



QSA DHAMMA MAGAZINE

Sangha Samaggi Togetherness of the Buddhist Sangha

Published by the Queensland Sangha Association Inc
An incorporated association of Buddhist monks and nuns in Queensland, Australia. Est. 2007
108 Eric Street, Goodna, Queensland 4300 [ABN 56 506 052 172]

QSA WEBSITE www.sanghaqlld.org
EMAIL ADDRESS infoqsa@gmail.com

Facebook: Queensland sangha Association

15 DECEMBER 2021 NUMBER 016

EDITOR Dr. Sanka Wasalthilake

ARTICLE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
51	The nine identifications of unskillful mental states (166 to 169)
52	Supporting wife and children
53	Being engaged in peaceful occupation
54	Aspects of metta- the charm of metta overriding fear
55	Aspects of metta - metta to the future
56	Aspects of metta - metta to the future

Article 51

Path to Nibbana listing of topics-edition 2 -segment 2 item 3

THE NINE IDENTIFICATIONS OF UNSKILFUL (AKUSALA) MENTAL STATES

Based on Abhidhamma and related commentaries

PART TWO Sub-topics 166 TO 169

Sub-topic 166

HINDRANCES (*NIVARANA*)

1 The five hindrances considered in the *Sutta Pitaka* are as follows:

- 1 Sensual desire (*kamacchanda*)
- 2 Ill-Will (*vyapada*)
- 3 Sloth and torpor (*thina middha*)
- 4 Restlessness and worry (*uddhatta-kukkucca*)
- 5 Doubt (*vicikiccha*)

2 Abhidhamma Pitaka adds another hindrance to this list:

- 6 Ignorance (*avijja*)

There is no problem with this as the five hindrances are based on the sixth hindrance.

3 What do these hinder? These obstruct the following:

- A Performance of skillful actions (*kusala*)
- B Attainment of absorptions (*jhana*)
- C Attainment of enlightenment (*nibbana*)

4 By deduction, the hindrances obstruct progress on the spiritual path as well as the way to mundane happiness.

5 Sensual desire is the desire for seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touch relating to external objects. When one delights in these experiences, then it opens the way to attachment. When these are not managed properly, the resulting thoughts are can be unskillful and may lead to immorality. The pleasures derived are temporary. They have a negative effect on spiritual practices. Disciplining the senses is always recommended by the Buddha.

6 Ill-will includes many states of mind in which there is a tendency to dislike a thing, a person, or any situation, and it may be intense and unbearable to oneself and others. In this state the mind the mind is unable to move on the spiritual path. Hating one-self is included.

7 Sloth and torpor go together. It is akin to lethargy, or inability to progress. These two are different in origin but produce similar results. Again, these mental states prevent spiritual advancement.

8 Restlessness and worry are mental states that cause the inability to live in the present. In restlessness, the mind dwells on future events and in worry the mind dwells on past events, usually with no valuable purpose. The need to use past data or future projections in planning needs to be looked at as an exception. Then the thinking is willed and is in the present.

9 Doubt about anything arises out of lack of knowledge or lack of understanding. It affects decision-making. It is merely doubts regarding the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Doubts hinder spiritual progress.

10 These matters were treated in greater detail in the discussions on obstacles to spiritual progress under QSA Buddhist Forum 04 session 3.

Sub-topic 167

LATENT DISPOSITIONS (*ANUSAYA*)

1 These are hidden mental states, that are not visible to others, and not visible to one-self. The term latent is used here as in science since the mental state lays hidden until suitable conditions arise. Like cankers, they are formed by continued experiences. When suitable conditions are available, the hidden dispositions rise to the surface and become visible.

2 In cankers there is a slight visibility as the entire mind is smeared by some form of past actions. In latent dispositions, nothing is visible until certain conditions arise.

3 The *Abhidhamma* mentions seven types of latent disposition:

- 1 Sensual lust (*kamaraga*)
- 2 Attachment to future existences (*bhavaraga*)
- 3 Aversion (*patigha*)
- 4 Conceit (*mana*)
- 5 Wrong views (*ditthi*)
- 6 Doubt (*vicikiccha*)
- 7 Ignorance (*avijja*)

4 Considering the case of hidden sensual lust, if a boy and girl were working together, there may be no suggestion of poor behaviour at any time. However, if the lights went off suddenly, it is possible for lust to arise, and poor behaviour might result. The change in lights provides the required condition. The lust was

always there as a latent tendency. If there was flirting all the time, generally, then we might have called it a canker.

5 During a war, it was noted that the first-time cannons were fired, and the sound was heard from a distance, the soldiers in the front-line started running. It illustrated the attachment to continued existence. It was able to over-power the usual tendency for bravery. The condition was the loud sound. The desire for continued existence was always there but it was latent.

6 A normally well-behaved gentlemen just heard someone saying that all the fellows in high positions take bribes. Suddenly he ran towards the other person and threatened him in abusive language. The latent tendency of ill-will came to the surface when the atmosphere became foul.

7 Conceit is the hidden tendency to measure and compare with others. At the start of a technical conference after business cards were exchanged, there was dead silence for a few minutes. During this period the highly qualified people were measuring their attainments against those of others. The new condition that triggered the behaviour was the exchange of cards.

8 While travelling in a train two men were in conversation. One man said that the minister in charge of railways was an idiot and immediately there was a flare up. The other had a strong view that the minister was great. That view was challenged by the other. That was the change in conditions which caused the flare up. The strong view was always there in latent form.

9 A person always had his doubts whether vaccinations were effective against Corona virus. Another said that most people who were dying had a double dose of vaccine. The first person jumped up and said that he knew this all along. The statement provided the condition. The doubt in the mind was exhibited in the action though based on a mistake.

10 Although we have studied the Dhamma, and understood certain aspects, we are usually not aware of deficiencies. In a Dhamma discussion, when our assumptions are challenged, suddenly we begin to realise that we were ignorant about some aspects. The challenge is the condition that enables us to know that we were ignorant before. This happens all the time though we do not notice it. In fact, this is the value of discussions.

Sub-topic 168 FETTERS (*SANYOJANA*)

- 1 The ten fetters mentioned in the *Sutta Pitaka* are as follows:
 - 1 Self-illusion or belief in a personality in one-self (*sakkaya ditthi*)
 - 2 Sceptical doubt (*vicikiccha*)
 - 3 Adherence to rituals and ceremonies (*silabbata paramasa*)
 - 4 Sense desires (*kamaraga*)
 - 5 Ill-will (*patigha*)
 - 6 Craving for fine material form (*ruparaga*)
 - 7 Craving for immaterial form (*aruparaga*)
 - 8 Conceit (*mana*)
 - 9 Agitation (*uddhacca*)
 - 10 Ignorance (*avijja*)

2 The idea of fetters is that they bind the person to an unending cycle of births and deaths (*samsara*). The attainment of enlightenment is prevented by these ten fetters. The presentation of fetters in *Abhidhamma* is slightly different but for these discussions these are immaterial.

3 If the elimination of fetters is summarised in terms of the four stages of enlightenment, the picture is as follows:

Stage 1 Stream winner	1,2 and 3 are shattered
Stage 2 Once returner	4 and 5 are toned down
Stage 3 Non-returner	4 and 5 are shattered
Stage 4 Saint (arahant)	6 to 10 are shattered

4 These mental states have been discussed before. A few important points are taken up here.

5 The question is often asked how the person continues after attaining the first stage (*sotapanna*) since the personality view is destroyed. This is a difficult question to answer. It is possible that we are not wise enough to understand that. The writer thinks that the mental state eliminated is that of a strong view that a permanent self exists. The view gets atoned. The idea of permanence is abandoned. Alternatively, we can consider this as equivalent to an atonement of the whole personality view.

Even after stage one is reached, conceit, agitation and ignorance remain. Hence the desire to exist in the worlds of form and no-form still exist.

6 At stage two, it is not easy to understand the idea of atonement of craving and ill-will. This can be understood through your own experience. Through better discipline and the practice of meditation, we can observe how our own cravings and ill-will get atoned or simply get reduced. Through our experience, we can intellectually see how atonement can occur.

7 In stage three, a person who attains that level will not always leave the household. However, he will start living in a different way keeping out desires and ill-will. A story relating to this idea was mentioned before. It happened when the Buddha was living. The Buddha asked monks to visit him and learn from him about the eight qualities he had (not discussed here).

8 In stage four, the person (usually a monk or nun) who becomes a saint would not live in a household with a family. Still the saint needs to sustain his body until death or give up life. He has no regrets about this as he has destroyed all taints.

Sub-topic 169

DEFILEMENTS (*KILESAS*)

1 Most of the ten defilements mentioned in the *Abhidhamma* were discussed before in many contexts. This virtually a re-statement of all these:

1	Greed	<i>Lobha</i>
2	Hatred	<i>Dosa</i>
3	Delusion	<i>Moha</i>
4	Conceit	<i>Mana</i>
5	Wrong views	<i>Ditthi</i>
6	Doubt	<i>Vicikiccha</i>
7	Sloth	<i>Thina</i>
8	Restlessness	<i>Uddhacca</i>
9	Shamelessness	<i>Ahirika</i>
10	Fearlessness	<i>Anotappa</i>

2 In the case of the last two defilements, it refers to immoral behaviour. A person who has these mental states, has no shame in doing certain acts. There is no fear about the consequences of immoral behaviour. It is to be distinguished from the normal idea of shame and fear. Failing in an examination brings shame but not moral shame. One might not be fearful in walking in a jungle. That is not the fearlessness mentioned here.

3 These mental states impede the progress on the path of spirituality, and in addition, reduce the possibility of a happy mundane life.

END OF PART 2

[Extracted from the script presented by Tanuja Sarath-Chandra and Jayantha Maharage at QSA Buddhist Forum 04 during October 2021]

Article 52

The Way to Happiness

SUPPORTING SPOUSE AND CHILDREN

[Taken from the book titled *The Buddhist Way to Happiness* by Rahubadde and Tanuja Sarath-Chandra based on the Great Discourse on Blessings (Maha Mangala Sutta)]

Factor (12)

SUPPORTING WIFE AND CHILDREN

Neglecting the family is wrongful. It is not fair to cause pain of mind to one's spouse and children. Even if you leave aside legal duties and obligations under the contract of marriage, the implied social contracts between spouses, and between spouses and children, is vitally important from the point of view of individuals and society.

It is to the credit of Buddhist culture, that countries where Buddhism prevails, families tend to stay together. When this occurs, the social fabric becomes stronger, thus contributing to stability and progress of society.

Two of the key practices in Buddhism are generosity and morality. On both counts, caring for the spouse and children become pillars of happiness and success.

The *Sigalovada Sutta*, sets out five duties regarding the wife and children. The wording has been slightly changed to suit current experience and the use of terms as well as inclusiveness:

- 1 A spouse must be courteous to the other
- 2 A spouse must not despise the other

- 3 A spouse must be faithful to the other
- 4 Proper authority, must be delegated to a spouse
- 5 The husband needs to give ornaments to the wife

In keeping with the social practice of the day, items 1 to 4 above are stated as duties of the husband for the benefit of the wife. In modern times since either spouse might be the bread winner, or both are bread winners, the terms need to be read in broader light.

In the family situation, these duties need to be performed with great care and affection. Then only, the generosity becomes meaningful. The performance of these duties is an indication of generosity. Good kamma is created, provided you have a good intention. These also have the effect of promoting morality.

Some tend to argue that these practices might lead to more bondage. No, this type of bondage leads to final release from all bondages. This is a type of *Sila* (virtue).

These duties are not an excuse to earn money through wrongful means. Earning a livelihood needs to be proper and honest.

Physical, emotional, and spiritual support are all important in caring for the spouse and children. In difficult times it is even more important. Emotions get rocked this way and that most of the time. It is sensible to keep an eye on that.

When participating in spiritual activities, the spouse must not be forgotten. The spouse can be of great help. Ignoring the spouse is not fair.

Some parents say that they do not need Dhamma schools and temples, and it is the children who need them. If you take this attitude and waste your time at the temple engaged in meaningless conversations, you are sadly mistaken.

Assume that you need the temple for yourself and take the family as spiritual companions. Learn and practise the Dhamma all the time. You need it, not merely the children.

Article 53

The Way to Happiness

BEING IN A BLAMELESS ENGAGEMENT OR OCCUPATION

[Taken from the book titled *The Buddhist Way to Happiness* by Rahubadde and Tanuja Sarath-Chandra based on the Great Discourse on Blessings (Maha Mangala Sutta)]

Factor (13)

BEING IN A BLAMELESS ENGAGEMENT OR OCCUPATION

This factor encompasses ethical aspects of earning a livelihood. The principle is that the engagement or occupation would do harm to oneself or to other people. It is best to avoid conflicts in the mind caused by the engagement.

The livelihood must be free from the need for dishonesty in the mind or in verbal or bodily actions, outright cheating or deceiving, or mis-leading whether express or implied.

It must not directly or indirectly cause harm to another person's wellbeing, health, or life.

It is recommended that occupations involving the following behaviour should be avoided at all costs:

- 1 Killing of human beings and animals
- 2 Dealing in arms, weapons, and ammunitions
- 3 Trading in intoxicants including alcohol and illicit drugs

4 Trading in poisons

5 Trading in meat

All these activities involve causing harm to other people's life, or health, and to the lives of animals.

One might not be employed in any of the activities mentioned above but by behaviour get connected to them. Voluntary workers need to consider this aspect. Family members of the wrong doer also could get involved in these actions. Spouses and children who get used to these activities, would like to justify their actions, as obedience to a family member in authority. This is a problem in ethics. Friendly advice and discussions may be helpful in solving problems like this.

Remoteness of connection is another factor to consider. For example, we run the government, indirectly. The government is involved in gambling, as they approve the operations of large gambling companies. Therefore, are we as individuals responsible for the gambling that goes on?

There are many other activities to which we might be remotely connected and apparently responsible. Probably we are not unless we intended to contribute to any such activity.

Hence, the remoteness principle needs to be used here, honestly. The principle is not an excuse for willing and intended actions.

Another ethical principle of relevance here is the strict practice of vegetarianism. The argument is that if we are vegetarians, then there is no need to kill animals or to trade in meat (including fish).

The Buddha has recommended to monks and nuns, that if one is aware that an animal is being killed for them to eat, then they must refuse to accept such a meal. He has not enunciated a rule not to eat meat.

One reason for not insisting on avoidance of meat, is that it had been a spiritual practice of the day, for some to be total vegetarians. They practised vegetarianism as a method of attaining enlightenment. Such a practice he said would amount to mis-leading oneself. It is classified as a spurious virtue and grouped under misguided discipline (*silabbata paramasa*). The latter mental state must be got rid of at the level of attaining the stream-winning (stage one, or *sotapatti*) mental state.

There is also the case of people who do not like to take medicines tested on animals.

It is good to avoid meat and causing harm to animals within the limits of practicality. Does this practice lead us to attain enlightenment? That is ultimate yardstick.

People ask the question whether working in the defence forces is a proper occupation. It is observed that a defence force is not necessarily engaged in using guns and ammunition. Some armies have never faced a war. They have a lot of civilian duties such as in development, health services and protection services.

Article 54

Ajahn Brahm's Quote:

“Metta to the Future

If you are not fearful, you balance.

That's the same with life. Whenever we're afraid, we tense up, and what we're afraid of, it happens. We make it happen. So instead of being afraid we should have *metta* towards the future. When you're relaxed, you are more likely to be successful, to be happy and to be healthy.

The trouble is: we worry too much.

One disciple who lived in Sydney was importing designer clothes. One year she went to London to a very big company for what would be a very lucrative contract. When she arrived at the office, jet lagged and tired, the directors told her, “You’ve wasted your time. You’ve come on a journey which is not going to be successful. The CEO is in a bad mood this morning. He’s usually in a terrible mood anyway, but today it’s even worse. He’s been shouting and swearing at us all morning. You’ve got no hope of success.”

Imagine that was you, travelling all that way for a contract, then getting told that you’ve got no chance. Anyway, she decided to sit in a corner and do metta meditation. ‘It doesn’t matter what happens, whether the contract gets signed or not, I will not be afraid. I will just make my mind positive with kindness towards all beings, including my future.’”

Just as she was doing this, they interrupted her; the CEO was coming down. And as soon as he came into the room, when she looked at him, words spontaneously just came out of her mouth: “Wow! You’ve got such beautiful blue eyes just like my baby daughter.” The very harsh, very tough CEO suddenly melted before her eyes, smiling. A few minutes later the contract was signed. She told me that as soon as the CEO went out of the room, all the other directors who were standing around rushed to ask her: “How did you do that? Teach us!”

This is one of the beautiful examples of how *metta* can melt the negativity in somebody else. But if you had been afraid that you were not going to get your contract, you would have been so tensed up and would never have been able to be so spontaneous. The spontaneity comes with confidence and the confidence is having metta towards the future. It doesn’t matter what happens, you’ll always be able to deal with it somehow or other.

Metta towards the future is one way of overcoming fear and negativity towards the future.”

Source: Opening up to Kindfulness by Ajahn Brahm

[Gratefully extracted from the newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria, 5 October 2021]

Article 55

Ajahn Brahm's Quote:

“Metta to the Future

It is the fear of the future that things might go wrong which causes things to go wrong.

I've read in many medical journals that sometimes people go for a medical check-up and find that they have had a tumor for many years without showing any symptoms. However, as soon as they know about the tumor, they get sick very quickly. It seems that fear is what makes the illness worse.

The only way to overcome that fear is this wonderful wise metta or loving kindness which tells us that whatever happens next, the door of our heart is open to it—we can handle anything no matter what happens.

So, if you go with that attitude to a job interview, you come across as easy going, intuitive and confident because you've got no fear. When you've got no fear, then you usually get the job. That confidence is one of the powerful attributes of a human being as it pushes them through to success. Just confidence. And all that confidence is, is this wonderful metta, which accepts yourself as who you are and that gives you this positive attitude and gratitude towards the future.

Many people these days get panic attacks where they freeze up and can't do anything. How do you deal with raw fear and panic attacks when they're upon you?

One of the wonderful tricks which we learn in Buddhism is a simple meditation using body awareness. Whenever you are afraid, you'll find that it has a corresponding feeling somewhere in your body. Your body could be shaking or your knees trembling, or you've got tension in your gut. You can always associate fear and panic with a physical feeling.

So, whenever you feel such fear or panic, be mindful of the effect on your body, and go to that part of the body to relax it. When you go back to the mind, you find the emotional part has also lessened. It's a feedback mechanism: mind to body and body to mind.

If you're relaxed and at ease, you will feel confident and thus you are increasing your chances of success considerably.

It's the fear of failure which creates the failure.

It's the fear of something going wrong which makes it go wrong.

People who are afraid of their partner leaving them will become controlling. The husband or wife then gets so afraid that they may be looking at somebody else. The fear destroys their marriage. When you're married to someone, please make trust the most important thing. If you're afraid, you control, and you create the causes for the relationship to break down. So the only thing you should really be afraid of is fear itself. And the way to overcome that fear of our future is to have compassion for the future. Whatever happens, it's okay.

Metta towards the future is one way of overcoming fear and negativity towards the future..”

Source: Opening up to Kindfulness by Ajahn Brahm

[Gratefully extracted from the newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria, 12 October 2021]

Article 56

Ajahn Brahm's Quote:

“Metta to the Future

Things don't go wrong, nor do they go right.
They just evolve into new opportunities,
lessons to be learnt, or
obstacles to make us stronger.

Whatever happens will be learning possibilities or growing pains.
In that way, nothing stands in the way of our success.
Whatever happens, we can always learn and grow, and become better people.

That is how we have metta towards the future.
Without fear, we're confident and can find success.
And our happiness levels rise and rise.”

Source: Opening up to Kindfulness by Ajahn Brahm

[Gratefully extracted from the newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria, 20 October 2021]

COMMENTS ON ARTICLES AND YOUR DHAMMA QUESTIONS

Comments and questions are requested. These can be taken up in future Buddhist Forums conducted by QSA. Forums 3 and 4 are now proceeding. For how to join these forums, please see a recent QSA newsletter. Ask for a copy from infoqsa@gmail.com or see under current activities in the QSA website www.sanghaqlld.org

THE END OF THE 16 PAGE QSA DHAMMA MAGAZINE FOR DECEMBER 2021

Issued by the President of QSA, Reverend James Wilson

**YOU ARE WELCOME TO FORWARD THIS MAGAZINE TO A FRIEND
WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT**

**THIS MAGAZINE IS NOT FOR PUBLIC CIRCULATION BUT FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS OF QSA,
SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS. PAST COPIES OF THE MAGAZINE ARE PLACED IN THE CURRENT activities section
of the QSA website www.sanghaqlld.org**

If you do not want to receive this magazine, please advise QSA via infoqsa@gmail.com

If you want a friend to see this magazine, please let us know