# DN 22 — Maha-satipatthana Sutta: The Great Frames of Reference

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Source revision: sha256:7c411108530c04aafcca0ac43267ed12227cbb2653320e8ae0bb686e566bb783

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Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

## Text

Translator's Introduction

The word "satipatthana" is the name for an approach to meditation aimed at establishing sati, or mindfulness. The term sati is related to the verb sarati, to remember or to keep in mind. It is sometimes translated as non-reactive awareness, free from agendas, simply present with whatever arises, but the formula for satipatthana doesn't support that translation. Non-reactive awareness is actually an aspect of equanimity, a quality fostered in the course of satipatthana. The activity of satipatthana, however, definitely has a motivating agenda: the desire for Awakening, which is classed not as a cause of suffering, but as part of the path to its ending (see SN 51.15). The role of mindfulness is to keep the mind properly grounded in the present moment in a way that will keep it on the path. To make an analogy, Awakening is like a mountain on the horizon, the destination to which you are driving a car. Mindfulness is what remembers to keep attention focused on the road to the mountain, rather than letting it stay focused on glimpses of the mountain or get distracted by other paths leading away from the road.

As a compound term, satipatthana can be broken down in two ways, either as sati-patthana, foundation of mindfulness; or as sati-upatthana, establishing of mindfulness. Scholars debate as to which is the proper interpretation, but in practice both provide useful food for thought.

The first interpretation focuses on the objects of the meditation practice, the focal points that provide mindfulness with a foundation — or, to use the more idiomatic English phrase adopted here, a frame of reference. Altogether there are four: the body in and of itself; feelings in and of themselves; mind in and of itself; and mental qualities in and of themselves. The "in and of itself" here is crucial. In the case of the body, for instance, it means viewing the body on its own terms rather than in terms of its function in the context of the world (for in that case the world would be the frame of reference). Dropping any concern for how the body's beauty, agility, or strength fits into the world, the meditator simply stays with the direct experience of its breathing, its movements, its postures, its elementary properties, and its inevitable decay. A similar principle applies to the other frames of reference.

The second interpretation of satipatthana — sati-upatthana — focuses on the process of the meditation practice, on how a frame of reference is established. This sutta gives three stages for this process, applied to each frame of reference. The first stage, as applied to the body, is this:

The monk remains focused on the body in and of itself — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.

"Remaining focused" refers to the element of concentration in the practice, as the meditator holds to one particular frame of reference amid the conflicting currents of experience. "Ardent" refers to the effort put into the practice, trying to abandon unskillful states of mind and develop skillful ones in their stead, all the while trying to discern the difference between the two. "Alert" means being clearly aware of what is happening in the present. "Mindful," as mentioned above, means being able to keep the frame of reference continually in mind. As these qualities work together, they bring the mind to a solid state of concentration. Although satipatthana practice is often said to be separate from the practice of jhana, a number of suttas — such as MN 125 (not in this collection) and AN 8.63 — equate the successful completion of this first stage with the attainment of the first level of jhana. This point is confirmed by the many suttas — MN 118 among them — describing how the practice of satipatthana brings to completion the factors for Awakening, which coincide with the factors of jhana.

The second stage of satipatthana practice is this:

One remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body.

The "phenomena of origination and passing away" covers events either directly or indirectly related to one's chosen frame of reference. "Directly" means changes in the frame of reference itself. For instance, when focused on the body, one may notice the arising and passing away of breath sensations within it. "Indirectly," here, means events in any of the other three frames of reference as they relate to the body. For example, one might notice the arising and passing away of feelings of pleasure or mental states of irritation in connection to events in the body. Or one might notice lapses of mindfulness in one's focus on the body.

In each of these cases, if the origination and passing away is of neutral events such as the aggregates, one is directed simply to be aware of them as events, and to let them follow their natural course so as to see what factors accompany them and lead to their comings and goings. However, when skillful or unskillful mental qualities — such as the factors for Awakening or the Hindrances — arise and pass away, one is encouraged to foster the factors that strengthen jhana and eliminate the factors that weaken it. This means actively getting engaged in maximizing skillful mental qualities and minimizing unskillful ones. One thus develops insight into the process of origination and passing away by taking an active and sensitive role in the process, just as you learn about eggs by trying to cook with them, gathering experience from your successes and failures in attempting increasingly difficult dishes.

As this process leads to stronger and more refined states of concentration, it makes one sensitive to the fact that the grosser one's participation in the process of origination and passing away in the mind, the grosser the level of stress that results. This leads one to let go of increasingly refined levels of participation as one is able to detect them, leading to the third and final stage in satipatthana practice:

Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body (feeling, mind, mental quality)' is maintained [simply] to the extent of knowledge & recollection. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world.

This stage corresponds to a mode of perception that the Buddha in MN 121 terms "entry into emptiness":

Thus he regards it [this mode of perception] as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: "there is this."

This is the culminating equipoise where the path of the practice opens to a state of non-fashioning and from there to the fruit of Awakening and release.

At first glance, the four frames of reference for satipatthana practice sound like four different meditation exercises, but MN 118 makes clear that they can all center on a single practice: keeping the breath in mind. When the mind is with the breath, all four frames of reference are right there. The difference lies simply in the subtlety of one's focus. It's like learning to play the piano. As you get more proficient at playing, you also become sensitive in listening to ever more subtle levels in the music. This allows you to play even more

skillfully. In the same way, as a meditator gets more skilled in staying with the breath, the practice of satipatthana gives greater sensitivity in peeling away ever more subtle layers of participation in the present moment until nothing is left standing in the way of total release.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the Kuru country. Now there is a town of the Kurus called Kammasadhamma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks."

"Lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said this: "This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & for the realization of Unbinding — in other words, the four frames of reference. Which four?

"There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings... mind... mental qualities in & of themselves — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

A. Body

"And how does a monk remain focused on the body in & of itself?

[1] "There is the case where a monk — having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building — sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect and setting mindfulness to the fore [lit: the front of the chest]. Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"Breathing in long, he discerns, 'I am breathing in long'; or breathing out long, he discerns, 'I am breathing out long.' Or breathing in short, he discerns, 'I am breathing in short'; or breathing out short, he discerns, 'I am breathing out short.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to the entire body.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to the entire body.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe in calming bodily fabrication.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out calming bodily fabrication.' Just as a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, discerns, 'I am making a long turn,' or when making a short turn discerns, 'I am making a short turn'; in the same way the monk, when breathing in long, discerns, 'I am breathing in long'; or breathing out long, he discerns, 'I am breathing out long' ... He trains himself, 'I will breathe in calming bodily fabrication.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out calming bodily fabrication.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing

away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[2] "Furthermore, when walking, the monk discerns, 'I am walking.' When standing, he discerns, 'I am standing.' When sitting, he discerns, 'I am sitting.' When lying down, he discerns, 'I am lying down.' Or however his body is disposed, that is how he discerns it.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[3] "Furthermore, when going forward & returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward & looking away... when bending & extending his limbs... when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe & his bowl... when eating, drinking, chewing, & savoring... when urinating & defecating... when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, & remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[4] "Furthermore... just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain — wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice — and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, 'This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice,' in the same way, monks, a monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: 'In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[5] "Furthermore... just as a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads cutting it up into pieces, the monk contemplates this very body — however it stands, however it is disposed — in terms of properties: 'In this body there is the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, & the wind property.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[6] "Furthermore, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground — one day, two days, three days dead — bloated, livid, & festering, he applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate'...

"Or again, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground, picked at by crows, vultures, & hawks, by dogs, hyenas, & various other creatures... a skeleton smeared with flesh & blood, connected with tendons... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, connected with tendons... a skeleton without flesh or blood, connected with tendons... bones detached from their tendons, scattered in all directions — here a hand bone, there a foot bone, here a shin bone, there a thigh bone, here a hip bone, there a back bone, here a rib, there a breast bone, here a shoulder bone, there a neck bone, here a jaw bone, there a tooth, here a skull... the bones whitened, somewhat like the color of shells... piled up, more than a year old... decomposed into a powder: He applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

(B. Feelings)

"And how does a monk remain focused on feelings in & of themselves? There is the case where a monk, when feeling a painful feeling, discerns, 'I am feeling a painful feeling.' When feeling a pleasant feeling, he discerns, 'I am feeling a pleasant feeling.' When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he discerns, 'I am feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.'

"When feeling a painful feeling of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a painful feeling of the flesh.' When feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh.' When feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh.' When feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh.' When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh.' When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on feelings in & of themselves, or externally on feelings in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on feelings in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to feelings, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to feelings, or on the phenomenon of

origination & passing away with regard to feelings. Or his mindfulness that 'There are feelings' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on feelings in & of themselves.

(C. Mind)

"And how does a monk remain focused on the mind in & of itself? There is the case where a monk, when the mind has passion, discerns that the mind has passion. When the mind is without passion, he discerns that the mind is without passion. When the mind has aversion, he discerns that the mind has aversion. When the mind is without aversion, he discerns that the mind is without aversion. When the mind has delusion, he discerns that the mind has delusion. When the mind is without delusion, he discerns that the mind is without delusion.

"When the mind is restricted, he discerns that the mind is restricted. When the mind is scattered, he discerns that the mind is scattered. When the mind is enlarged, he discerns that the mind is enlarged. When the mind is not enlarged, he discerns that the mind is not enlarged. When the mind is surpassed, he discerns that the mind is surpassed. When the mind is unsurpassed, he discerns that the mind is unsurpassed. When the mind is concentrated, he discerns that the mind is concentrated. When the mind is not concentrated, he discerns that the mind is not concentrated. When the mind is released, he discerns that the mind is released. When the mind is not released, he discerns that the mind is not released.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mind in & of itself, or externally on the mind in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the mind in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the mind, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the mind, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the mind. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a mind' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the mind in & of itself.

(D. Mental Qualities)

"And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves?

[1] "There is the case where a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances. And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances? There is the case where, there being sensual desire present within, a monk discerns that 'There is sensual desire present within me.' Or, there being no sensual desire present within, he discerns that 'There is no sensual desire present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen sensual desire. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of sensual desire once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no future arising of sensual desire

that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining hindrances: ill will, sloth & drowsiness, restlessness & anxiety, and uncertainty.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances.

[2] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates? There is the case where a monk [discerns]: 'Such is form, such its origination, such its disappearance. Such is feeling... Such is perception... Such are fabrications... Such is consciousness, such its origination, such its disappearance.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mental qualities in & of themselves, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates.

[3] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media? There is the case where he discerns the eye, he discerns forms, he discerns the fetter that arises dependent on both. He discerns how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of a fetter once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no future arising of a fetter that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining sense media: ear, nose, tongue, body, & intellect.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mental qualities in & of themselves, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media.

[4] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening? There is the case where, there being mindfulness as a factor for Awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a factor for Awakening is present within me.' Or, there being no mindfulness as a factor for Awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a

factor for Awakening is not present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen mindfulness as a factor for Awakening. And he discerns how there is the culmination of the development of mindfulness as a factor for Awakening once it has arisen. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining factors for Awakening: analysis of qualities, persistence, rapture, serenity, concentration, & equanimity.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally... unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening.

[5] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths? There is the case where he discerns, as it has come to be, that 'This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.'

[a] "Now what is the noble truth of stress? Birth is stressful, aging is stressful, death is stressful; sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are stressful; association with the unbeloved is stressful; separation from the loved is stressful; not getting what one wants is stressful. In short, the five clinging-aggregates are stressful.

"And what is birth? Whatever birth, taking birth, descent, coming-to-be, coming-forth, appearance of aggregates, & acquisition of [sense] spheres of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called birth.

"And what is aging? Whatever aging, decrepitude, brokenness, graying, wrinkling, decline of life-force, weakening of the faculties of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called aging.

"And what is death? Whatever deceasing, passing away, breaking up, disappearance, dying, death, completion of time, break up of the aggregates, casting off of the body, interruption in the life faculty of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called death.

"And what is sorrow? Whatever sorrow, sorrowing, sadness, inward sorrow, inward sadness of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called sorrow.

"And what is lamentation? Whatever crying, grieving, lamenting, weeping, wailing, lamentation of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called lamentation.

"And what is pain? Whatever is experienced as bodily pain, bodily discomfort, pain or discomfort born of bodily contact, that is called pain.

"And what is distress? Whatever is experienced as mental pain, mental discomfort, pain or discomfort born of mental contact, that is called distress.

"And what is despair? Whatever despair, despondency, desperation of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called despair.

"And what is the stress of association with the unbeloved? There is the case where undesirable, unpleasing, unattractive sights, sounds, aromas, flavors, or tactile sensations occur to one; or one has connection, contact, relationship, interaction with those who wish one ill, who wish for one's harm, who wish for one's discomfort, who wish one no security from the yoke. This is called the stress of association with the unbeloved.

"And what is the stress of separation from the loved? There is the case where desirable, pleasing, attractive sights, sounds, aromas, flavors, or tactile sensations do not occur to one; or one has no connection, no contact, no relationship, no interaction with those who wish one well, who wish for one's benefit, who wish for one's comfort, who wish one security from the yoke, nor with one's mother, father, brother, sister, friends, companions, or relatives. This is called the stress of separation from the loved.

"And what is the stress of not getting what one wants? In beings subject to birth, the wish arises, 'O, may we not be subject to birth, and may birth not come to us.' But this is not to be achieved by wishing. This is the stress of not getting what one wants. In beings subject to aging... illness... death... sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair, the wish arises, 'O, may we not be subject to aging... illness... death... sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair, and may aging... illness... death... sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair not come to us.' But this is not to be achieved by wishing. This is the stress of not getting what one wants.

"And what are the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are stress? Form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling as a clinging-aggregate, perception as a clinging-aggregate, fabrications as a clinging-aggregate, consciousness as a clinging-aggregate: These are called the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are stress.

"This is called the noble truth of stress.

[b] "And what is the noble truth of the origination of stress? The craving that makes for further becoming — accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now here & now there — i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming.

"And where does this craving, when arising, arise? And where, when dwelling, does it dwell? Whatever seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world: that is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"And what seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world? The eye seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world. That is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"The ear... The nose... The tongue... The body... The intellect...

"Forms... Sounds... Smells... Tastes... Tactile sensations... Ideas...

"Eye-consciousness... Ear-consciousness... Nose-consciousness... Tongue-consciousness... Body-consciousness... Intellect-consciousness...

"Eye-contact... Ear-contact... Nose-contact... Tongue-contact... Body-contact... Intellect-contact...

"Feeling born of eye-contact... Feeling born of ear-contact... Feeling born of nose-contact... Feeling born of tongue-contact... Feeling born of body-contact... Feeling born of intellect-contact...

"Perception of forms... Perception of sounds... Perception of smells... Perception of tastes... Perception of tactile sensations... Perception of ideas...

"Intention for forms... Intention for sounds... Intention for smells... Intention for tastes... Intention for tactile sensations... Intention for ideas...

"Craving for forms... Craving for sounds... Craving for smells... Craving for tastes... Craving for tactile sensations... Craving for ideas...

"Thought directed at forms... Thought directed at sounds... Thought directed at smells... Thought directed at tastes... Thought directed at tactile sensations... Thought directed at ideas...

"Evaluation of forms... Evaluation of sounds... Evaluation of smells... Evaluation of tastes... Evaluation of tactile sensations... Evaluation of ideas seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world. That is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"This is called the noble truth of the origination of stress.

[c] "And what is the noble truth of the cessation of stress? The remainderless fading & cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, & letting go of that very craving.

"And where, when being abandoned, is this craving abandoned? And where, when ceasing, does it cease? Whatever seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world: that is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"And what seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world? The eye seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world. That is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"The ear... The nose... The tongue... The body... The intellect...

"Forms... Sounds... Smells... Tastes... Tactile sensations... Ideas...

"Eye-consciousness... Ear-consciousness... Nose-consciousness... Tongue-consciousness... Body-consciousness... Intellect-consciousness...

"Eye-contact... Ear-contact... Nose-contact... Tongue-contact... Body-contact... Intellect-contact...

"Feeling born of eye-contact... Feeling born of ear-contact... Feeling born of nose-contact... Feeling born of tongue-contact... Feeling born of body-contact... Feeling born of intellect-contact...

"Perception of forms... Perception of sounds... Perception of smells... Perception of tastes... Perception of tactile sensations... Perception of ideas...

"Intention for forms... Intention for sounds... Intention for smells... Intention for tastes... Intention for tactile sensations... Intention for ideas...

"Craving for forms... Craving for sounds... Craving for smells... Craving for tastes... Craving for tactile sensations... Craving for ideas...

"Thought directed at forms... Thought directed at sounds... Thought directed at smells... Thought directed at tastes... Thought directed at tactile sensations... Thought directed at ideas...

"Evaluation of forms... Evaluation of sounds... Evaluation of smells... Evaluation of tastes... Evaluation of tactile sensations... Evaluation of ideas seems endearing and agreeable in terms of the world. That is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"This is called the noble truth of the cessation of stress.

[d] "And what is the noble truth of the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress? Just this very noble eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

"And what is right view? Knowledge with regard to stress, knowledge with regard to the origination of stress, knowledge with regard to the cessation of stress, knowledge with regard to the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress: This is called right view.

"And what is right resolve? Aspiring to renunciation, to freedom from ill will, to harmlessness: This is called right resolve.

"And what is right speech? Abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, from abusive speech, & from idle chatter: This is called right speech.

"And what is right action? Abstaining from taking life, from stealing, & from illicit sex. This is called right action.

"And what is right livelihood? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones, having abandoned dishonest livelihood, keeps his life going with right livelihood: This is called right livelihood.

"And what is right effort? There is the case where a monk generates desire, endeavors, arouses persistence, upholds & exerts his intent for the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities that have not yet arisen... for the sake of the abandoning of evil, unskillful qualities that have arisen... for the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen... (and) for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plenitude, development, & culmination of skillful qualities that have arisen: This is called right effort.

"And what is right mindfulness? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves... the mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. This is called right mindfulness.

"And what is right concentration? There is the case where a monk — quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities — enters & remains in the first jhana: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the second jhana: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation — internal assurance. With the fading of rapture, he remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, and senses pleasure with the body. He enters & remains in the third jhana, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding.' With the abandoning of pleasure & pain — as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress — he enters & remains in the fourth jhana: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is called right concentration.

"This is called the noble truth of the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths...

(E. Conclusion)

"Now, if anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance — non-return.

"Let alone seven years. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for six years... five... four... three... two years... one year... seven months... six months... five... four... three... two months... one month... half a month, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance — non-return.

"Let alone half a month. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance — non-return.

"'This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & for the realization of Unbinding — in other words, the four frames of reference.' Thus was it said, and in reference to this was it said."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.