

Four Strivings - 4 *padhāna*

The four strivings (*padhāna*) are:

1. effort through restraint (*saṃvarappadhāna*),
2. effort by overcoming (*pahānappadhāna*),
3. effort through development (*bhāvanāppadhāna*),
4. effort through preservation (*anurakkhaṇāppadhāna*). cf. AN 4. 14

1. Developing the effort, giving rise to the desire, and arousing energy to prevent bad, unwholesome states that have not risen, from rising;

2. developing the effort, giving rise to the desire, and arousing energy to abandon arisen bad unwholesome states;

3. developing the effort, giving rise to the desire, and arousing energy for the arising of unarisen wholesome states;

4. developing the effort, giving rise to the desire, and arousing energy for the persistence of arisen wholesome states, for their non-decline, increase, expansion, and fulfillment by development. cf. AN 4. 13

"There are these four strivings. What four?"

1. Striving by restraint,
2. striving by abandonment,
3. striving by development, and
4. striving by protection.

(1) And what, bhikkhus, is striving by restraint? Here, having seen a form with the eye, a bhikkhu does not grasp its marks and features. Since, if he left the eye faculty unrestrained, bad unwholesome states of longing and dejection might invade him, he practices restraint over it, he guards the eye faculty, he undertakes the restraint, of the eye faculty. Having heard a sound with the ear . . . Having smelled an odor with the nose . . . Having tasted a taste with the tongue . . . Having felt a tactile object with the body . . . Having cognized a mental phenomenon with the mind, a bhikkhu does not grasp its marks and features. Since, if he left the mind faculty unrestrained, bad unwholesome states of longing and dejection might invade him, he practices restraint over it, he guards the mind faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the mind faculty. This is called striving by restraint.

(2) "And what is striving by abandonment? Here, a bhikkhu does not tolerate an arisen sensual thought; he abandons it, dispels it, terminates it, and obliterates it. He does not tolerate an arisen thought of ill will. . . an arisen thought of harming . . . bad unwholesome states whenever they arise; he abandons them, dispels them, terminates them, and obliterates them. This is called striving by abandonment.

(3) "And what is striving by development? Here, a bhikkhu develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. He develops the enlightenment factor of discrimination of phenomena . . . the enlightenment factor of energy . . . the enlightenment factor of rapture . . . the enlightenment factor of tranquility. . . the enlightenment factor of concentration. . . the enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. This is called striving by development.

(4) And what is striving by protection? Here, a bhikkhu protects an arisen excellent object of concentration: the perception of a skeleton, the perception of a worm-infested corpse, the

perception of a livid corpse, the perception of a festering corpse, the perception of a fissured corpse,, the perception of a bloated corpse. This is called striving by protection. These, bhikkhus, are the four kinds of striving.

Restraint and abandonment,
development and protection:
these four strivings were taught
by the Kinsman of the Sun.
By these means an ardent bhikkhu here
can attain the destruction of suffering.”

cf. AN 4. 14