



# EMPTINESS

**Transcript** of the Dhamma talk  
Delivered by Brother Teoh Kian Koon  
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For free distribution (to **non-Muslims** only)

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# 1 Preface

It is Brother Teoh's **sincere** hope that Dhamma friends, spiritual practitioners, seekers of truth and cultivators are able **to make use** of these enclosed **transcript notes** to develop **a better understanding** of the **Dhamma as taught** by the Buddha so that they may **progress along the path of Dhamma** to become more **virtuous, noble** and **wiser** human beings who can be a **blessing** to all of humanity and mankind.

As these notes were mostly **compiled** based on a **transcript** from the recording of the talk, the text is aligned as closely as possible to the **colloquial speech** in the talk **with some editorial amendments to the text without detracting** from the **essence** of the talk. With this, it is hoped that readers can **adjust** themselves accordingly to better understand its **true meaning** and **intent**. A **good** way to do this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading the transcript notes. To listen to the recording you can download the talk at this link: **Emptiness.MP3'**:

<http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Teoh-Klang-141003-Emptiness.mp3>

Or contact Brother Ng Swee Aun at [sang47500@yahoo.com](mailto:sang47500@yahoo.com) for further details.

## 1.1 Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intention** that these transcript notes be **given free** to all those who are **interested** and have the **affinity** to receive them. I would like to take this opportunity **to thank** and **rejoice** in the **generosity** and **wholesomeness** of all those **Dhamma friends** or **Kalyanamittas** who had donated and helped in the **transcription, typing, typesetting, formatting, proof reading, etc** to make this **distribution** of dhamma dana possible.

Special thanks to **Sister Padmasuri Liew Swee Lian** for her **initiative** to **transcribe the talk** for my **subsequent editing** thereby enabling this Dhamma book to be printed for free distribution. Thanks also to the editorial and publishing team for improving the **accuracy** of the **flow** and **quality** of the **transcript notes** and the **presentation**.

By the **power of all these wholesomeness** may all beings be **well** and **happy, free** from all mental and physical sufferings and dangers and may there be **love, peace** and **joy** deep **within** their hearts. May it also **pave the way** for there to be **causes** and **conditions** for all dhamma friends who had **donated** or **helped** in one way or other to realize their **good and noble wishes/aspirations** soonest possible.

With metta always,  
Brother Teoh Kian Koon  
(Dated: 18 June 2015)

## 2 Emptiness - Dhamma talk proper

### 2.1 Pre-Pūja and Introduction by Brother Teh

**Brother Teh:** Brothers and Sisters in the Dhamma, let us start with the pūja while waiting for Brother Teoh to finish writing on the white board.

#### **Salutation to Lord Buddha:-**

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa **(3X)**

(Homage to thee the blessed one, the worthy one and the fully enlightened one.

**(3x)**

#### **Taking of the three refuges:-**

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Tatiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

#### **Taking of the 5 precepts:-**

Pānātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;

Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;

Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;

Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;

Surā-meraya-majja-pamā daṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.

**Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!** (Rejoicing)

**Brother Teh:** Good evening, brothers and sisters in the Dhamma and welcome Brother Teoh and friends. Thank you for your compassion

to come down here again to share with us your dhamma knowledge. It's very heartening to see you all beaming with happiness and joy to come and listen to this Dhamma talk. Tonight's Dhamma topic is on 'EMPTINESS'. This word '**Emptiness**' is **much discussed** and mentioned in the Mahāyāna tradition, but in the Theravāda tradition, I think the word used is '**voidness**'. So, either word can be used if we understand their meaning. However people may ask what do you mean by Emptiness? What do you mean by saying – 'The **five aggregates** of form and mind **are empty** and non-existent' as mentioned in the Heart Sutra of the Mahāyāna teaching. In that Sutra it was stated that 'while Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara was practicing the profound Prajna Pāramittā (which is the perfection of wisdom), **he illuminated the five skandhas** and **realised** that they **were all empty and non-existent**'. So what do we mean or what did the Buddha mean by these words '**empty**' and '**non-existent**'? If they are non-existent then how can the five aggregates arise? Anyway, I will leave it to Brother Teoh to explain to us and surely we will be able **to benefit** from his knowledge. Brother Teoh, please.

## **2.2 Dhamma talk by Brother Teoh**

Thank you so much Brother Teh for the kind introduction.

Before we start, I want to make one correction. When Brother Teh mentioned, 'while Avalokiteshvara or Kuan Yin (or Guanyin) Bodhisattva was reciting the Heart Sutta.....' Something is wrong



with the microphone, is it because the power was not on? The connection up there may have some problems .... (Interruption)

Sorry for the interruption. Hopefully all these can be **resolved**. Do you know what is happening? Today, if you **cannot accord and flow** with what happened, your mind will be affected. We arrived just in time for the talk. We were actually a few minutes early. So I told Brother Gan, we are very lucky and we still have some time because it was only about 8:26 pm when we arrived. So, I thought we can come up, before 8:30 pm, gather everybody together and start the Dhamma sharing at 8.30pm sharp. But then somebody told me, the monks have yet to finish their chanting. I told them it is okay, we will listen to the chanting first.

Looks like the microphone is okay already, 'testing... testing...' alright, very good. Thank you, Brother Swee Aun. This is the reason why we need an electrical engineer, to be around to help look into all these.

If you have **patience** and **understanding**, you can **accord and flow**, then nothing will go wrong. But if you **react** and **get angry**, then it is not just the microphone and the system, it is **nature's law hitting back**. So we need to accept whatever happened because **everything is just the way it is**. You cannot go against '**what IS**' which is the **reality**.

Just now I wanted to clarify one thing Brother Teh said in his introduction. He said, 'While Kuan Yin (or Guanyin) Bodhisattva was cultivating the Prajna Pāramittā'. You understand what prajna is, don't you? Prajna means wisdom, in Sanskrit. In Pāḷi it is Paññā and Pāramittā is perfection. So, this is the Sutta on the perfection of wisdom and also the reason why this is the cultivation that can lead to the **highest wisdom**. According to the Sutta, all Sammā Sambuddha of the three periods of time will have to cultivate this Prajna Pāramittā to become a Sammā Sambuddha. Hence you see how profound the teaching is.

It says, while He was cultivating this Prajna Pāramittā, He **illuminated** the five skandhas, - He didn't use candle light or torch light to illuminate and shine. Do you know what that light was? What was that light? It is '**Wisdom light**' borne of the **direct seeing** via the **silent mind**. It was so clear. All of a sudden, when He illuminated them with that wisdom light, that **prajna energy**, that **nature was awakened** and He came to realize that the five aggregates of form and mind are all empty. Empty here, does not mean **non-existent** or **doesn't exist** like what Brother Teh mentioned. Empty here means: 'when you understand you don't take it to mean literally' - because the Buddha never said that there is no human being. The Buddha said these 5 aggregates of form and mind, which is the human being, is not you because it is condition arising – **karmically conditioned out** from your **karmic nature**. That human being is just that **segmented life** of that **particular birth** and

we call it the **1st aspect** of the 5 aggregates of form and mind. Then there is this 2<sup>nd</sup> aspect, which is the **5 mental** aggregates of form and mind. This one exists, but this one is **also not you**. This one is **impermanent, subject to suffering** and **it is non-self and empty** because it is **not a permanent unchanging entity** that you can cling on to, hold on to, grasp on to and say this is 'me', this is 'I' because all these are condition arising states.

The form is made up of elements only and **consciousness** cannot be destroyed. They are **not intrinsic because** they are **condition arising**. But because of **delusion** you cannot see. You mix up the two. You think they are **real**. That's why when Avalokitesvara (Guanyin) **illuminated the 5 skandhas (aggregates)** and **saw** that they are **all empty** of any **true essence** and **meaning**, **He crossed beyond** all **suffering** and **difficulty**.

Who gives it meaning? Who calls them the five aggregates? It is the **mundane mind**, the **thinking mind**. Not the **true mind**. The **true mind understands** it as 'what it is'. That's why they **never 'existed'** because to the **true mind** that has the wisdom that can see clearly, they are all **not you**. They are **not real** because they are **all condition arising phenomena**. This **understanding is very important**. So **emptiness** is not about taking the **word literally**, otherwise you will use your **mundane thinking** via your **rational mind** to interpret them. Then you will be **very confused** and you will **argue**. **Then** you cannot come to terms with each other. You cannot even accept

Mahāyāna teachings because you are **so conditioned** by your **rational mind**. That is why I wrote to ask Brother Gan, ‘What made you choose this topic? Can you give me the rationale behind?’

He explained, ‘Brother Teoh, we are mostly Theravādins. We always hear of the five aggregates and the three universal characteristics of impermanence, suffering state and non-self (aniccaṃ, dukkhaṃ, anattā), but we never heard of Emptiness’. The concept of Emptiness to you is like it cannot be. There is no such teaching, definitely not in the Tipitaka. Then I said to him, ‘I think I know why you requested this topic’. It is because he wants to help others understand and he hopes I can clarify this so that whether you are from the Theravāda or from the Mahāyāna tradition, there is no further problems/confusion because they all point to the same Dhamma.

Now I will explain to you why the Mahāyāna tradition uses this word. In fact, the Theravāda tradition also has a similar word usage. Can you see what is written on the whiteboard? What is the Pāli word? Ah, ‘**Suññatā**’ and this word is in your Theravāda teachings. What is ‘**Suññatā**’? Of course he said ‘**voidness**’. What does void means? Without anything, empty. But what is **empty according to you** may **not be empty according to the scientist**. Is that not the case? Let us say you have an empty vessel. We call it an empty pot. Do you think it is empty? No! Why is that so? Because the scientist knows that there is air. For we live on a planet where there is atmosphere.

Atmosphere means what? Ah, there is air. That's why the scientist can even break it down into how many percent is oxygen, nitrogen etc. Let me try to test your physics and chemistry understanding. How many percent is nitrogen? 80%. Yes! Almost 80% because there is 20% of oxygen and the rest are rare gasses - about 1%. So, nitrogen is the bulk of it. Do you know why? It is because nitrogen is non-combustible. Without this 70 over to 80 percent of nitrogen, the planet will be set on fire, because the oxygen level will not be contained at the 20% level. Moreover, do you know we are subject to our planet's gravity? That is why when you extract air out of the container, a vacuum is created and the external pressure will exert a force onto the container. I remember during the early secondary school years, my teacher asked us to do this experiment. We heat up the container filled with some water until the steam comes out. Then we lock it. When it condenses back, there is no more steam inside. It was practically a vacuum. Then you see how the container gets **crushed** by the external atmospheric pressure built up.

So what appears to you as empty is relative. To you it is an empty container or an empty pot. But to the scientist, there is something inside. So 'emptiness' or that word, 'empty' has been used to convey a certain meaning that you cannot take for granted. If you take it literally, you will argue and comment as to what sort of teaching that is. The Heart Sutta states, 'Form does not differ from emptiness, and emptiness does not differ from form, for form itself is emptiness and emptiness itself is form'. If you use your **logical or**

**rational mind** you surely cannot come to an agreement. Then you will doubt and question, 'This cannot be. What sort of teaching is this?' Everything is so solid and so real yet you say it is empty and not real. Then why do we want to live life? If everything is empty, what reason is there for living life? For example, if you think your money is also empty, not real, then give it to me! I will use it. It does not mean that there is no money - empty. The meaning is very deep. It all depends on your understanding and your seeing. If you cannot develop the right understanding to see it clearly, then this word has no meaning for you. But when you had developed the wisdom and the understanding, you will have that **wisdom light** to illuminate clearly and insight into **reality**. Then you will come to realize that what the Buddha had taught in the Theravāda and the Mahāyāna teachings are in fact exactly the same.

### **2.3 The four ultimate Dhammas of nature**

According to the Buddha, the whole of our universe is just a **phenomena world** of **consciousness** and each and every phenomenon (not only our five aggregates of form and mind - the first aspect as a human being and the second aspect as the five mental aggregates) are **all impermanent, leading to suffering and empty**, just like what I had shared with you all at my last dhamma talk here. Can you all remember? Under Abhidhamma, there are four types of ultimate Dhammas or Paramattha Dhammas. What are they? The first ultimate dhamma is '**Rūpa**'. The second one is '**Citta**'

and the third one is 'Cetasika'. All these 3 are within the **conditioned world**. These three are actually your **5 mental aggregates of form and mind**. Rūpa is form. Citta is mind. Cetasika is the **content of consciousness**. The Buddha said these are the 3 ultimates of the universe, within the **conditioned world** because from this form and mind, everything arises. **Nothing is apart from this**. That is why the Buddha said if you understand that these five **mental aggregates of form and mind** (which are your nama rūpa or citta and its content) are mind made and the forerunner of all things then you will not be deluded by them. Citta without its content is viññāṇa. You will then come to understand that the world is only a **phenomena world of consciousness** and they all (5 aggregates of form and mind) exhibit the same **universal** characteristics of **impermanence**, leading to **suffering** when you **deludedly grasp and cling** onto it. They are all **condition arising, causal phenomena, not a permanent unchanging entity** that you can cling onto, hold onto and grasp onto and say this is 'me', this is 'I', therefore all these can be 'mine'; hence its **Anattā or non-self** nature. That is why it is non-self because it is impermanent, leading to suffering when you want things your way which is **not** nature's way. Because ultimately, it is **all empty**, just a **phenomena world of consciousness**, coming and going, arising and passing away. The fourth ultimate is 'Nibbāna' which belongs to the **unconditioned**, the **supra mundane**.

## 2.4 Anattā and self delusion

**Anattā** has two meanings; **non-self is only a small aspect of Anattā**. That is why the Buddha, when he taught the Sutta, asked the monks to chant, '**Rūpaṃ Aniccaṃ, then Rūpaṃ Anattā**'. What is the meaning? Form is Anicca. What does that mean? Yes, 'Impermanent'. Then what is Anattā? If you say 'non-self', what does that mean? Wah, Form is non-self? Then how about this table, is it also non-self? How can it be because this table is just element, it doesn't have life. Then why do you want to identify it with self and non-self? Self and non-self is when it is, as a human being, the first aspect of the five aggregates of the form and mind. If you deludedly cling on to this form and mind as 'self' then you have **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** or **self-delusion** because this is not you. There is no 'atta' there. Can you understand? Oh, no answer means what? You all cannot understand? Maybe this is too profound. Never mind, eventually, you will understand.

When you **do not meditate** and when you **do not have the silent mind** to see it clearly, you will **tend to believe** that this human being is you. You will ask, 'How can you say it is not me? I have been using it for the last so many years. I can feel. When I want to jump, I can. When I want to laugh, I also can'. That is because you all have already experienced life and this form and mind have been following you for so long. When you are born, you are given a name. You are so conditioned by the name because you use that name to identify



yourself all the time. Is that not the case? Every time you act with this form and mind. You say, 'I see, I think, I hear, I feel, and therefore I am'. It is like 'you' are real and you really existing. But if you meditate and contemplate, you will come to a **different** understanding. You will get a shock of your life when you come to realize that this so call human being **was never you!** It is only a **bundle of memories** with its **conditioning**, following nature's law, going the way of nature. If I have time, I will explain this further. Those who have been attending my classes they will understand because it is very simple. But I do not have that luxury of time today because the condition is such - we started late and we have to cover many other areas.

## 2.5 Ani Sutta (Āṇisuttaṃ)

I will now share with you the **Ani Sutta**. Anybody heard of this Ani Sutta? Actually, during his time, the Buddha spoke this Sutta. I only came to know about this Sutta a week ago when I noticed a **Face book** posting by Brother Yu Ban, a **Dhamma friend** from BUBS. I thought it was **interesting**. How is it that there is such a Sutta which I have not come across previously? I thought to myself that it was indeed **coincidental** and **timely** because the following week I will be delivering this talk on **Emptiness!**

Last week Brother Teh had mentioned, he is afraid when you all see the title of the talk you may not turn up for the talk because it is as if

**everything is empty** and thus what is the point of listening to the talk? **In order to generate faith**, this **Sutta** seems to have **suddenly surfaced** just at the **right time** for this talk. I printed it out from the internet. It should help you a lot. In this Sutta, the Buddha said that during the Dhamma ending age, the **Dhamma will disappear** when people **do not believe** the **true words of the Buddha** especially so when this **topic on Emptiness or Suññatā** is being taught as the **profound deep teaching**. I will read from the Sutta so that you can better understand.

**Ani Sutta:** Staying at Savatthi, the Buddha told the monks, “monks, there once were a time (meaning in ancient time), the Dhasarahas, they had a large drum, call the Summoner. Every time when they want to summon or call its people to meet, to discuss certain matter, they would use this drum”. They call it the Summoner. When Summoner was split, do you know what they would do? The Dhasarahas would insert another peg into the drum and eventually, over time the Summoner's original wooden body disappeared and only a **conglomeration of pegs** remained. Why? That is because so many pegs had been inserted. So too it is with disagreements amongst people. When there are too many disagreements, like what is happening now, see what happens!

Just like the Summoner, the Theravāda tradition itself is also divided into many factions such as by **methods, techniques, teachers, interpretations, commentaries** etc. During the Buddha's time,

there was only one teacher and one teaching. Now, it is not so because later came Mahāyāna, then Vajrayāna, and both these traditions also divide into so many more factions. Now you understand how the many pegs went in until the drum was no more.

The Buddha said, **‘In the same way in the course of time in the future, there will be monks who will not listen when the discourse which are words of the Tathāgata, very deep in their meaning, transcendental (the word transcendental means transcending the thinking mind, the mundane mind, the rational mind, the condition arising mind), connected with emptiness or Suññatā are being recited. They will not lend their ears, they will not set their hearts on knowing them; they will not regard this teaching as worth grasping or mastering. But when they listen to discourse that are literary works, the work of famous poets, elegant in sound and elegant in rhetoric, the word of outsiders, the words of so called disciples that are recited, they will lend their ears and set their hearts on knowing them. They will regard this teaching as worthy, worth grasping and mastering. In this way the disappearance of the discourses which are words of the Tathāgata, very deep in their meaning, transcendental, connected with suññatā or emptiness will come to be’.**

Isn't this pitiful? Just because you **do not have an open mind** all these misunderstandings can arise. Why can't you have **an open mind and listen**? If you cannot understand, then **just let things be.**

But when the time comes when you can understand, you will appreciate the **deep profound** meaning. You should have an **open mind** and **investigate** into everything. If that teaching **can transform** living beings and **bring** about **great benefits** and **transformation** in you and what you are doing has actually made you **stagnate** and **remain the same**, then **why must** you **doubt?** Why can't you just **give yourself a chance?** It is not to say you give others a chance. It is to **you**, yourself because your **own karma**, your **karmic nature**, depends on this understanding. If it happens to be the truth, then what happens? You will miss it. Do understand that you have **nothing to lose** by having an **open mind** to **investigate** into it. If you cannot understand this, then very difficult to make you understand the Dhamma because the actual Dhamma is a lot more profound.

Now I will zero in on the true understanding. We just talked about emptiness - Empty of what? That is a relative statement. If you are a scientist, you will say the environment is not empty because there is air. This can lead us into **unnecessary argument** and **debate**. But when it comes to the true teaching, **emptiness** is an **understanding**. There is nothing for us to debate about as life is like that. Let us take the **human being as a very good example**. Brother Gan said the Theravādans always talk about **the five aggregates of form and mind**. The Buddha also always refers to them **as impermanent**, bringing about **suffering; ultimately** they are **non-self** and **empty**. But the **empty nature** of existence is what the Buddha meant under his Anattālakkhana Sutta teaching. That is why he taught, “Rūpaṃ

anicam, rūpaṃ anattā”. It is impermanent because it is **condition arising**, a **causal** phenomenon. That is why it is **not** real. Because whatever that is condition arising is **never stable**. It will transform according to the **supporting** conditions. When the supporting condition ceases to be, the phenomenon will also cease to be. Then what do you say? You will say, ‘**Die**’. But when it is a sound, you do not say die. When I stop speaking, there is no more condition for your hearing consciousness to arise, and you never say ‘that sound dies’, but instead you say ‘that sound disappears’. When a human being’s heartbeat stops, you say he has died because there is **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** and because you think there is a person who has died. Actually, only the supporting conditions ceased to be. Just like sound - there is no difference. So, when you come to understand that, you will have an **entirely different understanding** altogether with **regard** to these five aggregates of form and mind.

## 2.6 Anattālakkhana Sutta

Firstly you must **investigate** into what the Buddha said in the Anattālakkhana Sutta. How many of you have heard of the Anattālakkhana Sutta on emptiness? Ah, very good, we have a few. The Anattālakkhana Sutta is very clear. The Buddha referred to ‘form’, the human form. If you look at it, can you say this is ‘me’, this is ‘self’? Because you believe this is you, you will ask, why not? What happens then? The Buddha said if you believe this is you, you will have a problem because the first noble truth very clearly points

toward that. The 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth final summary said that ‘In short, it is your **self-delusion** or **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** that conditions you to grasp and cling to these five aggregates of form and mind - the upadana khandhas that I call dukkha’. So if you think this is you, you will **worry** about this **physical body or form** getting **old, getting sick and die**; hence the **suffering**.

I will now read from the **Anattālakkhana Sutta**. The Buddha said very clearly, ‘This body is not self’. He said that to the five ascetics. Do you know why? After the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, he expounded this Sutta, and then all the five of them became Arahants. That is why this Anattālakkhana Sutta is very **penetrative**. So, please listen attentively and maybe some of you may become Arahants too. Really, it is possible, not difficult.

The Buddha said, ‘**Form is not self, physical body is not self, external form too is not self**’. Why? ‘**For if form were self, this form will not lead to suffering**’. Would you agree? **If it is really ‘you’, a permanent unchanging entity**, how can it be otherwise? You will then have complete control over what you want to do with the form, as it belongs to ‘you’ and it is ‘self’ - ‘you’. You can then say what you want. Such as, ‘May my body **not** get old, **not** get sick and die’. But you have gone through life, haven’t you? When that **physical form** wants to **get sick, it never** asks you for **permission**. Straight away it gives you problems and then you worry about it and panic. You quickly rush to the doctor who may give you some bad news.

Your face becomes ‘pucat’ (pale). So what is going on? It is mainly due to your self-delusion, attachment and sakkāya-diṭṭhi.

So, the Buddha said, “For if form were the ‘self’, this form **will not** lead to suffering, and it would be possible to obtain from this form the **fulfillment of one’s wish**, that it should be **thus and not otherwise**; but just because this form is **not self**, therefore it leads to suffering and it is not possible, and not within our power to obtain from form, that it should be thus and not otherwise”. Can you accept this statement of the Buddha? If you cannot even accept that, there is no need for you listen anymore. That is because form is the easiest to understand and you all have experience suffering, isn’t it?

If this form is you, you can tell this form what to do. ‘Hey, I control you. You are under my command. This is me and therefore I can do what I want’. But form goes the way of nature. What does that mean? It means it follows **nature’s law**. Even ‘**God**’ also has to **abide by nature’s laws**. Even ‘**God**’ also cannot prevent **911** from happening. During one of the interviews by **Larry King** after **911**, he commented, ‘It appears to me now there are two Gods, the **Islamic or Muslim God** and the **Christian God**. This round, the **Islamic God won**, because the Christian God, even though **almighty, cannot predict or stop 911 from happening**’. That will give you some understanding that **Gods are also subject to nature’s laws**. They have no power over nature’s laws. Everything follows nature’s laws,

so the **real God is nature's law**. When people say, '**God decides**', it means **nature's laws** decide. In this case it means the **law of Karma** decides. So by deduction, the **law of karma** is also God. If you want to know what the true God or the Almighty is, then we must inquire into nature and nature's laws that governs all of life and existence. **Nature's laws** are **also Almighty** because we are all **subject** to **nature's laws**. From nature you come, to nature you shall return. That is, from emptiness you come, and everything **returns to emptiness** as they are all condition arising, causal phenomena. When condition ceases to be, everything returns to the **original state**, the "**void**". That's why it is **empty**.

It is just like the Mandarin saying: “来也空，去也空，那么施主何必苦苦为空流泪?”

The meaning is **when you are born** into this **world** you came with **nothing**. That is **when you come**; you come **empty handed** and **naked**. Then when you **go**, **you** also cannot take **anything** along. So why do you **grieve** over **emptiness** in between? They will cremate you if you are lucky. If not they will bury you and you will rot, but because you have no more consciousness you will not know what is happening. Even when the termites, the bugs eat you, you also will not know. So is that you? At the time of asking, you will say, 'It cannot be me'. However before you die, you fear death, fear of this and that, and everything is like **so real**, and **you believe** this is **what you are**. **So this reality will show you clearly - if you come empty handed with nothing, you will also return to nature empty handed**



**with nothing.** Why then **in between** – in the midst of life you **fight**, become **so miserable** and **grief over emptiness**? This is another meaning of **emptiness**, anattā.

The Buddha continued, 'Feeling is the same; for if feeling is 'self', it will not lead to suffering. It **will not** lead to painful feelings, unhappy feelings, unpleasant feelings, and it will be within our power to obtain from feeling, the **fulfillment of one's wish**, that **it should be thus and not otherwise**. But just because feeling **is not 'self'**, it leads to suffering, and **it's not within our power** to obtain from feeling the fulfillment of our wish, that it should be thus and not otherwise'. The Buddha similarly repeated the same for the other aggregates of perception, sankhara and consciousness. After that the Buddha said, 'What do you think, Bhikkhus (now, I ask you)? Is the physical body permanent or impermanent?' Ah...impermanent. You can answer this quickly, because you can see yourself growing old, getting nearer and nearer to that final point. Then the Buddha asked, '**And that which is impermanent is it always blissful?** Or is it **subject to suffering** off and on?' It is **not** always blissful, is that not so?

When you are young, during your youth maybe you enjoy life. However, some may not be so fortunate, because karmically they maybe born with defects and are handicapped. But most of us have fairly good karma and we are born normal and healthy - not for long though because sooner or later, **old age** and **sickness** will **catch up**

with us. **This body will start to decay** and it will **start to fail**. The organs too will start to fail and many things may start to go wrong due to wear and tear and disease.

The Buddha continued, **“That which is impermanent, subject to suffering and change, is it right to consider it thus: this is ‘me’, this is ‘I’, and this can be ‘mine’?”** What do you think? Ultimately **when your breathe stops** what happens? You **cannot own** nor have anything because **even** this very **body**, you **cannot** take along with you. That’s why in the Dhammapada, the Buddha said, **‘My son, my wealth, my property, - all these only the fools lament, for that very body also does not belong to him, wherein son and wherein wealth’?** You cannot even own your own physical body, yet you want to own another person’s body and you also want to own all those wealth and properties. Understand that they are all **condition arising entities** or **phenomena**. When the conditions are there, **temporarily** it is as though **you** can **own** them. But when **condition ceases** to be, they will **be gone**.

Just like during the Iraq and Kuwait war. Do you remember? Iraq invaded Kuwait and ‘kicked’ out the Kuwaiti government. Overnight, the Kuwait government and the Kuwaiti people did not own anything anymore. Overnight, it was all gone. The **United Nations** together with the western powers and the United States then **declared war on Iraq** and that was how Kuwait eventually regained what they lost. So when conditions are **no more conducive**,

overnight everything can be gone. You need to reflect on all these **deeply** to understand the **impermanent nature of all condition arising entities**, especially the **aggregates of mind**.

Similarly the Buddha continued, with the other aggregates and he asked, “What do you think, Bhikkhus, are **feeling, perception, mental formation** and **consciousness** permanent or impermanent? That which is **impermanent**, subject to **suffering and change**, is it right to consider it thus: this is ‘me’, this is ‘I’ and this can be ‘mine’?” That is certainly not correct”, said the Buddha. After that he **instructed** the Bhikkhus further, “Therefore, Bhikkhus listen, **whatever that arise, may it be form** (physical body, or external form), feeling, perception, mental formation (or saṅkhāra) and consciousness, whether past, present or future, one’s own or external, gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near, **one should understand according to reality** and through **wisdom**, that all these **five aggregates** of form and mind: this **does not** belong to me, this am I not, this is not myself”. When understanding it thus, the Buddha said, ‘The **wise noble disciple** becomes **wary of form, feeling, perception, mental formation** and **consciousness**. Wary of all the five aggregates of form and mind, they will feel **revulsion**, and then on account of this revulsion, **they attain liberation**. And the **spiritually liberated disciple** knows that he/she **is liberated, that birth has been exhausted, the holy life lived to perfection, duty performed** and that there shall be **no more birth** or **returning to this conditioned world**’. Thus spoke the Blessed One; the five

Bhikkhus expressed appreciation towards the speech of the blessed one. While these were delivered, **the minds** of the **five ascetics** or **Bhikkhus** attained **perfect** spiritual **liberation** from all **grasping** and **attachment** to the **five aggregates** of form and mind and at that time there were **six perfect arahants** in the world. Sound so easy, so anybody got transformed? Actually it is not difficult. Now I will go into the talk proper. The **Ani Sutta** has already given you an indication of what this teaching is all about.

### 2.6.1 Seeing form, the unreality of form and seeing beyond form

The Heart Sutta state, **'Form** does not **differ** from **emptiness**; **emptiness** does not **differ** from **form**, for **form** itself is **emptiness** and **emptiness** itself is **form**'. How do we **reconcile** with this statement of Truth?

Before there is this form, what do you have? You have **empty space**. Is that not so? Later on, the planet **evolved**. Then, there is **gravity**. Then through evaporation and gravity air is trapped and hence the atmosphere is created. When the human mind and living beings evolved over the eons - all these formation from the (Big Bang) became elements and started to accumulate to form planets. Then you have the atmosphere. Beyond the atmosphere is space. If you go into actual space, you will know it is empty without air. That is why you cannot use the **normal** flight technology as that technology

needs oxygen to burn the fuel. You need rocket propulsion to have the thrust to push it out into space, and you need to have liquid oxygen to create oxygen because in space there is no oxygen. A lot of understanding is needed.

Let us investigate. When you are on planet Earth, initially **this space is just a void**. You call this void space. Let us say you introduce a **solid box into this space**. Then what do you see? This box you say it is **form**, but **before the form comes in**, this is just **space or void**, isn't it? So, Guan Yin said, **'Form does not differ from emptiness'** which is the space. Now can you follow? **Emptiness - the 'empty space'** does not **differ** from **form** for they **both occupied** the same space. Can you see it? Ah, now you say, yah! And you all can agree.

So coming back to the **human physical body**, when I look at you, if I look only at your **external form**, then you are **different** from the others. I am also different. But do you know that we occupied the **same space**, which is **empty within**. But you cannot see because you are distracted by the external form. Moreover when we discuss **spiritual understanding**, we are not interested in that **empty space**, do you understand? We are more interested in the **whole of that being**. So, if I look at this human being, like this analogy, what do I see? If I deludedly **identify** with this **form** then it is **mundane seeing** or **delusional seeing**. This is **form** and this is **mind** because the human being is just these two components, **mind** or **consciousness trapped inside** the **form** or the **physical body**. If you deludedly cling

on to this human form, then it is as though we are **all different**. That is why the world has a **lot of problems** because we cling on to **form Dhamma** and **form Dhamma** is **not** the **true Dhamma**. Form Dhamma is only one of the worldly **conditions** arising **Dhamma**. It is **not** the **ultimate truth**. It is **relative** truth or **partial** truth. So if I **don't look at** the form, **what do I see?** Let's say I **can see beyond form** because **as I meditate** I will **developed** the **ability** to be **heedful**, to be **silent**, then I start **to understand**, that the human being is **not just** the **external form**. It is precisely what **the Buddha had explained**; the **external form** is made up of **elements** only - the 4 elements, with **no knowing**. So it cannot be you. Hence form is **definitely not you**. For according to the Anattālakkhana Sutta, **form goes the way of nature**. It brings **about suffering** and you have **no control over it**. **Therefore** if this is **not me**, why do I deludedly **attach, cling** and **give meaning** to it? So if I **can see beyond form** with my **direct seeing**, what do I see? No more form – what does that mean? No more problem, isn't it? If I don't **identify** with this **physical form or body**, it means I do not have problem relating to **gender** anymore. Hence **no more male** and **female form delusion** to create **gender related problems**. Similarly no more **Chinese, Indian, Malay**, etc - hence no more **race issue** or **conflict**. Also no more problems related to tall, short, young and old. Many problems get resolved **if I can see beyond form**, and that is the **true Dhamma**. Do not be **gullible anymore**, and do not use your **mundane mind** to see, otherwise you will be **deceived**.

## 2.7 Three stages or levels of seeing

That is why in the Mahāyāna teaching; there are **three stages of seeing**. The first stage of seeing is **mundane seeing**. What is Mundane seeing? Yes! ‘看山是山’ - because to **mundane people**, when they **see mountain** it means **mountain**, why do you want to argue? Human beings means human being and similarly Brother Swee Ann and Brother Teh etc – how do you identify them? You identify them through their **external forms** with the **mundane mind** which is the **condition arising** mind **perceiving** it. That is why in the **first level of seeing** which is the **mundane seeing**, you tend to argue, via right and wrong, via gender and race discrimination. Especially those who are born as male they tend to side their own gender via saying male is a better gender because they are the **head** of the **household**, and most men they are **more authoritative** and **superior**. All these come from what? **Mundane seeing** via **using the thought leading** to the **attachment** and **delusion**, and this is **relative truth**, **not ultimate truth**, because ‘this’, 5 aggregates of form and mind is **not ‘you’** hence **not** a reality. It is made up of the 4 elements **with no knowing**, so **how can it be you?**

If I can see **beyond form**, I will go **direct to the mind**, and when I can see that conscious mind inside, then you are **not so different anymore**, isn’t it? But are we the same? **Consciousness has its content**, do you remember? Citta is consciousness and its content, and what is the **content of consciousness**? Yes! **Cetasikas**, the **52**

**mental factors** and they include **your mental states, emotions, views, your opinions, your conditionings, etc.** **That's why** this one is **still different**. This one is the mundane mind, condition arising consciousness with its content. So, when it is consciousness, you will have **your views, your opinions** and **your conditionings**, and because of that we are still different. Then you may say I am a Christian. I am a Buddhist. Then the **religious label** becomes **very important**, or **I am Chinese** and **I traditionally** believe in this. Or I am **'Guai Loh'** (a westerner) and I cannot accept traditional Chinese culture and all those things. So you **can still argue**. According to the Buddha to understand this **form and mind**, you must have the **wisdom** developed via the **direct seeing**. Then you can have similar realization like **Guan Yin Bodhisattva**, when he illuminated on this **5 skhandas** and **he realize that they** are all **empty** because they are **all condition arising states** within the **mundane condition arising** world, and they all have the **universal characteristics** of **impermanent, suffering**, leading to **non-self, empty nature**. **Ultimately** it is all **empty, only mighty nature** rolling by, **following nature's laws – no real meaning**.

That is why the Anattālakkhana Sutta is **very penetrative** because it can let you realize that these aggregates of form and mind are all **non-self, empty, impermanent, leading to suffering**. When you understand these, you will be able **to see beyond** the **conscious mundane mind** which is just the **consciousness** and its **content**. Then what do you see? What is **behind** these five aggregates of



form and mind? You will see the **'unseen'**. **What** is the **unseen**? You will surely ask me. Brother Teoh, 'unseen means cannot be seen isn't it?' This one you cannot use your **conscious eye to see**. This one is your **true mind**, your **true nature** and this one **cannot come out and live life**. This one **cannot think** it has got **no thought**. They call it by different names. Some call it the **True mind** or your **true nature**, or your **original nature**. When you can see via your **direct seeing** or via your **silent mind**, you can then **connect to it**. You will come to **realize** that this is the **unconditioned** with **no thought, no aggregates, no form and mind – it is just awareness before the knowing**, then what happen? This one **got no word, no concept, no idea, no views, no opinions** and this one **cannot** come out and **live**. To **live life** you need this **five aggregates of form and mind** which is the **human being**. These two, the form and mind, when combined become the five aggregates and **one aspect** of it is the **human being**. This is the **vehicle** and the **tool** that enable 'you' to come to this world. Living beings come to this world through what? Through this **karmically conditioned form and mind**, which is the **vehicle and the tool**, for you to come to this world, **to live life**, to **experience** all of the **beauties** and **wonders** of **life**. But **without** this **true mind connected** via the **direct seeing**, to develop the **wisdom** to **understand** the **unreality of this form and mind** - to break the **self-delusion (sakkāya-diṭṭhi)** and to **'see'** or **insight** into their **universal characteristics** of **impermanence, suffering state** and **empty nature**, you can **never liberate** your mind. That's why **without** the **direct seeing**, via the **silent mind** in meditation, you **cannot** develop the

**wisdom.** That is the reason why **thought base meditation** is **doomed to fail** as I had often told you all. Now you can understand?

Most of you are trapped in form and mind, **trying to liberate** from form and mind. Can you all understand? **Thought** trying to **escape** from **thought** - is it possible? You can ask yourself. You are playing the **game of delusion** and you want to come out from **delusion**. Who is trying to come out? **The thought** and the thought want to be **enlightened**, but **what is enlightenment? Beyond thought, beyond mind**, hence **thought must die**, but thought does not want to die, because **if thought die, 'you' die**. Now you understand. **Also because** you think the **thought is 'you'**, you **think feeling is 'you'**, you **think there is a person who thinks, perceive**, become **conscious** and **live life**. Can you follow? This is the **biggest delusion**; this is the **real understanding** of **Heart Sutta**. Form does not differ from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from form, for form itself is emptiness, and emptiness itself is form because it is all **condition arising**. When condition ceases to be, it is never there. Can you all remember this **'table analogy'**, which I had described before during my last talk? Externally, like the **bullock cart analogy**, it is already **condition arising** because when the **parts come together** and it **performs** a function, you give it a **name**, then the bullock cart **arise** already. You then say **real**, and then what did the Buddha tell the monk? Take it apart, the wheels, the axles, and all the other parts, and then he asked the monks, 'now where is the bullock cart?' They say no more.

This is like a very nice type of game, isn't it? **Suddenly bullock cart arise**, then suddenly **bullock cart no more**. Then **when you put everything back**, the **bullock cart arises again**. Then the Buddha asked: 'what do you understand from this analogy'? **When conditions are there, when it can perform a function, you give it a name**, and a **concept**, and then **it arises already** and become **like real**. That's why according to the Buddha - everything is 'mind made' and Mind is the forerunner of all things, mind is chief, mind made are they. When mind arises to perceive, then it becomes like real, exists already, and **who said it is real?** It is **the thought, with its content**. So to understand the thought with its content, you have to have the **mindfulness** and the **silent mind** to see clearly that these are **condition arising states, existing from moment to moment** depending **on its supporting conditions**.

When you penetrate this, **you will see things very differently**. Like the Buddha said, 'externally it is already condition arising – just like that bullock cart, or this table, this white board, my physical body and the form and mind, etc. They are all **condition arising, not so real**. Then **how do you know** it is a bullock cart? How do you **know it's the table**, white board, or Brother Teoh? - Through what? Through your **mind aggregate of perception** and you perceive it via **a mental image** up here and then you **recall through memory**, hence the labeling and the words and the concepts created by thoughts. Externally **the form** is already **condition arising, not so**

**real**, then how do you come to know about it? You know about it through a **perception** via **an image** up here, **laterally inverted**, but your brain knows how to make it up right, then what are you doing? That **image**, which is the **perception** is even **more unreal isn't it?** That's why it is **just mind made, consciousness** only then why did you **cling and grasp** on to it?

Then can you recall what did the Buddha say about **consciousness** and its **analogy?** He said, "**Consciousness is like a magician or an Illusionist**". What is a magician/illusionist? An illusionist is someone who **creates illusions** for you to see. All of **perception** is like a **mirage**; the **five aggregates, with its five analogies** – do go back and reflect on it. **Form** is like '**foam**', looks **so solid and real**, but behind it, it is empty. Because foam disperses very fast, apparently it **appears** very solid, but when condition disperses, it is gone. Just like the bullock cart analogy; if it is on fire, then it burns and **returns** to nature, **following nature's law**; it goes the way of nature. Or finally when it **wears out** after **long time of usage**, it will **crumble**. Just like what the Buddha told Ananda **before his Parinibbāna**. Ananda cried, and then somebody reminded Ananda that he must beg the Buddha to extend his life, because the Buddha has got psychic ability. He can do it if he wants to. When the Buddha was approached by Ananda, do you know what the Buddha told Ananda? He said to Ananda, '**don't be foolish, this body of mine** is like a **worn out bullock cart**, waiting to **collapse** and **crumble** and you still **want** me to **continue** with it?' Out of love and compassion, I had already worked so hard

and use this form to the very limit and you still want me to go on with it for another five or ten years'? Or maybe another forty years because they must have thought that everybody can live until hundred and twenty years old just like most of them at that time. **Out of love and compassion** for the world the Buddha had **sacrifice** his physical body and that was the reason why he passed away at the age of eighty only because **he has not enough rest**. And to him, forty-five years of Dhamma sharing is enough. If you still cannot understand him, then even if he stays on for another ten, twenty, and thirty or forty years also it is going to be of not much use. If you really want to learn the dhamma, to me **five to ten years is more than sufficient**. Because under the Satipatthāna Sutta the Buddha said the fastest is **one week**, longest it take is **seven years**. You may think you all are still young and still have a lot of time. The oldest among you all is how old? Seventy? If you live to eighty then you think there is still enough time. But then death is a certainty even though life is uncertain so one cannot assume. This above dhamma is very important and it is the **essence** of the **Buddha's teaching**.

Now I will **move on into life** which is **most important**. After understanding all these, **do not be gullible and deluded** to cling onto these 5 aggregates of 'form and mind' anymore. Learn to have the **direct seeing** to **connect your silent mind to your true nature early**. When you connect, you will **inherit** all your **spiritual understanding** and **wisdom**. Not until you **connect**, you **cannot inherit**; before you connect to this true nature, which is the unseen,

you will **inherit only** your good and bad **karma**. That is the reason why if you don't follow the **advice** of the Buddha '**to avoid all evil, do good and purify your mind**', you will be stuck and you cannot come out of samsara, you cannot liberate your mind. That is the reason why you must cultivate **sati or mindfulness** leading to **heedfulness** and **the silent mind**, which is **Passaddhi**. This passaddhi will have the **ability to see things as they are** via the **direct seeing** to **awaken** to the **truth and reality**.

This is the reason why; I always share with you all this statement: '**truth is everywhere - in the midst of life and existence, why can't you see?**' What is truth? - The **universal characteristics** of nature; and what are they? Yes! **Impermanent, suffering** and **non-self** and they are **inherent** in all phenomena, said the Buddha. May it be **physical, mental or nature's** phenomena; **everything** in this world, **every phenomenon** exhibits **these characteristics**. If these are the **truth** then why **can't** you see them? '**For those who see, they always see** (every moment and every instant)'. **So why can't you see? Living beings cannot see** because they **never** silent their mind. You must see with the **direct seeing**, with your **true mind**, **not** with the **thought** or with your **thinking mind** or your **deluded mundane mind**.

## 2.8 Mundane seeing, direct seeing and transcendental seeing

We have not finished because there are **3 levels of seeing**. The first level seeing is **mundane seeing**. What is the **second level seeing**? Yes! - Via the **direct seeing**. What do you mean by direct seeing? It means **seeing with the silent mind in pure awareness to see things as they are**. When you see with the pure awareness - **before** the knowing, **before** the perception, **before** the word and the concept, what do you see? Yes! ‘看山不是山’ – meaning ‘seeing mountain as not mountain’, because the **word** and the **concept** of ‘mountain’ hasn’t arisen as yet, hence **the reason why you can see things as they are** via just the **pure perception** or the **pure consciousness**. Just like seeing a painting with pure perception, before you label it. Can you understand? Like a baby’s seeing, - when the baby is **just born, there is no conditioning, no memories, nothing, just blank**. But this **direct seeing** must come with all the **conditionings and the memories in the brain**, only then it is the **real seeing**. The baby’s seeing is of **not** much use because the baby **cannot live life**. It has got no memories, nothing. By now you should be able to understand this direct seeing, which is the second level seeing via ‘看山不是山’, isn’t it? Then what is the **third level of seeing**? When your **wisdom stabilizes**, what happens? It has something to do with the **3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of Dhamma (pativedha)**. Yes! Sadhu! It is **transcendental seeing, or seeing with wisdom**. When you see with this type of **stable wisdom**, you will no longer cling on to **duality**. Do you realize that the direct

seeing at the second stage still has **duality** because it is **still one sided** and He can **still argue** with you via saying, “No, you still do not know how to see because you are **still deluded.**” That is why you cannot see; ‘看山不是山’ because there is only **pure perception** before the word, concept and the knowing. This understanding comes about because of the Surangama sutta. If you read the **Surangama Sutta**, you will understand. What did the Suragama Sutta say? I will write it on the white board. Some of you who had followed me for quite a while may know. ‘**Perception of form is what?**’ I will leave a blank, and then ‘**whereas its non-perception is what?**’ Wah! So fast forget already? Ah, very good, and sādhu to Sis. Mimi, - **Yes! ‘Perception of form is consciousness** whereas its **non-perception is wisdom**’ and this was clearly stated in the Surangama Sutta.

The mundane mind uses the mundane consciousness to see. That’s why when you see **form** you **label** it almost **immediately**. You look at this physical body, - the words men, women, old and young etc arise because **you label with the thought**. That’s why **perception of form is consciousness** via **mundane seeing**, whereas in the direct seeing they don’t perceive like that. It is only pure perception, no labeling; that’s why ‘**the non-perception of form**’ means **no word, no description**, etc and **that is wisdom** because **one is able to see things as they are**. Remember the Zen analogy? One of the Zen master’s disciples, who **thought** he **already** **awaken**. He was so excited, he rushes over to his master’s place and said, ‘Oh, master,



oh, master, thank you so much' and full of **gratitude** he said, 'I had already awaken'. The master said, 'very good, very good, come, come, come, sit down, what you see over there?' The master points towards the tea-table. And, the disciple replied, 'tea-table'. Do you know what the master did? He took out the cane and whacks the disciple, and then he commented, 'you said you already awaken, then how come some more got table?' Which means the disciple **still perceives form**. What should the answer be? Yes! **'Nothing'**. But when you say 'nothing', if you don't have the understanding, **you cannot justify your position**. You can only repeat what you heard or memorized. When you do not have the understanding you will identify and label. That is why; this **wisdom statement** in the **Surangama Sutta** is very **profound** and **powerful**. Twenty-five years ago, when I read it for the first time I was **full of joy**. The whole sutta, **I loved just this sentence so much**, because this **was what my nature had realized too**. This nature of mine already had this **direct seeing** for so long (since 1989), and that was the reason why it knew that this was what it is, and I was full of joy because it was stated in the sutta, and it makes **my 'job' a lot easier**. With this you will **not** have **doubt** like, 'what Brother Teoh teach/share, the book also do not write, so how can it be?' But when it is written in the Mahayāna Sutta you will feel more confident. If you always follow Theravāda, you tend to become one sided, then you will have doubt; unless you can have an **open mind**. Do you understand what doubt is? It is **one of the five mental hindrances**. When you have doubt, it means **you**

**do not** have **faith**, then how can you cultivate, because the first Spiritual faculty of Saddhā also you do not have!

I had covered almost everything. Now I will continue with the last part **concerning life**. Do you know why Life is also empty? Can you remember this mandarin song? ‘往事只能回味’ (Translation: **You can only recall the past**). Anybody knows how to sing this song? Come, help to sing. ‘时光一逝永不回，往事只能回味’ (Translation: **Time will never return, the past is only a memory**). When I was very young, whenever I listened to this song I had a lot of joy. At that time I still do not know the Dhamma. Although I am English educated, I appreciated this song very much because its meaning is very deep. The title of the song is, ‘you can only recall the past’. I use to share with you all this very important statement, ‘**As real as it can be, it is only within the moment and split second it is already dead and gone. Then the next moment and the next moment.....**’

Listen again, I had explained this before. **What is life? Life is existence** because to go through life **is to exist**. Hence **Existence** can be **correlated to time**. The **whole spectrum of time** can be divided into **past, present** and **future**. Of these three, **which is the reality?** Ah, Yes! **Past is already gone**, it is no more a reality; the **future yet to come**, also **not** a reality; so the **only reality is what?** Yes! The **present moment!** And **how stable** is the **present moment?** Every moment, **split second it is gone**, and **yet** that is the **only reality in life**. Then what did I always ask you all? Yes! ‘**Moment to moment**

life passes by, what are you doing?’ You can check. Without mindfulness, without heedfulness, without the spiritual faculties, you are most of the time heedless. You think a lot, you worry a lot, that is the reason why I always said: ‘human being’s problem is, they are too busy thinking, planning and worrying about life; so much so they never really live life and they totally missed out on life.’ You never live life because you think a lot, you plan a lot and you worry a lot. If you cannot be aware within the moment which is the only reality in life, then how are you going to live life? Moment to moment life passes by. If you cannot be with the moment in pure awareness (without thought) to experience all of the beauties and wonders of life then how can you live life? If only you are heedful, aware and silent within then you will be able to experience all of the peaceful mind moments to truly understand and live life. This part of the sharing came from my own contemplation and it is not in the sutta but you can investigate into it.

## 2.9 The 3 phases of dhamma: Pariyatti, Patipatti & Pativedha

It is wrong thoughts that trigger off fear, worry, anxiety and the 3 evil roots. Hence when you are without thought there will be no fear, no worry, no anxiety, no sorrow, no lamentation and no attachment. This is because thought cannot move. Hence it cannot project into the future and recall the past. It does not recall the

**scars of memories** to trigger off fear, worry and anxiety. There will be **no wrong view** to condition you **to react** and **stir** your mind. **To be able** to be with the **moment** in **silent** awareness to **live life, need** a lot of **wisdom**. The **mind need not** do anything - just be **silent** then it can **experience** the **pristine stillness** and **great beauty** of **nature**. Every moment, every instance, things are **so pristine** and **beautiful** when **thought** do not interfere. Can you live that type of **life** which is **Pativedha** or the **3<sup>rd</sup> phase** of **dhamma** where you are **able to reap** the **fruit** of your **dhamma cultivation** leading to your **ability to live** the **noble life** of **true peace** and **joy** of an **enlightened** one?

My advice to you is to **work hard** on the **first two phases** of dhamma. Phase 1 is **Pariyatti** which is **the learning** of the **teaching** or the **doctrine**; **Phase 2** of the **dhamma** is **Patipatti** which is putting the **teaching into practice** in **daily** life. **Don't** be too **eager** to start the phase 2 **cultivation phase**. One has to get this **Pariyatti cultivation** clearly **understood** first. Because when you understand, you can **cultivate** with **understanding** and **meditate** with **understanding**. Then **Patipatti** which is to put the **dhamma** into **practice** in **daily life** will be **much easier** and you will **penetrate** the dhamma much faster.

Before this talk, I was sharing the same subject matter with Brother Teh. I told him one cannot cultivate and meditate on something that one **does not** understand. Do you agree? If you wish **to realize** the truth, you must first understand what truth is. You do not

understand because you **never inquire** and **investigate** into it. Take for example if you do not **inquire** why the Buddha **ask you to chant** during **every pūja service** the **salutation** to the **Buddha**, the **Dhamma** and the **Saṅgha via chanting**, ‘Iti pi so Bhagava, Arahaṃ...’ and so on then you can become **gullible**. It is for you to develop *the faith in him* and his **teaching** via **knowing** who the **Buddha is** and how **special** and **wonderful** his **teaching is**. Also, to understand what is this Dhamma via chanting ‘Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo, etc.’ So that you understand that the **Dhamma or Truth** as taught by the Buddha is ‘Sandiṭṭhiko, Akāliko, Ehipassiko, Opanayiko, Paccattaṃ, veditabbo, viññūiti’. What are all these? You **have to reflect, contemplate** and **understand** them **clearly** because these are the **true Dhamma**. Sanditthiko means this dhamma **can be realize** in the **here** and the **now**. Akāliko means this dhamma is **beyond thought, beyond time**; Ehipassiko means this dhamma **can stand up to investigation**. Then **Opanayiko**, what is its meaning? It **means leading inward**, towards the **heart**, to trigger off the **realization** of **nibbāna**. If it **does not** lead you back to your **true nature, true mind** to **awaken, to realize nibbāna**, then that is **not the true Dhamma**. Last characteristic is **Paccattaṃ**, - which means this dhamma can only be **realize** by the **wise** each by themselves.

So, when you meditate, **you may think** you already **enlightened** and had **realised the Dhamma**. But you **never check** whether the ‘Dhamma’ you had realized is **Sandiṭṭhiko** and **Akāliko or not?** If you did not even put it to investigation or test then there is **no**

**Ehipassiko. Similarly if you do not even check whether there is Opanayiko (leading inwards to the heart) but instead you all use thought. Then definitely there is also no Paccattam, because no wise one inside there to realize anything. It is all just knowledge. That so called Enlightenment will be Enlightenment according to you. That's why all these pūja that the Buddha teaches is to allow you to develop the wisdom not to be deluded by what people tell you. Have an open mind and investigate into everything. If it is the truth, it will stand up to investigation. It will lead to the correct realization, the correct awakening. Hopefully, before ten o'clock I can finish my talk. I have already told you all, 'moment to moment life passes by and as real as it can be, it is only within that moment, that split second. So if you cannot see that clearly you will continue to perceive life as very real'.**

## **2.10 Understanding Life**

**Since birth until now, you cannot deny that you had lived those phases of life. Can I ask you one question: - is it (life) real? It's already gone, isn't it? It is the past. Even this moment, after I speak, it's already gone; dead and gone. As real as it can be, everything is just within the moment and split second it is dead and gone. If you cannot see their impermanent characteristic you will attach, cling and deludedly grasp at it via giving it meaning. That is the reason why the phenomena world has such power over you. Because you deludedly grasp and cling on to what your consciousness show you,**

what **your perception** tell you, what all your **views, opinions** and **conditioning** tell you. This is **what human beings** that are **deluded** and **heedless** will do because they cannot **see** the **unreality** of **form and mind**.

The truth is: **'moment to moment life passes by, and split second it is dead and gone, split second it is dead and gone, so how real can life be?'** Then you should ask yourself this question **'Why did Guan Yin Bodhisattva** say that the **five aggregates** of form and mind are **empty and unreal?'** Is this statement true? **Very true isn't it?** Because - **split second it is gone, split second it is gone, so how real can it be?** As **real** as it **can be** it is **only within** the **moment** and the **next moment** it is **gone**. But, there is another saying in the heart sutra (He **never** gives you **false hope**). Guan Yin said, **'true emptiness is wonderful existence'**. Ah, that is why, **the enlightened ones**, they understand. He said **even though** it is within the **condition world**, like not **so real** because **moment to moment**, the condition arising **phenomenon** just slips away, **but** there is **such a thing** as **life**, because with the **wisdom connected** to these **five aggregates** of **form and mind**, these **five aggregates** of **form and mind** is **no longer deluded**. As such it can **truly live life** to the **fullest**. It can be with the **moment**, with **silent inner awareness** to **truly appreciate** all of the **beauties** and **wonders of life**, just like what I had told you all just now. Hence **experiencing** the **third phase** of **Dhamma (Pativedha)**, which is the **most beautiful part of one's life?** It is also the **fruition** of your **cultivation**, for you to **get to enjoy** the

fruit of your **hard work**. That is, **even though** we are living within the **condition world**, and everything is **so unreal**, but there is **such a thing as Life**.

With that **wisdom** you will understand **profound true emptiness**; you will **penetrate** the dhamma and then **Life becomes wonderful and meaningful**. That is the reason why when have good food, if you do not want to eat because you think you are **very spiritual** and you must **not have** craving for good food, then pass it to me, I will eat it. Because you may think, 'eh, I am very spiritual, because I am a cultivator so I must not have carving'. And to you going after good food is carving. Ah, if that is so, then you bring, I will eat. What was the Buddha's advice? Yes! Not **to attach** to **good food**. He **never** says **you cannot eat** good food. The Buddha during his time, he was invited to the palace, and do you think the **king gave** him **very simple** food? Anāthapiṇḍika, do you think he cooked very simple food for the Buddha? They cook the best and they will try to offer the best. So when you understand, you are **not deluded**. It is not to say that you cannot have good food, good things, - you only need to have the **wisdom not to deludedly hold** on to it, **cling on to it** and **grasp on to it**, because they **never belong to anybody**. They are just **condition arising, causal phenomena**, and **not real. Moment to moment**, they change, they **transform** and **every moment** is a **different moment**. Can you understand? That is why with **wisdom**, when you **penetrate** the **dhamma**, you will **see** things so **clearly**, so **differently**. With that I shall end my today's sharing.



SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!

I hope it is recorded. Do you know why this problem comes about initially? There are **some forces** that **want to stop this talk**. First the talk was delayed for about fifteen minutes, then the **microphone connection problem**. All these while, when I come here to give dhamma talk there is no such problem. That is the reason why **when you accord and flow, nothing will happen**. Shall we rejoice one more time? SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!

Before I finish, I dare not tell you all these. Do you know why? If I tell you all then something else may happen. That is the reason why you cannot simply say things and you have to be **very tactful**.

### **3 Questions and answers**

**Brother Teoh:** Now that you all can understand better so this topic Emptiness has meaning right? Anybody got any question? You can ask while I take a drink.

**Brother Teh:** Any question from the floor?

**Brother Teoh:** Anybody has any question? You can clarify your doubt if you want to. Don't worry about the question. Maybe Brother Danny who was discussing something with Bro. Swee Ann, must have got something to ask?

### 3.1 Question by Brother Danny

**Question:** ... (Recording was too soft because Bro. Daddy did not use the wireless mic.)

**Brother Teoh:** Oh no..., no....! You must know **something** about **the recorder** and the **recording** in order to understand why. In **certain cases** the recording will slip and go back to the **starting point** but do not worry, just listen to it again and when you are nearly there, just move it a bit. Once you cross that mark, it will continue to play. There were **comments** from the floor. 'There they understand, because they had listened to it before'. That is why I always advice that you have **to investigate** and **find out** for yourself. If everything also you just ask and **expect** an answer, then what does it means? It means you refuse **to investigate** into it to develop the understanding. Like my son used to tell me, 'Daddy, you all are from the old generation, this IT thing you must play with it and find out for yourself because even the young children also know how to use it'.

Sister Yoon Chun who is not here today told us **a great story**. She is a grandmother with a 3 to 4 year old grandchild. One day her husband bought her a new I-phone. With our old hand phones, **we need to press** the **start button** to **activate it**. Isn't that so? She was looking for that **button** to press and activate her new I-phone. Her grandchild came along and said, '**Mama, no need. Just slide** and the

**hand phone** will start'. She laughed and commented, 'See, even grandchildren knows'. Do you know how they know? It is because they experiment and play with it; children like to play with things. Similarly, we **must try not to be so rigid**. Our **conditioning** makes us afraid **of trying new things**. My son encouraged me to **just try and not be afraid of trying**. I told him that it was not that I do not want to experiment but this hand phone is **too sophisticated** for me and I am from the old school. I understand fundamentals. You can ask me all about mathematics and science. I can understand all that very quickly. But IT (information technology) is a new field for me. Do you know that when you buy a new hand phone nowadays, **there is no instruction book or manual** to teach you **how to use it?** There are no instructions. They say it is all on the internet, so you just have to go to the internet to search for it. Some may tell you, '**No need, just try**. It is in the hand phone itself'. Once you know how to use it, you know the instructions are embedded in the phone. But if you do not know how to use it, you will grumble, '**What kind of a phone is this? Pay so much but it is worse than my old phone**'. That is because you are so used to the old ways.

It is like the new car, with modern technology. Initially you do not like to use **automatic car** because you are **only familiar** with **shift stick**, but when you know how to drive then you will say, 'Wah! This is good', then when you are asked to go back to use the old car, you do not want already. Like now go back to use the old nokia phone, you do not want already. You want Samsung, you want I-phone,

you may even insist on what generation. So, **understanding** can transform you.

**Question:** ..... (Too soft because wireless microphone was not used)

**Brother Teoh:** That is a good question. Ya! Ya! Correct. So...these are also Dhamma when you understand. Everything is Dhamma when you understand, because **life itself** is your **best teacher**, and that I can **vouch** for it. You can **never** learn, **apart** from **life**, because **life** is about **reality**. **Life** is about **relationship**. **Life** is about how you **manifest** and **interact**, your **relationship** with **nature** and fellow **living beings**. If it is **not** real life experiences, you can never learn; the defilements will not show up. Your **sati** will **not have** the ability to see. But because you went into **life** to **cultivate** via a very **stable** daily mindfulness, that's why you can **see**. This is also the reason why under **kāyānupassanā**, the **third category of cultivation**, the Buddha make it very clear, that the cultivation of **sati sampajañña** which is **mindfulness** and **clear comprehension** of all actions, all movements in the present moment, in the **midst of life** is very important. By now you should understand, why I always said, '**Sati Sampajañña** is the **real meditation**'. That was the reason **why I reverse** my **cultivation** during the early years, to move into this **four foundation of mindfulness** and the **daily mindfulness cultivation**. I met one teacher who was very good, he told me about the '**highest meditation**'. He was a **Thai monk, Phra Ajahn Yantra**, he just said to me, this, '**we choose aware, all actions, all movements, in the**

**present moment'**. Just like that, he said **that is the highest meditation**. Then straight away, **it dawn upon me** that **sati sampajañña** is the **real meditation**.

Initially I could not really 'penetrate' the dhamma until I understand this statement of his, via **inquiring** 'why did the **Buddha** say under the **3<sup>rd</sup> way** to just be **aware** during **cultivation**'? It is like you meditate **without** any excitement. No calmness, no formal meditation via sitting and ānāpānasati, but instead just **aware** in daily life and **don't try** to know; **standing** aware, **walking** aware, **sitting** aware, **lying down** also aware. Then later answer **nature's call** also **aware**. Just like one of the sisters asked me, I think it was Sis. Yoon Chun, she said, 'Bro. Teoh, what is there to be **aware of** when I answer nature's call?' When you do not understand you will ask this way. When you answer nature's call with **awareness**, it is totally **different**. Eh! It is totally different, it is **not** like what you all do, when your bladder is so full and you all tend to quickly or hurriedly go inside the **watch room** and 'sh...' **without** any mindfulness then you felt relieved; **meaning you are never aware** of the whole phenomenon or movement, the **whole reaction** of your this **form and mind**. Ah...**next time** when you do it with **awareness** it will be very different and you will know who is boss.

The thought will try to condition you - fast, fast, quickly, it is coming out already otherwise if you are too slow, you may wet your pant. You are like **in a hurry**. Why must you do that? If you **have sati** and

**awareness** you can tell the thought: **‘enough, you have been directing my life for too long; now, I am the master, you are the servant, and you serve me’**. That is how you can make use of this form and mind **to live life** because they are like a **tool**, and a **vehicle** for you to use **them** with **understanding**. In the past they use you, thought become your master, **condition** you into negativity; thought tell you a lot of stories – ‘that guy he wants to cheat you! Be careful’, and then you believe, ‘yes! This guy last time cheated me before’. You then dislike him. That perception comes from where? Your memories and your conditioning. Maybe he has change, transform and already enlightened, yet you do not know. However, you still perceive him that way. Then **out of fear**, you **don’t even know** that you had met an **enlightened one**. You then just quickly excuse yourself, by saying ‘sorry, sorry, I am not free, I think we meet some other time’. Then that guy will just smile, because to him **‘heedless one is heedless one’**. The real one in front of you also you cannot see or recognize. He may just say ‘Oh, since you are busy, don’t worry, then I will not disturb you’. If you just leave then he will just smile. If he is still the same old self, then you can excuse yourself, by saying, ‘do you have anything important? Otherwise I got thing to attend to, if you do not mind’. If you speak in this way, the outcome may be different. He can then give you a hint. ‘Oh, it’s okay, if you are busy, I will leave you alone. I just want to drop by to tell you something because over the years, certain things had happened and I had changed, I would like to **apologize** to you’. The moment you hear this, **you better serve that guy well**, take care of him. He is

your ‘**贵人**’. Do you know what is the meaning of ‘**贵人**’? It means he is your **savior**. For people to come and apologize to you, chances are they already realize some form of truth, at least, the mundane truth. When one starts to understand one’s form and mind and **are willing to repent and ask for forgiveness** that is the **beginning of sincerity and initial understanding**. You no longer want to go back to the **old way of cheating, deceiving and covering up things**. That is why your mind, if it cannot calm down to have the **basic simplicity and sincerity**, then it can **never cultivate the Dhamma** because to **cultivate Dhamma it demands a lot of sincerity**, for **sincerity** drives the way. When you are **sincere**, your **faith and perseverance** will also be there. You will have **faith and persevere** because you are **very sincere** and you had understood that this way is **very important, very beautiful, you will never waste it**. You will strive on **diligently through your faith, persevere and cultivation**; no matter **what the obstacle** is, you will just move on with **understanding**, following what the Buddha said, ‘**strive on with heedfulness - Appamādena Sampādetha**’. If no more question we can end.

### **3.2 Question by Sister Candy**

**Sister Candy:** Brother Teoh, just now you said ‘**penetrate**’ the dhamma. Can Brother Teoh please **guide me** on what you mean by ‘**penetrate**’ the dhamma.

**Brother Teoh:** Okay, thank you and Sādhu! This is a very good question. This question comes from a person who **really cultivate**. I said you have to use the **direct seeing**, to **‘penetrate’** the Dhamma. If you use **thought base meditation**, you cannot. Now that you already have the **ability to connect** to your **true mind** via the **silence** then you just **continue** to **remain silent** to **stabilize** the **silent mind**, that **mindfulness/awareness**. Do **not** try to **know**. The **more silent** you are, the **more relax you are**, the better. Remember the **four supports** for **awareness based meditation**? **First support** is Relax. You have to **relax** into **every mind state that arises**. Then the **2<sup>nd</sup> support** is **Aware**. **Train** the **mind** to have more and more **moments of silence** to develop the **awareness or sati** within. The **3<sup>rd</sup> support** is **24 Hours**. To **stabilize** the awareness until you are capable of **24 hour awareness** to cultivate the **daily mindfulness** and the **noble eightfold path** to develop the understanding, the wisdom. The **4<sup>th</sup> support** is **Trust**. When you are doing the **formal meditation**, **just silent** and **trust** your **nature** to do. **Do not use** the **mind**, do not **use** the **thought**, **just silent** and continue to be **mindful** throughout the **day**, **heedful** throughout the **day**. When you are **silent**, you will **feel everything** that is **arising** within your **form** and **mind**, you will **understand** a lot of **things** that are going on. You will see your **aggregates of mind**; initially **actively coming** and **going**, then if you **do not react**, you **do not judge**, the **silent mind** or **sati** will **stabilize**. **Do you remember** the definition of sati that I had written in the Heart sutra short notes? What is sati? **Sati** or **mindfulness** is the **silent, choice less awareness** of **‘What IS!’** – can remember? **Silent**



means completely **no verbalization, no chattering, no thinking, etc.** 'Silent, choice less awareness' - here choice less means you do not make **choice**, you do not **perceive or react or do anything**. You **just silent your mind**, and **just observe**. Some of you **call it bare awareness**, but you all **cannot understand** what it is. **Bare means don't do anything.**

Recently W.A.V.E. gave me two cartons of Dhamma books. Normally I do not need these Dhamma books. I usually just have a quick look then I will pass it on to the temples. Some of these books are quite alright, especially those written by Ajahn Chah, but then there are some new ones and this new one when I open it I was quite surprise. Have you all heard of this monk, **Ashin Tejaniya**? He has improved a lot; this book I read was so different from the earlier magazine write up that one of our kalyanamitta sent me a few years ago. This one reflects a lot of changes in his understanding. I will **share with you all** in one of the classes, either Tuesday, Thursday or Sunday class. His recent **teaching** is more or less **similar** to what I had **shared** with you all, but in a slightly different way basing on **his present understanding**. And with that understanding he will **progress very fast**, because he had also understood the **importance of non-labeling**, the importance of **relaxing**, of having the **silent mind**, of cultivating **bare attention**. Do **not react; do not judge, just aware** of all your **feeling**, your **sensation** and **everything** that arise. **But there are still** a lot of **fine thought behind**, which he still **cannot see** and he **thinks** there is no **thought, because** his sati/(the **real sati** which is

that **silent mind**) is **not stable** or **full yet**. He has some of it, he had understood quite a bit. You read through his book and you will know. It is about **defilement**, a square book. How many of you have seen that book?

This is the latest book that W.A.V.E. just sent to me, with the **rat** and the word **defilement** on it. I think it is a new book. Ah, yes that is the book, Blue colour, with a rat there. This is his recent book, maybe **edited** version, because this one is different. He said he **recently accumulated** all these **information** from **interviewing meditators**, and then he compiled them into a book. Also from **the experiences** that he had **gathered** while having **discussion** with the **yogis**, and also because he had got some **form of understanding recently**, he was **able to express them** in a **clearer** manner. But if you do not have the true Dhamma understanding, you still cannot see those things that are **still thought base inside** your mind. But it is **already very good** for anybody who can **write to share** like that at this **point of time**.

Please, do not get me wrong, I am **not here to comment anything**. I just want to give you the **understanding**. So please do not go and tell other people outside that Brother Teoh commented on....., - please, that is **not the intention**. The intention is **sincere**. If it is a **good book**, I will tell you it is a **good book**. And I can tell you, **thus far, this** is a **fairly good book**. I have not read the rest, because I only flick through a few pages, but it is good enough. I will highlight

to you all, when you come to the Tuesday and Thursday classes. But please remember the week **before** 19<sup>th</sup> October our classes already ended, so you have got only 2 or 3 more Thursday's classes. After that we have to postpone the classes until I come back from our Emei Shan **spiritual trip** to China – which is around mid-November, 2014. Okay, shall we end?

**Brother Teoh:** No, no, it's about defilement, something like - '**Don't under estimate the defilement or they will laugh at you**'. I think this is the **edited and improved version**. No, not likely because the first book was still with a **lot of 'thought based'** understanding. At that time, sati was not fully understood by him as yet. But he did mention and questioned, '**why must you note? Why must you label?**' Now **he dares** to put it **down in writing**. And he explain to you **very clearly** via saying, "**when you note and label, how can you be aware?**" Just like how I had explained to you all, "**your mind can only do one thing at a time so if it is busy thinking, how can you be aware?**" Because you are **either aware** within the **moment** or you are **lost in thought**. When you are lost in thought, - what does it mean? It means you are **pre-occupied** with **those thinking**. When you are **busy thinking**, how can you understand what is going on in life? **How can you be aware** of the **reality** in **front of you**? Then when you are **thinking, without awareness**, your **views** and **opinions** are very strong, you are **chattering, judging, commenting** and **reacting inside without** you knowing or being aware, because you are **so heedless**. Then how can you have that **silent mind** to be

sensitive of what is going on? That's why **you cannot feel, you don't know what sensation is. You cannot feel your heart beat; you cannot feel the vibration within you. You cannot be sensitive to the environment, nature, energy, and everything else. Why? -** Because you are **not silent. You are not attentive.** That's why the **true mind, the true nature that is silent is so sensitive and so different.** That **awareness is so different** and there is **no thought inside** there. You **try to be with the moment without thought** and see **whether** you can do it or not? Don't say - I say cannot, you go back and give it a try. I can tell you, it is not easy. If you can - try **not** to think, or try to maintain silent for even ten second, **I will congratulate and Sādhu you.**

You **hardly rest** your mind, because it is **so heedless.** The **habitual tendencies,** all of your thinking via **response to memories,** your **attachment,** your **clinging,** your **craving,** your **wrong view,** your **delusion,** your mental **hindrances,** they are **so strongly embedded inside your memories.** You **will never understand** all these **until** the day you **'connect'** and realized your **true mind.** Then you will like, **got a shock** of your **life,** because all these while, you have been **deceived** and **deluded** by this **mundane mind** of yours. And **all** these while the **teaching** was there, but you **never understood.** You only supposed to focus on the **five spiritual faculties.** **Don't control** and **suppress** the **defilement** and **mental hindrances.** Don't go and fight the defilement. That is why the title of the book said **'does not under estimate the defilement'** - **not to fight** them, but **to**

**understand** them, so that you are **not deluded** by them, **not deceived** by them. But a lot of people teach differently, they **advocate control** and **suppression**.

They say “**don’t try to get angry**”, which is a form of **suppression** because who is the one **not trying to get angry**? It is the **thought**. Not ‘YOU’ but they advocate it because they thought **anger** which is an **evil root** is them due to their **sakkāyadiṭṭhi** or **self-delusion**. If you do that, then it is **suppression**, because you are not doing it through **an understanding**. Understanding means what? When you silent, you **trace the origination factors**, following what the Buddha advice. Before you get angry, there was **no anger**, isn’t it? Then ‘**how does anger come to be**’ asked the Buddha. One has to develop the **mindfulness** to **trace the origination factors**. **Remember?** Under **Dhammānupasanā**, you **cultivate mindfulness** of the eighteen sense realms, or the **six internal sense bases** and **six external sense bases** to **trace** their origination factors. When you trace, you will come to realize that it comes from **one** of your **sense organ**, either **when you see something** that you are not happy, that’s why **you react** and **become angry** or **hear something** or **you recall something** through your **thought process** and **memory**. These are the **three powerful doors**. You will come to realize that angry is **condition arising**, hence not me. But because of wrong view you **perceive** with **negativity** – which means you see **without Yoniso Manasikara** or **wise attention** at the **moment of sense experience**.

Ah, this word Yoniso Manasikara, the monk that wrote that book explain it as **right attitude**, - I do not want to comment. He has his own understanding and his view. To me, it is **wise attention** and **not** right attitude (when you understand). Because **Yoniso** and **Ayoniso**, means **wise and unwise** and **Manasikara** mean **attention**, it is not attitude. At the **moment** of **attention** or **sense experience**, whether you have wisdom or you do not have wisdom, play a very big role. That is why **without Yoniso Manasikara** or **wise attention** at the **moment** of **sense experience**, you **cannot cut at feeling**. You **cannot** do anything. **Feeling** will be **conditioned** into **craving** straight away. You can see them happening. **As long as** your **view** is **not** straightened, and you do not have **wisdom**, you **cannot cut** at feeling and you **cannot 'let go'**. That word 'let go' is also a **thought based delusion** and very **mundane**. '**Don't attach, let go**', - these are **words borne of thought based meditation** because **they never inquire 'who let go?'** When you still have delusion and attachment and you want to let go, - can that be done? It is the **thought** that **try to let go**. '**I don't want to cling**', but the **craving** to have it is **so strong**, so how? There will be conflict within the mind isn't it? It is because your **thoughts will tell you**, 'no, this is defilement, you should not hold', but the **craving** is still there, **not rooted out** as yet. You will fall into it due to your **temptation**. Initially it is like taking bribe, 'no lah..., no lah..., not right lah'...then one day, they come and approach you in another way, then you may say, 'oh... like that ah...I think okay lah...but you keep it to yourself, otherwise we may both get into trouble'. That's **how you start to compromise**,

because the greed **not rooted out** as yet. The **thought is guilty**, because there is **right and wrong** in the **thought**. But this is **not wisdom**, with wisdom you will never compromise because **things that will lead to decay in the economy, at the expense of the economy of the country, affects the health of the country, the well-being of others - you will never do because all these got karmic implication**. Do you understand? That is the reason why you **cannot violate the precepts** and you **will understand very clearly deep inside you**. That is the reason why the **real cultivation is very different**.

How do I end up here? I was trying to explain what? No, the book was about Yoniso Manasikara, that one we had covered. No, before that, because I came to the point regarding **Yoniso Manasikara** and I said, 'you need **to have wisdom** for yoniso manasikara to be there or arise'. Never mind, later when I listen to this recording, hopefully the condition will come back and I will recall. Otherwise I cannot remember. But it's alright, we should end. Okay? And I would like to thank you all for your patience.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!** - rejoicing from the floor.

At first, I thought it will be a **very dry subject** for most of you, but, **surprisingly towards the end, you all are wide awake**. Maybe it is because **you all had started to understand** the subject matter better via me using that box and space analogy. Can you remember?

**Form does not differ from that empty space, or emptiness. And emptiness does not differ from form,** and then you can see it and agree that really the two are there. They are actually all the while there. But because **form is condition arising, causal phenomena, never real, impermanent, come and go** hence the **moment you attach, cling, give meaning, suffering will arise.** That's **why it is anattā, it is empty.** Later on, I gave the other example, then you start to understand, then you realize wah! **Heart Sutta** which appears like **so profound,** yet it can be **so simple.** Now like **very simple, isn't it?** Now you can relate and understand better, isn't it? Even via **using your rational understanding.** But quite a lot of our kalyanamittas who had followed me for some time, they had developed the cultivation and are capable of understanding the talk. And because of that they will have **a lot of joy** and they will **appreciate** it much more because they had developed the understanding already. You should thank **Bro. Swee Aun** because the **recording** is usually **very clear** and **when you listen** to this **recording again** you will have **faith** and **you will penetrate** the dhamma very fast. This sharing is the **whole of the Heart Sutta, explained so clearly,** - even in the **commentaries** you also cannot find such **clear explanation.** If you do not believe, you can go and read the commentaries and see for yourself. The book is **so thick,** and you do not know what they are trying to explain to you, unless you have wisdom.



## 4 Closing pūja

Okay we will do the **sharing of merits, transfer of merits, invoke the blessing** for our **nation** then you **all can make your aspiration** via **invoking the power** of your **merits**..... End.