

15 Anumāna Sutta

Inference

1. **THUS HAVE I HEARD.** On one occasion the venerable Mahā Moggallāna was living in the Bhagga country at Sumsumāragira in the Bhesakalā Grove, the Deer Park. There he addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Friends, bhikkhus." – "Friend," they replied. The venerable Mahā Moggallāna said this:

2. "Friends, though a bhikkhu asks thus: 'Let the venerable ones admonish me,²¹² I need to be admonished by the venerable ones,' yet if he is difficult to admonish and possesses qualities that make him difficult to admonish, if he is impatient and does not take instruction rightly, then his companions in the holy life think that he should not be admonished or instructed, they think of him as a person not to be trusted.

3. "What qualities make him difficult to admonish?"

(1) Here a bhikkhu has evil wishes and is dominated by evil wishes;²¹³ this is a quality that makes him difficult to admonish.

(2) Again, a bhikkhu lauds himself and disparages others; this is a quality that makes him difficult to admonish.

(3) Again, a bhikkhu is angry and is overcome by anger; this is a quality...

(4) Again, a bhikkhu is angry, and revengeful because of anger...

(5) Again, a bhikkhu is angry, and stubborn because of anger...

(6) Again, a bhikkhu is angry, and he utters words bordering on anger...

(7) Again, a bhikkhu is reproved, and he resists the reprover...

(8) Again, a bhikkhu is reproved, and he denigrates the reprover...

(9) Again, [96] a bhikkhu is reproved, and he counter-reproves the reprover...

(10) Again, a bhikkhu is reproved, and he prevaricates, leads the talk aside, and shows anger, hate, and bitterness...

(11) Again, a bhikkhu is reproved, and he fails to account for his conduct...

(12) Again, a bhikkhu is contemptuous and domineering...

(13) Again, a bhikkhu is envious and avaricious...

(14) Again, a bhikkhu is fraudulent and deceitful...

(15) Again, a bhikkhu is obstinate and arrogant...

(16) Again, a bhikkhu adheres to his own views, holds on to them tenaciously, and relinquishes them with difficulty; this is a quality that makes him difficult to admonish.²¹⁴

"Friends, these are called the qualities that make him difficult to admonish.

4. "Friends, though a bhikkhu does not ask thus: 'Let the venerable ones admonish me; I need to be admonished by the venerable ones,' yet if he is easy to admonish and possesses qualities that make him easy to admonish, if he is patient and takes instruction rightly, then his companions in the holy life think that he should be admonished and instructed, and they think of him as a person to be trusted.

5. "What qualities make him easy to admonish?"

(1) Here a bhikkhu has no evil wishes and is not dominated by evil wishes; this is a quality that makes him easy to admonish.

(2) Again, a bhikkhu does not laud himself nor disparage others; this is a quality...

(3) He is not angry nor allows anger to overcome him...

(4) He is not angry or revengeful because of anger...

(5) He is not angry or stubborn because of anger...

(6) He is not angry, and he does not utter words bordering on anger...

(7) He is reproved, and he does not resist the reprover...

(8) He is reproved, and he does not denigrate the reprover...[97]

(9) He is reproved, and he does not counter-reprove the reprover...

(10) He is reproved, and he does not prevaricate, lead the talk aside, and show anger, hate, and bitterness...

(11) He is reproved, and he does not fail to account for his conduct...

(12) He is not contemptuous or domineering...

(13) He is not envious or avaricious...

(14) He is not fraudulent or deceitful...

(15) He is not obstinate or arrogant...

(16) Again, a bhikkhu does not adhere to his own views or hold on to them tenaciously, and he relinquishes them easily; this is a quality that makes him easy to admonish.

"Friends, these are called the qualities that make him easy to admonish.

6. "Now, friends, a bhikkhu ought to infer about himself in the following way:²¹⁵

(1) 'A person with evil wishes and dominated by evil wishes is displeasing and disagreeable to me. If I were to have evil wishes and be dominated by evil wishes, I would be displeasing and disagreeable to others.' A bhikkhu who knows this should arouse his mind thus: 'I shall not have evil wishes and be dominated by evil wishes.'

(2-16) 'A person who lauds himself and disparages others... [98]...A person who adheres to his own views, holds on to them tenaciously, and relinquishes them with difficulty is displeasing and disagreeable to me. If I were to adhere to my own views, hold on to them tenaciously, and relinquish them with difficulty, I would be displeasing and disagreeable to others.' A bhikkhu who knows this should arouse his mind thus: 'I shall not adhere to my own views, hold on to them tenaciously, and I shall relinquish them easily.'

7. "Now, friends, a bhikkhu should review himself thus:

(1) 'Do I have evil wishes and am I dominated by evil wishes?' If, when he reviews himself, he knows: 'I have evil wishes, I am dominated by evil wishes,' then he should make an effort to abandon those evil unwholesome states. But if, when he reviews himself, he knows: 'I have no evil wishes, I am not dominated by evil wishes,' then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

(2-16) Again, a bhikkhu should review himself thus: 'Do I laud myself and disparage others?...[99]...Do I adhere to my own views, hold on to them tenaciously, and relinquish them with difficulty?' If, when he reviews himself, he knows: 'I adhere to my own views...', then [100] he should make an effort to abandon those evil unwholesome states. But if, when he reviews himself, he knows: 'I do not adhere to my own

views...', then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

8. "Friends, when a bhikkhu reviews himself thus, if he sees that these evil unwholesome states are not all abandoned in himself, then he should make an effort to abandon them all. But if, when he reviews himself thus, he sees that they are all abandoned in himself, then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.²¹⁶

"Just as when a woman – or a man – young, youthful, fond of ornaments, on viewing the image of her own face in a clear bright mirror or in a basin of clear water, sees a smudge or a blemish on it, she makes an effort to remove it, but if she sees no smudge or blemish on it, she becomes glad thus: 'It is a gain for me that it is clean'; so too when a bhikkhu reviews himself thus...then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states."

That is what the venerable Mahā Moggallāna said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the venerable Mahā Moggallāna's words.

SUTTA 15

- 212 *Vadantu*, meaning literally “let them speak to me,” has the implied sense: “Let them speak to me by way of instruction and exhortation” (MA).
- 213 See MN 5.10–29.
- 214 See MN 8.44 and n.109.
- 215 It is from this passage that the sutta acquires its name.
- 216 MA: The ancients called this sutta the “Bhikkhupāti-mokkha.” A bhikkhu should review himself three times daily in the way described in the sutta. If he cannot do so three times, then he should do so twice, or, at the minimum, once.

SUTTA 16

- 217 MA explains *cetokhila*, translated “wilderness in the heart,” as rigidity, rubbish, or a stump in the mind. It explains *cetaso vinibandha* as something that binds the mind, clenching it like a fist; hence “shackle in the heart.” The former, as will be seen, consists of four cases of doubt, one of hate; the latter of five varieties of greed.
- 218 MA explains “Dhamma” here as the scriptural teaching and penetration to the paths, fruits, and Nibbāna. The Dhamma as practice is mentioned separately just below as the training (*sikkhā*) – that is, the threefold training in virtue, concentration, and wisdom.
- 219 “Body” here is his own body, while “form” just below is outer forms, the bodies of others.
- 220 The four bases for spiritual power (*iddhipāda*) are included among the thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment; they are the special foundation for the five mundane kinds of direct knowledge (*abhiññā*). According to MA, enthusiasm (*ussolhi*) is energy, which is to be applied everywhere.
- 221 The fifteen factors are the abandoning of the five wildernesses of the heart, the abandoning of the five shackles, and the five just mentioned. “Supreme security from bondage” (*anuttara yogakkhema*) is arahantship, as at MN 1.27.
- 222 This simile appears again at MN 53.19–22 in connection