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CHAN MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2015



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*Manifesting Compassion and Wisdom*

Calligraphy by Chan Master Sheng Yen

“By moving from selfishness to selflessness, we will live with greater wisdom and compassion. Attaining selfless wisdom, our mind will not generate affliction; with compassionate self, we will contribute all without expecting rewards. This is the highest purpose of buddhahood: to manifest both compassion and wisdom.”

— CHAN MASTER SHENG YEN

*The Gate of Chan, 1995*

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# Selfishness and Selflessness

BY

Chan Master Sheng Yen

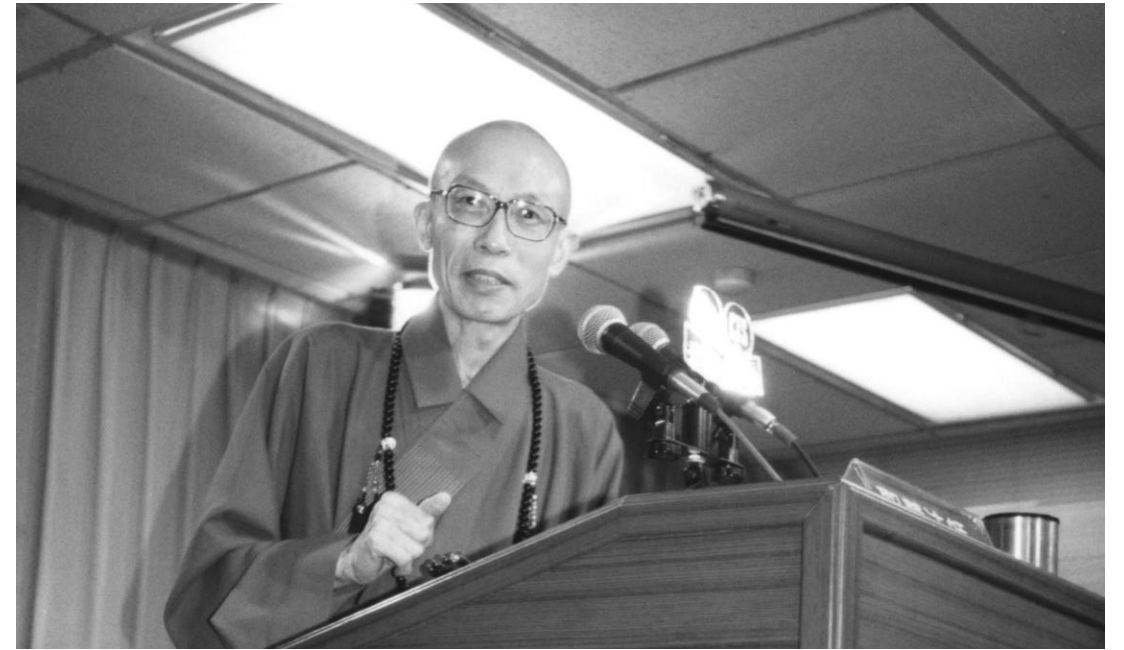
This article is excerpted from Master Sheng Yen's book, *The Gate of Chan*, published in 1995 as “禪門” (*Chan men*). It is one of a selected number of books which have been translated into English for eventual publication under the auspices of the Cultural Center of Dharma Drum Mountain, Taiwan. This article was translated and bilingual edited by Chiacheng Chang, with English editing by Ernest Heau. The talk was given at the Chinese Television System, Taiwan, August 15, 1992.

THE PROGRESS ONE MAKES FROM SELFISHNESS to “no-self” reflects one's practice in life. There are levels of selfishness, but on the literal level it is to be mainly concerned about one's own interests, without caring about other people's gains and losses. In other words, a selfish person goes all out in pursuit of their own desires without caring how that impacts others. The chapter on “Ultimate Justice” (Chinese *Zhigong*) of the *Garden of Stories* (Chinese *Shuo Yuan*) says, “Being biased and selfish makes one unable to reach out to people and relate to them.” This fully expresses the meaning of selfishness. Also, the “Story of Pan Yue” (Chinese *Pan yue zhuan*) from the *Jin History* says, “The continuation of misgivings and misfortunes derives from selfishness and develops through desire.” This says that selfish people often pursue their desires relentlessly, only to create more worries and misfortunes. The Buddhist sutras liken

having insatiable desires to trying to quench your thirst by drinking sea water – the more you drink the thirstier you get, and the thirstier you get the more you want to drink. The result is suffering.

## Selfishness as Helping Oneself through Self-Power

Another meaning of selfishness is to enhance one's own benefits by not being influenced by the environment. At this level, selfishness is not necessarily a bad thing. The chapter “Offering the Kingdom” (Chinese *Rang wang*) from *Zhuangzi* says: “One should not gain by destroying others, exalt oneself through other people's lower status, or exploit the times for self-benefit.” This means that one should not achieve success by destroying others; not elevate oneself by lowering others, not speak ill



Master Sheng Yen at the Chinese Television System, Taiwan, August 15, 1992

of others, and not taking advantage of the situation or good luck. In its proper sense, selfishness means benefiting oneself entirely through one's own efforts. In addition, the chapter on “Conduct of the Scholar” (Chinese *Ruxing*) from the *Book of Rites* (Chinese *Liji*) says, “...vigorous in actions, waiting to be chosen. Such is how one should establish and prepare oneself.” If working hard allows one to be successful through one's own efforts, there is nothing wrong with that. From this we know that selfishness or self-benefitting is not always a bad thing. If selfishness is about seeking what one deserves through one's own efforts, then it should be acceptable.

We can even interpret selfishness as seeking sufficient blessings for oneself and helping oneself through self-power. Interpreted this way, it is at a higher level and not particularly bad. For example, Yan Zhu, a Chinese philosopher during the Warring

States Period (480–221 BCE) once said, “I would not pluck a hair from my body to benefit the world.” Taken superficially, someone like that could not sound more selfish; but if we think more deeply, his philosophy makes sense. If everyone sought their own blessings and looked after themselves properly, wouldn't that be good? A person who could achieve that will undoubtedly be normal and healthy. But there are those who talk about helping others and their country, about being kind, righteous, and moral, while in fact plotting for their own benefit, coveting riches and status. We could use the Buddhadharma to influence and change them.

Mahayana Buddhists often criticize the Hinayana sage as a “self-perfecting fellow.” This implies that followers of the Hinayana are only interested in delivering themselves, and do not aspire to save and deliver others. Nevertheless, if a Hinayana sage

can really keep a pure body and pure mind, what is wrong with that? Someone whose physical, verbal, and mental actions are pure has obtained liberation, so at least they will not be a negative influence on society. Indeed, they can actually influence others in a good way. Isn't that even better? The *Analects of Confucius* says, "The virtues of the noble ones are like wind, while those of inferior people are like grass – when the wind blows across it, the grass bends." So what is wrong about this kind of selfishness?

## Selfishness Is Not Necessarily a Bad Thing

If we can uplift the level of selfishness by interpreting it as "greater self," then selfishness takes on a better meaning. Chapter Seven of *The Classic of the Way and Virtue* (Chinese *Tao Te Ching*, a.k.a. *Laozi*) says, "The sage puts himself last and thus, his self is regarded as first. By detaching himself, his self thus sustains. Is it not through his selflessness that he achieves his self?" This means that sages are always modest and ready to accommodate, and thus win other people's admiration and support in return. Giving of oneself for the sake of others will benefit oneself as a result; therefore, we can extend our individual selfishness into the one for the sake of the whole. In this way, the individual self can either be "smaller" or "greater." We may be independent individuals, but if we extend ourselves into a level that includes all the people in Taiwan or even those in Mainland China, then when some country is trying to take advantage of us, we will naturally develop a sense of togetherness to defend ourselves. Wouldn't this kind of selfishness be more meaningful?

From this we know that an individual's self can either be small or great. Buddhism holds that the self is composed of five major components: form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness; these are

also called the five skandhas, or five aggregates. Form refers to the physical, physiological phenomena, while feeling, perception, and volition refer to the three stages of psychological activities. When we receive an outside stimulus, we think and then give rise to a response. This is about feeling, perception, and volition. Consciousness, the fifth skandha, is a spiritual phenomenon that connects to and penetrates time and space. That is, consciousness is a living entity that penetrates and links time and space as the continuous existence of a sentient being's life. So, the self can be regarded as smaller or as greater. Ordinary people regard their body as their self, while worthy people regard the self as the interactions between their body/mind and the environment; sages regard time and phenomena as their self. In this way of thinking, the so-called "selfishness" or "personal self" can actually be very flexible: it can be as small as one's own selfishness or personal self, and it can also be as extensive as society, a nation, the world, and the universe.

## Selfishness Can Accomplish Good or Evil

Since there are many levels of selfishness, it actually includes both good and evil. This idea may sound very strange, for we are used to defining selfishness negatively. When we call someone "selfish" we often refer to the negative side. As a Chinese saying goes, "If one doesn't act for oneself, then heaven and earth will destroy them." Think of it this way: if you can't even take care of yourself, then who will? If you can't even plan for your own future, then who will? So, we can say that being selfish is actually a healthy mentality, not a bad thing. Since the selfish mind is normal, as we relate to others we should understand that they are also entitled to this mentality. Nevertheless, harming others through selfishness is evil. What is needed is

the selfishness that causes no harm; ideally, we should be able to directly benefit ourselves while indirectly benefitting others. Most people's selfish and self-benefitting actions can either be unwholesome or wholesome towards others, though too much of the time, more bad than good. Only the selfishness of worthy people is purely wholesome and without evil. As Confucianism says, "Having achieved personal fulfillment, one should perfect the world altogether; when insufficient, one should perfect oneself alone."

Therefore, Buddhist compassion and loving-kindness actually enable transcendence and liberation from selfishness and egoistic self. Compassion and loving-kindness mean contributing ourselves to the well-being and happiness of sentient beings, and to releasing their distress and suffering. Compassion is helping sentient beings eliminate suffering and affliction; loving-kindness is helping them achieve happiness and well-being.

## Three Levels of Compassion

Compassion can be expressed at three levels: the first is to respond to the suffering of sentient beings with the receiver in mind, with the gift varying according to one's affinity with the receiver. We begin with our relatives and loved ones, and then extend it to strangers; we start with humans and then extend it to animals. If we take care of other people and animals without first taking good care of our relatives, that would be forsaking the roots and going after the branches.

The second level of compassion is based on awareness of the true nature of dharmas as empty, with the dharmas as the object. At this level one has in mind the giver, the receiver, and the gift, but one does not consider the closeness to the receiver and the degree of the gift; one regards all equally. While it may be difficult for most people to act on

this level of compassion, Buddhists should possess this breadth of mind.

At the third level is unconditional compassion. Conditional compassion implies that there is some reason or cause involved. Unconditional compassion doesn't require a reason and a specific receiver in mind, or even the thought of being compassionate. We don't harbor thoughts of a giver, a receiver, or the act of saving others. To save sentient beings without a thought of saving sentient beings is the so-called "emptiness of the three wheels" – the giver, the receiver, and the gift.

Most people are capable of the first level of Buddhist compassion if they put a bit of effort into it; the second level is only achievable for those who practice bodhisattva deeds; the third level is only achievable to great bodhisattvas like Avalokiteshvara. From this we learn that although Buddhist compassion is transcendence and liberation from egoistic self, it still involves levels and degrees, and therefore is not instantly achievable.

## From Selfishness to Selflessness

Since we know that not all levels of selfishness have a negative meaning, let's discuss the stages of practice from selfishness to selflessness. First we will look at what makes up our selfish self. Aside from the five skandhas, two other sets of factors make up our selfish self: cause and effect, and causes and conditions. "Cause and effect" refers to the fact that the selfish self is composed of its causes and their subsequent effects in terms of time – present self is a continuation of past self, and future self is the extension of present self. From the perspective of causality, any action will lead to a real result. However, a cause doesn't necessarily generate an immediate or desirable effect, while every result must come from a cause. Therefore, causality is the

basis of the self. That is why our self in its physical value consists of our body and its parts, while our self in terms of concepts and values consists of our thoughts and their content.

Our selfish self consists of the dispersing of causes and conditions into space; our physical self is composed of the four major elements: earth, water, fire, and wind. The constant increase and decline among these four major elements and their metabolism causes our existential self, while our mental self is composed of our psychological responses based on greed, hatred, delusion, arrogance, doubt, as well as joy, anger, sadness, and pleasure. The incessant rising and falling of our thoughts generates the self, which is our life. Therefore, in this regard sentient beings are all equal: our selfish self – the coming together of various bodily and mental factors as a provisional aggregate of the five skandhas – can change anytime. Aside from movements in terms of time and space there is actually no existent self, much less the existence of a selfish mentality.

But then again, is our selfish self always a negative thing? In fact it's not necessarily the case. When we are selfish for our own good and disregard the relevant group as a whole, it will only end up harming other people and ourselves; in that case the selfish self is undesirable. But if one's selfishness brings no harm to other people, then it isn't necessarily bad; we can even say it is good for people! If one's selfishness benefits both oneself and others, then one can be said to be virtuous. For example, Buddhists are supposed to first study and practice before they offer themselves; they should first listen to and learn the Buddhadharmā, purify their own mind and body, so as to achieve the Buddha Path. Then, using what they have studied and realized, they can transform others and deliver sentient beings. What is wrong about the selfishness in this sense?

## Letting Go of Subjectivity, Acting in Accord with Conditions

To move from selfishness to selflessness is our spiritual practice. What then is selflessness? Selflessness is letting go of subjectivity, acting in accord with causes and conditions without concerning about our self-value. By doing so, we will naturally be able to let go of ourselves and accommodate, benefit, and help others; we can do this without insisting on our own standpoint, without thinking of our own safety. Eventually, we will be able to achieve the state of selflessness, free from the notion of both the subject and object. The *Diamond Sutra* teaches us to be free from the marks of self, others, sentient beings, and life-span. Being free of these four marks is the selfless state, or no-self. The notion of "self" is a mark of the existence of our self-consciousness. The notion of "others" is a mark of the existence of our consciousness of others. The notion of "sentient beings" is a mark of our consciousness of self and other objects. The notion of "life-span" is a mark of the activities of our subjective self and all other objective sentient beings, their ongoing and continuous activities in time.

Therefore, selflessness means being free of the notions of a subjective self; of an objective object; of a space in which I, you, and sentient beings exist; and of a temporal life-span. According to this principle, we know that when the Buddha delivers all sentient beings, it's actually the sentient beings that deliver themselves; in the end, the Buddha in fact hasn't delivered any sentient beings. When achieving selflessness, how could one still have the notion of self, the notion of others, the notion of you delivering me, and the notion of me delivering you?

We can't instantly move from selfishness to selflessness. People talk about selflessness and no-self all the time but ironically, they are the ones

that have the deepest attachments and selfishness. So it's actually not an easy job to achieve selflessness.

## Reflecting on and Dissolving the Self

To achieve selflessness, we should first be aware of, and recognize our selfish self. If we can at all times reflect on ourselves, we will gradually discover and clearly see the selfish self. To self-reflect, we can recite the Buddha's name, meditate, and cultivate concentration, all to make our mind more and more balanced and calm. When our mind is very stable and calm, we'll be able to reflect on and realize the value of our existence. Without engaging in spiritual practice, people cannot realize the meaning of their existence, resulting in being filled with affliction and worry. On the other hand, practitioners will find out the roots of their afflictions, and try to deal with them and release them. Through this process, they will be more able to understand the selfish self and recognize what selfishness is all about.

Next, we should release and dissolve our selfish self, which is like a big tank of muddy water. Through repeated sedimentation, distillation, and filtration, the muddy water will gradually become clean and clear. This process of distilling and filtering represents the effort we should apply after becoming aware of, and recognizing our selfish self. Certainly it's difficult

for most people to understand the meaning of selflessness, or no-self. Our selfish, afflictive self is like sediment which, as it settles to the bottom, leaves the water above clarified, thus enhancing our compassionate and wise self. This wise and compassionate self is what we call selflessness. With our wise self we won't be afflicted and with our compassionate self, we will give all of ourselves to sentient beings. This is our purpose in learning Buddhism.

By moving from selfishness to selflessness, we will live with greater wisdom and compassion. Attaining selfless wisdom, our mind will not generate affliction; with compassionate self, we will contribute all without expecting rewards. This is the highest purpose of buddhahood: to manifest both compassion and wisdom. The manifestation of selflessness will bring to our life greater well-being and happiness; it is the highest spiritual state in our quest for life. ☸



Photo by Jin-Dian Kuo

# *The Arising of Conditioned Appearance from the True Mind*

## *Part 8*

BY

**Abbot Venerable Guo Xing**

This is the eighth in a series of articles taken from Dharma talks given by Abbot Venerable Guo Xing at the Shurangama Sutra Retreat in August 2012. The talks focus on the first four chapters of the *Shurangama Sutra*, and include the discussion of Chan theory and practice, stories of the Chan Masters, and how to apply Chan methods in daily life.

IN THE NEXT SECTION OF THE SUTRA, the Buddha expounded on the notions of “the distorted awareness based on the karma of individual beings” and “the distorted awareness based on the karma sentient beings share” (*The Surangama Sutra*, English translation by The Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2009, p. 78). Both of these two types of distorted awareness are at work at all times.

For instance, as you are listening to my talk now, every one of you here have your own set of thoughts, feelings, things you see, and the parts of the talk you actually attend to. Aren't they all different from person to person? The Sutra says when the eyes are affected by glaucoma, the patient will see a halo around the light. Only glaucoma patients see the halo and other people don't. This phenomenon, where individuals have different perceptions, sensations, and feelings, is called “individual karma.”

Once the eye recovers from glaucoma, the halo would naturally disappear. When we perceive non-existing phenomena as existing, this is called “deluded awareness.” At this very moment, every one of us believes/perceives that our mind is inside our bodies. Isn't that so? As we discussed yesterday, due to ignorance the True Mind gives rise to the conception of a dualistic mind of subject and object, which in turn gives rise to empty space, the world, and karmic consequences. As the result, we erroneously perceive that the True Mind is inside our physical body. This view of “the mind is hidden inside the body” is indeed a deluded awareness. Shifu [Chan Master Sheng Yen] had said, “We are each living in our own world.” One person, one world; two persons, two worlds. The overlaps of the individual worlds are called “shared karma.”



Photo by Zach Laffey

When we dream at night, we feel we are interacting with many people, don't we? Dreaming at night, we are living in our own world, which is the function of the “independently arising thinking consciousness.” In the daytime, this “independently arising thinking consciousness” corroborates with the eye-consciousness, the ear-consciousness, the nose-consciousness, the tongue-consciousness, and the body-consciousness, and together they are called the “thinking consciousness that arises with the five sense consciousnesses.” The “independently arising thinking consciousness” is still operating in the daytime. The only difference is, in the daytime it's called “deluded thoughts,” and at nighttime it's called “dreaming.”

For instance, suppose you see, during the daytime, a person that you want to punch. The desire to punch that person is a function of consciousness.

Thinking better of the scenario, you realize you might get punched back if you really punch the person. So, it turns out, you don't do it. Yet had it been in a dream, you would've gone ahead and punched. The fact of the matter is, although during the day you did not punch, you have actually done so already in your consciousness. The only difference is that you did not punch physically. But in the consciousness, it's the same as in the dream. This part mainly belongs to the realm of the consciousness and it is identical in the dreams at night. They are both deluded awareness.

In fact, during the day, everything we see, hear, and think about is all deluded awareness. Whatever we see, hear, or smell in the daytime is optional. Optional means they are basically like dreams, which all arise from our own mind. The only difference is the addition of the working of

the five sense faculties. Comparing between the deluded awareness during the day and the dreams at night, the difference is just the addition of the five senses. At night, the five senses are most likely not contributing. In a similar fashion, forms and images in the daytime also originate from the mind-consciousness and they continue to surface from the mind. The problem is, we think of them as real.

Once we awake from our dreams at night, we realize nothing had really happened. During the day, are you able to see through whatever you experience so you know it is also like a dream? Would the dreams that occur in the daytime disappear? Yes, in truth, the dreams we experience during the day will also disappear. When you look at a person, the actual person does not disappear. However, the impressions you have formed about this person arise and perish, don't they? The memories of this person constantly picking on you also arise and perish, don't they? The dreams we have at night are deluded thoughts that arise and then completely perish. Once you are awake, you realize nothing had happened. The deluded thoughts that arise during the day may actually disappear even more quickly. Isn't that so?

I've said a lot already, as if whatever I said is absolutely correct, but that's how I see it. You can use the phrase "distorted awareness based on the karma of individual beings" as an anchor and contemplate: everything you see and hear is all the result of the True Mind giving rise to ignorance and the dualistic mind. This is all you have to remember. Just remember one principle: whatever person you think of is not that person; whatever emotion you experience is not you. In addition, when you are talking to other people, you have to remember, "Am I truly talking to this person?" Contemplating this way, you will actually increase the likelihood of you really talking to that person. Contemplating this way, we



*What do we see?* Photo by Venerable Chang Wen

can truly eradicate our deluded views. Otherwise you will continue to treat the images from your memory as real people. At this very moment, are you talking to that image or to the Mind? Have you ever talked to this True Mind? Not yet, right? That shows you are treating the images as the True Mind. So, we have to work on figuring out a way to keep letting go.

*Question:* Based on what you've said, when we are reading a sutra, how should we really be reading? Should we see it as "white paper with black dots?"

*Answer:* You are not even reading the sutras! Once there was a Chan Master. As he was reading a sutra, his disciple asked him whether he was reading the sutra. He said, "No, I'm using this to cover my eyes." In any case, so long as there's a "you" reading the sutra, you've become blind. Similarly, if you see yourself as conversing with another person, then your eyes have become blind, your mouth has become mute, and your ears become deaf. If one day, you reach the state where you are talking to a person yet you do not see yourself talking to that person, and there isn't a "you" looking at the other person. Then and only then, you are no longer blind, no longer mute. Otherwise, simply remember Shifu's words, "Be serious, but do not take it seriously." ☺

*(To be continued)*

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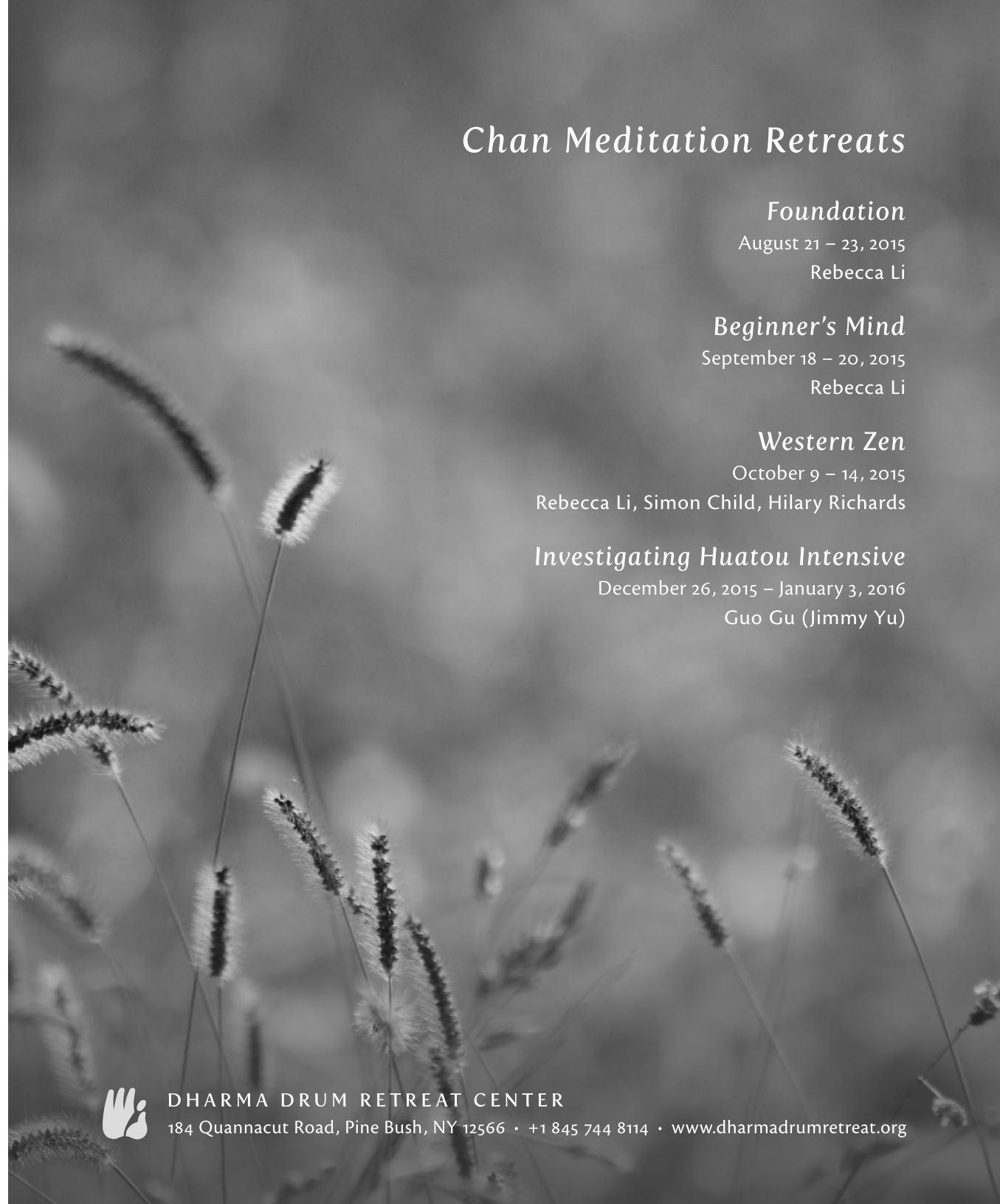
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# *In Daily Life Purify the Mind*

BY  
Guo Gu

This is an excerpt from a Dharma talk by Guo Gu (Jimmy Yu). The talk was given near the end of the seven-day Gateway to Chan Retreat held at the Dharma Drum Retreat Center in March 2013. Transcription and editing by Buffe Maggie Laffey.

## Pure Mind, Pure Environment

TODAY I WANT TO TALK ABOUT practice in daily life. All the things I've been talking about in this retreat, especially the attitudes, principles, and perspectives, are very useful in daily life. Ultimately practice should be indivisible with life. Life is practice; practice is life: learning to recognize Buddhadharma, learning to experience our environment and relate to other people through Buddhadharma. What is Buddhadharma? Impermanence, the workings of causes and conditions, interconnectedness – everything is an opportunity and a teaching.

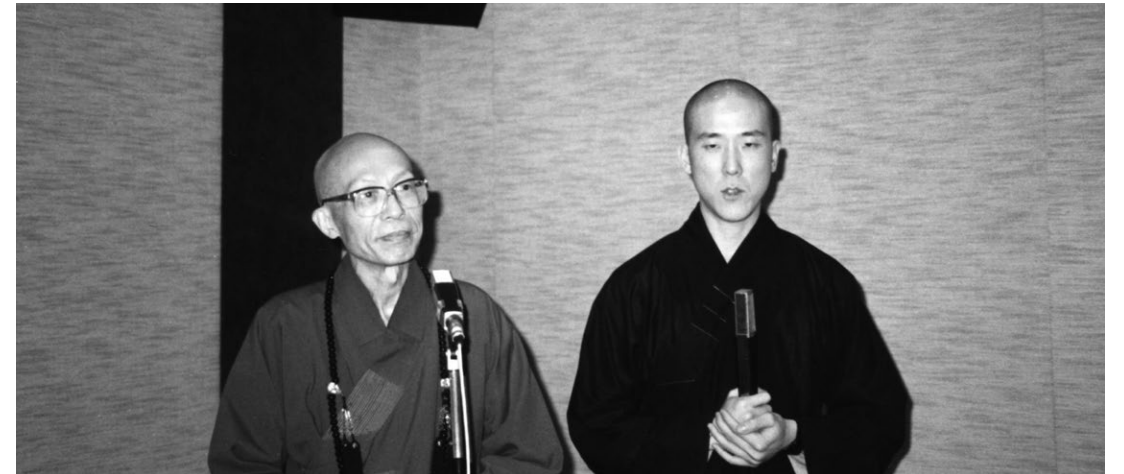
I used to travel with my teacher Chan Master Sheng Yen to different places in Europe, the United States, and Asia. He always carried a small notebook with him to record his observations. It was about two by four inches, and his writing was very small. For each trip, he'd write no more than a few pages. When he returned from the trip, he had an entire book about the things that he'd absorbed: the people he met, information about the place, its history. It was amazing. Usually we come back from vacation

and, after a year, we forget all the details. His mind was so clear, he could just jot down a few notes and remember everything.

Master Sheng Yen was able to see Buddhadharma in all things. His world was a pure land on earth. Everywhere he looked, whether it was difficult people or favorable conditions, he saw Buddhadharma. Why? Because when the mind is pure, the environment is pure. A pure mind in a clean body, living in a pure land, that was my Shifu's world. Even longtime practitioners sometimes cannot perceive this. This is the principle for daily practice: purify the mind of all vexations, cleanse the body of filth and dirt – that includes bodily actions. Then the environment is a pure land.

## The Buddha's Pure Land

There's a story in the *Vimalakirti Sutra*; Ananda was sitting there after alms-begging when everyone was having their meal, and he thought to himself, "Buddha is always talking about other Buddhas and other realms. Each Buddha has a pure land, Akshobhya



Master Sheng Yen and Guo Gu Photo: DDM Archive

Buddha in the East, Amitabha Buddha in the West, and so on. Where is our teacher's pure land?" Ananda couldn't get over that wandering thought. So he asked the Buddha, "Where is your pure land?" The Buddha said, "You want to know where my pure land is?" He took his foot off the throne and touched the ground with his big toe, and – BOOM! – the whole world became glorified. All the bodhisattvas were flying, the trees were blowing Dharma, and the rivers were seven jewels. Everything was purified. Buddha said, "Don't you know samsara is my pure land?" And he gave this teaching: when the mind is pure, everywhere is the pure land.

Now you know where to find the pure land of our original teacher, Shakyamuni Buddha. It is here and now. Don't soil it with greed, hatred, ignorance, jealousy, and doubt – the five root vexations. From the Buddha's perspective, all beings are Buddhas. The sentient beings' perspective is always a narrow view surrounding a false sense of selfhood that's totally constructed by imagination. This sense of permanence doesn't have a referent that really exists. From that perspective we say, "This person is

harming me, that person is benefiting me ..." and we set up oppositions. We create suffering for ourselves which perpetuates our vexations, and we act upon our vexations and give suffering to others. We don't see the Dharma that is around us, the teachings that other people are presenting. That's a pity. No pure land.

Let me tell you something – even some arhats can be like that, too, not practicing the Mahayana view. People are products of culture. A few thousand years ago, it was a culture of transcendence. That was the paradigm people lived in, just like we live in a paradigm of science. Today everything is scientific. People a few thousand years from now (if people are still around) will probably just laugh at us, saying, "They believed in science, look at them." The paradigm conditions people, and people are a product of it. Very rarely do people actually transcend their times. In human history, only a small handful have done so. The Buddha was one of them. You can see this from the teachings. Even among his disciples, the arhats, you can see this.

## Suddhipanthaka

There was one arhat named Suddhipanthaka; he became one of the Buddha's great disciples. But, before he attained arhatood, he was isolated by people. Why did they exclude him? He not only looked dumb, he actually had low intelligence. He was just stupid. Buddha would give a teaching, and he would remember the first half of the sentence but forget the second half. I'm not talking about long, convoluted sentences with parenthetical phrases and different clauses. I'm talking about a simple sentence with a subject and predicate, like "All things are impermanent." A sentence like that he could not remember. He would try to memorize it by repeating to himself "All things ... All things ... All things are ... what?" Everybody around him would be frustrated and yell at him, "Impermanent! All things are *impermanent*." He'd go off repeating "impermanent, impermanent, impermanent ..." and then come back and ask, "What is it that's impermanent?" because he forgot the first half of the sentence. No one wanted to deal with him. It was very sad.

Suddhipanthaka had a brother named Mahapanthaka, who was also an arhat. Both of their parents had died, and just the two brothers were left. Mahapanthaka wanted to leave home and become a monk. He couldn't leave his younger brother so, out of pity, he took him along. His younger brother didn't know anything about monkhood, or the Buddha. He didn't know what he was getting into. Shave his head? "Oh, are you shaving your head? Okay, then I'll shave my head." That's how he became a monk. That's like dragging your friend to a retreat when they don't really want to be here, and don't even know *why* they are here. They went and became monks, and Mahapanthaka became liberated very soon, he became an arhat.

People just isolated Suddhipanthaka in the Sangha; they didn't want to sit next to him. Everyone got annoyed by him because he couldn't remember things. Mahapanthaka had an obligation to take care of his younger brother, so he tried to teach him. He took him to the fields because he didn't want to teach him in public; it was just plain embarrassing. So Suddhipanthaka was taken to a field, and he was taught the most important key teaching: "All things are impermanent." I say that's the key because of the three seals of the Dharma: suffering, impermanence, and no self. If you refuse it, saying impermanent is permanent (rejecting things you don't like, grasping onto things you like), you go to the gate of suffering. If you face impermanence and accept it, you can begin to transform it, and then you go to the gate of liberation. Mahapanthaka wanted to teach his brother this most basic thing.

### Abandoned

In the field, Suddhipanthaka was playing with the weeds, giggling and singing to himself. His brother said, "Calm down. Come over here! Listen to the Dharma. All things are impermanent. Repeat it." Suddhipanthaka repeated it a few times and then asked, "What is impermanence?"

His brother answered, "Change. Things change all the time. All things are impermanent. I want you to memorize this: 'All things are impermanent.'"

Five minutes later Suddhipanthaka was saying, "All things ... all things ..." but he just couldn't remember the second half of the sentence. His brother lost patience and demanded, "All things are what? Tell me!" Suddhipanthaka wailed, "I don't know! I don't know!"

Then the farmer working in the next field yelled, "*Impermanent!* All things are impermanent!" That was the final straw for Mahapanthaka. He said, "Okay,

that's it! I can't be with you. You're a grown man. You're a monk already – when you're hungry, you can go beg alms for food. Don't come near me; I'm leaving you!"

All Suddhipanthaka could do was cry. His only family member had left him; he just stayed in the field and cried. Then the Buddha came and said, "Suddhipanthaka, come over here. Why are you crying?"

"My brother left me. I have no one now."

"You have me. You will study directly with me."

"Really? Who are you, again?"

"I am the Buddha. Let's go back to the vihara."

"I don't want to go back. People don't like me there."

"No, come back, I will take you," and Buddha took him by the hand.

### Sweeping Meditation

Viharas are temporary places in which the community of monks stays for a period of time to practice. It's basically just part of the forest. Sometimes they would be lucky – someone like King Bimbisara would donate his property to them and build a pagoda and platforms, actual structures where they could practice. But sometimes not. This time it was just a forest. And the Buddha said to Suddhipanthaka, "Okay, here is your broom. You clean everything, clean all the dust."

Now, what happens when you sweep dirt? It's not a cement floor. It's not a wooden floor. It's the forest! It's all dirt. Sweeping is a useless task. Suddhipanthaka was not very articulate; he didn't have an affinity for conceptual words and language. But cleaning? That was something he could do. The Buddha said, "Just sweep." So Suddhipanthaka just swept and swept.



Painting by Chien-Chih Liu

He swept, swept, swept. That was the genius of the Buddha, knowing Suddhipanthaka's causes and conditions, karmic affinity, and ripening potential. The Buddha could have set him to sweeping a long time ago, when he first accepted him to the Sangha. But he let him go through all that suffering because the time was not ripe. He waited for causes and conditions, until Suddhipanthaka's own brother gave up on him and he was completely devastated. Out of that devastation – it's the same kind of technique that Chan masters do, right? Bring them out, go for the kill.

Suddhipanthaka swept all day, chanting to himself, "I sweep, I sweep, I sweep, sweep, sweep. I sweep, I sweep, I sweep, sweep, sweep." Doing this he realized, "I'm just sweeping dirt from one side to another. It's all dirt, this open ground. What is this dirt that I am moving from one place to another? Where is the dirt? My mind has dirt." Sweeping only moves dirt from one place to another, it does not influence the nature of mind. It's just moving crap from one place to another. And if you realize that, the two are not opposites – they are non-dual. Crap is not crap anymore. People that you think obstruct you, if you learn from them, are they obstructions? No. Suddhipanthaka had the karmic capacity of a bodhisattva practitioner. So he realized the nature of mind in that instant. He attained arhatood, just like that. Surpassing his brother! Surpassing all the arhats!

## Twin Miracle

Because Suddhipanthaka's enlightenment was so thorough, all of the other capacities of his mind completely opened. What capacities? He still could not articulate very well, but he was the only other arhat among the Buddha's great disciples who could manifest a particular supernatural power called the Twin Miracle, in which the one side of the body emits

flames while the other side streams water. He had mastered the four elements; he could transform and inter-penetrate earth, water, fire, and wind. I haven't come across any record of Maudgalyāyana (who was number one in superpowers among the ten disciples) doing that. Suddhipanthaka was the only other one besides the Buddha to manifest that supernatural power. His countenance completely changed. Some of the big arhats like Mahākāśyapa and Shariputra could see that Suddhipanthaka looked different now. But those arhats with obscurations could not recognize the change.

The nuns didn't live together with the monks because of celibacy. The nuns' vihara was usually within walking distance of the monks'. They can't live together because of celibacy, right? But they can't live too far away; in case the nuns are in trouble, men have to be within running distance, so it's very close. Every month the nuns were required to request a monk to represent the Buddha and come teach them the Dharma. (Nuns have arhats and great teachers among them, too, but as a formality, they had to request a monk.) Every month the decision had to be made: who will represent the Sangha and go to teach the nuns? Everyone was voting, but the Buddha said, "This month, Suddhipanthaka will go."

All the other arhats were in disbelief, asking, "Did you mean Shariputra?"

The Buddha said, "No, Suddhipanthaka."

No one would disagree with the Buddha, but they asked, "Umm, are you sure?"

The Buddha said, "Yes, Suddhipanthaka. Ananda, go tell the nuns. Next week, Suddhipanthaka will go."

## Preaching to the Nuns

The nuns – great arrogance! Like many of us in our daily life, some of the nuns had great arrogance. They felt, "That person can teach me?" How many of us have

done that? Looked down on other people? So the nuns did a trick. They made a venerable's platform, adorned with gifts equal to what they would do for the Buddha, except they made it ten feet high with no ladders. They said, "The Buddha wants to insult us? We don't know why he is sending this idiot to save us but, okay, if he can give us teachings, we will treat him like a Buddha. Surely he can get up on this throne, where we will give him the highest veneration."

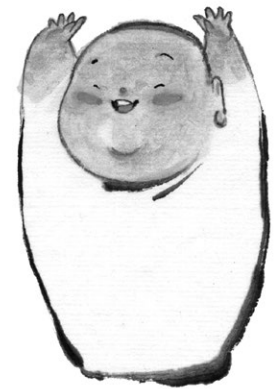
Suddhipanthaka went to the nun's vihara. He took a look at the throne. All the Buddha's nuns were sitting there. One said, "Venerable, thank you for coming today. We await your teaching. Please ascend to the Dharma throne."

Suddhipanthaka began to levitate straight up. All the nuns were amazed. In mid-air, he did that thing that only the Buddha can do; he transformed the four elements: earth, water, fire, and wind. And then he sat down. All of the nuns were in tears. They recognized their vexations, their discriminating mind. It was such a powerful teaching. These are Buddhist nuns – you think nuns have no vexations? And monks have no vexations? You think lay practitioners have no vexations? *We all* have vexations. Suddhipanthaka couldn't give a teaching through words and language. He just demonstrated how all things are interconnected, how all things are made out of the four elements. The nuns recognized their vexations and repented. Weeping tears of gratitude, they followed behind Suddhipanthaka as he returned to the monks' vihara.

The Buddha had waited for causes and conditions to ripen. All of those conditions were interconnected, including what the nuns would do. Especially those nuns who came up with the idea of building a throne so high that no one could climb up without a ladder (and those nuns became arhats!). The Buddha waited, and waited, and waited. What one perceives as hindrances, as difficult people, as challenging

situations – are they good or bad? Good and bad have no standard. We can't see causes and conditions. In daily life – aside from the practice of washing dishes, doing daily chores, doing formal meditation practice – we *must* purify our minds. Recognize vexations, accept them, give rise to compassion, humility, and gratitude. Learn to see Dharma in adversities. Learn to see Dharma in favorable conditions. Learn to see how your mind reacts to things. Can we do that? Yes, we have to do that. When we do that, we live in the pure land; a pure mind in a clean body, living in a pure land.

All the things that we've learned, now we have to live them, to embody them. Then they become your wisdom; you are the one who is nurturing your compassion. As for relating to causes and conditions – recognize, wait, create, and adapt. That's the way to practice: learn to recognize things. Sometimes we can only recognize them afterwards. Maybe sometimes a week later, sometimes a year later. It's okay. That's the beginning. You are just baby bodhisattvas, baby Buddhas. Through the interaction of all beings relating to things and objects, we learn about ourselves. That is the supreme way. It's free, readily available. Not difficult. Readily available. ∞



Painting by Chien-Chih Liu

# Fast Food Zen: The Way to “Unlightenment”

BY

Venerable Chang Wen

This article is one of a series of Questions and Answers between Taiwanese Buddhists and Venerable Chang Wen. A Chinese version was published initially in *Humanity Magazine* “人生” (*Ren sheng*), a publication of Dharma Drum Culture.

**Question:** Chan and Zen Buddhists seem to talk a lot about sudden enlightenment. When hearing this term, people may think that “sudden” means that it’s very quick and easy to experience awakening, and that Chan or Zen is the fastest way to get there. How do Western practitioners see this?

**Venerable Chang Wen:** Although the idea of sudden enlightenment has been emphasized greatly within Chan and Zen Buddhism, it’s certainly not an invention of the Chan/Zen school. Teachings and instances regarding sudden insights have appeared in the sutras, from the Agamas to the Mahayana texts. Actually, all enlightenments happen “suddenly,” yet people’s approaches to practice and capacities for insight vary. Although the process of practice takes time, and we can’t expect quick or easy results, modern people are often looking for a sudden resolution to their problems and vexations.

Even at the time of the Buddha, we can suppose that some people were also looking for a quick and easy way out of suffering. For example, Shariputra, one of the great disciples of the Buddha, suddenly became liberated upon hearing the Buddha say a few words. We can imagine that, when the news of Shariputra’s experience spread, people flocked to the Buddha to seek his counsel, hoping to get liberated themselves. What they didn’t know was that sudden enlightenment was preceded by a long time of gradual practice. Before encountering the Buddha, Shariputra himself cultivated his mind through many years of moral discipline and intensive meditation. Not understanding this process, people thought that all it took were a few “turning words,” so they sought the Buddha’s counsel in the hope that their own sudden enlightenment would happen. As the story goes, even Ananda, the Buddha’s attendant, had always expected that his master would help



Drawing by Venerable Chang Wen

him to have a realization. In China, Chan masters throughout the centuries – from the Sixth Patriarch Master Huineng of the 7<sup>th</sup> century up until the Qing Dynasty Master Han Shan of the 17<sup>th</sup> century – all addressed many misconceptions about practice and enlightenment. These examples can clearly be found in the records of their teachings. They often admonished practitioners for misunderstanding the meaning of sudden enlightenment, and for seeking quick results. Our founder, Master Sheng Yen, spent a great deal of effort explaining the meaning of sudden

enlightenment and how it relates to practice, but we practitioners can be ignorant, and it’s hard to break our stubborn habits and views. Even though we may know that we can’t expect quick results, we secretly wish for instant liberation. When I first started studying Chan, I spent a lot of time reading the stories of the masters and expecting that if I just so happen to read the right phrase, I’d “realize” what those great practitioners did. As I was reading and reflecting, I was waiting for the moment of enlightenment to happen, yet I was ignorant of the

context of those stories and the years of practice that those people put in before their insights.

As they say, there's no free lunch, not even with regards to our own mind. If we want enlightenment, we need to nourish the seeds of awakening and cultivate a healthy and fertile field of mind. Only then will the flowers of awakening blossom and ripen into fruits. Otherwise, if we're hasty – pouring excessive amounts of chemicals and fertilizers into our mind field, expecting the fruits will grow and ripen quickly – we'll poison and pollute the land. Things may grow within it, but most likely they will not be edible – even if so, they will make us sick. Throughout the generations, the great masters had to remind their disciples again and again of this illness of haste.

However, we want dearly to be free of suffering, we want to be enlightened. Because of this, it's easy to forget that to experience enlightenment takes great effort, patience, and resolve. Today, we are so used to instant gratification, where information through the Internet is almost instantly acquired, our car tires and oil are changed in 20 minutes, our medicine is prepared in 30 minutes, the car is washed in 10 minutes, and our fast food served in just a few moments. With these and many more conveniences in daily life, it's no wonder that people expect that enlightenment can come just as easy. People are looking for what could be called “fast food Zen.”

At the outset, I want to make it clear that by “fast food Zen,” I am not only referring to the Zen sect of Buddhism. By “fast food Zen” I am basically referring to an attitude that has developed especially due to the popularity of Chan/Zen/Son, and various Buddhist communities and individual practitioners who have misunderstood the idea of “sudden enlightenment.” For reasons of personal disposition, while also being led by unwise teachers with misguided views, the result is that these people

often end up being frustrated and disillusioned about Chan/Zen in particular and Buddhism in general. It's important to remind us all of the pitfalls of the misguided seeking mind.

## Preying on the Minds of the Misinformed

Sadly, there is a thriving industry that preys on the minds of misinformed spiritual seekers. There's a lot of money to be made from those looking for a quick resolution to their anxiety, anger, stress, and cravings, to name a few of the vexations we all suffer from. I've seen many ads on the Internet for a meditation “pill” that promises you'll enter into deep meditative states with the pop of a capsule. It's like something out of the movie *The Matrix*. Other ads promote equipment that hypnotizes you into supposedly equally profound states of meditative absorption. I think the *Exorcist II* had something like that. Initially, I thought these things were jokes, but these are real products. In addition to quick-fix meditation accessories, you can also find retreats that promise instant results. There are self-styled meditation masters out there leading accelerated-course retreats designed to give you an enlightenment experience that's “bigger, better, and lasts longer than a lesser enlightenment.” And you can have it all in just a few days. There are many infomercials for these retreats on YouTube, where the teacher explains the whole deal. You're probably wondering what they do on these retreats and how they can guarantee enlightenment. If you're really interested, well, then watch the infomercial. You can hear all about it! But be careful, because you might get caught, and then you'll become full of fast food Zen.

Besides these more extreme examples, there are more subtle lures and less boisterous products to be found. Open up any magazine on spirituality,

even the more well-respected ones about Buddhism and practice, and you'll surely find subtle hints that there's a course or product that can give you the peace of mind that you're seeking. It may be found within a small, quarter-page ad, or tucked away in the fine print of an event promotion. Here and there suggestions of “instant wisdom” are scattered about, like fish hooks in the air, waiting to catch the eye of the spiritual seeker. We cannot blame the publishers, or criticize the producers of these mind-pills, and there's no need to become pessimistic about Zen or angry at anyone. But we should be very wary of how these things can embed into our own consciousness, and that of our fellow practitioners. Knowing that there exists a trend for fast food Zen, we can protect ourselves and others from becoming victims of our own collective craving and ignorance.

## A Chan/Zen Culture of Instant Results

Within Chan/Zen Buddhism across the globe, a culture of sudden enlightenment seekers has developed, and as mentioned before, has always existed to some extent. From the time of the Buddha, to the time of the golden age of Chan in China (the Tang and early Song dynasties), to the spreading of Chan to all of the Far East, leading to the emergence of Japanese Zen and Korean Son Buddhism, the sudden enlightenment teaching has spread far and wide. Since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there have been many teachers and scholars who devoted their lives to sharing the teachings of Zen with the West and we should be grateful to them. Scholars and philosophers such as D.T. Suzuki and Alan Watts, Zen masters such as Shunryu Suzuki, Seung Sahn, and Philip Kapleau; Chan masters such as Hsuan Hua, and of course our own founder, Master Sheng Yen. We mustn't forget

the translators and authors like Thomas Cleary and J. C. Cleary, and many others. All of these people and their organizations have made great contributions to the spreading of Chan and Zen. In the West, Zen has become one of the most popular schools of Buddhism, understood by some as not necessarily Buddhism, but as a way of life. “Zen” has become a household term, associated with sitting meditation and, more broadly, with a life of mindfulness. Due to its religious neutrality, it has become most accessible to the general public. Zen has become so popular that countless books about *Zen and the Art of Such-and-Such* have shown the beneficial relationship of meditation and mindfulness in various skills and professions. But along with the popularity of Zen has come a watering down of its essence and a great many misunderstandings. Due to people's unwillingness to commit to the study and undertaking of Zen practice, and a shortage of fully qualified masters and well-established practice centers, there is a severe lack of depth. In the worst cases, only the outer forms are emphasized – sitting in meditation very straight with a serious face, wearing exotic robes, adorning the practice center with East Asian décor, and speaking in “Zen talk,” quoting the ancient masters about how “practice itself is enlightenment,” so all one needs is to “just be in the present.” On the surface, it all seems right to the spiritual seeker, and we can't say that it's wrong, but that's just the problem – for many, Zen practice is superficial. This diluted transmission of Zen has thus led to the misunderstanding of practice and enlightenment. Misinformed teachers and practitioners amidst this culture of instant gratification have in some way, intentionally or unintentionally, created the current state of fast food Zen. It's actually fitting for the United States, where, to the rest of the world, the symbol of American food is McDonald's.



Is Chan/Zen Practice really “nothing to do”? Photo by Cheng-Rong Yeh

## The Method of No Practice

Many have the misconception that the premise of Zen is that one doesn't need to “practice” per se, but rather, to awaken oneself to the truth that is “here and now.” This premise is not entirely incorrect, but is often taken out of context, which I will discuss later. For now, let's take it out of context. For many people who approach Zen with this idea, seeking the moment of enlightenment becomes the practice itself. This means that some people emphasize the enlightenment experience over the practice process, and underestimate the need for the right understanding. They are taught methods of awakening, but they see the methods as merely a means to quickly get the experience. These “sudden” seekers, for example, like the Zen method of *shikantaza*, “just sitting,” and not doing anything else.

They fancy silent illumination Chan as “the method of no method.” In theory, just by the act of sitting and not generating vexations, one can in effect, let the awakened mind function. In principle, this is possible, but how many people can do it (or *not*-do it)? Many meditators just sit and don't know what they should be doing. They end up actually just thinking that they are “just sitting.” Worse, they assume that, just by sitting there with “nothing to do” they are already enlightened.

With koan/gong'an practice, some practitioners overdo their investigation. Hearing that the method of gong'an or *huatou* is very powerful, they must put a lot of force into it. In principle, this is a powerful method; the power is generated from the inner strength of the questioning mind. However, they mistakenly assume that the power must be generated through physical and mental effort. They clench their

fists, grit their teeth, and tense up the whole body. They think that the harder they try and the more energy they put into it, the quicker the results. In this way, they exhaust themselves trying to conjure up an answer, or to somehow “get it” through a pressurized investigation. They're looking for some kind of special reaction. There are certain experiences that arise out of these misguided endeavors, and they are often mistaken as enlightenment. The experiences that people have from these over-zealous endeavors are nothing other than a fleeting feeling or flash of mental clarity, or a release of tension, in some cases just a moment of intelligence in reaction to a psychological puzzle. In reality, this is far from correct practice, and according to genuine Zen teaching, even farther from enlightenment. Yet, with such approaches and their subsequent reactions, people are led to believe that they've “illuminated the mind and seen self-nature.”

In the context of the past decade of my involvement with Chan/Zen practice and intensive retreats – especially with the many interviews that I've had the privilege to engage in – the above approaches and experiences may seem ridiculous to the well-informed Zen Buddhist, but they are really prevalent. Some practitioners are given very unclear instructions and very little, if any, teaching on the principle behind the practice. It's no wonder they end up going astray. After spending a period of a few days focusing their minds – or engaging in imaginative thinking – all kinds of experiences may occur. For the most part, these experiences are illusions, just reactions of body and mind. In some cases, they are due to the heightened senses and exaggerated power of the imagination because of the relative isolation of the retreat environment and the frequent periods of silent meditation. For those who have never done a retreat and may not have a clear idea of what intensive meditation is, just think about

having nothing to do or think about for seven days, sitting on a cushion with your senses withdrawn. What kind of dreams or visions would you have and what would you do with them?

For those practitioners who have not received proper instruction, or who are not willing to put their feet on the ground and patiently use a method of practice, preferring to use the “method of no method,” they often end up with delusions of enlightenment. It's more accurate to say that this is the “method of no-practice” or the “way to unlightenment.” For example, there have been practitioners on retreat who, when asked what their method is, just say, “I sit, and everything is. There are sights and sounds but no one listening. The snow is falling outside and everything is perfect. This is what I do.” It all sounds very nice, but with the first moment of speaking it's clear that this is coming from their imagination and what they've read or heard others say. Rather than presenting themselves honestly, they propose a picture of an enlightened self. What they don't notice is that this delusion of self is the very obstacle to genuine enlightenment.

On one occasion during interview, the teacher asked a participant, “What is your method?” The participant answered by slamming his palm on the floor and staring intently into the teacher's eyes. The teacher whispered to me, “What is that supposed to mean?” “Not sure,” I said. The student then replied, “You asked about my method, and I've shown you my method.” “Oh, O.K.,” the teacher continued, “Then keep practicing. Go back into the Chan Hall and keep slamming your hand on the floor.” A fellow participant sitting next to the first student was very startled by this whole event, and said nervously, “He scared the shit out of me.” The teacher advised, “If he does it again, just give him a good whack.” Everyone laughed except the first student. Eventually, he gave up this charade, realizing that the teacher

wasn't playing along. He apologized and began to cry, sincerely requesting guidance. Previously, he approached practice and interview in this manner, attempting to display his understanding with a classic Zen-like whack of the palm. But the outward performance of awakened spontaneity did not match the inward confusion. After all, he was not using any method. What else could he do?

Another time, a student came in and explained how he had learned the method before, and was told he had an enlightenment experience already. Yet, he was confused because he didn't really feel enlightened, and still had a lot of vexations. With his practice he focused all his energy on his abdomen and forcibly put the word "wu" there, as in the *huatou* "What is wu?" He remembered that his teacher said, if the power generated is strong enough, a person then experiences a shattering of "wu," whereby "enlightenment" ensues with feelings of rapture and release. He heard that with this shattering, sometimes people shout, cry, or laugh in an explosion of bliss. It really seems like some kind of enlightenment. He himself experienced this sense of release, and felt great for a while. But very quickly, this feeling passed. His mind was as scattered and vexed as before. What had happened was nothing more than a buildup of pressure and energy in the body, to the point where the person cannot bear it any longer, letting go of the method and pressure, and releasing the tension of body and mind. The rapture comes from the release of this tension and energy, whereby a person just returns to normal – the state they were in before they started to give themselves all that pressure. They feel comfortable, relaxed, and at ease. What occurred was far from the shattering of "great doubt" but just an explosive release of *qi*. That's surely liberating in one sense, but certainly not the liberation of enlightenment. Soon after though, their problems and vexations surely return. With this

approach, there is a method here, but the student's application was completely incorrect, and he had a mind of great expectation.

## The Crumbling Seal of Tofu

In extreme cases of enlightenment-seeking, students pressure themselves and break into sweats, clenching their fists and breathing heavy; teachers run around whacking away at the students with incense boards, scolding and shouting. The whole of practice becomes an intense pursuit of an enlightenment experience at the expense of physical and mental stability. And then all of the sudden, "BOOM!" Something happens; the student seems to have a breakthrough. The student gives an answer, shouts, screams, or cries. The teacher evaluates this breakthrough, and provides confirmation of enlightenment. Such a so-called "enlightenment" is actually nothing more than a flash of intelligence or a moment of a clear state of mind, or a release of physical and mental pressure – then the person becomes normal again. A "seal" of approval is given, and the Dharma is "transmitted." A person has gone from vexation back to vexation – not 360 degrees, but zero degrees. This is fast food Zen at its best. What's transmitted here is nothing more than false enlightenment, or "unlightenment."

In the case of a genuine experience and confirmation, this is often called the "mind seal" or the "Dharma seal," which is supposed to be a lasting mark. The teacher, having genuine insight and a clear observation of the student, "seals" the experience with recognition of the student's mind. The word "seal" here refers to the ancient practice of sealing a private letter or document with a piece of molten wax, usually having an impression of the sender's official mark, or seal. In the context of Chan/Zen, the "seal" is the confirmation of a student's realization

given by a master. Fast food Zen seals are jokingly said to be made, not of wax or an even more durable substance, but of tofu. Try sealing an envelope with tofu, or with a Big Mac patty. What happens? The patty becomes dry, crumbles, gets moldy, and has no function other than to feed flies. The modern day seals of some misled communities are given left and right, by teachers who have no genuine insight, to students who likewise have just seen illusions.

In the Far East, just as Western fast food has become very widespread, with Kentucky Fried Chicken being more popular than the local restaurants, fast food Zen has caught on. More people are looking for the bigger, better, faster, longer-lasting enlightenment that doesn't take hard work to get. Unfortunately, the Dharma that is transmitted is not Buddhadharma, and not the true sudden enlightenment teaching, but a disfiguration of a truly precious Dharma gate. Yet, many people are easily misled. Only after time do they recognize that they still have many vexations, that the so-called enlightenment they experienced may not have been genuine. They may doubt their own practice and experience or even doubt the Dharma. Some give up practice or faith in the teaching completely. This is truly a pitiable situation. They've encountered a perverted view and misguided teachers. This situation only leads to the degradation of the Buddhadharma.

In the very worst cases, this misguided practice can bring about serious psychological problems. Be careful what you get into. If someone promises fast, easy enlightenment, be wary. I've heard from participants of those fast food Zen retreats, that the whole process left them in a very dire state. Due to the intense pressure and psychological twisting of that method, they experienced a "breakthrough" that left them mentally broken. This breakdown can temporarily bring about a kind of mental clarity

and stillness, but it is very unstable, due to an overly intense pressure. It's similar to mental breakdowns that people experience due to stress. At some point, the mind stops discriminating in order to protect the body from becoming damaged by anxiety. There is no discriminative thinking, just calmness and clarity. It may be liberating for a while, but when a person needs to re-enter society and ordinary daily life, they are unable to function. This is certainly not enlightenment but mental illness. This kind of method is definitely not Zen and definitely not healthy. Yet, one can make a lot of money creating this kind of experience for people, who are unfortunately caught up at the wrong place at the wrong time. How did they get there? It's the mind that seeks for quick results that brought them there and made them unable to see the trickery.

## Cooking a Pot of Rice

The above problems have their roots in the misunderstanding of what sudden enlightenment really means, and in not seeing the whole context of Chan/Zen practice. If we look at the emergence of the Chan School in China, we see that the "sudden" teachings from Bodhidharma up to Huineng appeared when Buddhism was already well-established. Practitioners had been studying the Dharma and meditating, using fundamental practices of calming, along with engaging in disciplined lives of austerity and purity. For example, the doctrinal schools of Huayan and Tiantai had already taken root in China for hundreds of years, before the "sudden" approach of Chan emerged. Even within these traditions the sudden approach to enlightenment existed, based on the teachings of the sutras. However, this sudden approach was not to be taken up haphazardly. A serious engagement in practice and study was required before applying such an

approach. In general, practitioners already had a solid foundation of mental stability, clarity, and a mature view of the Dharma born from years of dedicated practice and community support. They were ripe for the sudden teaching. With this fertile ground already prepared, all that was needed was the moisture from the rain and the fruits of enlightenment sprouted. We can see that their sudden insights were preceded by much gradual practice. The effect of awakening was preceded by the cause of practice and study. Those who succeeded only did so with much patience and perseverance, as the path of practice is not easy. Facing vexations and learning to deal with them is a lifetime of effort . . . even longer, to be precise.

Like cooking a pot of rice, the flame can't be too high, and you can't be in a rush. If the flame is too big, you'll get burnt rice. If you turn the flame off and on, as with sporadic practice, the rice will never cook right. Only if the flame is just right, keeping it a low, continuous simmer, will you have tasty, edible rice. Practice should be like that. A person should be willing to engage in consistent and patient practice, engaging in many aspects of study. This is the right context of the sudden teaching.



Photo by Ting-Hsin Wang

Is it possible for modern people to develop such a foundation for approaching the sudden path? Yes. Is it easy? No, it's not. Even monastics of today cannot compare with those of the past; the conditions of monastic life now are drastically different. There are many complicated obligations and challenges that modern monks and nuns deal with, including the manifold tasks to run monasteries and retreat centers. Lay people have even more distractions and temptations to deal with, so making time for silent practice or dedicated study is often scarce. However, if one has the will and determination, deep practice is possible. However, determination by itself is not sufficient; one needs the right concepts and methods.

### Gradual Practice, Sudden Results

The genuine approach to Zen is to balance both theory and practice. Within the Chinese Chan tradition, especially our own Dharma Drum Lineage, great emphasis is placed on having a correct view of the Dharma, grounded in the fundamental teachings of the Agama sutras, and refined by the Mahayana teachings. A true practitioner must be familiar with this view, which maps out the course of practice: the problem, the condition, the goal, and the process – the four key aspects of Dharma. With this view, one will have the right approach to steer clear of pitfalls that only lead to mistaken realization, or unlightenment. Interestingly, when one truly understands the principles of practice and adjusts one's outlook through the concepts, a great deal of vexation can be relieved. In itself, this is a kind of awakening, a sudden shift in perspective. With a change in view, suddenly there's a change in experience of life.

In addition to the right concepts, in the beginning it's important to have concrete methods, such as following the breath or reciting the Buddha's name, or other methods for settling and calming the mind (e.g., the Five Methods of Stilling the Mind). This further develops the stability of mind and makes it more receptive to experiencing insight. There is a saying that if one wishes to go diving for pearls, it's best to do it when the water is calm. With big waves and cloudy water you can't see anything, let alone the oysters that contain the precious gems. This doesn't mean that sudden methods of Chan cannot be used, but it's important to know that initially, these methods and the expedient ways to approach them function to stabilize and clear the mind. Shifu [Master Sheng Yen] used to say, "Yes, the methods I teach here are 'sudden' ones, but you have to *take it slowly*."

When using such sudden methods, there is still a process. With either silent illumination or *huatou*, since one is most likely beginning with a scattered mind, one cannot expect to experience enlightenment quickly. Rather, with silent illumination, one goes through a process of settling the mind – possibly for many years – before developing the penetrating awareness that allows one to drop the sense of self and suddenly experience genuine emptiness. On the other hand, with *huatou* practice, as one engages the question, its initial function is to stabilize and concentrate the mind. When the mind is stable it becomes more penetrating, and a genuine and powerful sense of questioning helps one to investigate deeper into the mind, eventually breaking through the unified mass of doubt to reveal one's "original face." This whole process can likewise take many years to cultivate. Neither silent illumination nor *huatou* requires one to go through a defined set of stages to gain insight, but one must pass through various phases of progress before experiencing

enlightenment. The initial phase requires that the mind be sufficiently stable and clear; only then can there be any talk of silently illuminating or investigating the mind. To do that, one must have a concrete method and know how to use it; otherwise, one may just be imagining or pretending to be practicing Zen, when in fact, one is just thinking about being awakened.

### A Moment of Practice is a Moment of Benefit

As far as the results of practice, is enlightenment the only thing worth getting? Is preparing and building a foundation just something to drudge through until we finally are released from suffering? If we think this way, then our practice will really be miserable, and we'll always be waiting for something to happen. Our mind will be scattered and we won't be able to immerse ourselves in the method. Yet if we emphasize "a moment of practice is a moment of benefit," we'll experience the process of practice as a great profit. The moment we use the method is the moment we benefit from it; the moment the mind returns to the method is a moment of greater stability and clarity. Using our method with this attitude, we'll experience joy and a sense of ease. When the mind is on the method, for that moment, the mind is calmed and clarified; for that moment, we have peace. The problem is that we usually find it difficult to rest the mind continuously on the method because we're waiting for results – some kind of "big bang" experience. Some are waiting to be congratulated by the teacher or complimented by others: "You've finally arrived. Welcome to the land of the enlightened." While using the method, we fantasize. If we were to drop the fantasy and emphasize this moment of using the method, we'll experience the benefit of the practice. This is



joyful. This is fertilizing the field of mind with the nutrients that lead to awakening: stability, clarity, joy, wholesomeness, contentment. With this kind of practice, naturally the fruit of awakening occurs when the conditions are right. There's no need for waiting in line, no need for expedite fees, no need to perform, and no need to grab onto anything. With sincere, dedicated, and grounded practice, one is on the path to enlightenment. One joyfully walks this path, experiencing the benefits of practice along the way. This approach is in line with the reality of cause and effect. This is genuine Zen.

## The Evolution of Zen

It seems that the culture of fast food Zen is a natural product of the importation of an exotic spiritual practice during a time of materialism and instant gratification. During this time that modern people need spiritual practice the most, it's normal that we will initially misunderstand and misuse this tool for liberation. It seems that part of the process of practice is doing it the wrong way until we get it right. Some people have the good roots and good fortune to encounter a genuine master and practice correctly, swiftly coursing through their obstructions and melting away vexations without much struggle, through the use of proper methods and concepts. But for most people, who have heavy vexations and thick obstructions, we stumble along towards awakening, possibly heading in the wrong direction until conditions point us back in the right way. As

Chan and Zen practitioners, we have to recognize our afflictions and misconceptions and not be afraid to bring them to light. We shouldn't be afraid to reevaluate our ways of learning and teaching after discovering that there are problems. If we are unwilling to introspect into our culture of practice, then we will not be successful in introspecting into our individual minds. If we can look deeply and change our approaches to fit the right path of practice, we have a chance for freedom, and to help others find this path as well. If not, we'll just be performing silent mental acrobatics on our expensive meditation cushions, wearing fancy robes, speaking empty words.

As our views and practices mature, the benefits of Chan/Zen can reach the multitudes and have a great effect on society. If we adopt a realistic view that recognizes the fact of cause and effect, we will be willing to put in the work required to get the results we're looking for. If we emphasize this moment of practice, we won't have to look far to find joy and peace. If we don't get hung up on enlightenment, we may just find ourselves one day without vexation. In this way, we firmly place our feet on the ground and walk steadily, slowly, into sudden awakening. All sentient beings that come in contact with us will experience this benefit and will find comfort and freedom in walking with us. I encourage us all to investigate our current mindset and be honest in evaluating ourselves. After all, isn't the whole practice about discovering the problem of our suffering and uprooting it? Look into it! ☺

# The Song of Unlightenment

by Venerable Chang Wen



Drawing by Venerable Chang Wen

THIS POEM WAS INSPIRED BY THE EXPERIENCES that I've had leading retreats under the guidance of Venerable Chi Chern, especially over the past couple of years in Europe. Last year in 2014, during a five-day retreat in Switzerland, after discussing with him the various occasions where we've seen the attitude of fast food zen in retreat practitioners and in Buddhist culture in general, I asked him to write a poem about it. He said, "You can write one." And so I did. After his suggestions and review by my old Chinese teacher, Mrs. Chun-Fen Chang, from Taiwan, the poem was finalized and recently published in *Humanity Magazine*. The Chinese version mimics the rhythm and rhyme of "Song of Enlightenment" by Chan Master Yongjia. However, to translate it into English, maintaining a song-like rhythm and rhyme, I had to adapt the translation. Accordingly, the English poem below doesn't follow the Chinese word-for-word but captures the essential meaning. It maintains the original's critical and somewhat comical tone while presenting the very serious issue. I hope that while getting a laugh out of it, you also get informed and inspired.

快快參，速速悟，  
不理漸修求頓渡。  
他無時間來打坐，  
但還急著煩惱破。  
央你授，頓悟法，  
要求速效治療吧！  
若不即時順他意，  
轉身另覓高師地。

*“Hurry! Hurry! Gotta wake up quick!”  
Can’t fuss with the gradual, get the sudden fix.  
He’s got no time to meditate,  
but anxious he is for his pains to abate.  
Pleading you, teacher, for the sudden approach,  
quick therapy that cures the most.  
If at once you don’t agree,  
he’ll run off to another master, you’ll see.*

彼山高，他處深，  
所謂明師在在宣，  
不須用功走旁門，  
諾言易入佛知見。  
遇邪師，逢外道，  
雖然身心現糟糕，  
入室小參一掌拍，  
師便印心徒禮拜。

*The other master’s even more profound,  
at his place the “clear eyed sage” expounds:  
No need for practice – there’s a shortcut too,  
promising easy buddhahood, “even for you.”  
Having found a false guru on the outer path,  
even though his body-mind is just a mess,  
in the interview room, with a slap on the ground,  
the master confirms and the student bows down.*

如此修，如此悟，  
師徒迷糊不知誤，  
常把佛法當人情，  
代代傳承等於零。  
得法故，有身分，  
處處推銷其方便，  
拼命誘引弟子們，  
為了保全師顏面。

*Practicing thus, “awakening” like this –  
confused teacher and student, unknowing what’s amiss.  
Treating Buddhadharma like a favor still,  
generations of transmission are equal to nil.  
Having gained the Dharma and new identity,  
he’s off to flaunt expedients, oh so skillfully.  
With all his might, luring students to his place,  
for the sake of preserving his “Master” face.*

是功夫，自以為，  
已證無我開智慧，  
行住坐臥一切時，  
似無罣礙不修持。  
如此知，如此見，  
無法反省其妄念，  
無能修證真實法，  
不知所成均是假。

*This kind of skill that he’s acquired,  
he thinks it’s selfless wisdom inspired.  
Whether sitting still or on the move,  
seems nothing’s in mind; no need to improve.  
With such a viewpoint, in this he is caught,  
unable to reflect on his delusive thoughts,  
unable to realize true reality,  
that all he’s achieved is merely deceit.*

因緣生，因緣滅，  
一旦遭遇逆境界，  
手忙腳亂全失控，  
心生疑惑並空洞。  
功夫散，誤境破，  
信心失盡念低落，  
放棄修行不信佛，  
另謀它法求解脫。

*Causes and conditions arise and fall,  
in time he meets with a brick wall.  
He’s at a loss and out of control,  
doubtful he’s achieved anything at all.  
His skills are lost; “unlightenment” shattered.  
His mind depressed and his confidence battered.  
Giving up on practice and faith in the Way,  
he goes far astray seeking means to be saved.*

大眾聽，並留意，  
速式參禪有危機，  
非但不能迅開悟，  
且成斷絕善根故。  
依法修，有漸次，  
決定三學恆支持，  
待至因緣成熟時，  
即能頓悟獲真實。

*Please listen, my friends, and remember this:  
fast-food zen is dangerous!  
Not only will you not quickly gain good fruits,  
but you’ll end up severing your wholesome roots.  
In accord with the teachings, making gradual earnings,  
resolve to always uphold the Dharma’s three learnings.  
When causes and conditions ripen naturally,  
you’ll realize the truth and suddenly see.*

# The Past

from CMC, DDRC and DDMBA worldwide

## Passing on the Lamp of Wisdom: 2015

SINCE HIS PASSING IN 2009, every year in February we gather to commemorate Chan Master Sheng Yen's (Shifu's) life and teachings. This year we gathered on February 15<sup>th</sup> for the Passing on the Lamp of Wisdom ceremony and a one-day retreat. The one-day retreat was broken into four segments: Morning practice, lunch practice, afternoon practice, and then the

Passing on the Lamp of Wisdom ceremony. Each practice segment consisted of an introduction to the methods and principles of meditation, the practice of eight-form moving meditation (yoga), and sitting meditation. The sitting periods alternated with mindful yoga to relax the body. Two videos were played of Shifu giving a Dharma talk.



The Passing on the Lamp of Wisdom ceremony Photo: DDMBA San Francisco

The main question of the first video was “How to Practice?” and Shifu’s answer was to be “relaxed, natural, and clear.” This means, before we apply methods of practice, we should have a relaxed body, natural breathing, and a clear mind. Only then should we apply our method of practice. Even experienced practitioners have to go through this process. Venerable Chang Hui gave an example of this from her experience in a forty-nine day retreat, where the first seven days were focused on just relaxing the body. In the second video, Shifu explained “When and Where to Practice.” The idea was to extend the mindset of “practice” to all avenues of daily life beyond sitting meditation and the Chan Center. Whether brushing your teeth, opening your car door, walking to your office, the first bite of a meal, everything can be considered “practice” if done with awareness and clarity of mind.

The day’s last event was the Passing of the Lamp of Wisdom ceremony. Each person transmitted a candle flame to the person next to them until all the participants in the room held a lit candle. One lamp lit another and at the end, we all shared in the light of the flames. We then each made a vow, raised our lamps, and offered them back. This was meant to signify how each of us had a role to play in propagating and keeping the lamp of wisdom alive. Our flame was received from someone else, likewise we give our flame to others, and as a result, we light the whole world with these flames of wisdom. We receive and we give, our vows are then communal, achieved, and shared, bettering the self and thereby bettering the whole. The event was concluded with every participant receiving a copy of a new book, volume two of Shifu’s *Zen & Inner Peace*. This great event would not have been possible without the help of all the volunteers, the participants, and Venerable Chang Hui. ☺

by Ken Zhang, DDMBA San Francisco

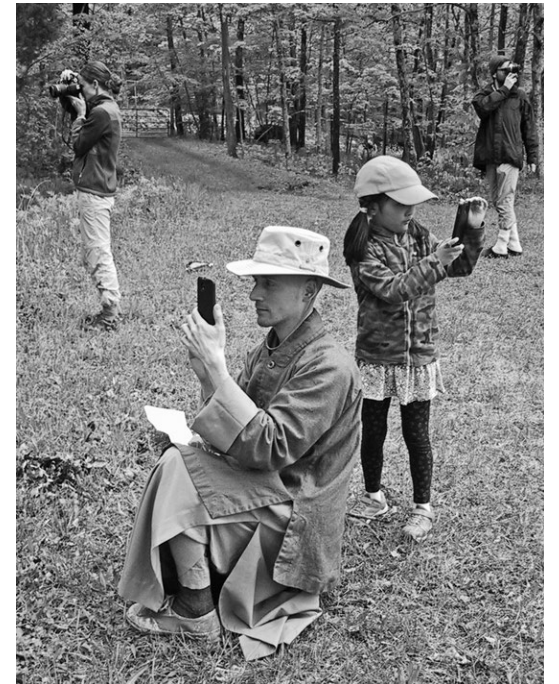


Photo by Buffe Maggie Laffey

## Photo Mind: 2015

DDRC held its second Photo Mind event in May. This workshop utilizes photography as a tool to understand, train, and awaken the mind. The stages of training the mind are reflected in the flow of activities for the day, going from a scattered, to a more concentrated mind. The techniques include sitting, walking, and moving meditation. Visual awareness exercises, including direct contemplation, are applied to develop skill in viewing through the camera. Through the process of exploring sensation and perception, one discovers habits, lets them go, then engages with them again in a free, open, and receptive way. The workshop was led by Taylor Mitchell and Lan Xu, assisted by Venerable Chang Wen. ☺

by Buffe Maggie Laffey

# The Future

Calendar of retreats,  
classes and other  
upcoming events

Schedule is subject to  
change. Please check  
websites for updated and  
detailed information.

## Zen & Inner Peace

Chan Master Sheng Yen's  
weekly television program  
Now on ICN Cable  
Channel 24.2 in NY  
Fridays 6:45 PM – 7:00 PM



| <b>Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC) in Pine Bush, NY</b><br>(845) 744-8114 · ddrcc@dharmadrumretreat.org · www.dharmadrumretreat.org |           |   |
|---|-----------|---|
| REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES   |           |   |
| Thursday Evening Meditation   | 7 PM–9 PM | Sitting, walking, moving meditation, Dharma talk. |
| RETREATS (register online)  |           |   |
| Day of Stillness & Children's Program   | Jul 11    | Saturday 9 AM–5 PM<br>Venerable Chang Xiang       |
|   | Sep 12    | Little Bodhisattvas Team                          |
| Essentials of Chan Intensive Retreat  | Jul 17–26 | Venerable Chi Chern                               |
| Foundation Retreat  | Aug 21–23 | Rebecca Li  |
| Beginner's Mind Retreat   | Sep 18–20 | Rebecca Li  |
| CLASSES & WORKSHOPS (register online)   |           |   |
| Beginner's Meditation Class   | Aug 15    | DDRC Monastics                                    |
| SPECIAL EVENTS (register online)  |           |   |
| Meditation in the Mountains   | Sep 5     | DDRC Residents                                    |

## Chan Meditation Center (CMC) in Elmhurst, Queens, NY

(718) 592-6593 · chancenter@gmail.com · www.chancenter.org · www.ddmba.org

| SUNDAY OPEN HOUSE   |                                     |  |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Every Sunday  | 10:00 AM–11:00 AM                   | Sitting Meditation                                     |
|   | 11:00 AM–12:30 PM                   | Dharma Talk  |
|   | 12:30 PM– 1:00 PM                   | Food Offering and Announcements                        |
|   | 1:00 PM– 1:45 PM                    | Vegetarian Lunch                                       |
| Chanting and Recitation   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday 2:00–3:30 PM | Guan Yin (Avalokitesvara) Bodhisattva Chanting Service |
|   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday 2:00–4:00 PM | Great Compassion Repentance Ceremony Dharani Sutra     |
|   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday 2:00–4:00 PM | Earth Store Bodhisattva Sutra Chanting Service         |
|   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday 2:00–3:30 PM | Guan Yin (Avalokitesvara) Bodhisattva Chanting Service |
| <i>(If there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month, there will be a Guan Yin Chanting Service.)</i> |                                     |  |

| REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES   |                 |   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Monday Night Chanting       | 7:30 PM–9:15 PM | Bodhisattva Precept Recitation Ritual<br>Every last Monday of each month                      |
| Tuesday Night Sitting Group | 7:00 PM–9:30 PM | Sitting, yoga exercises, walking meditation,<br>Dharma sharing, recitation of the Heart Sutra |
| Saturday Sitting Group      | 9:00 AM–3:00 PM | Sitting, yoga exercises, video teachings by Master Sheng Yen                                  |

| RETREATS (Pre-registration advised)                      |                          |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| 1-Day Retreat  | Jul 25 · Aug 29 · Sep 26 | Saturday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  |
| 5-Day Buddha's Name Recitation<br>Chan Retreat (at DDRC) | Sep 4–9                  | Apply chanting as a method of meditation.<br>Download application form at <a href="http://www.chancenter.org">www.chancenter.org</a><br>Please submit application by Aug 20 |

| CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS (Pre-registration advised) |                                   |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Taijiquan with David Ngo                         | Every Thursday<br>7:30 PM–9:00 PM | \$25 per 4-week month — \$80 for 16 classes<br>First class is free for newcomers                 |
| Sunday Afternoon Movies                          | Sep 20<br>2:00 PM–5:00 PM         | Film Viewing and Discussion Led by Dr. Peter Lin<br>Check website for film title and description |

| SPECIAL EVENTS                |         |   |
|-------------------------------|---------|---|
| Family Chan Camp<br>(at DDRC) | Aug 4–9 | "Chan in Daily Life" workshop, tea ceremony, mindful games, field trip, and more.<br>Download application form at <a href="http://www.chancenter.org">www.chancenter.org</a><br>Please submit application by Jul 20 |

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| <b>Chan Meditation Center (CMC)</b>   |  |                            |                                     |
| Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association (DDMBA) America<br>Dharma Drum Publications |  |                            |                                     |
| 90-56 Corona Avenue<br>Elmhurst, NY 11373   | (718) 592-6593<br>(718) 592-0717 (Fax) | ddmbausa@yahoo.com         | www.chancenter.org<br>www.ddmba.org |
| <b>Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC)</b>  |  |                            |                                     |
| 184 Quannacut Road<br>Pine Bush, NY 12566   | (845) 744-8114<br>(845) 744-8483 (Fax) | ddrc@dharmadrumretreat.org | www.dharmadrumretreat.org           |

| TAIWAN – WORLD HEADQUARTERS                                     |  |                      |                        |
|---|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Dharma Drum Mountain World Center for Buddhist Education</b> |  |                      |                        |
| No. 555, Fagu Rd.<br>Jinshan Dist.<br>New Taipei 20842          | 02-2498-7171<br>02-2498-7174<br>02-2498-9029 (Fax) | webmaster@ddm.org.tw | www.ddm.org.tw         |
| <b>Dharma Drum International Meditation Group</b>               |  |                      |                        |
| John Wu   | 0975-329-621                                       | img.ddm@gmail.com    | www.dharmadrum.org/img |
| <b>Nung Chan Monastery</b>                                      |  |                      |                        |
| No. 89, Ln. 65, Daye Rd.<br>Beitou Dist.<br>Taipei 11268        | 02-2893-3161<br>02-2895-8969 (Fax)                 |                      | ncm.ddm.org.tw         |

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| <b>British Columbia</b> | Vancouver | (604) 277-1357                   | Mei-Hwei Lin<br>info@ddmba.ca<br>www.ddmba.ca                        |
| NORTH AMERICA – MEXICO  |           |                                  |  |
| <b>Nayarit</b>          | Chacala   | (800) 257-0532<br>(800) 505-8005 | Dr. Laura del Valle<br>info@mardejade.com<br>www.mardejade.com       |

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| <b>Vermont</b>                | Burlington       | (802) 658-3413 | Jui-chu Lee    | juichulee@yahoo.com<br>www.ddmbavt.org                |
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| <b>Washington</b>             | DC               | (240) 424-5486 | Jack Chang     | chan@ddmbadc.org                                      |

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|                  | Sydney           | (61-4) 1318-5603<br>(61-2) 9283-3168 (Fax)                     | Agnes Chow                        | ddmsydney@yahoo.com.au<br>www.ddm.org.au                             |
| Hong Kong        | Kowloon          | (852) 2865-3110<br>(852) 2295-6623<br>(852) 2591-4810 (Fax)    | E-Kwang Lin                       | info@ddmhk.org.hk<br>www.ddmhk.org.hk                                |
| Malaysia         | Selangor         | (60-3) 7960-0841<br>(60-3) 7960-0842 (Fax)                     | Yeh-Mei Lin                       | ddmmalaysia@gmail.com<br>www.ddm.org.my                              |
| Singapore        | Singapore        | (65) 6735-5900<br>(65) 6224-2655 (Fax)                         | Shi Yi Xie                        | ddrumsingapore@gmail.com<br>www.ddsingapore.org                      |
| Thailand         | Bangkok          | (662) 713-7815<br>(662) 713-7816<br>(662) 713-7638 (Fax)       | Pornpip<br>Chupinijsak            | ddmbkk2005@gmail.com<br>www.ddmth.com                                |
| EUROPE           |                  |  |                                   |  |
| Belgium          | Luxemburg        | (352) 400-080<br>(352) 290-311 (Fax)                           | Li-chuan lin                      | ddm@chan.lu  |
| Croatia          | Zagreb           | (385) 1-481 00 74  | Dharmaaloka<br>Buddhist<br>Center | info@dharmaloka.org<br>www.dharmaloka.org<br>www.chan.hr             |
| Poland           | Zalesie<br>Górne | (48) 22-736-2252<br>(48) 60-122-4999<br>(48) 22-736-2251 (Fax) | Zwiazek<br>Buddystow<br>Czan      | budwod@budwod.com.pl<br>www.czan.org.pl<br>www.czan.eu               |
| Switzerland      | Zurich           | (41) 382-1676  | Max Kailin                        | MaxKailin@chan.ch<br>www.chan.ch                                     |
|                  | Bern             | (31) 352-2243  | Hildi Thalman                     | hthalmann@gmx.net<br>www.chan-bern.ch                                |
| United Kingdom   | Bury             | (44) 193-484-2017  | Western<br>Chan<br>Fellowship     | secretary@westernchanfellowship.org<br>www.westernchanfellowship.org |
|                  | London           |  | Joanne Dyson                      | liew853@btinternet.com<br>www.chanmeditationlondon.org               |

## Chan Meditation Retreats

Led by Dharma Heirs of Chan Master Sheng Yen

### 10-Day *Shattering the Great Doubt*

Led by Simon Child • 31 July – 9 August 2015

Hourne Farm near Crowborough in East Sussex, SE England, UK

CONTACT admin@westernchanfellowship.org • www.westernchanfellowship.org



### 21-Day *Intensive Chan*

Led by Chi Chern Fashi • 1 – 22 August 2015

Dluzew, Poland

CONTACT Pawel Rosciszewski • budwod@budwod.com.pl • +48 601224999 • www.czan.eu



### 10-Day *Silent Illumination*

Led by Simon Child • 11 – 20 September 2015

Maenllwyd Retreat Centre, Wales, UK

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