

(Sabb'upādāna) Pariññā Sutta**The Discourse on Full Knowledge (of All Clinging)**

[Overcoming clinging through understanding the sense-experience]

(Saṃyutta Nikāya 35.60/4:32 f)

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2003

Introduction

The basic structure of this short sutta is identical to that of §16 of **the Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18/1:108-114)¹ but omitting the rest of the passage within square brackets:

Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. **The meeting of the three is contact.**² With contact as condition, there is feeling. [What one feels, one perceives. What one perceives, one thinks about.³ What one thinks about, one mentally proliferates. What a person mentally proliferates is the source through which perceptions and notions due to mental proliferation⁴ impacts one regarding past, future and present forms cognizable through the eye.⁵]

Dependent on the ear and sounds, ear-consciousness arises....

Dependent on the nose and smells, nose-consciousness arises....

Dependent on the tongue and tastes, tongue-consciousness arises....

Dependent on the body and touches, body-consciousness arises....

Dependent on the mind⁶ and mind-objects, mind-consciousness⁷ arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as condition, there is feeling. [What one feels, one perceives. What one perceives, one thinks about. What one thinks about, one mentally proliferates. What a person mentally proliferates is the source through which perceptions and notions due to mental proliferation impacts one regarding past, future and present forms cognizable through the mind.]

(M 18.6/1:111 f; parentheses sign added)

The Pariññā Sutta adds the shorter **nibbidā (disgust) formula**, namely, “disgust (*nibbidā*), dispassion (*virāga*) and liberation (*vimokkha*),”⁸ to each analysis of sense-experience.

The Sutta’s commentary tersely summarizes its purpose: “For the full understanding of all four kinds of clinging by the three kinds of full understanding.” (SA 2:366). **The four kinds of clinging** (*upādāna*) are given in **the Paṭipadā Vibhaṅga Sutta** (S 12.2/2:3) and **the Upādāna Sutta** (S 45.173/5:59), thus:

- (1) clinging to sensual pleasures (*kām'upādāna*),
- (2) clinging to views (*diṭṭh'upādāna*),
- (3) clinging to rules and rituals (*sīla-b, bat'upādāna*),
- (4) clinging to a doctrine of self (*atta, vād'upādāna*).

The three kinds of full understanding (*pariññā*) are given in **the Parijāna Sutta 1** (S 35.26/4:17), thus:

¹ This same passage is also found in **(Samuday'atthaṅgama) Loka S** (S 12.44/2:71-73).

² *Tiṇṇam saṅgati phasso*.

³ “One thinks about,” *vitakketi*. On how when thinking stops, desires do not arise, see **Sakka,pañha S** (D 21.2.-2/2:277).

⁴ *Papañca, saññā, saṅkhā*, see **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18) = 6.14 Intro (3).

⁵ This important passage is the earliest statement on the Buddhist theory of perception. See **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18) = SD 6.14 Intro (4).

⁶ “The mind,” *mana*. Here Comy glosses as *bhavaṅga, citta* (MA 2:79), the life-continuum, sometimes called the unconscious or sub-conscious.

⁷ “Mind-consciousness,” *mano, viññāṇa*. Here Comy glosses as “advertence” (*āvajjana*) and impulsion (*javana*) (MA 2:77).

⁸ The full *nibbidā* formula is as follows: “disgust (*nibbidā*), dispassion (*virāga*), cessation (*nirodha*), peace (*upasama*), direct knowledge (*abhiññā*), full awakening (*sambodha*), nirvana” (eg M 1:431). Sometimes *nibbidā* is replaced by *ekanta, nibbidā*, “complete or total disgust” (S 5:82, 179, 255). See Gethin, 2001:166 f.

- (1) full understanding of the known (*ñāta,pariññā*), one understands the five aggregates in terms of their individual characteristics [Vism 20.18-19/611-613];
- (2) full understanding by scrutinization (*tīraṇa,pariññā*), one scrutinizes the aggregates by way of the universal characteristics (as being impermanent, painful, not self) [Vism 21.3 f/640],⁹
- (3) full understanding as abandonment (*pahāna,pariññā*), one abandons desire and lust for the aggregates through insight and gaining the path. [Vism 21.10/640].
(Nm 53; Pm 1:87, 2:238-242; Vism 20.3-5/606 f; SA 1:44 f, 2:365)¹⁰

In the *Pariññā Sutta*, these three levels of full understanding is applied in the following manner for each of the six sense-experiences [eg §4]:

- (1) The analysis of each sense-experience culminating with “the meeting of the three is contact,” and “with contact as condition, there is feeling.” This is full understanding of the known.
- (2) “Being disillusioned, he becomes dispassionate.” This is full understanding by scrutinization.
- (3) “Through dispassion, [his mind] is liberated.” This is full understanding as abandonment.

The *Pariññā Sutta* should be read following §18 of **the Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18.18/1:112) which deals with the cessation of mental proliferation.

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⁹ Comy mentions “one scrutinizes them in 42 modes as impermanent, painful, diseased, etc” (SA 1:44 f). However, **the Paṭisambhidā,magga** (Pm 29.7-10/2:238-242), on which the *Vism* passages are based, lists only 40 modes: “[He sees] the 5 aggregates as impermanent, as painful, as a disease, a boil, a dart, a calamity, an affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as a plague, a disaster, a terror, a menace, as fickle, perishable, unenduring, as no protection, no shelter, no refuge, [as unfit to be a refuge,] as empty, vain, void, not self, [as without satisfaction,] as a danger, as subject to change, as having no core, as the root of calamity, as murderous, as due to be annihilated, as subject to influxes, as formed, as Māra’s bait, as connected with the idea of birth, connected with the idea of ageing, connected with the idea of illness, connected with the idea of death, connected with the idea of sorrow, connected with the idea of lamentation, connected with the idea of despair, connected with the idea of defilement.” (Pm 238; the extra 2 modes given within square brackets). The 42 modes are given in **Visuddhi,magga** in connection with “discerning formation as void.” (Vism 21.59/655).

¹⁰ See BDict: pariññā.

The Discourse on Full Knowledge

(S 35.60/4:32 f)

2 Monks, I will teach you the Dharma regarding the full knowledge of all clinging. Listen to it.

3 And what, monks, is the Dharma regarding full knowledge of all clinging?¹¹

4 (1) Dependent on the eye and forms, *eye-consciousness* arises. The meeting of the three is *contact*.¹² With contact as condition, there is *feeling*. [33]

Seeing thus, the learned noble disciple feels disgust towards the eye, towards forms, towards eye-consciousness, towards eye-contact, towards feeling.

Feeling disgust, he becomes dispassionate.

Through dispassion, he [his mind] is liberated.

With liberation,¹³ he understands, “Clinging has been fully understood by me.”

5 (2) Dependent on the ear and sounds, *ear-consciousness* arises. The meeting of the three is *contact*. With contact as condition, there is *feeling*.

Seeing thus, the learned noble disciple is disillusioned towards the ear, towards sounds, towards ear-consciousness, towards ear-contact, towards feeling.

Feeling disgust, he becomes dispassionate.

Through dispassion, he [his mind] is liberated.

With liberation, he understands, “Clinging has been fully understood by me.”

6 (3) Dependent on the nose and smells, *nose-consciousness* arises. The meeting of the three is *contact*. With contact as condition, there is *feeling*.

Seeing thus, the learned noble disciple is disillusioned towards the nose, towards smells, towards nose-consciousness, towards nose-contact, towards feeling.

Feeling disgust, he becomes dispassionate.

Through dispassion, he [his mind] is liberated.

With liberation, he understands, “Clinging has been fully understood by me.”

7 (4) Dependent on the tongue and tastes, *tongue-consciousness* arises. The meeting of the three is *contact*. With contact as condition, there is *feeling*.

Seeing thus, the learned noble disciple is disillusioned towards the tongue, towards tastes, towards tongue-consciousness, towards tongue-contact, towards feeling.

Feeling disgust, he becomes dispassionate.

Through dispassion, he [his mind] is liberated.

With liberation, he understands, “Clinging has been fully understood by me.”

8 (5) Dependent on the body and touches, *body-consciousness* arises. The meeting of the three is *contact*. With contact as condition, there is *feeling*.

Seeing thus, the learned noble disciple is disillusioned towards the body, towards touches, towards body-consciousness, towards body-contact, towards feeling.

Feeling disgust, he becomes dispassionate.

Through dispassion, he [his mind] is liberated.

With liberation, he understands, “Clinging has been fully understood by me.”

9 (6) Dependent on the mind¹⁴ and mind-objects, *mind-consciousness¹⁵* arises. The meeting of the three is *contact*. With contact as condition, there is *feeling*.

¹¹ Comy tersely paraphrases: For the full understanding of all four kinds of clinging by the three kinds of full understanding. (SA 2:366). For details of these doctrines, see Introd.

¹² *Tiṇṇam saṅgati phasso*. As at **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18.16/1:111).

¹³ “Liberation,” *vimokkha*. This is an unusual term since the previous sentence says *virāgā vimuccati*, and one would expect *vimuttiyā* (liberation), the noun more directly related to *vimuccati*, to follow

¹⁴ “The mind,” *mana*. Here MA glosses as *bhavaṅga, citta* (MA 2:79), the life-continuum, sometimes called the unconscious or subconscious. See **The Unconscious** = SD 17.8b.

Seeing thus, the learned noble disciple is disillusioned towards the eye, towards forms, towards eye-consciousness, towards eye-contact, towards feeling.

Feeling disgust, he becomes dispassionate.

Through dispassion, he [his mind] is liberated.

With liberation, he understands, “Clinging has been fully understood by me.”

10 This, monks, is the Dharma regarding full knowledge of all clinging.

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Bibliography

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¹⁵ “Mind-consciousness,” *mano, viññāṇa*. Here MA glosses as “advertence” (*āvajjana*) and impulsion (*javana*) (MA 2:77).