

## **A Pre-awareness of Mind in Buddhist Perspective: An Obligatory Pre-requisite for Buddhist Meditation**

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Meditation (bhāvanā), a mind based process in its entirety, is the wholesome development of mind. The true nature of mind can be known only through the development of meditation. Nevertheless, the nature of mind, its frailties and enormous potentials should be exposed prior to the initiation of meditation. Therefore, gaining a certain awareness of the nature of untamed mind is a prerequisite of Buddhist meditation.

Mind is defined in Buddhism as a non-physical phenomenon which perceives, thinks, recognizes, experiences and reacts to the environment. The Dhammapada says that mind travels long journeys, it travels alone, it is bodiless and lives in a cave; those who subdue this mind are liberated from the bonds of Māra. The Buddha says there is no phenomenon that comes and goes so quickly as mind. Psychologically, mind, in terms of its nature of a worldly individual, is constantly flickering, fickle, throbbing, trembling and wavering.

The mind, the most dynamic force in the world can either bring peace and happiness or unhappiness and destruction to oneself, society and the world since it is endowed both with frailties as well as potentialities. The Citta Sutta says that the world is led by the mind, by the mind it is swept away. The Aṅguttara Nikāya reveals that the untamed and unrestrained mind conduces to great loss but the mind that is tamed and restrained conduces to great bliss. Ill-directed mind cannot pierce ignorance, draw knowledge and realize Nibbāna but the well-directed mind is capable of piercing ignorance, drawing knowledge and realizing Nibbāna. Hence, a substantial pre-awareness of intrinsic nature, frailties and potentials of mind is an obligatory prerequisite of utmost significance for a flourishing initiation of Buddhist meditation.

**Keywords:** Pre-awareness, Prerequisite, Mind, Meditation

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