

Upanisa Sutta

SN II 12.23 Causes for Liberation
Translated by Ānanda
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*R*esiding at Sāvātthi.

*“I say that it is by knowing and seeing monks,
That the mental movements become still,
Not by not knowing and not seeing.¹*

Knowing and seeing what?

- (1) *These are shapes,
These are shapes manifesting,
These are shapes vanishing.²*
- (2) *These are felt experiences,
These are felt experiences manifesting,
These are felt experiences vanishing.*
- (3) *These are concepts,
These are concepts manifesting,
These are concepts vanishing.*
- (4) *These are thoughts,
These are thoughts manifesting,
These are thoughts vanishing.*
- (5) *This is consciousness,
This is cognition manifesting,
This is cognition vanishing.*

*Knowing and seeing in this way monks,
There is the stilling of the distractions.³*

¹ *“Jānato ahaṃ, bhikkhave, passato āsavānaṃ khayam vadāmi, no ajānato no apassato.*

² *Iti rūpaṃ, iti rūpassa samudayo, iti rūpassa atthaṅgamo.*

³ *Evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, jānato evaṃ passato āsavānaṃ khayō hoti.*

[Stillness to Lack of Awareness]

But monks, I say

In this stillness,
this knowledge of the stilling comes from a cause,
It is not independent.⁴

(1) What is the cause for the knowledge of the stilling?

Release should be said.
But this release comes from a cause,
It is not independent.⁵

(2) What is the cause for release?

Letting go should be answered.⁶
But this letting go comes from a cause,
It is not independent.

(3) What is the cause for letting go?

Disengagement should be answered.
But this disengagement come from a cause,
It is not independent.

(4) What is the cause of disengagement?

Discernment should be answered.⁷
But this discernment comes from a cause,
It is not independent.

(5) What is the cause of discernment?

Mental Collectedness should be answered.⁸
But this Mental collectedness comes from a cause,
It is not independent.

(6) What is the cause for mental collectedness?

Happiness should be answered.⁹
But this happiness comes from a cause,
It is not independent.

(7) What is the cause for happiness?

⁴ *Yampissa taṃ, bhikkhave, khayasmim̐ khayeñāṇaṃ, tampi saupanisaṃ vadāmi, no anupanisaṃ.*

⁵ *Kā ca, bhikkhave, khayeñāṇassa upanisā? 'Vimuttī'tissa vacanīyaṃ. Vimuttimpāhaṃ, bhikkhave, saupanisaṃ vadāmi, no anupanisaṃ.*

⁶ *Virāga*

⁷ *Yathābhūtañāṇadassana*

⁸ *Samādhi*

⁹ *Sukha*

*Calm should be answered.¹⁰
But this calm comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(8) *What is the cause for calm?*

*Joy should be answered.
But this joy comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(9) *What is the cause for joy?*

*Relief should be answered.¹¹
But this relief comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(10) *What is the cause for relief?*

*Confidence should be answered.¹²
But this confidence comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(11) *What is the cause of confidence?*

*Trouble should be answered.¹³
But this trouble comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(12) *What is the cause of trouble?*

*Blind reaction should be answered.¹⁴
But this blind reaction comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(13) *What is the cause of blind reaction?*

*Habit patterns should be answered.¹⁵
But these habit patterns come from a cause,
They are not independent.*

(14) *What is the cause of habit patterns?*

*Accumulating should be answered.¹⁶
But this accumulating comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

(15) *What is the cause for accumulating?*

¹⁰ *Passadhi*

¹¹ *Pāmojja: Gladness, relief*

¹² *Saddhā*

¹³ *Dukkha*

¹⁴ *Jāti: Lit.: Birth (Rebirth), Practically: This is taking action in the physical plane. It can also be understood as the birth of every moment, of every conditioned processes (Saṅkhāra), their generation. Kamma. Blind action.*

¹⁵ *Bhavo: Mental conditioning.*

¹⁶ *Upādāna: Accumulating, holding on. This accumulating happens because of 'not letting go' (upa-adāna).*

*Discontent should be answered.¹⁷
But this discontent comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

*(16) What is the cause of discontent?
All felt experiences should be answered.
But all of these felt experiences come from a condition,
They are not independent.*

*(17) What is the cause of all felt experiences?
Sensory contact should be answered.
But this sensory contact comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

*(18) What is the cause of sensory contact?
The six senses should be answered.
But these six senses come from a cause,
They are not independent.*

*(19) What is the cause of the six senses?
Mind and matter should be answered.
But this mind and matter comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

*(20) What is the cause of mind and matter?
Consciousness should be answered.
But this consciousness comes from a cause,
It is not independent.*

*(21) What is the cause of consciousness?
Involuntary processes (of body speech and mind) should be answered.
But these involuntary processes come from a cause,
They are not independent.*

(22) What is the cause of involuntary processes?¹⁸

(23) Lack of discernment should be answered.

¹⁷ *Tañhā*: Lit.: Thirst. Practically: Discontent, dissatisfaction. (Longing for something that is not; Disliking something that is.)

¹⁸ *Saṅkhāra*: Built-in conditionings, automated processes.

[Lack of Discernment to Stillness]

In this way monks,

- (1) *Lack of discernment supports involuntary processes (of body speech and mind);*
- (2) *Involuntary processes support consciousness;*
- (3) *Consciousness supports mind and matter;*
- (4) *Mind and matter support the six senses;*
- (5) *The six senses support sensory contact;*
- (6) *Sensory contact supports all felt experiences;*
- (7) *All felt experiences support discontent;*
- (8) *Discontent supports accumulating;*
- (9) *Accumulating supports habit patterns;*
- (10) *Habit patterns support blind reaction;¹⁹*
- (11) *Blind reactions support trouble;*

- (12) *Trouble supports confidence;*
- (13) *Confidence supports relief;*
- (14) *Relief supports joy;*
- (15) *Joy supports calmness;*
- (16) *Calmness supports happiness;*
- (17) *Happiness supports collectedness;*
- (18) *Collectedness supports discernment;*
- (19) *Discernment support disengagement;*
- (20) *Disengagement supports letting go;*
- (21) *Letting go supports release;*
- (22) *Release supports the knowledge of Stillness.*

[Mountain Rain Analogy]

Just as when it pours down heavily on the mountain tops,

*That water rushes down, filling the main valleys and the gorges;
The main valleys and the gorges being full, they fill the streams;
The streams being full, they fill the creeks;
The creeks being full, they fill the rivers;
The rivers being full, they fill the estuaries;
The estuaries being full, they fill the great ocean.*

¹⁹ *Birth of Kamma every moment.*

In the same way monks;

- (1) Lack of discernment supports involuntary processes (of body speech and mind);*
- (2) Involuntary processes support consciousness;*
- (3) Consciousness supports mind and matter;*
- (4) Mind and matter support the six senses;*
- (5) The six senses support sensory contact;*
- (6) Sensory contact supports all felt experiences;*
- (7) All felt experiences support discontent;*
- (8) Discontent supports accumulating;*
- (9) Accumulating supports habit patterns;*
- (10) Habit patterns support blind reaction;²⁰*
- (11) Blind reactions support trouble;*

- (12) Trouble supports confidence;*
- (13) Confidence supports relief;*
- (14) Relief supports joy;*
- (15) Joy supports calmness;*
- (16) Calmness supports happiness;*
- (17) Happiness supports collectedness;*
- (18) Collectedness supports discernment;*
- (19) Discernment support disengagement;*
- (20) Disengagement supports letting go;*
- (21) Letting go supports release;*
- (22) Release supports the knowledge of Stillness.*

²⁰ *Birth of Kamma every moment.*



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