

Ven Anīgha Reddit Archive 2026

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2026

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Ven Anigha Reddit Archive 2026

Beautiful and Ugly

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Formal_Breath_2026 2026-01-16 18:22:33

I have heard Ajahn Ñānamoli say several times about how the ugly is a more fundamental context than the beautiful, and I was thinking about how to understand this concretely. What I have arrived at is that the ugly is more fundamental because that is exactly how sensuality is there at all — if things were more beautiful than ugly, it would just be a matter of avoiding the ugly; there would be no drive to go towards the beautiful. But it is the interplay between the signs/features of the beautiful and the broader context of the ugly — and the resulting *pressure* to engage with the beautiful — that makes sensual being (*kāmabhava*) what it is as opposed to a mere pleasant abiding (*rūpabhava*). This is why sensuality, being driven by that pressure to get away from the ugly, is always unwholesome, whereas material states (*Jhānas*) can be experienced wholesomely. This is also why sensuality is insatiable and unsatisfactory, as the ugly is always there ‘waiting’ as the broader context whenever the less fundamental beauty runs out. Similarly, if you were put in harsh enough conditions, you would start finding sensual appeal in less and less pleasant things, like an animal that enjoys eating filth. But when you develop the theme that whatever beauty in sensuality there is is only there because the broader context of the ugly gives it its appeal, it all becomes ugly and loses its pressure, and ironically that is what ultimately brings peace. The ugly is only a problem relative to the value you place in beauty, but when it’s all ugly, it becomes basically neutral. The more I think about it, the more it seems to me that this interplay between the signs of the beautiful, and the broader context of the ugly, are what make up the entirety of human existence, and developing that context is also how one can surmount it.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-17 17:15:00

The more I think about it, the more it seems to me that this interplay between the signs of the beautiful, and the broader context of the ugly, are what make up the entirety of human existence, and developing that context is also how one can surmount it.

Yes, exactly—granted one has stopped acting on desire for the beautiful no matter how invisible its more fundamental ugliness is.

The disgusting nature of your own body (the contemplation of organs often given in the Suttas) is the most acute and inescapable type of ugliness, but the principle extends to everything that you wouldn't want to look at because it would ruin your enjoyment/anticipation of something pleasant. Anything of that nature is by default more fundamental, since it's what stands out when desire isn't there to obscure it.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-17 16:59:29 (in reply to a comment not included)

The implication here that “jhāna is a subtler form of sensuality” is wrong. Jhāna definitionally is the complete cessation of sensuality (through dispassion, not replacement of objects).

There's no good reason to extend the word “sensuality” to everything.

Practice advice

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Embarrassed-Box6857 2026-01-15 11:04:55

Hi everyone,

Looking for some guidance and correction regarding my practice. I have been living a semi-monastic life for the past year (seclusion, simplicity, minimal stimulation) and on the 8 precepts.

I've been practicing seriously for about a year overall(used to meditate earlier from mantra to open awareness or “do nothing” meditation), but the last 1-2 months have been much more endurance based, basically dropping my meditation completely .

Current practice:

I have been at a monastery for about 50 days now and my main practice is avoiding acting out of cravings, aversion etc as much as possible. The days are often neutral/flat, I am fairly calm and used to living a restrained life without seeking much relief or stimulation.

What I notice changing after endurance :

- Cravings are weaker and less convincing
- Much greater tolerance of boredom, neutrality and less emotional reactivity overall
- Less interest in pleasure, anticipation, or planning
- Can be awake and inactive for long periods without panic

At the same time, there's dryness, grief for the past, and uncertainty. Relief feels largely unavailable, because i am not seeking it(yet at some level i still want it)but not in an urgent way, just a constant “ahh that would be nice”. You could say a continuous dissatisfaction throughout.

I know endurance is not sufficient for right view/stream entry, and I'm unsure how to integrate contemplation correctly. So here are some questions to things I am trying to discern.

- How do I know whether I'm truly "letting things endure" versus just spacing out or passively waiting?

Im currently "aware" of my experience in a general sense without getting too absorbed in things. Its hard to discern whether I intentionally feed thoughts or fantasise(though my fantasies and interest in them has greatly reduced)its more like I let them do thier thing while I just "watch them". I still get fooled with the content from time to time and I can feel the confinement Ajahn talks about- everywhere my attention goes the thoughts etc follow and there is no "escape". I am not trying to move my attention to avoid them or anything. This would be enduring on the right level?

- Ajahn often emphasizes understanding the context (body sitting, feelings enduring) rather than content.

When I set the context to be mindful of my posture for example, i am supposed to bring up the knowledge that " I am sitting"- which i am aware of in the moment- however this knowledge is just a thought which im attending to, which wouldn't be the actual "body". And same with when i "recognise" i lost the context of the body, i will automatically think "oh i forgot about sitting". But thats also just a thought. As I understand this way I fail to even set the context in the first place and am just playing around with sense objects. How do i work with this?

- Should I reflect on danger/drawbacks, impermanence, etc? At times mind does takes on these topics(not to avoid anything specifically) and it's not just on an intellectual level, I am definitely able to feel the implications of my contemplation. But im still trying to discern when its appropriate, how often to do so etc.

For sense pleasures , ex- longing for something, how do i reflect on the danger in that? The danger must be independent of the content and of sense pleasures as a whole, or specifically relating to the thought? I am still at the stage where I am just enduring and not steering the mind in the right direction towards dispassion with sense pleasures and making it learn for itself. Sometimes thoughts like "this is impermanent" or other stock phrases will arise, not to push the longing away(or it could be and im mistaken) but as I understand these are still surface level and aren't actually talking directly to the citta. Any advice for this?

Thank you for any guidance you're willing to offer.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-16 05:11:52

Should I reflect on danger/drawbacks, impermanence, etc?

Yes, that should be the main effort. It sounds like you've become habituated to the precepts and restraint externally, but without the certainty that your mind wouldn't return

to those things even if you wanted it to. The only relief that's not unwholesome comes from that certainty, and it's cultivated by clarifying the danger of what you're already disengaged from.

Don't try to contemplate the danger in sensuality in some abstract sense; just clarify the danger in returning specifically to breaking the precepts. By not doing so the mind still remains open to that possibility even if it never comes up, and that's why it wouldn't be at ease. Unease doesn't require explicit confirmation that enemies are coming; it's enough not to know with full certainty that they're *not* coming. Factually, they might all be defeated, but unless you *know* that, you will still be subtly anxious.

To be clear, you're not looking for some positive announcement from your mind that the precepts will never be broken. You simply see that when you bring up the intention never to engage in misconduct again, resistance and reservations no longer arise. That means the citta is obedient to that extent (the internal enemies are defeated).

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-16 11:11:10 (in reply to a comment not included)

The only things I still occasionally give in to or have not 100% said no to in terms of never giving in for the rest of my life are using Dhamma as a soothing tool (especially for doubt) and to relax/enjoy, likewise with food.

Sure, but what I'm saying is beyond merely not breaking them. A lot of people haven't broken any precepts for decades and they're nowhere near the right practice. What I'm describing is the factual joy that will be felt when having not broken the precepts and become accustomed to them, you mentally establish them as an immovable context that permeates everything you do, say, or think. You actively highlight to yourself the benefit of staying within those boundaries, and the unassailable freedom from danger that it entails. "Unassailable" because nothing and no one could force you to break the precepts. It's always been your decision, and that decision has become unthinkable because the danger in it is clear.

About my other questions, about endurance on the "right level" and the body posture context, am I on the right track? And likewise for finding the line with proliferation of thoughts and mere observation.

You can forget about that for now.

The right level is not something you do or create; it's when what you will *not* do (because it's unwholesome) is crystal clear, and abstaining from it is effortless because the mind has been trained to that degree.

Possibility and eventuality

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Puthujana381 2026-01-13 10:51:20

Dhamma eye

The insight of the dhamma eye is usually phrased as “whatever has the nature to manifest also has the nature to cease” [yāni kiñci samudayadhammāni sabbāni tāni nirodhadhammāni].

Stronger statement

However, I think a few times now I’ve encountered (for example in Right Way of Striving) the seemingly stronger statement that “whatever has the nature of arising, because of that it *will* have to cease”.

I don’t think the stronger statement that something *will* cease follows from the fact that it *might*. It’s possible for something to be perpetually liable to cessation, yet for it never to actually cease.

So I’m trying to understand in what sense the stronger statement is true and how to see it. I’ll write down my current thoughts on it, and would like to invite anyone with better clarity to respond and help me understand.

- First of all, I’m not sure if the stronger statement in such a form appears in the suttas, the closest things I can think of are:
 - It could have not been, and it wouldn’t be for me, it won’t be, it won’t be for me [no cassa no ca me siyā, na bhavissati na me bhavissati] (little hard to translate to English I think, since English mixes up tenses with optative)
 - Impermanent indeed are constituents, of a nature to appear and vanish; having appeared they cease, their settling is happiness [Anicca vata saṅkhārā, uppādavayadhammino; Uppajjītvā nirujjhanti, tesam vūpasamo sukho]
- I believe Nāṇavīra Thero addresses this question to some extent in Fundamental Structure II.5. My current takeaway would be that something arisen can endure for only so many eternities (of eternities of eternities...) before it will finally have to cease. This seems feasible, but I only see it to some extent and quite abstractly, and not sure how to make it more directly felt and concrete.
- In fact, in some Dhamma talks, in order to counter the common aversive thought of “oh, this is impermanent, it will cease” to try to soothe one’s discomfort, it’s recommended to think “no, this is permanent, it will last forever”. I see how both of these are aimed at dispassion: seeing the impermanence undermines attachment to the dear, while seeing that something might endure forever undermines the aversion to the disliked. Yet the truth should somehow reconcile the two without contradiction.
- I wonder if the stronger statement is actually only true *for a sotāpanna*? Since they are said to know a phenomenon (e.g. feeling), its condition, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. The puthujjana, not knowing the way leading to its cessation, is subject to the possibility of feeling for eternity. Until that eternity ceases?

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-16 04:55:34

I believe Nāṇavīra Thero addresses this question to some extent in Fundamental Structure II.5. My current takeaway would be that something arisen can endure for only so many eternities (of eternities of eternities...) before it will finally have to cease. This seems feasible, but I only see it to some extent and quite abstractly, and not sure how to make it more directly felt and concrete.

Yes, I wouldn't recommend going that route.

I see how both of these are aimed at dispassion: seeing the impermanence undermines attachment to the dear, while seeing that something might endure forever undermines the aversion to the disliked. Yet the truth should somehow reconcile the two without contradiction.

And it does. Impermanence means that things both could end next moment or last "forever," as in far longer than however long you expect them to last. So whether you hope for novelty or permanence, your hopes are undercut by *anicca*.

I wonder if the stronger statement is actually only true for a sotāpanna? Since they are said to know a phenomenon (e.g. feeling), its condition, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. The puthujjana, not knowing the way leading to its cessation, is subject to the possibility of feeling for eternity.

No, no quite. That would assume that there is some overall situation of being subject to feeling independent of what is currently being felt, and that's not how it works. A puthujjana remains subject to one of the three specific feelings (MN 74), and there is no stability to be found there. Even if they wanted to experience nothing but displeasure and dismay (e.g. at being puthujjana), pleasure or neutrality would take over sooner or later.

Mittasutta: satipatṭhāna practice for puthujjanas?

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Solip123 2026-01-12 21:27:36

In the Mittasutta (SN 47.48) the Buddha tells the monks to teach "friends and colleagues, relatives and family" the four satipatṭhānas.

What do you make of this?

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-13 05:08:41

It doesn't negate the prerequisites for *satipatthāna* established by a multitude of other Suttas, such as the one right before.

Try as you may, you will not be able to get someone who still looks for pleasure in the world to subdue longing and aversion in regard to the world. It's like asking them to jump off a cliff.

At best, they will be able to shift their longing to a new thing in the world, and that, though very common today, is not *satipaṭṭhāna*.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-13 08:09:15 (in reply to a comment not included)

That would only be possible if yoniso manasikāra was a quality independent of one's choices, but it isn't. Engaging and intending to engage in sensuality *is* ayoniso manasikāra.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-13 08:17:59 (in reply to a comment not included)

Neither. They're identical.

Yoniso Manasikara in practice

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Silatigi1 2026-01-12 00:41:45

Dear @Bhante Anigha

I have a very practical question about yoniso manasikara.

Let's say a pressure comes and I have trained to let it be, to let it exist, aka not acting out of body (grab food, look at things to buy) and speech (swearing at the pain of sustaining the unpleasant pressure, crying at the difficulty of sustaining it), but not yet by mind (not sure yet about the signs and features, at the moment more trying to survive the wave of the screaming pressure, but with the cigarette that I stop smoking many many years ago I kind of get an inkling of what this could feel like).

Now the question is how do you practically apply yoniso manasikara, what is it that you discern from a first person perspective?

So the pressure is there, say a restlessness, and you let it be without acting, then thanks to that pressure being here and remaining here there is something that I can discern that I could not discern if it was not there, if I (seemingly) got rid of it by acting.

So in the metaphor it would be suddenly I feel the lead of the dog pulling me when I stand my ground. I can also relate to the dog differently for the first time, I experience the dog and the lead whereas before both were invisible together to me as a pair.

Or the current of the river, and the pole I hold on to. Without the pole, no current is felt. Or the spoiled child putting on a tantrum and my resolution not to give in.

So my question is what is it that you discern from a first person perspective when the pressure is present? What is that thing that could not be seen without that pressure?

Anything concrete you could point to would be very helpful e.g ideally several different practical examples of pressure and what one could discern while enduring patiently the pressure.

Because unfortunately when I hear “with this, this” I don’t need necessarily concretely understand what the second “this” is when the first “this” is the pressure...

Thanks in advance for your help

Sil

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-13 04:56:19

So my question is what is it that you discern from a first person perspective when the pressure is present? What is that thing that could not be seen without that pressure?

The fact that all satisfaction of the pressure is actually still within suffering. You get to see first-hand that the presence of craving, not the lack of its fulfillment, is what suffering is.

How Should Buddhist Cosmology be Interpreted?

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Additional_Fix8417 2026-01-09 15:24:05

Currently reading AN and noticed how characters such as “King Yama” and “wardens of hell” inflict pain on the man who in the past performed “bad kamma”.

Assuming the former two characters were true, would they have the choice (of action; kamma) to punish or not to punish the “evil doer,” thereby abandoning kamma for themselves? As such stories if taken literally may just undermine the legitimacy of the law of kamma in relation to re-becoming, since characters such as “King Yama” and “wardens of hell” may not have the choice not to act in a way that inflicts pain on another, whether or not that other individual “deserves” it).

Should these stories be regarded metaphorically and that these characters are in a way manifestations of one’s own kamma? Mere lores largely inherited by preceding cultures and traditions?

Sutta reference: AN 3:36

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-11 10:29:29

Assuming the former two characters were true, would they have the choice (of action; kamma) to punish or not to punish the “evil doer,” thereby abandoning kamma for themselves? As such stories if taken literally may just undermine the legitimacy of the law of kamma in relation to re-becoming, since characters such as “King Yama” and “wardens of hell” may not have the choice not to

act in a way that inflicts pain on another, whether or not that other individual “deserves” it).

No, that doesn't follow at all. A soldier may have an extreme pressure on him to kill for his country, potentially facing severe consequences for refusing to do so. That doesn't in any way diminish his accountability for killing.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-11 11:56:23 (in reply to a comment not included)

Yes, that's what I'm referring to as well. Them being born to perform those roles doesn't mean they're not responsible for actually performing them. So the principle of kamma still applies.

It's no different than how human existence is made for sensuality and reproduction. If you want liberation, you don't do what your birth is meant for.

What should I do if I struggle to discern intentions of greed, aversion, or delusion?

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Solip123 2026-01-07 06:06:35

Will this become easier to do as I become established in the precepts?

I've been trying to keep the precepts and gradually add more of them, but I find myself largely unable to tell when my intentions are rooted in craving. I can sort of look at the amount of pressure, the overall hedonic tone, and question the content of the intentions in an attempt to ‘triangulate’ it, but I sense that this is not the right way of going about it. This is also often doesn't work. I will often ask myself “why do I want to do this?” or “why am I doing this / why did I do that?” and in response there will be nothing, just a blank mind.

Also, I have an additional (and somewhat related) question: what am I supposed to do when I am trying to keep the eight precepts (or something near that)? The boredom kicks in very quickly.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-10 20:17:07

I can sort of look at the amount of pressure, the overall hedonic tone, and question the content of the intentions in an attempt to ‘triangulate’ it, but I sense that this is not the right way of going about it.

Yes, that's going to be abstract.

What you have to do is (1) not be breaking the eight precepts currently, (2) not forget that you will not do so no matter what happens (this means avoiding anything that obfuscates

that conscious commitment even when it aids external restraint, chiefly meditation techniques). That's it. The mind will certainly try to sneak out of that confinement in the beginning, but there will be no opening if those two things are maintained. Eventually it will calm down and start to genuinely prefer staying within the boundaries.

Also, I have an additional (and somewhat related) question: what am I supposed to do when I am trying to keep the eight precepts (or something near that)? The boredom kicks in very quickly.

As part of the effort to keep the precepts, you *can't* do anything besides not forgetting that you won't intentionally break them under any circumstances. Finding something additional to do in the name of practice would compromise point #2 above. As for things unrelated to the practice that you might do, you can't decide that in advance. It's whatever comes up despite the deliberate commitment to the precepts remaining ironclad.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-12 05:49:15 (in reply to a comment not included)

The problem is that you're still thinking in terms of what to do. That's inevitably going to leave you susceptible to doubt. If you know what you're not going to do, you will completely stop caring about what you will do. And what you're not going to do is break any of the precepts.

If the intention never to pursue unwholesome content like TV, movies, etc. is crystal clear, then whatever intention there is to consume Dhamma content will not be problematic because it won't be leaning towards entertainment. It's because the boundary is unclear, not because of any neutral actions, that there is still pressure towards the full breach (if you were to abstain from consuming Dhamma content and just stare at the wall, the same pressure towards entertainment would be felt because you're still not clear about what you won't do).

As for the peril of sensuality, breaking the precepts is what sensuality is, so the peril is discerned in regard to those specific actions. When their danger is evident, there is no way to maintain even the most fleeting intentions towards them. Instead of hunting for those fleeting intentions, which will be an endless and ultimately unsuccessful task, you ruin the appeal of what all of them point towards, so they all wither away.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-13 08:15:39 (in reply to a comment not included)

There's no word missing. I meant that keeping the precepts is done by choosing to keep the precepts. Any other choice has to be done with that primary choice enduring as background, not in place of it.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-14 05:16:00 (in reply to a comment not included)

So, I should stop indulging in less coarse forms of entertainment/distraction first and then consuming the Dhamma content shouldn't be an issue anymore?

No, you don't take for granted that you will consume Dhamma content. You maintain the context that you won't be pursuing the obvious forms of entertainment, and if the pursuit of Dhamma content had an intention leaning in the direction of those coarser things then it will be clear and you won't be engaging with Dhamma at that time. Intention is the leaning towards the obvious action even if it never ends up being done.

So, if I understand correctly, the mental withdrawal from (read: devaluing of) sensuality will occur naturally as a result of abstaining from sensuality for a long enough period of time?

No, physically abstaining from it won't do much by itself. Within the physical withdrawal, you have to contemplate the peril and communicate to your mind that it should under no circumstances go there. The point is that that contemplation is in relation to the specific actions and situations outlined by the precepts, not in regard to some abstract idea of sensuality that extends to everything and nothing.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-16 05:29:49 (in reply to a comment not included)

There is still, though, a certain sense that sensuality has to be something more than merely the leaning towards breaking the precepts.

It is. The root of sensuality is the lack of internal clarity that sensuality will not be returned to. If there's unclarity (muddledness/delusion), then sensuality still looms even if no explicit intentions towards it are present now. By itself, the latter is just the state of an infant (MN 78).

See also this comment.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-16 05:39:29 (in reply to a comment not included)

Is this a reasonable way of going about it, or is this style of contemplation faulty?

Yes, because it's edging towards an undefined result. What you have to do is simply reflect on your intention to keep the precepts unconditionally, and if the mind's reaction to that is at least neutral, your work is done for now, and you just have to make sure that you don't obfuscate that intention (which is how the opposite intentions begin to take root). If there is internal push-back against that intention of restraint (including in the form of

doubt, not just coarse desire), *then* you make the effort to clarify the danger in breaking the precepts.

After Recognizing Sensuality as Bait for Hindrances : Right Effort to protect one from that sinking feeling.

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** rs_87_78 2026-01-06 07:27:37

Hello fellow practitioners,

Through first hand experience, I understand that Gross Sensuality is a trap. It is the gateway to craving which leaves one vulnerable to the other 4 hindrances.

However, I now find myself overly vigilant, guilty and a little helpless and restless. If conditional experiences are unsatisfactory and impermanent, what am I to extract a subtler more refined form of peace (Joy) from ?

Are there any interesting hobbies you guys have inculcated that reinforce wholesome states of mind ? Something that mitigates dependent behavior tendencies while also reinforcing a sense of meaning.

Which brings me to another query : If one is through conduct, abandon the aggregates, with the intention of abandoning ownership of a self, is there no room for Self-Worth ? Wouldn't this line of thinking create a void that exacerbates vulnerability to the hindrances ?

Warm regards.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-06 17:04:29

However, I now find myself overly vigilant, guilty and a little helpless and restless. If conditional experiences are unsatisfactory and impermanent, what am I to extract a subtler more refined form of peace (Joy) from ?

That's normal, and the solution is not to find something to relieve that confinement; it's to get used to it, which requires not going outside of it, i.e., breaking the precepts. When it gets used to it the mind will stop resisting it, and it will cease to be unpleasant. That cessation of resistance to restraint, without anything added on top, is the only type of joy that is in line with the Dhamma, since it comes craving falling away, not from fulfilling the same need in a more refined way.

The latter keeps the mind from protesting in the immediate present, but it also means no internal training will occur even if the precepts are kept externally.