The FIVE AGGREGATES are impermanent and suffering, therefore cannot be regarded as self.

What are the five aggregates?

Form ‘Feeling ‘Perception ‘Mental Formation ‘Consciousness

The Buddha taught us that “you” are not an integral, autonomous entity. The self (conventional truth) is a combination of the five aggregates (ultimate truth), namely the Body (form) and Mind (feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness).

Why do we need to understand the five aggregates?

They are the objects that identity view and clinging spring. They are the objects for investigation to gain insight.

1. The five aggregates of clinging is what the Buddha summarized as the Noble Truth of Suffering (Dukkha Ariya Sacca). Only when we understand dukkha correctly can we be liberated from suffering.
2. Dukkha comes from the syllable “du” which means “bad” and “kham” means “void of happiness and self”. Dukkha comes about when we cling to the five aggregates as I, mine, myself, my pleasant feeling, my unpleasant feeling, I see, I hear …
3. The five aggregates are the objects that identity view and clinging spring. They are the objects for investigation to gain insight.

Why do we attach to the five aggregates?

Because we are unable to see the faults and dangers of clinging to them.

We are attached to the five aggregates as I, mine, myself because we are unable to see the faults and dangers of clinging to them. The five aggregates are the objects of identity view and craving. They are the objects of insight (vipassanā) for one to gain release from dukkha. The goal of our vipassanā practice is – to experience the constant arising and passing away of the five aggregates and to see clearly the dangers of attaching to them – like a child sees the dangers of getting burnt touching the fireworks in fascination.