

THE FIVE HINDRANCES: REFLECTIONS

SENSUAL DESIRE. ILL WILL. SLOTH AND TORPOR. RESTLESSNESS AND WORRY, AND DOUBT.

Observing yourself, please reflect on the following questions. It might be useful to spend several days on one of these sets of questions before moving on to the next. Please spend some time discussing your observations and reflections with others.

1. Which of the five hindrances is the strongest or most common for you? Which is most likely to affect your meditation? Which is most likely to influence your behaviour in daily life?
2. In both meditation and daily life, how, and on which occasions, do the hindrances usually arise in you? What are the common conditions for their arising?
3. In your own meditation and life, please notice what disadvantages you experience when the hindrances are operating. What effect does recognizing the disadvantages have on you?
4. What understandings, abilities, states of mind, and practices do you know that can best help free you from the grip of the hindrances? You might draw up a list and then consider which are strongest for you.
5. Notice what opportunities you have in your daily life to develop these understandings, abilities, states of mind, and practices. What hinders your ability to act on these opportunities? What supports your ability to do so?