AN 2.5 — 5. Learned for Myself

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Source: https://suttacentral.net/an2.5/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
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Text

5. Learned for Myself

“Mendicants, I have learned these two things for myself— to never be content with skillful qualities, and to never stop trying.

I never stopped trying, thinking: ‘Gladly, let only skin, sinews, and bones remain! Let the flesh and blood waste away in my body! I will not stop trying until I have achieved what is possible by human strength, energy, and vigor.’

It was by diligence that I achieved awakening, and by diligence that I achieved the supreme sanctuary from the yoke.

If you too never stop trying, thinking: ‘Gladly, let only skin, sinews, and bones remain! Let the flesh and blood waste away in my body! I will not stop trying until I have achieved what is possible by human strength, energy, and vigor.’ You will soon realize the supreme culmination of the spiritual path in this very life. You will live having achieved with your own insight the goal for which gentlemen rightly go forth from the lay life to homelessness.

So you should train like this: ‘We will never stop trying, thinking: “Gladly, let only skin, sinews, and bones remain! Let the flesh and blood waste away in my body! I will not stop trying until I have achieved what is possible by human strength, energy, and vigor.”’ That’s how you should train.”