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The Recollection on the Triple Gem (Tiratanaguna)

The Enlightened One (Buddha)

Then layman, thus must you train yourself:

I will be accomplished with unwavering loyalty to the Awakened One, like this:

Indeed the Fortunate One is thus:

Accomplished
Rightly and fully awakened
Peerless in wisdom and conduct
One Well-gone
Worlds-knower
Matchless guide of the advisable
Teacher of deities¹ and humans
Awakened and fortunate.

The Process (Dhamma)

I will be accomplished with unwavering loyalty to the Process, like this:

The Process of the Fortunate One is perfectly expounded

Immediate

Timeless

Verifiable

Progressive²

To be known by the wise

Each for themselves.

The Disciples (Sangha)

I will be accomplished with unwavering loyalty to the Community of Disciples, like this:

The Community of the Fortunate One's disciples has entered on the good way

¹ The Paali and Sanskrit word “deva”, related to “divine” in English, is often translated “god”. Devaa [pl.] are known as beautiful and kind beings that often are messengers. In a Christian culture, that place would be assigned to “angels”.

² Often translated as “leading onwards” I have tried to find an English single word equivalent.

The Community of the Fortunate One's disciples has entered on the straight way
The Community of the Fortunate One's disciples has entered on the proper way
The Community of the Fortunate One's disciples has entered on the complete way
That is to say
The four pairs of people
The eight types of people
This Community of the Fortunate One's disciples is:
Fit for gifts
Fit for hospitality
Fit for offerings
Fit for respectful greetings
As the incomparable field of merit for the world.

(Source Pali M i 37, A iii 285)

The Four Sublime Abidings (Brahmavihaara)

Kindliness

May all beings be free from ill-will, cruelty and trouble. May they ensure their own happiness.

Compassion

May all beings end all stress.

Sympathetic Joy

May all beings not be separated from the fruits of their good works.

Equanimity

All beings are owners of their actions³, heirs of them, produced by them, related to and supported by them. Whatever action⁴ they shall follow, whether for good or evil, of that they will be heir.

(Source Pali D iii 220, 223-4)

The Five Recollections

Mendicants⁵, these five things ought to be often contemplated by woman and man, by house-dweller and by one gone forth. What five?

1. I am of the nature to age, I have not past aging.
2. I am of the nature to sicken, I have not past sickness.
3. I am of the nature to die, I have not past dying.
4. I will eventually be separated from all things or people near and dear to me.
5. I am owner of my actions⁶, heir of them, produced by them, related to and supported by them. Whatever actions⁷ I shall follow, whether for good or evil, of them will I be heir.

Mendicants, for what purpose ought these five thoughts be often contemplated by woman and man, by house-dweller and by one gone forth?

Mendicants:

1. beings in youth are obsessed with the pride of youth and vaunting in that pride....

³ Mental, verbal and bodily action.

⁴ Mental, verbal and bodily action.

⁵ Spoken to monks, but obviously for all.

⁶ Mental, verbal and bodily action.

⁷ Mental, verbal and bodily action.

2. beings in health are obsessed with the pride of health and vaunting in that pride...
3. beings in the fullness of life are obsessed with the pride of life and vaunting in that pride...
4. beings are obsessed with a passionate desire for those things which are or those who are near and dear, excited by that passionate desire...
5. the ways of beings are evil in deed, word and thought...

they go about working evil in deed, word and thought.

To one who often contemplates these thoughts, that pride is, that passionate desire is, or those evil ways are either got rid of altogether or reduced. Mendicants, it is for this purpose that these thoughts ought to be often contemplated.

Mendicants, the noble disciple reflects thus: "I am not the only one who is subject to these things, but wheresoever there are beings, coming and going, faring on and arising, all are subject to them." and while one often contemplates this thing the Noble Eightfold Way⁸ comes into being and he follows that way, develops it and in doing so the fetters are got rid of, the tendencies are removed.

(Source Pali A iii 71-74)

The Five Hindrances (Panca Nivarana)

Thus have I heard: Once the Blessed One dwelt near Savatthi at Jeta Grove in Anathapindika's Park, there he addressed the mendicants and they replied "Lord", the Blessed One then said:

Mendicants, there are five checks, five hindrances, which overspread the heart, which weaken insight⁹. What five?

1. ** Doubt...
2. Lust and passion...
3. Ill-will...
4. Sloth and torpor...
5. Flurry and worry...

These are the five checks, hindrances, which overspread the heart, which weaken insight.

Mendicants, it cannot possibly be that a mendicant could know his own good, know another's good, know the good of both, or realise the excellence of knowledge and insight proper to the Noble Ones, which goes beyond man's conditions, without truly being rid of those five checks, hindrances, which overspread the heart, which weaken insight; since he would be without strength and weak in insight.

Mendicants, suppose in the case of a mountain stream, winding here and there, swiftly flowing, taking all along with it, a man were to open watercourses into it from both sides; then indeed, mendicants, the flow in mid-stream would be disturbed, swirled about and diverted, and the stream would not wind here and there, nor flow swiftly, nor take all along with it: even so, mendicants, it cannot be that a mendicant could know his own good, know another's good, know the good of both, or realise the excellence of knowledge and insight proper to the Noble Ones, which goes beyond man's conditions, without truly being rid of those five checks, hindrances, which overspread the heart, which weaken insight.

Mendicants, it surely shall be that a mendicant could know his own good, know another's good, know the good of both, or realise the excellence of knowledge and insight proper to the Noble Ones, which goes beyond man's conditions, being rid of these five checks, hindrances, which overspread the heart, which weaken insight; since he would be strong and with insight.

Mendicants, suppose in the case of a mountain stream, winding here and there, swiftly flowing, taking all along with it, a man were to close the watercourses on both sides of it; then indeed, mendicants, the flow in mid-stream would not be disturbed, swirled about and diverted, but the stream would wind here and there, flow swiftly, and take all along with it: even so, mendicants, it surely shall be that a mendicant could know his own good, know another's good, know the good of both, or realise the excellence of

⁸ He is addressing monks here.

⁹ He is talking about "insight" therefore this discourse is relevant to anyone.

knowledge and insight proper to the Noble Ones, which goes beyond man's conditions, after truly being rid of those five checks, hindrances, which overspread the heart, which weaken insight.

(Source Pali A v 62-63)

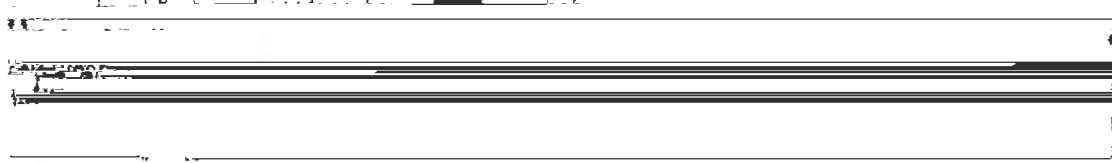
The Five Hindrances Cloud Memory

The Priest¹⁰ Sangaravaa visited the Blessed One and after exchanging the customary words of greetings, sat down at one side and the following conversation occurred:

Master Gotama, what is the reason or the cause, why sometimes I cannot recall even chants that I have memorized for a long time, not to mention those not memorized; and what is the reason or the cause why sometimes I can recall chants not memorized for a long time?

Priest, when one dwells with one's heart possessed by:

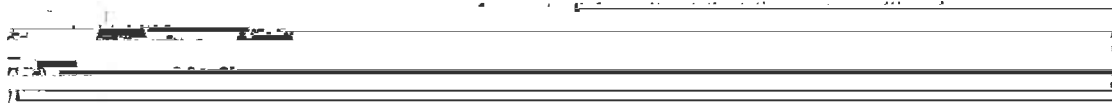
1. ** Doubt...
2. Lust and passion...
3. Ill-will...
4. Sloth and torpor...
5. Flurry and worry...



1. ** stirred up, troubled and muddied, set in the dark..
2. mixed with lac or turmeric or blue or yellow dye...
3. heated on a fire, boiling up and bubbling over...
4. covered over with water plants...
5. ruffled by the wind, stirred up, whirled round and rippled...

and suppose a person with good eyesight were to look there for the reflection of their own face. That person would not know or see it as it really is. Just so. priest, when one dwells with one's heart possessed by:

1. ** Doubt...
2. Lust and passion...
3. Ill-will...
4. Sloth and torpor...
5. Flurry and worry...



[and the opposite for recalling easily]

(Source Paali A iii 230-5, S v 121)

** Internal comparative studies show that the traditional placing of "doubt" as number five, would be wrong, e.g. it matches the Second Fetter and counters "faith" which is very early in Dependent Origination.

¹⁰ Used generically as someone who presides over religious ceremonies.