**TABLE 16.4**
*Characteristic, Function, Manifestation and Proximate Cause of Mental Formations*

**Key:**
- **C** = characteristic
- **F** = function
- **M** = manifestation
- **P** = proximate cause

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethically Variable Universals (7)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Contact—<em>phassa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C:</td>
<td>touching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F:</td>
<td>impingement; to cause the object and consciousness to impinge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:</td>
<td>as the concurrence of consciousness, sense faculty (door), and object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>an object that has come into focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Feeling—<em>vedanā</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C:</td>
<td>see Table 16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Perception—<em>saññā</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C:</td>
<td>perceiving the qualities of the object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F:</td>
<td>recognizing what has been previously perceived; or to make a sign as a condition for perceiving again “this is the same”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:</td>
<td>as interpretation by comparing features that had been previously apprehended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>an object in whatever way that it appears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Volition—<em>cetanā</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C:</td>
<td>the state of willing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F:</td>
<td>to accumulate kamma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:</td>
<td>as coordination or directing of action; the organizing of the associated mental factors to act upon an object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>the associated mental formations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>One-pointedness—<em>ekaggatā</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C:</td>
<td>the unification of mind with its object; nonwandering, nondistraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F:</td>
<td>to conglomerate or unite the associated mental factors; fixing the mind on its object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:</td>
<td>as peace; or as wisdom in the mode of effect as the Buddha described: “One who is concentrated understands things as they actually are” (S: 35: 99–100; S: 35: 160–161; S: 22: 5–6; S: 56: 1–2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>usually happiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Life faculty—jīvitindriya
   C: maintaining the associated mental formations in the same consciousness moment
   F: to make them occur
   M: as the establishing of their presence
   P: the mental formations to be maintained

7. Attention—manasikāra
   C: conducting the associated mental formations toward the object
   F: to yoke the associated mental formations to the object
   M: as confrontation with an object
   P: the object

Note: Attention is likened to the rudder of a ship, which directs it to its destination, or a charioteer who drives well-trained horses towards their destination. Similarly, attention directs the associated mental factors towards the object. Manasikāra is a necessary factor of cognition, and therefore it should be distinguished from vitakka, which is an occasional factor. Manasikāra is responsible for turning the mind toward the object, whereas vitakka applies the mind to the object.

Ethically Variable Occasionals (6)

1. Initial application—vitakka
   C: the directing or mounting of the mind onto the object
   F: to strike at and thresh the object
   M: as the leading of the mind onto an object
   P: the object; or material base, object, contact, and associated mental formations

2. Sustained application—vicāra
   C: continued pressure and occupation with the object; the continued stroking of the object by examining it
   F: sustained application of the associated mental formations to the object
   M: as the anchoring of those phenomena on the object
   P: the object; or material base, object, contact, and associated mental formations

3. Decision—adhimokkha
   C: conviction
   F: not to flounder with uncertainty like a blind man groping in the dark
   M: as decisiveness
   P: the object to be convinced about
4. Energy—*viriya*
   - **C:** supporting, exertion, striving, marshalling, or driving of the mental factors to fulfill their function
   - **F:** to consolidate or support associated mental phenomena
   - **M:** as noncollapse
   - **P:** a sense of spiritual urgency or anything that stirs one to vigorous action
   **NOTE:** *Viriya* is compared to strong military reinforcements that enable a king's army to defeat its enemy; similarly, energy supports the associated mental factors enabling them to fulfill their function.

5. Rapture—*pīti*
   - **C:** endearing, pleasure, happiness, or satisfaction
   - **F:** to refresh the body and the mind; or to pervade and thrill with rapture
   - **M:** as elation
   - **P:** the object; material base, object, contact, and associated mental formations

6. Desire—*chanda*
   - **C:** desire to act toward wholesome or unwholesome deeds
   - **F:** searching for an object
   - **M:** as need for an object
   - **P:** that same object
   **NOTE:** It should be regarded as the stretching forth of the mind towards the object.

**BEAUTIFUL UNIVERSALS (19)**

1. Faith—*saddhā*
   - **C:** placing confidence in, having faith, trusting
   - **F:** to clarify; to set forth or enter into, as one might set forth to cross a flood
   - **M:** as nonfogginess, resolution, or the removal of the mind’s impurities
   - **P:** something worthy to place faith such as hearing the liberating teachings, good friends, wise attention, diligent practice etc.

2. Mindfulness—*sati*
   - **C:** not wobbling, not floating away from the object
   - **F:** absence of confusion or nonforgetfulness of the object
   - **M:** as guardianship of mind and object; or as confrontation with an objective field
   - **P:** firm perception; or the four foundations of mindfulness

3. Shame of wrongdoing—*hiri*
   - **C:** disgust at bodily, verbal, or mental misconduct
   - **F:** inhibition of evil actions due to the influence of modesty or internal restraints
   - **M:** as the shrinking away from evil due to internal restraints
   - **P:** respect for oneself

4. Fear of wrongdoing—*ottappa*
   C: dread of bodily, verbal, or mental misconduct
   F: inhibition of evil actions due to concern for the opinions of others, punishment, social consequences, or external restraints
   M: as the shrinking away from evil due to external restraints
   P: respect for others

5. Nongreed—*alobha*
   C: non-attachment toward sensual or worldly objects; or nonadherence to the object like a drop of water on a lotus leaf
   F: to not grasp; likened to a liberated bhikkhu
   M: as detachment, not grasping things as *mine*
   P: wise attention to the object

6. Nonhatred—*adosa*
   C: lack of ferocity, savagery, aggression, aversion; or noncontention, like a gentle friend
   F: to remove annoyance and aversive states
   M: as agreeableness
   P: wise attention to the object

Loving-kindness—*mettā*
   C: promoting the welfare of living beings
   F: to prefer their welfare
   M: as the removal of ill will and annoyance
   P: seeing beings as lovable
   NOTE: Loving-kindness succeeds when it makes ill will subside; it fails when it produces selfish affection.

7. Evenness of mind—*tatramajjhataṁ*
   C: conveying the associated mental factors and consciousness evenly
   F: to prevent deficiency and excess; to inhibit partiality and attachment
   M: as the state of looking on with equanimity, neutrality, and mental balance; ever-evenness
   P: wise attention; or the material base, object, and associated mental formations

Equanimity—*upekkhā*
   C: promoting the aspect of neutrality towards beings
   F: to see equality in beings
   M: as the quieting of resentment and approval; impartiality
   P: seeing ownership of kamma thus: ‘Beings are owners of their kamma’
   NOTE: *Upekkhā* succeeds when it makes resentment and approval subside; it fails when it produces worldly-minded indifference, unknowing, or ignorance regarding experiences.
### Equanimity in the third jhāna—jhānupekkhā

| C | complete evenness of attention toward the object or nimitta |
| F | to prevent attraction to mundane sensual forms of happiness |
| M | as the state of balance which does not grasp even sublime bliss; ever-evenness |
| P | the fading away of rapture |

8. Tranquility of associated mental factors—kāyapassaddhi

| C | the quieting down of disturbance in the associated mental factors |
| F | to crush disturbance of the associated mental factors |
| M | as inactivity, peacefulness and coolness of the associated mental factors |
| P | the associated mental factors |

**NOTE:** Counters the defilements of restlessness and worry, which create distress.

9. Tranquility of consciousness—cittapassaddhi

| C | the quieting down of disturbance in consciousness |
| F | to crush disturbance of consciousness |
| M | as inactivity, peacefulness and coolness of consciousness |
| P | the associated consciousness |

**NOTE:** Counters the defilements of restlessness and worry, which create distress.

10. Lightness of associated mental factors—kāyalahutā

| C | the subsiding of heaviness in the associated mental factors |
| F | to crush heaviness in the associated mental factors |
| M | as nonsluggishness of the associated mental factors, swiftness |
| P | the associated mental factors |

**NOTE:** Counters the defilements of sloth and torpor, which can create heaviness.

11. Lightness of consciousness—cittalahutā

| C | the subsiding of heaviness in consciousness |
| F | to crush heaviness in consciousness |
| M | as nonsluggishness of consciousness, swiftness |
| P | the associated consciousness |

**NOTE:** Counters the defilements of sloth and torpor, which can create heaviness.

12. Malleability of associated mental factors—kāyamudutā

| C | the subsiding of rigidity in the associated mental factors, pliancy of associated mental factors |
| F | to crush rigidity in the associated mental factors |
| M | as nonresistance to the object |
| P | the associated mental factors |

**NOTE:** Counters the defilements of wrong view and conceit, which can create rigidity.
13. Malleability of consciousness—cittamudutā
   C: the subsiding of rigidity in consciousness, pliancy of consciousness
   F: to crush rigidity in consciousness
   M: as nonresistance to the object
   P: the associated consciousness
   NOTE: Counters the defilements of wrong view and conceit, which can create rigidity.

14. Workability of associated mental factors—kāyakammaññatā
   C: the subsiding of unwieldiness in the associated mental factors
   F: to crush unwieldiness in the associated mental factors
   M: as success in making something an object of the associated mental factors
   P: the associated mental factors
   NOTE: Counters the remaining hindrances, which create unwieldiness of the associated mental factors. It is likened to the process of refining gold to produce a workable metal. A workable mind enhances trust in the things that should be trusted, and inclines toward beneficial actions.

15. Workability of consciousness—cittakammaññatā
   C: the subsiding of unwieldiness in consciousness
   F: to crush unwieldiness in consciousness
   M: as success in making something an object of consciousness
   P: the associated consciousness
   NOTE: Counters the remaining hindrances, which create unwieldiness of consciousness. It is likened to the process of refining gold to produce a workable metal. A workable mind enhances trust in the things that should be trusted, and inclines toward beneficial actions.

16. Proficiency of associated mental factors—kāyapāguññatā
   C: healthiness and effectiveness of the associated mental factors
   F: to crush incompetence of the associated mental factors
   M: as absence of disability of the associated mental factors
   P: the associated mental factors
   NOTE: Counters deficiencies of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, which disable the associated mental factors.

17. Proficiency of consciousness—cittapāguññatā
   C: healthiness and effectiveness of consciousness
   F: to crush incompetence of consciousness
   M: as absence of disability of consciousness
   P: the associated consciousness
   NOTE: Counters deficiencies of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, which disable consciousness.
18. Uprightness of associated mental factors—kāyujjukatā
   C: rectitude or straightness of the associated mental factors
   F: to crush tortuousness of the associated mental factors
   M: as honesty, straightforwardness, noncrookedness, and nondeceptiveness of associated mental factors
   P: the associated mental factors
   NOTE: Counters hypocrisy, deception, and fraudulence, which create crookedness in the associated mental factors.

19. Uprightness of consciousness—cittujjukatā
   C: rectitude or straightness of consciousness
   F: to crush tortuousness of consciousness
   M: as honesty, straightforwardness, noncrookedness, and nondeceptiveness of consciousness
   P: the associated consciousness
   NOTE: Counters hypocrisy, deception, and fraudulence, which create crookedness in consciousness.
**BEAUTIFUL OCCASIONALS (6)**

1. Right speech—sammāvācā
   - **C:** nontransgression in the field of speech
   - **F:** to refrain from verbal misconduct
   - **M:** abstinence from harmful speech
   - **P:** the special qualities of faith, shame of wrongdoing, fear of wrongdoing, fewness of wishes, etc.
   
   **NOTE:** Should be regarded as the mind's disinclination to do evil.

2. Right action—sammākammanta
   - **C:** nontransgression in the field of bodily action
   - **F:** to refrain from bodily misconduct
   - **M:** abstinence from harmful bodily action
   - **P:** the special qualities of faith, shame of wrongdoing, fear of wrongdoing, fewness of wishes, etc.
   
   **NOTE:** Should be regarded as the mind's disinclination to do evil.

3. Right livelihood—sammājīva
   - **C:** nontransgression in the field of livelihood
   - **F:** to refrain from misconduct in livelihood
   - **M:** abstinence from engaging in wrong livelihood
   - **P:** the special qualities of faith, shame of wrongdoing, fear of wrongdoing, fewness of wishes, etc.
   
   **NOTE:** Should be regarded as the mind's disinclination to do evil.

4. Compassion—karuṇā
   - **C:** to promote the alleviation of suffering
   - **F:** being unwilling to disregard the suffering of beings
   - **M:** as noncruelty
   - **P:** seeing vulnerability in those overwhelmed by suffering
   
   **NOTE:** It succeeds when it makes cruelty subside, and it fails when it produces sorrow.

5. Appreciative joy—muditā
   - **C:** gladness and rejoicing produced by the recognition of another’s success
   - **F:** being not envious
   - **M:** as the elimination of aversion, envy, jealousy, and boredom
   - **P:** seeing the success of others
   
   **NOTE:** Muditā succeeds when it makes envy, jealousy, and boredom subside, and it fails when it produces merriment, giddiness, exuberance, or exhilaration.
6. Wisdom faculty—paññā
C: penetrating things according to their intrinsic and ultimate nature
F: to illuminate the object like a lamp makes objects visible; to abolish the darkness of delusion which conceals the individual essence of states
M: as clarity of perspective, lucid discernment, nonbewilderment, like a good guide in the forest
P: wise attention; concentration, because the Buddha said: “One who is concentrated understands things as they really are.”
(S: 35: 99-100; S: 35: 160-161; S: 22: 5-6; S: 56: 1-2)

Unwholesome Universals (4)

1. Delusion—moha
C: unknowing
F: to conceal the individual essence of an object
M: as the absence of right understanding
P: unwise attention

2. Shamelessness of wrongdoing—ahirika
C: absence of disgust at bodily, verbal and mental misconduct; or immodesty
F: to do evil out of an absence of modesty or internal restraint
M: as not shrinking away from the evil
P: disrespect for oneself

3. Fearlessness of wrongdoing—anottappa
C: absence of anxiety and dread about bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct
F: doing evil because of an absence of fear and dread of external consequences
M: as not shrinking away from evil actions
P: disrespect for others

4. Restlessness—uddhacca
C: agitation, distraction, and disquiet, like water whipped by the wind
F: unsteadiness, like a flag or banner whipped by the wind
M: as turmoil, like ashes flung up when pelted with stones
P: unwise attention to things that stimulate mental disquiet

Unwholesome Occasionals (10)

1. Greed, attachment—lobha
C: grasping an object as I or as mine; craving for the object
F: sticking or clinging as meat sticks to a hot pan
M: as not giving up; adhering
P: seeing enjoyment in things that lead to bondage
Note: Greed (lobha) includes all forms and degrees of attachment, clinging, longing, and selfish desire.
2. Wrong view—diṭṭhi
   C: unwise interpretation of things
   F: to presume
   M: as wrong interpretation, as attachment to opinions, holding the belief that the object is permanent, satisfying, or has self-essence
   P: unwillingness to see Noble Ones, hear the true teachings, and so on

3. Conceit—māna
   C: haughtiness, pride
   F: to promote arrogance and self-exaltation
   M: as an attitude of vainglory or the desire to promote oneself, narcissism
   P: greed dissociated from wrong views
   Note: Conceit (māna) is an unwholesome mental state that is rooted in greed or attachment (lobha). Wrong view is excluded as a proximate cause because the presence of wrong view would generate a state categorized as lobha diṭṭhi rather than lobha mana. An arrogant attachment to one’s genuine accomplishments (meditative or professional) could be a proximate cause for conceit to arise if attachment was present and the event was neither misunderstood nor justified by opinions. Note that although wrong views might be absent, delusion (moha), as a universal feature of every unwholesome state, would still be present.

4. Hatred—dosa
   C: savageness, ferocity, animosity
   F: to spread like poison; or to burn up and consume one’s own support, like a fire consumes a forest
   M: as persecution, like an enemy who finds an opportunity to attack
   P: the grounds for annoyance and ill will
   Note: Hatred (dosa) includes all forms and degrees of aversion, ill will, anger, hostility, fear, impatience, aggression, intolerance, etc.

5. Envy—issā
   C: being jealous of others’ success and good fortune
   F: to be dissatisfied with the accomplishments of others
   M: as aversion toward the accomplishments of others
   P: another’s success

6. Possessiveness—macchariya
   C: avarice; concealing one’s own success so that it will not benefit others
   F: to obstruct sharing with others
   M: as shrinking away to prevent sharing; as meanness or stinginess
   P: one’s own success or good fortune

7. Worry—kukkucca
   C: subsequent regret
   F: to sorrow about what has and what has not been done
   M: as remorse
   P: wrongs of commission and omission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sloth—thīna</th>
<th>Torpor—middha</th>
<th>Doubt—vicikicchā</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>lack of driving power, stiffness</td>
<td>unwieldiness, dullness</td>
<td>uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>to dispel energy</td>
<td>to smother</td>
<td>to waver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>as subsiding, sluggishness, or sinking mind</td>
<td>as laziness, nodding, and sleep</td>
<td>as indecisiveness; or as taking various sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>unwise attention to boredom and drowsiness</td>
<td>unwise attention to boredom and drowsiness</td>
<td>unwise attention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>