

## DN #15 - THE GREAT DISCOURSE ON ORIGINATION - MAHANIDANA SUTTA

BV: Okay. Tonight you get something a little bit different. This is from the Digha Nikaya, Sutta number fifteen, The Great Discourse on Origination.

DN: 1. 'THUS HAVE I HEARD. Once the Lord was staying among the Kurus. There is a market town there called Kammadhamma. And the Venerable Ananda came to the Lord, saluted him, sat down to one side, and said: 'It is wonderful, Lord, it is marvellous how profound this dependent origination is, and how profound it appears! And yet it appears to me as clear as clear!'

BV: Now what happened was that Ananda was a sotapanna. But he hadn't had the fruition of sotapanna. When fruition occurs, you see dependent origination very, very, clearly, and that's what just happened to him. So, that's why he came to the Buddha and he was talking like this. And the Buddha said:

DN: 'Do not say that Ananda, do not say that! This dependent origination is profound and appears profound. It is through not understanding, not penetrating this doctrine that this generation has become like a tangled ball of string, covered as with blight, tangled with like coarse grass, unable to pass beyond states of woe, the ill destiny, ruin and the round of birth-and-death.

2. 'If, Ananda, you are asked: "Has ageing-and-death a condition for its existence?" you should answer: "Yes." If asked: "What conditions ageing-and-death?" you should answer: "Ageing-and-death is conditioned by birth" ... "What conditions birth?" ... "Becoming conditions birth" ... "Clinging conditions becoming" ... "Craving conditions clinging" ... "Feeling conditions craving" ... "Contact conditions feeling" ... "Mind-and-body conditions contact" ... "Consciousness conditions mind-and-body" ... If asked: "Has consciousness a condition for its existence?" you should answer:

"Yes." If asked: "What conditions consciousness?" you should answer: "Mind-and-body conditions consciousness."

BV: So this part, this discourse on the dependent origination has some, has a few things that are not in the twelve, ah, links of dependent origination. This only has nine. There's no ignorance, there's no formation, and, there's no six sense doors. This goes straight to mind-and-body. The Buddha would give discourses like this. He wouldn't expound everything in every discourse. Sometimes he took short cuts, and that's what he is doing now. Also, for some people when they see dependent origination, they don't see twelve links. They can see ten. They can see twelve. They can see nine. So...

DN: 3. 'Thus Ananda, mind-and-body conditions consciousness and consciousness conditions mind-and-body, mind-and-body conditions contact, contact conditions feeling, feeling conditions craving, craving conditions clinging, clinging conditions becoming, becoming conditions birth, birth conditions ageing-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.

BV: Here it says "distress" but "despair" is a better translation.

DN:{...}

4. 'I have said: "Birth conditions ageing-and-death", and this is the way that should be understood. If, Ananda, there were no birth at all, anywhere, of anybody or anything: of devas to the deva-state, { ...,} of yakkhas..., of ghosts..., of humans..., of quadrupeds..., of birds, of reptiles {...}, if there were absolutely no birth at all of all these beings, then, with the absence of all birth, the cessation of birth, could ageing-and-death appear?' 'No Lord.' 'Therefore, Ananda, just this is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition, for ageing-and-death - namely birth.

BV: This is why the Buddha talks about rebirth, never talks about reincarnation. Reincarnation is the belief of having a permanent soul, that goes from one lifetime to the next. Now the interesting thing

about dependent origination is it's constantly arising and passing away. There's birth, death, birth, death, birth, death, continually happens. When you get deep enough in your meditation, you can actually begin to see this sort of thing, especially when you get into the realm of infinite consciousness. Because you see that these consciousnesses being born, you see that they are there a little while and you see them disappear. And it happens fast. Now what are you doing with your meditation? You're learning how to calm your mind down enough that you can begin to see very clearly how this whole process works. As you keep on opening and relaxing, over and over and over and over many thousands of times, many tens of thousands of times, many hundreds of thousand of times, many millions of thousands of times. As you do that more and more, every time and come back to your object of meditation, your mindfulness, your observation power is sharpened just a little bit. As you keep doing this over and over and over and over, your observation becomes finer and finer and finer and you start to see these things arise and pass away very easily. It doesn't happen right away. You see it on gross levels, when you first start out. You see your mind flip-flopping all over the place. And, as you start to let go and relax and don't criticize yourself for having wandering thoughts, these friends, when they come, are helping you, because every time you let them go and relax, and come back, it's helping to sharpen your awareness. So there's no such a thing in your entire life, as an enemy, a bummer, a hassle. There's no such a thing. It's all part of a process. I wish it would go away, I wish it would stay, there's no such a thing. It's just process arising and passing away. As you see that process more and more clearly, you let go more and more to the idea that there is some kind of controller behind it all. It's me, it's mine. You don't have any control. It arises because conditions are right. So all of these different hindrances when they arise, are there to help you. Be friends with them. Now on occasion, I've told this story before, that there was a monk up in the Himalayans and he was in a cave, and he had been meditating all day and he decided he wanted to have a cup of tea and watch the sunset. So he started fixing tea, and all of a sudden these daemons came roaring into his cave making huge amounts of noise, and they were really ugly. They had flesh dripping off of their skull, and things like that. They smelled incredibly bad.

Their smell was so bad that it left a taste on your tongue, and they were yelling. And the monk looked up and said 'Oh good, I have some friends. Why don't you sit down by the fire and warm yourself while I make you a cup of tea?' And these demons looked at him and said 'Aren't you afraid of us?' And he said 'No, when you dukkha demons come it's showing where my attachment is. You dukkha demons of fear and anxiety and restlessness and hatred and lust, of doubt, all of you guys are welcome. I look forward to your coming here.' That's the kind of attitude we need to take when you see you're starting to get over serious about things. Now this sounds kind of weird! A monk is telling me to be happy? This monk is telling me to smile? Why? Because when you smile, you have a tendency to have a light mind that's very alert and it is very easy to stay on your object of meditation. When you see you're not smiling, it's being pulled away to something else. So.. When these quote 'troubles' arise, they are your best friend and teacher. It's showing you where your old habits of thinking are, and when a feeling arises, what you do with that feeling if you don't like it, you try to push that feeling away with your thoughts and it doesn't work, and it hurts. The more you try to control, the bigger the pain becomes. And in everyday life, that's what happens, and people go to the doctor and say 'Give me some drugs. I can't sleep. I have trouble sleeping. My mind just keeps on going and going and going.' Why do hindrances arise? Hindrances arise because we've broken a precept. We have guilty feeling in one way or another. We have anxiety, we did things that we wish we hadn't of done. There are some things we wish we had done and we dwell on that with aversion in your mind. And when that aversion arises, is that a pleasant feeling or an unpleasant feeling? Unpleasant feeling. Causes a lot of tension and tightness in your mind and in your body. You can't relax. Because you can't relax your mind just takes off and it starts spinning going, going, going, going, going, all the time. What is the cure? The Buddha was an amazing doctor. He said 'You have suffering.' That's the disease. He doesn't look at the symptoms of the suffering, he looks for the cause of the suffering. And he sees that the cause of the suffering is .. craving. How does craving appear in your mind and in your body? What happens? Tension and tightness arises in both your mind and your body. And what happens right after that? All of the thoughts about

why you don't like that feeling and want it to stop and all of the thoughts keep building, and it's this habitual tendency that causes this to arise. Every time this kind of feeling arises, I do that. I try to ignore it. I try to make it go away. I fight with it and become depressed. And you might stay depressed for a week or ten days, depending on what the trauma was, and what your attachment to it is. Eventually you forget about it, but that doesn't mean it won't come up when another situation or similar arises and the old one gets on top of the new one and it starts building on top of that and it gets real big. So.. When the hindrances arise what are the instructions in the meditation? Recognize that you're not on the object of your meditation. Don't get involved in the story of why that fleeing is there. Let go of the story and relax. Feel your mind expand, feel your body relax a little bit. Next you'll notice that tight mental fist around that unpleasant feeling, and, this is where you have to relax your body and allow the feeling to be there. 'It hurts!' 'Ok it hurts, so what?' 'I don't like it!' 'Ok, you don't like it, so what?' What's the truth? What's the dhamma of the present moment? The dhamma is when a feeling arises, it's there. Doesn't matter how much you fight it, doesn't matter how much you try to make it go away, or change. We have to do the exact opposite of what we feel like doing. We feel like going to war with this fleeing, and what we really have to do is allow the feeling to be there. Because it's the truth. Any time you try to fight with the truth, any time you try to control the truth or push the truth around, that is the cause of suffering. Guaranteed. And you'll do that a little bit, until you learn not to do that anymore. Pain and suffering is the best teacher we have because it saying 'Hey, right here - there's the attachment. Look at it real close Oh, you don't want to look at it? OK, we'll tighten up a little bit. You still don't want to look at it? OK we'll tighten up some more, and let your thoughts just run away with you. Are you going to learn this time?' And sometimes we say 'No we are no going to learn this time, we got to go through this again, and again until finally you start going 'Wait a minute. What am I doing? I'm causing all of this pain and suffering to myself. I don't need to do that!' Then, you allow the feeling to be and relax. And you let that feeling to be there. 'OK it's unpleasant. Fine. Restlessness is a definite unpleasant feeling. And you feel like jumping out of your skin. What's the way you overcome restlessness?

Don't... move... your body. Let the feeling be there. Relax into that. Focus on peace and calm in your mind. Relax. Relax. That's the key. Ok..

S: ~~~~

BV: Yeah

S: ~~~~

BV: And that's what we have to learn how to do. Welcome all of the hindrances with joy. Why? Because when you have joy in your mind your awareness is very fast, and, you're not clinging to it. But that's hard to do. Unless, uh-oh I going to be that kind of monk again. You laugh at how crazy your mind is. It's not yours anyway, it just came up because conditions are right for it to come up. The more you laugh at the seriousness of your mind, the easier it is to see that it's not my problem, it's not my pain, it's only, this, it's only aversion, it's only attachment of whatever kind of emotional state arises. It's only that. That's not mine. I certainly didn't ask it to come up. I didn't all of a sudden say 'Well you know, I've been calm for a few days, it's time to get restless.' It arises because conditions are right for it to arise. What you do with what arises in the present moment dictates what happens in the future. This is where your point of decision is. You want to fight with it? Fine, you can fight with it, you can try to push it away, you can try to control it, and you can also look forward to having that come up over and over again. Or, you can allow that to be. Without getting into the story, let go of the thoughts and relax. See that feeling, that tight mental fist the one that really doesn't like that disturbance, and let it go. Let it be there. It's ok for it to be there, it has to be ok, cause that's the truth. it's there. So.. allow it to be there. Ok friend, you want to be here and cause and cause me all kinds of pain? That's no problem. You can do that. You allow it to be, you relax the tension and tightness in your body. Now that tension and tightness might not go away right away. You don't stay there and keep relaxing, relaxing, relaxing, relaxing, relaxing. No. You relax one time. If the tension doesn't go away, fine. The tension in your head doesn't go away, fine. Gently bring your mind back to your

object of meditation. Stay with your object of meditation, but you know it's not going to be for long because that attachment's big, and your going to bounce back. Ok, what happens? 'I was here on my object of meditation and now I'm over here with this pain. How'd that happen?' So.. you see the whole number happening just like it was on a tape deck. The story starts up. The worry, the fear, the anxiety, the dislike. Let go of the story, relax. Tight mental fist is there, don't like that feeling.. naa it's ok, it's only this unpleasant feeling. Relax. Come back to your object of meditation. Again you might not let go of all of the tension at one time, but that's ok. When you're practicing loving kindness, you come back to the feeling in your heart, that radiating feeling, you bring up a feeling of peace, and calm, and open acceptance. You know what it feels like to have an accepting mind? Accept. Radiate that feeling to your self, to your friend, to whoever you want to. Now your mind goes away again. But this time you see a little bit .. oh there was some stuff happening but I really didn't recognize it very well. Ok. Now the story starts up again. Let it be and relax. Let that feeling be and relax. Come back to your object of meditation. Now as you do that over and over you'll start to notice that you stay on your object of meditation a little bit longer. And you're starting to notice the process a little bit more clearly. Now when you do this with a sense of humor, it will happen faster. I promise.

S: ~~~~

So.. Every time you let go and relax, and come back to your object of meditation, that unpleasant feeling and the story about it is helping you to sharpen your awareness of how the process works. And you start catching it a little bit faster, relaxing a little bit more easily, coming back to your object of meditation, staying on your object of meditation a little bit longer. It doesn't matter weather it's an emotional pain or a physical pain. You treat it in the same way.

S: ~~~~

BV: What do you do with an unpleasant feeling, pleasant feeling? I don't care, it's a feeling, anything. Whatever pulls your mind away

from your object of meditation. You treat it in the same way. Now what are you doing when you see this? You get more and more clear that there is a mind and body. You get more and more clear that there are six sense doors. You get more and more clear that there is a feeling that arises, and right after that feeling, there's a tension and tightness. Right after that, there is a clinging, and you'll see that manifest in all kinds of different ways, in your mind and in your body. As you see that part of the process, you start recognizing it a little bit easier. So when you see your mind starting to move, you can relax as soon as the feeling comes up and there's no craving and there's no clinging and there's no habitual tendency with it. Now you're seeing clearly how the process works.

Yes..

S: ~~~~~

BV: Well of course it's anatta.

S: ~~~~~

BV: The whole entire time.

S: ~

BV: Every time you let go of craving you're letting go of that belief that this is you. And an amazing thing is that craving and that the false belief that there is a self is not particularly strong, it is particularly persistent. But it's not that strong, it's easy to let go of that tension once you really recognize it, but it keeps coming back, and back, and back, and back. So every time you relax and you allow it to be, your mind takes that little step down and becomes calm, and with that your mind becomes pure. And you bring that mind, that very alert, back to your object of meditation. That's how your mindfulness improves, by that little, brief moment of clarity that you bring back to your object of meditation. That's why you can progress reasonably fast by doing this practice as compared with doing other practices.

S: ~~~~~

BV: It comes and goes. The thoughts will come and go.

S: ~~~

BV: Yeah

S: ~~~~~

BV: Well as your awareness becomes quicker, you start noticing that there's still going to be some, see, when the thoughts arise, they're tiny. It's just that you're not recognizing thoughts now, but they're there. As you go deeper in your meditation, you start to see your mind stay on your object of meditation and then your mind starting to wobble, Now what caused that wobble? It was a feeling that arose or it was craving that arose or there was little teeny, tiny, little bubbles of thought. And it starts the mind moving and wobbling like this and then it starts moving away and they get bigger and bigger until your completely away.

S: ~~~~~

BV: The fleeting little things you let go and relax. And what?

S: ~~

BV: And..... smile

S: ~~~~~~

BV: When you're smiling, these things don't bother you. You see them for what they are. Ahh he just cut me off, so what?

S: ~~

BV: The anger doesn't come up. Why? Because it's not important.

S: ~~

BV: Anger is a heavy thing, but the more calm you become and the more you practice smiling and laughing, the easier it is to see your mind start to do that and let go of it right then and there. The easier it becomes.

We should get back to the sutta now. I've been talking for a long time.

DN: 5. 'I have said: "Becoming conditions birth."...If there were absolutely no becoming: in the World of Sense-Desires, of Form or Formless World...could birth appear?' 'No, Lord.' 'Therefore just this is the condition of birth - namely becoming.

BV: Ah,.. there's a.... different... words that are translated for 'bhava', 'b' 'h' 'a' 'v' 'a' is the Pali word. Bhikkhu Bodhi prefers to use the word 'experience', I prefer to use 'habitual tendencies'. And it's all correct. A..lot of the, a lot of the texts and commentaries will use the word 'being'. But 'being' is kind of confusing. What does that 'being', what does that mean? But 'habitual tendency' works pretty well.

S: ~~~~

DN: 6 ' " Clinging conditions becoming.',

BV: Or... habitual tendency

DN: If there were absolutely no clinging: sensuous clinging, clinging to views, to rite-and-ritual, to personality-belief...could becoming appear?

BV: Now what did we just describe here? We described clinging, clinging to views, clinging to rites and ritual, clinging to a personality belief. And that's a lot of clinging. That's a lot of thinking. That's a lot of concept, that we get attached to. When we get caught in thinking and concepts we don't see things the way they truly are. We close down.

DN: 7. ` "Craving conditions clinging." ...If there were absolutely no craving: for sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tangibles, mind-objects..., could clinging appear?

BV: Letting go of that tension and tightness in your mind, in your body is the way you let go of craving. And if there's no craving, what's there to cling to?

DN: 8. ` "Feeling conditions craving." ...If there were absolutely no feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact - in the absence of all feeling, with the cessation of feeling, could craving appear?

BV: No.

S: ~~~~

BV: If there's no feeling, there's no craving. Because these things happen very quickly. Very quickly. Ok, (snaps finger) that was a million thought moments. Ok the whole entire process happened a million times in a snap of a finger. And you can see it. You can see it when you're deep enough in your meditation. So you want to stay an extra week?

S: ~~~~

BV: It's like... have you ever taken a speed reading course where they have this machine that flashes words on the screen?

S: ~~

BV: What do they call that? Oscilloscope?

S: ~~

BV: Yeah. Well this is turning down the oscilloscope as you get more calm, as you get more peaceful, as you relax more, it's like turning

down the oscilloscope so it's just flashing like that instead of a million times in a flash of a, in a snap of a finger, you'll be able to see it.

S: ~~

BV: Kind of freaks people out when they first see it - They come all excited 'weird things happening to me' and I, kind of going (yawning) 'that's ok, no big deal.'

DN: 'No Lord.' 'Therefore Ananda, just this is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition for craving - namely feeling.

9. 'And so, Ananda, feeling conditions craving, craving conditions seeking, seeking conditions acquisition, acquisition conditions decision-making, decision-making conditions lustful desire, lustful desire conditions attachment, attachment conditions appropriation, appropriation conditions avarice, avarice conditions guarding of possessions, and because of the guarding of possessions there arise the taking up of (a) stick and (a) sword, quarrels, disputes, arguments, strife, abuse, lying and other evil unskillful states.

BV: Want to hear that one again? Ok. - 'And so Ananda, feeling conditions craving, craving conditions seeking,' - wanting it to be different than it is - 'seeking conditions acquisition,' Ahh I finally got, or I don't have and I want it - it's still on acquisition. 'acquisition conditions decision-making,' - What am I going to do with this now? That's the point that you mostly unconsciously either start fighting these feelings and get into your suffering or not.- 'decision-making conditions lustful desire, lustful desire conditions attachment,' -and thinking and pondering on- 'attachment conditions appropriation, - - - appropriation conditions avarice,' - greed - 'avarice conditions guarding of possessions,' - It's mine, you can't have it - 'and because of the guarding of possessions there arise the taking up of the stick and sword, there's quarrels, disputes, arguments, strife, abuse, lying and other evil unskillful states.'

DN: 10. 'I have said "All these evil unskilled states arise because of the guarding of possessions."

BV: And what do monks have? We've got a begging bowl, we've got a belt, we have three robes, we got a razor, got a needle –

S: ~~~

BV: But when you cut down on the things, on possessions, then you stop thinking about getting possessions. When you stop thinking about getting possessions, you stop thinking about money. When you stop thinking about money, there's real freedom. I want to tell you, there is real freedom there. There's no need to worry. There's no anxiety. There's no fear. When monks go out on alms round they depend entirely on somebody that wants to help. It's very humbling. Now there's a particular kind of practice when we go out on alms round, that can be done. It has to be done every day, unbroken for twelve years. And this is, you have to have the arrangement with the abbot, you have to go to him and say 'Ok, I want to practice this particular kind of generosity.' Now how can monks practice generosity? We don't have anything. But we practice sharing food. So I say to the head monk 'I want to do this.' This is a very difficult practice, but it's worth while. You can go out on alms round and you come back and you give the abbot whatever choice of food that's in the bowl. And the next senior monk, and the next senior monk until everybody of the monks is fed. You might have to go out three or four times on alms round, to collect. And only then you take whatever food is left and eat it yourself. And you do this every day. Now the trick of this practice is, sometimes there's monks that come through that are not very nice, and they can cause some difficulties in one way or another. You still give that monk food, and you can't have any remorse for doing it. No - a little bit later 'I wish I wouldn't have done that for him. You can't entertain one thought of remorse for twelve years. Now the benefits of doing this practice is, you have developed your generosity to such a fine degree, that where ever you happen to be, when it's time to eat there will be food in the bowl. You can be in the middle of the desert without a soul around. And it's time to eat and you open up your bowl and there's food. You can be out on the ocean on a boat by yourself. When it's time to eat you open up the bowl, and there's food. And there was a monk during

the time of the Buddha, that did this. And the monk, he did become an Ararat. And the Buddha was wandering around from one place to another, and they were going to go through this forest and right before they entered the forest, Sariputta said 'Venerably sir. Should we go out for alms round now? Because by the time we get through the forest we won't have any food. We won't be able to eat in the afternoon.' And the Buddha said 'We don't have to worry about that, because this monk is here.' And any time the Buddha went out for a walk, all the monks walked in a straight line, and the Buddha was always in front. And at about an hour before time to eat, he brought this other monk up and let him walk in front of him, he walked in front of the Buddha. And when it was time to eat, this monk stopped, the Buddha stopped, the monk opened up the bowl, and he gave the choice food to the Buddha, and Sariputta and Moggallana and Kassapa, Ānanda and all of these other monks. and he fed five hundred people. And his bowl never ran out. He actually had to throw some of the food out because after he got done eating there still was a lot of food there.

S: ~~ sure~~?

BV: Yes, I'm positive.

S: ~~~~

BV: So doing this practice has some great benefits. But it's hard. One, you have to stay in the same place for twelve years. That's hard in itself. And everybody starts to learn in the town that when they see you coming, they really load you up on food, and that's hard because you have to carry it. Now, when I went out on alms round, there were some days that there would be five or six pounds of food. And when you're walking two or three miles barefoot, five or six pounds of food turns into a major thing. And for some reason, I think it was because I was tall and fair skinned, I was such a novelty, that people gave me extra food. And I,- there were very, very few times that I didn't have enough food to feed four other monks. Now what do you do when, - I went into this - this village in Burma was incredibly poor. And they barely had enough food for themselves.

And they would rather go hungry themselves than let me go hungry. And here I am, I've got my bowl is full and I got stuff on top and balancing it and sometimes I have a plastic bag full of food. And these people are poor. Sometimes they would come and they would just put like three potato chips in. But everyone in the village, that adds up after a while. So I would always go back and I would share any food that I had with any of the monks that were around. And then I - one of the boys would come from the village, and I made an arrangement with him to go give the food back. Because the Burmese monks, what they did with the extra food was they gave it to the dogs and they gave it to the crows and that sort of thing, but I couldn't do that. And they thought that the food that I gave back to them was more blessed then the food that they gave to me, so they really liked that.

S: ~~~

BV: Oh yeah. I have amazing food karma. There's times that somebody would invite me to their house. And then they would tell all of their neighbors that I was coming to their house. And I would get to the house and from one end to the other was a solid table of food. It was so - I was there by myself. There was a gigantic amount of food, and it was so intimidating that I wound up eating very little, it was just so much. And of course they had every bowl, every plate they had to offer, and that made them exceedingly happy. So how could I refuse something like that? Amazing stuff. Ok..

DN: 10. 'I have said "All these evil unskilled states arise because of the guarding of possessions." { ...} would there be the taking up of stick or sword ...? if there were no possessions? 'No Lord' Therefore, Ananda, the guarding of possessions is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition of all these evil unskilled states.

11. 'I have said "Avarice conditions guarding of possessions . . ."

12 - 17. ' "Appropriation conditions avarice, . . . attachment conditions appropriation, . . . lustful desire conditions attachment, . . . decision making conditions lustful desire, . . ."

BV: I have it, I want it, this is mine. When I got to this country, after being twelve years in . . . - Ah , this cabin to a lot of people is very rough. But this is luxurious. You should see some of the places that I got an opportunity to stay in. And when I came back and the sheer mass of material possession was overwhelming, and I started noticing that people would go out and they would buy something new every day, just so they had a little bit of happiness arise in their mind. They had to buy something every day, and then the attachment to it left and they got rid of it. It's a continual thing. So when a monk, doesn't need very much - there are some things that people would give us a lot of. They gave us toothbrush, tooth paste, and they gave that with the thought that their speech would be clean. They gave us bars of soap, and they gave that very respectfully so that their mind would be clean, their mind and their body both. They give, sometimes people could only afford to give one or two safety pins. That's all that they could afford. But they gave it with such a open loving heart that - 'Yeah! I'll take that.' I've still got some, and I use them. The simplest things like that. Monks have a lot of. I haven't -- it hasn't happened here because I haven't talked about it very much, but in monasteries, anytime I go to a monetary the first thing they do is give me three bars of soap, couple tubes of tooth paste and a couple of toothbrushes.

S:~::~

BV: Oh yeah, I get lots of robes. But the thing is when a monk keeps his precepts, people want to give to him. So there's all of these things. Now, I go to a monetary, and I might get one or two robes and I get all of this soap and I get towels, and blankets sometimes and pillows and all this kind of stuff. What am I going to do when I leave? Ok, it's not given to me personally. It's given to the Sangha. Any time you offer anything to monks you never give it to that monk personally. And that monk never says 'Thank you.' Why? Because if I say 'Thank you' it turns into a personal gift from you to me. If I say 'Sadhu' or I don't say anything, you're giving it to the entire Sangha. So I leave it with the Sangha, for the next monk that comes through. Somebody might need it, because I can't carry all that stuff. And I

have, right now I must have five or six brand new robes, never worn. I wear this robe, and another one that's the same color. These are eight years old. They're just getting broke in. Why would I need any.. I don't need any other robe. So, gathering material things is a habit that happens, especially in this country, way over much. People that are poor in this country, are not poor. You say 'Well some people don't have enough to eat.' That's their own fault they don't have enough to eat. I can go around and get food by going out on alms round. And I did that in California. I went out for a month. There were some days, I had someone walking in front of me ringing a bell but mostly because he liked the bell, but to let people know that I was coming. And there were days that I had so much food that he had to carry a lot of it, because I was loaded down. And one lady in particular she said 'I'm going through a very rough time can you help me?' 'Yes, of course I can.' And then she found out, my friend who was going around with me told her that I liked popcorn. And so every week I got a three pound bag of popcorn, from her, and other things. And in that month I could see the change in her face. She went from having a very grave pulled in kind of face, to when she saw me coming she would just light up. Amazing. And one of the things about being a monk, is that when we go out on alms round, we're doing our meditation at the time. We're not chit-chatting, we're not looking around, it's time to do your loving kindness, and when I was doing the alms round in this country, in California, I was walking, one direction I was walking six miles. Monetary was long ways away from anything. So I was walking twelve miles a day, six miles carrying heavy stuff.

S: ~~~

BV: That happened. And there were times that I would go out for the alms round I would come back with only a little bit of food, and somebody had driven up to the monastery and left a big bag of food. That sort of thing happened too. Amazing thing. Worrying about where my next meal is coming, is not a problem. And one of the problems of other cultural Buddhists monks coming into this country is they are afraid to go out on alms round. So they set it up with their, like the Thai, they set it up with the Thai community to bring

the food in for them every day. So they never go around and do their alms round, let other people know what we're doing. And because they're very clannish like that, there's very few Americans that are even interested in going to the monastery, because they only speak the language of their culture. It happens at the Burmese temple, it happens some at the Sri Lankan temple, not as much, depends which one you go to, the Korean temple, the Thai, the Cambodian, the Laotian, it's all the same. So they're not carrying on the tradition that monks need to carry on. Being here up on the ridge, it's a little too far to walk in to Lesterville to get some food. But hopefully we be at a place where we can do that before too long.

S:~~~~

BV: They don't .. I never ask for food. I'm a monk. All they have to -- There's all kinds of organizations that fix fantastic food every day. Go to the soup kitchen, churches, goodwill, you don't need to go hungry. Hari Krishna.

S:~~~~

BV: Well, that's pride on their part.

DN: { . . . }

18. 'I have said: "Craving conditions seeking." . . . If there were no craving, . . . would there be any seeking?'

BV: See the craving, what it does, that tightness of I like it I don't like of he feeling makes you look out instead of in. Therein lies part of the problem. Therefore contact is the root, the cause the origin, and the condition for feeling – Oops

DN: {...} 'Therefore craving is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition for all seeking. Thus these two things become united in one by feeling.

19. 'I have said: 'Contact conditions feeling.' . . . Therefore contact is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition for feeling.

20. ` “Mind-and-body conditions contact.” By whatever properties, features, signs or indications of the mind-factor is conceived of, would there in the absence of those properties . . . pertaining to the mind-factor, be manifest any grasping at the idea of the body-factor?

`No, {...}

`Or in the absence of any such properties pertaining to the body-factor, would there be any grasping at sensory reaction on the part of the mind-factor?’ `No, {...}

BV: They’re interconnected.

DN: whatever properties the mind-factor and the body-factor are designated - in their absence is there manifested any grasping at the idea, or {...} sensory reaction?’ {...}

BV: This is a poor translation. I’m going to have to do something about this. I don’t care for this translation very much. Because Maurice Walshe was very much an intellectual, not a practitioner. So when he’s talking about grasping at sensory reactions and ideas, it’s out of place. It’s not appropriate that this is here.

DN: `By whatever properties, features, signs or indications the mind-factor is conceived of, in the absence of these is there any contact to be found?’

`No Lord.’

`Then, Ananda, just this, namely mind-and-body, is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition {for} all contact.

BV: Now you can say `mentality and materiality’ and that makes more sense.

S: ~

BV: Yes.

DN: 21. 'I have said: "Consciousness conditions mind-and-body." . . . If consciousness were not to come into the mother's womb, would mind-and-body develop there?'

BV: If there's no mind, there's no body. There's nothing there.

DN: 'No, Lord.'

'Or if consciousness, having entered the mother's womb, were to be deflected .....

BV: 'Be deflected?'

DN: ..would mind-and-body come to birth in this life?'

BV: 'Being deflected' means taking birth control, and birth control has been around for thousands of years, contrary to popular belief. And also if body, if a mother's body has a reaction there can be a deflection that way, of --miscarriage.

DN: {...} 'And if consciousness of such a tender young being, boy or girl, were thus cut off, would mind-and-body grow, develop and mature?'

'No, Lord.'

'Therefore Ananda, just this, namely consciousness, is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition of mind-and-body.

22. 'I have said: "Mind-and-body conditions consciousness." . . . If consciousness did not find a resting-place in mind-and-body, would there subsequently be an arising and coming to be of birth, ageing, death and suffering?'

'No, {Lord.}'

`Therefore, Ananda, just this, namely mind-and-body, is the root, the cause, the origin, the condition of consciousness. Thus far then, Ananda, we can trace birth and decay, death and falling into {...} states and being reborn, thus far extends the way of designation, of concepts, thus far is the sphere of understanding, thus far the round goes as far as can be discerned in this life, namely to mind-and-body together with consciousness.

23. `In what ways, Ananda, do people explain the nature of {...} self? Some declare the self to be material and limited, saying: "My self is material and limited"; some declare it to be material and unlimited . . . ;

BV: That's the Brahman belief, always going back to god, who is unlimited, but is permanent. Their god is permanent. There's a want for something to be unchanging. That's where these concepts come from.

DN: Some declare it to be immaterial and limited . . . ; some declare it to be immaterial and unlimited, saying: "My self is immaterial and unlimited."

24. `Whoever declares the self to be material and limited, considers it to be so either now, or in the next world, thinking: "Though it is not so now, I shall acquire it there."

BV: So your self is always something to strive for.

DN: That being so, that is all we need say about the view that the self is material and limited, and the same applies to the other theories. So much, Ananda, for those who proffer an explanation of the self.

25. - 26. `How is it with those who do not explain the nature of the self? ...

27. 'In what ways, Ananda, do people regard the self? They equate the self with feeling: "Feeling is my self", or: "Feeling is not my self, my self is impercipient",

BV: Without light. How Christian..

DN: or: "Feeling is not my self, but my self is not impercipient, it is of a nature to feel."

28. 'Now, Ananda, one who says: "Feeling is my self" should be told: "There are three kinds of feeling, friend: pleasant, painful, and neutral. Which of the three do you consider to be your self?" When a pleasant feeling is felt, no painful or neutral feeling is felt, but only pleasant feeling. When a painful feeling is felt, no pleasant or neutral feeling is felt, but only painful feeling, And when a neutral feeling is felt, no pleasant or painful feeling is felt, but only neutral feeling.

29. 'Pleasant feeling is impermanent, conditioned, dependently-arisen, bound to decay, to vanish, to fade away, to cease - and so too are painful feeling and neutral feeling. So anyone who, on experiencing a pleasant feeling, thinks: "This is my self", must at the cessation of that pleasant feeling, think: "My self has gone!"

S: ~sense of humor~

DN: and the same with painful and neutral feelings. Thus whoever thinks: "Feeling is my self" is contemplating something in this present life that is impermanent, a mixture of happiness and unhappiness, subject to arising and passing away. Therefore it is not fitting to maintain: "Feeling is my self."

30. 'But anyone who says: "Feeling is not my self, my self is impercipient" should {be} asked: "If, friend, no feelings at all were to be experienced, would there be the thought: 'I am'?" [to which he would have to reply:] "No, Lord." Therefore it is not fitting to maintain: "Feeling is not my self, my self is impercipient."

31. 'And anyone who says: "Feeling is not my self, but my self is not impercipient, my self is of a nature to feel" should be asked: "Well, friend, if all feelings absolutely and totally ceased, could there be the thought: 'I am this?' " [to which he would have to reply:] "No, Lord." Therefore it is not fitting to maintain: "Feeling is not my self, but my self is not impercipient, my self is of a nature to feel."

32. 'From the time, Ananda, when a monk no longer regards feeling as the self, or the self as being impercipient, or as being percipient and of a nature to feel, by not so regarding, he clings to nothing in the world; not clinging, he is not excited by anything, and not being excited he gains personal liberation and he knows: "Birth is finished, the holy life has been led, done was what had to be done, there is no{...} more here."

{...} if anyone were to say to a monk whose mind was thus freed: ' "The Tathagata exists after death", that would be [seen by him as] a wrong opinion and unfitting, likewise: "The Tathagata does not exist . . . , both exists and does not exist . . . , neither exists nor does not exist {...} Why so? As far, Ananda, as designation and the range of designation reaches, as far as language and the range of language reaches, as far as concepts and the range of concepts reaches, as far as understanding and the range of understanding reaches, as far as the cycle reaches and revolves - that monk is liberated from all that by super-knowledge, and to maintain that such a liberated monk does not know and see would be a wrong view and incorrect.

BV: Now, what's happening is, when a person becomes an Arahant, - there's a lot of different definitions for an Arahant, and one of my favorite definitions of a Arahant is a person that has no more secrets, he has no secrets at all. Think about that one. An Arahant is someone that never has craving or ignorance arise in his mind. So, when you talk to an Arahant, you talk about the dhamma to him he's going to give you exactly how it works. Why? Because he knows and sees from direct experience. That's why it's so important to have an Arahant as a friend. So I'll give you another week. I need some more friends up here.

DN: 33. 'Ananda, there are seven stations of consciousness and two realms. Which are the seven? There are beings different in body and different in perception, such as human beings, some devas and some in states of woe. That is the first station of consciousness. There are beings different in body and alike in perception, such as the devas of Brahma's retinue, born there [on account of having attained] the first jhana. That is the second station. There are beings alike in body and different in perception, such as the {Abhassara} devas. That is the third station. There are beings alike in body and alike in perception, such as the Subhakinna devas. That is the fourth station.

BV: This particular one, born into this deva loci you're getting up so it's like - one celestial day is equivalent to fifteen hundred years here. And the devas before that, they were the devas that could manifest anything just with a thought. You want a Rolls Royce - here it is, and there's a Rolls Royce there. Now these higher devas, they don't even have to do that, all they have to do is go mention it to one of these other guys, and they make it for them, they don't even have to trouble their minds with making things.

DN: There are beings who have completely transcended all perception of matter, by the vanishing of the perception of sense-reactions and by non-attention to the perception of variety; thinking: "Space is infinite", they have attained to the Sphere of Infinite Space. That is the fifth station. There are beings who, by transcending the Sphere of Infinite Space, thinking: "Consciousness is infinite", have attained to the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness. That is the sixth station. There are beings who, having transcended the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, thinking: "There is no thing", have attained to the Sphere of No-Thingness. That is the seventh station of consciousness. [The two realms are:] The Realm of Unconscious Beings and, secondly, the Realm of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception.

BV: When you get into the fourth jhana, if you don't go any higher, but you gain real strong mastery of the fourth jhana, and you die, there's two different heavenly realms that you can go to. One of them is a Brahma loci and the other one is the realm of being

unconscious. You have a body like a statue. But there's no consciousness. There's no thinking. Now some people have this idea that that's really - 'I don't want to be reborn there, that sounds like a hell realm.' But there's so much relief in getting to the cessation of perception and feeling. Your body is still there, still - the hearts beating, still breathing, although faint, not very much, your body stays alive. But there's no perception and feeling to disturb your mind. Now when you become an Anagami or an Arahant, you will have the skill to go into that state anytime you want, just by making the determination. You make a determination that you want to stay in that state for so many days. No more than seven days. Body can't live longer than seven days without consciousness. Now I've met one person that can do that. And it was a little Indian lady, you would never guess, by seeing her on the street, she's just a normal looking person, kind of happy all the time, but normal looking, but you go into the same room with her, you know that you're walking into a room with a person that has a lot of personal power. I mean a lot of personal power. And she started talking when I went in and she started talking about being able to sit for seven days in nirodhasamapatti, that's the Pali term for cessation of perception and feeling. And being a dumb American, I said: 'Why do you want to do that?' And she gave me a one word answer. 'Relief.' There's no movement of mind at all, there's no vibration at all. Ahaaa. Now when a person like that comes out of that state, if they're an Arahant or an Anagami, either one, you want to be around them and give them food, because you make huge amounts of merit doing that, huge amounts of merit. There's a story about Sariputta, he sat for seven days, he came out, he started on alms round. There was this man and this woman, they were so poor, that they only had one shirt and they had their ~~~~~. And they were farmers. And they lived in a very poor section and they could hardly grow enough food for themselves but whoever was working that day, they would put the shirt on and the other one would stay inside. So the man was out working and his wife was inside, and Sariputta came around, and the man didn't have any food to offer. So he offered some water, and he went, and he got a stick and he made a tooth pick which is for picking your teeth and like a tooth brush, and that's all that he could afford. That's all he had. And Sariputta took that and went on his

way, and the man ran real fast to the house. And he gave the shirt to the wife and he said: 'We need to give this monk some food.' So they gave the food that they were going to eat that day, that's all they had. They gave that food with very happy mind. And then the man went out and he started plowing the field again but he started noticing that the dirt was a different color. And he reached down, and it had turned into gold. His whole field had turned into gold. So the first thing that he did, he took some of that gold and he went and bought some food and he really had a feast. And then he went to the king because all this gold, what's he going to do with it? So he was going to give it to the king to hold it for him at least. I love these stories. Anyway, this is in the Dhammapada commentary. The king's men came out and they started collecting the - they had some rocks out there, and they'd turned into gold, and they started putting it on the wagons and they started saying 'This is the king's gold.' And as soon as they put it on the wagon it turned to dirt and rocks again. And the king came and saw what was happening and said 'No no, this isn't my gold, I'm just holding it for them.' And then it turned back into gold again. But just because of that act, they never had to work again. Of course you always work, doing one thing or another, but they lived pretty well, because of that. Now this story might be true and it might not, it doesn't really even matter it just gives you an idea of the kind of merit you make when you give to someone that has a mind that's that purified. I mean your mind is at the highest state of purity when there's no perception and no feeling. And there's real relief in that. So, you guys have to hurry up, we'll have a real luxurious temple before long. Lot of confidence here.

DN: 34. 'Now Ananda, as regards this first station of consciousness, with difference of body and difference of perception, as in the case of human beings and so on, if anyone were to understand it, its origin, its cessation, its attraction and its peril, and the deliverance from it, would it be fitting for him to take pleasure in it?' "{...}.

BV: No, you wouldn't take pleasure in your body if you understood how the process works. Ok.

DN: 'And as regards the other stations, and the two spheres likewise?' {...}

BV: You wouldn't be attached to any of this stuff.

DN: 'Ananda, insofar as a monk, having known as they really are these seven stations of consciousness and these two spheres, their origin and cessation, their attraction and peril, is freed without attachment, that monk, Ananda, is called one who is liberated by wisdom.

BV: That's the definition of being liberated by wisdom.

DN: 35. 'There are, Ananda, these eight liberations. What are they? '(1) Possessing form, one sees forms. That is the first liberation.

BV: That is the, it can either be the thirty-two parts of the body, or it can be the kasina. The kasina is a disk that's about this big. They're different colors. You can make an earth kasina, you can make a fire kasina, which is, you have a big piece of plywood or board or cardboard that has a hole cut out and you look at a fire through that, or water, or air. It can be red, it can be blue, it can be yellow, it can be white.

S: ~~~~

BV: No. That's one-pointed concentration.

DN: (2) Not perceiving material forms in oneself, one sees them outside. {...}

BV: I have to look at this. This book does not have good footnotes. So I've always hesitated to see what it says. Ok I made a mistake. The first one is getting into jhana by observing the marks on one's own body, the thirty-two parts of the body. The second liberation is the kasina.

DN: (3) Thinking: "It is beautiful", one becomes intent on it. {...}

BV: What happens with the kasina, is. you look at it, and you relax, and then you close your eyes and you try to see it. And when you're good at being able to do it, it becomes very beautiful. And that's what it's talking about here. And there are certain kinds of psychic abilities that occur from doing the kasinas, but I don't teach the kasinas. I don't understand them very well. I've done the kasina meditation, but I was doing one-pointed concentration, I'm not really too interested in them. So, I let that slide, so I'm not a complete teacher. Ok that's the third liberation.

DN: (4) By completely transcending all perception of matter, by the vanishing of the perception of sense-reactions and my non-attention to the perception of variety, thinking: "Space is infinite", one enters and abides in the Sphere of Infinite Space. That is the fourth. (5) By transcending the Sphere of Infinite Space, thinking: "Consciousness is infinite", one enters and abides in the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness. That is the fifth. (6) By transcending the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, thinking: "There is no thing", one enters and abides in the Sphere of No-Thingness. That is the sixth. (7) By transcending the Sphere of No-Thingness, one reaches and abides in the Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception. That is the seventh. (8) By transcending the Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception one enters and abides in the Cessation of Perception and Feeling. That is the eighth liberation.

36. 'Ananda, when once a monk attains these eight liberations in forward order, in reverse order, and in foreword-and-reverse order, entering them and emerging from them and when, and for as long as he wishes, and has gained by his own super-knowledge here and now both the destruction of the corruptions and the uncorrupted liberation of heart and liberation by wisdom, that monk is called "both-ways-liberated", and Ananda, there is no other way of "both-ways-liberation" that is more excellent or perfect than this.'

BV: What he's talking about is gaining mastery in the jhanas, being able to go in and out of the jhanas, for as long as you want, forwards and backwards, and you can jump all around. You can go from the

first jhana to the eighth jhana, to the sixth jhana, to the fourth jhana, to the third jhana, to the seventh jhana, and at that quickly. That kind of mastery takes some time. Ok. Now is it necessary to have that kind of mastery? No, but it's fun. And when you have that kind of mastery, now, when I teach people mastery, I get them to have a clock that has second hands, which is kind of hard to find these days, but, you want to be able to sit, at first, for seventeen minutes and thirty-one seconds. And at seventeen minutes and thirty-one seconds, you sit in the first jhana and then you come out. And when you hit that exactly, changing the time every time, then you do that going into the second jhana. And when you can do that with all four of the jhanas, then I get you to sit for longer. Ok now you want to sit for thirty-five minutes and fourteen seconds. And you start working just with the fourth jhana on that. Because you can go in and out really fast. And then when you're really good at hitting that exactly, to the second, coming out opening your eyes, and seeing the clock roll over that one second, then I get you to do it and sit for an hour. And then when you do that for an hour, and twenty-one seconds or whatever, when you come out then I want you to go back into the jhana and out in three seconds, then four seconds, then two seconds, and that way you start gaining real agility of mind. And after a while you can be able to go into any one of the jhanas that you want to in the blink of an eye. And I've seen it happen.

S: ~~~~

BV: Well that takes practice, doesn't it?

S: ~~~~

BV: Yes

S: ~~~~

BV: As you become more familiar with going in to the jhana, you start to get the feel of what's the difference between the second jhana and the third jhana. You know that. And there's stories in the suttas about Sariputta, he would spend a whole day just in the first

jhana, so he really knew the first jhana very well. Now when you do that going in and out, then you become very familiar and very skilled at going in and out of that jhana, And the next day he would come and he'd say 'Ok, today's by two jhana day.' So he goes in the first jhana and gets into the second jhana, and Ananda, he was, he would see him at the end of the day when he was coming in, and he'd say 'Venerable sir, your features are very bright and very clear, what have you been doing today?' And he'd say 'Well, Ananda, I've been sitting in the second jhana.'

S: ~~

BV: Or second.

S: ~~

BV: It's always nice to have joy.

S:~

BV: Yeah, and you still have equanimity.

S: ~~~~~

BV: Ok. This person that could sit for seven days, one of her students tried to take a picture of her without her really noticing and he hid the camera, and he had somebody distract her and talk and he put the camera up like this and she glanced down she was in the third jhana like that. And you could feel that loving-kindness just radiating off of her, I mean it was really powerful. She could slip into the jhana any time she wants. It's just is a matter of, you know when you play tennis, it's real hard to hit that ball, but when you do it over and over and over and over and over and over again, it gets easier. It's the same thing. It's just a matter of practice and practice makes perfect eventually.

Ok?

DN: Thus the Lord spoke. And the Venerable Ananda rejoiced and was delighted at his words.

BV: So, got any more questions?

S: ~~

BV: You mean the twelve fold links? Ok. Ignorance, sankharas, that means all physical, all material things, consciousness, mentality/materiality, six sense bases, ok, that's the first five. Then you have contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming - experience, being, habitual tendencies, then you have birth, death, old age, sorrow lamination, pain, grief, and despair. That's my imitation of a Baptist minister.

S: ~~~

BV: We've got enough of them out there. I don't need to bring any in here.

S: ~~~changing the habit?

BV: That's right.

S: ~

BV: From not watching to watching. From not smiling to smiling, from being sad to being happy.

S: ~~~hard?

BV: It's not particularly strong.

S: ~~~

BV: The craving,

S: ~~

BV: It is particularly persistent.

S: ~and can be retrained ~~

BV: The problem lies in the number of lifetimes, and the karma itself on how well you are able to do it.

S:~~forever.

BV: It won't be, I promise. If you continue practicing the way that I'm teaching you right now.

S:~~

BV: Well, ok, but, and you do it every day, in a short period of time, you will see amazing results. I can't guarantee everybody I teach is going to experience Nibbana, the Buddha even couldn't even do that. If you continue on in the same manner, you have the potential of obtaining Nibbana in this lifetime. You have the potential, whether it really happens or not, that, we'll have to wait and see.

S:~~~return

BV: Well, I can agree with that. See, anybody that obtains a jhana, even if they just do it one time, they have the potential to obtain Nibbana. And one of the suttas, it talks very much about, you can obtain Nibbana, the cessation of perception and feeling can come at any time when you're coming out of the jhana, Doesn't matter what jhana, it can be the first jhana. It can happen.

S:~~~

BV: It's something that happens when the conditions are right.

S:~~

BV: Things change constantly. You know when the Buddha was talking about meditation, he wasn't talking just about sitting. He said there's three parts of the meditation. You have to practice your generosity. You have to keep your precepts. And when you do that well enough, when you sit, your mind will naturally become calm and your progress in meditation is really fast. It's true.

Ok, lets share some merit.

May suffering ones, be suffering free  
And the fear struck, fearless be  
May the grieving shed all grief  
And may all beings find relief.

May all beings share this merit that we have thus acquired  
For the acquisition of all kinds of happiness.

May beings inhabiting space and earth  
Devas and nagas of mighty power  
Share this merit of ours.

May they long protect the Lord Buddha's dispensation.  
Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . .

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