

Contrary to popular opinion, — [AN 9.41](#), translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

Then Ven. Ananda, together with Tapussa the householder, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "Tapussa the householder, here, has said to me, 'Venerable Ananda, sir, we are householders who indulge in sensuality, delight in sensuality, enjoy sensuality, rejoice in sensuality. For us — indulging in sensuality, delighting in sensuality, enjoying sensuality, rejoicing in sensuality — renunciation seems like a sheer drop-off. Yet I've heard that in this doctrine & discipline the hearts of the very young monks leap up at renunciation, grow confident, steadfast, & firm, seeing it as peace. So right here is where this doctrine & discipline is contrary to the great mass of people: i.e., [this issue of] renunciation.'"

"So it is, Ananda. So it is. Even I myself, before my Awakening, when I was still an unawakened Bodhisatta, thought: 'Renunciation is good. Seclusion is good.' But my heart didn't leap up at renunciation, didn't grow confident, steadfast, or firm, seeing it as peace. The thought occurred to me: 'What is the cause, what is the reason, why my heart doesn't leap up at renunciation, doesn't grow confident, steadfast, or firm, seeing it as peace?' Then the thought occurred to me: 'I haven't seen the [drawback of sensual pleasures](#); I haven't pursued [that theme]. I haven't understood the reward of renunciation; I haven't familiarized myself with it. That's why my heart doesn't leap up at renunciation, doesn't grow confident, steadfast, or firm, seeing it as peace.'

"Then the thought occurred to me: 'If, having seen the drawback of sensual pleasures, I were to pursue that theme; and if, having understood the reward of renunciation, I were to familiarize myself with it, there's the possibility that my heart would leap up at renunciation, grow confident, steadfast, & firm, seeing it as peace.'

"So at a later time, having seen the drawback of sensual pleasures, I pursued that theme; having understood the reward of renunciation, I familiarized myself with it. My heart leaped up at renunciation, grew confident, steadfast, & firm, seeing it as peace. Then, quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful qualities, I entered & remained in the [first jhana](#): rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation..."