AN 5.28 — With Five Factors

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Text

Numbered Discourses 5.28

3. With Five Factors

With Five Factors

“Mendicants, I will teach you how to develop noble right immersion with five factors. Listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.”

“Yes, sir,” they replied. The Buddha said this:

“And how do you develop noble right immersion with five factors?

Firstly, a mendicant, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters and remains in the first absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of seclusion, while placing the mind and keeping it connected. They drench, steep, fill, and spread themselves with rapture and bliss born of seclusion. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with rapture and bliss born of seclusion. It’s like when a deft bathroom attendant or their apprentice pours bath powder into a bronze dish, sprinkling it little by little with water. They knead it until the ball of bath powder is soaked and saturated with moisture, spread through inside and out; yet no moisture oozes out. In the same way, a mendicant drenches, steeps, fills, and spreads themselves with rapture and bliss born of seclusion. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with rapture and bliss born of seclusion. This is the first way to develop noble right immersion with five factors.

Furthermore, as the placing of the mind and keeping it connected are stilled, a mendicant enters and remains in the second absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of immersion, with internal clarity and mind at one, without placing the mind and keeping it connected. They drench, steep, fill, and spread themselves with rapture and bliss born of immersion. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with rapture and bliss born of immersion. It’s like a deep lake fed by spring water. There’s no inlet to the east, west, north, or south, and the heavens would not properly bestow showers from time to time. But the stream of cool water welling up in the lake drenches, steeps, fills, and spreads throughout the lake. There’s no part of the lake that’s not spread through with cool water. In the same way, a mendicant drenches, steeps, fills, and spreads themselves with rapture and bliss born of immersion. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with rapture and bliss born of immersion. This is the second way to develop noble right immersion with five factors.

Furthermore, with the fading away of rapture, a mendicant enters and remains in the third absorption. They meditate with equanimity, mindful and aware, experiencing for themselves the bliss of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous and mindful, one meditates in bliss.’ They drench, steep, fill, and spread themselves with bliss free of rapture. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with bliss free of rapture. It’s like a pool with blue water lilies, or pink or white lotuses. Some of them sprout and grow in the water without rising above it, thriving underwater. From the tip to the root they’re drenched, steeped, filled, and soaked with cool water. There’s no part of them that’s not spread through with cool water. In the same way, a mendicant drenches, steeps, fills, and spreads themselves with bliss free of rapture. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with bliss free of rapture. This is the third way to develop noble right immersion with five factors.

Furthermore, with the giving up of pleasure and pain and the disappearance of former happiness and sadness, a mendicant enters and remains in the fourth absorption. It is without pleasure or pain, with pure equanimity and mindfulness. They sit spreading their body through with pure bright mind. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with pure bright mind. It’s like someone sitting wrapped from head to foot with white cloth. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread over with white cloth. In the same way, they sit spreading their body through with pure bright mind. There’s no part of the body that’s not spread with pure bright mind. This is the fourth way to develop noble right immersion with five factors.

Furthermore, the meditation that is a basis for reviewing is properly grasped, focused on, borne in mind, and penetrated with wisdom by a mendicant. It’s like when someone views someone else. Someone standing might view someone sitting, or someone sitting might view someone lying down. In the same way, the meditation that is a basis for reviewing is properly grasped, focused on, borne in mind, and penetrated with wisdom by a mendicant. This is the fifth way to develop noble right immersion with five factors.

When the noble right immersion with five factors is developed and cultivated in this way, a mendicant extends the mind to realize by insight each and every thing that can be realized by insight; and they are capable of realizing those things, since each and every one is within range.

Suppose a water jar was placed on a stand, full to the brim so a crow could drink from it. If a strong man was to tip it any which way, would water pour out?”

“Yes, sir.”

“In the same way, when noble right immersion with five factors is developed and cultivated in this way, a mendicant extends the mind to realize by insight each and every thing that can be realized by insight; and they are capable of realizing those things, since each and every one is within range.

Suppose there was a square, walled lotus pond on level ground, full to the brim so a crow could drink from it. If a strong man was to open the wall on any side, would water pour out?”

“Yes, sir.”

“In the same way, when noble right immersion with five factors is developed and cultivated in this way, a mendicant extends the mind to realize by insight each and every thing that can be realized by insight; and they are capable of realizing those things, since each and every one is within range.

Suppose a chariot stood harnessed to thoroughbreds at a level crossroads, with a goad ready. A deft horse trainer, a master charioteer, might mount the chariot, taking the reins in his right hand and goad in the left. He’d drive out and back wherever he wishes, whenever he wishes. In the same way, when noble right immersion with five factors is developed and cultivated in this way, a mendicant extends the mind to realize by insight each and every thing that can be realized by insight; and they are capable of realizing those things, since each and every one is within range.

If you wish: ‘May I wield the many kinds of psychic power: multiplying myself and becoming one again … controlling the body as far as the realm of divinity.’ You’re capable of realizing it, since each and every one is within range.

If you wish: ‘With clairaudience that is purified and superhuman, may I hear both kinds of sounds, human and heavenly, whether near or far.’ You’re capable of realizing it, since each and every one is within range.

If you wish: ‘May I understand the minds of other beings and individuals, having encompassed them with my mind. May I understand mind with greed as “mind with greed”, and mind without greed as “mind without greed”; mind with hate as “mind with hate”, and mind without hate as “mind without hate”; mind with delusion as “mind with delusion”, and mind without delusion as “mind without delusion”; constricted mind as “constricted mind”, and scattered mind as “scattered mind”; expansive mind as “expansive mind”, and unexpansive mind as “unexpansive mind”; mind that is not supreme as “mind that is not supreme”, and mind that is supreme as “mind that is supreme”; mind immersed in samādhi as “mind immersed in samādhi”, and mind not immersed in samādhi as “mind not immersed in samādhi”; freed mind as “freed mind”, and unfreed mind as “unfreed mind”.’ You’re capable of realizing it, since each and every one is within range.

If you wish: ‘May I recollect many kinds of past lives, with features and details.’ You’re capable of realizing it, since each and every one is within range.

If you wish: ‘With clairvoyance that is purified and superhuman, may I see sentient beings passing away and being reborn according to their deeds.’ You’re capable of realizing it, since each and every one is within range.

If you wish: ‘May I realize the undefiled freedom of heart and freedom by wisdom, and live having realized it with my own insight in this very life due to the ending of defilements.’ You’re capable of realizing it, since each and every one is within range.”