

慈恩

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慈恩物语 GRACE TALK

缘起无我，
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佛法的基本理论是“缘起无我”，认为人与人之间是辗转相关的，任何一个人都不能单独生存。因此，人类在这世界舞台上，应该本着关系集会的缘起法则，彼此互相关照，自他互助，使大家都可以过和乐、安定、自由自在的生活。

然而，人们由于不了解“缘起无我”的根本原理，而在潜意识中，滋生起自大的心理，总以为自己高人一等，别人都应该接受“我”的指挥。于是，人与人之间便发生种种争斗！

世界的紊乱已臻于极点，人类遭受空前的苦难。人们应该运用高度的理智，从“缘起无我”的原理，来了解和判断一切，进而本于佛法的悲愿，同情世人的愚昧，解除人间的苦难，促进世间的和谐。我们必须避免人与人之间的争斗，国与国之间的战争。唯有实践佛陀所开显的“缘起无我”原理，各个国家有无相通，人们互助合作，自利利他，人类才能共存共荣，世间许多复杂的问题，也才能获得合理的解决。

~ 演培老和尚

Dependent Co-Arising
and Mutual Support

The basic tenet of Buddhist teachings is “dependent co-arising with no true self”. People are inter-related, nobody can exist independently on his own. According to this principle of Dependent Co-arising, everything arises in dependence on a combination of causes and conditions. Based on this principle, human beings should take care of one another, offer mutual aid and support, so that all may live happily in peace, security and freedom.

However, people do not understand this basic principle and subconsciously develop the self-important mentality. One invariably considers oneself as being superior to others, so they should be directed by “me”. This is the cause for various human conflicts.

The turmoil in our world has reached a peak and mankind is afflicted with unprecedented suffering. We should exercise profound reason to understand and judge everything based on the principle of Dependent Co-Arising. Furthermore, in the Buddhist spirit of compassion, let us sympathise with the foolishness of people, relieve human suffering and promote global harmony. We should avoid conflicts among people and wars among nations. Following this principle of Dependent Co-Arising and selflessness as taught by Buddha, nations should share resources equitably, people should collaborate for mutual support and benefits. Only then can human beings thrive together, with reasonable resolution of many complicated global issues.

~ Venerable Yen Pei

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谈生说死

1988年讲于新加坡文殊中学佛教礼堂

一、从死说起

新加坡佛教总会从去年举办《以佛法净化人生》的一系列佛学讲座，邀请法师、学者、居士们开示佛法，让信众增长智慧，法喜充满。

《以佛法净化人生》的确是好主题，学佛行者都希望净化人生，以达到像佛陀一样的庄严与美满人生。

我今天就以《谈生说死》这个讲题，来诠释净化人生的主题。

“生死”这两个字，是佛法所常教示的，佛弟子听来，应该没有什么忌讳，但是世间一般人，总是喜欢听到“生”，而不太愿意听到“死”。然而，死总是跟着生而来，说生而不说死，似乎不完整。“人莫不有死”，不仅是人，乃至一切众生，在死亡面前，是一律平等的！

现代人，不仅是成人，即使是小孩，都知道说平等，甚至争取平等。以佛法的立场来说，人类的平等，无过于死亡。不论智愚贤劣，大富权贵或贩夫走卒，最终都免不了死亡，而且在死亡的时刻，一般人都会感受死亡的痛苦，不会死得舒服。即使一个人拥有很大的权势，或很多的财富，也决不例外。

报章上有一篇关于死亡的文章中说：“千万年来，从没有一个例外，多活几年，少活几年，没有什么了不起。活得好，多吃饭睡觉，多做几年制造大粪的机器；活得差，忧伤憔悴，疾病苦恼，只算是多受几年的活罪。”

现在世界上有几十亿人口，在这么多人当中，“几乎每天每时每刻，都不免有人死亡，不是自己的亲戚朋友，当然漠不关心”。死亡的影子时时呈现在我们眼前，但是因为与我们没有任何关系，所以死亡似乎是他人的事而已。

台湾的一本佛教刊物上，有一篇文章《怕死》。作者说：在现今社会中，什么学科都有，只要是人们需要的，都会开设课程教导，例如：美容、育婴、游泳、跳舞、歌唱、烹饪、裁剪、书法、纸画、营养等。各种课程多得不可胜数，就是没有设班教导死亡。有人认为死亡是很自然的，不论死得好不好，说去就去，还需要教导什么呢？社会上缺乏有关死亡的教导，也可能是因为人们对死亡有所忌讳，听到死亡就已经害怕，教导死亡如何如何，岂不是更令听者畏惧？其实，死亡的教导，将减少生者对于死亡的忧虑，也减轻病者死亡前的不安。

《怕死》一文的作者，最后总结死亡并不可怕。

中国江苏镇江金山寺，是中国最有名的禅宗丛林。在南宋时代，金山寺有一位住持道月禅师，他参禅已有相当的成就。禅师一次讲法后，就端坐着安然而逝，并没有任何痛苦或恐惧。

不但修禅有所得者不畏惧死亡，世人也有不害怕死亡的。美国文学家富兰克林说：“为什么怕死？死是人生中最美丽的经历。”

英国有一位诗人在临终时，这样喃喃自语道：“我是多么快乐，多么快乐啊！”

美国政治家希尔在临死时说：“我快要回我的老家了。”回家的感觉是快慰的。

世人对于死亡尚且不害怕，我们为什么怕死呢？

汉传佛教三论宗的开祖嘉祥（549—623）大师说：“含齿戴毛者，无不爱生怖死。死依生来，吾若不生，因何有死？宜见其初生知终死，应啼生勿怖死。”

照理来说，“生”是可怕的，因为出生者最终会死亡，所以我们对于出生，应该大哭特哭，对于死亡则不

应该有所恐惧。除非不生，出生了而又怕死，这实在有些说不过去。世人不了解这点，所以一听到“死”就害怕。

世界上有犯法者被判死刑，但是由于初犯罪而获得缓刑。法国有一位著名学者就这么说：“人类是被判死刑的囚人，不过是无期的缓期执行而已。”

这也就是说，人生下来就像被判死刑的囚人，由于人的寿命不定，活到五十岁而死亡，就是五十岁时执行死刑。如果活到八十岁而死亡，就是在八十岁执行死刑。

死期并非有任何人替你规定，依照佛法来说，何时死亡是由于你自己的业力。

人类生存在世间，什么时候会死亡，并没有固定，是由于各人的业力而有所不同，但是死亡是必然的。要想不死，是决不可能的。如果问人为什么生存，答案是人们为了生活而生存，但是不论我们怎样维持生命，其实我们一天天接近死亡的边缘。甚至可以说，我们现前的一呼一吸，其实是奏着趋向死亡的进行曲！

人一天趋向死亡，这并不分别贵贱老幼，也不分别贤愚贫富。不论是居住在独立洋房里，或潦倒在贫民屋里，最后的结局唯同一死。我们向死亡的边缘前进，到达生死的岸头时，任我们怎样想在人间多逗留片刻，都是绝对不可能的。

中国著名的田园诗人陶渊明（365—427）说：“人生无根蒂，飘如陌上尘”，又说：“人生似幻化，终当归空无。”

虽然这两句话把人生刻画得很深刻，却还不如佛经说得透彻。《维摩诘所说经·方便品》中说：“是身如聚沫，不可撮摩，是身如泡，不得久立……是身不实，四大为家。”

死亡是生命的事实，不容任何人否认或抹煞。

永嘉（633—712）大师说：

“生死事大，无常迅速。”

生了就不能不死，这是人人所知道的。自从有人类以来，没有一个人能活到今天而不死亡。世人总觉得死亡是最沉痛的事，正因为很沉痛，所以很怕死，也不愿意听到“死”，但是死亡仍然是会来临的。

前面说到，死亡是任何人所不可避免的，但是严格来说，当一个新生命初生时，就是生命死

亡的开始。因为当你在人生中向前迈进进一步时，死亡就紧跟着一步而来。死亡的阴影，从没有离开生命一步，那么死亡又有什么可怕的呢？即使害怕，也不能脱离死亡。

有人说：“生存期间的长短，并不意味着生命的久暂。一位年逾百岁的人瑞，可能无法与殉身战场的年轻战士相比较。若非前者有着足以传世的作为，其生命将随肉体之损失而灭失，而后者即以卫国精神永垂不朽。”

中国西汉史学家司马迁说：“人固有一死，或重于泰山，或轻于鸿毛。”

我们不必怕死，要问的是怎样的死法才是值得的！在世做人，对于死亡不应该有所畏惧。如果死得很有意义，肉体虽然灭亡，但是正义浩气长存，仍然活在每个人的心中，虽死犹生，那才是有意义的死！

例如世间许多历代的忠臣义士，在正义的挣扎中壮烈成仁。这些志士仁人虽然死亡，但是他们的精神永在人间，而且在人类历史上，留下光辉的一页！

一千多年前，中国有一位玄奘（602—664）大师，他去印度寻求正法，冒险犯难，跋涉穷荒、沙漠、雪峰等，往返途中经过一百三十国，饱经艰险，几近丧命也毫不畏惧。大师为法的精神，永远受人们所赞叹！

二、再来谈生

生死虽属平常，却是大事。众生还未解决生死之前，不论死得怎样光荣伟大，都还在轮回当中。我们身为佛弟子，应该求证生死的解脱。唯有解脱生死，不在这苦恼的世间转来转去地更换新生命，才算解决生死大事。

在无限生命的延续中，人死只不过是一期生命告一段落，而生命潜伏的业力仍然存在，一旦遇到相应的因缘就又去受生，而又转为新的生命，与已经消逝的旧生命，不完全相同。生命就这样长期地换来换去，可以称为“大生死”，就像晨之生，昏之死一样。

如何解脱生死呢？关键就在于截断生死的源头，而这个源头就是佛法中所常说的“无明”与“贪爱”。如何断除无明与贪爱？这是学佛者所要学习的主要课题。同样是求证解脱，有些人是为自己，有些是为他人，因而形

成佛两条不同的路线——解脱道与菩提道。要走哪一条路线，由你自己选择。

我们在还未解脱前，虽然说不必畏惧死亡，但是生命还是极宝贵的。我们应该运用宝贵的人身，多做有益自他的善事，以保持生命不堕落。这是佛法认为最重要的，如果不善于运用人身，而糟蹋这个生命，“空在人间走一遭”，那就太可惜了！而且我们想再得人身，是难之又难！

为什么这么说呢？我们的生命并不是只出现为人类，而是也可能转生在天界、阿修罗界、畜生界、饿鬼界、地狱界等，但是比较起来，出现为人类是最重要的。人类苦乐参半，最适合修行，不像天与阿修罗有太多享乐，也不像畜生、饿鬼、地狱众生有太多苦痛，而且唯有人能成佛。因此，我们对于现今的生命，应该特别重视，不要以为死后还有新生命到来，而随便荒废现今的生命。

佛经中常说“人身难得”，要我们珍惜现今的人生。佛陀在在处处，给予人们人生的美好希望与鼓励，绝对不会让人们活得灰心颓志。

但是我们也要知道，我们的人生前途，不能靠别人的扶助，而是要靠自己努力。唯有自己不断地努力，生命的解脱才不成问题。如果你希望借助外在的力量，来完成自己生命的解脱，你必然会失望。佛教主张自力，而并不是仰赖他力的宗教。

我们必须发挥自己的能力去求证解脱，但这并不是短时间内可以做得到的。有些人想要一生成办解脱，这是绝大的错误。我们要靠自己的力量，逐渐地、稳健地发展。不论自己的力量大小，只要靠自己的力量精进努力，必定有成就的一天。依循佛陀的指示去求证解脱，是最好的方法。

自己求解脱而证得解脱，对于别人和其他众生的苦痛则漠不关心，这是不是有些自私自利呢？佛陀曾经一再开示佛弟子：一个人应该不休止地为所有众生，无私无我地服务，使一切众生都证得解

脱，这才是佛陀所赞赏的。

佛陀在修行菩萨道的过程中，本于自己的不断努力，证得最高无上菩提，但是他在正觉后，并未自私地享受菩提觉悟的法乐，而是将自己的经验和智慧，开导众生，希望众生都能像他一样证悟，证知佛教决不是自私自利的。我们学习佛陀的教法，要靠本身如实地行践，才能自己解脱生死，同时也帮助众生解脱生死。

三、总结

生命长流的源头，是无明和贪爱。众生有无明和贪爱，必然造作善恶业。众生造了善恶业，就必然由各自业力的牵引，投生在不同的生命舞台上。要到达美好的舞台，呈献美好生命的演出，就应当注意自己平时的行为活动。众生一旦造业，生命源头还没有截断，无论如何还是会感召新的生命，而感召新生命的业力强大，如佛教戒律中所说：“不思議业力，虽远必相牵，果报成熟时，求避终难脱。”我们对于自己所造的善恶业，岂可忽视呢？

新加坡佛教总会每月主办一次佛学讲座，主题是《以佛法净化人生》。今天我所讲的《谈生说死》，与净化人生有什么关系呢？

首先，我们应当知道为什么要净化人生。一个生命体出现，不但肉体是污染的，精神同样是污染的。无明和贪爱是生死的源头，固然是污染的，由此而造的恶业，在佛经中称为“黑业”，也是污染的。人生是污染的，唯有佛法可以净化人生，所以说《以佛法净化人生》。

讲到净化，就必然说到污染，如现今有空气污染、食水污染等环境问题，影响着我们的生存，所以各国政府为了保护人民的生命，竭力清除污染。

佛陀深知，轮回中的每个生命，无一不是极为污染的，所以佛陀说种种法，以清除众生的污染，也就是净化生命。一旦完成生命的净化，就不会继续在轮回中滚来滚去，也就是了脱生死，证得究竟的解脱。

唯有自己不断地努力，生命的解脱才不成问题。

如果你希望借助外在的力量，来完成自己生命的解脱，你必然会失望。

Life and Death

*Translation of Venerable Yen Pei's talk delivered in Mandarin
on 27 November 1988, at Manjusri Secondary School Buddhist Hall, Singapore*

1 Death

Singapore Buddhist Federation has been organising a series of Dharma Talks based on the theme *Purification of Life with Dharma*. Various monastics, scholars and lay people have been invited as speakers. Their exposition of Dharma (Buddhist teachings) has enabled our audience to gain wisdom and Dharmic joy.

Purification of Life with Dharma is indeed a good theme. As Buddhist practitioners, we wish to purify our lives, so as to achieve perfection and dignity of life just like Buddha.

Today, I shall further elaborate on this theme, by discussing the issue of life and death.

The issue of life and death is often mentioned in the Buddhist teachings. As Buddhists, we should not be reluctant to talk about this. However, people generally like to hear about "birth", but are not pleased to hear about "death". Yet, death invariably follows birth. It seems incomplete to discuss life without mentioning death. Every human succumbs to death. Death is the leveller of all sentient beings, not just humans.

In modern times, not only adults keep mentioning equality and fight for equality, even children do so. From the Buddhist perspective, the equality of mankind lies in death. All people, whether

clever or foolish, virtuous or unworthy, wealthy or poor, high class or low status, cannot avoid the final end of death. Moreover, at the moment of death, people generally experience suffering, not comfort. Even if a person wields authoritative power or immense wealth, he is no exception.

There was an article about death in the newspapers, in which the author wrote, "Over thousands of years, there has never been an exception. There is nothing great in living a few years more or a few years less. If one lives well, one merely eats more, sleeps more and defecates more. If one does not live well, pining away in sorrow or tormented by sickness, that is merely enduring a few more years of hardships."

Among the billions of people in the world population, "there are inevitably people dying almost every moment in each day, but people are indifferent since the dead are not their relatives or friends". The shadow of death constantly looms before us, but since the deceased are not connected with us, death seems to be others' affairs.

An article entitled *Fear of Death* was published in a Buddhist magazine in Taiwan. The author wrote, "In modern society, there are various disciplines of learning. As long as there is a need, courses will be conducted, such as on cosmetology, caring for babies,

swimming, dancing, singing, cookery, tailoring, calligraphy, paper painting, nutrition and so forth. There are countless courses available, but none that teaches about death. Some people regard death as natural, so is there any need to teach people about death? When the time comes, one just has to go, regardless of whether one dies well or not. This lack of instruction about death in society may be due to the reluctance to talk about death. People are fearful when they hear about death. If lessons are conducted on death, wouldn't it make the audience even more fearful? Actually, death instruction will reduce the worries of the living with regard to death, as well as assuage the anxiety of the sick facing imminent death."

The author concluded that death is not to be feared.

Golden Mountain Monastery in Zhenjiang city, Jiangsu province, is the most well-known Ch'an monastery in China. During the Southern Song Dynasty, there was an abbot there called Ch'an Master Dao Yue who had considerable attainments in meditative practice. He passed away peacefully in a sitting posture right after preaching Dharma, without any fear or suffering.

Not only accomplished meditators did not fear death, there were also ordinary people who did not fear death. An American writer Franklin

questioned the fear of death, saying that death is the most beautiful experience in human life.

An English poet muttered before his death that he was so happy, so full of joy!

An American politician said, on the verge of death, that he would soon be returning to his "old home". The feeling of "going home" offered comfort.

Worldly people are not afraid of death. Why do we fear death then?

Master Jia Xiang (549—623), founder of the Three Treatise School of Chinese Buddhism, said, "Those beings with teeth and hairs all crave for life and fear death. Death arises from birth. If one does not get born, then on what basis will there be death? When one sees a newborn, one should know that it will eventually die. One should weep over birth, but not fear death."

Logically speaking, we should cry over a birth which ought to be dreaded for the consequential death, rather than fear death. Since one has been born, it does not make sense to fear death. Due to lack of understanding of this, people are frightened whenever they hear about death.

There are law-breakers who are sentenced to death, but the death sentence is reprieved on account of the first offence. Using this as an analogy, a French scholar thus said, "Human beings are prisoners sentenced to death, only that the execution of this death sentence is not immediate but postponed indefinitely."

This means that a human is like a prisoner sentenced to death at birth. Due to uncertainty in individual

lifespans, the execution of the death sentence is postponed indefinitely. If a person lives to the age of fifty, the "death sentence" is executed at fifty years of age. If he dies at eighty years old, the "death sentence" is executed at eighty years of age.

The time of death is not stipulated by anyone for you, but due to your own karma (intentional actions), as explained in the Buddhist teachings.

In the human lifespan, there is no definite time for death to occur. The time of death varies with individuals according to karma, but death is certain. It is absolutely impossible to live without dying. If one asks the reason for human existence, it is for the purpose of living. Regardless of how we sustain our lives, we actually move nearer to the brink of death with each passing day. It may even be said that the rhythm of our present in-breaths and out-breaths is actually the march towards death!

People are moving nearer to death day by day, whether they are highly esteemed or lowly, old or young, worthy or silly, rich or impoverished. Regardless of their residence, be it in a lavish house or squalid slum, they all finally end in death. When one is on the verge of death, one absolutely cannot stay longer in this human existence, no matter how much one wishes to linger.

Tao Yuanming (365—427), a renowned Chinese pastoral poet, said, "Human life is rootless like a gale, floating like dust along a trail." He also said, "Life is like an illusion, everything returns to emptiness."

These two lines embody a profound portrayal of human life, but this is still not as thorough or penetrating as what is taught in Buddhist discourses. It is stated in *Chapter on Skilful Means, Discourse Preached by Vimalakirti*, "This body is like a ball of foam, unable to bear any pressure. It is like a water bubble, not remaining very long..... This body is unreal, being a combination of the Four Elements."

Death is a fact of life that none can deny or ignore. Master Yong Jia (633—712) said, "Life and death are momentous matters. Impermanence is swift."

Once born, one will die someday. This is known to all. Since the beginning of humanity, none can survive till now without dying. People invariably consider death as most sorrowful and so have deep fears of death, as well as feel reluctant to hear about death. Yet, death will still approach us.

As mentioned before, nobody can avoid death. Strictly speaking, when a new life is born, that marks the beginning of death, because for every step you advance in life, death follows closely stepwise. The shadow of death always looms over our lives, it is never separate from our lives. Then what is there to fear about death? Even if we are fearful, we cannot escape death.

Someone said, "A long lifespan does not signify that life endures. Neither does a brief lifespan mean lack of longevity. A centenarian who has lived past a hundred years may not be comparable to a young soldier who sacrifices

his life on the battlefield. If the centenarian has not performed any deed that is worthy of being praised down the generations, his life will disappear along with the decay of his physical body, while the soldier will always be remembered by posterity for his brave spirit in defending the country."

Sima Qian, a Chinese historian who lived during the Western Han Dynasty, said, "Though death befalls all men alike, it may be weightier than Mount Tai or lighter than a feather."

We do not need to fear death, but should reflect upon how we may die worthily. We should not be frightened to die. If one dies for a worthy cause, even if the physical body perishes, one's noble spirit of righteousness will endure, living on in the minds of people despite one's death. That is then a worthy death.

For instance, throughout the ages, many patriots perished in the struggles for righteous justice, but their spirit lives on to inspire posterity, leaving glorious pages in the history of mankind.

More than a thousand years ago, Master Xuan Zang (602—664) travelled on foot from China to India, in quest of true Dharma. On these risky journeys, he traversed desolate lands, deserts, snow peaks and many difficult terrains. In his passage through one hundred and thirty kingdoms, he encountered numerous difficulties and nearly lost his life a few times, but he persevered dauntlessly. His courageous spirit in protecting Dharma will always be lauded by posterity!

2 Life

Even though birth and death are common to all, they are momentous matters. As long as sentient beings have not achieved liberation, they will still circulate in cyclic rebirths, no matter how gloriously or nobly they die. As Buddhists, we should strive to attain liberation from cyclic rebirths, so as not to circulate incessantly in these worlds of afflictions, changing from one life form to another. Only then can the important issue of life and death be said to be resolved.

In the infinite continuity of life, a human death is merely the end of a phase of existence. The latent karmic force still exists, causing one to be reborn once correspondent conditions are encountered. The new life is not the same as the previous life which has perished. In this way, life changes from one form to another over long periods of time, just like the "birth" of morning at dawn and "death" of evening at night. These are called momentous births and deaths.

How can one get liberated from cyclic rebirths? The crux lies in cutting off the source of birth and death, which is delusion and craving, as mentioned in Buddhist teachings. How does one eradicate delusion and craving? This is the main topic that Buddhists need to learn. In the quest for liberation, some people do so for themselves, while some people do so for the sake of others, thus resulting in two paths of Buddhist practice, namely the path to self-liberation and the altruistic path to Enlightenment. You decide for yourself which path you will follow.

Before achieving liberation, even though there is no need to fear death, life is still exceedingly precious. We should use this precious human rebirth to do more good deeds for benefitting oneself and others, so as to prevent our lives from degeneration. This is given great importance in Buddhism. If one does not use this human rebirth skilfully, but ruins it by living in vain, that will be a regrettable waste of this precious human rebirth! Moreover, it will be exceedingly difficult to gain another human rebirth again!

Why is this so? Our lives do not just appear as human beings. We may also be reborn in the realms of heavenly beings, demi-gods, animals, hungry ghosts and hell beings. In comparison, rebirth as human beings is the most important. Human beings experience a mixture of suffering and happiness, so human existence is the most conducive to spiritual cultivation, unlike heavenly beings and demigods that have excessive sensual pleasures on the one hand and on the other hand, unlike animals, hungry ghosts and hell beings that have excessive suffering. Moreover, only human beings can attain Buddhahood. Therefore, we should accord special importance to our current lives as humans. Do not waste the present life carelessly with the thought that a new life will follow after death.

In the Buddhist discourses, human rebirth is often described as extremely rare and precious, so it ought to be treasured. Buddha always gave people optimistic hope and encouragement for living. He

absolutely would not let people be discouraged or weak-willed in living.

Yet, we must also know that our lives must not depend upon others' support. We must rely on our own efforts. It is only by striving continually that we can achieve liberation from cyclic rebirths. If you hope to depend on external powers to achieve liberation, you will certainly be disappointed. Buddhism advocates self-reliance, it is not a religion with dependence on external powers.

We must exercise our own abilities to gain liberation, but this cannot be achieved within a short time. Some people want to achieve liberation speedily in one life, but this is absolutely wrong. We must rely on our own strengths to develop ourselves gradually and steadily. Regardless of the magnitude of our strengths, as long as we strive diligently with self-reliance, we will certainly accomplish liberation. The best way is to strive for liberation in accordance with Buddha's teachings.

If one strives for and attains liberation, but is indifferent to the suffering of other people or sentient beings, wouldn't this be selfish? Buddha admonished His disciples repeatedly that one should serve all sentient beings selflessly and unceasingly, to enable all sentient beings to attain liberation. This is then praised by Buddha.

Buddha strove conscientiously with unremitting efforts in the course of fulfilling the Bodhisattva practices. After attaining Full Enlightenment, He did not enjoy the bliss of Enlightenment on His own

selfishly, but instead imparted His experience and wisdom to sentient beings, in the hope that sentient beings may attain Enlightenment just like Him. It is thus clear that Buddhism absolutely does not advocate self-centred cultivation. Since we learn Buddha's teachings, we must personally put them into earnest practice, in order to achieve liberation for ourselves, as well as help sentient beings achieve liberation.

3 Conclusions

The source of the long flow of life is delusion and craving. In the presence of delusion and craving, sentient beings will certainly commit wholesome and unwholesome karma (intentional actions), thus getting drawn by their own karmic forces to be reborn as different lives. To have a good rebirth with conducive circumstances, one must pay attention to one's conduct and activities. As long as a sentient being commits intentional actions, the source of life has not been cut off, so rebirth will take place after his death. Moreover, this karmic force for rebirth is very strong, as stated in the Buddhist disciplinary texts, "The inconceivable force of karma, though distant, will certainly draw one to the karmic results. Once the karmic fruits ripen, one eventually cannot escape the results even if one tries to avert." How could we overlook the wholesome and unwholesome karma that we commit?

Singapore Buddhist Federation holds monthly Dharma Talks based on the theme *Purification of Life with Dharma*. How is my talk today

on *Life and Death* related to the purification of life?

Firstly, we ought to know the reasons for purifying human life. In the existence of a life-form, not only is the physical body defiled, the mind is also defiled. The source of cyclic rebirths lies in the defilements — delusion and craving. The unwholesome karma committed due to delusion and craving is thus also defiled and called "black karma" in Buddhist discourses. Only Dharma can purify our defiled lives.

The opposite of purification may be called defilement, pollution or contamination. For instance, nowadays, air pollution, water pollution, food contamination and other environmental problems affect our survival. Therefore, in various countries, the governments put tremendous efforts into tackling pollution issues, so as to protect civilian lives. Buddha was deeply aware that all sentient beings in cyclic existence are exceedingly defiled, so He taught various methods to eradicate the defilements of sentient beings, that is, to purify sentient lives. Once this purification is completed, one will not continue circulating incessantly in cyclic rebirths. One thus achieves ultimate liberation, which is freedom from cyclic births and deaths.



演培老和尚 的做人

凡愚僧智 YEN PEI WISDOM • 若然

艺术

（五十二）随分随力，应时行施

我们常常听说：某某人的福报可真大，某某人的福报小。对于福报大的人，我们似乎很羡慕。然而，你是否想过，他的福报是怎样得来的呢？佛陀告诉我们：一个人的福报大小，是由他所做的功德多少而来的，并不是无因无缘的。

那么，什么是功德事呢？功德事，是指好的、对的、善的、向上的事情。例如：有人肚子饿了，我们给他东西吃。有人受冻了，我们给他添加衣服穿，或用暖气机给予温暖。有人生病了，我们帮助他获得治疗。有人遇到困难，我们帮助他解决。这样解衣、推食、排难、助药的精神，就是大功德事，也正是佛法所说的“布施”。唯有通过布施，我们才能获得大福报。

一个人如果前生没有培植福德，今生就贫穷；前生如果多修福培植福德，今生就富有。富贵，是由于前生修福德而得来的。如果你希望来生更加富有，今生就更应该多布施，勤修福德。

布施，就是尽可能帮助别人，将自己的财力、智力，拿出来贡献给大家。古代的人修桥补路，施茶施药等，都是布施的例子。佛教鼓励我们广行布施，使贫穷困苦的人能过正常的生活，不至于挨饿或受寒。

黎巴嫩诗人哈里利·吉布兰（Kahlil Gibran, 1883—1931）说：“你所有的一切，终有一天是要施舍的，不如在生前就施舍。”

布施并不是白费的，既能济贫扶难，也为自己种下福德善根。

一、财物布施

世人有一个错误的观念，以为钱财会让人快乐。如果自己成为有钱人，要什么就可以买到什么。拥有财富，不就是拥有快乐与幸福吗？

事实真的是这样吗？

过去有一位富翁，家财万贯，事业兴隆，但是他终日为钱财而伤脑筋，日夜奔波，却不得安乐。

他有时想：我要这么多钱来做什么呢？但是要他舍弃钱财，他又不甘愿，而让钱财把自己压得透不过气来，甚至还惹来身心的病苦。唉，这究竟是为何辛苦与忙碌呢？

富翁终于感悟到：钱并不是好东西！我为什么要保存这么多钱？如果钱财处理不当，还会伤害生命！

富翁家隔壁，住着一个劳工。他每天早出晚归，放工回家就引吭高歌，乐在其中。富翁不明白这个邻居怎么总是那么快乐，就问他的妻子。

妻子回答：“道理很简单，只是你不明白而已。你如果无条件地送给他一笔钱，你看他过后会怎么样？”

第二天，富翁就送给这个邻居一笔钱。从此以后，晚上再也听不到邻居引吭高歌了，因为他同样为了钱而感到烦恼！

钱多未必带来快乐。有钱，不要全部保留给自己，拿一些钱去做有益人群的事，自己会因此而感到安乐，别人也会受益和开心。

生存在这世间，有些人的生活不成问题，有些人则生活得非常潦倒，所以世间就有“社会救济”的服务。本于佛陀慈悲救济众生的精神，佛弟子在经济条件许可的情况下，都应该多行布施，救济生活有困难的人。

财物布施（财施），就是“有钱出钱”，以财物帮助他人，毫无条件地拿出钱财，贡献给社会，使人群获得利益。财施，其实就是“以有余济不足”：当人们的物质生活有所缺乏时，我们就在自己经济能力范围内

所能做得到的，以钱财物资，去帮助他们解决困境，继续生存。

做人，尤其是学佛者，如果时时想到生命无常，那么你自然就不会为钱财做奴隶，而会想到怎样运用自己的财物去救济人群。

一个有财富与地位的人，应该善于运用自己的财富与地位，来谋求人群的福利。如此，富贵并没有什么不好的。其实，财富本身并不是罪恶，问题在于我们怎样运用财富，不成为钱财的奴隶。财富运用不当，当然是罪恶，遭人谴责；财富运用得当，并且贡献于救济事业，就是培植福德，值得赞赏。

有人认为：把财物布施出去，自己岂不是没有了吗？这种想法是错误的。以佛法来说，财物用于自己的享受，就是真的没有了。如果把财物布施给广大的人群，虽然是同样的用掉，但却不是没有了，而是因此种下了富贵之因，将来会获得更硕大的富贵果报。

这就像一粒谷种，放进水田里，从表面上来看，好像是没有了，但是它将会发芽开花，结成更多的谷子。

布施也是一样：布施出去的财物并不是没有了，而是以另一种形式收藏在你的“福德箱”里。发心布施，是种下富贵之因。

另一方面，一个人陷入贫穷的困苦中，自然希望能度脱“贫穷海”。佛陀说唯有搭乘“布施”这条坚实的船，才能度过贫穷的大海。因此，布施不但不会使自己贫穷，而且是使自己脱离贫穷的最大保障。

二、无畏布施

有些人也许这么想：自己的经济情况许可，当然可以布施，但是如果经济能力不够，怎么能布施呢？

其实，佛教鼓励布施，并不是强

人所难,而是让人们随分随力去做。实际上,有钱固然可以布施,没钱也同样可以布施。例如:大街上有一块果皮,会对行人造成危险。老人或小孩不留意,就可能踩到果皮而跌倒。我们捡起街上的果皮,扔进垃圾箱里,让人们行走时没有危险,这就是“无畏布施(无畏施)”。

无畏施,就是让众生没有畏惧,例如:鼓励人,给人信心,给人勇气,或者安慰人,使人不害怕等。

三、正法布施

财施的最大功用,是维持生命。这虽然是佛法所重视的,但并不是根本目的。因为这个生命体,不论怎样照顾它,终究有一天会舍弃你而去,要留也留不住。

因此,佛法于“财物布施”外,更提出了“无畏布施”与“正法布施(法施)”。

《法句经》中说:“一切施中,法施为胜。”

法施的功用,是滋润与增长众生的法身慧命。法身慧命,是每个众生本来就具有的,但是由于没有法水的滋润而未能增长。

法施,就是将自己所了解的佛法,说给别人听。扩大来说,以我们所拥有的知识,随时随地教人,使他人增进知识,也叫做法施。

演公说:“一个大乘佛法行者,不休不息,到处说法,从不把说法当作艰苦的事,目的就是为滋润众生的法身慧命,希望众生速证法身,成就慧命,达到与佛一样的果位。”¹

四、随分随力

那么,我们应该做哪一种布施呢?这就看各人的能力,有能力做财物布施的人就做财施,能够以正法布施的人就做法施,能够

给予无畏的人就做无畏施。

学佛者对于佛陀所教示的布施法门,应该随分随力地实践,发扬佛教慈悲利人的精神。佛教有一句话:“有钱而不施财,谓之吝财。知法而不说法,谓之吝法。有力而不出力,谓之吝力。”

演公说:“佛法最重视的,是破除人们的悭贪,而能去除此病的,唯有布施。布施,从表面上来看,是有所损失的,而从实质上来说,则是有所得的。因此,发心布施的人,不应该着眼于现在的损失,而应该着眼于未来的获得。具有这样正确认识的人,才肯老老实实在地布施。”²

五、应时行施

佛法所说的布施,还应该做到“应时行施”,就是在他人需要什么时,提供适合的东西。例如:人们在冬天需要多添衣服时,就布施厚暖的寒衣。

当我们布施时,如果真心诚意地应时行施,不但将来会获得富贵的果报,即使今生也可以获得应时果报。

六、自修与化他

在佛教中,布施是一个重要的法门,所以六度(布施、持戒、忍辱、精进、禅定、智慧)与四摄(布施、爱语、利行、同事),都以布施为首。

佛教为什么这么重视布施?因为布施是摄化众生的最殊胜方便。人们最关心的课题,就是生存。当人们遇到生存问题时,我们给予适当的援助,那时他们是最容易受到感化的。

在物质上给予人们利乐,就是一种善巧方便,让人们乐意接近我们。如果人们都不愿意接近你,他们哪里会接受你的济度,或听你所要分享的佛法呢?

我们不但是为了自己培植福德而行布施,也是为了摄化众生而布施。因此,无论是为了自修或度化众生,布施都是学佛者必修的主要课目。菩萨行者更需要广行布施,利益众生。

七、行施入佛道

布施这个法门,遍通于全体佛法。不论你在五乘(人乘、天乘、声闻乘、缘觉乘、菩萨乘)中修学任何一乘,布施都是不可或缺的。

佛陀告诉我们:诸佛如来,在最初发心时,都是以布施为入佛道的因缘。不行布施,不但不能进入佛道,而且根本不可能成就最高无上的菩提。

因此,学佛者首先所要学习的,就是布施,效仿诸佛如来,以布施作为自己入佛道的因缘。

注释:

¹ 演培法师:《怎样做个标准的佛教信徒》。

² 演培法师:《从水供养说到德水的长流》。



善乐园

宽严法师讲于2016年4月10日，新加坡福慧讲堂



人都向往世界是一个乐园。在乐园里，人人都是善良的，相亲相爱地和睦相处，互助互惠，处处都是欢乐。然而，这个原本可以和善的乐园，受到接二连三的恐怖袭击，许多无辜的生命受到伤害，人心惶惶。人们对这个乐园失去了安全感，对人对事感到恐惧，并且必须经常提醒自己居安思危，不能掉以轻心，而终日生活在惶恐不安之中。

我们的乐园去了哪里？善良的人们都在哪里呢？

南山和尚有两名弟子。有一天，大弟子出外化缘，获得了一担新鲜的桃子。他开心地挑着桃子，赶回寺院，途中路过李家庄的时候，突然觉得尿急，只好把桃子放在树下，去找个角落方便一下。

大弟子回来的时候，看到一群人正围坐在树下吃桃子。他急得大喊：“那是我的桃子，你们不许吃！”

众人听到喊声，赶紧一哄而散了。

大弟子气呼呼地回到寺院，上气不接下气地向南山和尚抱怨：“李家庄的人，实在太可恶了，竟然偷吃我化缘得来的桃子。”

南山和尚慈祥地笑着说：“不要怪他们，但愿佛菩萨保佑他们平安。”

过了一些日子，二弟子也下山化缘，却不小心摔伤了腿，倒在李家庄的村口。村民看到了，赶紧将二弟子抬进村子里，还请医生给他治疗。二弟子伤口痊愈后，就返回寺院，并且告诉南山和尚跌伤事件的经过。

南山和尚笑着问大弟子：“现在你还说李家庄的人可恶吗？”

大弟子回答：“上次他们是挺可恶的，偷吃我的桃子，这次却怎么这么友善呢？”

南山和尚说：“大善大恶的人，毕竟是少数。大多数的人，都像李家庄的村民一样普通，既有小善，也有小恶。你给他一个善的契机，他就表现为善；你给他一个恶的契机，他就表现为恶。恶要原谅，善要引导。你把桃子放在树下，别人并不知道桃子是你的，你又怎么可以怪他们吃桃子呢？”

佛教最重要的道理，就在于“诸恶莫作，众善奉行，自净其意，是诸佛教”的前三句话。这三句话概括了许多内容，并且把佛教的基本教理都涵盖在内。这也可以说是十方三世一切诸佛教化众生的

纲要。作为佛教徒，我们应该认真地学佛，细细地领会佛法，信受奉行，而最基本、最重要的就在于止恶从善。

诸恶莫作，就是指错误的事、坏事都不应该做，连坏的念头也不应该有！

众善奉行，是指一切好事都应该认真去做。

“自净其意”就是说：我们应当经常自我反思与反省，去除种种妄念。在这里，“意”就是指妄念，我们需要清除自己的妄想和执著。佛陀所说的一切法门，都是为了引导众生净化自己的思想，以解决这个问题。

“是诸佛教”就是说明：前面的三句话，就是十方三世一切诸佛教化众生的纲要，也可以说是一切戒律的根本原则。

我们为什么需要戒律？什么是“戒”？戒，就是为了实践“诸恶莫作”。戒，鞭策我们，止恶防非。持戒是为了禁止作恶，作恶就是犯戒。有些人害怕学佛，害怕持戒，因为这个不能做，那个不许做，做了就会犯戒。他们害怕持戒而不学佛，不学善法，不进一步“众善奉行”，却反而连连作恶。


人的一生，就好比一本银行存折。日行一善，就如同今天将现金存入银行账户一样。相反地，日行一恶，就如同今天从银行账户取出现金一样。当你为自己的人生“结帐”的时候，有两种情况：一是存款很多，因为你做的好事多。相反地，如果你作恶多端，那么你的人生银行就会呈现负数，这个时候，你才会赫然发现犯戒的结果。

这一切都是“自作自受”的结果。善有善报，恶有恶报。如果你遭受恶报，那并不是因为你不信佛，不持戒，而被佛菩萨“惩罚”。这些结果，其实是你自己每日作为的“人生清单”，不能怨天尤人！

中国三国时代的刘备（公元161—223年）对儿子说：“勿以恶小而为之，勿以善小而不为！”

这句话的意思是：不要以为只是小毛病，偶尔犯错，没什么大不了。比如抽烟、饮酒，甚至嗜毒，就是从一小口试试开始，到最后上瘾而不可自拔。因此，我们不可以忽视“小恶”。

同样地，不要以为自己的善行起不了大作用而不做。日行一善，集少成多，让我们真正“存善心，行善事，说善话，做善人”。如果人人好善，每个人都日行一善，我们将从社会的“小乐园”，扩展到世界的“大乐园”，使人间充满和谐与幸福！



伟大人物甘地(1869—1948)有一句名言：“要改变世界，先改变自己。”

如果你想让这个世界变得更美好，不要期待别人去做，而应该按照自己的能力和条件，亲自动手去做，哪怕是微不足道的一个行为，你也要尽力而为！

许多人认为自己只是一个普通的人，并没有能力去改变气候变暖或者水资源缺乏等大问题。其实并不是这样的。大乘佛教强调菩萨精神，菩萨精神是：只要你尽力，哪怕往前推进一步，都会对这个世界产生积极的促进作用，所以是值得去做的。

善，是人生最有价值的素质，能让你给自己一份漂亮的“人生清单”，为自己的“人生银行”增值。

英国剧作家莎士比亚(1564—1616)说：“善良的心，就是黄金。”

佛教修行的正道有很多方法，而最基本的是“五戒”和“十善”。我们听经闻法，并且加以思惟，从反省中了解其中的真正意义，进而努力去实践，以达到自我改善和提升，这样才能获得佛法的益处。

其实，佛法并不是难懂难学的。因为，学佛就是学“做人”，做一个诚实、正直、循规蹈矩的人。修行，也必须从“修己”开始。所有的大德，甚至佛菩萨们修行，都必须从“人”开始，按部就班，一步一脚印，踏上佛道。试问，如果一个人连基本的处世待人之道都无法做得好，“修己”不及格，他还能以什么“济世救人”呢？

良宽禅师有一个外甥，他是家族财产的唯一继承人，但是这个外甥生活放荡不羁，经常花天酒地。家族们担心他会把家产败光，就写信给良宽禅师。信中说：“虽然您已经出家了，但还是希望您回来一下，教导这个孩子！”

良宽禅师的外甥获知消息之后，就对那些酒肉朋友说：“我的舅舅良宽禅师，德高望重，他肯定

是回来教训我的。”

朋友们说：“你不要被他教训，一定要挫败他。我们倒要看看这个大禅师，到底有什么能耐！”

良宽禅师收到家族的付托，于是千里迢迢地从寺院返回遥远的家乡。他在家乡的那几天，都是由外甥接待他，但是他并没有批评或教训外甥。每天，良宽禅师只是跟外甥聊天，关心他的日常生活，这样反而使外甥感到十分纳闷！

一个星期过去了，良宽禅师即将离开家乡，返回寺院。启程的那天早上，外甥跟平时一样去拜见良宽禅师，向他请安，只见良宽禅师正弯下腰来系鞋带，但是由于年纪大了，他系来系去，总是系不了鞋带。

外甥看见了，立刻上前对良宽禅师说：“让我来替您系鞋带吧！”

外甥说完，就蹲下来替良宽禅师系鞋带。

看着外甥为自己系鞋带，良宽禅师感叹道：“年轻就是好呀！你看我，老了就没用了！什么事情都做不好，连系鞋带都系不好。你这么年轻，应该好好珍惜时光，为美好的人生打好基础！”

话说完，鞋带也系好了。良宽禅师站起来，朝门外走去，没有多说什么。外甥愣住了，他望着老舅舅——良宽禅师的潇洒背影，若有所思……

良宽禅师临走前对外甥说的那一番话，深深地启发了这个浪子，使他彻底改变人生观。外甥发愿戒掉所有的恶习，从此向善向上，最终成为成功的继承人！

这个禅宗故事给我们什么启示？

良宽禅师并没有先入为主地认定外甥无可救药，也并没有指责外甥放荡不羁的恶劣行为或教训他。

相反地，良宽禅师利用“系鞋带”的因缘，在最适当的机会，点醒他，教育他，启发他原本具有的良善之心。

良宽禅师趁外甥善心发动时说了那一番话，令这个年轻小伙子，顿时明白道理而有所感悟！如此，禅师随顺因缘进行教化，通过改变人心来改变世界。

佛法的道德教育不容忽视，并且有加强与巩固的必要。佛法教育，在培育正确的人生观和维持社会的道德次序方面，扮演着举足轻重的角色，这是无可否认的。

最重要的是，我们应该不断地提升和加强个人的修养。身为佛弟子，我们有责任支持道德与自律的培训，并且以身作则，一方面提升自己的修养，另一方面也能在社会上产生激励与引导的作用。

弘扬佛法，是每一个佛弟子应尽的责任，而且不是只有通过讲经说法才能弘法。在日常生活中，如果一个学佛者的身、语、意行为，处处体现善法，他就能令人感动与心服，而达到弘法的效益。

相反地，如果人们看到佛弟子的思想和行为都不如法、丑陋或邪恶，那么即使他将佛法说得再好，也没有人会信服。

有一位太太善根深厚，她接受佛法之后，原本慈祥、纯朴的人格就更加懂得随喜。学佛前，她一直以为佛教徒必须诵经、读佛书、吃素等等，但是自己无法做到这些而感到苦闷。

学佛之后，她将自己所学习到的佛法应用在生活中，并且感到很快乐。她的先生原本对佛教没有好感，看到太太的改变，他自己也很开心，有空时还会和太太谈论佛法。尤其是太太不但忙着自己的工作，还悉心地照顾家庭，更经常抽出时间来照顾他那病重的父亲，没有丝毫怨言。这些都使先生深深感动，并且体会到佛法的实惠。

在日常生活中，一个人所说的话，做的事，想的念头，只要是依循佛法的正语、正业和正念，去恶从善，那就是最好、最有效的修行，也是最容易看到成果的修行。如果你真正做到身、语、意都是善的，你就体会到真正的快



乐！

每个人都应该为自己的人生负责任，没有人可以代替任何人的生活，所以你要过怎样的生活，就要自己决定，自己过。每个人在成长的过程中，都会跌跌撞撞地长大，跌倒了再勇敢地站起来。孩子的思想还未成熟时，需要父母和师长的指导与教育，但是做得好或者坏，仍然是他自己的事。

世间的物质享受越变越精彩，但是能让我们的心灵安宁和快乐的事却越变越少。可怕的天灾人祸，例如恐怖袭击、残暴的滥杀无辜事件等，还有防不胜防的疾病、传染病、食品安全等问题，都令人感到不安。

人类的道德难道已经败坏了吗？人性的善被功利所埋没了吗？为什么世人变得如此善恶不分，而频频造恶业，让无辜的生灵饱受痛苦？我们又应该如何面对这样的恶世呢？

佛法提供我们提升人性的最佳解决方案。佛陀在菩提树下证悟，发现众生皆有佛性，都可以成佛。佛性，就是人性的提升和开展至最高的境界。佛陀的这个发现，给予世人莫大的启示，让我们看到人生的无限光明，也找到了人生向善的最高目标与归宿。

佛法所说的世间法，是在五戒十善之中。五戒十善，是人们所应该遵守与实行的道德规律。佛教所说的道理，都离不开人生，而且是我们人生中最需要的身心修养学问，或者说为真理，对于福国佑民，安定社会人心，更有莫大的裨益。

有一位计程车司机将一包垃圾放在后座上，忘了拿去扔掉。

接着，他载一位女士。女士一上车，就发现座位上的那包东西。她随手按压了一下，心想：哇！硬邦邦的，这一定是之前的乘客所遗留下来的，有可能是钞票呀！

于是，她趁司机不注意时，赶紧将包裹塞进自己的手提带里，过后就马上下车。

我们可以想象，当她发现自己原来是帮司机清理垃圾时，脸上会有怎样的表情！

善与恶，就只在一念之间。在生活中，我们不也是经常贪图一些自己以为非常珍贵的东西，而其实那些都只不过是一些垃圾罢了！

在五浊恶世中，只有佛法最珍贵，效用最大。因为学佛，就是为了学习做个好人，做一个懂得分辨善与恶的好人。在这末法时代，杀戮与残害事件不绝，社会的秩序混乱，众生饱受苦难，世间的纷纷扰扰难以平息。

东方的传统道德思想，教人们以“和”为贵。家和万事兴，世界和平更是人人所期待的，可见“和”的重要性。

佛法更是强调与推广“和乐”、“和谐”之道。佛法，是人生的善法，一定要先从自己开始。自己心平气和，才能与大家一团和气。

佛陀宣说十善法时就指出：做人之本在十善。佛陀为一切众生说法，但是主要的对象着重于人类。佛陀所说的道理，都离不开人间。这是佛教不同于其他宗教之处。佛陀从来没有要众生崇拜他，而是要众生通过实践，来体验和实现他所说的一切善法，所以佛教是理智的信仰。

佛法告诉我们：我们出生为人，是由于过去生所造的善业。因此，我们应该继续提升和扩充善行。佛法强调人生道德的充实，我们有责任让自己的人生道德化、佛法化，让自己的人格提升到最圆满的境界！

佛陀也说：和乐之源在十善。

人生于世必须合群，只有在群众当中，才能发现自己的缺点，看到别人的优点，从而改善和提升个人的品德修养。

父母师长从我们小时候，就教导我们：与人相处要和和气气，不可以吵架，不可以打架，不可以偷窃……有很多很多的“不可以”。我

们都会乖乖地回应：“哦！”

但是，长大之后，人们却经常为了小事、大事、有事、没事，搞得自己和别人都很生气！吵架、打架、偷窃、抢劫等事件，每天都在发生。

其实，人人都知道“和气”的好处，只是人们常常在有意无意之间出言伤人，“口”下不饶人，甚至恶意地批评、毁谤、谩骂等，结果“祸从口出”。在十善法中，口业占了四十巴仙，可见远离口业的重要性。

口业在十善业中的重要性，说明了这是人类和乐共处的根本德行。人类是以语言，来传达彼此间的感情和意见。如果人们说的都是妄语、是非、恶口或没有意义的话，那么人活着还有什么意思呢？

每个人，无论贫富贵贱，都希望受到别人的尊重与以礼相待。如果一个人言大言不惭，对人嚣张地呼呼喝喝，他会令人反感，使人们不愿意与他为友。

相反地，温和、关爱的语气，令人感到温馨和感动，这是人人都乐于接受和喜欢聆听的。尤其是当一个人遇到挫折或不幸时，一句安慰或鼓励的话，可以让他重拾信心，勇敢地生活下去。

说话，就要说有意义的话。

森林里举办“说话高手”比赛，所有的动物都来参加。

青蛙说：“我日夜不停地鸣叫，我的话说得最多，我是说话高手！”

黄莺说：“我的声音最悦耳，人人都这么夸我。我一开口，比你们唱出来的歌声更好听！”

狮子忍不住抢着说：“我的狮子口一吼，震耳欲聋，大地也会颤动。我的声音最大，最有震撼力，还有谁能跟我相比？”

这时，公鸡走出来，说道：“我每天只叫两三次，但是人类最听我的话。每天早上，我叫他们起床，他们都会乖乖地起床劳作。”

全体出席的大小动物投票，一致推选公鸡为最佳的说话高手。

话说得多，说得大声，或者说

得很好听，只表示你很会说话而已。要让听众倾听你所说的话，心服口服，并且照着你的话去做，你才是真正的“说话高手”！

佛陀强调，十善法是人间善法，一定要从个人做起，来完成圆满的人格修养，然后一步一步向善向上进展而超凡入圣。在世间修行而能达到接近圣者的境界，那的确非常不容易，而且十分难得。

从佛教的立场来看，人生毕竟还是不够究竟，所以修行者向三乘（声闻乘、缘觉乘和菩萨乘）精进努力，但是他们的修行都是以五戒、十善为基础。因为五戒、十善是世间善法的根本，就连声闻、缘觉、菩萨和佛也都必须从世间的善法学起。修学好世间善法，奠定了人生道德的根本之后，才能进一步修学出世间的三乘善法。

比如要建一座五层楼高的大楼，一定要一层一层建上去才行。修行就像建楼一样，底层的基础一定要打好，不可以偷工减料。如果世间善法的基础没有打好，就跳跃到第三、第四、第五层，要速学出世间的三乘善法，那就好比要盖五层楼高的建筑，而没有底下的两层，上面的三层又怎么能安立呢？因此，五戒十善是五乘共同必修的善法。

“学佛先从做人起。”这句话强调日常修行的必要。如果不好好地修学做人的基本善法，那么连做人的道德都不及格，还谈得上要学菩萨、学佛吗？

大家对于“十善”，应该不会太陌生，以下大略列出“十善法”的内容。

十善，就是断除十种恶习与恶行：一、杀生；二、偷盗；三、邪淫；四、妄语；五、绮语；六、两舌；七、恶口；八、贪欲；九、嗔恚；十、邪见。

五戒，是戒除前面的四种恶法，再加上戒饮酒。

以上的十种恶习和不良的行为，以及饮酒，都会毁败个人的道德思想和行为，所以必须避免。

佛陀甚至劝导人们永远屏弃这些害人的恶习，唯有这样才能净化人生。

这些恶习都是破坏我们身心健康的“寄生虫”、“害虫”。也许它们的“毒性”还没有发挥作用，所以我们感受不到这些“毒性”的严重伤害，但是当我们发现时，可能为时已晚。预防胜于治疗，远离恶习，防范于未然，才是上上策，让我们健康地生活！

在以上所列的十种恶法中，妄语、绮语、两舌和恶口，是属于口业。人与人相处是靠语言联络感情的。没有人喜欢被人欺骗，或听难以入耳的话，也没有人愿意卷入是非或被恶言伤害。这些言语令人感到难堪，或引发嗔火而导致不可收拾的局面，甚至威胁生命。既然我们不愿意受到这些伤害，我们也应该克制自己，避免以同样的恶言去伤害他人。

更重要的一点是：如果以“口”伤人，不只是对方受到伤害，你自己所要承受的“口业”恶报更大！

贪欲、嗔恚和邪见，是属于意业。人们做错事，交损友，都是因为善恶不分。善与恶的抉择，就取决于个人的起心动念是正确的，还是烦恼重重，杂染不堪的。

清净的心，没有贪欲、嗔恚、邪见等烦恼，所表现出来的行为，就是善行。相反地，内心如果充满贪欲、嗔恚和邪见等烦恼，所表现出来的行为必定是恶行。虽然我们以佛教的术语，来解释人生的善法，实际上，除去宗教因素，这些善法都是一般的做人基本道德。善，就是道德行为，对每一个人都很重要，因此佛陀在世时常对人们说善法，鼓励人们行善。

我们应该怎么行善呢？在日常生活中，时时观察和反省自己，不让恶念在心里滋生，而要让善的念头不断增长。真正发心修习善法的人，绝对不会容许自己被任何恶法所引诱。如果你能做到这一点，你修习善法就算非

常成功了。

过去有一位修行人，发心用功修学善法。他想出一个办法来时时提醒自己，结果修行成功。

他用两个大碗，一个装满白豆，代表善法；另一个则装满黑豆，代表恶法。他时时自我观察与反省，当他内心动了一个善念，他就从碗里拿出一颗白豆，放在一边。有时，他心里动了恶念，他也诚实不欺地从碗里拿出一颗黑豆，放在另一边。他用这个方法，来考验自己心念的善恶。

刚开始的时候，他拿出来的黑豆比白豆多了许多。他感到很惭愧，原来自己心中的恶念可真不少！于是，他更努力地去恶从善。

取出的黑豆渐渐地减少了，他再数一数时，发现碗外的黑豆和白豆一样多，这显示他心里的善恶念头参半。他感到高兴自己有所进步，但是这还不是他所要的结果。他比过去更加努力地改善自己的思想行为，一直到碗外完全没有黑豆。

如果我们依善法修行，的确可以断除一切恶法。佛陀说今生能够获得人身，而且能学佛修善法，是非常难能可贵的。因此，我们要好好珍惜这个难得的人身与因缘，勤修善法，来生再为人时，也一定要继续修善法。

十善法具有种种不可思议的功德，让我们受益无穷。大家一定要有信心，本着“众善奉行”的意愿，改善自己的人生，做个善良睿智的人。那么，无论面对任何困难或挑战，我们都能以善法去适应而快乐地生活！



LAND OF GOODNESS AND HAPPINESS

*Translation of Venerable Kuan Yan's talk delivered in Mandarin
on 10 April 2016 at Fu Hui Auditorium, Singapore*

Everyone yearns for our world to be a land of happiness, where all are kind-hearted and everywhere is full of joy, as people co-exist amiably and harmoniously, mutually helping and benefitting one another. However, our world which could have been a happy land of gentle kindness has been afflicted successively with terrorist attacks, with many innocent lives harmed. People have lost a sense of security in this world, living on tenterhooks with fears of other people and things. We have to often remind ourselves to be prepared for danger in times of peace and not let down our guard.

Where is our "happy land" now? Where are the good-hearted people?

Venerable Nan Shan had two disciples. One day, the senior disciple went out to seek alms and obtained a load of fresh peaches. He carried the load of peaches in great joy and hurried back to the monastery. On the way, while passing by Li Village, he felt a need to urinate, so he left the peaches under a tree and went off to look for a place to ease himself.

When the senior disciple returned, he saw a group of people sitting under the tree and eating his peaches. He shouted anxiously at the top of his voice, "Do not eat my peaches!"

Hearing his yells, the people dispersed hastily.

The disciple returned to the monastery in a huff and grumbled to Venerable Nan Shan, while panting for breath, "The folks of Li village are really detestable! They ate the

peaches that I have obtained on my alms round."

Venerable Nan Shan said with a benign smile, "Do not blame them. May they be safe and sound with the blessings of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas."

A few days later, the junior disciple fell and injured his leg when he descended the mountain for his alms round. He collapsed in front of the entrance of Li Village. Seeing this, the villagers immediately carried him into the village and asked a physician to treat his injury. When the injury healed, the junior disciple returned to the monastery and related what had happened to Venerable Nan Shan.

Venerable Nan Shan then asked the senior disciple with a laugh, "Now would you still say that the people of Li village are detestable?"

The senior disciple replied, "Previously, when they stole my peaches to eat, they were quite detestable, but why are they so friendly this time?"

Venerable Nan Shan said, "Greatly virtuous people and greatly evil people are both in the minority. Most people, like the folks of Li village, are ordinary people with small virtues as well as small evils. If you provide them with opportunities for doing good, they demonstrate goodness; when given opportunities to do evil, they behave in evil ways. Evil ought to be forgiven, while goodness needs to be guided. You left peaches under the tree. Others did not know that those peaches were yours, so how could you blame them for eating the peaches?"

The most important tenet of Buddhism lies in the

first three lines in this verse: "Refrain from all evils. Uphold all good. Purify one's mind. This is the teaching of all Buddhas."

These three lines encapsulate substantial content of the Buddhist teachings (Dharma) and contain all the fundamentals. These lines may be said to be the gist of the teachings of all Buddhas of the ten directions, in the past, present and future. As Buddhists, we should emulate Buddha earnestly, understand Buddha's teachings carefully, embrace these teachings in daily life, as well as uphold and practise them. The most fundamental and important aspect lies in abandoning all evils and pursuing all goodness.

"Refrain from all evils" means we should not do anything wrong or bad. We should not even allow unwholesome thoughts to arise!

"Uphold all good" means we should do all good deeds earnestly.

"Purify one's mind" means we should do regular introspection and self-reflection, to get rid of our multifarious thoughts. We need to eradicate our attachment and delusion. All the methods taught by Buddha are for the purpose of overcoming this problem, through purification of one's own thinking.

"This is the teaching of all Buddhas" means the previous three lines contain the gist of the edification of all Buddhas of the ten directions, in the past, present and future. These may also be said to be basic principles of the Buddhist

precepts.

Why do we need precepts? What are precepts? They are Buddhist disciplinary rules to help us “refrain from all evils”. Precepts drive us to cease and guard against evils. We observe precepts to abstain from unwholesome actions. An unwholesome deed constitutes a breach of the precepts. Some people are afraid of Dharma-learning, because they fear precept-observance, with this forbidden, that prohibited and non-compliance constituting a breach of the precepts. As they fear precept-observance, they do not take up Dharma-learning, cultivate goodness or further “uphold all good”, but on the contrary, they commit unwholesome actions repeatedly.

Human life is like a bank book. Fulfilling one good deed a day is like depositing cash into one’s bank account that day. On the contrary, committing one unwholesome deed a day is like withdrawing cash from one’s bank account that day. When you “settle accounts” for your life, there may be two scenarios. You may have made a lot of deposits, because you have done many good deeds. On the contrary, if you commit all kinds of evil, your “life bank” will present negative figures and only then will you realise suddenly the consequences of breaching the precepts.

We reap the results of our own actions. Good begets good and evil leads to suffering. One gets bad results, not due to punishment by Buddhas and bodhisattvas for one’s lack of faith or failure to abide by the precepts. All these results actually form a “life inventory” of your daily conduct. You cannot blame others!

Liu Bei (161—223 A.D.) of the period of Three Kingdoms in China said to his son, “Do not commit an evil no matter how trivial it seems. Do not fail to do a good deed even

though it seems insignificant.”

Do not think lightly of a small fault or regard an occasional error as nothing serious. For instance, vices like smoking, consuming alcoholic drinks and even drug addiction, all start with attempting a small dose, which eventually leads to addiction from which one cannot extricate oneself. Therefore, we must not overlook “small evils”.

Likewise, do not miss doing a good deed with the idea that your kindness will not have any impact. Do a good deed every day, as “many a little makes a mickle”. Let us truly “cultivate kind intentions, do kind deeds, speak kind words and be kind people”. If everyone is fond of doing good deeds and does one every day, we can expand our small “happy land” in society into a massive, global “land of happiness”, thus making our world full of harmony and bliss.

The great personage Gandhi (1869—1948) had a famous saying, “Be the change you want to see in the world.”

If you wish this world to become better, do not expect others to make this happen. You should do it yourself, according to your own abilities and conditions. You must do your best, even in an insignificant action!

Many people think that they are merely ordinary people, without any ability to resolve major problems such as global warming or shortage of water resources. This is not true. Mahayana Buddhism emphasises the Bodhisattva spirit. What is this Bodhisattva spirit? As long as you do your best, even if you make progress only by one step, it will be a positive boost to this world, so your endeavour is worthwhile.

Goodness is the most precious quality in human life, which enables you to give yourself an excellent “life inventory” and add value to your “life bank”.

The English playwright

William Shakespeare (1564—1616) said, “A good heart is worth gold.”

There are many methods that can be followed on the right path of Buddhist spiritual practice, the most fundamental being the Five Precepts and Ten Wholesome Actions. We learn Dharma, contemplate and reflect upon Dharma to understand its true purport, as well as fulfil it in practice ardently, so as to achieve self-improvement and spiritual uplift. It is only in these ways that we can benefit from Dharma.

Actually, it is not difficult to learn and understand Dharma. This is because Dharma-learning is learning to conduct ourselves well as honest and upright people who abide by rules. Spiritual practice must start with self-cultivation. All virtuous ones, bodhisattvas and even Buddhas have to start with being good humans and henceforth tread the path to Buddhahood step by step. If a person cannot even conduct himself in society well, failing in the fundamentals of self-cultivation, how would he be able to offer relief and succour to people?

Ch’an Master Liang Kuan had a nephew, who was the sole heir of the family wealth. However, this nephew lived in unrestrained ways, indulging in sensual pleasures. The relatives were worried that the family wealth would be squandered and dissipated by him, so they wrote a letter to Ch’an Master Liang Kuan, saying, “Although you have renounced the household life, we still hope that you could come back for a while to guide this child.”

When the nephew heard about the Ch’an Master’s impending return, he said to his dissolute companions, “My uncle is an esteemed Ch’an Master of noble character. He must be coming back to teach me a lesson.”

His companions said, “Do

not be moralised by him. You must frustrate him. We shall see how capable this Ch'an Master is!"

Entrusted with the task of reforming the nephew, Ch'an Master Liang Kuan made the long journey from the monastery back to his distant homeland. He was received and served by his nephew during his stay there. However, the Ch'an Master neither criticised nor lectured his nephew. Every day, he merely chatted with his nephew, expressing interest in his daily life. This made the nephew very puzzled indeed!

One week passed. The Ch'an Master would soon leave his homeland and return to his monastery. On the day of departure, the nephew went to pay respect to the Ch'an Master as usual in the morning. He saw the Ch'an Master bending down to tie his shoelaces, but due to old age, the Ch'an Master just could not get the shoelaces tied properly. Seeing this, the nephew immediately went forward and offered to help, saying, "Let me tie the shoelaces for you!"

The nephew knelt down to tie the Ch'an Master's shoelaces.

The Ch'an Master lamented as he watched his nephew tie his shoelaces, "It is so good to be young! Look at me. I have become so useless in old age. I cannot do anything well at all, not even tie my shoelaces. You are in the prime of youth, so you should treasure time and lay a firm foundation for a good life ahead!"

At the end of this speech, the shoelaces had been secured. The Ch'an Master stood up and walked out of the room, without speaking further. The nephew stood there in amazement. He stared at the elegant back figure of his old uncle — Ch'an Master Liang Kuan and was lost in thought.....

The Ch'an Master's words before his departure inspired this prodigal nephew

profoundly, causing him to change his life outlook thoroughly. The nephew made up his mind to quit all his unwholesome habits. From then on, he strove in the direction of goodness and betterment, eventually becoming a successful heir.

What is the moral of this Ch'an Buddhist story? Ch'an Master Liang Kuan did not hold any preconceived notion that his nephew was incorrigible. Neither did the Ch'an Master rebuke nor lecture his nephew for being unrestrained and bad in conduct.

On the contrary, the Ch'an Master used the incident of tying shoelaces, to awaken his nephew and arouse his innate goodness at the most opportune moment for edification.

The Ch'an Master words, uttered at that moment when his nephew's goodness was aroused, enlightened this young man at once. The Ch'an Master offered edification in accordance with causal conditions, thus transforming the world through transforming human minds.

The moral educational aspect of Dharma cannot be overlooked and moreover, must be strengthened and consolidated. Undeniably, Dharma education plays an important role in nurturing right views of life and maintaining ethical order in society.

Most importantly, we should enhance and strengthen personal cultivation continually. As Buddhists, it is our duty to support training in morality and self-discipline. Moreover, we must set good examples for others. On the one hand, this promotes our self-cultivation and on the other hand, it can also produce an inspirational and guiding effect in society.

It is the bounden duty of every Buddhist to propagate Dharma. Dharma-propagation can be done in many ways, not just through expounding the

Buddhist teachings. In daily life, if a Buddhist demonstrates goodness in his actions of body, speech and mind, he causes others to be touched and convinced by Dharma. He is thus propagating Dharma efficaciously.

On the contrary, if a Buddhist is observed to be "ugly" or evil in thinking and conduct, then even if he expounds Dharma well, nobody will be convinced.

A deeply virtuous woman embraced Buddhism. Being unsophisticated in character, she was imbued with even greater appreciative joy and kindness after becoming a Buddhist. Before that, she had all along thought that a Buddhist is required to recite the scriptures, read Buddhist texts and practise vegetarianism, but she could not fulfil these and felt depressed.

After embracing Buddhism, she applied the Dharma that she had learnt in daily life and experienced immense joy. Her husband, who previously had no favourable impression of Buddhism, was very glad to observe the changes in his wife. He would even discuss Dharma with her in his free time. He was deeply touched that his wife took care of the family with devotion, besides being busy with her own work commitments. Moreover, she often took time to take care of his grievously sick father, without any word of complaint. Her husband then realised the true benefits of Dharma.

In daily life, if one abandons evil and upholds goodness in one's speech, actions and thoughts, in accordance with Right Speech, Right Action and Right Mindfulness as taught in Buddhism, one fulfils the best and most efficacious spiritual practice. Such spiritual practice also yields results most easily. If you truly achieve goodness in body, speech and mind, you will realise true happiness!

Everyone must bear responsibility for his own life. None can live on behalf of another, so you must decide on the kind of life you want to lead and live it. In the course of growth, everyone develops amidst blunders, standing up bravely again after each fall. A child who is still immature in thinking needs guidance and edification from parents and teachers, but it is still up to him whether he fares well or poorly.

Worldly materialistic pleasures have become increasingly splendid and interesting, but the things that can offer us peace and happiness have dwindled. People feel insecure amidst the terrible natural disasters and manmade catastrophes, such as terrorist attacks, brutal carnage of innocent lives, as well as problems such as sicknesses which are hard to guard against, infectious diseases and food safety.

Has human morality become corrupt? Has the kindness in human nature been buried beneath material gain? Why do people commit evil repeatedly, failing to distinguish right from evil and hence causing innocent lives to suffer? How do we cope with this turbid world?

Dharma provides us with the best solution for improving human nature. When Buddha attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, He discovered that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature and can attain Buddhahood. Buddha-nature is the elevation and development of human nature to the most sublime state. This discovery of Buddha has provided great inspiration for humans, enabling us to perceive infinite brightness in life, as well as find the highest goal and refuge of human life in our striving towards goodness.

The worldly aspects of Dharma are encapsulated in the Five Precepts and Ten Wholesome Actions, which

comprise the moral discipline that people should abide by and fulfil. The teachings of Buddhism are not separate from human life. Moreover, these are teachings for mind-body cultivation, which is most needed in our lives. This may be called "Truth", which offers utmost benefits for blessing a country and the people, as well as maintaining peace in society.

A taxi-driver left a bag of trash on the backseat and forgot to dispose of it.

Later, he had a female passenger who discovered the bag on the seat once she boarded the taxi. She pressed on the bag and thought, "This is so hard! It must have been left behind by the previous passenger. There may be dollar notes inside!"

She quickly stuffed the bag into her own tote bag without the driver being aware of it. Then, she immediately alighted.

We can imagine the expression on her face when she discovered that she was actually helping the driver to clear trash!

The choice of good or evil lies in just one thought. In daily life, don't we often covet some things that we consider to be very precious, but in fact, those are merely trash?

In this World of Five Turbidities, only Dharma is the most precious and efficacious. We learn Dharma so as to conduct ourselves well as humans and know how to distinguish good from evil. In this Age of Degeneration of True Dharma, our society is in chaos with endless killing and harming. Sentient beings experience tremendous suffering and the confusing disturbances in the world are implacable.

The traditional moral thought of the East advocates harmony, which is most precious. Harmony in the family leads to prosperity in everything and people yearn for world peace. The importance of harmony is

thus clear.

Buddhism all the more emphasises and promotes harmony. The Buddhist teachings are conducive to goodness in human life, the cultivation of which must start with oneself. When one is calm and even-tempered, one can then keep on good terms with everyone.

When Buddha expounded the Ten Wholesome Actions, He pointed out these as the foundation for conducting oneself as a human being. Buddha taught the Truth to all sentient beings, but His main focus was on teaching human beings. All of Buddha's teachings are not separate from our human world. This is the difference between Buddhism and other religions. Buddha had never wanted sentient beings to worship Him. Instead, He exhorted sentient beings to experience and realise all His teachings by putting them into practice. Therefore, the Buddhist faith is based on reason.

Buddha said that we are born as humans due to wholesome actions done in past lives. Therefore, we should continue to enhance and expand our wholesome conduct. Buddhism stresses enrichment in morality. We have responsibility to live in accordance with moral ethics and Dharma, so as to uplift our character to the most perfect state.

Buddha also said that the source of harmonious happiness lies in the Ten Wholesome Actions.

As humans, we must get on well with others. It is only among people that one will discover one's own faults and perceive others' strengths. This will spur one to improve and uplift one's own moral cultivation.

Our parents and teachers have taught us since young to be polite and kind to others, not to quarrel or fight with others, not to steal and so on.....There are many

"don'ts" instructed, to which we invariably respond with obedience.

However, when grown-up, people often make themselves and others all very angry, be it over trivial matters, important matters or even no matter at all! Quarrels, fights, thefts and robberies occur every day.

Actually, everyone knows the benefits of polite friendliness and kindness, but people often hurt others with verbal abuse, whether intentionally or inadvertently, by making sarcastic remarks and even criticising, slandering or spewing invectives. Troubles hence issue from the mouth. Forty per cent of the Ten Wholesome Actions involve speech. The importance of steering clear of unwholesome speech is thus clear.

The importance of verbal actions in the Ten Wholesome Actions demonstrates that good speech is basic ethical conduct for harmonious co-existence of people. Human beings use speech to communicate feelings and opinions to one another. If the speech of people is all falsehood, gossip, abuse and meaningless talk, would there still be any meaning in human existence?

Everyone, whether poor, rich, high or low in status, wishes to be respected by others and treated with courtesy. If a person brags shamelessly or shouts at others arrogantly, he will make people disgusted and unwilling to befriend him.

On the contrary, a gentle and caring tone is heartwarming and touching. People would be receptive to such a tone and enjoy listening to it. In particular, when a person encounters a setback or misfortune, a word of comfort or encouragement can enable him to regain confidence and live on courageously.

When we speak, we ought to speak meaningfully.

A "Speech Master" contest

was held in a jungle, which attracted all the animals to participate.

A frog said, "I croak incessantly day and night. I speak the most, so I am a Speech Master!"

A nightingale said, "People praise my sounds as most pleasing to the ear. My singing is much more melodious than the sounds you all make!"

A lion rushed to say, "My roar is thunderous and deafening, causing even the earth to quake. The sounds that I make are the loudest and most impactful. Who else can compare with me?"

At this time, a cock strutted out and said, "I crow only two to three times a day, but human beings listen most to me. Every morning when I crow, they will wake up obediently to do work."

All the animals present, whether big or small, cast their votes. The cock was unanimously elected as the best Speech Master.

If you speak the most, speak loudly, or speak in very pleasing ways, it only shows that you are good at speaking. You must be able to let your audience listen attentively to you, be sincerely convinced by your words and do what you say, in order to be a "Speech Master" truly!

Buddha emphasised the Ten Wholesome Actions as virtuous human conduct which must start with each individual, in order to accomplish the perfection of character cultivation, henceforth progressing stepwise towards goodness and betterment, eventually overcoming all worldly thoughts and attaining the enlightened state of the Noble Ones. It is indeed exceedingly difficult and rare for a spiritual practitioner to attain a state near that of a Noble One.

From the Buddhist perspective, human life is not ultimate after all, so Buddhist practitioners strive diligently

in the Three Vehicles (Hearers, Cause-Awakened Ones and Bodhisattvas). Yet, their spiritual practice is all based upon the Five Precepts and Ten Wholesome Actions. This is because the Five Precepts and Ten Wholesome Actions are the basis of worldly virtues. Even the Hearers, Cause Awakened Ones, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas must start from cultivating worldly virtues. Once one has learnt and cultivated worldly virtues well, thus laying the foundation of human morality, one can then further learn and cultivate the supramundane teachings of the Three Vehicles.

For instance, to build a five-storey building, one must start at the base and build upwards, level by level. A firm foundation must be laid at the base without cheating on workmanship and materials. It is the same with spiritual cultivation. If one has not laid a firm foundation in worldly goodness, but leaps directly to the third, fourth and fifth levels to learn the supramundane Three Vehicle teachings speedily, that is just like a five-storey building without two base levels. Then, how can the three levels above be stably established? Therefore, the Five Precepts and Ten Wholesome Actions must be cultivated by all Five Vehicles in common.

"Dharma-learning starts with conducting oneself well as a human being." This line emphasises the necessity of spiritual practice in daily life. If one does not cultivate the basic, wholesome ways for conducting oneself, failing even in the ethics of being human, would one be qualified to emulate the Bodhisattvas and Buddhas?

You are not unfamiliar with the Ten Wholesome Actions. These are listed in brief as follows.

The Ten Wholesome Actions eliminate ten types of unwholesome habits and actions, namely killing,

stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, frivolous speech, divisive speech, harsh speech, craving, ill will and wrong views.

The Five Precepts include abstention from the first four vices, along with abstention from intoxicants.

These ten types of unwholesome habits and conduct mentioned above, in addition to consumption of intoxicants, will damage an individual's moral thinking and conduct, so they must be avoided. Buddha even advised people to give up these harmful vices forever. Only then can one's life be purified.

These unwholesome habits are like "parasites" or "pests" causing damage to our mind-body health. They may not have exerted their harmful effects yet, so we do not feel the severity of their damage. However, it may be too late when we discover the harm done. Prevention is better than cure. The best way is to steer clear of unwholesome habits and forestall them, so that we may live healthily.

In these Ten Wholesome Actions, there are four actions of speech, namely false speech, frivolous speech, divisive speech and harsh speech. People depend on language to communicate feelings and get along with one another. Nobody likes to be cheated by others, or hear unpleasant words. Nobody is willing to get involved in disputes or hurt by abusive words. Such speech will make people embarrassed or fly into a temper, which will result in unmanageable scenarios or even threaten lives. Since we do not wish to be harmed in these ways, we should restrain ourselves and avoid harming others with unwholesome speech.

More importantly, if you hurt another person in speech, not only will the other party be hurt, you will suffer even more severe results of unwholesome speech!

Craving, ill will and wrong

views belong to actions of the mind. Failing to distinguish between right and wrong, people commit wrongdoings or get acquainted with wrong friends. The choice between good and evil depends on whether one's thoughts and intentions are right or defiled.

There are no defilements such as craving, ill will and wrong views in a pure mind, so the conduct that one demonstrates will be wholesome. On the contrary, if one's mind is full of defilements such as craving, ill will or wrong views, one's conduct will certainly be unwholesome.

We have used Buddhist terms to explain wholesome actions for human living, but in fact, when the religious elements are removed, these wholesome actions are generally basic ethics for humans. Goodness involves moral conduct which is important to everyone. Therefore, Buddha often taught these wholesome actions to people and encouraged people to do good deeds.

How should we practise good deeds? In daily life, observe and reflect upon yourself constantly. Do not allow unwholesome thoughts to multiply in the mind. Let wholesome thoughts increase continually. One who truly aspires to cultivate goodness absolutely will not allow himself to get tempted by any evil. If you can achieve this, your cultivation of goodness may be considered very successful.

There was a spiritual practitioner who resolved to cultivate goodness conscientiously. He thought of a way to remind himself constantly, which resulted in his success in spiritual cultivation.

He used two big bowls, one filled with white beans to represent goodness, while the other was filled with black beans to represent evil. He did constant self-observation

and reflection. Whenever he had a wholesome thought, he would take out a white bean from the first bowl and put it aside. Sometimes, when he had unwholesome thoughts, he would honestly take out a black bean from the second bowl and put it aside without cheating. In this way, he tested the goodness or evilness of his thoughts.

At first, the black beans taken out far exceeded the white beans. He felt very ashamed to realise that he had so many evil thoughts! Hence, he strove more diligently to abandon evil and cultivate goodness.

The number of black beans removed from the bowl gradually decreased. He did another count and found that the quantity of black beans removed was equal to the quantity of white beans removed, indicating that his thoughts were half wholesome and half unwholesome. He was glad with his own progress, but he had not reached his goal. He strove even more diligently to improve his thinking and conduct, until there was no more black bean outside the bowl at all.

If we cultivate goodness, we can indeed eradicate all evils. Buddha said that it is very commendably rare to have gained a human rebirth and cultivate goodness through Dharma-learning. Therefore, we must treasure our human rebirth and causal conditions which are hard to come by, by cultivating goodness diligently. Moreover, we must continue to cultivate goodness in future human rebirths.

There are various inconceivable merits in the Ten Wholesome Actions, which will benefit us endlessly. We must have faith in this and improve our lives with the aspiration to "uphold all good", thus living virtuously and wisely. Then, regardless of the difficulties or challenges encountered, we shall be able to adapt with goodness and live happily.

何必忧愁？

“人生不满百，常怀千岁忧。”一个人如果达到长命百岁，就称为“人瑞”，但是世间有多少人活到一百岁呢？人的生命是短暂的，很少人会活到超过一百岁。在这个短暂的过程中，我们能平安健康地度过人生，就应该感到满足了，但是世人所担忧的事情，却总是比度过一千年的日子还多，不知究竟是在忧愁些什么？殊不知忧愁过多，不但会影响身心健康，也可能会缩短生命，甚至毁坏容颜。

一个经常忧愁的人，只要多从两方面去想，就会明白自己的忧愁是不必要的。

首先仔细考虑：这个使你忧愁的问题，是否值得你这样忧愁呢？

然后再问自己：如此忧愁，是不是就会解决问题呢？

只要你平心静气地朝这两方面多想一想，就不难把心头之结解开而如释重负。

对于多愁善感的人来说，这确实是一个排除忧愁的好方法。忧愁，确实是不利于自己的，会使你未老先衰。那么，你为什么要忧愁呢？何不开朗地过一生，使身心健壮？一个人时时困在忧愁中，其实是给自己和他人找麻烦，何必如此？

愿世人无忧愁，无苦恼，快乐活泼地生活！

WHY WORRY?

“Human life rarely reaches a hundred years, but people invariably have worries of a thousand years.”

A person who lives to the age of a hundred years or beyond is called a “centenarian”, but how many people in the world can become centenarians? Human life is so transient. In this short course of life, we should be contented to live with peace and good health, but people invariably have excessive worries. What exactly do people worry about? If one worries excessively, one's physical and mental health will get affected. One's life may even be shortened and one's good looks will deteriorate.

If a person is always afflicted with worries, he should direct his thinking to the following two aspects. He will then realise that his worries are unnecessary.

Firstly, consider carefully: is it worthwhile for you to worry about this problem?

Secondly, ask yourself: will the problem be resolved by worrying in this manner?

As long as you often direct your thoughts to consider these two aspects, it will not be difficult for you to untangle the jumble of knots in your mind and relieve yourself of this heavy burden.

For those who are easily and frequently afflicted by worries, this is indeed a good way to get rid of worries. Indeed, worries are not beneficial to oneself. Worries cause one to age prematurely. So, why worry? Why do we not live cheerfully, which will keep us healthy in both the mind and body? If we are constantly stuck in worries, this will only bring troubles upon ourselves and others. Is it worthwhile to worry?

May all be free from worries and vexation, so as to live happily with vitality!

君子务本，谈戒三毒（四十三）

郑玄微讲于青松园佛学课程

大家是否记得一句成语“作茧自缚”？茧，就是指春蚕在变成蛹之前，吐出丝来，把自己裹缚在里面的壳。换句话说，就是自作自受，把自己牢密地困住了。我们众生也是这样，自己的困境是哪里来的？我们的困境，都是自己的身、语、意三业行为所造成的。

佛法认为，一切都是因果。现在的果报，是由于过去所种下的“因”而来的。未来的果报，是由于现在与过去行为的“因”。总之，一切现实都是自己造成的。在座诸位为什么会来到这里？你是被动地来到这里，还是主动来到这里？不论你是被动的，还是主动的，要知道都有因缘。如果你当初不吸毒，今天怎么会困在这里呢？当然，有些人是自己走进来戒毒的，有些则是被警察抓来的。不论你是怎么来的，大家有一个共同点，那就是大家都曾经是毒瘾的奴隶，被毒瘾牵着鼻子走，不得自在。

毒瘾，就是欲望。欲望有好的，也有不好的。俗话所说的“七情六欲”，在正常的时候，并不会造成病态。七情六欲一旦过分，就会造成身心疾病。

好的欲望是“善法欲”，能带给我们幸福。坏的欲望，或者说为失控的欲望，或放纵的欲望，则会带给我们痛苦，例如吸毒。因此，佛经里处处呵责五欲（过分的放纵财、色、名、食、睡）的过患。

佛陀说：五欲可以增加诤斗，就像鸟儿抢夺食物，自然界当中的众生都是这样的。丛林社会有一个规则，那就是弱肉强食，适者生存。大家被欲望和共业所驱使，不得自由。

你看，现今世界与中国古代的战国时代很相似。在战国时代，

有两个人在大厅里谈论当时的国际局势。一位说：“你看到院子里那一群狗吗？”另一位说：“它们现在都在休息，相安无事。”“如果你扔一块肉过去，那群狗会怎么样呢？”“它们会互相争夺，最后会互相撕咬，头破血流……”现今的国际局势不正是这样吗？

如果我们追求欲望，毫无节制，就会引起无休止的争斗。古代一位哲学家荀子曾经指出：“人生而有欲，欲而不得，则不能无求。求而无度量分界，则不能不争。争则乱，乱则穷。”

每个人天生就有欲望，有欲望而不能满足，那么他就不能无所求，追求欲望而又没有一个限度，就不能不发生争执。争夺就会引起社会动荡，最终使社会陷入困境。

为什么会这样呢？其实就是无明作祟。由于无明，人们不明白真相，而不知不觉地被欲望拽着走。钱财多了，还要更多，贪得无厌，但是钱财多了，就会快乐吗？未必啊！近代著名比丘尼隆莲法师，曾经写诗来呵责五欲：“未必钱多乐便多，财多累己自招魔。阮囊何事堪羞涩，富有恒沙是佛陀。”

一般人认为，有了钱就什么都可以买到；没钱的话，什么事都办不成，哪里都去不了。但是如果你过分追求和执著钱财，就会变成金钱的奴隶，卷入拜金主义的漩涡里。

因此，佛陀把金钱比喻为大毒蛇。一天，佛陀带着阿难路过树林，看到路边草丛里有一大堆银子。佛陀说：“大毒蛇”。阿难一看，也说：“毒蛇。”他们就走开了。

有一位农民在一旁，听到佛陀说“大毒蛇”，就过来看个究竟。他走近一看，发现那里有一堆白花花的银子。他高兴极了，心里想：“这

么一大堆银子，世尊却说是大毒蛇，真是太傻了！”于是，他把银子偷偷扛回家。

农夫有了钱，放在家里怕被别人发现，于是就每天拿一点儿去买东西。买的次数多了，街坊邻居心里就起了疑惑，加上国库被盗，官员去他家里搜查，发现他的银子正是国库被盗的银子（国库的银子附有记号），就把农夫逮捕归案。

即将砍头时，农夫想起佛陀的话，才真正明白钱财害人，于是大声感叹：“大毒蛇！真是大毒蛇！”国王问他是什么意思，他就把佛陀见到银子后所说的话讲了一遍。国王向佛陀证实了这件事，再派人去调查。原来是盗贼偷了国库后，发现银子有记号，不敢拿走，就把银子丢在路边。农夫这才被免杀头之罪。贪著五欲，就像踩到毒蛇一样，有丧命的危险。

如果你贪钱，钱就变成了“大毒蛇”。如果你没钱，就不能去买毒品，现在还会在这里吗？所以“未必钱多乐便多”。有了钱，存在银行里怕贬值，放在家里又怕贼偷，整天为钱担心和害怕，还有什么快乐可言呢？钱多会带来许多麻烦，还会使人堕落，所以说“财多累己自招魔”。

“阮囊何事堪羞涩”：“阮囊”是指晋代的阮孚，一天携带一个黑囊，去会稽山游玩。有人问：“囊中何物？”他回答：“但有一钱看囊，恐其羞涩。”意思是：如果身上没有一文钱，就觉得不好意思，实际上贫穷有什么不好意思的呢？

“富有恒沙是佛陀”：出家人虽然没存钱，但是很富有，因为修成佛果后，就会拥有三千大千世界，还有什么比这更富裕的呢？



福慧佛学教育中心 师资培训课程

04.07.2020、11.07.2020

福慧佛学教育中心，举办师资培训课程，特别邀请杨慧芳硕士（儿童与青少年辅导员、表现艺术治疗师）与云威铭博士（资深临床心理学家、表现艺术治疗师），通过视讯授课的方式，与本中心的周日佛学班志愿老师们，分享教学方法与辅助技巧，并且进行线上交流。

第一堂课《儿童成长艺术心理学》，是由杨硕士分享艺术心理管理的教育策略。这是以多元艺术媒材，例如蜡笔绘画、捏黏土、拼图、自制绘本等，协助老师们了解学生，帮助学生疏导情绪，使佛学班的教学更积极与有效。

洪敬业老师总结学习心得如下：儿童的语言表达能力不足，通过画画可以更确切地表达心情。青少年已经有了相当程度的语言表达能力，但是有些青少年由于青春期的腼腆与叛逆，而不擅于在言语上沟通心情与看法。对于青少年，画画涂鸦可能显得幼稚，老师可以采用比较高难度的艺术活动，例如陶艺、摄影、禅绕画等。

佛学班老师通过这些艺术活动，以另一种婉转的方式，进入学生的内心世界，及时发现学生可能面对的难以启齿的问题。例如：绘画让儿童把自己的情绪，以及内心不知如何言说的想法，用不同颜色笔创意式地表达出来。老师甚至可以从学生所选择的颜色，看出他们的性格或心情。同时，佛学班的教学融入艺术活动，也将提高学生们的学习兴趣，使他们更踊跃参与。

少年班每次下课之前，老师给学生十分钟，写下当天的学习心得与感想，但是有些学生的记事簿常常留下空白。陈慧燕老师从这次的培训课程，获得了解决这个问题的方法。那就是让学生除了写字，也可以通过画画来表达想法，并且让学生在班上分享图画的含义，而且也可以分组一起作画，增加学生的互动与交流。

第二堂课是《佛学班教学管理》，云博士分享老师如何从许多方面将佛法融入生活文化中，让佛法的种子在自己与学生的心地里发芽。云博士运用丰富的例子，说明老师如何深入浅出地引导学生了解与运用佛法。例如：学生在学校里被同学欺负，老师可以在沟通中带出因果论，引导学生看到因果的投射，再进一步让学生了解自己的行为举止出现了什么差错，学习辨别善与恶的行为等。老师必须树立身教，并且与家长经常沟通，共同启发学生的善心善念。

云博士也进一步阐述如何以艺术心理学辅助佛法教学，以及如何通过学生的画来了解他们的心灵，引导他们敞开心扉。心理画注重的是内心所投射的情感，从图画的各个细节，例如颜色、画图顺序等，可以看出学生的想法，甚至从画中不同人物的距离，也可以看出学生对于不同人的想法。

云博士让老师们聆听一部电视剧插曲《关怀方式》，同时以《菩萨与义工》为主题，用彩笔画画。老师们分享各自在这个过程中的感受，表达内容多姿多彩，图画作品更是具有深刻的意义。



Zoom线上师资培训与交流
Zoom Online Teachers' Training



《菩萨与义工图》，张宝辉老师画
"Bodhisattva and Volunteer" drawing by
Teacher Zhang Baohui



《菩萨与义工图》，张郁荔老师画
"Bodhisattva and Volunteer" drawing by
Teacher Zhang Yuli

Fu Hui Dharma Education Centre Teachers' Training Course

04.07.2020 & 11.07.2020

Fu Hui Dharma Education Centre held a Teachers' Training Course for our volunteer Dharma teachers. In these two online sessions, our teachers learnt pedagogical methods and supportive skills for use in conducting Dharma classes.

In the first session "Art Psychology for Children's Growth", Ms Yeo Hwee Hong, child psychologist and expressive art therapist, shared on pedagogical strategies using art expression for emotional management. Various art media, such as crayon drawing, play dough, puzzles and do-it-yourself picture books, can enable teachers to gain better understanding of students and help students manage their emotions, thus making Dharma lessons even more positive and efficacious.

Teacher Hong Jingye summarised his reflections as follows:

Due to inadequate competency in linguistic expression, children may express their feelings more exactly through drawing. Youths are proficient in linguistic expression, but due to youthful shyness and rebelliousness, they may be disinclined to communicate their thoughts and feelings verbally. Drawing and doodling may seem childish to youths, so teachers may use art activities with higher levels of difficulty, such as pottery, photography, Zentangle art, etc.

Through these art activities, teachers may enter the inner worlds of students subtly, as well as discover and address problems faced by them which they have been reticent to talk about, before it is too late for remedy. For instance, a child may use different colours to express his emotions and unspeakable thoughts creatively in a drawing. The teacher may even discern the student's personality or moods from his choice of colours. At the same time, the incorporation of art activities in Dharma lessons will raise the students' interest and level of participation.

In the youth classes, students are given the last ten minutes before dismissal, to write down their learning experience and reflections, but some students often submit blank entries. Teacher Chen Huiyan found a solution from this training course. Instead of writing, students may express their thoughts

in drawing and share the meaning of their drawings in class. Students may also be engaged in group drawings, which will offer opportunities for greater interaction and exchange of ideas among students.

In the second session, Dr Hoong Wee Min, a clinical psychologist and expressive art therapist, shared on "Teaching Management for Dharma Classes". He elucidated how to integrate Dharma into various aspects of one's life culture, so that the seeds of Dharma germinate in one's mind-field and the mind-fields of students. Dr Hoong used many examples to illustrate how teachers can guide students, in simple ways, to understand and apply the profound Dharma. For instance, if a student gets bullied in school, the teacher may bring out "Cause and Effect" in his communication with the student, guide him to discern the projection of Cause and Effect, then further enable him to understand the faults in his conduct, as well as distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome conduct. Teachers should set exemplary models for the students, as well as communicate with the parents for joint efforts in inspiring students to develop the good mind.

Dr Hoong also elaborated on the use of art psychology to support Dharma-teaching, by understanding students' minds through their drawings and hence guiding them to open up their hearts. The focus of psychological drawing is on the projection of feelings and thoughts in various aspects of a drawing, such as colours and order of drawing. A student's perceptions of different people may even be discerned from the distances between people in his drawing.

This online session also included a creative expression segment, in which the teachers used crayons to create drawings based on the theme "Bodhisattva and Volunteer", while listening to "The Way I Care", an interlude song of a television series. The teachers then shared about their feelings and thoughts during this creative expression process. Their artworks were imbued with deep meaning about their altruistic commitments as Buddhist volunteers.

无眼耳鼻舌身意

No Eyes, Ears, Nose, Tongue, Body or Mind

小和尚学读《心经》，当他读到“无眼耳鼻舌身意”这句话时，心里感到很疑惑。他用手摸摸眼睛，自言自语道：“这是什么东西？”

小和尚用手拉拉耳朵，再捏捏鼻子……他想不通，就去找师父，指着眼睛问：“师父，这是什么东西？”

师父说：“这不就是眼睛吗？”

小和尚又拉拉耳朵，问道：“这又是什么呢？”

师父说：“你怎么连耳朵也不知道吗？”

小和尚指着鼻子，理直气壮地说：“既然这些叫做眼睛、耳朵、鼻子，为什么《心经》中说‘无眼耳鼻舌身意’呢？”

师父回答：“这就是佛法所说的‘无我’。”

小和尚立刻用手指着自己说：“这不就是我吗？”

师父笑呵呵地说：“眼、耳、鼻、舌、身、意，都是由种种条件组合成的，其实根本没有实在的眼、耳、鼻、身、意，也没有实在的‘我’。”

人们总是把生命体视为“我”，其实有情的身心生命体，刹那刹那在生灭变化。昨天的生命并不是今天的生命，今天的生命又不同于明天的生命，甚至前一刹那的生命不是后一刹那的生命，我们怎么可以妄认这个无常的生命体为“我”呢？何况我们的生命体不能不生病与老死，不能自由自在，根本没有任何具备自主能力的实在自我，所以佛法说为“无我”。

A little monk was learning the *Heart Discourse*. When he read the line “no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body or mind”, he touched his eyes with his hands in perplexity, mumbling, “What are these then?”

He pulled his ears, pinched his nose.... Unable to understand this, he went to his master and asked, pointing at his eyes, “Master, what are these?”

The old monk replied, “Aren’t those eyes?”

The little monk pulled his ears and asked, “What are these then?”

The old monk said, “You know that they are your ears.”

Pointing at his nose, the little monk said, “Since these are called eyes, ears, nose, why is it stated as ‘no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body or mind’ in the *Heart Discourse*?”

The old monk replied, “This is what is meant by ‘no self’ in the Buddhist teachings.”

The little monk immediately pointed at himself and said, “Isn’t this my ‘self’?”

The old monk replied smilingly, “The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind are causal combinations of various factors. Actually, there are no truly substantial eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. Neither is there any ‘self’.”

People invariably consider this life form as “self”. In fact, the mind-body life forms of sentient beings are changing every instant, with continual arising and cessation. The life of yesterday was not the same as the life of today, and the life of today will not be the same tomorrow. Even the life of an instant ago is not the same as that in the next instant. How could we falsely consider this constantly changing life form as “self”? Moreover, our life forms cannot be willed to be free from sicknesses, old age and death. There is no really substantial “self” at all, in the sense of an independent, unchanging entity. This is the tenet of “no self” as taught in Buddhism.

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