

## UNFOLDING DEPENDENT ORIGINATION: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS FOR DISCLOSING THE ROOT OF THE AFFLICTIVE STATE OF MIND

**Sanjoy Barua Chowdhury**

Mahidol University, Thailand

Author for correspondence email; [sanjoybchy@gmail.com](mailto:sanjoybchy@gmail.com)

### ARTICLE INFO

**Academic Article**

**Keywords**

Dependent Origination,  
Afflictive State of Mind

**Received:**

2021-11-15

**Revised:**

2022-05-20

**Accepted:**

2022-05-30

### ABSTRACT

Based on Pāli and Sanskrit scriptures, early Buddhist teachings postulate that the doctrine of dependent origination (Pāli: paṭiccasamuppāda, Skt. pratītyasamutpāda) clarifies the cycle of life, in addition to fulfilling its doctrinal demand of the Buddha's highest wisdom. What comes to light is a precise assessment of a concrete model of dependent origination which unfolds a clear picture of an unsatisfactory mental state between a being's birth and death. Through the psychological analysis of the twelvefold links in the law of causation, both the Pāli canon (Nikāya) and the commentary (Aṭṭhakathā) demonstrate the three taproots of unsatisfactory mental state and the afflictive state of mind, including: ignorance (avijjā), expectation (tañhā) and clinging (upādāna). Following early Buddhism, Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakārikā offered a scholarship where the state of 'no self-nature (Skt. nisvabhāva)' incorporated by dependent origination leads to the lucid state of mind from mental dissatisfaction, i.e., emptiness (Skt. śūnyatā). Nāgārjuna illuminates nisvabhāva as an absence (empty) of existence, which he indirectly referred to as 'non-self' (P. anattā or Skt. anatman) as found in early Buddhism. Prior to disclosing the taproot of the afflictive state of mind, the proposed paper examines the nature of dependent origination with its psychological analysis stemming from Buddhist philosophical thought

## Prologue

The concept of dependent origination (Pāli: *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Skt., *Pratītyasamutpāda*) is considered as the Buddha's most profound, yet subtle teaching since he had attained enlightenment over 2600 years ago. Exploring Pāli and Sanskrit scriptures based on Buddhist teachings, the study of dependent origination has been frequently seen throughout the texts. Pāli *Nikāya* texts from the *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya* and *Samyutta Nikāya* provides a brief notion of the discourse of dependent origination with twofold classifications: the abstract formula and the twelvefold linked formula through two sequences of forwarding (*anuloma*) and reversing (*paṭiloma*) order. On the other hand, Sanskrit scripture of *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* by Nāgārjuna's (2<sup>nd</sup> Century CE.) presents the notion of dependent origination as emptiness (skt. *śūnyatā*). It categorized the twelvefold constituents into three categories: affliction, action and suffering. It is noteworthy that the discourse of dependent origination is recognized as the heart of the Buddha's teaching. The doctrine of dependent origination is largely presented into theoretical and practical perspectives. The theoretical perspective of dependent origination is known as the law of conditionality, i.e., causes and conditions, whereas the practical perspective of dependent origination expounds the twelvefold constituents and their active role, which are delineated within the forward and reverse order. In-depth study of dependent origination clarifies the nature of mind and the taproot of afflictive states of mind, which has a direct bearing on the physical response of the body. However, the psychological perspective of dependent origination plays an important role for mental recovery from afflictive states of the mind, such as afflictive emotions, destructive emotions and mental proliferations. Meticulous studies of this research delineates how afflicted states of the mind inclines towards violence, hatred and social intolerance, while impacting physical ailments, such as restlessness, depression, stress or bodily disorder.

## The Notion and Significance of Dependent Origination

The doctrine of dependent origination (Pāli: *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Skt., *Pratītyasamutpāda*) was presented by the Buddha to illuminate the origin and cessation of suffering (*dukkha*). The Pāli word 'paṭiccasamuppāda' is derived from a combination of two words: 'paṭicca' and 'samuppāda'. The first word 'paṭicca' means 'because of' or 'on account of', whereas the second word 'samuppāda' means 'arising on the ground of', or 'happening by way of cause'. Again, 'samuppāda' can be divided into two words: 'saŋ' or 'sañ' and 'uppāda' [saŋ + uppāda] where 'uppāda' means 'origin', 'arising' or 'coming to be'. Furthermore, Buddhaghosa (5<sup>th</sup> Century CE.) defines the term of 'paṭiccasamuppāda' in his text *Visuddhimagga* (The Path of Purification) as thus: 'having dependent (paṭicca) a right (sammā) arising (uppāda)'. Literally, the Pāli term 'Paṭiccasamuppāda' can be translated into English as 'Dependent Origination', or 'Dependent

Arising'. Similar to Pāli grammatical structure and translation, the Sanskrit word, '*Pratīyasamutpāda*' is derived from a combination of two words: '*pratīya*' and '*utpāda*' [*pratīya + utpāda*] and translates as 'dependent origination'.

Both Pāli and Sanskrit scriptures agree that the doctrine of dependent origination appeared to the historical Buddha during the period when he struggled for and later attained enlightenment. Recalling in-depth the profound and subtle, the Buddha himself praised those who could realize the theory of causation through intensive observation of suffering, training of insight, absorption of knowledge and seeing the truth [reality] as it is. On one occasion, the Buddha acknowledged a disciple who had clearly seen reality with correct wisdom, i.e., dependent origination<sup>1</sup>. The Buddha also stated that dependent origination appeared to him as the astonishing, eye-opening discovery that brought about vision, knowledge, wisdom, understanding and light during the period while he struggled for enlightenment<sup>2</sup>. The tireless teachings of which he taught for forty-five years during the sixth century BCE is widely known as '*Dhamma*' that leads one on the path to liberation. To clarify the importance of dependent origination and its strong linkage to absorbing the essence of '*Dhamma*', the Buddha expounds:

"One who sees dependent origination sees the *Dhamma*; one who sees the *Dhamma* sees dependent origination."<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the role of dependent origination is an essential and integral element of the Four Noble Truths (*cattāri ariya saccāni*). However, the cycle of dependent origination is precisely drawn out in a clear process of life from birth to death. It is a complete patterning with twelve constituents and reflects an awareness of causes and conditions that demonstrate a mutual interaction within each link. The aim of dependent origination is an attempt to cease the entire mass of suffering and stress (*dukkhanirodha*)<sup>4</sup>.

Most scholars from Buddhist Studies and Buddhist practitioners accept that the discourse of dependent origination is one of the core teachings of Buddhism. Bhikkhu Bodhi states the teaching of dependent origination is the radical insight at the heart of the Buddha's teaching from

<sup>1</sup> Paccaya Sutta, S. 12.20.

<sup>2</sup> "Samudayo, samudayo"ti kho me bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhum udapādi, ñānam udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi. Tassa mayham bhikkhave, etadahosi:kimhi nu kho asati jarāmaraṇam na hoti. Kissā nirodhā jarāmaraṇanirodhō"ti. Tassa mayham bhikkhave, yoniso manasikārā ahu paññāya abhisamayo: "jātiyā kho asati jarāmaraṇam na hoti, jātinirodhā jarāmaraṇanirodhō"ti, Nagara Sutta, S. 12.65.

<sup>3</sup> "yo paṭiccasamuppādam passati. So dhammam passati. Yo dhammam passati. So paṭiccasamuppādam passati", Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta, M. 28.

<sup>4</sup> "Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa nirodho hoti"ti", Dutiyabodhi Sutta, Ud. 1.2.

<sup>5</sup> Buddhist concept differentiates between two levels of truth (Pāli: *sacca*, Skt. *Satya*): conventional truth (skt. *saṃvṛti satya*) and ultimate truth (skt. *paramārtha satya*). Conventional truth describes daily experiences of a concrete world, whereas ultimate truth ascribes as understanding the state of *Nibbāna* or *Nirvāṇa*, realizing ultimate reality of emptiness.

which everything else unfolds<sup>5</sup>. Kalupahana mentions the theory of dependent origination as the central philosophy of Buddhism<sup>6</sup>. Dependent Origination has profound and in-depth meaning, in addition to its significant status paving the way to realize *Dhamma* [Truth from ultimate perspective]<sup>7</sup>. It is well acknowledged that dependent origination is very difficult to comprehend. Therefore, the Buddha mentioned that dependent origination is subtle, profound and deep in implication (*paṭiccasamuppādo gambhīrāvabhaso*) and very difficult to see (*sududdasa*)<sup>8</sup>. Hence, Nyanatiloka states the teaching of dependent origination of ‘all phenomena of existence’ and has given rise to greater misunderstandings, more contradictory, more absurd speculations and interpretations<sup>9</sup>. It explains why the doctrine of dependent origination was ascribed by the Buddha in many times on different occasions. Apart from the Buddha’s presentation of dependent origination, it was also skillfully conveyed by the Buddha’s immediate pupils and subsequent eminent Buddhist scholars, such as Nāgārjuna (2nd Century CE.) and Buddhaghosa (5th Century CE.). The Buddha and his disciples’ interpretation of the doctrine of dependent origination appeared in the early Nikāya texts of the Pāli traditions, in addition to Sanskrit scriptures.

## The Principles of Dependent Origination and its Standard Model in Terms of Pāli Scriptures

Pāli Nikāya texts are defined as the scriptures of Early Buddhism<sup>10</sup>. According to the Pāli Nikāya tradition, the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) is largely presented into twofold classifications, namely: (i) the abstract formula and (ii) the twelvefold formula linked through two sequences.

Firstly, the abstract formula of the doctrine of dependent origination is expressed through exposition of ‘cause and effect’. According to the *Nidāna-Saṃyutta* from the Saṃyutta-Nikāya, the abstract formula of dependent origination refers to the law of causation that has arisen

<sup>6</sup> Vin 14.

<sup>7</sup> The notion of ‘Early Buddhism’ is referred to the pre-sectarian Buddhist era (until the first documented split in the Sangha), which existed from the Buddha’s time to one hundred years after the passing away (mahāparinibbāṇa) of the Buddha. Nikāya texts are defined as the scriptures of ‘Early Buddhism’. Texts from Sutta Piṭaka, Vinaya Piṭaka and Abhidhamma Piṭaka are considered as the scriptures of early Buddhism.

<sup>8</sup> Nidānasamyutta, S. 12.2

<sup>9</sup> “imasmīm sati idam hoti, imassuppādā idam uppajjati, imasmīm asati idam ha hoti, imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhati”, Bahudhātuka Sutta: M. 115; Trans. by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, Majjhima Nikāya: The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995) 927.

<sup>10</sup> Nidānasamyutta, S. 12.2.

depending upon causes (*hetu*) and conditions (*paccaya*), additionally known as the law of conditionality (*idappaccayatā*)<sup>11</sup>. In the “Bahudhātuka Sutta” of the Majjhima Nikāya, a conversation between the Buddha and his attendant Venerable Ānanda can be found where the Blessed One introduces the law of causation (formula of cause and effects) as follows:

“When this exists, that comes to be; with this arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases.”<sup>12</sup>

The above statement may be expressed in logical form by comparing it to ‘clouds’, ‘rain’ and ‘water’ in the following manner:

“Because of clouds, rain occurs (arises). Because of rain, water falls to the earth. When there are no clouds, there is neither rain nor water.”

Clouds, rain and water are interdependent. There is a cause (reason) for each event and when the taproot is cut off, the event (process) will disappear completely. In this example, with the taproot of water removed, the process of rain (event) disappears. This is the law of causation that explicitly demonstrates the path of origination, in addition to the path of cessation.

Secondly, the twelvefold linked formula, through two sequences of dependent origination is formulated in a practical way, which refers to the process of a being’s (*puggala*) birth to death, continuing from one lifetime to another, and expresses a clear structure of rotated existence (*samsāra*) within a frame of twelvefold constituents, namely: (i) ignorance (*avijjā*), (ii) mental formations or fabrication (*saṅkhāra*), (iii) consciousness (*viññāṇa*), (iv) mentality and materiality (*nāmarūpa*), (v) sixfold sense bases (*saḷāyatana*), (vi) contact (*phassa*), (vii) feeling (*vedanā*), (viii) craving (*taṇhā*), (ix) clinging (*upādāna*), (x) becoming (*bhāva*), (xi) birth (*jāti*), and (xii) aging and death (*jarāmarañña*)<sup>13</sup>, along with following two sequences: forwarding (*anuloma*) and reversing order (*paṭiloma*). Regarding the discourse ‘Analysis of Dependent Origination’ (*Paṭiccasamuppāda-vibhīṅga Sutta*), the Buddha expounded the notion of dependent origination in a systematic method by demonstrating the twelvefold formula and its two sequences as thus:

### **(1) Forwarding order (*anuloma*) of Dependent Origination:**

With the condition of ignorance, mental formations arise (*Avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā*);

---

<sup>11</sup> Paṭiccasamuppādasuttam, S. 12.2,

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

With the condition of mental formations, consciousness arises (*Saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇam*);

With the condition of consciousness, mentality and materiality arises (*Viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpam*);

With the condition of mentality and materiality, sixfold sense bases arises (*Nāmarūpa-paccayā saḷāyatanaṁ*);

With the condition of sixfold sense bases, contact arises (*Salāyatana-paccayā phasso*);

With the condition of contact, feeling arises (*Phassa-paccayā vedanā*);

With the condition of feeling, craving arises (*Vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*);

With the condition of craving, clinging arises (*Taṇhā-paccayā upādānam*);

With the condition of clinging, becoming arises (*Upādāna-paccayā bhavo*);

With the condition of becoming, birth arises (*Bhava-paccayā jāti*);

With the condition of birth, aging and death arises (*Jāti-paccayā jarāmaranam*);

Sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair (*soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassupāyāsā-sambhavan’ti*).

This is the origination of this whole mass of suffering [stress and dissatisfaction] (*Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti*)<sup>13</sup>.

### **(1) Reversing order (*paṭiloma*) of Dependent Origination:**

With the cessation of ignorance, mental formations cease (*Avijjāya tveva asesa-virāga-nirodhā saṅkhāra-nirodho*);

With the cessation of mental formations, consciousness ceases (*Saṅkhāra-nirodhā viññāṇa-nirodho*);

With the cessation of consciousness, mentality and materiality cease (*Viññāṇa-nirodhā nāmarūpa-nirodho*);

With the cessation of mentality and materiality, sixfold sense bases cease (*Nāmarūpa-nirodhā saḷāyatana-nirodho*);

With the cessation of sixfold sense base, contact ceases (*Salāyatana-nirodhā phassa-nirodho*);

<sup>13</sup> “Katamā ca bhikkhave avijjā? Yaṁ kho bhikkhave dukkhe aññāṇam, dukkhasamudaye aññāṇam, dukkhanirodhe aññāṇam, dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya aññāṇam, ayam vuccati bhikkhave, avijjā.”, S. 12.2.

<sup>14</sup> “Katame ca bhikkhave saṅkhāra? Tayome bhikkhave, saṅkhārā: kāyasankhāro vacasankhāro cittasankhāro. Ime vuccanti bhikkhave, saṅkhārā”, S. 12.2.

With the cessation of contact, feeling ceases (*Phassa-nirodhā vedanā-nirodho*);  
 With the cessation of feeling, craving ceases (*Vedanā-nirodhā taṇhā-nirodho*);  
 With the cessation of craving, clinging ceases (*Taṇhā-nirodhā upādāna-nirodho*);  
 With the cessation of clinging, becoming ceases (*Upādāna-nirodhā bhava-nirodho*);  
 With the cessation of becoming, birth ceases (*Bhava-nirodhā jāti-nirodho*);  
 With the cessation of birth, aging and death (*Jāti-nirodhā jarāmaraṇam*);  
 sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair cease (*soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassupāyāsā nirujjhān'ti*).

This is the cessation of whole mass of suffering [stress & dissatisfaction] (*Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa nirodho hotī'ti*)<sup>15</sup>.

The above-mentioned formulas of dependent origination can be delineated (with focusing its twelvefold constituents) in the following two manners: forwarding and reversing order. The forward and reverse order of dependent origination reveals a being's (*puggala*) entire life processes by indicating how it (a being) comes into existence and the way of its release from the samsaric cycle. The ascending order of dependent origination refers to finding out the root of fact that starts from ignorance and ends at aging and death, whereas the descending order of dependent origination refers to a practitioner's wise reflection in proceeding to 'break the causal links'. The standard models of dependent origination conceptually do not show marked differences in meaning whether the sequence is presented in forward or reverse order. However, the Buddha's exposition of the *Dhamma* is to offer a practitioner to taste the state of ultimate freedom, i.e., *nibbāna*. The standard model of dependent origination provides a concrete roadmap to scrutinize the root of sufferings (including afflictive states of mind). It also delineates the elimination of suffering that leads to the state of freedom.

### Interpretation of Twelvefold Formulas

The Buddha's proposal of the twelvefold constituents (links) and their active roles are delineated within the forward and reverse models of dependent origination. In addition to the work of Buddhist scholars, Buddhist inscriptions provide detailed information of these twelvefold formulas. Buddhist interpretation of the twelvefold formulas are as follows:

- (i) Generally, the term 'ignorance' refers to 'lacking of knowledge or information'. The Buddha defines ignorance (*avijjā*) as the lack of knowing the Four Noble Truths, namely

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way to its cessation<sup>16</sup>. On the other hand, ignorance is defined as a positive misconception and not the mere absence of knowledge<sup>17</sup>. Ignorance further refers to the foundation of all evil actions and taproot of all suffering; therefore, it stands first in the formula of dependent origination.

- (ii) The second constituent of dependent origination is volitional or mental formation (*sankhāra*) which defines essential conditions or mental coefficients<sup>18</sup>. The Buddha acknowledges three kinds of volitional formations: the bodily volitional formation (*kāyasankhāro*), the verbal volitional formation (*vacīsankhāro*) and the mental volitional formation (*cittasankhāro*)<sup>19</sup>. In brief, mental formation can be expressed as habitual tendencies (whether positive or negative) that lead the mind to attach to the aforesaid three actions.
- (iii) The third link of dependent origination is consciousness (*viññāna*) which defines the mental quality<sup>20</sup> (Mrs. Rhys Davids and William Stede, 2007:618-619). Consciousness plays a key role in how the mind operates into phenomenal and physical actions. According to the Pāli Nikāya, the Buddha classified consciousness into sixfold classes: eye-consciousness (*cakkhu viññāna*), ear-consciousness (*sota viññāna*), nose-consciousness (*ghāna viññāna*), tongue-consciousness (*jivhā viññāna*), body-consciousness (*kaya viññāna*) and mind-consciousness (*mano viññāna*)<sup>21</sup>. Buddhist teaching of consciousness offers the basis for comprehensive understanding of mental states, whether wholesome or unwholesome. Bhikkhu Bodhi signifies the appearance of consciousness as thus:

“Consciousness appears as an enduring subject due to lack of attention. When it is mindfully examined the appearance of lastingness is dissolved by the perception of its impermanence. (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2000: 20)”<sup>22</sup>

Additionally, Buddhist scripture clarifies that consciousness and wisdom are inseparable and precisely states that wisdom cannot flourish alone without awareness of consciousness

---

<sup>16</sup> Mahānidāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā; Trans. by Bhikkhu Bodhi,

<sup>17</sup> “Yā cāvuso paññā yañca viññāṇam ime dhammā saṃsaṭṭhā no visamaṇī. Na ca labbhā imesam dhammānam vinibbhujitvā vinibbhujitvā nānākaraṇam paññāpetum. Yañcāvuso pajānāti tam vijānāti. Yam vijānāti tam pajānāti”, Mahāvedalla Sutta, M. 43.

<sup>18</sup> “Katamañca bhikkhave nāmarūpam? Vedanā saññā cetanā phasso manasikāro, idam vuccati nāmam. Cattāro ca mahābhūtā, catunnam ca mahābhūtānam upādāyarūpam, idam vuccati rūpam. Iti idañca nāmam, idañca rūpam, idam vuccati bhikkhave, nāmarūpam.”, SN. 12.2.

<sup>19</sup> Paññā-bhūmi-niddesa, Vism. Ch. XVII; Trans. by Bhikkhu Nānamoli

<sup>20</sup> “Katamañca bhikkhave saññāyatanam? Cakkhāyatanam sotāyatanam ghāṇāyatanam jivhāyatanam kāyāyatanam manāyatanam. Idam vuccati bhikkhave, saññāyatanam”, S. 12.2.

<sup>22</sup> “Nāmañca rūpañca paṭicca phassā; icchānidānāni pariggahāni, icchāya’santyā- na mamattamatthi, rūpe vibhute na phusanti phassā”, Sn. V. 878.

(*viññāna*)<sup>23</sup>. Buddhist interpretation of consciousness reveals a clear notion of the role of the mind and its various directions or mental concomitant.

- (iv) Mentality and materiality (*nāma-rūpa*) is the fourth link of the chain of causation, where it is conditioned by consciousness (*viññāna*). In the discourse of dependent origination, the Buddha precisely described mentality (*nāma*) as it correlates to feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volition (*cetanā*), contact (*phassa*) and attention (*manasikāro*), while form (*rūpa*) derives from the four great elements (*mahābhūtānam upādāyarūpam*)<sup>24</sup>. By contrast, according to the *The Path of Purification* (*Visuddhimagga*), Venerable Buddhaghosa (*Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification* :122) states, when mentality and materiality (*nāma-rūpa*) are connected to the five aggregates (*pañcakhandha*), mentality (*nāma*) is correlated with the three aggregates of feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*) and mental formation (*saṅkhāra*), whereas materiality is signified with the aggregate of material form (*rūpa*)<sup>25</sup>.
- (v) The six sense bases (*saḷāyatana*) is the fifth link of dependent origination that defines the six sense organs, viz., the eye base (*cakkhāyatana*), the ear base (*sotāyatana*), the nose base (*ghānāyatana*), the tongue base (*jivhāyatana*), the body base (*kāyāyatana*) and the mind base (*manāyatana*)<sup>26</sup>. The six sense doors are, however, operated by the mind base. In fact, the mind is the key term for noticing responses from the bodily organs.
- (vi) The sixth link of dependent origination is contact (*phassa*), as originating in the contact of mentality (*nāma*) and materiality (*rūpa*)<sup>27</sup>. Mrs. Rhys Davids and William Stede define contact (*phassa*) as the fundamental fact in sense impression<sup>28</sup>. Through ‘The Discourse of Honeyball’ (*Madhupindika Sutta*), Venerable Mahākacchāna expresses contact as follows:

<sup>22</sup> “cakkhuñ ca paṭicca rūpe ca upajjati cakkhuviññānam. tiṇnam sāṅgati passo”, *Madhupindika Sutta*, M. 18; Trans. by Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi

<sup>23</sup> “Katamo ca bhikkhave phasso? Chayime bhikkhave, phassakāyā: cakkhusamphasso, sotasamphasso, ghāṇasamphasso jivhāsamphasso, kāyasamphasso, manosamphasso. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave, phasso.”, S. 12.2.

<sup>24</sup> “Katamā ca bhikkhave vedanā? Chayime bhikkhave, vedanākāyā: cakkhusamphassajā vedanā, sotasamphassajā vedanā, ghāṇasamphassajā vedanā, jivhāsamphassajā vedanā, kāyasamphassajā vedanā, manosamphassajā vedanā. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave vedanā.”, S. 12.2.

<sup>25</sup> “Katamā ca bhikkhave taṇhā? Chayime bhikkhave, taṇhākāyā: rūpataṇhā saddataṇhā gandhataṇhā rasataṇhā phoṭṭhabbatanhā dhammataṇhā. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave taṇhā.”, S. 12.2.

<sup>26</sup> “Katamañca bhikkhave upādānam? Cattārimāni bhikkhave, upādānāni: kāmūpadānam, diṭṭhūpadānam, sīlabbatūpadānam, attavādūpadānam. Idam vuccati bhikkhave upādānam”, S. 12.2.

<sup>27</sup> “Katamo ca bhikkhave, bhavo? Tayome bhikkhave, bhavā: kāmabhavo, rūpabhavo, arūpabhavo. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave, bhavo”, S. 12.2.

<sup>28</sup> “Katamā ca bhikkhave, jāti? Yā tesam tesam sattānam tamhi tamhi sattanikāye jāti sañjāti okkanti nibbatti abhinibbatti, khandhānam pātubhāvo āyatanānam paṭilābho, ayam vuccati bhikkhave, jāti”, S. 12.2. Trans. by Bhikkhu Bodhi.

“Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact.”<sup>29</sup>

The aforesaid statement clarifies the key role of the consciousness that leads to the mentality and materiality mechanism. According to the Buddha, contact is classified into six classes: eye-contact (*cakkhusamphasso*), ear-contact (*sotasamphasso*), nose-contact (*ghānasamphasso*), tongue-contact (*jivhāsamphasso*), body-contact (*kāyasamphasso*) and mind-contact (*manosamphasso*)<sup>30</sup>.

- (vii) The seventh constituent, feeling (*vedanā*), is a condition for the arising of craving. Regarding the six senses, the Buddha distinguishes six kinds of feelings – feeling born of eye-contact (*cakkhusamphassajā*), feeling born of ear-contact (*sotasamphassajā*), feeling born of nose-contact (*ghānasamphassajā*), feeling born of tongue-contact (*jivhāsamphassajā*), feeling born of body-contact (*kāyasamphassajā*) and feeling born of mind-contact (*manosamphassajā*)<sup>31</sup>.
- (viii) The eighth formula, craving (*taṇhā*), is denoted as the chief root of suffering. In the discourse of Dependent Origination, the Buddha expounds upon six classes of craving: craving for forms (*rūpatāṇhā*), craving for sounds (*saddatāṇhā*), craving for smells (*gandhatāṇhā*), craving for tastes (*rasataṇhā*), craving for tactile objects (*phoṭṭhabbatāṇhā*) and craving for mental phenomena (*dhammatāṇhā*)<sup>32</sup>.
- (ix) The ninth constituent, clinging (*upādāna*) is commonly referred to as grasping<sup>33</sup> (Nyanatiloka, 2004: 184). The Blessed One expounds four kinds of clinging: clinging to sensual pleasures (*kāmūpadāna*), clinging to views (*ditthūpādāna*), clinging to rules and vows (*sīlabbatūpādāna*) and clinging to a doctrine of self (*attavādūpādāna*)<sup>34</sup>.
- (x) The tenth formula of dependent origination is existence or becoming (*bhāva*) which refers to the sensual characteristics of the body (Nyanatiloka, 2004:31). The Buddha describes

<sup>29</sup> “Katamañca bhikkhave, jarāmarañam? Yā tesam tesam sattānam tamhi tamhi sattanikāye jarā jīrañatā khanḍiccam pāliccam valittacatā āyuno saṁhāni indriyānam paripāko, ayam vuccati jarā. Katamañca bhikkhave, marañam? Yā tesam tesam sattānam tamhā tamhā sattanikāyā cuti cavanatā bhedo antaradhānam maccumarañam kālakiriyā khandhānam bhedo kalebarassa<sup>3</sup> nikkhepo jīvitindriyassa upacchedo. Idam vuccati marañam. Iti ayañca jarā idañca marañam, idam vuccati bhikkhave, jarāmarañam”, S. 12.2.

<sup>30</sup> Vism. Ch. XVII; Trans. by Bhikkhu Nānamoli.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> After the Buddha passed away, the elder disciple Mahākāssapa proposed to arrange a congregation in order to protect the Buddha’s teaching from misleading, manipulation and rapid declining. Hence, the first Buddhist council (400 BCE.) was held in the Sattapanni Cave of Vebhara Mountain at Rajagaha (Currently located at Uttara Pradesh of India) under the leadership of Mahākāssapa. King Ajatasatthu provided all the facilities for 500 monks (participants) during the council. The second Buddhist council (383 BCE) was held after a hundred years of the Buddha’s passing away at Vālukārāma of Vesāli. Venerable Rewata was headed for thousand participants (monks); King Kalasoka patronized the council. According the Pāli text, “Cullavagga” of Vinaya Piṭaka, teachings of the Buddha (dhamma) and disciplines (vinaya) were recorded in the first and second Buddhist councils respectively. The third Buddhist council (250 BCE.) was held at Pataliputra; one thousand monks participated under the leadership of Moggaliputta Tissa. Eighteen sects of Buddhism emerged in between the period of second and third Buddhist councils. The eighteen Buddhist Schools are: (i) Sthāvīravāda (Vibhājjavāda or Theravāda), (ii) Mahāsmghīka, (iii) Mahīsāsaka, (iv) Vatsīputrīya, (v) Gokulīka, (vi) Ekavyāhārikas, (vii) Caitīka, (viii) Sarvāstivāda, (ix) Kāsyapīya, (x) Sankrantika, (xi) Dharmaguptaka, (xii) Sautrantika, (xiii) Dharmattarīya, (xiv) Bhadrayānīya, (xv) Sannārarika, (xvi) Sammitīya, (xvii) Prajñaptivāda and (xviii) Bahuśrūtiya.

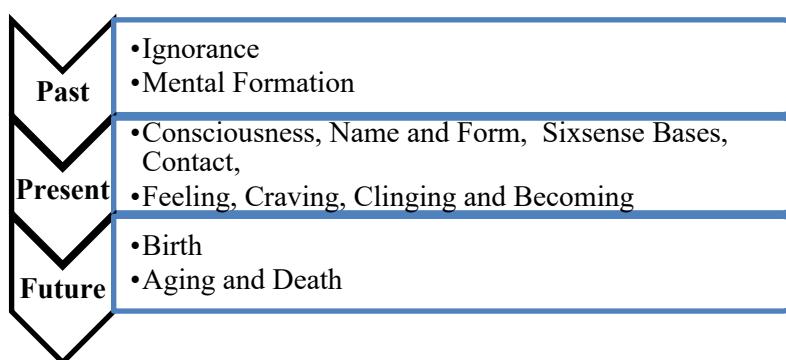
threefold existences: sense-sphere existence (*kāmabhavo*), form-sphere existence (*rūpabhavo*) and formless-sphere existence (*arūpabhavo*)<sup>35</sup>.

(xi) The eleventh link of Dependent Origination is birth (*jāti*) which comprises the entire embryonic process beginning with conception and ending with parturition (Nyanatiloka, 2004:69). The Blessed One expounds upon birth as follows:

“The birth of the various beings into various orders of beings, their being born, descend [into mother womb] production, the manifestation of the aggregates, the obtaining of the sense bases.”<sup>36</sup>

(xii) The twelfth constituent is aging and death (*jarāmarana*). In the discourse of Dependent Origination, the Blessed One explained that aging (*jarā*) refers to a being’s old age, brokenness, greyness, wrinkling, decline of vitality, degeneration of the faculties, whereas death (*marana*) refers to a being’s deceasing, passing away, breaking up, disappearance, mortality, death, completion of time, breaking up of the aggregates and casting off of the body.<sup>37</sup>

The twelvefold formula of Dependent Origination explicitly ascribed the entire lifespan of a being (*puggala*) as a whole. Nevertheless, Venerable Buddhaghosa (Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification: 287) categorized the twelvefold constituents into three lifetimes, they are, past, present and future<sup>38</sup>. Venerable Buddhaghosa’s categorization of twelvefold formulas are listed in the following chart:



<sup>33</sup> Philosophical viewpoints of the four major Buddhist Schools are as follows: (i) bāhyartha pratyakṣhavāda by Sarvāstivādin or Vaibhāsikan, that means, the external object can be perceived through direct perception; (ii) bāhyartha anumeyavāda by Sautrāntikan, that means, external object is inference; (iii) bāhyartha apratyakshavāda by Vijānavādins, that means, external object is empty; (iv) ubhayārtha śūnyatavāda by Mādhyamikans, that means, both external and internal are empty.

<sup>34</sup> Svabhāva Parīkṣā, MMK 15.9

<sup>35</sup> Dvādasāṅga Parīkṣā, MMK 26.1-26.12.

<sup>36</sup> Dedicatory Verse, MMK.

<sup>37</sup> Nāgārjuna logically concludes his śūnyatā (emptiness) doctrine that things are based on two truths similar to the Buddha’s interpretation. The Blessed One’s teaching rests on two truths, namely, conventional truth (samvṛti satya), and truth in the highest sense (paramārtha satya). One who does not comprehend the distinction between these two truths does not comprehend the profound meaning of the Buddha’s teaching.

<sup>38</sup> Dhammasaṅganī: Aṭṭhasālinī. I. 357.

**Figure I: Buddhaghosa's categorization of the twelvefold constituents into three lifetimes.  
(Past, Present and Future)**

According to this chart, Venerable Buddhaghosa expounds the first two constituents (in order), viz., ignorance and volitional formations are correlated to the past life; the next eight links, viz., consciousness, name and form, six-sense bases, contact, feeling, craving, clinging and existence are correlated to the present life; the last two formulas, viz., birth and aging-and-death are correlated to the future life. He replaced all links concerning kamma (action) and karmic consequences (resultant). For clarifying the aforesaid three periods of karmic (resultant) life through the law of dependent origination, Buddhagosa further categorized the twelvefold constituents into three areas: (i) afflictions or defilements (*kilesa*), (ii) actions (*kamma*) and (iii) karmic consequences (*Vipāka*)<sup>39</sup>. Needless to say, afflictions (*kilesa*) and actions (*kamma*) are considered as cause (*hetu*), whereas karmic consequences (*Vipāka*) is considered as effect (*phala*) or causal resultant.

The twelvefold formulas of dependent origination with three classifications of afflictions, action and Karmic consequences, along with twofold categories of cause and effect are noted in the following chart:

Affliction [Cause]	Actions [Cause]	Karmic Consequences [Effect]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignorance [past]</li> <li>• Craving [present]</li> <li>• Clinging [present]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Formations [past]</li> <li>• Becoming [present]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consciousness [present]</li> <li>• Name and Form [present]</li> <li>• Six-sense Bases [present]</li> <li>• Contact [present]</li> <li>• Feeling [present]</li> <li>• Birth [future]</li> <li>• Aging and Death [future]</li> </ul>

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Goldstein, "Mental Affliction," Accessed November 2, 2021, [https://www.dharma.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2003\\_fall\\_insight\\_newsletter\\_0.pdf](https://www.dharma.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2003_fall_insight_newsletter_0.pdf)

**Figure II: The categorization of the twelve-fold constituents into three classes (afflictions or defilements, actions and karmic consequences).**

It is noteworthy that the law of dependent origination defines the wheel of birth and death and depicts the endless cycle of death and re-birth from one existence to another existence within the twelvefold formula. The twelvefold formula of dependent origination is clearly interpreting the practical (daily) aspects of life through a psychological analysis of each link.

**The Concept of Dependent Origination According to the Madhyamaka School of Sanskrit Scriptures**

After the Buddha's passing away (*mahāparinibbāna*), Buddhism was split into eighteen sects<sup>40</sup>, which are compiled into four main schools: Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika, Vijñānavāda and Madhyamaka or Śūnyatāvāda<sup>41</sup>. As previously mentioned, early Buddhist teachings are recorded in the Pāli scriptures of *Nikāya* texts, whereas subsequent Buddhist (developmental) schools, such as Madhyamaka or Śūnyatāvāda teachings are depicted in Sanskrit scriptures. In addition, the Madhyamaka (The School of Middle-way), as a systematic philosophical tenet among the four great Buddhist Schools, arose in the second century C.E. through the great saint Ācārya Nāgārjuna. Within its historical development, the Madhyamaka School established the subtle doctrinal exposition of emptiness as presented by Ācārya Nāgārjuna. However, Nāgārjuna presented the doctrine of dependent origination (Pāli: *paṭiccasamuppāda*; Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*) through the concept of emptiness (*śūnyatā*). He stated his monumental text *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* 'The Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way' in Sanskrit stanza as thus: "*pratītya yad yad bhavati, tat tac Śūnyatā svabhāvatah*", which means "whatever is subject to conditionality (dependent

<sup>40</sup> After the Buddha passed away, the elder disciple Mahākāssapa proposed to arrange a congregation in order to protect the Buddha's teaching from misleading, manipulation and rapid declining. Hence, the first Buddhist council (400 BCE.) was held in the Sattapanni Cave of Vebhara Mountain at Rajagaha (Currently located at Uttara Pradesh of India) under the leadership of Mahākāssapa. King Ajatasatthu provided all the facilities for 500 monks (participants) during the council. The second Buddhist council (383 BCE) was held after a hundred years of the Buddha's passing away at Vālukārāma of Vesāli. Venerable Rewata was headed for thousand participants (monks); King Kalasoka patronized the council. According the Pāli text, "Cullavagga" of Vinaya Piṭaka, teachings of the Buddha (*dhamma*) and disciplines (*vinaya*) were recorded in the first and second Buddhist councils respectively. The third Buddhist council (250 BCE.) was held at Pataliputra; one thousand monks participated under the leadership of Moggaliputta Tissa. Eighteen sects of Buddhism emerged in between the period of second and third Buddhist councils. The eighteen Buddhist Schools are: (i) Sthaviravāda (Vibhājjavāda or Theravāda), (ii) Mahāsmghika, (iii) Mahīsāsaka, (iv) Vatsīputriya, (v) Gokulika, (vi) Ekavyahārikas, (vii) Caitīka, (viii) Sarvāstivāda, (ix) Kāśyapīya, (x) Sankrantika, (xi) Dharmaguptaka, (xii) Sautrantika, (xiii) Dharmattarīya, (xiv) Bhadrayāniya, (xv) Sannārarika, (xvi) Sammitīya, (xvii) Prajñaptivāda and (xviii) Bahuśrutīya.

<sup>41</sup> Philosophical viewpoints of the four major Buddhist Schools are as follows: (i) *bāhyartha pratyakṣhavāda* by Sarvāstivādin or Vaibhāsikan, that means, the external object can be perceived through direct perception; (ii) *bāhyartha anumeyavāda* by Sautrāntikan, that means, external object is inference; (iii) *bāhyartha apratyakṣhavāda* by Vijñānavādins, that means, external object is empty; (iv) *ubhayārtha śūnyatavāda* by Mādhyamikans, that means, both external and internal are empty.

origination), is by its very nature tranquil and empty”<sup>42</sup>. Nāgārjuna’s analysis of the twelve constituents of dependent origination into threefold categories: affliction (*kleśa*), action (*karma*) and suffering (*duhkha*), in relationship to cause (*hetu*) and effect (*paccaya*) as follows:<sup>43</sup>

1. Ignorance ( <i>avidyā</i> )	→Affliction ( <i>kleśa</i> )	→ Cause ( <i>hetu</i> )
2. Volition ( <i>samskāra</i> )	→Action ( <i>karma</i> )	→Cause
3. Consciousness( <i>vijñāna</i> )	→Suffering ( <i>duhkha</i> )	→ Effect ( <i>paccaya</i> )
4. Name and Form ( <i>nāmarūpa</i> )	→ Suffering	→ Effect
5. Six Sense Doors ( <i>sadāyatana</i> )	→ Suffering	→ Effect
6. Contact ( <i>sparśa</i> )	→ Suffering	→ Effect
7. Sensation ( <i>vedanā</i> )	→ Suffering	→ Effect
8. Craving ( <i>trṣṇā</i> )	→ Affliction	→ Cause
9. Clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> )	→ Affliction	→ Cause
10. Becoming ( <i>bhava</i> )	→ Action	→ Cause
11. Birth ( <i>jāti</i> )	→Suffering	→ Effect
12. Old Age and Death ( <i>jarāmarana</i> )	→ Suffering	→ Effect

**Figure III: Nāgārjuna’s analysis of the twelve constituents of Dependent Origination**

According to the above chart,

- (i) The first category of affliction (*kleśa*) includes three constituents: (1) ignorance (*avidyā*), (8) craving (*trṣṇā*) and (9) clinging (*upādāna*).
- (ii) The second category of action (*karma*) includes two constituents: (2) volition or mental formation (*samskāra*) and (10) becoming (*bhāva*).
- (iii) The third category of suffering (*duhkha*) includes the remaining seven constituents: (3) consciousness (*vijñāna*), (4) name and form (*nāmarūpa*), (5) six sense doors

<sup>42</sup> Svabhāva Parīkṣā, MMK 15.9

<sup>43</sup> Dvādasāṅga Parīkṣā, MMK 26.1-26.12.

(*sadāyatana*), (6) contact (*sparśa*), (7) sensation (*vedanā*), (11) birth (*jāti*), (12) old age and death (*jarāmarana*).

These constituents, moreover, can be classified into two groups: causal (*hetu*) and resultant (*paccaya*). In the commentarial text *Pratītyasamutpāda-hṛdaya-kārikā*, Nāgārjuna ascribes these twelvefold constituents as being empty (*śūnya*); his analysis of emptiness for the twelvefold formula of dependent origination (of twelve links) is summarized as thus:

- (i) From the three, two originates; from the two, seven originate; and from these seven, in turn, the three originate. Thus the wheel of existence revolves again and again.
- (ii) The whole world is cause and effect; excluding this, there is no sentient being. From the factors (which are) only empty, empty factors originate (Peter Della Santina, 2002:60-61).

The examination on the relationship between the concept of dependent origination and the doctrine of emptiness clearly reveals that those (the wise) who understand the essence of dependent origination, (the enlightened ones) have seen the meaning of conditioned origination that is empty (*śūnya*). Hence, Nāgārjuna advocates in the dedicatory verse of the *Mūlamadhyamakārikā*:

“*Anirodham anutpādam anucchedam aśāśvataṁ ,*  
*anekārtham anānārtham anāgamam anirgamam;*  
*yah pratītyasamutpādaṁ prapañcopaśamaṁ śivam ,*  
*deśayāmāsa sambuddhas tam vande vadatām varam* ”<sup>44</sup>

The verse translates as, ‘there is non-extinction (*anirodham*), non-origination (*anutpādam*), non-destruction (*anucchedam*), non-permanence (*aśāśvataṁ*), non-identity (*anekārtham*), non-differentiation (*anānārtham*), non-coming into being (*anāgamam*) and non-going out of being (*anirgamam*); withdrawal of all mental-fabrication (*prapañcopaśamaṁ*) of dependent origination. I (Nāgārjuna) offer my humble obeisance to the Buddha as the teacher of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*)”.

Based on the above discussion on the doctrine of dependent origination in the Madhyamaka School, Nāgārjuna strongly implies that the connection between the doctrine of dependent origination and emptiness can be revealed as reality by means of ultimate standpoint for those who realize the ultimate truth<sup>45</sup> and confirms to obtain ultimate peace at the stage of freedom (*nirvāṇa*).

<sup>44</sup> Dedicatory Verse, MMK.

<sup>45</sup> Nāgārjuna logically concludes his *śūnyatā* (emptiness) doctrine that things are based on two truths similar to the Buddha’s interpretation. The Blessed One’s teaching rests on two truths, namely, conventional truth (*saṃvṛti satya*), and truth in the highest sense (*paramārtha satya*). One who does not comprehend the distinction between these two truths does not comprehend the profound meaning of the Buddha’s teaching.

## An Application of Dependent Origination and Afflictive States of Mind

Apart from the interpretation of karmic consequences, the doctrine of dependent origination provides a clear notion of afflictive states of mind. An afflictive state of the mind is referred to as a defiled-mind or *kilesa* (Pāli) or *klesa* (Sanskrit), which is translated as defilement, impurity and delusion (T.W, and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 1910:323-324). The ‘*Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*’, the Sanskrit scripture of the Yogācāra School, states that the mind is fundamentally pure, but is defiled by afflicted states of the mind or *kliṣṭamana* (Suzuki, 1998:179-180). The Pāli scripture of the Theravāda Abhidhamma identifies ten additional defilements (*kilesa*), such as hatred (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*), conceit (*māna*), wrong views (*ditthi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), mental torpor (*thīna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), shamelessness (*ahirika*), and lack of fear (*anottappa*)<sup>46</sup>. These ten defilements are also considered as psychological impairments that can be neutralized through observing the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāri satipaṭṭhāna*), along with wise reflection and investigation (*yoniso manasikāra*). An afflictive state of the mind is defined as a mental impurity that has an absence of inner quality or wisdom. As long as the mind dwells upon negative thoughts, such as the tendency to grasp or harm others for personal benefit, the mind is considered to be unstable. An unstable or impure mind also dwells in the state of mental affliction. In the same way, destructive emotions, defilements and mental proliferations are also identified as afflictive states of mind. The afflictive mental state is devoid of four sublime states of the mind, they are: loving kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuna*), sympathetic joy (*mudita*) and equanimity (*upekkha*). Buddhist scriptures signify afflictive states of mind into three psycho-emotional behavior, namely: (i) afflictive emotions, (ii) destructive behavior and (iii) mental proliferation, which cause physical ailments such as stress, restlessness, depression or bodily disorders. The World Health Organization (WHO) published a report (WHO: 2017) stating that stress and depression are directly related to physical ailments which occurs from mental dissatisfaction (sadness). Consequently, there is a loss of positive energy, increased anxiety, restlessness and hopelessness, in addition to thoughts of self-harm, i.e., suicide.

### (i) Afflictive Emotions

The term “afflictive emotions” is referred to those mental states that cause suffering, such as depression, fear, hatred, anger, jealousy and so forth. According to Buddhist scripture, an afflictive emotion is considered to be a defilement (In Pāli: *kilesa* or In śanskrit: *klesa*). Joseph Goldstein expounds ‘afflictive emotion’ as ‘torment of mind’<sup>47</sup>, which also illustrates the state of

<sup>46</sup> Dhp. V. 183.

<sup>47</sup> Dhp. V. 204.

mental suffering. Moreover, according to medical science (most specifically from psychotherapists) another term for ‘afflictive emotion’ is mental disorder as indicated in a report from the World Health Organization (WHO)<sup>48</sup>.

The promising feature from Buddhist teachings is that it demonstrates the curative processes of afflictive emotions, i.e., reflecting on the obsessive part (unstable condition) of the mind through *Dhamma* eyes (the eyes of wisdom) as well as integrating classical practices such as meditation and mindfulness. The subtle doctrinal formula of dependent origination indicates a skillful approach on how one may overcome an afflictive emotional state or mental crisis. More specifically, an afflictive emotional state can be cured by applying the reverse formula (demonstrating the links or *anuloma*) of dependent origination. For instance, with mental proliferation, thoughts or habit formations are “wired” or emotionally conditioned. Here, the term, ‘wired behavior’ is used in the sense of an undisciplined or destructive behavior. By closely examining the reverse formula of dependent origination, the destructive emotion can be brought to light with an inclination towards mental recovery.

According to Buddhist introspection, those with afflictive emotions may not be consciously aware of how the three poisons: greed, hatred and delusion, dominate the mind. Because these afflictive states of the mind lack skillful discernment, there is a tendency to grasp everything without reflecting wisely. Underdeveloped practices, such as mindfulness or loving-kindness (*mettā bhāvanā*), may further result in depression. Needless to say, depression is a common mental disorder characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that a normal person usually enjoys and is accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities.

Nevertheless, the doctrine of dependent origination clearly delineates the root for afflictive emotions, such as depression, fear, hatred, anger or jealousy as grasping or attachment (clinging). According to Buddhist thought, a wholesome mind can skillfully and mindfully identify (reflecting an inner embodied) the moment of craving (*taṇha*) and clinging (*upādāna*) as it arises. Whereas an unwholesome or unhealthy mind/body is unable to identify the sense of craving or clinging. Afflictive emotional states occur for many different reasons. Some may experience disappointment, failed relationships and depression. Without inward reflection, these unwholesome states “settle” into sub-consciousness for an extended period. This state of depression is full of sorrow, sadness, lamentation, grief and despair. By reflecting on the twelve-

---

<sup>48</sup> According to WHO reports: “Mental disorders comprise a broad range of problems, with different symptoms. However, they are generally characterized by some combination of abnormal thoughts, emotions, behavior and relationships with others. Examples are schizophrenia, depression, intellectual disabilities and disorders due to drug abuse.” Accessed November 2, 2021, [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/en/)

fold formula of dependent origination, the taproot to suffering becomes identified: craving (*tañha*) and clinging (*upādāna*) to the desired object.

### (ii) Destructive Emotions

The term “destructive emotions” is referred to as an ‘obscuring’ or ‘afflictive’ mental states. Destructive emotions result in harmful states of mind, such as hatred, craving, jealousy, anger, extreme fear, etc. Dalai Lama states that destructive emotions are those mental states that disturb one’s internal equilibrium, while healthy ones foster equilibrium of mind<sup>49</sup>. However, Buddhist scriptures illustrate destructive emotion as a part of an afflictive mental state or defilement (*kilesa*).

While the doctrine of dependent origination (*paticcasamuppāda*) skillfully clarifies the root of destructive emotions, it also delineates its elimination through mindfulness practice (*sati*), loving-kindness meditation (*mettā bhāvanā*) and wise investigation of facts (*yoniso manasikāra*). The twelve-fold constituents of dependent origination clearly describes how the mind proliferates (*papañca*) into destructive thoughts, such as extreme fear, anger, hatred, craving and jealousy. Another way to view how the mind escalates into destructive thoughts is to think of the mind as like a piece of tissue paper. The tissue paper represents an unaffiliated state of mind. When a drop of water (a destructive emotion) is placed on the tissue paper (unaffiliated mind), the mind absorbs the destructive emotion just as tissue paper absorbs the drop of water. The drop of water spreads throughout the tissue paper in the same way that a destructive emotion proliferates the mind. With wise reflection of the twelve-fold formula of dependent origination, the taproot to destructive emotion becomes identified: ignorance (*avijjā*), mental formation (*saṅkhāra*), craving (*tañha*), clinging (*upādāna*).

### (iii) Mental proliferation

The term ‘mental proliferation’ is described as *papañca* (Pāli) or *prapañca* (Sanskrit), which means ‘to spread forth, to expand out’ (T.W, and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 1910: 567-560). According to the Pāli commentary on the *Papañcakhaya Sutta*, Venerable Dhammapāla expounds the notion of mental proliferation (*papañca*) as thus:

“Anger is a proliferation, hatred is a proliferation, delusion is a proliferation, craving is a proliferation, view is a proliferation, and conceit is a proliferation. (‘*Rāgo papañco, doso papañco, moho papañco, tañhā papañco, diṭṭhi papañco, māno papañco*’<sup>50</sup>)”

<sup>49</sup> Tricycle, “Taming Destructive Emotions,” The Buddhist Review, Accessed October 16, 2021, <https://tricycle.org/magazine/taming-destructive-emotions/>

<sup>50</sup> *Papañcakhaya Sutta*, *Udāna-āṭṭhakathā* 7.7

The above statement from Venerable Dhammapāla is expressed in explicit form on the notion of mental proliferation from a Buddhist perspective. Moreover, evidence from Pāli literature clearly delineates the process of mental proliferation (*papañca*), i.e., mind-consciousness (*cakkhu viññānam*). In the *Madhupiñḍikasuttam* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, Venerable Mahakacchāyana instructs, “*Cakkhū ca paṭicca rupe ca cakkhu viññānam upajjāti tinnam samgiti passo*”; which states ‘when the agent sees (perceives) anything (object), the object arises into the mind, and creates consciousness- these three contacts make mind consciousness’<sup>51</sup>. Correlation between the aforementioned Pāli verse and the process of mental proliferation (*papañca*) can be demonstrated as a visual map in the following manner:

Contact (*passo*) > Feeling (*vedanā*) > Perception (*saññā*) > Thinking (*viññāna*) > the Perceptions and Process of Mental Formation (*papañca*).

The process of mental proliferation (*papañca*) begins when the agent (mind) perceives something (an object) from the external world through *pañcaskhandha* (five aggregates- eye, ear, nose, tongue, body), the object is noted into the mind internally. Through the process of analyzing, the perceived object transmits into mental proliferation (*papañca*) and flourishes as a mental obsession of dualism. The doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) skillfully clarifies the root of mental proliferation (*papañca*) as clinging which leads to craving. It also delineates its elimination through observing the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāri satipaṭṭhāna*), along with wise reflection and investigation (*yoniso manasikāra*). The twelvefold links of dependent origination precisely describes how the mind proliferates into obsessive thoughts while uprooting the stillness of the mind.

Based on above discussions on the threefold psycho-emotional behaviors of afflictive emotions, destructive behavior and mental proliferation, the study of dependent origination traces the root cause of afflictive states of mind through analyzing the twelvefold formula. Given a case study with Person A, one may clearly understand how the twelvefold formula of dependent origination delineates the root cause of suffering for Person A. Imagine Person A is dissatisfied with himself due to an unsuccessful relationship (friendship) resulting in anger, worry and confusion. Since Person A is dissatisfied, he becomes so distressed and saddened which leads to physical ailments of stress, bodily disorder, depression and restlessness. Analyzing the twelvefold formula of dependent origination, the taproot of afflictive states of mind is processed as shown below.

---

<sup>51</sup> *Madhupiñḍikasuttam*: M. I. 108.

## A Proposed Study of Person A's Destructive Emotions and Twelvefold Formula of Dependent Origination

<b>1.Ignorance (<i>avijjā</i>)</b>	Suppose Person A is dissatisfied with somebody else. Therefore, he becomes angry. Because of the absence of loving-kindness ( <i>mettā</i> ) and compassion ( <i>karuna</i> ), Person A is unable to forgive ( <i>khanti</i> ) his friend. With his unwholesome state of mind ( <i>akusala citta</i> ), Person A is unaware of the mental activities that influence the causes ( <i>hetu</i> ) and conditions ( <i>phala</i> ) for suffering ( <i>dukkha</i> ). Person A is ignorant ( <i>avijjā</i> ) of the nature of suffering, so he is unable to reflect upon his anger wisely ( <i>yoniso manasikāra</i> ).
<b>2.Volitional or Mental Formations (<i>saṅkhāra</i>)</b>	Clinging to his destructive emotions, Person A develops vengeful (unwholesome) thoughts. Associated memories arise. The tendency to overthink further complicates his state of mind. Person A's extended analysis evolves into doubt, anger, delusion, aversion and resentment. Overthinking generates further pain. The constituent of mental formation ( <i>saṅkhāra</i> ) is in the process of being "grooved" into the mind. Repeated stories fossilize into thought formations which may be very difficult to relinquish unless brought to awareness through mindfulness practice ( <i>sati</i> ) and wise investigation ( <i>yoniso manasikāra</i> ).
<b>3.Consciousness (<i>viññāṇa</i>)</b>	With overthinking and delusive narratives, Person A's consciousness ( <i>viññāṇa</i> ) becomes distressed. Great pain and sorrow influences loss of confidence with recovery. Hence, Person A's lack of consciousness leads to a destructive emotional state of mind. His behavior and actions reflect a negative mind state which are based on previous impressions ( <i>saṅkhāra</i> ).
<b>4.Mentality and Materiality (<i>nāma-rūpa</i>)</b>	Person A's destructive mind ( <i>nāma</i> ) is outwardly reflected in the body ( <i>rūpa</i> ). Feelings, thoughts and moods arise to the surface through related facial expressions, such as anger or despair and body language, such as tightness constriction and restlessness (mental state of restlessness or <i>nāma</i> ).

<b>5. Six Sense bases (<i>saḷāyatana</i>)</b>	Person A's sense organs are primed to receive information that is related to and conditioned by mentality and materiality ( <i>nāma-rūpa</i> ). More clearly, Person A's mind is agitated by his own anger, which pervades throughout the six sense organs ( <i>saḷāyatana</i> ). Each sense base is defiled by frustrations and negativity.
<b>6. Contact (<i>phassa</i>)</b>	Negative thought (destructive emotions) patterns permeate throughout the six sense bases ( <i>saḷāyatana</i> ). Upon contact ( <i>phassa</i> ) with the six sense bases, the obsessive dissatisfaction is expressed through the body (physical ailment) in a contentious manner.
<b>7. Feeling (<i>vedanā</i>)</b>	Unaware of the unpleasant feelings ( <i>vedanā</i> ), negative thoughts continue to grow resulting in unwholesome and destructive thought patterns.
<b>8. Craving (<i>taṇhā</i>)</b>	The root cause ( <i>hetu</i> ) and condition ( <i>phala</i> ) that lead to person A's anger is desire or craving ( <i>taṇhā</i> ) for the situation to be different from what it is. Person A's anger towards his opponent, as well as his self conceit, obscures him from forgiveness. Failure to explore the internal process or nature of suffering fuels Person A's craving.
<b>9. Clinging (<i>upādāna</i>)</b>	Another root to Person A's destructive emotions is clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> ). He clings to his vengeful and harmful thoughts towards his opponent. The prolonged clinging interferes with person A's ability to see the cause ( <i>hetu</i> ) of his anger and prevents him from extending skillful practices, such as loving-kindness ( <i>mettā</i> ) and compassion ( <i>karunā</i> ) to his opponent.
<b>10. Becoming (<i>bhāva</i>)</b>	Person A's subsequent behavior falls under the influence of clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> ) and his actions become ( <i>bhāva</i> ) those of an antagonist.
<b>11. Birth (<i>jāti</i>)</b>	As the feeling of enmity becomes ( <i>bhāva</i> ) more distinct, it is assumed as an identity. More clearly, Person A's angry feelings are elevated to the point that the destructive emotion is consistently reborn ( <i>jāti</i> ) again and again.

<b>12. Aging and Death (<i>jarāmarana</i>)</b>	With the appearance of desire ( <i>tañhā</i> ), Person A's feelings ( <i>vedanā</i> ) of anger (destructive emotions) are preserved and spontaneously grow with desire in the mind, just as one naturally grows from youth to old age ( <i>jarā</i> ). Person A's extreme anger arises as a direct reaction to a painful situation ( <i>dukkha</i> ) as well as clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> ) to his vengeful unwholesome thoughts. Suppressed anger brings an additional layer of hatred, disappointment and worry, as if it were the human body in absence of breath. (Here, the term 'human body' refers to a mental state, whereas the term 'breath' denotes the quality of forgiveness and loving-kindness.) Consequently, Person A's mental state (destructive emotion) is blocked (death or <i>marana</i> ) from a wholesome mental state of forgiveness and loving-kindness. Without reflection on forgiveness and extending loving-kindness to his opponent, the tendency to anger remains Person A through the state of ignorance ( <i>avijjā</i> ).
--	--

The abovementioned study of Person A's anger in analyzing with the twelvefold formula of dependent origination signifies that the taproot to destructive emotions becomes identified: ignorance (*avijjā*), mental formation (*sañkhāra*) and clinging (*upādāna*). When person A suppresses his anger, he dwells in negative, afflictive thoughts, such as hatred and jealousy. He remains in the mental state of ignorance (*avijjā*). Consequently, his mind proceeds to overthink (*papañca*). He develops unwholesome narratives (*sañkhāra*). Attached to his destructive thoughts, Person A clings (*upādāna*) to the idea of harming his opponent. If person A begins to wisely reflect (*yoniso manasikāra*) on the reason for his anger while practicing loving-kindness (*mettā*) and compassion (*karunā*), his anger gradually ceases. Nevertheless, Person A, upon recognizing the twelvefold links to dependent origination (*paticcasamuppāda*), may discover that by reversing the order (*pañiloma*), he can deconstruct or retrace the roots of his destructive emotions. Person A begins to understand the negative consequences of his destructive emotions and recalibrates his mind by cultivating loving-kindness (*mettā*) and compassion (*karunā*).

### Applying the Model of Dependent Origination for Mental Recovery

The doctrine of dependent origination (*paticcasamuppāda*) not only applies to clarifying the taproot and cessation of afflictive states of mind, but also applies to mental recovery. The term "mental recovery" denotes as "recovery from a distracted, imbalanced mental state", which is

known as *utmattā*<sup>52</sup> in Pāli language. According to the Pāyāsi Sutta from Dīgha Nikāya, Venerable Kumāra Kassapa (a disciple of the Buddha) admonished prince Pāyāsi as deranged (*utmattā*) due to his lack of discipline and evil behavior which caused great and extended misfortune and suffering<sup>53</sup>. Nevertheless, the foremost Buddhist practice of mindfulness (*sati*) begins the path towards mental recovery. Free from greed, hatred, delusion, worry, fear, sorrow, impatience, loneliness and dissatisfaction, the practitioner is able to recalibrate the mind towards a more wholesome state of balance. The forward order (*anuloma*) of the twelvefold formula from the doctrine of dependent origination delineates the taproot of a distracted mental state, whereas the reverse order (*patiloma*) of the twelvefold constituents explains the collapse of the causal links.

Given a case study with Person A, we may clearly understand how the twelvefold formula of dependent origination instructs the afflictive state of mind towards mental recovery. Imagine Person A is consumed (*utmattā*) with greed (*lobha*). He grasps for money, wealth and material possessions. Obsessed by greed, Person A is driven towards unwholesome (*akusala*) actions and unethical actions such as stealing and lying. He cannot distinguish the differences between his needs and wants (*majjhima patipada*, the Middle Way). According to the links of dependent origination, the taproot to Person A's state of greed (*lobha*) may be processed through the forward order, while his mental recovery may be processed through the reverse order or breakdown of the causal links.

### Another Case Study of Person A's Mental Recovery from Greed by Applying the Twelvefold Formula of Dependent Origination from both Forward and Reverse Order

Twelvefold Formulas of Dependent Origination	Mental Recovery	
	Forward Order ( <i>anuloma</i> ) [Identifying the taproot]	Reverse Order ( <i>patiloma</i> ) [Break down of the causal links]
1. Ignorance ( <i>avijjā</i> )	Person A is obsessed with greed ( <i>lobha</i> ). Person A is unable to distinguish between his needs and wants. Because of his ignorance ( <i>avijjā</i> ), he is unaware of the nature of his afflictive mind state.	Person A needs to reflect wisely ( <i>yoniso manasikāra</i> ) on the matter of his greed ( <i>lobha</i> ). He should observe the Middle Way ( <i>majjhima patipāda</i> ) exposition towards his needs and wants. He should also avoid unethical

<sup>52</sup> Pāyāsi Sutta, D. 10.

<sup>53</sup> “*Tumhe khvettha bhāṇe ummattā tumhe vicetā tathā hi pana me sūkarabhattanti’ evameva kho tvam rājañña gūthahārikūpamo maññe paṭibhāsi. Paṭinissajjetām rājañña pāpakaṁ dīṭhigataṁ. Paṭinissajjetām rājañña pāpakaṁ dīṭhigataṁ. Mā te ahosi dīgharattam ahitāya dukkhāyā”ti*; Ibid.

	The condition of greed induces Person A towards unethical conduct.	actions ( <i>sabba pāpassa akaranan</i> ), and conduct meritorious actions ( <i>kusalassa upasampadā</i> ) by purifying own mind ( <i>sacittapariyō dapanan</i> ). <sup>54</sup>
<b>2. Volitional or Mental Formation (<i>saṅkhāra</i>)</b>	Clinging to his greed ( <i>lobha</i> ), person A devolves into an afflictive state of mind. The obsessive tendency obstructs his clarity and develops into mental formations ( <i>saṅkhāra</i> ).	Through mindfulness ( <i>sati</i> ) and wise reflection ( <i>yoniso manasikāra</i> ), Person A will gradually become less consumed as he relinquishes his desire for greed.
<b>3. Consciousness (<i>viññāna</i>)</b>	With Person A's habitual thoughts for enormous wealth, his consciousness ( <i>viññāna</i> ) is fueled by desire. His behavior reflects unethical actions due to earlier thought formation ( <i>saṅkhāra</i> ).	By applying the Middle Way ( <i>majjhima patipāda</i> ) exposition, person A can begin to tame his mind. Through contemplation, Person A can gradually return to a state of balance. The Buddha advised that contentment is the greatest wealth ( <i>santutthiparamam dhanam</i> ) <sup>55</sup> . By reflecting on contentment ( <i>viññāna</i> ) as his greatest wealth, Person A begins the process of forming a wholesome thought formations ( <i>saṅkhāra</i> ).
<b>4. Mentality and Materiality (<i>nāma-rūpa</i>)</b>	Since person A is obsessed by greed, his mind ( <i>nāma</i> ) is outwardly reflected in the body ( <i>rūpa</i> ). His mental state rises to the surface through related bodily expressions and feeling of dissatisfaction. Person A's	Person A needs to contemplate on contentment ( <i>santutthi</i> ) wisely and reflect ( <i>yoniso manasikāra</i> ) on his afflictive state of greed. With mindfulness of the six sense organs ( <i>salāyatana</i> ), in relationship to his clinging to greed, his mind ( <i>nāma</i> )

<sup>54</sup> Dhp. V. 183.

<sup>55</sup> Dhp. V. 204.

	physical (bodily) actions are reflected in his unethical conduct such as stealing or cheating.	becomes calm and bodily action ( <i>rūpa</i> ) becomes gentle.
<b>5. Six Sense bases (<i>salāyatana</i>)</b>	Person A's sense organs are primed to receive information that is related to and conditioned by mentality and materiality ( <i>nāma-rūpa</i> ). More clearly, Person A's mind is agitated by his greed ( <i>lobha</i> ) which pervades throughout the six sense organs ( <i>salāyatana</i> ), viz. eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. Each sense base is defiled by dissatisfaction and clinging to the idea of enormous wealth in terms of nourishing his greed.	As Person A begins to apply the practice of mindfulness ( <i>sati</i> ) in relationship to contact ( <i>phassa</i> ), he begins to discipline the six sense organs ( <i>salāyatana</i> ). By concentrating the mind ( <i>sati</i> ) on self-satisfaction and earnestly practicing the four foundations of mindfulness, Person A begins the process of mental recovery from his obsession from wealth.
<b>6. Contact (<i>phassa</i>)</b>	Depending on desire and repetitive thoughts of greed, the intellect-consciousness ( <i>viññāṇa</i> ) arises; the meeting of the three is contact ( <i>phassa</i> ). For instance, if person A has strong desire (greed) for an Ipad (an advanced computer), his mind is spontaneously proliferates towards excitement when he sees someone's Ipad. With eye contact, his desire grows. With the meeting of three (sense organ, object, and contact), contact ( <i>phassa</i> ) and latent desire arises.	Person A needs to restrain his feeling ( <i>vedanā</i> ) from desire (greed), otherwise his mind is agitated by the constituent of contact ( <i>phassa</i> ). Consequently, contact ( <i>phassa</i> ) is the causal link for dissatisfaction ( <i>dukkha</i> ) which is driven by greed. However, upon contact ( <i>phassa</i> ) with the six sense bases, dissatisfaction ( <i>dukkha</i> ) is expressed though the body in a contentious manner.
<b>7. Feeling (<i>vedanā</i>)</b>	With contact ( <i>phassa</i> ) as a requisite condition to feeling	Person A needs to wisely reflect ( <i>yoniso manasikāro</i> ) upon his feeling

	( <i>vedanā</i> ), Person A dwells in dissatisfaction, which fixates into the mind.	( <i>vedanā</i> ) so that his desire ( <i>taṇhā</i> ) and habitual tendencies can begin to recede.
<b>8. Craving (<i>taṇhā</i>)</b>	With the root cause ( <i>hetu</i> ) and condition ( <i>phala</i> ) as craving ( <i>taṇhā</i> ), Person A remains in an afflictive state of greed ( <i>taṇha</i> ). One becomes, as the Buddha described, a slave to craving ( <i>ūno loko atittho taṇhādāso</i> ) <sup>56</sup> .	Deepened practices of contentment ( <i>santutthiparamam dhanam</i> ); loving-kindness ( <i>mettā</i> ) and compassion ( <i>karuna</i> ) lead to a state of lucidity ( <i>pīti</i> ) and further dissipate the propensity towards greed.
<b>9. Clinging (<i>upādāna</i>)</b>	Person A's greed is further strengthened and rooted in clinging. The obsessive thoughts from the habitual tendency ( <i>saṅkhāra</i> ) toward greed become grooved in thought patterns.	With the practice of mindfulness ( <i>sati</i> ) along with meditation on emptiness ( <i>Śūnyatā</i> ), the causal links of craving ( <i>taṇhā</i> ) and clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> ) start to collapse. Person A begins to relinquish the afflictive state of greed.
<b>10. Becoming (<i>bhāva</i>)</b>	With the condition ( <i>hetu</i> ) of clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> ), person A's dissatisfaction evolves into the constituent of becoming ( <i>bhāva</i> ). Consequently, he creates new habit formations due to craving ( <i>taṇhā</i> ) and clinging ( <i>upādāna</i> ).	As person A shifts into practices of contentment ( <i>santutthi</i> ); mindfulness ( <i>sati</i> ); loving-kindness ( <i>metta</i> ), generosity ( <i>dana</i> ) and compassion ( <i>kruna</i> ), he moves towards a more wholesome, curative state of mind. ( <i>kusala citta</i> ).
<b>11. Birth (<i>jāti</i>)</b>	With person A's tendency towards craving ( <i>taṇhā</i> ), his feeling ( <i>vedanā</i> ) of enmity becomes ( <i>bhāva</i> ) more distinct. Consequently, his feelings of dissatisfaction ( <i>upādāna</i> ) are	With mindfulness, wise reflection into the nature of craving (for greed) and practice of contentment ( <i>santutthi</i> ), person A begins to relinquish the afflictive state of attachment-desire. He initiates the

<sup>56</sup> Rattapāla Sutta, M. 82.

	consistently reborn ( <i>jāti</i> ) again and again.	process of moving towards a more wholesome state of mind.
<b>12. Aging and Death (<i>jarāmarana</i>)</b>	<p>With the obsession for greed (afflictive emotion), person A's feelings (<i>vedana</i>) are preserved and spontaneously grows with desire in the mind just as one naturally grows from youth to old age (aging or <i>jara</i>). Obsessive thoughts of greed bring an additional layer of stress and disappointment, as if were a human body in absence of breath. Here, human body refers to a mental state, whereas the term 'breath' denotes the quality of accepting reality as it is or the presence of ignorance.</p> <p>Consequently, person A's mental state is blocked (death or <i>marana</i>) from the wholesome mental state of accepting (<i>yathābhāta nānādassana</i>) the bliss of contentment, the greatest wealth (<i>santutthiparamam dhanam</i>).</p> <p>Without reflection and strength of mindfulness, person A remains in a state of ignorance.</p>	With the gradual cessation of greed ( <i>akusala citta</i> ) from aging and death ( <i>jaramarana</i> ), person A's afflictive state is relinquished to a wholesome state ( <i>kusala citta</i> ) of mind.

Based on above case study from the twelvefold links of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), the key causal links, or forwarding order that lead to 'countless wealth' or greed are identified, viz., ignorance (*avijjā*), mental formation (*saṅkhāra*), craving (*taṇhā*) and clinging (*upādāna*). The reversing order, on the other hand, instructs the path that leads to abandoning the distracted causal links. With mindfulness (*sati*), the practice of contentment (*santutthi*), wise investigation (*yoniso manasikāro*), loving kindness practice (*mettā*) and

generosity (*dāna*), the gradual shift from an afflictive state of mind towards a more balanced state of mind becomes more attainable.

## Concluding Remarks

A study of dependent origination (Pāli: *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Skt., *Pratītyasamutpāda*) based on Pāli and Sanskrit scriptures explicitly demonstrates the origin and cessation of suffering. Both Pāli and Sanskrit scriptures agree that the doctrine of dependent origination is a very profound, subtle and insightful twelvefold formula that may be used to identify the taproot that leads to an afflictive state of mind as well as offer curative practices that lead to mental recovery. In summary, an afflictive state of mind is referred to as a defiled mind, which includes afflictive emotions, destructive emotions and mental proliferation. The twelvefold constituents from the discourse of dependent origination and its two sequences, viz. forwarding order and reversing order identify the taproot of the afflictive state of mind, in addition to its removal or mental recovery. An in-depth study from Pāli and Sanskrit scriptures reveals how the afflictive state of the mind is embedded with delusion, anxiety, fear, anger, jealousy, desire, depression, erratic and rampant thought, all of which are rooted in the causal links of craving and clinging.

In this research, a case study of Person A's afflictive state of mind from the analysis of the twelvefold formula of dependent origination identifies the three major causal links that led to the imbalanced mind state: ignorance (Pāli: *avijjā*, Skt. *avidyā*), mental formation (Pāli: *saṅkhāra*, Skt. *samskāra*) and clinging (Pāli: *upādāna*, Skt. *upādāna*). Additionally, in a separate case study, Person A's mental recovery from greed was similarly rooted in ignorance (Pāli: *avijjā*, Skt. *avidyā*), mental formation (Pāli: *saṅkhāra*, Skt. *samskāra*), craving (Pāli: *tanhā*, Skt. *trṣṇā*) and clinging (Pāli: *upādāna*, Skt. *upādāna*). Both case studies commonly demonstrate that craving and clinging are signified as the root cause of an afflicted state of the mind, as well as an impediment for mental stillness, i.e., an agitated mind, distracted from mindfulness, is an obstacle to physical and emotional well-being. This study has also identified the foremost cause of suffering is ignorance which is nourished by craving and clinging. In fact, both constituents of craving and clinging co-exist and are interdependent<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>57</sup> The Pāli discourse (*Paṭiccasamuppāda-vibhīṅga Sutta*, SN. 12.2) explicitly demonstrates the linkage between craving and clinging through a forwarding and reversing formula as thus: “With the condition of craving, clinging arises (*tanhā-paccaya upādānam*) and “With the cessation of craving, clinging ceases (*tanhā-nirodhā upādāna-nirodho*)”. Sanskrit text Mūlamadhyamakārikā from Nāgārjuna (MMK, 26.6) points out that grasping is a reflection of craving (*trṣyamāna upādānam upādatte*).

Meticulous studies of this research delineates when the taproot to an afflictive state of mind becomes identified, the practitioner can begin to wisely investigate (*yoniso manasikāra*) the causes and conditions that lead to the affliction. As the practitioner deepens in practices such as mindfulness (sati); loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karunā*) and generosity (*dāna*), the unwholesome state gradually ceases and rebalances to a wholesome state of mind. The doctrine of dependent origination is the Buddha's most renowned and historically seminal teachings. It provides a framework for identifying the taproot to suffering and understanding how to "break the causal links" (reversing order) that gradually lead to mental recovery from afflictive states of mind.

The expected output from this research is to construct a conceptual framework for a mindfulness based practice and intensive observation of morality (from the Buddhist perspective of the Five Precepts and the Eightfold Path) with an emphasis on identifying, understanding and relinquishing the root causes of suffering: craving and clinging. The essential mindfulness practice begins with an inward practice of developing an understanding of the root causes of suffering, craving and clinging, then moves outwardly towards enhancing greater peace and harmony in modern day society. Additional practices such as loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karunā*), generosity (*dāna*), wise reflection (*yoniso manasikāro*) and understanding of four sublime states (*brahmavihāra*) and accumulation of merits (*pāramita*) are curative applications that further strengthen and recondition the afflictive mind towards a wholesome state of balance and inner harmony.

## Abbreviations

All the references of the Pāli Canonical, Exegetical and Chronicle texts are to the Chattha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka (CST4) Software (Vipassana Research Institute <http://www.tipitaka.org/>) and Pāli Text Society (PTS) editions, unless otherwise noted.

A.	= <i>Ānguttara Nikāyā</i>
Abds.	= <i>Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha</i>
D.	= <i>Dīgha Nikāya</i>
Dhp.	= <i>Dhammapada</i> (by verse)
Dhp-a	= <i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
M.	= <i>Majjhima Nikāya</i>
MMK	= <i>Mūlamadhyamakārikā</i> by Nāgārjūna
S.	= <i>Samyutta Nikāy</i>
SĀ	= <i>Samyukta Āgama</i>
Skt.	= Sanskrit
Sn.	= <i>Sutta Nipāta</i> .
Ud.	= <i>Udāna</i> .
Vism.	= <i>Visuddhimagga</i> .

## Bibliography

Abhyawansa, Kapila. "The Truth of Suffering and the Truth of Cessation of Suffering: Their Identification in the Buddhist Scholasticism" *Ñāñappabhā: A Felicitation volume in Honour of Venerable Gnanarama Māha Thera*. Singapore: Tisarana Buddhist Association, 2011.

An, Yang-Gyu. *The Buddha's Last Days: Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*. Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2003.

Anālayo, Ven. *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications. 2003.

Bodhi, Bhikkhu. "Aggregates and Clinging Aggregates." *Pāli Buddhist Review* 1 (1976) 91-102.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, The Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Great Discourse of Causation: The Mahānidāna Sutta and its Commentaries*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Critical Examination of ñāñanavira Thera's 'A Note on Paṭiccasamuppāda'" *Buddhist Studies Review* 15 (1998) 43-65; 157-81.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 2 Vols. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Buddhadāsa, Bhikkhu. *Ānāpānasati (Mindfulness of Breathing)*. Translated by Nāgaena. bangkok: Sublime Life Mission, Vol.1 (1976).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Paṭiccasamuppāda, Practical Dependent Origination*. Thaikand: Vuddhidhamma Fund.

Burford, Grace G. *Theravāda Buddhist Soteriology and the Paradox of Desire, in Paths to Liberation*. Edited by Buswell (et al, ed.). Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Buddhist Meditation and Depth Psychology*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994.

Chowdhury, Sanjoy Barua. "An Analytical Study of the Concept of Emptiness (śūnyatā) Doctrine and Its Connection with Dependent Origination." *The Journal of International Buddhist Studies College (JIBSC)* 3 (2017): 13-27.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Process of Life in Dependent Origination: An Analysis Based on Buddhist Psychology" PhD Dissertation. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2019.

Chah, Ajahn. *Food for the Heart*. Thailand: Wat Pah Nanchat, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Taste of Freedom*. Malaysia: Wave, 1980.

Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Meditation*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1956.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Buddhism, its Essence and Development*. Oxford: Cassirer, 1960.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Buddhist Thought in India*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1962.

Chatterjee, Ashok Kumar. *The Yogācāra Idealism*. Delhi: Motilal Publication, 1999.

De Silva, Lily (n.d.) *Mental Culture in Buddhism (based on mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta)*. Colombo: Public Trustee.

De Silva, Padmairi. *Emotions and Therapy, Three Paradigmatic Zones*. Sri Lanka: University of Peradeniya, 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_. *An Introduction to Buddhist Psychology*. London: University Press, 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Buddhism and Freudian Psychology*. Singapore: University Press, 1973.

Dhammananda, K. Sri. *Meditation, the Only Way*. Malaysia: KualaLumpu: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1987.

Dutt, Nalinaksha. *Buddhist Sects in India*. Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1970.

Gethin, Rupert. "The Five Khandha." in *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 14(1986) 35-53.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Buddhist Path to Awakening: A Study of the Bodhi-Pakkhiyā Dhammā*. Leiden: Brill, 1992a.

Gnanarama, Petegama. *Aspects of Early Buddhist Sociological Thought*. Singapore: To-Sarana Buddhist Association, 1998.

Goldstein, Joseph. *Insight Meditation*. Boston: Shambhala, 1994.

Gómez, Luis O. "Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli canon." *Philosophy East and West* (1976): 137-165.

Gombrich, R.F. *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Banares to Modern Colombo*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1998.

Gunaratana, Mahāthera Henepola. *The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta and its Application to Modern Life*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Mindfulness in Plain English*. Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Path of Serenity and Insight*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996.

Gross, Richard. *Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behavior*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2001.

Harvey, Peter. "Consciousness Mysticism in the Discourses of the Buddha." *The Yogi and the Mystic*, Edited by Werner. London: Curzon Press, 82-102.

Harvey, Peter. "Consciousness Mysticism in the Discourses of the Buddha." *The yogi and the mystic*. Routledge, 2005. 97-116.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Selfless Mind: Personality, Consciousness and Nirvāna in Early Buddhism*. England, Richmond: Curzon, 1995.

Horner, I.B., "The Four Ways and the Four Fruits in Pāli Buddhism." *Indian Historical Quarterly* (1934):78-96.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Milinda's Questions*, vol.1. London: Luzac, 1969.

Kalupahana, David J. *Causality: The central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Hawaii: University Press, 1975.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Principles of Buddhist Psychology*. Delhi" Sri Satguru, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994.

Karunandana, Y. *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: Its Inquiry into the Nature of Conditional Reality*. Hong Kong: University Press, 2010.

Karunaratne, Upali. "Kilesa", *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. Sri Lanka, 1999.

Law, Bimala C. *Geography of Early Buddhism*. Delhi: Oriental Books, 1979.

Lusthaus, dan. "Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch'eng Wei-shih lin. London" *Routledge Curzon Taylor*, 2002.

Meyers, Karin. "False Friends: Dependent Origination and the Perils of Analogy in Cross-Cultural Philosophy." *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 18 (2018): 785 -818.

Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu. *The Guide (Netti)*. London: Pali text Society, 1962.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Path of Discrimination (Paṭisambhidāagga)*. London: Pali Text Society, 1982b.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1994.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Pāli English Glossary of Buddhist technical Terms*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1994.

\_\_\_\_\_. et al. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995.

Ñāṇananda, Bhikkhu. *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1986.

Ñāṇapoṇika Thera. *Sutta Nipāta*. Konstanz: Christiani, 1977.

Nauriyal, D. K., Michael Drummond, and Y. B. Lal. "Mindfulness in the pali nikayas." *Buddhist thought and applied psychological research*. Routledge, 2006. 265-285.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Contemplation of Feeling*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Abhidhamma Studies: Research in Buddhist Psychology*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Protection through Satipaṭṭhāna*. Kandy: Buddhist Publications Society, 1990.

Norman, K.R. *Pali Literature (A History of Indian Literature* Vol.VII, Fasc 2, edited by Jan Gonda). Wiesbaden: Otto Harraowitz, 1983.

Pio, Edwina. *Buddhist Psychology: A Modern Perspective*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1998.

Payutto, P.A. *Dependent Origination*. Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 2011.

Rahula, Walpola. *What the Buddha Taught*, reprinted. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000.

Rhys Davids, C.A.F. "On the Will in Buddhism." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*(1898): 47-59.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics*. Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1922.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism*. Delhi: Oriental Books, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Pāli-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal BanarsiDass, 1993.

Sarachachandra, Ediriwira. *Buddhist Psychology of Perception*. Sri Lanka, Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1994.

---

Santna, Peter Della. *The Tree of enlightenment*. Taiwan: Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc, 1997.

Salvini, Mattia. "Dependent Arising, Non-arising, and the Mind: MMk1 and the Abhidhamma." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 42 (2014): 471 - 497.

Ṭhānissaro, Bhikkhu. *The Buddhist Monastic Code*. California: Mettā Forest Monastery, 1994.

Velmans, Max and Schneider, Susan. *The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness*. Oxford & MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.