

Introduction

Before practicing samādhi (meditation), the qualified aspirant should give a careful consideration to the subject of meditation according to their temperaments. . In ancient days it was customary for pupils to seek the guidance of a competent teacher to choose a suitable subject but today, if no competent teacher is available, the aspirant must exercise his own judgment and choose one he thinks most suited to his character.

Source: <http://buddhistpage.com/six-kinds-temperaments-carita/>

Temperaments

1. Lustful temperament (raga carita)
2. Hateful temperament (dosa carita)
3. Ignorant temperament (moha carita)
4. Devout temperament (saddhā carita)
5. Intellectual temperament (buddhi carita)
6. Discursive temperament (vitakka carita).

Combined Temperaments

Carita signifies the intrinsic nature of a person which is revealed when one is in normal state without being preoccupied with anything. The temperaments of people differ owing to the diversity of their actions or kamma. Habitual actions tend to form particular temperaments.

Rāga or lust is predominant in some while dosa or anger, hatred, ill will in others. Most people belong to these two categories. There are a few others who lack intelligence and are more or less ignorant (mohacarita). Akin to ignorant are those whose minds oscillate unable to focus their attention deliberately on one thing (vitakka-carita). By nature some are exceptionally devout (saddhā carita) while others are exceptionally intelligent (buddhi carita).

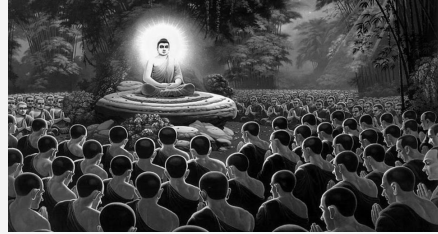
Combining these six with one another, we get sixty-three types. With the inclusion of speculative temperament (ditthi carita) there are sixty-four types.

The subjects of meditation are variously adapted to these different temperaments and types of people.

Six Temperaments

Based on their dominant traits, the Buddha categorized people into six groups:

1. those lustful and passionate
2. those with hatred and anger
3. those with delusion
4. those with faith and confidence
5. those with wisdom and intelligence
6. those with hesitation and doubt



Suitability of Subjects for Different Temperaments

According to the texts the ten impurities and the mindfulness regarding the body—such as the contemplation of the thirty-two parts of the body—are suitable for those of a lustful temperament because they tend to create a disgust for the body which fascinates the senses.

The four illimitables and the four colored kasiṇās are suitable for those of a hateful temperament.

The reflections on the Buddha and so forth are suitable for those of a devout temperament. The reflections on death and peace, perception on the loathsomeness of material food, and analysis of the four elements are suitable for those of an intellectual temperament. The remaining objects, chiefly reflection on the Buddha, meditation on loving kindness, mindfulness regarding the body, and reflection on death are suitable for all, irrespective of temperament.

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