AN 10.51 — AN 10:51 One’s Own Mind | Sacitta Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

One’s Own Mind

Sacitta Sutta (AN 10:51)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. There he addressed the monks: “Monks!”

“Yes, lord,” the monks responded to him.

The Blessed One said: “Even if a monk is not skilled in the ways of the minds of others [not skilled in reading the minds of others], he should train himself: ‘I will be skilled in reading my own mind.’

“And how is a monk skilled in reading his own mind? Imagine a young woman—or man—youthful, fond of adornment, examining the image of her own face in a bright, clean mirror or bowl of clear water: If she saw any dirt or blemish there, she would try to remove it. If she saw no dirt or blemish there, she would be pleased, her resolves fulfilled: ‘How fortunate I am! How clean I am!’ In the same way, a monk’s self-examination is very productive in terms of skillful qualities (if he conducts it in this way): ‘Do I usually remain covetous or not? With thoughts of ill will or not? Overcome by sloth & drowsiness or not? Restless or not? Uncertain or gone beyond uncertainty? Angry or not? With soiled thoughts or unsoiled thoughts? With my body aroused or unaroused? Lazy or with persistence aroused? Unconcentrated or concentrated?’

“If, on examination, a monk knows, ‘I usually remain covetous, with thoughts of ill will, overcome by sloth & drowsiness, restless, uncertain, angry, with soiled thoughts, with my body aroused, lazy, or unconcentrated,’ then he should put forth extra desire, effort, diligence, endeavor, relentlessness, mindfulness, & alertness for the abandoning of those very same evil, unskillful qualities. Just as when a person whose turban or head was on fire would put forth extra desire, effort, diligence, endeavor, relentlessness, mindfulness, & alertness to put out the fire on his turban or head; in the same way, the monk should put forth extra desire, effort, diligence, endeavor, relentlessness, mindfulness, & alertness for the abandoning of those very same evil, unskillful qualities.

“But if, on examination, a monk knows, ‘I usually remain uncovetous, without thoughts of ill will, free of sloth & drowsiness, not restless, gone beyond uncertainty, not angry, with unsoiled thoughts, with my body unaroused, with persistence aroused, & concentrated,’ then his duty is to make an effort in maintaining those very same skillful qualities to a higher degree for the ending of the effluents.”

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: AN 2:5; AN 4:245; AN 6:19—20