AN 2.15 — AN 2.15

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

15. “Bhikkhus, when the Bhikkhu commits a wrong action, and another Bhikkhu who has confronted him by pointing out the misconduct and is chastising him, if both do not observe what is taking place within each of their individual hearts, by reflecting carefully on the events that transpired, then the matter would take quite a long time to reach a settlement or some kind of a closure. Meanwhile, the Bhikkhus will come to have resentment and disgust towards each other, and thus experience much suffering for a long time.

“And how, Bhikkhus, can the Bhikkhu who commits a wrong action observe what is taking place within his heart, by reflecting carefully on the events that transpired?

“Here, Bhikkhus, having already engaged in a misconduct, the Bhikkhu begins reflecting:

‘Well, it is a fact that I made a mistake, committing a damaging and wrong action, having ‘taken the bait’ from one or more of the sense doors, thus truly engaging in an offence. And this Bhikkhu has simply seen me commit this offence, where I ‘took the bait’ from one or more of the sense doors.

‘Now, if I had not done this, by not committing such a damaging and wrong action, then this Bhikkhu would simply not have seen nor witnessed me engaging in any such thing, in the first place!

‘But since I did commit a damaging and wrong action, having ‘taken the bait’ from one or more of the sense doors, thus truly engaging in an offence, as a result, this Bhikkhu has seen me do it, and in turn became upset at me and said those reproving and harsh words while chastising me. In retaliation, because I was now upset at the way I was treated by him, I went and said those mean things about this Bhikkhu to others. Then, when that Bhikkhu learned of this, he again became upset and went and spoke badly about me to others.

‘So, when you think about it, I was the one who started this whole mess!

‘Therefore, I must be the one who goes to him, to apologize for what I have done. That way, I can simply put an end to this unpleasant and bitter situation between us, just like a merchant who owes fees to the King’s men for importing goods into the kingdom.’

“This, Bhikkhus, is how that Bhikkhu who commits a wrong action observes what is taking place within his heart, by reflecting carefully on the events that transpired.

“And how, Bhikkhus, does the accusing Bhikkhu observe what is taking place within his heart, by reflecting carefully on the events that transpired?

“Here, Bhikkhus, the chastising Bhikkhu who confronted the former, begins to reflect:

‘Well, it is a fact that this Bhikkhu made a mistake, by committing a damaging and wrong action, having ‘taken the bait’ from one or more of his sense doors, thus truly engaging in an offence. Meanwhile, I was the one who simply saw him commit this offence, where he ‘took the bait’ from one or more of his sense doors.

‘Now, if he had not done this, by not committing this damaging and wrong actions, then I would simply not have seen nor witnessed him engaging in any such thing, in the first place!

‘But since he did commit a damaging and wrong action, having ‘taken the bait’ from one or more of his sense doors, thus truly engaging in an offence, as a result, I did see him do it, and in turn became upset at him, and said those reproving and harsh words by chastising him. In retaliation, because this Bhikkhu was now upset at the way I treated him, he went and said those mean things about me to others. Then, when I learned of this myself, I became more upset, and in turn went and spoke badly about him to others.

‘So, when you think about it, I was the one who made the situation a lot worse than it was!

‘Therefore, I must be the one who goes to him, to apologize for what I have done. That way, I can simply put an end to this unpleasant and bitter situation between us, just like a merchant who owes fees to the King’s men for importing goods into the kingdom.’

“This, Bhikkhus, is how the accusing Bhikkhu observes what is taking place within his heart, by reflecting carefully on the events that transpired.

“Now, know this, Bhikkhus, that as a result of this disciplinary issue, unless both the Bhikkhu who committed the offense and the accusing Bhikkhu do reflect on this matter and try to resolve it in this or similar manner, then it can surely be expected that this issue will escalate, and as a result, there will be more suffering and strife for a long time, for all Bhikkhus involved.

“However, if they resolve this disciplinary issue in the prescribed or similar manner, then it can be expected that this issue will not escalate, and there will not be any more suffering or strife experienced as a result of it, and the Bhikkhus will become relaxed again and

dwell at ease.”