

TABLE 16.2
Characteristic, Function, Manifestation and Proximate Cause of the
Consciousness Aggregate

Key:

C = characteristic

F = function

M = manifestation

P = proximate cause

NOTE: Consciousness has the singular characteristic of cognizing an object yet it may manifest in multiple ways and serve various functions. Table 16.2 includes the types of consciousnesses that are examined in this book. The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* includes a more comprehensive classification scheme in which the consciousness aggregate is initially categorized by mundane and supramundane processes, then divided into sense-sphere, material-sphere, or immaterial processes, further distinguished by wholesome, unwholesome, resultant, or functional attributes, and still further classified as prompted or unprompted. In this way consciousness is analyzed into 89 or 121 types. This degree of detail is beyond the scope of this introduction; readers may find further elaboration in the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*.

1. Consciousness—*viññāṇacitta*
 - C: the knowing or cognizing of an object
 - F: to be the “forerunner” of the mental factors because it presides over them and is always accompanied by them
 - M: as a continuity of processes
 - P: associated materiality and mental factors which are the object for consciousness
2. Rebirth-linking consciousness—*paṭisandhicitta*
 - C: cognizing the object which might be kamma, kamma sign, or rebirth sign
 - F: to link the processes of two lives or existences
 - M: as a continuity of two existences
 - P: associated materiality and mental factors which are the object for consciousness
3. Life-continuum consciousness—*bhavaṅgacitta*
 - C: cognizing its object which might be kamma, kamma sign, or rebirth sign
 - F: noninterruption of flow of consciousness
 - M: as a continuity in the flow of consciousness
 - P: associated materiality and mental factors which are the object for consciousness
4. Five-door adverting consciousness—*pañcadvārāvajjana*
 - C: being the forerunner of eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, and body-consciousness; cognizing the occurrence of sensory data such as color, sound, odor, flavor, tactile impressions, and mental phenomena
 - F: to advert
 - M: as confrontation of sensory data
 - P: the interruption of life-continuum consciousness

5. Eye-consciousness—*cakkhaviññāṇa*
 - C: being supported by the eye-sensitive element and cognizing visible data
 - F: to have only visible data as its object
 - M: as occupation with visible data
 - P: the cessation of advertent consciousness that has visible data as its object
6. Ear-consciousness—*sotaviññāṇa*
 - C: being supported by the ear-sensitive element and cognizing sound
 - F: to have only sound as its object
 - M: as occupation with sounds
 - P: the cessation of advertent consciousness that has sound as its object
7. Nose-consciousness—*ghānaviññāṇa*
 - C: being supported by the nose-sensitive element and cognizing odor
 - F: to have only odor as its object
 - M: as occupation with odors
 - P: the cessation of advertent consciousness that has odor as its object
8. Tongue-consciousness—*jivhāviññāṇa*
 - C: being supported by the tongue-sensitive element and cognizing taste
 - F: to have only flavor as its object
 - M: as occupation with flavors
 - P: the cessation of advertent consciousness that has flavor as its object
9. Body-consciousness—*kāyaviññāṇa*
 - C: being supported by the body-sensitive element and cognizing touch
 - F: to have only sensations as its objects
 - M: as occupation with bodily sensations
 - P: the cessation of advertent consciousness that has tangibles as its object
10. Receiving consciousness—*sampaṭicchana-citta*
 - C: cognizing visible data, sound, smell, taste, and touch immediately following the respective sense consciousness
 - F: to receive sensory data
 - M: as the state of receiving the sensory data
 - P: the cessation of the previous moment of eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, or body-consciousnesses
11. Investigating consciousness—*santīraṇā-citta*
 - C: the cognizing of the six sense objects
 - F: to investigate the six sense objects
 - M: as the state of investigation
 - P: the heart base

12. Determining consciousness—*voṭṭhabbanacitta*
 C: cognizing of sense data
 F: to determine or define the object that has been cognized by sense consciousness
 M: as the state of determining or discriminating sense data
 P: the cessation of the preceding investigation consciousness
13. Wholesome or unwholesome impulsion consciousness—*kusala or akusala javanacitta*
 C: the presence or absence of fault
 F: as the property of purity or impurity in the experience of sense data
 M: as wholesome or unwholesome, profitable or unprofitable; productive of desirable or undesirable effects
 P: wise or unwise attention
14. Registration consciousness—*tadārammaṇacitta*
 C: cognizing of the six sense objects
 F: to take as object what has been apprehended by the preceding impulsion consciousness
 M: as the state of registration of that sense data
 P: cessation of impulsion consciousness
15. Mind-door advertent consciousness—*manodvārāvajjana*
 C: cognizing sensory data
 F: to advert attention at the mind door
 M: as the state of advertent
 P: cessation of the preceding life-continuum consciousness
16. Death consciousness—*cuticitta*
 C: cognizing its object which may be kamma, kamma sign, or rebirth sign
 F: shifting
 M: as the state corresponding to the shift
 P: the cessation of the previous consciousness which may be an impulsion, registration, or life-continuum consciousness