AN 4.200 — AN 4:200 Love | Pema Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

Love

Pema Sutta (AN 4:200)

“Monks, these four things are born. Which four? Love is born of love. Aversion is born of love. Love is born of aversion. Aversion is born of aversion.

“And how is love born of love? There is the case where an individual is pleasing, appealing, & charming to (another) individual. Others treat that individual as pleasing, appealing, & charming, and the other one thinks, ‘This individual is pleasing, appealing, & charming to me. Others treat this individual as pleasing, appealing, & charming.’ He gives rise to love for them. This is how love is born of love.

“And how is aversion born of love? There is the case where an individual is pleasing, appealing, & charming to (another) individual. Others treat that individual as displeasing, unappealing, & not charming, and the other one thinks, ‘This individual is pleasing, appealing, & charming to me. Others treat this individual as displeasing, unappealing, & not charming.’ He gives rise to aversion for them. This is how aversion is born of love.

“And how is love born of aversion? There is the case where an individual is displeasing, unappealing, & not charming to (another) individual. Others treat that individual as displeasing, unappealing, & not charming, and the other one thinks, ‘This individual is displeasing, unappealing, & not charming to me. Others treat this individual as displeasing, unappealing, & not charming.’ He gives rise to love for them. This is how love is born of aversion.

“And how is aversion born of aversion? There is the case where an individual is displeasing, unappealing, & not charming to (another) individual. Others treat that individual as pleasing, appealing, & charming, and the other one thinks, ‘This individual is displeasing, unappealing, & not charming to me. Others treat this individual as pleasing, appealing, & charming.’ He gives rise to aversion for them. This is how aversion is born of aversion.

“Monks, these are the four things that are born.

“Now, on the occasion when a monk, quite secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna—rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation—then any love of his that is born of love does not come about. Any aversion of his that is born of love… any love of his that is born of aversion… any aversion of his that is born of aversion does not come about.

“On the occasion when a monk, with the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, enters & remains in the second jhāna—rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation, internal assurance—then any love of his that is born of love does not come about. Any aversion of his that is born of love… any love of his that is born of aversion… any aversion of his that is born of aversion does not come about.

“On the occasion when a monk, with the fading of rapture, remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, senses pleasure with the body, and enters & remains in the third jhāna—of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding’—then any love of his that is born of love does not come about. Any aversion of his that is born of love… any love of his that is born of aversion… any aversion of his that is born of aversion does not come about.

“On the occasion when a monk, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain, as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress, enters & remains in the fourth jhāna—purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain—then any love of his that is born of love does not come about. Any aversion of his that is born of love… any love of his that is born of aversion… any aversion of his that is born of aversion does not come about.

“On the occasion when a monk, through the ending of effluents, enters & remains in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now, then any love of his that is born of love is abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. Any aversion of his that is born of love… any love of his that is born of aversion… any aversion of his that is born of aversion is abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising.

“This is said to be a monk who doesn’t pull in, doesn’t push away, doesn’t smolder, doesn’t flare up, and doesn’t burn.

“And how does a monk pull in? There is the case where a monk assumes form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He assumes feeling to be the self, or the self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in the self, or the self as in feeling. He assumes perception to be the self, or the self as possessing perception, or perception as in the self, or the self as in perception. He assumes fabrications to be the self, or the self as possessing fabrications, or fabrications as in the self, or the self as in fabrications. He assumes consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. This is how a monk pulls in.

“And how does a monk not pull in? There is the case where a monk doesn’t assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He doesn’t assume feeling to be the self…. doesn’t assume perception to be the self…. doesn’t assume fabrications to be the self…. doesn’t assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. This is how a monk doesn’t pull in.

“And how does a monk push away? There is the case where a monk returns insult to one who has insulted him, returns anger to one who is angry at him, quarrels with one who is quarreling. This is how a monk pushes away.

“And how does a monk not push away? There is the case where a monk doesn’t return insult to one who has insulted him, doesn’t return anger to one who is angry at him, doesn’t quarrel with one who is quarreling. This is how a monk doesn’t push away.

“And how does a monk smolder? There is the case where, there being ‘I am,’ there comes to be ‘I am here,’ there comes to be ‘I am like this’ … ‘I am otherwise’ … ‘I am bad’ … ‘I am good’ … ‘I might be’ … ‘I might be here’ … ‘I might be like this’ … ‘I might be otherwise’ … ‘May I be’ … ‘May I be here’ … ‘May I be like this’ … ‘May I be otherwise’ … ‘I will be’ … ‘I will be here’ … ‘I will be like this’ … ‘I will be otherwise.’

“And how does a monk not smolder? There is the case where, there not being ‘I am,’ there doesn’t come to be ‘I am here,’ there doesn’t come to be ‘I am like this’ … ‘I am otherwise’ … ‘I am bad’ … ‘I am good’ … ‘I might be’ … ‘I might be here’ … ‘I might be like this’ … ‘I

might be otherwise' … 'May I be' … 'May I be here' … 'May I be like this' … 'May I be otherwise' … 'I will be' … 'I will be here' … 'I will be like this' … 'I will be otherwise.'

"And how does a monk flare up? There is the case where, there being 'I am because of this [or: by means of this],' there comes to be 'I am here because of this,' there comes to be 'I am like this because of this' … 'I am otherwise because of this' … 'I am bad because of this' … 'I am good because of this' … 'I might be because of this' … 'I might be here because of this' … 'I might be like this because of this' … 'I might be otherwise because of this' … 'May I be because of this' … 'May I be here because of this' … 'May I be like this because of this' … 'May I be otherwise because of this' … 'I will be because of this' … 'I will be here because of this' … 'I will be like this because of this' … 'I will be otherwise because of this.'

"And how does a monk not flare up? There is the case where, there not being 'I am because of this [or: by means of this],' there doesn't come to be 'I am here because of this,' there doesn't come to be 'I am like this because of this' … 'I am otherwise because of this' … 'I am bad because of this' … 'I am good because of this' … 'I might be because of this' … 'I might be here because of this' … 'I might be like this because of this' … 'I might be otherwise because of this' … 'May I be because of this' … 'May I be here because of this' … 'May I be like this because of this' … 'May I be otherwise because of this' … 'I will be because of this' … 'I will be here because of this' … 'I will be like this because of this' … 'I will be otherwise because of this.'

"And how does a monk burn? There is the case where a monk's conceit, 'I am,' is not abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. This is how a monk burns.

"And how does a monk not burn? There is the case where a monk's conceit, 'I am,' is abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. This is how a monk doesn't burn."

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 2; MN 87; SN 1:25; SN 12:20; AN 4:19; AN 7:60; AN 10:80