Destruction of Craving: Examining Each Link in the Chain

Noirin Sheahan · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Noirin Sheahan · 47:31

I want to continue with the discourse on the destruction of craving, the *Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta*. Here we find the Buddha countering a disciple's view that we have just the one consciousness that speaks, feels and experiences. The Buddha debunks this and reiterates his position that there are six distinct forms of consciousness. When we're seeing something, we have visual consciousness. When we're feeling hot, we have body consciousness and so on. Only one of these can operate at any moment, and it needs certain conditions to be present for that consciousness to arise.

As an aside, I'd like to clarify that the Buddha is talking of worldly consciousness here, termed *viññāṇa* in Pali. There is ongoing debate about how we can describe awareness which transcends the world, *Nibbāna*. Let's not get into that. But remember that when we're speaking of consciousness starting and ending with each sensory experience, we're only referring to ordinary human consciousness here.

The remainder of the sutta gives us a methodology that lets us experience the world in the same way as the Buddha. In the first place, we are to learn to see experience as a series of happenings. The phrase he uses to describe this perspective is "this has come to be." When we get angry we can reflect "anger has come to be." When we cool down and become peaceful we can reflect "peace has come to be." Our whole life can be seen as a series of experiences arising one after the other.

Normally, we use a broad-based understanding to negotiate the world, where we're aware of multiple things: the walls, the furniture, the conversation on the radio, the twinge of pain in the back. This broad understanding requires conceptualisation. It's a cognitive miracle, but it doesn't reflect ultimate reality.

To experience ultimate reality, things as they really are, we have to be prepared to delve beneath thought to let awareness rest on the raw data that is coming through our sense doors moment after moment. With this intuitive awareness, we realise that we can only focus on one thing at a time. Whatever has just come to be, that is all we know. It's the limit of cognition. When we're seeing, we're not hearing. When we're hearing, we're not aware of the twinge in our back.

At times we become painfully aware of how unsatisfactory this is to our normal sense of self, how little the self likes this stop-start world where certainties crumble. The pain of this insight, however, gives us an extra incentive to see how we can reduce the stress, learn to live peacefully with uncertainty, with the inability to control experience.

Having persuaded ourselves that experience can be described as "this has come to be," the Buddha next wants us to learn about the causes and conditions for experience. Essentially, he says, all conditions have craving at their source. It's a sobering thought. Craving is obviously a very powerful force in the universe. Luckily, wisdom is an even stronger force.

So we don't have to tackle craving head on, suppress every urge to want things to be different, accept every misery without reaction. This would be impossible. The Buddha discovered that craving can be undermined and eventually destroyed altogether by learning from direct experience about all the causes and conditions that underlie it. Just knowing these is to reduce and eventually eliminate craving. The power of knowing. It is amazing.

By knowing is meant direct present moment conscious experience. It's because we don't fully know this, we skim over it, ignore so much of it, that we unwittingly allow craving to hold such sway in our lives. To the degree that we're skimming over, ignoring, we are, using Buddha's terminology, ignorant.

In this sutta, the Buddha traces the causes and conditions for craving down to ignorance, this imperfect, imprecise knowing. He then recaps on the sequence, working back up from ignorance to *dukkha*. It's generally accepted that all the links up as far as sense contact occur simultaneously with the remaining ones following sequentially. At the deepest level of concentration we might see the final links from feeling onward to *dukkha* following one another in a flash. So the full sequence may be happening thousands, perhaps millions of times during every second of our lives.

Although our concentration isn't sharp enough to follow each individual link, we can get to know each step when we focus attention. For example, we could focus on craving, looking within experience for pushing or pulling sensations, for rushes of energy, for the mind's tendency to narrow down on what it craves. In time, we'll be able to recognise craving and make a rational decision about whether or not to follow its suggestion.

Similarly, we can learn by bringing attention to any stage in dependent origination. Eventually, intuition will use this knowledge wisely. We'll use that as a theme for the rest of the talk, asking how understanding each stage might release us from suffering.

We get to know the first stage, ignorance, *avijjā*, when we watch our relationship with not knowing, the little question mark in our minds that sometimes becomes evident as we sit in meditation. Not knowing isn't itself due to ignorance. There are real limits to cognition. For example, we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. When we're hearing, we're not seeing. Appreciating how little we know is wise. It's the degree to which we're disturbed that gives a measure of our ignorance.

There's a lot of purification to be had by learning to steady the mind around the sense of not knowing, if ever that comes up for you. Bearing with any agitation, restlessness, doubt or whatever hindrance comes up, the mind gradually makes peace with not knowing the future, not even knowing a sensation that

passed a moment ago. The pause between breaths is sometimes when the sense of not knowing looms large.

As we learn to steady the mind around that, we also get a sense of there being a potential for something to be brought into consciousness, to become known. This allows us to learn about the next stage in dependent origination, *saṅkhāra*. Focusing on this sense of potential, we sense the somewhat ghostly nature of *saṅkhāra*. All our usual avenues for experience are there, but being held back. *Saṅkhāra*, remember, are the habits we've developed through our previous thoughts, speech and actions. They're the fruits of *kamma* and exist as a potential for their own repetition.

What we want to avoid doing is repeating unskillful habits based on greed, hatred or delusion. When ignorance is strong, it's easy to identify with that question mark and fall prey to the hindrance of doubt. Then there might be temptation to rush into something, to choose any old course of action, rather than live with doubt and uncertainty. Better to recognise doubt and learn to dwell more peacefully within that state of wonder and potential. Bringing wisdom to these crucial early steps in the chain allows intuitive awareness to bring forth the most appropriate *saṅkhāra*.

Saṅkhāras take three forms. Mental formations, which reflect our habitual feelings and perceptions. Verbal formations, which reflect our habits of thought and evaluation. And bodily formations, such as the in and out breath, which is the bodily habit we're most aware of in formal meditation.

Let's look at some examples of working skillfully with *saṅkhāra*. As we sit in meditation and things quieten down, during a pause between breaths, the little question mark of wonder might grow strong. We sense the tempting potential to think about what might be happening, what we should do. We also sense thinking being held back, recognised as a form of greed, the greed for understanding and control. In that case, body *saṅkhāra* might be the wise route for conscious experience. Consciousness of breath gets stronger and stronger, steadying the mind against the temptation to indulge thought. Here, intuition has chosen bodily *saṅkhāra* as the basis for conscious experience and our habitual urge to think is undermined.

At other times, feeling and perception may be the most skilful habit to come into consciousness. If the uncertainty has brought up strong aversion, the habit of *mettā* would help us bear with this. If we've been practising *mettā* in the past, then a perception of friendliness with associated pleasant feelings might emerge from nowhere, so to speak, to balance the aversion. In this case, intuition chose the mental habit of *mettā* as the basis for conscious experience. We begin to trust that this strange, uncertain world is, at base, a friendly place.

Verbal *saṅkhāra* can also be the skilful choice, especially when that sense of not knowing brings an almost chaotic bewilderment, as if we're an alien not understanding anything about the world. At such times, I found the phrase "this has come to be" surprisingly calming and consoling. It puts some sort of sensible framework around experience, reminding me that I'm just a human being in a state of bewilderment. In

these cases, intuitive awareness has chosen to work through verbal *saṅkhāra*, allowing the thought "this has come to be" to become conscious.

Saṅkhāra, the habits that emerge because of ignorance, form the basis for the next link, *viññāṇa*, consciousness. To get to know this link, we could try to verify the Buddha's insight that there are six distinct types. For example, while listening to a piece of music, look at some visible object. Can you really hear and see at the same time? Or does one or other tend to predominate? In standing meditation, can you really feel both feet on the floor? Or does attention keep switching from one to the other?

Consciousness is coupled together with the following link, *nāma-rūpa*, mind and matter, like two sheaves of wheat balancing one another. *Rūpa* refers to the matter which, in subjective experience, corresponds to four elements: earth, air, water and fire. *Rūpa*, though physical in origin, is brought into mind through sense contact. Remember the first six links up as far as sense contact occur simultaneously. Here we can see how intertwined are the links of dependent origination. Sense contact forms a component of the mind that allows for sense contact to be made. It's not a neat linear process. It's more like an ecosystem with everything intertwined.

Other constituents of mind include intention and attention. Intention, otherwise called will or volition, is the basis for *kamma*, which we create at a much later stage in the cycle, the stage termed becoming. Intention arises at this early stage, *nāma-rūpa*, and then does its business, so to speak, at the much later stage of becoming. If a *saṅkhāra* of greed underlies consciousness, it is this mental factor of intention which allows greed to be acted out in the world and also be carried forward into the future. It's not the thought, act or speech themselves which create *kamma*. The key is the will with which this has been done. Exactly the same thought, speech or action could have been done out of goodwill, resulting in a *saṅkhāra* of *mettā*, starting a new round of conscious experience in the world.

To incline our lives in the direction of freedom, we need to get to know what our motivations are, pull ourselves away from situations if we find they are unskillful.

Attention is another mental factor which we can learn to use skillfully. We are constantly being bombarded with sensory information. Attention is the mental factor that selects out some portion of this to focus on. When we're not being mindful, we're letting *saṅkhāra*, our old ghosts, tell us what to notice. Greed gets us to look for pleasure. Aversion lures attention towards whatever frightens or irritates us. Delusion persuades us to ignore incoming sense data so that we can prioritise daydreams, worries and plans, all of which bolster the concept of me.

By contrast, mindfulness teaches us to bring attention to what will support our spiritual life. For example, the neutral sensations from the breath, which promote tranquility.

Mind and matter form the necessary basis for the next link, the six sense doors. We have the five physical senses plus the mind itself as another sense door. The eyes are sensitive to light and can act as a doorway

for visual consciousness. Similarly for the ears and sound, nose and odours and so on.

Let's look in a bit more detail at the sixth sense, the mind as the doorway for mental consciousness. When we're looking at mind as part of *nāma-rūpa*, we were looking at what you might call central headquarters, the aspects of mind that display and process information via feeling and perception, and control experience through attention and intention. The mind door, on the other hand, represents the receptive aspect of mind. It's the mind as a sensor, sensitive to its own activity, much as the eyes are sensitive to light and the ears to vibration. A detector which detects itself.

When we listen to our own thoughts, we are using the mind as a sense door. It's mind-boggling to think about. No wonder we're in such a state of confusion. The mind can act like an echoing chamber or an infinity mirror, detecting its last thought, reacting in the same way, escalating worries till we're a nervous wreck.

Training ourselves to use the mind door wisely is our pathway to freedom. We can learn to stop echoing information unnecessarily. Stop trying to persuade ourselves that the past is still present. Persuade ourselves that thoughts represent reality. This shows us why so much emphasis is put on awareness at the physical sense doors in Vipassanā. The more often we rest attention on physical sensations, the less chance we're giving the mind to go round in circles, thinking a thought, detecting the feelings and perceptions generated by the thought, reacting to them by generating another thought.

We recognise the value of closing down the echo chamber effect of the mind when we stop rehearsing our woes, going over and over our plans, stop the daft daydreams. It's a relief. At times we detect a deeper silence. We might lose the sense of being an individual, a subjective entity to whom experience is happening. Sensations need no further embellishment, no interpretation beyond the experience of them arising and fading. Gradually we start to trust the Buddha's insight that *dukkha* results from ignorance, from constructing a false version of reality because we are not seeing it clearly.

The sense doors provide the opportunity for the sixth link to be made, sense contact. This happens when a sense door is open and has consciousness at one end and a sense object at the other. We've already mentioned sense contact, which can be confusing till you remember that all the first six links are experienced simultaneously.

At the moment the vibrations fall on the ear, a mental image of sound appears on the screen of consciousness. The vibration is only known as its mental component within *nāma*. The bird may be singing in the tree, but the sound I hear is within my own mind. The thought "there's a bird singing in the tree" is a thought. It's a construction we're putting on reality to explain that sound.

Sense contact forms the necessary basis for the next link, feeling, or *vedanā*. We're hardwired to interpret whatever comes in through the sense doors. Our biology is designed to detect whether the environment is safe or threatening, whether there are opportunities out there we should avail of, like food, shelter,

company. Once sense contact is made, the mind processes this to produce a feeling. Comparing this sense input to previous ones, it works out whether to signal pleasure or danger. If a match can be made with a good memory, a pleasant feeling is generated. If it's a bad memory, an unpleasant feeling results. If it matches up with memories that were not in any way special, then a neutral feeling is generated.

Feelings, *vedanā* in Pali, are also part of the mind. They're not out there in the world. They're internal, peculiar to each individual. We easily overlook this. We believe "this person is terrific, beautiful, good fun." What we're doing is to project our internal feelings onto the person, embellishing them, concocting stories based on the good feeling we get when we meet them. But then we feel horribly let down if the person is in a bad humour. Our expectations aren't being met. Perplexed, we might add all manner of daft stories to the unpleasant feeling of disappointment. That they must be ill, that something terrible has happened, that they're rejecting us, that we've done something horrible to deserve a snub.

If we can sensitise ourselves to our feelings, we can stop creating unnecessary stories around these. It helps undermine the reactive stories to let attention rest on feelings, discerning whether they are pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, whether they are associated with worldly concerns or with the spiritual life. This is a practice the Buddha specifically recommends.

As we all know, however, this is not so easy. Our habit is to indulge feelings by forming the next link called *taṇhā* in Pali, translated as craving or desire. This, according to the Buddha, is the cause of all our suffering. We crave more of whatever gives us a pleasant feeling. We crave to get rid of unpleasant feelings. We crave to ignore neutral feelings.

Unlike contact and feeling, craving isn't a basic constituent of mind. Contact, feeling and other elements of *nāma* can be likened to atoms of experience. They can't be broken up, explored in more depth. We can be aware of these as entities in themselves, just as sensation, just as feeling tone, just as a mind state. Craving and all the links beyond craving aren't so simple.

Remember, the cycle from ignorance to *dukkha* can happen thousands of times a second, so there is time for a thousand different *saṅkhāras* to underlie a thousand feelings, sensations and perceptions in even one second of craving or clinging. It's like putting atoms together to form molecules, putting molecules together to form a cell, and so on, till we have a new being.

When we're paying close attention, we can start to deconstruct the monster. We'll see that the experience of craving can be analysed down to several moments of sense contact, each with its own feeling tones. Physically craving is often felt as pulling or pushing, lack of force within the body, a strong flow of energy. Mentally, we might sense a willful focusing of mind. We get tunnel vision, all attention being drawn toward what we want or don't want, pushed away from what we want to ignore.

Even though craving is the cause of suffering, we shouldn't repress it in *vipassanā*. We need to get to know the experience. If we find ourselves rushing towards the dining room for dinner, that's a great time to

slow down, bring attention inward, feel the mental and physical energies that are compelling you to rush. Often, there will be a mixture of craving and the next link, clinging, at this stage.

Clinging, *upādāna* in Pali, is sometimes called grasping. This generates a sense of self. It's as if many molecules of craving fuse together to create a central headquarters for this new activity, getting what I want, getting rid of what I don't want, ignoring what I deem irrelevant.

Let's look at how we might recognise grasping, *upādāna*, resulting from reacting with desire at the thought of buttered toast. Desire might have been felt as a rush of physical energy when the mind suddenly zoomed into that thought. A second later, those energies have coalesced into an empowered feeling of me. This is grasping. It might be felt as a solidifying within body and mind. A moment ago, experience may have been nebulous. Now it seems I'm a whole entire person with a very definite agenda.

If we've previously trained ourselves to take an interest in the experience of craving, then *saṅkhāras* of mindfulness could also be underlying consciousness, making us aware of greed. *Saṅkhāras* of restraint could prompt us to think again, to hold back from indulgence. It often seems as though we have multiple selves, all pulling us in different directions. Again, it's important to allow the experience of clinging become fully known within *vipassanā*, rather than suppress this.

Some of these selves we construct are wise. For example, the mindful, restrained aspects of our character can hold us in check while the greedy aspect is yelling for buttered toast. So we can welcome each experience of grasping. These give mindfulness a chance to learn how to grasp onto whatever safety hook might be available in times of trouble.

Every greed will have its moment in the sun. For example, there may come a time when we're curled up in fear and dread of a scary world. At that moment, intuition might well choose a *saṅkhāra* of greed as the wisest basis for conscious experience. We grasp onto anything pleasant. Could be a thought like, there must be something better than this. It's wise to grasp this glimmer of hope with all our might until the spectre of fear has dissipated. With mindfulness, we learn how to grasp wisely till the need to grasp is over.

If we're not being mindful, however, greedy *saṅkhāras* will easily get the upper hand and we're on to the next link. This is termed becoming, *bhava* in Pali. This is the moment when will becomes action. We start moving towards the toaster. What was a possibility, a potential, now becomes reality. It's sensed as a release. All those tensions stirred up by desire and grasping now have somewhere to go. At this moment, we create *kamma*. Acting on *saṅkhāras* of greed strengthens this habit in our character, makes it more likely that greed will haunt us in the future.

It could happen, of course, that we were mindful at the point of grasping, and instead of rushing towards the toaster, we've decided to act on the *saṅkhāra* of restraint. We make a firm decision not to make toast. It's often a good idea to make some physical activity here as well, so that the energies stirred up by the

earlier stages have somewhere to go. For example, walking to a window, looking out, whatever will help reinforce the decision. Thoughts also involve will. And so when we make the decision, we also create *kam ma*, making it more likely that we'll be able to restrain ourselves in the future.

But if we've been snared by greed, we run to the penultimate link, termed birth. We're making the toast, buttering it, eating it. We now have ten minutes or more where greed can have a field day. We might be daydreaming, worrying, thinking of a thousand different things throughout the process, hardly even noticing the taste of toast when it hits the tongue. Each thought, each mindless body movement sows more *kamma*, getting us ever more hooked on greed, mindlessness, daydreams, worries and restlessness. If greed had prompted the birth of, say, a night in the pub getting drunk, the potential for harm would be even greater.

This penultimate link, birth, sets our life on a certain trajectory which reinforces whatever habit prompts the activity in the first place. But even here, mindfulness might prevail, giving us a chance to limit the damage. We could decide to slow down, to relax and enjoy the treat of buttered toast. You might even decide to forego the last morsel, give it to the birds, as a symbolic step towards restraint. And of course we can take wholesome births, for example, going on retreat. Each step in dependent arising can be used wisely once we know what we're doing.

And keep reminding yourself that the whole process is happening in any moment. So even if, at a gross level, we've taken birth as a toast eater, we can pause at any moment to feel the desires and clinging underlying this. As an aside, let's remember that dependent arising is occurring at many, many levels in life and we've all taken birth in various forms as a parent, a sister, an engineer. We took birth as a human being at our physical birth. All of these births are being acted out moment after moment.

Back to our mini birth as a devourer of buttered toast. Once the last crumb has disappeared, we have the final link in the chain, termed death. The Buddha describes this also as sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. The pleasure is over. All that's left are sticky teeth, a bloated tummy, dirty dishes and the need to buy more bread. The term death sounds melodramatic but as practice deepens we get more sensitive to the miseries we can experience when delusive pleasure comes to an end.

On retreat some years ago I had been looking forward eagerly to the evening meal on my last day. With great relish, I sat down to a bowl of steaming soup. But as the bowl emptied, it was as if my world came to an end. Deep grief, believe it or not. Worldly pleasures don't last. Delusion gets us to ignore that obvious reality. We can pin all our hopes on the next meal, the next party, the next activity. Once they're over, discontent rears its head again, intensified because our latest hopes for happiness have been dashed. We might feel painfully disappointed. Usually, we skip quickly over this final link, busy ourselves with some new activity. But we'll never escape *dukkha* that way.

Don't underestimate the value of mindfulness at this final stage of *dukkha*. If we're willing to feel our disappointment, this is a powerful teacher. In fact, many people start their spiritual journey because of

some form of death. It might be a physical death, the loss of a loved one. It might be a relationship breakup, losing our job, failing an exam, seeing the first wrinkles appear. In some way or other, we are suddenly jolted into the more painful realities of life. Not knowing how to cope, we look for wisdom, for some alternative to a life based on temporary pleasures.

So even if we've missed every single cue and ended up with toothache, bellyache and never want to see another slice of toast, it's possible to learn from this *dukkha*. Each and every mini-death we go through mindfully eats away at ignorance, our basic problem. I never again pinned so much hope on an evening meal following that grief-filled bowl of soup.

We undermine ignorance with wisdom. The better we know any of the links in dependent arising, the more wisdom we are gaining. So pick whichever one is most obvious at any time, or whichever naturally attracts your curiosity. The Buddha clarifies that we can halt the process at *vedanā*. We can become completely convinced that reactions of craving only lead to suffering. In tandem, we develop the taste for equanimity and tranquillity, for not allowing ignorance drive us to *dukkha*.

With that, we can resist the allure of pleasant feeling and aversion towards the unpleasant. We don't have to suppress these reactions out of fear or judgment. Instead, we relax, trust wisdom to do the work. When we can dare to trust, intuitive intelligence can start to tease out ways to protect us from repeating the cycle. It can be fascinating to watch how the intuitive intelligence rescues us from our unskillful habits. What I sometimes find is that it uses some other habit to pull me back from the current of danger.

For example, I might be watching anger and on the verge of strong condemnation. Many of the final links can be felt within experience. *Tanhā*, craving, can be felt as a tense pushing within my body and my mind almost splitting in two. Grasping expresses itself as a solid sense of me, the righteous one. There's a feeling of power associated with this image of myself and it's almost as if my body is being shaped as a large fist which is clasping tightly around the mind state. All the earlier links are embedded within the experience too. The sensations of grasping include unpleasant feelings of tension, sweetly pleasant feelings of self-righteousness, the habitual formation of anger and so on.

I teeter on the cusp of the next link becoming. This is sensed as if a dam is about to burst. I know that all my powerful, self-righteous energies could burst through the dam and be released into a torrent of angry thoughts. At times the dam bursts. This feels like a relief and pleasant feelings become more apparent. But because of mindfulness, these pleasant feelings might also get associated with perceptions of friendliness. This can change everything. Self-righteousness cools a bit, remembering the value of friendship. The *saṅkhāra* of doubt might then become conscious, giving me pause for thought.

This, I find, is a really interesting aspect of the whole process. A *saṅkhāra* of doubt is normally unskillful, but can be used skillfully by intuitive awareness in many situations. In this case, it's not arising out of ignorance. Mindfulness is present, and intuition senses doubt as my best route out of the mess I've created. This shows why we need to allow all our various habits be expressed in *vipassanā*. The more we

get to know their expression, the more readily they can be used to rescue us from situations. Anger could be a wise route to stabilize us against fear, for example. Greed could help us move on from despair. There is hope, even within all our unskillful habits.

At other times, the transition from craving to equanimity might be quite smooth. In fact, we might not even understand exactly why, but our attitude has changed. One moment we were fretting, doing our best to keep mindfulness afloat, but in constant danger of identifying with thoughts and feelings. The next moment we're okay with the experience. The sensations and feelings are the same, but we're no longer identifying with these, no longer troubled by them.

The teacher, Thanissaro Bhikkhu, puts this down to the complexity of dependent arising. As for an ecosystem or almost any aspect of modern society, the system has feedback loops which, in normal circumstances, positively reinforce the system, making it robust. But complex systems run into trouble when the environment changes. There are tipping points where the system becomes vulnerable. Once the tipping point has been reached, negative feedback starts to predominate and the system starts to fail and can even disintegrate, just as a bridge might suddenly collapse and as the financial system collapsed in 2008. Nowadays, we greatly fear ecosystem collapse. But within the sphere of dependent arising, collapse is welcome. We want to move towards that tipping point where our behaviour starts to change radically, where the whole complex tangle that ensnares us in suffering starts to unravel.

The environment for dependent arising is wisdom. While this is at a low level, while we're ignorant, the system flourishes and binds us tightly into unskillful habits. But mindfulness chips away at ignorance, drives the system towards its tipping point. Once we start to see how dependent arising works, intuition can use our understanding to undermine the process and bring about the conditions which favour collapse. The system will collapse totally and forever at the moment of enlightenment. But we sense many disintegrations along the way.

I mention these because we should welcome them but the sudden change might leave us perplexed. One example would be the abrupt attitude change from fretful to equanimous. Resistance can suddenly evaporate. At other times we might suddenly see through the fallacy of our thoughts, as if a veil had been lifted from our eyes. We wonder why we hadn't been able to see what was so totally obvious. At other times, it's as if we can feel threads of delusion snapping as we relax. One moment we're blowing up a bubble of thought, the next moment the bubble has burst.

We can welcome all these abrupt changes as evidence that the system that binds us to *dukkha* is starting to crumble. Each moment of mindfulness undermines ignorance, drives the system that bit closer to its tipping point. I hope this talk encourages you to increase your understanding of dependent arising, getting to know whichever of the twelve links seems most apparent, trusting that this knowledge is bringing you closer to the end of suffering.

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Transcriptions produced locally using Swiss low-carbon electricity. Corrections and rewriting by cloud-hosted AI.