

The Sixteen Defilements of Mind

1. *abhijjha-visama-lobha*: covetousness and unrighteous greed
2. *byapada*: ill will
3. *kodha*: anger
4. *upanaha*: hostility or malice
5. *makkha*: denigration or detraction; contempt
6. *palasa*: domineering or presumption
7. *issa*: envy
8. *macchariya*: jealousy, or avarice; selfishness
9. *maya*: hypocrisy or deceit
10. *satheyya*: fraud
11. *thambha*: obstinacy, obduracy
12. *sarambha*: presumption or rivalry; impetuosity
13. *mana*: conceit
14. *atimana*: arrogance, haughtiness
15. *mada*: vanity or pride
16. *pamada*: negligence or heedlessness; in social behavior, this leads to lack of consideration.

The sixteen defilements are finally abandoned by the *noble paths* (or *stages of sanctity*) in the following order:

- By the *path of stream-entry* (*sotapatti-magga*) are abandoned: (5) denigration, (6) domineering, (7) envy, (8) jealousy, (9) hypocrisy, (10) fraud.
- By the *path of non-returning* (*anagami-magga*): (2) ill will, (3) anger, (4) malice, (16) negligence.
- By the *path of Arahathship* (*arahatta-magga*): (1) covetousness and unrighteous greed, (11) obstinacy, (12) presumption, (13) conceit, (14) arrogance, (15) vanity.

It may be asked why the Buddha had given this simile of the soiled cloth. He did so to show that effort brings great results. A cloth soiled by dirt that is adventitious (i.e., comes from outside; *agantukehi malehi*), if it is washed can again become clean because of the cloth's natural purity. But in the case of what is naturally black, as for instance (black) goat's fur, any effort (of washing it) will be in vain. Similarly, the mind too is soiled by adventitious defilements (*agantukehi kilesehi*). But originally, at the phases of rebirth (consciousness) and the (sub-conscious) life-continuum, it is pure throughout (*pakatiya pana sakale pi patisandhi-bhavanga-vare pandaram eva*). As it was said (by the Enlightened One): 'This mind, monks, is luminous, but it becomes soiled by adventitious defilements' (AN 1.49). But by cleansing it one can make it more luminous, and effort therein is not in vain.

Source: Excerpted from "Vatthupama Sutta: The Simile of the Cloth" (MN 7), translated from the Pali by Nyanaponika Thera. *Access to Insight (Legacy Edition)*, 30 November 2013, <http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.007.nypo.html> . Accessed on 18 May 2014.