

Anattalakkhana Sutta SN 22.59

This is how I heard it.

On one occasion the Buddha was living at Benares, in the Deer Park at Isipatana (the Resort of Seers). There he addressed the group of five bhikkhus:

"Bhikkhus." — "Venerable sir," they replied. The Blessed One said this.

"Bhikkhus, form is not-self. If form were self, it would not tend towards dis-ease, and I could make it do what I want. But because form is not self it tends towards dis-ease, and I can't make it do what I want.

"Bhikkhus, feeling is not-self...

"Bhikkhus, perception is not-self...

"Bhikkhus, formations are not-self...

"Bhikkhus, awareness is not self.

If awareness was self, then it would not tend towards dis-ease, and I could make it do what I want. But because awareness is not self it tends towards dis-ease, and I can't make it do what I want.

"Bhikkhus, how do you understand it?

Is form permanent or impermanent?" "Impermanent, Bhante.

Is that which is impermanent, painful, or pleasurable?

Painful, Bhante.

Is it right to regard that which is impermanent and painful because it is subject to change in this way?

This is mine, I am this, this is my self? No Bhante.

"Is feeling permanent or impermanent?..."

"Is perception permanent or impermanent?..."

"Are formations permanent or impermanent?..."

"Is awareness permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, Bhante.

Is that which is impermanent painful or pleasurable?

Painful, Bhante.

Is it right to regard that which is impermanent and painful because it is subject to change in this way?

This is mine, I am this, this is my self? No Bhante.

In this way bhikkhus, any form, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, is to be understood in this way:

'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not myself.'

"Any kind of feeling...

"Any kind of perception ...

"Any kind of formation...

"Any kind of awareness....

In this way bhikkhus, any awareness, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, is to be understood in this way:

'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not myself.'

"Bhikkhus, when a noble follower who has heard the truth sees things in this way, they find disenchantment with form, disenchantment with feeling, disenchantment with perception, disenchantment with formations, and disenchantment with awareness.

"With disenchantment, passion fades. With the fading of passion, they are liberated from the taints. When liberated, there is knowledge that they are liberated.

They understand: 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, what had to be done, has been done, there is no more of this.'

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were glad, and they approved his words. And while this explanation was given, the hearts of the group of five bhikkhus, through the abandoning of clinging, were fully liberated from the taints.