**WHOLESOME MIND CONDITIONERS, PART 2**

**THE BEAUTIFUL PAIRS**

The seven wholesome conditioners described in the previous essay “Wholesome Mind Conditioners, Part 1” occur in any moment of wholesome self-awareness. The following twelve mind conditioners are often called the “six beautiful pairs”, and they represent the functional benefits of vipassana practice. They can be conceived of as the unified, harmonious cooperation between the aggregated mind conditioners reflected in awareness unperturbed by the five hindrances. The following descriptions will include commentary from Shaila Catherine’s “Wisdom Wide And Deep”, pp 376-78, designated by C (Characteristic), F (Function), M (Manifestation) and P (Proximal Cause). Each comment includes a note quoted from the book. Please note that her book terms the *mind conditioners* as *mental factors* and *mind* as *consciousness*:

**TRANQUILITY OF MIND CONDITIONERS**: The pali word *passadhi* (pah-sah-dee) is most often translated as tranquility. It is one of the seven awakening factors and represents the absence of turbulence in the flow of subjective experience. Its function is so similar to the manifestation of concentration that I often use the term “Samadhi/Passadhi”. This is the antidote for the unwholesome mind conditioner of restlessness.

C: the quieting down of disturbance in the associated mental factors

F: to crush disturbance of the associated mental factors

M: as inactivity, peacefulness, and coolness of the associated mental factors

P: the associated mental factors

Note: Counters the defilements of restlessness and worry, which create distress.

**TRANQUILITY OF MIND**: As the wholesome mind conditioners affect consciousness, then consciousness becomes stabilized and clarified as well. The “flow” of recurrent and coherent self-states becomes smooth and harmonious. This pairing is the manifestation of the factor of tranquility in the 7 factors of awakening.

C: the quieting down of disturbance in consciousness

F: to crush disturbance of consciousness

M: as inactivity, peacefulness, and coolness of consciousness

P: the associated consciousness

Note: Counters the defilements of restlessness and worry, which create distress.

**LIGHTNESS OF MIND CONDITIONERS**: This mind conditioner supports the other wholesome, universal and particular conditioners in overcoming sloth and torpor. There is an agility as the mind is less burdened by the hindrances associated with greed, aversion and ignorance. As a result, the focus of attention is less prone to “enchantment”, that is, craving and clinging to a particular aggregation of mind conditioners. This is an important quality to be cultivated through the practice of vipassana, particularly the quickness through which “aiming and sustaining” (vitakka and vicara) are skillfully applied.

C: the subsiding of heaviness in the associated mental factors

F: to crush heaviness in the associated mental factors

M: as nonsluggishness of the associated mental factors, swiftness

P: the associated mental factors

Note: Counters the defilements of sloth and torpor, which can create heaviness.

**LIGHTNESS OF MIND**: As the wholesome mind conditioners affect the arising of a moment of consciousness, the consciousness is characterized by lightness when that is the object of attention. Subjectively, this can be noted as a sense of inner mental buoyancy, a “lightness of being”.

C: the subsiding of heaviness in consciousness

F: to crush heaviness in consciousness

M:as nonsluggishness of consciousness, swiftness

P: the associated consciousness

Note: Counters the defilements of sloth and torpor, which can create heaviness.

**PLIANCY OF MIND CONDITIONERS**: This conditioner of consciousness is the antidote for mental rigidity, i.e., the unwholesome mind conditioners of wrong view and conceit. It is open-mindedness as to what is good and wholesome. I once heard vipassana described as “The ability of the mind to go to a mental object, wrap around it and then return to breath awareness.” A benefit of this capability is that it minimizes the likelihood of “enchantment” so the mind is clear and receptive to the next moment of consciousness (see below).

C: the subsiding of rigidity in the associated mental factors; pliancy of associated mental factors

F: to crush rigidity in the associated mental factors

M: as nonresistance to the object

P: the associated mental factors

Note: Counters the defilements of wrong view and conceit, which can create rigidity.

**PLIANCY OF MIND**: As the mind conditioner affects the arising of consciousness, the consciousness becomes pliantly receptive to the next moment of experience. A strong component of clinging is the residual “afterglow” that predisposes the mind to become attached to what has arisen; pliancy of the mind is the minimal effect of that component.

C: the subsiding of rigidity in consciousness; pliancy of consciousness

F: to crush rigidity in the associated mental factors

M: as nonresistance to the object

P: the associated mental factors

Note: Counters the defilements of wrong view and conceit, which can create rigidity.

**WIELDINESS OF MIND CONDITIONERS**: This mind conditioner is the antidote for the hindrances of sensual desire and aversion, both of which are difficult to divert attention away from. It supports the pliancy and proficiency of other wholesome mind conditioners. A simile that I find useful is skill at using a tool (I was a craftsman for a time and I approach mindfulness practice as an artful skill, with virtue and awakening as the aesthetic. An example of this might be being wieldy with an ax or with a tennis racquet.

C: the subsiding of unwieldiness in the associated mental factors

F: to crush unwieldiness in the associated mental factors

M: as success in making something an object of the associated mental factors

P: the associated mental factors

**WIELDINESS OF MIND**: This represents the ability of consciousness to accept and be fulfilled by wholesome conditioning without disturbance and with clarity. The mind is responsive and reflects what has arisen in awareness readily.

C: the subsiding of unwieldiness in consciousness

F: to crush unwieldiness in consciousness

M: as success in making something an object of consciousness

P: the associated consciousness

Note: Counters the remaining hindrances, which create unwieldiness of consciousness. It is likened to the process of refining gold to produce a workable metal. A workable mind enhances trust in the things that should be trusted and inclines toward beneficial actions.

**PROFICIENCY OF MIND CONDITIONERS**: This mind conditioner supports competency, and "goodness of fit" regarding the utilization of the co-arising mind conditioners. It is reportedly the manifestation of good mental health. For example, a woodsman is proficient at using an ax with wieldiness to cut down a tree efficiently, and a tennis player is proficient at using the racquet with wieldiness to serve the ball accurately and at a high velocity.

C: healthiness and effectiveness of the associated mental factors

F: to crush incompetence of the associated mental factors

M: as absence of disability of the associated mental factors

P: the associated mental factors

Note: Counters deficiencies of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, which disable the associated mental factors.

**PROFICIENCY OF MIND**: A healthy mind-moment, free of disability.

C: healthiness and effectiveness of consciousness

F: to crush incompetence of consciousness

M: as absence of disability of consciousness

P: the associated consciousness

Note: Counters deficiencies of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, which disable the consciousness.

**UPRIGHTNESS OF MIND CONDITIONERS**: This supports forthrightness and is the antidote for deceit and fraud conditioned by wrong view, conceit, desire and ill-will. It supports moral shame and fear of blame. It also conditions the mind to accurately assess what the appropriate response to a situation is.

C: rectitude or straightness of the associated mental factors

F: to crush tortuousness of the associated mental factors

M: as honesty, straightforwardness, noncrookedness, and nondeceptiveness of associated mental factors

Note: Counters hypocrisy, deception, and fraudulence, which create crookedness in the associated mental factors.

**UPRIGHTNESS OF MIND**: A clear conscience that is a manifestation of the wholesome mind conditioner of confidence.

C: rectitude or straightness of consciousness

F: to crush tortuousness of consciousness

M: as honesty, straightforwardness, noncrookedness, and nondeceptiveness of consciousness

P: the associated consciousness

Note: Counters hypocrisy, deception, and fraudulence, which create crookedness in consciousness.

The topic for next week’s discussion will an investigation of the remaining Wholesome Mind Conditioners, often termed as the Beautiful Occasionals. These cetasikas reflect important elements of the Noble Eightfold Path and the manifestation of virtue.