

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Kajangalā in a grove of mukhelu trees.

2. Then the brahmin student Uttara, a pupil of the brahmin Pārāsariya, went to the Blessed One and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and amiable talk was finished, he sat down at one side. The Blessed One then asked him: “Uttara, does the brahmin Pārāsariya teach his disciples the development of the faculties?”

“He does, Master Gotama.”

“But, Uttara, how does he teach his disciples the development of the faculties?”

“Here, Master Gotama, one does not see forms with the eye, one does not hear sounds with the ear. That is how the brahmin Pārāsariya teaches his disciples the development of the faculties.”

“If that is so, Uttara, then a blind man and a deaf man will have developed faculties, according to what the brahmin Pārāsariya says. For a blind man does not see forms with the eye, and a deaf man does not hear sounds with the ear.”

When this was said, the brahmin student Uttara, Pārāsariya’s pupil, sat silent, dismayed, with shoulders drooping and head down, glum, and without response.

3. Then, knowing this, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda: “Ānanda, the brahmin Pārāsariya teaches his disciples the development of the faculties in one way, but in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties is otherwise.”

“Now is the time, Blessed One, now is the time, Sublime One, for the Blessed One to teach the supreme development of the faculties in the Noble One’s Discipline. Having heard it from the

Blessed One, the bhikkhus will remember it.”

“Then listen, Ānanda, and attend closely to what I shall say.”

“Yes, venerable sir,” he replied. The Blessed One said this:

4. “Now, Ānanda, how is there the supreme development of the faculties in the Noble One’s Discipline? Here, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu sees a form with the eye, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. He understands thus: ‘There has arisen in me what is agreeable, there has arisen what is disagreeable, there has arisen in me what is both agreeable and disagreeable. But that is conditioned, gross, dependently arisen; this is peaceful, this is sublime, that is, equanimity.’ The agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease in him and equanimity is established. Just as a man with good sight, having opened his eyes might shut them or having shut his eyes might open them, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established. This is called in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties regarding forms cognizable by the eye.

5. “Again, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu hears a sound with the ear, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. He understands thus:...and equanimity is established. Just as a strong man might easily snap his fingers, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established. This is called in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties regarding sounds cognizable by the ear.

6. “Again, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu smells an odor with the nose, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. He understands thus:...and equanimity is established. Just as raindrops on a slightly sloping lotus leaf roll off and do not remain there, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established. This is called in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties regarding

odors cognizable by the nose.

7. “Again, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu tastes a flavor with the tongue, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. He understands thus:...and equanimity is established. Just as a strong man might easily spit out a ball of spittle collected on the tip of his tongue, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established. This is called in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties regarding flavors cognizable by the tongue.

8. “Again, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu touches a tangible with the body, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. He understands thus:...and equanimity is established. Just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established. This is called in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties regarding tangibles cognizable by the body.

9. “Again, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu cognizes a mind-object with the mind, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. He understands thus:...and equanimity is established. Just as if a man were to let two or three drops of water fall onto an iron plate heated for a whole day, the falling of the drops might be slow but they would quickly vaporize and vanish, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose cease just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established. This is called in the Noble One’s Discipline the supreme development of the faculties regarding ideas cognizable by the mind.

“That is how there is the supreme development of the faculties in the Noble One’s Discipline.

10. “And how, Ānanda, is one a disciple in higher training, one who has entered upon the way? Here, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu sees a form with the eye...hears a sound with the ear...smells an odor with the nose...tastes a flavor with the tongue...touches a tangible with the body...cognizes a mind-object with the mind, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises

what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable; he is ashamed, humiliated and disgusted by the agreeable that arose, by the disagreeable that arose, and by the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose. That is how one is a disciple in higher training, one who has entered upon the way.

11-16. “And how, Ānanda, is one a noble one with developed faculties? Here, Ānanda, when a bhikkhu sees a form with the eye...hears a sound with the ear...smells an odor with the nose...tastes a flavor with the tongue...touches a tangible with the body...cognizes a mind-object with the mind, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable. If he should wish: ‘May I abide perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive,’ he abides perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive. If he should wish: ‘May I abide perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive,’ he abides perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive. If he should wish: ‘May I abide perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive and the unrepulsive,’ he abides perceiving the unrepulsive in that. If he should wish: ‘May I abide perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive and the repulsive,’ he abides perceiving the repulsive in that. If he should wish, ‘May I, avoiding both the repulsive and unrepulsive, abide in equanimity, mindful and fully aware,’ he abides in equanimity, mindful and fully aware. That is how one is a noble one with developed faculties.

17. “So, Ānanda, the supreme development of the faculties in the Noble One’s Discipline has been taught by me, the disciple in higher training who has entered upon the way has been taught by me, and the noble one with developed faculties has been taught by me.

18. “What should be done for his disciples out of compassion by a Teacher who seeks their welfare and has compassion for them, that I have done for you, Ānanda. There are these roots of trees, these empty huts. Meditate, Ānanda, do not delay, or else you will regret it later. This is our instruction to you.”

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Ānanda was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

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Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṃ amoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi  
Contributed by Chris Burke