**THE BEAUTIFUL OCCASIONALS**

As understanding and application of the Anapanasati Sutta continues, the remaining cetasikas are discussed. To provide a contextual review, here is the appropriate excerpt from the Sutta, translated by Thanissaro:

"On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to rapture'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to pleasure'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to mental fabrication'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out calming mental fabrication': On that occasion the monk remains focused on *feelings* in & of themselves — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this — careful attention to in-&-out breaths — is classed as a feeling among feelings, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on feelings in & of themselves — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to the mind'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out satisfying the mind'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out steadying the mind'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out releasing the mind': On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *mind* in & of itself — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. I don't say that there is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing in one of lapsed mindfulness and no alertness, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the mind in & of itself — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

The reference to rapture and pleasure are associated with either attainment of the first jhana or, more specifically, to the heightened interest (rapture) and peace of mind (pleasure). The reference to sensitivity to mental fabrication and calming mental fabrication is the functional result of cultivating the Wholesome Cetasikas, previously discussed on March 13 (the Universal Wholesome Cetasikas) and 20 (the Six Beautiful Pairs of Cetasikas.

As this practice matures, a person’s ability to noticed clearly and dispassionately how the mind appears in awareness is noticeably enhanced. This produces the effects described as *sensitive to the mind*, *steadying the mind* and *releasing the mind*. Of course, as with other stanzas of the Sutta, there is an emphasis on remaining *ardent, alert & mindful*. *Putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world* refers to the subsidence of the five hindrances; they are diminished in the frequency and affect of their occurrence, but not uprooted.

Some of the commentaries talk of the “Noble Tenfold Path”, and I believe that this refers to the shift from conceptual understanding of the Path to actual immediate subjective insight of the Path. Specifically, the Wisdom Aggregate, Right Understanding and Right Intention, are realized and are increasingly transformative in one’s life. This does not reflect total Awakening, but rather a significant shift in one’s ongoing awareness, such that the remaining six cetasikas described below become a manifestation of personality function rather than basic conceptual understanding. The ability to easily and confidently organize thoughts and behaviors becomes normalized through the filter of these remaining cetasikas.

The next 3 mental conditioners are three virtues from the Noble Eightfold Path: Wholesome Speech, Wholesome Action and Wholesome Livelihood. As with the discussion on March 20 of the Beautiful Pairs of Cetasikas, each cetasika description includes references drawn from Shaila Catherine’s “Wisdom Wide and Deep”, pp. 379-80. As before, C represents Characteristic, F-Function, M-Manifestation, and P-Proximal Cause; Note: represents how to understand its effect.

**ABSTINENCE FROM UNWHOLESOME SPEECH**: The avoidance of lying, slandering, harshness and frivolity of speech.

C: nontransgression in the field of speech

F: to refrain from verbal misconduct

M: abstinence from harmful speech: the special qualities of faith, shame of wrongdoing, fear of wrongdoing, fewness of wishes, etc.

Note: Should be regarded as the mind’s disinclination to do evil.

**ABSTINENCE FROM UNWHOLESOME ACTION**: The avoidance of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and intoxication.

C: nontransgression in the field of bodily action

F: to refrain from bodily misconduct

M: abstinence from bodily misconduct

P: abstinence from harmful bodily action

Note: Should be noted as the mind’s disinclination to do evil

**ABSTINENCE FROM UNWHOLESOME LIVELIHOOD**: The avoidance of occupations that are manifestations of, supportive of, or extensions of unwholesome speech or unwholesome action.

C: nontransgression in the field of livelihood

F: to refrain from misconduct in livelihood

M: abstinence from engaging in wrong livelihood

P: the special qualities of faith, shame of wrongdoing, fear of wrongdoing, fewness of wishes, etc.

Note: Should be noted as the mind’s disinclination to do evil

The next two mind conditioners do not necessarily arise with every moment of consciousness. Their arising is conditioned by opportunities for application. They are aspects of non-aversion, that is, associated with lovingkindness and non-attachment. It is important to understand that these qualities are normalized in one’s lifestyle and that they emerge from the higher functioning of the mind represented by the Wholesome Cetasikas in operation:

**COMPASSION**: This represents a heightened empathetic sensitivity to distress and confusion, either in one’s own selfing process or one’s witnessing of another’s distress and confusion. As progress on the Path is more thoroughly integrated into Right Livelihood there is an increasing orientation towards recognizing the appearance and nature of distress and confusion, accompanied by more highly developed abilities to respond to this witnessing effectively.

C: to promote the alleviation of suffering

F: being unwilling to disregard the suffering of beings

M: as noncruelty

P: seeing vulnerability in those overwhelmed by suffering

Note: It succeeds when it makes cruelty subside, and it fails when it produces sorrow.

**SYMPATHETIC JOY**: This is the ability to empathize with the success and wholesome happiness of others. To me it is a form of generosity, as being generous elicits happiness in those who receive the benefits of generosity. It represents the antithesis of jealousy and envy. As the benefits of the Path manifest in one’s life, the richness and fulfillment of that way of life is not inclined towards believing that another’s success and happiness diminishes one’s own life.

C: gladness and rejoicing produced by the recognition of another’s success

F: being not envious

M: as the elimination of aversion, envy, jealousy and boredom

P: seeing the success of others

Note: Mudita succeeds when it makes jealousy and boredom subside, and it fails when it produces merriment, giddiness, exuberance, or exhilaration

The remaining mind conditioner is the third "beautiful root factor", understanding. As with compassion and sympathetic joy, it does not necessarily accompany every wholesome citta. It is the premiere mind conditioner, co-arising with mindfulness, as its manifestation overcomes ignorance and delusion.

**WHOLESOME UNDERSTANDING**: This constitutes perceiving the 3 characteristics of reality: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality. It supports awareness of dependent origination and the deconstruction of the five aggregates of clinging away from the notion of a separate self. This is the Wholesome Understanding of the Noble Eightfold Path. It is appreciated on two levels: that of conceptual understanding, and that of experiential insight.

C: penetrating things according to their intrinsic and ultimate nature

F: to illuminate the object like a lamp makes objects visible; to abolish the darkness of delusion which conceals the individual essence of states

M: as clarity of perspective, lucid discernment, nonbewilderment, like a good guide in the forest

P: wise attention; concentration, because the Buddha said: “One who is concentrated understands things as they really are.”