
Mind and Mental Factors

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

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As usual please establish a virtuous motivation for listening to the teaching.

We are now going to talk about Mind and Mental Factors. Mind plays a very important part in our lives, and therefore it is essential to understand what mind is. As long as we don't control our mind, then whatever actions we engage in, to accomplish happiness or to avoid suffering, will not be successful. The attainment of happiness and suffering depends upon controlling our mind, which in turn depends upon knowing the make-up of our mind.

1. Mind

Out of Mind and Mental Factors, mind is the main one. Mental factors are described as the entourage of mind. What do we refer to as mind? *Mind is a main consciousness distinguished by mainly apprehending the identity of the object.*

Mind, main mind, consciousness and main consciousness are synonymous.

1.1. Divisions of Mind

Main mind has a six-fold division into the six types of consciousness. We mentioned these in past teachings. They are the eye consciousness and so forth. We have six types of consciousness apprehending the six types of objects, by depending upon the six types of empowering conditions. There are six types of empowering conditions, such as the eye sense power and so forth, in dependence upon which the individual consciousnesses, like the eye consciousness and so forth, arise. These then apprehend the individual objects, such as form and so forth.

If one narrows the six-fold division of consciousness down, then it can be condensed into a two-fold division of mental consciousness and sense consciousness.

1.2. Relationship Between Main Consciousness and Mental Perception

We said that the main consciousness and consciousness are synonymous, so it is important to posit a difference between main consciousness and mental perception.

- Eye consciousness, for example, is a main consciousness, but it is not mental perception.
- The mental factor of feeling in the entourage of mental main consciousness is a mental perception, but is not main consciousness.
- The main mental consciousness is the main consciousness, as well as mental perception.
- The mental factor of feeling in the entourage of eye consciousness is neither a mental perception, nor main consciousness. The mental factor of feeling in the entourage of eye consciousness is not a main consciousness simply because it is a mental factor, and it is not a mental perception because it is sense perception.

The same four-fold relationship between main consciousness and mental perception can also be found between sense perception and main consciousness.

2. Mental Factors

We said before that the main characteristic of mind is that mind mainly apprehends the general identity of the object. Mental factors mainly apprehend the differentiating characteristics of the object. *A knower that mainly apprehends the characteristics of the object and has a concomitant mind.*

Because the Sautrantika tenet asserts self-knowers, the definition of mental factors says '**and has a concomitant main mind**'.

The reason for this is that self-knowers will also apprehend the characteristics of their objects, but a self-knower is not a mental factor. So in order to eliminate self-knowers as mental factors the definition mentions that a mental factor also has to have a concomitant mind together with it. Self-knowers don't have concomitant minds.

For tenets that don't assert self-knowers, it is enough to say, 'a knower that mainly apprehends the characteristics of its object'.

Mind and the mental factors in its entourage are concomitant by way of five aspects. One aspect is time. Mind and mental factors are concomitant through time, meaning that they are established simultaneously. Mind and mental factors are established simultaneously, and they are of one identity but of a different isolate. Everything that is of one identity, has to be necessarily of a different isolate.

The Tibetan word for mental factor is called *Sems Byung* (pron *Sem Jung*). which literally translates as 'arising from mind'. When we hear the Tibetan word for mental factor, the idea one gets is that mental factors arise from mind. Just now, we said that a mental factor and the mind arise at the same time, and that the mental factor is regarded as the entourage of the main mind. The main mind is like a king, who has an entourage of various mental factors that always come together with him.

As we explained before, the six types of consciousness arise in dependence upon the basis of the individual empowering condition of the various sense powers, and they do so independently. The mental factors also arise in dependence upon the sense powers, but not independently. They arise in dependence upon the main mind, in the same way as the entourage depends upon the king. They don't have their own base, as they rely on the base of the main consciousness. Therefore, because they have to rely on the base of the main consciousness, they are regarded as the entourage of that main mind. Also, because their focus will always be the same as the focus of the main mind, they are regarded as the entourage of that main mind.

Coming back to the original question, if they are always simultaneous with the concomitant mind, why are they termed as 'arising from mind'? It is because they arise from a preceding mind.

Every main mind has a concomitant mental factor of contact as well as feeling. The definition of contact mentions that contact acts as the basis for feeling. This again refers to a feeling that follows. Contact is the basis for feeling but not for the feeling arising simultaneously with it. It is the basis for the following feeling. In the same way mental factors are termed as 'arising from mind'. They don't arise from the mind with which they are concomitant, but from a preceding mind.

2.1. The Five Concomitant Aspects

Mind and mental factors are concomitant by way of the five aspects of base, focus, aspect, time and substance.

2.1.1. Base

The first of those five aspects with which they are concomitant is base. *Base refers to the uncommon empowering condition of the main consciousness.* For example in the case of eye consciousness, the uncommon empowering condition is the eye sense power, and this is the basis through which the eye consciousness and the various mental factors (which are its entourage) are concomitant. As we said before, they both arise in dependence upon the uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power. It is not the case that the eye consciousness arises in dependence upon the basis of the eye sense power, and then the mental factor concomitant with the eye consciousness

arises in dependence upon another base. They both share the same base of the sense power.

2.1.2. Focus

The second aspect by which the eye consciousness and its concomitant mental factors are concomitant is focus. For example the eye consciousness apprehending blue is first generated in dependence upon the uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power, and it is also generated in dependence upon the focal condition of blue. This focus of blue is shared between the eye consciousness and its concomitant mental factors.

2.1.3. Aspect

Thirdly, the eye consciousness and its mental factors are concomitant by aspect. This means that the eye consciousness arises in the aspect of blue, and also its concomitant mental factors arise in the aspect of blue. Both arise in the aspect of blue.

2.1.4. Time

The fourth aspect by which they are concomitant is time. As we said, *the eye consciousness and its concomitant mental factors are established simultaneously*. This means that they are generated simultaneously, abide simultaneously and disintegrate simultaneously.

2.1.5. Substance

The fifth aspect by which they are concomitant is by substance. They are *concomitant by being individual substances*. In the entourage of one main consciousness we will always find only one mental factor of feeling and one mental factor of contact and so forth. We will never find two mental factors of feeling in the entourage of one main consciousness.

2.2. Divisions of Mental Factors

There are fifty-one mental factors, which are:

- the five ever-present mental factors
- the five determining mental factors
- the eleven virtuous mental factors
- the six root delusions
- the twenty secondary delusions
- the four changeable mental factors.

2.2.1. The Five Ever-Present Mental Factors

The first set, the five ever-present mental factors, are called that because *every main consciousness will always have those five mental factors in its entourage*. Without a complete set of these five mental factors in its entourage, a consciousness would not be able to engage its object. As we said before, the mind is like the King, or in Australia like the Prime Minister. Each main mind has various mental factors that are like the Ministers. The Prime Minister has the general view of what is happening in the country, and he gets this overview through his individual Ministers informing him about the various situations in their portfolios, or their various specialities.

This is like the relationship between the main mind and the mental factors. If a main mind is not concomitant with the five ever-present mental factors it will not be able to engage its object.

2.2.1.1. Intention

The first of the five ever-present mental factors is the mental factor of intention. *Intention has the function of directing the mind without choice to its object*. If a mind weren't concomitant with the mental factor of intention, it wouldn't be directed to any kind of object. The mental factor of intention, which is karma, directs the concomitant main mind without choice to object.

2.2.1.2. Attention

Then we have the mental factor of attention. This is quite

similar to intention, but there is a slight difference. Attention places our mind on the focal object. We can observe this in meditation when we try to place our mind on the object of meditation. This happens through the mental factor of attention. The mental factor of intention directs the mind without choice to its object. If we didn't have the mental factor of intention, then the mind wouldn't be directed to any kind of object. On top of this we need attention to make the mind apprehend, or grasp the object to which it was directed. Without attention there would be no placing of the mind on the focal object.

2.2.1.3 Recognition

Then we have the mental factor of recognition. If the main mind didn't have the mental factor of recognition one couldn't distinguish between various objects. One couldn't distinguish blue or woman and so forth. The mental factor of *recognition apprehends the various distinguishing characteristics of the object*.

2.2.1.4 Contact

Without the mental factor of contact there wouldn't be any basis for apprehension and perception. *Apprehension of an object comes about through the coming together or contact of sense power, consciousness and object*. Without the mental factor of contact there wouldn't be any basis for the various perceptions to arise.

2.2.1.5 Feeling

There is also the mental factor of feeling. Without feeling there wouldn't be any *experience of the object*.

That completes the etymology of why those five mental factors are called the ever-present mental factors, explaining why they always need to be present.

2.2.2. Five Determining Mental Factors

The second set of mental factors is called the five determining mental factors. Their *function is determining the particular objects*. They will only be in the entourage of realisers, that is of minds that realise their objects.

2.2.3. Eleven Virtuous Factors

The next set is the eleven virtuous mental factors. They are called virtuous mental factors because they *act as the antidote to non-virtuous states*. For example faith acts as the antidote to non-faith. We also have a set of three, detachment, non-anger and non-ignorance, which act as the antidotes to attachment anger and ignorance. If a mental state acts as an antidote to any one of the delusions it is a virtuous state of mind. Therefore these eleven mental factors are called the eleven virtuous mental factors, because they are concomitant with virtuous mental states. Later when we go through the eleven virtuous mental factors individually we will explain in greater detail how they act as antidotes to various disturbing states of the mind, delusions and secondary delusions.

2.2.4. The Six Root Delusions

The fourth set is the six root delusions. They are called the root delusions because they are the six *mental states that are mainly responsible for the disturbances in our mind*. These six mental states are called root delusions because they represent the six main causes that afflict our mind. They are the six main causes responsible for making our mind unsubdued and unsuitable.

One can elaborate those six delusions into ten, because the sixth root delusion called wrong view can be divided into five types of wrong view. So if one wants to become an expert in root delusions, one can elaborate them into ten.

2.2.5. Twenty Secondary Delusions

Now we come to the fifth set which are the twenty secondary delusions. The twenty secondary delusions belong to *a family of*

any one of the six root delusions. For example the first secondary delusion is wrath. Wrath is a stronger form of anger, so it belongs to the family of anger. It is the same for all the other secondary delusions. They are usually stronger aspects of the six root delusions.

2.2.6. Four Changeable Mental factors

The sixth set is called the four changeable mental factors. We have for example sleep, regret and so forth. They are called changeable mental factors because *by themselves it is not definite whether they are virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral.* Depending upon the motivation from which they arise, they can be virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral.

We forgot to mention before that the main mind will always come together with the five ever-present mental factors. However there is no pervasion that they will always be in a manifest state. They can also be in a latent state. During the death process there is a stage where the breathing stops, and sometime after this the subtle mind of death becomes manifest. At this time the five ever-present mental factors are present, but in a latent state not in a manifest state. At that time one doesn't recognise any kind of object, the mind becomes neutral, and no virtuous or non-virtuous mental states are present.

That completes the general etymology of those six sets of mental factors. Now we can go through them one by one.

2.2.1 Five Ever-Present Mental Factors

We start with the five ever-present mental factors and the first is feeling.

2.2.1.5. Feeling¹

The mental factor of feeling is characterised **by being in the nature of experience.** Feeling and aggregate of feeling are synonymous.

Feeling has various divisions. There is a two-fold division, a three-fold division and a five-fold division.

Two-fold Divisions of Feeling

a. The two-fold division is physical feeling and mental feeling.

Physical feeling is divided into feeling associated with the five sense consciousnesses. Each of the sense consciousnesses has a concomitant mental factor of feeling. Physical feeling is synonymous with outer feeling.

Then we have **mental feelings**, which are the feelings associated with the various mental consciousnesses. There are mental feelings concomitant with the various types of mental consciousness. Mental feeling is synonymous with inner feeling.

b. Feeling can be divided into common feeling and superior feeling.

Common feeling is contaminated feeling. It is the feeling arising through contact with ordinary objects. This refers to our everyday feelings, which are all contaminated.

Then there is the **superior feeling** arising in the mental continuum of an Arya being. These feelings are uncontaminated feelings.

Three-fold Division of Feeling

Then we have a three-fold division of feeling - happiness, suffering and equanimity. As we have been saying, feelings are in the definition of experience. Feelings experience the various objects. Happy feelings experience happiness, suffering feelings experience suffering and equanimity experiences equanimity.

Happiness experiences the ripening result of virtuous karma.

Suffering experiences the ripening result of non-virtue. There is a pervasion that if it is happiness then it has to be the experience of the mental factor of happiness. If it is suffering, then it has to be the experience of the mental factor of suffering. However there is no pervasion that if it is equanimity it has to be the mental factor of equanimity.

There are three types of **equanimity**.

- The mental factor of equanimity
- Boundless or immeasurable equanimity, which is one of the four immeasurable thoughts
- The equanimity experienced in meditation which is one of the eleven virtuous mental factors

Five-fold Division of Feeling

Then we have the five-fold division of feeling.

- happiness
- mental happiness
- suffering
- mental suffering
- equanimity

This five-fold division of feeling includes happiness and mental happiness. Happiness refers to the physical feeling of happiness, as opposed to mental happiness. If we talk about mental happiness in the context of the five-fold division, then we say that mental happiness is not happiness. That is because in this context happiness refers to physical happiness, which is different from mental happiness. Of course in general mental happiness will be happiness.

It is the same for suffering and mental suffering. Suffering in the context of the five-fold division of feeling refers to physical suffering, which is different from mental suffering. In the context of the five-fold division, mental suffering is not suffering, even though it will be suffering in general.

Of the five ever-present mental factors, this completes the first one, feeling. and The second one is recognition. We can do this one next time.

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¹ From the Compendium of Knowledge: What is the definition of feeling? The definition of experience. The identity of experience through which the ripening of the results of virtues and non-virtues karmas are individually experienced.

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Please generate the virtuous motivation of bodhicitta.

Last time we talked about the five ever present mental factors, which are: feeling, recognition, intention, contact and attention. Last time we finished the first one, feeling.

2.2.1.3. Recognition¹

The second ever-present mental factor is recognition.

What do we understand by recognition? *Recognition is a knower apprehending the uncommon characteristic of its object after the meeting of object, sense power, and consciousness.*

Object, sense power, and consciousness have come together, and after that there is one mental factor that now apprehends the uncommon characteristic of the object, and that is recognition.

Divisions of Recognition According to *Compendium of Knowledge*

Recognition has a two-fold division into recognition apprehending characteristics, and recognition apprehending patterns.

Recognition apprehending characteristics refers to the recognition apprehending the uncommon characteristic of the object appearing to a non-conceptual consciousness. So, for example, the recognition of the eye consciousness apprehending blue would apprehend the uncommon characteristic of blue.

Recognition apprehending patterns refers to the recognition apprehending the uncommon characteristic of the object appearing to a conceptual thought.

Bases Engaged by Recognition

There are various bases that are engaged by recognition. The bases are distinguished by what are called seeing, hearing, categorising and the object of consciousness.

Seeing refers to the recognition labelling the meaning that is seen by a direct perception.

Hearing refers to the recognition labelling the meaning that is understood by a correct assumption, which came about through listening.

Categorisation, is labelling the meaning ascertained in dependence upon the reason.

Consciousness is recognition labelling the meaning that is ascertained by a direct perception.

That division was according to the *Compendium of Knowledge*².

Divisions of Recognition According to *Treasury of Knowledge*

According to the *Treasury of Knowledge*³, recognition is again divided into two: recognition apprehending the characteristics with regard to meaning, and recognition apprehending characteristics with regards to label.

The first one, **recognition apprehending characteristics with regard to meaning** would be the recognition that differentiates between blue and yellow, for example. If we have an eye consciousness to which blue and yellow appears, the various meanings such as blue and yellow are differentiated by recognition. Without recognition, then even though they would

appear to the mind, one couldn't distinguish between the two colours. So the mental factor that apprehends the details of those two colours is recognition. The recognition apprehends the uncommon characteristic of those individual meanings, such as blue and yellow.

The **recognition apprehending characteristics with regard to label** would be the recognition that apprehends the details of the label woman and man. If we think, "This is a man, this is a woman", then there is a part of the mind which makes that distinction, and attaches these different labels. That is recognition apprehending characteristics with regard to labels.

There could be much more to say, but now we go to the third ever-present mental factor, which is intention.

2.2.1.1. Intention

Of the various mental factors, the mental factor of intention is regarded as the most important one.

What do we call intention? *Intention is the mental factor that moves and directs its concomitant mind towards the object.*

This mental factor of intention is what we normally call karma. The mental factor of intention moves and directs the mind to different objects. Just by itself the consciousness wouldn't go to particular objects. Nor would consciousness, just by itself, be able to identify different objects. That is done by recognition.

Intention directs the mind towards virtuous or non-virtuous objects. Our mind doesn't actually have any freedom, but it is directed by the mental factor of intention towards various virtuous and non-virtuous objects. That is good to know.

Regardless of whether it is a mind, or whether it is a mental factor, the moving of any type of awareness towards its object is caused by the mental factor of intention. It is like a magnet attracting iron filings. The magnet will move the iron filings that will be drawn to the magnet without choice. In the same way, without any independence the mind will be moved towards various objects without choice, by the mental factor of intention, which is what we call karma.

Normally we say that our mind is controlled by karma, the various mental states that arise without any control, even when we know that those mental states will cause danger. For example, the object to which the mind is attracted is a dangerous object. Yet without any freedom it happens that the mind is attracted to that object. That is through the power of karma, or the mental factor of intention.

Six-fold Division by Way of Base

1. Feeling arising from contact, through meeting of the eye
2. Feeling arising from contact, through meeting of the ear
3. Feeling arising from contact, through meeting of the nose
4. Feeling arising from contact, through meeting of the tongue
5. Feeling arising from contact, through meeting of the body
6. Feeling arising from contact, through meeting of the mental sense power

There are also many other divisions of karma but they were all explained when we went through the Lam Rim.

Two-fold Division of Karma

One two-fold division of karma is into intentional karma and intended karma.

Intentional karma is the karma that we have at the time of the motivation. For example, in the case of the negative action of harsh speech, firstly we would generate in our mind the motivation of saying something harsh. At this time the intention of wanting to say something harsh is called intentional; it is at the time of the cause.

Intended karma is intention at the time when we are actually expressing the harsh words.

The same division applies to all the virtuous and other non-

¹ The numbering follows the order in which the ever present factors were defined last week. It does not follow the order in which they are presented here.

² *Compendium of Knowledge* was written by Asanga

³ *Treasury of Knowledge* was written by Vasubhandu (Asanga's brother)

virtuous actions.

2.2.1.4. Contact

The definition is a long one! The fourth ever present mental factor, *contact* is a **knower that, after the meeting of object, sense power and consciousness, establishes the object that is concordant with the feelings to be experienced, such as happiness and suffering.**

For example, if after the coming together of object, sense power, and consciousness, the mental factor of contact establishes a pleasant object, then the feeling generated by that will be happiness. That is what 'object concordant with the feeling to be experienced' means.

- If a happy feeling is to be experienced, a pleasant object will be established.
- If an unhappy, suffering feeling is to be experienced, an unpleasant object is established
- If a neutral feeling is to be experienced then a neutral object is established.

The mental factor of contact will establish any one of those three objects after the coming together of object, sense power and consciousness.

For example, when the eye sense power meets with a pleasant form the mental factor of contact, which comes about through that meeting, will cause a pleasant feeling to arise. So the mental factor of contact establishes and also apprehends, or knows this pleasant form. Then through that it becomes empowered to cause the feeling of happiness. It is the same with regard to unpleasant forms and neutral forms.

Contact has a six-fold division according to the six sense bases.

1. Contact, through meeting of the eye
2. Contact, through meeting of the ear
3. Contact, through meeting of the nose
4. Contact, through meeting of the tongue
5. Contact, through meeting of the body
6. Contact, through meeting of the mental sense power

2.2.1.2. Attention⁴

The fifth mental factor, attention, is quite similar to the third one, intention.

As we said before, the mental factor of intention moves the mind towards various objects; more specifically intention moves the mind towards the generality of the object. It directs the awareness to the basic generality of the object, and through that the various feelings of happiness and suffering are generated.

The mental factor of attention is the apprehending of a particular of the object. It causes the mind to apprehend a particular of the object to which the mental factor of intention has directed it. So *attention is an awareness that places its concomitant mind on a particular focal object.*

The five mental factors described above are called five ever-present mental factors because every main mind will always have those five concomitant mental factors.

2.2.2. The Five Ascertaining Mental Factors

The second set of mental factors is the five ascertaining mental factors, which are: aspiration, belief, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom.

These five determining mental factors will only come together with a mind that realises or ascertains its object. They will not come together with every kind of mind.

They called determining or ascertaining mental factors because

they ascertain the individual object.

2.2.2.1. Aspiration is an awareness that aspires to a particular object one wants to attain. It aspires to a particular end.

2.2.2.2. Belief is engaging the object with pleasure, as if we realise something and that we like the object.

2.2.2.3. Mindfulness causes the not forgetting of the object.

2.2.2.4. Concentration causes the single-pointed engagement with the object.

2.2.2.5. Wisdom causes the discriminating between the various objects.

2.2.2.1. Aspiration⁵

Aspiration is an awareness that wishes to attain some aim that one has in mind. It is the mental factor that acts as the basis for enthusiastic effort, because of the wish wanting to engage in actions to attain whatever one aims to achieve. So aspiration is the antidote against laziness.

It is explained in the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* by Lama Tsong Khapa: "If one doesn't abandon the laziness that likes the obstacles of concentration and doesn't like concentration, then one won't start engaging into concentration meditation. Even if it is attained once, because one can't practice continuous it will degenerate quickly. Therefore it is important at first to abandon laziness. If one attains the pliancy that increases the bliss and happiness of body and mind, because one won't get tired of engaging day and night into virtue, one will abandon laziness. For that to be generated one need to be able to exert continuous enthusiastic effort in concentration, which is the cause for the generation of pliancy. For that to be generated one needs to have continuous strong aspiration wanting to attain the qualities of concentration. Since as cause for that one needs to have stable faith beyond belief through seeing the qualities of concentration, first one should repeatedly familiarize oneself with the faith seeing the qualities of concentration. You should hold this as very special because if you check after practising this sequence you will realise very clearly what I mean."

What this is saying is that one needs to have the strong wish or aspiration to engage in attaining whatever one has set out to attain.

Threefold Division of Aspiration

Aspiration has a three-fold division into:

- the aspiration of wanting to meet
- the aspiration of not wanting to be separated
- the aspiration of wanting to attain

Once one has generated the aspiration of wanting to attain a particular aim, one needs to generate that aspiration again and again generate that aspiration to make it stronger and stronger.

As we have already mentioned, aspiration is the base for enthusiasm.

2.2.2.2. Belief⁶

A knower thinking it is only like this and not different, with regards to an object ascertained by ones own valid cogniser.

Belief is an awareness that thinks, "That is exactly how I have ascertained it with my valid cogniser and not in any other way".

It is explained that this mental factor of belief has the function of not being disturbed within one's realisation. Nobody can change one's mind to think that it is any different from how one has understood it to be.

⁵ The *Compendium of Knowledge* states, "What is aspiration? The wish to work for attaining the aspired qualities, having the function of acting as the basis for practising (starting to) effort."

⁶ The *Compendium of Knowledge* states, "What is belief? Apprehending the ascertained object the way it was ascertained, having the function of preventing loss."

⁴ The *Compendium of Knowledge* states, "What is attention? The engaging of the mind, having the function of making the mind apprehend (grasp at) the object."

For example this comes into play with refuge. One is very certain that the Three Jewels are our perfect refuge. Nobody can rob us of our realisation. Thinking about the qualities and characteristics of the Buddha, one has found the Buddha to be faultless, or a valid being. One has also found the Dharma, which is explained by the Buddha to be valid Dharma. Likewise one has found the Sangha, which practises and has realised the Dharma taught by the Buddha, to be valid. Then one has generated a very strong conviction that those three are the undeceiving and infallible refuge. Then, regardless what other people will say, they will not be able to rob us of our understanding. This is the function of belief. With strong belief one will be able to overcome all adverse conditions.

In the same way it is also mentioned in *The Bodhisattva's Way of Life*: **The Able one explained belief; as the root for all virtues dharmas; Always meditate on the ripened result; Of their root**

The Buddha explained that the root of all virtuous dharmas is belief, and that one should meditate permanently on that root.

If we have strong belief in the Dharma, then regardless of what other people say, they will not be able to cause us to give up our Dharma practice. Without a strong belief in the Dharma, then as soon as other people make some critical remarks we very easily give up our Dharma practice. For that reason I always advice people to start slowly with the Dharma practice, then steadily and slowly, slowly increasing their Dharma practice, rather than rushing into it. There are people who rush into it, but because they don't have a strong belief in the Dharma, as soon as other people criticise them, or make remarks like, "Oh you are just wasting your time", then they give up their Dharma practice easily.

2.2.2.3. Mindfulness⁷

Mindfulness is important. It is *an awareness that possesses the three characteristics, relating to the object, aspect, and function.*

Mindfulness is an awareness that possesses three characteristics.

- First of all, the **object** has to be an introduced object.
- The **aspect** of mindfulness is non-forgetfulness.
- The **function** is making the mind non-distracted.

The significance of saying that it has to be an **introduced object** is because we cannot be mindful of an object to which we have not been introduced.

So having been introduced to an object, mindfulness is in the **aspect of not-forgetfulness** - not forgetting the object to which one has been previously introduced.

We were saying that the third characteristic is the **function of mindfulness**, which is avoiding distraction, or **causing non-distraction** in the mind. What mindfulness does is to cause one's mental placement and stability to increase more and more.

The mindfulness that possesses these three characteristics is what we call special mindfulness, and this is the mindfulness that we need for meditation. We need to be introduced to the object, and then we need to have non-forgetfulness with regard to the object. Not forgetting the object to which we have been introduced causes mental placement and stability.

Mindfulness and introspection are regarded as very important mental factors. Without those two mental factors then our meditation will not progress very well, and also other practices such as listening, engaging with effort, joyful enthusiasm and so forth, will not turn out successfully.

We need to be continuously mindful of our virtuous practices, remembering and not forgetting them.

Because the increasing of all the qualities of the grounds and paths depends on mindfulness and introspection and whatever attainment of the concentrations of Sutra and Tantra needs to be attained through the power of this special mindfulness, for those who from their heart have the wish to practice this method of relying on mindfulness is most important.

The object of mindfulness is an object to which one has to be introduced. This doesn't happen with sense consciousnesses. In order to be introduced to an object, one has to be introduced to it again and again. There has to be certain continuity of being introduced to the same object again and again so that there is a continuity of becoming acquainted with the object. This doesn't happen with sense consciousnesses, which don't have this continuous acquaintance with their object. Therefore we see that sense consciousnesses don't have this aspect of strong mindfulness.

2.2.2.4. Concentration⁸

Concentration is single pointedness of mind that, having focused on the bound phenomenon, engages with continuity.

We are talking about the object being bound to the mind by the rope of mindfulness. Concentration is the mind that continuously and single-pointedly engages the bound object.

The concentration that is mentioned here is not necessarily single-pointed concentration.

At the time of meditation we have the mind itself, then mindfulness, introspection and concentration.

First of all one should say that concentration is the abiding aspect of the mind. Mindfulness and introspection cause that stability, but mindfulness and introspection are not the stable aspect of the mind. They are not the concentration, and actually the mind itself is also not the concentration. Also, all the various other concomitant mental factors like feeling, aspiration, contact and so forth, (we went through a variety of them), are not concentration.

What is concentration? It is the abiding aspect of the mind, the stable aspect of the mind that was caused by mindfulness and introspection. That is what concentration is. At the time of meditation, this can of course be why it is strong and long lasting. Actually every virtuous mind has a concomitant mental factor of concentration - a certain moment of abiding with the object.

Focal Object of Concentration

The focal object of concentration has a four-fold division that is mentioned in the *Great Exposition of The Graduated Stages of the Path*.

They are:

- Focal object purifying behaviour
- Focal object purifying delusion
- Pervading focal object
- Proficient focal object.

The **focal object purifying behaviour** refers to the meditational object that can purify whichever delusion is most prevalent in our mind, and so purify the harmful behaviour that is the most prevalent behaviour of the mind. For example:

- a person whose predominant delusion is attachment should meditate on the meditational object of impurity

- a person whose predominant delusion is anger should meditate on the meditational object of love and compassion

⁷ The *Compendium of Knowledge* states, "What is mindfulness? Non-forgetfulness by the mind of an introduced object, having the function of non-distraction."

⁸ The *Compendium of Knowledge* states, "What is concentration? Singlepointed mind to imputed object, having the function of generating understanding."

- a person whose predominant delusion is ignorance should meditate on the twelve interdependent links and emptiness

- a person whose predominant problem is too much conceptualisation, agitation should meditate on the coming and going of the breath.

So focus purifying behaviour are the various objects that purify predominant harmful behaviours of the mind.

With regard to the **focal object purifying delusion** there are objects that are common to the worldly paths, which purify the manifest delusion, and there are objects of the superior paths, which purify the delusions, together with their seeds.

The first refers to the various meditations which can lead one through the various concentrative absorptions of the form and formless realms. So, for example, to attain the absorption of the first form realm, one meditates on the objects of the desire realm as being coarse and unattractive, and on the pleasures and objects of the first form realm as being attractive. Then through that meditation one attains the absorption of the first form realm.

When one attains that absorption, then the manifest delusions of the desire realm are pacified, and in that way one then goes on to meditate on the objects of the first form realm as being coarse and unpleasant, and on the pleasures of the second form realm as being attractive. In that manner one attains the second absorption and again purifies one level of manifest delusions. Like that one proceeds up until the peak of cyclic existence. However, these are only the **worldly paths** that purify manifest levels of delusions.

We also have the objects of the **superior path**, the Four Noble Truths, which can then purify the delusions together with their seeds.

With regard to the third object, **pervading objects**, basically if it is an object of the meditation on calm abiding, then it is a pervading object. For example, the objects purifying behaviour and the objects purifying delusions would all actually fall in this third category of pervading objects.

The **objects of proficiency** include the aggregates, the spheres, the sources, dependent arising and so forth.

With regard to this fourth category, the object of experts, this is becoming proficient with regard to the five aggregates, with regard to the 18 spheres, with regard to the 12 sources, or with regard to dependent arising.

- Becoming proficient with regard to the aggregates means, based on an understanding of the five aggregates understanding that all compounded phenomena are condensed within those five aggregates. In order to be able to do that, one has to first clearly identify what those five aggregates are. The aim is to realise there is no I or mine separate from the aggregates.

- Becoming an expert in the 18 spheres includes becoming an expert how the various phenomena are generated from their own particular seeds, or causes.

- With regard to becoming proficient in the 12 sources, we have the six inner sources that are the six sense powers, and we have the six outer sources that are the six objects of the six consciousnesses. You become proficient how the six inner sources become what we call sense powers, and then how they become what we call the uncommon empowering condition for the individual consciousnesses to arise. You also become proficient in how the various outer six sources become the focal condition for the various consciousnesses to arise.

- Becoming proficient in dependent arising includes becoming an expert in all compounded phenomena being empty, selfless, suffering and so forth.

This mental factor of concentration arises only in connection with the mental consciousness, and not with the sense

consciousness. There is no concentration that arises in connection with the eye consciousness, for example.

When we meditate on the visualisation of Buddha, first we look at a Buddha statue to see what the form body of the Buddha looks like. However, the actual object of the meditation is not the statue, but the reflection of the statue within our mind. Then we familiarise our mind with that reflection of the Buddha's form, and acquaint our mind with that reflection.

When one has meditated in that manner for some time then the object will actually appear to one's mind as clearly as if one saw it with one's eye. Actually the object of meditation doesn't have to be a appropriate object. Any kind of object will appear clearly to our mind after some time, if we acquaint our mind with it.

When you do this type of meditation it is important to make the focal object heavy. That will help to lessen mental excitement. If we make the focal object light then that counteracts mental sinking. So at the beginning it helps to make the focal object a little bit heavy.

If our mind is very distracted we can think that the focal object is like a container in which our mind is placed. So the focal object is a container where we place our mind, and then that can also help to lessen distraction in the mind. If you are truly interested in meditation then you have to know these things.

If you think that you experience too much distraction in the mind, then think that the focal object is like a hat, which sort of covers your mind. Through that you attain greater stability of mind, and then you can continue your meditation.

It is also important to mix the mind with the object. It shouldn't be like the mind looking at the object. Rather the mind should merge with the object. That also helps to maintain stability of mind.

Note on authentication

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Mind and Mental Factors

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

19 October 2001

Please generate a virtuous motivation.

Five Ascertaining Mental Factors (cont)

Of the five ascertaining mental factors we have completed aspiration, belief, mindfulness and concentration.

2.2.2.5. Wisdom¹

Wisdom is a knower discerning in detail the faults and qualities of the objects to be investigated.

The object to be investigated refers to virtue, non-virtue and non-predicted, which is neutral. Wisdom is discerning what is beneficial, what is not beneficial, what is harmful, what is not harmful, what gives happiness and what doesn't give happiness. Then through analysing and investigating in this way, wisdom eliminates doubt. The text gives eliminating doubt as the function of wisdom.

Four Types of Analysis

To determine what is beneficial and what is not beneficial there are four methods of investigation.

They are,

- reason of action
- reason of dependence
- reason establishing it as correct
- natural reason

Reason of action refers to an investigation into the function of various phenomena. So, for example, when we analyse by investigating the nature and function of fire, then we will find that fire is in the nature of being very hot, and can fulfil the function of burning things. In the same way, if we analyse the function of the wisdom realising emptiness, then we will find that the wisdom realising emptiness can oppose the grasping at the self, which is the root of all suffering.

Reason of dependence refers to investigating how impermanent phenomena come about, and then understanding that they are generated in dependence upon causes and condition. In other words, understanding that compounded phenomena come about through dependence on causes and conditions.

Reason establishing it is correct refers to analysing whether the object of our investigation is contradicted by any of the three valid cognisers. As mentioned before, if something is not contradicted by any of the three valid cognisers then it has to be correct.

Natural reason refers to the various natural attributes of different phenomena. For example, it is the nature of fire to be hot and burning, and it is the nature of water to be wet and moistening, and so forth. According to worldly convention, various phenomena naturally have certain qualities.

Four Types of Reliances

Those four lines of investigation are related by Asanga to what are called the four teachers. The four teachers are,

- Not relying on the teacher, but relying on what he explains
- Not relying on the words, but relying on the meaning
- Not relying on the interpreted meaning, but relying on the definitive meaning

- Not relying on consciousness, but relying on mental consciousness

First of all one shouldn't rely on the teacher, but one should **rely on what the teacher actually says**.

One shouldn't rely on the words themselves, that is, whether they are spoken very pleasantly or skilfully and so forth. Rather one should **rely on the actual meaning** of what was said.

With regard to the meaning, one shouldn't rely on the interpretative meaning but one should **rely on the definitive meaning**.

Fourthly, even though consciousness and mental consciousness are very similar, this is saying that one should **rely on non-mistaken mental consciousness** rather than mistaken consciousness.

These are the four kinds of analysis, and the four reliances that one talks about quite often.

Having contemplated those points, the omniscient Lama Tsong Khapa said, "Having investigated with those four reasons what one has heard, day and night, may any doubt as to the objects of contemplation be cut off, by discerning awareness arising from contemplation."

Having first of all listened to many teachings, and then concentrating on and investigating again and again what one has heard with the four kinds of analysis, a certain kind of wisdom will be generated. The ascertaining awareness that is generated by this process is the wisdom of contemplation.

This wisdom of contemplation can then cut off any doubt. The ascertaining awareness, which arises through investigating with the four kinds of reasons what one has heard, again and again, is the wisdom arising from contemplation. That wisdom will oppose doubt. If that wisdom is further increased through further meditation, then it becomes the wisdom arising from meditation.

We have now finished with the five every present mental factors and the five ascertaining mental factors.

2.2.3. Eleven Virtuous Mental Factors

The eleven virtuous mental factors are: faith, shame, consideration, detachment, non-anger, non-ignorance, enthusiastic effort, pliancy, conscientiousness, equanimity and non-cruelty or non-harmfulness.

When we go through those eleven virtuous mental factors we shouldn't just analyse them as if they were something unrelated to us. Rather we should check to see how many of those eleven virtuous mental factors we have actually generated in our mind. Everybody has some virtuous mental factors in their mind. When one goes through faith check one's own mind. Has one generated faith? How strong is that faith? Which kind of faith is it? Then do the same for shame and so forth.

Knowing this enumeration of the eleven virtuous mental factors, and then realising that one actually has a certain number within one's own mind, is a very great cause for rejoicing. A beggar rejoices very greatly if we give him a piece of gold. If we find out that we have certain number of those virtuous factors then we can rejoice in the same way. Then through rejoicing in those virtuous mental factors, one greatly increases one's merit.

2.2.3.1. Faith²

The first virtuous mental factor is faith. We all have faith in the Dharma. However it is important to really understand faith, and to generate it, and not to just know faith as mere words.

The text explains that *faith is a knower having the aspect of*

¹ From the *Compendium of Knowledge*: "What is wisdom? Discerning thoroughly the objects of mere analysis, having the function of eliminating doubt."

² The *Compendium of Knowledge* defines faith as, "What is faith? Aspiring belief, clarity and wish with regard to mere existent, qualities, and ability, acting as the basis for aspiration."

belief, clarity or wish, acting as direct antidote against faithlessness.

As I have explained before, if during our meditation we generate faith in the objects of refuge, then we have to take that faith as the object of our meditation, and concentrate on it and increase it. Through that, this faith that we generate, will stabilise and increase in our mind and will become the antidote to faithlessness.

There are three kinds of faith, which are called clarifying or clear faith, faith through belief, and aspiring faith.

Clear Faith

Clear faith arises through seeing the qualities of the object. When we see the qualities of the object, for example the Three Jewels - the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha - they have a clarifying, illuminating effect on the mind. The faith which one generated in that way is called clear faith, because if it is generated in the continuum, it clarifies the dirt in the mind. It is like a water-clarifying jewel: if you put it into dirty, polluted water, then the water will become very clean and pure. In the same way if we generate this kind of clarifying, clear faith in the mind, then it will have a purifying effect on the mind when we think about the qualities of the Buddha - the qualities of his body, speech and mind, his virtuous activities, his knowledge, compassion and so forth.

If we generate this clear faith in our mind it purifies the pollution of faithlessness from our mind. Through that it becomes possible for all the qualities of the realisations to be generated in our continuum. It is said that the root of all qualities is faith. We establish that the roof of all qualities is faith, by purifying the pollution of faithlessness from our mind. Then it becomes possible for the realisations of faith to be generated in our continuum.

Faith Through Belief

Faith through belief relates to the faith that we generate after thinking about, for example, things which were taught by the Buddha, such as the law of cause and effect, dependent arising and so forth. Then, having contemplated and thought about what we have heard in the various teachings again and again, we generate an ascertaining awareness, which is an understanding that what the Buddha explained is true. This is the wisdom that arises from contemplation. Through that one generates faith through the belief that, for example, the law of cause and effect as explained by the Buddha is incontrovertible, or that from non-virtue comes suffering, and from virtue comes happiness and so forth.

The word normally translated as 'belief' is actually closer in meaning to 'conviction'. In this context, belief is not just believing something for no reason. It actually refers to being completely convinced single-pointedly, with a complete single-pointed and stable conviction that what one believes is true.

For example if, after having thought about it, we decide that a person is 100% reliable, then we generate a certain belief in that person, and we generate a conviction in their truthfulness. Once we have generated that conviction in the truthfulness of the other person, then we can safely lend money to them. Many rich people have become very poor by lending money to just anyone!

In the same way, having a single-pointed and stable conviction that the law of cause and effect, as explained by the Buddha, is incontrovertible or valid generates a very good practice of watching one's karma. So a very good practice of karma will be generated.

If we apply that attitude of accepting only what we have ascertained through investigation, then that of course will be very beneficial to our Dharma practice. It also will be very useful in ordinary worldly life if you don't just believe anything, and everything, and everybody, but only follow what

we have found to be true through analysis and investigation.

Aspiring Faith

Aspiring faith could be also called an achieving faith. Knowing that one has the potential to attain a certain result, such as the potential to attain the truth of cessation and the truth of the path, this kind of aspiring faith encourages one to want to attain the truth of cessation, and to want to attain the truth of the path.

Vasubandhu says that in these days, in worldly terms faith and liking are regarded as one. In fact, there is no pervasion that if something is faith, then there is necessarily a liking for that object, or vice versa.

There are actually four possibilities.

- Something which is liking, but not faith. For example the liking for one's father and mother, or for one's boyfriend or girlfriend are all obvious instances of liking, but they are not faith.
- Something can be faith without necessarily liking the object. For example, having reflected on the sufferings of the lower realms, and understanding that the Three Jewels have the power to protect oneself from those sufferings. Then through meditation a belief is generated in the ability of the Three Jewels to protect oneself from those sufferings of the lower realms. That is faith, but not liking.
- Something which is both liked and faith. For example, faith in the qualities of one's virtuous friends, or in the benefits of cause and effect.
- Something which is neither liking nor faith is anger and suffering, and so on and so forth.

2.2.3.2. Shame

The meaning of *shame* is *apprehension towards non-virtue, taking oneself as the reason*. The Tibetan word for non-virtue is *ka-na-ma to-wa*, which has the connotation of being inexpressible. What is inexpressible is non-virtue, one cannot say anything non-virtuous to the Three Jewels. It is said that non-virtuous is something that one cannot express from the mouth. Although this word *ka-na-ma to-pa* is expressed from the mouth, the meaning is basically non-virtue. (Translator: I think it might mean to bad to be expressed, something better kept quiet.)

If after taking oneself as the reason, one feels caution with regard to engaging in non-virtue, then that is called shame.

2.2.3.3. Consideration

Consideration is *apprehension to with regard to non-virtue, taking others as the reason*.

Both shame and consideration are the same in being apprehensive about negative actions.

However shame is becoming apprehensive when coming close to engaging in a negative action, thinking, "This is not an appropriate action for me"; or for example remembering one's vows and thinking, "This is not something which is appropriate for me to do"; or if one is an ordained person such as a bhikshu, then remembering one's vows and thinking, "Oh according to my vows I am not allowed to do this. It is not appropriate action for a monk to engage in", and then not doing it.

Consideration is becoming apprehensive when coming close to engaging in a negative action, then thinking, "Others would criticise or despise me because of that action, so this action is not suitable". The 'others' in this thought refers to, for example, one's lama, or the Buddha and so forth, as the main objects of apprehension. So consideration is thinking that it would not be appropriate to engage into an action, for which one would be criticised for by, for example, one's teacher.

The various vows which one can take, like the vows of

individual liberation, the Bodhisattva vows and Tantric vows are a very good help in generating shame. That is because one remembers one's vows before one engaging in a negative action, and will think, "Oh, this is something which is not appropriate for me to do, because of the vows that I have taken". That helps in the generation of shame, which helps one to keep one's vows.

Also, when we take the various vows, we always take them from special objects like the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. When we take the Bodhisattva vows, we visualise the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Ten Directions in the space in front of us. It is the same with taking Tantric vows. So they become the objects of our consideration as we remember, "Oh, we took those vows from those special objects, so therefore it would not be appropriate to engage in actions that they would not like".

If we have pictures of the Buddhas and so forth in our room, then we should visualise them as actually being there, not just thinking of them as a picture. That will also help to generate consideration within one's mind.

Without shame and consideration then it will be very difficult to stop negative actions. Actually it will be impossible to stop negative actions. By considering that we take the various vows from those special objects, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas, then we can also understand how the negativity comes about when we break a vow. We understand that we have broken a promise which we made with regard to those holy objects. This is something worthwhile and important to think about very deeply over and over again.

Also if, for example, we remember the Buddhas again and again, then they will also appear to our mind more and more vividly as our mind becomes more and more habituated and accustomed to them. That also helps when, for example, we are sad or depressed and so forth. If we sit down and start to think about the Buddhas, and visualise them, then that can have a very beneficial effect on the mind.

The text says that the main object of apprehension with regard to consideration is the lama and the Buddha etc., through thinking that they might know what I am up to.

I think that this is the reason why people marry in churches. When you marry in church, you exchange marriage vows. It makes it special if you go to a special place, with a priest, and all the relatives of the husband, and all the relatives of the future wife, as well as their many friends. When they exchange the marriage vows they do so in front of all those people, and if god exists then he is also there. Regardless of whether or not god exists, at least his representative is there! *{laughter}*

I don't know if it is correct, but I think that such a ceremony is also for the purpose of generating consideration and shame within the mind. So the couple think, "We really took those vows in front of all those people, in front of god and so forth." Then later when there is a danger of the relationship breaking down, they remember those vows and that helps to keep them together.

During the marriage ceremony you have to repeat various promises such as taking care of the other person when they are sick, and always respecting them and so forth. Later if husband or wife is sick, then you remember, "Oh, at the time of our marriage I made those vows, and they were not just words. They were vows actually taken in front of god (or whatever the refuge is). If I do not act in accordance with those vows now, then it will become like a lie." So that gives power to whatever promise one has made earlier. That is how the power of the Dharma comes about.

The next three virtuous mental factors, detachment or non-attachment, non-anger and non-ignorance are also referred to as the three roots of virtue.

2.2.3.4. Detachment

Asanga gives this definition of detachment or non-attachment, "What is detachment? It is non-attachment to samsara and samsaric perfections acting as the basis for not engaging in negative actions."

Samsara refers to one's own five contaminated aggregates, and samsaric perfections refers to wealth and so forth. The meaning of this definition is basically *a knower with renunciation and without attachment*.

By reflecting on the disadvantages and sufferings of samsara, and the samsaric perfections, one will generate renunciation. Renunciation will counteract the grasping for samsara and samsaric perfections, so it will counteract the attachment. By reflecting on, for example, the four sufferings of birth, aging, sickness and death, then one will generate renunciation with regard to samsara and samsara perfections. This automatically counteracts grasping towards samsaric happiness and towards samsara.

Lessening and giving up the grasping for samsara and samsara happinesses also has the great benefit of leading to more happiness in this life. Detachment is a virtuous mind which counteracts attachment.

The three minds of detachment, non-anger and non-ignorance counteract the three delusions, and as we know the root of cyclic existence is ignorance. In the same way as the three delusions are the root of all suffering, these three kinds of antidotes are the root of all qualities.

2.2.3.5. Non-anger

Asanga gives as the definition of non-anger as, "the non-harming intention towards sentient beings, sufferings and places of suffering, acting as the basis for not engaging into negative actions". So it is a knower completely without any harmful intention, that after focusing on any of the three objects of anger, has eliminated the generation of anger.

With regard to the objects of anger,

- we get angry with other sentient beings,
- we get angry with our own sufferings
- we get angry with the places of suffering

Non-anger is a knower completely without any harmful intention, after having focused on any of those three kinds of objects of anger.

2.2.3.6. Non-ignorance³

Non-ignorance is the discriminative wisdom attained through birth or through practice, able to act as the antidote to ignorance.

Non-ignorance is a discriminative wisdom that can be attained by birth, or through one's own practice. One can have a certain wisdom that comes about through the ripening of karma. If one widens it out, there are also certain qualities, which a person can have, that don't come about through practice in this life, but which are the result of ripening karma.

Then there is the discriminative wisdom that is attained through practice in this life. In the same way there are qualities with which one hasn't been born, but which have been attained through practice in this life.

Either one of those two kinds of wisdom is able to act as the antidote to ignorance.

Those three mental factors of detachment, non-anger and non-ignorance are the root of all virtuous dharmas. That is why they are referred to as the three roots of virtue, and are the

³ From the *Compendium of Knowledge*, "What is non-ignorance? Discerning analysis and understanding arising from ripening, teachings, contemplation or realisation, acting as the basis for not engaging into negative actions."

method to stop all negative actions. They are the essence of all paths, because all grounds and paths are for the purpose of eliminating the three poisons including their latencies. Because all negative actions definitely arise from the cause of any of the three poisons, the text gives the function of those three mental factors as acting as the basis for not engaging into negative actions.

Three Kinds of Capable Beings

There are three kinds of detachments relating to the three kinds of capable beings.

The thought of the **small capable being** is being detached from this life, changing the focus of the awareness from this life to aspiring to the next life. So the motivation of the small capable being is one kind of detachment.

The thought of the **middle capable being** is being detached from any samsaric perfection, and overturning grasping from the heart. So the motivation of the middle capable being is related to another kind of detachment.

The thought of the **great capable being** is the aspiration for non-abiding nirvana, being detached from both of the extremes of existence and peace.

If one hasn't generated any one of those three kinds of detachment, then one's Dharma practice will not progress very well. These three motivations are very important. If one meditates on them, there is nothing but profit for oneself.

Maybe we will finish here. The next virtuous mental factor is enthusiastic effort.

As we have only one more Friday it looks like we won't finish.

If we add two more Fridays to the four which were planned, that will be six Fridays altogether. Then, even though it we would be just a short introduction to each of the mental factors, we might finish them all.

We don't have to decide now. You can tell me next time whether you want to go on or not.

Note on authentication

Transcribed from the tape by Gaye Lewis Radcliffe

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Mind and Mental Factors

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

26 October 2001

Please generate a virtuous motivation.

2.2.3. Eleven Virtuous Mental Factors

Of the eleven virtuous mental factors, we have finished six.

2.2.3.7. Enthusiastic Effort

Now we start with the seventh virtuous mental factor, which is enthusiastic effort.

The meaning of *enthusiastic effort* is **a mental factor having joy with regard to virtue**. The focal object is virtue, and the aspect is joyfulness.

As Vasubandhu says in his *Treasury of Knowledge*, "What is enthusiastic effort? The antidote to laziness, joy with regard to virtue." Enthusiastic effort has to become the antidote to Laziness. That explanation is similar to the one in the *Compendium of Knowledge*.¹ Also, *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* says, "Effort is joy in virtue".

In ordinary terms if you exert a great deal of effort in a particular discipline or practice (for example the study of philosophy), without actually having joy in doing so, then even though you exert a great deal of effort, it wouldn't be enthusiastic effort. For it to be enthusiastic effort there has to be a joy in whatever the Dharma practice is.

If we strive very hard for happiness in this life, then that also is not enthusiastic effort. Actually that is what is called the laziness of being attracted to negative actions.

I forgot to mention before that, in order to generate enthusiastic effort, it is important to reflect on both the benefits of generating enthusiastic effort, and on the disadvantages of laziness. As is mentioned in *Entering the Middle Way* by Chantrakirti, practising effort is the root of all qualities. The two accumulations depend upon the practice of enthusiastic effort.

As it says in the *Ornament of the Mahayana sutras*, if one doesn't have enthusiastic effort, then the other practices of the path, such as the six perfections and so forth, will not be generated. Whatever samsaric or non-samsaric realisations one wants to achieve have to be achieved through effort.

As Lama Tsong Khapa says, "through effort one will be able to overcome all the adverse conditions of the path, and be able to achieve all the accumulations".

There are five divisions of effort: armour-like effort, effort in training, effort with confidence, irreversible effort and effort without content.

Three-fold Division of Effort

Actually I have jumped ahead, so I will just correct that. In the Lam Rim from *Great Path of Enlightenment*, there is a three-fold division of enthusiastic effort into armour-like effort, effort collecting virtue and effort working for sentient beings.

Here there are two divisions of enthusiastic effort into enthusiastic effort accumulating virtues, and enthusiastic effort achieving the benefit of sentient beings. The first refers to accumulating merits through the practice of the six perfections, and the second refers to enthusiastic effort in accomplishing the benefit of sentient beings through one's virtuous actions.

Five-fold Division of Effort

The first one, armour-like effort, is included in the division explained by Asanga in his *Compendium of Knowledge*, which has the five divisions of effort explained before: armour-like effort, effort in training, effort with confidence, irreversible effort and effort without content.

1) Armour like enthusiasm

Lama Tsong Khapa says **armour-like effort** is the wearing of the great armour of joy, as the preliminary for engaging in virtuous actions. Before one engages in virtuous actions, one generates great joy with regard to planned actions, in addition to generating the attitude that one will be able to accomplish whatever one sets out to achieve.

One wears armour-like enthusiastic effort in the same way as a warrior wears his armour when going into war. In order to protect himself from various weapons, the warrior dons his armour before he goes into battle. In the same way, in order not to be harmed by obstacles such as laziness and so forth, a Bodhisattva wears this armour of armour-like enthusiastic effort, or joy in virtue, before engaging in practice.

2) Enthusiastic effort in training

This refers to the mental joy which one experiences while actually engaging in the various trainings. Having first generated armour-like enthusiastic effort as a preparation for engaging in a virtuous action, enthusiastic effort in training is the joy that one experiences while actually engaging in the training. It is the joy a Bodhisattva experiences while actually engaging in the various practices.

One can experience the situation where, before setting out on various virtuous practices, one has great enthusiasm and joy. Then when one actually starts those practices, the joy can sometimes wear down very quickly. So in order to prevent this, one trains in the second type of enthusiastic effort, enthusiastic effort in training. Here there are two types: continuous training and respectful training.

- **Continuous training** refers to the application of analytical meditation during the time of one's virtuous practices. Engaging in continuous analytical meditation at the time of one's virtuous practices is the first type of training, continuous training.
- **Respectful training** refers to the increasing of one's ascertaining awareness. If one has generated certain ascertaining awarenesses, concentrating on those and increasing them is the second type of training.

3) Effort with confidence is joy in virtue without depression, not thinking, "How could somebody like me be able to do this, while engaging in virtue?" Effort with confidence is engaging in virtuous practices, and experiencing mental joy in those virtuous practices, without depression or self-doubt about one's ability.

While engaging into virtuous activities, there is mental joy and no depression. For example there is no thought, "Oh, how will somebody like me be able to accomplish this? How will somebody like me be able to do that?" Without having that kind of depression one experiences mental joy while engaging in virtue.

The Buddha explained that there is not the slightest benefit in having self-doubt or depression. In fact having self-doubt and depression can become a type of laziness of putting oneself down. There is not the slightest benefit there. The Buddha explained that every sentient, from the smallest insect, has the potential to attain full and complete Buddhahood. So there is absolutely no reason why one should doubt that one is able to achieve that goal. By avoiding self-doubt and depression, and in addition actually increasing self-confidence, one will achieve one's aims.

¹ From the *Compendium of Knowledge*: What is enthusiasm? Joy with regard to armour, training, with confidence, not giving up and not being content, having the function of perfectly completing and accomplishing the virtues side.

Having mental joy in one's virtuous practices, without putting oneself down and experiencing the depression that comes from doing so, is the meaning of the third type of effort.

4) Irreversible Enthusiasm

The fourth type of effort, **irreversible effort**, is mental happiness in eventually completing one's virtuous work, when one isn't able to complete one's virtuous activities immediately, because of other conditions.

Irreversible effort is very important because one will always be confronted with situations where, because of other conditions, one is not able to immediately complete one's virtuous activities. Then one gives up. This kind of effort prevents that from happening. Even if there are adverse conditions because of other sentient beings and so forth, one doesn't give up one's virtuous practice and one's Dharma practice, even in the face of those adverse conditions. If one can meditate purely for ten minutes without being distracted by other sentient beings, or by the adverse conditions created by them, then how well will one's mind develop? In order for one's virtuous practice to be completed this kind of effort is very important.

Without irreversible effort, then it will be very difficult for us to develop our mind further. In order to continue and complete the development of one's mind, this type of effort is essential.

With regard to this kind of effort Lama Tsong Khapa says, "If you're wearing the cloth of irreversible effort, the qualities of scripture and insight will increase like the waxing moon". With this quality of irreversible effort, we wear the cloth of irreversible effort. Before we said that one wears enthusiasm like armour. Here we wear the cloth of irreversible effort so that the qualities of scripture and insight will increase like the waxing moon.

If one just practises some of the time, and then because of some adverse conditions throws in the towel, then one will never get anywhere. However, if one has this irreversible effort, then whatever qualities of scripture and realisation one has will increase, like the waxing moon. Also all the trainings and paths will have meaning.

One is always complaining that one doesn't generate any kind of realisation. How can one generate any kind of realisation or path within the mind if one practises intermittently - sometimes practising, then giving up the practice, and then practising again? Practising in that way one will not achieve any realisations, nor will it accomplish the trainings and path.

On the other hand if one has irreversible effort, then all that one sets out to do will be accomplished exactly as planned. Knowing this the bodhisattvas adopt the great wave of irreversible effort, which is the root of all the realisations and path, and which completely overcomes laziness.

5) Enthusiasm without content

The fifth type of effort is **effort without content**, where one strives for the higher realisations, not being content with the small virtues and the realisations that one has so far achieved. As we progress along the path, we start out with very small results. Then through continuous practice, one has to increase one's realisation, not being content with the small results attained at the beginning. Rather, one should continuously try to increase those realisations and results.

Concentrating on some subtle parts of the path, and abandoning the rest of it becomes a great obstacle to placing imprints of the whole path within one's mind. I have explained over and over again that when we meditate on the Lam Rim we should not concentrate only on one topic. Rather we practise what is called a glance meditation on the whole path. We start at the root of guru devotion, and then practise glance meditation through all the various stages of the Lam Rim up to the highest meditations. If one doesn't practise in that way then one will

create obstacles for the generation of one's own realisations, and that is something one shouldn't do.

As is mentioned in *Exalting the Superior Attitude*,

Whatever works exist in samsara,
Whatever works exist beyond samsara,
If they aren't difficult with practising effort
Which scholar would tire of enthusiasm?

There are samsaric activities within samsara and also activities that are free from samsara. Regardless which kind of activity it is, if we combine those activities with practising enthusiastic effort then they will not be difficult to attain.

Whoever strives for enlightenment or Buddhahood?
Seeing the faults of sleep and dullness,
Should abide in continuously practising effort.
That is my exhortation to you.

So the root of all qualities is effort. As is explained in the *Graduated Path* by the Omniscient Lord Losang Dragpa, Lama Tsong Khapa,

The benefits of engaging in effort,
The disadvantages of not engaging in effort;
The methods of countering the opposites of effort,
(Procrastination, attachment to negative actions and laziness),
Are the powers of belief in the conducive conditions of enthusiastic effort,
Power of reliance, power of joy, and the power of elimination.

1) Power of Belief

The first method to combat the opposites of effort is the **power of belief**. Under belief we understand aspiration. We have already talked about the virtuous mental factor of aspiration, and that is what is understood here by 'belief'.

As you might remember, when we talked about aspiration it was explained that aspiration is the cause or basis for engaging in effort, and that the cause or basis for aspiration was faith. So the more faith we have, the stronger our aspiration becomes. The stronger our aspiration is, then the more we engage in effort. Here, when we say the power of belief, we are talking about the power of the aspiration that makes us engage in enthusiastic effort.

Through the power of aspiration in Dharma, one creates the inner conducive conditions that generate enthusiastic effort in the mind. Here, as we said before, the power of belief refers to the power of aspiration or belief in the Dharma. Having strong aspiration in the Dharma generates the inner conducive conditions for the generation of enthusiastic effort within one's mind. The reason why we are actually practising the Dharma, and why we are drawn to it, is because of our aspiration. As long as one has strong aspiration for the Dharma, one will be drawn to it.

So faith is the root of all virtues, and therefore one should meditate very well on the various ripening results. This means that one should meditate very well on white and black karma and their results. Through meditating in that way one will generate a strong faith in the Dharma, which is the root of all virtue. As we said before, faith is the basis for aspiration. So having strong faith will then act as the basis for aspiration.

If we have strong aspiration and belief in the Dharma then our Dharma practice will develop very well. If we don't have aspiration, belief and faith in the Dharma, then our Dharma practice will degenerate. This is something that we all know.

2) The power of reliance

This refers to the fact that when one practices virtuous activities in conjunction with enthusiastic effort, then one will achieve and complete them. They will become stable or

relevant. Without that power of reliance one will not complete them.

Before engaging in virtuous activities, one should analyse with one's discriminative wisdom whether or not one will be able to complete those activities. One should analyse one's own potential and the possibility of being able to actually complete those activities. Having made sure that one will be able to complete what one has set out to do, then one should engage into those actions. If one doesn't do that, then it places very harmful imprints on one's mind.

One starts out to do certain thing, but then after a few months one tires of it, and takes a rest. Then later one starts a new project. For example, one starts out studying something. Then after two months, one gets tired of it and takes a two-month break. After the two months break one starts a new subject of study, and doesn't complete that either. In that way one spends one's life never completing anything.

The worst thing about this is that such people set up the mental conditioning for their mental habits to be the same in future lives, where they will never being able to see anything through. For that reason Shantideva said in his *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, "If one is not sure that one can complete what one set out to do, then it is better not to engage in the action in the first place."

3) Power of Joy

The third power is the **power of liking or joy**. Through the power of belief and aspiration then one sets out on a particular virtuous action. Then, while engaging in such virtuous practices and never ceasing to do so, again and again generating joy and liking for the practice in which one is engaged. This is accompanied by a joyful and confident mind thinking, "I will be able to achieve what I have now started to do, and there are no adverse conditions." That is the positive, confident and joyful mental state that is the third power of joy.

It's the same as the way a child does not get tired of playing. No matter how much the child plays, their joy in playing will not decrease, they will not get tired of playing. If anything they will only become more and more enthusiastic about playing. It is the same with regard to one's Dharma practice - never becoming tired with regard to the cause, and also never becoming tired with regard to the result. It is constantly having this untiring joy with regard to one's practice, and the result one sets out to achieve.

4) Power of elimination

The fourth power is the **power of elimination**, which refers to being skilful during one's practice, with regard to knowing when to rest. Having generated enthusiastic effort and engaged in one's practices, after some time the body and mind become tired. Then it is important to take a rest, and not to think, "I have to push onwards continuously without any rest". If one thinks like that, then there is the danger that one will generate an uptight mind and mental disturbance, up to the point of actually becoming seriously mentally disturbed and crazy. So at certain times when one becomes physically and mentally tired, then taking a rest is actually skilful means. One takes a rest, and then after the mind and body has rested, again generates enthusiasm and continues with one's practices.

If one has achieved a particular aim, or completed a certain practice then one takes a rest. Having had a rest then one continues with some new project, or a new practice. So this is skilful means, and it is particularly important for us beginners.

One has to practise with a relaxed mind and in a relaxed manner. One has to go slowly, so slowly. That's the way to go. That concludes enthusiastic effort.

2.2.3.8. Pliancy

The eighth virtuous mental factor is pliancy.

"What is pliancy? Pliancy is the mere serviceability of body and mind, because of having cut the continuity of physical and mental disability, having the function of eliminating all obscurations"².

Of the nine levels of mental placement in the calm abiding meditation, pliancy is attained when one reaches the ninth level. There is also a subtle pliancy that is achieved when one reaches the first level of mental placement. However at that stage it is too subtle, and one cannot recognise and hold it. It is only when one reaches the ninth level of mental placement that one really attains pliancy. So *pliancy is a knower that has cut off the continuity of physical and mental disability, creating the imprints for being able to place the mind on a virtuous focus or virtuous object as one wishes*.

Here the two obstacles to mental and physical pliancy are mentioned. They are called mental and physical disability or non-workability, which are the opposite of pliancy. Mental pliancy is mental workability or serviceability. Of the two kinds of pliancy mental pliancy is attained first. Mental pliancy is attained first. When mental pliancy is attained then the mind becomes completely serviceable or workable. This means that one can place the mind on whatever object one wishes, and that it will remain stable on that object.

Then through the attainment of mental pliancy, physical pliancy is induced. One will overcome one's physical disability or non-workability and obtain the opposite, which is physical pliancy. The physical body becomes very pure and light.

This physical pliancy will completely pervade one's whole body, and then as one progresses in one's meditation, the bliss of physical pliancy will be generated from that physical pliancy. Then through the attainment of physical pliancy, the bliss of mental pliancy is induced and attained.

The sequence is that of the two kinds of pliancy, mental and physical, mental pliancy is attained first, and then physical pliancy. For the two blisses, which are associated with those two kinds of pliancy, it is the opposite. The bliss of physical pliancy is attained first, and the bliss of mental pliancy is attained second.

Lama Tsong Khapa said pliancy is like, "The king that empowers the mind for absorption". The king that empowers the mind for absorption is calm abiding. On the basis of having attained the ninth level of mental placement, the two kinds of pliancy and the associated blisses are generated. When one's single-pointed concentration is actually held by those blisses, and the mind remains on any object for however long the meditator wishes while being held by those two kinds of blisses, then one has attained calm abiding. That calm abiding is like the king, because the king has the power to direct. So in the same way, calm abiding has the power to direct the mind anywhere.

The second line of the quote from Lama Tsong Khapa says, "If placed, immovable like the power of a mountain". If, through the force of calm abiding, our mind is placed on a virtuous object, it will remain there as stable and as immovable as a mountain. It will not be distracted by disturbing thoughts. If so directed, it will engage all virtuous objects, and it will induce the great bliss of physical and mental pliancy.

The elimination of all obscurations is mentioned as the function of pliancy.

With regard to the function of eliminating all obscurations, through the force of pliancy all physical and mental disabilities will be purified. As mentioned before, if pliancy is attained one will naturally stay in concentration, which will increase greatly. Then by the mere increase of concentration, the bliss of pliancy will increase. By the increase of the bliss of pliancy,

² From *Compendium of Knowledge* by Asanga

concentration will increase. So in this way pliancy becomes powerful for eliminating all obscurations.

9. Conscientiousness.

The meaning of *conscientiousness* is *an awareness not under the control of the delusions, while abiding in enthusiastic effort that accomplishes virtue, and protects the mind from contaminated phenomena*. It is an awareness that is free from the control of delusions, abiding in enthusiastic effort, and accomplishing virtue and protecting the mind.

As for the function of conscientiousness, the text mentions perfectly completing and accomplishing all samsaric and non-samsaric perfections. So conscientiousness is very important as the root of all grounds and paths.

The text says, "protecting the mind from contaminated phenomena". First of all conscientiousness protects the mind from what are called manifest contaminated phenomena. Contaminated phenomena refer to the delusions. First one subdues the manifest delusions, and then through worldly paths blocks the seeds of the delusions. Then through like non-samsaric paths one completely eliminates the seeds of the delusions from one's mind.

It has the **function of causing attainment of all perfections, and also preventing the perfections that have been attained from degenerating**.

2.2.3.10. Equanimity

Equanimity is, the text says, "While abiding within detachment or non-attachment, non-anger and non-ignorance together with enthusiastic effort contrary to abiding completely deluded, the mere abiding within the natural mental state, and mere mental equipoise, having the function of eliminating all possibility of delusion".

So *equanimity* is *the spontaneous abiding of the mind, at the time of having attained the ninth placement of the mind, (of the nine stages of calm abiding the ninth stage of mental placement), not having to strive in dependence upon the antidotes of mental sinking and mental excitement*.

In the previous stages of mental placement, one had to employ various antidotes against mental sinking and mental excitement. At this ninth stage, having gradually achieved the nine stages of mental placement in dependence upon the methods that engaged the mind single-pointedly internally, one does not have to strive in dependence upon the antidotes of mental sinking and mental excitement.

Here the equanimity that is talked about is the equanimity that is mentioned as one of the eight antidotes to the five kinds of obscurations in regard to calm abiding meditation. When one talks about the five obscurations and the eight antidotes, this equanimity is one of the eight antidotes, which one attains the mere abiding in the natural mental state that one attains at the ninth level of mental placement, where one no longer has to depend on the antidotes of mental sinking and mental excitement.

The tenth virtuous mental factor of equanimity is called equanimity of action. Of the three kinds of equanimity, (equanimity of feeling, immeasurable equanimity and equanimity of action), this kind of equanimity is equanimity of action. It refers to the mere mental equipoise one achieves when one no longer has to depend on the antidotes of mental sinking and mental excitement.

When one reaches a state of mental equilibrium and equipoise in one's meditation, where there is no longer any need for the antidotes to mental excitement and mental sinking, then this is the mere mental equipoise that is referred to as the **equanimity of action**. **Equanimity of feeling** is the feeling that is neither happiness nor suffering. **Immeasurable equanimity** refers to the mental state abiding free from anger and attachment.

When in the practice of concentration one has progressed to the point that one's meditation is free from the faults of mental excitement and mental sinking, then those faults actually don't occur any more within one's mind. At this stage it would actually become an obstacle to practise introspection, for example to check up on the mind, thinking, "Is the mind abiding on the object? Is the mind clear? Is the mind sharp?" and so forth. Because the mind is already free from all of those faults, what one has to do is to place the mind in mere mental equipoise.

2.2.3.11. Non-harmfulness

The text says, "What is non-harmfulness? A compassionate mind belonging to the family of non-anger having the function of preventing harming and belittling others"³. *Non-harmfulness is the patience of having focused on a suffering sentient being, of having taken a suffering sentient being as its object, then without harmful intent wishing it to be free from suffering*. So there is no harmful intent with regard to that sentient being.

Non-harmfulness or abandoning harming sentient beings is the essence of the Buddhadharmā, because as it is quoted, "Patience is the supreme austerity".

Non-harmfulness and abandoning harming sentient beings is the essence of the Buddha's teachings. It is quoted from the sutras that, "patience is the supreme austerity which brings liberation". Harming other ordained ones and giving harm to others is not virtue. So practising non-harmfulness, or practising patience is the supreme of all austerities, which will lead one to liberation.

Further, according to the Vinaya, when one becomes ordained then one is given a water strainer. That also shows that the teachings of the Buddha are specifically related to compassion. As one has to give up harming others, so one definitely has to use a water strainer in order to protect the sentient beings in the water; before drinking the water one should strain it so as to take out all sentient beings that would otherwise be killed. This also shows the great emphasis on compassion in the Buddhadharmā.

Further there are four important points that one should consider.

- One shouldn't abuse others because of abuse from them. If abused by another, one should not abuse them in turn.
- Don't become be angered by anger. If other people are angry with you, don't retaliate with anger from your side.
- Don't hit others because of being hit. On being hit, one shouldn't retaliate by hitting the other person.
- Don't insult others because of being insulted. If insulted one shouldn't react in kind by insulting the other person.

Those with discriminating wisdom can understand that abandoning harming others is the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Types of Virtue

Are these eleven virtues the only virtues? No. There are actually other virtues, such as for example virtue by birth, virtue through practice and so forth. [see endnote 1]

The eleven virtuous mental factors, the eleven virtues of faith as just discussed are called natural virtues because merely their being established generates a virtuous nature or identity. This occurs without the need for other conditions, such as motivation and so forth. For that reason, what are called natural virtues is shown here expressively.

Maybe that is enough for tonight.

It looks like we could only continue for two more weeks in November, and we wouldn't finish in two weeks. Therefore I think it's better if we leave it for this year, and complete these

³ From *Compendium of Knowledge*

teachings next year over one month. Maybe with another four weeks next year we will be able to finish it all.

At first I thought we could do it in the two weeks in November because I don't have to give the Vajrayogini that I had planned to give, as Khensur Rinpoche is giving it in Atisha Centre. I thought that because of that there would be time, but of course people will go there to attend the initiation. So I think it may be better if we just leave it for now, and then do four weeks next year.

To complete the text, first we will talk about virtue a little more. Even though we have now completed the eleven virtues, there are actually more virtues to come, as well as more kinds of non-virtue. There are the ten non-virtues and the ten virtues. Then after having completed those, we come to the six root delusions that are very important, and after that are the twenty secondary delusions. So it gets more and more profound as we go on. That is what we will do next year, but the actual date is not yet definite yet.

Lastly we have the four changeable mental factors of sleep and so forth. That's when we will learn how to sleep!

Endnote:

¹ From the 'Necklace of Clear Awareness' by 'Yong-dzin Yeshe Gyaltzen'

Virtue

Are the eleven virtuous mental factors mentioned here the only virtues existent? In general virtue has the fivefold division into natural virtue, virtue through relation, virtue through subsequent relation, motivated virtue and ultimate virtue.

1. The eleven virtues of faith etc. mentioned above are called natural virtues because a virtues identity is generated merely by them being established, without the need for other conditions such as motivations etc. Therefore, here eleven main virtues are shown.
2. Virtue through relation: The mind and mental factors that are concomitant in five ways to the eleven mental factors of faith etc.
3. Virtue through subsequent relation: Virtues karmic latencies.
4. Arising virtue: i.e. Physical and verbal karma motivated by faith.
5. Ultimate virtue: Suchness is called ultimate virtue because all obscuration will be purified if one takes it as the object of ones meditation. Because of that is labeled virtue even though it isn't actual virtue.

If the virtues mentioned above are categorized according to occasion then we get the following categories: Virtue attained through birth, virtue through practice, virtue through front generation, virtue through benefit, virtue through being completely held, virtue through antidote, virtue through pacification, virtue through concordant cause.

1. Virtue attained through birth: i.e. Faith not dependent on the meditation of this life but generated merely through being born because of karmic latencies from previous lives
2. Virtue through practice: i.e. the wish to become a Buddha generated in dependence on the four conditions of listening in this life to the ultimate dharma from a virtues friend,) integrating it in ones mind accordingly and practicing the dharma that will lead to liberation.
3. Virtue through front generation: i.e. the karma of making prostrations, offerings, etc. to the superior merit field visualized in front.
4. Virtue through benefit: i.e. the karma of ripening sentient beings with the four actions of gathering disciples.
5. Virtue through being completely held: i.e. the special white karma causing higher rebirth and liberation.

6. Virtue through antidote: i.e. the virtues karma possessing the special power to eliminate directly the obstructing objects of abandonment.
7. Virtue through pacification: i.e. Truth of Cessation; as it is taught: Through purity free from attachment; through virtue free from the lower realms; that becoming only ultimate supreme; dharma becoming peace...
8. Virtue through concordant cause: The ten powers and five clairvoyances etc. arisen through the attainment of the Truth of Cessation.

Non-virtue

In the same way non-virtue has the fivefold division into natural non-virtue, non-virtue through relation, virtue through subsequent relation, motivated non-virtue and ultimate non-virtue.

1. Natural non-virtue: Most of the delusions and secondary delusions.
2. Non-virtue through relation: The mind and mental factors concomitant with those delusions.
3. Virtue through subsequent relation: Non-virtues karmic latencies.
4. Motivated non-virtue: The physical and verbal karma motivated by those delusions.
5. Ultimate non-virtue: Whatever is contained within samsara. They are called ultimate non-virtue because they are the basis for the generation of renunciation of the Aryas; there is no pervasion that everything within samsara is actual non-virtue.

In the same way, with regards to the others non-virtues mentioned above, it appears there are many instances where one also to make the distinction between actual and labeled non-virtue.

Those non-virtues also have categories according to occasion: Non-virtue attained through birth, non-virtue attained through practice, non-virtue through front generation, non-virtue through harm, non-virtue through being completely held, non-virtue through obstruction and non-virtue through interruption.

1. Non-virtue attained through birth: Engaging into killing because of a natural inclination to kill others generated merely through being born because of karmic latencies from previous lives. When we were to debate those words: The karma of killing is non-virtue but if one accepts the engaging into killing as non-virtue then of course debate would arise. However, this presentation of virtue and non-virtue here was not added as clarifying auxiliary for the benefit of the questioning and analysis of those modern clear minded ones. Instead, because it is written as clarifying auxiliary to introduce the aspects of virtue and non-virtue in the context of practicing the graduated path to Enlightenment it is appropriate, after turning the mind towards the inside and not grasping at the mere words, to think about it in relation to practice.
2. Non-virtue attained through practice: i.e. the negative actions of the three doors arisen in dependence upon relying on a non-virtues teacher, listening to false dharma and meditation on wrong beliefs etc.
3. Non-virtue through front generation: i.e. doing blood sacrifice after grasping at harming others as dharma because of the deception by a non-virtues teacher.
4. Non-virtue through harm: the karma of harming others with ones body, speech and mind.
5. Non-virtue through being completely held: i.e. throwing and completing karma that only causes suffering.
6. Non-virtue through obstruction: i.e. negative views obstructing the generation of uncontaminated paths.
7. Non-virtue through interruption: i.e. negative views interrupt everything virtues.

Non-predicted

In the same way non-predicted have those categories from natural non-predicted to non-predicted through concordant cause.

Note on authentication

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