

Ven Anīgha Reddit Archive 2026

Ven Anīgha

2026

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MN 43's Parato Ghoso Usage of right view,

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** upasakatrainee 2026-02-11 08:49:07

Bhante u/Bhikkhu_Anigha, may I request some clarification on MN 43's reference to two conditions for the arising of right view: parato ghoso and yoniso manasikāra.

My current understanding (which may be mistaken) is that this refers to the arising of right view as a conditionally dependent factor, not yet the irreversible Dhamma-eye associated with stream entry. My observations are as follows:

MN 43 presents parato ghoso and yoniso manasikāra as *conditions* (*paccayā*) for the arising (*uppādāya*) of right view. This suggests something dependent and contingent (arisen), rather than something already structurally irreversible — which is what the opening of the Dhamma eye (i.e capitalized Right View is). I also noticed that in your translation you have used the un-capitalized ‘right view’, so perhaps this was intentional to refer to something apart from the supramundane attainment?

If these two were sufficient for the decisive and irreversible vision, then hearing correct Dhamma and attending appropriately would seem to guarantee noble entry “then and there.” But the suttas elsewhere imply that right view can fail to arise even when the right Dhamma is heard AND yoniso manasikāra is present, due to resistance or remaining obstruction (e.g. The Buddha declaring that King Ajātasattu, had it not been for his patricide, would have in fact entered the stream)

Although verbs of “arising” (e.g., *cakkhum udapādi* in SN 56.11) are used for awakening itself, that alone doesn’t seem to settle the issue. The decisive factor seems to be what is being described and how it functions structurally, rather than the morphology of the verb.

The suttas often speak of right view arising in a conditional sense prior to noble entry, whereas the Dhamma-eye or irreversible vision is described with additional language such as “fixed in destiny,” “no longer liable,” etc. MN 43 lacks that irreversible framing.

Based on these, it seems to me that MN 43 is pointing to the necessary conditions for right view to arise in a still-dependent sense, rather than directly describing the decisive and irreversible breakthrough. So in that sense, they are necessary but not sufficient

conditions (sufficiency coming with the removal of what obstructs)

Is this distinction valid? Or should MN 43 instead be understood as referring directly to the irreversible establishment of Right View that marks entry into the noble individuals?

I would be grateful for correction if this framing is misguided. Thank you!

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-02-11 16:41:58

I also noticed that in your translation you have used the un-capitalized ‘right view’, so perhaps this was intentional to refer to something apart from the supramundane attainment?

No, that wasn’t intentional. I wouldn’t make such a distinction on my own, nor try to find a justification for it the Suttas.

I don’t see why right view having conditions implies that it is reversible. Arahantship depends on plenty of conditions, yet it is irreversible.

If these two were sufficient for the decisive and irreversible vision, then hearing correct Dhamma and attending appropriately would seem to guarantee noble entry “then and there.”

Yes, it would. The catch is that one has no stable internal reference point to distinguish *yoniso* from *ayoniso*, nor the accuracy of an utterance, until after right view. At the same time, what needs to be done is clear: establishing the mind in virtue and abandoning passion for sensuality is what makes one’s attention *yoniso*. Hence the stock passage preceding the attainment of stream-entry.

But the suttas elsewhere imply that right view can fail to arise even when the right Dhamma is heard AND *yoniso manasikāra* is present, due to resistance or remaining obstruction (e.g. The Buddha declaring that King Ajātasattu, had it not been for his patricide, would have in fact entered the stream)

Having killed his father meant that King Ajātasattu couldn’t have *yoniso manasikāra*, at least not sufficiently. Extending the right utterance of another—that all actions based on defilements are unwholesome and unjustifiable—to the right level (where nothing is excluded) will evoke in such a person a level of remorse that is impossible to bear. He had to continue regarding what he did was to some extent excusable (wrong view) in order to maintain his sanity.

It’s for the same reason that the mind needs to lose its passion for sensuality for right view to arise. While still being passionate for something, let alone pursuing it, the fact that one’s passion is actually the very source of one’s suffering cannot sink in. The mind will reject the right view because it has something against it that it needs to protect.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-02-12 07:57:02 (in reply to a comment not included)

I can extrapolate that this applies not only to sensuality (sensual passion) but to aversion as well — insofar as both are forms of passion toward feeling.

Yes, but not as a separate aspect. If you're truly undermining all your passions, aversion has no foothold whatsoever. Hence the Buddha often using the word "passion" (or "delight") to encompass every potential defilement.

That makes yoniso far more existential and less technical than I had been subtly treating it.

Absolutely. Yoniso manasikāra is a result of the citta being tamed and pliable, not something anyone can do by following a protocol. Passion structurally carries ignorance.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-02-12 08:02:14 (in reply to a comment not included)

Since the "utterance of another", i.e the right instructions have basically been heard countless times by this point I assume that one wouldn't necessarily be actively "trying" to get the right view.

In the sense of reflecting on what one has heard, no, not always. But it's also not something you can preemptively decide.

When clarity about the practice is fading, you have to revisit the right instructions (mentally at least).

Beauty, Ugliness, Danger in the Body

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Seekfinderin 2026-02-09 23:38:53

In the last weeks I was reading more and more Suttas and articles and listened to many talks and almost everything I read or listened to, and the more I did so, seemed to make sense and be very logical and convincing to me. But I have a very hard time to understand the way how you seem to look at the human body and why. I remember this Sutta, that is also quoted often in your talks, where apparently Buddha said about a princess or some girl that he would not touch her even with his feet, because, apparently that was so disgusting in his view, even though in the eyes of most others she was probably beautiful.

Then I hear you, when talking about the body, about it being that sack of flesh and blood and excrements and urine. I don't understand that. It makes some sense to me and I am trying to reflect about it, that some things, actions, thoughts etc., that I consider desireable may not be so desireable from a more complete, neutral, clarified point of view. But in regard to this description of the body this feels to me as if you just try to look at it in this disgusted way for some reason by choice, and it seems to be very abstract to me.

Because in fact and according to what I see this body is not that ugly, dirty, filthy thing. Yes, there is something like that within it, within its organs, but all that is quite in order, functions well, is surrounded by smooth skin, held together in that form, can move very elegantly and softly. When you talk about it, it sounds as if you are seeing a body when it is exploded on the floor like in a crime scene. When I reflect on this I don't see why I should imagine something like that as it is so far away from how the body of a living human being is usually appearing?

Of course, if I would have such a negative view of the body, it would be much easier to restrain the senses and not desire to touch other bodies etc. But right now, to be honest, and please correct me, if I am wrong, it seems to me as if you just consciously cultivate such a disgust for the body in order to get rid of sensuality/sexual urges, without this having a basis in regular experience of human bodies?

To get to the point: Maybe someone can explain to me how such a disgust for the body evolves and why? And why that may be necessary or a natural occurrence on that path. I don't get it. While so many explanations convince me and help me withdrawing more and more, this particular area is very confusing to me.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-02-10 05:59:28

But in regard to this description of the body this feels to me as if you just try to look at it in this disgusted way for some reason by choice, and it seems to be very abstract to me.

Emphasizing ugliness is certainly a choice, yet no less so than emphasizing beauty is. It's just because in the beginning one is so used to (and pressured towards making) the latter choice that it feels like it happens on its own.

When I reflect on this I don't see why I should imagine something like that as it is so far away from how the body of a living human being is usually appearing?

You don't need to, and that's not what the Buddha described. He said you reflect on the organs of "this very body" as you would be reviewing a sack containing different types of grains and beans. So rather than an abstract "bodies can become like that", it's "*my body already is like this.*" And that is undeniable. It may feel *unnecessary* to think about it, but that's something else (and it's the pull towards delusion).

But right now, to be honest, and please correct me, if I am wrong, it seems to me as if you just consciously cultivate such a disgust for the body in order to get rid of sensuality/sexual urges, without this having a basis in regular experience of human bodies?

If you reflect properly as above (rather than taking asubha as a mechanical "meditation object") it does have a basis in your own experience all the time. And that is why it would *uproot* sensuality, not just push it aside.

Though you may not realize it, you (*choose to*) relate to your own body as an instrument for

pleasure all the time. Particular sensual desires are just the byproduct of that. Asubha is meant to change that deeper relationship with the body. Replacing sensual thoughts with shock reactions changes nothing fundamental.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-02-10 16:42:36 (in reply to a comment not included)

But all of these things are things that were in one short moment or will happen at some point in the future etc.

The point is that asubha is not about future possibilities. The body can reach such levels of “shocking” unattractiveness in the first place because of the unattractive aspects (blood, flesh, waste-producing glands) that it already has *now*, while it is factually young, healthy, good-smelling, etc.

You need to recognize the unattractiveness *within* the beauty; otherwise you’ll indeed just be covering up the good parts in order to fabricate a “dispassion” that is not even genuine and will not last.

Questions on Contemplating

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** ConditionOwn3429 2026-02-08 12:04:19

Could you clarify what contemplating the danger in sensuality really means? I hear this flying around a lot, but I have yet to fully grasp what it means. Does it require a prerequisite, like virtue and sense-restraint? And how do you actually, practically do it? It would be really helpful if you could also provide an example.

For context, I’ve been reading a section of The only way to jhana, chapter 8: The pleasure of boredom in this chapter, Ajahn says “Practically speaking, boredom is a good way to practise. People don’t see boredom as an indicator, and certainly don’t see delusion as an attitude that they cultivate, despite commitment to precepts, sutta study, and contemplation.” (p. 88) and “For example, if you decide to allow yourself to get bored: switch off your phone, close the doors and curtains, put away your books, switch off the television, don’t do your meditation technique—then, it doesn’t matter whether you sit, walk, stand or lay down—just abide in that non-activity. The mind will certainly be presenting you with something to do, which is fine—you don’t need to try to get rid of those thoughts, you just don’t act upon them” (p. 89). This is what I’m doing, and something that I’ve encountered along the way was that I impulsively daydream, and I can’t control it. It’s not that I can’t resist the desire to daydream, the daydream in itself just appears without my consent.

Now how is this related to what I’m talking about? I’ve heard from one of the Hillside Hermitage videos that one should contemplate when pressured by “unwholesome states”. So how I see it is that:

- My daydreams are to entertain me when I’m bored

- Daydreaming is an unwholesome act (it contains unwholesome thoughts of desire and pleasure)
- You should contemplate when you're pressured by unwholesome states
- You should contemplate on your daydreams.

So I understand now that I should contemplate when I unwillingly daydream, but how do I do that? In the same chapter, I read “all you need to do is to not entertain it (the mind) and establish the context of the danger, if what it offers is unwholesome and sensual.” (p. 87) yes, but what does that mean? I don’t understand. “You can develop the perception of danger or the perception of abandoning in regard to those thoughts (of sensuality, ill-will) so that while the mind is presenting those thoughts of sensuality, you are not wanting them, and are abandoning them because they are dangerous” (p. 87) I’m not sure where to go from here.

I would appreciate it if you could clarify my question, or debunk some of my thinking. Thanks in advance.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-02-09 06:02:36

So I understand now that I should contemplate when I unwillingly daydream

If your bodily and verbal actions are contained by the precepts and not partaking in sensuality and ill-will anymore, then yes.

What you contemplate is the danger in any behaviors of sensual or hateful nature that your mind still delights in even though you have thoroughly given them up outwardly.

You don't try to deny the potential gratification of those actions; you're simply highlighting the drawbacks that the mind wants to look away from even though they are far greater in magnitude than the gratification.

The effect of that is not necessarily immediate. The momentum towards ignoring the danger (built up by careless behavior from before) has to wear away before the recognition of the danger feels palpable and the mind genuinely “accepts” it.

Questioning Hillside Hermitage based on the Suttas: “All the Defilements”, Sutta MN2

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** Representative-Age18 2026-01-27 19:10:50

Foreword: I felt semi convinced after watching 20+ hours of HH videos, and I think they do have a lot of good points that deserve attention. There's obviously a lot of intelligence, dedication and knowledge to be found here. Therefore I decided to take a deep dive into the Suttas to clarify my position. Here's something I'd love to hear discussed:

QUESTIONING HILLSIDE HERMITAGE BASED ON THE SUTTAS: “ALL THE DEFILEMENTS”, SUTTA MN27

In MN2: *All the defilements*, the buddha says: “Some defilements should be given up by seeing, some by restraint, some by using, some by enduring, some by avoiding, some by dispelling, and some by developing.”

It does not say “All defilements should be given up by restraint and endurance”.

Now, here is the sentence that I would assume HH followers would really stick to:

“Mendicants, I say that the ending of defilements is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know or see”.

HH states that this means you have to be a Sottapanna.

The Buddha always, in the rest of the suttas, describe Sottapannas with words such as: “for one who has entered the stream”, “for a noble disciple”, “for one with the noble right view”. When clearly describing a sottapanna, he is never vague about it. There is not one example about this. The Buddha, as the AMAZING teacher he was, NEVER clearly described a sottapanna without using EXPLICIT words. I repeat, there is not ONE example of this. He is either totally explicit, or using diagnostic criteria. The Buddha is always very clear and upright in the Suttas, so it confuses me as to why he would describe a Sottapanna with vague terms like “for one who knows and sees”, which is so much more vague than simply “for one with the noble right view” or “for one who was entered the stream”. In the video on this Sutta by HH, he justifies it using his logic, but never once questions why the Buddha in this exact sutta is using vague wording, while every other time he speaks of Sottapanna, he uses clear, exclusive wording. Nyanamoli Thero makes the exact mistake that he warns about himself: he gets into the details of the logic that pertains to what he thinks is mentioned, but he forgets the peripheral context: that the Buddha is always clear and straightforward in his speech, not cryptic.

Secondly, he says “Mendicants, I say that the ending of defilements is for one who knows and sees(...). He does not say “The continuation of the ending of defilements is for the one who knows and sees”. It is also kind of paradoxical - why would he exclude the removal of defilements to Sottapannas only. It’s a general statement. So a person who is not a Sottapanna cannot start to end their defilements? The way I would interpret it is that the starting point in the journey to begin ending your defilements begins with a rational mind, not swayed by emotions such as “I don’t want this to be true because of x,y,z”.

The common interpretation about “for one who knows and sees” (...) that application of irrational thoughts give rise to defilements (hope, prayer, not using logic, or just plain non-rational thinking), however, one who sees is someone who looks at reality rationally, logically and applying their mind in such a way. Ie. you are open to look at reality unbiased and logically. Not that you need to have supramundane insight into reality.

But let’s give HH the benefit of the doubt, and assume that what he really meant was that the prerequisite for removal of defilements using these 7 methods are only to be attempted by Sottapannas. Or we can give them the benefit of the doubt, however to a slightly smaller degree and say that “one who knows and sees” does mean sottapanna, without that actually making this a clear prerequisite in the sutta. It could definitely still

mean “the total destruction of defilement is only attained after sottapanna”, that does not read the same as “these following methods will only work for sottapannas”.

Problem 1. Assumption by HH: “You have to be a Sottapanna to practice”some by seeing, some by restraint, some by using, some by enduring, some by avoiding, some by dispelling, and some by developing” (MN2) ” So you already have to be a Sottapanna to practice restrain and endurance, the exact methods that HH teach is the way to Sottapanna itself? How do you become a Sottapanna if you cannot apply senserestrain until after you have become a Sottapanna? HH clearly state that a prerequisite for using these 7 methods as means to lessen defilements, is already being a Sottapanna - so how do you become a Sottapanna then, without restrain, seeing, or endurance?

Problem 2. At the end of the first method proposed by the Buddha to remove defilements (Seeing) we have this statement: And as they do so, they give up three fetters: substantialist view, doubt, and misapprehension of precepts and observance of rites and rituals. These are called the defilements that should be given up by seeing.

So a sutta aimed at only Sottapannas is an instruction of how you can become a Sottapanna? Ehm, what?

Now, you can discuss “wise attention” and what it really means all you want, but that doesn’t take away from the context that this whole sutta doesn’t make sense at all if it is only aimed at Sottapannas. That’s the first argument. The second one is that the Buddha was always abundantly clear when he talked about a Sottapanna, never vague.

Just to make sure; the sutta also is not a linear progression, like you should have use seeing first, then restraint, then using etc. This is obvious, as you can’t do one without the other. You can’t get rid of the defilements using the method of seeing very well, while not restraining yourself at least a little bit for example.

What MN 2 actually recommends (if we give the benefit of the doubt and call “knowing and seeing”=sottapanna)

MN 2 teaches:

- **All practitioners** must learn:
 - what to attend to
 - what not to attend to
 - which method fits which defilement
- **Without right understanding**, practice is often misapplied
- **(With supramundane right view**, practice becomes fully effective and irreversible
So the sutta is:

—not a gated manual usable only after awakening.

Please enlighten me

Edit: you guys keep saying there’s right restraint (after sottapanna) and wrong restraint (befoe). However, it doesn’t change the fact that the Buddha, in this very sutta, also recommends the methods of abandoning and developing alongside restraint and endurance,

not separating them. He doesn't say: do only restraint and endurance until you become sotapanna, then do the rest of the methods. He says: you use all the 7 methods here (including restraint and endurance, and including abandoning and dev), and you try your best, but none of them will work FULLY until you have right view. He DOES NOT tell you to only use restraint and endurance and that development can only be done after sotapanna.

Another good point:

By user: Edit: also, this part doesn't make sense to me: "And what are the influxes that should be abandoned by avoiding? Take a bhikkhu who, reflecting in light of the origin, avoids a wild elephant, a wild horse, a wild ox, a wild dog, a snake, a stump, thorny ground, a pit, a cliff, a swamp, and a sewer. Reflecting in light of the origin, he avoids sitting on inappropriate seats, walking in inappropriate neighborhoods, and mixing with bad friends—whatever wise fellow renunciates would take to be an unsuitable setting. For the influxes, trouble, and affliction that would arise in someone who abides without avoiding these things do not arise when they are avoided. These are called the influxes that should be abandoned by avoiding."

Why is either grasping of the sign of the mind or right view needed to avoid dangerous things? This seems like a part where yoniso as "rational" actually fits.

My view on this is that again, anything you do after yoniso will actually and effectively rid defilements - doesn't mean you should not practice before yoniso. So similar to how the buddha wants you to avoid a wild elephant, you should on the same level practice abandoning and developing. There's no prerequisite to avoid getting killed by elephant, and there's no prerequisite to practice abandonment and developing.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-28 05:09:15

The distinction is between practicing restraint and endurance, which anyone can do in theory, and successfully *abandoning defilements* by doing so. A puthujjana can and has to practice restraint, but that restraint will itself be tainted by defilements as long as they're a puthujjana, so cultivating it further will not lead to Nibbāna. Hence it's not what is being described in the Sutta.

So, rather than taking restraint as a "method" that is already correct, a puthujjana would keep continually questioning their ideas about what restraint is (and you can only meaningfully upgrade your understanding of something if you're also doing it). That's how they would move closer to *yoniso manasikāra*.

The same point is found in AN 2.11:

"There are, bhikkhus, these two powers. What two? The power of reflection and the power of development. And what, bhikkhus, is the power of reflection? It's when someone reflects: 'Misconduct of body, speech, or mind has a bad, painful result in both the present and the future.' Reflecting like this, they give up misconduct of body, speech, and mind, and develop good conduct of

body, speech, and mind, keeping themselves pure. This is called the power of reflection.

And what, bhikkhus, is the power of development? In this context, the power of development is the power of the trainees. **For relying on the power of a trainee, one gives up passion, aversion, and delusion.** Having given up passion, aversion, and delusion, one doesn't do anything unwholesome, or engage in anything harmful. This is called the power of development. These are the two powers."

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-28 06:00:23 (in reply to a comment not included)

This sutta makes it abundantly clear that abandoning and developing is also recommended for puthujjana's.

It explicitly says that a puthujjana fails at practicing yoniso manasikāra.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-28 07:00:11 (in reply to a comment not included)

it also says you will fail at restraint and endurance, it doesn't say you don't do any of them.

We're not saying that either, as you have yourself noted.

Regardless, you don't have a strong enough position here to tell me or anyone to stop practicing meditation (partly abandoning and developing)

You're misunderstanding the point. What you're describing as "meditation" is not abandoning and developing to begin with, neither before nor after right view. It's simply distraction. So the need to give up of meditation techniques has nothing to do with enforcing right view as a prerequisite. It's to do with at least *trying* to practice abandoning and developing, which is how you could eventually attain right view.

Also, regarding avoiding: does avoiding a wild elephant to not get killed also ONLY work and is it only supposed to be applies after right view?

As a means of abandoning defilements, it does.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-28 07:33:36 (in reply to a comment not included)

Anyways, I've said all my points and I've said more than enough on this. It's taking too much time away from my life now, and I gotta put the computer away, so I'll leave it at this: thank you engaging in discussion with the lay community. I highly appreciate and regard the effort to actually speak to us directly.

And thank you for the discussion. May you all be well, peaceful and attain true happiness, with metta - Erik

Sure, I also don't think this is going anywhere.

none of these methods will rid defilements completely unless done with yoniso, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't do it.

For the record, our point is that you are describing as "wholesome" is ayoniso in its very nature, whether one is a puthujjana or not. So "doing it with yoniso" is an inherent contradiction.

Essays in book format?

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** ghfph 2026-01-25 06:21:28

I read awhile ago that Bhikkhu Anigha's essays may be published in a paper book format.

Is there any news on this? I'm planning to rid myself of unnecessary technology (laptop and ereader), for kusala reasons, but would still like to re-read Venerable Anigha's essays.

Can I provide any help in proofreading or editing while I still have a laptop?

Thanks, ☺

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-26 05:17:13

I'm working on the book currently.

As for getting rid of technology, it's worth questioning your reasons for doing that. If it's because you can't control yourself and keep breaking the precepts when you have access to it, then it's fine to get rid of it until that's no longer the case. But if it's not that, it might be rooted in trying to avoid the practice in the name of "peace" (not having to face doubt regarding your intentions for using technology).

Question on “Definitive Guide to Seeing Your Mind” Dhamma Talk

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** CutnSkratch317 2026-01-22 21:28:22

Venerables and HH community,

Thank you for sharing this video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hd9WZzxqAkE>). I found it extremely informative and clarifying for my practice.

I have a question regarding Ajahn's point that one must first understand the signs of the mind by enduring, and that only once the mind is understood can "the King be fed" — otherwise, one is simply acting out of aversion or greed for a different mind state.

Here is how I currently understand this, and I would appreciate correction if I am mistaken:

Suppose an angry mind has arisen. I recognize that anger is present, and through practice I understand the dangers and consequences of an angry mind. In that case, is it appropriate to intentionally cultivate mettā (as an example) to counterbalance the anger based on that understanding - rather than out of a desire to get rid of the anger? Or would this still be considered a subtle form of aversion?

I can see how, through understanding the mind and its inclinations, abandoning it becomes easier on its own. At the same time, it seems that knowing how an angry mind operates and inclines might make it skillful to cultivate a counter-state, if such cultivation is appropriate.

Thank you very much for your time and for all that you offer to the community.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-24 09:01:03

Suppose an angry mind has arisen. I recognize that anger is present, and through practice I understand the dangers and consequences of an angry mind. In that case, is it appropriate to intentionally cultivate mettā (for example) to counterbalance the anger on the basis of that understanding, rather than out of a desire to get rid of the anger? Or would this still amount to a subtle form of aversion?

The implication that cultivating mettā is a separate undertaking from recognizing the presence of anger, etc., suggests that it remains a form of aversion or management. Even if you do not think of it as trying to get rid of the anger, you are still just “turning the page” on it rather than addressing its causes, much like distracting yourself with a worldly unrelated activity. That does nothing to alter the underlying tendency toward aversion when attention is *not* being closely managed, which is precisely the only time that counts as a criterion for development (AN 5.200).

Mettā is the natural result of the absence of aversion. It is no more contrived than the friendliness you already experience towards people for whom you have no ill-will (which are the majority). By contrast, the common, misguided fabrication of mettā requires ignoring certain unpleasant aspects and selectively focusing on pleasant ones, and for as long as that's at all required, you're still just continuing to take ill-will for granted.

Hence, the ordinary friendliness of an undeveloped puthujjana toward *some* people is actually far closer to genuine *mettā* than what many Buddhists today take it to be. The difference between ordinary friendliness and the liberation of mind through *mettā* is simply that the latter is boundless/infinite. That's the same as saying that it involves no effort or even anchor, since anything conditioned by an activity implies the possibility of its absence under certain circumstances, hence it's not boundless. Mettā depends only on the absence of something, namely ill-will, and that absence is universal when the mind has been well cultivated.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-24 16:50:27 (in reply to a comment not included)

This sutta 5.200 contains the exact method that HH argues against,

Where? It talks about mettā, sure, but it doesn't vindicate the modern interpretations of what that means, which is what we criticize.

What I intended to highlight with that Sutta is that the actual escape from ill-will is when the mind doesn't want to go there even if you tried to send it there. Whereas the modern practices revolve around holding back the mind from what it still prefers by fabricating the opposite, without ever addressing the causes for why it in principle *could* want to go towards ill-will (or sensuality).

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-24 18:11:21 (in reply to a comment not included)

I agree that trying to use wholesome as a means of controlling the unwholesome, is just clinging.

That's not quite the point. The modern interpretation of mettā is just a cover-up, and cover-ups are themselves unwholesome. It's replacing ill-will with delusion, which is like switching the side of a cube you're facing while the cube remains equally close to your face.

This is what I believe can quickly happen with non-resistance, non-doing, endurance methods: We understand that aversion to discomfort is the problem, but that we are supposed to not resist it. We end up mindlessly "thinking" and never really get objective perspective, it's just a perpetual thinking "Aversion", "I'm supposed to not let this aversion take over" "Now I'm controlling" "oh no I shouldn't control" "ok stop controlling" "ok allow even that to be", and maybe it stops. Also aversion becomes the center of gravity, like we know aversion is the problem, so we automatically start 1. subconsciously looking for aversion 2. We start identifying (clinging) to aversion. We end up kinda chasing displeasure to solve our aversion, but we are now identified to some extent to aversion.

That's what happens when even what we're describing is still being implemented as a mechanical technique. That tendency might take time to calm down, and those considerations aren't of much value anyway unless you're already fully steadied in the eight precepts. If you're not, you're not going to clearly see what any defilement is no matter how hard you try.

For example: I can feel peaceful while feeling quite a lot of pain IF I stay mindful, ardent and fully aware, fully comprehending what is going on. However, if I just drift into the pain/aversion, I feel like I quickly identify with it and sink into more aversion.

Right, and the fact that the latter can still happen means that the mind is not being developed. No amount of time of cultivating such “mindfulness” will remove the need for itself. It’s just learning how to cope, however successfully and skillfully, and never removing the causes for disturbance. In fact it makes the problem worse; if after getting used to that you have to face discomfort without crutches, you will be even less able to do so than before. Hence the Buddha said that a person who attains wrong liberation through wrong view ... wrong samādhi is *worse off* on that account. It’s not a “transitional stage” or a “skillful means.” It’s a complete deviation that requires you to unlearn everything you learned.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-24 18:56:23 (in reply to a comment not included)

You’re essentially telling me that on account of that, I cannot even attain Sotapanna, and even that is contradicting the Buddha, as thousands of laypeople who indulged in sex, entertainment etc etc, did attain stream entry.

The Buddha did say that such activities are an obstruction to both right view and right *samādhi*. He also listed things that need to be given up in order to practice *satipaṭṭhāna*, and the things you mention are covered by the items in that list (AN 6.118). Elsewhere he said one can’t progress in the Dhamma while maintaining delight in sensuality.

In your view, from what I interpret, I’m better off just giving up meditation practice, unless I can follow all 8 precepts and probably also live in calm environment.

Yes, you should give up the meditation you’ve been doing so far and anything that resembles it because it’s actively taking you even further away from the right samādhi and peace. Giving it up will show you how your mind actually isn’t tamed; how it still resists and craves for things just as strongly, if not worse, when you stop managing the scenery internally.

As for the eight precepts, it’s not all or nothing.

First of all it’s about being honest to yourself regarding what the goal is, i.e., freedom from craving, and the fact that you can’t claim to be practicing towards that goal while you still engage in obvious acts of craving. That’s probably not going to be all that obvious if you’ve been following contemporary teachings, and the precepts need to be supported by that simple but important recognition to be effective.

With that perspective, even though you might not be formally committed to the eight precepts all the time, there will be a lingering sense of shame each time you intentionally break them and remember your desire to train your mind, and that will allow you to grow in the precepts as quickly as you can handle. For some people that’s overnight, for others it takes longer.

If you’re not choosing entertainment yourself then that’s not really a concern.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-26 05:32:46 (in reply to a comment not included)

That's a widespread misunderstanding.

If you have to shield and control your mind to prevent unwholesome reactions, it is not even temporarily liberated or composed. The need for suppression or redirection is itself a product of the hindrances. If that feels calming, it will be the same kind of "calm" produced by sensuality, which also depends on averting attention from what is unpleasant. Thus, it's wrong calm.

The notion that *samatha* can be developed independently of understanding is refuted by Suttas like AN 6.73 and AN 9.41.

in order to come to the experiential understanding that clinging to ill-will is unproductive?

This supposed "experiential understanding" never actually comes. Anyone who relies on these practices neither has nor will reach a point where defilements cannot arise without them. That's because they are not just tangential; they actively manifest the same problem.

Why is business/trading in meat & living beings Wrong Livelihood?

Subreddit: r/HillsideHermitage | **Posted by:** ToLazyToPickName 2026-01-22 17:33:18

If buying & eating meat is not wrong action, why is trading in meat & living beings wrong livelihood?

A cook who make a living off of cooking meat, a grocery store cashier, or a pet store owner who makes a living off of selling pets, why is that wrong livelihood but consuming the cooked meat or buying/having the pet is not wrong action?

I don't see how there is wrong intention in the livelihood of being a meat cooker or pet supplier. Maybe the meat cooker is encouraging more people to kill animals and the pet supplier is encouraging crueling towards animals? But then why isn't the end consumer also doing that?

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-24 04:49:33

A cook who make a living off of cooking meat, a grocery store cashier, or a pet store owner who makes a living off of selling pets

Only the last one is wrong livelihood. Cooking meat and being a cashier at a general grocery store are too far removed from the act of killing to matter.

The issue is how gaining a living from these things carries a welcoming attitude towards the acts of killing and, with pets, undesired imprisonment. Even when you're not the one physically perpetrating either, internally your intentions are pointing in that direction to a degree simply by working in those industries.

With weapons and intoxicants, you'd be condoning the intended usage of those things by selling them (though not if you're a cashier where those are among many of the items sold and customers take them without your involvement).

Some people think that in buying meat you are also condoning killing, but that's a fabricated connection and not true in any sense that's relevant for the training of the mind. You can totally maintain the attitude that you would never intentionally kill a living being or encourage another to do so, even to save your own life, despite buying and consuming meat. That attitude is what you have to cultivate, and abstaining from meat as a rule contributes nothing to that per se. It usually takes away from it by distracting you.

The Buddha could've easily made at least monks vegetarian and thereby prevented a lot of meat purchasing. But not only did he not have that initiative; he explicitly refused when asked by Devadatta. It would've cemented a wrong view about what virtue is.

Comment by Bhikkhu_Anigha on 2026-01-26 04:34:51 (in reply to a comment not included)

To me, it seems like by relying on the death of animals to continue for their livelihood of selling or helping to sell meat

Because unless they're working directly with a butcher, the connection is abstract. They wouldn't have to be open to killing or encouraging another to kill in order to do it.

Which jobs in the meat industry would be included in wrong livelihood besides the job of doing/commanding the killing?

It depends on the closeness of the association. If the job involves any dealings with the people who do the killing, it would be wrong livelihood. Not because you're explicitly telling them to kill, but because there is automatically going to be a sense of cooperation.

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:** Puthujjana381 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" [yam kiñci samudayadhammam sabbam tam nirodhadhammam].

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 [Aniccā vata saṅkhārā, up-pādavayadhammino; Uppajjivā 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 *satipatṭhāna*.

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* yoniso 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 exists, 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 them-

selves? 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.