

The 3rd Noble Truth – cessation of suffering

That is, the ending of thirst for the 'next thing', so as to give full attention to what is here, now; abandoning attachments to past, present or future; freedom that comes from contentment; not relying on craving so that the mind does not fixate on anything, adhering to it, roosting there.

When craving and other related causes thus come to an end, dukkha ceases. This is equivalent to Nirvana, also known as the 'unconditioned' or 'unconstructed', the ultimate goal of Buddhism. As an initial spur to striving for Nirvana, craving for it may play a role, but this helps in the overcoming of other cravings, is generally replaced by wholesome aspiration, and is completely eradicated in the full experience of Nirvana. Nirvana is only attained when there is total non-attachment and letting go.

- Peter Harvey

The Buddha had a word for this experience of an identity inhabiting a world defined around a specific desire. He called it bhava, which is related to the verb bhavati, to "be" or to "become." He was especially interested in bhava as process—how it comes about, and how it can be ended. So "becoming" is probably a better English rendering for the term than "being" or "existence," [...] The Buddha's Awakening also taught him that craving and clinging leading to stress are identical to the craving and clinging that lead to becoming. So becoming is inevitably stressful. This explains why the typical human way of avoiding suffering—which is to replace one state of becoming with another—can never fully succeed. If, to escape the sufferings of being a painter, you decide to become a miner instead, you simply exchange one set of sufferings for another. Regardless of what identity you take on, or however you experience the mountain of the world, it's going to entail some degree of stress. Thus to put an end to suffering, it's necessary to put an end to becoming.

- Thanissaro Bhikkhu

The term vossagga stands for "letting go", in the sense of relinquishing, forsaking, or renouncing. Similar to the closely related patinissagga, "giving up", vossagga has a considerable scope of meaning in early Buddhism. Both terms can be seen to throw into relief the central theme that underlies the path to liberation from its outset to its final completion, namely the need to quite literally "let go" of any clinging whatsoever. [...] giving up, similar to letting go, spans the whole scale of meditative development. Perfecting giving up, then, requires giving up all craving, whereby the mind will be thoroughly liberated. Such giving up is the theme of the third noble truth, according to which the eradication of dukkha requires giving up craving. It was through such giving up of craving and of any sense of 'I' and 'mine' that Buddha reaches supreme awakening.

- Bhikkhu Analayo