

15 THE LAW OF CONDITIONALITY

3rd January 2001

Imasmiṃ sati, idaṃ hoti

Imass' uppāda, idaṃ uppajjati

Imasmiṃ asati, idaṃ na hoti

Imassa nirodha, idaṃ nirujjhati

When this is, that is.

With the arising of this, that arises.

When this is not, that is not.

With the ceasing of this, that ceases.

One of the monks asked me to talk about Dependent Origination. Rather than talk about that I want to pay more attention to the Law of Conditionality, which is mentioned in the *gāthā* that I just chanted at the beginning of this talk: ‘When this is, that is; and from the arising of this, that arises; when this isn’t, then that isn’t; and from the cessation of this, that ceases.’ What the Buddha is talking about in this beautiful teaching is that everything that arises has its causes and conditions. Part of the Dhamma is actually to see the causes and conditions which give rise to the various qualities and seeing that when those causes and conditions are not there, those qualities cease. So it gives us an idea of the causality of the whole of *samsāra*. It gives us an understanding of the nature of this whole process towards Enlightenment. It gives us an understanding of the process that we call the *citta*, the mind.

The Emperor’s Clothes

One of the reasons people find it so hard to see deeply into, and accept fully, the teaching of *anattā* (non-self) is because most people who look inside themselves will say that, from their experience of the world, *there is* something there. When we start

to talk about what is deeply within us, we never say that there's nothing there. There is that mysterious – but not mystical – misty, uncertain something, which people take to be a 'me'. However, when we see that fully it reveals itself as a process. This is why Theravada Buddhism and the Buddhism of accomplished meditators disagree with people who say it's just empty and that there is nothing there. There is something there. There is this process that you can feel as being something. Our real problem is that we take it to be something it isn't. That which is there is just a process and that process is beautifully described by the Buddha: with the arising of this, that arises; and from the cessation of this, that ceases.

By understanding this whole process you realise the root cause of *samsāra*: the illusion of this 'being', this 'self', this 'me'. As meditators we look deeply into the nature of our minds, but the only way we can really see that nature is to clear away all the undergrowth. A simile that I like is the simile of the Emperor clothed from head to foot in five different garments. He has a hat on top of his head, a scarf around his face, and a jacket over the top half of his body; he has trousers on the bottom half and is wearing high boots. So his whole body is covered up with these five garments, the hat, the scarf, the jacket, the trousers, and the boots. Because he is covered up in this way you can't actually see what or who the Emperor truly is. You don't know what's actually underneath all those clothes or who it is that's walking along. You don't know who is speaking from behind the mask or who is feeling all these things and responding to them. In that simile the five garments covering the Emperor are the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

We often take those five senses to be me, to be the 'self', and that's why we think that they are so important to us. We are very concerned with what we see and don't see. We are very concerned with what we hear and don't hear. We like to hear praise, we don't like to hear blame. We like to hear beautiful sounds and, if we don't like crows, we don't like to hear the crows. Some people like to hear the cement mixer working, some people don't. It is the same with smells. You all know that one of the smells that I delight in is the smell of bat pooh. The reason for that is because I lived for three months having lovely meditations in a cave populated by bats and so I always

relate that sort of smell to a very happy time in my life. We take these preferences to be very important; we take them to be me, to be mine. It's the same with the taste the food. You like this food, you don't like that drink. You like this amount of honey or sugar or coffee-mate or whatever in your tea. We are very concerned with how we feel in our physical body: the aches, the pains, and the pleasures. For many people this is the clothing around the whole of existence; it is all they know of existence. They are concerned with nothing else but the five senses, and they never really know who the Emperor is behind these five senses. So the only way to find out what this Emperor is – by the Emperor I mean *that which you take to be the 'self'*, the mind, consciousness, the will, or whatever – is to undress this Emperor somehow.

That was the great discovery of the Buddha before he sat under the Bodhi tree. Just before he was about to become Enlightened, he remembered the time when he was a small boy sitting under a Rose Apple tree, when he unwittingly entered into a *jhāna* for the first time. He recalled the experience and thought that maybe this is the path to Enlightenment. Insight then arose and he knew that was the path to Enlightenment. He asked himself, 'Why was I afraid of that pleasure which is apart from the five senses?' and he thought, 'I will not be afraid of that pleasure'. He realised that was the path and he sat under the Bodhi tree and developed the *jhānas*.

The *jhānas* are nothing more than the result of letting go of the body and the five senses. The body and the five senses twirl around each other; they are conditioned by each other. When this body dies the five senses cease. When the five senses cease this body dies. They are completely dependent on one another like two sticks holding each other up. When these five senses actually disappear through the practice of meditation then that reveals the nature of the *citta*. It's like taking the clothes off the Emperor and finding out who is underneath. Who is saying all these words? Who is deciding to think this way? Who is deciding to do this? Who gets angry and who gets happy? What is all of this? You need to be able to investigate like this in order to be able to find out what's inside. Of course you then come up with what we call the *citta*, the mind. That's why the first experience – before you even get to a *jhāna* – is seeing a beautiful *nimmitta*, a beautiful light, radiant, wonderful, and very still.

You understand why the Buddha said this mind is radiant (*pabhassara*) when it is not defiled from outside. Remove the clothing from the Emperor and the mind appears brilliant and beautiful.

This is a very beautiful, very enjoyable, fun way of becoming Enlightened. But the main purpose is to get to know what it is that's underneath all of those clothes, and of course the actual Emperor looks very different from the clothes. This is the reason people who have deep experiences of meditation have such a difficult time trying to explain it to other people. It's important to have access to a monk or a teacher who has experienced these states, because they have a much better chance of understanding your particular descriptions and whether your experiences fit in with all the *jhānas*. If a person has been to Paris many, many times, then they are more likely to understand the first time visitor's description of Paris. This is all it really is.

The Builder

The realm of the *citta*, the realm of the mind, is a different world. It's amazing how few people ever get to such a place, or ever realize what such a place is like. That is because they don't have enough data to start the process of Enlightenment. When you start to experience the *citta* alone and see this whole process, it's like seeing the Emperor with all his clothes off. You see what this person really is and then you've got a chance of overcoming the illusion of self. You are actually looking at the process that you take to be you. You see the process of the will, and the 'doer' is seen for what it is. In the *jhānas* all that stops for awhile, and there is the sense of being frozen, not being able to do anything. That gives you a very powerful insight – an insight not based on inference but based on the experience – that there is pure mindfulness, a great awareness, but you are not doing anything, you can't do anything. That is when you start to see that the will is just a process. Before that you thought the will was you. If it really was you it couldn't stop. If it was you and it did stop, then you would die: the self would just disintegrate, and the soul would be abolished.

When you start to see the will ceasing and experience that state for a long period of time, it's seen as a condition, a process. You then see that which does: the chooser, the decider, the generator of thoughts, the will, what the Buddha once described as the builder. This is what Dependent Origination is all about, *imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti*, 'when this is, then that occurs'. Once you see that will is not coming from you, you look back and start to see the whole process of causality. *You* are not choosing to do these things. Why did I decide to talk like this, this evening? Why do I decide to scratch my ear? You start to see after a while that this is not coming from a person inside, it is not coming from a self. It is completely conditioned.

Once you start to understand what we call choice, the movement of the mind, you see it is conditioned, fully conditioned, one hundred percent conditioned, and then you can start investigating the conditions. You question what is the condition that makes you do this, what condition makes you do that? And then you find the best conditioning. Because, wherever you are in the world, there will always be some conditioning or brainwashing going on. The best conditioning if you really want to be happy and become Enlightened is to hang out in monasteries. If you come here every Wednesday evening, then you get brainwashed by me, and that's much better than being brainwashed by the T.V. or being brainwashed by the shopping malls. Why is it that when you go to the shopping mall you buy all those things? You are being brainwashed – the conditioning is not coming from you, it's coming from outside.

Once you begin to experience this you start to understand how this mind and body work, and then you can start playing around as it were with the conditioning. When you start playing around with conditioning you realize that if you want to be peaceful you have to create the conditions for peacefulness. You can't just say, 'Now I am going to be peaceful' or, 'now I am going to be happy'. You have to know the conditions for happiness, the conditions for peace, the conditions for *jhāna*, and you the conditions for liberation. This is what Dependent Origination is all about. Once you begin to notice what the conditions for happiness are you know that you can get the grosser happiness's in the world from making good *kamma*. By doing good things

you get happiness, and that should not be belittled by monks who are practising for the higher happiness's of *jhānas* and insight.

Even the lower happiness's are a very important support for the path: that's why monks should keep *sīla* and make merit. I was very pleased once to come across a passage in one of the *suttas* where the Buddha said, 'Monks you too should make merit, should make *paññā*'. When I first read that I thought deep down, 'I've always thought that'. But sometimes you hear monks say, 'No that's just merit, that's for lay people and not necessary for monks. Lay people should build all the toilets, sweep the monastery, feed us and wash up afterwards because we have more important things to do'. But by helping to build a monastery, going out to give talks, helping people, you are helping the *sāsana*, and it's important to make that merit. If you make merit properly, with compassion, with love – rather than just doing it because you have to – if you do whatever service is asked of you in this monastery willingly, and even more than you're asked for the sake of merit, then you will get very happy. And that happiness will be a cause of tranquillity; the tranquillity will be the cause of *samādhi*, and *samādhi* will be the cause of insight and the cause leading to Liberation. It is just the usual conditioned process of things. The Buddha knew that. The great *Ariyas* knew that and the Kruba Ajahns in Thailand know that. All the great teachers know that. That's why they encourage monks to make merit, even though it may be tiring, because it's a really worthwhile thing to do. If you know how to do it properly and you do it willingly without begrudging it, it enhances your meditation, and you know it's the cause for having worldly happiness and good health.

You begin to realize that the cause for this underlying happiness is keeping the precepts. You see that keeping the precepts actually causes a very powerful long lasting happiness. You also see that if you break the precepts you are just creating suffering for yourself. It is cause and effect that's all. Even something like alcohol just creates suffering for you. When you see the cause and effect you really see that there is no way you can keep on doing those stupid things, it doesn't make any sense at all. Take lying or getting angry at other people: what does anger actually do for you? Does it help you get your own back on the other person? Anger just burns you

up. You see that anger is not the cause for happiness; anger just takes you into the hell realms.

I'm sure everyone from time to time has had anger come up. When you're angry you feel very justified that your anger is really worthwhile and right, because the other person has really done something they shouldn't have done. *If ever you get angry it's never the other person's fault. It's your fault.* There is no reason to get angry ever. For the wise person, the liberated person, no matter what other people do to them, whether they are right or wrong, it's no reason to get angry. Anger just causes suffering for you. So knowing that anger causes suffering and knowing how cause and effect works, stops all that silly stuff from coming up. Of course, this is just keeping precepts, keeping virtue, keeping restraint. But then you realize that you can go deeper and you start to let go of concern for the world: the world of the past and future, your plans and your memories, the doing and the thinking, philosophising, and the arguing – you let go of all of that. You let go of all your concepts of Dhamma and *Nibbāna*. By getting into silence you start to see things and that gives you a deeper sense of happiness.

Focusing on that and getting the insight of that happiness you start to realize why meditation is so important and what type of meditation is important. You start to see that all the planning and the lingering on the past, all of the conceptions and thinking about of the past, are just suffering. It causes suffering, it doesn't cause Liberation. All the thinking in the world is not a cause for the liberation the mind or liberation from *samsāra*. It just keeps you tied to the wheel and that should be an easy cause and effect to see. If you truly see it, it will become very easy to meditate. You realize that when there is thinking, there are headaches, suffering, problems, things to do, and business in your world.

A Maestro of Silence

When that thinking stops, *imasmiṃ asati idaṃ hoti*, in its place comes the silence, the beautiful silence. Then you begin to let go of the body, the five senses, by focusing

on just one sense, the physical sense of the breath. Allow that to be the only thing you are paying attention to – not listening, not smelling, not tasting, not hearing – just feeling the breath and nothing else. Then allow that to disappear and with it the five senses. Letting go of the breath you realize that these five senses are the cause of misery, because when they go you are happy. The bliss you get when the five senses disappear is much greater than anything you can get through the senses. Even in the heaven realms, where the five sense pleasures reach their limit, they are still much lower than the happiness and bliss of the *jhāna* realms.

So this teaching – if you can experience these things – shows us the cause of suffering. Worldly suffering is just these five senses. I don't know why people want to protect the five senses. I know that a couple of the monks are going to see the optician tomorrow; maybe if they became blind, that would be one less sense to worry about. My nose is sensitive to pollen and I get hay fever, but it's not sensitive to smells. I remember telling Ajahn Jagaro how happy I was, because if a lady wears perfume or if she smells of sweat, it all smells much the same to me because of my nose. That's one sense base I don't have to worry about. Isn't that wonderful?

It's wonderful when the senses disappear. You get a feeling of freedom. It's as if the mind is freed from the burden of the five senses, from the irritation of the five senses, always having to be looking and seeing. When you look at your room, you have to go and tidy it up or dust it or something because it's never tidy, at least not for very long. When you see things in the monastery, you see everything that needs doing, all the bricks that need moving, all the work that is required. When you start listening to what people say, you sometimes get angry, because what they say is not what they should be saying. It's not correct. They haven't got it right. These five senses create so many problems in the world that it's surprising people celebrate them. They have great big parties and fireworks displays because they are celebrating the sight and the sound of bangs. Or take the great orchestras: the poor men and women in those orchestras, in those fancy clothes, have to practice and practise to be able to play music like that. What suffering! They think they are getting somewhere in life.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to be a maestro of silence, to be able to let go of all of that and have the bliss, which is greater than any symphony?

This is where one starts to see the cause of a huge amount of worldly suffering: just these five senses. With the arising of that type of knowledge you begin to see with insight, based on the experience of the five senses. You also experience what it's like when the five senses are not there. You compare the two and it's just as plain as the nose on Pinocchio's face that the five senses are so much suffering, and the bliss when the five senses are not there is so much greater.

These are experiential insights that you cannot dismiss. With the insights that you get through thinking and through inference, you can sometimes have the wrong insight because you haven't got the full information. Many people get lost in that way. But the experiential insights that arise can't be put aside. That's why anyone who has these deep experiences, even early in their life, just can't forget them. They are the most important things in your life. Eventually, sooner or later, they'll lead you into brown robes and keep you there. These experiences are showing you that there is something else that is important in life.

Letting Go

The Buddha said that delusion, *avijjā* or ignorance, the first factor of Dependent Origination, is the root cause of the whole of *samsāra*. When the Buddha taught Dependent Origination he was talking about how *samsāra* works and how this whole process of mind goes from life to life. When the mind gets involved with the body there is the illusion that these five senses are important, and that fun and enjoyment are to be found there.

Lack of insight into the five senses and the five *khandhas* is suffering, and because of that the *saṅkhāras* will go on planning and doing, through body, speech, and mind. That planning and doing, through body, speech and mind is all coming from the illusion of the 'doer', the 'house builder', the 'maker'. And that's all coming from the

illusion that there is something to make, something useful to do, or something that has to be done. When you stop all the doing, then you really have fun. When you stop doing things and let go, that's when you experience these *jhāna* states.

The jhānas are no more than stages of letting go. The more you let go and the more that disappears, the closer you get to *jhānas*. If you let go a lot, these things just happen all by themselves. *The jhānas are conditioned by letting go.* That's a very powerful teaching. When you're meditating always remember the Third Noble Truth. It shows you how to let go. It gives you the underlying theme of *cāga* (giving or letting go); this doesn't belong to you, give it up. The five senses don't belong to you. They are not you and they have nothing to do with you. *Cāga* and *mutti*: you can throw the sense away and free yourself from them. *Anālaya*, not allowing these five senses to stick anywhere, and lastly *paṭinissagga*, renouncing them, saying, "No way five senses, I'm not interested". If you can really do that it's called 'letting go'. You renounce sounds, 'I'm not interested in hearing'; just shut yourself off from sounds. 'I'm not interested in feeling; I'm not interested in this body' – just cut off this body; it doesn't belong to you and it's not yours. "I'm not even going to scratch it because if I start getting involved in this body then I'm stuck; consciousness becomes stuck to this body. I'm going to free myself". Once you remember that in your meditation, you're letting go of the doer, the controller, the *saṅkhāras*.

You can only really let go if you've got a bit of wisdom, understanding, and insight. You need enough insight to have the courage and the faith to let go completely. Many meditators get close to these *jhānas* but they can't let go of that last bit of ego. They want to control, to do, to be in charge of deep meditations, rather than just letting go, sitting back, and enjoying the journey. Give control over to the process. The *saṅkhāras* are the same as this whole craving of *taṇhā* (thirst), *upādāna* (taking up), and *bhava* (existence). In the latter part of the Dependent Origination it's a different way of saying the same thing, because the making of *kamma* is all based on craving, which is the fuel for more existence and birth. All this doing, all this reacting, all this making, all this wanting and not wanting is what causes rebirth. It provides the fuel for *saṃsāra*, the fuel for more existence.

Once you can see this whole cause and effect relationship you know why rebirth happens and why consciousness passes from one life to the next life. You see the causal relationship that is there. One important technical point with causality – *imasmiṃ asati, idaṃ hoti*, ‘this being, that comes to be’ – is to know that in the Pāli it does not mean that these things have to happen at the same moment, or that when one thing exists the other thing has to be right there at the same time. It doesn’t mean the causes or the conditions follow each other from moment to moment. Sometimes causes take a long time to generate their effects, in the same way that *kamma* and its results are often far apart. The *kamma* of today sometimes doesn’t give its results until next week, next month, next lifetime, or some other lifetime. That’s still just conditionality, the law of *kamma*.

Once one understands that, one can see how one is creating conditions now for both this life and the next life. You understand how you are making your rebirth and how you are making *samsāra*. You understand how birth happens and how one gets a particular role as soon as there is that birth. With birth come the five senses, and the sense bases, and *vedanā* (feeling), and all the factors that follow after *viññāṇa* (consciousness) and *nāma rūpa* (mind and body), to old age, sickness, and death. Because, when there are those things, there are always going to be the experiences and the sensations of old age, sickness and death, and the suffering of all that. This is all Dependent Origination really is. It shows you the cause of rebirth and how rebirth is ended.

It’s Already Too Late

Dependent Cessation is the opposite of Dependent Origination. *Avijjā* (ignorance) is finished with when you actually see the nature of this mind and see that there is no ‘doer’. It’s just a process; you see all the causes and the reasons why you do these things. You even see that ‘that which knows’ is just a process; consciousness is also just a process. There is not a being in here who hears all this, there is not a person inside who has all these thoughts. Consciousness comes and goes, rises and falls. Sometimes it is one consciousness, sometimes it’s another consciousness. Know the

difference between the six consciousnesses. They are all very separate, very different – if you know the differences it is much easier to see consciousness arising and then falling away and another one arising afterwards. It's important to split up these consciousnesses and to know the difference between them. It is especially important to know mind-consciousness in its receptive mode. Once you can see all of this you realize there is no entity in here experiencing all these things. So, why do you want to experience? People just want to be; it is *bhava-taṇhā*, the craving to exist. Instead of saying *bhava-taṇhā*, the craving to exist, perhaps it is better to say the craving to experience. We all want to experience more and more in the world, we want to go to different places and see different things. We are just craving to experience. When will you be finished with all this experiencing? There is no end to experiencing different things, different sensations, but that's all it is: *sukha vedanā*, *dukkha vedanā* or the *vedanā* in between – that is agreeable feeling, disagreeable feeling, or indifferent or neutral feeling – or each of the six senses.

There are just eighteen different types of *vedanā* (feeling) and that's all you can have. They're just packaged in different wrapping but really there are only eighteen. If you've experienced each one of those different *vedanās* then you've experienced the whole of *samsāra*. So, after a while you say, "Been there, done that". You go up the Amazon and this is just another *cakkhu viññāṇa*, eye sensation. If you like it, it is *sukha*, if you don't like it, it is *dukkha*. Here we go again. There are only eighteen things to experience in this world. So: been there, done that! Have an end to it. When one sees in this way, it's the cause for cessation.

The Buddha talked about Dependent Cessation starting with *avijjā* (ignorance) being abandoned, and actually having insight into the Four Noble Truths that the body and mind, all experience, all the senses, are suffering. Once you start to see that fully then *Nibbidā* comes up: you're just not interested in this sensory experience any more. Once *Nibbidā* comes up it doesn't matter. There is no person inside who refuses to do this or do that. It's just a natural process, and whether you like it or not, it happens. That's why I keep saying that once people hear and understand these teachings it's already too late; you're already on the bus, You are going to become Enlightened

whether you like it or not. So you might as well stop wriggling and screaming and just all become monks or nuns. Get it over and done with as quickly as possible. Forget about your world. Forget about your jobs and money. Forget about your travel plans. Forget about all that and just let it all go. It's going to happen anyway, whether you come kicking or screaming or whether you come gently. Realizing that whole process which leads to Enlightenment, you realize there is no one in there to hasten it along or to slow it down. Once *avijjā* is overcome it's just causes and effects working their way out. The knowledge of non-self is there. These are the Four Noble Truths. The process that ends *saṃsāra* is inevitable, it has begun, and it cannot be stopped. You see the complete empty nature of the mind. You see that the body is empty of a self, empty of a core. It is just an empty process. There is no real happiness or joy in that process. Happiness and joy is found in ending things. Seeing that, whether you like it or not, your world becomes reconditioned.

By ending things you become an *Ariya*. An *Ariya* is one who seeks endings, who just wants to stop. It's not the person who wants to stop, it's just the experience. Insight is what makes things stop. There is no interest any more, and so there is nothing to keep *saṃsāra* going. One has seen through the whole process of body and mind, one has seen through the senses playing around. You see that there is not one of the eighteen different types of feelings that is worth anything; so finish with it. *Saṃsāra* starts to unravel because *avijjā* has been overcome and you don't make any more *saṅkhāras*. The cause for future rebirth, the craving and the delight in rebirth, has been stopped.

Kāma-taṇhā, the craving to enjoy the five senses, wants to find happiness in having a nice meal, in sex, in going to see a nice movie, and in going here or there. What a stupid idea! Once you've seen the Dhamma you see that is complete idiocy. Hearing nice music is not going to satisfy you, it's just irritating. There is no sound as beautiful as silence. Trying to find pleasure in the body? Each one of you has meditated long enough now to know that the best pleasure in the body is when the body disappears and you get into a deep meditation. That's the only time the body's not hot or cold, hasn't got an ache or a fever, and hasn't got a headache or a gut ache

or whatever other ache you have. The only time there is any real comfort is when the body disappears, when the sense of touch is completely turned off. I don't know why people want to play around in that world of *kāma-taṇhā*, craving for sensuality in the five senses, or *bhava-taṇhā*, the craving to exist. What do you want to exist for? Why do you want to be? Why do you want to experience again? It's complete stupidity once it's actually seen. When those things disappear, there are no *saṅkhāras* made, there is no craving, there is no attachment, you're not making existence, *bhava*. So when you see that the causes of rebirth are uprooted and there is nothing there that is going to give rise to any rebirth, that's when one knows what Enlightenment, what *Arahatta*, is. There are no causes and nothing is making rebirth. The natural process has worked its way out, it has worked its way through the last of the lingering delusions about craving. Any possibility of happiness in the sense world is gone, and you're someone who just likes ending things, simplifying things, because the world outside has no meaning for you. The only thing that has meaning for you is spreading the Dhamma and helping other people out of compassion while you've still got the energy. When they die it's not really the *Ariya* or *Arahant* who dies, because there was no one there to die, it's just a process that ends. That's why you never say that *Arahants* die, they *Parinibbāna*. *Parinibbāna* means this whole process finally comes to a grinding halt and everything just dissipates and disappears, never to arise again. That's the ending of the whole cycle of *saṃsāra*. Seeing in that way and understanding the Buddha's full teaching becomes very beautiful.

At this point it becomes clear that putting off one's Enlightenment to become a Bodhisattva makes no sense. If you can see the Dhamma, the whole idea is to get out and help as many people as you can by teaching the Dhamma. After your Enlightenment you are an example to people of the happiness that arises from letting go of the sensory world. You are a beacon to people so that they too can find their way out of this jungle of excitements, sensory pleasures, anger and delight, disappointments, frustrations, and all that sort of stuff. Good monks and good nuns, who are *Ariyans*, can lead a lot of people out of *saṃsāra*, because they are already on the way out themselves. If they don't know the way out themselves, how can they lead other people out of the blazing house of *saṃsāra*? This is a process that is beyond stopping. You cannot put off Enlightenment once you've seen the Dhamma

anymore than you can break the laws of gravity or the natural laws. There is a natural law that once one is a Stream Winner one has to end *saṃsāra* sooner or later. One cannot stop it because there is no one in here to stop it. It's all running according to the natural law of cause and effect. From the cessation of this, that ceases, *imassa nirodha – etaṃ nirujjhati*: from the cessation of the stupidity of thinking that there is someone inside, that you are the owner of things, a possessor of experiences, of will, and of knowing – *saṃsāra* soon ceases.

It does not happen automatically the next moment, sometimes it takes seven years or seven lifetimes. But at least you know *idaṃ nirujjhati*, that these five *khandhas*, the whole of *nāma rūpa*, this whole world that you know – that you think is something real but which is just an empty process – will cease and end. Isn't it wonderful that it can end? The Buddha kept on saying, “*Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*”, *Nibbāna* is the ultimate happiness. If you don't believe that then just end things slightly, give things away, let go of things, and you will see that the more you let go the more happiness you get. End a lot and you get a lot of happiness; end completely and you get the ultimate happiness, the complete happiness of *Nibbāna*. So this is just the cause and effect nature of the mind, the cause and effect nature of the world. There is no God running all of this, there is no self inside you planning all of this, it's just a process.

You're fortunate to be brainwashed by this talk on the Law of Conditionality.