
KNOWING

KNOWING

Minowani

KNOWING

First Publication: January 2017

Update: March 02, 2021

<https://minowani.github.io>

This work is made available under the Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication. The person who associated a work with this deed has dedicated the work to the public domain by waiving all of his or her rights to the work worldwide under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights, to the extent allowed by law.

'Nothing is worth clinging to'

Preface

This booklet sets out to explain the Buddha's Teaching. It does so by showing things we can all know for ourselves and build from there. Many concepts like Anatta, Anicca, Kamma, Sankhara, etc., will be addressed, but in plain english.

Since this work builds up, try to understand a chapter before faring to the next. They are purposely fairly short. On the other hand they do require a bit of thinking and pondering so it might take some time to get through. Should you get stuck you can always reread from the start (it is setup this way). Some parts of chapter 5 may go a bit deeper, but know this depth is not required.

Contents

1 Introduction	1
1.1 Knowing and Believing	2
2 Basics	3
2.1 The Art Gallery	4
2.2 Cheese	5
2.3 The Football Player	6
2.4 Carrot on a Stick	7
2.5 The Barn	8
3 Implications	9
3.1 A Colour Picker Tool	10
3.2 Life and Death	11
3.3 Around	13
3.4 The Football Field	15
3.5 Mortgage	17
3.6 Fed Up	19
4 The Teaching	21
4.1 Breaking Through	22
4.2 The Sermons	24
5 Arising, Ceasing	25
5.1 Dependent-Co-Arising	26
5.2 Sixfold Base	28
5.3 Name-and-Form	29
5.4 Conscious	31
5.5 Inclinations	35
5.6 Not-Knowing	38
6 Particulars	40
6.1 Time	41
6.2 Me	43
7 Realization	44
7.1 Calm and Insight	45
7.2 Concentration	46
7.3 Radiance	49
7.4 Knowing	54

1 Introduction

We know we are born, ageing, and will die someday. But what is the point of all this? And, is there even something more to it? No matter what religion, and non-religion, has some kind of belief built in, but how can we come to know for ourselves?

1.1 Knowing and Believing

When we believe something it means we have no real evidence, no real certainty, to accept something as true. It can be based on trust, confidence, opinions and so forth. To know is to understand based on facts, truth, from which we too can deduct, draw conclusions. But what we '*know*' and what we '*think to know*' are two different things; what we think to know is just a belief. The difference can be hard to see. What we think we know can turn out to be quite otherwise, even years and years later. And on the same principle this viewpoint can then change again, which shows this is just '*think to know*'.

Suppose your tooth hurts, this is then directly noticeable. If someone were to tell you it is not your tooth hurting but your foot, then you might not value this input so highly. But when your dentist informs you of a sinus infection you might accept this. Then after treatment you understand what you *thought you knew* was just a belief. Though the precise location might have been somewhat assumed, what you didn't assume was pain, acknowledged by your dentist who did find a cause. Nonetheless, you don't need anyone to tell you whether you did or didn't feel pain. At that moment there was no doubt about it. It was actual; true.

The more general our experience (e.g. '*pain*' vs '*I have pain because of a hole in my tooth*') the closer we are to knowing. When we know it replaces our belief. Yet believing can't take the place of knowing — such a change can not go against our own experience — though it can replace other believes. So, what can or do we know?

2 Basics

When we comprehend the basics, what generally is called advanced might become more natural, more clear. Without comprehension we get entangled up very fast; things might unnecessary seem advanced. Therefor, before going into what the Buddha had said, lets start with some basics which we are then able to use as common ground.

2.1 The Art Gallery

Suppose we are in an art gallery, looking at a spotless white wall. When asked what we see, we might say '*A spotless white wall*'. If an attendant removes a white panel, which turned out to be placed in front of the wall, we understand we did not just see a white wall, but a white panel too. And we understand there could be more panels as well. When the panel is put back but with some smudges, we would now see the white wall and the not-so-spotless part.

If we give this some thought we understand in order to see things there must be a difference. Or better said we only *see* difference. And for a difference we must have something and something-else, something and not(-that)-something. Thus, to see white we must also have not-white.

If everything was white we would not be able to see white. It would not be possible to label, name, it simply because we would not have any experience of it. This same principle applies to our other senses as well. If there was no difference we would not register. For us to notice something there has to be a difference.

2.2 Cheese

Suppose I hold up a block of cheese, point to one side and claim it to be the back. If I would then ask where the front is, would you be able to point that out?

I cut a slice off the front, put it on a plate, and again point at the back. Where would you say the front was? At the slice on the plate or at the opposite side of where I am pointing at?

And if I now would point to *that* side and claim it to be the new back, would you then not point at its opposite side as the (new) front?

What was previously determined as the back has now become the front and vice versa. Here we see the front depends on (where) the back (is) and the back depends on the front. When there is a back there is a front as well. And no matter how much we cut away, there will always be a front as long as there is a back. The only way to get rid of the front is to have no back either. They come and go together. This is also something we can see for ourselves. Here too no believe comes into place.

2.3 The Football Player

We are always doing something. Reading, thinking, talking, breathing, and so on. Can you think of any action which bears no result at all?

When we do things we usually get better at them, we get more experienced. If we read we will improve. If we study we will improve. Perhaps this might not be immediately noticeable since a result does not need to follow an action right away. For instance when we train we might hit a point where progress seems to stall. It might even seem as if it gets worse and worse from there. But later, perhaps after a break, we might discover things are suddenly going smooth again. As if we are now able to push through a certain barrier; we see our efforts finally paying off.

If someone, with a talent for it, wants to play football but all he does is play tennis, will he then become the football player he could have been? See, no need for believing here either. This too is something we can see for ourselves.

2.4 Carrot on a Stick

Something else we know is we want things. Lets look into this a bit.

If we want to be a football player it might be a good idea for us to practise football instead of tennis. Still, not everyone can become a football player. And by just wanting it, even with practise, we can't always fulfil this goal. Perhaps there is a lack of talent, sickness, old-age, or because we just got no time available, etc. If our goal is totally out of our reach we might not be at ease. But why would we want to be a football player, or a tennis player, or anything at all for that matter?

The short answer seems to be because we want to be happy, and presumably on our own terms. Getting what we want seems to have a promise in it. A promise of fulfilment, contentment, happiness. So we want something and, if we are not totally out of our mind, something which seems at least somewhat attainable. And we act accordingly. Also, we don't just want one thing, we want many things. Being healthy, beautiful, loved, to have a nice breakfast; anything. Can you remember something you strove for and got? What happened? Did you get the gladness, ease, fulfilment, and was the wanting gone? And if you did get that sense of accomplishment, fulfilment, do you still have it? Or has it made room for something else?

This is always the case. We always want something we don't have. And there are so many things we want — eat, drink, succeed, excitement, not to be bored, rested, relaxed, money, more money — hence we are always doing something to fulfil this promise. It is not that it is without rewards either right? If we want some tasty food we 'know' (expect) a pleasant taste is waiting for us. There is a lot of enjoyment in these things. But by getting what we want we still don't get this lasting quenching result. It is an empty promise really. Basically this mechanism keeps us going on and on. It is like the carrot hanging on a stick which keeps the donkey on the move.

2.5 The Barn

On a new piece of land a farmer builds a barn. One day, when he arrives at his almost finished barn, he notices the walls are covered with graffiti. This happened on two occasions before and this time he decides to go to the police to report the incident. Some time later a rich guy passes by. He admires the view and asks the farmer if he would be willing to sell the place. He offers a great deal of money and the farmer accepts. They also agreed upon the farmer finishing the construction work, albeit with several adjustments so the barn would turn into a lovely home for our rich guy.

A few months later, again the walls got cluttered. And again the incident is reported. Only this time it is not for a barn but for a house, right? But other than perhaps for some relatively minor changes, the walls have not really changed that much. Though first barn-walls, they are now house-walls even though the bricks are still the same bricks. And they kept their properties as well. It is not like you could not cut the barn-wall with a pair of scissors, but now that it is a house-wall you can.

A wall inherits the properties of its building-blocks. This is also something we know for ourselves. These building-blocks are barn-building-blocks if we intend to build a barn, but house-building-blocks if we intend to build a house. And they are building-blocks because we intend to build with them in the first place. They are for what we intend them to be.

3 Implications

We talked about the basics, about things we already know. We see these things every day. It is nothing new per se but perhaps put in a different perspective. 'The Art Gallery' and 'Cheese' are showing us a bit that things we experience are not independent. 'The Football Player' let us realize what we do, leads to results. The 'Carrot on a Stick' shows us a bit of why we do the things we do. And 'The Barn' says something of how things become things by intention and inheritance.

These are all things we know for ourselves. We don't need anyone to tell us this is right, wrong, or otherwise. Let us take this a step further and look at their implications.

3.1 A Colour Picker Tool

Earlier we talked about what we can experience is a difference. And for this we need a thing and not-that-thing e.g. white and black, warm and cold, life and death.

Red is not-white and birth is also not-white. Birth and white are two different things. But to say birth is not-white is a bit weird isn't it? It doesn't seem to apply. This is because we can't see a necessary relation between white and birth. White, red and black are related, they belong to the same (colour) dimension or spectrum. To illustrate this we could imagine a colour picker tool: a slider on a colour spectrum which moves from one extreme (end) to another, and by doing so gradually changes the selected colour from white to black.

For a difference the two things must be somehow related; they must be in the same spectrum. And as such it is possible to shift from one into the other. From white to black, from warm to cold, from life to death. When something changes it changes into something else for a 100%, but within the same spectrum. When my arm changes it could f.i. be the skin or a muscle which changes, but it would be a weird thing if my arm would change into a palm tree right? So this change is in some aspect total, but from another point of view there is no change at all.

The aspect where there is no change, at least not at the same time, we could call the context or background. And this is not apart from what we know already (see 'The Art Gallery'). We need a context or background to appropriate a thing. Or, if you like, a thing and its background create a difference. The spotless white wall could form a background for the panel because they both have a colour property (colour dimension). The taste 'sweet' can't form a background to our panel, but sugar — which also has a colour-dimension — can. And those colours depend on the fact there is such a thing as colour in the first place. When there is colour, which we can discriminate, there must also be also no(t)-colour. Still the same basic principle but applied to a more general level.

We know things change. And because things (differences) are dependent (a difference needs a dyad) they change when the things they depend on change. And things will (therefore) change since they are dependent. Only a thing — if we can speak of a thing — which is not dependent would not be subjected to change but this is a bit problematic since 'to experience' already implies difference, which implies dependence, and thus change.

3.2 Life and Death

We know we are born, aging and will die someday. Some think it all ends with death, others think life goes on in some form or another. But normally these are *both* beliefs. We don't know whether it is one or the other. Since we prefer knowing above believing, let's see if we can work with what we now already know.

We know we live; we discern life. Then in order to do so — since we can only experience differences — there must also be not-life (death) on the other end of that *same* spectrum. And to have death there must then also be life (birth); they are dependent.

There are different ways to consider dependence. Take our cheese for example, we can't say first we have a front and then the back. A front without its back can't be. But take for instance 'walking'. First we put one leg in front of the other, we shift our body and then we put the other leg in front of the first. This too is a dependent relation, but more in the order of 'if this (comes first) then that (follows)' instead of 'with this, this'. Do you see the difference? With the cheese-point-of-view (CPOV) there is no time involved, when you have a front you got the back as well. With the walking-point-of-view (WPOV) there is time, first you move one leg and then the other. You don't need to move them both the same way at the same time, we wouldn't even call that walking.

Normally we would apply a WPOV — first we are born, then we will die — but this is a bit muddled since we are not really looking at life and death there but at '*me*' — another context or background. Let's go back to walking for a moment. We move one leg and then the other. So, for the concept of walking two legs are needed, they are related. Suppose you would have only one leg, and not an artificial second one whatsoever, then you wouldn't be able to walk. But the one leg in itself is perfectly fine without the other. It is still the same one leg. But a front wouldn't be the same without its back. It is not like one is perfectly okay without the other. They are dependent in a necessarily way. One (end) can't exist without the other (end).

And so, do we know of any life without death? We know of people with one leg or none so we see that the relation between legs is not a necessarily one in order to live. But we do consider death as a part of living. We know we will die. We may not like it, we might try to find ways to escape it, but at the same time we do understand death is part of life. We don't know of any life where death does not seem to be waiting. We can't see that the relation

is *not* necessary. In fact, if death came for a person we see he or she is not living any more; its relation is a necessary one. So, we should then apply our CPOV instead of our WPOV. When we do we see when there is birth, there is death and when there is death, there is birth. By applying the basics to life and death we then seem to get some kind of ongoing existence. They both are necessary for each-other to exist. And although this ongoing existence might perhaps seem strange, it is in line with what we know to be true for ourselves so far already. It cuts out believing which did lead to views which do go against what we know.

3.3 Around

In 'The Football Player' we talked about actions and their results. We usually understand this partially. We understand to some extent doing good can lead to good results, what goes around comes around, but we don't necessarily understand how this must always be the case. Same with good which can't come from bad. We sometimes do think good can come from bad and vice versa.

If we go back to our basics, we know from doing things over and over we improve. And this is the result. Not some superstitious one which seems to occur by chance or so. No, just this improvement. This describes just the mechanism though. For example, if you like to play football you improve. But suppose you don't like football and you are forced to play it more and more, then this does not necessarily mean you will come to like it, or become better at it, at *football*. It could very well be the case your dislike improves, your disengagement grows.

So what do you think, if we do something which is let's say based on anger, we act and speak with anger and we cultivate this, will we then become better or worse at it? If we feed our anger will we then improve this or lessen it? So if we want to be a professional in being angry, it will be a good thing for us to feed anger and act upon it. But we should not make the mistake thinking happiness is to be found in there. Happiness can only come from siding with the good, happiness is a result from being good, which is also something we must train to be well at — if we do pursue such a thing of course. Suppose someone successfully robs a bank and lives in wealth after. We can understand the fear of getting caught could come from this action and we might think the living in wealth comes from this too. However if we understand that good comes from doing good, we can reason that the fact this person succeeded and live in wealth might be because of the results from previous actions did bloom. The results which got invested in earlier f.i. the ability to succeed, to be fortunate, by means of studying, preparing, practising, etc. might be spend on something like this.

An action can have a result but we don't always see the result (from that particular action) nor do we know if and when this result will happen. With this birth-and-death thing going on it would therefor not be illogical to assume a result could occur in a next life. We don't know, but it does not go *against* what we know either. Take our football player again. If we train playing football, we become better at it, we might like it more and then train more. Can you imagine by doing this over and over again (across lives) we could at

some point become a natural talent? But suppose we lack the discipline, now doing this and then that, perhaps this talent then, because it is not cultivated, isn't there.

If we let this all sink in we'll understand our responsibility: We are responsible for our actions; we inherit their results. So how about in order to get the results we want, we start managing them properly?

— Although actions can have their results it doesn't mean everything we experience is caused by action, let alone our actions.

3.4 The Football Field

We talked about good and bad actions and their results. But what is good, and what is bad? How do you know which is what?

Well, look at it this way. What is a bad result? When it is unwanted, unwelcome, right? Since bad actions lead to bad results a bad action is something which leads to unwanted, unwelcome, results. We already know we don't always see the results of our actions nor do we know when they bloom, so it is not always that clear. But let's go back to our football player for a moment.

On the football field we find two goals each on the opposite side. When our player is about to score he is aiming at his opponents goal and not at the one belonging to his own team. Whether he scores or not depends on several things but at least he is aiming to the right *side* for him to score. And this is what we can try here too. We might not know if an action is good or bad but does it *side* with welcome or unwelcome results?

An unwelcome result is for example pain. Siding with pain leads to pain and vice versa. It could be physical pain or mental pain. Suppose we would be verbally backstabbing someone, even if we didn't know whether this would be a good action or a bad one, or to which exact result it could lead, we do know it sides with pain, either for us or for the other. But since it sides with pain, it increases, nurtures, pain; it doesn't lessen it. And since it is our action the result, blooming with pain, is ours too.

Many actions we seem to do so fast, almost instantly. We trained such behaviour quite well; we got a real talent for it. If we don't like the results we might start to look more carefully at the things we do and why we do them. If they side with what is for us the right side, the wholesome side, we should keep doing them but if they side with for us the wrong side, the unwholesome side, we should just get rid of them, destroy them, not feed and dwell in them. This way we will become more and more skilful. It is wise to do those things which lead to the result we want.

We are so used to the things we do, some actions might feel unnatural. For instance if someone is angry at us, our trained reaction might be to retaliate in some way, we might even start a fight. But since hurting sides with things we don't want for ourselves nor for the people we care about, it would be wise not to go there. And don't worry, even though it could take a while, things siding with the wholesome will become natural, a habit, too. What we train we will become better at, we will come to know better and it will

feel less and less alienated. But be aware, it is not like we should be a smiling pounce bag for bullies! Or let people rob, abuse, walk over us, or anything like that. That is like *enabling* them to do so, which doesn't side with the wholesome either right?

3.5 Mortgage

Suppose you have a mortgage loan from a bank with which you bought your house. If you stop paying off the bank can, whether you like it or not, sell your house. So from one point of view it is your house but from another point of view it isn't. Basically this 'my, mine', is about the amount of control we have. And with that some responsibility. If you don't have any control is it really right to call something yours?

When something is mine I can basically do what I want with it. This (my) body is mine not yours. I can put a tattoo on it, have it pierced, etc. Sometimes my or mine is used in another sense, like 'my country'. But here we don't mean to say the country is mine, that I own it.

We can control our body, but only to some extent. We can't prevent it from getting sick or older. It is the same with the mind, we can't prevent it from being restless for example. Thus, being out of our full control, is it then really proper to call it mine? Is it right to consider it me? Yet we do feel this is me, mine. But what is this me then? Well we can't describe it really. We use words like me, self, myself, but we can't define or locate this properly. Why? Is it out of reach? Well then it isn't mine for sure. If it was so clear we wouldn't have so much trouble describing it. Perhaps then we might be looking at it from a wrong point of view? From a wrong notion, from... a belief? Maybe we just *think we know*?

We do know something which would be really myself would be fully under one's self-control. But would a self need (to) control? If so it would be dependent and not in-dependent. And if it depends on something else it falls away if this dependence isn't there. So a self can't depend on not-self, it should not be dependent at all. We already know what we experience is a difference, a duality. Thus this is always dependent and therefore not self. If we can't experience it how can we say it exist or not exists? What can we say about it? If it is something we can't experience, is it even right to call it 'something' or 'not something'?

So this is a strange matter. We could rethink this through and ask how we came up with a self in the first place. If I ask 'does a *goeloo* exist?' you would ask me what it is. With a self we immediately assume we have one or not — both ways at least assume we know what it is. But it seems to go against what we know. Should we then take a self up on believe? Well the problem here is we are still assuming and still muddled, since it can't go against what we know and we already established we can't experience it.

Basically we can't discern 'self'. We think we somewhat do but it is a flaw in our assuming. Normally we use the WPOV. We think things are things-in-themselves, not dependent; 'self'. Like white exists on its own. Or black. We don't see these exist only in dependence. They are two ends (poles, extremes) of a spectrum. A self implies no dependence. It doesn't mean there is no you or me etc. *with* dependence. Of course you are you and me is me. And I call this myself, or self, which is in the same manner as I call this my country; it is handy for communication. However we often switch these contexts without noticing. When we talk of this self even with dependence, which strictly speaking makes no sense, we automatically assume an independent self, a soul or something going on, which keeps itself in essence, after we die or till we die. So we get drawn to duality — there is a self and there is not a self, all exists and nothing exists — drawn to this WPOV, drawn into the game of extremes.

3.6 Fed Up

At this point we are not much further than 'what goes around comes around' or 'you reap what you sow'. Life may go around and around and we get to experience nice and not so nice things. But now what? Well nothing really, unless we get fed up with all this, especially with the painful, grievous side of it.

If we get tired of these unwelcome experiences, or if we see the pointlessness in experiencing, we might want to do something about it. When we understand the duality (see 'The Art Gallery') it might perhaps become even more easy to see the repetitious nature of things. When we are new in this world it is a big place with lots of things to discover. Later on we might get a natural eye for (some) repetition. We wake up, prepare, eat, go to work, get home, eat, cool down, sleep. Or whatever repetition we call ours. With this duality we might get a little bit disenchanted already: 'Okay, this is nice but it is just another colour', 'Okay, this taste nice, but is just another taste'. But how tasty it might get, it does not leave the taste spectrum; it is more of the same really. And it stays this way. It doesn't break out these dimensions; it doesn't go further than our sense experiences. Life after life, on and on.

The clearer our mind the easier it will be to see the more generic levels. If we are aware we are seeing colours, that colours depend on no colours, which is basically just a 'dimension' in which a colour could be possible, then we might not have the need to experience every colour out there. We might get fed up with colours, they are just colours, and then these colours lose their enchanted powers. When they do, they don't form part of the 'carrot on a stick' any more. We don't go out in the world trying to experience all different colours in the hope they will enrich us. No, we will understand this being a vicious circle and we won't go after them.

Always wanting and we always want (have thirst for) something we don't have, it is a perfect fuel for this perpetuum mobile. If we see this there is also the chance we get fed up. Perhaps not fully yet, but we will understand to some extent wanting things is a bit pointless too. It never gets fulfilled. There are often many things one can want and no situation is perfect — which can give the excuse of being the reason why a 'want' is not fulfilled. We might think 'if only I was rich' or 'if only I was healthy, younger, older, more loved, less loved, attractive, less attractive'. So we keep busy longing, wishing but intrinsic it is just the same really.

When we get fed up with all this we might want to stop and be done with

it. Understanding this does not mean we can't appreciate nice things, we still can, we just don't need to make all kinds of assumptions while getting tricked by them. Then gradually we will be siding more and more to things we know, things which we experience right now, instead of creating a duality between what is here and what isn't (yet, any more). We become more and more occupied with the present.

So this stopping then, is it something which can be done and if so how? Well, here is what we know for ourselves might end and it is then time to take some things up on trust. Only temporarily though, only till we can turn this into knowing too.

4 The Teaching

By following our basics we came perhaps to a different view on life and death. And we might understand our own responsibility, since what we do leads to manageable results. We may not know if breaking through this life-and-death cycle is something which is even possible, but we do know we don't want to suffer. And this is what life entails for us. There is this sickness, separation from those we care about, ageing and dying, and so on, waiting for us, so at least we could try to look into the possibility.

What we did previously on our own, to decrease or end suffering, might not have given us a lasting result. So let's see what someone who claimed to have broken through had to say about this.

— We know we can only do and experience things just now, right this moment. And we are always doing something; we either increase or decrease suffering. Breaking through is something which doesn't side with the increase of suffering right? So, the way to increase happiness and breaking through must then be one and the same. This way we understand we are able to guard and verify what we are doing with what we already know. We don't welcome blind belief.

4.1 Breaking Through

According to buddhism it is possible to break through and this breaking through, this ending of this cycle of life-and-death, is what buddhism is about. Those who broke through on their own are called Buddha's, Awakened Ones, which is said to be very rare to accomplish. To fully understand is to (have) it realized. Til then it means some things will have to be taken up on trust. Which does not have to be a problem though. I think if you understand what we said earlier you got enough knowledge to keep things in check. For example the doubting or worrying 'is this the right way or not?', what do you think, does it side with knowing or with not-knowing? With not-knowing right? With knowing there is no doubt. So, if we dwell in it, if we feed this thought, will this doubt then increase or decrease? It is just a basic, if we dwell in it we will just be getting more. So, don't get preoccupied, obsessed, with it. Don't dwell in there. What to do? Well we can cultivate something which sides with knowing. Also, when we are in a lot of doubt we can get stressed right? Which doesn't side with calm at all. So we can do something which calms us. Or, when stressed we are also not having joy, so we can do something which sides with joy. And more and more we might come to understand there is only one direction out. It is either the game of extremes *or* not. We either play the game *or* we don't. In the beginning this might all be easier said than done but don't panic, just apply the basics. And this way it can only lead to more knowledge, more calm, more joy and, according to the Buddhas, this is all you need to do.

You might perhaps think: 'Hmm, this can't be all there is to it'. Well actually it is but there is indeed a problem. Perhaps you might not get the calm and happiness when you want and you don't know which results ripens when. You might not know when you'll get sick or die which might all be obstacles. What if you die, get born and perhaps just as in this life you forget about your previous things learned? It is very easy to act with greed or anger. We often feel justified to do so, it is even socially the norm. So it can get worse and worse very fast.

But we are in luck. Some Buddhas were able to explain what they did; they became teachers. And it is a lot easier to follow a teachers' guidance than to discover things on our own. Compared to that this is a shortcut. In our era we did have a Buddha too and lucky for us a teaching one. For a long time these teachings were handed over orally and are now for us available online, in modern languages. Where in the past people had to listen to them, we can now also read them.

About that siding with the good, we did mention above, here's what the Buddha said about it:

Whatever action done without greed, without hatred, without not-knowing is wholesome, unblameable and has happiness as result, that action leads to the cessation of actions; not to the support of them.

(AN3.112, AN3.34)

4.2 The Sermons

The latest Buddha taught many and is referred to as the greatest teacher. We don't have the Buddha to teach us in person, but we do have access to his teachings. And not just to a few sermons, we got thousands! So we can think, ponder, study the sermons from many different angles.

In the sermons we read about people listening to one sermon and then put it into practise. Some heard more than one and we even got so many more, probably more than people have heard in the Buddha's time. We got sermons from his disciples too, even those from after the Buddha had given his last one. So if some heard one, others two, three, ten, and so on, how many would be enough for us? hundreds? thousands? If it is never enough we have to ask ourselves if we are really studying or just collecting. We like to collect things and we can make up good excuses for it. So we do have to be careful.

Nowadays there are many buddhist books and many different schools of buddhism. Since they are all claiming to be buddhist, what do all these teachings, schools, have (roughly) in common? It should be what the Buddha taught right? It seems they can roughly agree on some collections, which in Pali are called: Anguttara Nikaya (AN, shorter enumerated sermons), Samyutta Nikaya (SN, shorter sermons grouped by topic), Majjhima Nikaya (MN, middle length sermons), Digha Nikaya (DN, lengthy sermons) and Vinaya (the monastic's code of conduct). The Vinaya is aimed at a very specific group so lets set that aside for now, then we have four collections from which we all can study in order to build up a good foundation. This does not mean the sermons don't go deep though, they go just as deep as you can get. When you know the foundation you have something to stand on. And we need this, just temporarily. These four collections are really really enough. Study them *honestly, for understanding*, and you gradually develop right view.

When you study the sermons you don't rob or kill someone; in that moment you are doing things siding with the good, things siding with the end of suffering.

5 Arising, Ceasing

After covering what we can know for ourselves and the implications, we talked about the Teaching. Now let's see what the Teaching is about.

To look only just now for what the Buddha and his followers have said, does not mean what we covered could be reached without what they said. Without practise, without their guidance we would simply be overcome with doubts and kept switching between extremes. We would not be able to deduct the basics or keep going through their implications. But because they are factual they don't need the '*because the Buddha said so*' arguments. Which does, of course, not mean every one will agree or prefer this approach in the first place. This work is about knowing, our approach is not directed by faith or trust. Not that we do mistrust, but we want to know why and how, preferably before doing. And how do we know we are not led astray? Because a supposed Buddha said so? Or his followers? Or even if we do have that trust, how do we know we have not misunderstood what they said? Or if translations were properly done or understood?

So, now that we have got our basics and implications in place to keep things in check, let's look at the implication of those implications; the arising and ceasing of suffering.

5.1 Dependent-Co-Arising

The problem is suffering. We suffer. We are getting sick, we are ageing-and-dying, we get separated from the ones we care about, etc. Were there no suffering we wouldn't suffer. And we don't seem to be able to stop suffering by just not wanting or ignoring it, so, how to end it?

Suppose we remove the supporting bars of our barn-house, then it will collapse right? Perhaps not right away. Perhaps it still stands on its own, without its support, for a while. But it is not any more suitable for living; it is bound to collapse.

Before broken through the Buddha thought about what the support of suffering could be. Cut away its support and it can't keep going right? And what is the support (*paccaya*) for suffering, for ageing-and-dying? In a moment of insight the understanding arose: Birth. If there was no Birth would there be ageing-and-dying? Of course not. Birth is just birth and ageing-and-dying is just that. No mystics here. But we read 'In a moment of insight...' To say Birth (being born, life) is the support for ageing-and-dying doesn't seem to require too much insight right? We all know beings are born and will die someday. First we are born, then we will die. No big deal here. So, are we now so much smarter, educated, then? Well, normally we look at it with the WPOV. But try to look at it from the CPOV which is about: not-self ('Mortgage'), change ('A Colour Picker Tool') and suffering ('Fed Up'), thus from another context (see 'Life and Death'), now that is a whole different story.

— While the CPOV might be convenient to use, we should not forget our basics. After all, we can't see both the cheese its back and front. Whatever is discerned is against its context or background (see 'The Art Gallery'). Thinking of the back of the cheese is just reasoning. We can turn the cheese to look at its back, so we know it is there, but then right there this would be the (new) fore (see 'Cheese'). Structurally a background comes first and with that the foreground.

And the support for Birth? In 'Life and Death' we turned back, from death to life and vice versa, which wouldn't be too helpful to really understand (to *know*) since this is reached by reasoning: We can't experience life after death, it would just be life. Instead the Buddha-To-Be went deeper. If what wasn't here, there wouldn't be any Birth? Existence. If there was no existence would then there be birth (ageing, death)? Of course not, no speculation needed here. And what is the support for existence? As fire exists where it holds on to, it is existence depending on holding on to. Holding on to what? There is

holding on to things longed for, for instance existence or opinions, traditions etc. This holding on to then, what is its support? This Longing we just talked about. And what is the support for longing then? Feeling. This is easy enough to understand right? If we long for something tasty, nice, beautiful, it is because of this niceness, a nice feeling... Well..., we have to be careful, because even with the WPOV we would say we understand this. But we are not talking about the WPOV here, still the CPOV applies. It could be the CPOV is easy enough to see in the case of the front and back of our cheese, but we are so used to feeling and longing from a WPOV we automatically switch back; don't use the WPOV here. And by what is feeling supported? Contact. If there was no contact there would be no difference, no experience and thus no feeling. Thus for contact there must be a difference; it must be able to be contacted, to be able to see for seeing — which is just seeing — to be able to hear for hearing — which is just hearing — etc. in short, the six bases are the support for the six contacts; as is the sixfold base for contact. (The following items can use a bit of explaining, for now I'll just list them.) And what is the support for the sixfold base? Name-and-Form, and name-and-form? Conscious, and conscious? Inclinations, and inclinations? Not-Knowing.

Seeing how suffering arises we can now understand how to end this: we need to remove the supporting bars so this whole building falls down. Thus with the ending of not-knowing Inclinations ends, with inclinations ending Conscious ends, with conscious ending Name-and-Form ends, with name-and-form ending Sixfold base ends, with sixfold base ending Contact ends, with contact ending Feeling ends, with feeling ending Longing ends, with longing ending Holding on to ends, with holding on to ending Existence ends, with existence ending Birth ends, with birth ending, Ageing-And-Dying ends and with the ending of ageing-and-dying this whole mass of Suffering ends.

— When we are talking about the stopping of birth, feeling, etc., and it sounds a bit gloomy, it shows us how easily we forget our basics and implications. Didn't we talk about how bad can't come from good, that good comes from siding with the good? And gloomy, does it side with wholesome (happiness) or with the unwholesome (unhappiness)? So although we might think we follow this logically we then, when gloomy, misunderstand.

In the sermons we can find other occurrences too, the principle stays the same of course (applying the CPOV instead of the WPOV):

There being this, this is. With the arising of this, this arises. There not being this, this is not. With the cessation of this, this ceases (SN12.37).

5.2 Sixfold Base

Imagine a swimming pool with its base made of heavy concrete plates. The water is perfectly still. Then suddenly from the middle to the end all the plates drop down one foot. What happens to the water? It now flows right? We got ourselves a tiny waterfall.

First when there was no difference in the base the water was still. There was no higher or lower part to discern. But just like the water moved, so do we. As with the carrot hanging on a stick we are moved by our thirst. And just like the water we then got a difference in base too. We thirst for things we don't have. Differences in sights, sounds, and so on. So there got to be differences in eye-base, ear-base etc. too.

— We call it eye because of its function, not for being an organ. Warmth and pressure with the ear-organ would thus be with the body, not the ear, as base.

A difference in the eye-base is the thirst for visuals between have and not-have. So we would, just like our pool, have a higher and a lower base. But which part is here the higher and which would the be lower? That depends. Since there is no height it depends on where we point at. Just like our cheese its back and front. From the viewpoint of the eye, or sight, we could speak of closer and further, or inner (here) and outer (not-here, there).

The thirst for visuals, between have and not-have, is a difference (experience, see 'The Art Gallery'). Feeling arises with these six's base for contact. A difference in the sight spectrum, we could call seeing. A difference in the sound spectrum, hearing and so on. If we would not ever have been able to experience sight would there be any longing for it? Would we long for something we never experienced nor imagined its existence? Of course not, we don't long for what we don't miss. So, if there was no experience would there then be a difference? Also not right? Can we see something without experiences? Also not. Thus, the relationship between sight-experience and the eye-base is a necessary one; it is the CPOV. — Note here and there I switch contexts a little, just to get my point across; Dependent-co-arising is not about *us* longing, feeling, etc. it is about cessation of longing, feeling, etc. itself.

Explained this way you might perhaps see why these bases stop when not-knowing stops, why it stops with the stopping of greed; it is because then a difference (depending on thirst) isn't there.

5.3 Name-and-Form

Suppose you walk with your arm straight ahead and your eyes closed. And you bump into a panel in front of you. Your arm might bent a bit because of the pressure, *resistance*, and you understood you hit something on your way. Perhaps because of the sound and feel you get the impression you hit a glass panel and roughly you might have gotten an impression about its size or thickness too. This information you got out of your earlier experiences with glass. You know what glass is like. Your whole life you've been with glass. And it doesn't matter if the glass is coloured or not but if you are able to look at it you might know this too. If it turns out the panel was made out of wood we would be rather surprised right? The information we got from our older experiences and the information we retrieved while bumping against the panel didn't match.

Yet it did stop us all the same. What we know is there was friction, resistance, and with our interpretation we combined this into a 'story'. You know you hit the panel with your arm and this is in the story too. Someone who has always been blind doesn't know what his or her arm looks like, in that story this particular information is omitted. Or when disgusted with glass the experience would be different too, even though the touch-resistance is somewhat similar. While this story-making is very handy in daily life, if I say bananas you already know a lot about them, it is a lot about story-making and thus further away from knowing.

Suppose you would pick up a rock and find it heavy. And another rock, which you find lighter. Then you would have picked up a heavier rock and a lighter one. But they are heavier or lighter *because* of you... the rocks don't have any notion about their weight. This measuring is something you brought in. So it quickly becomes a story. It gets quickly *tagged*. Here we see this tagging doesn't necessarily mean big or old stories.

If you sit and relax you might notice you don't feel your hands or you might feel them differently. If you know what your hands normally look or feel like, chances are you interpreted, manipulate, 'correct', this current experience with your normal one. Though through practise you might become more and more aware of this, and see this story-making doesn't always have to be made more than it already is.

If we both sit in a room but I sit on a pushpin, this experience would be 'here' where I sit and not 'there' with you. Although the happening is in the same room so to speak, it isn't your experience. You can't register it, you don't

have this difference, this tagging and the resistance, existing for you. While I do register this happening, which is my experience. So, an experience is this noticing, registering, knowing of a happening. It is how this happening presents itself (to me).

This *tagged-resistance* — a happening — is name-and-matter. Name is this tagging, labelling, naming; inclined by feeling, perception, will, contact and attention. Matter is the resistance, oppression, friction; the fiery-, airy-, watery- and earthy aspects and their derivatives, of the happening. Name-and-Matter is what we are conscious of. Or valid: what conscious is conscious of, which is just 'with conscious'. When there is name-and-matter there is conscious and when there is conscious there is name-and-matter; they are each others' support (SN12.65).

Of course, talking about matter is a little abstract. That which we call matter we discern as violation, infringement, breach, breaking, deforming, of boundaries. Just as we saw in our examples above. As it thus deforms, it is called Form. Then together with Name we got Name-and-Form.

5.4 Conscious

Conscious, subconscious and unconscious

Normally when we are conscious, it somewhat means we can register and respond to things. We are aware, not not-aware. But we are not aware of everything around us with the same intensity. Perhaps we have an itch and we scratch without paying attention to it. It is not we didn't register the itch, else we wouldn't have responded to it, but there were for us more important things to pay attention to. Scratching is something we are used to do, it is not a new way of manoeuvring, it is easy, we can do this without much effort, it doesn't require a whole lot attention. If something else needs a lot more attention we just scratch and, as it served its purpose, be done with it. We even might forget doing it. Just like we can forget many other things.

This is not only the case for simple tasks but for more complicated ones as well, even those just recently done. Then, confronted, people might indicate they acted without being conscious. Without being conscious? Unconscious? This sounds strange right? But we get to use the term subconscious. I don't know whether it has always been the case, but people are not only saying they might have done something subconsciously, something can be done *by* their subconscious as well ('Perhaps my subconscious did this'). And it is widely (wildly) accepted we do have a thing called subconscious. But forgetting, paying attention (focussing, giving priority) are very common aspects. We seem to accept more easily we may have forgotten something when it happened longer ago, but this mechanism is just the same. We don't really need a subconscious for this. Whether we know it or not, people shift. From being conscious to 'having a conscious' from subconsciously to 'a subconscious' and now suddenly we got stuck with all these things. Basically it is muddled thinking and creating 'a self' or 'a soul' or parts of it. For some the subconscious might be part of the conscious for others not, but it seems to be part of you, your self, what you are.

We might think when someone can't register and respond he or she is not conscious but unconscious. But how do we know this is so? When the tooth pain is gone are we then unconscious? Not so right? We are not conscious of the pain, which is gone, but we are conscious of other things. And unless awakened this whole mass of suffering is still in tact, even when dying (see 'Life and Death'). When dead the body has grown cold, yet when the body is still warm there is still life (SN41.6). Even if we would come up with an idea like 'this person is neither dead nor alive', even then there must be name-and-form, conscious, feeling, and so on. How could we then maintain

conscious not being there? When someone is unconscious we can only truly say there is no response perceived by us.

Subconscious and unconscious might perhaps be things we think we are familiar with but there does not seem to be a need for them apart from communicating about the intensity, level, degree of awareness, knowing, *cognition*. We know what we experience is dependent. And thus, taking conscious, unconscious or subconscious as a not-dependent thing goes against what we know. Whatever you find is there for you, it is dependent. And when you find it, experience it or what ever, it means you are conscious of it.

Location

Generally speaking we have a body (*kaya*) and mind (*citta*). They are two different things; a mind is not physical and this body not mental. When we personify things we attribute human nature to not-humans e.g. 'The Teaching says'. But in this materialistic oriented world we are so used to cope with materials we 'materialize' things; we give physical attributes to non-physicals. A physical attribute is for example 'colour'. There are things with no-colour as well, so when we think of conscious having no colour it may not sound to strange. But we have to be careful because no-colour depends on colour and vice versa, so we are talking about the colour-spectrum here, which applies *only* to matter. It isn't the case conscious has no colour, colour doesn't even apply. Perhaps we like to make things physical, tangible, because they then exist for us? And the more we get into that way of thinking, the more a conscious feels like a thing and a subconscious too for that matter (pun intended). Physical objects we can (often) point at, they have a location. So perhaps we are trying to do this with non-physicals too?

Of course, when something is, it is here or there. So, we can't say conscious has no location. But it is just there where name-and-form is, it is dependent. It is in this way we can justly speak of a location. And like physicals, things can be *not* here or there. Perhaps we think this off conscious too? Maybe this is, partly, why we need an unconscious?

Cognizing name-and-form

Suppose you are thinking of pickled cucumbers (pickles). Perhaps you can even see the colour, and almost smell and taste them. Perhaps, if you grave for them, water is already running in your mouth. You prepared to eat them already. Ha. But the sour you can only experience through the taste-base. You know sour, you can remember what it is like. If you are not eating pickles right now, is there then (pickle-)taste-conscious? Of course not. There can

be (pickle-taste-)mind-conscious which is a different thing (this way there are six kinds of conscious; we can be conscious of changes in the six spectra). There is (pickle-)taste-conscious when we are actually eating pickles. Well, without a tongue one can still eat. So let's say we need all the internal required to taste. The pickles then being the external name-and-form (SN12.19).

If we fell back to the WPOV, we think because we have the taste-base and an external object, while being conscious about it, we experience taste and then feeling — or something along that way of thinking. But with the CPOV we understand they *arise and cease together*. Those things can be *known*, discerned, when there *is* taste, when there *is* feeling. In daily speech we use the WPOV, but to see what is really going on, to understand, we need the CPOV. If the pickle is on the other side of the room we can't taste it. Then there is *no base* for taste, no external-taste-base nor an internal one (regarding the sour that is). For taste-conscious to exist we need a difference. The 'tongue' — or rather the internal taste base — and the external name-and-form. So, we *know* we taste when we taste, cognize, when we are conscious of it. Or valid: conscious is conscious of it, which is just 'with conscious'.

Foundation of cognizing

In 'Name-and-Form' we said: '*... quickly becomes a story. It gets quickly tagged*' and '*... see this story-making doesn't always have to be made more than it already is*'.

Suppose someone stepped on your toes while carelessly passing by and you find you want to retaliate in some way, which is your experience; a happening (name-and-form) which you are conscious of. For which, as an example, the underlying situation of '*I have pain in my toes caused by someone stepping on them while passing by carelessly*' is present first.

For which '*I have pain in my toes caused by someone stepping on them while passing by*' is present first.

For which '*I have pain in my toes caused by someone stepping on them*' is present first.

For which '*I have pain in my toes caused by someone*' is present first.

For which '*I have pain in my toes*' is present first.

For which '*I have pain*' is present first.

For which '*I have*' is present first.

For which '*I*' is present first.

So we can perhaps see here how conscious can build up, grows. It grabs on conscious and name-and-form which fueled forms a new thing to hold on to. And while such a newer experience might cease an underlying one can endure. In cognizing this whole thing is cognized, all these underlying things come along. And with these enduring underlyings we can perhaps see how it seems for this '*I*' to endure. When in this way conscious holds on conscious, it keeps being conscious of course; it still is conscious which cognizes.

5.5 Inclinations

Inclination: tendency, leaning, desire, wish, impulse, bent; liking, preference, interest, taste; bending, slope, slant, rise, angle

‘Matter’, when cognized, is already directed or orchestrated — what is cognized is name-and-form. This directing starts on a very generic level of experience (see ‘Knowing and Believing’). In a way the more particular levels are inheriting their properties from the more general ones, just as our wall inherited its characteristics from its building-blocks (see ‘The Barn’). Like our building-blocks, which can be barn-building-blocks or house-building-blocks, there are different ones for our experience too, thus for body, speech or mind. They form what we are inclined to. A barn-wall is built as barn-wall because we intent to. Likewise speech is built, by a speech-building-block, because we are inclined to speak, to communicate, so this includes thinking, reasoning, judging, etc. which is the *speech-inclination*. Breathing, scratching, eating, drinking are things related to body, this is the *body-inclination*. And *mind-inclination* covers things related to mind like feelings, moods, perceptions.

But building-blocks, f.i. for a wall, have properties themselves too right? A building-block made out of wood has different ones than a building-block made out of stone, yet they have similar ones as well else they wouldn’t both be building-blocks. A property could be size, colour, weight, the ability to stack, and so on. Likewise we got properties for the body-, speech-, and mind building-blocks. What do the body-, speech- and mind-inclination have in common? They arise, change — but staying the same from another point of view — and cease. All things we can experience *come, stay-and-change* and *go* right? So things derived from them do have these same qualities too.

We could try to find even a more generic level. What do these properties have as properties? But in AN3.47 we can read these are the building-blocks themselves; they are recursive.

In ‘The Football Player’ we talked about what we do leads to results: an improvement; it increases. But we didn’t say how. It is through this recursiveness. Each level or layer inherits from a more general one and so this builds up, stacks, adds up. The ability to build up, add up, is a basic too. Adding is just a basic operation and arithmetic has nothing to do with belief either. This building up is an increase but look at our barn-house-wall for example. If a wall got every stone stacked on top of each other, neatly aligned, it is rather weak. But a sturdy wall has its row-stones overlapping so every part

is covered by the stones from another row. And like our wall, our suffering is sturdy too. In 'Fed Up' we talked about a vicious circle, a self-regulating mechanism which reinforces itself through a feedback loop (the output, after processing, is routed back as input) and in this case the in- and output are unwelcome, unwholesome, hence vicious. This reinforcing should be very simple in its nature since it is something which works on each and every level. Even at a high level where intention seems more like a direction; an inclination. So which 'elementary process' leads to more sturdiness? It is not so different from stacking bricks so they overlap; for which each next row's stones are just moved a bit to the left or right. Movement is of course not chaotic. How do things move? They follow their nature. Just as water flows from a higher to a lower point. We don't think water *wants* to go a certain way, even though we can use this in our speech, but this is what water does. It just goes to a certain direction, slanting, sloping, alternating between two points (ends of a spectrum); just like the slider of our colour picker tool. This movement we are talking about *is* change. The ability to build-up is just another way of talking about 'change while enduring' which *is* a characteristic of *Inclinations* (AN3.47); it too is inclined.

Perhaps we understand better we used CPOV mostly to illustrate the *necessity* of a relation — the arising and ceasing. The relation itself, change while enduring, is a feedback loop. Phrases and implications from sermons like 'conscious depends on conscious' or 'recollection develops recollection', and so on, might now make more sense. To include this feedback system in our way of thinking we could call this the CPOV+ (a new label for a new content).

This feedback system is very counter-intuitive and here too, just as with our CPOV, we might keep switching back to causality. Even when we 'think we understand' we might still cut things up into casual chains and sneakily find ourselves moving to causality again. Causality can put us on the wrong foot very fast. But not only in that way; we know when the front and back are gone our cheese is gone right? We think of *us*, when thus gone, as either existing or not-existing. But what we are then in fact doing is applying the WPOV as *background* for our CPOV, implying with the ending of suffering there *is* suffering. While if the CPOV+ is applied thoroughly, we come to understand 'we then (neither) exist and/(n)or not-exist' is muddled thinking. Normally we mis take opposites (extremes) as ends, 'selves'. White vs black, life vs death, exists vs not-exists. We don't see **co-arisen** and **co-arising** as ends (AN6.61). Of course there is no turning back from cessation; how could it be a spectrum's end? What we normally take as 'ceasing' (viz. not-existing, death, an end) is just an alternation between life and its arising.

If we reread 'Dependent-Co-Arising' we can keep this CPOV+ in the back of our head. See how from that chapter the phrase '*In a moment of insight*' got even more depth? It would be an overkill to try to grasp this in the *fullest* range possible though, if such a thing would even be conceivable at all. The best way to tackle this problem, of reasoning about a feedback system, is to describe the principle and the system as a whole. Which was exactly what the Buddha did.

With *Inclinations* as feedback loop, we see how it is-and-gets co-arisen. But what does this tell us? Have you ever seen how some people ride bikes and get into trouble when something in their back is calling for attention? They steer where they look at right? We steer and we go. Aim and move, aim and fire, think and act, think and become. So, look where you want to go, aim for your target (see 'The Football Field'). This way we get either a more stable vicious circle or we unwind this stableness with a virtuous one. Understanding this we now don't need to rely to manage our actions to end suffering with misunderstood, mismatched, results but we can manage our actions **by direction** — never mind a misinterpreted 'result'.

Basically suffering is a straw man (argument). We are continuously battling against things we don't like (sickness, ageing-and-dying, etc.) not seeing we set the whole thing up ourselves in the first place. So, it is this ignorance, this blindness, this *not-knowing* which feeds or supports this. 'We set it up ourselves' is just a way of (an ill) expression though, it is 'aimed' *because* it is dependent fed by ignorance.

5.6 Not-Knowing

When something is present it is here. And when it is absent it isn't. Suppose there is no anger now then you can say it is absent. But anger can pop up again, so was it really gone?

Now we can go a little overboard with this way of thinking, but luckily we find in the suttas there is no need to do so: What is present is here; what is not, not. Which doesn't mean it is then uprooted (SN46.38). Thus when anger is not present it is absent, gone. Which doesn't mean its absence is nothing or that it should be understood as present anger, no, it is absent but present *as* absence, as possibility. Hence it is still possible to become angry.

When something is present it is not-absent and when absent not-present. Both are defined by what they are not. Presence is a matter of attendance. Something which is attended to becomes the foreground of our attention, it becomes 'seen'. And what it is not, the absence, becomes the background. Discernment is dependent on this difference between fore- and background (see 'The Art Gallery') so you can't really take a foreground out of its background so to speak; they depend on each other. A 'thing' is not its not-dependent self.

If we apply this way of thinking to not-knowing then, logically, *not* not-knowing (knowing) should be at the back. But how could something be fed, supported, with knowing be not-knowing? This would be a contradiction. So, when there is not-knowing there can't be another *more* background be discerned. Therefore not-knowing is the ultimate background. And it is in the same way for knowing actually. However when knowing is settled at the back, then not-knowing can't be any more. Not-knowing can't grow out of knowing, which too would be a contradiction.

We suffer and to some extent we know this, even though we don't fully get why or how this is. Not-knowing is then already in its right place; at the back. And there must be at least some degree of knowing present to be able to make this difference with not-knowing. How else could not-knowing (or something else for that matter) otherwise even be known? The most basic form of knowing is exactly the discernment of what is present (see 'Knowing and Believing').

For 'to be present' there must be something to be present, which (as presence) is thus already inclined, supported, fed, by its background; by not-knowing. So not-knowing comes first then (for the presence of this inclined thing) in-

clinations. Thus we got with not-knowing inclinations and with inclinations the presence, discernment, cognition, of the inclined thing:

With not-knowing Inclinations, with inclinations Conscious, with conscious Name-and-Form.

6 Particulars

We saw that the CPOV does not involve time, which is thus also the case with Dependent-Co-Arising. 'But', one might ask when misunderstood, 'how should I see all this? How should I look at it *with time*? After all I know that I was born and will die someday. If these things are arising and ceasing together, are they then now present? Do they then mean something else than what is normally understood by them?'

6.1 Time

In 'Life and Death' we said: *'Normally we would apply a WPOV — first we are born, then we will die — but this is a bit muddled since we are not really looking at life and death there but at 'me' — another context or background'.*

Adding time to the principle does mean to talk about a particular. In this case however, this view of time as in 'first birth then death', is the WPOV. And it is the WPOV which is mistaken as principle. So, if we need to talk about this particular we should do so without the WPOV. But first an illustration.

Suppose years ago you tasted a sweet apple and you tried to grow a tree out of its seeds. The work paid off and you are holding one of its fruits. This apple is not the same as the first. Yet you might have hope for the apple to be as sweet as its ancestor. After all, there is a chance it inherited the same properties. At the time you didn't know if a tree would grow, whether the tree would carry fruits, etc. But you did recognize its *potential*. You would have been surprised if the tree gave fruit to sour bananas. This would not have been possible; this potential was not there present to begin with.

Time we know as *past*, *present* and as *future*. We can say our *present* aging(-and-dying) dependent on an earlier, (thus) *past*, birth. Without this *past* birth *this* aging(-and-dying) wouldn't have been. And if this aging(-and-dying) wasn't, this past birth wasn't. Or, keeping the illustration with the apple in mind, this specific-past-birth-with-this-(kind of)-potential wasn't. Thus this present aging(-and-dying) *depends* on the this-present-aging-and-dying-potential-of-this-past-birth. Which is how past is present (*as past*). That there is this potential (though it is 'birth' morphed into aging-and-dying, 'past' morphed into 'present') is a commonly held view. After all we do find people saying one is (un)lucky to be born in such or so family or caste, or it is understood as in inheritance and heredity, thus this potential is somewhat seen, expected, as to be present. And it will fulfil the inclined possibilities of aging-and-dying too. It is when fruit is not fertile potentials and possibilities will have become ceased (in this way death is a possibility too).

So, being (*the present*) comes with inclined potentials (*the past*), pregnant with inclined possibilities (*the future*). Hence past and future are not determined as in 'determinism', but determined as in chosen or possible 'possibilities'. Depending on the aim — on the development of wisdom — some are more likely to be experienced than others. These potentials and possibilities are *Inclinations*. 'Chosen' or 'possible' says something about how inclined these Inclinations are: As potential (past), actual (present), and possibilities (fu-

ture); thus how past and future are experienced in the present, as potential and possibilities.

— The difference between past, present and future Inclinations is a matter of presence; it *depends* on their way of being present (as *were, are, can be*). Being present, the matter of presence, *is* to be cognized (see 'Name-and-Form' and 'Conscious'). Thus: *With Inclinations, conscious*.

6.2 Me

'Normally we would apply a WPOV — first we are born, then we will die — but this is a bit muddled since we are not really looking at life and death there but at 'me' — another context or background'.

'But', one might still wonder, 'apart from the time aspect, what about the *me* then?' Well, what about you? What do you consider to be 'you'?

Usually we see ourselves as this composition of body and mind, which we are so used to it automatically comes with the WPOV attached. We could make use of another classification, based on what could be discovered. This then leads to groups of matter, feeling, perception, conscious and inclinations. All matter (coarse or fine, internal or external, in the past, future and the present, inferior or superior, far or near) belongs to the matter group. Matter is matter through and through, which means it is void, empty, of anything else. There are for example no feelings in matter (feelings belong to the feeling group). Matter seen as everlasting, not subject to change, does not exist, but matter which is not permanent, subjected to change, does. And it is similar with these other groups.

But we should not forget what the problem was; Suffering. Which comes with the holding to any, or a combination of particulars, of these groups as self. Feel free to play with it, whatever you regard as self see if you can make it fit into one of them. You'll notice you can't find anything you identify with, which doesn't fall within these five groups of holding; there is no attachment found apart from them.

With identification there is holding on to things outside full control. They come and go as they please. So it would be wise not to keep holding on to them to such an extent they can cause trouble. Identification comes with attachment, not without, and with attachment comes this sense of self. Which is thus really about regarding things which are not-self (see 'Mortgage') as self. Making it about self, while it is not about self, is actually a form of conceit. Which in its most subtle form is 'I am'.

Basically we are taking things up as I, mine, belonging to me, self, while actually they don't belong to anyone at all. We seek dependence to things which are outside our full control (which is just a recipe for disaster really). Being pleased with the limited control, we do not see the huge interest which comes with it. We are in debt. And when it is time to pay, we suffer.

7 Realization

With the right view, understanding, we can summon this all up with one word: Suffering. It is suffering which arises and ceases. Since we experience suffering we now understand there must be a difference, dependence. And being dependent it is supported, set up, aimed, orchestrated, inclined, intended, willed in the CPOV+ way. To end it we need to remove its support, which also is dependent. When there is suffering there is not not-suffering. Since both are dependent, aimed for, willed, but rule each other out, we either set the things up for the increase of the support of suffering or for the decrease of this support. We learned wholesome actions lead to the *ending* of actions. So targeting, aiming, inclining to the right side leads to the end of inclinations; to *the uninclined*.

At this point we are *still* not much further as in 'Fed Up': 'What goes around comes around' or 'you reap what you sow'. Even though we might perhaps understand even better what to do and why. We saw this approach, of not playing the game of extremes, was understood by the Buddha while not being a Buddha yet. So, it is not about learning this, which is just part of the path, it is about actually realizing it, reaching the goal, the cessation of suffering.

7.1 Calm and Insight

To break through we need to develop calm and insight, both siding with knowing. Through calm our longing fades and through insight our not-knowing fades (AN2.31).

This longing we can recognize as the building up of Inclinations (intentions, will, desire, thirst, longing) supported by not-knowing. From our CPOV+ we know we can't remove a back from its front, they come and go together. Here likewise we remove inclinations and not-knowing together. Calm diminishes inclinations and insight diminishes not-knowing. And with the fading of not-knowing inclinations fades and with the fading of inclinations not-knowing fades.

'Samatho ca vipassana ca. Ayam vuccati, bhikkhave, asankhata-gamimaggo.'

'Calm and insight, is called the-way-to-the-uninclined' (SN43.2).

So we see why they side with wisdom, both need to be developed and their development is gradual. Like *Inclination* builds up (a vicious circle) it builds down (a virtuous one). If we didn't get 'calm' we just would be running after our senses, trying to fill this empty promise and just be too busy with that. And without 'knowing' we don't even see we are doing this, we would not understand this empty promise. We would only create more desire and get more chained in.

But now we know what to do: things siding with the wholesome. And we need to be sharp, to see the things as (or for what) they are, else we might find ourselves having turned and build things up, ready to experience suffering again.

We already talked a lot about the knowing part so let's now talk a bit about concentration leading to the kind of calm which leads to the fading of greed.

7.2 Concentration

In 'Breaking Through' we talked about the problem of forgetting what we learned and practised. And things could turn from bad to worse because of it. But we also said we are in luck because we got the Teaching made available to us. This must then mean practising, understanding, following, the Teaching must contain some insurance so we won't turn from bad to worse right? And we all can understand if there is such a thing as awakening, enlightenment, it entails not turning to the wrong side.

From the sermons we can learn the development is gradual and there are three stages, before suffering ends, where we already have this insurance. The first stage is called stream-entry. When we know for ourselves we don't rely on others (see 'Knowing and Believing'). Then we can stand on our own; we become emancipated. Emancipation (*vimutti*) got this feature of being less-to-not dependent which is precisely where this insurance or security comes from. If falling back would be possible it would be dependent and thus not emancipated, not steadfast, not standing on its own. Though as long as suffering hasn't ended, it is not not-dependent either.

This security is reached by practising the Noble Eightfold Path. Walking on this path will gradually turn our actions, aiming to the right side. It counters the vicious cycle (see 'Inclinations') with a virtuous one. This path contains eight factors grouped into three: *right view and right attitude* — the group of wisdom (*panna*), *right speech, right doing and right livelihood* — the group of conduct (*sila*) and *right effort, right recollection and right concentration* — the group of concentration (*samadhi*).

Right concentration is supported by the other factors of the path (SN45.28). And in AN4.41 we read there are four ways, types, of developments of concentration. One type develops the four radiances (*jhanas*), which are praised by the Buddha as the *proper radiance* and are also referred to as the **right concentration**. Further it is said to be *nice to abide* in them. Another kind of development is by light (sight, vision) perception, a base for *psychic power* (SN51.20). Then there is the knowing of feelings, perceptions and thoughts: developing recollection and awareness (*satisampajana*) which leads to *stream-entry*. And the forth way of development of concentration is by focusing on the nature of the five groups of holding (collections which we hold on to, identify with) leading to all the stages of awakening (*stream-entry and up*).

Only the first kind is called the **right concentration** and praised as **radiance**. Are the others not right then? Saying stream-entry and further could be at-

tained with the wrong concentration sounds strange right? So what is going on here then?

In AN6.70 we read, regarding the second way of development of concentration leading to psychic powers, it is impossible to get those powers without concentration which is peaceful, sublime, and one of those powers *is* awakening. So, we see each of these other kinds of developments of concentration can cut away doubt too. Doubt is one of the five hindrances (*viz. sense-desire, ill will, sloth-and-torpor, restlessness-and-remorse, and doubt*), these are factors which obstruct wisdom. And with them gone the way is open for radiance and further, the stilling of even the mind-inclination up to liberation. So we could say by calling only the first kind right concentration, the message of the Buddha is something like this: 'After you have done your job, you can enjoy this nice abiding' (all the factors are totally right when nothing remains to be done). Since the other factors support right concentration and to abide in pleasantness is radiance, we can say right concentration is radiance; it is the culmination, the conclusion.

This concentration isn't always obtained. SN22.88 seems to say this only matters to people who think concentration is super important (not having it, making a problem about it; thus put hindrances up). What is important is getting, developing understanding. Of course understanding needs concentration and vice versa. It is not like there is no concentration in there. It is not that for one who understands 'calm' isn't reached or for one who is calm 'understanding' isn't reached. And there are differences, preferences, too. For some their calm is more (easily) developed, for others their understanding. But this does not matter. We work with what we got. Calm can be used as a base to develop understanding and understanding can be used as a base to develop calm. If we got neither we need to develop both through developing recollection and awareness and if we got both we make further use of them.

When we study we think, ponder, examine, contemplate. Reading falls under listening, so we are listening and thinking; two ways of developing understanding (radiance being the third). So studying the *sermons* involves all this too. They are good themes themselves. And who knows, perhaps for the duration of a finger snap we get into that pleasure, that concentration already and who is there to say it isn't enough to qualify as fulfilment of concentration? We might have this idea we need to sit long, as if it is utmost important and to difficult to do, but it just might be all these kinds of thought are putting a barrier up, they just obstruct. And you already know engaging in this leads to results, leads to more engaging. Don't be too heavy on things, keep it light. Aim for the right direction.

So the theme (food, support) on which we concentrate can differ (right or wrong kind of concentration), the intensity can differ and whether we master it or not can differ (getting in and out that intensity when we want), but concentration is just concentration. It too is supported, dependent in a CPOV+ way. In our daily life we all have concentration and we all experience different strengths. To learn something new we might have to concentrate harder then when eating an apple for example. And it might be we experience some kind of absorption, flow, where things feel pleasant or brighter, etc., too. But no matter the experience, when not supported by the other factors of the path we got for us the wrong kind of concentration; we then develop the *wrong eightfold path*.

Now that we can understand a bit what we can do with concentration, what it is we use it for, lets talk a little more about developing it.

7.3 Radiance

In 'The Football Player' we talked about action (kamma) and result (vipakka); good comes from doing good. And we saw doing good leads to the stopping of action (see 'Breaking Through') with which this suffering stops.

Before doing something we think about it. In MN19 we see the Buddha said no harm would come from thinking good thoughts. This is in line with the basics right? But a problem is you can't sit still and just think good thoughts for a very long time. Your body will get tired and then your mind gets disturbed from which you get no concentration. If you have no concentration you can't keep focusing. The Buddha then switched to radiance.

— Radiance? The pali word *jhana* is often translated as meditation or absorption or is left untranslated. Further it is supposed to be related to the burning of a flame. I find meditation vague (what is it you exactly do?). Absorption might have this connotation of not being aware, in that case this would not be proper. But leaving it untranslated does not make it more helpful. Radiance has no doubt its own problems but it also seem to emphasise a more active and defined side. There are many kinds of meditations and activities which we call meditation. Since we use it as such they are meditations but not necessarily *radiancing* right? So there is this benefit. In daily life we can see something *resembling* this feature. When someone is feeling happy this person can be warmed up, glowing, shining, beaming, too. Of course this is not exactly the same, but it is something we know and thus handy to relate to. This radiance is natural, it is when the defilements (kilesas) are abandoned: when happy and filled with joy. And happiness-and-joy *is* what we will be generating, just not out of the enjoyment from our senses. Therefore, at least for the time being, I'll be using radiance.

So, if for some reason you can't do radiance don't worry. Just think good thoughts. We can't keep this up for a very long time but chances are this is long enough for us, to practise, anyway. If we don't know this, we might have some idea of how things should be like and we try to live up to it. Which can be very unpleasant, painful even. Feeling frustrated about this, thinking sitting quietly gives rise to boredom, and so on, are just thoughts which imply the diminishing of suffering leads to *more* suffering, not less. And how can this be, right? Don't manage actions by mismatched results, manage by direction. So, as in accordance with our basics, better sit with nice thoughts than to sit in despair or with doubts.

If thinking nice thoughts was good but too heavy to keep up, we can imag-

ine a lighter thing would be having no thoughts at all. And we can imagine to stop thoughts the development could be going from something like having normal thoughts, to pleasant thoughts, to cosy, to softer, lighter, till... no thoughts? We might not know if this is possible but we do understand when we worry we are experiencing heavy thoughts and when we are at ease our thoughts are already feeling lighter, *we* feel lighter. Since even pleasant thoughts are heavy, tiresome in the long run, lighter thoughts would then already be easier to keep up. Whether the stopping of thoughts is possible for us or not, it does not matter. The way to lighter and stopping is just the same. It is gradual.

We know when we are stressed or angry we feel it in our body. This means there is a connection. Perhaps it is then not so strange to think getting lighter thoughts could be supported by relaxing our body. So if you sit, sit comfortable. When you sit *to* comfortable though, it is pleasant but only at the start. It is more comfortable to sit stable. We needed concentration for the development of calm, so while practising we keep try to calm down, relax, too. We calm our body and we calm our mind.

But what are nice or good thoughts? Suppose you wish all people being well and happy, this would be nice right? But if you are thinking about people chances are, when unskilled, sooner or later your thoughts go towards *certain* people. People who are dear to you for example. But some of them might be sick others may have died. Or your thoughts go to those who might have wronged you, upset you etc. This way your nice thoughts might get disturbed very fast. And being disturbed does not lead to calm right? So, instead of picking anything we like, or just sound good, we can pick a for us more beneficial theme, a theme by which we don't get moved so fast. From the previous chapters we know good thoughts are those not rooted in greed, anger or not-knowing. And from the types of developments of concentration (see 'Concentration') we can understand helpful themes can be about thoughts, feelings, contemplation on the five groups of holding, and so on too. A lot more themes can be found in the sermons as well. Some benefit from this theme some from another. But even with a theme our thoughts can go all over the place right? Well, don't worry, just try to have *more* good thoughts than bad ones.

So we pick a theme, for example the breath which is a general theme suitable to all temperaments. We can train to experience our whole body while being aware of our, longer or shorter, in and out breaths. We don't need to focus on any body-part specifically to know whether our breath goes in or out. It is not different from being aware of our posture. We know whether we sit or stand right? Or if we bend our arm slightly or with a big angle, we don't need

to focus on any part to know this either. We know this when we attend to it. It is just the same with the breath. We might still forget we are practising, still drifting off but we'll be quicker notice it. And then, right there, we already stopped drifting and we can just continue. This 'not forgetting', 'tying' to the breath is the factor of recollection. It weakens the attention our senses are trying to get. Because breathing is connected to the body this practise is known as recollection directed at the body (*kayagatasati*). Other themes like the gross anatomy or the postures of your body belong to this same category as well.

— As child, with a fear for monsters under the bed, I noticed thoughts about nice things (started with holiday presents) would let me fall asleep comfortably. Getting used to this felt more and more deluding, replacing one imagination with another, yet it worked. It was only later, after getting acquainted with the Dhamma, when I noticed we could just look at the body *as* body; the body not as for appropriation of the world but as it is, its nature. With which first there is no going after what is not here, thus not negative, and secondly it provides the relief of any negative not here. Thus by attending to the actual we get a double positive if you like (normally nice things come with greed attached). How is this as fast-track, for building a virtuous circle? As such, practises like 'body as body', 'feelings as feelings', etc. are as lanes on a highway.

There are four kinds of such suitable areas where concentration from recollection can be fulfilled. The **body**, as mentioned, which depends on food. Then we have **feelings** (pleasant, unpleasant, neutral) which depends on contact. The **mind** (f.i. angry, distracted, calm, steady, concentrated, wide, contracted) which depends on name-and-form. And the last group dealing with the **law-of-nature**, what is factual regarding insight, understanding (f.i. reflecting on change, the hindrances, anti-hindrances, sixfold base, five groups of holding) which depends on attention. Developing recollection in either of these four areas, leads to the fulfilment of the seven prerequisites for awakening (*Bojjhanga*'s). These are anti-hindrances; they don't obstruct wisdom, they don't corrupt the mind. Those are: *recollection, investigation, energy, pleasure, calming down, concentration and equanimity* (again we see things like recollection develops recollection). When these seven are cultivated, they lead to emancipated-knowledge.

But this is not the proper radiance as praised by the Buddha. What we were doing is using (developing) right recollection, right effort, ..., right view, all the first seven factors of the path as support for the eight: right concentration. For radiance to be praised by the Buddha it involves the 1st, 2nd, 3th or 4th radiance (MN108). Those are lofty states to abide in, where first the

speech and then the bodily-inclination are gradually dropped. The sermons show to develop those we need to understand and get rid of the hindrances. With them gone their weight isn't felt anymore and delighting in this fact causes joy to arise. We then feel lighter, uplifted and with this joyful mind the body becomes calm. We feel at ease, content and being content the mind is said to become concentrated. Thus by recollecting and by being secluded from the hindrances, we turn inwards. And when we get this inner joy and pleasantness, from seclusion, we drench, saturate, suffuse ourselves. While for each next intensity, radiance, the grosser experience is dropped.

It is important to understand the hindrances; there is joy in them too. They are hindrances because they obstruct wisdom, not because there wouldn't be any joy in them. So we have to make sure we are not feeding them instead. Which is the case when the danger of their enjoyment is not seen for what it actually is; a bait. The results then still seem worth it. In a way you could say these hindrances are having us aimed towards the external, having to do with the outside world, as they keep us away from going inwards, going to this inner cosiness where it is nice to abide in; just as it is, just on its own.

A way to counter these hindrances *is* by practising recollection. If we practise, for example kayagatasati, we don't focus outwards (note it got this 'recollection develops recollection' in it). There are other ways to counter the hindrances too; it is not as if one antidote is always equally effective (AN7.61). To get to know more about the hindrances we can study the sermons. We can then learn to recognize them so we know what to do. From SN46.38 we learn they can be removed through studying too. This sermon also shows us how the mind is in such situation; it is eager, joyful, energetic, fully directed, active. Not bored, sluggish, darkish, sleepy, passive. Not passive at all. This energetic, active aspect is something which needs to be attended to. Without it laziness would find its way in. Yet we shouldn't focus on this too hard either else we would just become restless, so we have to put some evenness into the mix as well.

The radiances are, of course, dependent too, they too are set up, aimed for and willed; they too are not self. So depending on how we feed them (CPOV+) there is a difference. For those who do not walk the Noble Eightfold Path the radiances have temporarily effects, they don't lead to understanding, to emancipation (AN4.123). This is for us not the proper radiance; it is wrong concentration. For a learner they do lead to knowing but they are different than for those who did break through who, with nothing more remaining to be done, abide in this pleasantness; having achieved right concentration (SN54.13).

So, we see it is not about the radiances themselves. Since the Buddha abundantly taught about them (about their differences) this must then mean it must be beneficial for us to even learn about them. In what way could this be helpful? By describing the differences between the first, the second, and so on, we get to see there is a next thing to go to: it is a roadmap. A roadmap can be very handy in order to not to get lost and, in some way, we can see what comes ahead. To describe them only the differences are needed; it is as if someone asks 'which car is yours?' and you say 'the blue one over there'. It doesn't mean your car has no wheels, no engine, no steer. And if there are more blue ones you might say 'the blue one with the darker roof' or 'the first blue one' etc. Another benefit is to see this gradual-practise-of-stilling described as being pleasant, even when nothing remains to be done. If this was not the case, if there was no joy or if this was even a painful road, practising would *still* be the preferable thing to do (SN56.35). So this makes it even more inviting; a roadmap for a pleasant travel to a pleasant stay. It is not needed to take a stand about whether the radiances are achieved or not; just make sure you feed your concentration properly.

We saw our speech-inclination includes thinking (see 'Inclinations'). If lighter thoughts were too heavy to keep up, a lighter thing is to have no thoughts, no communicational-inclination at all. We are so used of having to deal with the outside world, we are even communicating with ourselves. We can perhaps imagine when we would not have to communicate, not to justify or explaining ourselves, a lot of what we do could be dropped right? If everything was just fine as it is, explaining, justifying, would just seem disturbing. We might not *know* if this is possible, after all it is not something we consider normal right? And the sermons do say exactly so; the four radiances are 'uttari manussadhamma', beyond what is humanly the norm. And what *is* the human norm? It is the world of the five senses; the cultivation of sense-enjoyments. Taking a vacation from all this, from our thoughts, might sound refreshing; perhaps it sounds as a relief. However, when we don't *know* we use 'thoughts' to come up with this view, not 'no-thoughts'. So, it is then mere an opinion or belief. But for what would this direct experience, of stilling the inclinations, be needed? It is for full understanding; the abandonment of our shackles.

7.4 Knowing

We started with things we can already know for ourselves and build on this accordingly. Although this way of thinking could be logically followed, still we might think ‘*well... I don’t know about that*’ or ‘*I just don’t buy it*’, etc. When we feel pain we know it hurts, then this doubt isn’t there. But why is it when we deal with this matter?

If we look at the sky we see it is blue. Even though we might have learned about the sunlight which is partially absorbed, blue being reflected, and if for some reason the sunlight would become reddish we would perceive colours differently compared how we do experience them now, we still say the sky *is* blue, the grass *is* green. Why? Because what we *think we know* does *not agree* with our direct experience. We do know the sky is blue and the grass is green because this is our experience, this is what is true for us. And it is the same with this matter. That is why we still can leave room to doubt, because no matter how valid it might all sound, it is then not our experience.

When we come to know, recognize, understand, our joy and desire for our straw man — whether it is lead by wisdom, trust or concentration — we learn to see for what it is and step by step, gradually, the chains which tighten us to suffering weaken till they are cut. Then this duality does not apply any more. Thus Not-Knowing ended and *with the ending of not-knowing Inclinations ended, with inclinations ending Conscious ended, with conscious ending Name-and-Form ended, with name-and-form ending Sixfold base ended, with sixfold base ending Contact ended, with contact ending Feeling ended, with feeling ending Longing ended, with longing ending Holding on to ended, with holding on to ending Existence ended, with existence ending Birth ended, with birth ending, Ageing-And-Dying ended and with the ending of ageing-and-dying this whole mass of Suffering ended.*

