

Vyāpāda

Ill will

Theme: The second of the five mental hindrances

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1 *Vyāpāda*: definitions

The second hindrance, *vyāpāda* (ill will, also spelt *byāpāda*), is sometimes known as *vyāpāda, padosa* (the fault of ill will). The Dīgha Commentary says that it is synonymous with anger (*kodha*) (DA 1:211). More specifically, however, anger is only an expression of ill will. A closer synonym of ill will is *domanassa*, as found in the ancient dvandva, *abhijjhā, domanassa*.¹ *Vyāpāda*, in other words, is always present, at least in latent form, when *kāma-c, chanda* is present.

While sense-desire (*kāma-c, chanda*), the first mental hindrance, works at collecting and affirming what we deem pleasurable and acceptable, *vyāpāda*, the second hindrance, is the main force behind religious denial. We tend to deny those things we deem to be painful or unacceptable. We are all very averse to decay (or old age), disease and death—the three D’s of life—that fill the Buddha-to-be with so much *samvega*,² that he decides to dedicate his whole life, giving up all his worldly pleasures, to find the answer to them.

While *kāma-c, chanda* fervently affirms youth, health and life,³ *vyāpāda* feverishly denies their opposites: decay, disease and death. We are unable to see or refuse to see the reality of the body as it really is. We are driven by the falsehood that *kāma-c, chanda* presents us, that the body is permanent, pleasurable, self (our soul) and pure.⁴

Furthermore, we fear loneliness, and hate the idea of being separated from our loved ones, and so we live in the fantasy that they will always be there for us. We hate being proven wrong so that we skew the facts to deceive ourselves. We go around seeking people, groups, gurus and religions that endorse our views and quirks. Or, if we have the means, we might even publish our own books of ideas or start a religion of our own.

Vyāpāda prevents us from seeing our personal and spiritual potential and those of others. While *kāma-c, chanda* induces us to seek pleasure and truth *outside* of ourselves, *vyāpāda* deludes us into believing that we are replete with all the best qualities we desire: an angry person thinks he is right or is unable to rise above himself. As a result, we see no need for a wholesome awareness of others, of being responsible to them, of *responding* positively to them; or at least of *respecting* others (of seeing them and accepting them for what they are).

Vyāpāda enshrouds us with such a thick cloud of denial that we live in a very private and limited world of our own creating, worshipping gods and fearing demons of our own creation. We live in denial of practically whatever we perceive as threatening our views and likes. *Vyāpāda* (ill will), in short, prevents or retards spiritual growth in a powerful way.

2 *Vyāpāda* on an unconscious level

2.1 *VYĀPĀDA* AS A MENTAL HINDRANCE. Discourses such as **the Saṅgīti Sutta** (D 33) list ill will as the second of the five mental hindrances,⁵ following *kāma-c, chanda* (sensual desire), sometimes listed as *abhijjhā* (covetousness).⁶ According to **the (Nīvaraṇa Bojjhaṅga) Pariyāya Sutta** (S 46.52), ill will, as a

¹ See *Nīvaraṇa* = SD 32.1 (2.1).

² See **Ariya, pariyesanā S** (M 26) = SD 1.11 Intro (3.2) & **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16) = SD 9 Intro (7f).

³ On the 3 intoxications (*mada*), see **Mada S** (A 3.39/1:146 f) = SD 59.8 & **Sexuality** = SD 31.7 (9.2).

⁴ These are the 4 perversions (*vipallāsa*): see **Vipallāsa S** (A 4.49/2:52; Vism 22.68/685) = SD 16.11; **Satipaṭṭhāna Ss** = SD 13.1 (4.1a).

⁵ D 33.2.1(6)/3:234.

⁶ See *Kāma-c, chanda* = SD 32.2 (1.2.3).

hindrance, could be either “internal,” in the sense of ill will towards ourselves, or else “external,” that is, towards others.⁷ In short, it can manifest as self-hate [4.1] or other-hate.⁸

Bearing in mind what the (Nīvaraṇa Bojjhaṅga) Pariyāya Sutta has explicitly pointed out here, we can further understand “internal” as referring to the ill will that has arisen in our own selves, and “external” as that arising in another. As shown in the sixth sutta of the **Acelaka Vagga** (A 3.161), this is useful in reminding us that not only is ill will within ourselves blameworthy, but to incite ill will in others or to approve of it is just as unwholesome.⁹

In a well known set of five imageries of water in a bowl, illustrating the hindrances, ill will is compared to water that is boiling over a strong fire.¹⁰ In common parlance, for example, we might say of someone that “he is boiling with anger.” Just as it is impossible to see our image in such turbulent water, ill will prevents us from seeing the true nature of our minds. Furthermore, just as boiling water poses the danger of boiling over and hurting those nearby, our hatred and anger are likely to translate into unwholesome action that would harm even those near and dear to us.

The Bojjhaṅga Sīla Sutta (S 46.33) and **the (Nīvaraṇa) Upakkilesa Sutta** (A 5.23) compare the presence of ill will in the mind to copper tainting gold, making it impure. Due to this impurity, the gold will be brittle and unsuitable for working on by the goldsmith to make ornaments, as it has lost its malleability and radiance.¹¹ This imagery points to the mind’s being unmanageable in the presence of ill will.

The Rukkha Sutta (S 46.39) graphically compares ill will to how a strangling fig grows over a tree, bends it, and eventually splits it. In a similar way, when ill will crowds the mind, it weakens, even destroys, wisdom.¹² Such a presence of ill will not only prevents the mind from being calm and focussed, but also shortens our attention span so that our memory and creativity are negatively affected.

2.2 VYĀPĀDA AS A MENTAL IMPURITIES. Another well known list of defilements dealing with meditation is that of *upakkilesa* (mental impurities). The list of impurities,¹³ as found in discourses such as **the Vatthūpama Sutta** (M 7), are as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| (1) Covetousness and rampant greed | (<i>abhijjhā, visama.lobha</i>), ¹⁴ |
| (2) Ill will | (<i>vyāpāda</i>), |
| (3) Anger | (<i>kodha</i>), |
| (4) Grudge [Resentment] | (<i>upanāha</i>), |
| (5) Smirching [Contempt] | (<i>makkha</i>), |
| (6) Spite [Malice] | (<i>palāsa</i>), |
| (7) Envy | (<i>issā</i>), |
| (8) Stinginess [Selfishness] | (<i>macchariya</i>), |
| (9) Deceit | (<i>māyā</i>), |

⁷ S 46.52/5:110 = SD 62.6.

⁸ **Analyo**, in his Ency Bsm entry (sv Vyāpāda), omits this point and mentions only the foll point (not mentioned in the Sutta), but nevertheless supported by **Acelaka Vg**: 2009: 48 f.

⁹ A 3.161/1:299 = SD 72.4.

¹⁰ **(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55.5/5:122) = SD 3.12; **(Manta) Saṅgārava S** (A 5.193.4/3:231) = SD 74.3. For **comy** on the similes of the 5 hindrances (MA 2:318-321), see SD 10.13 Appendix. See also Nyanaponika, *The Five Mental Hindrances*, BPS Wheel 26, 1961: 27-34.

¹¹ **Bojjhaṅga Sīla S** (S 46.33.9 f/5:92) = SD 10.15; **(Nīvaraṇa) Upakkilesa S** (A 5.23.4 f/3:16 f) = SD 74.3.

¹² S 46.39/5:96 f = SD 75.2.

¹³ “Imperfection of the mind” (*cittassa upakkilesa*): most of these imperfections are def in **Vibhaṅga** (Vbh 845-846/350, 891-894/357). The term *upakkilesa* is used in 3 senses in the Canon: (1) in the sense of the weaknesses in our meditation, as in **Upakkilesa S** (M 128.27+30/3:160-162) = SD 5.18; (2) referring to the mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), viz, sensual lust, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and remorse, doubt [SD 32.1], “that weaken wisdom,” as in **Nīvaraṇā S** (S 46.37/5:94) and **Patta,kamma S** (A 4.61.8/2:67) = SD 37.12; (3) as lesser defilements or aspects of the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala,mūla*), as in **Vatthūpama S** (M 7.3-5/1:36 f) = SD 28.12. There is a fourth sense, a later one, used in the **Visuddhi,magga**, in the sense of “imperfection of insight” (*vipassan’upakkilesa*) (Vism 20.105/633). MA 1:168-170 discusses these mental imperfections: for summary, see M:ÑB 1179 n87.

¹⁴ On *abhijjhā*, see **Kāma-c,chanda** = SD 32.1 (2.1).

(10) Fraud [Hypocrisy]	(<i>sātheyya</i>),	
(11) Callousness	(<i>thambha</i>),	
(12) Impetuosity [Rivalry]	(<i>sārambha</i>),	
(13) Conceit	(<i>māna</i>),	
(14) Arrogance	(<i>atimāna</i>),	
(15) Mental intoxication [Pride]	(<i>mada</i>),	
(16) Heedlessness [Negligence]	(<i>pamāda</i>).	(M 7.3/1:36) = SD 28.12

The Vatthūpama Sutta compares the presence of any of these mental impurities to *stain or dirt on a piece of cloth* that makes it impossible to properly be well dyed. But a cloth that has been *well washed and clean* would take the dye properly.

According to **the Cūḷa Assa, pura Sutta** (M 40), as long as ill will is not overcome, a monk is not really worthy of being called a recluse (*samaṇa*).¹⁵ **The Piṇḍolya Sutta** (S 22.80) says, more graphically, that a monk under the power of ill will (and any of the other mental impurities) neither lives as a true recluse nor does he benefit the blessing of living the household life. His predicament is comparable to a cremation fire-brand that is burnt at both ends and is smeared in the middle with cow-dung. Such a fire-brand is useless except in the cremation pyre.¹⁶ A monastic who is filled with any of mental impurity benefits neither from the ascetic life nor from the lay life.

2.3 VYĀPĀDA AS A LATENT TENDENCY. The latent tendency list then evolved into **the ten fetters** (*dasa saṃyojana*) to fit the four stages of sainthood.¹⁷ The list of the five lower fetters,¹⁸ however, probably evolved before the full list of ten fetters. These five lower fetters hold us in the samsaric life-cycles of the sense-world, as they promote attachment to sensuality.

While the first three lower fetters are overcome with the attainment of streamwinning, the fetter of sensuality and the fetter of ill will are completely left behind only with non-return. Hence, ill will is only uprooted at a more advanced stage of spiritual growth.

Suffice it here to say that ill will is present in an unawakened beings, whether or not such a being is already matured enough to express it. The Mahā Māluṅkyā,putta Sutta also implies that the objects of ill will are usually living beings, who could either be ourselves or other beings [5.1].

2.4 VYĀPĀDA AS A LOWER FETTER. **The Mahā Māluṅkyā,putta Sutta** (M 64) lists the following set of “the five lower fetters” (*orāṃ, bhāgiyāni saṃyojanāni*), so called because they hold us back to be reborn in the sense-sphere. There are totally destroyed only at non-return. The five lower fetters are:

(1) self-identity view	(<i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i>),	
(2) spiritual doubt	(<i>vicikicchā</i>),	
(3) attachment to rituals and vows	(<i>sīla-b, bata parāmāsa</i>),	
(4) sense-desire	(<i>kāma-c, chanda</i>), and	
(5) ill will	(<i>vyāpāda</i>).	(M 64.2/1:432) = SD 21.10

The Buddha then tells Māluṅkyā,putta that these five lower fetters are present even in an infant as *anusaya* (latent tendencies)—even though a newborn child does not yet have the perception of a “being,” making it impossible for ill will against beings to actually arise in the child.¹⁹ In other words, even a newborn child has *latent ill will* as “karmic genes” of sort, inherited through past karma.

Here we see that *ill will* replaces the more usual *paṭigha* (aversion), found in the stock list of seven latent tendencies.²⁰ Furthermore, ill will is placed fifth here instead of the usual second place in the stock

¹⁵ M 40.2/1:281 = SD 41.8.

¹⁶ S 22.80.19/3:93 = SD 28.9a.

¹⁷ See *Sīla Samādhi Paññā* = SD 21.6 (5).

¹⁸ D 33.2.1(7)/3:234.

¹⁹ M 64.2-3/1:432 f = SD 21.20.

²⁰ See eg D 33.2.3(12)/3:254.

list of the five hindrances.²¹ The rationale here is that the former is *psychological* and the latter, *soteriological*: while the mental hindrances model deals with meditation, the seven latent tendencies model deals with self-liberation.

3 Vyāpāda on a preconscious level

3.1 VYĀPĀDA AS WRONG INTENTION. Many of us would be familiar with “right thought” or “right intention” (*sammā saṅkappa*), one of the factors of the eightfold path.²² Right thought is defined in the suttas as comprising “the thought of renunciation, the thought of non-malice, the thought of harmlessness.” Its opposite is wrong thought or wrong intention (*micchā diṭṭhi*), consisting of the “thought of sensuality” (*kāma saṅkappa*), the “thought of ill will” (*vyāpāda saṅkappa*), and the “thought of harming” (*vihimsā saṅkappa*).²³ The first wrong thought should be noted, is that of *kāma* (sensuality), and these three types of thought or intention are impediments to progress on the path to liberation.

In this listing, it should be noted that although “ill will” and “harming” are closely related, they are separately listed. The reason for this, suggests **Analayo**, “could be the emphasis on non-violence, *ahimsā*, among ancient Indian recluses and wanderers” (2009: 44).²⁴ This sentiment is similarly reflected in the lay follower’s code or five precepts (*pañca sīla*), the very first of which is to refrain from killing any living being.²⁵ Even on a simpler level, life is precious to all beings, as it is all that they really have. As the Dhammapada says,

<i>Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa</i>	All tremble at the rod;
<i>sabbe bhāyanti maccuno</i>	All fear death:
<i>attānam upamaṃ katvā</i>	Using oneself at the case,
<i>na haneyya na ghāteyya</i>	Let one neither kill nor cause to kill. (Dh 129)

All this shows that early Buddhism is characteristically *life-centred*, since life is of the highest intrinsic value, without which nothing else exists or matters.²⁶ Life, after all, is the vehicle for spiritual transformation and liberation.

If we accept the five precepts as the basic defining ethical code of early Buddhism, then we can also say that the first precept (against taking life) entails our abstaining from ill will and harmfulness. In fact, non-ill will (goodwill) and harmlessness are of such vitality for progress on the path that **the (Ariya, magga) Brāhmaṇa Sutta** (S 45.4) compares “non-ill will, harmlessness and solitude” (*avyāpādo avīhimsā viveko*) to the weaponry of a war chariot.²⁷ (S 5:6).

It is interesting that “solitude” (*viveka*) should be mention, too. Here, it refers to “mental solitude,” that is, the mind that is free distractions, a focussed mind in samadhi or dhyana. Non-ill will and harmlessness here refer to moral virtue, which should not be taken as an end in itself, but as the foundation for mental development, which better equips us for overcoming such negative qualities on a deeper level.

²¹ See *Nīvaraṇa* = SD 32.1 (3.1).

²² For a def and details of the 8 limbs of the eightfold path, see **Sacca Vibhaṅga S** (M 141.23-31/3:250-252) = SD 11.11; **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22.21/2:311-313) = SD 13.2; also **Mahā Cattārīsaka S** (M 117/3:71-78) = SD 6.10. See also Gethin 2001:190-226 (ch 6) for an insightful study.

²³ See eg **Mahā Cattārīsaka S** (M 117/3:71-78) = SD 6.10.

²⁴ A similar concern, notes Analayo, is reflected in a Vinaya regulation, according to which it is not appropriate for a Buddhist monastic to take meat that is killed specially for them (V 1:238). Other Vinaya regulations protect plant life and even water-borne life-forms from any harm, rules that seem to reflect the same concern with not harming any living being as prevalent among contemporary recluses and ascetics. Such rules prohibit digging soil, cutting plants, and pouring out or making use of water that contains living beings (V 4:32, 34, 49, 125). (2009: 45)

²⁵ Khp 1, the monastic counterpart of which is Pāc 61 (V 4:124).

²⁶ For the context of the value of life, see the 5 precepts: **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41) = SD Intro 5.2 (2); **Veḷudvār-eyya S** (S 55.7/5:352-356) = SD 1.5; **Bhaya Vera S** (A 5.174/3:204-206) = SD 6.4.

²⁷ S 45.4/5:4-6 = SD 74.4.

Hence, the **Sallekha Sutta** (M 8) enjoins that, though others may be full of ill will, harmfulness, and other unwholesome qualities, we should make every effort to remain free from them ourselves.²⁸ In short, a mind free from the three types of wrong thought (which underlie all negative thoughts, speech and actions) is a mind of undisturbed or pure thought (*anāvila, saṅkappa*).²⁹

3.2 VYĀPĀDA AS A KARMIC COURSE. In the ten unwholesome courses of conduct (*akusala kamma, -patha*), listed in discourses such as the **Sāleyyaka Sutta** (M 41), ill will is listed under mental conduct,³⁰ which is the same as the “wrong thought” factor of the noble eightfold path, as found in the **Mahā Cattārīsaka Sutta** (M 117)³¹ [3.1]. The Sāleyyaka Sutta (M 41) explains that such ill will fuels the wish for other beings to be killed, slaughtered, annihilated, destroyed, and ceased to exist.³²

Such negative wishes reflect how ill will can narrow down our perception of others or other beings to the extent of even eliminating them. In karmic terms, as stated in the **Mahā Dhamma Samādāna Sutta** (M 46), a person who takes ill will as a course of conduct would bring suffering upon himself.³³

3.3 ILL WILL AS A BODILY BOND. At some point in early Buddhism, the model of the three unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*)—greed, hate and delusion—was elaborated into the four “bonds” (*gantha*), a term common with the Jains, who referred to themselves as “nirgrantha” (*niggaṅṭha*), “the bond-free” or “one free from ties.”³⁴ They are called “bonds” because they bind us to the cycle of death and rebirth (DhsA 49, 377).

The four “bodily bonds” (*kāya gantha*) found in the Pali Canon are as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) covetousness | (<i>abhijjhā</i>), |
| (2) ill will | (<i>vyāpāda</i>), |
| (3) attachment of vows and rituals | (<i>sīla-b, bata parāmāsa</i>), |
| (4) the insistence, “Only this is the truth!” | (<i>idaṃ, saccābhinivesa</i>). ³⁵ |

The Dīgha Commentary to the Saṅgīti Sutta (D 3:230) explains that they bind the mind (*nāma, kāya*) and body (*rūpa, kāya*) together to samsara (DA 3:1023). In this group of four bodily bonds (*kāya, gantha*), *abhijjhā* (a synonym for *kāma-c, chanda*) comes first, followed by ill will.

3.4 ILL WILL AND SENSUALITY ARE CLOSELY CONNECTED. The first two defilements—*abhijjhā* (or *kāma, rāga*) and *vyāpāda*—appear in the same sequence in the wrong intentions [3.1], the ten unwholesome courses of action [3.2], the hindrances [2.1], the mental impurities [2.2], the latent tendencies [2.3], and the five lower fetters [2.4].

This recurrent pattern of listing ill will after sensual desire or covetousness, observes **Analayo**, is probably not be a matter of chance, but could point an underlying relationship between the two. Both are comparatively gross defilements of the mind that need to be overcome before we can progress on the path. Moreover, the two are to some extent related to each other, since ill will easily arises as a consequence of frustrated desire.³⁶

²⁸ M 8.12/1:42 = SD 51.2.

²⁹ **Saṅgīti S**, D 33.3.3(5)/3:269 f (as no 7 of the 10 noble abodes, *ariya, vāsā*) = **Mahā Pañhā S 1**, A 10.27.10/-5:30 f.

³⁰ M 41.7-10/1:286 f = SD 5.7.

³¹ M 117.11/1:72 = SD 6.10.

³² M 41.7-10/1:286 f = SD 5.7.

³³ M 46.14-15/1:313 = SD 59.8.

³⁴ See eg **Upāli S** (M 56/1:371-387) = SD 27.1 Intro (3.5). See H Jacobi, SBE 45 1895: xx f. On *gantha*, see Ency Bsm 5:308 f.

³⁵ **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.1.11(34)/3:230); **Gantha S** (S 45.174/5:59 f); **Nm 1:98** (on Suddhaṭṭhaka S, Sn 794c, *ādāna, gantham gathitam visajja*), **246** (on Purābheda S, Sn 857b *ganthā tassa na vijjanti*), **329** (on Mahā Viyūha S, Sn 912a, *visajja, ganthāni munīdha loke*); **Dhs** §§1135-1149/201 f (*Gantha Gocchaka*); **Paṭ 3** (*Gantha Gocchaka*); **Vism** 22.54/683, 22.69/685; **DA** 5:59; **ThaA** 3:32; **DhA** 3:275 (ad Dh 211c); **SnA** 1:348 (ad Sn 347a). Cf Comy on Arhanta S (S 1.25/1:14) on *gantha* is applied to craving (*taṅhā*), views (*diṭṭhi*) and conceit (*māna*) (SA 1:51), which are also known as the 3 grasplings (*ti gaha*), viz, craving (*taṅhā*), conceit (*māna*) and views (*diṭṭhi*), on account of which arise, resp, the notions “this is mine,” “this I am,” and “this is my self”: see **Vatthūpama S** (M 7.18/1:38) = SD 28.12. Cf also **NmA** 1:207 (ad Sn 847a).

³⁶ Analayo 2006: 47.

A close study of **the Sakka Pañha Sutta** (M 21) is helpful here. This Sutta answers the question why beings who wish to be free from ill will nevertheless succumb to it (D 2:276). In an intriguing analysis of a series of conditions, the Sutta traces the arising of ill will to selfishness, holding things as dear, desires, thoughts and mental proliferation. The way out of this predicament, says the Sutta, is to cultivate only *so-manassa* (mental joy) that does not have any unwholesome consequence.³⁷ Hence, ill will clearly stands in a close relationship to desire.

4 The nature of *vyāpāda*

4.1 HOW VYĀPĀDA ARISES. **The Nīvaraṇa Pahāna Vagga** (A 1.2) contains a very short sutta which says that the most common condition for the arising of ill will is unwise attention to the sign of aversion (*paṭigha, nimitta*).³⁸ (A 1:3). Once ill will has arisen, notes **the (Āhāra) Kāya Sutta** (S 46.2), the mind tends to turn again and again to the stimulus (a person, an event, or an object) that has initiated the arising of ill will. As such, the aversion sign is literally the “food” (*āhāra*) for ill will, sustaining ill will.³⁹

According to **the Sa, nidāna Sutta** (S 14.12), when an “ill will element” (*vyāpāda dhātu*) is present in the mind, perceptions related to ill will (*vyāpāda, saññā*) will arise (S 2:151). This then leads to intentions of ill will (*vyāpāda, saṅkappa*), desires arising from ill will (*vyāpāda-c, chanda*), fevers due to ill will (*vyāpāda, pariḷāha*) and quests incited by ill will (*vyāpāda, pariyesanā*). The end results of such a conditioned state of affairs are likely to be misdeeds of body, of speech or of mind motivated by ill will.⁴⁰

The Āvaraṇa Sutta (A 5.51) says that if ours is a mind of ill will, we would be unable to know what is beneficial for ourselves or for others.⁴¹ Such a mind, notes **the (Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 46.55), also prevents us from remembering what has been memorized, even after a long time.⁴² The reason for this is clear enough: sensual thoughts distract our minds so that our attention span is badly affected, and our memory suffers as a result through lack of focus.

According to **the Cūḷa Kamma Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 135), ill will and anger conduce to our being reborn ugly, or even to rebirth in hell.⁴³ Such future karmic results of ill will only reflect what is clearly evident in the present effects of ill will, for example, an angry face, twisted by ill will, is an ugly one, and one who is often angry will suffer ill health.

4.2 THE EFFECTS OF VYĀPĀDA. **The Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (D 30) gives us further perspective on the karmic consequences of ill will. It says that due to being free from anger and ill will during previous births, the Buddha is endowed with a comely complexion and beautiful skin.⁴⁴ The degree to which the absence of ill will can positively affect countenance is alluded to in **the Mahā Saccaka Sutta** (M 36). It is said that, although the nirgrantha Saccaka has been speaking to the Buddha in an offensive manner, yet the Buddha’s skin would brighten up and his countenance become radiantly clear.⁴⁵

Beauty, however, is not the main reason for the sake of which ill will should be avoided. A more serious consequence is mentioned in **the Patta Kamma Sutta** (A 4.61), that is, if we are overwhelmed by ill will we would do what should not be done and fail to do what should be done.⁴⁶ Ill will distorts and confuses our minds so that we fail to fulfil our duties, and what really should be done is neglected to our own detriment and that of those we love or work for.

³⁷ D 21.2.1/2:276 = SD 70.6. On a higher level, this refers to the attaining of dhyanic bliss: see **Sexuality** = SD 31.7 (1.6). For a detailed study, see **Māgandiya S** (M 75/1:501-513) = SD 31.5.

³⁸ A 1.2.2/1:3 = SD 16.3.

³⁹ S 46.2/5:64 = SD 62.9.

⁴⁰ S 14.12.5/2:151 & SD 29.8 Intro (2.4).

⁴¹ A 5.51/3:63 = SD 32.3.

⁴² S 46.55/5:122 = SD 3.12.

⁴³ M 135.10/3:204 = SD 4.15.

⁴⁴ D 30.1.27/3:159 = SD 36.9.

⁴⁵ M 36.48/1:250 = SD 49.4.

⁴⁶ A 4.61.7/2:67 = SD 37.12.

The Vyāpanna Sutta (A 3.106) adds that when ill will takes hold of our minds, we would be untinged (*avyāpanna*) so as to say unwholesome words and do unwholesome deeds. This is like a house that is ill-thatched, so that its peak, roof beams and walls the house will be badly affected (*avyāpanna*).⁴⁷

The Bhaya Bherava Sutta (M 4) reminds those going on solitary forest retreats to refrain from harbouring ill will. For a person who is overcome by ill will would find such a solitary life very difficult on account of fear and dread arising in him.⁴⁸ In fact, adds **the Gopaka Moggallāna Sutta** (M 108), it is impossible to meditate properly when the mind is obsessed by ill will (or any of the hindrances): we would only be “meditating, over-meditating, under-meditating, out-meditating” (*jhāyati pajjhāyati nijjhāyati apajjhāyati*). The Buddha does not speak in praise of such a practice.⁴⁹

On a broader scale, a predominance of ill will in people can contribute to a gradual deterioration of social conditions in general. Thus, according to **the Cakka, vatti Sīha, nāda Sutta** (D 26), it is only when beings, living in a time of general decline, decide to give up ill will and other unwholesome mental states and negative actions, that the decline would end, so that society begins to improve again.⁵⁰

5 *Vyāpāda* and meditation

5.1 SELF-HATE. We often think of *vyāpāda* as arising on account of another person, but as stated in **the (Nīvaraṇa Bojjhaṅga) Sutta** (S 46.52), ill will can arise either *internally* as self-hate towards ourselves, or *externally* towards others⁵¹ [2.1]. Self-hate often arises as a result of *guilt*, a feeling that is likely to be common if we believe in “sin” or a God-idea, or where family upbringing or religious indoctrination has been rather stern and lacking real love and communication.⁵² Guilt and sin are negative emotions imposed upon us by some higher authority through some kind of dogmatic belief in a supreme being.

Fear, or better, guiltless fear, on the other hand, is a natural response to what brings us pain and suffering, or what is not conducive to our personal or spiritual development.⁵³ When we accidentally touch a hot stove and get burnt, we will be careful not to touch it again, But it is senseless to feel guilty about it.

But stoves have no feelings, you might retort; for, when we hurt others, we hurt their feelings. The point is that we are not really in control of other people’s feelings. We are wrong and unethical only when we purposely or foolishly hurt their feelings. Of course, we need to tell truthful and useful things at the right time, too, so that these are beneficial to others.

Guilt and self-hate can also arise where we have had strong family ties, but feel that we have failed to fulfil certain duties or obligations. Unconsciously, we carry this burden of the past around with us, affecting the quality of our lives, and of those near and dear to us. As a result of all this, we keep blaming ourselves, even hating ourselves to the extent of feeling that we should be punished, or do not deserve to be happy. If we are such a person, we are unlikely to be able to enjoy our meditation due to self-hate.

Brahmavamso, in his *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond* relates such a case. One of the western nuns told him that she went very deep into meditation, almost to the point of dhyana. But it stopped right there because *she felt she did not deserve that happiness!* I have a few meditation students who tell me the same thing—the feeling that they do not deserve to be happy. The hindrance here is obviously ill will.⁵⁴

Self-hate can also arise in us if we have been abused, especially at a young age. We might feel that our body is impure as a result, or unworthy of love from others. In some cases, any suggestion of bodily pleasure could trigger this repressed painful memory, arousing fear and hate in us. Or, we could be vio-

⁴⁷ A 3.106.3/1:262 f = SD 48.8.

⁴⁸ M 4.4/1:17 = SD 44.3.

⁴⁹ M 108.26/3:13 f = SD 33.5. There is a humorous wordplay here: *pajjhāyati* usually means “it burns up, he is consumed (by grief, etc),” *nijjhāyati* means “he thinks” but also has the sense of “being consumed (by thought, etc), and *apajjhāyati* means “he is absorbed (in thoughts on account of ‘I am’-conceit).” Also at M 50.13/1:334 = SD 36.4 (pl).

⁵⁰ D 26.22/3:74 = SD 36.10.

⁵¹ S 46.52/5:110 = SD 62.6.

⁵² On *fear*, see *Thīna, middha* = SD 32.6 (3.4.3).

⁵³ Cf role of guilt in promoting sloth and torpor, see *Thīna, middha* = SD 32.6 (3.4.3).

⁵⁴ See Brahmavamso 2006: 33-35.

lently angry at the perpetrator, and blame ourselves for being helpless or doing nothing at that time. It is important to remember here is that all this is past and gone. They are only memories, how we perceive things. We should let go of our persistent “victim” role.⁵⁵ We begin by accepting ourselves just as we are.

5.2 UNCONDITIONAL SELF-ACCEPTANCE.

5.2.1 Positive words. There is no rule or teaching in Buddhism against enjoying meditative bliss.

There may be some other kinds of pleasure that are unwholesome, that might bring suffering or disease to us and others. But this is not the case with meditative bliss. Dhyanic bliss is neither illegal, nor unwholesome, nor does it have any negative side-effect.

In those of us susceptible to self-hate, the hindrance of ill will is likely to occur early in our meditation, especially with lovingkindness meditation. If this is the case, we can try doing breath meditation first under the guidance of a compassionate spiritual friend (the meditation teacher). Once you notice your mind is free from distractions, and experience a sense of inner stillness, calmly but firmly tell yourself,

“I accept myself just as I am. I forgive myself completely. I will let go of this past memory like drops of water running off a lotus leaf. I am well, I am happy.”

Choose a couple of these sentences, or make up your own in a positive manner. Keep repeating them slowly for as often as you feel comfortable. Keep doing this until you are able to go on to the lovingkindness meditation. Another effective healing meditation is to do this same practice while lying on your bed just before falling asleep. As you fall asleep, you are deprogramming yourself to let go of the painful memories and conditionings.

5.2.2 Positive deeds. Another thing you should do is to throw out that “revenge” diary (records of past pains) if you have one, and start a “happy book” instead. Record the impressions of your happy memories and moments. You will be surprised how many happy and healing memories will come back. Some of these memories may not be so clear any more, but it is all right. It is all right to exaggerate a bit in your records. It is like reading an exhilarating story and you feel so good. These writings are to help you remember those happy and healing feelings, to experience them all over again *here and now*.

You can also visualize a beautiful and energizing place, especially open nature, and visualize that you are there right now, in that beautiful wide open valley, with distant mountains and a clear blue sky. Just feel that joy and peace. There comes a point you do not need any words (they in fact would distract you): just feel the joy and peace of unconditional self-acceptance. Keep up this practice even after you feel healed and changed.

6 How to overcome vyāpāda

6.1 SIX WAYS OF DEALING WITH ILL WILL. The Commentaries prescribe a list of six ways of overcoming and preventing ill will,⁵⁶ thus:

- (1) acquaintance with lovingkindness,
- (2) cultivating lovingkindness,
- (3) reflecting on karmic consequences of our actions,
- (4) constant wise attention,
- (5) spiritual friends, and
- (6) conducive conversation.

The first method of overcoming and preventing ill will is actually a preparatory stage: that of understanding the nature of lovingkindness and learning the cultivation of lovingkindness in theory. There are two interrelated ways of doing this: studying the suttas dealing with lovingkindness, including related stories, and learning the practice from an experienced teacher. Then comes the actual practice of cultivating lovingkindness.

Numerous discourses record the Buddha encouraging us to practise lovingkindness.⁵⁷ The best known discourse on lovingkindness is **the (Karaṇīya) Metta Sutta** (Khp no 9 = Sn 1.8).⁵⁸ The Commentaries

⁵⁵ On the “victim” role, see **Self & Selves** = SD 26.9 (4.1).

⁵⁶ MA 1:281-286 = SA 3:165-167 = AA 1:44-51 = ItA 2:176-182; VbhA 270-274. See also DA 3:777-782; cf DA 216.

contain many inspiring stories of lovingkindness,⁵⁹ such as those of the laywoman Uttarā⁶⁰ and of queen Sāmāvatī.⁶¹

The third method is that of reflecting on the karmic consequences of our actions. An important benefit of this reflection is that we begin to understand and accept personal responsibility for our actions,⁶² and is thus empowered to cut down, even remove, our tendency to harbour hatred.

The fourth method of overcoming and preventing ill will, that of constant wise attention, is about how to see things as they really are, and not to make them bigger than what they are. First, we need to accept the fact that ill will is a negative emotion which hurts us as well as others: it is a lose-lose situation. Secondly, anger is impermanent: to let it go, we must acknowledge it, then tell ourselves, “This ill will is useless and harmful. I am letting it go.”⁶³

The fifth method, spiritual friendship, is prescribed as an antidote for all the five hindrances.⁶⁴ This is understandable because spiritual friendship is the foundation of spiritual life.⁶⁵ A spiritual friend is an experienced meditator who is able to assist us in our mental cultivation.⁶⁶ **The Visuddhi, magga** explains the spiritual friend as “the giver of the meditation subject,”⁶⁷ and how the practise lovingkindness should be cultivated.⁶⁸

A vital ingredient of spiritual friendship is conducive conversation, that is, wholesome communication that conduces to our mental and spiritual development. This is clearly the opposite of ill will which involves harsh and useless speech, even lies, leading to disunity and discord. Through such a communication, we can better understand ourselves, and strengthen ourselves emotionally.

6.2 FOUNDATION OF MORAL VIRTUE. It is not always easy to overcome ill will at once, even during meditation; in fact, its presence hinders any effective mental focus. Effective meditation and mental cultivation begins with and is founded on a wholesome lifestyle. A good start would be to understand and practise the five precepts on a regular basis.⁶⁹ A proper practice of moral virtue is based on “the three-pointed utter purity” or simply “the threefold purity” (*ti,koṭi,parisuddha*) which comprises of

- (1) not breaking any precept ourselves,
- (2) not causing others to do so, and
- (3) not approving of any breach of the precepts.⁷⁰

Such moral virtue instils moral courage in us, even as a lay practitioner.⁷¹ According to **the Abhisāṅga Sutta** (A 8.39), when we keep to the precepts and cultivate moral virtue, we are giving others, as it were, gifts of fearlessness, non-anger and non-ill will (*abhayaṃ deti averaṃ deti avyāpajjhaṃ deti*).⁷²

⁵⁷ The Buddha declares that lovingkindness is *the highest of austerities*, **Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S** (D 25.16-17/3:49 f) = SD 1.4. For a description of the immeasurable or divine abodes with similes, see **Tevijja S** (D 13.76-79/1:251) = sd 1.8. On the divine abodes with the elements, see **Vuṭṭha Vass’āvāsa S** (A 9.11.4/4:375 f) = SD 28.21. On how the divine abodes limit karma, see **Brahma, vihāra S** (A 10.206/5:299) = SD 2.10.

⁵⁸ Khp 9/8 f = Sn 1.8/148-152 = SD 38.3. On the 11 benefits of lovingkindness, see (**Ekā, dasa**) **Mettānisaṃsā S** (A 11.16/5:342) = SD 2.15.

⁵⁹ Vism 12.34-35/381.

⁶⁰ AA 1:451; DhA 17.3b/3:308-313.

⁶¹ AA 1:443; DhA 2.1/1:208-218.

⁶² See **Cūḷa Kamma, vibhaṅga S** (M 135.4) = SD 4.15; and also M 1:390, 3:203; A 3:72 f = 186, 5:88; Kvu 522. See also K N Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963:404 f.

⁶³ For a more detailed study, see **Nimitta & Vyāñjana** = SD 19.14.

⁶⁴ See **Nīvaraṇa** = SD 32.1 (Table 4).

⁶⁵ See (**Kalyāṇa, mitta**) **Appamāda S** (S 34.15/1:87-90) = SD 3.18.

⁶⁶ See **Spiritual friendship** = SD 8.1.

⁶⁷ Vism 3.28/89, 3.57-73/98-101.

⁶⁸ Vism 9.1-124/295-324.

⁶⁹ See **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41) = SD Intro 5.2 (2); **Veḷu, dvāreyya S** (S 55.7/5:352-356) = SD 1.5; **Bhaya Vera S** (A 5.174/3:204-206) = SD 6.4.

⁷⁰ **Veḷu, dvāreyya S** (S 55.7.3-12/5:353-355) = SD 1.5; **Kūṭa, danta S** (D 5/1:127-149) = SD 22.8 Intro (3); SnA 376 f.

⁷¹ On moral intrepidity (*sārajjā*), see **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80) = SD 28.9a Intro (3).

6.3 DEALING WITH ILL WILL. The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (M 10), in its concluding section, on the contemplation on dharmas (*dhammānupassanā*), shows how we need to clearly detect and accept the presence of ill will in our minds. It describes how such an awareness should be cultivated as a preliminary practice, which then leads to insight into how the hindrance of ill will has arisen, how to remove it, and how to prevent its future arising:⁷³

When there is ill will in him, he understands,
 ‘There is ill will in me’.
 Or, when there is no ill will in him, he understands,
 ‘There is no ill will in me’.
 And he understands the arising of unarisen ill will;
 and he understands the letting go of arisen ill will;
 and he understands the further non-arising of the ill will that he has given up.
 (M 10.36/1:60) = SD 13.3

In this satipaṭṭhana practice, we first direct our awareness to the presence of ill will in our minds: we acknowledge it for what it is, without any other comment, a non-judgemental observation. This is vitally important; for, any discursive comment would lead the mind astray. In this bare watching of ill will, we in time begin to see how it arises, or the conditions that brings it about. The main idea here is to see ill will (or any other mental hindrance) as *as it is* and note their impermanence (their arising and passing away).

This two-step teaching is recorded in **the (Pāpa) Desanā Sutta** (It 2.2.2), where the Buddha teaches us to “see evil as evil” (*pāpam pāpakato passatha*), and then being revulsed (*nibbindath*) at it, we are able to let it go.⁷⁴ While this is easy for an experienced meditator, a beginner or inexperienced practitioner may need to work the process in greater detail by way of right effort, that is, as stated in **the Mahā Sakul’udā-yi Sutta** (M 77), to put in effort

- (1) to *prevent* unarisen negative states from arising,
- (2) to *remove* arisen negative states,
- (3) to *cultivate* unarisen wholesome states, and
- (4) to *maintain* wholesome states that have arisen. (M 77.16/2:11) = SD 49.5

An inexperienced practitioner must spend as much time as it takes in the initial step of dealing with the presence of evil in the mind (as stated in the (Pāpa) Desanā Sutta). Only from careful observation do we really see the true nature of ill will or any other hindrance. Only when we can naturally see it as being *impermanent*, that we can really let it go. In other words, we need wisdom to disengage our minds from the hindrances. It is as if wisdom is on the other side of the hindrance puddle blocking our path: we see the safe dry spot on the other side, then take the right steps to run and jump over the puddle to land safely over it onto the other side, and continue your journey.

A short-hand teaching on what has been discussed so far, dealing with the overcoming of ill will, is found in three consecutive suttas in the Tika Nipāta (A 3), namely,⁷⁵

- | | <u>overcome</u> | <u>with</u> |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| • (Saṅkappa) Vitakka Sutta (A 6.109) | thoughts of ill will | thoughts of non-ill will ⁷⁶ |
| • (Saṅkappa) Saññā Sutta (A 6.110) | perceptions of ill will | perceptions of non-ill will ⁷⁷ |
| • (Saṅkappa) Dhātu Sutta (A 6.111) | element of ill will | element of non-ill will. ⁷⁸ |

⁷² A 8.39.6-7/4:246 f = SD 59.9.

⁷³ This sub-section deals with all the 5 hindrances; only *ill will* is quoted here.

⁷⁴ It 2.2.2/33 f = SD 62.13.

⁷⁵ These suttas actually each deal with the removal of the 3 constituents of wrong thought (*micchā saṅkappa*), ie sensual desire (*kāma*), ill will (*vyāpāda*) and cruelty [violence] (*vihimsā*).

⁷⁶ A 6.109/3:446 = SD 62.10.

⁷⁷ A 6.110/3:446 f = SD 62.11.

The Mahā Assa,pura Sutta (M 39) compares the effective removal of ill will to a one recovering from an illness.⁷⁹ **Analayo** notes an interesting connecting of ill will as a bodily tie (*kāya gantha*) [3.3], to bodily tension and the “dis-ease” that the arising of ill will and anger can bring about. Such bodily tension and the mental fever of ill will naturally tend to feed each other. Thus, at times, we need to take a break from the vicious circle of ill will by relaxing the body, such as by deliberately taking a deep full breath.⁸⁰ Shortness of breath, gritting of teeth and tensing of shoulders are clear bodily indicators of the presence of ill will in the mind, and to consciously counteract them by relaxation can have quite surprising effects on the mind.⁸¹

6.4 BROADENING THE MIND. A very prelude to meditation is to gently relax the whole body, and to attentively *feel* the relaxation as it arises. This also relaxes the mind which keeps it open and happy. For ill will arises from a narrowed mind. The point is that ill will involves a narrow perspective, usually focussing on unpleasant aspects of a situation or a person at the exclusion of other more positive aspects.

When this constricting of the mind reaches the level that ill will motivates a course of action where the only possible solution is to eliminate the unpleasant object or person. The negative internal state has been projected onto the external object. The suttas say that one who is repelled by an unpleasant form (or any other sense-object) dwells with a narrowed mind (*appiya,rūpe rūpe vyāpajjati...viharati paritta,-cetaso*).⁸²

Conversely, if we open up our minds with lovingkindness, ill will is easily abandoned. **The Āneñja Sappāya Sutta** (M 106), for example, says that when covetousness and ill will are abandoned, the mind will be no more narrowed, but become boundless and well developed (*abhijjhā pi vyāpādā pi...tesam pahānā aparittañ ca me cittaṃ bhavissati, appamānaṃ subhāvitam*).⁸³

Our practice of lovingkindness is only complete when it becomes “boundless” (*appamāna*), that is, it reaches the point of “breaking the barriers,” or as **the (Karaṇīya) Metta Sutta** (Sn 1.8 = Khp 9), “unhindered, without hatred, without enmity” (*asambadham averam asapattam*).⁸⁴ This is the culminating stage of the cultivation of lovingkindness when we develop lovingkindness towards all alike—ourselves, loved ones, neutral persons, hostile people and other beings.

The (Mūla) Aggi Sutta (It 3.5.4), a short but inspiring text reminds us that “the highest of men put out the fire of hate with lovingkindness” (*dos’aggim pana mettāya | nibbāpentī nar’uttamam*), and the wise, working day and night to uproot greed and delusion, they are liberated.⁸⁵ As **the Saṅgīti Sutta** (D 33) reiterates, lovingkindness is the best antidote for ill will, such that it is impossible for ill will to invade and remain in a mind of lovingkindness.⁸⁶ In short, says **the Mahā Rāhul’ovāda Sutta** (M 62), whoever cultivates lovingkindness will abandon ill will (*mettam...bhāvayato yo vyāpādo so pahīyissati*).⁸⁷

6.5 THE POSITIVE EMOTIONS. When ill will is overcome, even momentarily, it is a stepping-stone to the cultivation of other positive emotions—namely, compassion, appreciative joy and equanimity—that are the pathways to liberating insight. **The Āghāta Paṭivinaya Sutta** (A 5.161), a study in mental strategies against negative emotions, for example, tells us to overcome any ill will by consciously ignoring the

⁷⁸ A 6.111/3:447 = SD 62.12.

⁷⁹ M 39.13/1:275 f = SD 10.13, which see for imageries for the removal of the other hindrances.

⁸⁰ By this I mean a gentle combination of first *abdominal in-breath* followed by *thoracic in-breath* so that the whole torso is tight with air, hold for a comfortable while, and then gently breathe our through the pursed lips (as if whistling) until you have fully expired. Then *naturally* let the breath in, and if you like, take a couple more such breath sequences, but no more so that you do not hyperventilate.

⁸¹ Analayo 2006: 53.

⁸² **Mahā Taṇhā Saṅkhaya S** (M 38.30/1:266) = SD 7.10; (**Mahā Kaccāna**) **Lohicca S** (S 35.132.10/4:119) = SD 60.5, **Avassuta Pariyāya S** (S 35.243.11/4:184) = SD 60.6.

⁸³ **Āneñja Sappāya S** (M 106.3/2:262) = SD 35.13.

⁸⁴ Sn 150d; also at **Te,vijja S** (D 13.78/1:251) = SD 1.8. Comy glosses “unhindered” (*asambādham*) as “breaking the barriers” (*bhinna,sīmam*, KhpA 149; cf Vism 9:40-42).

⁸⁵ It 3.5.4/92 f = SD 62.14.

⁸⁶ D 33.2.2(17)/3:248.

⁸⁷ M 62.18/1:424 = SD 3.11.

negative qualities of the person we resent, and to radiate *lovingkindness* to that person (eg by thinking of his positive qualities). If that is unsuccessful, then we should go on to cultivate *compassion* to him (that is, to be kind to him even though he does not deserve it).⁸⁸ The next strategy is to cultivate *equanimity* towards the whole situation, whichever way it turns out to be. If the resentment persists, then we are in a better position to ignore it. Finally, we need to reflect that, whatever the outcome, we are all heirs to our own deeds (karma).⁸⁹

The Majjhima Commentary further suggests that besides lovingkindness and the reflection of karmic accountability, it is to our spiritual benefit to constant reviewing of our actions (*paṭisaṅkhāna, bahula-tā*), associating with spiritual friends (*kalyāṇa, mittatā*), and indulging in speech conducive to personal development (*sappāya, kathā*) (MA 1:282 f). In this connection, we should reflect on **the Dasa Kamma,-patha Sutta** (S 14.27), which points out that those under the influence of ill will, that is, on account of our “element” (*dhātu*), tend to associate with others who have the same inclination (S 2:168).⁹⁰ As such, if we know that we have a tendency towards ill will, then it is very wise not to associate with those who have the same tendency, which, if we do so, would be like adding fuel to the fire.

According to **the Samaṇa,maṇḍika Sutta** (M 78), intentions related to ill will arise from perception, and cease completely with dhyana attainment (M 2:27).⁹¹ **The Visuddhi,magga** explains that it is the dhyana-factor of zest (*pīti*), that stands in direct opposition to ill will.⁹² Furthermore, notes **the Mahā Assa,pura Sutta** (M 39), even when ill will is only temporarily overcome, it is like to a person recovering from an illness.⁹³

According to **the (Arahata) Vitakka Sutta** (It 2.2.1) For those who have attained final liberation, such as the Buddha and the arhats, ill will has been fully uprooted, and they live happily in its absence.⁹⁴ As **the Jīvaka Sutta** (M 55) points out, the Buddha’s lovingkindness is fully well grounded since he has forever removed all mental defilements relating to ill will.⁹⁵ This Dhammapada verse says the final word on the benefit of overcoming ill will and cultivating lovingkindness:

*Mettā, vihārī yo bhikkhu
pasanno buddha, sāsane
adhigacche padam santam
sankhārūpasamam sukham.*

A monk who dwells in lovingkindness,
devoted to the Buddha’s teaching,
shall reach that place of peace,
the happiness that is the stilling of all formations.

(Dh 368)

— — —

100213; 100219; 100304; 101118

⁸⁸ This should not be a self-righteous gesture, but one done understanding the difference btw *compassion* and *gratitude*. While gratitude is kindness shown in reciprocal response to the good that has been done to us (the doer deserves this response), compassion is kindness shown even to those who do not deserve, esp when they need it.

⁸⁹ A 5.161/3:185 f = SD 12.23.

⁹⁰ *Dhātu* technically refers both to the mental state and its activity. Saṃyutta Comy says that *dhātu* is a generic term for related mental states (or “mental factors,” *cetasika*, in Abhidhamma). Hence, we can take *dhātu* here as a canonical counterpart of the post-canonical Abhidhamma term, *cetasika*. In modern lingo, we can safely say that *dhātu* refers to both our *unconscious* repressed potential or latent tendencies (*anusaya*) and our *karmic* acts rooted in those tendencies through the unwholesome roots. See **Sa,nidāna S** (S 14.12), SD 29.8 Intro (1).

⁹¹ M 78.12/2:27 f = SD 18.9. On *jhāna*, see **Dhyana** = SD 8.4.

⁹² Vism 4.86/141. On dhyana-factors and the hindrances, see **Dhyana** = SD 8.4(7).

⁹³ M 39.14/1:275 = SD 10.13.

⁹⁴ It 2.2.1/31 = SD 55.5.

⁹⁵ M 55.6-7/1:369 = SD 43.4.