



Cetasika (Mental)

Cetasika (opp. kāyika, physical,) is a concept rarely found in early suttas. Moreover, most of the suttas in which this term is found, have no Chinese, Sanskrit or Tibetan parallels.

Bhikkhus, when the instructed noble disciple is contacted by a painful feeling, he does not sorrow, grieve, or lament; he does not weep beating his breast and become distraught. He feels one feeling—a bodily one, not a mental one.

Sutavā ca kho, bhikkhave, ariyasāvako dukkhāya vedanāya phuttho samāno na socati, na kilamati, na paridevati, na urattāḷiṃ kandati, na sammohaṃ āpajjati. So ekaṃ vedanaṃ vedayatikāyikaṃ, na cetasikaṃ.

SN 36.6

For him — uninfatuated, unattached, unconfused, remaining focused on their drawbacks — the five clinging-aggregates head toward future diminution. The craving that makes for further becoming — accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now this & now that — is abandoned by him. His bodily disturbances & mental disturbances are abandoned. His bodily torments & mental torments are abandoned. His bodily distresses & mental distresses are abandoned. He is sensitive both to ease of body & ease of awareness.

Tassa asārattassa asaṃyuttassa asammūḷhassa ādīnāvānupassino viharato āyatiṃ pañcupādānakkhandhā apacayaṃ gacchanti. Taṇhā cassa ponobbhavikā nandīrāgasahagatā tatrātrābhīnandinī, sā cassa pahīyati. Tassa kāyikāpi darathā pahīyanti, cetasikāpi darathā pahīyanti; kāyikāpi santāpā pahīyanti, cetasikāpi santāpā pahīyanti; kāyikāpi pariāhā pahīyanti, cetasikāpi pariāhā pahīyanti. So kāyasukhampi cetosukhampi paṭisaṃvedeti.

MN 149

And what is distress? Whatever is experienced as mental pain, mental discomfort, pain or discomfort born of mental contact, that is called distress.

Katamañcāvuso, domanassaṃ? Yaṃ kho, āvuso, cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ cetasikaṃ asātaṃ manosamphassaṃ dukkhaṃ asātaṃ vedayitaṃ, idaṃ vuccatāvuso: ‘domanassaṃ’.

MN 141

And what is the miracle of telepathy? There is the case where a monk reads the minds, the mental events, the thoughts, the ponderings of other beings, other individuals, [saying,] ‘Such is your thinking, here is where your thinking is, thus is your mind.’

Katamañca, kevaṭṭa, ādesanāpāṭihāriyaṃ? Idha, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisati, cetasikampi ādisati, vitakkitampi ādisati, vicāritampi ādisati: ‘evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṃ’.

“Then someone who has faith and conviction in him sees him reading the minds... of other beings... He reports this to someone who has no faith and no conviction, telling him, ‘Isn’t it awesome. Isn’t it astounding, how great the power, how great the prowess of this contemplative. Just now I saw him reading the minds... of other beings...’

Tameṇaṃ aññataro saddho pasanno passati taṃ bhikkhuṃ parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisantaṃ, cetasikampi ādisantaṃ, vitakkitampi ādisantaṃ, vicāritampi ādisantaṃ: ‘evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṃ’.

Tameṇaṃ so saddho pasanno aññatarassa assaddhassa appasannassa āroceti: ‘acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho, samañassa mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvātā. Amāhaṃ bhikkhuṃ addasaṃ parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisantaṃ, cetasikampi ādisantaṃ, vitakkitampi ādisantaṃ, vicāritampi ādisantaṃ: “evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṃ”.

“Then the person without faith, without conviction, would say to the person with faith and with conviction: ‘Sir, there is a charm called the Manika charm by which the monk read the minds... of other beings...’

Tameṇaṃ so assaddho appasanno taṃ saddhaṃ pasannaṃ evaṃ vadeyya: ‘atthi kho, bho, maṇikā nāma vijjā; tāya so bhikkhu parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisati, cetasikampi ādisati, vitakkitampi ādisati, vicāritampi ādisati: “evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṃ”.

What do you think, Kevatta — isn’t that what the man without faith, without conviction, would say to the man with faith and with conviction?”

Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, kevaṭṭa, api nu so assaddho appasanno taṃ saddhaṃ pasannaṃ evaṃ vadeyyā”.

"Yes, lord, that's just what he would say."
"Vadeyya, bhante"ti.

"Seeing this drawback to the miracle of telepathy, Kevatta, I feel horrified, humiliated, and disgusted with the miracle of telepathy."

"Imaṃ kho ahaṃ, kevaṭṭa, ādesanāpāṭihāriye ādīnavaṃ sampassamāno ādesanāpāṭihāriyena aṭṭiyāmi harāyāmi jigucchāmi.

DN 11

And what, monastics, is sadness? The mental pain, mental unpleasantness, painful and unpleasant feeling arising from mind contact: this is called pain.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, domanassaṃ? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ cetasikaṃ asātaṃ manosamphassaṃ dukkhaṃ asātaṃ vedayitaṃ, idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, domanassaṃ.

MN 10

But there are some recluses and brahmins who abide pursuing development of mind, but not development of body. They are touched by mental painful feeling.

Santi pana, bho gotama, eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā cittabhāvanānuyogamanuyuttā viharanti, no kāyabhāvanaṃ. Phusanti hi te, bho gotama, cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ.

MN 36

Perceptions & feelings are mental; these are things tied up with the mind. That's why perceptions & feelings are mental fabrications."

Saññā ca vedanā ca cetasikā ete dhammā cittaappaṭibaddhā, tasmā saññā ca vedanā ca cittasaṅkhāro"ti.

Whatever is experienced physically or mentally as pleasant & gratifying is pleasant feeling. Whatever is experienced physically or mentally as painful & hurting is painful feeling. Whatever is experienced physically or mentally as neither gratifying nor hurting is neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling.

Yaṃ kho, āvuso visākha, kāyikaṃ vā cetasikaṃ vā sukhaṃ sātaṃ vedayitaṃ ayaṃ sukhā vedanā. Yaṃ kho, āvuso visākha, kāyikaṃ vā cetasikaṃ vā dukkhaṃ asātaṃ vedayitaṃ ayaṃ dukkhā vedanā. Yaṃ kho, āvuso visākha, kāyikaṃ vā cetasikaṃ vā neva sātaṃ nāsātaṃ vedayitaṃ ayaṃ adukkhamasukhā vedanā"ti.

MN 44

(see also **SN 41.6**)

"What do you think, prince? Might there arise in that householder or householder's son bodily and mental fevers born of lust (raga), which would torment him so that he would sleep badly?"

Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, kumāra, api nu tassa gahapatissa vā gahapatiputtassa vā uppajjeyyūṃ rāgajā pariñhā kāyikā vā cetasikā vā yehi so rāgajehi pariñhehi pariḍayhamāno dukkhaṃ sayeyyā"ti?

(idem for hatred (dosa) delusion (moha)).

AN 3.35

Whatever bodily energy there is, is the enlightenment factor of energy; whatever mental energy there is, is also the enlightenment factor of energy. Thus what is spoken of concisely as the enlightenment factor of energy becomes, by this method of exposition, twofold.

Yadapi, bhikkhave, kāyikaṃ vīriyaṃ tadapi vīriyasambojjhaṅgo, yadapi cetasikaṃ vīriyaṃ tadapi vīriyasambojjhaṅgo. 'Vīriyasambojjhaṅgo'ti iti hidaṃ uddesaṃ gacchati. Tadināpetam pariāyena dvayaṃ hoti.

SN 46.52

And what, bhikkhus, are the two kinds of feelings? Bodily and mental. These are called the two kinds of feelings.

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, dve vedanā? Kāyikā ca cetasikā caimā vuccanti, bhikkhave, dve vedanā.

SN 36.22 (no parallel)

A person impassioned, his mind bound up, overcome with passion, wills for his own detriment, wills for the detriment of others, wills for the detriment of both. He also experiences mental stress & sorrow. But having abandoned passion, he doesn't will for his own detriment, doesn't will for the detriment of others, doesn't will for the detriment of both. He doesn't experience mental stress or sorrow.

Ratto kho āvuso rāgena abhibhūto pariādinnacitto attavyābādhāya'pi ceteti, paravyābādhāya'pi ceteti. Ubhayavyābādhāya'pi ceteti. Cetasikampi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti. Rāge pahīṇe nevattavyābādhāya'pi ceteti, na paravyābādhāya'pi tetti. Na ubhayavyābādhāya'pi ceteti. Na cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti.

"A person impassioned, his mind bound up, overcome with passion, engages in bodily misconduct, in verbal misconduct, in mental misconduct. But having abandoned passion, he doesn't engage in bodily misconduct, in verbal misconduct, or in mental misconduct.

Ratto kho āvuso rāgena abhibhūto pariādinnacitto kāyena duccharitaṃ carati, vācāya duccharitaṃ carati, manasā

duccaritaṃ carati. Rāge pahīṇe neva kāyena duccharitaṃ carati, na vācāya duccharitaṃ carati, na manasā duccharitaṃ carati.

"A person impassioned, his mind bound up, overcome with passion, doesn't discern, as it actually is, what is of profit to himself, what is of profit to others, what is of profit to both. But having abandoned passion, he discerns, as it actually is, what is of profit to himself, what is of profit to others, what is of profit to both.

Ratto kho āvuso rāgena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto attatthampi yathābhūtaṃ nappajānāti, paratthampi yathābhūtaṃ nappajānāti. Ubhayatthampi yathābhūtaṃ nappajānāti. Rāge pahīṇe attatthampi yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Paratthampi yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Ubhayatthampi yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Rāgo kho āvuso andhakaraṇo acakkhukaraṇo aññāṇakaraṇo paññānirodhiko vighātapakkhiko anibbāṇasaṃvattaniko.

AN 3.71 (Partial Saṃyuktāgama parallels)

What are the five fears and hatreds overcome? Householder, whatever fear and hatred, mental unpleasantness and displeasure be to one destroying living things here and now and here after, are not to him who abstains from destroying living things. That fear and hatred is appeased to him.

Katamāni pañca bhayāni verāni vūpasantāni honti? Yaṃ, gahapati, pāṇātipātī pāṇātipātapaccayā diṭṭhadhammikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, samparāyikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, cetasikampi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti, pāṇātipātā paṭivirato neva diṭṭhadhammikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, na samparāyikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, na cetasikampi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti.

(Idem with: takes the not given, misbehaves in sexual desires, tells lies, takes intoxicating and brewed drinks).

AN 9.27/28 (no parallel - only AN parallel: AN 10.92)

When a person takes life, then with the taking of life as a requisite condition, he produces fear & animosity in the here & now, produces fear & animosity in future lives, experiences mental concomitants of pain & despair; but when he refrains from taking life, he neither produces fear & animosity in the here & now nor does he produce fear & animosity in future lives, nor does he experience mental concomitants of pain & despair: for one who refrains from taking life, that fear & animosity is thus stilled.

Yaṃ, gahapati, pāṇātipātī pāṇātipātapaccayā diṭṭhadhammikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati samparāyikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati cetasikampi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti, pāṇātipātā paṭivirato neva diṭṭhadhammikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati na samparāyikampi bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati na cetasikampi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti. Pāṇātipātā paṭiviratassa evaṃ taṃ bhayaṃ veraṃ vūpasantaṃ hoti.

(Idem with: steals... engages in illicit sex... tells lies... drinks distilled & fermented drinks)

AN 10.92 (no parallel - only AN parallel: AN 9.27/28)

See also **SN 12.41** (no parallel)

Bhikkhus, there are two kinds of pleasantness. What two? Bodily pleasantness and mental pleasantness. Of these two, mental pleasantness is better.

Dvemāni, bhikkhave, sukhāni. Katamāni dve? Kāyikaṇca sukhaṃ cetasikaṇca sukhaṃ. Imāni kho, bhikkhave, dve sukhāni. Etadaggaṃ, bhikkhave, imesaṃ dvinnaṃ sukhānaṃ yadidaṃ cetasikaṃ sukhaṃ”ti.

AN 2.64-76 (no parallel)

Brahmin, one excited by lust (raga), overcome by lust, with mind obsessed by it, intends for his own affliction, for the affliction of others, and for the affliction of both, and he experiences mental suffering and dejection. But when lust is abandoned, he does not intend for his own affliction, for the affliction of others, or for the affliction of both, and he does not experience mental suffering and dejection. It is in this way that the Dhamma is directly visible....

Ratto kho, brāhmaṇa, rāgena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto attabyābādhāyapi ceteti, parabyābādhāyapi ceteti, ubhayabyābādhāyapi ceteti, cetasikampi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti.

Rāge pahīṇe nevattabyābādhāyapi ceteti, na parabyābādhāyapi ceteti, na ubhayabyābādhāyapi ceteti, na cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti.

Evampi kho, brāhmaṇa, sandiṭṭhiko dhammo hoti...

(idem for hatred (dosa) delusion (moha)).

AN 3.53 (54 & 56) (no parallel)

Bhikkhus, these two are ailments. What two?

Bodily and mental ailments.

Bhikkhus, there are sentient beings acknowledging freedom from bodily ailments for one year, ... re ... even for two years, ... re ... or even for a hundred years.

Yet bhikkhus, sentient beings acknowledging freedom from mental ailments even for a moment are rare in the world, unless it is an arahant.

Dveme, bhikkhave, rogā. Katame dve?

Kāyiko ca rogo cetasiko ca rogo.

Dissanti, bhikkhave, sattā kāyikena rogena ekampi vassaṃ ārogyaṃ paṭijānamānā, dvepi vassāni ārogyaṃ paṭijānamānā, ... re ... bhiyyopi ārogyaṃ paṭijānamānā.

Te, bhikkhave, sattā sudullabhā lokasmiṃ ye cetasikena rogena muhuttampi ārogyaṃ paṭijānanti, aññatra khīṇāsavehi.

AN 4.157 (no parallel)

Ailment = Icchā, anasana, jarā.

Icchā longing, desire.

Anasana hunger.
Jarā decay, decrepitude, old age.

The one who abstains from destroying living things does not develop fear and animosity, here and now or here after. That fear and animosity is appeased in one who abstains from destroying living things.

pāṇātipātā paṭivirato neva diṭṭhadhammikaṃ bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, na samparāyikaṃ bhayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, na cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti.

(Idem with: takes the not given, misbehaves in sexual desires, tells lies, takes intoxicating and brewed drinks).

AN 5.174 (no parallel)

And what is the happiness-faculty? Any mental pleasure, mental comfort born of intellect-contact to be experienced as pleasure & comfort. That is called the happiness-faculty.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, somanassindriyaṃ? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, cetasikaṃ sukhaṃ, cetasikaṃ sātaṃ, manosamphassaṃ sukhaṃ sātaṃ vedayitaṃ—idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, somanassindriyaṃ.

"And what is the distress-faculty? Any mental pain, mental discomfort born of intellect-contact to be experienced as pain & discomfort. That is called the distress-faculty.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, domanassindriyaṃ? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ, cetasikaṃ asātaṃ, manosamphassaṃ dukkhaṃ asātaṃ vedayitaṃ—idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, domanassindriyaṃ.

"And what is the equanimity-faculty? Anything, physical or mental, to be experienced as neither comfort nor discomfort. That is called the equanimity-faculty.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, upekkhindriyaṃ? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, kāyikaṃ vā cetasikaṃ vā neva sātaṃ nāsātaṃ vedayitaṃ—idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, upekkhindriyaṃ.

SN 48.36/37/38 (no parallel)

*There isn't any mental suffering
For one without expectations, village chief.
All fears are left behind
By one whose fetters are ended.
Natthi cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ,
anapekkhassa gāmaṇi;
Atikkantā bhayā sabbe,
khīṇasaṃyojanassa ve.
Thag 16.1*

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