

We often feel we live in a state of

Impermanent Insufferable Existence,

which frequently makes us/ feel perplexed/ and confused/
but which/ in the Pali texts/ is explained in terms of

The Three Signs of Existence*

(which will be our topic for today).

Anagarika Tevijjo

As an ancient riddle goes:

“If **One** is the need for nourishment,
and **Two** is the psychophysical/ mind/body
(which is continually-seeking nourishment),
What, then, is Three?”

This is/, indeed/,
a befuddling puzzle/,
— at least for those/
who prefer to wear
the blinkers and blinders/ of this world

— being rooted/, as they are
— in a continually/-evolving
emerging and disappearing
illusion or mirage
(of appearance)

— a mirage full of
of flickering
empty material/
and immaterial-
-phenomenal-
dream-images and bubbles

which those who are
still blind to the Dhamma

literally take to be real,
in what they take to be
a real, solid and concrete world

But which is actually
— a world which has—
(as few seem to know)

absolutely nothing at the core.

Does this sound confusing?
I'm sure it does, so let's
put the question another
way by asking, ironically,

“What are the **three things**
which men (and women) in this world
purposely **do not want to know** and
deliberately try to overlook and ignore?”

And...

as we know/ that no one likes
to be kept waiting/, we shall
give the answer immediately
to this/ perplexing-riddle
(to avoid/ wasting time/ on
unuseful/ guessing-games).

*

The Theravada texts say that
there are **Three Things**
of which/ so-called/ normal/, common/,
everyday mortals/ are wholly ignorant.

And these are called the ***Three Signata***,
which are:

- (i) first, - **impermanence, (*anicca*)**
- (ii) second, - **suffering, (*dukkha*)** [and]
- (iii) third, - **non-self, (*anatta*).**

These are
the three ‘marks’ or ‘signs’
or **characteristics**
of all phenomenal existence;—

These are
the three signs
or marks in all phenomena
(as **initially** seen and interpreted):—

[Or perhaps better said]
[These are **three signs or marks** -

the mental ‘noting’
(or noticing)
(or marking) of which
leads us to suspect/

that there was/ 'initially/'
something wrong with
the way we originally/
perceptually/
believed/ and conceived/
the appearance of all phenomena
to be as first experienced in the world.

These are
three signs or marks
of existence which reveal
deep and subtle insight
to make us realize that
things-in-world are not
in reality/ at all/ the way/
which we, (at first),
falsely perceived them to be.]

These are the three signs or marks
which, if not seen,
the way they actually are,

(and which are not
properly understood,
as ultimate truths,)
leave man immersed
in an absolute state of darkness called-
(avijja) - or ignorance.

*

I.

In explaining *The Three Signata*,

First, let's talk about
(anicca) - impermanence:

The Buddha said about '*impermanence*'
that **the way to deliverance**
from attachment/ to worldly mind-objects
and false-delusions/ of self/ is to see
“the impermanence/ of all compounded things.”

So let's start from there.

To state the point more succinctly:

Seen against the background
of the larger picture,
how we feel about

the existence and the importance
of our own puny (tiny),
miserable ‘supposed-selves’
is actually insignificant,

because not only man/ and human consciousness
and the four basic elements/ are impermanent—
**the whole world as we conceive it/ is actually
unsure, insecure,
and impermanent
and bound to disappear.**

Not even this world is permanent

In the Buddha’s words,

“A time will come/
when the *watery element*/
will rise in fury/
and when that happens/
the *earthly element* will disappear/
unmistakeably/ revealing itself/
as transient/ and subject to ruin/
to destruction/ and vicissitude ...

“A time will come when
the *watery element*
will dry/ and no water
is left in the ocean/ [which]/
will cover just one joint of a finger.

“On that day, the *watery element*
will unmistakably/ reveal itself
as transient/ and subject to ruin/
to destruction and vicissitude.

“A time will come when
the *fiery element*
will rage furiously and devour
the whole surface of the earth,
ceasing only when there is
nothing more to devour.

“On that day, the *fiery element*
will unmistakably/ reveal itself
as transient/ and subject to destruction.

“A time will come when
the *airy element*

will rage in fury
and carry away village and town
and everything on this earth ...
till it exhausts itself/ completely.

“On that day, this great *airy element*
Will/ unmistakably/ reveal itself
as subject to transience
and itself subject to ruin,
to destruction and all vicissitude.” (M.I.187)
[or variations of uncertainty]

Thus *everything/ that is composed/ of the four elements*,
including this earth/, will show itself/ as transient
and *subject to the law of impermanence/ (anicca)*,

and this is as true/ for the four elements,
of the body; *matter, liquid, heat and air*,
as it is true/ for any other object/ on this earth.
This is a natural fact. This is the law of the Dhamma.

And absolutely everything else
(*everything there is in the world*)
is also subject to arising
and is subject to ceasing,

**so we should not take the
impermanence of all things
in the world personally**

**—especially with regard
to our ‘supposed selves.’**

*The hard fact of reality
which we do not want to see*
is that the body is born and lives and dies
in a process/ that is accompanied/
by physical pain at birth/,
during illness/ and suffering in life/
(and unless we happen to pass away/
peacefully in a state of sleep),
there is also pain at the moment of death.

Seeing through
“The impermanence of all compounded things”
is one of the core teachings/ of the Buddha’s doctrine
and this is why/ impermanence or (*anicca*)
is the first of *The Three Signs*.

At the core of insight meditation
is the realization that man himself
is a compound of psychophysical elements
and conditions that are constantly arising,
coming together, and passing away,
with no lasting reality.

Whatever has arisen
and momentarily ‘become’

is/ (at exactly the same time)
in the process of ‘unbecoming’
and completely passing away.

And this is true of every
phenomena in the world

— however paradoxical —
and against our worldly-based
assumptions and suppositions
and wishes this may seem to be.

*

In one of the books which I have proof-read
for the **Buddhist Publication Society**
in Kandy, Sri Lanka,
entitled *The Thee Signata*,

Dr. O. H. de A. Wijesekera,
former Professor of Sanskrit,
at the University of Ceylon,
(in BPS Wheel Series, Nr. 20),
repeats:

“That is to say that material form/
sensations, perceptions/ and dynamic processes/
and consciousness/
are merely mental-physical/
perceptions, [arising] in the moment/
[which] are/ in the process/ of arising and passing away.
Everything is—in a state of becoming/
—[and] in a process of passing away.”

This means that even every impression,
(however strong or weak),
is only the result of/ constantly coming-together
of countless/ prior dependent conditions
and factors/ which will always be changing
so that any arising impression will, (in turn),

be impermanent/ and cease/ and pass away.

Again, in the words of the Buddha:

“All compounded things/, indeed/,
are subject to/ arising and passing away;
what is born/ comes to an end/, and
blessed is the end of becoming/
on the path to peace.”

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This means/ that there is no such thing
as a state of being/ as a permanent thing,

and what we ‘**experience**’
as a seemingly ‘**fixed form**’
in corporeal psychophysical perception
is, in actual perceptual fact,

just a mental over-simplification
of the complex world of
rapidly-changing appearances

based on commonly accepted
linguistic conventions and

mutually-shared behavioral patterns
and norms regarding
self-preservation and
anticipated and expected
individual, self-satisfaction,

arising out of the dependent conditions
of expectation, wishful thinking and
illusively-comforting self-deception.

[In summary]

Whatever has origination is subject to cessation
and this is true/ not only/ of momentary perceptions/
but also of you/ and everything you/ want and wish for.

The Buddha said:

“There is no materiality/ O monks/, no feelings/, no perceptions/, no
formations/, no consciousness. There is nothing that is permanent/,
everlasting/, eternal/, changeless/, identically abiding forever.”

“Then, the blessed/ one took a bit of cow-dung/ in his fingernail/ and spoke thus/: ‘Monks/, if even that much of permanent/, changeless/, individual selfhood/, **identically abiding forever/ could be found/**, then, this living a life of purity for the complete eradication of suffering would not be feasible.” (M.56)

And elsewhere, the Buddha says:

“Here/, O Monks/, **feelings and perceptions/ and thoughts/** are known to him/ as they appear/, [are perceptually] present/, and as they disappear/. Cultivation of this kind/ ... **conduces to/ mindfulness and awareness.**” (A.VII, 62)

This is the heart of Buddhist meditation.

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Insight meditation practice,
focuses upon conditions and
contact through the six senses,

but, for now,

let’s limit our discussion
to how impermanence (*anicca*)
serves as a cause/ leading to
an unsatisfactory effect/
due to a wrong view/,
of anticipation/ and expectation,
leading to **‘irritation/’**
in the mundane, everyday,
so-called normal-human-being’s
undeveloped un-cultivated mind.

II.

Second, in our discussion of *The Three Signata*
comes (***dukkha***) - **suffering**,

If what the Buddha says above
about impermanence (*anicca*) **is true**,

then it follows that our stubborn-and-
tenacious insistence-and-dependence
upon on our own idea
of constant self-gratification

and the untrained mind’s
compulsive need for fulfillment
of its insistent-wishes will always
result in anxiety/, mental stress/ and tension.

More specifically,
the moment our expectations
are threatened and thwarted,

when there is a contradiction/ between/
what we wish to receive/ **yet do not get** /,
there is, then, a resultant
sense/ of sadness and emotional letdown/ and disappointment.

And there will always be
this irresolvable **paradox**
between
what we ‘want’ to believe,
on the one hand, and,
what is/ actually/ true, on the other.

Thus, if we are to see life
wholly realistically
—‘*the way life really is,*’—
then we must learn to face
‘*the way things really are*’
in terms of the Buddha Dhamma
as explained in the *Abhidhamma*.

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Anxiety, mental stress and tension
will always show-themselves in
the arising and experiencing of
disappointed-anticipation/
and expectation, continually

and repeatedly/ resulting/
in cycles/, patterns/ or processes/,
leading through/ frustration, irritation
and suffering/, which in Pali is called *dukkha*.

*

To reiterate,
in life, in addition to our feeling
of physical bodily-pain/, we also feel
and experience excruciating, mental pain,
anxiety, tension and stress.

So this means that we experience

suffering on two levels/ concomitantly/..
[At the same time,]

we experience **pain**, not only through

(i) the **physical** components of our being,
through the body and its organs,

(ii) we also simultaneously experience **mental** pain
through feelings/, mental formations/ and consciousness/,
all of which

**both physically and mentally
are momentary and impermanent.**

The Buddha says about the body:

“The corporeal form/, Brethren/, is transient/ and what underlies/ the arising/
of corporeal form/ — that too is transient. As it is arisen/ from that which is
transient/, how could/ corporeal form/ be permanent?”

We all secretly know and admit
(at least to ourselves)
that one day, **we must die**,

and so **we all**, therefore,
(at least **unconsciously know**)

**that we are obviously transient
and certainly not here to stay.**

But facing-up to this inevitable impermanence
(at least for most of us)
is too just painful to view head-on,

so we (self-deceptively) shove it aside
and ignore it/ for the rest of our lives,

suffering/, all the while/, unconscious/
and mental-results/ and effects/
from a deep internal awareness/ that/
we are actually hiding something from ourselves.

*

Actually,
there is always **“the one who knows,”**
even in an ignorant person.

In everyone, there is always **“the one”**

who inherently somehow senses

that, through avoidance of
accepting the way things really are,

he is not only foolishly deceiving himself
but trying to deceive the whole world as well.

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This is yet another form of self-delusion,
but as most of the world is similarly self-deluded,
it seems easier to go along with the flow
of the maddening crowd, -

following the current
of common-illusion and fashion, -

whilst

acting in way which we secretly recognize
as being 'unauthentic' and based on 'bad faith,'

— playing along with the game —
whilst secretly suspecting that it is
all nothing more than an incongruous/
bizarre/ and existentially-absurd/ sham.

[deception]

One might ask:
“How can we all lie to our selves
and lie to one another like that?”

But the real truth is that
we are all in collusion,
in creating an illusion

— running from the actual truth,
— concealing our complicity —
all hiding the real truth,

[deceitfully concealing]

our in-authenticity/ through the pretense/
of believing/ in the same/ incongruous sham.

[delusion]

So rather than living on in 'bad faith,' so unauthentically,
it is better to strive authentically, with determination
against the world of worldly sham and self-delusion, -

arousing the exceptional ardency

and unrelenting diligence needed
to analyze and see clearly through
wrong view of worldly-delusion

to the true base of actual truth and reality
which brings ultimate freedom
first, from impermanence,
second, suffering, and,
third, an illusory idea of a permanent self.

These are the *Three Signata* or as they are often called
—‘*The Three Signs*’ or ‘marks’ on the face of reality.

*

(In actual fact, one cannot even identify oneself
as a continual receptor of impressions and feelings.)
[In actual fact, there is only knowing knowing.]

*

Regarding what we may call our psychophysical selves,
the Buddha, says:

“Sensations and feelings/ are transient/, what underlies the arising/ of these/
(such as the sense organs/ depending on the body) is also transient.”
(S.111, 23)

“Arisen form is transient. How could sensations and feelings be permanent?”

“Similarly, perceptions, dynamic processes of the mind, and consciousness—
all these, arising from what is transient, can [only] be transient.”

So how could any idea of ‘person/’ be permanent?
when everything else/
in the world/ is impermanent/ and transient?

To put it in a few words,
trying to hang onto what
we do not want to let go of
(i.e. the idea of self)

is an unsatisfactory feeling (*dukkha*),
usually accompanied with feelings
of anxiety and anguish/, which are
generally translated into English as

‘suffering, in a broad sense,’

but should also include/ a refined-understanding/
of the anxiety/ of our continuing sense

of on-going uncertainty—

even down into/ the most subtle/ senses of insecurity/
irritability/, mental agitation/, and underlying-dread.
[deep fear and terror]

Furthermore, in the unraveling
of the raw and base perceptions
and processes of the untrained mind,
what is observed by the trained mind

is clearly seen as a **fleeting arising**—
of delusory, mentally, appearing formulations
and resultant, inconstant states of consciousness —

which, /then/, just as **fleetingly, passing away**
as the **accompanying conditions, impressions**
or moods or movements of consciousness keep changing.

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[In Summary]

The well-trained-mind/ expects/
and sees/ and knows
that everything arising/
will be only temporary—
and this subtle way of seeing/
observing/ and analyzing
provides incisive-insight/ into -

how the transient nature of things
can never lead to any mental state
that will be abiding and satisfactory
or unsatisfactory for long.

In an oft-quoted dialogue, the Buddha asks:

“What think ye, Brethren/, is the body permanent or transient?”

“It is intransient, sir.”

“Now, that which is transient/—is it satisfactory or unsatisfactory?”

“It is unsatisfactory, Sir.”

“What think ye, Brethren/, sensation/, perception/, mental process/
and consciousness/—are all these permanent/ or unsatisfactory?”

“They are transient, Sir.”

“Now, what is transient/— is that satisfactory/ or unsatisfactory?”

“It is unsatisfactory, Sir.”

This state of ‘unsatisfactoriness’
may be defined as the general state of
the mind of mankind in this worldly world.

We exist in a world in which people,
are frantically struggling to escape
their mental feelings
of uneasiness, dissatisfaction

whilst being immersed
in a perverse and pervading
sense of general worldly ‘malaise.’

[meaning uncomfortable and ill-at-ease.]

We live in a world/ in which we are vainly/
grasping at any/ fleeting external sensation/
and wishing for/ resultant expectations/
(which we are hoping may arise)
to ease our/ constant sense of ‘dis-ease.’

[uncertainty and discomfort]

We are craving and grasping for anything
which promises/ freedom from mental stress
and uneasiness/—for anything which promises/
at least/, some sense/ of satisfaction

to, (at least momentarily), alleviate our
everyday continuing/ state of mental ‘distress’
within the, ever-perpetually/ turning wheel of the
ever-dependant and conditioned world of *samsara*.

This can be explained more clearly in other words.

To quote Professor O. H. de A. Wijesekera:

“The Master has said/ that the sentient being/ is so constituted/ that he hankers
[yearns for what is] pleasurable/ and shuns [avoids] what is non-pleasurable/
... He hankers [yearns] after what is satisfactory/ for himself/ and recoils
[shrinks away] from what is unsatisfactory.” (*Three Signata*, Wheel Series 20)

Put simply, this means that man selfishly seeks
what is satisfactory for nourishing his needs,
and when he doesn’t get what he wants,

he feels dissatisfied and casts about
in frustration and irritation,
trying to avoid dissatisfaction
in the fulfillment of personal desires

—often, consciously or unconsciously,
(it may be added, at the expense of others).

Indeed, that the truth of suffering/ is not obvious/
to most/ who hear about it in a Dhamma-talk/
or read about it in a Dhamma-book/ is most clear/

in the well-known statement of the Buddha:

—that there are only very few in this world—
who have developed their vision sufficiently
clearly to see the truth of the cause
of the origin of human suffering.

We may, now, close the second section of our
exposition on *dukkha* by reading a well-known quotation: -

The Buddha has said:

“This indeed, Brethren/, is the Noble Truth of Dukkha/, namely the fact that/
birth itself is *dukkha*/, disease is *dukkha*/, death is *dukkha*/; to be joined with/
what is unpleasant is *dukkha*/, to be separated from/ what is unpleasant is
dukkha/; failure in getting/ what one wants is *dukkha*/. In short/, the five
groups/ of the physical and mental qualities/ making up the individual/ [*the
aggregates*] due to grasping are themselves *dukkha*.” (Vin. I. p. 10; s.V.421)

Without an understanding of this Noble truth of Dukkha,
the meditative practitioner will make little progress on the path.

The Buddha once summed-up his teaching in one sentence:

“I teach suffering and the end of suffering.” (M. 22)

Furthermore, if what the Buddha has said about
impermanence (*anicca*)
and suffering (*dukkha*)
are true,

it follows that any sense/
which apparent consciousness/
may have/ in the mind of itself/
as ‘being a permanent self or entity’/
is also wholly and totally delusory.

‘Permanent consciousness,’ in the Buddhist view,
is a contradiction in terms based on wrong view
which we will now discuss in more specific
detail as we continue our exposition in part three.

III.

Third, in our analysis of *The Three Signata*,
we shall talk about (*anatta*) - non-self .

Regarding the *delusion of ‘self,’* the Buddha said:

“Give up what does not belong to you/. Such giving up/ will long conduce/ to your weal [or benefit] and happiness/. And what is it/ that does not belong to you?/ Materiality/, feelings/, perceptions/, mental formations/ and consciousness [the aggregates].

“These do not belong to you/, and these/ you should give up/. Such giving-up/ will long conduce/ to your weal [well-being] and happiness.” (S. XXII, 33)

And further, the Buddha says,

“It is impossible that anyone with right view could see anything or view or dhamma as self.” (M.115)

And furthermore, concerning the aggregates:

“The learned and noble disciple does not consider materiality, feelings, perceptions, formulations of consciousness as self, nor self as the **owner** of these groups.” (S.XX, 117)

And most important perhaps,

“One should not imagine oneself as being identical with the eye/, should not imagine oneself as being included in the eye/, should not imagine oneself as being outside the eye/, should not imagine/, “The eye belongs to me/.” And so on with the ear, nose, tongue, body and conscious mind.

“One should not imagine himself as being identical with physical objects, sounds, odors, tactile and mental objects. One should not imagine oneself as being included/ in them or outside of them/. One should not imagine/, ‘They belong to me.’

In short, **one should not imagine/ ‘experience’/ or ‘consciousness’/ to be self:**

“Consciousness is not self.
Causes and consequences/
of the arising consciousness/
- they are, likewise, not self.
Hence/, how could it be possible/
that consciousness/, having arisen
through something/ that is not self/,
could ever be self.” (S.XXXV, 141)

In a more comprehensively analytical vein, Professor Wijesekera writes,

“The Buddha admonishes his disciples/ to analyze **the whole/ of the conception of self/ or abiding personality/** and thereby the whole of experience (*loka*)/ along with every single component of the process/, whereby the **fallacy of self/ or abiding**

personality/, viewing this whole process/ of the arising of *nama-rupa* [will become clear] in a perfectly objective manner”

This may be seen perhaps more clearly in another quotation from Dr. Wijesekera, (BPS, Wheel Series 20), which follows:

“From sight and physical objects/ arises visual consciousness/, and the meeting of all three/ is contact/, from which contact/ come feelings/, which may be/ pleasant or unpleasant or neither/. When experiencing a pleasant feeling/, a man rejoices in it/, hails [**welcomes**] and clings tight to it/, and a trend of passion/ (**attachment**) ensues.

“When experiencing an unpleasant feeling,
a man sorrows [**feels grief and pain**], feels miserable, wails,
beats his breast and goes distraught, [**mentally distressed**]
and a trend of repugnance [**dislike and avoidance**] ensues.

“When experiencing a feeling
that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant,
he has no true/ and causal/ comprehension/
of that feeling’s origin/, disappearance/,
agreeableness/ and outcome/,
and a trend of ignorance ensues.

“It can never possibly result
that without first discarding
the pleasant feeling’s trend to passion,

without first discarding
the unpleasant feelings/ trend to repugnance,
[disgust and dislike]
and without first getting rid of the
neutral feeling’s trend to ignorance,

without discarding/ ignorance/
and stopping it from arising,

he will **put an end/
here and now/
to *dukkha*,**
and what is equally true
of sight
is **true of the other five senses.”**

This means, in plain terms,
**that any form of consciousness
is subject to distortion, and that**

as long as there is a sense of ‘I-ness/,’
**even the sense of ‘I experience/’ or ‘I think/’
or ‘I am/’ or ‘I am perceiving with bare awareness/’**

or ‘I am concentrating with bare attention/’

as long as there is this ‘sense of self’ present,
the meditator will not have attained pure clarity
of knowledge of things as they really are.

[Thus Ends This Lecture]

But I also recommend that you read

The Venerable Nyanaponika/, in *The Vision of the Dhamma*/, edited and published/ in 1994/, (the year of his demise)/ at the Forest Hermitage/, in Kandy/, who also talks about understanding/ *The Three Signata*/ or the three signs of impermanence/suffering and non-self/ as essential to seeing things/ as they are/ (in actual truth)/

as follows:

“If we contemplate/ even a minute sector/ of life’s vast range/, we are faced/ with a variety of living forms/ so tremendous/ that it defies description. Yet three basic features/ can be discerned/ as common to everything/ that has animate existence/, from microbe to man/, from the simplest sensations/ to the thoughts of a creative genius/: first, impermanence/ or change (*anicca*)/, second, suffering/ or unsatisfactoriness/ (*dukkha*)/ and third, *non-self*/ or insubstantiality (*anatta*) ...

“The Buddha applies/ the characteristic of suffering/ to all conditioned things/ in the sense/ that for living beings/, **everything conditioned/ is a potential cause/ of experienced suffering/** and is at any rate/ incapable of giving/ lasting satisfaction/. **Thus/ the three are truly-universal marks/ pertaining/ even/ to what/ is below or beyond/ our normal range of perception.**

“The Buddha teaches/ that life can be correctly understood/ only if these basic facts/ are understood/. And this understanding/ must take place/, not only logically/, but in confrontation/ with one’s own experience.

Insight wisdom/, which is the ultimate liberating factor/ in Buddhism/, consists in just/ this experiential understanding/ of the three characteristics/ as applied to one’s own bodily/ and mental processes/ and deepened and matured/ in meditation.

“To see things/ as they really are/ means/ to see them consistently/ in the light of/ the three characteristics.

“Not to see them/ in this way/, or to deceive oneself/ about their reality/ and range of application/, is the defining **mark of ignorance (*avijja*)**/,

“and ignorance/ is by itself/ a potent cause of suffering/, knitting the net/, in which man is caught/—the net of false hopes/, of unrealistic/ and harmful desires/, of delusive ideologies/ and of perverted values and aims.

“Ignoring or distorting/ the three basic facts/ ultimately leads/ only to frustration/, disappointment and despair/.

“But/ if we can learn to see/ through deceptive appearances/ and discern the three characteristics/, this will yield/ immense benefits/ both in our daily lives/ and in our [mental] striving [for higher states.]

“On the mundane level/, the clear comprehension/ of impermanence/, suffering and non-self/ will bring us/ a saner outlook on life/.

It will free us from unrealistic expectations/, bestow a courageous acceptance/ of suffering and failure/ and protect us against the lure/ of deluded assumptions and beliefs/.

[And], [in our quest/ for the supramundane], [clear] comprehension/ of the three characteristics will be indispensable.

“The meditative experience/ of all phenomena/ as inseparable/ from the three marks/ will loosen/ and finally cut/ the bonds binding us/ to an existence/ falsely imagined to be lasting, pleasurable and substantive.

“With growing clarity/, all things/, external and internal/, will be seen in their true nature/: as constantly changing/, as bound-up with suffering/ and unsubstantial/, without an eternal or abiding essence/. By seeing thus/, **detachment will grow**/, bringing greater freedom/ from egoistic clinging/ and culminating in Nibbana/, mind’s final liberation from suffering.”

The two key words/ in the last phrase/ were ‘**mind**’ and ‘**suffering**.’ And the overall meaning of the whole quotation/ from Venerable Nyanaponika/ above/ is to show how to free the mind from suffering.

And how exactly/ do we free the mind from suffering?

The key or answer/ may be found/ in a proper understanding/ of the root of suffering/ (*dukkha*)/ as it is clearly outlined and explained/ in the Buddha’s Four Noble Truths, which/, if properly understood and practiced/, will lead to/ a dissolution and deliverance/ from the state of ignorance and delusion/ (*avijja*)/ which leads to suffering/ and permeates the experience/ of all conditioned things.

*Excerpted from Anagarika Tevijjo’s *The Mind Watching the Mind* at www.noblepath.info adapted and slightly abridged for audio presentation.