

Developing the Perfection of Determination

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Tips of the Day · 1 min read

Determination is one of the Ten Perfections. It is exemplified in the relentless search the Bodhisatta Siddhartha Gotama made to become a Fully-Self -Enlightened Buddha. And especially so when he sat beneath the Bodhi Tree and determined with resolute resolution that he would either find the answer to his quest or die. To help us strengthen our commitment, we need to contemplate these four areas: our capability (can), our responsibility (ought), our aspiration (want) and our determination (will) to undermine what is unwholesome and develop what is virtuous. We can determine to overcome an unwholesome conditioning. Bring to mind a trait within yourself that you see is not wholesome, skilful or virtuous. 1. I am able to, I can resist this temptation. This has to be repeated until there is a conviction of this ability. 2. I ought to for my own benefit and the benefit of others. This has to be repeated until the heart is moved by it. 3. I want to. This has to be repeated until an enthusiasm arises. Where there is resistance, it is spoken kindly to cajole the heart into acceptance. We need to develop ways of encouraging ourselves. 4. And I will resist this temptation whenever it arises. This has to be repeated till one feels the determination in the gut. In the same way we can determine to develop a virtue. Bring to mind a virtue you would like to develop. I am able to, I can develop this virtue. I ought to for my own benefit and the benefit of others. I want to. I will develop this virtue whenever the occasion arises. This exercise is best done every morning. Such practice has an immediate but not a lasting effect. So one has to keep repeating it. The more often the better. We can do this every time an unwholesome or wholesome desire arises we go through this process, even if speedily. Just like the practice of vipassana, metta and constant mindfulness, this practice cannot be stopped until we are fully liberated. That's the way it is!

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