebirth of action or kamma that will bear fruit at a future time. However, if the mind is rid of all these elements that come

together in bhava, then that action is without any fruit-bearing kamma. Let's now explore the factors leading to bhava.

Āsavas

Tayome, āvuso, āsavā — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, avijjāsavo.

There are these three taints: the taint of sensual desire, the taint of being, and the taint of ignorance.

- MN 9, Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta

The āsavas are an origin point in one cycle of Dependent Origination. There is an interdependency between the āsavas and the link of avijjā or ignorance. There are three āsavas – kāmāsava, bhavāsava, and avijjāsava. Before we go into these āsavas, it's also important to know how one can understand the basic term. Āsava has been translated as inflows or outflows of a stream – that is the stream of Saṃsāra – as cankers or open sores that when touched or prodded are liable to ooze materials and cause pain and Dukkha – as mental movements,

propensities, and proclivities, as intoxicants or fermentations of the mind, as corruptions, or as taints which condition the rest of the links of Dependent Origination. The āsavas are like a computer virus, which once installed wreaks havoc on the system. For the purpose of understanding their nature to project outwards to or incline towards the rest of the links of Dependent Origination, we may use the words we've already seen as well as the terms projections or inclinations interchangeably with the Pali word.

Kāmāsava is essentially the projection or inclination towards sensual experiences, which causes mind to color the world around as a means towards an end – the end here being the satisfaction of the senses. With kāmāsava as an influence, the mind is geared towards seeing the world through sensual activity, causing it to identify with the six sense bases. All pleasure that arises from contact with the six sense bases and the experience that arises as pleasant is taken as self, as satisfying, and as being permanent. When a sensory experience of a painful nature arises, this too is taken to be self, but due to the painful nature the mind erupts into aversion and wants to push it away, and in that reactivity that painful feeling feels like an eternity, and therefore one is unable to discern its impermanent nature. When a neutral feeling arises, the kāmāsava leads to taking the feeling as self and intertwines with the avijjāsava which makes it unable to discern the tilakkhaṇa of that feeling. Whenever one acts with identification to a sensual feeling through the link of craving, the energy of that process feeds back to kāmāsava.

Bhavāsava is the projection or inclination towards an identity. It is the first step towards the mind concretizing a sense of self, mixing it with habitual tendencies. This āsava leads one to identify with experiences as self and so it is interspersed with kāmāsava. It influences one to become, to produce kamma, and to exist. It forms the desire for being, for existing in one of the three divisions of the realms of existence, as well as vibhava or non-existence. On a macro level it causes a being some form of rebirth from one life to another, while on the micro level it causes the mind to produce an action based in the idea of a self. Whenever one automatically acts from a sense of self and repeats the habitual patterns without mindfulness of the process of the link of bhava, the energy of that process feeds back to bhavāsava.

Avijjāsava is the projection or inclination towards ignorance. It leads the mind astray from the mindfulness of the Four Noble Truths and the tilakkhaṇa. Avijjā appears a few times in the schema of Saṃsāra – first as the āsava, then as a link that influences formations, as an underlying tendency, and as a fetter that binds beings to the cyclical patterns of rebirth and Dukkha. Avijjāsava is the first particulate that starts the ball rolling. It's not to say that this or the other āsavas are physical particles the way Jainism might see them, but that they are like the first structures that build upon the rest of the links of Dependent Origination – they are like the first drops of water from a glacier that finally form a river downstream. So long as one identifies via bhava and craves via kāma, it will be due to ignorance. Whenever mind is careless, has lack of mindfulness, and takes feeling to belonging to a personal self, the energy of

that process feeds back to avijjāsava. Sometimes a fourth āsava is mentioned, which is ditṭhāsava and this is the projection towards views, specifically wrong views. Since Right View replaces ignorance and destroys all wrong views, it would make sense to envelope the projection towards views into avijjāsava. It should be mentioned that this fourfold division makes it equivalent to the four yogas or floods that overwhelm the mind and the four yogas or yokes that bind the mind to Saṃsāra – the floods and the yokes of sensual craving, existence, views, and ignorance.

The āsavas are conditioned by previous choices and then continue to condition future choices. They manifest as the unwholesome roots in formations and ultimately solidify into the ten fetters, which are the chains of Saṃsāra. Since the āsavas are fundamental to rebirth at different levels, they are meant to be understood, abandoned, and ceased. Doing so, one attains arahantship, because the arahant is also known as khīṇāsava, the destroyer of the āsavas. We will now take a look at how they are destroyed.

Abandoning the Taints with Right Effort

*Avijjāsamudayā āsavasamudayo, avijjānirodhā āsavanirodho,
ayameva ariyo atthaṅgiko maggo āsavanirodhagāminī paṭipadā*

With the arising of ignorance, there is the arising of the taints.

With the cessation of ignorance, there is the cessation of the taints.

The way leading to the cessation of the taints is just this Noble Eightfold Path.

- MN 9, Sammāditṭhi Sutta

We've mentioned that there is an interdependency between the āsavas and avijjā, in that the link of avijjā is conditioned by the āsavas and the āsavas are conditioned by avijjā. Since the āsavas are the primary and fundamental cause of avijjā and rebirth, but then with rebirth being a manifestation of ignorance and ignorance being a cause of the taints, that means ignorance is a loopback to the āsavas, and so this continues over and over until the cycle is broken. To put it in the context of the Four Noble Truths, this means with the cessation of avijjā is the cessation of the āsavas, and with the cessation of the āsavas is the cessation of avijjā. The way leading to the cessation of the āsavas is the Path.

In other words, with the āsavas being the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, their cause is ignorance, which is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. To find release from the āsavas, which is

the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha, one utilizes the 6Rs, which is the encapsulation of the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga. Now, since there is ignorance as cause, we need to cease that ignorance by understanding and applying the Four Noble Truths. Every time one understands Dukkha as being a link of Dependent Origination abandons its preceding link, which is tainted by Taṇhā, and experiences relief that is Nirodha by developing the Path that is Magga, one is eroding away at avijjā until these Four Noble Truths become a way of life, and completely eradicate the three āsavas. We'll take it a step further for each individual āsava. With the understanding that the link of taṇhā feeds back energy to kāmāsava, the conceit, identification, and habitual tendencies in bhava all feed energy back to bhavāsava, and lack of mindfulness of the Four Noble Truths and the tilakkhaṇa feeds back energy to avijjāsava, we can draw out the use of the 6Rs for the purpose of destroying these three taints. In all three cases, one:

- ◆ Recognizes sensual craving, personalizing and identification, or being careless as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention from them and thus abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes the tension present as a manifestation of the craving, identification, and personalizing, thereby experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles and uplifts mind with joy, tranquility, and equanimity

- ◆ Returns to mindfulness in the present and deepens one's awareness of Nirodha
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind drifts back to personalizing, craving, and losing mindfulness – thus cultivating Magga

In this way, every time one relaxes the craving, abandons the identification, and sharpens mindfulness, one stops the flow of looping energy back to the āsavas. The more one does this, the less the āsavas start to influence the rest of the links and the less they become part of the storehouse of bhava. Ultimately, with the experience of the complete destruction of the taints, one also experiences the complete cessation of bhava, or bhavanirodha, thus destroying any possibility of a new rebirth in Saṃsāra.

Akusalamūla and Kusalamūla

Tīṇimāni, bhikkhave, akusalamūlāni Katamāni tīṇi? Lobho akusalamūlaṃ, doso akusalamūlaṃ, moho akusalamūlaṃ.

Tīṇimāni, bhikkhave, kusalamūlāni. Katamāni tīṇi? Alobho kusalamūlaṃ, adoso kusalamūlaṃ, amoho kusalamūlaṃ.

Bhikkhus, there are these three unwholesome roots. What three? The unwholesome root, greed; the unwholesome root, hatred; and the unwholesome root, delusion.

There are, bhikkhus, these three wholesome roots. What three? The wholesome root, non-greed; the wholesome root, non-hatred; and the wholesome root, non-delusion.

- AN 3.69, Akusalamūla Sutta

Mūla means root. Akusala means unwholesome. Kusala means wholesome. The unwholesome roots are the same as the kilesas or mental impurities that we discussed in the previous chapter – lobha or greed, dosa or hatred, and moha or delusion. The wholesome roots are the diametric opposite of these impurities – alobha or non-attachment, adosa or non-ill will,

and amoha or wisdom. Any of these mental roots are found and established in saṅkhāras, which then influence viññāna and the rest of the links of Dependent Origination. While the impure roots lead to rebirth into unwholesome existences, the pure roots lead to wholesome existences, so this means that one must follow the three-rung approach here to escape the possibility of rebirth, even if it is a positive one because all rebirth is impermanent, Dukkha, and impersonal and not to be taken as self. First, one purifies intention, which leads to purifying one's thoughts, words, and actions. This is done by understanding the precepts, making a commitment to follow them, and becoming mindful of one's thoughts so that they are always wholesome, leading to wholesome speech and action. In doing so, one follows the Path. One has now taken the step from the first rung of unwholesome tendencies to the second rung of wholesome tendencies. After this, with further purification of mind through samādhi and paññā, one understands the conceit and bhava that arise due to taking the wholesome thoughts, speech, and action as personal, which still leads to rebirth and keeps one revisiting the wheel of Saṃsāra. Therefore, while one may have done away with lobha through alobha and dosa with adosa, one still needs to do away with moha through amoha.

Let's understand these roots from the perspective of rebirth and through the process of Dependent Origination. First the āsavas arise due to past choices that feed energy back to them, arising in ignorance automatically because those choices were already rooted in not knowing or seeing the Four Noble Truths and the tilakkhaṇa. This ignorance with the āsavas spinning its

spoke gives rise to the abhisañkhāras. These abhisañkhāras or fettered formations are fettered by craving or rooted in greed or hatred, fettered by conceit and ignorance or rooted in delusion, and depending on the root most dominant, this will give rise to the defilements of the mind through the viññāna and nāmarupā. From here, those defilements will continue to color the process of contact and feeling, from where the underlying tendencies will give rise to an inclination towards craving if one is not mindful at that point. From here hindrances arise as part of rebirth of one state of mind to the next, and existences are established from one to the next at bhava on the macro level. The streams of the āsavas directly influence the unwholesome roots and they crisscross depending upon which roots are dominant, but to simplify if one has greedy, hateful or delusional intentions, these are all streaming from avijjā and avijjāsava and more dominantly greed and hateful thoughts stream from kāmāsava, but they can also stream down from bhavāsava because there is a sense of an “I” already present in that process.

Now let’s briefly understand what happens if one has wholesome tendencies – we will take the pāramis or moral perfections as one collection of tendencies, but there are other wholesome inclinations beyond this scope, and they sometimes overlap. If they are done with a sense of self then they are rooted in alobha, adosa, and amoha that are still streaming from bhavāsava and avijjāsava. When someone sets the intention to follow the pāramis then the viññāna is purified and the thoughts, speech, and actions that arise give rise to a bhava of habitual tendencies that are automatically leading to rebirth

of wholesome kamma. So, that means there is still rebirth, albeit a wholesome one. Therefore, it's important to let go of bhava at that point by abandoning the wholesome intentions if they stream from the āsavas and see them as impersonal processes, which is rooted in Right View. When Right View replaces avijjā, meaning it also eradicates the āsavas, then there won't be any unwholesome roots whatsoever and the wholesome roots in the saṅkhāras won't have rebirth-producing capabilities to cause bhava in a new state of mind as self or jāti in a new existence.

Abandoning the Roots with Right Effort

*Yato kho, āvuso, ariyasāvako evaṃ akusalaṃ pajānāti, evaṃ akusalamūlaṃ pajānāti, evaṃ kusalaṃ pajānāti, evaṃ kusalamūlaṃ pajānāti, so sabbaso rāgānusayaṃ pahāya, paṭighānusayaṃ paṭivinodetvā, 'asmī'ti diṭṭhimānānusayaṃ samūhanitvā, avijjaṃ pahāya vijjaṃ uppādetvā, diṭṭheva dhamme dukkhassantakaro hoti—
ettāvatāpi kho, āvuso, ariyasāvako sammādiṭṭhi hoti, ujugatāssa diṭṭhi, dhamme aveccappasādena samannāgato, āgato imaṃ saddhamman'ti.*

When, friends, a noble disciple understands the unwholesome and the root of the unwholesome, the wholesome and the root of the wholesome, in that way he is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has unwavering confidence in the Dhamma and has arrived at this true Dhamma.

- MN 9, Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta

One must understand that these roots, whether wholesome or not, are embedded in karmically active formations, which means they produce rebirth any time they are taken as self. One can think of this in the context of intention. Right Intention has three factors – nekkhamma or renunciation, abyāpāda or non-ill, and avihimsa or non-cruelty. Renunciation corresponds to alobha, while non-ill will and non-cruelty correspond to adosa. Right View, which gives rise to Right Intention, corresponds to amoha. On the flip side, the factors of wrong intention and avijjā correspond to the three unwholesome roots – attachment to lobha, ill will, cruelty to dosa, and avijjā to amoha. If we understand this, then we can draw this further out to seeing that these intentions will give rise to speech and action.

Depending upon the choices one makes, there will be strengthening of the formations those choices stemmed from and, therefore, the further strengthening of the roots those formations possess, leading to a collection of habitual tendencies in bhava colored by those previous choices.

An effective way to deal with this process so that one is able to cut off these roots is to see their manifestation early enough before they become part of an identity in bhava and as jāti of speech or action. This is to watch one's thoughts in response to any stimuli, whether pleasant, painful or neutral. In this way one can see if the mind is rooted in greed, hatred or delusion. Of course, we will see in the next section how the upakkilesas are another step in the process so that one can recognize the content of those thoughts rooted in the formations. However, if one is able to discern the quality of thoughts, that is to say where they are rooted in, this would be even better, since cutting them off right then and there stops the whole process of creating further rebirth. If a thought is filled with qualities of greed, hatred, or the sense of "I am" and one is unable to see the impermanence of the situation that led to such thoughts, then that means the akusala mūla have fettered the formations.

Therefore, one must first understand such thoughts as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, then abandon the attention given to them as a result of reacting to a situation with any of the three unwholesome roots at the level of thought as the Second Noble Truth of Samyudaya through the 6Rs that is the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga and experience the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha that is the release from such thoughts. Doing this, even if there has been a rebirth of mental action in the form of

that unwholesome thought, letting it go and preventing it from becoming (or bhava) to the birth (or jāti) of speech or action, one cuts off any new bhava of becoming or an identity that collects those roots as part of its collection of automatic tendencies. Doing so, one also weakens the roots in formations as well as the āsavas since there is no corresponding energy fed back to them. Even in the case of having a thought rooted in the wholesome, one needs to abandon the identification with that thought to prevent any form of identity in bhava that can turn into rebirth-producing action or kamma. This is done with the Attention Rooted in Reality and remembering the tilakkhaṇa of the thoughts and of the situation that caused it. Using the 6Rs one:

- ◆ Recognizes whenever thoughts rooted in ill will, sensual craving, or taking a situation personally arises, which is Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention from that and abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes any associated tension with those thoughts, thus experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and uplifts the mind
- ◆ Returns to a more wholesome mindset, replacing thoughts of ill will or cruelty with loving-kindness or compassion and sensual craving with a mindset of non-attachment, without personalizing the situation

by recalling the tilakkhaṇa of the situation and the thought around it

- ◆ Repeats whenever mind drifts to any of the unwholesome roots or identification with the wholesome thoughts and thus continues to cultivate Magga

Therefore, the more one is able to recognize the root of one's thoughts, meaning how the intention towards a situation arises and the quality of that intention, the easier it is to stop the process of accumulation of tendencies and identity in bhava. And so, through the Path or the 6Rs one experiences the cessation of unwholesome roots.

Upakkilesa

Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, vattham saṅkiliṭṭham malaggahitam; tamenam rajako yasmim yasmim raṅgajāte upasamhareyya—yadi nīlakāya yadi pītakāya yadi lohita kāya yadi mañjiṭṭhakāya durattavaṇṇamevassa aparisuddhavaṇṇamevassa. Tam kissa hetu? Aparisuddhattā, bhikkhave, vatthassa. Evameva kho, bhikkhave, citte saṅkiliṭṭhe, duggati pātikaṅkhā.

Bhikkhus, suppose a cloth were defiled and stained, and a dyer dipped it in some dye or other, whether blue or yellow or red or carmine; it would look poorly dyed and impure in color. Why is that? Because of the impurity of the cloth. So too, when the mind is defiled, an unhappy destination may be expected.

- MN 7, Vattūpama Sutta

To reiterate from the previous chapter, let's first list out the upakkilesas or defilements. The sixteen defilements are abhijjha-visamalobha or covetousness, byāpāda or ill will, krodha or anger, upanāha or resentment, makkha or contempt or disparaging others, palāsa or competitiveness, issā or jealousy, macchariya or stinginess, māyā or deceit, sāṭṭheyya or hypocrisy, thamba or stubbornness, sārambha or prone to quarreling, māna or conceit, atimāna or arrogance, mada or self-infatuation, and pamāda or carelessness. We will go into depth with all of these, but we should first understand where these defilements first occur in the mental processes of Dependent Origination.

To do that we must understand what this term citta is and how it relates to the words mano and viññāna, because this may lead to some confusion unless we first clarify these words so we can put them in the right context of how the defilements arise. There is a way in which these words are different meaning and different in name and the same in meaning and different in name. In the first case, citta is a mindset, a collection of likeminded thoughts. For example, the citta can be a contracted one, an expansive one, a contentious one, or a peaceful one. That is to say various similar qualities of thoughts are aggregated into a type of citta. It is the affective aspect of an experience. Mano is the sixth sense base – that through which thoughts are sensed and cognized. It is the thinking aspect of an experience. Viññāna is consciousness or cognition, the bare knowledge of an object, the awareness of something, the process of learning something for the first time and is usually tied to the awareness of experiences of the six sense bases. It is the awareness aspect of an experience.

And how are these terms the same in meaning and different in name? The Buddha states in SN 12.61, Assutava Sutta –

Yañca kho etaṃ, bhikkhave, vuccati cittaṃ itipi, mano itipi, viññāṇaṃ itipi, taṃ rattiyaṃ ca divasassa ca aññadeva uppajjati aññam nirujjhati.

But that which is called 'mind' and 'mentality' and 'consciousness' arises as one thing and ceases as another by day and by night.

Here the Buddha is saying that the mind or citta, mentality or mano, and consciousness or viññāna are one and the same and, in this context, are used synonymously to describe a process of how consciousness descends and holds onto an object of attention, arising and ceasing with every microsecond of contact with that object. Therefore, when one refers to the sixteen defilements of the mind, one is to understand it as a coloring or bespeckling of viññāna in the process of Dependent Origination after the saṅkhāras which would be rooted in the kilesas. These upakkilesas, therefore, make up a mindset, using the context of citta, and the consciousness besmirched by them, using the context of viññāna. So, one can say, for example, a jealous mindset or consciousness (or cognition) defiled by jealousy or a stingy mindset or consciousness (or cognition) defiled by stinginess, and so on. While the āsavas are like particulates or droplets that start the process and the roots bind intention, the defilements are like clouds that obscure the mind. It is here that one puts on the defilement-colored sunglasses and experiences the world through those sunglasses. It's important to classify the defilements under the three roots for the context of bhava. The root of greed gives rise to the defilements of covetousness and

stinginess. The root of hatred gives rise to the defilements of ill will, anger, resentment, contempt, competitiveness, jealousy, and quarrelsomeness. The root of delusion gives rise to the defilements of deceit, hypocrisy, stubbornness, conceit, arrogance, self-infatuation, and carelessness.

The process first started with the droplets of the āsavas, which then streamed into the roots, and now that stream has gained momentum by a whirlpool of the defilements. We will now explore each upakkilesa in depth that is present in the whirlpool that interconnects viññāna and nāmarupā as there is an interdependency between the two for the purposes of understanding each effect on the link of consciousness that then extends to infecting the factors of nāmarupā. We will also explore how to abandon each of them so that the mind is undefiled. The principle behind letting go of each defilement and replacing it with a wholesome tendency is rooted in MN 19, Dvedhāvittaka Sutta –

*Yaññādeva, bhikkhave, bhikkhu bahulamanuvitakketi
anuvicāreti, tathā tathā nati hoti cetaso.*

*Bhikkhus, whatever a bhikkhu frequently thinks and ponders
upon, that will become the inclination of his mind.*

Abhijjha-visamalobha

Technically, this compound word means covetousness and unrighteous greed. The understanding here is that covetousness is coveting the wholesome properties or qualities of another being while unrighteous greed is the desire for the unwholesome properties or qualities of a being. However, greed is greed no matter how one would try to justify or explain it, and even coveting the wholesome is an extension of that root of greed. For this reason, one can just understand this term as covetousness. This is the mindset that stains the cognition towards seeing the world as a way to gain something that is not yet possessed. It can intertwine with jealousy, competitiveness, deceit and resentment. When it defiles consciousness, it also defiles the factors of contact, feeling, perception, intention, and attention in *nāma*. Such a mindset is unable to see what is in one's own plate because the eyes are always looking at what others are eating and wanting that. Because of this, one is unable to let go of restlessness and the mind becomes aggravated, possibly leading to breaking the precept of taking what is not given, leading to further restlessness.

Whenever mind is stained by covetousness, the mental, verbal and physical actions that follow will be karmically laced with that defilement. The root of greed manifests as this particular defilement, causing the mind to think thoughts of grabbing and stealing, using deceitful words to trick people and therefore one breaks the precept of abstaining from false

speech. If one is covetous of a relationship, one may even go as far as to commit sexual misconduct and even kill another being. Such a mind is only thinking about a self to please and to fulfill, and so one is unable to exercise gratitude or generosity. One is to become mindful of whenever covetous thoughts arise and nip them before they express themselves into further thoughts, speech and action, by which time the mindset becomes so ingrained in covetousness that a person continues to build up for themselves a bhava – an existence, a personality or identity – that is of cheating, lying, stealing, and scamming if one continues to remain this way. Such an identity and such thoughts then give rise to guilt, remorse and regret or karmic markers of hungry ghosts because of the overuse of such greedy intentions, leading the next consciousness to give rise to a jāti in the lower realm.

Abandoning Covetousness with Right Effort

Dveme, bhikkhave, puggalā dullabhā lokasmim̐. Katame dve? Yo ca pubbakārī, yo ca kataññū katavedī. Ime kho, bhikkhave, dve puggalā dullabhā lokasmin”ti.

Bhikkhus, these two kinds of persons are rare in the world. What two? One who takes the initiative in helping others and one who is grateful and thankful. These two kinds of persons are rare in the world.

- AN 2.119, Āsāduppajaha vagga

In order to prevent a bhava that causes mind to take jāti as a scammer, thief, conman or the like, one has to see the thoughts that could potentially lead to such destinies in the present lifetime or lead to the realm of the hungry ghosts in a subsequent lifetime or even worse if one murders and continues to maintain wrong views. Everything in terms of bhava and jāti begins at the level of thought and descends down from there, so it is imperative to understand the importance of mental actions as being responsible for verbal and physical actions. If the formations rooted in greed give rise to covetousness, they will manifest in a nāmarupā that is always seeking, always feeling inadequate and thus looking for other people's property, qualities, and relationships to be able to fulfill this scarcity mindset brought on by that defilement. This defilement harbored in thoughts can then manifest in an

intention to cause unwholesome actions. One must be vigilant enough to notice these sorts of intention. In other words, the thoughts stained by covetousness are one jāti which is one form of Dukkha present in the mind, but if it gives rise to the next intention to commit unwholesome speech or actions, then that is the jāti of speech or actions. However, if one becomes mindful enough to notice that the mind is grasping out of this covetousness, one will be able to let go of it through wisdom and understanding.

Gratitude is a wonderful deterrent against every form of covetousness. In the morning, spending a few minutes mentally listing out the wholesome qualities the mind possesses, the relationships one has built and nurtured, the people in one's life who have supported one through the years, the friends, family, the situations that brought one success, even the physical possessions one has becomes like a meditation to become aware of the wonderful aspects of one's life. One can for certain go through an entire day just contemplating the people, mental, emotional, and physical qualities of oneself, the possessions, and so on, and one wouldn't have exhausted the list of blessings one has acquired in life. Doing this, one begins to see the minutest gifts and acts of generosity from others as immense and one immediately has gratitude for them. From the air one breathes, the health of one's mind and body, the bed one sleeps on, the room one sleeps in, the running water one has, the clean drinking water, food in the fridge, electricity, and so on – all of these become precious gems in one's life – and everything else becomes the proverbial icing on the cake.

This evolves into natural generosity. One feels truly content and in fact is prone to sharing what one has because of that contentment. One becomes generous with one's resources, one's knowledge, and one's time. These three are important for everyone. Resources come and go, but knowledge grows the more it is shared. Time is invaluable because it is irreversible. If one shares one's time to share knowledge or even just to be there for a friend who needs someone to hear them out, this is showing true generosity. Smiling is the easiest and immediately satisfying form of generosity. Smile and the other person cannot help but smile. Being generous in mind by radiating good thoughts towards everyone one meets, in speech by sharing words of comfort and support, and in body by donating resources or volunteering, will keep one feeling content. It is difficult for any thoughts of covetousness to arise in a mind that is grateful, generous, and content. In this one has a mind of equanimity, void of restlessness born from covetousness.

Thoughts of covetousness are the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. The persistent attention towards them, thereby becoming preoccupied by them and further proliferating them into stronger iterations of intention and inclinations that lean towards acting on them is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. To notice them and abandon them is to utilize the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga in order to experience the release from thoughts of covetousness or the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. Using the 6Rs to understand and abandon covetousness, one

- ◆ Recognizes covetous intentions or thoughts as Duk-kha
- ◆ Releases attention and proliferation of such thoughts, thus abandoning Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes the tension in the mind or body as a manifestation of these thoughts, thus experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles with awareness of that mind rooted in Nirodha
- ◆ Returns to thoughts of gratitude or radiating equanimity
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind becomes covetous again, thus developing Magga

Byāpāda

Byāpāda is translated as ill will. It manifests as a defilement as well as a hindrance and a fetter. These levels are all varying degrees of the presence, energy, and usage of ill will. In other words, the defilement of ill will is on the subtle level before it becomes a hindrance that is a result of having acted from that defilement, and it binds one to Saṃsāra as a predominant factor for rebirth in the sensual realms in the form of a fetter. Ill will is also another word for aversion. Aversion, in this case, can mean not wanting an experience, person, object, or identity. The more one acts upon the defilement of ill will, the more it

manifests in stronger forms like anger, resentment, hatred, and violence in thought, speech, and action. Aversion can arise because of a painful feeling, and therefore it is also present as an underlying tendency with a different name at the level of that painful feeling. Now this painful feeling can be purely physical, but if the mind attaches to it a sense of self, then there is a further mental reaction of not liking the feeling, wanting it to go away, and with it, the *Dukkha* of the painful feeling manifests in union with what is displeasing can arise along with reactions of annoyance, irritation, frustration and building up to anger.

The more one harbors these thoughts, the more they accumulate in the mental *bhava* of a being as one who is annoyed and then they spill over into further *jāti* of even heavier thoughts, heavy in that they are rooted further in hatred, and even more stained with the defilement of ill will. If one acts on these thoughts through speech and action, it causes the breaking of all five precepts and one becomes known as an irritated person, manifests in *bhava* the habitual tendencies to automatically react from ill will and thus create the identity of such a person in that same *bhava*, leading to further *jāti* of mental, verbal, and physical actions in a matter of microseconds. If this becomes the habituated personality and the consciousness is thus defiled at death, it can lead to unpleasant births in the next birth of existence, even the lower realms if one hasn't entered the stream.

If the mind becomes accustomed to lashing out with expressions of annoyance and frustration, harboring even fear as a result of this defilement of ill will, then the mind becomes

fraught with worry, restlessness, and is unable to tranquilize formations. It will take time and effort to replace these thoughts, but they can be replaced since every iteration of Dependent Origination makes the whole process fluid. This effort is made up of mindfulness, vigilance and understanding and reverses the process and cleanses the next iteration of viññāna to be unstained and undefiled.

Abandoning Ill Will with Right Effort

*Nissaraṇaṅghetaṃ, āvuso, byāpādassa yadidaṃ
mettācetovimuttī'ti.*

*For this, friend, is the escape from ill will, namely, the liberation
of the mind by altruistic joy.*

- AN 6.13, Nissāraṇīya Sutta

The immediately effective antidote counteracting any form of ill will is mettā or loving-kindness. As soon as the mind becomes annoyed or irritated by a person or situation, instead of paying more heed to the ill will and irritation, one develops the Path by letting go of one's attention away from that ill will and replacing it with loving-kindness. It's imperative to see that it's not the person, the situation, or anything else external to the mind that is the source of the ill will but the mind itself. The mind perceives someone or something as a source of its frustration because it is clouded by the defilement of ill will. It begins to act upon that ill will, first with more thoughts fueled and nutrified by attention and mental proliferation. This immediately gives rise to further underlying tendencies and the thought becomes "mine, me, I am" at clinging, thereby leaving the impression of the ill will into the link of bhava where the mind becomes habituated to act from ill will as a default any time the same triggers cause it to arise. From that birth of mental action of thought to the craving, clinging and bhava, the energies in those links are fed back to the āsavas, the unwholesome roots in formations and further strengthen this defilement at the next round of consciousness arising so that those energies become like a denser cloud formation that obscures the perceptions of the mind.

And how does one replace ill will with loving-kindness? It's as easy as setting an intention. Whenever the mind starts to swerve towards the territory of ill will, one has to have the attentiveness to see this and then uses the Path to replace thoughts of ill will with loving-kindness. Eventually, loving-kindness replaces the fragments and sediments of ill will that

are picked up through the river of Dependent Origination and then finally overturns the habitual tendencies in bhava so that an identity is rooted in that loving-kindness from which one acts in thought, speech, and behavior in a loving and kind manner at the link of jāti. Remember, that because there is still “I am” rooted in that mettā and in the action infused with that mettā, there will still be a rebirth in eventually better scenarios in one’s life as well as possibly higher rebirths in a new life. So once the steps are taken to let go of the defilement of ill will and replace it with loving-kindness, the next step is to let go of the conceit around that loving-kindness and therefore have no bhava that could create a feedback loop and at the same time create the possibility of a new jāti at the moment of death.

In the context of the Four Noble Truths, one can look at ill will in the following manner. Ill will as arising as a defilement of consciousness, being rooted in hatred in formations and streaming from the āsavas, is due to previously choices acted upon born from habitual tendencies in bhava that loop back to further defiling of the next consciousness. That means that one has to become aware of thoughts and see if they are tinged with ill will. If they are, then one releases any nutriment of attention to them and abandons ill will altogether and replaces it with loving-kindness. Ill will present in one’s thoughts is the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. The proliferation born from attention to those thoughts is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. One uses the 6Rs to abandon the cause of the ill will and redirects it toward loving-kindness. The 6Rs here are the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga, and the release from ill will is the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. So, let’s say you come across a situation you

know is likely going to get you to experience aversion. If you notice it, you are already using mindfulness to notice the ill will. Before you speak or act, you shift your awareness away from the ill will and generate a feeling of loving-kindness, which can be activated by a pleasant image, recollection of gratitude, or just as simple as verbalizing in mind, “May I be happy. May I be well.” One can even extend such mettā towards the situation or people involved. In the context of the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the ill will present as an intention or thought – this is Dukkha
- ◆ Releases their awareness and attention away from the thoughts – this is abandoning the Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes the mental and/or physical tension that resulted from harboring ill will and thus tranquilizes formations rooted in hatred – this is experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and uplifts mind
- ◆ Returns to a feeling of loving-kindness to replace the ill will
- ◆ Repeats whenever another wave of ill will arises in mind – this is practicing Magga

Thus, one utilizes the Path to replace ill will with loving-kindness and weaken the fettered formations, which start to uncloud the next set of consciousnesses so that the sediments picked up from these links don't build up to the bhava of a person filled with ill will.

Kodha

Kodha or rage is a destructive force, not just for the person receiving the anger but for the one holding onto anger. Anger is the intensification of ill will and aversion, which results in a mindset that is heavily defiled and results in thoughts of harm, violence, and even murder. Anger is like an intoxicant because it muddies the senses, makes the head feel hot and tense, and colors the perceptions in a way that prevents one from seeing reality as it is, thereby causing one to become heedless, caustic, and prone to breaking the precepts. Anger, rooted in hatred, can give rise to a mindset stained with intentions and thoughts to cause harm, and as these thoughts pick up steam – meaning after contact with something that enrages the mind, the unpleasant feeling gives rise to the underlying tendency towards resistance, which causes one to deepen the aversion at the link of craving. At clinging, there is anger that is possessed by conceit with the sense that it is “me, mine, I am,” and therefore there are justifications built around it in a matter of

microseconds before it becomes part of a person's identity and existence at bhava.

At that point, mind is hot with fury, unable to make sense of wholesome and unwholesome; it is almost inevitable that the anger will give rise to angry thoughts, speech or action at which point the energy of this anger is fed back to the other links starting with the āsavas. After this, the built-up tension is released, and the valve of bhava opens up to let out the flood of angry actions at three levels – mind, body, and speech. Then, when the dust is settled, the mind becomes tired, restless or even lazy and filled with sloth and torpor. However, the rush of the anger for some, like an intoxicant, can become addictive. The personality around anger gets built up at bhava and the habitual tendencies all swirl around this one defilement, causing one to identify as a person with anger issues or even worse as one who commits unwholesome actions, including murder. These tendencies in bhava become automatic. Mindfulness of one's thoughts are required at this point in order to realize the anger arising before it becomes full-blown rage and heinous actions.

Abandoning Anger with Right Effort

Nissaraṇañhetam, āvuso, vihesāya yadidaṃ karuṇāceto vimutti'ti

For this, friend, is the escape from the thought of harming, namely, the liberation of the mind by compassion.

- AN 6.13, Nissāraṇīya Sutta

Anger should be understood as an extension of ill will and a direct cause of *himsa* or violence. *Himsa* is also translated as cruelty because, in anger, one is cruel in mind, body, and speech. The most effective antidote against anger is *karuṇā*, or compassion. Whereas *mettā* is a feeling of friendliness that sees all beings as those who deserve happiness and one has a genuine wish for this, *karuṇā* is a feeling of understanding and care for all beings who are suffering. One understands beings have their own suffering to endure, and when one truly sees this, one doesn't want to add to that suffering but has a genuine wish for beings to be free from that suffering altogether, causing the mind to be cool, calm, collected and free of suffering itself. Just as a mind filled with loving-kindness is void of ill will if the mind is truly steeped in that loving-kindness, a mind truly immersed in compassion is void of even an iota of angry thoughts.

Compassion must be realized through meditative practice, but one can have a flavor for it if one understood and saw all beings suffering in their own way. The cashier at the checkout who may act standoffish may be suffering from grief at the

news of a loved one's death. The colleague at work who may suddenly seem to give the cold shoulder may be under a lot of stress at home with their family. The friend who suddenly lashes out at you with cruel words may have broken up in their relationship or heard some bad news. Everyone is going through something, and most people hide their pain in their work and try to suppress it, and sometimes this can manifest as afflictive emotions and reactions. With this understanding, one then cultivates self-compassion. One looks within and sees that anger may also result as a manifestation of their own hurts. Seeing this, it would be suggested to practice self-forgiveness and even send out forgiveness to those that have harmed one in the past.

Radiating compassion comes at a later stage in one's practice, but as mentioned, it can be understood with one's own understanding of suffering. The more one sees this, the less impatient one becomes, and the defilement of anger is replaced by compassionate thoughts bit by bit. Of course, it will take some effort initially, but it must be a persistent one where one is aware of the spark of anger arising due to the habitual tendencies. In noticing this, one must not see a person or their actions as the trigger for the anger but the mind as the driving force behind it, and after letting go of it, the immediate mental action is to forgive oneself and have compassion for the person through understanding and making leeway for that person's choices. From here, any speech or action will be rooted in compassion instead of anger. Eventually the defilement will be eradicated as will the habitual tendencies dependent on it, leading to new tendencies rooted in compassion. As with every

tendency, it must then be void of any sense of self and conceit to completely destroy the remaining residue that could cause rebirth

From the lens of the Four Noble Truths, we can understand anger as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. Paying attention to those intentions and thoughts clouded by that anger is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. Using the 6R process to abandon those thoughts is the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga while experiencing the relief from that release of thoughts is the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. In this process, one replaces the anger with compassion or loving-kindness, whatever seems best suited for that moment, and the mind becomes cleared of that defilement bit by bit, thereby whittling away at the habitual tendencies in bhava that are rooted in the anger. Using the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes anger arising as thoughts and intentions defiled by it – this is Dukkha
- ◆ Releases the nutriment of attention to those thoughts – this is the abandoning of Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes mind and body and thus tranquilizes formations having arisen from anger – this is the release from anger, the experience of Nirodha of that anger
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and uplifts mind

- ◆ Returns to replace that anger with compassion, understanding, loving-kindness, or forgiveness, whatever feels appropriate in the moment
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind goes astray towards anger – this is continuing to cultivate Magga

One important point to consider is that compassion is not sympathy, empathy, or pity. Compassion neither looks down on a person suffering nor does it take on the feeling of that person's suffering. Compassion understands there is Dukkha present and has genuine wishes and actions to help alleviate that Dukkha while at the same acknowledging and respecting that a person must go through their own evolution to come out of the Dukkha themselves. One can only point the way and have compassionate motives, but the path out of Dukkha must be walked by every being on their own so that they themselves can see and experience the cessation of Dukkha.

Upanāha

Upanāha is resentment. It is holding onto ill will or anger to such an extent that it becomes part of the framework of what one may consider to be one's identity or personality. Resentment is suppressed anger. Anger and ill will are not to be suppressed or sublimated to anything else, but to be

recognized for what they are – Dukkha of that moment – and abandoned to experience freedom from them. Resentment is rooted in hatred and defiles consciousness as a result of unpleasant experiences. After contact arises, the unpleasant experience of past abuses by loved ones, the betrayal of friends, or even being felt hurt by a group of people in society results in the mind shattering into self-doubt, self-criticism, and self-hatred. These become the stem for outward doubt and mistrust, critical behavior and outward hatred. If one doesn't forgive oneself or those who have caused harm to the mind in the past, this anger will turn into resentment that eats away at the mind. This defilement of resentment then embitters one's thoughts, words and actions.

As the bhava becomes a depository of reactions, responses, and tendencies stemming from that resentment, one's expressions appear cold and untrustworthy. Not forgiving oneself, one cannot forgive others and vice versa. Not trusting others, one is unable to trust oneself, and vice versa. This is why the defilement of resentment feeds the underlying tendency of doubt more than others, as well as the hindrance and fetter of doubt, which can manifest as doubt in one's own abilities, in the practice, in the Path, and in the Dhamma. Whenever one becomes doubtful, one's mind also becomes lazy and unmotivated, or it can become restless and anxious.

If a person who triggers resentment comes in the vicinity of one's area, the contact with seeing that person immediately fires up the defilement of resentment and underlying tendencies in microseconds, leading to the automatic response of behaving a certain way stemming from the bhava of those

tendencies. Even the mere thought of a person who has hurt one deeply in the past fires up those same defilement and tendencies. The more one thinks, speaks or acts from automatic responses rooted in that resentment the more one feeds that same resentment. It is a vicious cycle that only continues to energize itself through wrong or misguided attention and lack of mindfulness. It is with Right Effort rooted in awareness of the arising of the resentment that the process of acting upon that resentment begins to diminish and ultimately replaced.

Abandoning Resentment with Right Effort

Ime kho, bhikkhave, pañca āghātaṭṭhāpāṭivāyā, yattha bhikkhuno uppanno āghāto sabbaso ṭṭhāpāṭivāyā”ti.

Bhikkhus, there are these five ways of removing resentment by which a bhikkhu should entirely remove resentment when it has arisen toward anyone.

- AN 5.161, Paṭhamaāghātaṭṭhāpāṭivāyā Sutta

There are five ways to let go of resentment – the cultivation of mettā, karuṇā, upekkhā, abandoning attention towards the person who sparked that resentment, and reflection on everyone being inheritors of their own kamma. Forgiveness is the antidote to resentment, and it ultimately helps cultivate and fulfill these five methods. One has to first become aware of the resentment and its manifestation. Perhaps there have been people or situations that one has held onto for so long that it has become part of who one is as a person, which has locked itself into a place deeper in bhava every time the mental reaction of the memory of that person or situation is imbued with automatic resentment. This mental reaction is jāti, which continues to refuel the process of resentment. When the person shows up in one's life, perhaps one may not show resentment, but it is inside, in mind, and bottled up and rising with every microsecond of mental reaction. The key is to become mindful of this and notice that the attention to this resentment is feeding it further, making it grow larger. Instead, with wisdom, one lets go of the attention to this resentment and relaxes the formations that arose from such reactions, then directs the mind to forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a powerful cleanser of the mental and emotional debris that has been lodged for many years or even lifetimes through the process of formations arising and passing away. Forgiveness sheds light on that debris and makes it float up the surface of river so it can be fished out rather than getting stuck in and strengthening the rapids of consciousness, feeling,

craving, and clinging, all experienced as a self in bhava and from where one acts. The way to forgiveness is first through self-forgiveness. In a meditation, one may use the phrase “I forgive myself for not understanding,” a few times and let the energy of that mental verbalizing seep into the heart. This is quite a cathartic process that more often than not causes one to cry and is a massive relief from holding on to any self-doubts and self-hatred. Then, some people or situation will come into view of the mind’s eye. The energy of forgiveness may gently be guided towards them with the words, “I forgive you for not understanding.”

This phrase, “not understanding,” has wisdom in it. It means that oftentimes one may misjudge people and one realizes that whatever a person did they did it at that point in time for whatever reason, but they are not the same person anymore. Perhaps one misread a person’s words and misinterpreted them as words of hurt and anger. Forgiveness provides clarity into a situation to realize that the mind has been holding onto the resentment for so long while the person that caused it has no awareness of it, and even if one were to bring it up to that person, it would only lead to further hurt, both for oneself and for the other person. Instead of confrontation, the energy of forgiveness in meditation sweeps through the consciousness and cleans it of any stains of resentment. When this happens the rest of the undercurrents dependent upon that defilement fade away and there is a cleansing at bhava. With true forgiveness the bhava of hurt emotions, resentment, and a personality rooted in that are all demolished. Now, if required, one can then wait and receive

forgiveness from a person by seeing them in the meditation where they say, "I forgive you for not understanding," and one accepts that forgiveness. This process can also work for forgiving or receiving forgiveness from beings that have passed away.

This resentment is the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. The attention to that resentment is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. Using the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga – that is through the practice of forgiveness meditation – one is then able to experience the release from resentment, which is the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. There are two steps to the meditation – forgive and relax. When forgiving oneself, when painful memories come up, one forgives those and relaxes any tension or tightness associated with that painful memory. This applies to the person one wants to forgive as well and for when receiving forgiveness. Any memories, thoughts, ideas, or distraction arising from the resentment and pain are to just be forgiven – meaning letting go of the pain and forgiving it away – and mind and body are to be relaxed. Then, one returns to forgiving oneself or to forgiving another or receiving forgiveness. Eventually, in doing this, the mind becomes free of any resentment and the habitual tendencies related to that resentment in the link of bhava fade away as well.

In forgiving oneself, the negative power of the same painful memories won't have that same sting when they come up. Likewise, when forgiving another being, the negativity around what they might have done fades away, and there is no reaction to thinking about them. Instead, at the very least, the mind will be equanimous if not having mettā or karuṇā for that being.

Forgiveness makes one realize that everyone is on their own journey, and there is nothing but a detriment to holding people to a certain expectation of being, whether they were an abusive parent who themselves might have been abused, a disloyal friend who has their own reasons and kamma for they may have done, or anyone who may have harmed one in the past. In letting go of expectations with wisdom and forgiveness, the mind becomes free of resentment.

Makkha

Makkha is contempt. *Makkha* arises from the root of hatred and a strong sense of self. As one comes up in the world, one forgets one's friends or those who helped one get on the path to success. It arises from self-pride and ingratitude. When one achieves something, they may feel like they are on a pedestal looking down at everyone else and this gives rise to being critical of others. Perhaps as one grew up, one saw this happen in one's teenage years or early twenties – and for some it can continue even beyond to the rest of their lives – when one thinks they know more than their parents and become critical of their parents' or elders' advice. They may do this out of spite and contempt or because they have faith in friends who may lead them astray. This form of belittlement in mind, body, and speech may occur when someone becomes famous and may return to one's hometown and feel not only out of place but

may also look down on the same people one was once friends within that town. After becoming well-known after training and teaching, if that monastic were to feel pride in their work and feel like they are now better than their elders, then they are filled with makkha.

Makkha as a thought process gives rise to a bhava of existence in which the mind is deluded and intertwines with the defilements of conceit, arrogance, self-infatuation and carelessness as well as the fetter of conceit. Self-pride intoxicates the mind and causes it to misperceive reality. It's the opposite of the adage, "Don't believe your own press," and when one does, the mind becomes haughty and starts to criticize others or looks down on them. There's a story from an ancient Indian epic called the Mahabharata that illustrates this particular point. While they were young, there were two boys Drupada and Drona. Drupada was the son of a king and Drona was the son of a brahmin teacher. Under the guidance of Drona's father, the two learned knowledge of various warcraft and statecraft. While still young, Drupada saw Drona as his best friend and didn't have any sense of being higher or lower than Drona. He even promised Drona that when he would become king, he would share half his wealth and kingdom with him. When the two grew up, Drona's father passed away and he lived on alms. He thought of approaching his friend Drupada who had now become king. However, when he approached the new king, he was belittled. Drupada the new king looked down on what he considered a lowly beggar and refused to consider him a friend. Drona left disheartened. The story ends in tragedy where Drona manages to kidnap

Drupada and forces him to share half the kingdom in return for his life. In return, Drupada has his son kill Drona during a massive war. The broader point here is to never forget those who are your friends and not to be swayed by fame, wealth, pride, or disdain.

A mind with *makkha* doesn't have or make any consideration for others. As this happens, one leads a lonely life filled with bitterness and emotional pain, which becomes one's new existence or *bhava*. In order to let go of this pain and this *bhava*, one must examine and abandon those thoughts that lead one to the idea that one is better than another just because one achieved a higher level of success. This identification with that newfound status becomes one's new *bhava* and one's actions become rooted in that. One has to understand the true nature of impermanence of all conditioned things, including the rise to fame or glory. Everything that arises is bound to pass away. One sees that there is intrinsic *Dukkha* in taking this as self or as permanent. One then abandons any such notions and comes to a freer mind and a *bhava* void of contempt.

Abandoning Contempt with Right Effort

One should see contempt in the form of thoughts and prevent those thoughts from becoming speech or action. There are four qualities of mind that one can make a persistent effort in imbuing consciousness with, as per *Sutta Nipata* 2.4 –

*Gāraṇo ca nivāto ca,
santuṭṭhi ca kataññutā;
Kālena dhammassavaṇaṃ, etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*

Reverence and humility,

contentment and gratitude,

timely listening to the Dhamma:

This is the highest blessing.

That is to say, reverence or respect for those who brought one up – parents, elders, mentors, teachers – keeps one aware of how one got to where they are. Humility is modesty, being one of few wants, and self-effacement. This arises naturally from one who sees the impermanent nature of all processes and doesn't take them personally. Contentment is being happy with the qualities one possesses, aware that anything else is extra – gratitude is the cause of this, in that one is always aware of the depth of value something, or someone has and doesn't take anyone or anything for granted, including the support of those who brought one up. Listening to or reading the Dhamma – suttas and talks – helps the mind become clear-sighted.

One must exercise these qualities and with the remembrance of the tilakkhaṇa, that all that arises – including the fame, name, status, and wealth that one may possess – is bound to pass away. More importantly, they arise due to causes and conditions, which include the support of one’s friends, elders, teachers, mentors, and parents, and even one’s own efforts are accredited to the support of those same people in one way or another – this keeps one humble and grateful, leading to contentment. In remembering and applying these qualities, the mind becomes free from contempt and looking down on others. Replacing makkha with these wholesome attitudes, the undercurrent changes, leading to the dissolution of a bhava – existence or personality – rooted in haughty contempt and bit by bit, one’s mental, verbal, and physical actions continue to refine the next set of consciousnesses until the mind is void of all contempt and ultimately the conceit and sense of “I am” which is a root of makkha.

Contempt here is the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. Attention to it is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. Abandoning that attention and replacing the contempt with something wholesome is the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga using the 6Rs, and thus one experiences the cessation of contempt, which is the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. Using the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes contemptuous thoughts as Dukkha

- ◆ Releases attention from them and abandons
Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes tension in mind and/or body and thus tranquilizes formations arising from those thoughts and experiences Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles to bring in joy and other wholesome qualities
- ◆ Returns to thoughts of respect, humility, contentment, and gratitude
- ◆ Repeats the process every time an inkling of contempt arises – this is cultivating Magga

Palāsa and Issā

Palāsa is competitiveness. It's rooted in hatred because one has the sense of wanting to be better than others and domineering for personal gain while harboring ill will and aversion towards them. It is one-upmanship or "keeping up with the joneses," and therefore, it can be intertwined with jealousy, covetousness, conceit, arrogance, self-infatuation, and carelessness. Thoughts rooted in *palāsa* arise due to having seen someone better than one is, and now one wants to dominate the playing field. One gets a sense that they have lost and become greedy to regain what they mistakenly think they have lost – respect, attention, praise, resources, and so on. With

this misperception, a person becomes domineering, wanting to be right instead of getting things right. In other words, the person whose consciousness is infused with competitiveness develops the bhava to see everyone as a competitor. This can give rise to rivalry and quarrelsomeness and even tend towards ill will, hatred, and anger.

This palāsa stems from insecurity – the sense that what one possessed, which in itself is a wrong view as all possession are impermanent, not worth holding onto for that very reason, and impersonal – and this insecurity then manifests in subtle ways, first has the birth of thoughts like “I need to find a way to be better than that person,” or “how dare they steal my thunder?” Then, those thoughts build up momentum through continual attention, which proliferates through the links of craving and clinging, and now everything one perceives becomes an opportunity to try to dominate what one considers to be their competitor. If another person is gifted in remembering suttas and expounding on them, one then tries to do the same (which at first may seem like a good thing, but the motivation is rooted in greed), and if one is not able to compete in that way one tries to find flaws in the other person’s words – this is a form of quarrelsomeness. Instead of letting these thoughts of trying to overpower another manifest into verbal or physical actions, which further concretize the bhava of automatic reactions and the existence of someone who is prone to being competitive, it’s important to notice the thoughts leading up to such actions and to abandon them using the Path before they become strengthened through the links of craving, clinging, and bhava.

Issā is jealousy. It is closely related to covetousness, but it is also a sense of possessiveness, especially when it comes to relationships. Like palāsa, this defilement stems from the root of hatred in that the mind is has aversion towards an object of jealousy. It also stems from insecurity. Perhaps in a romantic relationship, one starts to see others begin to interact with their partner and one feels jealous – possessive of that partner – and thoughts rooted in that jealousy may manifest in speech and action that exhibits that possessive attitude, causing one to cultivate the bhava of a being who is jealous and possessive. This can lead one to become suspicious and begins to proliferate all forms of what-if scenarios and in the self-fulfilling prophecy of not wanting to lose that partner, if the jealousy gets out of hand, it can result in just that. Among siblings, one sibling may feel jealous of the attention the other sibling is receiving from parents or elders in general. One may view their sibling in a negative light, and this can manifest in harsh words or even actions towards the siblings as well as the parents or elders. This can also happen in the workplace where one becomes jealous of the praise a colleague is receiving and instead of celebrating in that colleague's success, one harbors jealous thoughts and every time that colleague comes to mind, one may even bear ill will, anger, and resentment towards them.

Jealousy can cause the mind to shut down from the reality of the situation, just like the other defilements and it can produce many unwholesome behaviors, which if repeatedly acted out, can then become part of the storage of automatic reactions in the link of bhava. These actions can be cold,

standoffish and avoidant behavior or at the extreme they can cause the mind to become hot with fury, causing destructive and violent reactions. These give rise to further ill will, anger, and resentment, and cause a flurry of interwoven unwholesome tendencies in bhava. In order to remove and prevent such responses, it's important to see the jealousy as a defilement in the form of thoughts and let go of them using Right Effort, before they translate into further actions and automatic tendencies.

Abandoning Competitiveness and Jealousy with Right Effort

Nissaraṇaṅghetaṃ, āvuso, aratīyā yadidaṃ muditāceto vimuttī'ti.

For this, friend, is the escape from discontent, namely, the liberation of the mind by altruistic joy.

- AN 6.13, Nissāraṇīya Sutta

Competitiveness and jealousy - being two sides of the same coin – that is, insecurity and unable to appreciate others' successes – the effective antidote for them is muditā. Muditā is translated as appreciative, sympathetic, or empathetic joy. In whatever way one would want to term it, it is joy in essence, but joy that stems from seeing and appreciating, and celebrating another's joy. In the case of having thoughts of competitiveness where one feels like they've been undermined by another's successful effort, one ought to recognize this, and instead of closing in on how it's unfair or undermining one's own effort, one then should release attention to such fuel for further arising of the defilement, then after relaxing and bringing in joy through a smile, center the mind around the feeling of muditā. That feeling is the same sort of feeling you would have if it was your child who succeeded or if your best friend was getting married and you are happy for them. That quality of feeling should be homed in and expanded with continual attention to it. Doing so, one can then direct that feeling to the person who one has a sense of competition with, and the energy in bhava becomes dissipated through non-attention to the palāsa. Likewise, having loving-kindness, gratitude, and muditā, for others which one may be jealous of, and then letting the attention to those wholesome qualities of mind replace the attention to the jealousy. In this way, one clarifies the next set of consciousnesses arising that are given the energy of the wholesome conditions in a new bhava through non-activation of the automatic tendencies rooted in the old defilements, until eventually, a completely new bhava that is diametrically opposed to the previous bhava of a jealous and competitive existence and identity emerges, thus

preventing the birth of actions rooted in that previous bhava or a new consciousness at death giving rise to a new existence that could be stained with these defilements.

Using the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga – the 6Rs – to identify and recognize when thoughts of wanting to prove oneself as better than another or when one starts to feel like they are being undermined by another person, which all encompass the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, one then abandons the attention to such thoughts and feeling to let go of the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya and experience relief from such thoughts, which is the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha of palāsa. Thus, with the 6Rs one:

- ◆ Recognizes the palāsa in the form of thoughts and intentions to overpower another as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention to such thoughts and thus abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes tension present in the mind/body and experiences Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate to bring in joy
- ◆ Returns to a state of muditā
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind thinks thoughts of palāsa and thus continues to cultivate Magga

Likewise, with issā, one recognizes it in the form of thoughts as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. One abandons the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya when one releases one's attention away from such thoughts to then cultivates either mettā if ill will is present from such thoughts, gratitude if covetousness arises from jealousy, or muditā if one becomes jealous of another's possessions and success, which is cultivating the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga. Hence, one experiences the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha, the cessation of issā. Using the 6Rs one:

- ◆ Recognizes jealous thoughts and intentions as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention away from such thoughts and abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes tension in mind or body and thus experiences Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate for the situation
- ◆ Returns to a state of loving-kindness, gratitude, or muditā depending upon the situation
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind inclines towards the defilement of jealousy

In both cases, after the bhava is cleansed and one begins to cultivate the wholesome tendencies as mentioned, one must

take care of depersonalize those wholesome qualities as well, preventing any further bhava rooted in conceit or the sense of “I am” arising again and thus eliminating rebirth altogether.

Macchariya

Macchariya or stinginess stems from the unwholesome root of greed. There are five types of stinginess – regarding one’s shelter, one’s family (which can be understood in different ways), gains, praise, and the Dhamma itself. One may have attachment to all of these, thus causing one to become identified with them and consider them as “me, mine, I am,” at which point then the bhava rooted in such conceit becomes defensive and holding onto these types of stinginess. One may consider one’s house as the ultimate possession and feel thwarted if one has to share their dwelling space with another person. This doesn’t have to be for just someone who has a large mansion, but even as small as a dorm room or a hut. Being stingy regarding one’s family is to mean relationships in the lay life and in regard to sharing the support of families with others within the sangha in the life of a monastic. How is one stingy with relationships? For example, one may be controlling of where a family member may go or who can speak with them and so on. In terms of family for a monastic one may try to hoard the support of lay families, trying to exclude the rest of the Sangha from being able to receive donations from such

families. Stinginess in regard to gains is not sharing the food or other resources one has gained with others. One may have received some money for the benefit of one's community, family or team members in a work environment, but one hoards that money, controls how it's spent in such a way as to make sure one is benefitted the most from it and the cost of others missing out. Perhaps, one receives donations in the form of clothes, electronics for the benefit to spreading the teachings of the Dhamma but is uninclined to share and rather is possessive of these things. When one receives teachings of the Dhamma, one may be stingy regarding those teachings by trying to hoard what one has learned and not share them with others who may require it when asked about it.

All of these are manifestations of the root of greed because one doesn't want to part with any of them, under the misguided perspective of seeing what is impermanent as permanent, intrinsically Dukkha as sukha, and what is not self as belonging to self. When one is unaware of the tilakkhaṇa everything becomes precious and valuable because it is a part of self and any chance of parting from whatever one considers self is seen as painful. That itself should be recognized as Dukkha, however a being blinded by greed and defilement of stinginess is not able to see it in this light. Instead, they hoard and hold onto what they seem to possess tighter and from there can stem other negative attitudes of hatred, ill will, aversion, resentment, conceit, arrogance, and carelessness. One may protect what they believe to be their belongings to such an extent that they may even kill for them and break other precepts as well. This is why one has to become aware of such

thoughts defiled by stinginess by paying attention to the intention behind those thoughts and then using the Path to abandon them and thus abandon the defilement. Doing so, one replaces any bhava rooted in stinginess with a bhava that is rooted in wisdom, generosity, and kindness, and ultimately when one eliminates all clinging of self or conceit that is collected in that bhava, one eliminates rebirth.

Abandoning Stinginess with Right Effort

Dvemāni, bhikkhave, dānāni— āmisadānañca dhammadānañca.

*Etadaggaṃ, bhikkhave, imesaṃ dvinnaṃ dānānaṃ yadidaṃ
dhammadānaṃ.*

*There are, mendicants, these two gifts. A gift of material things
and a gift of the teaching. The better of these two gifts is the gift of the
teaching.*

- Iti 98, Dāna Sutta

Generosity is the one surefire way to change one's existence and false sense of identity rooted in stinginess. Here, expressing generosity exercises the mind to share even when it doesn't want to share. Recognizing the stingy quality of mind and then releasing one's attention from it, then relaxing the formations rooted in greed, the mind gravitates towards the pārami of dāna or generosity. One can practice dāna specifically related to the five types of stinginess.

That means one may share one's home, inviting others for a meal at one's home, letting them rest and use the facilities of your space. As a monastic one may share the resources received from a family of supporters with other monastics. One may be open to the choices members of one's family makes when it comes to who they meet and where they go, respecting their way of life and not holding onto them like possessions. One may share the food one has at home with guests. One may express formal generosity with monastics – that is to say offer food and any other requisites with an open heart to all monastics and with all beings as well. In all forms of giving, it should be done with loving-kindness and a sincere wish for the benefit of those receiving, without expectation or reward or returns from one's generosity. The generosity itself should be a source of happiness for one. If one is aware of certain teachings in the Dhamma, one should not hesitate to teach when requested to do so, and of course, the simplest way always is to share one's smile with all, causing others to experience an uplifted mind.

There are gradual steps leading to such generosity, but the first step is always to recognize the stinginess when it arises in the form of thoughts. It may feel painful at first because the mind has grown accustomed at the level of bhava to identifying with one's possessions and resources and family, but if an opportunity to give arises, instead of letting the mind resist it, recognize that resistance, let go the attention to it and then relax the tension formed in mind and body. Then one smiles or re-smiles if appropriate and returns to a feeling of loving-kindness and an intention to share and then acts on that intention. Eventually, this experience and process will start to become habituated in the mind so that one has a natural inclination towards being generous, and stinginess will have long faded away from one's mindset and bhava. With wisdom and further Right Effort, one roots out the attachment born from identification with the wholesome qualities of generosity to transcend all fetters leading to rebirth.

From the perspective of the Four Noble Truths, one can understand the presence of stingy thoughts and intentions as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, attention to such thoughts, causing proliferation of them, as the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya, using the 6Rs to let go of those thoughts and replace them with generosity-filled thoughts as the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga, and the experience of the cessation of a stingy mindset as the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. Therefore, using the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the stingy mindset as Dukkha

- ◆ Releases attention to thoughts making up that mindset, thus abandoning Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes mind and/or body tensed up from formations rooted in such thoughts, thus experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and uplifts the mind
- ◆ Returns to a mindset filled with the intention of generosity and loving-kindness
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind swerves towards thoughts of stinginess, thus cultivating the continual practice of Magga

Māyā and Sāṭṭheyya

Māyā or deceit and sāṭṭheyya or hypocrisy are also two sides of the same coin. They are rooted in delusion because from both defilements there is identification and a personal sense of self present. The difference is in intention. Deceit here is about misrepresenting oneself by concealing the unwholesome tendencies one might have. Therefore, one tries to bring their best foot forward but is not forthright with their shortcomings. They may do this in order to gain favor for support, resources, and name and fame. One tries to maintain an identity or image in society of someone who is morally upright and void of any immoral behavior. This is why it is of the nature of concealing. When one does this, one is lying, which gives rise to self-doubt

and doubt in the Dhamma itself – one is unaware or uninterested in understanding the basics of the teachings related to cultivation of the wholesome and abandonment of the unwholesome qualities of mind. One sees this as a waste of time and a detriment to one's progress.

In the case of *sāṭṭheyya* or hypocrisy, one says one thing and does another or what one represents is not one's intentions. It is treachery. One may say one is someone's friend but may stab them in the back, figuratively or even literally. One may say they are a master of a certain technique, or they have attained so and so, but in reality, they haven't even begun the practice. There is a difference of course between someone who misrepresents themselves through conceit and arrogance and ignorance but has no intention to deceive and someone who says they are something when they know they aren't with the intention to trick and fool others. In the first case there is an overestimation of one's attainment, and in the second case there is just a need for gaining favor and teaching people with fraudulent representations of the teachings. A mind that is defiled by hypocrisy may also lead people astray from Right View and this can create an extremely unwholesome bhava where such a mind may not even have remorse for their actions, believing their thoughts, speech, and deeds to be right and effective. Such a person is lost. It can become difficult for them to find their back to Right View if they themselves believe they are on the right path when they really aren't.

The existence of one whose mind is defiled by deceit or hypocrisy feels hollow, shallow, empty and crumbling. One may become so used to lying that it is just one's way of life, and

not only is there mistrust of others but there can even mistrust of oneself and self-hatred. Life takes on an illusory garb that has been put on by the mind defiled by deceit and hypocrisy. Here the world is illusory because one has made it so, built up through their deceptive and treacherous worldview and perceptions, dependent upon the defilements that latch onto a sense of self and identity at the link of bhava. Life doesn't feel real in this sense instead of where one sees through the illusory nature of perverted views of seeing permanence in impermanence, satisfaction in what is really Dukkha, and self or identity in an impersonal reality. Life doesn't seem real because anyone, in a mind defiled by deceit and hypocrisy, is a liar and not worth trusting. The recognition, fame, name, and gains themselves become empty of value and nothing is satisfying. If one is unable cleanse the mind of these defilements by seeing the inherent Dukkha of these valueless gains born from deceit and treachery and thus turn one's intentions around to see reality by first committing to change one's way, then one experiences a bhava rooted in Dukkha in one lifetime and then dies in confusion and is liable to enter a new existence that is unwholesome or even a lower realm of misfortune and pain.

Abandoning Deceit and Hypocrisy with Right Effort

Tasmātiha te, rāhula, 'hassāpi na musā bhaṇissāmī'ti—evañhi te, rāhula, sikkhitabban.

Therefore, Rāhula, you should train thus: I will not utter a falsehood even as a joke.

- MN 61, Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda Sutta

A commitment to sacca or truth and honesty is a deterrent against deceit and hypocrisy. Undertaking the precept to abstain from false speech is rooted in an intention and thoughts that stem from a commitment to truth. When this arises, the remembrance of that precept of being true in all dealings and using that as a foundation helps one to become aware of one's thoughts to see if they have the bhava of being untruthful. In other words, once one makes the commitment to be truthful, the mind has some clarity that translates to a bhava of being truthful, and when the mind recognizes an intention to deceive or trick another being, the foundation of truthfulness, if given attention, will replace that intention. When this happens, the next consciousness that arises will not be defiled by deceit or hypocrisy, and the bhava in which one has built up a character of dishonesty and treachery begins to weaken with non-

activation, the automatic tendencies wither away and are replaced by tendencies for being honest in one's words, thoughts, and actions. Therefore, the next set of jāti of mental, verbal, and physical actions will be rooted in sacca and give rise to further intentions stemming from formations rooted in wholesome roots. When this happens and continues to happen, bit by bit the consciousnesses that arise will continue to be undefiled by māyā and sāṭheyya and then if no action is possible dependent upon such defilements, then the bhava of habitual tendencies will continue to be reconstituted dependent upon the previous choices rooted in wholesome tendencies. Eventually, the bhava of a trickster turns into the bhava of an honest person, a bhava of a trustworthy being, and so on. Finally, the wholesome roots, tendencies, and actions have to be purified of any conceit and identification to destroy any rebirth, even a wholesome one, altogether.

Before one even recognizes the mind defiled by deceptive or treacherous intentions, one first takes the five basic precepts and makes a commitment to maintaining them. One of those precepts is to abstain from false speech. Once this has been done, the remembrance of this precept will arise in the mind if one continues to practice maintaining that precept. In other words, the more one not only takes the precepts but also actively maintains them, the more these actions purify intentions. With mindfulness dependent on these precepts, when there is a thought to deceive, mislead, or trick, immediately the recognition of this results in one letting go of such thoughts and replacing them with the motive to speak and act honestly. Therefore, when one does this, one utilizes

the 6Rs, the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga. To recognize such thoughts as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, abandon the attention and intention to act on such thoughts and thus let go of the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya and experience release from such thoughts, that is the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. Using the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the deceitful and treacherous thoughts and intentions to lie or conceal as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention to these thoughts and abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes mind and/or body and tranquilizes formations connected to such thoughts and intentions to lie, cheat and conceal – doing so, one experiences Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and uplifts mind
- ◆ Returns to the awareness of sacca – the willingness to be honest – and acts from there
- ◆ Repeats whenever deceitful thoughts or intentions to conceal arise, thus continuing to cultivate Magga

Thambha

Thambha means a post or pillar in Pali and comes from the Sanskrit *sthambha*. This term also denotes stubbornness, obstinacy, or inflexibility. A mindset defiled by stubbornness holds strongly to views and is unable to move forward with ease, if at all. Usually, such stubbornness may be expected in the beginning for a mind that is doubtful or skeptical, questioning everything. This is a good thing insofar as experimenting and seeing for oneself the beauty and practicality of the teachings of the Dhamma, but if this becomes the mode of thinking where it is unable to let go of ineffective views due to attachment to those views, then this is called stubbornness.

In other words, having a healthy attitude of scientific curiosity and sense of seeing for oneself how the Dhamma works is a better means of learning rather than accepting everything blindly and at face value without looking at what's under the hood. If one were to accept everything without question, one would not get very far – it's the lines of questioning that allows a person to penetrate the deeper aspects of the Dhamma as one would see in MN 43, Culavedalla Sutta, and MN 44, Mahavedalla Sutta. Indeed, through the process of questioning with the intention of removing doubts one becomes adept in being able to answer such questions for oneself after reflection and investigation and for future generations of dhamma-followers. However, if one had a mindset defiled by stubbornness, then one wouldn't even go into such lines of questioning for the sake of learning because such a person would believe, "I am right and everyone else is wrong," which creates a negative bias towards any

information that seems to contradict what they think to be right. And if one decided to go into such a line of questioning for reasons other than clarifying one's understanding, one would be bound for defiling their mind further with quarrelsomeness and even competitiveness, intent on winning a debate and to prove one's point, instead of truly wanting to learn.

When stubbornness is acted on through conceited thoughts of "I am right" and so on, and then through expression of speech and action, the undercurrent of this defilement activates underlying tendencies towards doubt, views, conceit, bhava and ignorance, which then become clung to, with reasons for why one is right consolidated at the link of clinging, and after having habitually reacted in such a manner from bhava, the reaction of speech would not be in alignment with the Path. For this reason, such reaction at jāti will cause one to continue to behave in an automated way rooted in stubbornness. At bhava, the identity generated is that of someone who is attached to views, and the existence one experiences is that of reactivity rooted in stubbornness. Instead of letting go of these views, one seems to others as a stubborn person. On the macro level, such stubbornness, if not understood and abandoned, may prevent one from attaining Right View and then establishing that Right View at stream-entry. Doing so, one is liable to then fall into a state of a lower existence.

Abandoning Stubbornness with Right Effort

Since stubbornness is rooted in delusion or ignorance, one must first recognize that the mind is inflexible and unable to process information related to the Dhamma in an unbiased manner. This is not to say there won't be some bias present for one with an open mind since such bias is always rooted in intention, but at the very least with an openness that explores and investigates through reflection, observation, study, and discussion, that mind will orientate itself in the direction of attaining the Dhamma. Even an arahant, accomplished in the Dhamma, will always be open to suggestions and advice regarding anything and everything. There is no pride in their attainment, and so they see all advice as an opportunity to be able to convey the Dhamma accordingly.

For example, one may have a small suggestion about the way a teacher may speak or convey information. If that teacher has pride and stubbornness, they will not move from their position of conveying information in the same way they did before and continue in the same manner without taking the suggestion of that student. But, if that teacher understood the importance of such a suggestion, not only would they be able to show they respect that student but that they are able to convey information in such a way, based on the new suggestion, that not only that one student but many others possibly are able to learn faster and absorb more information. In other words, it's not just about the education, knowledge, and attachment to those that one has to recognize. It's also any

form of closedness to suggestions and advice. Instead of immediately and automatically disregarding such suggestions or advice, one can take a few moments of reflection to understand what has been conveyed and make a decision based on calm reflection and understanding through application of that suggestion or advice.

The one sign of stubbornness or the arising of a stubborn attitude is tension. When new information or suggestions are provided to a mind prone to being attached to sedimented views, the body tends to lock up. This tension must be recognized and relaxed, and with that relaxed mind, one may assess what has been stated and reflect on it. If it is Dhamma-related, one can use the advice of the Buddha from the Kesamutti Sutta to see if what has been stated is correct or not, instead of solely relying on one's own notion of what they believe to be right –

Etha tumhe, kālāmā, mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākāraparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, kālāmā, attanāva jāneyyātha: ime dhammā akusalā, ime dhammā sāvajjā, ime dhammā viññūgarahitā,

*ime dhammā samattā samādinna ahitāya dukkhāya sarivattantī'ti,
atha tumhe, kālāmā, pajaheyjātha.*

Come, Kālāmas, do not go by oral tradition, by lineage of teaching, by hearsay, by a collection of scriptures, by logical reasoning, by inferential reasoning, by reasoned cogitation, by the acceptance of a view after pondering it, by the seeming competence [of a speaker], or because you think: 'The ascetic is our guru.' But when, Kālāmas, you know for yourselves: 'These things are unwholesome; these things are blameworthy; these things are censured by the wise; these things, if accepted and undertaken, lead to harm and suffering,' then you should abandon them.

- AN 3.65, Kesamutti Sutta

What the Buddha is saying here is that one should know for oneself and based on that decide whether a teaching,

suggestion, or advice makes sense. Having the openness to try and see for oneself in the spirit of understanding for the sake of clarity, rather than just blindly holding onto a teaching, the words of a teacher, or tradition, one will know for oneself. Of course, the caveat is to also see if it is in accordance with what one understands as the basics of the Dhamma. One uses the Four Noble Truths as the litmus test. After seeing that a suggestion doesn't lead to recognizing Dukkha, abandoning its Samudaya and experiencing Nirodha, or that it contradicts Magga or the Noble Eightfold Path, then one needn't follow that advice.

Using the Four Noble Truths, one is able to recognize the tension of holding onto a view in stubbornness as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, abandon that tension of holding onto a view that is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya, experience the release from that tension as the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha, having used the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga. Even the Dhamma itself can be held onto as a view that one identifies with, in the case of the anāgāmī. In that case, an anāgāmī would let go of their attachment to the Dhamma in the same way. If one is able to easily recognize if a piece of advice is not in alignment with the Four Noble Truths because it is counter to the teaching of letting go, meditation practice, or sīla, then one needn't apply such advice. However, if that advice is more rooted in an intention to better one's practice or sīla, then it should be taken into account by first letting go of any mental resistance to that advice and then seeing for oneself through application. In the first moment of a reaction, when after

hearing a teaching, suggestion or advice - see if the mind is defiled by thambha, by using the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the mind resisting the idea as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention to that resistance and abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes mind and body to tranquilize formations and experience Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and uplifts the mind
- ◆ Returns to a more open mind that is able to apply a suggestion after it goes through the litmus test of the Four Noble Truths
- ◆ Repeats whenever attachment to view, even to the Dhamma itself, arises, and thus continues to cultivate Magga

Doing so, the mind continues to be naturally open and non-resistant to new ideas and suggestions, and the bhava of that identity of being a stubborn being or of an existence in which all ideas except what one has known are wrong will change such that the old habitual tendencies will no longer cause jāti of action that continues to perpetuate the cycle of stubbornness.

Sārambha

Sārambha is being prone to quarreling, hostility, and quick to retaliation. For this reason, it is rooted in hatred, having a connection to ill will, anger, resentment, and competitiveness. If one whose mind is defiled by *sārambha* is criticized, then they are prone to retaliate with critical words. If one whose mind is defiled by *sārambha* is attacked, then they are prone to retaliate against that attack. In other words, one defiled by *sārambha* is unable to practice restraint and abandon the ill will arising in them from the underlying tendency towards resisting the painful feeling in the form of critical words or physical attacks. As that underlying tendency manifests into the *jāti* of action in the form of retaliation, that experience that seems to bring some superficial relief to mind from having expressed the underlying tendency renourishes the root of hatred and further clouds the mind with the defilement of quarrelsomeness. Because one retaliated, the tendencies in the link of *bhava* continue to grow and automate towards continually retaliating. Such a process causes one's existence to be fueled by fuming thoughts, aggravation, and irritation. This can cause one to be aggressive in mindset, thoughts, words, and deeds. If a being has not let go of this defilement, they are prone to enter a state of dismay, misfortune, and pain throughout their lifetime. Moreover, at death, the defiled consciousness that automatically arises from the formations rooted in hatred will establish into a new *nāmarupā* in a lifetime of turmoil in the human existence, in the asura realms,

or even in the lower realms. This is because this defilement leads one to break all five precepts and destroys the purity of one's mind. Such a mind is untamed and not cultivated properly for the practice of meditation, and thus such a mind will not obtain wisdom.

Abandoning Quarrelsomeness with Right Effort

*na ceva me cittaṃ vipariṇataṃ bhavissati, na ca pāpikaṃ vācaṃ
nicchāressāmi, hitānukampī ca viharissāmi mettacitto, na
dosantaro'ti*

*My mind will be unaffected, and I shall utter no evil words; I shall
abide compassionate for his welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness,
without inner hate.*

- MN 21, Kakacūpama Sutta

The reactionary state of this defilement must be countered with a pause after that defilement is recognized in the form of thoughts stained by it. For example, if someone criticizes you, or even mocks you, if you notice the arising of resistance and aversion to that painful feeling, this is the first step towards letting it go and taking a pause after having cultivated the mind with loving-kindness. Quarrelsomeness and the bhava originating from this defilement are quick to arise – in a matter of microseconds – but in those last few moments of where a thought forms with the intention to retaliate, that is where mindfulness and attention are most required. From there, the mind recognizes this and abandons that intention before it becomes harsh and abusive speech or violent action. Once this is done, one diverts their mind towards loving-kindness and responds with that loving-kindness. Initially, it will require extra careful attention and longer pauses to notice the defiled intention and thoughts and to let them go and cultivate mettā, but with continual effort, the next time there is conflict or potential for conflict, the mind doesn't become inclined towards acting to further exacerbate the situation and instead seeks to resolve it with kind and sensible thoughts, words and actions. The more one does this, the more the bhava changes and one's habitual tendencies will project out a jāti of wholesome mental, verbal, and physical actions. Eventually, one doesn't identify with the existence or idea of a self around conflict resolution or mettā as one abandons conceit altogether, thus destroying the link of bhava completely and the potential for any form of rebirth, wholesome or otherwise.

In the context of the Four Noble Truths, the defiled intention and thoughts to retaliate and quarrel are part of the First Noble Truth of Dukkha; the misguided attention that fuels those thoughts is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya, the application of the 6Rs to abandon it is the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga, at which point one experiences the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. Using the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the intention to retaliate as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention to thoughts fueling that retaliation and thus abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes the tension from those thoughts and tranquilizes formations related to those defilements, thus experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles if appropriate and inclines mind towards joy
- ◆ Returns to a state of tranquility and seeps mind in mettā, from where one acts
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind becomes agitated with an intention defiled by sārambha

Māna and Atimāna

Māna means to measure. It is a deeply embedded view in mind that sees the world in the context of an “I am.” It is the identification process that is one of the most subtle elements of rebirth to eradicate. It is a conceit or concept of the sense of an intrinsic self that the mind mistakenly grasps at. *Māna* appears as a defilement of consciousness, as an underlying tendency, and as a fetter, all to be understood and abandoned for full awakening. *Māna* can generally occur from three different views that the mind considers in relation to each of the five aggregates. The mind takes each of the five aggregates as self and in that process the three views may arise – “I am better than,” “I am equal to,” or “I am worse than.” Such views give rise to other defilements and tendencies to crave, resist, or to misperceive. From such conceit arises *bhavataṇhā* or *vibhavataṇhā* or the craving to be or not to be, restlessness, and mental, verbal, or physical actions that break precepts if such *māna* turns into *atimāna* or great conceit. *Atimāna* can be translated as arrogance from a deeply rooted conceit of the idea that oneself is better than all. From this arises the other defilements of stubbornness, competitiveness, contempt, and quarrelsomeness. *Atimāna* is actually an aspect of *māna*. While *māna* has the three conceits – the inferiority complex, sense of equality, and superiority complex – that *atimāna* is the third of these conceits.

There are also fifty-five ways to understand conceit, which includes arrogance that is found in the *Mahanidessa* and the *Culanidessa* within the *Khuddaka Nikāya*. These are

categorized into various folds, from onefold to tenfold, as follows –

- ◆ Onefold where the mind feels superior
- ◆ Twofold is where one brags about oneself and belittles others
- ◆ Threefold of “I am better than,” “I am equal to,” and “I am worse than,”
- ◆ The fourfold conceit of identification with gains, fame, praise, and pleasure
- ◆ Fivefold in relation to experiencing as an “I am” feeling forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangibles
- ◆ Sixfold in identifying with the functions of the six sense bases
- ◆ The sevenfold conceit of pride, arrogance, boastfulness, self-loathing, overestimation, the sense of “I am,” and the false sense of equality

- ◆ Eightfold conceit arising from the eight vicissitudes of existence – pride of gain, fame, praise, and pleasure, and self-hatred due to loss, infamy, blame, and pain
- ◆ The ninefold conceit of the threefold conceits each experienced in three cases – where one is indeed superior to another and feels superior, inferior or equal to that person, is inferior to another and feels superior, inferior or equal to that person, is equal to another and feels superior, inferior or equal to that person – and this can be in reference to morality, practice or wisdom, or anything else
- ◆ Tenfold conceit in relation to one’s status, family, beauty, wealth, education, occupation, creativity, knowledge, learning ability, or ability to convey information in an eloquent manner

The basis for all of these different types of conceit stem from that idea of “I am” in relation to the five aggregates. This gives rise to attachment to a sense of self that then translates into the

desire for bhava or vibhava – the desire to exist or not to exist. Until there is this sense of “I am” present, bhava will continue to remain as a link. This bhava doesn’t just extend to a certain type of identity or existence on a macro level, but it can also arise within the context of meditative states. If one thinks, “I am experiencing this jhāna,” or “I have attained this āyatana,” or “I enjoy the factors of this state,” then they are identifying with that jhāna. For this reason, one must be mindful of the conceit arising in relation to jhānic experiences and let them go in order to cut off rebirth into the realms associated with these states.

Abandoning Conceit and Arrogance with Right Effort

*Anicca-saññino, bhikkhave, anattasaññā saṅghāti. Anattasaññī
asmimānasamugghātaraṃ pāpuṇāti ditṭheva dhamme nibbāna”ti.*

*When one perceives impermanence, the perception of non-self is
stabilized. One who perceives non-self eradicates the conceit ‘I am,’
[which is] Nibbāna in this very life.*

- AN 9.1, Sambodhi Sutta

As soon as one notices the mind thinking thoughts rooted in some sense of “I am” or intentions rooted in this, one has to abandon them with wisdom. One has to see through the five aggregates with the understanding of the tilakkhaṇa. In other words, one sees form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness as impermanent. They are impermanent because they arise dependent upon causes – form through nutriment of food, feeling, perception and formations through contact, and consciousness through formations and nāmarupā including the six sense bases, depending upon the context. Because they are dependent on causes, when those causes go away, so do the aggregates. This means they are impermanent – form is always changing; feeling, perception, and formations continue to arise depending on contact in every moment; likewise, consciousness arises and passes away at the level of microseconds. Therefore, what is impermanent and liable to change falls under the category of Dukkha. If it is Dukkha, then it should not be considered a self – a self here meaning something that is permanent, all-pervasive, and unchanging. So, the “I am” that arises dependent on these five aggregates and the links of Dependent Origination should be seen as illusory through the lens of the tilakkhaṇa. When one sees the five aggregates as “this is not mine, I am not this, this is not myself,” one has used anatta as a way to let go of that conceit. With such conceit gone, there can be no arrogance.

After having seen for oneself through the experience of the tilakkhaṇa and established the experience of anatta through consistent seeing all as not belonging to a self, when one starts

to identify with any process – pleasant, painful, or neutral – whether in the realm of the senses, the form jhānas or the formless āyatanas, one should immediately recognize this identification as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, abandon the attention to that identification and thus let go of the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya, and experience the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha through the use of the 6Rs or the Fourth Noble Truth. Through the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes identification with thoughts and intention arising as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention to the identification and abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes tension in mind and/or body, thus tranquilizing formations rooted in conceit and experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles to uplift the mind
- ◆ Returns to the mind void of any identification and which perceives anatta and acts from there
- ◆ Repeats any time mind starts to add “I am” to an intention, thought, or experience, and thus continues to cultivate Magga

Mada and Pamāda

Mada can be understood as vanity, self-infatuation, intoxication or pride, and therefore is closely linked to the defilement of conceit. *Mada* here refers to three types of self-infatuation – the infatuation to one’s youth, health, and life. When these arise, one is liable to identify with the objects of that infatuation. Doing so, one becomes attached. Through this attachment comes further clinging where the mind proliferates reasons for becoming infatuated with these impermanent components of existence. At *bhava*, the mind is in an existence of vanity, pride, and overindulgence. This can result in causing the mind to try to change the way the body looks through extreme plastic surgery and overinvest in various medicines to increase one’s longevity and so on. This becomes an obsession that causes the mind to lean towards becoming greedy or hateful. Ultimately, such self-infatuation is rooted in delusion. *Mada* can also be subtler – there can be infatuation with one’s achievements, birth, status, gain, being honored and respected, fame, followers, one’s appearance, knowledge, wisdom, intelligence, and expertise and mastery of *jhānas* and other meditative states, and so on.

When *mada* arises, the mind becomes lazy and complacent due to this attachment and infatuation, and thus the mind experiences *pamāda*, which can mean carelessness or negligence. There is a lack of mindfulness where one is unable to see the *tilakkhaṇa* of and at the links of contact and feeling. This gives rise to underlying tendencies, which we will explore in the section on the *anusāyas*. This causes the mind to create

further fuel for bhava as an existence in sensual, luminous form, or formless realms. On the micro level, it causes the mind to further root itself into greed, hatred, and delusion. The cycle continues with the bhava and jāti of deluded mental, verbal, and physical action feeding energy back to the āsavas, the fettered formations, and arising of further consciousnesses defiled by pamāda. Ultimately, one can see that pamāda is the root of all other unwholesome states – that is being unmindful, inattentive, and negligent in exercising the precepts and morality, restraint and collectedness, and reflection and wisdom leads to further unwholesome existences or bhava. The way out, as we will see, is through wisdom, understanding, and cultivation of the Path.

Abandoning Self-infatuation and Carelessness with Right Effort

“Handa dāni, bhikkhave, āmantayāmi vo, vayadhammā saṅkhārā appamādena sampādethā”ti.” Ayaṃ tathāgatassa pacchimā vācā.

“Now, monks, I declare to you: all conditioned things are of a nature to decay – strive on untiringly.” These were the Tathāgata’s last words.

- DN 16, Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

Appamāda, or diligence, is the key to abandoning the defilements of self-infatuation and carelessness, and ultimately all other defilements, latent tendencies, mental hindrances, fetters, and other factors leading to a new existence. It is the coefficient to Attention Rooted in Reality, mindfulness, comprehension, discernment, and awareness, which together lead to collectedness of mind and the insight into reality as it is. This arises through Right Intention and Right Effort. It’s only after one recognizes that the mind is deluded and confused that one seeks a way out of such states, and that is rooted in the intention inclined towards the Path. Right Effort here is the pivotal tool that changes one’s wrong view to Right View, wrong intention to Right Intention, wrong speech to Right Speech, wrong action to Right Action, wrong livelihood to Right Livelihood, wrong mindfulness to Right Mindfulness, and wrong collectedness to Right Collectedness. Through such an effort, beginning with preventing the arising of unwholesome states to arise, then continuing on to abandon

already arisen unwholesome states, generating wholesome states, and finally maintaining those wholesome states, the mind works towards preventing all defilements from becoming collected at bhava into a new existence, colored, stained, tainted, and conditioned by those defilements. This Right Effort is the 6Rs, which are, in turn, the encapsulation of the Path itself and the application of the Four Noble Truths. And it all starts with the intention to pay attention, be vigilant, and with being ready to notice any of the defilements arising and coming to fruition as unwholesome mental actions and intention that one can then abandon and root out before culminating into bhava from which the action that cannot be taken back occurs and continues to fuel that cycle.

Using appamāda as the basis for recognizing the self-infatuation or carelessness or any defilement, taint, tendency, hindrance, or fetter at all as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, one abandons all undue attention to causing it, which is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya, through the process of the 6Rs which is the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga to experience the relief from Dukkha, the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha. Through the 6Rs, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the mental actions first stemming from mada and pamāda as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention away from the thoughts and intention rooted in the defilements and abandons Samudaya

- ◆ Relaxes the mind/body and tranquilizes formations, thus experiencing Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles to uplift mind
- ◆ Returns to a mind free of the defilements and takes action from there
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind swerves from that mind, thus continuing to cultivate Magga

Anusayas

We have discussed how the droplets of the āsavas from the headwaters of the river of Dependent Origination become the movement behind ignorance, which conditions the formations that, if rooted in the unwholesome, give rise to a defiled consciousness. Now how does the river keep moving? It is the undercurrent of whirlpools in the form of fettered formations and defiled mindsets that keep it flowing, but below these rapids is the declination, the river having started from a higher source – the āsavas – and moving down to the lower point in the ocean of Dukkha. This subtle declination is made up of the anusayas, the underlying tendencies. These underlying tendencies are kāmārāgānusaya or the tendency towards sensual craving, paṭighānusaya or the tendency towards resisting, diṭṭhānusaya or the tendency towards views, vicikicchānusaya or the tendency towards doubt, mānānusaya

or the tendency towards conceit, bhavarāgānusaya or the tendency towards existence, and avijjānusaya or the tendency towards ignorance. Commonly, it's understood that the tendency towards sensual craving underlies a pleasant feeling, the tendency towards resistance underlies a painful feeling, and the tendency towards ignorance underlies a neutral feeling. Beyond this, the tendency towards ignorance also underlies the other two kinds of feeling, and the tendencies towards views, doubt, conceit, and existence underly all three types of feeling in conjunction with the tendency towards ignorance.

When one sees someone that is attractive to their mind, it is a pleasant feeling, and immediately the underlying tendency towards sensual craving can arise and cause the mind to proliferate ideas and concepts around that person and how mind reacts to them. When a painful feeling arises, such as a stomachache, there can be an underlying tendency in that painful feeling itself to resist it. When a neutral feeling, such as walking around the garden and hearing birdsong where one doesn't consider it as pleasant or painful but just a feeling, there can be the tendency toward a view in terms of a "self" that experiences that feeling, and the tendency towards doubt in reference to that feeling in that one doesn't have correct or wise attention towards that feeling, not knowing how to cultivate the wholesome or root out unwholesome; if one identifies with the experience there can still be present the conceit giving rise to the tendency towards an "I am" in reference to the feeling; there can be the tendency towards existence in terms of leaning towards one way of being in relation to that feeling, and there

can be the tendency towards ignorance when is unable to see the tilakkhaṇa or the Four Noble Truths of that feeling.

These anusayas can arise and activate or remain dormant for eons throughout countless rebirths on the cosmic level. For example, as a being becomes inclined towards a jhāna when that being passes on, they take rebirth in a corresponding rupā realm. However, as soon as their lifespan is up, whatever intentions arise at that point will also give rise to a new existence, dependent upon craving. While in the jhāna, the tendency towards sensual craving, resistance, and doubt are dormant, but the tendencies towards views, conceit, and existence may still be active in some form, so long as there is an “I am” to whom the views or idea of identity and existence arise, thus all finding their origin point at the tendency towards ignorance.

When a defiled consciousness arises, then the mental factors of nāmarupā conditions become defiled as well. The faculties of contact, feeling, perception, intention, and attention within nāma all bring about defiled six sense bases. This is to say that the underlying tendencies have already been laid down by the defiled consciousness and remain dormant in the nāmarupā and the six sense bases. Thereafter, when the process of contact arises – for example, when the photons of an image impinge upon the eye faculty, dependent upon them the defiled eye consciousness arises, which becomes aware of the feeling of seeing – the feeling that then arises can activate one or more of the tendencies that underlie it. In that seeing or at the link of feeling, intertwined with perception, an underlying tendency can then give rise to conceptual proliferation at the link of

clinging, consolidating an identity from the process of clinging and bringing it to ripening at bhava as an existence of a self from which one acts. This same process is experienced numerous times over the span of microseconds for every defiled sense consciousness, with the underlying tendencies as the consolidating agents for the “self” to form at bhava. Every time they are all acted upon mentally, verbally, or physically, they continue to feed energy back to their corresponding sources – to the āsavas, the roots in formations, defilements in the next set of consciousnesses, and underlying tendencies dormant in the nāma, six sense bases, contact, and feeling.

It is through these seven tendencies that, on the micro level, the mind gravitates towards concretizing a storehouse of habitual tendencies that makes up a way of automatic being, thinking, speaking, and acting. On the macro level, these anusayas give rise to an existence dependent upon the habitual tendencies within bhava with a possibly fettered intention giving rise to a possibly defiled consciousness. However, these anusayas can still give rise to a new existence even when the intention and planning have stopped, as seen in SN 12.38, Cetanā Sutta –

Yañca, bhikkhave, ceteti yañca pakappeti yañca anuseti, ārammaṇametam hoti viññāṇassa t̥hitiyā Ārammaṇe sati patiṭṭhā viññāṇassa hoti. Tasmim̐ patiṭṭhite viññāṇe virūl̥he āyatim̐ punabbhavābhiniḃbatti hoti.

No ce, bhikkhave, ceteti no ce pakappeti, atha ce anuseti, ārammaṇametaṃ hoti viññāṇassa t̥hitiyā. Ārammaṇe sati patit̥thā viññāṇassa hoti. Tasmim̃ patit̥thite viññāṇe virūl̥he āyatim̃ punabbhavābhinibbatti hoti.

Yato ca kho, bhikkhave, no ceva ceteti no ca pakappeti no ca anuseti, ārammaṇametaṃ na hoti viññāṇassa t̥hitiyā. Ārammaṇe asati patit̥thā viññāṇassa na hoti. Tadapatit̥thite viññāṇe avirūl̥he āyatim̃ punabbhavābhinibbatti na hoti.

Bhikkhus, what one intends, and what one plans, and whatever one has a tendency towards: this becomes a basis for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is a basis, there is a support for the establishing of consciousness. When consciousness is established and

has come to growth, there is the production of future renewed existence.

If bhikkhus, one does not intend, and one does not plan, but one still has a tendency towards something, this becomes a basis for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is a basis, there is a support for the establishing of consciousness. When consciousness is established and has come to growth, there is the production of future renewed existence.

But bhikkhus, when one does not intend, and one does not plan, and one does not have a tendency towards anything, no basis exists for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is no basis, there is no support for the establishing of consciousness. When consciousness is unestablished and does not come to growth, there is no production of future renewed existence.

First, let's understand the interconnections between the roots, defilements and the tendencies. The root of greed and the defilements of covetousness and stinginess can leave a residual tendency towards sensual craving, and the root of hatred and the defilements of ill will, anger, resentment, contempt, competitiveness, jealousy and quarrelsomeness can leave a residual tendency towards resistance. The root of delusion can leave residual tendencies towards doubt, views, conceit, existence and ignorance. Specifically, the defilements of deceit and hypocrisy can leave residual tendencies towards doubt, the defilement of stubbornness can leave a residual tendency towards views, the defilements of conceit and arrogance can leave residual tendencies towards conceit, the defilement of self-infatuation can leave a residual tendency towards existence, and the defilement of carelessness can leave a residual tendency towards ignorance.

Now, even if intention or fettered formations and planning or craving have been abandoned so as not to appear in the next cycle of Dependent Origination, the underlying tendencies can still be activated, and consciousness can still become established – at the quantum level, giving rise to an action that further strengthens the tendencies, and at the cosmic level, guided by the tendencies to become established in a *nāmarupā* or *nāma* matching those tendencies. It is not that there isn't a conditionality between the unwholesome roots in formations, defilements in mindsets, and the underlying tendencies in feeling, but even when the roots and defilements are gone,

there is a residue of previous choices imprinted in the mind that are these underlying tendencies within *nāmarupā*, which is one and the same as the five aggregates. These residual imprints can then give further momentum to the wheel of *Ṣaṃsāra* at the link of feeling if providing undue attention and acted upon, feeding craving for existence or non-existence if not for sensual pleasures, clinging, and further being. This is why the Buddha mentions in MN 64, *Mahāmāluṅkyaputta Sutta*, that even an infant who doesn't have any concept of sensual pleasures, identity, being, and so on, will have the corresponding underlying tendencies in their mind, despite no intention or planning residing in the infant's mind to directly cause those tendencies. This is because they are remnants from previous lifetimes. One can extend the following simile to other underlying tendencies besides conceit, but the Venerable *Khemaka's* explanation may provide some illustration of this underlying residual tendency and point out why mindfulness and attention are paramount to rooting them out in order to completely do away with *bhava* – to experience *bhavanirodha* or the cessation of existence and identity –

Seyyathāpi, āvuso, vatthaṃ saṅkiliṭṭhaṃ malaggahitaṃ.

Tameṇaṃ sāmikā rajakassa anupadajjuṃ. Tameṇaṃ rajako ūse vā khāre vā gomaye vā sammadditoṃ acche udake vikkhāleti. Kiñcāpi taṃ hoti vatthaṃ parisuddhaṃ pariyodātaṃ, atha khvassa hoti yeva

anusahagato ūsagandho vā khāragandho vā gomayagandho vā asamūhato. Tamenam̐ rajako sāmikānam̐ deti. Tamenam̐ sāmikā gandhaparibhāvite karaṇḍake nikkhipanti. Yopissa hoti anusahagato ūsagandho vā khāragandho vā gomayagandho vā asamūhato, sopi samugghātaṃ gacchati. Evameva kho, āvuso, kiñcāpi ariyasāvakassa pañcorambhāgiyāni saṃyojanāni pahīnāni bhavanti, atha khvassa hoti yeva pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu anusahagato ‘asmī’ti, māno ‘asmī’ti, chando ‘asmī’ti anusayo asamūhato. So aparena samayena pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu udayabbayānupassī viharati... Tassa imesu pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu udayabbayānupassino viharato yopissa hoti pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu anusahagato ‘asmī’ti, māno ‘asmī’ti, chando ‘asmī’ti anusayo asamūhato, sopi samugghātaṃ gacchatī”ti.

Suppose, friends, a cloth has become soiled and stained, and its owners give it to a laundryman. The laundryman would scour it

evenly with cleaning salt, lye, or cow dung, and rinse it in clean water. Even though that cloth would become pure and clean, it would still retain a residual smell of cleaning salt, lye, or cow dung that had not yet vanished. The laundryman would then give it back to the owners. The owners would put it in a sweet-scented casket, and the residual smell of cleaning salt, lye, or cow dung that had not yet vanished would vanish. So too, friends, even though a noble disciple has abandoned the five lower fetters, still, in relation to the five aggregates subject to clinging, there lingers in him a residual conceit 'I am,' a desire 'I am,' an underlying tendency 'I am' that has not yet been uprooted.... As he dwells thus contemplating rise and fall in the five aggregates subject to clinging, the residual conceit 'I am,' the desire 'I am,' the underlying tendency 'I am' that had not yet been uprooted—this comes to be uprooted.

Abandoning the Tendencies with Right Effort

*Yatonidānaṃ, bhikkhu, purisaṃ papañcasaññāsankhā
samudācaranti. Ettha ce natthi abhinanditabbaṃ abhivaditabbaṃ
ajjhositabbaṃ. Esevanto rāgānusayānaṃ, esevanto
paṭighānusayānaṃ, esevanto diṭṭhānusayānaṃ, esevanto
vicikicchānusayānaṃ, esevanto mānānusayānaṃ, esevanto
bhavarāgānusayānaṃ, esevanto avijjānusayānaṃ*

*Bhikkhu, as to the source through which perceptions and notions
[born of] mental proliferation beset a man: if nothing is found there to
delight in, welcome and hold to, this is the end of the underlying
tendency to lust, of the underlying tendency to aversion, of the
underlying tendency to views, of the underlying tendency to doubt,
of the underlying tendency to conceit, of the underlying tendency to
desire for being, of the underlying tendency to ignorance...*

- MN 18, Madhupiṇḍika Sutta

Non-reactivity at the level of contact and feeling diminishes the strength of underlying residual tendencies. This is facilitated through the practice of meditation and wisdom. One is then able to continually notice the tilakkhaṇa of feeling and recognize anytime an underlying tendency arises. The complete destruction of these tendencies occurs at the different attainments. When one attains stream-entry, the underlying tendencies towards doubt and towards views no longer arise as one has destroyed the fetters of belief in a personal self, doubt, and belief in rites and rituals as a process to take on to Nibbāna. At the level of the anāgāmī, the underlying tendencies towards sensual craving and resistance are destroyed as one has destroyed the fetters of sensual craving and aversion. When arahantship arises, the underlying tendencies towards conceit, being, and ignorance are destroyed as the fetters of conceit, craving for a type of being, ignorance, and restlessness – which is dependent upon conceit – is destroyed.

It begins with Attention Rooted in Reality, facilitated by study and verification for the mind. This verification is the peacefulness at contact and feeling. When there is some vibratory experience in the form of an arising of an underlying tendency when a feeling arises, then the mind must use attention to see this and abandon it using the Path through the 6R process. Ultimately, even feeling will have a different quality in that there won't be surrounding thoughts around it

due to the development of the Path. With careful study and practice of the Dhamma, cultivating and knowing what is wholesome and rooting out unwholesome qualities of mind, the underlying tendency towards doubt is removed. With the understanding of anatta and seeing the impersonal nature of consciousnesses arising and passing away and of the other links that arise with sharp mindfulness after a post-cessation event, the underlying tendency towards views is removed. With the continual seeing of the tilakkhaṇa of sensual pleasures and painful feelings, the mind becomes balanced, equanimous, disenchanted, and dispassionate. Through this, another experience of cessation leading to the attainment of the anāgāmī, where mind doesn't seek anymore for the relief-inducing experience of contact with Nibbāna, and the underlying tendencies toward sensual pleasures and resistance are removed. Through understanding the anatta experience even deeper, seeing the arising and passing away of the six sense bases and nāmarupā – that is, the five aggregates – and noticing there is no personal, permanent self that is present in any of that, and seeing the Four Noble Truths of each of the five aggregates, the underlying tendency towards ignorance and therefore the underlying tendencies toward conceit and existence are removed.

The beginning of any of these removal processes is through cultivation of the Path and understanding of the Four Noble Truths. First, one must recognize any time the desire to become, to identify, to crave or resist, or to hold any personal self in relation to a feeling arises and see this as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. Having seen this, the mind immediately

stops the flow of those underlying desires from continuing, and one removes the mind's attention that is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya and experiences the non-arising and thus the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha – the cessation of underlying tendencies. This process is the 6Rs, which is the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga. Using the 6Rs, therefore, one:

- ◆ Recognizes the arising of a desire to be, identify, crave, resist or take personally as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases thoughts of such desires by removing attention from them and thus abandoning Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes the mind/body and tranquilizes any formations that could further feed energy to or have been fed back energy from the anusayas and experiences the Nirodha of those anusayas
- ◆ Re-smiles to uplift mind and replace the tendencies with wholesome dhammā
- ◆ Returns to a balanced mind and acts in accordance with the Dhamma
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind inclines towards the underlying tendencies and thus cultivates Magga

Nīvaraṇa as Bhava

Nīvaraṇa means obstacle or hindrance. There are five hindrances – *kāmacchanda* or sensual desire, *byāpāda* or ill will, *thīna-middha* or sloth and torpor, *uddhacca-kukkucca* or restlessness and worry, and *vicikicchā* or doubt. When one meditates, there is a possibility that one or more or all of these five hindrances will be experienced as obstacles from reaching *jhāna*. These hindrances arise as mental *bhava* – that is a state of mental existence where one has withdrawn from sensory experiences and now experiencing fully the mind as the sense base and its objects. The hindrances are these mental objects that result from previous *jāti* of actions rooted in unwholesome choices, namely not following the precepts, and thus they are also *Dukkha*. As a result of breaking precepts, the mind becomes sullied and dimmed down by these hindrances and that is the existence or *bhava* as an effect that one experiences.

Breaking the first precept results in the hindrance of ill will. As one intentionally harms other living beings, the mind continues to strengthen intentions rooted in that ill will. Doing so, the mind becomes automatically geared towards acting from ill will, and the mind becomes fraught with this hindrance. Breaking the second precept results in the hindrance of restlessness and worry. Taking what is not given, the mind becomes greedy and is always looking for the next thing it can acquire – whether it is possessions, relationships, attention, credit for one’s work and so on – and this causes restless activity in the mind. The mind also becomes worried about when it will get its next acquisition, resulting in a fidgety mindset. Breaking the third precept results in the hindrance of doubt. Lying to others, one becomes distrusting of others and

even loses confidence in one's own capabilities, resulting in doubt of the practice, what is right and wrong, and overall confusion. Breaking the fourth precept results in the hindrance of sensual craving. Acting out of attachment to sensual (including sexual) pleasures, the mind becomes intoxicated by them and identifies with them, seeking more ways to gratify the sense bases it considers as self. Doing so, memories of sensory experiences may cause the mind to lose collectedness. Breaking the fifth precept results in sloth and torpor. Any intoxicant, not just drugs and alcohol, but anything that can pull out addictive behavior – porn, news, entertainment, and so on – can result in a mind that is dull, tired, and lazy. Despite having intoxicants that can excite the nervous system, like cocaine and methamphetamines, the overall effect in the long-term is the mind that is lethargic and drowsy.

Moreover, acting on the underlying tendencies also result in the five hindrances becoming the mind's bhava during meditation practice. Acting upon the tendency towards sensual craving results in the hindrance of sensual craving. Acting upon the tendency towards resistance results in the hindrance of ill will. Acting upon the tendency towards doubt results in the hindrance of doubt. Acting upon the tendency towards views, conceit, and existence results in the hindrance of restlessness. Acting upon the tendency towards ignorance results in the hindrance of sloth and torpor. In other words, if the mind gravitates towards sensual craving, it becomes filled with sensual craving, towards resistance and it becomes filled with ill will, and towards doubts and it becomes filled with doubt. When one has attachment to views rooted in concept of

self and acts from conceit and identifies with existence, the mind becomes restless and worried because it has an “I am” that seeks more and attaches ideas around that sense of self that it wants to fulfill. When one is unaware or not paying attention or being mindful of the tilakkhaṇa of phenomena and the Four Noble Truths, the mind is ignorant and thus is lazy to take any form of action towards rectifying this ignorance.

Abandoning the Hindrances with Right Effort

Yasmim, bhikkhave, samaye ariyasāvako atthim katvā manasi katvā sabbaṃ cetaso samannāharitvā ohitasoto dhammaṃ suṇāti, imassa pañca nīvaraṇā tasmim samaye na honti. Ime satta bojjhaṅgā tasmim samaye bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchantī”ti.

When, bhikkhus, a noble disciple listens to the Dhamma with eager ears, attending to it as a matter of vital concern, directing his whole mind to it, on that occasion these five hindrances are not

present in him; on that occasion these seven factors of enlightenment go to fulfilment by development.

- SN 46.38, Anīvaraṇa Sutta

When meditating or even letting the mind alone without any intentional thought, one may observe some movement of mind, which can be tinged with any of the five hindrances. This is, as we have discussed, a result of acting upon underlying tendencies in the past and breaking the precepts at some point in one's life. That's why the first step to deal with the hindrances that do arise is to commit to taking and then keeping the five precepts. The more one sticks to this commitment, a natural happiness and clarity of mind emerges that is subtle and present, but the Right Effort must be made not just to keep the precepts but then to till the soil of the mind with jhāna practice, deepening the capacity for mind to penetrate the nature of reality and awaken complete wisdom. While one meditates and enter jhāna, the hindrances are not present. However, if any of the hindrances do arise, one's mind has dropped from that jhānic state and is now in a bhava of disturbance. Paying undue attention to these hindrances feeds them further and makes them stronger, and so one must inculcate the mind with the intention to abandon this undue attention bring up wholesome qualities that replace those

hindrances and naturally leads one back into jhāna. These qualities are brought up through the process of Right Effort. Recall that Right Effort is to prevent the dormant flow of hindrances from rising up, abandoning the already arisen hindrances, generating wholesome states, and maintain those arisen wholesome states.

There is an entire arsenal of wholesome mental factors one can generate. The common tools one can use directly to deal with hindrances are the seven awakening factors. These factors are mindfulness, discernment of states, energy, joy, tranquility, collectedness, and equanimity. Mindfulness is always the foundational state upon which the others are intended – in other words, one must first recognize the hindrances having arisen and therefore prevent further hindrances from arising. Whenever the hindrance of ill will arises, one may also use loving-kindness, compassion, or forgiveness, and equanimity to let go of any involvement of attention to ill will. If the hindrance of sensual craving arises, one may use joy to experience mental bliss that is more satisfying than any physical sensual pleasure as well as equanimity to be detached from the craving. If doubt arises, one may use discernment by being able to recognize the effective path through experience and understanding of the wholesome and unwholesome to release that doubt. If sloth and torpor arise, one may use the uplifting presence of joy and the factor of energy through more focused attention and Right Effort. If restlessness and worry arise, one may use the factor of tranquility and collectedness to relax the tense activity from that restlessness and worry and to make the mind more unified around a singular object of

meditation. Now the hindrances will also be fully eradicated in stages, meaning some may appear in the mind while others won't, depending upon the level of awakening attained. At stream-entry, the hindrance of doubt is eradicated. At the level of the anāgāmī, the hindrances of sensual craving and will are eradicated. At the level of the arahant, the hindrances of restlessness and worry and sloth and torpor are eradicated.

In one not yet entered the stream and all three cases of attainments, with the exception of the arahant who has done away with all hindrances – that are the sotāpanna, sakadāgāmī, and the anāgāmī – there is still work to be done to remove the hindrances. Doing so first recognizes the hindrance arising as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha, then abandons the undue attention given to the hindrance, which is the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya, and experiences the release from that hindrance as the Third Noble Truth of Nirodha, through the use of the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga or the 6R process. Through this one:

- ◆ Recognizes the presence of the hindrance as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases undue attention that feeds them and thus abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes mind/body to tranquilize formations and thus experiences Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles to uplift mind

- ◆ Returns to one's object of meditation or towards an awakening factor to deal with a specific hindrance
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind wanders back to the hindrance, thus continuing to cultivate Magga

One should also understand that using the 6R process, one automatically brings into balance the seven factors of awakening, which means one smoothly returns mind back to a jhānic level. In other words each step of the 6R process activates an awakening factor. Recognize activates mindfulness and discernment, release activates energy in having taken an effective action towards removing the cause of the hindrance, relax activates tranquility, re-smile activates joy, return activates collectedness as mind is unified with intention to return to a singular object of meditation, and repeat activates equanimity where mind doesn't get attached or repelled by the arising of another hindrance but immediately gets to work to implement the 6Rs again.

Saṃyojana

Saṃyojana means a fetter or a chain. When anusayas become more and more dominant and activated throughout rebirths, they provide further strength to the fetters. There are ten fetters that bind a being to the wheel of Saṃsāra and the

various existences that make up bhava, namely the three divisions of the kāmādhātu, rūpādhātu, and arupādhātu. They are belief in a personal self, doubt in the teachings of the Buddha, attachment to rites and rituals, sensual craving, ill will, craving for the luminous form realms or jhānas, craving for the formless realms or āyatana, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. These fetters are factors of one's becoming and accumulation of existences within the wheel of Saṃsāra as well as the result of having acted upon anusayas, which concretize into the fetters. Like hindrances, the fetters are both factors for new becoming if not dealt with as well as Dukkha as a result of jāti of conditioned action. As one destroys them, factors of certain existences are destroyed as well. One should also understand that the fetter or chains are linking two components together – the mind and existence, but neither are the fetters and instead the fetters are what bind the two together. In different contexts, there is that which can possibly be chained and that which is the chain itself. The five aggregates are all liable to be fettered if the fetters are there to bind them to existence. The twelve-fold bases – that are the eye and forms, ear and sounds, nose and odors, tongue and tastes, body and tangibles and mind and mental objects – are all liable to be fettered if the fetters are there to bind them to existence.

Let's explore each of the fetters. The belief in a personal self is caused by taking any of the five aggregates as self. We will discuss each one further when we explore the link of upādāna or clinging, but there are four kinds of belief in a personal self in relation to each of five aggregates. Here, one has the belief that form, feeling, perception, formations, or consciousness is

self; the self is in form, feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness; form, feeling, perception, formations or consciousness is in self; or that there is a self beyond form, feeling, perception, formations, or consciousness. Together, these are the twenty self-views one may possess. The anusaya towards views – the belief in an eternal self or the belief in a self in a body specifically – provides strength to this fetter. The other form of views that give rise to the underlying tendency towards views and the fetter of self-view are the following as per MN 2, Sabbāsava Sutta, “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 did I become 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?” and “The self exists for me. No self exists for me. I perceive self with self. I perceive not-self with self. It is this self of mine that speaks and feels and experiences here and there the result of good and bad actions; but this self of mine is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and it will endure as long as eternity.” The fetter of doubt refers to doubt in one’s own capabilities in relation to practicing the Dhamma, in the Triple Gem as well as in the basic teachings of sīla, samādhi, and paññā. When the underlying tendency towards doubt is acted upon, it strengthens this fetter. There is another underlying tendency discussed in MN 64, Mahāmāluṅkyaputta Sutta, called sīlabbataparāmāsānusaya or the underlying tendency towards attachment to rites and rituals, which when acted upon strengthens the fetter of the attachment to rites and rituals. This attachment arises from the belief that rituals will give one liberation of the mind from the wheel of Saṃsāra. The subtler

part of this fetter is the belief that just following the precepts alone will lead to Nibbāna, when what is required is all three – sīla, samādhi, and paññā – to exit the wheel of Saṃsāra.

The fetter of sensual craving is where the mind becomes attracted to one or more of the sensual pleasures it experiences. Here it isn't the twelfefold base, the five aggregates, or the processes of contact and feeling that constitute the fetter. It is the attachment to the experiences of these components – seeing the sensual pleasure as “mine,” and delighting in it with the belief that it is permanent and therefore will be fulfilling to the “self.” Acting upon the underlying tendency towards sensual craving strengthens this fetter. In a similar manner, the fetter of ill will is what causes the mind to become disgusted or aversive towards a sensual experience, and so again the fetter here arises from taking personal the twelfefold base, aggregates and the links of contact and feeling and the experience that arises from them is seen as permanent and fulfilling to a “me.” Acting upon the underlying tendency towards resistance strengthens this fetter.

The fetter of restlessness causes the mind to have subtle movements of thoughts and rumination. Here the mind is inattentive and unmindful and thus the movement that arises comes in the form of daydreams and general mind wandering. In essence, the mind is on autopilot. It is like wind churning the surface of an otherwise still lake. Acting upon the underlying tendency towards conceit gives rise to restlessness because it is the “I am” thoughts that arise in such activity, also known as self-referential thoughts. The fetters of craving for a luminous form realm or a jhānic state and of craving for a formless realm

or an āyatana make the mind seek and identify with existing in these states. The mind finds great joy, which is certainly uplifting, but then it starts to crave these states to the point of attachment, leading to further cycles of rebirth in these realms. Acting upon the underlying tendency towards bhava, taking the feeling of the jhānic state or a formless state as something to identify with, strengthens the fetters of craving for a luminous form or a formless realm. Finally, the fetter of ignorance continues to bring beings back to existence due to the ignorance of seeing and applying the Four Noble Truths and tilakkhaṇa of phenomena. Activation of the underlying tendency towards ignorance further strengthens this fetter.

Abandoning the Fetters with Right Effort

*Kathaṃ nu kho, bhante, jānato, kathaṃ passato, samyojanā
pahīyantī"ti?*

*Venerable sir, how should one know, how should one see, for the
fetters to be abandoned?*

- SN 35.54, Saṃyojanappahānasutta

Katham nu kho, bhante, jānato, katham passato saṃyojanā samugghātam gacchantī”ti?

Venerable sir, how should one know, how should one see, for the fetters to be uprooted?

- SN 35.55, Saṃyojanasamugghāta Sutta

Whether it is the taints, roots, defilements, underlying tendencies, hindrances, or fetters, what causes one to abandon and finally uproot them all is wisdom born from meditation. And how does one abandon these factors of becoming, existence, and coming to being at rebirth? How does one eliminate these factors that create further habitual tendencies, multiple existences and identities that one reacts from? Seeing the impermanent nature of the six sense bases and their external objects, the five aggregates, the links of contact and feeling, and realizing that they are all conditioned, arising and passing away with no underlying control or stability in any of them. Doing this, the mind doesn't become attached nor repelled to the various activities of these faculties and

processes. Instead with Attention Rooted in Reality, mindfulness, and discernment one knows their true nature – as impermanence – and thus abandons any interest in acting from them or as them. This naturally gives rise to the understanding that all attachment or craving and identification around them is for something that is intrinsically bound to fall apart and therefore Dukkha. From this, one then perceives that all states born from these conditions are also impersonal. Seeing this, the mind is freed from any conditions to cause further becoming, experiencing the freedom of mind, where there is no more coming to any state of existence – neither on the cosmic level nor on the quantum level. All further conditioned identity and habitual tendencies have ceased – this is bhavanirodha, the cessation of being, existence, and becoming.

Ultimately, the attainments will cause the total destruction of the fetters. At the level of sotāpanna, the mind is rid of the first three fetters. At the level of the sakadāgāmī, the mind has weakened the fetters of sensual craving and aversion to quite a great extent. At the level of the anāgāmī, these two fetters are completely destroyed. At the level of the arahant, the five higher fetters are eradicated. At that point, there is no more fuel for further becoming or rebirth. Until then, one continues to meditate to get to these stages and to arahantship. One understands and recognizes the anusayas or manifestations of these fetters as the First Noble Truth of Dukkha. One then abandons the factors of these fetters, namely attention to them, and thus one lets go of the Second Noble Truth of Samudaya. One then experiences the cessation of these fetters as the Third

Noble Truth of Nirodha, using the 6R process or the Fourth Noble Truth of Magga. Through the 6R process, one

- ◆ Recognizes the manifestation of a fetter in the form of a thought or intention as Dukkha
- ◆ Releases attention from those thoughts and intentions and abandons Samudaya
- ◆ Relaxes the mind/body and tranquilizes formations to experience Nirodha
- ◆ Re-smiles to uplift the mind
- ◆ Returns to the awareness of impermanence and anatta as a deterrent against further fetters
- ◆ Repeats whenever mind becomes distracted and thus cultivates Magga

We have gone through the scope of bhava by having explored the factors leading up to and making up this link. Now we will explore bhava from the understanding of kamma, consciousness, and intention, which with craving, can produce new becoming, being, and existences.

Kamma, Consciousness, and Craving

Iti kho, ānanda, kammarāṃ khettaṃ, viññāṇaṃ bījaṃ, taṇhā sneho

“Thus, Ānanda... kamma is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture

- AN 3.76 and 3.77, Bhava Sutta

While we have explored bhava as the end of a river as it meets a waterfall, where the bend is the point of no turning back and from there is the launch or jāti of action, we can also understand bhava through the image of a tree with the ripening of the fruit of that action. Before further drawing out this analogy, let’s explore these two Bhava Suttas from AN 3.76 and 3.77. They are almost identical where the Venerable Ānanda asks the Buddha what bhava is, and the Buddha responds with asking if there was no kamma to be experienced, would there be an existence in any of the three realms – the kāmādhātu, rūpādhātu or the arupādhātu – to which Ānanda responds in the negative. Here, the Buddha concludes in each case of the realms that one may understand kamma to be field, consciousness to be the seed, and craving to be the nutrition. While in the first Bhava Sutta, the Buddha says consciousness hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving then becomes

established into the new existence, in the second Bhava Sutta the Buddha points out intention and the karmic aspiration that when hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving becomes established into the new existence. The understanding here is that intention and karmic aspirations are the fettered formations, tainted by the āsavas, fettered by craving, conditioned by ignorance and rooted in conceit, which then give rise to a new consciousness that becomes established into a new existence. In the first sutta, the consciousness has already been defiled as a result of the fettered formations and this is implied to be the case, and in the same manner it becomes established in a new bhava.

So how does one understand kamma as being the field, consciousness being the seed, and craving being the moisture? We can see kamma in two different contexts – the first is the active sense of intentional mental, verbal, and physical actions, while the second is the passive sense of inherited effects of those intentional actions. Kamma as a field primarily refers to the second context but is continually tilled by the kamma of the first context. That field is comprised of old kamma, which is nāmarupā. In other words, the fettered formations have been ignited by the āsavas as a result of previous jāti, and these formations then give rise to a consciousness that is planted into a nāmarupā, which inherits the effects of those previous births of action. Nāmarupā here also includes the six sense bases. Therefore, the mind as you understand it now, the body as you experience it now, the six sense bases as they function now, and the faculties of contact, feeling, perception, intention, and attention are all old kamma, are all the field inherited, tilled

and nurtured through previous choices. When consciousness becomes established in this field of kamma, if nourished by the craving present in the formations – whether sensual or existential craving – it is then brought to further growth, which will then give rise to an experience of an existence or bhava.

On the quantum level, this bhava is the existence of experiences as a result of previous choices. If someone continues to harbor intentions of creating great wealth and produces actions towards building that wealth, their nāmarupā – their knowledge and faculties geared towards that wealth, born from experiences and continual progress – will continue to change through persistent intentional mental, verbal, and physical actions. This nāmarupā as old kamma becomes the field in which one's cognition continues to become established through recurrent building up of intentions fettered by craving for wealth. Eventually, that craving continues to change one's status in life, and one becomes wealthy, is established in an existence of wealth and in the identity of a wealthy individual. Similarly, if a being experiences craving for the holy life, they will start to cultivate intentions with wholesome roots that give rise to a consciousness that becomes established into an experience of virtue and the existence of a virtuous lifestyle and as an identity of being a virtuous person. Finally, if a being is inclined towards jhānic practice, their craving for that jhāna continues to motivate new kamma or intentional mental actions that produce the next cycle of formations rooted in that practice and give rise to a consciousness or cognition that becomes established in the bhava of the jhānic experience and,

if continually nourished by such intentional efforts and craving for jhāna, the identity of a jhāna master.

On the cosmic level, we can see how this continues to play out even further. An individual who has continually craved for more wealth, being of a wealthy mindset, whose sole karmic aspiration is to continue to be wealthy, if they have continued to be generous, wholesome and virtuous in their mental, verbal, and physical actions, their craving will manifest in the form of images of wealth, and the formations fettered by that craving will then give rise to a consciousness that becomes established into the bhava of a new existence where it will attach to a nāmarupā of such a wealthy being. Now this is also jāti in that the consciousness becomes established at conception, but as the being develops into a fetus, this is done so through continual craving. In other words, in the case of the human conception and birth, first there is the conception, and further craving causes the zygote to develop. Fed by the desire for growth, this mass of cells that continually develop through the stages of the embryo continues to develop further through a process of implantation until it becomes the fetus within the womb. This craving, inherent in the DNA programming of the zygote to continue to develop, then evolves into the fetus in the womb through a series of arising and passing away of consciousnesses caused by continual activation of formations. Bhava therefore is the becoming stage of a being from one thing to another on the physical level in the sensual realm. This continues to ripen the life inside the womb until it is ready to experience jāti in the form of coming out from that womb into the world outside. Bhava is also the process from where the

consciousness carries forward the fettered formations driven by an intention that matches with the genetic blueprint best suited for that intention to come to fruition through certain tendencies. This genetic blueprint then is the bhava, the storehouse for those tendencies that will become activated further through intentional actions and through input from the environment. Therefore, the activation of these tendencies is also the activation of the relevant genes that give expression to those tendencies for further becoming. Eventually, the new being is born into wealth in the new existence and continues to develop through further intention and environmental inputs, which we will explore in the next section. Now, in the case of in vitro fertilization procedures, when a zygote is produced, that becomes the nāmarupā for the new consciousness to come into being. However, that consciousness has not yet descended because it requires heat and vitality for it to continue to sustain within that nāmarupā. It is the womb that provides that heat and vitality. Therefore, with the successful implantation of the embryo culture into the womb, the consciousness then descends down into that culture and continues to make it grow with further craving through the same process we discussed. The embryo culture is the nāmarupā whose genetic makeup best matches the formations carried forward by the descending consciousness.

Thus, one is able to see how the image of the tree and its growth is apt for understanding the process of bhava. One plants the seed within the field of nāmarupā, which is the intention-conditioned consciousness fettered by craving. As the craving continues to nourish the field with the next set of

actions, they in turn nutrify the seed of that consciousness which germinates, develops and buds up from the ground, creating continual variations of nāmarupā in the form of the ever-growing tree. Finally, the fruit from that tree ripens with the seed now having become that fruit. This ripening process is bhava, while the fruition process is jāti of a new being on a cosmic level or an action on the quantum level, which carries inside the seed of a new consciousness, which, if craving will continue, will give rise to yet another existence in a new nāmarupā of a new tree and the ripening of yet newer fruit.

The Four Acquisitions of Personality and Existence

Cattārome, bhikkhave, attabhāvapaṭilābhā. Katame cattāro?

*Atthi, bhikkhave, attabhāvapaṭilābho, yasmim attabhāvapaṭilābhe
attasañcetanā kamati, no parasañcetanā.*

*Atthi, bhikkhave, attabhāvapaṭilābho, yasmim attabhāvapaṭilābhe
parasañcetanā kamati, no attasañcetanā.*

Dependent Origination

*Atthi, bhikkhave, attabhāvaṇṇābhavo, yasmim̐ attabhāvaṇṇābhave
attasañcetanā ca kamati parasañcetanā ca.*

*Atthi, bhikkhave, attabhāvaṇṇābhavo, yasmim̐ attabhāvaṇṇābhave
nevattasañcetanā kamati, no parasañcetanā.*

*Bhikkhus, there are these four acquisitions of individuality. What
four?*

*(1) There is an acquisition of individuality in which one's own
volition operates, not the volition of others.*

*(2) There is an acquisition of individuality in which the volition
of others operates, not one's own volition.*

(3) There is an acquisition of individuality in which both one's own volition and the volition of others operate.

(4) And there is an acquisition of individuality in which neither one's own volition nor the volition of others operates. These are the four acquisitions of individuality.

- AN 4.171 Cetanā Sutta

Attabhāva means personality or individuality. Note the ā in bhāva, which usually would mean intent. However, in the context of the Pali Canon, it means to become when compounded with another word, this word in this case being atta, which means self or one's own. Paṭilābhā means acquisition. For this reason, one can understand this process of attabhāva paṭilābhā to mean the acquisition of a personality, but in a broader context, with intention being understood the key factor in the process, it can also mean the process of coming into a new state of existence. According to this sutta, there are four types of acquisition processes – through one's own intention, through another's intention, through both, and

through neither intention. Let's now explore each of these four types in greater detail from the quantum and cosmic contexts.

The acquisition of a personality or existence through one's own intention is the process through which intention carries forward a consciousness towards a new state of being. For example, one decides to go on a vacation. This is one's intention. With such an intention in mind, one makes the necessary arrangements and having traveled for one's vacation, one is now in a holiday mood, a different person who is relaxed, happy, and ready to rejuvenate and one's existence is now in a new place where the vacation is taking place. Another example would be for someone who wants to find a new job or position within a company. They see openings available for their desired career path and they make the intention to take action to get hired. Their intentional, mental, verbal, and physical actions cause them to acquire that new job or position and one is now, for example, a supervisor or a manager of that branch or company. They have acquired a new existence. Likewise, on the cosmic level, when one maintains the precepts, is generous, and morally upright, but one hasn't yet entered any jhānic plane, their mind is clear and a good basis for setting an intention. One sets an intention to take rebirth into a desired state of existence as a certain kind of person. That intention produces a consciousness that then transports the formations from that intention to a nāmarupā or existence which exactly matches that intention.

Acquisition of a new existence through another's intention is when a being enters a new state of existence that they didn't have an intention towards or necessarily want. For example,

when someone is working at a company, their manager or supervisor decides to promote them to a new senior position. This wasn't that person's intention, but it happened due to someone else's intention. Another example would be where someone is walking down the street and is mugged. It wasn't their intention to be assaulted but it was the intention of the mugger to attack them and steal from them with the use of force. That experience itself is bhava or state of existence, even if it is for a brief amount of time. A less drastic example would be where one partner wants a divorce or to be separated from a relationship. That person's intention affects the other partner who didn't have such an intention, and in this way both partners are separated, one having wanted it and other not having wanted it. The latter entered into a new state of existence as one of separation and then assumes the identity of one who is now single. As we now see, bhava can last anywhere from a few seconds to an entire lifetime, depending on context and the factors leading up to and making that bhava. On the cosmic scale, a being is killed, and their lifespan is prematurely ended. Having ended, whatever fettered formations are present in that moment, due to contact from the attack by their murderer's intention, will give rise to a consciousness that will become established into a nāmarupā that matches those formations.

Acquisition of existence through both one's own intention and the intention of another occurs in different ways. One may have the intention to enter into a relationship, friendship, business partnership or any sort of community or club that others intend to enter as well, and that relationship, friendship,

partnership or whatever it may be is then the state of existence that all who intended for it are now experiencing. On the flipside, a separation, breaking off a relationship, divorce, or dissolution of a business partnership may be mutually intended by both parties and therefore this brings about a new state of existence at individual levels for both parties. On the cosmic scale, it may occur that two or more people seem to have a certain karmic affinity. For example, the Buddha in his previous lifetimes always had connections to certain people, such as Sāriputta, where the two shared different relationships such as teacher and student or father and son. Sāriputta also shared various karmic connections with disciples such as Ānanda and Mogallāna. In the case of two beings with mutual intentions that cause their rebirths, it doesn't necessarily mean their intentions will cause them to meet in the same rebirth always since kamma is such that it's dependent upon the strongest fruition of the intention that will provide the exact match rebirth for that intention. It's due to two beings' closeness and affinity that will more often than not cause their intentions to undergo karmic fruition at various phases in various rebirths. Those intentions are interconnected and strengthened through those various interactions that make up the contact for certain formations to arise and then give rise to states of existence in which those beings meet for some purpose that are aligned with the intentions involved in order for that purpose to be fulfilled. Moreover, the purpose can be singular and for the mutual fruition of each being's intention, or there can be multiple purposes – one or more for the fruition of each so-called individual being's intention – that are fulfilled in one or more lifetimes through the interactions of these beings. It's

important to note that in this process of fulfillment, it's not happening to the same beings that take rebirth – which would be reincarnation and not what the Buddha taught. Instead, what is happening is that the impersonal fruition of impersonal intentions is matched with impersonal interactions and there is no continuity of beings but there are threads of impermanent and impersonal formations that become activated, experienced, and brought to an end through their fulfillment, so long as new intentions do not arise from further birth of reactions.

Acquisition of existence through neither one's own intentions or others' intentions can best be understood through the process of natural events and accidents. For example, when a volcano erupts, spewing out clouds of smoke and particles that darken the skies, disabling air travel for months, that wasn't the intention of the travelers, pilots, airline management, crew, or airport staff. It was a natural event. The same for when an earthquake strikes and demolishes structures in cities, destroying property and even injuring or killing beings. It did not arise due to a being's intention. Likewise, when there is a vehicular accident, it was not the intention of any of those involved in that accident to enter into that accident – provided it wasn't one or more people involved with an aim to create destruction or mayhem, such as terrorists, in which case such a phenomenon would be under the category of acquisition of existence through another's intention. In short, the acquisition of intention through no intentions occurs due to natural calamities, accidents, and even sicknesses and disease. On a cosmic level, there is an existence that arises outside the

scope of any intention, which Sāriputta asks the Buddha about in this particular sutta, AN 4.171, Cetanā Sutta, to which the Buddha says it is the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception that arises through neither one's own intention nor another being's intention. To enter this realm, all intention is let go of and one enters into a dream-like but lucid state where the mind's formations are not fully formed to give rise to any further consciousness. Rather it is with just the subtlest sense of "I" that a consciousness arises and establishes itself in the nāma of the realm of neither perception nor non-perception. Within this realm, no intentions arise until the final moment at the end of a lifespan. Such an intention that arises in that final moment can cause further rebirth.

We have now completed our journey through the numerous factors leading to and making up bhava, through a plethora of contexts, including the understanding of existence, identity, and habitual tendencies, as well as how kamma and intention play a key role in the arising of this link. With this examination completed as thoroughly as possible, let us now enter into an understanding of bhava's proximate cause, upādāna.

This is the end of the link of 'Bhava' book .