

5 faults and 8 antidotes

Faults

Lack of Enthusiasm. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga. « It is a non-enthusiasm of the mind engendered by the comfort of lying down, reclining on one's side, and slouching about, and is involved with ignorance. It has the function of hindering application to the class of virtue. »

According to Geshe Gendun Lodrö in *Calm Abiding and Special Insight* : « A mental factor which, through its own power, causes procrastination with respect to cultivating meditative stabilization.»

3 types of lack of enthusiasm/laziness: 1. Of discouragement. (e.g., "I am not able to do that.") 2. Of procrastination. (e.g., "I'm able to do that but rather tomorrow.") 3. Of indulging in worldly activities. (e.g., "I'm able to do that, but I have no time." Or : "I've got other things to do.")

Forgetting the instructions. This can refer both to forgetting the instructions on how to place the mind on the object of meditation or to forget the object of meditation.

Laxity and excitement. Definition of excitement according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: "It is an unpeacefulness of mind that subsequently engages an attractive cause. It has the function of hindering calm-abiding." Its object is attractive and pleasant. It is conjoined with attachment. Its function is to create turbulence in the mind. Description of laxity according to Geshe Gendun Lodrö: "An internal distraction which is a mental factor that destroys the intensity of the clarity in [a mind of] meditative stabilization."

Non-application. Not applying an antidote to laxity and excitement.

Over-application. Consists in still applying an antidote when unnecessary.

Antidotes

Faith/Believing a fact to be true. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: "It is a conviction, clarity, and wishing with respect to an existent that is endowed with excellent qualities and power. It has the function of acting as a support for aspiration." It is a constructive mental factor. To *have faith* in non-constructive behavior may hold the name "faith", but is not what is mentioned here. Faith doesn't necessary mean that we *like* something. We can have faith into the problems of samsara. An other translation could therefore be *believing a fact to be true*. In the practice of Shamatha, it is a conviction in the good qualities of Shamatha and the belief that we can, to a certain extend, achieve them.

Aspiration. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: "It is the very wish to be endowed with this or that [attribute] of a desired thing. It has the function of acting as a support for making effort." In the practice of Shamatha, aspiration is a genuine wish to gain more concentration or to attain Shamatha. This aspiration involves spending time generating this wish.

Enthusiasm/Joyous effort/Zeal. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: "It is a mind that is enthusiastic in regard to armoring, application, non-inferiority, irreversibility, and non-complacency. It has the function of fulfilling and accomplishing the class of virtue." 5 types of effort: 1) The **armor-like effort**. It consists in donning the great armor of preparation. Being enthusiastic before actually doing something. 2) The **effort of application**. A joy in engaging oneself the application. 3) The **effort of non-discouragement**. Not thinking: " How someone like me could do such a thing?" 4) **Effort of irreversibility**. Adverse conditions can not prevent us from engaging in virtue. 5) The **effort of non-complacency** is exertion that does not just rest complacent with some trifling virtue, but seeks higher qualities. // In the practice of Shamatha, joyous effort is first engendered by reflecting on the good qualities of concentration, then is generated during the practice as one experiences the qualities in real time.

Pliancy. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: "It is a serviceability of body and mind due to severing the continuum of unfavorable states of body and mind. It has the function of eliminating all obscurations." (1) **Physical pliancy** is such that, through the power of meditative stabilization, unserviceability of the body is purified, whereupon the body is buoyant and light, like a ball of cotton, and can be applied to virtuous activity according to one's wish. (2) **Mental pliancy** is such that, through the power of meditative stabilization, the mind becomes free of unserviceability, whereupon it becomes amenable to application to an object of observation without hindrance.

Mindfulness. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: « It is a non-forgetfulness of the mind with respect to a familiar object. It has the function of non-distraction." (1) Since mindfulness is not produced with respect to that which has not been previously familiarized with, the objective feature is stated as "a familiar object." (2) Even though the mind might have previously familiarized itself with an object, if it does not presently dawn as an object of the mind, mindfulness will not occur. Thus, [the subjective aspect feature] is specified as "non-forgetfulness of the mind." (3) Since the stability of the mind is enhanced in dependence on special mindfulness, its functional feature is specified as that of "non-distraction."

Vigilance/Introspection. Shantideva in *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. "To examine again and again the states of my body and mind. Just that, in brief, is what it means to preserve vigilance." It is a type of wisdom. Kamalashila's *Second Stages of Meditation*: "While you stay right with the object, analyze and investigate your mind, thinking: "Is my mind apprehending the object of meditation well? Or is it lax? Or is it distracted by the appearance of external objects." Or: "If you see you mind become lax, or in danger of laxity [...] You see your mind become excited or in danger of becoming excited."

Application [of an antidote]. Definition according to the *Abhidharmasamuchaya* from Asanga: "It is a compositional mental action of the mind. It has the function of engaging the mind in virtue, non-virtue, or the unspecified." It is not enough to have vigilance noticing the various faults of our focus, one has to use the antidotes.

Equanimity. Description in Asanga's *Sravaka Levels*. "As your mind attends to objects of meditation associated with serenity and insight, it is focusing with calm settling, spontaneous mental engagement, a sense of mental well-being, effortless mental functioning after becoming serviceable and a mental balance free from the afflictions."