The Benefits Of Perfecting Determination

The next in the list of Paramis, those qualities of mind to be perfected during the process of awakening, is Determination, *adhitthana* in Pali. Determination is one of the Paramis that is meant to be supportive of the development of the other Paramis. As in the other discussions about the Paramis, here is a reference to “The Perfections Leading to Enlightenment *by Sujin Boriharnwanaket, t*ranslated by Nina van Gorkom”:

Determination has the characteristic of determining upon the requisites of enlightenment; its function is to overcome their opposites; its manifestation is unshakeableness in that task; the requisites of enlightenment are its proximate cause.

The understanding of determination in contemporary terms has two references: a firmness of purpose and resolution, (I’m determined to complete this project!) and the clear establishment of a particular issue or domain “The project was determined to be complete by the certifying inspector). Both of these refer to the perfecting of mental capabilities, that is, a firm and enduring commitment to establish a clear, investigative awareness of the nature and consequences of craving and clinging along with the practices that manifest liberation from distress and confusion.

How does determination relate to each of the other Paramis?

1. Regarding Generosity, there is a determination to notice the benefits of sharing resources with others as regards overcoming the false (although quite normal) perception of separation and of greed.
2. Regarding Virtue, there is a determination to be clearly aware of benevolent intention as the better choice for awakening and to skillfully apply virtue in daily life routines.
3. Regarding Renunciation, there is a determination to cultivate the ability to be clearly aware of the emergence of an unwholesome self-state organization and to redirect attention back to a benign focus, such as mindfulness of breathing.
4. Regarding Wisdom, there is a determination to cultivate persistent, mindful investigation of impermanence and the absence of an enduring, autonomous self.
5. Regarding Energy/Right Effort, there is determination to persistently and skillfully channel attention to cultivating the emergence and fulfillment of wholesome self-state organizations.
6. Regarding Patience, there is the relentless, willing capability to endure unpleasant and pleasant mental phenomena in non-reactive ways in order for Wisdom to flourish.
7. Regarding Truthfulness, there is determination to be mindfully aware of virtuous self-state organizations and to manifest them in speech and action.
8. Determination supports willingness to integrate the Paramis thoroughly and routinely into daily life routines.
9. Regarding Lovingkindness, there is a determination to persistently cultivate kindness, compassion and sympathetic joy during daily life routines.
10. Regarding Equanimity, there is a determination to bring balance to one’s identification of a self-state organization (not too attached or too indifferent) and energy expression (not too much excitation or too much tranquility).