

# The Abhidhamma

By Jeff Hardin

Insight Meditation Central Valley

July 13, 2013

# Overview of Daylong Class

- Introduction
- History of the development of the *Abhidhamma*
- The nature of experience
- Consciousness, mental factors, form factors
- Dependent origination and conditionality

# Take Home Points

- The term “*Abhidhamma*” refers both to the development of meditation theory and practice after the Buddha’s death and to the literature stemming from this development .
- The *Abhidhamma* evolved from practitioner’s attempts at systematizing the Buddha’s teachings into a standard format that can be applied universally **and** refining the subtler points of the *Dhamma* into a comprehensive system of understanding the human mind.
- The *Abhidhamma* is best used as a map for understanding meditative experience.
- Understanding or practicing with the *Abhidhamma* is not necessary for finding peace, relieving suffering or awakening.

Hey, Hank, do you know what would make me really happy?

Huh?... Well, no, sweetheart. I can honestly say I don't have the slightest idea. I mean, the universe presents each one of us with so many things that are just unknowable.



# The Outline of the *Dhamma*:

*“Doing no harm,*

*Engaging in what’s skillful,*

*And purifying one’s mind:*

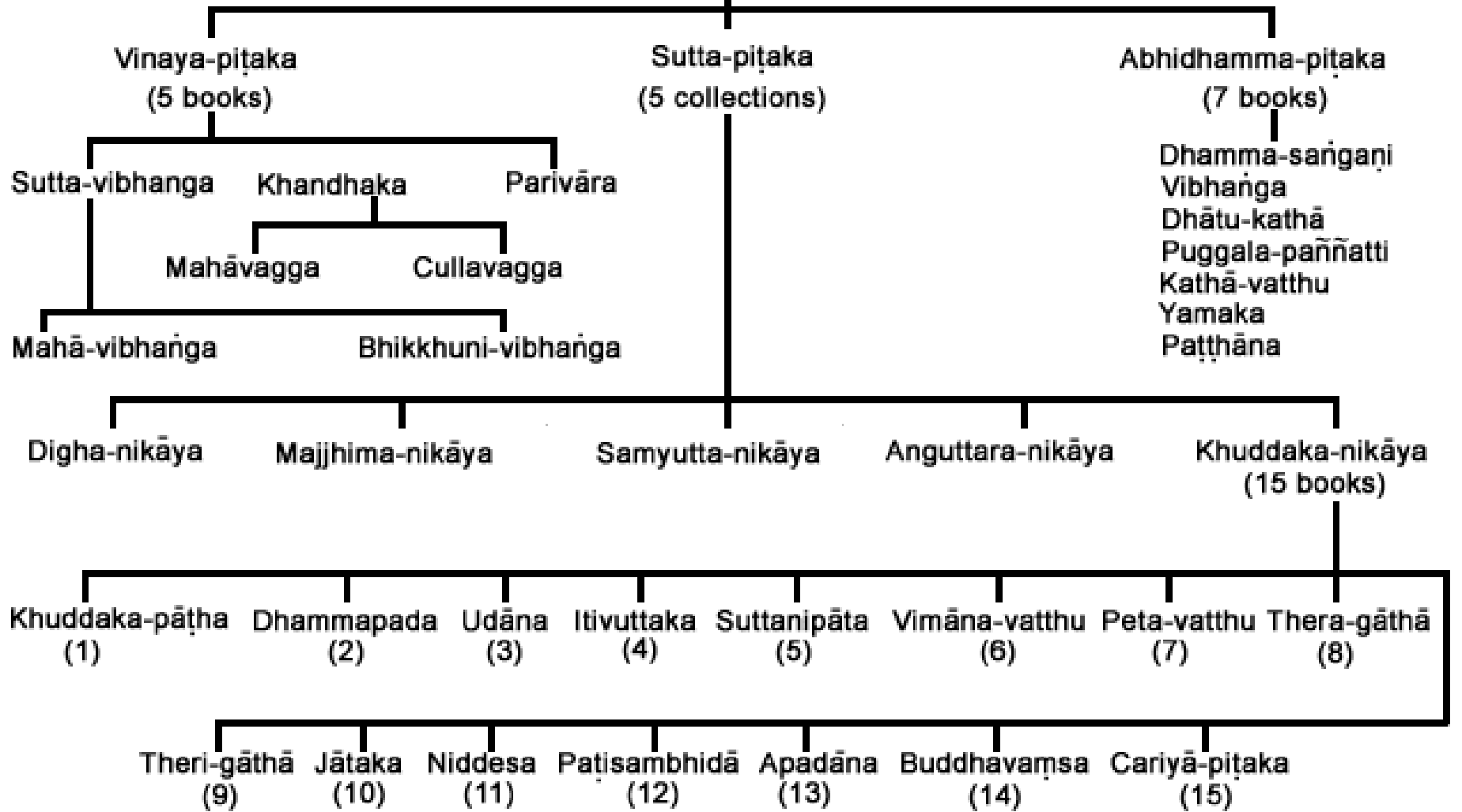
*This is the teaching of the Buddhas.”*

*-Dhp 183*

# The Four Noble Truths And Their Tasks

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. There is <i>dukkha</i><br>(suffering)                                  | 1. To be understood |
| 2. The cause of <i>dukkha</i><br>is <i>taṇhā</i> (craving)                | 2. To be abandoned  |
| 3. There is cessation of<br><i>dukkha</i>                                 | 3. To be realized   |
| 4. The Noble Eightfold<br>Path leads to the<br>cessation of <i>dukkha</i> | 4. To be developed  |

# TIPITAKA



## **Surviving *Abhidhamma* Systems:**

*Theravāda Abhidhamma*

*Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*

*Sāriputra Abhidharma Śāstra - Dharmaguptaka*



# *Theravāda Abhidhamma vs. Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*

<b>Theravāda Abhidhamma Books</b>	<b>Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma Books</b>
1. <b>Dhammasangani (Enumeration of Dhammas)</b>	1. <b>Sangitiparyaya ('Discourses on Gathering Together')</b>
2. <b>Vibhanga (The Book of Analysis)</b>	2. <b>Dharmaskandha ('Aggregation of Dharmas')</b>
3. <b>Dhatukatha (Discourse on the Elements)</b>	3. <b>Prajñaptiśāstra ('Treatise on Designations')</b>
4. <b>Puggalapaññatti (Description of Persons)</b>	4. <b>Dhatukāya ('Body of Elements')</b>
5. <b>Kathavatthu (Points of Controversy)</b>	5. <b>Vijñānakāya ('Body of Consciousness')</b>
6. <b>Yamaka (The Book of Pairs)</b>	6. <b>Prakaranapada ('Exposition')</b>
7. <b>Patthana (The Book of Relations)</b>	7. <b>Jñānaprasthāna ('Foundation of Knowledge')</b>



"According to the people in R & D,  
the hard part was getting it to stay in the box."

# Buddhist Timeline

563-483 BCE	The Buddha
483 BCE	First Buddhist Council
383 BCE	Second Buddhist Council - schisms
250 BCE	Third Buddhist Council - King Ashoka
29 BCE	Pali Canon written down in Sri Lanka
430 AD	Pali Commentaries and <i>Visuddhimagga</i> written by Buddhaghosa
1100 AD	<i>Abhidhammattha-sangaha</i> by Anuruddha

# ***Mātikās*** - Lists or categorical summaries

Examples:

5 Aggregates

5 Hindrances

6 Sense bases

7 Awakening factors

8 Factors of the Noble Path

# The 5 Aggregates (*khandha*) of Clinging:

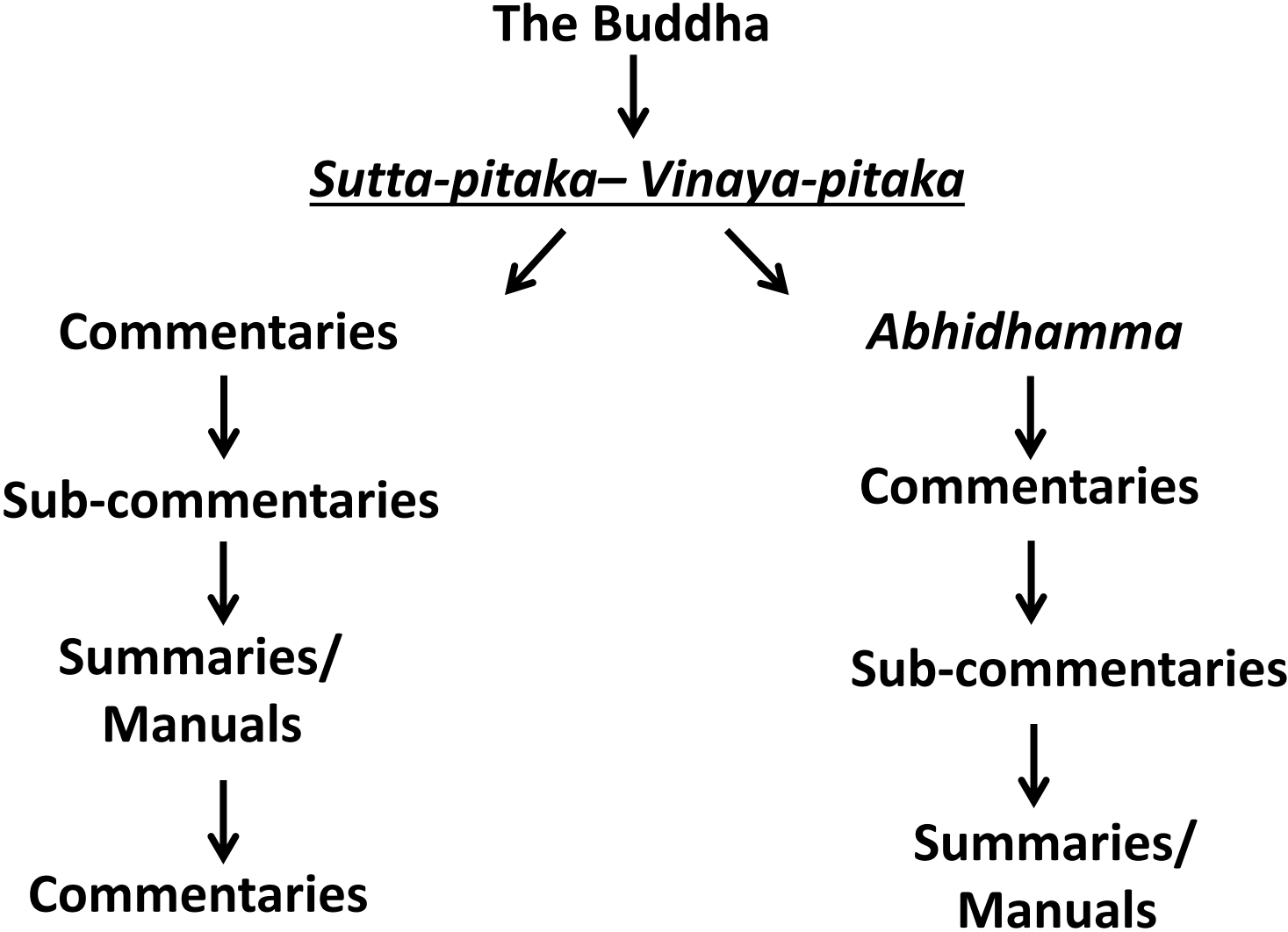
1. **Form** (*rūpa*)– Physical matter including the body (i.e. the 5 sense organs and their sense objects).
2. **Feelings** (*vedanā*)– The affective tone of experience (i.e., pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral).
3. **Perceptions** (*saññā*)– The labels and concepts that the mind assigns to experience.
4. **Formations** (*saṅkhāra*)– Mental fabrications, intentions, actions and dispositions.
5. **Consciousness** (*viññāṇa*)– Awareness of sensory experience.

# The 18 Elements (*dhātu*):

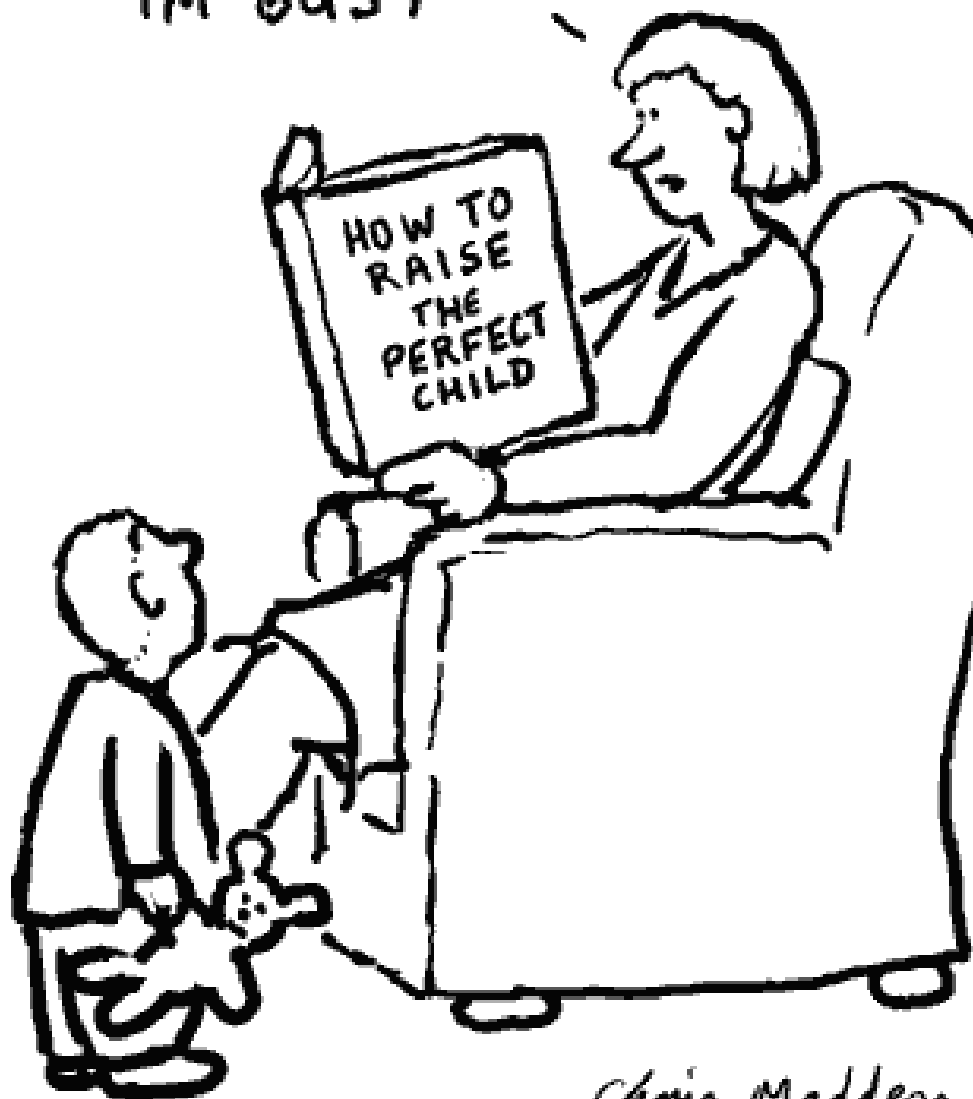
6 Senses, 6 Objects and 6 Consciousness

<b>Sense Organ</b>	<b>Sense Object</b>	<b>Sense Consciousness</b>
Eye	Sights	Seeing
Ear	Sounds	Hearing
Nose	Odors	Smelling
Tongue	Tastes	Tasting
Body	Sensations	Touching
Mind	Thoughts	Thinking

# The Evolution of the *Dhamma*



NOT NOW DEAR,  
I'M BUSY



Chris Madden



"What I teach now as before is suffering and the cessation of suffering."

- MN22.37

# ***Dhamma Theory***

**Ultimate realities (*paramattha-dhammā*)**

82 types in the *Theravāda Abhidhamma*

Consciousness (*citta*) – 1 type (89 sub-types)

Mental factors (*cetasika*) – 52 types

Matter (*rūpa*) – 28 types

*Nibbāna* – 1 type

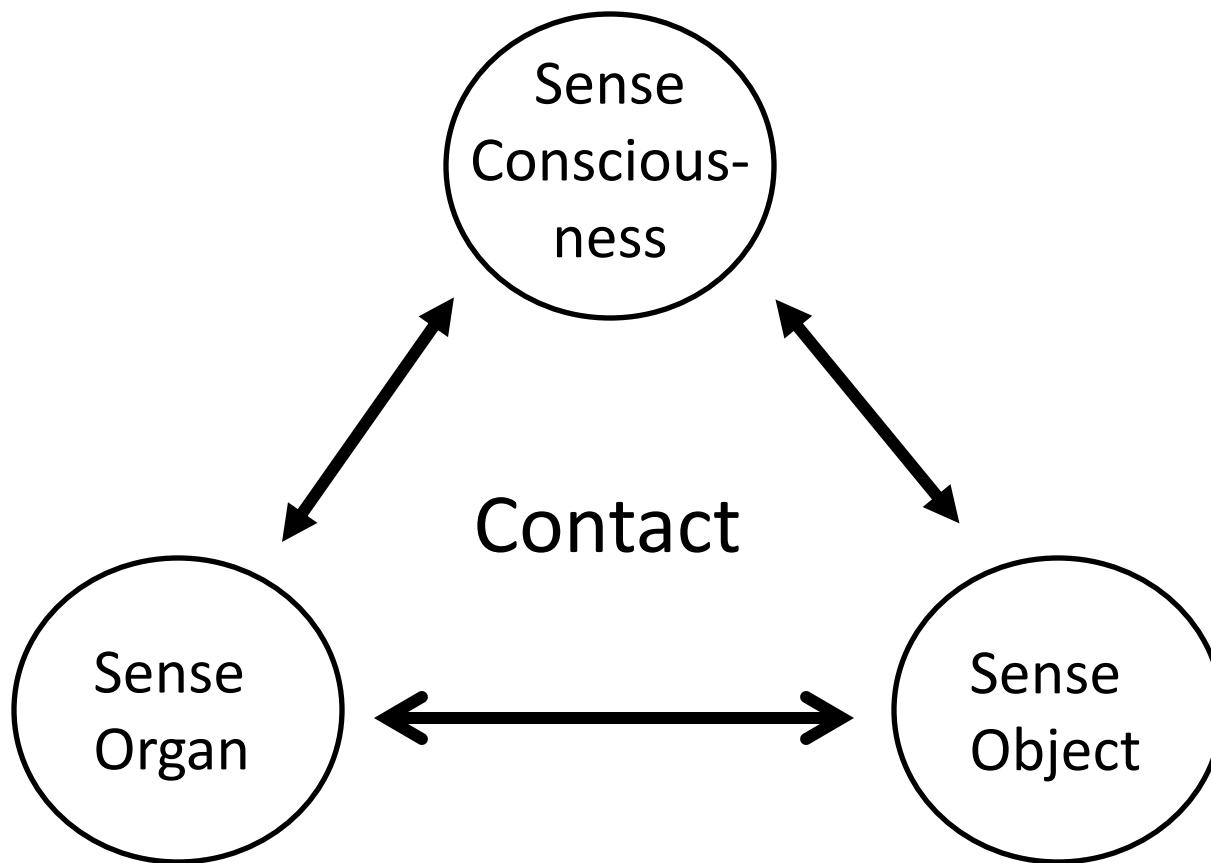
"YEAH, IT'S STILL SQUIRMING A LITTLE"



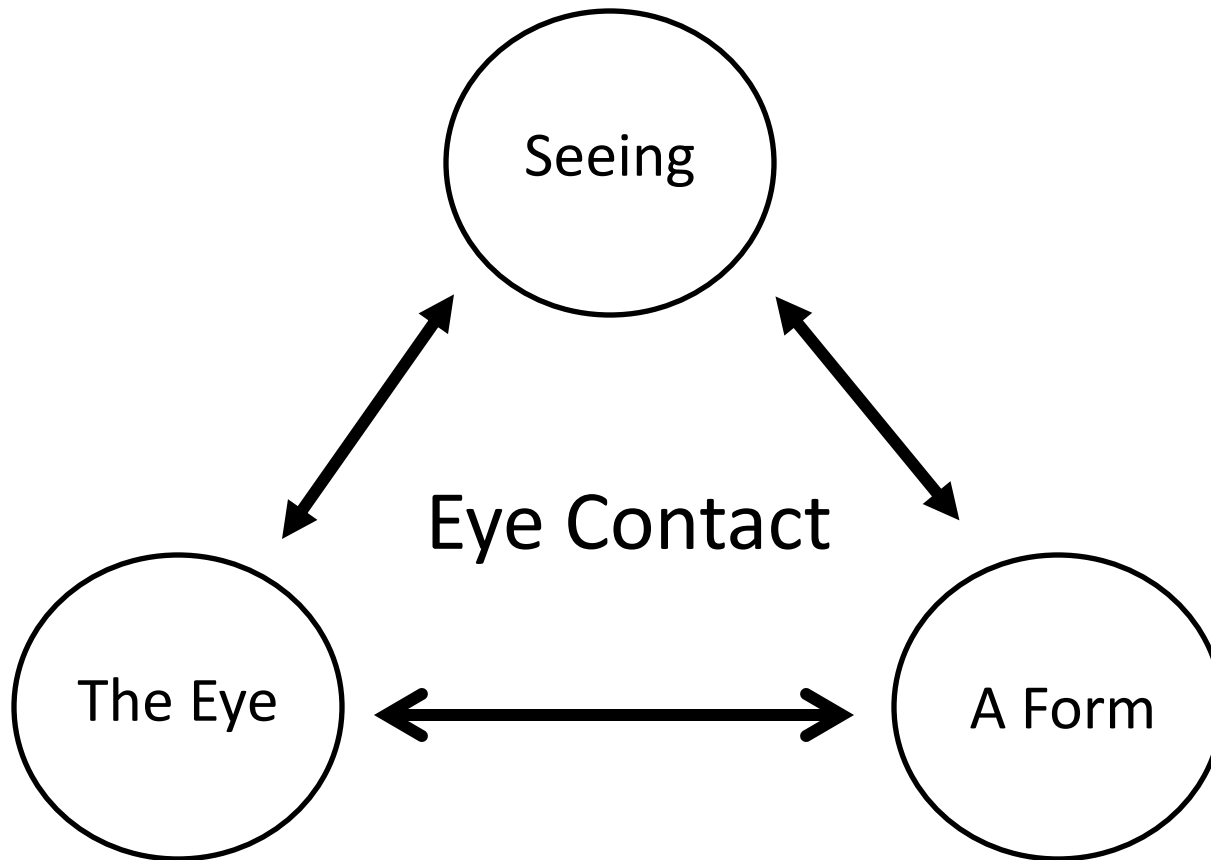
MIND UNDER MICROSCOPE

# The Momentary Nature of Experience

Consciousness Arises in Dependence upon Sensing



# Example: Eye Consciousness (Seeing) Arises in Dependence upon the Intact Eye Encountering a Visible Form

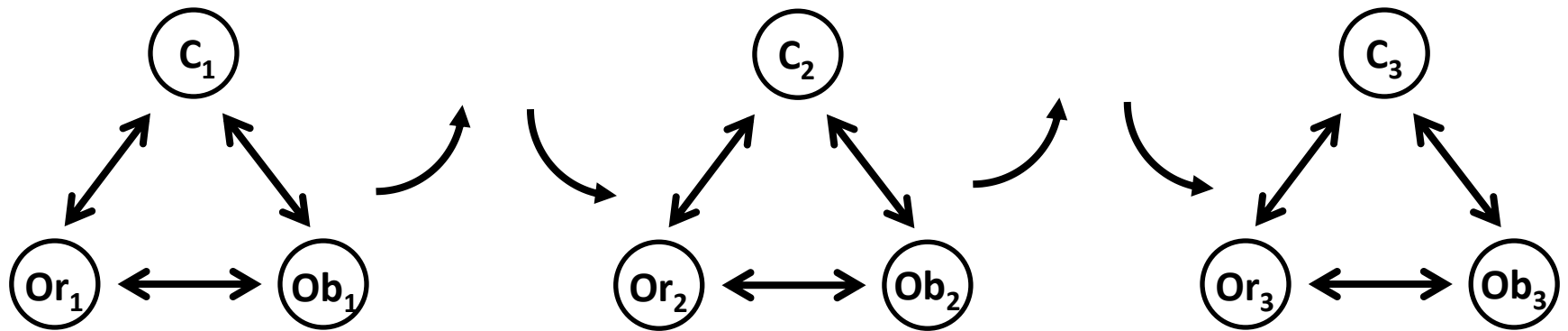


# The 18 Elements (*dhātu*):

6 Senses, 6 Objects and 6 Consciousness

<b>Sense Organ</b>	<b>Sense Object</b>	<b>Sense Consciousness</b>
Eye	Sights	Seeing
Ear	Sounds	Hearing
Nose	Odors	Smelling
Tongue	Tastes	Tasting
Body	Sensations	Touching
Mind	Thoughts	Thinking

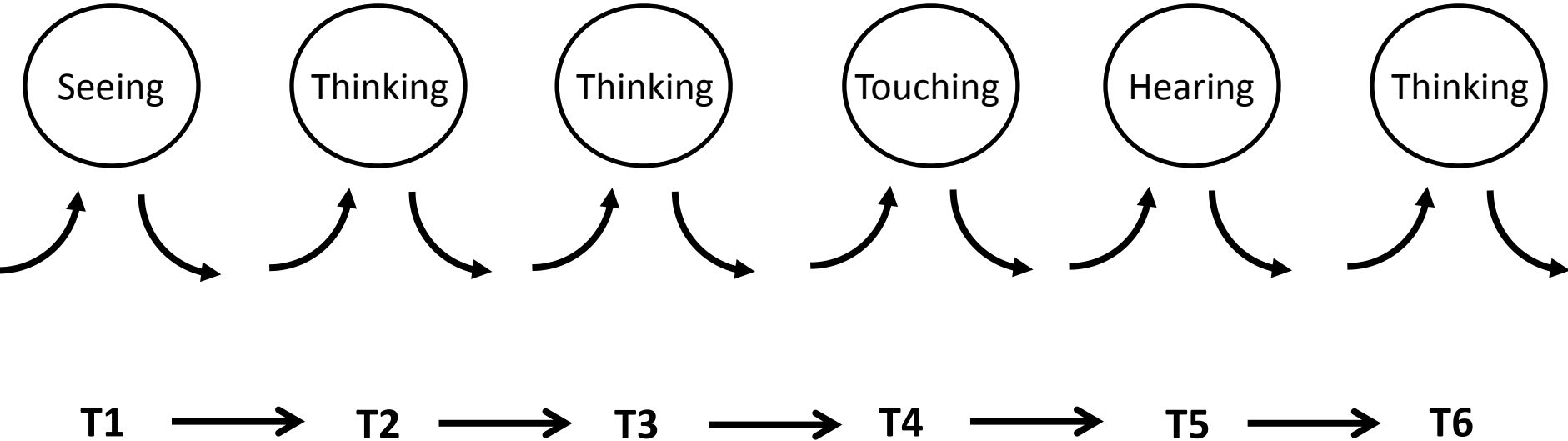
Each Mind Moment Consists of the Arising and Passing Away of Consciousness and ...



Time: T1 → T2 → T3

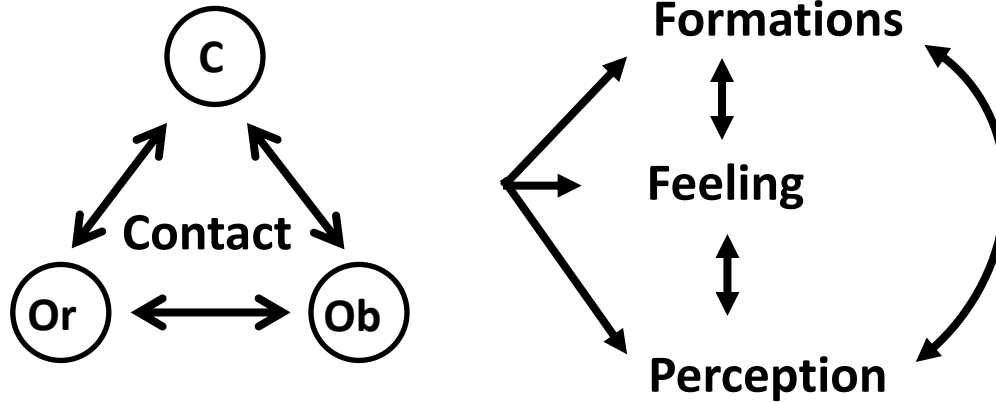
Example: Seeing Thinking Hearing

# The Stream of Consciousness

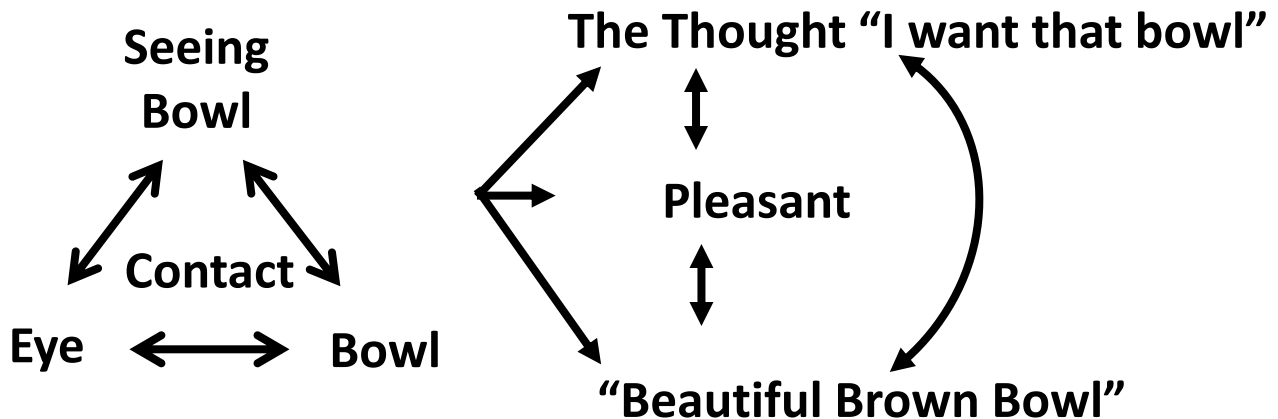




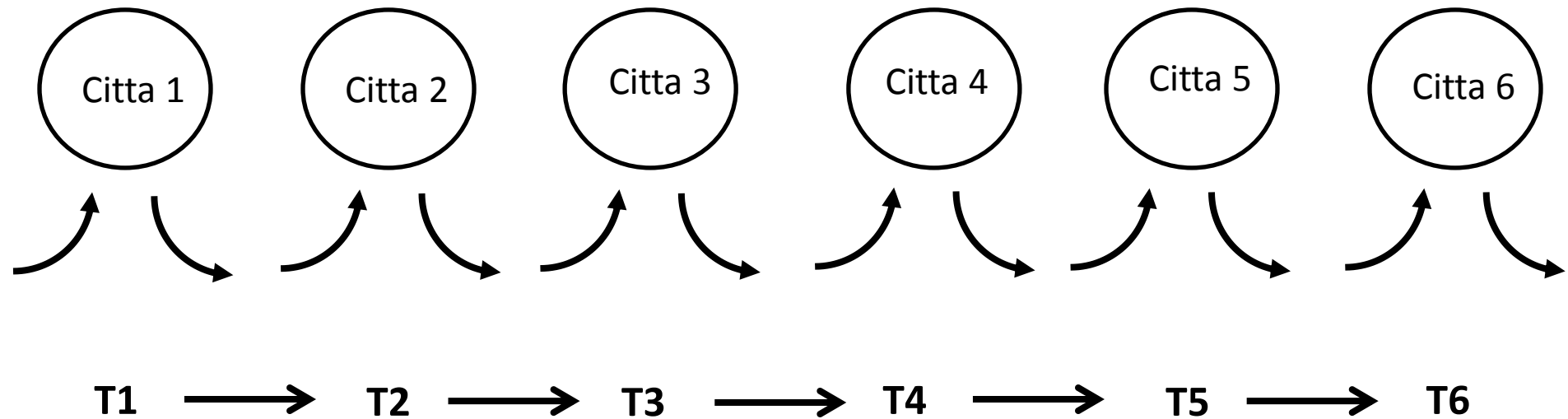
# The Interdependent Processes of a Mind Moment Consists of the Arising and Passing Away of the 5 Aggregates



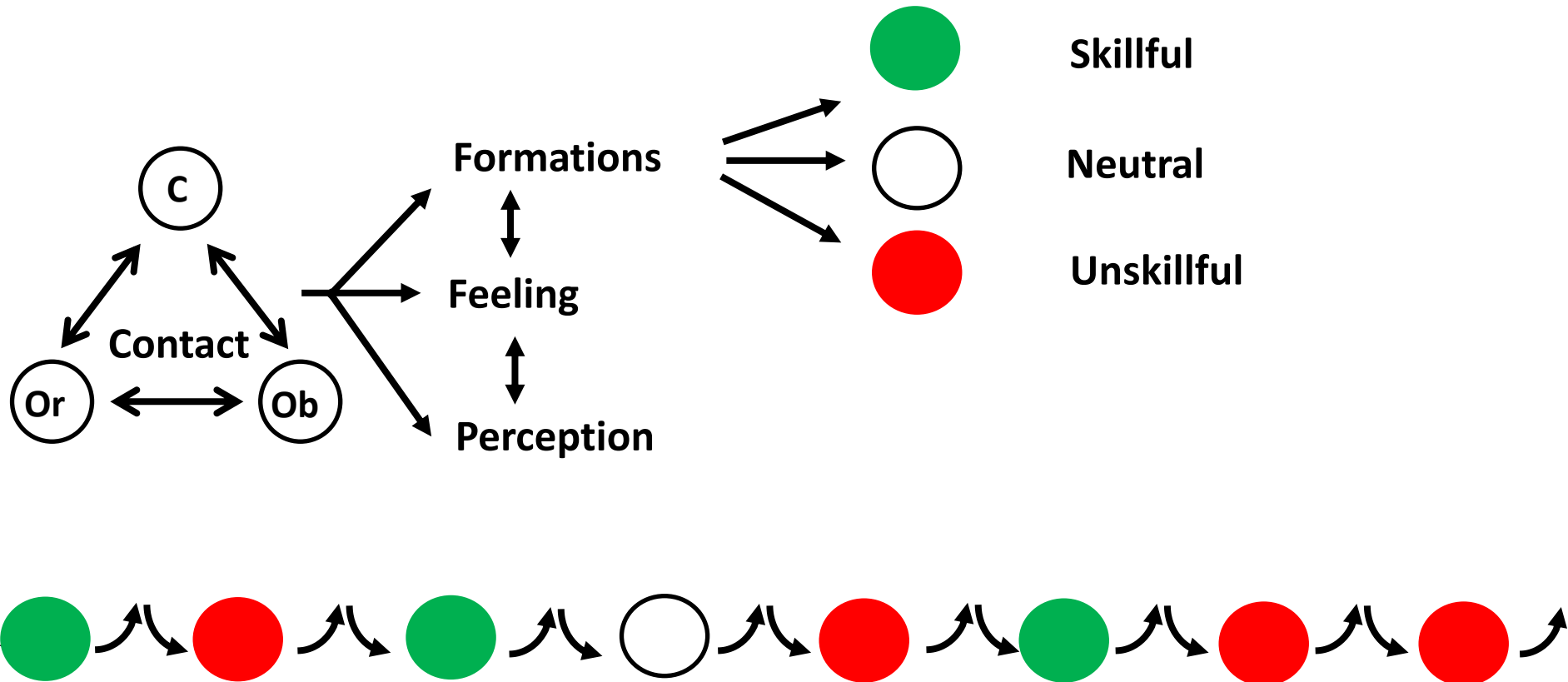
**Example:**



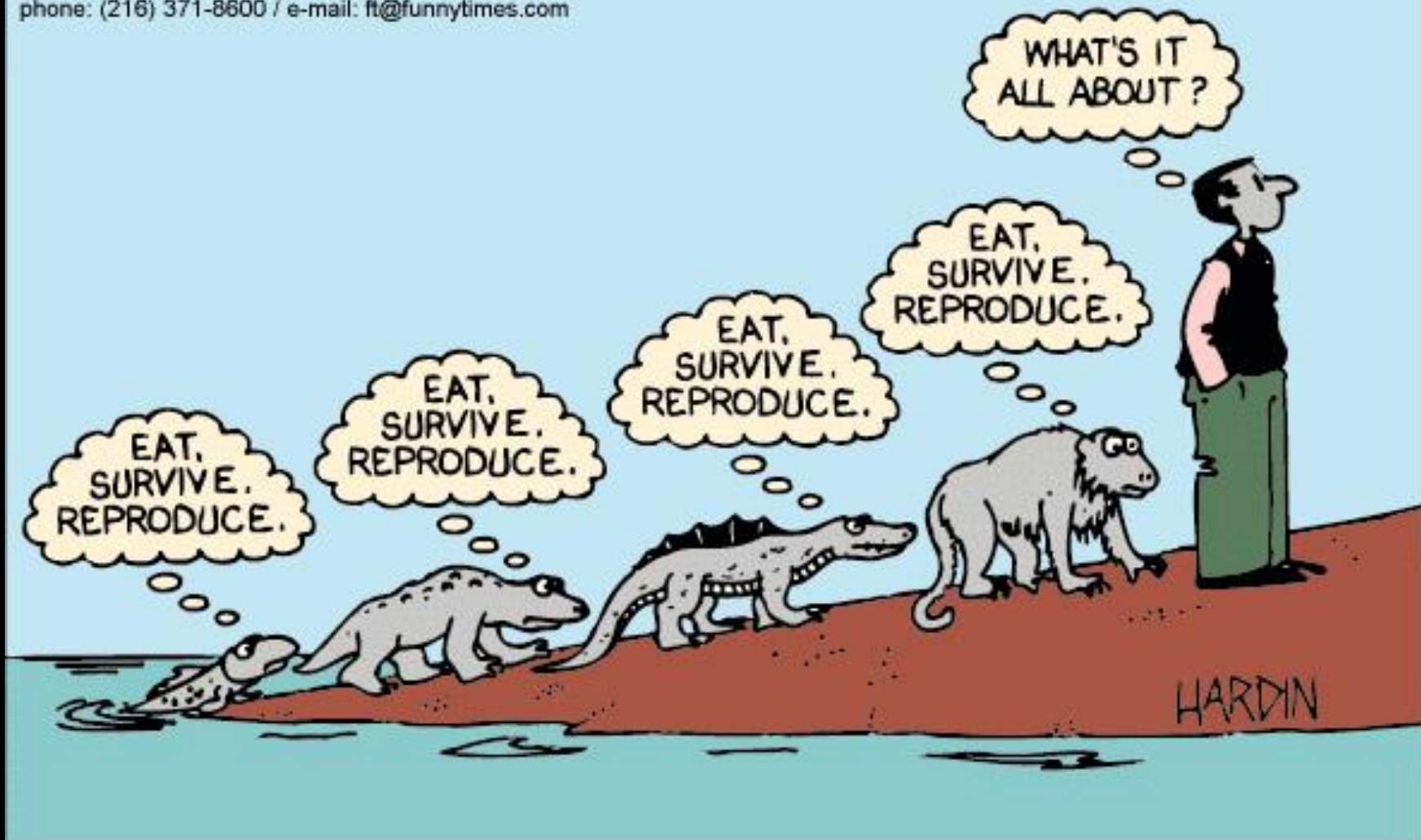
**The stream of consciousness consists of dependently arisen mind moments (*citta*)**



**Through our formations we create dispositions which condition our present and future consciousness**



Reprinted from The Funny Times / PO Box 18530 / Cleveland Heights, OH 44118  
phone: (216) 371-8600 / e-mail: ft@funnytimes.com



# Citta 1

Mundane

Sense sphere

Unwholesome

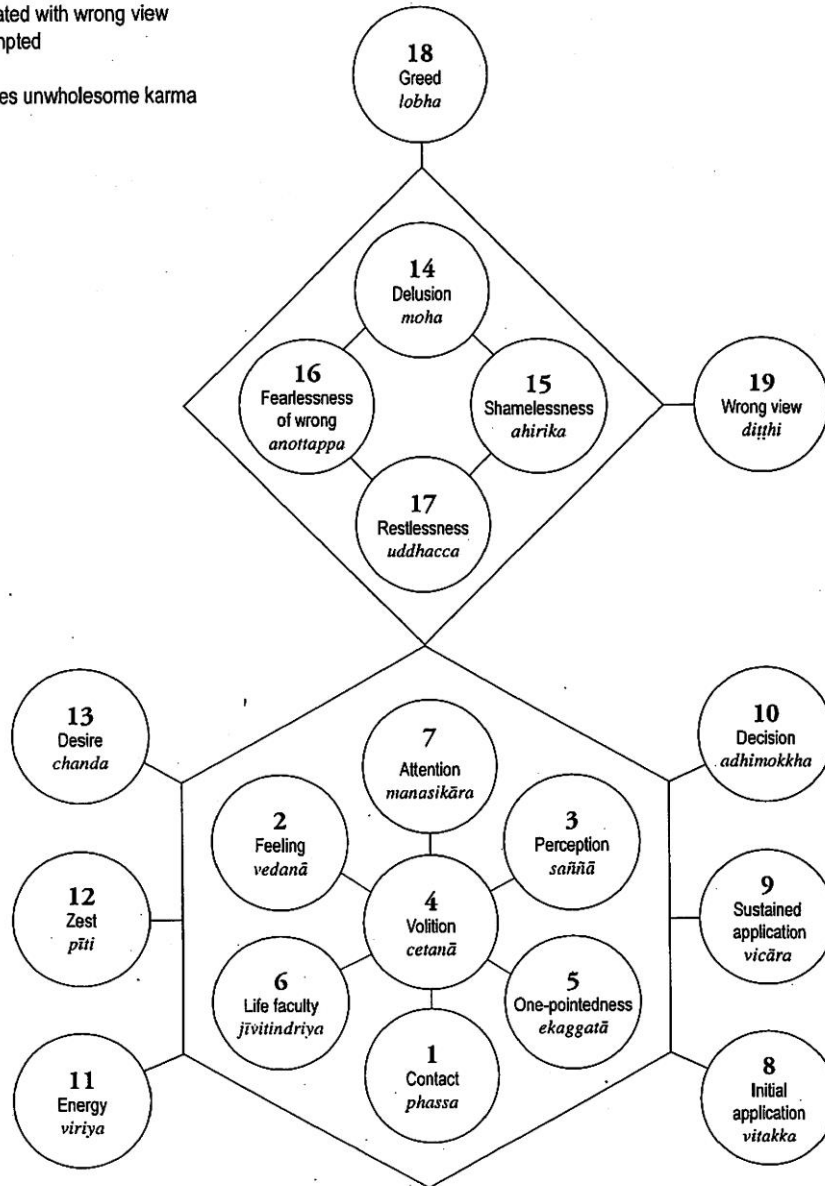
Rooted in greed

Accompanied by joy

Associated with wrong view

Unprompted

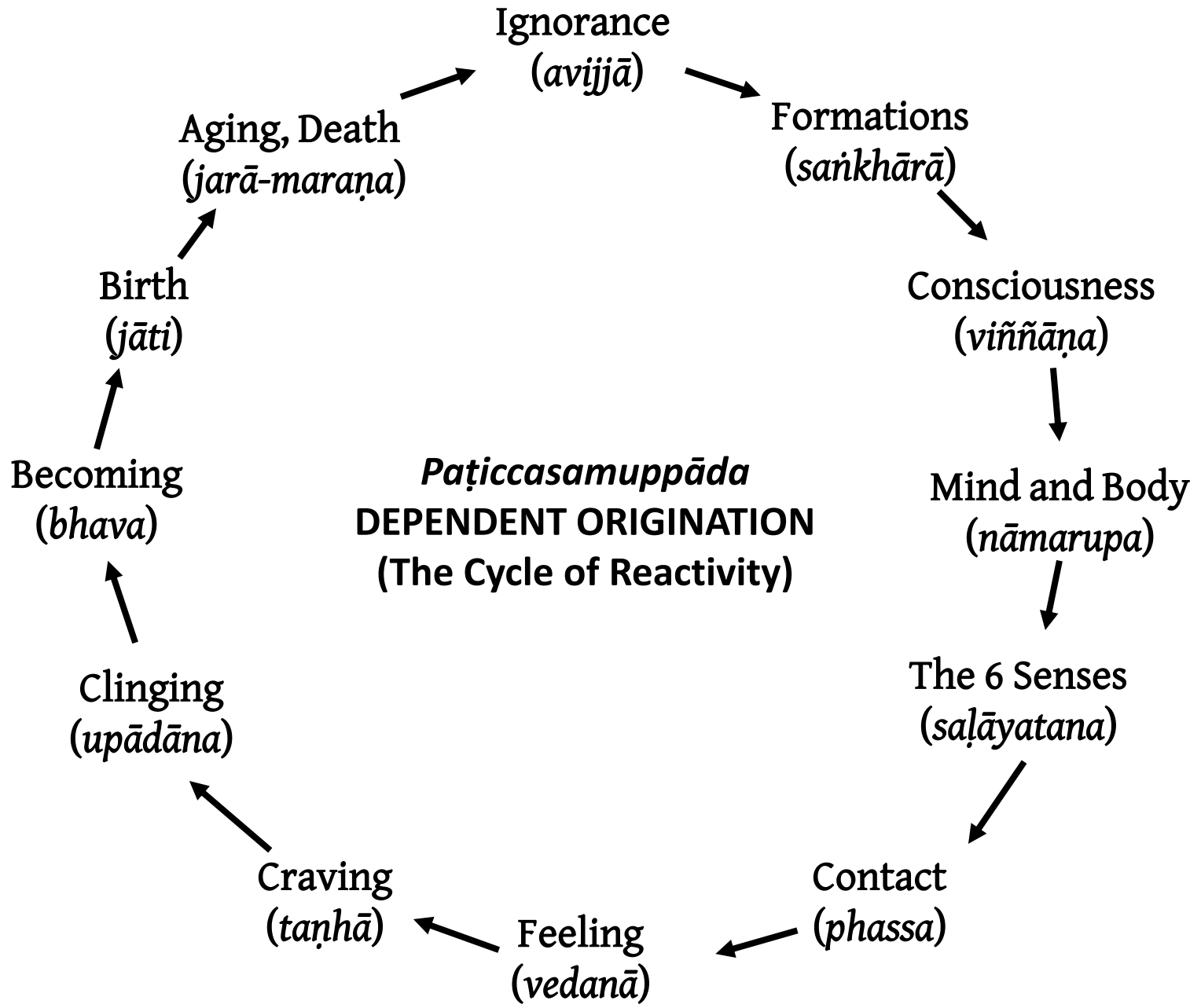
Produces unwholesome karma



# Habituating the Mind

“Whatever one frequently thinks and ponders, that will become the inclination of the mind.”

*-MN 19*



# The Conditional Nature of Experience

“When this is, that is.

From the arising of this comes the arising of that.

When this isn't, that isn't.

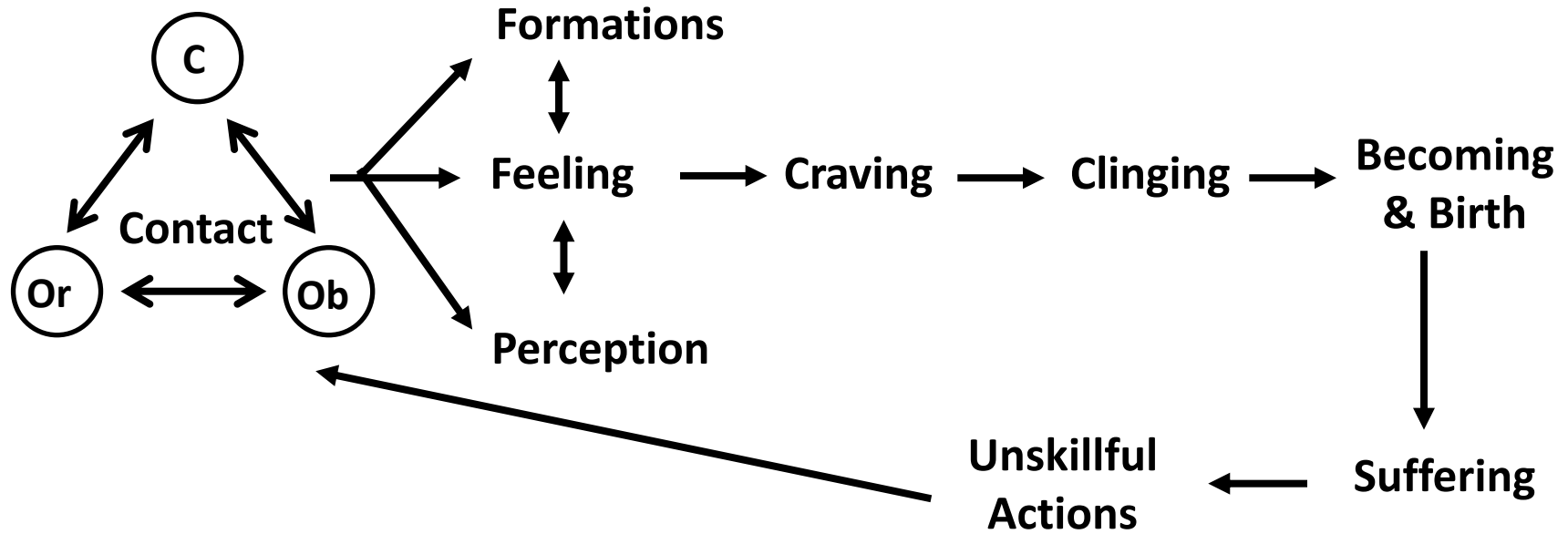
From the cessation of this comes the cessation of that.”

— *Ud 1:3*



# Dependent Origination Gives Rise to Unskillful Actions (thoughts, words and deeds)

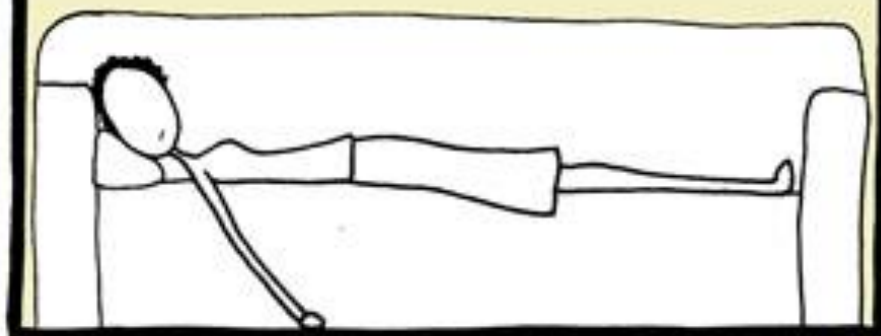
## Ignorance



# 24 Conditions (*Paccaya*) of the *Paṭṭhāna* (7<sup>th</sup> Book of the *Abhidhamma*)

1. Root condition (Hetu Paccayo)
2. Object condition (Arammana Paccayo)
3. Predominance condition (Adhipati Paccayo)
4. Proximity condition (Anantara Paccayo)
5. Contiguity condition (Samanantara Paccayo)
6. Conascence condition (Sahajata Paccayo)
7. Mutuality condition (Annamanna Paccayo)
8. Dependence condition (Nissaya Paccayo)
9. Decisive Support condition (Upanissaya Paccayo)
10. Prenascence condition (Purejata Paccayo)
11. Postnascence condition (Pacchajata Paccayo)
12. Repetition condition (Asevana Paccayo)
13. Kamma condition (Kamma Paccayo)
14. Vipaka condition (Vipaka Paccayo)
15. Nutriment condition (Ahara Paccayo)
16. Faculty condition (Indriya Paccayo)
17. Jhana or absorptive condition (Jhana Paccayo)
18. Path condition (Magga Paccayo)
19. Association condition (Samyutta Paccayo)
20. Dissociation condition (Vippayutta Paccayo)
21. Presence condition (Atthi Paccayo)
22. Absence condition (Natthi Paccayo)
23. Disappearance condition (Vigata Paccayo)
24. Non-disappearance condition (Avigata Paccayo)

Cathy Thorne © www.everyday people cartoons.com



AN UNEXAMINED LIFE MAY NOT BE WORTH LIVING, BUT EXAMINING MINE IS EXHAUSTING.

# Take Home Points

- The term “*Abhidhamma*” refers both to the development of meditation theory and practice after the Buddha’s death and to the literature stemming from this development .
- The *Abhidhamma* evolved from practitioner’s attempts at systematizing the Buddha’s teachings into a standard format that can be applied universally and refining the subtler points of the *Dhamma* into a comprehensive system of understanding the human mind.
- The *Abhidhamma* is best used as a map for understanding meditative experience.
- Understanding the *Abhidhamma* is not necessary for finding peace, relieving suffering or awakening.

# The Final Words of the Buddha:

*“All conditioned things are subject to decay. Practice diligently.”*

Thank you

# 37 Aids To Awakening (*bodhipakkhiyā dhamma*)

The Four Establishments Of Mindfulness

The Four Right Efforts

The Four Bases Of Spiritual Power

The Five Faculties

The Five Powers

The Seven Awakening Factors

The Eight Factors Of The Noble Path

# Categories of Experience

- Name & Form (mind & body)
- 5 Aggregates
- 6 Elements
- 12 Sense Bases
- 18 Elements



**WHOLESOME**  
 non-greed; generosity; renunciation  
 non-hatred; kindness; compassion  
 non-delusion; wisdom; insight

**FACTORS OF AWAKENING**  
 mindfulness  
 investigation of states  
 energy  
 joy  
 tranquility  
 concentration  
 equanimity

**WISE ATTENTION**

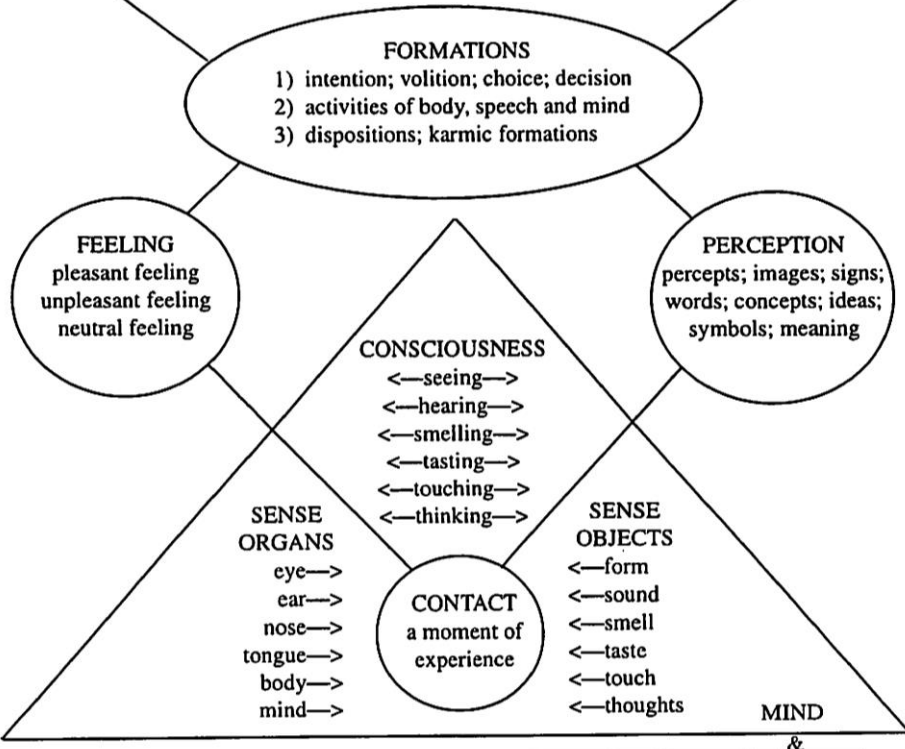
**UNWHOLESOME**  
 greed; attachment; lust  
 hatred; aversion; ill-will  
 delusion; ignorance; confusion

**HINDRANCES**  
 sense desire  
 ill-will  
 sloth & torpor  
 restlessness & remorse  
 doubt

**view of self**

**UNWISE ATTENTION**

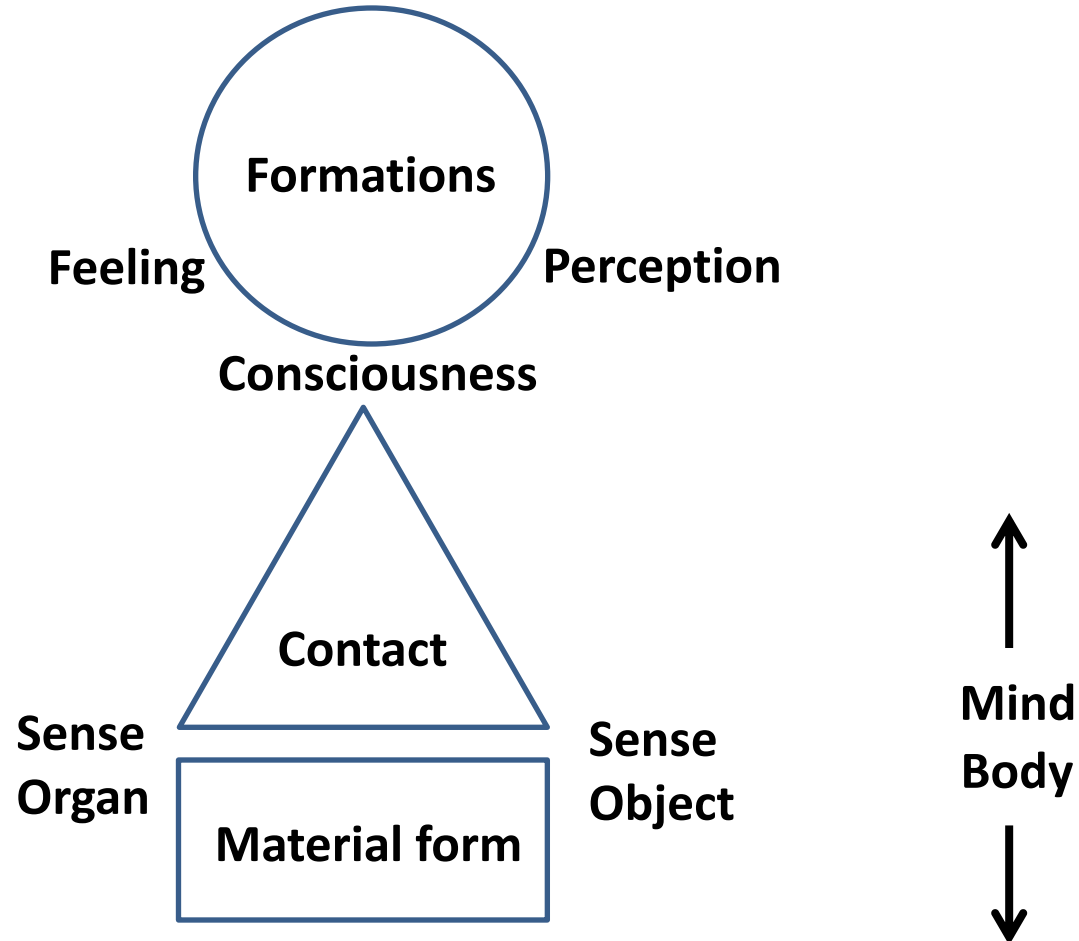
**AN OUTLINE  
 OF  
 BUDDHIST  
 PSYCHOLOGY**



**MATERIAL FORM**  
 earth air fire water  
 the four great elements and the material  
 derived of the four great elements

**BODY**

# The *dhammas* of a mind moment dependently arise and pass away



## 3 types of wisdom from the *Saṅgīti Sutta* DN 33

- *sutamayā paññā* – is the wisdom gained by hearing or reading the *Dhamma*
- *cintāmayā paññā* – is intellectual wisdom from reasoning, analyzing and reflecting on the *Dhamma*
- *bhāvanāmayā paññā* – is experiential wisdom from meditation

# The Three Trainings and the Noble Eightfold Path

<b>Training</b>	<b>Noble Eightfold Path</b>
Ethical Conduct <i>(sila)</i>	Skillful Speech ( <i>samma vaca</i> )
	Skillful Action ( <i>samma kammanta</i> )
	Skillful Livelihood ( <i>samma ajiva</i> )
Concentration <i>(samadhi)</i>	Skillful Effort ( <i>samma vayama</i> )
	Skillful Mindfulness ( <i>samma sati</i> )
	Skillful Concentration ( <i>samma samadhi</i> )
Wisdom <i>(panna)</i>	Skillful View ( <i>samma ditthi</i> )
	Skillful Intention ( <i>samma sankappa</i> )