




Form, feeling, perception, fabrication, and consciousness are inconstant and non-self. All phenomena are inconstant and not-self.

Venerable Channa, having received and understood the teaching of non-self from the senior monk, thought to himself: “But still my mind does not leap up, grow confident, steadfast, and release in the ending of craving. Instead, agitation and clinging still arise. Who, then is my self?”

— Channa Sutta (SN22.90)


 **SS** Agitation arises because of fear of losing the “self” that one has clung to so strongly.


He sought help from Venerable Ananda who preached to him: “The world is supported by a polarity, that of existence and non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it actually is, with right discernment, “non-existence” with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is, with right discernment, “existence” with reference to the world does not occur to one. He has no uncertainty or doubt that, when there is arising, only stress is arising, and that when there is passing away, stress is passing away.”

This is RIGHT VIEW

The Middle Path: “Everything exists. That is one extreme. Everything does not exist. That is a second extreme. Avoiding the two extremes, the Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma via the Middle Path (Dependent Origination).”

— Kaccayanagotta Sutta (SN12.15)

 **SS** The instruction here is to contemplate the arising and ceasing of mind-and-matter (nāma-rūpa) so that the myth of “self” is destroyed. When there is no “self” then there is only the natural process of rapid arising and passing away; there is no clinging to existence (to be) and non-existence (not to be).

 **SS** With clear understanding of Dependent Origination, one frees oneself from the wrong view of these two extremes. Understanding intellectually is not enough as insight knowledge is weak.

Yamaka Sutta (SN 22.85)

Is form, feeling, perception, fabrication, and consciousness constant or inconstant?
Inconstant, my friend.

And is that which is inconstant, peaceful, or stressful?
Stressful, my friend.

And is it proper to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as “This is mine. This is myself. This is what I am?”
No, my friend.

Do you regard form, feeling, perception, fabrication, and consciousness as Tathāgata?
No, my friend.

Do you regard Tathāgata as being in form, feeling, perception, fabrication, and consciousness?
No, my friend.

Then, an Arahant with no more mental effluents, what is he on the break up of the body after death?
Form is inconstant, feeling, perception, fabrication, and consciousness are inconstant. That which is inconstant is stressful. That which is stressful has ceased and gone to its end.

Understanding this sutta is important so that we do not get attached to the five aggregates and do not determine any of them to be “my self”. These five aggregates, not clung to, lead to long term happiness and well-being.

