

Five Faculties

Insight Meditation South Bay

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Five Faculties (*indriyas*)

Key ideas

- The Five Faculties (*indriya*) exert a controlling influence on the mind in two ways:
 1. Keeping it balanced. Faith and Wisdom balance each other; Energy and Concentration balance each other; the strength of Mindfulness determines the refinement of the balance.
 2. Keeping it from falling prey to the opposites of the faculties: faithlessness, indolence, heedlessness, agitation, and ignorance.
- When developed to the point of becoming “unshakeable” in light of their opposites, these same qualities are called *The Five Powers (bala)*.
- Heedfulness underlies the development of the Five Faculties.
- These Five Faculties are sometimes called Controlling Faculties or Spiritual Faculties.
- The Five Faculties are developed at every stage of the practice and lead to enlightenment.

The Five Faculties	Balancing View	Developmental View	Function on the Path
Faith (<i>saddhā</i>) Also translated as conviction, trust, or confidence	Excessive faith leads to credulity; it is balanced by wisdom	Conviction in the efficacy of the practice and teachings of the Buddha, confidence in the worthiness of the goal. Trust in the lawful unfolding of cause and effect. <i>This leads to...</i>	
Energy (<i>virīya</i>) Also translated as effort, strength	Excessive energy leads to restlessness; it is balanced by concentration	Putting effort into practice. Skillful effort is neither too lax nor too rigid. <i>This leads to...</i>	
Mindfulness (<i>saṭi</i>)	Mindfulness balances the development of all the faculties and harmonizes their integration	Clear awareness. The capacity to be aware of what is present without distorting interpretations. <i>This leads to...</i>	
Concentration (<i>samādhi</i>)	Excessive concentration leads to dullness; it is balanced by energy	Undistracted focus and unification of mind. <i>This leads to...</i>	
Wisdom (<i>paññā</i>) Also translated as discrimination, discernment	Excessive wisdom makes the mind cunning and skeptical; it is balanced by faith	Direct discernment of things as they are actually occurring; attainment of the goal	
			Initial impetus to practice (Right View)
			Factors of the training (Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration) that support meditative development
			Insight that confirms the initial Faith, transforming it into Knowledge (Right View).