MN 2 — MN 2 All the Effluents | Sabbāsava Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

All the Effluents

Sabbāsava Sutta (MN 2)

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, “Monks, the ending of the effluents is for one who knows & sees, I tell you, not for one who doesn’t know & doesn’t see. For one who knows what & sees what? Appropriate attention & inappropriate attention. When a monk attends inappropriately, unarisen effluents arise, and arisen effluents increase. When a monk

attends appropriately, unarisen effluents do not arise, and arisen effluents are abandoned. There are effluents to be abandoned by seeing, those to be abandoned by restraining, those to be abandoned by using, those to be abandoned by tolerating, those to be abandoned by avoiding, those to be abandoned by destroying, and those to be abandoned by developing.

"[1] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by seeing? There is the case where an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for people of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—doesn't discern what ideas are fit for attention or what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he doesn't attend to ideas fit for attention and attends (instead) to ideas unfit for attention.

"And what are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen effluent of sensuality arises in him, and the arisen effluent of sensuality increases; the unarisen effluent of becoming arises in him, and the arisen effluent of becoming increases; the unarisen effluent of ignorance arises in him, and the arisen effluent of ignorance increases. These are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to.

"And what are the ideas fit for attention that he doesn't attend to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen effluent of sensuality doesn't arise in him, and the arisen effluent of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen effluent of becoming doesn't arise in him, and the arisen effluent of becoming is abandoned; the unarisen effluent of ignorance doesn't arise in him, and the arisen effluent of ignorance is abandoned. These are the ideas fit for attention that he doesn't attend to. Through his attending to ideas unfit for attention and through his not attending to ideas fit for attention, both unarisen effluents arise in him, and arisen effluents increase.

"This is how he attends inappropriately: 'Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?' Or else he is inwardly perplexed about the immediate present: 'Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?'

"As he attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of view arises in him: The view I have a self arises in him as true & established, or the view I have no self … or the view It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self … or the view It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self … or the view It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self arises in him as true & established, or else he has a view like this: This very self of mine—the knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions—is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will endure as long as eternity. This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is not freed from birth, aging, & death, from sorrow,

lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from suffering & stress.

“The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—who has regard for noble ones, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma; who has regard for people of integrity, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma—discerns what ideas are fit for attention and what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he doesn’t attend to ideas unfit for attention and attends (instead) to ideas fit for attention.

“And what are the ideas unfit for attention that he doesn’t attend to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen effluent of sensuality arises in him, and the arisen effluent of sensuality increases; the unarisen effluent of becoming arises in him, and the arisen effluent of becoming increases; the unarisen effluent of ignorance arises in him, and the arisen effluent of ignorance increases. These are the ideas unfit for attention that he doesn’t attend to.

“And what are the ideas fit for attention that he does attend to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen effluent of sensuality doesn’t arise in him, and the arisen effluent of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen effluent of becoming doesn’t arise in him, and the arisen effluent of becoming is abandoned; the unarisen effluent of ignorance doesn’t arise in him, and the arisen effluent of ignorance is abandoned. These are the ideas fit for attention that he does attend to. Through his not attending to ideas unfit for attention and through his attending to ideas fit for attention, unarisen effluents do not arise in him, and arisen effluents are abandoned.

“He attends appropriately, 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. As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: self-identification view, doubt, and grasping at habits & practices. These are called the effluents to be abandoned by seeing.

“[2] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by restraining? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, dwells restrained with the restraint of the eye-faculty. The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were to dwell unrestrained with the restraint of the eye-faculty do not arise for him when he dwells restrained with the restraint of the eye-faculty.

“Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the ear-faculty ….

“Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the nose-faculty ….

“Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the tongue-faculty ….

“Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the body-faculty ….

“Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the intellect-faculty. The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were to dwell unrestrained with the

restraint of the intellect-faculty do not arise for him when he dwells restrained with the restraint of the intellect-faculty. These are called the effluents to be abandoned by restraining.

"[3] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by using? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, uses the robe simply to counteract cold, to counteract heat, to counteract the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles; simply for the purpose of covering the parts of the body that cause shame.

"Reflecting appropriately, he uses alms food, not playfully, nor for intoxication, nor for putting on bulk, nor for beautification; but simply for the survival & continuance of this body, for ending its afflictions, for the support of the holy life, thinking, 'Thus will I destroy old feelings (of hunger) and not create new feelings (from overeating). I will maintain myself, be blameless, & live in comfort.'

"Reflecting appropriately, he uses lodging simply to counteract cold, to counteract heat, to counteract the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles; simply for protection from the inclemencies of weather and for the enjoyment of seclusion.

"Reflecting appropriately, he uses medicinal requisites that are used for curing the sick simply to counteract any pains of illness that have arisen and for maximum freedom from disease.

"The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to use these things (in this way) do not arise for him when he uses them (in this way). These are called the effluents to be abandoned by using.

"[4] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by tolerating? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, endures. He tolerates cold, heat, hunger, & thirst; the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles; ill-spoken, unwelcome words & bodily feelings that, when they arise, are painful, racking, sharp, piercing, disagreeable, displeasing, & menacing to life. The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to tolerate these things do not arise for him when he tolerates them. These are called the effluents to be abandoned by tolerating.

"[5] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by avoiding? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, avoids a wild elephant, a wild horse, a wild bull, a wild dog, a snake, a stump, a bramble patch, a chasm, a cliff, a cesspool, an open sewer. Reflecting appropriately, he avoids sitting in the sorts of unsuitable seats, wandering to the sorts of unsuitable habitats, and associating with the sorts of bad friends that would make his observant companions in the holy life suspect him of evil conduct. The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to avoid these things do not arise for him when he avoids them. These are called the effluents to be abandoned by avoiding.

"[6] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by destroying? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, doesn't tolerate an arisen thought of sensuality. He

abandons it, destroys it, dispels it, & wipes it out of existence.

“Reflecting appropriately, he doesn’t tolerate an arisen thought of ill will…

“Reflecting appropriately, he doesn’t tolerate an arisen thought of harmfulness…

“Reflecting appropriately, he doesn’t tolerate arisen evil, unskillful qualities. He abandons them, destroys them, dispels them, & wipes them out of existence. The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to destroy these things do not arise for him when he destroys them. These are called the effluents to be abandoned by destroying.

“[7] And what are the effluents to be abandoned by developing? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, develops mindfulness as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion… dispassion… cessation, resulting in letting go. He develops analysis of qualities as a factor for awakening… persistence as a factor for awakening… rapture as a factor for awakening… calm as a factor for awakening… concentration as a factor for awakening… equanimity as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion… dispassion… cessation, resulting in letting go. The effluents, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to develop these qualities do not arise for him when he develops them. These are called the effluents to be abandoned by developing.

“When a monk’s effluents that should be abandoned by seeing have been abandoned by seeing, his effluents that should be abandoned by restraining have been abandoned by restraining, his effluents that should be abandoned by using have been abandoned by using, his effluents that should be abandoned by tolerating have been abandoned by tolerating, his effluents that should be abandoned by avoiding have been abandoned by avoiding, his effluents that should be abandoned by destroying have been abandoned by destroying, his effluents that should be abandoned by developing have been abandoned by developing, then he is called a monk who dwells restrained with the restraint of all the effluents. He has severed craving, thrown off the fetters, and—through the right penetration of conceit—has made an end of suffering & stress.”

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

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 63; MN 72; SN 12:20; SN 22:122; SN 44:10; AN 4:42; AN 4:200; AN 10:93