

Brother Teoh's 10 Mar 2020 Tuesday Class Outline Short Notes

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Tue-200310.mp3>

Whiteboard : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Tue-200310.jpeg>

A. Book Reference: Heart Sutra Short Notes – 2nd Edition (8 March 2020)

1. Announcement of this year's Cameron Highlands annual Meditation retreat postponement (likely to Jul 2020), after receiving a very nicely and respectfully worded advice from the Sam Poh temple's 'Tang Chia' as to their sangha's concern regarding the recent spread of covid-19 situation. Out of respect and understanding, Bro Teoh immediately conform and agreed to the postponement, as we are using their way place to hold our retreat.
2. If we **can perceive** every **situation** or **event** that **arise** without **any negativity of mind states**, then we can **be at peace to confront them** with understanding instead of **panicking** and allowing the **fear, worry** and **anxiety** to affect and at times paralyse us. This can only be done if we have the **wisdom** to understand the **causes** and **conditions behind**, then **accord and flow** with **circumstances** and whatever that **unfold** (arise) after that.
3. If we can view it with **understanding**, then it can **turn out** to be a **blessing in disguise**. Just like in this **case**, it can enable me to teach the Heart Sutra 2nd edition's teaching prior to the commencement of the coming annual retreat so that Kalyanamittas can be ready with the **understanding** of the teaching before they attend the retreat.

B. Book Reference: The Buddha and His Teachings by Narada (Chapter 44 – The Problems of Life, Page 659).

1. **The author** suggested the following **Self-knowledge** inquiries:
 - a. What is this human being all about? Is it really me?
 - b. Who am I? What am I?
 - c. What am I doing on this planet, Earth? I am so insignificant. (The universe is so immense, still expanding with no end in sight; every star is a potential sun like ours)
2. Bro Teoh shares his experience of such inquiries and searching when he was young (at the age of 17).
3. Understanding the **1st noble truth's 8 realities** of human life (the realities of life and existence):
 - a. The reality surrounding **birth**;
 - b. The reality surrounding **aging** (growing old with deterioration of physical and mental functions);
 - c. Confronting the reality of **sickness** (physical and mental) and disease;
 - d. Confronting the reality of **death**;
 - e. Confronting **separation** from prized possessions and loved ones;
 - f. When **we are being with people we dislike**;
 - g. When our **expectations in life** are **not met/can't get what we want in life/things don't go our way**),
 - h. The **5 grasping aggregates** of form and mind are dukkha (suffering).
4. **5 daily contemplations**:
 - a. This body of mine is of the nature to decay and grow old, for it has not gone beyond old age.
 - b. This body of mine is of the nature to be diseased or get sick, for it has not gone beyond disease.
 - c. This body of mine is of the nature to die, for it has not gone beyond death.
 - d. Our loved ones, wealth, properties and prized possessions will one day separate from us (or us from them, when our breathe stops).
 - e. We are all born of our karma, heir to our karma, conditioned and supported by our karma, and we are what we are because of our karma. This is the great Law of Karma.

5. 4 broad interrelated elements of the human form (simplified definition):
 - a. Wind element or Vayo (motion/movement)
 - b. Earth element or Pathavi (solidity)
 - c. Water element or Apo (liquid/cohesion) & d. the Fire element or Tejo (heat)

6. Matter is **trapped or unreleased energy** (consists of forces which are trapped in a solid state). Einstein's famous equation on $E = mc^2$ - means "Energy equals (mass) times (c, the speed of light) squared.

7. Our Mind can be both a constructive and destructive powerful force (double edged tool). If **the user of thoughts** or the **Mundane mind** is deluded, then mind will become **evil or destructive**. On the other hand, if it is **wise** then mind become **wholesome and constructive**. Hence the **user of thought** is most important.

8. **Dhammapada verse 1**: Mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is chief. When mind arise, everything arises. If one speaks, acts and thinks with a wicked/unwholesome mind (that has the 3 evil roots of greed, hatred, and delusion), then suffering will follow one like the wheel that follows the hoof of the cart.

9. 3 conditions are required to sustain life (the karmically conditioned vehicle/tool), 5 aggregates of form & mind:
 - a. A Physical body (rupa or form)
 - b. A Mind / Consciousness (nama)
 - c. The Life force (karmic force) to pump the heart, to give rise to the pulse of life.

10. We are introduced and subject to **all kinds of conditioning** as we go through our **life experiences** (via interaction with the media, society, religions, traditions, educations, races and belief systems etc.) and through these **accumulation** of memories (of both good and bad) we evolved our **views** and **opinions** of things, **belief system** and **conditioning** to become what we are. Thus, from **an initial single simple rebirth** consciousness (with karmic imprint) it evolves over the years of existence to becomes **a very complex consciousness** with its **bundle of memories** that moulded the individual.

11. Origin of human species – via a series of evolution. E.g. tracing the source of a river, there is no source per se, as the entire catchment area provides the water. Like the popularly asked question "What come first? - the chicken or egg come first?", it is not important because **everything is dependent originating, condition arising** (nature's conditions within the conditioned world). As per the Buddha's teaching, 'Whatever that arise, there are causes and conditions behind'. So that is the reality and it can never be otherwise. This is wisdom. If you want things your way which is not nature's way or following nature's existing conditions, then suffering will follow you when you cannot get what you want.

(Above outline short notes draft was prepared by Sis Soo Yee)