

Fifty-one Mental Factors

Mental factor	Description	Function
Omnipresent mental factors (5) <i>kun'gro</i>		
Feeling (<i>tshor ba</i>)	It has the characteristic of experience (pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral)	It experiences individually the fruitional results of virtuous and non-virtuous actions.
Discrimination (<i>'du shes</i>)	Apprehends, upon the aggregation of an object, sense power, and a consciousness, the uncommon signs of an object.	
Intention (<i>sems pa</i>)	Moves and directs the mind that accompanies it to its object.	Engaging the mind in virtue, non-virtue, or the unspecified.
Contact (<i>reg pa</i>)	Distinguishes its object – upon the aggregation of object, sense power, and mind – as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral in accordance with subsequent feelings of pleasure, pain, or neutrality.	Acting as a support for feeling.
Attention (<i>yiḍ la byed pa</i>)	Directs the mind accompanying it to a specific object of observation.	Holding the mind to the object of observation.
Object-determining mental factors (5) <i>yul nges</i>		
Aspiration (<i>'dun pa</i>)	Observes a contemplated phenomenon and seeks it.	Acting as a support for making effort.
Belief (<i>mos pa</i>)	Holds an ascertained thing to be just the way it has been ascertained.	Non-captivation.
Mindfulness (<i>dran pa</i>)	Non-forgetfulness with respect to a familiar phenomenon.	Non-distraction.
Meditative stabilization (<i>ting nge 'dzin</i>)	One-pointedness of mind with respect to an imputed object.	Acting as a support for knowledge.
Wisdom (<i>shes rab</i>)	Individually differentiates the characteristics, faults and good qualities of things that are to be examined.	Overcoming doubt.
Virtuous mental factors (11) <i>dge ba</i>		
Faith (<i>dad pa</i>)	A conviction, clarity, and wishing with respect to an existent that is endowed with excellent qualities and power.	Acting as a support for aspiration.
Shame (<i>ngo tsha shes pa</i>)	An avoidance of misdeeds on account of oneself.	Acting as a support for effective restraint from misconduct.
Embarrassment (<i>khrel yod pa</i>)	An avoidance of misdeeds on account of others.	<i>same as shame</i>
Non-attachment (<i>ma chags pa</i>)	A lack of attachment to cyclic existence and the articles of cyclic existence.	Acting as a support for non-engagement in misconduct.
Non-hatred (<i>zhe sdang med pa</i>)	A lack of malice with regard to sentient beings, suffering and the sources of suffering.	<i>same as non-attachment</i>
Non-ignorance (<i>gti mug med pa</i>)	A knowledge of individual analysis that can serve as an antidote to ignorance.	<i>same as non-attachment</i>
Effort (<i>brtson 'grus</i>)	The mind that is enthusiastic about virtue	Fulfilling & accomplishing the class of virtue.
Pliancy (<i>shin tu sbyangs pa</i>)	A serviceability of mind and body such that the mind can be set on a virtuous object of observation as long as one likes.	Eliminating all obscurations.
Conscientiousness (<i>bag yod</i>)	A cultivation of virtuous qualities within abiding in non-attachment, non-hatred, non-ignorance, as well as effort, and guards the mind against contaminations.	Thoroughly completing and fully establishing all mundane & supramundane success.
Equanimity (<i>btang snyoms</i>)	An evenness of mind, a dwelling in a neutral state, and a spontaneous abiding discordant with the afflictions.	Not allowing an opportunity for afflictions.
Non-harmfulness (<i>rnam par mi 'tshé ba</i>)	A compassionate attitude, included as part of non-hatred, which is patience devoid of intention to injure.	Not inflicting injury.

Root afflictions (6) <i>rtsa nyon</i>		
Attachment (<i>'dod chags</i>)	A mental factor that perceives a contaminated thing to be attractive by way of its own entity and thereupon seeks it.	Producing suffering.
Anger (<i>khong khro</i>)	A malice towards sentient beings, suffering, and phenomena that are sources of suffering.	Acting as a support for not abiding in contact and for misconduct.
Pride (<i>nga rgyal</i>)	Pride depends on the view of the transitory collection as a real I and has the aspect of a puffing up of the mind upon observing one's own wealth, qualities, youth, and so forth.	Acting as a support for disrespect and suffering.
Ignorance (<i>ma rig pa</i>)	The mental factor of unknowing that is obscured regarding the mode of abiding of all phenomena. [Two types: (1) obscuration that is the mental factor of unknowing and (2) an awareness that apprehends erroneously]	Acting as a support for the arising of wrong ascertainment, doubt and afflictions with respect to phenomena.
Afflicted doubt (<i>the tshom</i>)	A two-pointedness of mind with respect to the four noble truths, actions and their effects, and so forth.	Acting as a support for not engaging in the class of virtue.
Afflicted views (5) (<i>lta ba nyon mongs can</i>)		
1) View of the transitory collection (<i>'jig lta</i>)	An afflicted wisdom that observes the appropriated aggregates and apprehends them to be a real I and mine.	Acting as a support for all views.
2) View holding to an extreme (<i>mthar lta</i>)	An afflicted wisdom which observes the self that is held by the view of the transitory collection and apprehends it to be either permanent or annihilated.	Hindering definite emergence by means of the middle path.
3) Conception of a [bad] view as supreme (<i>lta ba mchog 'dzin</i>)	An afflicted wisdom that observes other bad views and the aggregates, the locus in dependence on which they arise, and holds them to be supreme.	Acting as a support for strongly adhering to bad views.
4) Conception of [bad] ethics and modes of conduct as supreme (<i>tshul khrims dang brtul zhugs mchog 'dzin</i>)	An afflicted wisdom that observes: bad ethics and modes of conduct and the abode of bad ethics and modes of conduct – the five appropriated aggregates – to be purifying, liberating, and delivering	Acting as a support for fruitless fatigue.
5) Wrong view (<i>log lta</i>)	An afflicted wisdom which views the cause and result of actions, past and future lives, and so forth as non-existent.	Severing roots of virtue, holding tightly to roots of non-virtue, and acting as a support for engaging in non-virtue and not engaging in virtue.

Secondary afflictions (20) nye nyon		
Belligerence (<i>khro ba</i>)	A malice that wishes to harm, by striking and so forth, when any of the nine bases of malice abides nearby. It is involved with anger.	Acting a support for taking up weapons, punishing, etc., and preparing to injure others.
Resentment (<i>khon du 'dzin pa</i>)	A mind that, refusing to let go of a continuum of anger, wishes to harm or retaliate. It is involved with anger.	Acting as a support for intolerance.
Concealment (<i>'chab pa</i>)	An awareness that wishes to hide faults through the force of ignorance when another person, such as a spiritual guide, benignly points out one's faults. It is involved with ignorance.	Acting as a support for not abiding in contact with regret.
Spite (<i>'tshig pa</i>)	A wish, through the force of belligerence and resentment, to speak harsh words out of ill-will to another who has pointed out a fault. It is involved with anger.	Acting as a support for rough violent speech, to increase that which is non-meritorious, and not abiding in contact [with happiness].
Jealousy (<i>phrag dog</i>)	A deep disturbance of mind that cannot tolerate another's marvelous attributes or success due to strong attachment to gain and honor. It is involved with hatred.	[Causing] mental unhappiness and of not abiding in contact [with happiness].
Miserliness (<i>ser sna</i>)	A tight holding onto possessions without letting them go through the power of strong attachment to gain and honor. It is involved with attachment.	Acting as a support for non-diminishment of possessions.
Deceit (<i>sgyu</i>)	A pretension of having good qualities, whereas one does not, through the force of strong attachment to gain and honor. It is involved with attachment and ignorance.	Acting as a support for wrong livelihood.
Dissimulation (<i>g.yo</i>)	A wish to hide one's faults from others through the force of attachment to gain and honor. It is involved with attachment and ignorance.	Hindering the acquisition of perfect instructions.
Haughtiness (or self-satisfaction) (<i>rgyags pa</i>)	A joy and mental happiness upon seeing one's own good health, youth, signs of long life, or contaminated success. It is involved with attachment.	Acting as a support for all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.
Harmfulness (<i>rnam par 'tshé ba</i>)	An unmerciful wish to harm other sentient beings. Involving anger, it is a lack of compassion as in wanting to harm or to cause others to harm, or in taking delight when seeing or hearing of harm to sentient beings.	Harming others.
Non-shame (<i>ngo tsha med pa</i>)	A non-avoidance of misdeeds on account of either oneself or the Dharma. It is involved with attachment, hatred & ignorance.	Assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.
Non-embarrassment (<i>khrel med pa</i>)	A non-avoidance of misdeeds on account of others. It is involved with attachment, hatred and ignorance.	Assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.
Lethargy (<i>rmugs pa</i>)	A heaviness and an unserviceability of the body and mind. It is involved with ignorance.	Assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.
Excitement (<i>rgod pa</i>)	An awareness that, upon observing the attributes of the desire realm previously experienced, mentally scatters outwards to them and engages them with craving.	Hindering calm-abiding.
Non-faith (<i>ma dad pa</i>)	A non-conviction, non-clarity, and non-wishing of the mind with respect to virtuous phenomena. It is involved with ignorance.	Acting as a support for laziness.

Laziness (<i>le lo</i>)	A non-enthusiasm of the mind for virtue engendered by the comfort of lying down, etc. It is involved with ignorance.	Hindering application to the class of virtue.
Non-conscientiousness (<i>bag med pa</i>)	It is a looseness of mind that does not cultivate virtuous qualities and guard the mind from the afflictions and misdeeds. It abides with attachment, hatred, ignorance, and laziness.	Acting as a support for the increase of non-virtue and the decrease of virtue.
Forgetfulness (<i>brjed nges pa</i>)	An unclarity of mind and a forgetting of virtuous objects through mindfulness of objects of the afflictions.	Acting as a support for distraction.
Non-introspection (<i>shes bzhin ma yin pa</i>)	A wisdom that is concomitant with afflictions and engages unknowingly in activities of body, speech, and mind.	Acting as a support for infractions.
Distraction (<i>rnam par g.yeng ba</i>)	It is a scattering of the mind from its object of observation through the force of afflictions. It is involved with attachment, hatred, and ignorance.	Hindering separation from attachment.

Changeable mental factors (4) gzhan 'gyur

Sleep (<i>gnyid</i>)	A powerless withdrawal inside of the engagement by sense consciousnesses in objects. It depends on causes such as heaviness of body, weakness, fatigue, taking the figure of darkness to mind, and so forth. It is involved with ignorance.	Acting as a support for failing to perform (virtuous) actions.
Regret (<i>'gyod pa</i>)	In dependence on oneself having performed an appropriate or inappropriate activity deliberately or having been made to do so under duress, being remorseful about that activity which one subsequently comes to dislike. It is involved with ignorance.	Hindering the stability of the mind.
Investigation (<i>rtog pa</i>)	An inquiry into the rough entities of objects as well as their names. It is a coarse mind and depends on either intention or wisdom	Acting as a support for abiding in contact and not abiding in contact.
Analysis (<i>dpyod pa</i>)	Analyzes with fine discrimination. It is a fine mind and depends on either intention or wisdom	Acting as a support for abiding in contact and not abiding in contact.

Sources: Kachen Yeshe Gyeltsen, *Necklace of Those of Clear Awareness Clearly Revealing the Modes of Minds and Mental Factors*. Translated by Toh Sze Gee. Also Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*.