

HOW TO BE MINDFULNESS ACCORDING TO THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM

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The Buddha delivered that the wise one who is heedful amongst the heedless, wisely wakeful amongst the sleepy, advances like a swift horse leaving a weak one behind. Every moment of Mindfulness is a gradual destruction of latent defilements and one needs the constant application of awareness to attain purity of the mind.

According to the *Abhidhamma* Text there are altogether 121 minds (*cittas*) and 52 (*cetasika*) mental factors which must be watched by Mindfulness. Then the meaning of the term *Citta* is analyzed etymologically as follows: (a) Having the nature of thinking i.e. responding to the stimulation (*Cintetīti cittaṃ arammanāṃ vijānāti attho*), (b) Having the nature of causing the mental factors to be aware of the reports coming in through the sense-doors (*Cintetīti cittaṃ (Ārammanāṃ vijānātīti attho)*) and (c) Having the nature of diversification and refinement (*Cittaṃ karotīti cittaṃ*). This includes the diversification process which also makes refined both the animate and the inanimate.

There are fifty-two mental factors such as feeling (*Vedanā*), perception (*Saññā*), mental formation (*Sankhāra*) and volition (*Cetanā*) etc, which arises together with consciousness, (ii) perishes together with it (iii) has an identical object with it and (iv) has a common basis with it. Among them, *Cetanā* is the most important of them. No consciousness exists apart from its concomitants.

Here the words *Mano*, *Vīññana* and *Citta* are one in meaning. *Mana* is *Mano* and it is just a synonym term for *Citta*. *Citta* can be defined as the awareness of the object. Sometimes it may be a vivid object. Sometimes it may be an obscure object. *Citta* can never arise without an object. Whenever there is *Citta*, there must be its object. The mental phenomenon arises at the moment of contact between one of the five doors (*Pañcadvāra*) and the five-door object (*Pañcadvāra-vatthu*), the mind clearly knowing, thinking, paying attention, responding to the

object as its characteristics to cognize the object. Ven. *Buddhaghosa* states thus “There can be no consciousness of any kind without the characteristic cognizing on object or objects”.

Mind has the function as the forerunner, going before the mental factors (*Pubbangamarasam*). When consciousness reaches a sense door, it then becomes the forerunner or precursor. The Buddha states that all mental phenomena have Mind as their leader in the sense that Mind is the most dominant and it is the cause of the other three mental phenomena, namely, feeling (*Vedanā*), perception (*Saññā*) and mental formation (*Sankhāra*).

And then “*Manasā ce paduṭṭhena*” and “*Manasā ce pasannena*” mean intention or volition (*Cetanā*); volition leads one to the performance of volitional actions, good or evil. Therefore the above line means that all mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; all are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with an evil mind, “Suffering (*Dukkha*) follows him just as the wheel follows the foot print of the one that draws the cart.

In *Anguttara Nikāya*, the defilements are said thus: the term, “greed” comprises all degrees of the attraction, from the slightest trace of attachment up to the crassest form of greed and egotism, while the term “hatred” comprises all degree of aversion, from the slightest touch of ill up to the extreme forms of violent wrath and revenge. *Moha* is a mental factor (*cetasika*) that makes mind incapable of choosing between right and wrong, incapable of perceiving the four noble truths, incapable of practicing correctly for the perception of the four noble truths, incapable of adopting a proper mental attitude. *Moha* makes a person blind to the nature and consequences of a demerit deed. *Moha* is associated with all immoral consciousness.

Lobha, Dosa, Moha is the three roots of evil and the function of *Lobha* is to cling or to attach. So it can be defined as attachment or clinging or greed. *Lobha* is called *Taṇhā* in the sense of attachment, and *Rāga* in the sense of craving or taint or defilement. There is always this order *Lobha, Dosa, Moha*. In the commentary to this manual it is stated that consciousness accompanied by *Lobha* is mentioned first because in a given existence the first *Javana* consciousness that arises is accompanied by *Lobha*. In whatever existence one is born there is first the attachment to that existence, to that life. The Buddha preaches thus “*Natthi rāga samo aggi*” meaning there is no fire as hot as *Rāga*. That is so strong that one is always attached to one’s lives.

A monk thinks that greed and covetousness is defilement to the mind and having known it le Gem, he acquires knowledge of the goal and the mind is well concentrated. Thus, he gets rid of the defilement of the mind such as greed and covetousness. Then he becomes possessed of

unwavering confidence in the Awakened One, in *Dhamma* and in the Order. The *Kalamas* admitted that greed, hatred and delusion (*Lobha, Dosa, Moha*) are morally bad (*Akusala*), blameworthy (*Sāvajja*), censured by the wise ones (*Viññugarahita*), and when one is under their influence, the results are illness and suffering.

The Buddha's attempt here is to show that the *Kalamas* themselves came to know the distinction between good and bad without depending on external authority. A similar exposition of the Buddhist criterion for distinguishing between a good and bad behavior is presented in the *Bahitikasutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya*. Here, a bad conduct, censured by wise recluses and Brahmins, is defined as the conduct that involves injury or harm (*Savyapajjha*). An injurious conduct, in turn, is described as the conduct that has an unhappy consequence (*Dukkhavipāka*). It is the conduct that results in tormenting the agent, tormenting others and tormenting both the agent and those affected by the action.

The concepts of happiness and well-being play a central role in Buddhist ethics. The goal of *Nibbāna* is a worthwhile ideal to pursue because it constitutes the real happiness that man can attain. *Nibbāna* puts an end to *Dukkha*. The highest happiness in the view of the individual can be attained when there occurs a total emotional transformation. It is on hedonistic considerations that *Nibbāna* is conceived as the highest happiness. Individuated existence in the cyclic process of *Samsāra*, subjected to the hazards of birth, old age, disease and death, and numerous other depressions, anxieties and frustrations due to the transient nature of phenomenal existence, is *Dukkha*. This process does not cease until the psychological defilements (*Āsava*) are laid to rest. The evil tendencies that function as the driving forces of *Samsāric* life are precisely those mental traits that produce immoral behavior. At the root of all conflicts, dissensions, rivalry and warfare are the basic evil dispositions (*Lobha, Dosa, Moha*).

From the Buddhist point of view, man is incapable of becoming happy as long as these evil bases are dominant in his behavior. Disharmony at a social level, and the resultant suffering produced by man himself in the form of violence towards fellow members of the society, discriminative treatment, and violation of the rights of others are all explained in Buddhism as being rooted in these evil dispositions.

Buddhism accepts as facts about the human predicament the reality of *Kamma*, rebirth, and *Samsāra*. Morally praiseworthy action is, from the Buddhist perspective, action that conforms to a hedonistic, consequentiality, or teleological criterion. However, this hedonism is

universalistic in the sense that Buddhism admits that, in the ultimate analysis; there is a universal harmony of interests.

One can be happy only by the development of a character that is conducive to the happiness of others as well. According to Buddhism, the sexual impulse in man is one of the strongest expressions of what it conceives as craving for sensuous pleasures (*Kamataṇhā*). Lust (*Rāga*) is at the root of the sexual impulse, and it is one of the bases of unwholesome action that has to be completely eliminated in order to achieve full liberation from *Dukkha*.

Opposed to immoral (*Akusala*) consciousnesses which spring from attachment (*Lobha*), ill-will (*Paṭigha*) and ignorance (*Moha*) are the moral types of consciousness (*Kusala*) because they are rooted in non-attachment (*Alobha*), non-hatred (*Adosa*) and wisdom, non-delusion (*Amoha*). When the mind is overwhelmed by the roots of evils among the fifty two mental factors, they spill over through the channels of words and deeds. The purpose of following the Path shown by the Buddha is to curb and dispel these defilements and purge them from one's mind.

Regarding mind it is said in *Khandha Vagga Samyutta Nikāya* that mind says that one must regard one's mind for a long time, and thus mind has been tainted by lust, hatred and delusion. By a tainted mind, beings are tainted. By purifying mind, beings are made pure. A pure mind is developed mind that is tractable and a cultivated mind that brings so much happiness and the mind that is so trained, guarded, protected and controlled that it brings the great benefits.

Like a stump of a palm tree, which is no longer to live, an action done in non-delusion, arising from non-delusion, etc, since greed, hatred, delusion have vanished or have been abandoned, cut off at the root is not liable to bear fruit in future. The Buddha preached that whatsoever states are good, have part in the good, are on the side of the good all these have mind as their forerunner. Mind arises as the first of them and is followed by the good states. Thus, good states not yet arisen will arise and evil states arisen will wane due to heedfulness.

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