

AN 6.58
Āsava Sutta
“Mental Contaminants”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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“Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhu who possesses these six qualities is deserving of reverence, honor, hospitality, gifts, and of paying homage with one’s hands clasped together at the heart, truly the incomparable field of merit for the entire world. What are these six?

“Here, Bhikkhus, through restraining himself, the Bhikkhu has abandoned those mental contaminants that have to be abandoned through restraining.

Furthermore, by properly utilizing, the Bhikkhu has abandoned those mental contaminants that have to be abandoned through properly utilizing.

Furthermore, by patiently enduring, the Bhikkhu has abandoned those mental contaminants that have to be abandoned through patiently enduring.

Furthermore, by avoiding, the Bhikkhu has abandoned those mental contaminants that have to be abandoned through avoiding.

Furthermore, by removing, the Bhikkhu has abandoned those mental contaminants that have to be abandoned through removing.

Furthermore, by developing, the Bhikkhu has abandoned those mental contaminants that have to be abandoned through developing.

a. “And how, Bhikkhus, are the mental contaminants abandoned in the Bhikkhu, through restraining?

“Here Bhikkhus, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while continuously being restrained in his eye faculty. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person whose eye faculty is unrestrained, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while continuously being restrained in his eye faculty.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while continuously being restrained in his ear faculty. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person whose ear faculty is unrestrained, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while continuously being restrained in his ear faculty.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while continuously being restrained in his nose faculty. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for

some other person whose nose faculty is unrestrained, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while continuously being restrained in his nose faculty.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while continuously being restrained in his tongue faculty. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person whose tongue faculty is unrestrained, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while continuously being restrained in his tongue faculty.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while continuously being restrained in his body faculty. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person whose body faculty is unrestrained, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while continuously being restrained in his body faculty.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while continuously being restrained in his mind faculty. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person whose mind faculty is unrestrained, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while continuously being restrained in his mind faculty.

Bhikkhus, this is how the mental contaminants are abandoned in the Bhikkhu through restraining.

b. “And how, Bhikkhus, are the mental contaminants abandoned in the Bhikkhu through properly utilizing?

“Here Bhikkhus, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while properly utilizing his robes *only* for the purpose of dispelling the cold, the sting of gadflies, mosquitoes, the wind, and to ward off heat, snakes, and the touch of other creeping things, as well as to cover up one’s private parts, while also being considerate of others.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while properly utilizing his alms food *only* for the purpose of supporting this body and its upkeep, while avoiding harm and having the energy for living the Holy Life, and *not* for the sake of enjoyment, nor for the gaining of physical beauty and attractiveness, nor for intoxication. In this way, the Bhikkhu considers: ‘I am giving up old tendencies and attachments to the body, while making sure I do not develop new ones. Thus, I will be at ease, while living a blameless and a healthy life.’

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while properly utilizing his dwelling place *only* for the purpose of dispelling the cold, the sting of gadflies, mosquitoes, the wind, and to ward off heat, snakes, and other creeping things, as well as to protect himself from rainstorms and rough weather, and for the purpose of practicing in seclusion.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while properly utilizing his medicinal requisites and provisions *only* for the purpose of dispelling any signs or feelings of discomfort and pain, and to sustain his health. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person who does not properly utilize his requisites thus, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while properly utilizing them.

Bhikkhus, this is how the mental contaminants are abandoned in the Bhikkhu, through properly utilizing.

c. “And how, Bhikkhus, are the mental contaminants abandoned in the Bhikkhu through patiently enduring?

“Here, Bhikkhus, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while patiently enduring the cold, the heat, the sting of gadflies, mosquitoes, the wind, the snakes, and the touch of other creeping things, as well as being subjected to offensive remarks and hurtful comments by others; he perseveres with tolerance of any and all feelings that result from being harmed by unavoidable physical harm that he is exposed to, be they sharp, terrible, piercing, racking, torturing, mortifying, that could even end his life. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person who does not patiently endure these difficult to bear experiences, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while patiently enduring them.

Bhikkhus, this is how the mental contaminants are abandoned in the Bhikkhu through patiently enduring.

d. “And how, Bhikkhus, are the mental contaminants abandoned in the Bhikkhu through avoiding?

“Here, Bhikkhus, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while avoiding a wild elephant, a wild horse, a wild bull, a wild dog, a serpent, an uneven road, a hedge of thorns, a pit, a precipice, the pool at the entrance of towns where men or women gather, a cesspit.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while avoiding to sit in unsuitable seats, or wandering without consideration of others or being inappropriate, or associating with evil friends, as well as avoiding to endanger the lives of his wise companions in the Holy Life, or in giving them a reason to suspect him of evil actions or unwholesome intentions. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person who does not avoid these situations, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while avoiding them.

Bhikkhus, this is how the mental contaminants are abandoned in the Bhikkhu, through avoiding.

e. “And how, Bhikkhus, are the mental contaminants abandoned in the Bhikkhu through removing?

“Here, Bhikkhus, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while removing any arisen sensual thoughts, as he does not tolerate them at all and, instead, constantly focuses on destroying them, as he ceaselessly eradicates them.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while removing any arisen angry thoughts, as he does not tolerate them at all and, instead, constantly focuses on destroying them, as he ceaselessly eradicates them.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while removing any arisen hateful thoughts, as he does not tolerate them at all and, instead, constantly focuses on destroying them, as he ceaselessly eradicates them.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while removing any arisen evil and unwholesome thoughts, as he does not tolerate them at all and, instead, constantly focuses on destroying them, as he ceaselessly eradicates them. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person who does not remove these negative states of mind, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while removing them.

Bhikkhus, this is how the mental contaminants are abandoned in the Bhikkhu through removing.

f. “And how, Bhikkhus, are the mental contaminants abandoned in the Bhikkhu through developing?

“Here, Bhikkhus, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of mindfulness, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of investigation of states, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of energy, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of joy, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of tranquility of the mind, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of stability of the mind, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release.

Further, with consistent radical reflection, the Bhikkhu lives while developing the Awakening factor of equanimity of the mind, supported by seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and maturing in full release. As a result, the mental contaminants that create agitation and imbalance for some other person who does not develop these lofty states of mind, simply do not occur for the Bhikkhu, who lives while developing them.

“Bhikkhus, this is how the mental contaminants are abandoned in the Bhikkhu through developing.

“Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhu who possesses these six qualities is deserving of reverence, honor, hospitality, gifts, and of paying homage with one’s hands clasped together at the heart, truly the incomparable field of merit for the entire world.”

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu