AN 3.102 — Basis

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an3.102/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Numbered Discourses 3.102

10. A Lump of Salt

Basis

“Mendicants, a mendicant committed to the higher mind should focus on three bases from time to time: the basis of immersion, the basis of exertion, and the basis of equanimity.

If a mendicant dedicated to the higher mind focuses solely on the basis of immersion, it’s likely their mind will incline to laziness.

If they focus solely on the basis of exertion, it’s likely their mind will incline to restlessness.

If they focus solely on the basis of equanimity, it’s likely their mind won’t properly become immersed in samādhi for the ending of defilements.

But when a mendicant dedicated to the higher mind focuses from time to time on the basis of immersion, the basis of exertion, and the basis of equanimity, their mind becomes pliable, workable, and radiant, not brittle, and has become rightly immersed in samādhi for the ending of defilements.

It’s like when a goldsmith or a goldsmith’s apprentice prepares a forge, fires the crucible, picks up some native gold with tongs and puts it in the crucible. From time to time they fan it, from time to time they sprinkle water on it, and from time to time they just watch over it. If they solely fanned it, the native gold would likely be scorched. If they solely sprinkled water on it, the native gold would likely cool down. If they solely watched over it, the native gold would likely not be properly processed. But when that goldsmith fans it from time to time, sprinkles water on it from time to time, and watches over it from time to time, that native gold becomes pliable, workable, and radiant, not brittle, and is ready to be worked. Then the goldsmith can successfully create any kind of ornament they want, whether a bracelet, earrings, a necklace, or a golden garland.

In the same way, a mendicant committed to the higher mind should focus on three bases from time to time: the basis of immersion, the basis of exertion, and the basis of equanimity. …

When a mendicant dedicated to the higher mind focuses from time to time on the basis of immersion, the basis of exertion, and the basis of equanimity, their mind becomes pliable, workable, and radiant, not brittle, and has become rightly immersed in samādhi for the ending of defilements. They extend the mind to realize by insight each and every thing that

can be realized by insight; and they are capable of realizing those things, since each and every one is within range.

If they wish: 'May I wield the many kinds of psychic power' ...

'With clairaudience that is purified and superhuman, may I hear both kinds of sounds, human and heavenly, whether near or far.' ... 'May I recollect many kinds of past lives.' ... 'With clairvoyance that is purified and superhuman, may I see sentient beings passing away and being reborn.' ... 'May I realize the undefiled freedom of heart and freedom by wisdom, and live having realized it with my own insight in this very life due to the ending of defilements.' They are capable of realizing these things, since each and every one is within range."