

The Sixteen Mental Defilements (Cittass'upakkilesā)
from the Vatthupamā Sutta (MN 7)

Ps: = Papañcasūdanī, Commentary to Majjhima Nikāya;

Vbh: = Vibhanga, from the Abhidhamma Pitaka

1. **Covetousness and unrighteous greed** (*abhijjhāvisamalobha*): Ps: *Covetousness* is desire for and attachment to one's own belongings; *unrighteous greed* is (desire for and attachment to) the belongings of others. Or else: *Covetousness* is attachment to an object that is suitable and has been obtained; *unrighteous greed* is the same for an object that is unsuitable and has not been obtained. One Elder says that there is no greed that is not unrighteous, therefore greed itself is covetousness in the sense of longing and also unrighteous in the sense of contrary to what is right. The meaning is one though the expressions are different.
2. **Ill will** (*byāpāda*): Ps. = the nine cases of aversion.
3. **Anger** (*kodha*): Vbh. = Anger, being angry, angeriness, hatred, hating, hatefulness, irritation, irritability, irascibility; opposition, resistance, ... displeasure of mind.
4. **Resentment** (*upanāha*; perhaps "hostility" is a better rendering): Vbh. = In the past there was anger, later there is hostility. It is the accumulation, persistence, strengthening of anger. Ps.: It is anger after it again and again envelopes the mind.
5. **Contempt** (*makkha*): Ps. It is the disregard favors done towards oneself. In the case of lay people, if one is poor and someone, out of compassion, sets one up in a high position, later one disregards the favor done, thinking, "What did he do for me?" In the case of a monk, after one becomes famous and respected, one disregards the instruction and guidance one's elders gave to one when one was a junior monk.
6. **Insolence** (*paḷāsa*): Ps. The sense of competitiveness (?*yugaggāhagāhī*) that arises overpowering someone else, for example, towards a learned person one thinks, "What is the difference between you or me?"
7. **Envy** (*issā*): Vbh. The envy, envying, enviousness, that arises towards the gain, honor, respect, esteem, veneration, and reverence shown towards others.
8. **Avarice** (*macchariya*, better: stinginess): Vbh. Stinginess, meanness, niggardliness, unwillingness to share; stinginess regarding dwellings, families, gains, praise, and Dhamma. Ps. Inability to endure sharing one's own fortune with others.
9. **Deceit** (*māyā*): Vbh. Someone misbehaves with the body, by speech, by mind. For the purpose of concealing it, he forms the evil wish, "May others not know this of me!" Such deceit, deceptiveness, excessiveness, crookedness, craftiness, hiding, concealment, etc., is called deceit.
10. **Fraud** (*sātheyya*): Vbh. Someone is fraudulent, utterly fraudulent, etc., this is called fraud. Ps. *Kerāṭīkabhāva* (trickiness?). For a trickster is like a long-fish. For a "long-fish" is said to show its tail to fish and its head to snakes, to make them think, "I am just like you." So a trickster shows himself to others and says to them, "I will be your companion, your benefactor, and I will never desert you." And they think, "He is devoted to us, loyal to us."
11. **Obstinacy** (*thambha*): Vbh. Stiffness, harshness, single-mindedness, inflexibility. Ps. Unyieldingness, rigidity, high-headedness; being like a bellows filled with air.

12. **Rivalry** (*sārambha*): Ps. This is twofold, as unwholesome and wholesome. The unwholesome: A layman sees another person dressed up in ornaments and there arises in him the thought of surpassing the other person twofold; a monk hears of another who has learned so much Dhamma or speaks so much and, by way of conceit, thinks to outdo the other twofold or threefold. But when a layman sees another give a gift and, from a desire to give, thinks that he himself should give two or three gifts; or when a monk sees another learn one Nikāya and, without depending on conceit, entirely from a desire to learn, thinks that he should learn two Nikāyas, it is wholesome. But here the unwholesome is intended.
13. **Conceit** (*māna*): Ps. elevation of the mind on account of social class, etc.
14. **Arrogance** (*atimāna*): Ps. Extreme elevation of the mind.
15. **Vanity** (*mada*): Vbh. defines *mada* almost in the same terms as *māna*; it concerns social class, clan, etc.; in suttas, related to youth, health, life (as opp. to age, sickness, death). Ps. The aspect of grasping vanity (*madaggahaṇākāra*; not so helpful).
16. **Negligence** (*pamāda*). Ps. Letting the mind roam among the objects of sensual pleasure.

The elimination of defilements by the supramundane paths

(according to the Majjhima Nikaya Commentary)

- (1) The path of *stream-entry* eliminates six:
contempt, insolence, envy, stinginess, deceit, fraud
(*makkha, paḷāsa, issā, macchhariya, māyā, sātheyya*)
- (2) The path of *non-returner* eliminates four:
ill-will, anger, hostility, negligence
(*byāpāda, kodha, upanāha, pamāda*)
- (3) The path of *arahantship* eliminates six:
covetousness-and-unrighteous greed, obstinacy, rivalry, conceit, arrogance, vanity
(*abhijjhā-visamalobha, thambha, sārambha, māna, atimāna, mada*)