

Identification of human traits in the Visuddhimagga for meditation

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Did you know that according to Buddhism, there are different types of personalities that can sum up the human kind? Each personality has its specific trait, which can make it think, speak and act in a specific manner. All forms of Buddhism contain and dwell into six human traits, The Visuddhimagga or the Path of Purification from the Pali Canon was written 1,600 years ago, in Theravada Buddhism by one of its esteemed commentator, Buddhaghosa. Theravada is the oldest school of thought in Buddhism and it is the basic tradition which leads up to now, let's dwell deeper into this subject. As per the Visuddhimagga, the human personality comprise six intricate facets, each of which has a bad/good or negative/positive or a yin/yang for modern reference. These six personalities are as follows:

1. "Raga Carita"- Passionate characteristics (Greedy or Lustful)
2. "Dosa Carita"- Hatred characteristics (angry)
3. "Moha Carita"- Ignorant characteristics (Misunderstanding)
4. "Saddha Carita"- Devout characteristics (Faithful)
5. "Buddhi Carita" - Intelligent Characteristics (Wise)
6. "Vithakka Carita"- Argumentative characteristics (Confused)^[2]

01. Passionate characteristics / Lusty individual (Raga Carita)

A person who has the above characteristics obtains pleasure methodically, attracted to desirable happiness with illusion, who is strongly supposed to exit deceitfulness has the habit of a deceiving person the social dimensional power, discounted and rebellion qualities. Raga characters possible to judge by observing carefully how a person behaves, by his postures, movements, and how a person walk, stands, sits, sleeps.

Walking

Walk keeping the limbs still; does artistically and carefully. The sole of lusty person has a deep hollow in the middle creating a foot print that is divided in the middle. Creating a foot print that is divided in the middle.

Sleeping

Lustful person sleep in a composed manner. They always react with abusive words with suspicion.

Style of living

Graceful chagrining and polite.

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Movements

This person's movements are very neat and tidy. While cleaning the garden use the broom in proper manner.

Having meals

This person prefers to have sweet, aromatic & tender foods. Eats slowly and enjoys soft, sweet food.

Admiration of the lustful person

Looks carefully, admires, get attracted, and attached to it longer than others. He is not aware of the counting existences.

As religious manners

This person is greedy, stingy, lustful, cunning, attach to sensual pleasures. The characters of a person is the expression of his mentality and is determined by the previous kamma.

❖ To identify this kind of human personalities we can ask few questions as follows

1. When you walk do you keep your feet at an equal distance? Yes
2. When you walk do you touching mid of the feet to the ground? No
3. Do you always like to do your works neatly and orderly? Yes
4. When you go to sleep do you arrange your bed neatly? Yes
5. When you sweep the floor, do you do it slowly and tidily? Yes
6. When you sweep the floor, do you do it slowly or quickly? Yes
7. Do you prefer sweets? Yes
8. When you eat, do you take time to taste the good? Yes
9. Do you find faults of others? No
10. Do you hide your faults? Yes
11. Do you like to show your qualities which you don't have? Yes
12. Do you prefer to use perfume? Yes
13. Do you like to wear washed dresses daily? Yes
14. Do you like to wear colorful dresses? Yes
15. Do you suffer from chest infection very often? Yes

If you agreed to the answers for the questions mentioned above then you can ensure that you have characteristics of Raga Carita. Hence Dasa Asubha is the recommendation for these characters.

02. Hatred characteristics / Irascible, hot-tempered individual (Dosa Carita)

A person who has anger (Dosa), his body posture will change to become rough, arouse, in unpleasant situation, wild and violent in anger. "Dosa" characters possible to judge by observing carefully how a person behaves, by his postures, movements, and how a person walks, stands, sits, sleeps.

Walking

A person who walks in jerky gait as if digging with the toes when walking bare footed. The foot print shows a trailing mark as through he dragged the foot in placing it,

Style of living

This person stand stiffly body is stiff unreleased and hard.

Sleeping

Sleep with covering whole body. When gets up, react violently.

Movements

This sort of person sweeping rough manner ignoring the neatness.

Having meals

They usually like salty, bitter or pungent food. Eats mouthful of food without any hesitation. React for useful food.

As religious manners

They differ vastly in many respects. The person always shows grudge, revenge envy jealousy, slander, pride and stubbornness. It acts according to the previous birth. The previous birth's bad qualities brings to present birth. They are full of bad traits come from "Naga loka"

Admiration of the person

This person is crude in manner expose the anger on other. When he leaves a place it is like a escaping without any hopes.

❖ To identify this kind of human personalities we can ask few questions as follows

1. Do you walk faster than others? Yes
2. Do you not bother about the neatness of the bed when go to sleep? Yes
3. When you go to sleep do you like to cover the whole body? Yes
4. Do you get aggressive if someone ask you any question, immediately after awake? Yes
5. Do you sweep slowly and tidily? No
6. Do you prefer the taste of sour? Yes
7. Do you enjoy while eating? No
8. Do you dislike the pungent food that you get? Yes
9. Do you get aggressive when you are in trouble with objects? Yes
10. Do you like to appreciate others? No
11. Do you like, if your friends are having comforts more than you? No
12. Do you like to work tidily and orderly? No
13. Are you suffering from headaches? Frequently? Yes

If you agreed for the answers of the questions mentioned above then you can ensure that you have characteristics of Dosa Carita. Hence For a person with the above qualities it should be better to recommend "Sathara brahma viharana".

03. Ignorant characteristics / Deluded nature (Moha Carita)

Those who belong to this category are foolish and ignorant individuals in heedlessness can't realize what is good and bad or right and wrong, has doubts on religion extensively. "Moha" characters possible to judge by observing carefully how a person behaves, by his postures, movements, and how a person walk, stands, sits, sleeps etc. Walking

As a mislead person who walks in a shambling gait. He is not walking in a formal way.

Style of living

This sort of person who does his work awkwardly. And waste his time by being lazy.

Sleeping

They makes their bed untidily. Sleeps with the body sprawling, keeping the back downwards most of the time.

Movements

He does sweeping awkwardly, unevenly, and without order.

Having meals

Has no particular test for food, eats ungracefully, has no interest no distinctive taste on his own.

Admiration of the person

This person is usually incapable of making his own judgments so follows the opinion of others in denouncing or praising someone. It is the victim of sloth and torpor.

As a religious manner

"Moha" based person is associated with ignorance, delusion, and forgetfulness. He is usually perplexed and confused. He can't distinguished between right and wrong, good and bad as well.

❖ To identify this kind of human personalities we can ask few questions as follows

1. Do you raise your heel when you walk? Yes
2. Do you walk faster than others?
3. Do you do your daily work cleanly and orderly? No
4. Do you sprawl when you sleep? Yes
5. Do you make a sound after awaken?
6. Do you leave your garbage here and there while sweeping? Yes
7. Don't you have any taste of food? No
8. Do you think while having meals? Yes
9. Do you make commence on looking at the figure? No/yes
10. If any negligence had occurred do you report on it? Yes
11. Are you lazy on your daily work? Yes
12. Would you like to change the decision if it is wrong? Yes
13. Have you suffered from rheumatic? Yes

If you agreed for the answers of the questions mentioned above then you can ensure that you have characteristics of Moha Carita. Hence For a person with above qualities it should be better to recommend “Breathing Meditation”.

04. Devout characteristics (Sadda Carita)

People who include the habits of willingness, devoted to the Triple Gem are generous, find it difficult to realize the truth, unable to achieve the truth but with distinctive characters for liberality, charity, desire to meet people who are engaged in religious practices, desire to listen to their doctrine, cheerfulness, frankness, honesty, faith and devotion on religious matters. This person is usually gentle and polite. Who is generally clean, neat, and tidy and prefer sweet, aromatic and tender food.

❖ Devout character (Saddha Carita) is very similar to lustful character (Raga Carita) therefore we can derive Saddha Carita from Raga Carita by asking the questions are mentioned below.

1. When you offer something to anyone do you give it without any hesitation? Yes
2. Do you involve faithfully in religious activities? Yes
3. Do you involve in religious activities daily? Yes
4. Do like to associate many friends (Are you a socialized person)? No
5. When you find faults of yours, do you like to get rid of it? Yes
6. Do you please a person who has spiritual qualities? Yes

If you agreed the answers for the questions mentioned above then you can ensure that you have characteristics of saddha Carita. Hence For a person with above qualities it should be better to recommend “Breathing Meditation”.

05. Intelligent Characteristics (Buddi Carita)

An intellectual person has similarities to that of a hot-tempered personality, but can be distinguished by gentleness, good friendship, moderation, mindfulness, self-possession and alertness; he feels deeply moved at the emptiness and sorrow of things, but wisely taking them as they are and make the right effort for deliverance. The above mentioned character is similar to realize full character but wise, obedient, friendly, knowing about the limitations, thoughtful, perseverant.

❖ Intelligent Characteristics (Buddi Carita) is very similar to hatred characteristics (Dosa Carita) therefore we can derive Buddhi Carita from Dosa Carita by asking the questions are mentioned below.

1. Do you honor the others principals? Yes
2. Are you an obedient person comparing to others? Yes
3. Are you conscious about your daily routing works? Yes
4. Do you try to do your all work on time? Yes
5. In a sensible situation would you really sorrow? Yes
6. Would you like to do your work with your best attempts and complete it successfully? Yes

If you agreed for the answers of the questions mentioned above then you can ensure that you have characteristics of Buddi Carita. Hence For a person with above qualities it should be better to recommend “Aharepatikkulasanna”.

06. Argumentative characteristics / Agitated individual (Vitakka Carita)

A disturbed person has a character synonymous with that of a deluded individual except for being talkative, desire for company, lack of sustained moral application, unsteadiness in work, and lack of concentration. These are the general observations of that will help one to define the disposition of a person from his or her outward characteristics, but divergence should be expected owing to the great variety and complexity of the mind. If a person seems to fit in more than three groups of characteristics, he may be best classed as mixed character or Satta carita. However he is not in suitable mind, can't concentrate and not involved in spiritual things.

❖ Argumentative characteristics (Vitakka Carita) is very similar to ignorant character (Moha Carita) therefore we can derive Vitakka Carita from Moha Carita by asking the questions are mentioned below.

1. Are you willing to be talkative with others? Yes
2. Do you believe on moral aspects? No
3. Do you stagnate with your works? Yes
4. Do you have a doubt when you take a decision? Yes
5. Do you jump one after the other while working?
6. Do you not feel doing things at stretch? Yes

If you agreed the answers for the questions mentioned above then you can ensure that you have characteristics of Vitakka Carita. Hence A person with above qualities should be better by practicing “Breathing Meditation.”

Conclusion

According to Buddhism we all have final emancipation that is called as Nibbana (wisdom) to achieve this we have to develop or guide our mind in a proper way. When we talk about the development of mind, meditation is the best way to practice it. When someone refers to practice meditation he or she needs to know one's characteristics. Habits strongly and rigidly conform to one's characteristics. For example, even if you feed a dog well he will surely nibble on an old worn out shoe once he gets hold of one. Or at the least he will sniff at the shoe. Likewise a person with bad habits will be mean and base in words and deeds. Even when the noble, the wisely help him to a high status he will occasionally expose his bad carita (characteristics or traits). He cannot get rid of his rooted habits. Therefore it is important to examine one's own carita and of others associated with one. One can generally identify a person's carita by watching attentively his gestures and movements, his style of living, the food he likes and his behavioral pattern. Person with raga carita and those with saddha carita display common carita and those with buddhi carita. And persons with moha carita and those with vitakka carita are similar in nature. The teacher (meant Kammattanacharya) who is able to determine the character of his disciple, either through the faculty of reading other's mind or by questioning and watching the individual's behaviour, should choose a suitable subject for that person among the forty meditation subjects (kammattanas). As explained in visuddhimagga it is not an easy to identify all these characters by the ordinary teacher by observing a particular person.