



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOMINANT DESIRE (CHANDA) IN BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

To dominate the desire seem to be the most important issue of life, because everyone wants to get achievement. Our family, parents, relatives and friends want to get achievement. There is achievement dominated by desire which is two-sides: good and bad or positive and negative. If so, one has to know the things that lead to attain the good achievement. It is needed the predominant desires. Every leader, conqueror, master has the right desire of things. Otherwise, one cannot get right achievement. The core purpose of this article is to establish right predominant desire so that the reader gets good achievement avoiding wrong predominant desire.



KEYWORDS: *predominant desire, will to do, wholesome and unwholesome, right understanding.*

INTRODUCTION

The final spiritual goal of the human within Theravada Buddhism is to liberate from all suffering and the cycle of birth and death (*samsara*) by gaining right achievement. This is the state of Nibbana, which has been described as a supra-mundane state of the highest bliss and eternal happiness devoid of the suffering of birth, disease, old age, death, grief, lamentation and despair. Here, according to Theravada Buddhist ethical perspective it will describe the real meaning or definition of desire and the ways to manage the dominant desires with the right understanding based on right effort and training of mind and body.

MEANING OF DESIRE IN BUDDHISM:

In the Abhidhamma Text desire is defined that 'Chanda, in Pali word' which derived from *chad*, to wish, means impulse, excitement, intention, resolution, will, zeal, desire for, wish for, delight in and a state of willing to do or to get something, or to take something as an object. It is not desire as attachment, as craving, as lust. It is a simple desire or mere will to do. It has its own characteristic, function and its proximate causes.

In the Abhidhamma, commentaries defined that its model is described that desire has the characteristic of willing to do something or to take something or to take something as an object. When it occurs in the continuum of beings, its nature is very clear. A child, wishing to go from his father's hands to its mother's hands, stretches his hands towards his mother. This wishing to go is called desire (*chanda*). It includes all kinds of wishing to go here and there, to meet with someone, to see, to hear, to smell, to eat, to take, to touch, to understand' and so on.

Its function is searching for an object. Searching for sensual things, the *Dhamma*, education, the right achievement and are the function of it. It is mere searching for an object without attachment. The commentator explained that it is compared to a man stretching out his hand to pick up an arrow. An archer when he wants to shoot picks up an arrow from the quiver. He is not attached to the arrow. He does not want to keep the arrow. He wants the arrow so he can shoot. Desire is like that. It is just the mere will to do. Here it is not attachment, it is not lust.

Its manifestation is need for or desire for an object. The desire in taking an object, is like the stretching of mind's hands. Its longing for an object is like the turning of the hands towards the object to take it. The statement that the mind is like the hands is figuratively said to clarify its wishing to do (something), though the mind has no hands.

Its proximate cause is the object that is desired. Because consciousness and mental factors cannot arise without an object.

The desire with the occasional mental factor.

As regard the occasionally desire, it can associate with either wholesome or unwholesome. When it arises with unwholesome impact, it is bad; they assist the evil mind to do its function in an unwholesome way. When it accompanies with wholesome influence, it is good; it assists the evil mind in carrying out its function in a wholesome way. It is just as the dawn that is the forerunner, the harbinger of the arising of the sun. Therefore possession of good desire or evil mind is the forerunner, the beginner of the arising of the wholesome or unwholesome *dhamma*.

It is explained that when desire arises with greedy mind, it searches for the desirable object, it needs that object. Although it is different from greed which is bad, when they arise together, it is not easy to distinguish between them. When we like to obtain a pleasant object, it is attached and it is the desire which can accomplish the obtaining of that desired object. Greed could not accomplish anything by itself. It is a state of being committed to an object whereas desire is a state of just desiring that very object.

When desire arises with the hatred and deluded mind it searches the object that is disagreeable. Here we see more clearly that desire is quite different from greed which is attached to an object and which can never accompany hatred will. It also does not accompanied by doubt and restlessness or distraction which can waver its real object and lack of right decision. It can be sure about the object and search for the object it needs.

As regards the wholesome minds, they are always accompanied by desire. Whenever we perform good, the wholesomeness is accompanied by desire which is zeal for good achievement, which desires to act in the wholesome way. It searches for the object that the wholesome mind recognizes and it assists the good mind in carrying out its task.

Desire is a necessary factor for all kinds of good, for giving and taking, for discipline and for wisdom. When we, for example, visit a sick person, when we want to console someone who is in trouble or when we try to save an insect from drowning, there has to be wholesome desire which assists the good mind. If there were no wholesome zeal, 'wish to act', we could not perform such acts of wholesome thing as loving-kindness and compassion.

It is also a necessary factor for the development of understanding subject. Without the wholesome desire one could not develop it. When calm has been developed more, the hindrances can be temporarily eliminated and unshakable mind can be attained. Also at the moment of firm mind there is desire.

The Power of dominant desire or will to act (Chanda) :

By having merely wishing or praying, one cannot attain one's achievement. All people have to fulfill, ardently, their respective perfections to attain to their own individual achievement with great zeal. They become such and such noble men only having fulfilled their respective perfections, but not otherwise.

And also the people of today who have attained to the higher position or rank become so only having ardently made a great effort with good desire. Therefore, one should have the noble wish to attain to the higher rank and also to the path and fruition, either in this life or future existences.

It is said in the Sub-commentary, thus: *“For one who has strong desire, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished.”* One, for example, has desire to become wealthy, but he is very poor. The cause of it is simply because his desire to become a wealthy one is not strong enough. So, it is very obvious that one really do not have strong enough desire to become wealthy although he may wish to be so. Wishing alone leads one nowhere. That is why the Buddha said:

*“What is not expected may happen; what is expected may fail.
Wealth cannot be made by one’s expectation.”*

If one desire to be rich were to predominate, one would surely find the ways and means to be so; one would create opportunities to make good achievement. Then, there would be no reason why one cannot become wealthy. In the same way, if one have a strong desire to be educated, one will surely become educated; if one have a strong desire to become powerful, one will become powerful; if one have a strong desire to attain enlightenment, one will become enlightened. Surely, if their desire is very strong, it will be fulfilled very soon. That is the reason why we get achievement in life.

Without the basic desire to attain to the top-rank, one will never make a great effort to attain to the top-rank. Therefore, one must initially make desire to attain the noble advantage and must ardently make an effort with great desire.

For example, in the Buddhist history, a wealthy merchant called *Anatha-pindhika* was very well known because he was rich and very generous. He had a very famous monastery built especially for the *Buddha*, where the *Buddha* spent nineteen rain retreats. Moreover, the merchant served meals for two thousand monks every day. However, at one point, he suffered bankruptcy for various reasons and could no longer afford donation on such a grand-scale as before. He could only serve broken rice and fermented bean curry for meals to the *Buddha* and his monks. Being one of the most generous men on earth, he always had a strong desire to be able to give sharing on a grand-scale as he had done previously. His strong wholesome desire triggered the kindness of a *deva* who helped him regain his lost wealth.

In the other hand, for the unwholesome desire, if unwholesome predominant desire strong enough, it will help one to accomplish his unwholesome purpose.

In the Chandasamadhi sutta of the Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha has stated three aspects to desire;

“Thus, this desire, this concentration due to desire, and these volitional formations of striving: this is called, bhikkhus, the basis for dominance endowed with concentration due to desire and with volitional formations of striving”

The three aspects are the desire (*chanda*), the unification of the mind or concentration attained due to desire (*samadhi*) and the associated volitional formations of striving or effort (*padhana sankhara*). The associated volitional formations of striving involve the four aspects of effort in maintaining a wholesome mental state.

1. Desire with effort for the non-arising of evil and unwholesome states that have not yet arisen
2. Desire with effort for the abandoning of the arisen evil and unwholesome states
3. Desire with effort for the arising of the wholesome states that have not yet arisen
4. Desire with effort for the steadiness of the arisen wholesome states.

CONCLUSION:

There is no doubt that with the predominant desire, one can attain one’s aim that is to do wholesome or unwholesome. This is called the real predominant desire and the power of the predominant desire. Main point, here, is that one’s predominant desire should be wholesome

predominant desire: desire to do wholesome actions such as sharing and caring, loving and understanding each other which lead to attain the achievements in life.

The base of mental power named "Desire, Chanda in the Pali language" can be translated as intention, zeal, aspiration, inspiration, will or wholehearted desire to attain, reach, fulfill or accomplish a certain task. No task can be started or accomplished without this primary requirement of desire which will help one to persevere to face any possible distractions or obstructions. The desire here is of such a firm nature that nothing internal or external can negatively affect its progress until its full achievement.

However, it is needed to dominate by understanding the nature of it. According to Theravada Buddhist point of view, the desire to perform a certain task to achieve the goal can be either wholesome or unwholesome. A desire is positive or wholesome when it is based on the wholesome roots of non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion and will lead to wholesome mental states and spiritual progress. A negative or unwholesome desire is based on unwholesome roots of greed, hatred and delusion and includes desire to enjoy sense objects received through the six sense doors. An unwholesome desire will lead to unwholesome mental states with negative effects on one's spiritual progress. An unwholesome desire may also be associated with craving and clinging and will not subside on the accomplishment of the task but will lead to even more desire and craving. On the other hand, when a wholesome desire is accomplished it will subside with no further wrong desire or craving.

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