Mil 4.3 — 3. Nine Kinds of People Who Can’t Keep Secrets

English translation by John Kelly.
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Text

Milinda’s Questions

Initial Discussion on Solving of Dilemmas

Qualities of a Lay Follower Chapter

3. Nine Kinds of People Who Can’t Keep Secrets

“Venerable Nāgasena, there are these nine types of people who disclose and do not keep secret counsel. What are the nine? A person characterized by lust, a person characterized by anger, a person characterized by delusion, a fearful person, a person attached to sensual things, a woman, a drunkard, a eunuch, and a child.”

The elder said: “What is the fault with these?” “A person characterized by lust, Venerable Nāgasena, discloses and does not keep secret counsel, on account of lust; a person characterized by anger, venerable sir, discloses and does not keep secret counsel on account of anger; a deluded person discloses and does not keep secret counsel on account of delusion; a fearful person discloses and does not keep secret counsel on account of fear; a person attached to sensual things discloses and does not keep secret counsel for the sake of material pleasures; a woman discloses and does not keep secret counsel due to changeableness; a drunkard discloses and does not keep secret counsel because of addiction to drink; a eunuch discloses and does not keep secret counsel due to uncertainty; and a child discloses and does not keep secret counsel due to fickleness. It is said concerning this:

‘An infatuated person, a malicious one, a deluded one,

a coward, a materialist,

A woman, a drunkard, a eunuch,

and a child make nine.

These nine types of people in the world,

unsteady, fickle, wavering;

From these counsel that is hidden

quickly becomes revealed.’”

Nine Kinds of People Who Can’t Keep Secrets