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(Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 1

Paṭhama (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta The First (Fours) Discourse on Striving | A 4.13

Theme: The 4 right strivings

Translated by Piya Tan ©2016, 2017

1 Introduction

1.1 DEFINITION. The (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 1 (A 4.13) gives a short definition of the 4 right strivings or right efforts. Essentially, the 4 right strivings are to diligently strive:

(1) to <u>prevent</u> an unarisen unwholesome state from arising;	<i>saṁvara padhāna</i>
(2) to <u>abandon</u> an arisen unwholesome state;	<i>pahāna padhāna</i>
(3) to <u>cultivate</u> an unarisen wholesome state;	<i>bhāvanā padhāna</i>
(4) to <u>guard</u> an arisen wholesome state.	<i>anurakkhaṇa padhāna</i>

1.2 OMISSION AND COMMISSION. “Right striving” (*samma-p, padhāna*) is the 6th of the 8 limbs of the noble eightfold path, and the first of the triad forming training aggregate of “concentration” (*samādhi*) or mental cultivation.¹ In this capacity, right striving is both moral virtue (the first two strivings)—that is, the “not-doing of all bads” (*sabba, pāpassa akaraṇaṃ*)—and mental cultivation (the last two strivings)—as the “promotion of the wholesome” (*kusal’upasampadā*) (Dh 183).

1.3 PERICOPE. This is the *samma-p, padhāna* pericope [1.1]—the stock passage on right striving—that is found throughout the 4 Nikayas as well as the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, as evident from this list:²

Saṅgīti Sutta	D 33,1.11(2)/3:221	
Mahā Sakul’udāyi Sutta	M 77,16/2:11	SD 49.5a
(Gaṅga) Pācīna Sutta	S 49.1/5:244	
Amata Vagga	A 1.20,13-16/1:39	Each striving treated as a sutta.
Khaṭṭa Sutta 3	A 3.152/1:296	Each striving treated as a sutta.
(Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 1	A 4.13/2:15	SD 51.21
(Catu) Padhāna Sutta	A 4.14/2:16 f	SD 10.2
Samma-p, padhāna Sutta	A 4.271.2/2:256	For direct knowledge of lust.
(Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2	A 4.69/2:74	SD 51.21(2)
Sikkhā S	A 9.73,4/4:462	Helps to keep the 5 precepts.
Vibhaṅga	Vbh 208	See also VbhA 291-302.

1.4 RIGHT STRIVING AS A SPIRITUAL FACULTY

Right striving (*samma-p, padhāna*) is both a **path-factor**, as well as the second of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*), that is, the faculty of effort (*viriy’indriya*). References to **the faculty of effort** define as the 4 right strivings can be found here, in **the Indriya Saṁyutta** (the collected teachings on the faculties):

¹ As “right effort,” see SD 10.16 (6).

² **The Āgama version** (preserved in Chinese tr)—at SĀ 647 (T2.182bc) & SĀ 877-879 (T2.221ab)—reverses the positions of the first two strivings.

Daṭṭhabba Sutta	S 48.8/5:196	<i>Viriya'indriya</i> = the 4 right strivings
(Indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 1	S 48.9/5:197-6 f	<i>Viriya'indriya</i> defined as the 4 right strivings
(Indriya) Vibhaṅga Sutta 2	S 48.10/5:197-199	Defined as the <i>samma-p, padhāna</i> pericope [1.2]
Paṭilābha Sutta	S 48.11/5:199	<i>Viriya'indriya</i> = the 4 right strivings
Āpaṇa Sutta	S 48.50/5:225 f	<i>Viriya'indriya</i> defined as the 4 right strivings

2 (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2 (A 4.69)

This **(Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2** (A 4.69) is practically identical to **the (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 1** (A 4.13) (the main text here). The only differences are that **A 4.69** here gives the word-list of the 4 striving, the tag and refrain for each of the passages on these 4 strivings, and the closing verse is different, too.

SD 51.21(2)

(Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2

Dutiya (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta The Second (Fours) Discourse on Striving • **A 4.69/2:74**

Traditional: **A 4.2.2.9**, Aṅguttara Nikāya 4, Catukka Nipāta 2, Dutiya Paṇṇāsaka 2, Pattakamma Vagga 9

Theme: The fourfold dynamics of spiritual striving

1 Bhikshus, there are these 4 right strivings. What are the four?

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) The striving of restraint. | <i>saṁvara-p, padhāna</i> |
| (2) The striving of abandonment. | <i>pahāna-p, padhāna</i> |
| (3) The striving of cultivation. | <i>bhāvana-p, padhāna</i> |
| (4) The striving of guarding. | <i>anurakkhana-p, padhāna</i> |

2 And what, bhikshus, is **the striving of restraint** (*saṁvara-p, padhāna*)?

(1) Here, bhikshus, a monk summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives for **the non-arising** of un arisen bad unwholesome states.

This, bhikshus, is called the striving of restraint.

3 And what, bhikshus, is **the striving of abandonment** (*pahāna-p, padhāna*)?

(2) Here, bhikshus, he *summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives for* **the abandoning** of arisen bad unwholesome states.

This, bhikshus, is called the striving of abandonment.

4 And what, bhikshus, is **the striving of cultivation** (*bhāvana-p, padhāna*)?

(3) He *summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives for* **the arising** of un arisen wholesome states.

This, bhikshus, is called the striving of cultivation.

5 And what, bhikshus, is **the striving of guarding** (*anurakkhaṇa-p, padhāna*)?

(4) He summons his will for **the persistence** of arisen wholesome states, for their non-decline, increase, abundance, development, fulfillment.

This, bhikshus, is called the striving of guarding.

6 These, bhikshus, are the 4 right strivings.

<p>7 <i>Samvaro ca pahānañ ca bhāvanā anurakkhanā ete padhānā cattāro desit'ādicca'bandhunā Yehi bhikkhu idh'ātāpī khayaṃ dukkhassa pāpuṇāti.</i></p>	<p>Restraint and abandoning, cultivation and guarding— these are the 4 strivings taught by the Kinsman of the Sun. Whichever monk is ardent here will attain the ending of suffering.</p>
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— evaṃ —

3 Related suttas

3.1 (Duka) Padhāna Sutta (A 2.2), SD 51.2

The highest striving is that of the abandoning of all acquisitions. The Sutta mentions 2 kinds of difficult life-styles: the first is that of a lay person who strives to regularly offer alms to renunciants, and the other, the renunciant who is bent on “abandoning all acquisitions.” Clearly, these 2 kinds of practitioners reflect the two sides of the ideal early Buddhist community: the faithful and generous layperson, and the faithful and diligent renunciant.

3.2 Saṅgīti Sutta (D 33,1.11(2)/3:221)

This text, said to be given by the arhat Sāriputta, gives the most succinct definition of the 5 right strivings, thus:

The 4 right strivings (*cattāro sammā-p, padhānā*)

“Here, avuso, a monk

- (1) *anuppanānam pāpakānam akusalānam dhammānam **anuppādāya** chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyam ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.*
- (1) summons his will,³ makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives, for **the non-arising** of unarisen bad unwholesome states.
- (2) *uppanānam pāpakānam akusalānam dhammānam **pahānāya** chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyam ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.*
- (2) *He summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives, for **the abandoning** of unarisen bad unwholesome states.*
- (3) *Anuppanānam kusalānam dhammānam **uppādāya** chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyam ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.*
- (3) *He summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives, for **the arising** of unarisen wholesome states.*

³ *Chandaṃ janeti*, lit, “bring to birth his desire.” *Chanda* (“will, will-power, desire”) is one of the 4 “bases of (spiritual) success” (*iddhi, pāda*): will (*chanda*), effort (*viriya*), mind (*citta*) and investigation (*vīmaṃsā*): **Cattāro Iddhi, pāda**, SD 10.3; **Iddhi, pāda Vibhaṅga S** (S 51.20), SD 28.14.

(4) *Uppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ **ṭhitiyā** asammosāya bhiyyo, bhāvāya vepullāya bhāvanāya pāripūriyā chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.*

(4) *He summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives, for the maintaining of the arisen wholesome states."*

3.2 (Cātu) Padhāna Sutta (A 4.14 = D 33,1.11(10)), SD 10.2

The 4 right strivings as the dynamics of spiritual growth.

- (1) The striving of restraint is that of sense-restraint.
- (2) The striving of abandoning is the striving that is right thought.
- (3) The striving of cultivation is that of the 7 awakening-factors.
- (4) The striving of guarding is that of wise attention.

3.3 (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 1 (A 4.13), SD 51.21 (This work.)

The 4 right efforts, that is: to restrain, to abandon, to cultivate, and to maintain. This text is expanded as **the (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2** (A 4.69) [2].

3.4 (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2 (A 4.69), SD 51.21(2)

This is almost identical as **the (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 2** (A 4.69), but it lays down the 4 right efforts in slightly greater detail. It is fully translated above [2].

3.5 (Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 3 (A 4.71), SD 74.12

The 4 qualities attesting to one's surety of the path that brings the destruction of mental influxes (*āsava*).⁴ These 4 qualities are: moral virtue, learning, energy and wisdom.

3.6 (Pañcaka) Padhāna Sutta (A 5.53), SD 51.14

These 5 qualities conduce to spiritual striving:

- (1) possessing faith;
- (2) having good health and digestion;
- (3) being honest and open;
- (4) asserts effort; and
- (5) wise, especially in terms of the nature of the rise and fall of phenomena.

3.7 (Sutta Nipāta) Padhāna Sutta (Sn 3.2), SD 51.12

The Bodhisattva, in his quest for awakening, meditates. Māra appears with his army to distract the Buddha. (Sn 425-429)

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⁴ The mental influxes (*āsava*) are those of (1) sense-desire (*kām'āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav'āsava*), (3) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 33,1.10(20)/3:216; M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The better known but later set of 4 influxes incl wrong views (*diṭṭh'āsava*), as no. 3 (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937).

(Catukka) Padhāna Sutta 1

The First (Fours) Discourse on Striving

A 4.13

1 Bhikshus, there are these 4 right strivings. What are the four?

2 Here, bhikshus, a monk

(1) summons his will,⁵ makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives for **the non-arising** of un arisen bad unwholesome states.

(2) He *summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives* for **the abandoning** of arisen bad unwholesome states.

(3) He *summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives* for **the arising** of un arisen wholesome states.

(4) He *summons his will, makes an effort, rouses energy, applies his mind, strives* for **the persistence** of arisen wholesome states, for their non-decline, increase, abundance, development, fulfillment.

3 These are the 4 right strivings.

4 *Samma-p, padhānā māra, dheyyābhūhūtā⁶
te asitā jāti, maraṇa, bhayassa pārāgū*

Those who rightly strive overcome Māra's realm.⁷
Unattached, they cross beyond fear of birth and death.

Te tusitā jetvā māraṃ sa, vāhanam te anejā

They are contented, unshakened, having
conquered Māra on his mount;

sabbam⁸ namuci, balaṃ upātivattā te sukhitā'ti

those happy ones have overcome all of Na, mucis'⁹
armies.¹⁰ [16]

— evaṃ —

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⁵ "Summons his will," *chandam janeti*. *Chanda* is not merely "desire," but has an element of joy; hence, it can be said to be "joyful will." Cf "He should do his will therein" (*tamhi chandam kayirātha*) (Dh 118c), ie, diligently and often perform acts of merit (*puñña*); for, happy is the accumulation of merit (Dh 118).

⁶ Be Ce Se *-ābhibhūtā*; Be:King *-ābhibhutā*; Ce:AA *-ādhibhutā*; Ee *-adhibhuno*.

⁷ Personally, **Māra** signifies all our senses, esp when they distract us or not in the service of spiritual cultivation. Broadly, he signifies all cyclic existence, worldly and divine. Māra is said to be blinded by dhyana (*jhāna*) and has no power over arhats (incl the Buddha). The latter is also called "Māra's realm" (*māra, dheyya*). On Māra, see SD 51.11 (3).

⁸ Ce:Turnour *saccam*; Be Be:King Ce Ee Se *sabbam*; Ce:Tr(enckner) *saddham*.

⁹ *Na.muci*, an epithet of Māra: SD 51,11 (3.2.1.1).

¹⁰ On Māra's army, see Sn 436-439 (SD 3.2) + nn.