AN 4.245 — The Benefits of Training

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Numbered Discourses 4.245

25. Perils of Offenses

The Benefits of Training

“Mendicants, this spiritual life is lived with training as its benefit, with wisdom as its overseer, with freedom as its core, and with mindfulness as its ruler.

And how is training its benefit? Firstly, I laid down for my disciples the training that deals with supplementary regulations in order to inspire confidence in those without it and to increase confidence in those who have it. They undertake whatever supplementary regulations I have laid down, keeping them intact, impeccable, spotless, and unmarred.

Furthermore, I laid down for my disciples the training that deals with the fundamentals of the spiritual life in order to rightly end suffering in every way. They undertake whatever training that deals with the fundamentals of the spiritual life I have laid down, keeping it intact, impeccable, spotless, and unmarred. That’s how training is its benefit.

And how is wisdom its overseer? I taught the Dhamma to my disciples in order to rightly end suffering in every way. They examine with wisdom any teachings I taught them. That’s how wisdom is its overseer.

And how is freedom its core? I taught the Dhamma to my disciples in order to rightly end suffering in every way. They experience through freedom any teachings I taught them. That’s how freedom is its core.

And how is mindfulness its ruler? Mindfulness is well established in oneself: ‘In this way I’ll fulfill the training dealing with supplementary regulations, or support with wisdom in every situation the training dealing with supplementary regulations I’ve already fulfilled.’ Mindfulness is well established in oneself: ‘In this way I’ll fulfill the training dealing with the fundamentals of the spiritual life, or support with wisdom in every situation the training dealing with the fundamentals of the spiritual life I’ve already fulfilled.’ Mindfulness is well established in oneself: ‘In this way I’ll examine with wisdom the teaching that I haven’t yet examined, or support with wisdom in every situation the teaching I’ve already examined.’ Mindfulness is well established in oneself: ‘In this way I’ll experience through freedom the teaching that I haven’t yet experienced, or support with wisdom in every situation the teaching I’ve already experienced.’ That’s how mindfulness is its ruler.

‘This spiritual life is lived with training as its benefit, with wisdom as its overseer, with freedom as its core, and with mindfulness as its ruler.’ That’s what I said, and this is why I said it.”