

Analysis of Defilements and way to eradicate

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Abstract

The topic aims to understand about the Mind Analysis and mental defilements of human beings and how to eradicate mental defilements as a core, essence and goal of Buddha's teaching. These teachings are like a roadmap which guides one to live one's life so as to eliminate or minimize painful experience in life.

1. Introduction

As in ancient times and in modern times too, we find that society is afflicted with lot of enmity, hatred, jealousy, conflicts, violence and at times war too. At the base of these emerging problems lies the distorted or perverted minds full of mental defilements. It's a challenge to identify the various mental defilements and the process of eradication of the same.

Lord Buddha taught about three cankers which are the canker of sensual desire (kama tanha), the canker of desire of continued existence (bhava tanha), and the canker of ignorance (avijja). The path from the diagnosis to deliverance leads one through the vagaries of the human mind, from dormant tendency through thought, reaction and future kamma. The defilements and various approaches and techniques for their riddance forms the subject of this thesis.

Dhamma is practical approach to the development of excellence. Once the defilements are recognized, they can be destroyed by the various specific methods as outlined by the Buddha. In order to work towards the destruction of defilements, the meditator will not only improve the quality and happiness of this lifetime, but will continuously evolve in future lives too. After their complete removal, he will be delivered from the bondage of phenomenal existence and be able to attain liberated state free from defilements and ultimately leads to free from mental impurities.

Analysis of Mind & Defilements – Meaning

Mind- The essence of the mind is empty. We cannot see the mind; we cannot touch the mind. But to say that the mind is empty does not mean that the mind is vacuous like space. It is not empty like a void or a vacant room. It is also not devoid of characteristics. Your mind is aware. It has the quality of knowing. The nature of mind is luminosity, which allows for the dawning of appearances. These appearances can come in a variety of forms. Certain forms are consistent with the experience of samsara and certain forms are consistent with the experience of nirvana. Everything that we could experience in samsara or nirvana

is a creation of the mind. And all the appearances of the mind are spontaneous. In this way the mind is also described as spontaneous.

Kilesa - Mental Impurities (Bodhi, 2016)

Lord Buddha enunciate that the defilements are those inherent mental cankers or pollutants with which we all are afflicted. These cankers affect the fabric of all thoughts and action, both individual and societal. Until they are eliminated, they ensure the continued unsatisfactoriness of lives.

Levels and Types of Defilements

There are several types and levels of mental impurities as discovered by the Buddha and Expounded for the mankind. Buddha advised to understand and keep away from all these defilements by following Noble Eight-Fold Path and ten Parmita.

Defilement (Kilesa)- The defilements (kilesa) are so called because they afflict (kilissanti) or torment the mind, or because they defile beings by dragging them down to a mentally soiled and depraved condition. There are ten types of defilements

1. Lobho (Greed)- An excessive desire or attachment to worldly things, possessions, or experiences.
2. Doso (Hatred)- Aversion, anger, or ill will towards others or situations.
3. Moho (Delusion)- Ignorance, misunderstanding of the true nature of reality, and the inability to see things as they truly are.
4. Māna (Conceit)- An inflated sense of self, pride, or arrogance.
5. Micchāditthi (Wrong view)- Holding incorrect or distorted beliefs about reality, ethics, or the path to liberation.
6. Vicikicchā (Doubt)- Uncertainty or skepticism about the teachings, the path, or the possibility of enlightenment
7. Thīnaṃ (Sloth)- Mental dullness, lethargy, or lack of energy.
8. Uddhaccam (Restlessness)- Mental agitation, worry, or an inability to focus.
9. Ahirikam (Shamelessness)- Lack of shame or remorse for unwholesome actions.
10. Anottappam (Fearlessness of wrong doing)- Lack of fear of the consequences of unwholesome actions, or a disregard for moral principles.

Methods for Elimination of Defilements by Following Ways

1. Sila (Dhammannda, 1994): Greed is an unwholesome state of mind, and when the mental impulse is strong, the defilement manifest as verbal and physical actions. Any effort to curb the defilement must start at this gross level. It calls for a voluntary adoption of a code of disciplined behavior. Morality is the very foundation of all noble endeavor; and higher culture of mind (like concentration, wisdom, transcendence) can succeed only if such exercises are backed by a life of moral purity. Sila for lay persons is practiced in two ways.

A. Commitment to refrain from killing, harming, violence, theft of any category, sexual misconduct, telling lies, carrying tales, using harsh words, gossiping and consuming alcohol. On to contrary practice non-violence, friendliness, liberality. adherence to truth etc.

B. On special days, periodically, practice a stricter code of behavior which is known as the eight-fold sila.

2. Samadhi (Narada, 1988) - Concentration of mind is also known as one pointedness of mind which is the fixing of the mind on a single object. When a visible object is seen with one pointed mind, there is only the process of seeing, and no thinking about the visible object. Since thinking about the visible object absent, sense-desire for that visible object has to be absent. In this way, one makes sure that in the seen there is only the seen; in hearing a sound, there is only hearing; in smelling there is only the smell; in touching there is only the awareness of touch; and cognizing a mental object there is only cognition. Since thinking about the sense-object is stopped, sense-desire does not arise.

3. Guarding the sense doors (Sayadaw, 1999)- The importance of this practice is stressed in many discourses of the Buddha. The practice is described thus "Whenever the monk perceives a form with the eye, a sound with the ear, an odor with the nose, a taste with the tongue, and impression with the body, an object with the mind, he neither adheres to the appearance as a whole, nor to its parts. And he strives to ward off that through which evil and unwholesome things, greed, and sorrow, would arise, if he remained with unguarded senses; and he watches over his senses, restrains his senses.

4. Moderation in eating (Sayadaw, 1999)- Firstly one should know the measure of eating. Overeating as well as undernourishment cause the arising of defilements. 'Eat to live, and not live to eat' is an old saying. Secondly one should not be finickily about food. Food is for nourishment only, and not for providing visual delight, sound delight, smell delight, taste delight, touch delight and thought delight.

5. Brahma Vihara (Narada, 1988) - The four divine abodes, or boundless states, are Maitri (Loving-kindness), Karuna (Compassion), Mudit (Sympathetic joy, to be joyous at others success), Upekkha (Equanimity, a capacity to tolerate others weaknesses and failings). The development of these selfless emotions is as follows: "The monk with a mind full of loving-kindness pervading all directions; and everywhere identifying himself with all, he is pervading the whole world with mind of loving kindness, with mind wide, developed, unbounded, free from hate and ill-will". The same theme applies to the development of compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.

Benefits of Meditation- Meditation offers a wide range of benefits, including reduced stress and anxiety, enhanced self-awareness, improved focus and concentration, better emotional regulation, and greater overall well-being. It also promotes physical health improvements, cultivates compassion, and can lead to greater peace and contentment

Mental and Emotional Benefits:

Reduced Stress and Anxiety: Meditation helps regulate the mind's tendency to dwell on negative thoughts, leading to lower levels of stress and anxiety.

Improved Focus and Concentration: By training the mind to focus on the present moment, meditation enhances attention span and concentration.

Enhanced Self-Awareness: Practitioners gain a deeper understanding of their thought patterns, emotions, and behaviours through mindful observation.

Better Emotional Regulation: Meditation helps control impulsive reactions and promotes healthier emotional responses.

Greater Resilience: Regular practice builds mental strength, enabling individuals to better cope with challenges and setbacks.

Improved Empathy and Compassion: By understanding their own suffering, practitioners develop greater empathy and compassion for others.

Reduced Symptoms of Depression: Studies suggest Vipassana can help alleviate symptoms of depression.

Physical Benefits:

Improved Sleep: Meditation can lead to more restful sleep.

Pain Management: Some studies indicate meditation can help manage chronic pain.

Overall Well-being: Improved mental and emotional states can contribute to a greater sense of overall well-being.

Other Benefits:

Increased Mindfulness: Meditation cultivates a heightened awareness of the present moment in daily life.

Self-Discovery: The practice allows for exploration of one's own mind, leading to deeper insights into thought patterns and beliefs.

Stronger Relationships: Better emotional regulation and increased empathy can positively impact interpersonal relationships.

Results

The causes for suffering and mental impurities are defilements which are arising out of greed, hatred and also ignorance and delusion. And the world is different but the students are proven to various desires are driving them to do the uncommon things which are the most of them are negative things.

Several studies have been conducted all over the world to eradicate this defilement. However, these are only a partial one, a complete remedy for eradication of mental impurities can be found in Buddha's Dhamma approach, where it has been said the Dana (Generosity), Sila (Morality), Samatha (Practice in

concentration meditation). Anapana, Metta Bhavna and Panna will certainly eradicate this mental defilement and we can create the healthy society, harmonious society.

Conclusion

Buddha's Dhamma is practical approach to the development of excellence. Once the defilements are recognized, they can be eradicated by the various specific methods as outline by the Buddha in the form of Buddha. In working towards the destruction of these defilements, the undergraduate students will not only improve the quality and happiness of this lifetime, but will be assured of continuing spiritual progress.

Dhamma education improves productivity and prosperity, and improve life. It contributes towards the growth of harmonious peaceful and ethically prosperous content and happy society.

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