



HEART SUTRA

A series of short notes compiled
from the weekly Heart Sutra cum Meditation
classes conducted by Brother Teoh Kian Koon

For free distribution (to non-Muslims only)

Donated by Kalyanamitta funds of Brother Teoh Kian Koon

Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

Dated : 19.2.2015

Heart Sutra cum Meditation Classes Short Notes

Compiled from the weekly Sunday Heart Sutra cum Meditation
Classes conducted by: Bro. Teoh Kian Koon
At Wu Pin Chen Seah, Mahayana vihara.
(Address: No. 4, Jalan 8/11,
Petaling Jaya, Selangor)

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1. Introduction

Sister Lee Siew Gaik had in the year **January 2012** invited Brother Teoh to visit Wu Pin Chen Seah (WPCS) vihara and it was during this visit that Sister Lee **had requested** Brother Teoh to **conduct** this **weekly Heart Sutra cum Meditation class** at WPCS vihara. The **1st Heart Sutra cum Meditation class** commences on the **12th Feb 2012** and it continues till the **19th May 2013** for a period of about **15 months**. This was then followed by the weekly **Satipathana Sutta cum Meditation classes**.

Initially **short notes** were taken by Sister Lee and forwarded to Bro. Teoh for **editing** before **using** it for **sharing** at the **next Heart Sutta cum Meditation class** and this was how the '**Heart Sutra cum Meditation classes' short notes** comes about. Many kalyanamittas who had attended the classes had found the short notes to be **very beneficial** and **rather useful** hence the reason why **they had suggested** that it be **compiled into a book** so that it can **also benefit others** who had the **affinity** to receive it later.

These short notes **can also helped** those of the **Theravada tradition** to have a better understanding of the **Heart Sutra teaching** of the **Mahayana tradition** because Bro. Teoh had managed **to link** the **Heart Sutra teaching** to all the **various essential dhammas** of the Buddha as **recorded** in the **Theravada tradition** so that **dhamma practitioners and cultivators** can have a **much better understanding** of **both traditions teachings** and see clearly how **they are related** to each other. Bro. Teoh had also managed **to link** and **explained clearly** how all the **essential dhammas** of the Buddha as recorded in the **Theravada tradition** comes about and how they are connected to **each other** thereby making it much easier to understand. In fact the **essence** of the Buddha's teaching is just the **Four Noble Truths** and all the other teachings (or essential dhammas) are '**branches' or 'spin'** off from it.

It has always been Bro. Teoh's **sincere intention** and **wish** that **Dhamma friends, spiritual practitioners, seekers of truth, and cultivators** will be able **to make use** of this enclosed '**Heart sutra cum meditation classes' short notes** to develop a **better** and **clearer understanding** of the **Dhamma as taught** by the Buddha so that they may **progress along the path of dhamma** to become more **virtuous** and **wiser** human beings that can be a **blessing** to all.

As these **short notes** were mostly only **important pointers** as prepared by Sister Lee for my **editing**, as such it may not be **as complete** as compared to the **recorded talks**. Hence it is hope that readers who want to benefit more will **listen** to the recordings so as to have a **clearer** and **more complete** understanding of what had been shared.

For those who want to listen to the recordings they can download the talks from the various dropbox links: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/.....> Via contacting either Sister Lee Siew Gaik at gaiksl@gmail.com or Brother Ng Swee Aun at sang47500@yahoo.com to get the dropbox links.

2. Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intention** that this 'Heart Sutta cum Meditation classes' short 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 out** in the **compilation, typing, typesetting, formatting, proof reading, etc** to make this **free distribution** of dhamma dana possible.

Special thanks should be accorded to **Sis. Lee Siew Gaik**, who **had personally** taken the **initiative** to prepare all the **short note pointers** for **my editing**, Sis. Padmasuri, Brother Tune, Sister Eng Bee, Sister Ellen Wong and Sister Mun Yuen for their **very useful** and **rather important** input thereby **enabling** this **Heart Sutra dhamma book** to have the condition to be, printed for **free distribution**.

By the **power** of all these **wholesomeness** may all beings be **well and happy, free** from all mental and physical sufferings, harms and dangers and may there be **love, peace** and **joy** - deep **within** their hearts so that the world will be much more **peaceful** with **greater harmony** always.

And may it also **paved the way** for there to be **causes and conditions** for all dhamma friends who had **donated or helped out** in one way or other to realize their **good and noble wishes/aspirations** soonest possible.

With Metta always,
By Bro. Teoh Kian Koon
(Dated: 19.2.2015)

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Heart Sutra cum Meditation classes short notes

1st Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 12 February 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken during the talk for sharing:-

Part 1 – Introduction

1.1 Definitions - *from www.answers.com* ›Library›Religion & Spirituality

Pāramitā (Sanskrit, crossed over) - In Mahāyāna Buddhism pāramitā means a 'perfection' or virtuous quality practised by a Bodhisattva in the course of his spiritual cultivation.

Prajna (Sanskrit) or **Paññā** (Pāli) means Wisdom

1.2 The Heart of Prajna Pāramitā Sutra:-

When **Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva** was practicing the **profound prajna** pāramitā, he illuminated the **5 skandhas** (or **aggregates** of form and mind) and saw that they are **all empty**, and he crossed beyond all suffering and difficulty.

Sāriputta, **form does not differ from emptiness; emptiness does not differ from form. Form itself is emptiness and emptiness itself is form.** So too are feeling, cognition, formation and consciousness.

Sāriputta, all dhammas are **empty of characteristics**. They are not produced. Not destroyed, not defiled, not pure, and they neither increase nor diminish. Therefore, **in emptiness** there is **no** form, feeling, cognition, formation, or consciousness; **no** eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind; **no** sights, sounds, smells, tastes, object of touch, or dhamma; **no** field of the eyes, up to and including **no** field of mind consciousness; and **no** ignorant or ending of ignorant, up to and including **no old age and death or ending of old age and death**. There is **no suffering, no accumulating, no extinction, no way and no understanding and no attaining**.

Because **nothing** is attained, the Bodhisattva, through reliance on prajna pāramitā, is **unimpeded** in his mind. Because there is no impediment, he is **not afraid**, and he leaves **distorted dream-thinking** far behind. Ultimately Nirvana!"

All Buddhas of the **3 periods of time** attain **Anuttarasamyaksambodhi** through reliance on **prajna pāramitā**. Therefore, know that prajna pāramitā is a great spiritual mantra, a great bright mantra, a supreme mantra, an unequalled mantra. It can remove all suffering; it is genuine and not false. That is why the mantra of prajna pāramitā was spoken. Recite it like this:

“Gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha!”

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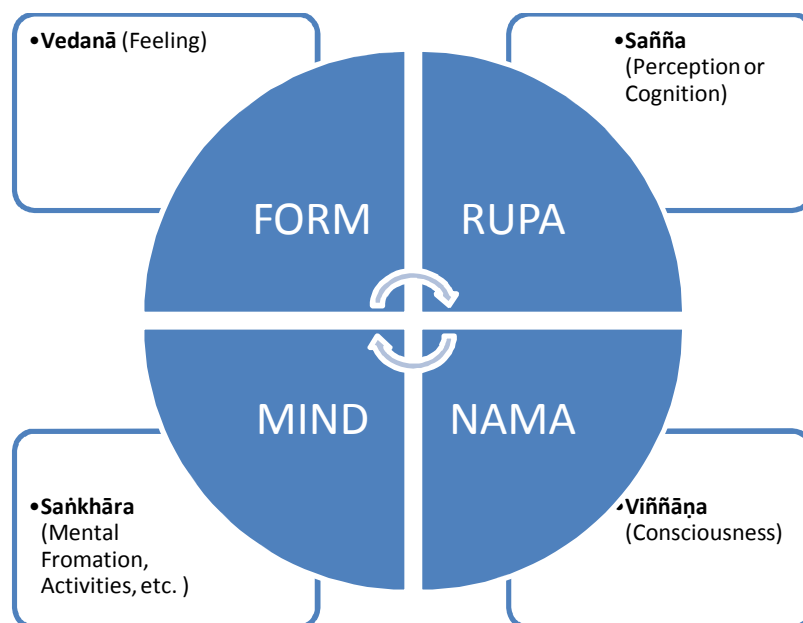
《心经》

观自在菩萨，行深般若波罗蜜多时，照见五蕴皆空，度一切苦厄，
舍利子，色不异空，空不异色，色即是空，空即是色，
受想行识，亦复如是，舍利子，是诸法空相，不生不灭，不垢不净，不增不减，
是故空中无色，无受想行识，无眼耳鼻舌身意，无色声香味触法，
无眼界，乃至无意识界，无无明，亦无无明尽，乃至无老死，亦无老死尽，
无苦集灭道，无智亦无得，以无所得故，菩提萨埵，依般若波罗蜜多故，
心无罣碍，无罣碍故，无有恐怖，远离颠倒梦想，究竟涅槃，
三世诸佛，依般若波罗蜜多故，得阿耨多罗三藐三菩提，
故知般若波罗蜜多，是大神咒，是大明咒，是无上咒，是无等等咒，
能除一切苦，真实不虚，故说般若波罗蜜多咒，即说咒曰：
揭谛揭谛 波罗揭谛 波罗僧揭谛 菩提萨婆诃。

1.3 The 5 Skandhas or Aggregates of Form and Mind – 2 aspects to it

- i. **1st aspect** - as a **human being** where the **rupa (form)** is the **physical form or body**.
- ii. Then the **2nd aspect** – as the **5 mental aggregates** where the mental rupa (forms) are **external forms** brought into mind by the aggregate of **mental perception or sañña**.

Perception or sañña is translated as **cognition** by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua in his book - “The Heart of Prajna Pāramitā Sutra”.



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Vedanā, Saññā and Saṅkhāra are contents of Consciousness.

Saṅkhāra = Mental Formation, mental activities, mental states, mental intention, mental planning, scheming, etc. = everything that the mind can do **including** feeling & perception.

Consciousness or **Viññāṇa** = receptacle or the container.

6 sense doors = Eye, Ear, nose, tongue, bodily tactile and mind doors.

Part 2 – Meditation And Important Essential Dhammas

2.1 The **5 mental hindrances** that **hinders** the mind from becoming peaceful and aware within are:- sensual desire, ill will, sloth & torpor (sleepiness/lethargic mind), restlessness of mind & doubt. To counter it we need to cultivate the opposite 5 spiritual faculties;

2.2 The opposite **5 spiritual faculties** are:- saddhā (faith), viriya (spiritual zeal), sati (mindfulness), samādhi (collectedness & unwavering mind) and Paññā (wisdom);

2.3 **Five daily reflections or contemplations** (leading to **initial** wisdom):-

- i. This **body** of ours is of the nature to **grow old & decay** for it has **not gone** beyond old age & decay;
- ii. This **body** of ours is of the nature to be **diseased & get sick** for it has **not gone** beyond disease & sickness;
- iii. This **body** of ours is of the nature to **die** for it has **not gone** beyond death;
- iv. All **that is dear to us** (our loved ones, our wealth, possessions, etc.) are **impermanent** and **conditions arising** hence they will **separate from us** one day;
- v. We are all **born** of our kamma, **heir** to our kamma, **conditioned and supported** by our kamma and **we are what we are because of our kamma**.

2.4 **Meaning of craving, meditation and attachment or clinging**

Craving = wanting things your way; 'Reacting to' = **craving leading** to suffering;

Meditation = listening/hearing/reading + contemplation + 'direct seeing' leading to awakening;

Attachment = **Grasping** or **clinging** via delusion - condition suffering.

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2nd Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 19 February 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 The 10 Perfections or Pāramitā (of the Theravāda tradition)

Dāna	-	giving/generosity
Sīla	-	morality
Nekkhamma	-	renunciation
Paññā	-	wisdom
Viriya	-	spiritual zeal or strong tenacity/energy to cultivate
Khanti	-	patience
Sacca	-	truthfulness
Adhiṭṭhāna	-	aspiration or resolution/self determination
Mettā	-	loving kindness
Upekkhā	-	equanimity

These are the **10 perfections** that the Bodhisattva who is intent to be a Sammā Saṃbuddha must cultivate and perfect.

1.2 The Six Perfections or Pāramitās (of the Mahāyāna tradition)

Dāna	-	giving/generosity	Sīla	-	precepts/morality
Khanti	-	patience	Viriya	-	vigor/spiritual zeal
Dhyana	-	samādhi	Prajna	-	wisdom

1.3 Words of wisdom by the Buddha - extracted from the Dhammapada Verses on avoiding all evil, do good and purify the mind via having the right view with regards to the Law of Karma:-

Verse 1: Mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is chief. Everything arises from the mind. So, if one speaks, acts and thinks with a wicked/unwholesome mind, then **suffering** will follow one like the wheel that follows the hoof of the ox.

Verse 2: Mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is chief. Everything arises from the mind. So, if one speaks, acts and thinks with a pure/wholesome mind, then **happiness** will follow one like the shadow that never leaves him.

Verse 183: All evils have to be avoided. Cultivate whatever good when there are conditions and purify the mind. This is the advice of all Buddhas.

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Dhammapada Verses 21, 22 & 23 on heedfulness (Appamādavagga)

Verse 21: Heedfulness is the path to the **deathless**, **heedlessness** is the path to **death**. The heedful do not die; the heedless are as if dead.

Verse 22: Distinctly understanding this difference, the **wise intent** on heedfulness and rejoices in the realm of the Ariyas or the enlightened ones.

Verse 23: The constantly meditative, the ever mindful and the steadfast one realizes the bond-free Nibbāna.

1.4 Buddha's advice before his Parinibbāna:

“Appamādena Sampādetha- “STRIVES ON WITH HEEDFULNESS.”

Note: The Heedful, never die (eternal life, spiritually); The Heedless are as if dead spiritually.

1.5 Final summary of the 1st Noble Truth of Dukkha

In short it is **the attachment** or **grasping** and **clinging** to the 5 **grasping aggregates** (or upādāna khandas) of Form + Mind via one's delusion or ignorance that I call **Dukkha**.

“The word **dukkha** (or Sanskrit dukkha) is one of those Pāli terms that **cannot** be translated adequately into English, by one word, for no English word covers the same ground as dukkha in Pāli. Suffering, ill will, anguish, unsatisfactoriness are some favorite renderings; the words: pain, misery, sorrow, conflict, and so forth, are also used. The word dukkha, however, includes all that, and more than that.” (Ref. pg 37 of The Buddha's Ancient Path, by Piyadassi Thera)

1.6 The 7 Factors of Enlightenment or Satta Bojjhaṅga

Sati or **mindfulness** is the 1st of the **7 Factors of Enlightenment** followed by the **investigation of Dhamma** or **Dhammavicaya** which is the 2nd factor of enlightenment. **Without sati**, one cannot be **heedful** or **ever mindful**. Hence, one **cannot** investigate the dhamma. That is the reason why **Sati** or **heedfulness** is **very important**, for **Sati is Life** because the **heedless are as if dead**.

With Sati one can **investigate** the Dhamma and if it is the truth then, this Dhamma can stand up to investigation hence giving rise to the strong **faith** in the Buddha then **Viriya** or **spiritual zeal**, which is the 3rd enlightenment factor will arise thereby enabling one to cultivate the dhamma according to the Buddha's advice. Sati will then stabilize and **Pīti** or the **spiritual joy** which is the 4th factor of enlightenment will arise. Once **Pīti** is stabilised and becomes more **refined**, it will cumulate into **Passaddhi** or **tranquility** which is the 5th factor of enlightenment. With Passaddhi becoming more and more stable, the mind will cumulate into **Samādhi** (a stable **collected** and **unwavering mind**), which is the 6th enlightenment factor. With Sati and Samādhi in place, **wisdom** or **Paññā** will keep on arising giving rise to the last or 7th enlightenment factor which is **equanimity** or **Upekkhā**.

Note: Samādhi = a stable, collected & unwavering mind that does not waver at the moment of sense experiences while in the midst of life.

1.7 The three Universal Characteristics:-

- i. Anicca (Impermanence);
- ii. Dukkha (Suffering); and
- iii. Anattā (Non- self and empty nature/not a permanent unchanging entity).

1.8 The 5 Universal Laws or Orders (Pañca Niyāmas) that govern all of Life and Existence in this Universe are:-

First **2 scientific** laws of -

- i. **Utu Niyāma** or the **Physical Law** of Nature and
- ii. **Bīja Niyāma** or the **Biological Order** of nature;

Next **3 spiritual** Laws of Nature of -

- iii. **Kamma Niyāma** or the Law of Kamma;
- iv. **Citta Niyāma** or the Law of the Mind and
- v. **Dhamma Niyāma** or the Law of Truth/Dhamma as taught by the Buddha.

Understanding these 3 spiritual laws that **govern all of our Life and Existence** will give rise to the 3 **important right views** as taught by the Buddha in his **Noble 8-Fold Path** i.e. **Right view** with regards to the:

- i. **Law of Kamma** - (i.e. 'You reap what you sow; Do good begets good and Do evil begets evil' and 'You are born of your kamma, heir to your kamma, conditioned and supported by your kamma and you are what you are because of your kamma', etc.);
- ii. **Law of the Mind** - (i.e. The 12 Links (Dependent Origination) or paṭicca-samuppāda);
- iii. **Law of the Dhamma** (i.e. The 4 Noble Truths, 5 aggregates of Form & Mind, the 5 spiritual faculties, etc.)

Understanding these **3 great spiritual laws** is likened to **understanding** the **secret of Life**, giving rise to the **wisdom** to enable one to **truly live** life. Having these right views will lead to the understanding of **non-delusion, non-attachment, non-grasping** and **non-clinging** etc., hence **freeing** and **liberating** one's mind from all suffering.

These Panca Niyāmas can also be explained by the **4 aspects of Dhamma** as explained by **Ajahn Buddhadasa**:

- i. **1st Aspect**: there is **Nature**;
- ii. **2nd Aspect**: there are **laws that govern** Nature;
- iii. **3rd Aspect**: there is a **right duty** that one must perform towards these laws that govern nature;
- iv. **4th aspect**: reaping the **fruit of one's hard work** after having **performed** that duty.

1.9 The 3 Evil roots or 3 Poisons of Greed, Hatred and Delusion are:-

- i. **Lobha** - (which includes all of your **greed, selfishness, lust, cravings, covetousness, desire, deceitfulness, cunningness, etc.**);
- ii. **Dosa** - (which includes all of your **hatred, anger, aversion, envy, jealousy, dislike, negative emotions, sorrow, lamentation, grief, etc.**); &
- iii. **Moha** - (which is **self delusion** or **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** that conditions one's **egoic** mind to arise the **3 evil roots** of lobha, dosa, and moha leading to all the egoic personality of selfishness, craving, fear, worry, anxiety, etc.).

They are the **roots** of all **Evils**. If you have them in your mind or consciousness, then it will **condition** and **cause** you to become a **very evil person**. So it is **very important** to develop the training of the mind via meditation to be **always heedful** so that we can be **aware** of our **mental intentions** all the time and if there is any of the **3 evil roots**, then we should arise **the appropriate right effort** to either **abandon it or prevent** it from arising. Otherwise, it will condition us into **negativity** leading to all the **suffering**. As they are also called the **3 poisons**, they **will kill us** (spiritually) if we allow them **to stay** in our mind.

1.10 Seeing beyond form and understanding Nibbāna

To develop **basic wisdom**, one must have the ability to **see form 'as they are'** and the **unreality** of form via its **condition arising, its impermanence, suffering** and **non-self/empty nature** leading to our ability to **'see' beyond form**. Inability to see beyond form will result in **form delusion** because one will **grasp** at **external** forms via one's **own delusion** caused by **identification** with **external forms**, thinking that **they are all so real**. As form **divides, so** once we identify via identification with – let's say our external form, which is the **physical body** then one will create the **attachment** to this body via delusion hence **worrying** about it getting **old, falling sick** and **dying**. It can also create **duality** of male and female gender; race identification; young and old or age identification, etc. leading to all the unnecessary fear, worries, anxieties, possibility of conflict and arguments caused by external form identification and division.

Unless you have the **ability to see beyond form**, chances are you will not be able to **see mind** because mind is much **more subtle** and **intangible** than the **solid** external forms. And **unless** you can see 'mind' (the mundane mind) **as it is** via the **silent mind** in **Sati, true wisdom cannot** arise. For **Nibbāna** is cessation of Form & Mind.

So **learn to see** Form, the **unreality of form** then **learn** to see **beyond form** leading to your ability to see the **mundane mind** clearly. This can then lead to the **realization** of the **impermanence** and **empty nature** of the **mundane or thinking mind** leading to the ability to see **beyond the mundane mind** via the **silent mind** to realize one's **true nature which is beyond thought** and **beyond mind!** At the **mundane mind** level, one **still clings on** to **one's views** and **opinions** and **religious labels** etc. hence the division again - at mind level leading to all the conflicts and argument caused by one's delusion as before.

Note: Words divide via **form and thought identifications** due to **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** and ignorant. Hence only if one **'can see things as they are'** – i.e. via the direct seeing **without words, concepts** and **labelling**, etc. only then there is no more **form** and **thought delusion** to condition **one's grasping** and **clinging** leading to all the suffering.

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That is if you **cannot see form** and the **unreality of form**, then you **will not be able** to see **beyond form**. And everything you **come to perceive** via your **mundane** mind (which is consciousness only) will be **like so 'real'** and **so 'meaningful'** to you hence the **delusion** or **sakkāya-diṭṭhi**. Also Dhammapada Verses 1 and 2 said: - 'Mind is the forerunner of all things & mind is chief and everything arise from the mind.' so one must be wary of mind.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 2

2.1 Definitions:

Thus have I heard - implies **Suchness** or **Thusness** of things! Or **Tathatā**!

The Buddha is also called the '**Tathāgata**' – meaning He is the Tathāgata who is an expert in **Tathatā** or **Suchness**.

The Buddha understands 'truth' as it is because **Truth IS!** - The **ISness** of things or **Suchness** via accepting "**What IS**".

2.2 Important quotations from Sixth Patriarch (Hui Neng)'s Platform Sutra

i. Introduction

One day while delivering firewood to a store, Hui Neng heard a customer reciting the **Diamond Sutra** and has an awakening when he heard the stanza "**The mind must have no dwelling**". He immediately inquires about the sutra and decides to seek out the **Fifth Patriarch, Hongren** at his monastery on Huang Mei Mountain. Hui Neng then embarks on his journey, and after travelling for thirty days on foot, he arrives at Huang Mei Mountain where the 5th Patriarch was residing.

ii. From the first chapter of the **Ming canon version** of the **Platform Sutra**:

The 5th Patriarch asked me, "**Who are you and what do you seek?**"

I replied, 'Your disciple is a **commoner** from Xinzhou of Lingnan. I have travelled far to **pay homage** to you and seek **nothing other than Buddhahood.**' "

So you're from Lingnan, a southerner and a barbarian! How can you expect to become a Buddha?" asked the 5th Patriarch.

I replied, 'Although **people exist as** northerners and southerners, in the **Buddha-nature** there is neither north nor south. A barbarian **differs** from Your Holiness **physically**, but what difference is there in our **Buddha-nature?**'

Master Hongren the 5th Patriarch immediately asks him to do chores in the rice mill. Hui Neng chops wood and pounds rice at the monastery for the next eight months.

iii. Becoming the Sixth Patriarch

One day, Master Hongren announced,

The question of **incessant rebirth** is a momentous one. Day after day, instead of trying to free yourselves from this **bitter sea of life and death**, you seem to go after **tainted merits only** (i.e. merits which will cause rebirth). Yet merits will be of no help **if your Essence of Mind** is **obscured**. Go and seek **Prajna (wisdom)** in your own mind and then write me a stanza (gatha) about it. He who **understands** what the **Essence of Mind** is

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will be given the robe (the **insignia** of the **Patriarchship**) and the **Dhamma** (the ultimate teaching of the Chán school), and I shall make him the **Sixth Patriarch**. Go away quickly. Delay not in writing the stanza, as **deliberation** is **quite unnecessary** and of **no use**. The man who has **realized the Essence of Mind** can speak of it at once, as soon as he is spoken to about it; and he cannot lose sight of it, even when engaged in battle.

However, the disciples said to each other that they didn't need to write any gatha, and that surely their teacher and head monk, Venerable Shen Xiu, would become the Sixth Patriarch. So only Shen Xiu wrote a gatha for Master Hongren but as the head monk, Shen Xiu was **well respected** and **under great pressure** to produce a gatha that would qualify him as the next patriarch. However, he was **uncertain** as to his own understanding, and eventually decided to write a poem **anonymously** on the wall in the middle of the night, announcing his authorship only if Master Hongren approved of it. It stated:

身是菩提樹， The body is like a Bodhi tree,
心如明鏡臺。 The mind a mirror bright on a stand,
時時勤拂拭， Polish until it shines,
勿使惹塵埃。 So that no dust can alight.

When the disciples saw this gatha on the wall, there was a great stir but when Master Hongren saw it, he told them, "**Practise according to this gatha, you will not fall into the evil realms, and you will receive great benefits. Light incense and pay respect to this gatha, recite it and you will see your essential nature.**"

All the disciples **praised** and **memorized** the gatha.

However, privately, Master Hongren told Shen Xiu, "You have arrived at the **Gate of Enlightenment**, but haven't entered it. With this level of understanding, you still have **no idea** what the **supreme Bodhi mind** is. Upon hearing my words, you should immediately recognize the **original mind, the essential nature**, which is **unborn** and **unceasing**. **At all times see it clearly in every thought, with the mind free from all hindrances**. In the **One Reality, everything is real**, and all phenomena **are just as they are**."

Master Hongren asked Shen Xiu to compose **another gatha** that demonstrated true understanding. Shen Xiu tried hard but couldn't come up with another verse.

When a young novice passed the rice mill reciting Shen Xiu's gatha, Hui Neng immediately knew this verse **lacked true insight**. He went to the wall, and asked a district officer there to write a poem of his own for him. The officer was surprised, "How extraordinary! You are **illiterate**, and you want **to compose** a gatha?"

Whereupon Hui Neng said, "If you seek **supreme** enlightenment, **do not** slight anyone. The lowest class may have great insights, and the highest class may commit foolish acts." In veneration, the officer wrote Hui Neng's gatha on the wall for him, next to Shen Xiu's, which stated:

菩提本無樹， 'Bodhi is fundamentally **without** any tree,
明鏡亦非臺。 The mind is **neither** a stand nor a mirror bright;

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本來無一物， **Originally** there was **nothing**,

何處惹塵埃。 Where can any dust alight?'

Hui Neng then went back to rice pounding. However, this gatha created a **bigger stir**; everyone was saying, "**Amazing!** You can't judge a person by his looks! Maybe he will become a **living bodhisattva** soon!" However, when the Master Hongren came out, he just casually said, "This hasn't seen the **essential nature either**," and proceeded to wipe the gatha off with his shoe. The 5th Patriarch then went secretly to the room where the rice was pounded. Seeing that Hui Neng was working there with a stone pestle, he said to him, "**A seeker of the Path risks his life for the Dhamma, should he not do so?**"

The 5th Patriarch then asked, "**Is the rice ready?**"

Hui Neng replied, 'Ready **long ago**, only waiting for the **sieve**.'

The 5th Patriarch then knocked the mortar thrice with his stick and left.

Knowing what the 5th Patriarch meant, in the mid-night at the 3rd watch, Hui Neng went to the 5th Patriarch's room.

That night Master Hongren received Hui Neng in his abode, and **expounded** the **Diamond Sutra** to him. When he came to the passage, "**to use the mind yet be free from any attachment**," Hui Neng came to **great enlightenment**—that **all dhammas** are **inseparable** from the **self nature**.

He exclaimed, "How **amazing** that the **self nature** is **originally pure!** How **amazing** that the **self nature** is **unborn** and **undying!** How **amazing** that the **self nature** is **inherently complete!** How **amazing** that the **self nature** **neither** moves nor stays! How **amazing** that **all dhammas** come from this **self nature!**"

Master Hongren told Hui Neng, "**If one recognizes the original mind and the original nature, he is called a great man, teacher of gods and humans, and a Buddha.**" He passed the robe and begging bowl as a symbol of the **Dhamma Seal of Sudden Enlightenment** to Hui Neng.

Although this story is as clearly stated as it can be, it should also be noted that Hui Neng was not permitted to make himself known as the Sixth Patriarch until later on. This was due to the fear that his fellow monks might be angered and harm him, that he had been made the Sixth Patriarch and **not Shen Xiu** or one of the other monks who had **seniority** over him.

Bro. Teoh. 18/2/2012.

3rd Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 26 February 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Question 1: Why must we go through the **introductions** by Master Hsuan Hua instead of going into the Heart Sutra teaching direct?

Bro. Teoh: A very good question. It will be like building a high-rise building without having a stable foundation. As I have explained, the Heart Sutra is a **very profound** teaching and it must be understood that **without** a proper foundation being taught to you, it is almost near to impossible to understand this teaching unless some of you have had **some very strong past cultivation** to help support you in the understanding of this sutra. Hence this is the reason why I started off by introducing to you the **final summary** of the 1st Noble Truth of Dukkha followed by an in-depth explanation of the meaning of the **2 aspects of the 5 aggregates of Form and Mind** in the 1st Heart Sutra class. This is to help establish a basis for you to understand the great **similarity** between Sākyamuni Buddha's teaching and that of the Heart Sutra as expounded by Kuan Yin Bodhisattva. Both teachers emphasized the **importance of understanding the 5 aggregates of Form and Mind and why they are all empty?** i.e. **Anattā and Suññatā**.

The introduction by Master Hsuan Hua also explained how **wonderful and full of wisdom** this sutra is and also why it is so important to read through this sutra **diligently many times** because **each repetition will reveal** to the reader a **new depth** or a **new level** of understanding thus bringing about **immeasurable benefits**. In a book 10 times its length, one could not fully praise its value as a key to **the understanding of human Life**. Hence the famous saying, **"True emptiness is wonderful existence."** i.e. understanding **True emptiness** can lead to **deep understanding of human Life**, hence **Life or Existence** will become **very meaningful** and **very wonderful** once this Heart Sutra wisdom has been developed.

Master Hsuan Hua also stressed on the importance of **real spiritual understanding** rather than deep learning or 'knowledge' based understanding only as a true **prerequisite** for expounding this Heart Sutra. The main concern of the Heart sutra and all the other sutras that the Buddha had spoken is simply **the Life and Death of living beings**.

Answering questions like:-

Why must we avoid all evil, do good and purify our mind? Why are we born and where will we go when we die? What we must do while here? How we can stop our suffering and find true happiness for ourselves and others? What is death? What dies and who dies? Who are you? And what are you? What is Life – how to understand its meaning and purpose?

1.2 Question 2: Why must we also study the 6th Patriarch's platform sutra?

Bro. Teoh: As the Heart sutra teaching is so profound because it is **beyond** thought, **beyond** mind and **beyond** the **conditioned world**, hence we need to understand the 6th Patriarch's platform sutra especially so - the 2 famous poems as written by Shen Xiu and Hui Neng. Only then can we **go beyond mind** to understand the **Heart Sutra** which is **so abstract** with sayings like "Form is emptiness and emptiness is form" and "Therefore in emptiness there is no form, feeling, etc..... ; no eyes, ears,; no sights, sounds,; no field of eyes, up to and including no field of mind consciousness; no ignorance or ending of ignorance, up to and including no old age, sickness and death or ending of it and no 4 Noble Truths; and no understanding and no attaining etc....."

1.3 6th patriarch's Platform Sutra

Base on his poem then, Shen Xiu has yet to realize the **true mind** hence his **inability** to comprehend the **higher dhamma as realized** by Hui Neng. The reason being he is using the **mundane mind** to cultivate hence the **delusion**. In my 2nd and this 3rd Heart Sutra classes recap, I dealt in more detail into Hui Neng's Platform Sutra and I also taught you **how to see form**, the **unreality of form**, its **condition arising** or **impermanent nature** and it's **non-self** and **empty nature** so as to enable you to develop the wisdom to **finally see beyond form**. This is then followed by the same understanding that **all** the other **4 aggregates** of mind (Vedanā, Sañña, Saṅkhāra and Viññāṇa) are also **impermanent**, causes **suffering** and are **empty**. Only then can you start to develop the understanding of why 'Form is emptiness and emptiness is Form'.

Mundane Life with and without Spiritual understanding

We can be very successful in life both **financially** and **career wise** (both are mundane aspects of Life) but without the **spiritual understanding** we are still **vulnerable** and many things can still **afflict** us especially so the **1st Noble Truth's 8 conditions** which are also the **realities of Life and Existence**. This is the reason why the Buddha renounced the world once he saw the **4 signs** of an old man, a very sick man, a dead man and a **Samaṇa** or a renounced holy person in robe. The then Buddha-to-be realized that he had a problem with regards to old age, sickness and death hence He seeks the spiritual understanding **to gain the wisdom** to free himself from these problems. He then developed the **Spiritual understanding** and became a Sammā Saṃbuddha underneath the Bodhi tree. Without the **true spiritual understanding or wisdom**, one cannot be free from all suffering because one can still have **fear, worry** and **anxiety** etc. via one's **own self-delusion** which will condition one to cling onto and grasp at one's 5 aggregates of Form and Mind. Hence one should realize the **importance** of cultivating the **spiritual understanding** via Meditation as taught by the Buddha to enable one to live the **noble Life** of Love, Peace, Joy and Harmony. Only then is there no more fear, worries, anxieties, unhappiness and suffering, etc. The **spiritual understanding** will lead to **non-delusion** and **wisdom** enabling one to clearly understand who you are, what you are and how human beings function and eventually leading to enlightenment in the here and the now.

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1.4 In the recap, Bro. Teoh emphasized on the following:-

- i. The importance of understanding Dhammapada Verses 1, 2, 183, 21, 22 and 23 and the **final advice of the Buddha** before his parinibbāna. Once one comprehends these verses, one will understand the importance of training the mind to be **heedful** and **ever mindful**. One will like 'wake up' from their deluded dream state via seeing the **danger** of **heedlessness** and one will then be **very serious about life** to develop the cultivation;
- ii. The **danger of letting** these **3 Evil Roots of greed, hatred and delusion** (which are the roots of all evil) from **manifesting** in our heart;
- iii. The **importance** of **arising** the **4 right efforts** to **root out** the 3 evil roots and the 5 mental hindrances;
- iv. The **importance of cultivating** the **5 spiritual faculties** to **overcome** the 5 mental hindrances of mind.

Notes:

1. Under kāyānupassanā, there is a category of cultivation called **Sati Sampajañña** (mindfulness and the 4 types of clear comprehensions) of every action and movement in the present moment. This is the **most important cultivation** needed to stabilize one's sati or mindfulness via the **daily mindfulness cultivation**. Hence this is the reason why Bro. Teoh always says, "Life itself is the real meditation and Life is our true teacher."
2. The 4 types of clear comprehensions are: clear comprehension of **sincerity of purpose**; clear comprehension of **domains of meditation**; Clear comprehension of **suitability** and clear comprehension of **non-delusion**.
3. The Domains of meditation means one can meditate in any posture, anywhere, any place and anytime under any circumstances.
4. Anything (external form) that is created by mind via perception is only **a mental image** - it comes and it goes hence it is impermanent, not so real and empty. To cling onto it is obviously a delusion. Form is never a problem if we know how to **use the mind (without any attachment and delusion) to understand it**.
5. Cultivating the **3 turnings** of the **Four Noble Truths** as taught by the Buddha leading to the 3 types of corresponding wisdom called Suttamaya Paññā; Cintamaya Paññā and Bhāvanāmaya Paññā is very important. For details, please refer to Bro. Teoh's dhamma notes on "Understanding the Meditation as taught by the Buddha."

4th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 4 March 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation

1.1 Emphasis on the previous lesson

- i. **Emptiness** (or **Suññatā** in Pāḷi) is a term frequently used in the Mahāyāna tradition verse the term **non-self** (or **Anattā** in Pāḷi) which is the **equivalent term** that is frequently used in the Theravāda tradition.
- ii. Importance of **understanding** why our **physical form** and all **external forms** can also be expressed as Form is **impermanent**, brings about **suffering** if we deludedly cling onto it without understanding its **empty or anattā nature**. To understand it clearly, we must have the **ability** to see **its manifestation** via **mind's perception** with **clear mindfulness** to **recognize** it as **condition arising phenomena**. Hence, it is **not a permanent unchanging entity** that we can cling onto or hold onto as the "I" and the "Me" or own as the "Mine" thus seeing it as empty (**Suññatā/Anattā**) because it has **no apparent reality**. Also a cultivator needs to develop the **wisdom to understand** why "**Form** is external manifestation of **mind**" via a **clear and stable daily mindfulness cultivation**.
- iii. **Form delusion** can be very powerful. Hence if you **can't see form, you can't see mind** because **Form** is **much grosser** whereas **mind** is **very subtle**. However with **wisdom borne** of the **direct seeing**, form and mind **delusion** will cease to be, leading to Enlightenment in the here and the now.
- iv. Definition of **Samaṇa**. A **Samaṇa** is a renounced holy person in the robe seriously cultivating the Buddha dhamma as taught by the Buddha. He or she is also usually referred to as one who is already enlightened. The term is used as opposed to the other term **Brahmins** who studied the Vedas during the time of Sākyamuni Buddha.

To a Samaṇa, spiritual understanding is very important because without spiritual understanding, one cannot be free. One cannot understand the **problems** and **realities** of life and existence. There is a recently printed dhamma book for free distribution by W.A.V.E. and the title of the book is "**Samaṇa**" – on the Life of the late **Luangta MahaBoowa**. Our kalyāṇamitta fund has also donated towards its printing for free distribution hence we are given some copies of these books for free distribution from W.A.V.E. and anyone who is interested in having a copy can request it from Bro. Teoh.

1.2 In the recap, Bro. Teoh re-emphasized on the following important dhammas: -

- i. The **importance** of understanding "**True emptiness is wonderful existence**" leading to our ability **to live** Life **meaningfully** and to **the fullest**;
- ii. **True blessing** comes from your own cultivation **via karmic inheritance** and nothing else. i.e. not due to your luck, Fong Sui etc.;
- iii. The importance of cultivating a **very stable Sati or mindfulness** leading to **Heedfulness** or **Appamāda** throughout the day;

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- iv. Importance of **repentance** and asking for **forgiveness sincerely**. When you forgive someone, you actually **free yourself** from the evil roots of anger, hatred and delusion.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 4 (Introduction One – pg x to xii of Master Hsuan Hua's commentary)

2.1 Master Hsuan Hua's very unique birth and life history:-

“On Kuan Yin Bodhisattva's birthday, the Master dreamed that an old woman wearing a patchwork robe and a string of beads appeared to guide him.....”

This unique birth and life history of Master Hsuan Hua, provided the conditions for Bro. Teoh to also share a bit of his **unique spiritual affinities** and **encounters** with **Kuan Yin Bodhisattva** in his early years and the details are as described by him during the sharing on that day. For details, please refer to the web link that contains the recording as produced by Bro. Swee Aun.

In 1986, Bro. Teoh and his whole family took refuge under Master Hsuan Hua and apart from taking the 5 precepts, the other condition is to finish the **10,000 bows of reciting “Homage to thee, my original teacher Namō Sākyamuni Buddha”** within 3 months (Bro Teoh completed it within less than 2 months). According to Bro. Teoh, this bowing, if done **mindfully** and with very strong **saddhā or faith** and **virīya or the spiritual zeal**, can lead one to a **very stable daily mindfulness very quickly**.

2.2 Question 1: Is **bowing another technique** to develop **mindfulness** that is similar to walking and sitting meditation?

The **understanding** of it is very important. There is not much meaning to your cultivation if you just **follow** instructions **without understanding**. You must understand **why you bow?** And **what you are doing** in the name of meditation? i.e. do not just follow the instructions to do certain things via **any method or technique**, etc. thinking that **when you are doing all that** then you are meditating. The real Meditation as taught by the Buddha **cannot begin** unless one has developed the training of the mind to **be Heedful with Sati** or **mindfulness within**. The various **objects of meditation** used in conjunction with the various methods and techniques are **only initial skilful means** used to **train** the mind so that it is **not heedlessly lost in thought** most of the time. The main purpose of the **object of meditation** is to **anchor the mind to it** so that it is **always** in the **moment, mindful** and **aware** of the **object of meditation** without thought. Once this training is done the **trained mind** will be **silent** with **awareness within** and such a mind is in the **meditative state** to “**see things as they are**” **without any concepts, ideas or words**.

When the above is **understood** then any **method or technique** can also be used to **train** the mind to be **heedful initially** but finally we need to develop the **ultimate meditative mind** with **silent inner awareness** (where the mind must have **no dwelling** as per the diamond sutra). Then one **must let go of the meditation object** and **silent one's mind** to develop the more **refined mindfulness within**. It is just like swimming - the float is just like an **initial skilful means** (object of meditation) to help keep one afloat and as long as one still holds onto the float then one will never understand the actual swimming because to swim **with the float** and **without the float** are two totally different experiences.

Bowing or reverential salutation is 1 of the 10 **meritorious actions** and it is a **very important virtue** that comes with so **many benefits** and **advantages**. It is part of the opening and

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closing **pūjā** or **devotional practices** as recommended by the Buddha to help one establish the **faith** or **saddhā** in the Buddha and his teaching followed by **the spiritual zeal** or **virīya** and the development of **sati or mindfulness** (which is the 3rd spiritual faculty). One can then bow **mindfully** and with **understanding** via a **composed mind** with **strong saddhā** and **virīya**.

Bowing is **not** idol worshiping but instead it is **reverential salutation** done out of **great respect** and **gratitude** for someone who has **taught us so well** like the Buddha who is the **fully Enlightened one**, perfect in wisdom and virtues. Since it is a **meritorious action**, the field of merits is **immeasurable** if it is done with understanding to the worthy or enlightened ones. Such merits can be made use of, to arise the causes and conditions for us to progress quickly along the path of dhamma via invoking the power of merits.

Apart from helping us to develop the spiritual faculties of **saddhā, virīya and sati**, bowing can also help us to cultivate **humility** and **help exercise** our body while establishing ourselves in **mindfulness training**. Also according to the Buddha, 4 things grow if we pay respect **sincerely to our elders and worthy ones**.

The 4 things are; “**ayu, vanno, sukhaṃ and balaṃ.**”

Their meanings are: **ayu** = long life; **vanno** = fair complexion; **sukhaṃ** = happiness; and **balaṃ** = strength (both spiritual and physical). All these **4 blessings** are very **important** in Life.

2.3 Question 2: Can you show us how to do the bowing? Is it the Theravāda tradition’s 5 point prostration or the Mahāyāna’s way of standing up then going down to prostrate and come up again?

Bro. Teoh: Whichever way that suits you more, use it. The most important thing is, when you bow, do it **mindfully**, with very **strong faith** and **virīya** and do it with proper **understanding**. Always remember, one can only do one thing at a time, that is, **either you are mindful with the moment in silent awareness without thought** or you are **lost in thought** hence **heedless**. Bowing mindfully means **body and mind** move as **one in harmony without thought**. When the mind is composed and without the **5 hindrances** of mind, **mindfulness** will be there naturally. So develop the **faith, compose** the mind then chant the salutation to **Sākyamuni Buddha** and then **bow mindfully** to develop the **sati or mindfulness** within. After a while - if you are **sincere, patient** and doing it with **understanding** then it can bring about the **conditions** for **sati or mindfulness** to arise. **Mindfulness** arises through **understanding** and **perseverance** and when **mindfulness is firmly established**, there will be **so much joy**. The mind is **so silent, so light, so composed, so still, yet fully aware within throughout** the day. In every movement and every action, there is so much **clarity** and **awareness** within the heart. It then starts to **see things as they are** and **direct knowledge and vision** of the **reality** keep on arising. Things that are there all this while (its **3 universal characteristics** of anicca, dukkha and anattā etc.) – which the **normal** living beings **never** ‘see’ suddenly become very clear. This is the reason why Bro. Teoh always said to us, “**Truth is everywhere – in the midst of Life and Nature, why can’t you see? For those who ‘see’ they always see.**”

2.4 Question 3: Are the teachings of our 3 great Buddhist traditions of Theravāda, Mahāyāna and the Vajrayana all the same or are they different?

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Bro. Teoh: The **essence** of the Buddha's teachings like the **Four Noble Truths** which includes the **Noble 8-Fold Path** are essentially all the same for all the 3 traditions. It is only how **they approach it that makes it** appear to be very different because of different commentaries and interpretation of suttas via words and terminologies used and all these complicate the matter further as **words are subjected** to various **interpretations**. What is more important is, **not to argue** and **create any unnecessary divisions** and **misunderstanding** within the various traditions but instead to **have an open mind** and **avoid all negativities**. **Make use of** whatever that is **relevant and suitable** for each of us **to progress** along the path of dhamma following the Buddha's advice to the Kalamas as stated in the Kalama Sutta. **Harmony, Love and Understanding** following the **Noble 8-Fold Path** to resolve **all issues amicably** is very important – i.e. no more negativity.

2.5 Question 4: Can you explain the difference between the 'Pure Land teaching that talks about the **Western Paradise**' and '**Nibbāna** as taught by Sākyamuni Buddha'?

Bro. Teoh: Pure Land teaching is based on **Amitabha Buddha's great vows** which created the **Pure Land** (also called the **Western Paradise**) for those **disciples or cultivators** who have the **affinity with him** to continue with their cultivation or perfection. By virtue of **Amitabha Buddha** and all the **other great Bodhisattvas** (like **Kuan Yin, Manjusri** etc.)'s great cultivation, their **vows are so powerful** because of their **wisdom and perfections**. Hence, **this leads to their great vows being integrated** into **nature's law** thereby enabling their vows to have a **very special effect** to create such Pure Land and thus **helping the cultivators** or **their disciples** who know how to **connect directly** to their vows without themselves having to be there or at any specific place to help.

This Pure Land or the Western Paradise is in the **hearts** of those who have **developed the cultivation** and have the **ability to connect** directly to Amitabha Buddha's vows via **their silent mind** with **very strong faith** while chanting Amitabha Buddha's name or mantra. (**Chant until no one is chanting** i.e. **the vibration** and the **mind has become one in perfect harmony** and **synchrony**.)

The Pure Land or the Western paradise is **not within** the **31 planes of Existence** as taught by the Sākyamuni Buddha.

2.6 Question 5: What are these 31 planes of Existence?

Bro. Teoh: According to Theravāda tradition, the **31 Planes of Existence** are the realms within saṃsara or existence where living beings have **to undergo birth and death** following their **kamma**. It can also be called the 3 worlds:

- i. The **Formless world** or **Arūpa Loka** - 4 Realms (realms of neither perception nor non-perception; nothingness; infinite consciousness and infinite space.)
- ii. The **Form world** or **Rūpa Loka** - 16 Brahma realms
- iii. The **Sensual world** or **Kama Loka** - 6 Deva or heavenly realms + 1 human realm + 4 woeful or suffering realms

The sensual realms are further divided into:

- i. **Suffering world of the sensual realms or Kama dugati** and they are the 4 woeful realms of demons, animals, petas or hungry ghosts and the hell beings;

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- ii. **Kama Sugati** or the **sensual realm of happiness** which is the human realm and the 6 deva realms.

The Mahāyāna called it the **6 realms of birth and death** with the 1 human realm + 4 woeful realms remaining exactly the same and the only difference is the Mahāyāna has the **1 heavenly realm** to define all the 6 deva realms + 16 Brahma realms + the 4 formless realms. Hence $(1+4) + (6+16+4) = 31$ realms or planes of existence.

Note:

1. **No thought, ever mindful** and **constantly meditative** (imply ever mindful to constantly cultivate the Noble 8-fold path) = **Heedfulness**.

5th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 11 March 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 – Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Introducing Master Hsuan Hua (45th Patriarch of Sākyamuni Buddha lineage)

In 1948 after 3000 miles of travel, **Master Hsuan Hua** reached Nan Hua monastery near Canton and received the wonderful **mind to mind transmission** of all Buddhas from the Venerable **Master Hsu Yun** and became the **45th** Patriarch in the line of succession from Sākyamuni Buddha. **Master Hsu Yun** is also the teacher of **Master Bo Yuan** the late abbot of Wu Pin Chen Seah.

1.2 Introducing the late Venerable Master Hsu Yun (44th Patriarch in the line of succession from Sākyamuni Buddha)

Hsu Yun was born on **26th April 1840** in **Fujian**, China and passed away in **1959** at the **age of 120**. He is one of the **most influential** Chán masters of the past two centuries, and arguably the most important in modern Chinese history. Unlike Catholicism and other branches of Christianity, there was no organization in China that embraced all monastic in China, not even all monastic within the same sect. Traditionally, each monastery was autonomous, with authority resting on each respective abbot. This changed with the rule of the Communist Party. In 1953, the **Chinese Buddhist Association** was **established** at a meeting with **121 delegates in Beijing**. The meeting also elected a chairman, 4 honorary chairmen, 7 vice-chairmen, a secretary general, 3 deputy secretaries-general, 18 members of a standing committee, and 93 directors. The **4 elected honorary chairmen** were the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama, the Grand Lama of Inner Mongolia and **Hsu Yun himself**. Though Chán is less well known in the West compared to Japanese Zen, the teachings of Hsu Yun have persisted within Asia, and he is still a major figure of **Pure Land Buddhism** in East Asia. Outside of China, the influence of his teachings is **strongest in Southeast Asia**, particularly in **Vietnam and Myanmar**, as well as in **Americas**, where his teachings were transmitted through well known **monastic students** such as **Venerable Hsuan Hua** and **Venerable Jy Din Shakya and Venerable Fo Yuan Shakya**.

i. Middle Age and Enlightenment

At the age **forty-three**, Hsu Yun had by then left the home-life for more than twenty years, but he had not yet completed his practice in the Path. He had not repaid his parents' kindness, and so he vowed to again make a pilgrimage to Nan Hai. From Fa Hua Temple all the way to Ch'ing Liang Peak at **Mount Wutai** or 5 peak mountain of the northwest, the **bodhimandala of Manjushri**, he made one **full prostration every three steps**. He prayed for the rebirth of his parents in the **Pure Land**. Along the way, Hsu Yun is said to have met a **beggar called Wen Chi, who twice saved his life**. After talking with the monks at the **Five-Peaked Mountain**, Hsu Yun came to believe that the beggar had been a **manifestation of Manjushri**. Having achieved **singleness** of mind, Hsu Yun travelled west and south, making his way through Tibet. He visited many monasteries

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and holy places, including the Potala, the seat of the Dalai Lama, and Tashilhunpo Monastery, the seat of the Panchen Lama. He travelled through India and Ceylon, and then across the sea to Burma.

During this time of wandering, Hsu Yun felt his **mind clearing and his health growing stronger**. Hsu Yun composed a large number of poems during this period.

After returning to China, During Hsu Yun's **fifty-third** year, he joined other Venerable **Masters Pu Zhao, Yue Xia, and Yin Lian (Lotus Seal)** to cultivate together. They climbed **Jiu Hua Mountain** and repaired the huts on Cui Feng Summit, where Dhamma **Master Pu Zhao** expounded the **Mahavaipulyabuddha Avatamsaka (Flower Adornment) Sutra**. When Hsu Yun was **fifty-six**, the Abbot Yue Lang of Gaomin Temple in Yangzhou planned to convene a **continuous twelve-week session** of dhyana meditation. Preparing to leave, the group asked Hsu Yun to go first. After reaching Di Gang, he had to cross the water, **but had no money**. The ferry left without him. As he walked along the river's edge, he suddenly lost his balance and fell into the rushing water, where he bobbed helplessly for a day and night and was caught in a fisherman's net. He was carried to a nearby temple, where he was revived and treated for his injuries. Feeling ill, he nevertheless returned to Yangzhou. When asked by Gao Ming whether he would participate in the upcoming weeks of meditation, he politely declined, without revealing his illness. The temple had rules that those who were invited had to attend **or else face punishment**. In the end, Gao Ming had Hsu Yun beaten with a wooden ruler. He willingly accepted this punishment, although it worsened his condition.

For the next several days, Hsu Yun sat in **continuous meditation**. In his autobiography, he wrote: "In the purity of my singleness of mind, I forgot all about my body. Twenty days later my illness **vanished completely**. From that moment, with **all my thoughts entirely wiped out**, my practice took effect **throughout the day and night**. My steps were as swift as if I was flying in the air. One evening, after meditation, I opened my eyes and suddenly saw I was in **brightness** similar to **broad daylight** in which I could see **everything inside and outside** the monastery" But he knew that this occurrence was **only a mental state**, and that it **was not at all rare**. He **did not** become **attached to this achievement**, but continued his **single-minded investigation** of the topic, "**who is mindful of the Buddha?**" over and over again, he delved into this topic without interruption.

During the twelfth lunar month, on the **third evening of the eighth week** of the session, after six hours of sitting meditation, the attendant made his rounds, filling up the tea cups. Hsu Yun's **hand was burned by spilling boiling water**, and **his cup fell to the floor**. At the **sound of the crash**, the **root of his doubt** was **instantly severed**. He was joyous beyond words at having **fulfilled his lifelong ambition**. It was as if he **had just awakened from a dream**, and he **observed how the conditions** of the **past unravel**.

- ii. Hsu Yun's verse explanation says:

"A cup fell to the ground

With a **sound** clearly heard

As space was pulverised

The **mad mind** came to a **stop"**

1.3 Meaning of “We accord with conditions” or “Flow with the Dhamma”

The word “accord” means **not to resist** hence there is **harmony** and **no conflict**. **Conflict** means **disharmony, argument** etc. **So to flow** with the **dhamma** means the same i.e. **don't resist** or **argue** via “**accepting things as they are**” or via “**Seeing things as they are – without delusion and Let things be.**” It is like martial art if we were **to resist** or **defend** via **rigid kung fu** then **both will get hurt** but if you can use **Tai Chi to flow with it** then **Tai Chi** will send the **force back to the aggressor** who will be hurt by their own force.

1.4 The Phenomenal or Illusionary World

Definition of **phenomenon** - **anything that is perceivable by the mind is a phenomenon**. Then how do you know the world? - Via our **consciousness** and **mental perception** isn't it? And since consciousness and mental perception are just **mental images** in our mind that **arise and pass away continuously**, hence the reason why it is said, ‘the **phenomenal world** is actually an **illusionary world of consciousness** – empty’.

The Mahāyāna also got a very famous saying:

“Perception of form is consciousness whereas its non-perception is wisdom.”

This is **most profound** and the **enlightened one will understand it**. Now you understand why the Mahāyāna always said that **“The phenomenal world is the world of consciousness.”** This is also the reason why the Shurangama sutra said, **“Consciousness created the world** and the **continents, the stars** and the **universe** and the **“knower”** becomes the **living being.**” Through thought and form delusion, the **“knower” deludedly cling** on to the **5 aggregates of form and mind (or living being)** thinking **that it is real** and this is **what they are**. Hence the **deluded living being clinging** onto the **false** becomes the **“traveller”** in **space and time** wandering through **samsāra** and undergoing **birth and death for eternity**.

Notes:

- 1 **True Mind** does not stir – **true Suchness** or **“Ru Ru Bu Dong” (如如不动)**. Only the **Mundane mind stirs via delusion**. Mundane mind **without wisdom** is the **discriminating thinking mind**.
- 2 Definition of **hallucinatory** – ‘thinking that it is real but is actually not real’.
- 3 J Krishnamurti said, ‘The **observer** is the **observed**’, leading to **“seeing things as they are”** via the **direct seeing** without words. In a similar way the **Buddha** also taught, **“In the seeing, it is only the seeing consciousness** and there is **no one to see!”** – Hence no delusion. Otherwise, the **moment you associate and cling onto what you see** or what **you observe, delusion or sakkāya-diṭṭhi** has already arisen.

Part 2 - Meditation

2.1 Question 1: – Can visualization like visualizing a blue sky be used as a technique to develop MINDFULNESS?

Bro. Teoh: This type of Visualization technique, like any other skilful means if **used with understanding** can also bring about the training of the mind to be peaceful and calm. Just like auto suggestions via music, sound and vibration etc. But the **disadvantage** of this type of **skilful means** is that it usually only works for the first few times and after a while, like good food, it loses its effectiveness. The other type of **visualization** technique **using kasinas** or the **40 objects of meditations** used to develop **one-pointedness concentration** followed by the development of **jhānas and deep concentration leading** to all the other **psychic abilities** is **more dangerous unless** it is done **with understanding** and preferably under the guidance of a **very good** and **very skilful** meditation teacher. If one clings and attached to such one-pointedness concentration and special jhānic abilities then one can get **trapped** and chances of **deviation** from the **true cultivation** of wisdom to free the mind from all suffering can happen. The mind that is in **one-pointedness concentration** is a **conditioned mind** that is **still within** the **field of thought** and all the **anusaya** or **latent tendencies** of the mind are **still suppressed** and **not rooted** out as yet. Such a **mind is not a free mind** with **clear awareness** and **Samādhi** borne of **equanimity or wisdom**.

2.2 Question 2: - How to apply the wisdom of, "Let things be" to solve all of our life's problem?

Bro. Teoh: With **right views** borne of **wisdom** to accept the **reality of the moment**, we will **not react** or **allow the mind** to stir when **confronted** with the **1st Noble Truth realities of Life and Existence (the 8 conditions)**, hence no fear, no worry and anxiety or any suffering. That is "we just let things be" after accepting the realities of the moment. Then, with a **calm** and **clear mind**, we can **weigh our options** and **act appropriately** following the **Noble 8-Fold Path (which is the meditation)** to resolve all our life situations or problems **amicably**. I.e. without any negativity or wrong thoughts to cause our mind to stir and wrong thoughts are thoughts that condition **one's fear, worry, anxiety, unhappiness** and **misery** etc.

Without wisdom and **right views** borne of understanding the Buddha dhamma, one **will react** and **the mind will stir** due to the **fear, worry and anxiety**, etc. borne of their wrong views (just like normal **deluded** living beings) leading to all the **mental sufferings** (grief, sorrow and lamentation etc.). The **cause of suffering** is **delusion** that conditions one's **grasping** and one's **clinging** to one's 5 aggregates of form and mind. This is the **2nd Noble Truth**. Under the **3rd Noble Truth** the Buddha said, "Suffering **need not be** if one has the wisdom and enlightenment can be realized in the here and the now or Nibbāna is possible." Then following the **4th Noble Truth** which is the **way out of suffering**, one **cultivates the Noble 8-Fold Path** (which is the **meditation as taught by** the Buddha) leading to the **end of all suffering**.

6th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 18 March 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Heart Sutra Lesson 6 (Introduction Three – pg xxii to xxiv of Master Hsuan Hua's Commentary)

1.1 The Heart of Prajna Pāramitā Sutra, with **verse without a stand** and prose commentary consists of **3 parts**:

- i. The **Sutra text** itself;
- ii. The Venerable Master Hsuan Hua's **verse explanation**; and
- iii. The Master's **lectured commentary** on the texts and verses.

This Heart Sutra is an **essential summary** of the Mahāyāna Buddhism's teaching on **true emptiness**. The Heart Sutra is nothing less than a summation of the **wisdom** of the Buddha. It distils **perfectly** the teaching of **non-attachment**, which is the **doctrine of emptiness**. As the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua says in his commentary, only the **most advanced of masters** can expect to **grasp** the full import of the sutra by itself **without** the aid of a teacher because this teaching is the **heart in the heart within the heart**.

Bro. Teoh also concurs with Master Hsuan Hua's statement, and also said, 'dhamma must be delivered from the **heart spontaneously** and **not** through any **prior planning via memory** otherwise it is **only knowledge** and **not wisdom**'.

The important criteria for translating The Heart of Prajna Pāramitā Sutra as adopted by Master Hsuan Hua are the **Eight Guidelines** of his Buddhist Texts Translation Society (BTTS):-

- i. A volunteer must free himself/herself from the motives of **personal fame and profit**.
- ii. A volunteer must cultivate a **respectful** and **sincere attitude** free from **arrogance** and **conceit**.
- iii. A volunteer must **refrain** from aggrandizing his/her work and **denigrating** that of others.
- iv. A volunteer must **not establish** himself/herself as the standard of correctness and **suppress** the work of others with his or her fault-finding.
- v. A volunteer must take the Buddha-mind as his/her own mind.
- vi. A volunteer must use the wisdom of Dhamma-Selecting Vision to determine true principles.
- vii. A volunteer must request **Virtuous Elders** in the ten directions to certify his/her translations.
- viii. A volunteer must endeavour to propagate the teachings by printing Sutras, Shastra texts, and Vinaya texts when the translations are certified as being correct.

When there is condition to share the translated dhamma, one must share, thus allowing the translations to benefit more living beings.

Part 2 – Meditation

2.1 **Aṅgulimāla Sutta** MN 86: - translated from the Pāḷi text by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

Thus have I heard that on one occasion, the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. And at that time, in King Pasenadi's reign, there was a bandit named **Aṅgulimāla**: brutal, bloody-handed, devoted to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings. He turned villages into non-villages, towns into non-towns, settled countryside into unsettled countryside. Having repeatedly killed human beings, he wore a garland (mālā) made of fingers (aṅguli).

Then the Blessed One, early in the morning, having put on his robes and carrying his outer robe & bowl, went into Sāvatti for alms. Having wandered for alms in Sāvatti and returning from his alms round after his meal, he set his lodging in order. Carrying his robes & bowl, he went along the road to where Aṅgulimāla was staying. Cowherds, shepherds, & farmers saw him going along the road to where Aṅgulimāla was staying, and on seeing him said to him, "Don't go along that road, contemplative, for on that road is Aṅgulimāla: brutal, bloody-handed, devoted to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings. He has turned villages into non-villages, towns into non-towns, settled countryside into unsettled countryside. Having repeatedly killed human beings, he wears a garland made of fingers. Groups of ten, twenty, thirty, & forty men have gone along that road, and even they have fallen into Aṅgulimāla's hands." When this was said, the Blessed One kept going in silence.

A second time... a third time, cowherds, shepherds, & farmers said to the Blessed One, "Don't go along that road, contemplative... Groups of ten, twenty, thirty, & forty men have gone along that road, and even they have fallen into Aṅgulimāla's hands." When this was said, the Blessed One kept going in silence.

Then Aṅgulimāla saw the Blessed One coming from afar and on seeing him, this thought occurred to him: "Isn't it amazing! Isn't it astounding! Groups of ten, twenty, thirty, & forty men have gone along this road, and even they have fallen into my hands, and yet now this contemplative comes attacking, as it were, alone and without a companion. Why don't I kill him?" So Aṅgulimāla, taking up his sword & shield, buckling on his bow & quiver, followed right behind the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One willed a feat of psychic power such that Aṅgulimāla, though running with all his might, could not catch up with the Blessed One walking at normal pace. Then the thought occurred to Aṅgulimāla: "Isn't it amazing! Isn't it astounding! In the past I've chased and seized even a swift-running elephant, a swift-running horse, a swift-running chariot, a swift-running deer. But now, even though I'm running with all my might, I can't catch up with this contemplative walking at normal pace." So he stopped and called out to the Blessed One, "Stop, contemplative! Stop!"

"I have stopped, Aṅgulimāla. It is you who haven't stopped."

Then the thought occurred to Aṅgulimāla, "These Sakyan contemplatives are speakers of the truth, asserters of the truths, and yet this contemplative, even while walking, says, 'I have stopped, Aṅgulimāla. It is you who haven't stopped.' Why don't I question him?"

So Aṅgulimāla the bandit addressed this verse to the Blessed One:

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"While walking, contemplative, you say, 'I have stopped.' But when I have stopped you say, 'I haven't'. I ask you the meaning of this: "How have you stopped? How haven't I?"

[The Buddha:] "I have stopped, Aṅgulimāla, once & for all, having cast off violence towards all living beings. You are still unrestrained toward beings. That's how I've stopped and you haven't."

[Aṅgulimāla:] "At long last, **a greatly revered great seer** for my sake has come to the great forest. Having heard your verse in line with the Dhamma, I will also abandon all evil." So saying, the bandit hurled his sword & weapons over a cliff into a chasm, a pit. Then the bandit paid homage to the feet of the One Well-gone, and right there requested the going-forth.

The Awakened One, the compassionate great seer, the teacher of the world, along with His devas, said to him then:

"Come, bhikkhū." That in itself was bhikkhūhood for him.

Then the Blessed One set out wandering toward Sāvatti with Ven. Aṅgulimāla as his attendant monk. After wandering by stages he reached Sāvatti, and there he lived, near Sāvatti, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery.

Now at that time a large crowd of people, loud & noisy, had gathered at the gates to King Pasenadi Kosala's inner palace, [calling out,] "There is a bandit in your reign sire, named Aṅgulimāla: brutal, bloody-handed, devoted to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings. He has turned villages into non-villages, towns into non-towns, settled countryside into unsettled countryside. Having repeatedly killed human beings, he wears a garland made of fingers. The king must stamp him out!"

Then King Pasenadi Kosala, with a cavalry of roughly 500 horsemen, drove out of Sāvatti and entered the monastery. Driving as far as the ground was passable for chariots; he got down from his chariot and went on foot to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, "What is it, great king? Has King Seniya Bimbisara of Magadha provoked you, or have the Licchavis of Vesali or some other hostile king?"

"No, Lord. King Seniya Bimbisara of Magadha hasn't provoked me, nor have the Licchavis of Vesali, nor has some other hostile king. There is a bandit in my reign, Lord, named Aṅgulimāla: brutal, bloody-handed, devoted to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings. He has turned villages into non-villages, towns into non-towns, settled countryside into unsettled countryside. Having repeatedly killed human beings, he wears a garland made of fingers. I am going to stamp him out."

"Great king, suppose you were to see Aṅgulimāla with his hair & beard shaved off, wearing the robe, having gone forth from the home life into homelessness, refraining from killing living beings, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from telling lies, living the holy life on one meal a day, virtuous & of fine character: what would you do to him?"

"We would **bow down to him**, Lord, or **rise up to greet** him, or offer him a seat, or offer him robes, alms food, lodgings, or medicinal requisites for curing illness; or we would arrange a lawful guard, protection, & defense. But how could there be such virtue & restraint in an unvirtuous, evil character?"

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Now at that time Ven. Aṅgulimāla was sitting not far from the Blessed One. So the Blessed One, pointing with his right arm, said to King Pasenadi Kosala, "That, great king, is Aṅgulimāla." Then King Pasenadi Kosala was frightened, terrified, his hair standing on end. So the Blessed One, sensing the king's fear & hair-raising awe, said to him, "Don't be afraid, great king. Don't be afraid. He poses no danger to you."

Then the king's fear, his terror, his hair-standing-on-end subsided. He went over to Ven. Aṅgulimāla and said, "Are you really Aṅgulimāla, Lord?"

"Yes, great king." "What is your father's clan? What is your mother's clan?"

"My father is a Gagga, great king, and my mother a Mantani."

"Then may Master Gagga Mantaniputta delight [in staying here]. I will be **responsible** for your **robes, alms food, lodgings, & medicinal requisites** for curing illness."

Now it so happened that at that time Ven. Aṅgulimāla was a wilderness-dweller, an alms-goer, wearing one set of the triple robe made of cast-off cloth. So he said to King Pasenadi Kosala, "Enough, great king. My triple robe is complete."

So King Pasenadi Kosala went to the Blessed One and on arrival, having bowed down, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "It's amazing, Lord. It's astounding, how the Blessed One has tamed the untamed, pacified the unpeaceful, and brought to unbinding those who were not unbound. For what we could not tame even with blunt or bladed weapons, the Blessed One has tamed without blunt or bladed weapons. Now, Lord, we must go. Many are our duties, many our responsibilities."

"Then do, great king, what you think it is now time to do."

Then King Pasenadi Kosala got up from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One and — keeping him to his right, departed.

Then Ven. Aṅgulimāla, early in the morning, having put on his robes and carrying his outer robe & bowl, went into Sāvatti for alms. As he was going from house to house for alms, he saw a woman suffering a **breech birth**. On seeing her, the thought occurred to him: "How **tormented** are living beings! How tormented are living beings!" Then, having wandered for alms in Sāvatti and returning from his alms round after his meal, he went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to him, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "Just now, Lord, early in the morning, having put on my robes and carrying my outer robe & bowl, I went into Sāvatti for alms. As I was going from house to house for alms, I saw a woman suffering a breech birth. On seeing her, the thought occurred to me: 'How tormented are living beings! How tormented are living beings!'"

"In that case, Aṅgulimāla, go to that woman and on arrival say to her, 'Sister, since I was born I do not recall intentionally killing a living being. Through this truth may there be well-being for you, well-being for your foetus.'"

"But, Lord, wouldn't that be a lie for me, for I have intentionally killed many living beings?"

"Then in that case, Aṅgulimāla, go to that woman and on arrival say to her, 'Sister, since I was born in the noble birth, I do not recall intentionally killing a living being. Through this truth, may there be well-being for you, well-being for your foetus.'"

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Responding, "As you say, Lord," to the Blessed One. Aṅgulimāla went to that woman and on arrival said to her, "Sister, since I was born in the noble birth, I do not recall **intentionally killing** a living being. Through this may there be **well-being** for you, **well-being** for your foetus." And there was well-being for the woman, well-being for her foetus.

Then Ven. Aṅgulimāla, **dwelling alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute**, in no long time reached & remained in the **supreme goal of the holy life** for which clansmen rightly go forth from home into homelessness, knowing & realizing it for himself in the here & now. He knew: "**Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done**. There is nothing further for the sake of this world." And thus Ven. Aṅgulimāla became another one of the **arahants**.

Then Ven. Aṅgulimāla, early in the morning, having put on his robes and carrying his outer robe & bowl, went into Sāvatti for alms. Now, at that time a clod thrown by one person hit Ven. Aṅgulimāla on the body, a stone thrown by another person hit him on the body, and a potsherd thrown by still another person hit him on the body. So Ven. Aṅgulimāla, his head broken open and dripping with blood, his bowl broken, and his outer robe ripped to shreds, went to the Blessed One. The Blessed One saw him coming from afar and on seeing him said to him: "Bear with it, brahman! Bear with it! The **fruit of the kamma** that would have **burned you in hell for many years, many hundreds of years, many thousands of years**, you are **now experiencing** in the **here-&-now!**"

Then Ven. Aṅgulimāla, having **gone alone into seclusion**, experienced the **bliss of release**. At that time he exclaimed: **Who once was heedless but later is not, brightens the world like the moon set free from a cloud**. His **evil-done deed is replaced with skillfulness**: he brightens the world like the moon set free from a cloud. Whatever young monk devotes himself to the Buddha's bidding: he brightens the world like the moon set free from a cloud.

Part 3 - Meditation

3.1 Question 1: While sitting in half-lotus for some time, the pain of the leg becomes unbearable. And then when I start to chant, the original pain ceases but a more severe pain arises in another part of the legs. Why?

Bro. Teoh: First, you must understand what **meditation is?** And **what are you doing in the name of meditation – your purpose and intent**. If you don't have **such an understanding** then there is this **tendency to react to unpleasant feeling/sensation** that arises during meditation by labelling it **as pain** (which is an aversion or an ill will) and as we all know, **ill will** is one of the **five mental hindrances** of the mind that will hinder your mind from entering the **meditative state of peace and calm**. As such, you are already caught or trapped by it. Because of your **dislike** towards such **unpleasant sensation**, your mind will try to do **something else (like chanting)** to either **suppress it or make it go away**.

As chanting is just **another skilful means to train the mind** and it is **still within the field of thoughts** hence by doing so you **have lost your focus** because Meditation consists of 2 steps :-

- i. The 1st step is to develop the **training of the mind** to be **constantly aware leading to the heedfulness**;
- ii. Then the 2nd step is **to use** the trained mind to **meditate or cultivate** the **meditation as taught** by the **Buddha** which is the cultivation of the **Noble 8-Fold Path**. Understanding

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this will enable you to **just silent your mind** and **patiently relax** your **body** and **mind** to allow **the sensation** to be **without** any like or dislike for it because it is the **nature** of this body to develop that sensation if you do not know how to relax to enable the 'chi' to flow through the blockage.

So just be **aware** (or **mindful**) **always**, to **observe what is going on** within your 'form and mind' and to **investigate via mindfulness** to understand how the **movement of mind from one state to another comes to be**. That is to understand how the **stirring of the mind** comes to be and how the mind can be **conditioned** into negativity, emotions, selfishness and fear etc. via **delusion** upon seeing something or hearing something or thinking of something etc.

3.2 The Buddha teaches 5 ways to overcome negative unwholesome thoughts that have arisen:-

- i. Think of the **direct opposite wholesome thought**. (For example, if there is anger then **develop Mettā** and if there is **cruelty** then develop **Compassion**. And if there is **Fear** develop **Faith**)
- ii. Think of the **consequence** of holding on to the **unwholesome thought or evil roots**; (If you do not abandon it then the evil roots which are the **roots of all evil** will **condition you to become an evil person**. For example, anger can condition one into hatred and violence. An **angry person can kill, harm and abuse others**.)
- iii. **Relax and aware via just let things be** - this is the **meditative way** via understanding that "the **natural state of mind before** its stirring is already in the **meditative state of inner peace, calmness and silent inner awareness** and the **flowering of thought is the very ending** of that **thought**".
- iv. Trace the **origination factors** of the unwholesome thought and then **retrospectively reverse** it via the cultivation of **mindfulness of dhamma** (dhammānupassanā) – i.e. via cultivating the mindfulness of the **6 internal and 6 external sense bases**. This is to **develop the wisdom to free**.
- v. If all the above 4 ways also cannot help you, then you must use your own **self-determination** as recommended by the Buddha, i.e. "With **clenched teeth** and with **your tongue towards your palate**, you should **determine strongly** to abandon the negative thought".

7th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 1 April 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Bro Teoh re emphasized the importance of understanding the following:-

- i. What is Meditation? So that we understand what we are doing in the name of meditation and this will keep us always in **focus**.
- ii. There are 2 steps involved in the **development of meditation** as taught by the Buddha:-
 - a) **1st step** is to **train the mind** to be **heedful** via using a **skilful means** or an **object of meditation to anchor** the mind in **awareness or mindfulness** so that the mind is **relaxed, aware, silent and mindful within**.
 - b) **2nd step** is to make use of this **trained mind in silent awareness** ‘to see things as they are’ to develop the meditation as taught by the Buddha namely the **cultivation of the daily mindfulness or Sati Sampajañña, the Four Foundations Of Mindfulness, the 3 turnings of the Four Noble Truths and the Noble 8-Fold Path**.
- iii. The aim of Meditation is to realize the **state of Enlightenment** that is **beyond thought and beyond time** (psychological time) **because the dhamma is Timeless** or “Akāliko” in Pāḷi.
- iv. **Thought-based** meditation is limited to the **field of thoughts** hence it **cannot free our mind** or lead it to realize a state that is **beyond thought and beyond time** because the **moments of thought is psychological time**.
- v. **Diligently** cultivate the **5 spiritual faculties** of **saddhā, viriya, sati, samādhi and paññā** to overcome the **5 hindrances of mind** of **sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor (or sleepy/lethargic mind), restlessness of mind and doubt**.
- vi. The danger of having **self-delusion** and **not comprehending** what **sakkāya-diṭṭhi or self-delusion** is!
- vii. Importance of using **mindfulness** to ‘observe’ and **understand** how your **mind ‘stirs’ or gets conditioned** into **mental thinking** or **activities** leading to all the **emotions and reactions** to **sense experiences** that **conditioned** ones’ sufferings, etc. via comprehending the famous Mahāyāna saying of “**Qi Xin Dong Nian**” (起心动念) – the **arising of mind creates thinking hence stirring of the mind comes to be!** Or in Theravāda term it is “**avijjā paccayā saṅkhāra**” – “**Ignorance conditions activities of mind**” (the first two links of the paṭicca-samuppāda/Dependent Origination) ;
- viii. Originally before the stirring, the mind is already in **the meditative state** of peace, silence and still awareness within, so the **stirring** of the mind only comes about when we do not have **the wisdom and understanding** of this **fundamental principle of the original (or true) mind** then through our own **delusion or ignorance** we cause **our mundane mind** to arise hence the **stirring** (via our **reactions to sense experiences at**

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every moment of sense door consciousness). Train the mind to **have the silent inner awareness** and **clarity to see all these clearly** then there is **no more delusion** thereby understanding that if we can just **“let things be”** then there is **no more suffering** or **problem** and with this understanding, **tranquility** will return by not trying to do anything via **using the thought to suppress or control** etc. – i.e. just **be patient** to maintain the **‘silent mind’ with clear inner awareness** and let everything **return to its original state before its stirring**. Always remember; when there is **no delusion or ignorance** then there is **no stirring of the mind** hence having the understanding that **“only wisdom frees the mind”**. i.e. the **moment you have wisdom**, your mind will **not stir** and **you are free** so **no need to do anything after that** because things are just the way they are! – Suchness or Tathatā.

(Note: *Tathā* means **thus** in Sanskrit and **Pāṇi**, and Buddhists think this refers to what is called **reality as-it-is** (*yathā-bhūta*). This **reality** is also referred to as **thusness** or **suchness** and [tathatā](#) in **Pāṇi** - indicating **‘What IS’** or the **‘Isness’ of things**. A Buddha or an arahant is defined as someone who **“knows and sees reality as-it-is”** (*yathā bhūta ñāna dassana*). **Gata** "gone" is the past passive participle of the verbal root *gam* "go, travel". **Āgata** "come" is the past passive participle of the verb meaning "come, arrive". Thus in this interpretation Tathāgata means literally either, "The one who has gone to Suchness" or, "The one who has arrived at Suchness".)

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 7

2.1 “The Bodhisattva, through **reliance** on **prajna pāramitā**, is **unimpeded** in his mind. Because there are no impediments, he is not afraid, and he leaves **distorted dream-thinking** far behind. Ultimately Nirvana!”

Here **distorted dream-thinking** means **delusion conditioned inverted thinking**. That is taking the **unreal to be real** and vice versa. This verse is **so beautiful**.

2.2 “All **Buddhas** of the **three periods** of time attain **Anuttara samyaksambodhi** through reliance of **prajna pāramitā**. Therefore, know that **prajna pāramitā** is a great spiritual mantra, a great bright mantra, a supreme mantra, an unequalled mantra. It can remove all suffering; it is genuine and not false. That is why the mantra of **prajna pāramitā** was spoken. Recite it like this: **Gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha!**”

Here **prajna pāramitā** means the perfection of **wisdom cultivation** and **Anuttara samyaksambodhi** means the **perfection** of Buddha hood. This is even more beautiful.

2.3 “Therefore in **emptiness** there is **no form, feeling, perception, mental activities or consciousness; no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body or mind; no sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile and mental forms; no field** of the eyes, up to and including **no field** of mind consciousness; and **no ignorance** or **ending** of ignorance up to and including **no old age** and **death or ending of old age and death**. There is **no suffering, no cause of arising** of suffering, **no extinction of suffering** and **no noble 8-fold way** and **no understanding** and **attaining**.”

This verse appears like **very contradictory** to **normally taught dhamma** hence the **beauty** and **uniqueness** of the **Heart Sutra** – reason why it is always expressed as **“True Emptiness is wonderful Existence.”** That is, when one is - “able to understand the **profound True Emptiness** as taught in the **Heart Sutra** then **Existence** or **Life** becomes **wonderful** and very

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meaningful and beautiful.” Hence there is **no contradiction** because on the one side is taught the **conditioned dhamma** within the **conditioned world**. Then there is the **realization** of the **unconditioned dhamma** which is the **understanding of True Emptiness** as taught by the Heart Sutra. The **unconditioned** dhamma as explained by the Buddha is **beyond thoughts** and **beyond time** hence **no words, no concepts, no ideas** and no this and no that – which imply cannot be **spoken** or **expressed** like the great “TAO”.

Part 3 - Meditation

- 3.1** Bro. Teoh conducted a **review** on the **compilation of emails notes** as written by him to various Buddhist Groups and Dhamma Friends in the early years with the title:- “Understanding The Meditation As Taught By the Buddha” so as to enable the cultivators of the Buddha dhamma to have a **better understanding** of **the key/important dhammas** as constantly **emphasized** by the Buddha. They are:-
- i. **Importance of understanding** Dhammapada Verses 1, 2 and 183; Verses 21, 22 and 23 and the **Buddha’s final advice** to all the monks before his **final parinibbāna**. These verses are classified under the **words of wisdom of the Buddha** immediately after the content, introduction and acknowledgement sections.
 - ii. The importance of **understanding** the **true significance** of the **Four Noble Truths** as expressed by the Buddha as the equivalent to the **“Handful of leaves”** as emphasized by him at Kosambi in the Simsapa grove, over 2500 years ago to the monks then so as to enable them to **stay focused** in their cultivation. **Otherwise** the chances of **deviation** are very high and probable.
 - iii. The importance of understanding “What is Meditation? As explained under email Nos. 2 and 3.
 - iv. The importance of developing the 3 types of **corresponding wisdom** of Suttamaya Paññā, Cintamaya Paññā and Bhavanamaya Paññā that will arise via cultivating the **3 turnings** of the **Four Noble Truths** as taught by the Buddha via his **1st sermon the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta**. Email No. 4.

8th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 8 April 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Question 1: Can you teach me how to meditate?

Bro. Teoh: This is the **most common question** but also the **most common mistake** because it is a **wrong** question to ask. When you ask this question you expect the teacher or instructor to give **you a method** and a **technique** to meditate right? And this SOUNDS very **logical**, isn't it? But what is a method? It is only a **series of instructions** to do certain things right? Like **training** the mind to **be mindful** and **heedful** so that it is in the **moment, silent, peaceful** and **aware within** or to train the mind to develop **concentration** etc.? And more often than not, the method or technique taught never defines the meditation so isn't it more important to understand **"What is Meditation?"** Only then do we **know how to develop it**. So whatever that **appears logical** may not necessarily be the truth or right question to ask.

(Note: Unless you understand **what meditation is**, you will not be able **to develop** it. All methods and techniques given are only an **initial skillful means** meant to help **train** the mind to be **heedful** or in **concentration**. They are only a **series of instructions** given to **initially train** the **mind** so that it is **not heedlessly lost in thought** or **preoccupied** with what it is thinking or feeling.)

The **purpose** of meditation is to train the mind **to be heedful** then to use it **to see things as they are** to develop **the wisdom** and to **understand how** the **5 mental hindrances** can hinder your mind from **returning** to its **original state** of **silent inner awareness** and **peace** before its **stirring**. Do **not fight** the mental hindrances or force it to go away but instead just develop the corresponding **5 spiritual faculties** of mind especially **Sati** and **Samādhi** as taught by the Buddha to arise the **wisdom** to counter them. For the Dhamma is beyond thought and beyond time. **Heedfulness** is **without thought** hence **without psychological time**.

Brother Teoh always advises us **to diligently cultivate** the 5 Spiritual Faculties because they are keys to the development of the **37 factors of enlightenment**. They appeared **twice** within the 37 factors of Enlightenment.

1.2 Question 2: What about those who believe in chanting? Can chanting itself bring about enlightenment?

Bro. Teoh: Yes! It can, provided you know **how to chant** with very **strong faith, clear mindfulness**, and **understanding**. Then it can also bring about the **cultivation** of the **5 Spiritual Faculties of mind** (saddhā, viriya, sati, samādhi and Paññā) leading to the Enlightenment. So don't **be rigid or dogmatic** to simply comment when you still cannot understand **other** people's practices or cultivation especially those of the **Mahāyāna** and the **Pure Land** traditions. Their **Buddhas** and their great **Bodhisattvas vows** are very **powerful** and they can help those who are **sincere** to **connect to their vows** enabling them to develop their cultivation **so much faster**. Whatever you do in Life and if you know how to develop it with understanding then it can bring about a transformation too for **"Life itself is the**

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meditation” - via the cultivation of the daily **mindfulness** which is the **cultivation** of **sati sampajañña**.

1.3 Some **important truths** that Brother Teoh has learnt from his teacher Phra Ajahn Yantra Amaro Bhikkhū, a very **wise and famous** Thai monk during the early years of his cultivation (1988-1992) :

- i. **Mind is Mind, Body is Body, Body is never the Mind and The Mind is never the Body;** But Body is **important too** because both Body and Mind must **harmonize to help** us **live Life** and **develop** the meditation and we choose ‘take care of Mind’ because Mind is more important;
- ii. We choose ‘accept **everything as natural**’ because **only “form and mind”** and **mighty nature rolling by** - **not so real** and **not** what one thinks;
- iii. We choose **contemplate**, all dhammas until they are **very, very clear** – **importance of 2nd turning wisdom**;
- iv. The highest or real meditation - “We **choose aware** of **all actions** and **all movements** in the **present moment**” – **daily mindfulness** meditation in **daily life**;
- v. Importance of having a **good daily religious routine** to **train the mind to cultivate pūjā, mettā** and **meditate every day**;
- vi. Importance of constantly **cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties of mind** and the **keeping of the 5 precepts**.

1.4 The key to **understanding meditation** is to **understand** that “the **body and mind** must **harmonized** and be **in a state** of **constant relaxed inner awareness** to develop the **meditation”** and because the mind is **‘trapped’ inside** this **physical body** of ours due to our **karmic conditioning** so whatever the body experiences, the mind will also experience them via its **mental consciousness**. This is the reason why the **form and mind** can experience **suffering** conditioned by **one’s kamma** if wisdom is not developed as yet.

To truly become Enlightened, one must have the understanding to **transcend** “Birth and Death” of this **segmented Life** of ours. The famous quotes by Venerable Master Guang Qing are: “**Guo Qi Xin Bu Ke De**” (过去心不可得) - The **past is already gone** so **not** a reality anymore;

“**Wei Lai Xin Ye Bu Ke De**” (未来心也不可得) - The **future has yet to come** so it is also **not** a reality; and

“**Xian Zai Xin Ye Bu Ke De**” (现在心也不可得) - The **present moment cannot also be held onto** hence **not a ‘reality’ too** even though it is the **‘highest’ in Life** or **within** existence because **the moment you know or experience it**, it is already **gone** hence no longer the present moment.

So **in order to transcend Life** or Birth and Death “**Liao Sheng Xi**” (了生死), - one must **transcend even the present moment** which is still **within existence** and **Life itself**.

As we all know, **the moment** is the only **apparent ‘reality’ in Life** and **as real as it can be**, it is **only within the moment** and the **very next moment** it is **‘dead’ and gone** or **no more** and

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the **next moment** arises and **passes away again and again** – hence impermanent, empty and **not so real** or Anattā.

So **moment to moment, Life passes by, what are you doing?** The problem of Living beings is, they are **too busy thinking, planning, worrying and reacting** to **Life most of the time**, so much so, they **totally miss out on Life** i.e. they are **never with the moment to fully Live and experience all** of the **beauties and wonders of Life**. Instead, they only **existed** through Life; they are conscious but **hardly mindful or aware**. So **learn to live Life and not to worry** about Life!

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 8 (Part II A General Explanation of the Title and The Five Categories of Recondite Meaning pg 3 to 6)

2.1 Brother Teoh just briefly went through it because it is **not** important.

Below is Master Hsuan Hua's **8-line Verse** which Bro. Teoh advises us **to read through before discussing them during** the next Heart Sutra class:

- i. **Wonderful wisdom** can reach the other shore right now,
- ii. The **true mind** itself can **merge with enlightenment's source**.
- iii. **Dhamma and analogy** comprise its title which **transcends** the relative.
- iv. **Empty** of the **characteristics of all dhamma** is this substance **beyond words**.
- v. Fundamental **non-attachment** is **its purpose and intent**,
- vi. And by using its **power of eradication**, the **three obstacles** are cleansed away.
- vii. The 'Butter division' is determined to be the **meaning** of this teaching,
- viii. A maha turning around: this is the **prajna boat**.

Part 3 - Meditation

3.1 While reviewing email no. 3, what is Meditation - Part (2), Bro. Teoh came across the 6R's Meditation practice as mentioned by one of the participants and Bro. Teoh had so kindly explained the 6R's practices to us as below:

The monk that introduces this 6R's practices is quite a good monk and his 6R method or technique which he also sometimes termed it as a form of **Right Effort** is quite **useful and good** if used as an **initial skilful means to train and relax** the mind. But as in **many instances**, they thought the 6R is **the meditation** hence the problem. This is also the reason why every time when they are **doing the 6R, they thought** they are **meditating**. Anyway the 6R's as mentioned consist of the following:-

- i. 1st R is **Recognize** – to **recognize** that your mind has been **distracted** by a **Distraction** which may be a **pain, a wandering thought or a tension, itchiness or numbness** within your body manifesting as **tactile** consciousness or at one of the other **sense door consciousness**;
- ii. 2nd R is **Release** – to **release the mind** from the Distraction and letting it be **without clinging on or reacting** to it;

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- iii. 3rd R is **Relax** – to **Relax** the **Tension** or **tightness** or **stress** within caused by craving in your Forehead where there is like **a membrane** that is being tightened;
- iv. 4th R is **Re smile** – this is **to relax** the body and mind of **all tension and stress** within. When you smile, you relax because in order **to smile genuinely**, there must be a **relaxed state** of joy **and happiness**;
- v. 5th R is **Return** – to return to the cultivation of **Ānāpānasati** (mindfulness of the in and out breath) to train the mundane mind to develop **a stable mindfulness** leading to **heedfulness**;
- vi. 6th R is **Repeat** - to repeat the above 6 R training.

Please note that the no. 6th step involves a lot of **repeated doing** by the **thought** hence **very mechanical or repetitive** leading to **thought-based** meditation if one clings onto the doing **without** understanding **what Meditation is?** So a better way will be to replace **the 6th R** with **Meditation** via the **trained mind in silent awareness** instead of **Repeat**. This will **help improve** and **refine** upon the 6R to make it a lot better and much more useful. Similarly step no. 5 can be stopped once the mind is **already trained**. Note that **steps nos. 3 and 4** are very similar to our **mind sweeping method** and **mettā** used **to train and relax** our mind. So basically, the 6R can be a very **useful initial skilful means** to train and relax the mind.

Notes:

1. Have an open mind, when people share with us **their understanding**. We should **appreciate** and have **mutual respect for** each other's **understanding**. No more trying to be right or arise any unnecessary argument that can lead **to disharmony** and **misunderstanding**. Avoid **all division** and **negativities**.
2. **Pure actions** are actions performed **without** any evil roots or evil motive. When you want to do good or **generosity** to get merits and **your action is out of getting** merits (or **greed for that merit**), it is already not a **pure action** and it will end up with no **True merits for True Merits** are borne of Pure action that are free of all the evil roots of **Greed, Hatred and Delusion**.

9th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 15 April 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Within the 37 factors of Enlightenment, there are **7 main Factors of Enlightenment** called **satta Bojjhaṅga** as taught by the Buddha and they are:

- i. **Sati or Mindfulness (silent inner awareness before the knowing)** - is the 1st Factor of Enlightenment and it is also one of the **5 spiritual faculties**. For **Sati is Life** and **without sati** there is **no heedfulness** hence no **Life** because the **heedless** are as if **dead**. Also **without sati** there is **no heedfulness** or the **'silent mind'** in **pure awareness** to **investigate** the dhamma and to see the **mental intentions** behind all our action, speech and thought processes;
- ii. **Dhammā-Vicaya or Dhamma Investigation** is the 2nd Factor of Enlightenment. Only **with sati** is there the ability **to investigate** the dhamma with the silent mind. When the dhamma **stands up to investigation**, the **faith** or **saddhā** in the Buddha and his teaching will **be strengthened** giving rise to the **virīya**;
- iii. **Virīya or spiritual tenacity or energy** (or zeal) is the 3rd Factor of Enlightenment that will drive your meditation; then
- iv. **Pīti the Spiritual Joy or Calmness**, which is the 4th Factor of Enlightenment, will arise;
- v. Followed by **Passaddhi or tranquility** and **stillness of mind** which is the 5th Factor of Enlightenment?
- vi. **Samādhi – the collected and unwavering mind** which is the 6th Factor of Enlightenment will arise once **passaddhi** and **sati** have stabilized;
- vii. **Upekkhā or equanimity** of all **mental formations** borne of **wisdom** is the last of the 7 Factors of Enlightenment and it will arise once **Sati** and **Samādhi** have stabilized to **"see things as they are"** leading to all the **wisdom** or **Paññā** which is also the last of the 5 **spiritual faculties**.

This **karmically-conditioned 5 aggregates of Form and Mind** (or this **segmental human being**) which you all call Bro. Teoh is **not me** but just only a **'Tool'** and **'Vehicle'** for me **to come** to this world and for me to **make use of, to Live and Experience** life **to the fullest**, etc. This form or physical body of 'mine' is similar to the **functional body** of Lord Buddha called **Nirmanakāya** that performed the **function** of the Buddha 2500+ years ago. When He **became enlightened** underneath the Bodhi tree, His **spiritual nature** or **perfection body** called the **Sambogayakāya** came back to him and then they combined to make Him the **Sammā Saṃbuddha** via arising the 3rd transformed body called **Dhammakāya** that enable him to speak and proclaimed the dhamma.

So after understanding all these - you should **not cling** on to **this karmically conditioned 5 aggregates of form and mind** so **deludedly** anymore. And the next time when you **argue** with your friend or your wife/husband you will understand that it is just **one 'form and mind'**

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- with its **bundle of memories** and its **conditionings, views and opinion** etc. arguing with **another 'form and mind'**, - **so not so real** and **not what you think**.

If you deludedly cling or grasp onto the **5 aggregates** of this 'form and mind' as the 'I' and the 'Me' then you will have what the Buddha called "**Self delusion**" or **Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi**. Self delusion or **wrong view** with regards to the **Self** will condition your **Egoic mind** and **Personality** to arise leading to all your **Selfishness** and **Possessiveness** to own, cling, grasp and possess things, wanting things your way, etc. hence arising the whole mass of suffering.

The Buddha gave **5 very good analogies** to **clearly explain** the **empty nature** of these 5 aggregates of form and mind. He said your **physical body** or **Form aggregate** is like a **foam** - appears so solid but not so because if you leave the foam for a while, it's gone after a while; and the **Feeling aggregate** is just like a **bubble** – **arises and passes** away so fast. Then the **aggregate of Perception** is just like a **mirage** you see in the desert – appears so real from afar but you will realize that it's just a **mirage** when you come near to it. Then the aggregate of **saṅkhārā (or thinking/activities of mind)** is like peeling a banana tree's stem – layer after layer you peel **finally at the core** of it, **it is empty**. i.e. Sabbe **saṅkhārā** anicca and anattā; lastly the Buddha said your **aggregate of Viññāna** or **Consciousness** is just like a **magician**. A magician is also called an **illusionist** – **who creates illusion** for you to see. Hence the reason why the Mahāyāna always said that, "**This world of ours is an illusory world – a world of consciousness only**, - so not so real and not what you think. Do **wake up** and do not be deluded anymore.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 9 (Commentary pg 7 to 11)

2.1 Be aware of the **3 karmic obstacles** and according to master Hsuan Hua "**Eradication**" is what the Heart Sutra is capable of doing. i.e. doing away with - the 3 obstacles: the **retribution** obstacle, the **activity** obstacle and the **affliction** obstacle.

- i. **Retribution-obstacle** – there are 2 types:-
 - a) **Primary Retribution** – implies **karmically-conditioned** physical body like the type of DNA coding, the physical appearances etc.
 - b) **Dependent Retribution** – implies **karmically-conditioned living conditions** or your Materialistic Inheritance i.e. born poor or born rich and where you are born into, you don't have a choice because it is a **dependent** retribution but who you **marry to**, you do have a choice.
- ii. **Activity-obstacle**- implies karmically-conditioned **livelihood obstacles** (like you have a lot of karmic obstructions while working and living your Life.)
- iii. **Affliction-obstacle** - implies karmically-conditioned **affliction** caused by your **heedlessness in Life**. That is **whenever you** act, speak and think with an **evil mind** that has the **3 evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion then **affliction** or **suffering** will follow you like the wheel that follows the hoof. Then Dhammapada Verse 1 will take its course. If you want to be happy then **be heedful to train your mind** to act, speak and think without the 3 evil roots. **Then happiness will follow you like your shadow that never leaves you**. Dhammapada Verse 2 will then take its course.

Don't **blame** anybody for **your afflictions** for according to the Buddha "**We are born of our kamma, heir to our kamma, conditioned and supported by our kamma and we are what**

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we are because of our kamma". So do strive on with **heedfulness** to **take care** of your kamma so that your Life is taken care of. **Do not be heedless**. Have **goodness and kindness** for you "**reap what you sow**" – what you do to others, karmically it will come back to you so if you are good and kind to others, karmically others will be good and kind to you because these are your karmic inheritance. The "**absence of evil is good**" so **don't try to be good** but instead **just train your mind to be heedful or mindful** so that it is **incapable of evil** then **naturally you will be good**. Those who **have cultivated** the **Noble 8-Fold Path** have **no evil** but only **wisdom and virtue**.

Part 3 - Meditation (Email No 4 – 3 Turnings and 12 Modes of the Four Noble Truths)

3.1 The three types of **Prajna** or **wisdom** as explained by Master Hsuan Hua are similar to those of the **3 turnings** of the Four Noble Truths **wisdom** as explained by the Buddha under his Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta or his first sermon and they are:

- i. 1st Turning – Proclaiming **the Truth** as spoken by the Buddha leading to **Suttamaya Paññā** (wisdom borne of **hearing the sutta** or **discourse** of the Buddha). Master Hsuan Hua calls it **prajna of language**;
- ii. 2nd Turning – **Reflection, Contemplation and inquiry** into the truth as proclaimed by the Buddha leading to **Cintamaya Paññā** (wisdom borne of **constant contemplations, inquiry and reflection** on the truth as proclaimed by the Buddha). Master Hsuan Hua calls it the **prajna of contemplative illumination**;
- iii. 3rd Turning – **Meditative Training** leading to **Bhāvanāmaya Paññā** (wisdom borne of the meditative training as taught by the Buddha). Master Hsuan Hua calls it the **prajna of characteristic of actuality** or ultimate wisdom.

10th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 22 April 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Bro. Teoh reminded us **not to be heedless anymore** but instead **strive on with heedfulness** and **diligence** making use of this **great window** of **opportunity** to **cultivate** and to **gain liberation** from birth and death when the **Buddha sāsana** or **his dispensation** is still around. This is because according to the Buddha it is very difficult **to be born as a human beings** ('Ren Shen Nan De' 人身难得) and even more rare and difficult is to be born during the **era of the Buddha sāsana** and to **encounter** the Buddha dhamma ('Fo Fa Nan Wen' 佛法难闻).

So do follow the **advice** of the Buddha to **"Strive on with Heedfulness"** and **do not be heedless anymore** for this great window of opportunity is indeed **very, very, very rare** – so **please do not be complacent** to let it slip away for you will **truly regret how foolish you were** if you were to let it slip by.

The earlier **Heart Sutra short notes** that **emphasized** the **following important basic essential teachings** of the Buddha are more than enough to help you all **develop** your **cultivation**:

- i. **Importance of cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties;**
- ii. **Importance** of having **right views** with regards to the **Law of Karma** to follow the **advice** of the **Buddhas (Dhp. Verse 183);**
- iii. **Importance of cultivating heedfulness;** and
- iv. **Importance of understanding the meditation** as taught by the Buddha and the **3 turnings of the Four Noble Truths** especially its **2nd turnings**. That is to **constantly investigate** the dhamma via the **2nd turnings of the Four Noble Truths** to develop your own understanding via **Cintamaya Paññā** – wisdom borne of the **2nd turnings**.

To develop this **cintamaya Paññā**, one needs to carry out **constant inquiry, reflections** and **contemplations** on the Buddha dhamma or Noble Truths as proclaimed by the Buddha and not just **via believing** what the Buddha said and then committing them to **memory** and **storing** these so-called 'dhamma' up **as knowledge**, for the **true dhamma** and **wisdom** is an **understanding** and it is 'alive'(a living dhamma that can be experienced and understood from moment to moment) whereas knowledge and memories **are of the past, very rigid** and **fixed**, making you very 'rigid' in your views.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 10 (Commentary pg 11 to 15)

- 2.1** What are deviant views? Deviant views mean **deviated** or **wrong and devious views borne of delusion** that can condition one's suffering and misery.
- 2.2** What is affliction? Affliction is **mental suffering** conditioned by **one's 3 evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion.

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2.3 The **unmoving mind of true suchness** – the **true mind** with the enlightenment factors of Samādhi and Upekkhā or Equanimity.

2.4 **Question:** Why did the Buddha specifically states the duration of 7 years maximum or 7 days to realize the enlightenment of at least an Anāgāmī if one were to maintain this **Four Arousing of Mindfulness or Satipaṭṭhāna practices** as taught by him?

Bro. Teoh: The **Four Arousing of Mindfulness or Four Foundations Of Mindfulness** as taught by the Buddha is **very unique** because according to the Buddha “This Four arousing of mindfulness is the **only way** for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the realization of Nibbāna.” Then the Buddha continued telling the Bhikkhūs “ Verily O Bhikkhūs, **should any person maintain these Four arousing of mindfulness** in this manner for seven years, for 6 years,..... for two years, let alone a year,.....for seven months, two months, one month, half month or 1 week, then by him again one of the two fruitions is **proper** to be expected. Wisdom/“Knowledge” here and the Now or if some form of clinging is still present, the state of **a non-returner or Anāgāmī.**”

This is **the assurance** given by the Buddha, so it is **worthwhile to give it a try, isn't it?** Just **sacrifice** a Maximum of 7 years to cultivate the Satipaṭṭhāna and your future existence (should you choose to come back) is all **set and taken care of**, i.e. no more fear, worry, anxiety, sadness, and suffering, etc. from then onwards – worth the while, isn't it? **So Strive on with heedfulness and do not be heedless anymore.**

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 **Do not just believe** what has been spoken but **instead investigate into** all of the dhamma or Truth as advised by the Buddha via **constant Reflection, Contemplation and inquiry** into all dhammas to fully understand the **3-turnings** of the Four Noble Truths as taught by the Buddha. Once you have developed the 3 types of **corresponding wisdom**, you will know how **to free yourself** and later **share your understanding** with others so that you too can be a **blessing** to all.

As thought is response to memory so **Memory is thought-based** and is of **the past**, hence when you cultivate based on **memory which is thought and knowledge-based**, you cannot possibly realize a state that is **beyond thought and beyond time**. With **knowledge which is not wisdom**, you tend to be ‘rigid’ in your views so you tend **to use words, interpret them according to your views and opinion**. You will also have the **tendency to argue** with people and **perceive things** as right and wrong.

3.2 The 4 Right Efforts within the Noble 8-Fold Path

- i. 1st right effort is **to abandon** the **unwholesome actions, speech and thought** that have arisen;
- ii. 2nd right effort is **to prevent** the arising of the **yet-to-arisen** unwholesome action, speech and thought – this needs **constant heedfulness or mindfulness**;
- iii. 3rd right effort is to arise the right effort **to cultivate** the appropriate right action, speech and thought regularly;

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- iv. 4th right effort is to continuously arise the **right effort to refine upon** the wholesomeness that is already in you until they become **perfected** as against just **to maintain** the wholesomeness as stated in most texts.

11th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 29 April 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Our **true Mind** or **essence of mind** is always there – true **Suchness** or “**Ru Ru Bu Dong**” (如如不动) in Mandarin. This is the reason why you **cannot practise mindfulness or sati** and you **cannot try** to be **mindful** because the **trying** and the **practicing** or **noting and doing** etc. are always by the **thought**. If one does not understand this **true principle** of the **true mind** – i.e. **the essence of mind is already there** and we don't have to do anything to be **mindful** because the moment you are **silent** with **inner awareness** you are already **naturally mindful** and **heedful** and you will **be able** to “**see things as they are**” **naturally** to understand the **truth** and the **reality arising** within the **moment**. For if we do not ‘**stir**’ the mind or cause it **to arise the thinking** via our **heedlessness** (or **conditionings** borne of **wrong views**) then our mind will **be quiet** and **silent without thought** - then it can be **aware** of this **essence of mind** which is the **natural state of silent inner awareness before the knowing**. Hence **mindfulness** or **sati** which is the **silent inner awareness** will **automatically ‘shine’ forth** from the ‘nature’ within because ‘Man’ can only do “**one thing at a time**” - either you are **silent** and **aware within** with your **nature (or essence of mind)** or you are **lost in thought** and is **preoccupied** with your **activities of mind** or **thinking** and **reacting** etc. Just like the analogy of the sun – the sun is always there and its **rays ever shining** but when the clouds are there, its rays **cannot shine through**. So similarly, **your thoughts**, your **various emotions** and **reactions** or ‘**stirring**’ of the **mind** are like clouds **obscuring your true nature** or **true mind** from shining forth hence your **inability ‘to see things as they are’** via the **direct seeing** with your **silent/true mind**.

According to the sutta on **Dependent Origination** as taught by the Buddha the first 3 links are **Avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā**; then **saṅkhāra paccayā viññāṇam** i.e. Dependent on **ignorance** arises **saṅkhārā** or **mental thinking** or **activities**; then dependent on **saṅkhāra** or **mental activities** arises **mind door** or **mental consciousness** or **viññāṇam**. This is just a **pure consciousness** or **awareness before the knowing** or the **perception** and **labelling** etc. – that is there is **no one to see or to perceive (objective seeing.)** As the **true sati** is **without the ‘observer’**(there is only an **awareness** of the **phenomenon** or the **impersonal process** of **Dependent Origination** arising from the **pure awareness** or the **essence of mind** which is the **unconditioned** and **without the thought** (which is part of the **Egoic mind**) all as per what the Buddha had often said, “**In the seeing there is only the seeing consciousness** and **there is no one to see or observe**” because they are **all condition arising (naturally)** and **causal phenomena** - so this is the **true understanding** of Anattā within the Dependent Origination borne of **Right view**, hence no more **Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi** or **self delusion**.

It is **delusion** that conditions the living beings to cling and grasp onto the **5 aggregates of Form and Mind** or the **mundane mind** and this is the **main cause** of one's suffering. And because of the first 2 links of the Dependent Origination – ‘**Avijjā paccayā Saṅkhārā**’, every moment of consciousness **you will think** and ‘**stir**’ the mind because of your **ignorance** that

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conditions your **habitual tendencies** to think the wrong thoughts and this is **how one becomes heedless**.

So if there is **no wisdom or yoniso manasikāra (wise attention)** at every moment of sense experience then the mind will be **conditioned** into craving via the link '**vedanā paccayā taṅhā**' or **dependent on feeling craving comes to be** when there is **no wisdom or wise attention** at the moment of sense experience.

Part 2 - Questions and Answers

2.1 Question 1: Why did the Buddha said, "Verily, O Bhikkhū, should anyone (not necessary a Buddhist) who cultivates this 4 Foundations Of Mindfulness, in this manner for 7 years, then by him one of the two fruitions is proper to be expected, sainthood in the here and the now; or if **some form of clinging** is still yet present, the state of a **non-returner** or Anāgāmī – the 3rd stage of the Supra mundane Enlightenment?" and why not at least a Sotāpanna or a Sakadāgāmī is to be expected?

Bro. Teoh: Very likely it is because the Buddha knew that the Four Foundations Of Mindfulness is **such a powerful** cultivation that it can lead to at least **the realization** of Anāgāmī if some form of clinging is yet present. The other reason can be that the **Sotāpanna** and **Sakadāgāmī** are still **not free** from the **fetters of ill will** and **sensual desire** and they still have to come back to the **sensual realm** for at least one more Life. This is the reason why the Sakadāgāmī is also called a **once returner** whereas the **Anāgāmī is called a non-returner** (one who has no more delusion but still some form of minor clinging and conceit). The Anāgāmī will be born into the Pure Abode within the Form or Brahma Realms.

2.2 Question 2: Why is **the Bodhisattva way of cultivation** not much emphasized in the Theravāda tradition? What is emphasized is mainly the **sainthood ways** culminating in **Arahantship**.

Bro. Teoh: The Buddha at that time in Kosambi gathered a **handful of leaves** in his hand and explained to the Bhikkhūs then, its **essential meaning**. The Buddha said, "Even so, monks **many are the things** that I have fully realized, but **not** declared unto you; **few are the things** I have **declared unto you**. And why, monks have I not declared them? They monks are indeed **not** useful, **not** conducive, are **not** essential to the **holy life of purity**, they **do not** lead to **disenchantment, to dispassion, to detachment, to tranquility, to full understanding, to cessation**, to Enlightenment and **to Nibbāna**. That is why they are not declared by me."

So the Buddha knew during that era the conditions were such that the **sainthood way** via cultivating **the 3 turnings of the Four Noble Truths** is the **fastest and the most appropriate** hence the teaching then. The other reason could also be because the **Bodhisattva way** is so much longer – **needs eons and eons** of cultivation to perfect the **10 pāramitās** or **perfections** and this way is so much more difficult. To be a Bodhisattva one must have a **very great compassion** and a very **big heart - to come back for the living beings** and they have **to vow** to **save the limitless living beings**. The **supra mundane mind** via this **great compassion** and **vows** of theirs **must arise** to cause them to come back again **as Bodhisattva** to cultivate the perfections otherwise **after Arahantship** the form and mind will cease upon parinibbāna and there will be no more rebirth.

2.3 Question 3: Can you elaborate on the 2nd aspect of the 5 aggregates of form and mind?

Bro. Teoh: The 1st aspect of the 5 aggregates of form and mind is **as a human being**. As a human being we have a **physical form or body** and a **mind**. The Buddha subdivided the mind into **4 more aggregates** of feeling, perception, activities of mind or saṅkhārā and consciousness. Since the mind is **the knowing element** and **anything that the mind** knows is the **form in the mind** hence, you also have the **5 mental aggregates of form and mind within every moment of sense experience or sense door consciousness**. This is the **2nd aspect** of the 5 aggregates of form and mind and the **external 'form'** enters the mind via the **mental aggregates of perception** (memory-perception-knowledge) or sañña. Like the external form of a Buddha image – how does this external form enter the mind? Via the **seeing consciousness and mental perception (via memory)**, right? This **2nd aspect** which is the **5 mental aggregates of form and mind that arise and pass away with every moment of sense door consciousness** is the **more important** one that the Buddha talks about under his **dependent origination or 12 Links (paṭicca-samuppāda)** teaching.

The text **mostly explains** the 12 Links using **the 1st aspect of the 5 aggregates** of form and mind with the 12 link occurring **only once** over **3 life spans** and this type of **paṭicca-samuppāda** is of not much use. It explains that dependent on the **1st link of ignorance or avijjā**, it conditions **karmic volition** or **saṅkhārā** then **karmic volition conditions rebirth consciousness or viññanam** and dependent on **rebirth consciousness, form and mind or nāma rūpa (the human being) comes to be**. Dependent on the human being, the **6 sense bases or saḷāyatana** come to be To them this is the **only usual logical way** of explaining it.

Whereas the actual 12-links **using the 2nd aspect** can also be explained **if one understands** how **our mind** functions or **operates as taught by the Buddha**. According to the Buddha, the **dependent origination** occurs **within every moment of sense door consciousness**. That is dependent on ignorance (**not understanding the truth** and wanting to know) it conditions **mental volition or activities (mundane perception and thinking, etc.)** then dependent on **thinking or mental volition**, it creates **mental contact** that **triggers off mental or thought consciousness** (instead of rebirth consciousness) because **mind is also an organ**; then dependent on mental or **thought consciousness, the content of consciousness will follow to arise the 5 mental aggregates of form and mind (2nd aspect)**. Then dependent on this form and mind there must be these **6 sense bases**. Hence the flow of dependent origination as taught by the Buddha. This **2nd aspect** is **seldom taught** because it is **very difficult** for most cultivators to have the understanding to share **unless** they themselves have realized the **paṭicca-samuppāda** happening within their own form and mind.

2.4 Question 4: Why is it that my Mindfulness could only sustain for a while and I find it very difficult to cultivate the daily mindfulness when I am working?

Bro. Teoh: When you understand **what sati or mindfulness is**, then you **will know** how to **train** your mind to be **heedful throughout the day** and **daily mindfulness** can be **developed** and **stabilized** even in the **midst of Life and work**. When I was cultivating about **26+ years ago** I was also working as a **civil engineer** and the place I work according to my boss and my predecessor was like a **'mad-house'**.

I was the head of the **Maintenance and Technical department of the Property Office, a super scale post** with a staff strength of 800+ responsible for the **overall upkeep, maintenance and development** of one main and two branch University campuses. This job

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comes with a **lot of responsibilities** and **work pressure**, yet I was able to **cultivate** and my **daily mindfulness** was not a problem. So it all **depends** on you and if you are **sincere** and **serious about Life** then the **cultivation will take off** and there will be **no problem**.

You **must know how to plan** and **organize your work well** then you will be able to do it. Like what I did - within a period of 2-3 months the **whole 'mad-house' department was transformed** and I was able to settle down to do my **cultivation** and soon I became **quite free** after I had **managed to standardize** into **annual contracts** most of the **essential routine maintenance works**. That was the reason why while working, I could still **meditate daily**, off and on **can still go for meditation retreats** and **spiritual trips etc.** with my wife and two children aged 4 & 6. I followed a very 'strict' **daily religious routine** and **meditate very often**. I will meditate **early morning** when I woke up, **before I start work at office**, at **lunch break** and **whenever I had free time** and **before I sleep**. **Even during meetings**. Then later when my daily mindfulness meditation had stabilized I was able to **meditate throughout** the day and **even into my sleeping moments**. Like I hardly sleep and I was **fully aware** and **awake** most of the time.

2.5 Question 5: What is the difference between **forest and ordinary city monk**?

Bro. Teoh: It is just **different terminologies** used to describe these two different types of monks. The forest monks are those from the **forest traditions** especially those within the outskirts of Thailand where they still practice **the forest traditions** as laid down by the Buddha i.e. they **cultivate** following the **vinaya and the sutta** so as to be **worthy of offering** etc. and also on a **daily basis**, they go for **pindapata or alms round** following the Buddha's tradition. However the **ordinary city monks** who stay in the city monasteries or temples **do not** usually go for **pindapata or alms rounds** and they are usually more scholarly and since they tend to have more **interaction with worldly people**, their **worldly duties** are more but they also cultivate following the **vinaya** and the **sutta**. It is a matter of **preference or choice** and it is up to the individual. **Both types of monks can still cultivate the Buddha dhamma** because they are **ordained monks** following the **rules and teachings** (Dhamma Vinaya) as laid down by the Buddha.

Part 3 – Meditation (E-mail No. 4 - 2nd Turning)

How to **cultivate** this **2nd turning wisdom** of **Cintamaya Paññā** via **inquiry, contemplation** and **reflection** on the truth as proclaimed by the Buddha?

3.1 1st Noble Truth, 2nd turning: - The Buddha said: **"This Noble Truth of Dukkha is to be Understood"**

Inquiries:

- i. **Why did the Buddha say this?** – It is because the Buddha knew we need to **inquire, reflect** and **contemplate** into the truth he had proclaimed, so that we can **truly understand** what this **1st Noble Truth** of dukkha or suffering is?

This inquiry can allow us to **sincerely reflect, contemplate** and **inquire deep** into this **1st Noble Truth** of Dukkha to **truly understand** what dukkha is before we confront it so that we can **be wary of it**. This will also enable us not to be **caught** in dukkha or suffering via **not** knowing that we are already suffering.

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- ii. **How** can I develop the **understanding** of **what Dukkha is?** – one can do it via the above reflection, contemplation and inquiry into the 5 daily contemplations as recommended by the Buddha **with a very calm and composed mind** filled with **saddhā, viriya** and **sati** (the first 3 of the 5 spiritual faculties) following what we have done during the sutta class. (For details please refer to the recorded sharing via web link as done by Bro. Swee Aun.)

3.2 2nd Noble Truth, 2nd turning – The Buddha said, “This cause of the arising of Dukkha which is craving is to be Abandoned”

Inquiries:

- i. **Why did the Buddha say this? i.e. craving** which is the **cause** of **one’s suffering** is to be **abandoned?**

If craving is **not** abandoned – we will **continue** to suffer.

- ii. **How can I abandon it?** - To reflect deeply into the Buddha’s **4 right efforts** and **5 daily contemplations** as advised by the Buddha followed by the **dhamma** on **impermanence, suffering** and **anattā** nature of the **5 aggregates of the form and mind**. To use the **4 right efforts** and **5 ways as taught by the Buddha** to **abandon** the **unwholesome thoughts** and the **cravings** that will condition our **unwholesome action, speech and thought**.

As we all understand finally, **only wisdom frees** so to use the **4th way** which is to Trace the “**origination factor then retrospectively reverse it**” to develop the **wisdom to free** and this is the best way thus far. This **4th way** uses **heedfulness** to cultivate the **mindfulness** of the 6 internal and 6 external sense bases via Dhammānupassanā (Mindfulness Of Dhamma cultivation to **trace the origination factors** leading to the wisdom thereby enabling one to understand clearly how your mind has been tricked **into attachment or clinging** and **reactive modes** via one’s **delusion** because there is **no yoniso manasikāra** or **wise attention** at the **moment of sense experience**. **Craving borne of delusion** is the **cause** of all **our attachments** and **clinging** to our 5 aggregates of form and mind that conditions our suffering. (To refer to the 18/3/12 - 6th Heart Sutra, Part 3, Question 1 short notes for details.)

3.3 3rd Noble Truth, 2nd turning - “This cessation of Dukkha is to be Realized”

Inquiries:-

- i. **Why did the Buddha say this? Why is this cessation of dukkha** to be **realized?**

So that one does not have to suffer anymore because according to the Buddha, **suffering need not be** and that this **cessation** of dukkha **can be realized** in the **here and the now** before one dies. The other reason is the **2nd turning** emphasized here is on the word **realization** because the dhamma or enlightenment is **not a knowledge** but a **wisdom** which is to be realized or awakened to without thought.

- ii. **How can I realize the cessation of dukkha?**

Realization can only arise after one has trained one’s mind to have the **initial heedfulness** and **wisdom** (after **overcoming covetousness** and **grief**) to cultivate the **Four Foundations Of Mindfulness** and the **Noble 8-Fold Path** as taught by the Buddha.

3.4 4th Noble Truth, 2nd turning - "This Noble 8-Fold Path that leads to the cessation of Dukkha is to be Cultivated"

Inquiries:-

i. **Why did the Buddha say this?**

This 2nd turning emphasis is on the word to be '**Cultivated**' instead of only to be '**understood**' as per the 1st Noble Truth. The reason being Noble 8-Fold Path **must be a part of you** for you to be able **to live it** hence **understanding alone is not enough**. i.e. you may understand but you **cannot live it**.

ii. **How can I cultivate it?**

To contemplate, reflect and inquire deep into all the Noble 8-Fold Path factors to develop the **true understanding** of what they are **as taught by the Buddha** like for the 1st path factor of **Right View (Sammā Ditthi)** - what are the **3 important right views** as taught by the Buddha? They are the **Law of Kamma; the Four Noble Truths and the Law of Dependent Origination**. One also needs to **train one's mind to be heedful and ever mindful** with the **Right Sati and Samādhi** to see things as they are following Dhammapada Verse 23 which states that: "**The Ever mindful, Constantly meditative and the steadfast one will realize the bond-free Nibbāna.**"

3.5 The 3rd turning is always on the **realization and enlightenment** part.

12th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 13 May 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Appamāda or Heedfulness - means a mind that is **ever mindful (without thought) within to cultivate the meditation** as taught by the Buddha following Dhammapada Verse **23**. (It is just like a **relaxed inner awareness** that is **always aware** and **without thought to see things as they are** - to see **Reality** or the **Truth** within all **mental, physical** and **nature's phenomena**.)

1.2 Applying the 6R technique

While meditating in a **formal posture**, if one feels **any tension or tightness or stress within** one's body and mind then one must **just recognize (1st R) it** and after that **release (2nd R) it**. **Then relax (3rd R)** into whatever **mind state** that has energy built up including all the **tightness** and the **tension** that can be felt via a **radiant smile (4th R)** and a **relaxed inner awareness** without thought. The **moment you relax, craving losses its strength** and this **relax and radiant smile steps** are **very important** to make your **mind feel at ease, light, tranquil and free**. This **training of the mind** will enable you to **de-condition** your mind from its **heedless thinking** and **grasping** to sense experiences. This will enable the cultivator to develop a **silent, tranquil mind** with **heedfulness** within **naturally** via the **understanding** that **'originally, the true mind is already in the meditative state with clear inner awareness within** - so there is **no need to do anything** but instead **just "relax and silent via let things be"** – then the **heedless thinking and grasping** borne of **delusion will slow down and stop on its own via wisdom**. The mind will then return to its **original state** of **true silent inner awareness**. **Without the thought the ever-shining nature** which is the **true mind** will then **shine forth**. (This ever-shining nature which is the **essence** of mind is **always** there.) The **5th R** is – to **return** to the object of meditation to train the mind to develop a **very stable sati** if this training is still needed. Once the mind is **already trained** and constantly aware in sati or Passaddhi throughout the day then this training is no longer required. The **6th R** is to **repeat** the about training of the first 5R. But need to be careful not to do it until it becomes mechanical or repetitive. This last step must be done with understanding especially for those who are still trapped in thought based meditation. Beyond the 6R is the awareness based meditation where the new 4 supports for meditation are:

- i. **Relax;**
- ii. **Aware;**
- iii. **24 hours;**
- iv. **Trust.**

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 12 (Explanation of the Meaning of the Text pg 23 to 24)

2.1 The opening verse by Master Hsuan Hua :-

“Reversing the light to shine within” (‘Hui Guang Fan Zhao’回光反照), Avalokiteshvara enlightens all the sentient beings; thus he is a Bodhisattva. His mind is “**thus, thus, unmoving**” (‘Ru Ru Bu Dong’ 如如不动), a superior one at Peace; with total understanding of the **ever-shining**, he is **host** and **master**..... ”

The 1st line of the above verse is very important because **most of the time** our mind dwells **outside** to chase **after externals** – the **external appearances** that **created the phenomena world of ours**. This is also the reason why the Buddha said under Dhammapada Verses 1 and 2, that ‘**our mind is the forerunner of all things and mind is chief; everything arises when the mind arises**’. In order to understand what is going on, we need **to return the mind to abide within** so that we **can be aware of what is going on within our mind** hence the importance of “**Reversing the light to shine within**” (‘Hui Guang Fan Zhao’回光反照). Only then can we be **aware of our content of consciousness** within our mind i.e. how our mind **are stirred by externals** and **conditioned into clinging** and **grasping** after **externals** (created by mind) via our **delusion** and **mental aggregates** of vedanā, sañña, sankhāra and viññāṇa. You will **start to understand how thoughts and feeling arise in your mind**, with **every moment of sense door consciousness** and how they **condition each other**. How your thoughts (**with its conditionings**) condition your feeling and then how **this feeling** becomes craving/emotion to condition your **subsequent wrong thought/thinking**. All these, if you are **not careful or heedful**, if you do not develop the **wisdom or yoniso manasikara to enable you ‘to see things as they are’**, clinging and grasping will continue to arise and Dukkha or suffering will be the result.

The next verse - “With **total understanding** of the **ever-shining**, he is **host** and **master**.” The word **host** is synonymous to the **owner** or **Inn keeper**. The **ever-shining** is our Buddha **nature**. Imagine oneself as a hotel with 6 rooms. The **6 sense bases** are like your 6 rooms and the **sense data** or **external forms** are like your guests of the mind. For example, the guests of your **seeing** consciousness are colours, shapes and forms; vibrations like sound, music, noise etc. are guests of your **hearing** consciousness. These guests of the mind are **not** like human beings because they **cannot talk or complain** so it is a lot **easier to manage** this Hotel if one is **not deluded**. The **Host** is always there to receive the guests. The guests **of the mind - they will come and go hence they are impermanent**. As guests they are here to stay **for a while only** and **most of the time** they stay **for split seconds only** but because of your **delusion** you cling on to them **as memories** and give them meaning so that they can ‘stay’ for longer period of time thereby causing you all the **miseries** and **suffering**. At times leading to depression.

If the **mundane mind** can **reverse the light and shine within**, then it can **stay aware inside and see clearly** how **peaceful ‘He’** is when he just allows them ‘to come and go’ via **perceiving** them with **wholesomeness** and **wisdom** or **right view** and also **how ‘He’** suffers and becomes **miserable** when he **perceives** them **with negativity** via his own **wrong views** and **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** to **grasp** and **cling** onto them via **wanting things his way**. This will enable ‘Him’ to develop the **wisdom** to understand that if ‘He’ - **the Host does not** attach, cling and react then he is always peaceful and is not **disturbed** by the guests of the mind then **Life is wonderful and meaningful** and the guests of the mind can also be **quite fun** at times.

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2.2 Important Notes: -

- i. **Host – always there to stay** but **guests**, they come and go;
- ii. You hold the **key to your own life's destiny**. To be happy or to be unhappy depends entirely on your own choice, so why are you not happy? If **we choose to be happy** then no one can make **us unhappy unless** we ourselves **allow ourselves** to be unhappy via our own delusion;
- iii. **Thought is like money** and **Money is neither good nor evil** because good and evil **depend on the user**. If the **User** of money or thought **is evil** then money or thought will also become evil. If user of thought **has wisdom** then thought becomes **right and wholesome thought**. So the **user of thought** is the **most important**. **Hence do strive on with heedfulness to develop the right views** more and more.

Part 3 – Meditation (Email No. 4 pg 9 of e-mail compilation notes)

- 3.1 Bro. Teoh explained that the **three turnings of the 4 Noble Truths in Pāṭi** under the Theravāda tradition is **very accurate**. Mahāyāna's explanation compared to Theravāda differs a bit. The problem with most cultivators is they cling onto the 1st turning and never get down to the **nitty-gritty of the 2nd turning** where all the **hard work** is. (To refer to email no. 4, page 9 of the email compilation notes on 'Understanding the Meditation as taught by the Buddha – dated 14th May 2007.)

13th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 20 May 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 **Heedfulness** means a mind that is **constantly meditative** and **ever mindful** to develop clear understanding & wisdom via seeing things as they are. Understanding the **Importance of heedfulness** via understanding the following important Dhammapada Verses:-

Dhammapada Verse 21

Heedfulness is the path to the **deathless**, **heedlessness** is the path to **death**. **The heedful do not die; the heedless are as if dead.**

Dhammapada Verse 22

Distinctly understanding this **difference**, the **wise intent** on **heedfulness** will rejoice in the **realm** of the **Ariyas** or the Enlightened Ones.

Dhammapada Verse 23

The **constantly meditative**, the **ever mindful** and the **steadfast ones** realize the bond-free, supreme Nibbāna.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 13 (Commentary pg 23 to 25)

2.1 **Dhammapada Verse 1 - leads to suffering.**

Mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is Chief. Everything arises from the Mind. If one speaks, acts and thinks with a **wicked/unwholesome mind** that has **the 3 evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion**, then **suffering will follow one** like the **wheel that follows the hoof**.

2.2 **Dhammapada Verse 2 – leads to happiness.**

Mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is Chief. Everything arises from the Mind. If one speaks, acts and thinks with a **pure/wholesome Mind**, that is free of all **the 3 evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion**, then **happiness** will follow one like the **shadow that never leaves him**.

2.3 **Question 1:** Why is the teaching or dhamma as taught by the Buddha during his time becomes **different** as it gets passed down over the years?

Bro. Teoh: Because the dhamma was passed down via using **words** and **speeches** which are verbal in nature and as we all know, **words are subject to various type of interpretation** hence the **deviation**. For example when asked about “what is the **1st Noble Truth** as taught by the Buddha?” More often than not – we get the **standard** and **very popularly accepted answer**: - “**Life is suffering**” and this is very **dangerous** because the Buddha **never said** that. The Buddha **instead** proclaimed that **there is a 1st Noble Truth** that **explained clearly what dukkha or suffering** is and according to Lord Buddha there are **8 conditions in Life or**

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realities of Life and Existence that can give rise to suffering when one **confronts them without wisdom**.

They are **the realities** of Birth, getting old or old age, sicknesses and death; when you are with **people whom you don't like**; when there is **separation** from **your loved ones** and your prized **possessions** (things that we hold on to dearly); when you **cannot get what you want** or **when things don't go your way**; etc.

No matter who you are and how wealthy and powerful you are – if you live long enough you **will confront** all of these realities of Life and Existence.

The Buddha then went on to proclaim that there is a **cause behind all suffering** and the cause is always **craving borne of delusion** – this is the **2nd Noble Truth**. Then under the **3rd Noble Truth**, the Buddha said, **“Suffering need not be because there is a Noble Truth that explains the possibility of the cessation of all suffering in the here and the now.”** Then finally the Buddha taught the **4th Noble Truth** – which is the meditation as taught by the Buddha namely the **Noble 8-Fold Path** and if one cultivates this Noble 8-Fold Path, it will lead to the **end of all dukkha or suffering**.

2.4 Important Definitions:-

- i. Zi Zai (自在) – meaning **“Me in the moment”** and it means at **Ease**.
- ii. False thinking – means **Heedless thinking**.
- iii. One is not right here or **aware** within – means **lost in thought**.
- iv. 1st pronunciation ‘jiao’ or **jue** 觉 – means enlightenment and 2nd ‘jiao’ (搅) – means to stir up trouble.

Part 3 – Meditation (Email No. 4 - 3 Turnings of the 4 Noble Truths)

3.1 Training of the mind to be Heedful - two steps is involved:-

- i. Via **Mind Sweeping Method + Metta + 6R + Object of Meditation**;
- ii. Then finally **silent your mind to be heedful within** via letting go of the object of meditation i.e. mind is constantly meditative and ever mindful to cultivate the N8FPath.

The **mind sweeping method** is a very good and useful skilful means to train the mind to be at the **location you want it to be** and it also **trains you to feel** and **not to think**. Then you **continue to relax** whatever tension, tightness and stress within the location you feel (like your forehead etc.) to enable you to be in a **state of relaxed inner awareness** to realize the **tranquility, peace, quietness** and **calmness within** when there is **no thinking**. Then your mind will be **peaceful, at ease** and **without thought** hence **de-conditioning** it from **your habitual heedless thinking and worrying**, etc.

14th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 27 May 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Within the **conditioned world of Life and Existence**, everything is **condition-arising** (or they arise due to **causal phenomena**) following the **5 universal nature's laws/orders** (pañca niyāmas namely Utu niyāma, Bija niyāma, Kamma niyāma, Citta niyāma and Dhamma niyāma). Hence, they exhibit the **three Universal Characteristics of anicca (impermanence), dukkha (suffering state) and anattā (non-self/empty nature)**. The first **two are scientific laws** – nature's **physical law (Utu niyāma)** and nature's **Biological order (Bīja niyāma)** and the **next three** are nature's **spiritual laws** namely **Kamma niyāma (Law of Kamma)**, **Citta niyāma (Law of the Mind)** and **Dhamma niyāma (Law of Dhamma or Truths as taught by the Buddha)**. Understanding **these 5 universal orders or laws implies having right view** with regards to **life and existence** and this **right view** will enable one to have **great understanding and wisdom** of our **existential world**. Understanding Citta niyāma will also enable one to understand how **our mind functions** following the **12 Links or Law of Dependent Origination (Paṭicca-Samuppāda)** as taught by the Buddha.

The children of today are mostly **2nd generation kids** and nowadays parents, they are **usually over protective** of their **2nd generation children** and they also tend to **over pamper** them in the name of 'loving' them hence giving rise to all the related **social problems**. This is especially common in families where the family members do not have **close relationship** with one another. They usually lack **harmony** and the family members seldom have **the opportunity or line of communication** to talk and discuss with one another **openly, frankly and sincerely** to resolve **their Life's problems** like **relationship, health, career and financial problems, etc.**

Do learn to play your role **as responsible and good parents** via **cultivating and understanding the Buddha dhamma or great wisdom** as taught by the **Buddha** then **share them** with your **children** to **guide** them through **Life**. Your **duties or responsibilities** as parents are **to provide** for their **basic needs** like **food, shelter, clothing and education etc.** **when** they are **young** and not to pamper them or be too protective of them. **Advise them accordingly** and then **allow** them to **make their own decision** in **Life** because it is **their Life** and let them **be responsible** for their own **Life decisions** and **never force them** or try to **control them** in any way that will cause **them** to **dislike** you or refuse to **talk or discuss matters** with you.

PART 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 14 (Commentary pg 25 to 28)

2.1 There is a big difference between '**emotional love**', '**conditioned love**' and '**mettā**' – which is **universal love**. An example of emotional love is **the usual love/hatred relationship of laypeople**. One moment they will **love each other** when things go their way and the **next moment**, this so-called 'emotional' love can turn into **hatred, envy and jealousy, etc.** Then, there is the other relationship between parents and children, brothers and sisters,

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daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law, good friends, etc. expressed as '**conditioned**' love that **only exists** because of **relationship bonds** whereas **Universal love or mettā** is love without any **opposite**.

The mind that has mettā is **always peaceful and happy – without any negativity**. It is borne of **wisdom** that enables one **to accept the reality of the moment** and **always be at peace** with the **way things are** and one's heart is always full of mettā.

2.2 Definition of terms:-

Samādhi – a mind that is **collected, unwavering** and **unmoving**;

With total understanding of the **ever-shining** (or the **Buddha Nature**);

Host and master – meaning **fully in charge**;

Mind is at peace – meaning **mind that is heedful, silent** and **unstirred**.

Dhamma saying by Master Bo Yuen Chang Lau is quite similar:-

心静 (xin jing) - **Still or silent mind**.

无念是真心 (wu nian shi zhen xin) – **no thought is true mind**;

动念即无明 (dong nian ji wu ming) – **stirring of the thought is delusion**.

That is **understanding** – meaning **wisdom**;

Outflows – means **defilements, evil roots and delusion**.

2.3 The 8 Worldly Conditions or the 8 winds or the 8 pairs of dualities are:-

- i. **Gain & Loss** - wherever there is **gain** there is **loss**. **Before you have, you have not** so what **you have lost** is only **losing back** what you **have gained**. **We came with nothing & we go with nothing**, then why does one grieve over emptiness in between?
- ii. **Happiness & Sorrow** – if you **cling to happiness, sorrow** will be the **result** because it is a **worldly condition**;
- iii. **Praise & Blame** – wherever there is **praise** there will also be **blame**;
- iv. **Fame & Ill-Fame** – the **same goes** with **fame** and **ill fame**.

Note: Do not cling! To the 8 worldly conditions via **understanding** the **importance of cultivating** the **equanimity enlightenment** factor **needed to liberate** the mind.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Deeper states of Meditation are needed to allow the **stillness** and **cessation** to develop and stabilize via **wisdom**.

The two main purposes of Meditation are:-

- i. To **stabilize** the **silent** and **tranquil heedful mind** – via a **combination of relaxation, clear awareness, wisdom** and **understanding**.

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- ii. To use this **still/tranquil** mind **to investigate clearly** into all the dhammas and phenomena both internally and externally within Life to realize the wisdom and the enlightenment needed to free the mind.

Brother Teoh also shared with us **his own cultivation** and **how he came out into the private sector to test himself in 1989** – for details, please listen to the 14th Heart Sutra recording dated 25/5/2012.

Bro. Teoh Kian Koon – 28/5/2012

15th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 10 June 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 According to the Buddha “Mind is the forerunner of all things and mind made are they.” Hence through **mental consciousness** we can perceive the **phenomena world of consciousness** - all of the **physical, mental and nature’s** phenomena within life and existence. (Definition – **anything perceivable by the mind** is a phenomenon.)

Contemplative wisdom – can arise when you **silent your mind** to reflect, contemplate and inquire into the dhamma as taught by the Buddha. Be **aware and mindful** of all **physical, mental and nature’s phenomena** within your daily Life to ‘see’ **clearly** their **moment of arising, its sustenance and passing away** of all **phenomena** and to realize the **penetrative** wisdom borne of Bhāvanā or cultivation of the **4 Foundations Of Mindfulness**.

With the **silent mind** in **pure awareness** one can be **aware** of all the vibrations and phenomena within one’s form/body and mind. One will be able **to perceive deeper** into one’s mind consciousness. **All phenomena** can be **perceived** via the silent mind and it **can also witness** how **they come and go; arise and pass away; their birth and death**, etc. hence realizing **their impermanence and empty or non-self nature**. You will see them **everywhere** – from your **bodily vibrations to your heartbeat, your pulses, feelings, thought activities, perceptions and consciousness, physical, mental and nature’s phenomena etc.** You only have to **silent your mind** to ‘see’ them all as they are. What you perceive via your **mundane or thinking mind** is **not a real condition** because they arise via **thought** which is **response to memory**. The **reality before the knowing** is very different.

Human beings have the **tendency to react to sense experience** because of **ignorance**. To solve human beings’ problem or suffering, one **needs the dhamma**. Life **without dhamma is not easy to cope**. Without the dhamma, there will be **delusion and ignorance** with regards to **understanding who you are and what you are?** Without **self knowledge**, one will **grasp and cling** to one’s **5 aggregates of form and mind** hence conditioning one’s dukkha or suffering.

Samsāra or Wheel of Life within Existence can also take the form of “**Man and Nature must harmonise**” and there are the **5 Universal Laws or Orders that govern Nature**. These 5 laws – 2 of them are scientific laws (Utu niyāma and Bīja niyāma) and the other 3 are Spiritual Laws (Law of Kamma or Kamma niyāma; Law of the Mind or Citta niyāma and finally the Law of Truths or Dhamma niyāma). When you have the **right understanding or right views** with regards to these 5 universal orders/laws (which are like **the secrets of Life**) then you will **know how to Live** Life. When you know how to live Life you will know **how to experience** all of the **wonders and beauty of Life**. Then **Life will be very meaningful and beautiful. i.e. true emptiness is wonderful existence**.

Understanding the **3 right views** with regards to the **Law of Kamma, the 4 Noble Truths and the Law of Dependent Origination or 12 Links** is very important because it can transform your understanding of the dhamma to enable you to live the **noble Life**.

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Thought is **limited** and **egoic** hence it **cannot free you**. True mind – is **only pure awareness without thought**. As such, it can **see things as they are without the conditioning**. One will come to understand clearly that **“In the seeing there is only the seeing consciousness (no one to see)”**. That is before the knowing and before the delusion or sakkāya-diṭṭhi carries through to condition you into **grasping and clinging** on to what you see. Your **craving or reactive** mental intention is due to your **habitual tendency** borne of **wrong views**.

1.2 Understanding thought and consciousness

Once we input the **content of consciousness into our awareness** then consciousness becomes the **thought**. Hence **Thought = Consciousness + its contents**.

Initially **before the knowing or the arising of thought** there is just this ‘spacious’ **Awareness**. The moment you **focus** on something, you input the **content of consciousness** then consciousness becomes **restricted** or **limited** and becomes a **thought**. Take for example, seeing. Initially **“In the seeing there is only the seeing consciousness (no one to see)”**. But the moment you are **preoccupied with what you see** and **without the wisdom (yoniso manasikāra)** at the moment of **sense experience** then the **egoic mind** borne of **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** or **wrong view** with regards to the **atta or self**, has already arisen causing you to **grasp and cling onto** what you see. Then your **habitual tendencies** of likes and dislikes or pleasant and unpleasant will arise to condition **your hindrances of mind** to arise.

As **form is the product of thought** hence **thought can see form** but **form cannot see thought** because thought has got **higher intelligence** than form. Likewise **since thought is the product of awareness** hence awareness can see or be aware of thought but **thought cannot see awareness** because awareness has got higher intelligence than thought which is limited and egoic.

1.3 Important inquiries for developing the meditative wisdom:

- i. Are the feelings, perceptions, saṅkhāra and consciousness that arise in ‘you’ really **what you are?**
- ii. If feeling and perception, etc. are you then **when they arise** and **pass away how come you did not die?** So who are you and what are you?
- iii. If the five aggregates of Form and Mind are not you **then why did they arise in you?**

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 15 (Prajna and Emptiness pg 29 to 33)

2.1 Definition of terms

Profound Prajna – wonderful wisdom of those who cultivate the **Bodhisattva way** to become Sammā Saṃbuddha.

Superficial Prajna – Limited to the understanding of the Four Truths and the 12 Links of conditioned causation as taught at the Theravāda level.

Form-dhammas – perceptible dhamma at the form level (1st of the 5 aggregate of form and mind).

Mind-dhammas – non-perceptible dhammas (the remaining 4 aggregates of mind namely feeling, perception, activities of mind and consciousness).

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Need **Awareness or mindfulness** to **see** the mind dhammas.

If one cannot see **form dhammas** then it will be **very difficult** for them to see **mind dhammas** which are **much subtler** and **much less** perceptible.

Cultivators of **superficial prajna** can **end the Birth and death of their delimited segment** (body and mind) but they are **unable** to transcend the birth and death of **fluctuations** or the **thought**. They can be enlightened because they **don't have ignorance** so at the **moment of death** there is **no more** rebirth consciousness but their mundane mind is still there when they are still in the midst of living life.

Previous lives could be – animals/petas/demons/devas etc. then this life say you are a Human Being - so which one of these is "YOU"? None of them, isn't it?

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Post retreat sharing: 2nd - 8th Aug 2012 Retreat at Cempaka Buddhist Lodge by Ajahn Achalo.

Conditions are **very conducive** and the **retreat** was **very well-received** by all. It had also **benefited so** many of them in so many ways. These were **made possible because of the continuity of mindfulness, bhāvanā** and **great wholesomeness expressed by all throughout** the retreat and it had also resulted in such **good conditions** for many of the **participants** to **experience** rather good **meditative states** and **development** of their **5 spiritual faculties**. The conditions during the retreat are **very conducive** for good **bhāvanā** and **wholesomeness** training to **set the base** for our **past cultivation** to **connect back** to us thus helping to speed up our cultivation. Every day **we chant, take refuge, renew our precepts, pay reverential salutation, maintaining quietness, do sitting and walking meditation and mindfulness bhāvanā followed by listening to the dhamma, straightening our views, share merits, transfer and dedication of merits, offering and receiving of dana, radiating mettā, dhamma discussion and meditation reporting followed by Q & A cum dhamma sharing, etc.** - all these are **very, very wholesome and meritorious** in nature and **together** with the **non-humans** - our **collective group consciousness** had **created a very conducive environment** which was **charged with a lot of very good meditative and wholesomeness energies** to benefit so many of us including all those who had **one way or other contributed** to the **success** of this **wonderful retreat**.

This type of retreat is **more intense** and **useful** hence the **5 spiritual faculties** and the **Mind** can develop very much faster. It will **encourage** and **motivate** many of the participants who have **benefited** from it to diligently determine **to continue their post retreat cultivation**. Do not be **complacent** otherwise one will lose this good **state of trained mind** within a very short span of **post-retreat heedless living again**. The **ability to maintain and continue this good momentum of post-retreat cultivation** by **integrating** it into one's **daily Life** is very important. The **momentum of continuous post-retreat devotional, bhāvanā and mindfulness training** via having a **very good and disciplined daily religious routine** and **daily awareness/mindfulness** training are equally important. A good daily **religious routine** can be in the form of at **least twice a day** of **strict devotional and bhāvanā training** – i.e. once in the morning and once at night before one sleeps followed by paying respect to the Buddha every time before you leave your house and every time when you return to your home. **Maintain awareness of all your bodily actions and movements** within the **present moment** to **cultivate your daily mindfulness** until it is **very stable**. This training of the mind in

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kāyānupassanā is to **slow down** your **heedless habitual thinking mind** and not your **actions** and **movements**. Every moment of **awareness or sati** will help you to **break the momentum** of your **heedless habitual thinking** thus enabling you to **stabilize your daily mindfulness training**.

16th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 17 June 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 The **6 internal sense bases** are our **5 physical sense bases** and our **1 mind base** and the **6 external sense bases** are their **respective 6 sense data/objects** like colour, shapes and forms for the eye; vibrations (sound, music, noise, etc.) for ear; etc. Upon **contact of mind**, their respective **sense door consciousness** comes to be and like the **physics laboratory experiment** of the light bulb, the switch and the battery - upon contact, the **light bulb lights up naturally**. So in the same way, **our sense door consciousness** is also naturally condition arising (i.e. upon contact of mind with their respective sense bases and sense objects their respective consciousness comes to be).

Contemplative wisdom refers to the **2nd turning wisdom** called **Cintamaya Paññā** whereas the **meditative** or **bhāvanā type** developed via cultivation of the **4 Foundations Of Mindfulness** refers to the **3rd turning wisdom** called **Bhāvanāmaya Paññā**. Wisdom is always linked to **harmony**. This is the reason why the wise ones are **always in harmony and at peace with all things no matter what happens**. Sensual desire and ill will are the first **two hindrances of the mind** that will always arise when one **reacts to one's sense experiences without wisdom**. **Reactions or stirring** of mind also imply **disharmony** via **wanting things our way**.

Memory is useful for remembering one's house address, name and bank account and signature etc. but **not for grasping, clinging and holding onto** our **unhappy, sad and fearful memories** of our **psychological hurts and emotional past**, etc. These **scars of memories must not be clung onto** otherwise they can condition one's **sadness, grief, sorrow and lamentation, fear, insecurities, unhappy emotions etc.** Memories should be left in the brain as it is like the **ROM and RAM in the computer** i.e. we do not cling onto it but **only access** it when we need to **make use of it to perform certain useful and appropriate** actions or functions.

True or actual meditation **only begins** when **one's daily mindfulness has stabilized**. That is when one is **always aware and heedful throughout the day** to investigate the **Buddha dhamma in daily life via cultivating the Four Foundations Of Mindfulness** to truly understand **who we are, what we are, how we function** as a human being via **'self' knowledge** and **how we become what we are via understanding how our mind stirs at every moment of sense experience** and how we are **conditioned into various mind states of suffering** due to our own **delusion and ignorance**.

The **silent mind in clear stable awareness** or **mindfulness** will enable us to be aware of the sense door consciousness that arise at every moment of sense experiences thereby enabling us to witness all of the Buddha dhamma like the **Four Noble Truths, the Law of Dependent Origination, etc.** as taught by the Buddha within our own form and mind or fathom-length body. This witnessing via **the direct seeing** can give rise to **a lot of wisdom leading to the awakening or enlightenment** in the here and the now.

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Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 16 (Prajna and Emptiness pg 32 to 33)

- 2.1** **Silent** your mind and **be aware from within or inside** to **realize the true mind**. Then you will understand why **only wisdom frees and liberates the mind** and **nothing else**. Then you can understand Master Hsuan Hua's commentary that states, "With wisdom you can very **naturally reach the other shore of Nirvana; very easily, very naturally, you get to the other shore, without any need, expend any effort at all.**"
- 2.2** **Question:** Is the "divine" innocence of a new born baby the same as the enlightened state?
- Bro. Teoh: No!** The **new born baby's condition is different**. Only the mind state of **pure perception is quite similar**. The reason being in the case of the baby the so-called **pure perception comes about via a brain** that is still **quite innocent and pure** - in the sense, that it is **not conditioned by any memories, views, opinion, conditioning or concepts and words as yet**. So the main difference is – that mind state is **not borne** of wisdom. Whereas for those of the **enlightened ones**, their perceptions are **still pure perceptions** despite their **memories, conditioning etc.** due to their **wisdom** and there is **clarity within their pure perceptions**. That is, they are like **a lotus flower**, they are **still pure and above the lotus pond** even though they **originate from the filthy lotus pond** below.

Part 3 – Meditation

- 3.1** When one encounters adversities **without wisdom**, the mind **will stir to condition ones unwholesome thoughts** and **unwholesome emotions**.

The Buddha teaches 5 **ways** to overcome all these **unwholesome thoughts** and **emotions** that have arisen:-

- i. **1st way** - Think of the **direct opposite wholesome state**. (For example, if there is anger then **develop mettā** and if there is **cruelty**, then develop **Compassion**. And if there is **Fear**, develop **Faith**);
- ii. **2nd way** - Think of the **consequence** of holding onto the **unwholesome thought or evil root**; (If you do not abandon it then the evil root which is the **root of all evil** will **condition you into becoming an evil person**. For example, anger can condition one into hatred and violence. An **angry person can kill, harm and abuse others**);
- iii. **3rd way** - **Just Relax and let things be** - this is the **meditative way** developed via **understanding** that "the **natural state of mind before** its stirring is already the **meditative state of peace, calmness and silent inner awareness**" and that "the very **flowering** of the unwholesome thought is the **very ending** of that thought if we don't give it anymore **'fuel'** to proliferate";
- iv. **4th way** - Trace the **origination factors** and then **retrospectively reverse** them via the cultivation of **mindfulness of dhamma** (dhammānupassanā) – i.e. via cultivation of the mindfulness of the **6 internal and 6 external sense bases**. This is to **develop the wisdom to free**;
- v. **5th way** - If all the above 4 ways above also cannot help you, then you must use your own **self-determination** as recommended by the Buddha i.e. "With **clenched teeth** and

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your tongue towards your palate, you should **determine strongly** to abandon the negative unwholesome thought”.

3.2 Question: Is it alright to **indulge in positive thought** during **formal sitting** meditation? For example, like recalling thought of doing good deeds, etc.

Bro. Teoh: **Not** advisable because it is like trying to create good memories for a good state of **happy mind moments** which is a **form of thinking** and **sensual indulgence or craving** for these happy mind states whereas **radiating loving kindness or mettā** is different because it is **not thinking** - it is from the **heart** with the **pure feeling** of **true mettā**. You **are silent** and you **radiate** that **peaceful mettā sincerely** from your **heart**.

When you are in the sitting posture during formal meditation training, **try not to do that** because it will not bring about the bhāvanāmaya Paññā (the **meditative wisdom**) borne of the **3rd turning** of the Four Noble Truths. During the formal sitting meditation, your main focus is to **initially train** and **tame** the **heedless thinking mind** into a **relaxed state** of **silent inner awareness**. Then after it **has stabilized**, **keep it silent** and **just be aware within** to understand what is going on **within** our own form and mind so as to develop the 3rd turning **direct seeing wisdom** as taught by the Buddha.

Understand that the 1st and 2nd turnings wisdom are **less penetrative** than the 3rd turning wisdom which is borne of the **direct seeing**. Hence the **2nd turning wisdom** via reflection, contemplation and inquiry into the truth as proclaimed by the Buddha should only be done during **normal daily mindfulness training** and **silent relaxed contemplative sessions** and **moments**.

Bro. Teoh – 19/6/12

17th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 24 June 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Direct seeing refers to the **silent mind** in **pure awareness** to see things as they are **without** any thought to arise the 3rd turning wisdom (Bhāvanāmaya Paññā). If you have wisdom, the 5 aggregates of form and mind will not be a problem because they will be **non-grasping** aggregates. Reversing the **light of awareness** to shine within to cultivate the **daily mindfulness** with **clear comprehension** or **Sati Sampajañña** is **very important**.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 17 (Prajna and Emptiness pg 29 to 33)

2.1 Whenever you are **not peaceful** and **not happy**, the evil roots of **Greed, Hatred and Delusion** are there; whereas **wisdom leads to peace, harmony, love, happiness and joy**. This is the dhamma to contemplate constantly and it is **a very good check** for all cultivators.

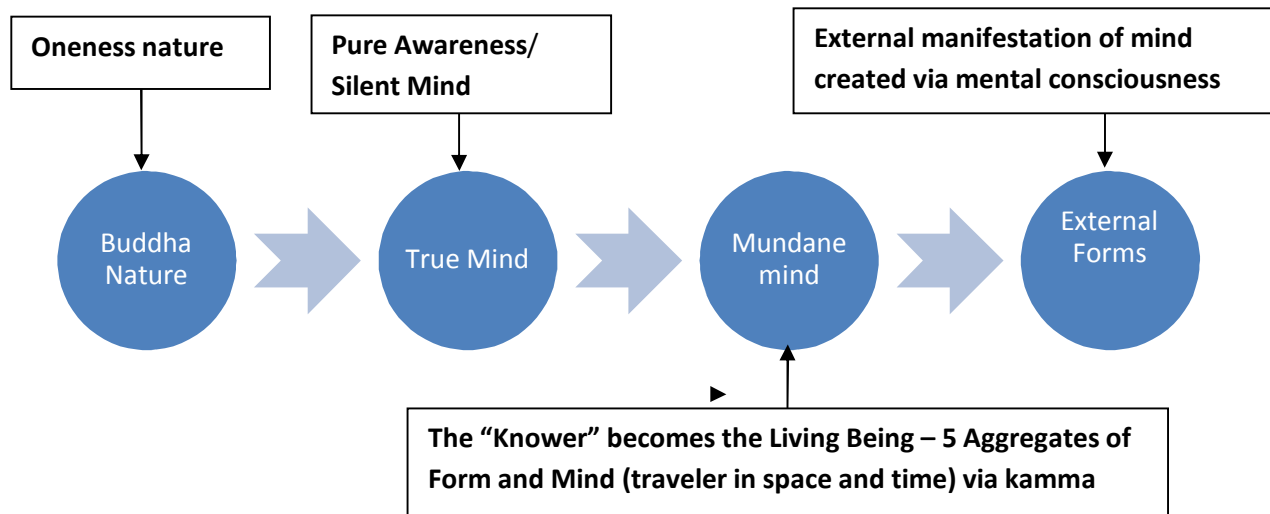
Buddha reprimanded Ananda on the sayings “see no evil and hear no evil, then you are peaceful” because according to the Buddha “evil” or “not evil” is all in the mind. The world is the world and **it is not a problem** if you **have wisdom to confront its realities** for nobody can make you unhappy or miserable unless you allow yourself to be so via your **own delusion**.

There are three types of **wisdom lights**:

- i. 1st wisdom light – the light of **Prajna of Language** is equivalent to the 1st turning wisdom called **Suttamaya Paññā**.
- ii. 2nd wisdom light – the light of **Prajna of Contemplation illumination** is equivalent to the 2nd turning wisdom called **Cintamaya Paññā**.
- iii. 3rd wisdom light – the **light of the Prajna of the characteristics of actuality** is equivalent to the Direct seeing wisdom of the 3rd turning called **Bhāvanāmaya Paññā**.

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Return all **external forms** or **manifestation** created by mind to **mental consciousness**, then **mental consciousness** to the **pure awareness** or **True mind** to realize the **Buddha nature** or **Oneness nature** which is also the **SOURCE** of all things.



Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1: In meditation, usually how long will it take for the mind to settle down into stillness?

Bro. Teoh: It depends on the individual. If you **have cultivated correctly** and **consistently** and **your wisdom** and **daily mindfulness** are already **very established** then the stillness of mind can be realized relatively fast. It can happen within minutes. But if you **have not done** the training and the wisdom is **not established as yet** then it **may not happen** and to settle down into stillness may be quite a difficult task.

3.2 Question 2: What actually returns to the source?

Bro. Teoh: There is no one to return to the source. It is just the **mundane mind** that **realizes itself** and **cease**. The **cessation of form** and **mind** which is the realization of Nibbāna is **without** any mind and **totally without any thought** or **even the pure awareness** or **consciousness** hence it **cannot be spoken** or **expressed** or **understood via words, knowledge** or **ideas** or **concept which is still within the field of thoughts**. The mind ceases but 'you' are **not dead** and consciousness can still come back if it is still not time for parinibbāna as yet. It is just like the analogy of the **candle light that ceases**.

3.3 Question 3: Buddhist Meditation talks about **mental liberation** and **enlightenment** via the Buddhist way; can non-Buddhist also gain liberation of mind via meditation?

Bro. Teoh: Yes because like the Buddha said, "The **Dhamma** or **Truth** was already there before him and he only **realized it** after the enlightenment." So Truth is **not monopolized** by Buddhism or **any religion** for that matter. **Whatever that can explain the way things are is the Truth**. Hence **Truth IS! Not your Truth or my Truth** – for these are the **individual's opinion** of Truth.

3.4 Question 4: When meditating is it normal that the mind may go blank for awhile?

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Bro. Teoh: The mind can go blank for a **while** or for **quite some time** depending on the type of meditation one is doing. But it is more important for us to understand **what the main purpose of bhāvanā or meditation is**. The main purpose **is to realize the wisdom** that can enable us to understand clearly the **Four Noble Truths** so that our mind can be **liberated** from **all the entanglements of Life** that can **condition our mental suffering**. So whatever **meditative experiences** that can bring about this wisdom or understanding is more important than just blanking our mind or developing the **very special meditative experiences** during meditation. The very special or beautiful meditative experiences that arise during meditation **are only conditioned states** and if they do not bring about a transformation in understanding then they should be **left as they are**. They should not be clung onto or perceived as equivalent to **special achievement** in meditation.

Certain types of **one-pointedness concentration** and **absorption meditation** can also bring about a state of like **no thought or blank mind** for a certain period of time. The calmness can be very strong but the mind **is without any awareness within**. Such meditation is mainly **samatha** in nature. One will have **to release** the absorption and concentration to **normal state of awareness** to cultivate the **sati sampajañña or daily mindfulness with clear comprehension** meditation to develop **the insight and wisdom** needed for enlightenment.

Bro. Teoh (28/6/12)

18th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 30 June 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Daily mindfulness is very important **to enable one to realize the real dhamma** as taught by the Buddha. Without this **daily mindfulness** via an **awareness of all actions and movements, feelings, content of consciousness, and dhamma that arise and pass away from moment to moment** (within the present moment), the real wisdom **cannot arise**. When there is **no wisdom**, one will be **conditioned by one's delusion** whereas Wisdom leads **to Joy, Peace, Love, compassion and harmony**.

How you **interpret** or **perceive** a life situation or a phenomenon at every moment of sense experience is very important. When you have wisdom, **Life itself is your teacher**. The Enlightened one will perceive all things with **wholesomeness** only. Develop the **wisdom** to be **at peace** with all **situations** and **learn to accept the reality of the moment** so that one **does not** have to **react to** or **worry about Life** but instead **always act** with **wisdom** following the **Noble 8-Fold Path** to **resolve all of Life situations amicably**.

1.2 The four right efforts are—the Right effort:-

- i. To **abandon** the unwholesome actions, speeches and thoughts that **had** already arisen;
- ii. To **prevent** the arising of the unwholesome thoughts, speeches and actions that have **yet** to arise;
- iii. To **develop or cultivate** the right thoughts, speeches and actions;
- iv. To **maintain and refine upon** any right thoughts, speeches and actions that are already in you.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 18 (The Conditioned Body pg 35 to 39)

2.1 There are three (3) types of suffering:

- i. **Suffering within suffering** in its most obvious ordinary form (**dukkha-dukkhata**) – Suffering within the physical form like birth, old age, sickness and death. If the mind **via delusion clings and attaches** to this bodily suffering then there is double suffering. i.e. not only the body is sick, mind is also affected;
- ii. **Suffering** due to the **unsatisfactoriness of conditioned states (saṅkhāra-dukkhata)** – suffering due to **mental attachment** via **attachment to the saṅkhāra aggregate** of mind;
- iii. **Suffering** caused by change (**vipariṇāma dukkhata**) – everything is impermanent or unsatisfactory and if one **cannot accept** this reality or this **universal characteristic** of impermanence then suffering will arise via wanting good things your way.

Note: - Suffering due to change (as explained on pg 43 of The Buddha's Ancient Path by Piyadassi Thera)

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Vipariṇāma dukkha comes under the category of **unsatisfactoriness due to impermanence**. All the pleasant and happy feelings that man can experience fade away and disappear. As the Buddha says, even the feelings that a yogi or meditator experiences by attaining the four meditative absorptions (jhāna), come under the category of Vipariṇāma dukkha, because they are transient (anicca), dukkha and subject to change (vipariṇāma dhamma). But the dukkha mentioned here is certainly not the pain and suffering that people in general endure. What the Buddha points out is that all things impermanent are unsatisfactory. They suffer change every moment and this change brings about unsatisfactoriness; for **whatever is impermanent is unsatisfactory** ('yadaniccaṃ taṃ dukkhaṃ'), that is, there is **no lasting bliss**.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1: As always emphasized by Bro. Teoh, **Right understanding** and **Right view are very important**. If one lacks of this then how can one **progress along the path of dhamma**?

Bro. Teoh: According to the Buddha the 1st of the Noble 8-Fold Path factor is **Sammā Diṭṭhi or Right view**. Without this Right View, you **can't proceed** with the cultivation of the Noble 8-Fold Path (which is the meditation as taught by the Buddha) because **if your views are wrong** then your **thoughts will be wrong**. As thoughts and mental intentions **condition our speeches, actions and the way we live our Life** then all the other subsequent path factors of the Noble 8-Fold Path will also be wrong. Hence it is important to have the **Right view** or **Right understanding** as the 1st path factor within the Noble 8-Fold Path.

The 3 Right views with regards to all the **spiritual laws** that **govern all of Life and Existence** are very important and they are:

- i. The Law of Kamma (**Kamma niyāma**);
- ii. The Law of the Mind (**Citta niyāma**) – like the **12 Links or paṭicca-samuppāda**;
- iii. The law of all other **nature's Truth (Dhamma niyāma)** – like the **Four Noble Truths**.

Nature's TRUTH! Anything that can explain "the way things are" is the Truth. The Buddha's advice via Dhammapada Verse 183: "to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind" comes from the 1st Right view – Law of Kamma. According to the Buddha, each and every one of us is **"born of our kamma, heir to our kamma, conditioned and supported by our kamma and we are what we are because of our kamma"** (which is also one of the **5 daily contemplations** that the monks are told to reflect on daily.) Hence the importance of taking care of one's Kamma.

How do we take care of kamma? We need to **train our mind to be ever mindful/heedful** of our mental intentions so that our action, speech and thoughts are always **right and appropriate** to avoid all the negative or evil kamma **via keeping our precepts and cultivating their ennoblers**. This will enable us to heed the 1st two advice of the Buddha and the 3rd advice is to cultivate the **Four Foundations Of Mindfulness** to purify one's mind.

3.2 Question 2: When we are on the wrong path via having wrong view **how can we come out of it?**

Bro. Teoh: This is a very good question. Now you can understand the great wisdom of Lord Buddha in teaching us how to make sure that **we won't have wrong view** or **follow the**

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wrong path via following his advice **to sincerely** cultivate the below important cultivation and aspiration:-

- i. Taking the **3 refuges (Buddha, Dhamma and the Saṅgha)** with **very strong faith** and **sincerity** via understanding its importance. There is no other safe refuge except in the Triple Gems where the Four Noble Truths can be found to realize the enlightenment.
- ii. To make the **aspiration** by reciting “Iminā puñña kammaṇa, māme bāla samāgamo; sataṃ samāgamo hotu, yāva nibbāna pattiya” (**to invoke the power of merits** to enable one **to avoid** all the **foolish** and **meet** with the **wise** and the **enlightened ones** so that **Nibbāna** can be **realized soonest possible time.**)

3.3 Question 3: You reap what you sow, so can this kamma be experienced in this very life?

Bro. Teoh: It depends on which cetanā or determining **thought moment** the kamma is being committed. According to the Abhidhamma, there are **7 determining thought moments** or cetanā or mental intention to condition kamma and if it happens during the **1st determining thought moment** then it is **only effective** this **Life** if there **is condition** for it to arise. Otherwise, it will cease to be. Similarly for the **7th determining thought moment**, it is only effective up till the **next Life**, if there is condition for it to arise. But those occurring between the **2nd to 6th determining thought moments** will be around at all times. So the answer is it is possible to experience them even in this life time. Just like how you reap the result of your hard work while studying and later on working in this life.

19th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 15 July 2012. Time: 3 pm. – 6 pm.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 With **wisdom**, one is always **at ease** with a **lot of harmony** in whatever one does. One will also be able to **accord** and **flow with conditions** during their **waking moments**, as in working career environment, as a housewife doing her daily chores, as a normal human being going through life, etc. One will have the **wisdom** and **ability** to **resolve all of life's issues** or **situations amicably** - without causing any **suffering** or **Karmic negativity** to any one (i.e. with **no mental negativity** to **deceive, cheat, lie or take advantage of others**).

In life, the way **one perceives a life situation** is very important. If one can perceive a life situation **without** any negativity then one will be always be **happy** and **at peace** with all Life situations. If one **does not react** or stir one's mind then one **will not** suffer.

To have the ability **to prevent** the unwholesome speech, action and thoughts from arising, one needs to develop **sati (mindfulness)**, **heedfulness** (appamāda) and **wisdom** (Paññā) to prevent the arising of the **unwholesome mental intentions** that will **condition one's unwholesome speech and action**. Right thoughts, speech and action are conducive for the **holy life**.

The 3-doors that commit kamma are **cetanā or mental intentions** committed via speech, action and thought processes. **To take care of kamma**, one needs to be **ever mindful** of one's **mental intentions** and apply the appropriate **right effort** and **right understanding** to **Avoid all evil, do good** and **purify one's mind**. Contemplating to develop **skillful means** of communication and action via arising only the right or **appropriate speech and action** that will not cause any suffering or misery to fellow living beings is very important. For example, via having **love and compassion, kindness, pleasantness** and **gentleness** of speeches, **gratitude, sincerity**, etc. in everything we do can go a long way.

Sometimes by being sensitive to say **"I am really sorry and please do forgive me if I have unknowingly cause you any misunderstanding"**, can go a long way to make people **feel good** and happy as opposed to engaging in **unfruitful argument** that can lead to further misunderstanding and enmity later on. **Use only pleasant, gentle and appreciative speech** and **speak tactfully** with wisdom, **kindness, love and compassion** to help others and to bring about **more harmony and happiness**. Those who are in the **service industry** should learn to speak well on the phone and when receiving people. Those who are attending to emergency phone calls must have the ability to use gentle, pleasant and good speech **to calm people down and assist them** to handle the situation calmly and appropriately. Words like **"May I help you?"** and **"How can I be of assistance?"** are very useful and appropriate. Understanding the importance of applying the 4 right efforts to purify our action, speech and thought processes is a very important aspect of the whole cultivation. There are 3 very important purifications needed for cultivation and they are purification of morality, purification of mind and purification of view. These 3 purifications are part of the 7 stages of purification as taught by the Buddha.

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1.2 The 7 stages of Purification or satta visuddhi as taught by the Buddha are as follows:-

- i. **Sīla-Visuddhi – Purification of Morality or virtue** via keeping **one's precepts**;
- ii. **Citta-Visuddhi – Purification of Mind or content** of consciousness especially the 3-evil roots via an awareness of how it arises to condition one into negativity then how to root them out via wisdom to develop the wholesome state of mind;
- iii. **Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi – Purification of View** so as to arise the Right view with regards to the Law of Kamma, the 4 Noble Truths and the Law of Dependent Origination and to cultivate the rest of the Noble 8-Fold Path factors. Know the difference between right and wrong views to develop the true understanding according **to reality** and **to see things as they are**.
- iv. **Purification by Overcoming Doubt** (kaṅkhā-vitarāṇa-visuddhi) – no more doubt because it has overcome the **10 defilements of insight** that binds the cultivators to complacency and misguided belief of realization;
- v. **Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What Is Path and Not-Path** (maggamagga-ñānadassana-visuddhi) – not path leads to delusion and suffering whereas path leads to clarity, non-negativity, peace and stillness of mind borne of wisdom;
- vi. **Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way** (paṭipadā-ñānadassana-visuddhi) – after understanding the Path, one cultivates accordingly to realize the vision of the way;
- vii. **Purification by Knowledge and Vision** (ñānadassana-visuddhi) – realization or enlightenment borne of the direct seeing or direct knowledge and vision of the way things are without thought.

Since **Meditation as taught** by the Buddha is the **Noble 8-Fold Path** so if one's meditation does not lead one back to the **cultivation of the Noble 8-Fold Path via heedfulness** and **Sati** as taught by the Buddha then it is **not** the **Buddhist meditation as taught by the Buddha**. If after having experienced a **fantastic meditation experience**, one may think that one is **already enlightened**. But if one's action, speech and thought processes are still **very crude** with a lot of wrong view and delusion then one must check what type of enlightenment that is.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 19 (The Kinds of Suffering pg 43 to 46)

2.1 The 31-Planes or Realms of Existence:-

- i. **The Immaterial World (*arūpaloka*)**. Consists of four realms that are accessible to those who pass away while meditating in the **formless jhānas**.
- ii. **The Fine-Material World (*arūpaloka*)**. Consists of sixteen realms whose inhabitants (the *devas*) experience extremely refined degrees of mental pleasure. These realms are accessible to those who have attained at least some level of form **jhāna** and who have thereby managed to (temporarily) suppress hatred and ill will. They are said to possess extremely refined bodies of pure light. The highest of these realms, the Pure Abodes, are accessible only to those who have attained to the sainthood stage of a "non-returner," or of the third stage of Anāgāmi Awakening. The Fine-Material World and the Immaterial World together constitute the higher heavenly realms.

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- iii. **The Sensuous World (*kama-loka*)**. Consists of eleven realms which experience — both pleasurable and non-pleasurable sensual states of mind — it is dominated by the five senses. Seven of these realms are favourable destinations, and it includes the 6 deva realms and our own human realm. The lowest of the realms are the four "bad" destinations, which include the woeful realms of the demons, animal, petas (hungry ghosts) and hell realms.

Enlightenment – Mind that has clarity and wisdom and is no longer deluded.

Genuine wisdom – is with complete clarity and understanding.

3rd Noble Truth - cessation of Form and Mind leading to Nibbāna. Form and mind cease to be.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Reports on Meditation:-

- i. I have followed Brother Teoh's class for almost 19 weeks by now. I can feel the **calmness and peace within** more often now. I **can sit** for 1 hour and **feel light hearted**, with **more clarity, joy, calmness and peace within most of the time**. My mind is **a lot quieter** and **less heedless** i.e. with very much **less wandering thoughts**. When faced with problems, the mind is **not so afflicted** like before.
- ii. My **daily mindfulness** has improved. Now when I encounter problems, the mind is **not so easily stirred**. I am now **more aware of my mental intentions** especially the **negative ones** with the **3 evil roots**. And with **this clarity of awareness**, I am able to cultivate the **4 right efforts** to abandon, to prevent the arising, to promote and to refine upon the **various mind states** with **greater ease**.
- iii. After cultivating the **daily mindfulness**, when encountering **sloth and torpor**, I can just accept the state of sloth and torpor **without any intention to do away with it** and **this acceptance allows** my **silent mind in sati to take over** and **remain in peaceful awareness** within. After a while I can experience a **shift in consciousness** that **makes my mind bright and clear** with a lot of joy and viriya. Then the sloth and torpor are gone.

Bro. Teoh: These are **very good** meditative results borne of correct meditative cultivation and right understanding. Always remember - whatever **you do in the name of meditation** if it can bring about **more clarity of mind** with **inner peace** and **awareness** to live life with a lot of **happiness, joy** and **understanding** then it is the right meditation. The meditation as taught by the Buddha will also **enable you** to develop all the **wisdom and virtues/wholesomeness** borne of the cultivation of the **Noble 8-Fold Path** to live the noble Life of a Noble one.

To truly live life, the mind must be **in silent inner awareness to be with the moment to experience all of the beauties and wonders of Life**. Most living beings are **heedless** because they think a lot and they are most of the time too **busy thinking, planning** and **worrying about life** so much so they totally miss out on Life (i.e. they don't really live). To be **at peace with every moment of sense door consciousness is genuine wisdom**. To have the **clarity of mind** and **right understanding** or **wisdom** to know **how to act** and **live life to the fullest** meaningfully is most important.

20th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 12 August 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 The 7 stages of purifications are **important cultivation** especially so the first three purifications which are purification of morality, purification of mind and purification of views.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 20 (Sāriputta pg 47 to 50)

2.1 Definition:

With **precepts** and **Samādhi complete and bright** - the pearl light appears. (The pearl light refers to the relics of the enlightened one.)

The **wisdom** is within you. How do you meet it? Put down your **upside-down mind** and let go of your **false thinking** or **deluded mind**. **Earnestly work hard** at your meditation. (False-thinking mind - is the mundane/deluded/heedless mind.)

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 To develop the **meditation**, the **body and mind** must be in **harmony**, that is, they must both be in a **relaxed state** and **at ease**. **At ease** means **no stress, no tension, no tightness** within the **physical body** and **no fear, no worry, no restlessness and no anxiety etc. within the mind** - both body and mind are **completely relaxed and at ease**. The stress and tension within the physical body and mental arise because of one's **heedless living** via lack of **mindfulness** or **attentiveness to live life**.

The **heedless living** arises because human beings tend to have **a lot of problems and worries**. They **worry** about their children, their education and their future; worry about their own health, their career and work-related problems, their relationship with their loved ones, their financial problem, their investments, business, wealth and possessions, etc. This is the reason why the Buddha said, to meditate, one must keep one's **precepts**, to avoid all evil so that one's kamma is taken care of via **less heedless living**. Hence this is the reason why the Buddha has advocated: -

Sīla – morality/precepts;

Samādhi – meditation

Paññā - Wisdom

And

Dāna – generosity to build up the parami for goodness to arise;

Sīla – morality/precepts and

Bhāvanā – meditative discipline which is inclusive of Samādhi and Paññā

3.2 Question 1: Can one attain enlightenment through only listening and without meditation?

Bro. Teoh: Yes! And there are **many cases of this happening** even during the time of the Buddha. Like venerable Kondañña and Sariputa and many others. Normally such people are able to awaken only through hearing because of their **past cultivation** and **parami**. Most of these people have, in fact, **cultivated very sincerely and diligently before in the past**. So, that is the reason why in this Life, they will have the condition to awaken just **via hearing the dhamma**. This hearing of the dhamma actually corresponds to the 1st turning wisdom called **Suttamaya Paññā** – wisdom borne of hearing the sutta or discourses of the Buddha.

3.3 Question 2: How do we apply the **dhamma to deal** with someone who is very **irritable, throw things** in front of you, and **rather unfriendly towards you**? Apparently he is like that because of the way he has been brought up so we can't really blame him and I don't know how to deal with him!

Bro. Teoh: Is he or she one of your family members or friends? “Yes! She is one of my Family members.”

To apply the dhamma is very simple – just follow the **Noble 8-Fold Path**. She is just the way she is so have the **right understanding** or **right view to accept her for what she is**. Then you will be at peace. If not, you **will react** and **perceive her** with the **negativity** which you had described via your question.

This is the suffering that will arise **when you are with people whom you don't like** as described by the Buddha under his 1st Noble Truth and the cause behind is your craving borne of your delusion. So, to **overcome** this delusion and craving, you will have to **accept her for what she is**. Then learn to arise the **right thought, pleasant and gentle right speech** following the Noble 8-fold path to deal with her. **Do not react or reason** with her because it will not bring about a solution to her so-called problem or negativity as you have perceived earlier. **Have love** and **goodness of heart** to understand her. Radiate mettā and make aspiration to help her change for the better. All these will help. **With mindfulness observe her** and await **the right conditions** to counsel her and bring her into the dhamma fold when conditions are appropriate. Slowly with patience, loving kindness and wisdom, she will come to accept you one of these days.

21st Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 26 August 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Purification of **Sīla** (or morality/virtue), **Citta** (or mind/content of consciousness) and **Diṭṭhi** (or view) followed by **purification by knowledge and vision of overcoming doubt** are all very important cultivation. This is especially so for the first 3 purifications where one must get it right. The understanding of Dhammapada Verse 183 - on the advice of all Buddhas is also very important for it is based on a **deep understanding** borne of **right view** with regards to the **Law of Karma**.

Starting, of course with the 1st advice - 'All Evil is to be avoided.' So the 1st inquiry is what constituent Evils? The **3 Evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion** are the **roots of all evils** - so if your **mental intentions** behind all of your actions, speeches and thought processes are with **these Evil roots** then they will condition you to become **very evil** hence creating **one's negative karma** via "**you reap what you sow**". Take for example, **selfishness** and **anger** - once these **evil roots** are there, they can condition one to **kill and harm** and **take advantage** of a situation for their personal selfish gains.

Saṅkhāra (mental states or content of consciousness) - there are 52 of them and some are **wholesome** and some are **unwholesome**. So we **need mindfulness** and **heedfulness** to be **aware of them** so that we **can avoid all evil** via this **heedful mind**. With heedfulness and sati or mindfulness, **we can see clearly how our mind gets conditioned into negativities** (mind states with these 3 Evil roots) via our own **ignorance and self-delusion**; how we get ourselves **entangled** with the **evil mind states** of Anger, hatred, selfishness, lust, envy & jealousy, fear, worry and anxieties, etc. through our lack of understanding of the noble truths thereby **conditioning us to grasp** and **cling** onto the **unreal** which has the **3 universal characteristics of impermanence, suffering state and non-self cum empty nature of all phenomena**. Without wisdom, **we will not understand how we are conditioned into negativity**.

Understanding the **3rd Noble Truth**, that **suffering need not be** if **we had developed the wisdom** before **confronting the 1st Noble Truth's reality of Life and Existence**, is very important and that **enlightenment** in the here and the now is possible once we **have awakened** to the 3 universal characteristics of Nature.

With **wisdom and awareness or sati**, one can just be **Aware** and "**let things be**" via "**seeing things as they are**" and then there will be **no more** suffering. One can then just **accord and flow** with **conditions (without any resistance)**. Hence, there is no suffering and unhappiness via **wanting things our way** which is **not nature's way** or the **REALITY** - which is **What IS!** We **cannot** argue with '**What IS!**'

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Sati or mindfulness which is the **1st enlightenment factor** and **most important spiritual faculty** is very important because **without sati**, there is **no Heedfulness** and **without heedfulness** there is **no spiritual Life**. **Without sati**, one **cannot investigate the dhamma (2nd factor of enlightenment)** to strengthen **one's faith and viriya**. One **must investigate** into the following important Dhammapada Verses 1, 2, 21, 22, 23 and 183 and confirm that these **truths stand up to investigation** thereby establishing our faith in the Law of Kamma as explained by the Buddha to reaffirm **our right view** with regards to this Law of Kamma.

All of **Saṅkhāra** or **mental activities** (inclusive of all our feelings and perceptions) are **impermanent** for they **arise and pass away constantly** and are **in a state of continuous flux**. Thought activities also come and go; arise and pass away; its birth and die; appearing and disappearing – **exhibiting its characteristics of impermanence constantly**. With **Wisdom within, one sees it clearly** whereas the mundane mind without wisdom is **very heedless**.

My teacher used to tell me, “Finally, **there is only pure awareness**” - which is the true mind. This I came to realize later when the rather gross **mundane or thinking mind collapsed** leading to the true mind which is **just pure awareness and silence within**. It is **very fine** and like **no mind**. It is like the **pure nature or awareness just shining forth** when the mundane thinking mind is no more.

But there is such a thing as **Life even though it is only within the moment**. As we have established earlier on - the **past is already gone** hence it is **not a reality** anymore. Similarly the **future has yet to happen** so it is also **not a reality**. Hence, the **only reality in existence** is only the **present moment and moment to moment Life passes by, what are you doing?** Every **thought just arises and passes away** very quickly. **So, as real as it can be, it is only within the moment when it arises. After that, it is gone – ‘dead’ and gone!** So do wake up! And do not ‘dream’ anymore. The **phenomena world of consciousness** is not what you think. As long as you are **not deluded to grasping and clinging then you are okay** and you **won't be afflicted**. So **don't hold, don't grasp and don't cling or attach to anything** - even through memory. Then, you will **be free and peaceful always**. **Without delusion and ignorance**, you are **beautiful**. When you can see things as they are then you **will not be deluded** by them. The form and mind will be clear to you then there will be **no more entanglement to cause you anymore mental suffering**. The reason being the mind has awakened to the **3 Universal characteristic of anicca, dukkha and anattā** hence no longer gullible.

With **heedfulness well-established**, the mind is **constantly aware** of all your mental movements and intentions. You will come to know how you are **conditioned into negativity** via your **mind's delusion that conditions you to grasp and cling onto your 5 aggregates of form and mind as the “I”, “Me” and the “Mine”**. You will also come to know how **your likes and dislikes** come to be via your reaction to what you see and perceive at the moment of sense experiences when you lack **wisdom or yoniso manasikāra** (wise attention at the moment of sense experience). You will come to experience all of the **4 Noble Truths**, the **Dependent Origination (or 12 Links)** and how your mind functions **via witnessing the 12 Links occurring within your mind**. **Always be aware within** and develop the ability to use the **trained mind in heedfulness** to cultivate the penetrative wisdom borne of the **direct seeing to clearly awaken to the 3 universal characteristics** of anicca, dukkha and anattā **to liberate your mind**. You will come to witness how all your feelings arise and pass away like a ‘bubble’.

Heart Sutra cum Meditation classes short notes

All of your perceptions, activities of mind and mental consciousness also exhibit the **same characteristics of impermanence** leading to your ability to realize **their anatta** and **suffering nature within** all phenomena.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 21 (Form Does Not Differ From Emptiness pg 51 to 57)

2.1 This concept of “form is emptiness and emptiness is form” is **very difficult** to grasp and most people cannot understand this. There are also some Buddhists of the Theravāda tradition who think that the Mahāyāna teaching is **not** authentic because they cannot accept the Heart Sutra teaching that said “**Form is emptiness and emptiness is form.**” But for those who understand, there is **no such problem** because basically, the Buddha’s teaching on Anatta, as presented in the Theravāda tradition, also gives the same meaning for **Anattā** as **Non-self** and **empty nature of all phenomena** and **Suññatā or emptiness**. For whatever that is impermanent, it is not a **permanent unchanging entity** that we can **cling onto** and say **this is ‘Me’ or these are ‘Mine’** i.e. they **cannot be owned** and **possessed**. Ultimately, they are all mind-made and empty because Form and mind are all conditions arising hence ‘Hey! No Me and Hey! No You’. Also, the Buddha always said “Rupaṃ aniccaṃ, rupaṃ anattā” Before something exists in space, there is **only space or emptiness** so form does not have different characteristic with emptiness. So, in Form, you are able to see and understand the principle of emptiness and hence not get attached. If we go **direct into the mind** then we will know that **all knowing comes from mind as mind is the forerunner of all things so everything is only consciousness appearing and disappearing** – so how real can it be? The Reason why it is empty, it is just a **mental image** conjured by **consciousness** which is like the great ‘Magician’ as explained by the Buddha via his analogy of the 5 aggregates of form and mind.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 All phenomena whether **physical, mental or nature’s phenomena**, exhibit these **3 universal characteristics of impermanence, suffering state and non-self/empty nature** – take for example our in-and-out breath; our footsteps; our heartbeat; our feelings; our perceptions; our thoughts and consciousness and our bodily vibrations etc. They are all **continuously arising** and **passing away following nature’s law**. See their appearing and disappearing; birth and death; rise and fall; and the moment of its arising, its sustenance and its disappearance clearly via the **silent mind** in **direct seeing** to **awaken** to their **3 universal characteristics** of anicca, dukkha and anattā so as to break free from **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** or **self-delusion**.

See clearly its condition arising – i.e. how when **conditions arise**, the phenomenon comes to be and how when the **supporting conditions for its sustenance** are still there, then the phenomenon will continue to exist and how when any of the **supporting conditions cease** to be then it will lead to the disappearance or **cessation of that phenomenon**. This will lead to the **comprehension** of its **impermanence** and **non-self** or **empty nature** clearly. Then, you will **come to understand** that if you try to hold or cling onto things and want them your way (which is **not nature’s way**), **suffering will come to be**.

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This is how **you react to your sense perceptions** via **delusion** that conditions your evil roots to arise. Evil roots are **the roots of all evil** hence they have the **power to condition you into negativity** via your evil action, speech and thoughts. This is the reason why Heedfulness to understand all of these is very important and with heedfulness, you will be able to **constantly investigate the dhamma** as taught by the Buddha to confirm that they are the Truth hence re establishing your **faith** and **reaffirming** your **right view**.

The **Buddha pūjā** or **Buddhist devotional practices** as taught by the Buddha are very **useful practices** recommended by the Buddha to help us develop the **5 spiritual faculties** of **Saddhā, Viriya, Sati, Samādhi** and **Paññā** needed for us to receive and understand his teaching more easily. **Silent your mind** to do the Buddha pūjā with very **strong faith and confidence** in the Buddha and his teaching via **understanding who He is** and **how special** and **great** He is, **then, bow mindfully**. This will develop a very strong, calm and composed mind leading to the establishment of the **viriya** and **sati**. Then, with the strong **saddhā** and **viriya**, you bow mindfully to **pay respect** or **reverential salutation** to the Buddha, to **de condition** the **heedless thinking** that you have arisen throughout the day, thereby calming the mind to develop **the stable sati** or **mindfulness within**. The reason being, this **constant bowing** and **chanting of the Buddha's name** as **practiced** by the Mahāyāna can also help develop the **very strong saddhā, viriya** and **sati** needed to develop the wisdom. There are also **many benefits** that can arise because the bowing or reverential salutation is also a **meritorious action**. Then apart from developing the **faith**, we can also make use of these merits to make the **necessary aspiration** to **walk the path of dhamma** smoothly by avoiding all the **fools** and only meet up with the **wise and the enlightened ones** so that Nibbāna can be realized soonest possible.

When we **bow mindfully** with the very strong faith/saddhā and viriya, our mind is very **calm** and very **composed** thereby helping us to develop a **very stable mindfulness/sati much more easily** and it also leads us to cultivate **humility**. At the same time, we **exercise** our body. **Sati is awareness before the knowing or the arising of thought – just a pure awareness within**. So this bowing should be done with understanding i.e. **we bow to establish mindfulness or awareness without thought** so that the body and mind move as one in perfect synchrony or harmony. Once mindfulness has been established, use it to cultivate the **4 postures of standing, walking, sitting and lying down** then followed by the cultivation of **sati sampajañña** or **Mindfulness and clear comprehension** of all actions and movements in the **present moment** to develop the initial **vipassanā wisdom** borne of direct seeing of the 3 universal characteristics. Only then, can we proceed with the **contemplation of the 4 elements** and the **32 parts** within this **physical body of ours** and the **9 stages of cemetery decomposition contemplation** to finish off the kāyānupassanā cultivation. After kāyānupassana, we **then** proceed to vedanānupassanā and cittānupassanā followed by finally dhammānupassanā.

22nd Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 2 September 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 The **meditative mind** must **not only** be calm but it must also be **mindful** and **heedful within to develop** the **wisdom** needed to **liberate** the mind. It is this meditative mind that is **aware/mindful** and **heedful** that can understand how the **mind stirs and becomes afflicted** via **one's delusion** and **wrong view (or ignorant)** that conditions the **evil roots to arise**. It will come to understand its **origination factors clearly** as to **how the evil roots** come to be. It will also come to understand that **before the evil roots are there**, the mind was originally **very peaceful**. Everything arises **naturally via conditions arising causes** and **all phenomena exhibit** the **3 universal characteristics** of **anicca, dukkha and anattā**. Then via **dhammānupassanā** cultivation of the **6 internal** and **6 external sense bases**, one will understand clearly **how to trace** the **origination factors** behind the **stirring** of the **mind** and how one can **retrospectively reverse it** via **wisdom**. The moment your mind stirs, Dhammapada Verse 1 will take its course hence **conditioning one's suffering** like the wheel that follows the hoof.

The **meditative mind** will **understand** how the **mundane mind** got caught? With understanding, it will **no longer be deluded**. To **really see** and **awaken** to this **truth or understanding**, one needs a **very stable mindfulness**. Take for example - a case where a kalyanamitta's friend passed away suddenly at the age of 63 years old due to a heart attack. The kalyanamitta said "Today I am very sad!" So I asked her "why?" She said because "she has been my very good friend for the past 20+ years". I asked her again "**Do you know why 'you' are so sad? And who is sad? Who is the 'you' that is sad?**"

As usual, she said "**attachment lo!**" Then I said, "Most Buddhists answered this way and because of that, very likely, they will **not develop** the wisdom because they **never inquire, reflect** and **contemplate deep** into this **dhamma** that has arisen, as advised by the Buddha under the **2nd turning** of his **1st Noble Truth**." The **1st turning** is - proclamation of the **1st Noble Truth** of Dukkha leading to **Suttamaya Paññā**. Then, under the **2nd turning**, the Buddha said "this **Noble Truth** of **Dukkha** is to be **understood**" leading to **Cintamaya Paññā**. So, the inquiry will enable her to investigate **via mindfulness** and **heedfulness** to realize that it is the mind that has been **conditioned** by her **wrong view** or **ignorance** that causes her to **cling** onto **her thought** that arises via her **memories** of her good friend of 20+ years hence confirming the Buddha's final summary of the **1st Noble Truth** that states "**In short**, it is **ignorance/delusion** that **conditions** one's **grasping** to their **5 aggregates of Form and Mind** that **I call dukkha**." So the cause of suffering which is craving (or grasping and clinging) conditioned by her own **self-delusion** (or **Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi**) led her to **cling** onto her **mental perceptions, memories** and **consciousness** that **conditioned her pure feeling** into **sadness** or **suffering**. It is only a **Form and Mind** - not so real because **all conditioned arising phenomena** are **not permanent unchanging entities** that one can **cling onto** and say, "This is **'Me'**, this is **'I'** and these are **'Mine'** ". Do **reflect deep into this** and awaken to its 3 universal

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characteristics of anicca, dukkha and anattā to **break free**. Then, we will understand that there is **No one to be sad** and **also no one born, no one dies!!!**

Contemplation and reflect deeply and inquire – Why am I still so deluded? Why can't I wake up to this Truth!

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 22 (Form Does Not Differ From Emptiness pg 57 to 61)

2.1 Anattā or Non-self nature is also Emptiness. If one realizes **Anattā** or penetrates the understanding of **True Emptiness**, then one can also become enlightened. Once awakened to **True Emptiness** then one will understand why the Heart Sutra said – **'True emptiness is wonderful EXISTENCE'**.

When **thinking**, one is **clouded by what one thinks**, hence **no clarity to understand** what is happening within the moment to **awaken** to the Truth. As Man can only do one thing at a time i.e. either one is **aware** and **silent within (Heedful)** or **lost in thoughts, hence, heedless**. Living beings are most of the time, **preoccupied with** what **they think** plus all of their **minds' reactions** to the **3 evil roots** that they create within their **thought processes** via their **likes** and **dislikes, pleasant and unpleasant feelings** and **emotions** that arise **upon contact** of **mind** within **every moment of sense experiences**.

In the Diamond Sutra, it is said, **'the mind must have no dwelling'**. Hui Neng understood this stanza when he heard it because Hui Neng's mind is - **true mind**; reason why he was able to **see things as they are** via **the silent mind without thought** as he was born **without** the mundane mind. If you create **via thoughts** - then there is **good** and **bad** for you to dwell on. So, **duality will arise** because **thoughts divide via words** and **concepts** like gender, race, religion, nationality, right and wrong, good and bad, etc. Non-duality is the **doctrine of True emptiness**. **With wisdom, one can see things as they are and can accept everything that happens** as **natural** or **the way things are** hence **transcending all dualities** that lead to reaction of mind. Knowing **via thought** is **knowledge** whereas **awakening** via the silent mind **without thought** is **Enlightenment** which is an **understanding** and understanding is **non-rigid** because it is **not knowledge**. No right and no wrong because everything is just the way it is – true **Suchness** or **Tathatā!**

Dhammapada Verse 183 states that: **'All evil is to be avoided, do good and purify the mind.'** - And this is the advice of all Buddhas which all Buddhist must follow. To **purify** the mind one must develop the enlightenment factors of **Equanimity & Samadhi** to see things as they are. Then, with **wisdom**, one will come to understand that **things are just the way they are** and there will be **no good and evil, right and wrong, wholesome and unwholesome, etc.** in **meditation**. No right no wrong because **deluded person** will say **deluded things**; angry person will say angry things. So **accept them for what they are via perceiving them with equanimity**. When you perceive a life situation **with negativity** or without equanimity, you will **react and your mind will stir** to bring about suffering to all (including yourself).

The Buddha said, **'In the seeing, there is only the seeing consciousness and there is No one to see!'** and **external form** arise through **consciousness**. So do wake up to this **reality** via the **pure awareness** to **see clearly** that **mind is the forerunner of all things and mind is chief, everything arises when mind arises**. Then when we understand that we can **reverse** all these **mental creations** via returning **all EXTERNAL mental creations to mind consciousness**, then mind **consciousness** to the **pure awareness** and then **pure awareness back to the great**

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void which is **Emptiness** via realizing the **cessation** of form and mind which is Nibbāna, then we would have **understood** the **whole mystery** of nature's creation.

If all phenomena can be returned to mind-consciousness then to pure awareness and then finally back to True Emptiness – it means they are all not so real; - all created by mind via consciousness and mind made are they, hence 'the **phenomenon world is a world of consciousness and they are all really empty!**'

Beyond mind there is no creation and no suffering; i.e. without mind there is no form, no perception, no feeling, no saṅkhāra hence no kamma and no creation via mental consciousness. Cognition via mental perceptions is all mind-made hence phenomena and perceptions are all linked – they are all impermanent, leading to suffering and anattā or Empty.

The **pure awareness (before the knowing) or essence of mind which can be aware of the silence of nature is not a condition-arising phenomenon hence it is the unconditioned and also your 'true mind'** but it is not a **permanent unchanging entity** that you can call the 'Me' and the 'I'. But the mundane condition-arising mind needs sense data in the form of vibration for the arising of the **hearing consciousness** to perceive hence its **condition-arising nature** of the phenomena world.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1: I often **feel peace** and **calm** during meditation, I also **feel warm** in my body. As I bow and chant, it **increases the mindfulness** in me. Thereafter, it prepares me for **more effective** sitting meditation.

Bro. Teoh: As you meditate, the Yin & Yang energies can build up to cause heat and cold to arise within your body. Here at Wu Pin Chen Seah, there is **no air-conditioning** so we tend to feel **warm** and sometimes, we sweat too. Is the warmth uncomfortable? "No, it is quite soothing." Then, it is okay and you can **just silent your mind and relax into it** and as long as your mind is **not affected** by the heat then you are at peace with it. Otherwise, your mind will be affected and cause you to react. For some, who **do samatha or one-pointedness concentration and absorption type of meditation**, they tend to have this heat problem because of their Yin & Yang imbalance. This is especially so for those who like to play with **energy fields** to develop **psychic powers**. The maras too can come and **delude them** and **disturb them**. But if they know how **to release** the energy built-up and come out to **normal state of awareness** to cultivate the **4 Foundations Of Mindfulness** to develop the **wisdom as taught** by the Buddha, then they are alright and they can also develop the **enlightenment**.

3.2 Bro. Teoh: How about your daily mindfulness? Are you able to develop it?

Reply: For a while only because I get **easily agitated** and **affected** when **confronted** with **DIFFICULT situations** in daily life. Then the calmness and the daily mindfulness are all gone.

Bro. Teoh: **Habitual tendencies** borne of the **wrong view to perceive** certain situations with **negativity** is the cause. You **lack right view** and you should **reflect, contemplate and inquire deep into the dhamma** via the **2nd turning** of the **1st Noble Truth** to develop the Cintamaya Pañña to overcome this problem of yours. You should inquire **why you are agitated or affected**. How do these **habitual tendencies that cause you to react to such situations come about?** You will finally come to understand that it is because you have **certain expectations**

and preferences borne of your **wrong view that conditioned** you to think that way for so long already. You are actually **grasping or clinging** onto your **wrong thoughts** borne of your **conditioned memories**. **Seeing this clearly with your pure awareness** will enable you to **straighten** your view **via silencing your mind** to develop the wisdom and right understanding needed to free your mind.

You can also inquire to free via applying the 'work' as taught by **Byron Katie** to free. The **Work** is a simple **yet powerful process of inquiry** that teaches you to identify and **question** the **thoughts** that **cause** all the **suffering** in this world. It's a practical way **to understand what's hurting you**, and **to address the cause** of your suffering or problems **with clarity**.

Her work consists of 4 lines of questionings or inquiries to develop the wisdom to free and they are:-

- i. Question the **wrong thoughts** that conditioned you **to react** habitually:- 'Is it True?'
- ii. Then inquire again by asking: - '**Can you absolutely know that it's true?**'
- iii. **How do you react and what happens, when you believe that thought?** – (*You are afflicted isn't it? Hence it is **a wrong thought** and you should arise the **right effort to abandon it instead** of believing it or clinging onto it to condition your suffering and misery).*)
- iv. **Who would you be without this wrong thought?** – (*Peaceful and at ease isn't it? With this **clarity of mind** and **non-reaction** then we can act following the **Noble 8-Fold Path** to resolve whatever issue **amicably without having to resort to any negativity** of action, speech and thoughts thereby leading to the end of all suffering).*)

Then you will **perceive Life differently** and will know **how to truly live Life to experience all of its beauties and wonders**. The **pure awareness with wisdom within** is so **beautiful** and it can **experience** all of **Nature's pristine purity and beauty**. When I was in New Zealand I can feel that **the Nature there** is so **pure** and so **different** because there is very little human consciousness **to pollute** it. Even the food I eat makes my body feel so good.

3.3 Question 2: How do you perceive **opening chakras** via Qi Gong practices?

Bro. Teoh: When you **use your thought** to 'open' your chakras, you have **to be careful** because the **thought created** by the **unenlightened being** still has **delusion** so it can bring about **Yin & Yang imbalance**. It can also mean **tampering** because **wherever you focus** and **concentrate** your mind, the **thought energy** will build up there. It is advisable to develop only the **relaxation** and **mindfulness training** and **exercises within** the Qi Gong practices; - **not** to focus and store your **thought energy** at the **Tan Tien** unless the intention is to develop the Qi **for health purposes**. Do not use it to develop the **psychic** or **energy field**.

There is a **safer and more genuine way** to open the chakras via developing the **wisdom first**. Then, when the mind **can cease via wisdom**, one can make use of it to **develop the 10 perfections** to walk the **Bodhisattva way** to realize **Buddhahood**. Develop the **loving kindness, compassion** and **wisdom** and then stay at the **heart area and silent one's mind** to detect the **gateway to our nature**. This gateway will '**melt**' all our life force and mental or pure awareness energies into our nature to become **pure neutral energy** which is no more of the yin & yang type. This is the **pure energy** that can really **open up** the chakras internally via **Trust** i.e. **without the interference** of any **thought**.

23rd Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh KianKoon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 9 September 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Within the 5 aggregates of Form & Mind, **Form** is much **grosser** and has **perceptible characteristics** hence it is quite easy to see and understand. But when it comes to **mental aggregates** like feeling, perception, activities of mind (thinking, mental states, mental formation and intentions etc.) and consciousness, they are **formless**. Hence, they are much **subtler** and **more difficult** to see and understand.

Most people do meditation without the **true understanding of what is meditation - as taught by the Buddha** and its **true purpose and intent?** Hence their main activities are centered on developing the so called **'good' meditation** such as **calmness** and **tranquility** of mind via **concentration** and **focusing of the mind** using **thought**. Such calmness and tranquility are usually taken as **good meditative states** which they **will cling onto** as a sign of good progress forgetting that it is **only wisdom that frees and liberates** the mind. The calmness and tranquility are **'good' conditioned states** but they are only the by-product of meditation that **should not be clung onto**. **Instead**, they should make use of it **to develop the wisdom or insight needed** for enlightenment via **sati to see things as they are** without any **concepts, words, ideas or thoughts**.

Without Sati or Mindfulness, you cannot **'see things as they are'** to understand what is going on in Life within the moment. Use the **Sati or silent mind before the knowing to meditate and awaken** to the **three Universal characteristics of nature** and to develop the **insight knowledge needed to free** the mind. **'See'** clearly that **all phenomena** are **natural conditions arising upon contact of mind** with their **respective sense bases**. Also **'see'** how upon contact, consciousness (and its **7 universals** mental concomitants) come to be and how through **ignorance, contact** conditions **craving** leading to all the **grasping and clinging** etc. that causes **one's suffering** when **wisdom or yoniso manasikāra (wise attention) is not there** at the moment of sense experience. Then, one will come to understand clearly **how thought arises** due to **response to memories** and how one grasps and clings to **all these memories** via our **mental perceptions** and **thinking** that condition our **emotional negativities and fear** etc. leading to all the **suffering and misery** in Life. And because of **delusion**, you take them **as very real** and **give them meaning** hence arising your grasping and clinging. In **actual fact**, **there is no one to see, to think, to feel, grasp and cling**. All these are due to one's wrong view or **sakkāya-diṭṭhi (self-delusion)** because one still cannot see their **condition-arising nature** to **insight** into the 3 universal characteristics of nature- **anicca, dukkha and anattā**.

The human being (1st aspect of our 5 aggregates of Form and Mind) is only a **'vehicle' and a 'tool'** - karmically-conditioned out by our **karmic nature** for us **to use and live this segment of 'our' Life** and it is **not a permanent unchanging entity** that you can call the "ME" and the "I" because it is **NOT YOU!** When you see this clearly, you **truly awaken**. We have taken birth and die for so many countless lives. So, which of all these countless numbers of **segmented life** is **'YOU'?** **None!** So do awaken to this Truth with **Right view and wisdom**. Then, we will

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understand the **secret of life** and we will know how to **truly live Life** without having to **worry** about Life anymore.

1.2 Question 1: – This wisdom or realization, does it happen during or out of meditation?

Bro. Teoh: It can happen anytime as long as one is **heedful** which means **constantly meditative** and **ever mindful** and be the **steadfast one** as explained by the Buddha via his **Dhammapada Verse 23**. Never crave or desire or expect it to happen because the craving, desire and expectation **are thoughts** that will **prevent one from awakening** to the state of enlightenment which is **beyond thought** to see things as they are. **Silent the mind completely and be patient** to cultivate the **4 Foundations Of Mindfulness** as taught by the Buddha via **Sati** or the **silent mind** then only can one awaken.

When you are out of the **formal meditation** but you are **still heedful** most of the time then you can also awaken to the truth. That is as long as you are **heedful, anytime; you can realize it via the 1st, 2nd or 3rd turnings of the 4 Noble Truths**. But if you are heedless, you are as if dead (spiritually) hence **no way** to awaken as confirmed by the Buddha via his **Dhammapada Verse 21**.

1.3 Question 2: – When we say we must be **constantly aware**. What is it that we must be aware of?

Bro. Teoh: **Awareness** is **before** the **knowing** so there is nothing for you to be 'aware' of technically. It is just **awareness before** the labelling or perception and words i.e. **mind in silent awareness to see things as they are before** the arising of the **aggregates of mind to interpret** and **give meaning** to them. Just the mind and phenomenon in **harmony** and **perfect synchronization** before the knowing - **so don't go and note anything or look for the phenomena** but instead, **just silent your mind and allow the phenomena** to tell you **their characteristics** via the **silent awareness to awaken** to all the **3 universal characteristics** of all phenomena. This is the reason for the Buddha's instruction on cultivating **Ānāpānasati** (mindfulness of the in and out breath) are: - "**breathing in aware and breathing out aware.**" i.e. **just an awareness** of the in and out breath (the **breath** and **mind move as one** in **perfect harmony** and **synchrony without thought and at ease**). **In the seeing, there is only the seeing consciousness** – no one to see because it is just the **pure consciousness or awareness before the knowing** that arises **naturally** upon contact of mind with the eye as the organ (like the **physics experiment analogy** of the light bulb, battery and the switch). So similarly when 'you' are aware there is no one to be aware of anything because it is **just awareness** i.e. the silent mind and phenomenon as one **without thought** to perceive anything.

Equanimity means **Non-duality**. **Seeing thing as they are with YONISO MANASIKĀRA** (wise attention at the moment of sense experience) is the **key to enlightenment** because only through **wisdom** or **understanding** can the mind be free. The nature's laws that **govern** all of **Life and Existence** especially the **Law of Karma** is very **complex** so **without** wisdom it is **very difficult** to cope with Life.

Thinking can become a **habitual tendency** when we **lack mindfulness** and **wisdom** and because of our **rather conditioned views and opinions**, we tend to develop a lot of **negative thoughts** via **habitual tendencies**. As we understand, **wrong thoughts** are **thoughts that condition our fear, worries, anxieties, suffering and miseries etc. As such, they should be abandoned** via **right effort** and **wisdom**. We must apply the **Kalama Sutta's advice** not only

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as advice given to us but also to our thoughts. Hence, whatever advice given to us, in order to know whether we should follow it or not, the Buddha said to the Kalamas at that time that **they should reflect and contemplate** as follows to find out: **“If I follow their advice, will it cause suffering and misery to others and to me? If not, then we can try it out. Otherwise, abandon it”**. So if it is applied to our **own thoughts** then we will know how to **abandon** all the **wrong thoughts** and develop only the right and wholesome thoughts via the **4 right efforts** as described in the **Noble 8-Fold Path**.

Without wisdom, thought is always egoic. With wisdom, we can see all these i.e. we can see the **limitation of thoughts** and how **thoughts divide** through words like **race, religion, gender, nationality, views, relationships**, etc. to bring about all the conflicts, misunderstanding, argument, jealousy & envy leading to all the enmities and wars. With **wisdom, we will see clearly** that it is **only thoughts** and **Form and Mind arguing**. They are only the **aggregates of mind** and **not ‘You’**. Like the analogies as given by the Buddha to the 5 aggregates: **feeling is like a bubble** – because **feeling or sensations always** arise and pass away from moment to moment; **Perception is like a mirage** – only a **mental image**; **Saṅkhāra** is like a **banana tree’s stem** because **layer after layer after** you peel - **at the centre or core, it is empty, which is similar** to your **thoughts or thinking**, they always **arise and pass away** and very quickly they are dead and gone, hence empty – only thoughts; **then consciousness** is like a **great magician or illusionist creating** all the **illusions to delude you**.

Living beings **should inquire deep** into why the Buddha said **‘sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā and sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā and sabbe dhammā anattā’** to understand its deep meaning. Saṅkhāra is only **mental activities or thoughts** so how come they have the power **to delude you** and cause you so much **suffering and misery**? It is because **via ignorance and delusion**, you **give it power to torment you without your knowing**. With wisdom, we can see **all these clearly** and we will come to understand that **things are just as they are** and that **everything** that we come to **perceive** through our **mind** are all **conditions-arising, causal phenomena** and they are all **manifestation of mind** or mental images only – hence **not so real and not** what we think. So don’t grasp, don’t cling and don’t give it meaning via delusion otherwise they can torment you.

The **essential dhamma** as taught by the Buddha are: -

- i. The **Appamāda vagga** – Dhammapada Verses on **Heedfulness D21, D22 & D23**;
- ii. The **4 Noble Truths**; The **Noble 8-Fold Path**; The **5 hindrances of mind**; The **5 spiritual faculties**;
- iii. The **3 evil Roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion**; The **5 daily contemplations**;
- iv. **Right view** with regards to the **Law of Kamma, 4 Noble Truths and the 12-Links**;

And they must be **clearly understood** in order **to progress** along the path of dhamma. The reason being when I first came out to share the **Buddha dhamma** during the year 2004, I thought **what living beings need** was the dhamma. But after I had started, I came to realize that **very few could really understand** the true **Buddha dhamma** because at that time their **basic essential understanding** of the **dhamma as taught by the Buddha** was still not there. So when I contemplated on it the inquiry on - **“How can living beings develop the understanding of the true dhamma?”** – Then this understanding comes to me. This is the

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reason why nowadays I reverse the teaching **to focus** on the **essential dhamma** first before teaching the **true dhamma** to new people.

We are not able to be aware of the **silence of nature** because of the **phenomena world**. Our mind is so **clouded by thoughts**, - the **vibrations** and **activities of mind** that thoughts create. This is the reason why most of you **can only perceive** the **silence of nature** only in the middle of the night **when everything** is very **quiet** via the **essence** of mind.

Consciousness creates the world and the **continents** and the **universe**. The **'Knower'** becomes the **Living being**. Via ignorance and delusion, the 'knower' **grasps** onto the Form and Mind thinking that it is **real** and **what they are** hence becoming the **'traveller' in space and time**, wandering in samsara following the **Law of Karma**. Certain dhamma books talk about - be with the 'knower'. Actually there is no 'knower' or any Atta at all – there is only **awareness**. Like the Buddha explained **"In the seeing, it is only the seeing consciousness and there is no one to see – everything is condition-arising and they always arise and passing away following nature's conditions."** Hence just be aware and don't get involved. That is why the mind that **has wisdom will not stir**.

Thoughts are just thoughts they are **neither good nor bad** because **it depends on the user of thoughts** and if the **user of thoughts** has **wisdom** then thoughts become **right thoughts and they are so beautiful**. Use thoughts **appropriately** via arising **only right and wholesome thoughts**. Right thoughts bring about **harmony** and **wholesomeness** whereas wrong thoughts are thoughts that condition your **fear, worries, anxiety, suffering and misery etc.**

When we are born with these **5 aggregates of Form and Mind** via our **kamma**, we must understand that it is just like a **'vehicle'** and **'tool'** for us **to use and live Life**. The body is like our physical tool or 'vehicle' that can take us around and the mind is our **mental 'tool'** for us **to use to live and experience Life** in the **here and the now**. Together, we call it a human being which **we think is a permanent unchanging entity** that we **can grasp onto as the 'Me' and the 'I'** hence the **delusion**. When we develop the **pure awareness base meditation** to **connect** to our **true nature or true mind** and **awaken** to the **Truth** to **see the unreality** of this **form and mind** then we can **understand clearly** what this form and mind is. Then there is no more **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** or **self-delusion**. With this **wisdom connected to this form and mind**, the form and mind is then **no longer deluded** hence it will **not grasp** anymore thereby **freeing the mind** from all **suffering**. It will have the enlightenment factor of **equanimity within** hence **no more stirring of the mind** to be afflicted again. It will be **at peace** with all **things**. It will know how to **live life** and **no more delusion** to worry about **life anymore** because you have **clearly understood** that these **5 aggregates of form and mind** of this **'segmented Life'** of yours (as a **human being**) is not **'YOU'**. This is the **ultimate understanding**.

Important notes:

- i. The **4 important supports** needed to develop the **proper awareness base meditation** are: - **Relax, Aware, 24 hours** and **Trust**.
- ii. When the **heart area cannot 'open' up** it is **very difficult** to **progress** along the **path of dhamma** so the **bowing** and **reverential salutation** to develop the **saddhā, viriya** and **sati spiritual faculties** to **'open' up our heart area** to make it **sensitive** to receive the **spiritual energies needed to connect** to our **nature within** is **very important**.

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- iii. Just **Relax, Aware** and **silent your mind to develop the heedfulness** then you will progress along the path of dhamma **naturally** following Dhammapada Verses D21, D22 & D23.
- iv. **D21 - “Heedfulness** is the path to the **deathless; Heedlessness** is the path to the **death**. The **Heedful** do not **die**; the **Heedless** are as if **dead**.” All conditioned things are **impermanent, non-self & empty** (anattā) therefore **strive on with Heedfulness – Appamādena Sampādeṭha** as advised by the Buddha and **do not** be **Heedless**. **Without sati or mindfulness, you cannot be heedful for Sati is life**.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 23 – Nil.

Part 3 – Meditation – Nil.

Teoh – 13/9/2012.

24th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 16 September 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 The **true purpose** and **intent** of meditation is to develop the **wisdom** to **liberate** the mind so that one is no longer **deluded** by the **5 aggregates of form** and **mind causing** one to grasp and cling onto it as the **'I'** and the **'ME'** and the **'Mine'** to condition one's suffering. **Understanding this true intent** and **purpose** of meditation is **very important** because meditation is not only about developing the **calm** and **tranquil** mind alone. **Wisdom** is **more important**. One only needs to understand why **one's mind** is **not peaceful**? The main reason being the **5 hindrances of mind**, and they are there because the opposite **5 spiritual faculties** needed to overcome them are lacking. When the spiritual faculties are there, the hindrances will cease to be.

Then when there are **no more mental hindrances** or **craving**, the mind will be **naturally peaceful** and **calm** because it **can accept** the **reality of the moment** via **wisdom**. Wisdom allows one to **see thing as they are** via the **unwavering Mind in Upekkhā (or Equanimity)** – mind that does not stir anymore. Mind is **free, liberated** and **no longer deluded**.

'Meditation' via **Focusing, looking** and **noting** are **mostly thought-based** whereas the one via the **silent mind** in **sati/awareness** before the **knowing (without thought)** to awaken to phenomena is **mindfulness** or **sati-based**. Only through **wisdom** is the mind free. This wisdom **cannot be learnt**, but only **through awakening** via the **direct seeing** - with the **true mind** without thought.

Attachment to dhamma as **knowledge** can also be a form of delusion. **Wisdom** is an **understanding** and **not knowledge**. There is nothing to know because **all knowing is via the thought as knowledge** whereas wisdom is an awakening – a realization which is beyond thought and it is not rigid.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 24 (Feeling, Cognition, Formation & Consciousness pg 62 to 71)

2.1 **So too are feelings, cognition, formation, and consciousness. Sāriputta, all dhammas are empty of characteristics. They are not produced, not destroyed, not defiled, not pure, and they neither increase nor diminish.**

This section covers the **more subtle formless dhamma** acting at the mind level.

2.2 Definition:

- i. Through understanding (pg. 63) – imply **wisdom**;
- ii. Defeat them – imply **no longer deluded** by them;
- iii. Feelings of happiness – imply **pleasant feeling**;
- iv. Feelings of suffering – imply **unpleasant feeling**;

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v. Feelings which are characterized by neither suffering nor happiness – imply **neutral feeling or indifference**.

“In the pure and deep ultimate silence, all creations are transcended: A sudden awakening to the original perfect fusion of self and dhammas.”

Explanation - when the mind **realizes itself**, all the above can happen.

Part 3 – Meditation (Reporting And Questions)

3.1 Question 1: When I **listen** from my **heart** during **dhamma sharing**, I feel **very peaceful** and **happy**; there is **clarity** but this state does not last. Why is it that I feel this way?

Bro. Teoh: This could be due to your **past cultivation** that enables you **to have this ability to listen** from your **heart** and it looks like **conditions are now ready** for you to **connect back to your past cultivation**. You **will progress very fast** from now onwards because when **you know how to listen from your heart** with your **full awareness there**, then the brain which is up in your **forehead** will **not condition you to think, comment, judge and react so strongly as before** when your **attention** is most of the time at your **forehead** while listening. Since **thoughts are response to memories** so by **listening from the heart**, there will be **very much less thoughts** but initially, it will be like the **listening is in bits and pieces** and not really **connected to the memories**. But **don't worry** because it is normal and you **should continue** to listen from **your heart** until it **becomes normal or natural** for you to do that. Actually that is the correct **way to listen** – listening with your **full attention or consciousness/awareness without the interference of thoughts**. It is a **sign of good progress**. Also understand that like all phenomena, it is **impermanent** - so do not expect this same experience to be repeated all the time. This is especially so during your **daily life**, when you are not in a **conducive place** to listen to the **true dhamma**. Then **your habitual tendencies of listening from your forehead (brain) will start** to happen again.

Sometimes the **hindrances of mind** can still come in **to disturb** your mind states. So **do not react** or **stir your mind via delusion** - just **let things be** and **let it settle back** to its **natural/original state of stillness and inner peace** then you will **always be happy** and at **peace**. Have the wisdom **‘to see things as they are’** and understand all these **clearly**. Then, one day you will come to **understand** that as long as the **True mind within does not stir** and **create thoughts via one's own delusion to think or react** then the mind will **always be peaceful**.

“The wanting to react or to be calm and peaceful via the thought is a delusion.”

The wanting will create the **stirring** of the mind because this mind via the thought will **try to control** and **suppress its negative emotions or lack of peace** thinking that it is bad via **not understanding** that **‘the controller is the controlled’**. When the **mind is in Sati** there is **no thought** (i.e. thought ceases). So **just relax and silent the mind** to be with the moment in silent **inner awareness** and **do not try to do anything** because **the doing is by the thought** that will cause the **stirring of the mind again**. So the thought which is the **‘controller’** tries to control thought thus explaining why J Krishnamurti said, **‘the controller is the controlled’**.

When one understands that the **natural state of mind before the stirring is stillness without thought** then **meditation becomes very simple** just like the **case of swimming**. Take for example swimming - if **we understand** that the **natural state of our body** is already **buoyant**

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(because it is lighter than water) then why do **we need to learn how to float?** Just let go and **don't do anything** and **trust** that **your natural state of your body is buoyant** then your body **will just float** via **not doing anything**. But instead most people **struggle in the water trying to keep afloat** and in the process sink and drink water **because of their fear and lack of understanding or delusion**. So **similarly in meditation** – if we understand that the **natural state of mind is already the meditative state of silent inner awareness without thought** then we **just let things be** and **don't do anything** and the **mind will settle down** to its **natural state of peace, tranquility and stillness on its own** just like the **swimming analogy**.

Once you realize that **you can float without doing anything or holding onto any float** then **swimming** becomes **very simple and easy** because you **just move** to swim **without having to worry about learning how to float anymore**. The float is just like **your object of meditation** which is **just a skillful means** to help you **to train your mind to be heedful** or in the **case of the float to assist you to float**. So now you start to see and understand that **as long as you are dependent on the float to swim** then you **will never understand what the real swimming is without the float**. So, in a similar way, as long as you are **still holding onto an object of meditation** or a **mantra or noting** something then you **will not understand** what the actual **meditative mind** is. So now you **understand** why finally one still needs to **drop** the use of **any meditation object or skillful means** used to train their mind. Just like swimming - **why must you learn how to float**, when your natural state of your body is already **buoyant** which is a **fact** which you can't understand initially due to your **delusion**. Understanding that your **natural state** of mind is already the **meditative state**, which is, **without thought** - in **perfect pure awareness** and **stillness** then meditation becomes **very simple** and **very straight forward** and you will **know how to meditate without delusion** anymore.

To me, after several years of **serious meditative investigation**, I have come to realize one **very important truth** or **understanding** with regards to **Meditation**, that is, we need to **understand what meditation is** instead of clinging to **meditation techniques, methods** and **teachers** because the **technique/method** (which is a series of instructions to do certain things) **never defines** the meditation. Maybe, it can act as an **initial aid**, like a float **to assist you initially** to learn how to swim and float. But, to **really know how to swim**, you must **let go of the float** and believe that your **body can float** and **reach a natural state of balance** or **buoyancy** if you don't try to do anything, **that is, let go completely and you will float**. Then swimming becomes **very natural and easy**. Our mind is more or less the same i.e. its **natural state** is already the **meditative state in stillness** – so just stay silent (mentally) and don't do anything (don't even try to use the 'mind' which is the thought to meditate) **to disrupt the natural state** because the **thinking mind** which is egoic and **thought-based cannot meditate** to realize the dhamma/truth which is **akālilo (timeless & beyond thought)**. Because of ignorance (not knowing what truth is), the thinking mind is **conditioned** via its **own wrong view and habitual tendencies** to constantly arise the **mental activities** or **heedless thinking (saṅkhāra)** leading to the arising of the respective **mental consciousness (viññāṇa)** that supports the arising of the **5 mental aggregates of form and mind (nāma-rūpa)**, hence triggering off the whole chain of **dependent origination** leading to dukkha finally.

When you understand what **Meditation is**, then you will **naturally know how to meditate at any place, any time** and **under any circumstances** and you will not be **constrained or deluded** by your **attachment to methods, techniques** and **teachers**. Basing on the analogy of the **handful of leaves by the Buddha** it is pretty obvious that the **Noble 8-Fold Path** is the

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Meditation because according to the Buddha there is this 4th **Noble Truth that states clearly that:** “the **path leading to the cessation of dukkha (or realization of Nibbāna)** is the Noble 8-Fold Path.” So **just silent** your mind and **be heedful** to cultivate the **Noble 8-Fold Path** via the **7 stages of purification** and the **3 turnings of the Four Noble Truths** as taught by the Buddha. Hope the above explanation will clear all your doubts and enable you **to meditate correctly** with the **right understanding**.

3.2 **Question 2:** Brother Teoh, you are the only teacher who asks us **to silent our mind and stay at the heart area** but why no monks or text ever advise us to focus on the **heart area**?

Bro. Teoh: Don't worry about what others say. **Just investigate and find out for yourself.** Do not quote me saying anything (because you may not understand what I mean) then you may get me and yourself into trouble **unnecessarily**. If you are not careful then you may end up **arguing with them over methods and techniques again**. Just say, “Bro. Teoh only share his **dhamma understanding** with us so no right no wrong and we as dhamma friends (or kalyāṇamittas) **just make use of whatever that is useful and conducive for our own cultivation**; It is just **his sincere way of sharing the dhamma** and as dhamma friends who walk the path of dhamma we are **here to sincerely support, motivate, counsel and help each other to progress along the path of dhamma without resorting to any inappropriate negativity of action, speech and thought.**”

I only advise those who have developed the **ability to silent their mind and rest their awareness** at the heart area to feel the ‘**gateway**’ to their nature if they have penetrated the **direct seeing** and **stabilized** their **daily mindfulness**. This meditation is only done by those who have developed the **silent mind in pure awareness** (or sati) **without thought** after they **have stabilized their daily mindfulness or ānāpānasati** and also for those who have **trained their mind** until their **mindfulness is so subtle and fine** that they can hardly **feel anything**. This is the state where a lot of ‘meditators’ **get trapped** and **stagnate** because they don't understand what is happening. Some master or teacher will ask them to do the ‘**sitting and touching**’ etc. but if they understand what is happening then they **should stop doing those things** just like what I have explained under Question 1 above. The reason being, the ‘meditator’ **has reached a state** where their **bodily vibrations** have become so much **finer and subtler**. Hence they need to develop the **more refined sati or mindfulness to stabilize their mind** so that their mind is able **to stay still and silent on its own without the need for any ‘dwelling’ or object of meditation**, that is, **mind in sati without any anchor**.

To realize this state - they must **silent everything** and stay at the **heart area to detect the gateway to connect** to their **nature within** so that **their sati** can become **more refined and stable**. Then when they have **stabilized** their sati this way, they **will suddenly realize** that they will be **able to be mindful of even** the very **subtle breathing** or **fine vibrations within their heart area** and **every movement of mind within their kāya via this awareness or sati is like greatly ‘magnified’ and in slow motion but with a lot of clarity within – all of the movements are like broken down into a lot of very fine movements in between**. When this stage of cultivation is reached, the mind is **very mindful most of the time** (in and out of meditation). Even in their **daily life**, their **daily mindfulness will be very different - very clear and stable with little or no thought most of the time** and they are **constantly aware**. A **mind in sati is always aware of sense experiences** - every hearing, seeing and thinking etc. with a **lot of clarity**; and everything is like a ‘flow’ – i.e. the mind and phenomenon coming together

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as one, in perfect harmony and synchrony. The meditation using **Trust** is needed when one is able to detect the **gateway to their 'nature' within** and this is usually cultivated only by those going the **Bodhisattva way** leading to Buddhahood. For more details please listen to the recorded talk.

25th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 23 September 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 If you have **delusion**, you will **grasp and cling**. Nothing can free you **except wisdom**. When there is wisdom, the mind is **always free and at ease** because it is **no longer deluded** by sense experiences. The mind is **always peaceful and calm** and it will **not stir anymore**.

Thought-based meditation cannot develop the **penetrative insight/wisdom** to liberate the mind because the dhamma is **akālika** (timeless, beyond thought & time) and **paccattam** (can only be realized by the wise each for themselves).

The Mahāyāna analogy of **finger pointing** towards the **moon** is very important. The dhamma is like the finger pointing **towards the truth** which is the **enlightenment** so to really **see the moon** one must **look/gaze beyond the finger**. Similarly, to realize enlightenment, **one must see beyond the dhamma** and **not cling** onto the dhamma. If you attach or cling onto the dhamma, then your mind cannot be free because it is still holding onto something, **hence not a free mind**. A good example is Shen Xiu, who always clings onto the **wholesome dhamma** and tries to push away the **unwholesome dhamma** via his constantly 'polishing' of his mind until it shines so that no dust can alight. He has **failed to realize the true mind** because he mistakenly (or deludedly) clings onto the **mundane mind** taking it to be the true mind. This **delusion has conditioned** him to cling onto the **wholesome and unwholesome dhammas** (or duality) created by his **own discriminating** mind. But Hui Neng (the 6th Patriarch) who has **transcended the dhamma** and **realized the true mind** is **no longer deluded** hence he can understand that 'originally **there is nothing so where can the dust alight**'; that is, if there is no **discriminative mind** with delusion **to divide** the dhamma into **wholesome** and **unwholesome** for it to **grasp and cling onto** then there will be **no dust** (which are the **defilements** or the **unwholesome dhamma**) hence no more problem or doing is needed anymore because wisdom frees.

Mind **creates** through **consciousness** following the 12-Links. Consciousness is just **mental images** hence **not so real** and **empty** and because **it is constantly arising and passing away** following nature's conditions we will be able to awaken to its anicca (impermanence), dukkha (suffering state) and anattā (non-self) universal characteristics if we can just be **silently aware within** via a **choiceless awareness of What IS**.

1.2 **Forehead** – is where the brain is so if **we Live** from there then it is mainly **thought-based** giving rise to mainly Knowledge only.

Heart – is where **the nature or awareness is** so if **we Live** from there, we will use it mainly **to feel** and be **aware intuitively** to arise the wisdom via the **direct seeing**. When the mind is **chattering or thinking** then it is **preoccupied** with **those activities** hence it is **Not silent** and **not aware** anymore **to see things as they are**. Active thinking will make one **heedless, that is, lost in thoughts** hence no real wisdom can arise.

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To have wisdom, one must develop the ability **to be aware and listen** from the **heart** without the interference from the brain's **conditioned thinking** (views and opinions). **Thought-based living** leads to **heedlessness** and a lot of **negativities** whereas **awareness** or **sati-based living** from the **heart** leads to wisdom. Therefore **stay in the heart – have Love** and be **Loved** always. Without the **daily mindfulness**, there is **no real** meditation because **wisdom can only** come from the **direct seeing via the silent mind in pure awareness**. **Heedless thinking** throughout the day develops **strong negative Habitual tendencies**. To overcome this **Heedlessness**, one must develop the **5 spiritual faculties** to counter the **5 mental hindrances** of the mind.

The Mind sweeping method to only feel (no thinking) **and relax** is also a very **useful technique** to **decondition the mind** from its **daily heedless thinking** via allowing the mind to settle back to its **natural state of silence and stillness**. Every moment of **Feel & relax** will allow us to relax **any tension, tightness** or **stress** within our body more and more. With a **relaxed** physical body, it will condition the mind to be **at ease and relaxed** also. The **Meditative mind** is just **aware, silent** and **without thought**. So, the **Pure awareness** or **essence of mind before the knowing** is the meditative mind.

Dhammapda Verses 23: The **constantly meditative, the ever mindful** and the **steadfast ones** realize the bond-free, supreme Nibbāna.

1.3 Question1: Brother Teoh, can you explain more about **the heart**. Is it the same as **Citta**?

Bro. Teoh: Do not cling to the words. When you have developed the cultivation correctly then you will come to understand those related Pāli words very clearly. Sometimes, they use the words *citta*, *viññāṇa* and *mano* – all 3 terms as synonymous with mind. *Mano* is commonly used in Dhammapada Verse 1 and 2 as the **mind** that arises to create the *citta* and the *viññāṇa*. The reason why the Buddha said, “Mind is the forerunner of all things.....” whereas *viññāṇa* is usually taken to mean the **pure consciousness** or **receptacle** which is the last aggregate of mind. Then when one adds in the **content of consciousness** which is **saṅkhāra**, it becomes **citta or thought**.

Thought or Citta = (content of consciousness + *viññāṇa*).

Heart is “Xin” (心) in mandarin or Mahāyāna term. The heart is the **seed of consciousness** and it is also the **Gateway** to our nature. So, if we live from the heart, it means live with **pure awareness before the thought**. But the moment we introduce the **saṅkhāra or content of consciousness** (everything that the mind can do) **via the brain** then thought or *citta* will arise. So the **user of thought** is very important. If **the user is deluded** then the thoughts that arise become **wrong thoughts**. If the user is **wise** then thoughts become right thoughts. For more details, please refer to the recorded talk.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra – Nil.

Part 3 – Meditation – Nil.

26th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 14 October 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Clinging to **all teachings** or **Dhamma** via **knowledge** or **memories** is of not much use and one must **instead awaken** to the **Truth** or **Dhamma** - especially the **3 Universal characteristics** of impermanence, suffering states and non-self or empty nature of all phenomena to arise the **wisdom** borne of **direct seeing** because **only wisdom** or **understanding** can free the mind. The **mind once awakened** is no longer **deluded** and the **understanding is always there** because **understanding** or **yoniso manasikāra** (wise attention at the moment of sense experience) **is not knowledge**. The dhamma is like the raft acting as a means to take one across the ocean of suffering and once awakened one must **not carry** the raft around. Also, one must **not mistake** the **'figure' pointing** at the moon which is analogous with the **'dhamma pointing towards the truth'** as the moon.

The **emphasis** of our present civilization is mainly on **IT, Science and Technological advancement** hence the **overuse of the human thought processes** via this type of very competitive **knowledge-based education system**. The **spiritual cultivation via sati or awareness** and the **creative mind** has been **neglected** for too long. You cannot use **thought and knowledge to liberate** the mind from **delusion and ignorance** because **thought is limited** and **egoic**. Only through the cultivation of **wisdom via mindfulness or awareness** to understand 'who you are?' and 'what you are?' can we understand what **Anatta** is. You cannot rely on thought anymore. You should inquire via your **heedfulness, "Is the human being or the 5 aggregates of form and mind, really what you are?"**

In the olden days when we did not use the **thought process so rampantly** we tend to be **more intuitive** and **creative** because we use more of **our senses** and **inner Nature to feel and be aware** instead of **constantly preoccupied** with our **thought processes** and its related **reactions to what we see, hear and think** etc. via our **heedless living**. But then civilization **has evolved** over the last few centuries and the emphasis nowadays is more on **science and technology** and **IT type of education** which is mainly **knowledge** and **thought-based**. So we tend to use the **thought process more and more** to acquire scientific, technological and IT knowledge and in the process, we **overlook** our **natural** or **True mind** of **stillness** and **peace** which is **without thought, more creative** that has **a lot of clarity** within. The moment those (who are **not yet enlightened**), use thought from their forehead (where their brain is situated), it will cause their mind **to stir** hence **disrupting** its **natural state** of pure, calm, inner **awareness** and **stillness**. We therefore **need to develop** the wisdom **to balance** our life so that we are **not deluded** and drawn by the **overemphasizing** on the **heedless thinking process** to disrupt our **spiritual life** of **awareness heedfulness living**. Instead of being 90+% of the time **using the thinking process from our forehead**, we should **reverse it**, to only use it **where necessary to live** life with a **silent and clear mind** with **inner awareness** from the heart most of the time. Only then, do we know **how to live life** via **our essence of mind** or the **true mind** after realizing the **Anattā nature** of these 5 aggregates of form and mind of ours. To develop this understanding or wisdom, we need to **develop sati or**

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mindfulness/awareness to reconnect back to **our essence** of mind. So **stay at the heart** and **be aware** from there **to live life**. Have **love and be loved**.

Understand that **thoughts are responses to memories**, so if we maintain **our attention at our forehead** then thought will **constantly arise** and because of **our delusion**, thought will create a **centre** which is **the 'I'** and **the 'Me' (or self-delusion/ Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi)** thereby conditioning us **to act and react** heedlessly. As wrong thought is always **limited and egoic**, it will condition our **fear, worry, anxiety, selfishness** and **emotional negativity**.

Knowledge binds - hence the reason why **all knowing** which is **thought-based knowledge** is **not wisdom** and it will become an obstruction to spiritual cultivation. The reason why the Pure Land teaching of the 'Infinite Life Sutra' or Wu Liang Shou Jing's (无量寿经) most profound quotes are "**Suo Zhi Zhang**" (所知障) & "**Fan Nao Zhang**" (烦恼障) i.e. **all knowing** (via memories/knowledge) are **obstructions** and **all fear, worries** and **anxieties** are **obstructions** too. We are so used to **thought-based** living. Thought-based living is **very egoic** hence a lot of **selfishness** and **possessiveness** – it is motivated by what your thought tells you. Our thoughts are **conditioned thinking** – **conditioned** by our **wrong views & opinions** caused by our **Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi (or self-delusion)**. These **conditioned thinking** are **mainly our habitual tendencies** that will cause us to **deludedly react, hold, cling and grasp** onto a **lot of things** which we think **we can own** and **possess** or **desire and reject**.

Before thought, it is **just spacious awareness** or the **entire oneness**. Then the moment **we focus** or **concentrate**, thought is being **created via the input** of the **content of consciousness** (which is our **perception, feeling, emotions, thinking** and other **activities** of mind etc.) within that space. Hence, thought becomes **limited** because **it shrinks** the whole of the **spacious awareness** into the narrow field of **focusing**. No focusing implies **no thought** and **without thought**, there is **no centre** of the 'I' and the 'Me' hence no one to fear, worry, become anxious, selfish and emotional etc. which **implies peace, pure awareness, tranquility and stillness**. The awareness nature **without delusion** is the **essence of mind**. To prepare for this coming 2012 expected **transformation of consciousness** and **great shift**, we only need **to be aware** and **stay at the heart** – **have love and be loved**, then **everything** will be **alright**, that is, **Heart-based awareness** and no more thought-based living from the forehead. Then naturally, overnight you may transform if you **do not arise any fear**. The **Pure awareness** state **before the arising of thought** has **no centre** which implies - **no being** hence **anattā**.

Thought has the **power to divide** via words, concepts and ideas, etc. and **creates the centre** – the 'I' and the 'Me' **resulting in selfishness, anger, possessiveness, delusion, fear, worry** and **anxiety etc.** This **Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi** or **self-delusion** will condition us to **believe** that there is **'a thinker behind the thought'** and that there is **'an observer and the observed.'** The moment **we awaken** to the fact that it is only **consciousness** and **every sense door consciousness** is **naturally condition arising** then this **delusion of self** will automatically cease to be. Remember the analogy of the lighting up of the **light bulb** when the **switch is switched on?** The moment there is **delusion**, the egoic mind or mundane mind or thought **will grasp and cling** due to the 12 Links – i.e. through **ignorance, contact** triggers off **mental activities** which include perception, memory, **Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi** – self-delusion etc. then contact, feeling, craving, grasping, becoming and birth leading to the whole mass of suffering. Just maintain Awareness **without thought** then everything will cease to be. **Silent your mind** and

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you will **awaken to this truth**. No thought means **no 'centre'** – no Ego, no becoming, no fear, no selfishness etc.

Understand how you get **yourself entangled with life** via **not understanding** the **Four Noble Truths**:

1st Noble Truth of Dukkha – explains clearly the **realities of life and existence** and the **final summary of what is dukkha**;

2nd Noble Truth – explains the **cause of suffering** which is **craving conditioned by one's delusion and ignorant**;

3rd Noble Truth – suffering need not be and **enlightenment in the here and the now – Nibbāna can be realized**;

4th Noble Truth - The **Noble 8-Fold Path leading to enlightenment and the cessation of all suffering**.

- 1.2 **Question 1:** Bro. Teoh, can you explain again what you meant by the Buddha was **able to summarize** all of **Life** – both the **mundane** and the **supra mundane** into **just 4 simple** but **very beautiful Noble Truths** which is the **essence** of his teaching? And can you also explain which part is **mundane** and which part is the **supra mundane**?

Bro. Teoh: As stated above, the 1st Noble Truth of suffering or dukkha clearly explains all of the **8 realities of Life and Existence** that **cover all aspects** of our **mundane living** and **Life experiences** ranging from Birth, Old age, sickness & Death, to separation from our loved ones and prized possession; and to be with people whom we don't like; not able to get what one desires or when things don't go our way or follow our expectation; and the final summary of - attachment to the 5 aggregates of our form and mind (**upādāna khandha**) as the cause of all suffering. The Buddha also cautioned **living beings** that if they **do not develop the wisdom** needed to free their mind before **confronting these 1st Noble Truth of dukkha's life realities** then they will definitely **be afflicted** by it and **suffering will be the result**.

Then the Buddha proclaimed the 2nd **Noble Truth** that **explained** clearly the **cause behind all sufferings** so that living beings **can develop** the understanding **not to be gullible anymore**. After understanding **what suffering is** and their **cause behind** they will know **how to manage** their **life better** so that they need not have **to suffer unnecessarily** anymore.

Then, the Buddha proceeded to explain under the 3rd **Noble Truth** that '**suffering need not be** if one has the dhamma' and there is such a Noble Truth that talks about the possibility of **realizing Nibbāna** or the **enlightenment** in the here and the now leading to the cessation of all suffering. This enlightenment or Nibbāna is the **supra mundane realization**.

Then the Buddha explained how this enlightenment **can be realized** via proclaiming the 4th **Noble Truth** that states: - 'There is a path leading to the **cessation** of all suffering namely the **Noble 8-Fold Path** of Right view, Right thought, Right communication or speech, Right action, Right living, Right Effort, Right mindfulness and Right samādhi'. Once this **Noble 8-Fold Path has been cultivated** it can lead to the **supra mundane way of living** the **Noble Life** of the Noble or enlightened ones following the **Noble 8-Fold Path**. The entire **8 path factors within the Noble 8-Fold Path** – they are all **so noble** and **relevant** to Life and they **cover all of Life, both the mundane and the supra mundane aspects**.

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In order **to live** life we must have the **understanding** of what is life? And to **understand Life** we must have the **1st path factor** of **Right understanding** or **Right view** with regards to **nature's laws that govern** all of **Life and Existence** especially the **3 great spiritual laws** of: - **Kamma niyāma, Citta niyāma and Dhamma niyāma.**

Then to live life, we have to use **thoughts**, we have to **communicate via speech**, e-mail, etc. and we also **need to act** and **work to live life** hence the **importance** of having the **2nd to 5th path factors** of **Right thoughts, Right speech/communication, Right actions** and **Right living cultivated.** Then we will need the **4 Right efforts** path factor to **purify our actions, speeches** and **thoughts** followed by **Right Mindfulness** to be **heedful** to **cultivate** the **Four Foundations Of Mindfulness** and finally the **last path factor** of **Right Samādhi** to **see things as they are** thereby **developing the wisdom** to become enlightened.

This is also the reason why the Buddha gave the analogy of the **handful of leaves** at Kosambi to the monks **to impress** upon them the **importance** of **understanding** the **Four Noble Truths** which is **so essential** to live the **holy life.** This **Four Noble Truths** and **its 3 turnings** are also the Buddha's **first teaching** or his **1st sermon** – the **Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta** which he expounded **immediately** after his enlightenment.

This **dhamma cultivation** is more or less a **full time job** – i.e. throughout your **waking hours** cumulating into **24 hours heedfulness cultivation**; that is, we need **to confine** our cultivation fully on the **dhamma** when undergoing the training which consists of **hearing, reflection, contemplation & inquiring** into the **4 Noble Truths** and **heedful direct seeing** into phenomenon via our **daily mindfulness** in life itself. But, **full time job** here doesn't mean one **must retire** or **give up one's job or career.** One can **cultivate even in the midst of working** and **living life** via the **daily mindfulness** and this type of **heedfulness training.**

I always advise devotees or Kalyanamittas as follows - **if you:**

- i. **Have to work** (for survival) then work;
- ii. **Need to work** (because too much free time and don't know how to retire) – then work;
- iii. If you already have the wisdom and you **don't have to** or **need to work** then retire or semi-retire **to do the things that you love or like to do.**

Learn to live life and not to worry about life. To be **Heedful** is to be **ever mindful** and **constantly meditative** to realize the dhamma as taught by the Buddha. The **most important** meditation training is the cultivation of **Daily mindfulness** via following this instruction – '**we choose aware** of our **every bodily** and **mental action** and **movement** within the **present moment**'.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 26 (Feeling, Cognition, Formation and Consciousness pg71 to 73)

2.1 Definitions:

Mental Formation – Saṅkhāra or activities of mind (everything that the mind can do.)
Impermanence – a **universal** characteristic prevalence in all phenomena; see clearly how phenomenon comes & how it goes, how they arises and passes away, their birth and death, their rise and fall, etc.

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All **condition arising phenomena** are **impermanent** and they do not have a permanent unchanging ENTITY of their own – hence they **cannot be owned** or **held onto** as the ‘I’ & the ‘Me’. Our **Fundamental nature** is the **oneness or Buddha nature**.

2.2 Saying by most venerable master Kuan Ching Lau He Shan

- i. “**Guo Qu Xin Bu Ke De**” (过去心不可得) – the mind of the past cannot be grasped onto because it is already gone - **not a reality**;
- ii. “**Wei Lai Xin Bu Ke De**” (未来心不可得) – the mind of the future also cannot be grasped onto because it has yet to come – also **not a reality**;
- iii. “**Xian Zai Xin Bu Ke De**” (现在心不可得) – the mind of the moment is the **only reality** and **highest** in Life but to transcend Life, we have **to transcend even the moment** which is still within the field of thought hence impermanent.

Note: Moment to moment Life passes by, what are you doing? Are you truly Living or are you too busy thinking, planning and worrying about Life - so much so you totally miss out on Life, that is, you never get to truly live Life. To be with the moment in silent awareness within to feel and **to experience** the **reality of the moment** (including all of its **wonders and beauty** of life) is to live.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question1: What is the difference between **Contemplation** and **Thinking**?

Bro. Teoh: To contemplate on the dhamma spoken by the Buddha is to **reflect** and **inquire deep** into the **proclamation of the truth** that he has given under his **1st turning of the 4 Noble Truths**. This **contemplative wisdom** called **Cintamaya Paññā** is part of the **2nd turnings** of the 4 Noble Truths wisdom. To develop this **contemplation**, one must have a **calm** and **composed mind** (with the spiritual faculties of Saddhā, Viriya, Sati and Samādhi) in its **creative state to inquire** and **reflect deep** into its **2nd turnings** hidden meaning.

Reflection and contemplation is a form of **inquiry/investigation** with the **creative mind** in sati. There is some form of slight **creative thinking** (but **not** the active thinking) to bring about a **better understanding** of what has been heard under the **1st turning** followed by the **assimilation** of it **to stabilize one’s understanding**. Just like a **talented musician** or a **talented person** – when are they **most creative**? - When they are in a **very tranquil** and **conducive setting** to reflect and contemplate on their talent. Their mind is usually **very quiet, calm** and **rather creative** at that time and that is the reason why they can have the talent **to create** such beautiful music. Reflect on what you have heard, taught to you or read about. Listen with **attentiveness** and a **calm** mind. After that, reflect and contemplate with that calm mind (with very little or no thinking). Reflection is like inquiring and contemplation its purpose is to stabilize what one understands. (Note: Assimilating the dhamma is analogous to assimilating the food – i.e. like assimilating or absorbing the nutrients after eating the food.)

29th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 2 December 2012. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 – Recapitulation & Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 There were no short notes for last week's Heart Sutra class so we will use the short notes of the last Tuesday Surangama Sutra (楞严经) class.

The Surangama Sutra (楞严经) is important because without it, the **Maras will create havoc**. According to Master Hsuan Hua, this sutra will be the **first sutra** to disappear during the **dhamma ending age**. If this sutra is around, the Maras will find it very difficult to **delude** the cultivators. This sutra explained clearly the danger of the **50 Deviant Samādhi** or “Wu Shi Yin Mo” (五十阴魔) that can trap the cultivators if they **deludedly grasp** onto any of them. The Surangama sutra also explains **how the living beings** come into this **world of existence** via the **four stages of manifestations originating from the source**. These 4 stages of manifestations are clearly explained in the notes to be given out at the next Tuesday class.

From **the Source** comes the **True Mind** in **Pure awareness** before **the knowing**. Man, because of the **basic ignorance caused**, since time **without beginning**, by the **1st thought which screened the True Mind**, became subjected to **birth and death**. Thus, both permanent and impermanent **unite to transform** that **True mind** into **Alaya vijñāna** or **store consciousness**, the **root** of samsara. This **alaya consciousness** has 3 characteristics: a **karmic one** which is basic **ignorance** resulting from **self evidencing**; a **changing or condition-arising one** which **turns fundamental wisdom into false perception**, the root of the first seven consciousnesses; and its **expression in appearances or forms**. Because of **basic ignorance**, the spiritual, bright, and **nirvanic absolute void** was changed into **dull and deluded emptiness**. Hence Manjusri said: ‘Thus in delusion there appeared **one-sided emptiness**’. Within this dull emptiness, **ignorance gradually crystallized** and turned into **illusionary form** made of the **4 elements**, resulting in an **imaginary world created** within the void. When **false perceptions confronted form**, a very small portion of this form was gradually **grasped as being self-possessed** and being **supported by wrong perception**, mind and form united and grasped at this dim little form as **the EGO**, thereby creating **the living being** made up of the **5 aggregates of form and mind**. Hence Manjusri continued: ‘Steadying itself, the **thinking process** made the **continents** and the **illusionary knower** became the **living being**’. Then via **delusion and ignorance**, the living being with the **mundane or Samsaric mind** (5 mental aggregates of form and mind) came to be via **karmic conditioning** and this was then grasped at - hence the **self-delusion or Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi**. This was the **origin** of a living being. **Ever since then**, this living being grasped at the **condition arising 5 aggregates of form and mind as the EGO (as the ‘I’ and the ‘Me’)** so how then can he now recognize its **boundless True Mind before the stirring?**

Then comes the **External phenomena world** or **world of form or consciousness** created by the **mundane mind** via its **condition-arising thoughts** and **consciousness**. So our meditation is to develop **the wisdom** to understand all these **retrospectively** to return the **entire External phenomena world** back to **consciousness** within the **mundane mind** then

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silent/still the mundane mind to connect back to **our True mind** before returning to the **Source** via the complete cessation of form and mind.

- 1.2** Everything you come to **know and perceive** is **manifested** through mind. **Mind made are they** – a **condition-arising phenomena world of consciousness**. Before mind arises, there was **nothing** so everything comes about **after mind has arisen via mental consciousness**. So **how real can mental consciousness be?** Just a **mental image**, isn't it? **Constantly arising and passing away from moment to moment** hence its **impermanence** and **empty or 'anattā' nature**. If you can't understand all these via **wisdom** then you **will grasp and cling** onto all these **mental manifestations** very strongly **thinking that they are real**. This is **delusion** and it can be so powerful as to cause you a lot of suffering (via your sorrow, lamentation and fear, etc.). When you train your mind to **be silent, ever mindful and heedful** then you will be able to **'see things as they are'** thereby developing the **wisdom and understanding** to enable you to **free and liberate your mind** so that you need not suffer anymore. Then you will be able to **connect to the true mind** and **live from it**. It is this **True mind in pure awareness** that can **'see things as they are'** to realize the enlightenment in the here and the now. When wisdom stabilizes, the mundane mind will realize itself and ceases to be leading to the realization of Nibbana. **Nibbāna is complete cessation of form and mind** (even the pure awareness also will cease) and it cannot be talked about because it is **the unconditioned** and **beyond** the form and mind.

The Mahāyāna's 6th consciousness is the Theravāda's **Saññā** aggregate of mind which is usually translated as **mental perception** or **cognition**. It also includes the **conception and discerning aspects** of the mundane mind but the key meaning is perception and cognition. The first 5 types of consciousness are: seeing, hearing, smelling, tactile and tasting consciousness and the 6th, 7th and 8th consciousness of the Mahāyāna are within the mental consciousness that arise upon contact of mind with its respective sense organ and data.

The **mundane mind or False thinking mind** is not your **True mind** because it is condition-arising – i.e. Not a **permanent unchanging entity**. It **has no nature** of its **own** whereas Nirvana is totally different because it is the **unconditioned**. Once the **Mundane Mind completely ceases** then the **True mind will manifest leading** upstream to the realization of the **Oneness Nature – Buddha Nature**.

Mundane Mind – is the deluded **Heedless thinking mind**, capable of false Perception, cognition, memory, knowledge and false thinking – karmic related. Saṅkhāra and Saññā are very active within it. It constantly **clings and grasps** onto sense data whereas the **True mind is the silent Heedful Mind - Pure and clear profound bright mind**. It can be aware of sense data, thoughts and it can also see things as they are. The Mind of the **enlightened one** is connected to their **True mind with wisdom**. It is the essence of mind – the unconditioned mind.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 29 (pg 77)

- 2.1 Saññā (Perception)** – brings the **external form** into the mind via **mental perception** and it is also called the 6th **consciousness**. This external form then becomes the mental form or sense data for mind to arise mental consciousness because mind is also an organ.

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7th consciousness – Saṅkhāra, is likened to the ‘**mental organ**’ and **upon contact** within mind (via the mental activities of Saṅkhāra) triggers off the **8th consciousness – Alaya** or store house consciousness (**Viññāṇa**).

2.2 The 4 Foundations Of Mindfulness in brief:

- i. **1st foundation - Kāyānupassanā**: starts with
 - a) **Ānāpānasati (mindfulness of in and out breath)** to train the mind to be in **sati** to develop **heedfulness**.
 - b) Once **heedful**, cultivate **mindfulness** of the **4 postures** of **standing, sitting, walking** and **lying** down.
 - c) Then, move on to cultivate **sati sampajañña (mindfulness with clear comprehension)** of all the **connecting activities** in between the **4 postures** i.e. **daily mindfulness** of all **actions** and **movements** in the **present moment** to develop the **initial insight** into the 3 universal characteristics of nature. **Four types** of clear comprehensions are clear comprehension of **sincerity of purpose; domains of meditation; reality of the here and the now** and lastly, **non-delusion**.
 - d) Then, cultivate **mindfulness of the 4 elements** which constitute this **physical form** to see its **anattā nature**.
 - e) Then, contemplate the **32 parts that constitute this physical body** to understand its **condition-arising nature** of all the **parts coming together** to perform the functions of a human being and to realise its **foulness**.
 - f) Finally, to **contemplate 9 stages** of **cementary decomposition** of this **physical form or body** after it is **devoid** of **consciousness**.
- ii. **2nd foundation – Vedanānupassanā**: mindfulness of the feeling that arises **upon contact** of mind.
 - a) Be aware of feeling. If feeling **has been conditioned into pleasant and unpleasant feelings** then one **has to be aware** that it has become **sensual desire and ill will** which are the first two of the **5 hindrances of mind** and it is also the **1st two evil roots of mind**. With this awareness, we must **arise** the **right effort** to **abandon** the **unwholesomeness thoughts** that have arisen followed by the **right effort** to **prevent** them from **arising** in the future.
 - b) So, during meditation if we are **not mindful** of the **uncomfortable tactile feeling** that arises via **lack of** wisdom then we will **react to it** and **label it as painful** or **unpleasant** feeling which is the reason why your **mind cannot be peaceful anymore** because **pain** is a **mental hindrance**.
 - c) If we have this understanding then we will be **mindful** of this feeling via our **silent mind** to **investigate** into it - **to trace** its **origination factors** so as **to understand** how the **un arisen hindrance** of mind comes to be. The mind will come to understand that if there is **no wrong view or self-delusion** then the **stirring of the mind** leading to the **arising** of the **mental hindrance** of sensual desire or ill will will not happen. Then via **straightening one’s views** ‘to accept things as they are’ one will be able to **retrospectively reverse** it, thereby **understanding** how the **disappearance** of the

arisen hindrance comes to be via wisdom. Then as this wisdom finally **stabilised** one will also come **to understand** how the **non-arising** of these **hindrances** in the **future** comes to be. This is the **way to develop wisdom or insight via vedanānupassanā** and not **via just noting pain, pain, pain** to do away with the pain **via resisting, suppression and control etc.**

- d) To go deeper into the **investigation**, we can also **inquire** as follows - before this **unpleasant** feeling arises – there was none. Hence the **awareness** of this feeling transforming into mental hindrances can bring about **an understanding** of how the **un arisen** hindrance comes to be. How come I have this **reaction of mind** to those **mental perceptions** that I come to perceive via my seeing or hearing or thinking? – thereby conditioning the **feeling** or **sensation** into **mental hindrances** of **sensual desire** or **ill will**? It is because of one's **conditioning to reject unpleasant feeling** which is a **negative craving** – hence a **wrong view** borne of habitual tendency. If you can be **at peace** with what you perceived via **acceptance of 'what is'** then there is no more wrong view. Then with this right view or right understanding one can just **let things be** and **then silent one's mind to relax into it**. When you **do not react or grasp** and **cling** onto the sensation with **aversion or wrong view, then what happens?** The hindrance is **no more** there **so the mind that accepts the reality** of that sensation **without reacting to it** can be **at peace** with it. Hence, the mind **can relax into it and the sensation will become normal and peaceful again**. The lack of peace comes from **your reaction of mind to try to do away** with that unpleasant sensation that you had labelled via your wrong view.
- e) **Meditation** is to **develop** the **wisdom to understand** and then **act** with **right view** following the **Noble 8-Fold Path** which is **incapable of negativity to resolve** all issues **amicably instead of reacting** to them **via delusion and wrong view thereby creating** more **negativities** in the **process**. So, the main purpose and intent of Meditation is to realise the **wisdom**, to be **at peace with any situation** within the **moment** and **not to label it as pain**, etc. With no more aversion then only **can we accept the reality** of the moment and to understand that it is **because we do not know how to relax into it causing** the "Chi" (气) flow to be **constricted** thereby causing that **unpleasant sensation**. This is what you should do. You don't have to resist, suppress and control it.
- iii. **3rd foundation – Cittānupassanā:**
- a) Like feeling, here we go deep into the **content of consciousness** to be aware of its **evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion**, and various states of consciousness, etc. When the content of consciousness has Greed, one must **be aware** - to deal with it as above so as to develop the wisdom to free the mind.
- iv. **4th foundation – Dhammānupassanā:** Its 1st category of cultivation is:
- a) Mindfulness of the **5 hindrances of mind**; followed by
- b) Mindfulness of the **5 Aggregates of form and mind**; then
- c) Mindfulness of the **6 internal sense bases** and the **6 external sense bases** – the 18 sense realms **to trace its origination factors** and then **retrospectively reverse them** via **wisdom**; then

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- d) Mindfulness of the **7 Factors of Enlightenment** followed by the final cultivation of
- e) Mindfulness of the **Four Noble Truths** to realise the **enlightenment** in the **Here and the Now**.

Once enlightened, there is **no more** delusion, so one will **never be deluded** by the 5 aggregates of Form and Mind anymore. One doesn't have to suffer anymore. One will know how to use the karmically-conditioned Form and Mind to **truly live the noble life wonderfully and meaningfully** following the Noble 8-Fold Path thereby becoming a **blessing** to all. This is the reason why the Heart Sutra said, '**True emptiness is wonderful existence**'.

Part 3 – Meditation

- 3.1** Understanding what **mindfulness** or **sati** is – is very **important**. **Sati** is **before** the knowing – **just** an **awareness within** the **moment without thought** i.e. phenomenon and mind **as one** without thought. Like **ānāpānasati** or **mindfulness** of the **in** and **out** **breath**. Just feel the breathing and then **mind and breath move as one** in complete **synchrony without thought** following the Buddha's instruction, "Breathing in, one is aware and breathing out, one is aware, etc."

A **calm and peaceful** mind is only a **by-product of a well-trained mind** but the **main purpose and intent** of the Buddha's **Meditation** is **not** about becoming **peaceful and calm only** but to develop **the wisdom** to be **at peace** with **all situations**. Otherwise, one will be trapped with a mind that **is attached** to the calm and peaceful meditation as the **good meditation** and when your meditation **is not peaceful and calm** then you are **afflicted** and you label it as **bad meditation**. Hence, your sensual desire and ill will which are hindrances of mind are still there. Like the saying goes: "**Any sense experience** whether it is **pleasant or unpleasant** is a **prelude** to suffering or dukkha." Even **very fantastic** and so-called **good meditative experiences** including the experiencing of **jhanas, seeing of nimittas**, etc. are just **condition-arising states** within meditation and unless one can develop the **wisdom out of them** to free the mind, then they are of **not much use**.

- 3.2** **Question 1:** Bro. Teoh, during the meditation when I hear the bird's very **loud** and **excited chirping**, I follow your instruction, **just be aware** and **no more noting**. Is it correct?

Bro. Teoh: It is **very dangerous** to do that because when you **quote me** and **follow what I say** via your **own interpretation** of it **without** proper **investigation** to develop **your own understanding** then you become gullible. The reason being when you are **fully aware** and **without thought** the listening is **very different** because it is with the **silent mind in full creative awareness and attentiveness**. Only then, can you **truly awaken via clearly witnessing** the **condition-arising nature** of the **hearing consciousness** within your meditation. This is **Not as a concept** or **a theory** but **truly realising it during** the meditation. So that is why I always say, 'Don't quote me', but just cultivate to investigate and find out for yourself whether what I have said to you is the truth or not? **Don't just believe me** and be **gullible**, okay? Nevertheless, it is a good question because if you don't ask, I cannot point out your mistake and explain further.

When you meditate, you **just relax** your **body** and **mind** and maintain the **silent inner awareness** to be **watchful** of **what is going on** within one's **form and mind**, how one **reacts**

to sense experiences and get conditioned into the various mind states to become afflicted via one's heedlessness and wrong view, and how one function as a human being and how we become what we are; how our mind, thoughts, feelings and emotions arise and pass away following the 12 Links or Law of Dependent Origination. Awareness or sati is the silent mind before the knowing and it is just awareness and without thought. i.e. mind and phenomena as one in perfect harmony and synchrony to move and flow with Life. But due to ignorance and delusion, the mind cannot become heedful or mindful because it thinks a lot and becomes very heedless via its habitual tendencies. Through ignorance, the mind keeps on reacting to sense experiences to arise the likes and dislikes, fear, worry and anxieties & restlessness, doubt etc. throughout the day. These are the 5 hindrances of mind that hinder your mind from entering the meditative state of inner peace and calmness. Such continuous heedless thinking with the 5 mental hindrances will become so habitual and this is the reason why most living beings think a lot and they find it so difficult to meditate. The moment they close their eyes - there are so many thoughts!

So, the first thing to do in meditation is to develop the opposite 5 spiritual faculties of saddha, viriya, sati, samadhi and panna via your daily devotional puja to counter the hindrances thereby reversing all the heedless thinking so as to become more peaceful and calm. Another skilful means is to do the mind-sweeping method to just feel and relax the body and mind without thinking so as to decondition your habitual heedless thinking. It will also train your mind to be at the location you want it to be. This is followed by anapanasati or mindfulness of the in-and-out breath so as to develop appamada or heedfulness of mind. When the mind is trained and heedful, it listens to you. You want it to be silent, calm and peaceful, it will just do that. If you want it to be aware at the moment of feeling, perception, activities of mind and consciousness, it will just do that. Such a mind can meditate and understand what is going on. You want it to think then only it thinks. Otherwise, it is silent, relaxed and just aware within. The mind becomes like your obedient and faithful servant and it is always at your command to do what you instruct it to do especially to live and experience all of the beauty and wonders of Life and live life to the fullest and meaningfully.

If the user of thoughts is wise then thoughts become beautiful, right and wholesome thoughts. Otherwise, if the user of thoughts is evil and heedless then thoughts become evil (i.e. wrong thoughts that constantly condition one's evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion leading to all the suffering and miseries). This is the reason why the noble eightfold path is about right thoughts only.

The cultivation of the 5 spiritual faculties is very important because it can help you overcome the 5 hindrances of mind (sensual desire, ill will, sloth & torpor, restlessness and doubt) thereby enabling you to understand easily the Buddha dhamma and meditation as taught by the Buddha. Radiating love and metta via reciting 'May this body and mind of mine be well and happy always' also helps complement the cultivation because it will bring about a calm and composed mind with a lot of inner well-being and happiness and this positive mind states of good vibration will help improve and strengthen your immune system. When the mind has a lot of well-being, joy and mettā, it can become calm and composed because it is without the heedless thinking and hindrances of mind. Hence, it can be heedful to develop the meditation especially after a stressful day. If one can meditate to bring about inner peace, inner well being and inner clarity of mind to develop

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the **wisdom** then one can be in a **state of constant relaxed inner awareness, with a lot of inner peace and joy always.**

3.3 Meditation involves 2 important steps:

The 1st step is **to train the mind to be heedful or ever mindful** via deconditioning one's **habitual heedless thinking**; then the 2nd step is **to use that trained or heedful mind to meditate via cultivating the Noble 8-Fold Path especially the 4 Foundations Of Mindfulness.** It is also very important to understand what **sati** is? Also to understand that **Vipassanā is not a knowledge that you can practise or learn via thought-based 'meditation'** because it is **an insight or wisdom** that has to **be awakened to via the direct seeing without thought.** And **wisdom is not a rigid knowledge** that can be **learnt or practiced** because it is **an understanding** which is not rigid. This is the reason why the Buddha always says, 'He only **showed us the way but we must walk the path ourselves to awaken** to it.' 'Vi-' stands for the **3 universal characteristics of nature (anicca, dukkha and anattā)** and 'passanā' is to **insight** into, so the meaning of Vipassanā is to **insight into** the 3 universal characteristics of nature thus awakening to this truth.

Note: There are no short notes for Heart Sutra Classes 27 & 28 because Bro. Teoh's sharing was just based on a review of the Heart Sutra Class 26 short notes.

32nd Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 6 January 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - No more notes for this section. Previous notes are more than adequate for your cultivation so do strive on with Heedfulness.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 32 (The Emptiness of the Eighteen Fields or 18 Sense Realms pg 78)

2.1 The 18 sense realms consist of 3 sets of sixes:

- i. 1st set of 6 – refers to the 6 internal sense bases or **organs** (5 physical and 1 mental);
- ii. 2nd set of 6 – refers to the 6 external sense bases or **sense data**; and the
- iii. 3rd set of 6 – refers to their 6 respective **sense door consciousnesses**.

Understanding these 18 fields or 18 sense realms can lead to the understanding of **how you know the world** and **how you interact with the world** plus **how you function as a human being** leading to the **understanding of who are you? And what are you?**

It is important for us to understand **what Sankhāra is? Sankhāra** is the **content of consciousness** or **everything that your mind can do** including the **aggregates of feeling and perception**. It includes all of **your mental movements & activities** like mental states, intention, planning & scheming, formations, conditioned views and opinions etc. The **consciousness aggregate** is the pure receptacle. **Consciousness and its content** becomes the **thought** which is the **mental 5 aggregates of form and mind** that the Buddha referred to under his **final summary of the 1st Noble Truth of Dukkha** – in which the Buddha said,

“In short it is due to one’s **self-delusion (sakkāya-diṭṭhi)** that conditions one’s craving and clinging to grasp onto these 5 aggregates of form and mind that He called dukkha”.

This is due to **self-delusion**. Living beings tend to **attach/cling** to their **physical form, mental feeling, external forms** that they come to **perceive with every moment of consciousness**, their **mental thinking and mental consciousness**, - taking them to be real and calling them the **‘I’ and the ‘Me’ and the ‘Mine’**”, leading to all the suffering. Take for example, when one perceives their **loved ones, good friends, colleague or pets or various prized possessions** like their property, money and wealth etc. and grasp onto them then what happens? The **fear of separation or losing them** can arise **if we don’t** have the wisdom and deludedly perceive them **as really belonging** to you. Once you have **attachment or grasping** to them, you can be **afflicted** and you will become very **‘fragile’** and **vulnerable**. It is due to delusion that conditions you to grasp and cling onto them because you fail to see their **impermanence, suffering** and **anattā or non-self nature**. All sense experiences and phenomena – no matter how **alluring** – are a **prelude** to suffering because they are of the **nature to arise and pass away or cease**, so they will separate from you. **Without wisdom** developed via **heedfulness**, one will not be able to **accept** this reality. One must train one’s mind to be **heedful** or **ever mindful** to **cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path** and the **4 Foundations Of Mindfulness** leading to the **Enlightenment** via realization of the **4 Noble Truths**.

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2.2 The 4th **Foundation Of Mindfulness's 3rd category** of cultivation (mindfulness of the 6 internal sense bases and 6 external sense bases) is related to the **18 sense realms** and the **12 Links** or Dependent Origination and the **Fire sermon** cultivation.

In the Fire sermon, the Buddha preached about **achieving liberation** from suffering through **detachment** from the **five senses** and **mind consciousness**. In this discourse, the Buddha described the **sense bases** and **resultant mental consciousness or phenomena** as "**burning**" with **passion, aversion, delusion** and suffering. Seeing such, a noble disciple becomes **disenchanted** with **dispassion** and thus **liberated** from the **senses bases** thereby achieving arahantship. This is described in more details below:-

Thus I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Gaya, at Gayasisa, accompanied by a thousand bhikkhus, the Buddha proclaimed:

"Bhikkhus, all things are burning." - *Sabbaṃ bhikkhave ādittaṃ*. What, Bhikkhus, are all these things burning?

The **eye**, Bhikkhus, is **burning**; **visual forms** are **burning**; **visual forms/sense data** received by the **eyes** are **burning**; **eye or seeing-consciousness** is burning, **eye-contact** is burning, also **whatsoever feeling** felt as **pleasant or unpleasant/painful or neither pleasant nor-unpleasant/painful** that arises with **eye-contact**, that too is burning.

With *what are they burning?* - **Burning with the fire of lust/passion (Lobha)**, with the **fire of hate (Dosa)** and with the **fire of delusion (Moha)**. I say it is burning with birth, aging and death, with sorrow, with lamentation, with pain, with grief, with despair.

"The **ear**, Bhikkus is **burning**, **sounds** are burning; **vibrations** or **sense data** received by the **ears** are **burning**; **ear or hearing-consciousness** is burning, **ear-contact** is burning, also **whatsoever feeling** felt as **pleasant or unpleasant/painful or neither pleasant nor-unpleasant/painful** that arises with **ear-contact**, that too is burning.

With *what are they burning?* - **Burning with the fire of lust/passion (lobha)**, with the **fire of hate (Dosa)** and with the **fire of delusion (Moha)**. I say it is burning with birth, aging and death, with sorrow, with lamentation, with pain, with grief, with despair".

The Buddha then repeated the same for all the other sense door consciousness as below:-

"The **nose**, Bhikkus is **burning**, **odours** are burning; **smell or sense data** received by the **nose** are burning; **nose or smell-consciousness** is **burning**, **nose contact** is burning, ..."

"The **tongue**, Bhikkus is **burning**, **tastes** are burning; **taste or sense data** received by the **body** are burning; **tongue or taste-consciousness** is **burning**, **tongue or taste contact** is burning, ..."

"The **body**, Bhikkus is **burning**, **tactile sensations** are burning; **tactile feelings or sense data** received by the **body** are burning; **body or tactile-consciousness** is burning, **tongue contact** is burning, ..."

"The **mind** is **burning**, **thoughts** are burning, **mental objects** received by the **mind** are burning; **mind or thought consciousness** is burning, **mind contact** is burning, also whatever

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is felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with **mind-contact**, that too is burning”.

With *what are they burning?* - **Burning with the fire of lust/passion (Lobha)**, with the **fire of hate (Dosa)** and with the **fire of delusion (Moha)**. I say it is burning with birth, aging and death, with sorrow, with lamentation, with pain, with grief, with despair.

“Bhikkhus, when a **noble disciple** who has heard (this truth) and **clearly seeing things** thus,

“He becomes **weary** of the eye, **weary** of visual forms, **weary** of eye or seeing-consciousness, weary of eye-contact, and **weary** of whatsoever is felt as pleasant or unpleasant/painful or neither pleasant nor unpleasant/painful that arises with **eye-contact**.”

“He becomes weary of the ear, weary of sounds, and weary of ear or hearing consciousness ...”

“He becomes weary of the nose, weary of odours, and weary of nose or smell consciousness ...”

“He becomes weary of the tongue, weary of taste, and weary of tongue or taste consciousness ...”

“He becomes weary of the body, weary of tactile sensations and feelings, and weary of body or tactile consciousness ...”

“He becomes weary of the mind, weary of thoughts or mental forms, weary of mind or thought-consciousness, weary of mind-contact, and weary of whatsoever is felt as pleasant or unpleasant/painful or neither pleasant nor unpleasant/painful that arises with **mind-contact**.”

In this way, he becomes freed of passion and he becomes aware of feeling, with insight knowledge and wisdom. He knows there is no more re-birth, that the holy life is his that he has done all that should be done.

These were the Blessed One’s words; when he spoke to the Bhikkhus thus, the whole congregation of over one thousand bhikkhus, **rejoiced, approved** of his words and attained **liberation** from the **āsavas** through **clinging no more** and their hearts were completely freed.

2.3 Notes from another commentary:

"Bhikkhus, form is burning, feeling is burning, perception is burning, volitional formations are burning, and consciousness is burning. Seeing thus, the instructed **noble disciple** experiences **revulsion** towards form, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness..... through dispassion and [this mind] is liberated...."

The ensuing text reveals that "all" (*sabba*) refers to:

- i. the six *internal* sense bases (*ayatana*): eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind

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- ii. the six *external* sense bases: visible forms, sound, smells, tastes, touches and mental objects
- iii. consciousness (*viññāṇa*) contingent on these sense bases

By "burning" (*āditṭa*) is meant:

- i. the fire of passion (*rāgagginā*);
- ii. the fire of aversion (*dosagginā*);
- iii. the fire of delusion (*mohagginā*)

The manifestations of suffering: birth, aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress and despair.

“Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate.

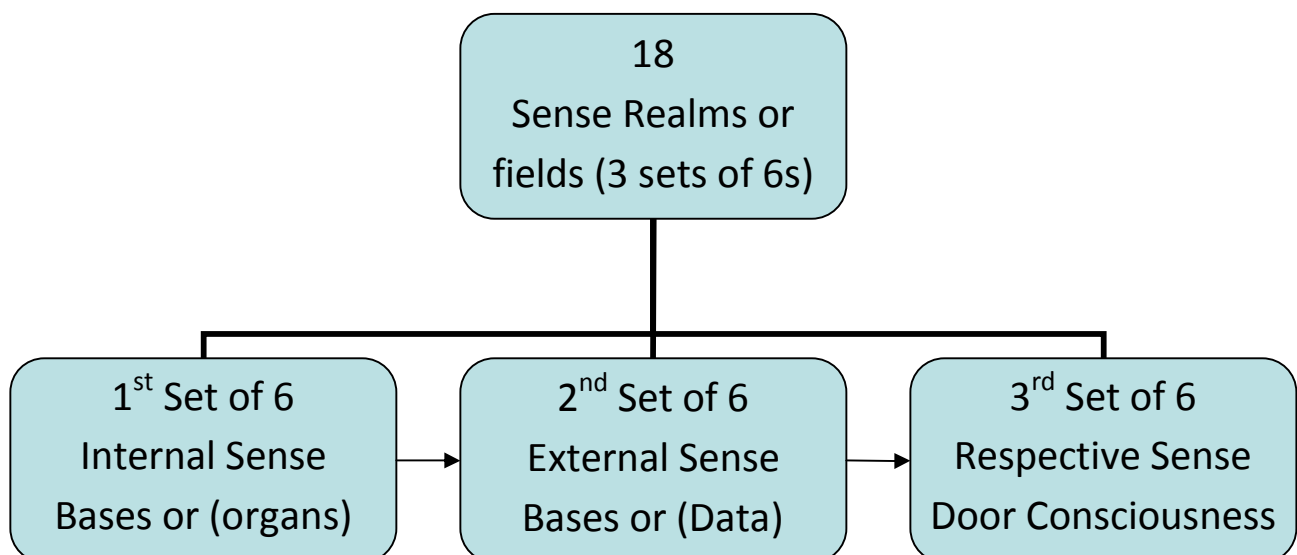
Through dispassion, he is fully released.

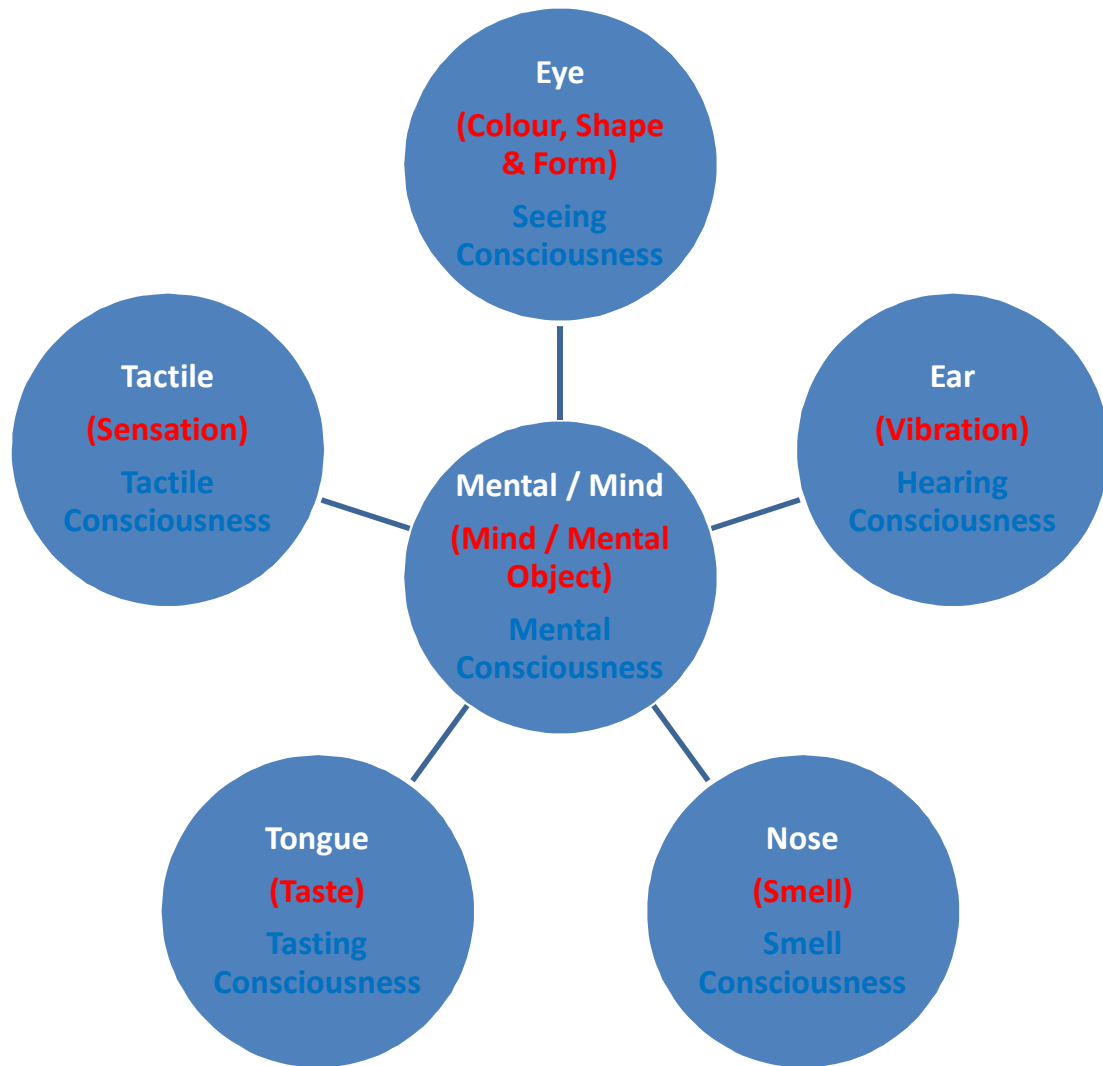
With full release, there is the knowledge, ‘Fully released.’

He discerns that ‘Birth is ended,

The holy life fulfilled, the task done.

There is nothing further for this world.”





Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Meditation consist of two parts: 1st part is to train the mind to be **heedful**, then the 2nd part is to make use of this **trained** mind in **heedfulness to live life** and **cultivate** the **Noble 8-Fold Path** with **special emphasis** on the **4 Foundations Of Mindfulness**. This mind that **is trained** listens to you.... and **if you want it to be silent within**, it will **just be silent within**. If you want it **to be aware** or think, then it will do just that. Even if you want it to be **at the moment of feeling, perception, activity of mind or consciousness**, then it will just do that. That is, it **listens to you**. **Heedfulness** can only arise when the **mind is trained**. To be heedful, one **must know how to silent** one's mind to connect to one's true mind. The **untrained** mind is very heedless and it thinks a lot because of ignorance and delusion. Without **this heedfulness developed**, one is **as if dead (spiritually)** as per Dhammapada Verse 21. Since **heedfulness is the path to the deathless** and the heedful do not die, so please do **strive on with heedfulness**.

Note: There are no short notes for Heart Sutra Classes 30 & 31 because Bro. Teoh's sharing was just based on a review of the Heart Sutra Class 29 short notes.

33rd Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 13 January 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 – Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

- 1.1 Dhammapada Verse 21 – **Heedfulness** is the path to the **deathless**, **Heedlessness** is the path **to the dead**. The heedful **do not** die; the heedless are **as if dead** (spiritually). One only needs to be Heedful then one is **destined** for enlightenment. Therefore one must make **strong determination** to be **heedful**.

To know who you are and what you are, is very important. Is this **human being** or the **5 aggregates of form and mind** really what you are? **How do you know the world? And how do you interact with the world?** It is the **senses** that enable us **to interact** with the world **via mind** or **mental consciousness** – this is a **very important understanding**.

Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi (self-delusion) is a very **powerful** delusion because during every moment of sense-door consciousness like seeing, hearing and thinking, etc. the **personality and Egoic mind** will arise if there is **sakkāya-diṭṭhi**. Then, one will try to **own and possess things**. This is how **selfishness** which is an evil root arises. Similarly because of the Ego, one can also become **jealous, angry, emotional** and **fearful** which are the other **2 evil roots of hatred and delusion**. As they are the roots of all evil, this is the reason why when things do not go your way, and when you cannot get what you desire or want, you can become **very unhappy** and you can also **get angry** and become **emotional** too. When confronted with the 1st Noble Truth's **realities**, especially **health problem** or **separation problems**, **the thought will project into the past and the future to condition your fear, worry, anxiety and sadness/unhappiness** etc. leading to one's suffering. See that **it is just a thought – not a reality** at all so how come it has the **power to torment** you and **cause you** so much suffering? This is **wrong view** conditioned by your **delusion** to grasp and cling onto the so-called problem hence causing your fear, worry and anxiety etc. Do see its impermanent characteristics and anattā nature i.e. **it is just a thought which comes and go** and it has **no power** over you if **you are not deluded** by it.

Part 2 – Heart Sutra Lesson 33 (The Emptiness of the Eighteen Fields pg 80 to 83)

- 2.1 Ultimate Nirvana - when you have **wisdom**, **you do not cling** to the Dhamma. The Dhamma are **only words, concept** and **skilful means** pointing towards **the truth** as likened to the finger pointing to the moon.

The commentary said, 'The **mind of the past** cannot be obtained, the mind of the **future** cannot be obtained, and the mind of the **present moment** also cannot be obtained.' This English translation by the commentary is not so clear as compared to the **mandarin** version. In mandarin, it is "**guo qu xin bu ke de**" (过去心不可得) meaning the mind of the past is **already gone so it is no more a reality** i.e. you cannot hold onto it or have it anymore. Similarly, the **future has yet to come so it is also not a reality**. The **moment is the only reality in Life** and **moment to moment** Life passes by, what are you doing? **Are you mindful** of the moment **truly living life?** Or are you **too busy thinking, planning** and **worrying about**

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life (so heedless) **so much so you totally miss out on Life**. To be **with the moment** to experience all of the **wonders and beauty of life without any fear, worry and anxiety** is truly living life.

The **present moment may be the highest** in Life but **in order to transcend Life**, one must also **transcend even the moment**. This is because the moment passes by so fast and it is also **not** a reality in that sense. That is split second - it is dead and gone. This **moment** then the **next moment** and the **next moment** - only a **stream of unending moments** of thoughts rising and falling. **See this clearly** and **free** your mind. **Only consciousness** and **thoughts** arising and passing away, implying it is **nothing substantial** and **not so real**. This is the reason why the Buddha said, 'Mind is the **forerunner** of all things, mind is chief and when mind arises, everything comes to be and **mind-made are they**. So, if one acts, speaks and thinks with a **heedless** or **unwholesome mind** that has the **evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion, suffering will follow one like the wheel that follows the hoof.'

Hence the reason why the Surangama Sutra states that: - '**perception of form** is **consciousness** whereas its **non-perception** is **wisdom**'. The first seeing refers to **mundane seeing** via the **conditioned arising** mundane mind whereas the 2nd seeing refers to the **direct seeing** via the **true mind** which is beyond thought and beyond mind (the mundane mind).

When cultivating the Buddha dhamma, one must be diligent to do it **continuously** with full determination in order to be **successful** and one **must not** be complacent. A good analogy is of the primitive man making a fire by rubbing a stick against the rock to spark off the fire. One must not stop half-way before the spark can trigger off the fire. Hence **heedfulness** must be stabilized and sustained until one is **ever mindful**.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1 – Why do I experience heat which comes and goes during meditation?

Bro. Teoh: Whether heat arises or not is **not so important** because the **main purpose and intent** of meditation is **to train the mind** in **heedfulness first**, that is, to be in a **stable state of relaxed inner awareness** or **mindfulness** first. Then only can one meditate. Heat can be due to the environment that you are in or due to your **Yin and Yang imbalance** within your body. The key thing is just to be in a state of **relaxed inner awareness**, to be aware of everything that is arising and passing away during meditation. Just **maintain a silent passive awareness**. Don't try to know. The understanding will come by itself via an awakening and not via thinking.

3.2 Question 2 – I can be very heedful and mindful when I am here doing meditation in a very conducive environment but when I am in the midst of life I can be very heedless. When I am in a very negative environment/situation, I can become deluded very fast. Then I start to blame myself and get angry with myself. Why?

Bro. Teoh: This is normal. When you are in this present **tranquil meditative environment**, you will be **naturally more peaceful** and **heedful**. Everything appears very smooth sailing because it is a **conditioned environment** or state of mind **with no negativity to stir and test you**. But, when you are **in the midst of Life**, you are usually less **heedful**. So, when you are with **someone that you don't like** or a **weird** and **difficult person** then you are tested. During these moments, if you **have yet to develop** the **wisdom** needed **to calm yourself**

down, then it is very likely that you will **become unhappy** via your **heedless reaction** to what they say and what they do. You will have **to learn to confront** or **face all these negativities** and **difficult life situations** with **wisdom** to free your mind. That's why **you must investigate** into all these; that is, - how **your reactions** to sense experiences conditioned by your delusion develop into very **strong habitual tendencies** without you even becoming aware of them. Habitual tendencies borne of delusion are difficult to change or correct overnight.

Silent your mind to investigate into their **origination factors** so that you can **later, retrospectively**, reverse it via wisdom after you **have contemplated** into it. That is, - how **this anger or fear** arises in your mind? And then inquire - are they real? Is **angry or fear really what you are?** Apart from these **mental states** that come and go, is there a nature within that is unmoving and unchanging? All these are part of meditation.

Your problem lies in your **inability to recognize** the fact that **you are not** what your thinking or mundane mind tells you via your **sakkāya-diṭṭhi**. Your **true nature** within is already perfect and without any negativity or discrimination and convention. So **don't blame yourself** for being like **so useless** because you cling onto **your form and mind** (the so-called human being) as the 'YOU', the 'I' and the 'Me'. Hence the delusion!

Blaming and getting angry with yourself is **of no use** because it is a **wrong view**. The **anger or fear** that arises is **not 'YOU'** but only a **conditioned state of mind** that arises after you **have reacted** to what you see and what you hear and think via your **own sakkāya-diṭṭhi** or self-delusion which is a wrong view. **If you do not perceive** whatever **life situation** that arises **with negativity or wrong view** then you **will not react** and there will be no suffering. You will come to understand via **your heedfulness** that **when things don't go your way then you will react** because **you want things your way** which is **against** nature's laws that govern all of life and existence. Hence suffering will arise because you have **your expectations** that are not met and you are not able to understand that **people are just the way they are** and **this is a fact**. This is part of the 1st Noble Truth's 7th condition or realities of life and existence. When you have **right view** - anger, selfishness and fear cease to be.

As we all know a **deluded person will say** and do **deluded things**. Likewise an **angry and violent person** will do and say **angry and violent things**. You have to develop the **wisdom via your meditation** to just **accept them** for **what they are, and then you will be peaceful**. You **only need** to **change** and **straighten** your view to free your mind. This **realization is wisdom**. Hence the saying, '**Wisdom frees whereas delusion binds!**'

3.3 Question 3 – How do I overcome discrimination against a specific person?

Bro. Teoh: When you use your false thinking (or condition-arising) **discriminative thinking mind** to see and perceive a specific person via your **wrong views** and **opinions** borne of your own **mind's conditioning** then this **discriminative perception** will arise. The problem is your **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** or **self-delusion** that conditions you to deludedly cling onto your false thinking mind leading to your inability to realize your true mind to see things as they are via wisdom. Please refer to the 7th Surangama Sutra's notes dated 8/1/2013 for further explanation on this.

34th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 20 January 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 – Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 Verse For Opening A Sutra

“The unsurpassed, profound, and wonderful dhamma,
Is difficult to encounter in hundreds of millions of eons,
I now see and hear it, receive and uphold it,
And I vow to fathom the Tathagata’s true meaning.”

Reciting the above opening verse with **great sincerity** and **faith** is **very important** because it reminds us clearly of the following:-

- i. **Rare is birth as a human being;**
- ii. **Rare is the OPPORTUNITY of hearing the Dhamma;**
- iii. **Dangerous is the delusion of mind.**

Via the analogy of turtle’s egg in the great ocean.

In the **Mahaparinibbāna Sutta**, the Buddha used the metaphor of a blind turtle in a vast ocean to explain **how difficult it is to be reborn as a human being** and at the same time to have the **chance of hearing the Dhamma**.

Suppose there is a turtle egg floating on a vast ocean. The turtle egg has a hole the size of which is just slightly larger for the head of a turtle to pop into. There is a long-lived sea turtle in the ocean. **Once every one hundred year**, this turtle comes out from the bottom of the ocean and pops his head into the ocean surface and the **probability of it hitting the hole of the turtle egg** is the probability of being born as a human being and to hear the Buddha Dhamma. i.e. To be able to be **born a human** and having the **chance to hear the Dhamma** is just as hard as for the **blind turtle to encounter the turtle’s egg** on a vast ocean and **let its head go through the hole** of this turtle egg. Therefore, **do not be heedless anymore** so that you will **not lose sight** of this **great opportunity** of already having the **special condition** to be a human being and the **great condition** to hear the Dhamma. **Yet, not taking it seriously to diligently cultivate to awaken** to it is going to be a **real waste**. If one misses this window, it may be **hundreds of millions of eons later** before one can have **another such condition or opportunity**.

1.2 Question 1: What is Heedfulness or Appamāda?

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Bro. Teoh: The importance of **heedfulness** is clearly expounded by the Buddha via his **Dhammapada Verses 21, 22 and 23**. The Buddha said under Dhammapada Verse 21,

'Heedfulness is the path to the deathless and the heedful never die, whereas heedlessness is the path to death and the heedless are as if dead.' So **do not be heedless** and **do strive on with heedfulness always**.

Appamāda is the **silent mind in heedfulness, attentiveness, alertness, non-laxity, diligence and vigilance** to develop the **meditation to liberate** the mind. **Appamāda** or **heedfulness** is the **cornerstone of all skilful mental states** and it is of **such importance** that the Buddha stressed it in his **parting words or last exhortation**: "**Transient are all conditioned things and phenomena. Strive on with heedfulness!**" (**Appamādena Sampādetha**)

1.3 Below is the **Appamāda Sutta** as translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu:-

Appamāda Sutta:

At Savatthi, as he was sitting to one side, King Pasenadi of Kosala said to the Blessed One: "Is there, Lord, any one quality that **keeps both kinds of benefits secure** — benefits in **this life** and benefits **in lives to come**?"

"There is one quality, great king that keeps both kinds of benefits secure— benefits in this life and benefits in lives to come."

"But what, Lord, is that one quality?"

"It is **Heedfulness**, great king. Just as the footprints of all living beings with legs can be **encompassed** by the footprint of the elephant, and the **elephant's footprint is declared to be supreme** among them in terms of its great size; in the same way, **heedfulness** is the one quality that **keeps both kinds of benefits secure** — benefits in this life and benefits in lives to come."

That is what the Blessed One said. Having said that, the One Well-Gone, the Teacher, said further:

For one who desires **long life, health, beauty, heaven and noble birth, lavish delights, one after another** — the **wise praise heedfulness in performing deeds of merit**.

When **heedful and wise**, you achieve both kinds of benefit:

- i. Benefits in this life; and
- ii. Benefits in lives to come.

By breaking through to your benefit, you're called **enlightened, wise**.

To be **mindful** or **in sati** is to be in a state of **relaxed inner awareness or attentiveness without thought**. To be **heedful** is to be **aware or mindful before the knowing**, to **understand the truth or to see things as they are**. When the mind is **silent, mindful and attentive without thought** then it is **in sati**. The **silent mind with inner awareness** to cultivate the **Buddha dhamma** thus developing the **wisdom (or paññā)** is **heedfulness**. The opposite of **heedfulness** is **heedlessness** and when one is **heedless**, one is **hardly aware** and

only merely conscious of life because one is **too busy and heedlessly thinking, planning and worrying** about life so much so one **totally misses out** on life. One **never** really lives life because one is **so preoccupied** with one's **thinking or thought processes** (hence the **heedlessness**) via **constantly** lost in thought most of the time and throughout the day.

Heedful living allows us to be **ever mindful** of **all our mental intentions** behind **all our action, speech and thought processes**. This will **enable us to cultivate the Noble 8-Fold Path** factors of Right speech, Right action and Right thought via following the **advice of the Buddha** to **apply the appropriate 4 Right efforts to avoid all evil, do good and purify our mind**. **Heedfulness** will prevent us from being **heedless** throughout the day so that the **5 hindrances** of mind **can be overcome and finally eradicated**. Heedfulness will also enable us to trace the **origination factors** of the **5 hindrances** of mind and **3 evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion when they **arise due to one's reaction of mind to sense experiences**. By understanding **how they arise via wisdom**, we will be able to **retrospectively** reverse it. **With heedfulness**, we will be able to **put the teachings** to test and witness the **4 Noble Truths** and the **Law of Dependent Origination** or **12 Links** occurring within our own form and mind **with every moment of mental activity**. Heedfulness will also enable us to **see things as they are via our sati and Samādhi leading to the wisdom or paññā**. When one is **heedful and mindful** with **inner awareness** most of the time, one **can see everything very clearly** because the silent mind is not distracted by anything and it is not preoccupied with any **heedless thinking** so it can see things as they are. It can be **aware** of thoughts, mental intentions, emotions, fear etc. It can also be aware of all movements like the moving cars, all our physical actions and movements, etc. When **mindfulness stabilises**, it will develop into a **continuous flow**. Then, your 'seeing' or awareness will be so different because it can be aware of **all of life's physical, mental and nature's flow**. The mind is just **silent and aware**, one with all phenomena **without thought** and **always heedful**. When one's mind is **no longer preoccupied** with all the **heedless thinking** then there is **great clarity** and one can see very clearly. Just like the saying goes, "**Truth is everywhere, why can't you see? For those who see they always see!**" That is, when one is **heedful** there is **no thought** – only the **senses are aware** so there is a lot of clarity. **Everything is so clear**. Without thoughts there are **no evil roots** - i.e. no fear, no selfishness and emotional negativity etc. So, develop the silent mind with inner awareness to be heedful always.

For **more details on heedfulness**, please refer to the **recorded talk**.

1.4 Question: How to overcome Anger?

Bro. Teoh: When there is anger arising, just **be aware** (don't think). Then, **silent your mind** and **sit back to relax**. After a while, the **agitation due to the stirring of your mind into anger** via your **heedlessness and delusion** will **slow down**. Then suddenly it will become **completely still**. Then you will come to understand with joy **clearly** that if you **don't react to stir the mind** then you are in your **original natural state of mind** (which is **peaceful and calm**) before the stirring. The analogy of a pool of **still water** will help illustrate the point. If stirred

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by a **falling branch** or a **stone** thrown into it, the ripples will start to form. **Wind and weather** may also create waves just like **Fear and Anger** appearing in the mind due to **external stimulus**.

A Mind that is **heedful, wise and constantly aware** will **not** be stirred by any delusion hence it will be very calm and **peaceful always**. As **habitual tendencies** developed over the years are **difficult to eradicate** or do away with, one will need to be **heedful most of the time**, throughout their daily life **to stabilise the wisdom** to deal with the **strong habitual negative tendencies**. When the spiritual faculty of **Samadhi** and enlightenment factor of **equanimity** are there, then one will **no longer be entangled**. The mind that is **transformed will not react anymore** and instead it will **just flow and accord** via wisdom. When you try to share and there is no condition but then others want to argue and want to be right; then you will say yes! You are right and let them be right because they don't understand duality as yet so just let things be. One must ask the question, Right according to whom? And why must one defend oneself? It is because of the **EGO** – the **self-delusion** that conditions **one's selfishness, emotional negativities and fear**. Understand that things are just the way they are – no right no wrong via seeing things as they are! Grasping and clinging to sense experiences **via delusion** is the cause of suffering. Only wisdom liberates and frees nothing else. With wisdom one will be able to **understand and appreciate life** more and more.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra - Nil.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1: During Meditation, I heard and perceived the branches of the tree, and I return to Ānāpānasati but then the thoughts regarding the falling branches arise? May I have your comments?

Bro. Teoh: This is what you are **supposed to see** in your meditation because there is this **subtle grasping** going on within the mind. Meditation is **to uncover** all these **unhealthy delusion** and unwholesome **subtle attachments** to what we **perceived** with **every moment** of our **conscious sense experiences** via **our trained mind** in **heedfulness or silent inner awareness** to understand **what is going on** in our own form and mind, how we are **conditioned** into **thinking and reaction of mind** (likes and dislikes) via our **own self-delusion** or **sakkāya-diṭṭhi**. Why do these thoughts arise and not other thoughts? And we also **see clearly** how we are **conditioned into grasping and clinging leading to the suffering caused** by our own self-delusion, selfishness and emotional negativities (the 3 evil roots – which are the roots of all evil). In this particular case, there is this **curiosity of mind** due to **ignorance** that conditions your **grasping** to what you **perceive** earlier – which is the falling branches. This is attachment to 1 of our 5 aggregates of form and mind and in this case it is the **perception aggregate**. So the first of the Dependent Origination link of 'avijjā paccayā saṅkhāra' or 'dependent on ignorance, saṅkhāra (which is mental activities) comes to be,' hence the thought or thinking about the falling branches. This is **witnessing how your mind**

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functions and via all this **heedfulness training**, you will also witness all of the **Buddha's teachings** like the 4 Noble Truths and the 12 Links, etc. in **your own life experiences** via your daily mindfulness to understand **who you are** and **what you are** including **how you function as a human being**; how the sense door **consciousness** and the **stirring of the mind** come to be etc., so as to develop the **requisite wisdom** and **understanding** leading to the subsequent awakening via **insight into the 3 characteristics of nature** of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā especially the Anattā universal characteristics.

For further details please listen to the recorded talk.

35th & 36th Heart Sutra Classes + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 27 January 2013. Time : 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 To develop the **Heedfulness** needed to cultivate the **Meditation as taught by the Buddha**, one must at least understand **“What is Heedfulness?”** and **“What is Meditation?”** as taught by the Buddha in order to start. It is just like you **have a ‘problem’** and you come to a meditation teacher and he said to you – “just meditate and your problem will be resolved.” Is this going to be useful if you **do not even want to find out what your problem is?** How can you **start solving your problem** when you **do not** know what your problem is? Similarly **with meditation**, if you do not understand what meditation is, then how can you start developing it? **Meditation and cultivation must be done with understanding** so that one is **not gullible**.

Dhammapada Verses 21, 22 and 23 already stress the **importance of Heedfulness**. So Heedfulness must be a part of you in order to realize the enlightenment. **Continuous Heedfulness** is the key to the **noble life**. Those **without Heedfulness** cannot become enlightened. Please refer to the earlier 34th Heart Sutra notes for the detailed explanation of what heedfulness is.

As meditation is a very **general** word, it is important to understand **the meditation as taught** by the Buddha. The real meditation as taught by the Buddha is **to develop the wisdom** via **insight** into the 3 universal characteristics of nature (**anicca, dukkha and anattā**) so as to be **at peace** with all situations wherever you are - termed **upadhi viveka**.

Fully **relax and be aware** to develop the **wisdom borne of direct seeing**. The thought must not interfere. There is just **clarity** of mind leading to the **awakening or insight** into the 3 universal characteristics of nature. The mind that is **liberated is so free**. It understands that all of phenomena (whether **physical, mental and nature’s**) are all empty and they are all conditions arising or causal phenomena following nature’s laws. This is deep penetrative wisdom.

In cultivation we should **thank those people** who are **not so friendly** and **constantly make things** difficult for us because they are the **ones that can give us the conditions to test our cultivation**. Hence we should perceive them with **wholesomeness and wisdom** via accepting them as they are, then **expressing our gratitude** towards them. Then, **great compassion** will **naturally arise** in our mind. **Do not perceive** any situation with negativity, for **the absence of negativity is good**. So **don’t try to do good** because **without wisdom**, one can end up becoming just a good-hearted fool. The unenlightened ones are **so heedless, chasing and clinging** after so many things in life. They still **grieve and worry** about life despite having so many things and possessions for they **lack contentment and wisdom** to live life. The 1st Noble Truth of dukkha that expounds so clearly the **8 realities of life and existence** needs to be understood. Otherwise, they can **really make human beings miserable**. Without

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understanding the true dhamma as taught by the Buddha, suffering will be the final result. So, **strive on with heedfulness** and **do not be heedless**. Please listen to the recorded tape for more details.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra – Nil.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1: While cultivating **mindfulness in daily life**, I was able to be **mindful most** of the time when I am going about **living the normal life**. But, when **confronted** with work-related and personal problems I find it very difficult **to maintain** that heedfulness and I realise that the **same worrying and fearful** thoughts keep coming back to haunt me. How can I overcome this?

Bro. Teoh: This is a very good question. Yes! When there are no 1st Noble Truth realities to disturb us, cultivating heedfulness or mindfulness in daily life is **fairly easy**. The **challenge** is when one is **confronted** with the 1st Noble Truth realities of **birth, old age, sickness and death; threatening separation** from loved ones and one's prized possessions, etc. like work-related and personal health, career, relationship and financial problems etc. Can your mind **still be peaceful and calm** to cultivate the **requisite heedfulness**? This is **most difficult** but it **can still** be done if one **has developed the appropriate wisdom** to confront them with right understanding.

This is the reason why the Buddha constantly advised the Bhikkhus to reflect on the **5 daily contemplations** and to strive on with heedfulness to arise the **much needed wisdom** to overcome all these 1st Noble Truth realities.

3.2 The 5 daily contemplations are as follows:-

- i. Our body is of the **nature to decay and grow old** for it has **not gone beyond** old age and decay;
- ii. Our body is of the **nature to be diseased or sick** because it has **not gone beyond** diseases and sicknesses;
- iii. Our body is of the **nature to die** for it has **not gone beyond death**;
- iv. All of our **loved ones, wealth, property and other prized possessions**, etc. which we hold onto so dearly - they will **all one day separate from us** or **we separate from them** when our breath stops;
- v. This is the **great Law of Kamma** and is also the **1st Right view** that we **must develop** or **have** to begin our cultivation. Each and every one of us (**including all living beings**), we are **all born of our kamma, heir to our kamma, conditioned and supported by our kamma** and we are **what we are because of our kamma**. This is the great Law of Kamma. **Since kamma is so important**, we must all **take care of our kamma via avoiding all evil, do good and purify our minds (which is the advice of all Buddhas)** to develop

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the **strong karmic nature** to bring about the **good life** every time we come or choose to come.

Once the wisdom borne of **one's cultivation** and **above constant reflections and contemplation** has stabilised, then **these projections** of **wrong thoughts** to haunt you **will not have power over you**. Wrong thoughts are **deluded thoughts** that condition **one's fear, worry, anxiety and suffering** via one's **self-delusion** or **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** that conditioned one **to cling** on to the **5 aggregates** as the 'I' and the 'Me', hence the **heedlessness**. So ultimately, it is **wisdom** that **really frees** and **liberates one's mind**. Job pressures, datelines and targets can be **very stressful** within the job and career environment and if one **has not developed the wisdom** to confront them **with understanding**, it is not easy. The same goes for **personal problems**. So, the dhamma understanding **to confront all these** 1st Noble Truth **realities is very important** and this is the reason why the Buddha's final advice before his passing away is to **strive on with heedfulness to develop the requisite wisdom to liberate one's mind**.

3.3 Understanding the meditation as taught by the Buddha

Dhammapada Verses 21, 22 and 23 confirmed the importance of **heedfulness** in order to become enlightened.

Heedfulness or **Appamāda** = **Ever mindful** (sati) + to cultivate the **dhamma** and the **meditation** as taught by the Buddha

So the first thing we must do when starting this meditation is **to train our mind** to be **in sati (or silent inner aware)** to be **ever mindful without thought** most of the time first. Then only use this **trained mind in sati** to **meditate** and **cultivate** the dhamma as taught by the Buddha.

How do we train this mind to be mindful and aware most of the time? First, we must understand why we are most of the **time heedless** and **not mindful/aware** and **peaceful**? According to the Buddha it is because of the **5 mental hindrances** that **condition our heedless thinking thereby** stirring our mind and **hindering** our mind from returning to its natural **meditative state of inner peace and calmness before the stirring**.

The 5 Mental Hindrances of:-

- i. **Sensual desire;**
- ii. **Ill will;**
- iii. **Sloth and torpor** (lethargic or sleepiness);
- iv. **Restlessness or agitated** mind (due to fear, worry anxiety);
- v. **Doubt.**

The 5 Mental Hindrances condition our **heedless thinking, lack of peace** and **awareness** so we must **reverse all these** via cultivating the **opposite five** which are the **5 Spiritual Faculties:-**

- i. **Saddhā** or **confidence** in the Buddha and his teaching

- ii. **Viriya** or **spiritual zeal**/tenacity to cultivate heedfulness
- iii. **Sati** or mindfulness or awareness;
- iv. **Samādhi** or **collectedness** of mind/**unwavering** mind; and
- v. **Paññā** or wisdom

To cultivate these **5 spiritual faculties**, the Buddha recommended the **pre and post pūjā** or **devotional practices** of **paying respect or homage** to the Buddha, Dhamma and the Saṅgha and **taking Refuge** in them followed by the renewal **of 5 Precepts**, chanting the **various salutations** to the Buddha, Dhamma and the Saṅgha etc. The paying of respect and the taking of refuge followed by the chanting of the various salutations is to develop the faith or **saddhā** and **virīya** spiritual faculties. Then the paying of respect or **mindful reverential salutation** is to develop the composed mind to be **mindful** while paying respect to the Buddha. So **do not under estimate** the **importance of pūjā** in the cultivation process. When **Sati is developed**, Samādhi will come to be and **with Sati and Samādhi** one will be able to have the **clarity** of mind **to see things as they are** (without the interference of thoughts) via the **Sati in direct seeing** hence awakening to the truth **leading to the wisdom**.

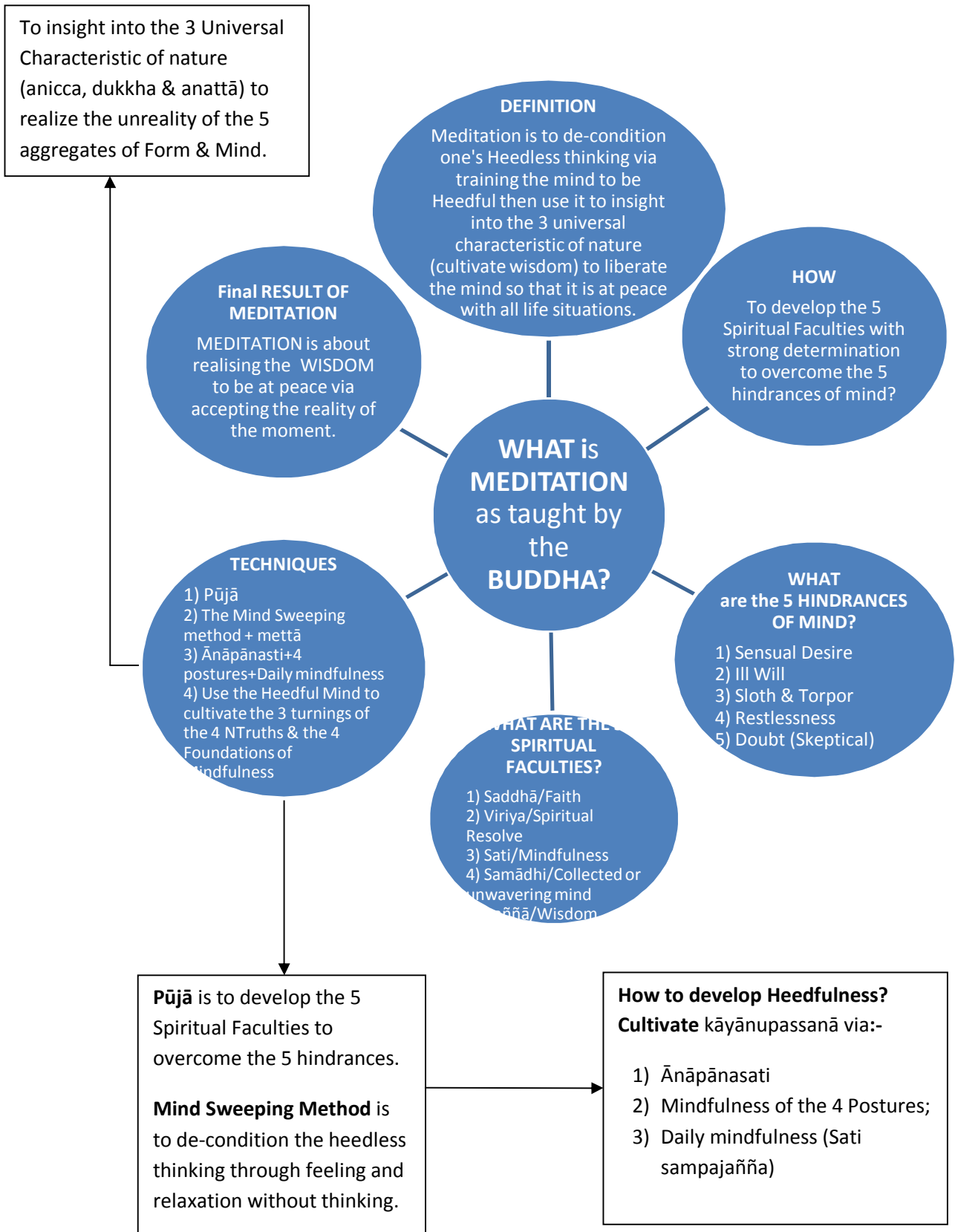
Then to **decondition** the **heedless thinking**, we use the **mind sweeping method** as a **skillful means** to train our mind to **just feel and relax** (no more thinking) as we sweep the mind through our body. This will allow the mind **to naturally relax** and **calm down** on its own. We can also combine it with the radiating of **mettā** or **loving kindness** to develop the **inner well-being** and **wholesome state of mind** to **enhance** our meditation. After the mind sweeping method and mettā training, our mind **should** be more **relaxed, calm** and **peaceful** then we can use it **to develop sati (the silent mind with inner awareness)** via the **Ānāpānasati** (or mindfulness of the in and out breath) training as taught by the Buddha in his kāyānupassana practices. After that, **when sati is already quite stable**, we should move on to the **mindfulness of the 4 postures** followed by the **sati sampajañña** (or the **daily mindfulness with clear comprehension**) training as described in the kāyānupassana's 6 categories of practices. **Once sati is established**, use it **to cultivate the 3 turnings of the 4 Noble Truths** and the **Four Foundations Of Mindfulness** to complete the training. The **real meditation** as taught by the Buddha is the **cultivation of the Noble 8-Fold Path** leading to the cessation of all suffering and enlightenment in the here and the now.

3.4 Summary of cultivation:

- i. Train the mind to be **heedful** via:-
 - a) **Pūjā** or **devotional practices** (a **daily religious routine** will be useful);
 - b) **Mind sweeping method** and **mettā**;
 - c) **Ānāpānasati**;
 - d) **Mindfulness of the 4 postures**; and
 - e) **Mindfulness** and **clear comprehension** of all actions and all movements in the **present moment** or **Daily Mindfulness** and clear comprehension training.

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- ii. Once heedful, use the trained mind to cultivate the 3 turnings of the Four Noble Truths and the Four Foundations Of Mindfulness or Satipaṭṭhāna practices



37th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 7 April 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 In order not to arise any unnecessary **misunderstanding** or **karmic consequences**, Bro. Teoh had been reluctant to share his **dhamma understanding** until about 9 years ago when he was approached **3 times** by a **very sincere** sister of the dhamma, asking him to share his rather good understanding of the dhamma. Bro. Teoh then **contemplated** and **finally agreed** to share the dhamma but with the following **3 conditions**:

- i. Call it a Dhamma **Sharing** instead of a dhamma talk because a talk could be like a 'one-way traffic' not offering any chance of having a **fair discussion** to clarify matters from the audiences. Also sharing means **no authority** over one another and as dhamma friends we are here to **share** our **understanding** of the dhamma with **mutual respect** for each other's **cultivation** i.e. I respect you for what you are and you respect me for what I am.
- ii. **No right** and **No wrong** – if it is **beneficial to you**, use it. If it is not – have an **open** mind because we are not here to **argue about right and wrong**. Right and wrong is just a **relative** measurement or opinion as expressed by someone according to their **views and opinions** and it is not something **absolute**. As such, it is not **beneficial** at all. If we are not careful, it may lead to **unnecessary arguments** and **misunderstandings** too.
- iii. Do not quote me – because it can be very dangerous. If you quote what I said **without understanding** what I meant, it can get both of us into **unnecessary trouble**.

Just say, "Bro. Teoh **shared with us** his understanding of the dhamma" - which we have come **to appreciate** a lot because the dhamma which is a **very difficult** and **profound topic** can be **made so simple** and **taught to us** with such **clarity** that we can so **easily relate to it in our daily life**, as always pointed out by Bro. Teoh. According to Bro. Teoh:- "**Life itself is the meditation** and Life itself is where the **dhamma** is and Life itself is **our greatest** teacher. **Truth is everywhere** – in the **midst of life** and **nature** so **why can't you see?** For those who see, **they always see.**"

Wisdom cannot be learnt or taught because it is not a rigid knowledge. Wisdom needs to be **awakened to** or **realized** because it is an **overall understanding**. Dhamma is about **realization** and it can only be **understood by the wise** each for themselves – no one else can understand it for us. At different levels, wisdom is realized differently. If you can understand the **deep meaning** behind this Surangama saying: "**Perception of form is consciousness, whereas its non-perception is wisdom**" - then you would have some form of wisdom borne of understanding the **mind dhamma**. For **everything** is **condition-arising** and **mind-made** are they – so not so real. It is only the **mundane mind** creating the **phenomena world** through its own **mental perception** and **consciousness**. Like the following Zen sayings:-

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1.2 Zen Proverb



First 'you see mountain as mountain' – this is **conventional or mundane seeing**.

Then 'You see mountain as not mountain' – this is **seeing with the above Surangama saying's understanding**;

Finally 'You see mountain still as mountain' again – this is **seeing things as they are with understanding** that everything is '**Suchness**' or '**What IS**' (able to **accept** things as they are - hence able to accommodate both the **Conventional** and **Ultimate realities** to live life with **wisdom** and **understanding**.)

1.3 Zen analogy

- i. Two monks were arguing about the temple flag waving in the wind. One said, "The flag moves." The other said, "The wind moves." They argued back and forth but could not agree. Hui-neng, the sixth Patriarch, said: "Gentlemen! It is not the flag that moves. It is not the wind that moves. It is **your mind** that moves." The two monks were struck with awe. (**To refer earlier Heart Sutra notes for the detail explanation of this Zen analogy**).
- ii. Bodhisattva's son died – no crying, no sorrow and lamentation. Why? Because the Buddha knew, "Whatever that is of the **nature to arise** is also of the **nature to cease** and what **has been born** has **already ceased to be** so **no amount of sorrow or lamentation** can **bring back the dead**". We have been born so many times so which one of the many eons of segmented lives or birth and death is 'YOU'?
- iii. **Cameron Highlands retreat - stillness, breeze – Dhamma contemplation** When your mind is **silent and still**, all of **Nature's phenomena + mental & physical phenomena** – can be **perceived clearly** because they keep on arising via **mental perceptions** and **consciousness within your silent or true mind**. When at the retreat you are **very relaxed, at ease and heedful most of the time** so **dhamma contemplation** can arise **easily** and there is **dhamma in everything** that comes within your field of perception.

Part 2 - Report of Meditation

2.1 Question: When I focus on an object to meditate. I can feel there is a grasping. Thus I change to free flow and I find it more relaxing and there is better blood circulation with better awareness...

Bro. Teoh: Meditation is not just about **developing calmness** nor having **good** and **bad meditation experiences** but it is about developing **wisdom** via the **silent mind in awareness** to insight into the **3 universal characteristics** of anicca, dukkha and anattā.

Heart Sutra cum Meditation classes short notes

Meditation or Bhāvanā consist of two parts – **Samādhi and Paññā**. First part is Samādhi which is the path factors of Sammā Sati and Samādhi i.e. training the mind to be in **sati (or mindfulness) leading to the Samādhi** (or collected and unwavering mind) to arise the **heedfulness needed for cultivating insights**. Then the 2nd part is to use this trained mind in sati and samādhi to meditate and cultivate the dhamma as taught by the Buddha (leading to **heedfulness**) to develop the paññā or wisdom.

So how can you do that? Can you do that by **focusing** on an object of meditation? Or must you just train your mind to be aware via **a skilful means** or a **meditation object**? The latter will lead you to an understanding of what you are doing in the name of meditation. So **whatever happens in meditation** – as long as you **are silent** and **aware to understand** what is going on then **wisdom can arise**. If we have **expectation** that meditation **must lead to calmness** and **good meditative experiences** then we have a problem when it doesn't happen. Most yogis tend to **react** and **chase after** good meditation and what they do is, they become **unhappy** and **agitated when they cannot get** what they **want** or **expect** – hence their mind is **not at peace** with the **moment**. This lack of understanding is the **main** problem that **traps** most yogis.

You must understand that the moment you are silent, **you are already aware** and **heedful** so you don't have **to try** to be aware. The trying is by **the thought** and **if thought is active** how can your **mind** be **silent and aware**. The 5 mental hindrances that hinder your mind from becoming peaceful and calm will arise as long as your mind is **deluded** and **heedlessly lost in thoughts**. This **habitual tendency of heedless thinking** is the main problem. So to counter these 5 mental hindrances, we need to cultivate the opposite **5 spiritual faculties** of saddhā, viriya, sati, samādhi and paññā via the following:-

- i. The **devotional practices** (or pūjā) to develop the faith, the viriya and sati;
- ii. The **mind sweeping method & mettā** to de-condition the **heedless thinking** via just feel and relax (no more thinking); then
- iii. **Cultivate Ānāpānasati** or mindfulness of the in and out breathing **to stabilize the sati** borne of the above training leading to the silent mind (sati), followed by samādhi and paññā.

There was a question raised by a yogi during the last Saturday meditation class as to why the **random thoughts** keep on arising during her meditation? I told her, "This is good because at least now you are able **to be aware** of your own **lack of peace** and **understand why your random thoughts keep arising**." Why these thoughts and not other thoughts? - When you **are aware** of all these **without any reactions** of mind and **agitation** or **trying to do anything** – then what happens? You will come to realize that these **random thoughts arise due to your attachment or clinging to a lot of those mind activities that affected you during your daily life** and these arising thoughts have a lot to do with the **memories** - which you had deposited or accumulated (**'scars' of memories**) into your brain over the years. And since **thoughts are response to memories** – that is how **random thoughts** arise during your meditation but if **you just let it be and remain just silent and aware** then these random thoughts will start **to slow down** on their own until there is **just stillness** or **quietness**. Also if you don't cling and live your life **with heedfulness** and **wisdom** then all these clinging and grasping and accumulation will cease to be and you will be **very peaceful** most of the time.

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'Vi' is the **3 Universal Characteristics of nature** and 'passanā' is 'to insight into', hence Vipassanā is a meditation that leads to the **ability** of the **mind to insight** into these 3 universal characteristics of nature to arise the **wisdom** needed **to liberate** the mind. So meditation is **about insight** and **not** about good or bad meditation. Reaction of mind is due to one's wrong views that **conditioned** the arising of the **wrong thoughts** leading to the **fear, worry, anxiety** and **restlessness** of mind. Understand **via awareness** how these wrong thoughts come to be and how they condition our fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation etc. via thoughts projections and proliferation is very important. Then, understand how dhamma can allow us to develop the **wisdom needed** to free our mind leading to the **peace** and **tranquility within**. This is meditation.

38th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah Date: 14 April 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 It is important to understand “What is Form Dhamma?” and “What is Mind Dhamma?” For example, I am a religious person; my religion says I cannot take certain types of meat – not permitted. I cannot touch OR use the bowl that contains this type of meat used by people of other religions. Then by the same logic, they shouldn’t breathe the air that the people of other religions have breathed or the money that they have used. This type of action puts emphasis only on the Form Dhamma – i.e. they only deal with the form and are not able to see the mind as yet. Form has so much meaning to them hence they can be deluded by it and it is because of their attachment to form dhamma that conditions them to cling to the external forms and identify with them as right or wrong, **spiritual** or **non-spiritual**.

Outwardly, they try to become more spiritual but **inwardly** at the mind level they are still ‘barren’ because they cannot see their rather **latent defilements, evil mental intentions and thoughts**. Another example is taking “vegetarian”. When you don’t understand ‘Why are you vegetarian?’ then the same problem will arise. Some people are vegetarian because they thought by doing so, they will be **more spiritual** and **compassionate** because they don’t cause to kill anymore. There may be **some truth** in that statement but **if you don’t** have the **clear understanding** of why you go vegetarian then **delusion** can still creep in because you fail to understand that **spirituality** has **nothing** to do with **what you eat**. For spirituality is about **cultivating the mind** and **purifying it** to develop **wisdom** to **liberate our mind**. Otherwise, all the **herbivorous animals** like the cows, the goats and the horses would have been enlightened because they are vegetarians all the time for they only eat grass and the funny part is - what they eat, finally becomes meat too.

The other important point that one need to understand is - for the **true cultivators of the way**, there will come a time for them **to go vegetarian** and they will know when and why. For their cultivation **has reached** the mind level and they are **so sensitive** and **so clear** with their understanding that they are ready to go vegetarian. This is a good understanding, but what happens when you don’t have this type of understanding? When your understanding and cultivation **have not reached this level of refined compassion** then becoming vegetarians like the others, has not much meaning and it will not make you more compassionate and spiritual. It is like at the **form level**, you are trying to **‘impress’ others (outwardly)** that you are a ‘vegetarian’ but **inwardly** your mind is still not ready and so coarse with all the **cravings, selfishness, anger, hatred, jealousy, violence (to harm and kill), pettiness** and **fear etc.** – so what is happening?

This is **attachment to form dhamma** and **not cultivating the mind dhamma** at the mind level to develop the **wisdom to understand beyond form dhamma**. This is like some devotees who chant to renew their 5 precepts but still break them. Outwardly, they will say, ‘I am a Buddhist you know – I cannot lie and steal or commit sexual misconduct etc.’ but then inwardly, are they really a Buddhist? As a true Buddhist and to be worthy of the Buddha, the

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minimum we should do is, **to be able to, at least, heed his advice ‘to avoid all evil, cultivate goodness and wholesomeness and purify our mind’** right?

- i. To avoid all evils, we will have to keep our 5 precepts via developing our **mindfulness** and **heedfulness** to diligently cultivate the **first 2 right efforts**:-
 - a) to **abandon** the unwholesome thoughts (or mental intentions) that have arisen; and
 - b) the other right effort **to prevent** the unwholesome thoughts from arising.
- ii. To cultivate goodness and wholesomeness, we need to cultivate the **next 2 right efforts**:-
 - a) to **promote** or arise the right thoughts, right speech and right action that are **still not in you**; and
 - b) the other right effort to **refine upon** whatever right and wholesome mental intentions and thoughts, action and speech that you **have developed**.

As these 4 right efforts are cultivated at mind level hence they are **still thought-based cultivation** involving **effort** or the thought. A **better way** to cultivate goodness, wholesomeness and blessings is to understand that the **absence of evil is by itself already good**. With this **understanding**, one only needs to cultivate the **stability of daily mindfulness** leading to the **heedfulness** to constantly avoid all evil mental intention that condition one's negativity then there will be **no more need** to use the 4 right efforts anymore.

- iii. To purify our minds, we need **to go beyond thought** to cultivate **only mindfulness or sati** (the silent mind) **to see things as they are**, without the **interference of thoughts** via its views, opinions and conditioning. This is **direct seeing** which is also called the **3rd turning cultivation** leading to the realisation of **Bhāvanāmaya Paññā** (wisdom borne of bhāvanā or the meditative discipline).

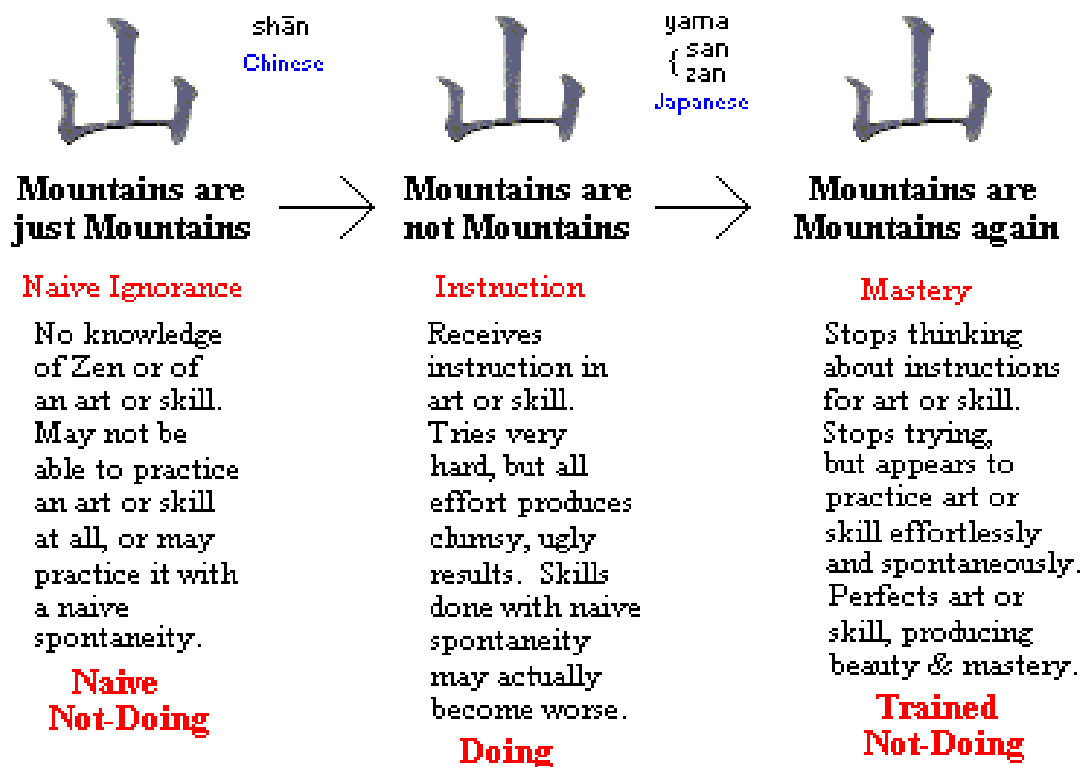
At the mind level **you can still be deluded** because you must understand that your mind is the forerunner of all things, Mind is Chief and everything arises from the Mind. So if one acts, speaks and thinks with a **wicked/unwholesome** mind, then suffering will follow one like the wheel that follows the hoof. So, even though the **mind dhamma** is more important than **form dhamma**, one can still get trapped at mind level if one continues to be **deluded** by the **aggregates of mind**. When we identify via form then we will **discriminate** according to what we see or perceive like male and female, old and young, beautiful and ugly, race, nationality, etc. Like I am a Malay, Chinese, and Indian leading to racial discrimination via identification with our **external physical forms or appearances**. When we are able to see **beyond form** all these **discriminations or divisions conditioned by form dhamma will cease** but then **mind dhamma** can still arise to cause **similar division and discrimination**. At mind level, we still have our **views, opinions, belief systems, traditions and conditionings** etc. that **can still divide** and cause us **to argue** with one another. All **these divisions and discrimination** can only cease when we are able **to see beyond form and beyond mind or thoughts** leading to the **‘direct seeing’** – with our **true nature** within. i.e. ‘seeing things as they are’ leading to the understanding of ‘What IS’ - Suchness or Tathatā.

The Buddha explained to us clearly how we **perceive form** via our mind (mental consciousness). This is the reason why the Buddha said, “Mind is the forerunner of all things and mind is chief. When mind arises, everything comes to be.” So we can **return all external**

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forms to **mind** then **mind** to our **pure nature** within to **realise the truth** of how creation via mental consciousness comes to be, leading to the understanding of their impermanent, non-self and empty nature.

When you awaken, your form and mind will cease and your **true nature** within or your **essence** will be realised as the **Oneness**, the unconditioned and the timeless – beyond thought, beyond mind. The whole world is about Suchness. Truth cannot be monopolised by any religion or any one because Truth IS! Not your truth or my truth for they are our own opinions of truth. Truth is whatever that can explain the way things are! So what is the truth? Truth is dhamma or nature’s laws that govern all of Life and Existence.



Worldly

Mundane seeing

This is **conventional truth**. (Normal mundane seeing.)

Spiritual

Direct seeing

Via the **silent mind** leading to **awakening**. (Realising that perception of form is consciousness whereas its non-perception is wisdom.)

Mastery

Gone beyond - Suchness seeing

Seeing things as they are after having the wisdom and can live Life as a normal person again.

Part 2 – Meditation

2.1 Question 1: I used to have pain when I meditate and now I don't have, why?

Bro. Teoh: You must **investigate** into it and find out for yourself. Very likely it is because you are **more calm** now and your **ānāpānasati cultivation** has improved and you are **more relaxed** and **mindful** now. This is a good sign of slight progress but meditation is not just about **cultivating calmness of mind** and having **peaceful experiences** leading to the so called - 'good' meditation and **then jump for joy** and **cling** on to it unknowingly.

It is just like **random thoughts** that arise during meditation - yogis dislike it and call it '**bad' meditation** and they **become unhappy**. So is this meditation? - When your mind **still reacts** to good and bad meditation.

Meditation is about **developing wisdom** via **awareness** to be at peace with all life situations. Even when random thoughts arise, the **yogi can still develop the wisdom** out of it if the yogi knows how to develop the meditation **via sati to understand how the random thoughts** come to be via inquiring – “Why am I not peaceful?”

When we come to understand that we have been **heedless for so long** because we **seldom train** our mind to be **in sati** and we are **seldom heedful**, then we will understand that this mind is **not peaceful** because of the **heedless way** we have been **living our life**. This **heedless living** has conditioned our **habitual tendencies** of **ceaseless thinking** and **reactions** to sense experiences giving rise to the **5 mental hindrances** – hence our **lack of peace**. If we just **silent our mind via wisdom** and not feed it with **anymore thought energies**, like trying **to focus** and **concentrate** or **do something** to push away the random thoughts then what happens? **Try it and find out for yourself**. You will be **very surprised** that the random thoughts will **just slow down on their own** and then **become silent and still**.

This is a form of **awakening** and **wisdom will arise**. Then, the yogi will **suddenly understand** with **a lot of joy** that the **natural state of mind** before the **stirring** and **reaction** of mind is **already** silent and still. So the cultivation of **sati or mindfulness during meditation** is **not** about **doing with the 'thoughts'** but about **understanding** that **the moment I am silent without thought** I am **already in sati**. That means you don't have to **practise** mindfulness or **try to be mindful** anymore because **the practice or the trying is by the 'thought'**. With thoughts so actively 'doing' things - how can you be aware? So just **silent your mind** then sati is automatically there because **sati is awareness before the thought or the knowing** – it is just a **pure awareness** leading to the direct seeing. Sati is the **silent, choice less awareness** of What IS.

39th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 21 April 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Part 1 - No Heart Sutra Notes

Part 2 – Meditation

2.1 Question 1: Brother Teoh, the sutta said Buddha became enlightened through self-realization. Then why is it also mentioned in the 1st sermon that the Buddha himself also had to go through the 3 Turnings of the Four Noble Truths to become enlightened?

Bro. Teoh: The Buddha had already cultivated for **3 and ¾ aeons** to fulfil his **10 perfections** cultivation prior to his full enlightenment in India **2600+ years ago**. So the Buddha was already a Bodhisattva then and he **had cultivated the 3 Turnings of the Four Noble Truths before**. What happened was, when he **became fully enlightened** under the Bodhi tree, he **inherited all his past perfections and cultivation**. Hence he knew the **3 turnings** of the Four Noble Truths are very important.

In the first sermon, the Buddha's opening statement is to advise the 5 ascetics to avoid the 2 extremes of:-

- i. Sensual Indulgence; and
- ii. Self-Mortification via following the middle path (which is the Noble 8-Fold Path) as proclaimed by him. The deeper meaning of the middle path is to **transcend all dualities**.

In the early days when I was cultivating the Buddha dhamma, I didn't really know about this 3 turnings of the Four Noble Truths but I was indeed very lucky because I met a Thailand monk **Phra Ajahn Yantra** Amaro Bhikkhu in 1988 and it was he **who constantly** (not less than 6 times) advised me **to contemplate all the dhammas spoken by the Buddha until they became very, very clear**. I didn't know that this was the **2nd turning of the Four Noble Truths until much later**.

He also emphasized a lot on the **importance** of cultivating the **daily mindfulness**. Because of my very **strong saddhā or faith** in Ajahn Yantra and the Triple Gems, I cultivated this dhamma contemplation (or **2nd turning wisdom**) and the **daily mindfulness** a lot and my understanding of the Buddha dhamma started **to stabilise** and **my progress** along the path of dhamma became **very smooth and fast**.

It was only in the year 2004 when I was invited by a sister in the dhamma to share the dhamma that arises the condition for me to really look at the first sermon sutta. I remember it was at section 17, Selangor Vipassana Society, - when she asked me what topic I wanted to start off with. I then saw a framed photo of the Buddha giving the first sermon to the 5 ascetics on the wall. So I said to her, "since the Buddha started with that I would also start with that first sermon sutta". I then asked her for a copy of the sutta which she so kindly gave to me. It was a Thai chanting book and the moment I read the **3 turnings** of the Four Noble Truths, straightaway I could link my cultivation to it and there was so much joy. I **suddenly understood** its meaning and **how the 3 turnings correspond to the 3 types of wisdom** that the Buddha talked about in the sutta. I had developed my own cultivation

following these **3 turnings without knowing that they were the 3 turnings of the 4 Noble Truths.**

- 2.2 Question 2:** According to Bro. Teoh, our mind can only do one thing at a time. But in my meditation, how come I could be **aware of my in and out breath and simultaneously I could be aware of a lot of other things – like my other thoughts, perceptions and bodily sensation etc. Why is it so?**

Bro. Teoh: This is a very good question. You see, when your Ānāpānasati had stabilised, your **awareness** will enable you to do that because mindfulness of your in and out breath will help you **anchor your awareness** there. With **that awareness (silent mind with inner awareness** of the breath) you can **definitely be aware of your thoughts, perceptions and bodily sensations or tactile consciousness** because every time when you are aware, you are not thinking. So this awareness of all your other **mental activities** like **perceptions, tactile and thought consciousness** are actually all separate entities but because your **mind can move so fast**, it is as if you can **multi-task** them – as if they are all happening simultaneously. When you are aware of the breath, there is **no thought** (i.e. mind and breath as one) **but the moment** you start to arise a **perception of what you have perceived**, your mental aggregate of ‘saññā’ has arisen so it is a **separate** entity. Then what do you do? Chances are you will deludedly **react or grasp** on to it via your **views and opinion. Unless you have wisdom (or yoniso manasikāra) at the moment of sense experience your feeling will be conditioned into craving** of likes and dislikes almost immediately.

With **wisdom, mindfulness and heedfulness you can be aware of thought and its content.** You can be **aware at the moment** of perception, feeling and consciousness etc. but the **moment you are lost in thought or preoccupied with what you perceived then your mind is no longer aware** and you have **become heedless.** The mind that is aware is always silent. Hence the **moment you are aware again**, you don’t perceive or think anymore. The mind with **silent inner awareness** is actually the **oneness nature** that can take in the **entire phenomena world** outside.

- 2.3 Question 3:** During my meditation, I was **more aware** and I was able to sense the cooking smell from behind the kitchen as if, it is just right in front of my nose. Why?

Bro. Teoh: When your mind is **truly silent** and you are **aware** then this is possible because the smell is just the smell consciousness. The smell can travel to your nose because you are more sensitive **when the mind is silent and not preoccupied** with any **thinking or distracted by any worry or anxiety.** If it is a vibration like a very distant sound, you can also be aware of it and the vibration hearing consciousness is **very clear and sort of magnified.** The **silent mind in awareness pervades the entire oneness.**

Meditation is not about inquiry ‘How come the mind is like that?’ Meditation is about developing the wisdom to understand clearly the universal laws that govern life and existence and to understand **how you function as a human being and what this so called human being is all about.** It is also to understand how the mind works and functions thereby understanding clearly the 12 Links (or Law of Dependent Origination) as taught by the Buddha. The **dhamma or truth is everywhere** but **why can’t you ‘see’?** If only your mind is silent, you will be aware then you can ‘see’. It is as if, all of a sudden, you can awaken to it. Hearing the truth, contemplating and reflecting upon it can bring about a lot of joy. Wisdom

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is not a rigid knowledge, it must be awakened to. Thought is created via a **focusing** of the **perceived** with **its content** of consciousness that was introduced into it. Initially it is just **spacious pure awareness** and **silence**. Learn to see how thought arise. When the mundane mind collapses, the **pure awareness nature** or **supramundane mind** will **shine forth** and it will be a lot clearer.

40th Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 12 May 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 - Recapitulation And Emphasis On The Previous Lesson

1.1 When random thoughts arise, **do not react, suppress or try to control** them, **just let things be and flow with them**. Then **investigate and find out** what happens when you do that. You will come to understand that **they are just thoughts** which **come and go** according to **your mental conditioning**. You will also come to understand that when your **5 mental hindrances** are around, **you are not peaceful** and when the **5 spiritual faculties** are there, they will counter the 5 mental hindrances and you are then **naturally peaceful**. No matter what happens, **do not try to control or suppress** thoughts. **Only through understanding, you free your mind** - not through the doing via the thought which is egoic. You must investigate why you are like that and why you are not peaceful?

The **essential dhamma** as taught by the Buddha will enable us to see **the dangers of the 3 evil roots** of greed, hatred and delusion, the **importance of Heedfulness** and the importance of following the advice of the Buddha **to avoid all evils** (via **keeping the precepts**), **do good and purify the mind** (via cultivating the **Noble 8-Fold Path**) until one is awakened. Similarly one will also see the importance of cultivating **Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā**, based on the Right view with regards to the **3 important spiritual laws** (Kamma Niyāma, Citta Niyāma and Dhamma Niyāma) that **govern all of our life and existence** so as to understand and see the full picture of the dhamma cultivation clearly.

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 40 (The Twelve Conditioned Causes pg 84 to 88)

2.1 The 10 Dhamma Realms (十法界) (a Buddhist cosmology)

The Buddhist cosmology consists of **10 dhamma realms** - First four realms are the realms of the saints or enlightened ones and they are:-

- i. **The realm of the Buddhas “Zhu Fo Fa Jie” (诸佛法界);**
- ii. **The realm of the Bodhisattvas “Pu Sa Fa Jie” (菩萨法界);**
- iii. **The realm of the Conditioned Enlightened Ones “Yuan Jue Fa Jie” (缘觉法界);**
- iv. **The realm of the Sound Hearers “Sheng Wen Fa Jie” (声闻法界);**

The other 6 realms are the realms of the **living beings subjected to birth and death** and they are equivalent to the **31 Planes of Existence within the Theravāda tradition**. They are:-

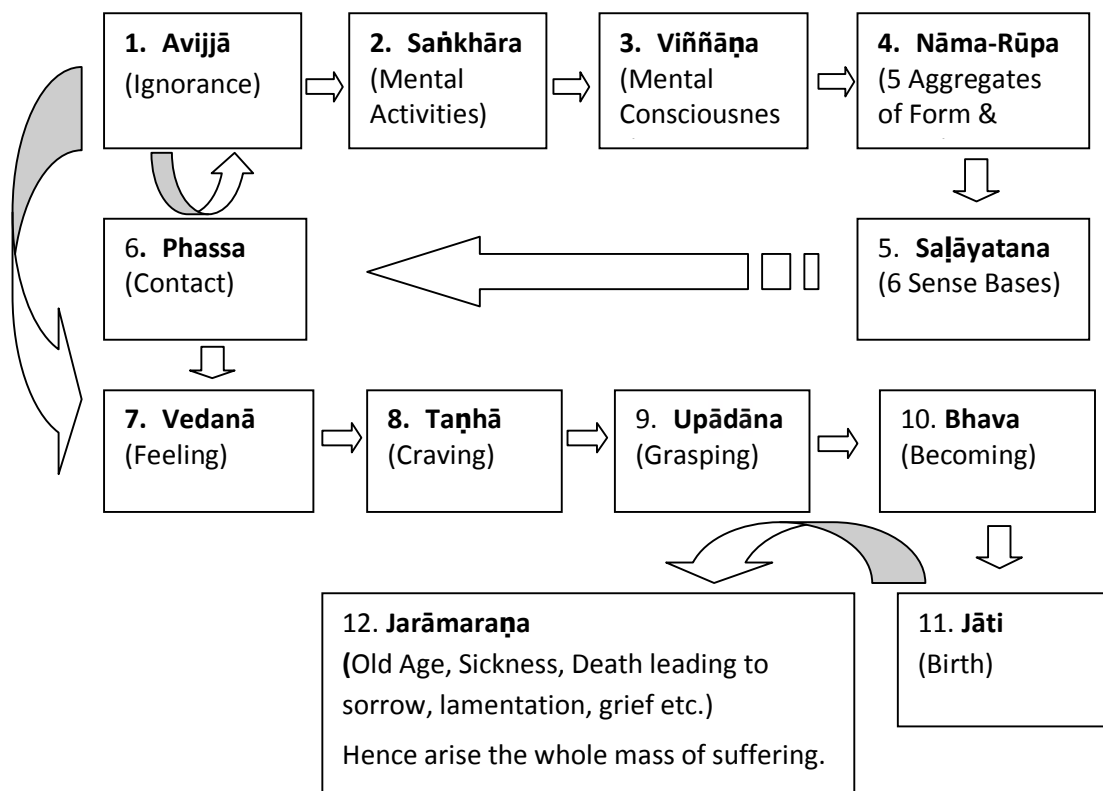
- i. **The realm of the heavenly beings “Tian Ren Fa Jie” (天人法界);**
- ii. **The realm of the human beings (Ren Dao Jie) (人道法界);**

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- iii. The realm of the demons “A Xiu Luo Fa Jie” (阿修罗法界);
- iv. The realm of the animals “Chu Sheng Fa Jie” (畜牲法界);
- v. The realm of the hungry ghosts “E Gui Fa Jie” (饿鬼法界);
- vi. The realm of hells “Di Yu Fa Jie” (地狱法界).

Some of the great Bodhisattvas like Kuan Yin (观音菩萨), Wen Shu (文殊菩萨), Pu Xian (普贤菩萨) and Earth Store (Di Zang Wang) Bodhisattvas (地藏王菩萨) have already fulfilled their 10 perfections to become Sammā Saṃbuddha but due to their **great compassion** and **love for the living beings** they have used their great vows to continue to come and save living beings. Just like Earth Store Bodhisattva - one of his vows is that if hell is not empty of living beings, he will not become a Sammā Saṃbuddha.

Law of Dependent Origination or Paṭicca-Samuppāda Flow Chart



The 1st link is Ignorance. Ignorant of what? - the **Truth or Realities** of life and existence (i.e. the lack of right views with regards to **the Law of Karma, Four Noble Truths** and **the Laws Of Cause And Effect or Dependent Origination.**) One **major aspect of ignorance is sakkāya-diṭṭhi or self-delusion.** This is the **sole culprit** that **conditions our grasping and holding onto all the creations of the mind as real and trying to own and possess them.** Upon **understanding clearly via meditation** that there is no “I” and “me” or Attā within **this 5 aggregates of form and mind** of ours, then there is **no more wrong view or self-delusion** to grasp and to cling onto the **phenomenon world of consciousness** created by mind. With this wisdom, the form and mind **can be free of all suffering.**

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Because of this ignorance or wrong view, living beings **think a lot** and thinking arises because they **don't understand what is going on in life**. So **wanting to know** and **wanting to understand life**, the living beings **create more thinking or saṅkhāra** hence becoming more **heedless**. As mind is also an 'organ' of thoughts so this thinking creates contact to trigger off **mental consciousness** or **viññāṇa**. Then within this viññāṇa, there is the **mental form** that enters the mind via perception or saññā hence arise the 5 **mental aggregates of form and mind or nāma-rūpa**. Please read the blue book (dhamma discussion **transcript** on the Law of Dependent Origination dated May 2008 – based on a direct transcript from a recorded talk as given by me on 8th Sept. 2005) for a more detailed explanation of all the other links.

Part 3– Meditation

3.1 Question 1: Brother Teoh, why is it while in Meditation, I can be at peace with most things like itchiness, etc. but only not with pain?

Bro. Teoh: If you can **endure** itchiness, you should be able to **endure pain** also because they are quite similar. It is the result of **understanding via meditation**. Not being at peace with pain could be due to your inability **to relax** into it via **acceptance**. That is your mind have negative craving to push away that so called **painful sensation** that you have labelled to be so, hence giving it the strength to become **a hindrance** of your mind (ill will). Your mind **wants things your way** hence conditioning suffering in the mind when you cannot get what you want. You have **to silent** your mind and **investigate** then you will understand what is going on. Meditation is to be **done with understanding** and not just to endure that pain without understanding. Inquire - why am I not peaceful and not silent? Understand the importance of the **5 spiritual faculties** that are needed **to counter** the **5 hindrances of mind** and the danger of allowing the hindrances of mind to be around. Then the answer will come to you through an understanding, and then you will know what to do. Try to just **relax** into the sensation and not labelling it as such to see what happens. Develop wisdom to free. **Always remember only WISDOM FREES!!!**

41st Heart Sutra Class + Meditation Class by Brother Teoh Kian Koon at Wu Pin Chen Seah on 19 May 2013. Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Short notes taken to assist in developing a clearer and better understanding of the sutta discussed:-

Part 1 – Nil

Part 2 - Heart Sutra Lesson 41 (Emptying The Four Truths pg 91 to 98)

2.1 Definition:

Way – path

Extinction – cessation

The 7 mental **Factors of Enlightenment (Satta Bojjhaṅga)** are:-

- i. Sati – mindfulness or awareness;
- ii. Dhammavicaya – dhamma investigation;
- iii. Viriya – spiritual zeal or tenacity to cultivate the Buddha dhamma;
- iv. Pīti – spiritual joy/calmness or raptures;
- v. Passaddhi – tranquility (still mind or silent mind without thought); Mind already trained – initially it can still stir because the latent tendencies or anusaya are not rooted out as yet.
- vi. Samādhi – a collected and unwavering mind (that can see things as they are);
- vii. Upekkhā – equanimity of mind (borne of wisdom – no more grasping or clinging and stirring of mind & feeling at the moment of sense door contact will remain as pure feeling because there is wise attention or yoniso manasikāra. Similarly for perception, saṅkhāra, consciousness etc.)

For the Arahants, their 5 aggregates of form and mind **are pure** aggregates and **non-grasping** because of their wisdom. Their minds cannot get into trouble anymore because the Arahants are no longer deluded. Understand the non-self or anattā nature of our form and mind then there will be no more delusion to condition us into dukkha.

When your grasping arises, you cease to have the enlightenment thought.

The Arahants – still have **outflow of thoughts** but **no more ignorance**. The wisdom is enough to liberate them from birth and death of their segmented life – the 5 aggregates of form and mind.

2.2 The Four Noble Truths (Cattāri Ariya-Sacca):-

- i. Dukkha – Suffering
- ii. Samudaya – cause of arising of dukkha
- iii. Nirodha – Extinction or cessation of all dukkha (Nibbāna)
- iv. Magga – the Way or path (Noble 8-fold Path) leading to the cessation of all dukkha.

Part 3 – Meditation

3.1 Question 1: Brother Teoh, since the Cameron Highland's retreat, I am able to feel the **different mind states** in meditation, **especially pain and other subtle emotions**. Now I understand that pain is just another **negative expression** of the **feeling** that I dislike so I **just relax** and **let it be** without any **aversion** towards it. The mind is now more at peace and because of that, it **effortlessly drops** to the heart, and when this happens, there are **no more obstacles** and I feel hollow and free (neither feeling the energy nor anything for that matter.) I am then able to sit much longer without any feeling of numbness or pain anymore in the legs.

Bro. Teoh: This is very **good understanding** leading to a **very good meditative experience** that **can stabilise one's insight**. Most cultivators make the mistake of **reacting** to the tactile sensation that arises and label it **as pain** because of their **mind's aversion** towards that sensation. They do it without knowing that the moment they **label** it as pain then a **mental hindrance (ill will)** has arisen. This mental hindrance of ill will will hinder the mind from becoming peaceful. The lack of peace will condition the 'meditator' to try to note or focus and concentrate the mind **to push away the pain** so as to become more peaceful. This is **introducing thought** into the meditation hence **no more heedfulness** because the doing (of meditation) is **by the thought** which is **actively trying to meditate** to become peaceful. This is not knowing that you are already peaceful **the moment** you are **silent and aware** (without thought) **to just understand the truth** and the **reality of what is happening within the moment**. You will start to understand how the form and mind can be conditioned into **reacting** to sense experiences via its own **sakkāya-diṭṭhi or self-delusion** to grasp onto the **5 aggregates of form and mind** as the 'I' and the 'ME'. This is real insight borne **of sati** that can **'see things as they are'** and understand what is going on there and then **without** any thought/thinking.

Under vedanānupassanā, the Buddha said when there is feeling (whether pleasant, unpleasant or neutral), **you must be aware**. This awareness will enable you to understand how your mind via its own **wrong views and opinions** (or self-delusion) **reacts to the sensation** and label it as pleasant and unpleasant sensation (or like and dislike leading to the first 2 hindrances of mind). These hindrances of mind which are sensual desire and ill will are also part of the evil roots of greed and hatred. The moment the mind is aware of such delusion, the mind can just relax into the moment without any reaction. Meditation is not just about good, comfortable, peaceful and beautiful meditation. It is about the **development of wisdom** to enable the mind **to deal** with all life situations without having to experience anymore mental suffering.

3.2 Understanding the 5 ways to overcome the 5 mental hindrances and unwholesome thoughts that have arisen is also very important. The first 2 ways are:-

- i. Think of the **direct opposite** wholesome thoughts;
- ii. Contemplate the **consequence** or **danger** of holding or clinging on to these unwholesome or wrong thoughts;

These 2 ways are still **thought-based meditation** but they are **important skilful means** that can help the cultivator **to overcome the unwholesome thoughts** via the first 2 **right efforts** whereas the 3rd and 4th ways are **meditative training** as taught by the Buddha to help the

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cultivator develop the **wisdom needed** to free the mind from such unwholesome thoughts. This is especially so for the 3rd way:-

- iii. the Buddha said, just **silent your mind and don't do anything**. Then the mind will **settle down on its own** to return to its **natural state of silent and stillness before the stirring conditioned by one's self-delusion**. This understanding can lead to profound wisdom.

Just like J Krishnamurti's famous quote – "The very flowering of the unwholesome thought (like anger etc.) is the very ending of that thought."

- iv. Then the Buddha via its 4th way trained the cultivator to develop **true understanding** or **wisdom** via **tracing its origination factors** and **retrospectively reverse it via understanding** to liberate the mind.

The **origination of these unwholesome** thoughts is always via one of the sense doors consciousness especially **the seeing, hearing and thought consciousness** sense doors. When we understand the cause behind the **stirring of the mind** then **we should contemplate** the 3 turnings of the 4 Noble Truths (especially the 2nd turnings) until the **wisdom is very stable and clear** so that the next time when we **confront** similar seeing or hearing or thought consciousness situations, we **will not be deluded** by them anymore and can have the wisdom to deal with the situation.

The ability **to silent the mind** and **to accept the reality** of the moment **without** any **reaction** or **judgement** is **WISDOM**. Then to be able to use this **clarity of awareness** or **heedfulness** to **investigate** the truth and characteristics of all phenomena in our daily life is **TRUE MEDITATION**. The ability **to accept** the reality of all sensations/feelings is also **wisdom**. The mind can only understand what is going on **via just a silent inner awareness to observe the truth** and the **reality** of the **moment without** any **suppression** or **control** of any emotion – i.e. just allowing it to flower to develop the wisdom that comes with it.

Use the mind sweeping method (combined with mettā) **to decondition** your **heedless** thinking so that your mind can be trained to be in a state of **relaxed silent inner** awareness to be heedful to meditate. This heedfulness will be able to investigate clearly how the **tactile consciousness** really comes to be. You just silent your mind to be aware to investigate the truth and the reality of the moment and you will understand how they arise and pass away with every moment of arising of the tactile consciousness. You can then be aware of the **pulling sensation** to understand clearly how the **form and mind** function. There is always a **knowing element** that can be **aware of the pulling sensation phenomena** that has arisen. The awareness or mind moment is always **moment to moment** – hence no reality at all because they are **all conditioned arising mental phenomena/consciousness** only but due to your self-delusion you will grasp and cling onto them hence conditioning your suffering via your wrong view. This understanding is very important to enable one to break free from the concept of self or self-delusion.

- 3.3 Question 2:** Brother Teoh, when I meditate I don't feel any pain but I am aware of thoughts. When aware, I tell myself to be silent and go back to ānāpānasati. Is that correct?

Bro. Teoh: Meditation is not about right and wrong but it is more towards realising wisdom that can free our mind from all suffering. When you are **just silent and aware**, you are heedful and in that heedful state you can develop a lot of understanding via **observing your own form and mind** without any judgement or comment. You only need to continue doing

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ānāpānasati when you need to train your mind to be aware so that it is not heedless. Once **your heedfulness** has already stabilised, technically you don't need to hold onto the ānāpānasati training anymore. Similarly for the mind sweeping and mettā exercises too, for they are just **skilful means** to train the mind. The key is relaxation of both the body and mind followed by the silent mind leading to a tranquil state of mind that has clarity and awareness within to see things as they are thereby realising the wisdom. So meditation has **4 important supports** and they are: - **relax, aware, 24 hours continuity and trust.**

The key to meditation is **awareness or sati** which is also the 1st factor of enlightenment. With awareness, you can develop the understanding of why your mind is like that, how it is conditioned to **react to sense experiences** via your **wrong and deluded views and opinions** of things. That is **dhamma investigation. Inquire deep** into who is doing the meditation? What is the 'I' and the 'Me' all about? Why did the Buddha say it is sakkāya-diṭṭhi or self-delusion? Why are the thought so active, judgemental and intrusive and why can't, they just let things be. The moment you are aware, the dhamma will come to you. Understand it and awaken to it. **Relax and be with the moment in silent awareness** to experience all of the beauty of life and existence. Once you realise, you will know how **to accord and flow**, then you will not be afflicted anymore hence life becomes very meaningful and very beautiful.

All these can be understood if you are not deluded. See how your attachment and craving arise during your meditation when you lack wisdom. Most cultivators attach to the good and calm meditation. They hold onto all the things that their mind has created via their consciousness and its content not knowing these things are all impermanent and empty thus causing suffering the moment they grasped onto them.

Through this dhamma sharing, you can develop wisdom much faster. Otherwise, it will take you a long time to understand the **full picture** of the cultivation yourself. These short notes are **very useful** and all of you must read through them **again and again** to stabilise your understanding. Similarly for the **recorded talks** – you must listen to them again and again to develop the clear understanding of the dhamma shared. This is how you can progress along the path of dhamma.

Appendix 1 - The Heart Of Prajna Pāramitā Sutra

The Heart of Prajna Pāramitā Sutra

When Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva was cultivating the profound Prajna Pāramitā, he illuminated the five skandhas and saw that they are all empty and he crossed beyond all suffering and difficulty.

Sāriputta, form does not differ from emptiness; emptiness does not differ from form. Form itself is emptiness; emptiness itself is form. So too are feeling, cognition, formation, and consciousness.

Sāriputta, all dharmas are empty of characteristics. They are not produced, not destroyed, not defiled, not pure, and they neither increase nor decrease.

Therefore, in emptiness there is no form, feeling, cognition, formation, or consciousness; no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind; no sights, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch, or dharmas; no field of the eyes, up to and including no field of mind-consciousness; and no ignorance or ending of ignorance, up to and including no old age and death or ending of old age and death.

There is no suffering, no accumulation, no cessation, no Path. And no understanding and no attaining because nothing is attained, the Bodhisattva, through reliance on Prajna paramita, is unimpeded in his mind because there is no impediment, he is not afraid, and he leaves distorted dream-thinking far behind. Ultimately he attains Nirvana!

All Buddhas of the three periods of time attain Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi through reliance on Prajna Paramita. Therefore, know that Prajna Paramita is a great spiritual mantra, a great bright mantra, a supreme mantra, an unequalled mantra. It can remove all suffering; it is genuine and not false. That is why the mantra of Prajna Pāramitā was spoken.

Recite it like this:

Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate, bodhi svaha!

Appendix 2 – 般若波罗蜜多心经

般若波罗蜜多心经
bō rě bō luó mì duō xīn jīng

观自在菩萨，行深般若波罗蜜多时，
Guān zì zài pú sà, xíng shēn bō rě bō luó mì duō shí,

照见五蕴皆空，度一切苦厄。
zhào jiàn wǔ yùn jiē kōng, dù yī qiē kǔ è。

舍利子，色不异空，空不异色，色即是空，空即是色。
shè lì zǐ, sè bù yì kōng, kōng bù yì sè, sè jí shì kōng, kōng jí shì sè。

受想行识，亦复如是。舍利子，是诸法空相，
shòu xiǎng xíng shí, yì fù rú shì shè lì zǐ, shì zhū fǎ kōng xiāng,

不生不灭，不垢不净，不增不减，是故空中无色，无受想行识，
bù shēng bù miè, bù gòu bù jìng, bù zēng bù jiǎn, shì gù kōng zhōng wú sè, wú shòu xiǎng xíng shí,

无眼耳鼻舌身意，无色声香味触法，无眼界，
wú yǎn ěr bí shé shēn yì, wú sè shēng xiāng wèi chù fǎ, wú yǎn jiè,

乃至无意识界，无无明，亦无无明尽，乃至无老死，亦无老死尽。
nǎi zhì wú yì shí jiè, wú wú míng, yì wú wú míng jìn, nǎi zhì wú lǎo sǐ, yì wú lǎo sǐ jìn。

无苦集灭道，无智亦无得，以无所得故。
wú kǔ jí miè dào, wú zhì yì wú dé, yǐ wú suǒ dé gù。

菩提萨埵，依般若波罗蜜多故，心无挂碍。
pú tí sà duǒ, yī bō rě bō luó mì duō gù xīn wú guà ài。

无挂碍故，无有恐怖，远离颠倒梦想，究竟涅槃。
wú guà ài gù, wú yǒu kǒng bù, yuǎn lí diān dǎo mèng xiǎng, jiū jìng niè pán。

三世诸佛，依般若波罗蜜多故，得阿耨多罗三藐三菩提。
sān shì zhū fó, yī bō rě bō luó mì duō gù, dé ā nuò duō luó sān miǎo sān pú tí。

故知般若波罗蜜多，是大神咒，是大明咒，
gù zhī bō rě bō luó mì duō, shì dà shén zhòu, shì dà míng zhòu,

是无上咒，是无等等咒。能除一切苦，真实不虚。
shì wú shàng zhòu, shì wú děng děng zhòu。 néng chú yī qiē kǔ, zhēn shí bù xū。

故说般若波罗蜜多咒。
gù shuō bō rě bō luó mì duō zhòu。

即说咒曰：
jí shuō zhòu yuē:

揭谛揭谛，波罗揭谛，波罗僧揭谛，菩提萨婆诃。(3X)
jiē dì jiē dì, bō luó jiē dì, bō luó sēng jiē dì, pú tí sà pó hē。

Appendix 3 – Lesson 5 of the Satipatthana Sutta & Meditation Class

Date: 06/04/2014 Time: 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Lesson 5 of the SATIPATTHANA SUTTA & MEDITATION CLASS @ WU PIN CHEN SEAH

- conducted by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon.

Notes Taken To Assist In The Understanding:-

1.0 PURE LAND CHANTING - IS IT MEDITATION?

1.1 Developing the Five Spiritual Faculties

Just like what Sis. Monica said, chanting is only one of the methods or techniques or **skilful means** used to **anchor** your mind but the Pure Land type of chanting is more than that. Because in the **Pure Land tradition**, they have **this great faith** in the **Buddha** and the **Bodhisattva** that they chant and due to the **great vows** of these Buddha and Bodhisattva it can arise the causes and conditions for them to develop the very **strong faith** to **connect** to their **vows**. Their vows are very **heavy** and **powerful** because of their **great virtues, wisdom** and **perfections** hence all these vows can become part of **nature's laws** and they will **manifest** and **respond** on their own. That is, you don't need to have the Buddhas or Kuan Yin Bodhisattva to be all over the places to listen to you and respond. Because of the Buddhas' and the Bodhisattvas' great vows, if you **chant** with **understanding** and you do it **sincerely** with very **strong faith**, it can help you to develop a very strong **affinity** with their natures and that **faith** and **affinity** will **connect** you to their vows. And their vows will **bring forth the causes** and **conditions** to assist you to **progress** along the path of dhamma and help you develop the 5 **spiritual faculties** needed for you to develop the meditation.

1.2 Leading to Heedful Living

That's why even though you see them like only chanting, chanting and chanting, but in actual fact they are **training** their **mind** to be **heedful** via **mindfulness** of the **Buddha's name**. Their faith in the Buddha's name will arise the strong **Saddha** (due to the **repeated chanting with understanding**) leading to the **viriya** (spiritual zeal) then together with the **sati** developed via **chanting, walking and bowing** (reverence salutation) it will bring forth the **sati and Samadhi** needed to develop the **clear mind** – which is the **meditative or silent mind** without **thoughts** to 'see things as they are' to arise the **wisdom** which is the last of the 5 **spiritual faculties**. So when **Sati** and **Samadhi** are established then during **every moment** of their **daily living** – when they see, hear, smell, taste and feel something, they will be very different because they will be **no** longer **heedless** like before. Instead they will be **heedful most** of the **time** and their mind are **very peaceful, calm** and **just aware without thought** (hence clarity of mind) most of the time and this is possible because they hold their **mantra** with **faith** and they do it **very sincerely** and **diligently**.

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1.3 Overcoming the Five Mental Hindrances leading to Direct Seeing

To develop the meditation **we only need to develop** these 5 **spiritual faculties** which will help us overcome the **5 mental hindrances** that hinder one from becoming **peaceful** and **mindful**. These 5 mental hindrances, you don't have to fight them, control or suppressed them or worry about them. Once these 5 **spiritual faculties** of Saddha, Viriya, Sati, Samadhi and Panna are there, the **hindrances** will cease to be, and then the mind **with sati** and **Samadhi** will have the **clarity** to see things as they are, to arise the wisdom (panna).

Then their mind is no longer **heedless** and they will no longer see things with the **conditioned mind** – i.e. no more 'seeing' with their **views** and **opinions** and the **egoic mind** and their thoughts will **no longer interfere** with the **direct seeing** which will lead to the **awakening, understanding** and the **enlightenment**. They will see the **dependent origination** within their own form and mind. They will start to understand the **4 Noble Truths** on their **own**. Then they will start **to see clearly** what the Buddha meant by the **5 mental hindrances** and the **5 spiritual faculties**. They will also see clearly the **3 evil roots** of **greed, hatred** and **delusion** within their own **mundane mind** and why the Buddha called them **evil roots**. They will also come to understand how the **7 factors of enlightenment** come to be and **how their sense bases actually function**. I.e. how **upon contact consciousness** and **feeling** comes to be and because **they have** sati and Samadhi they will also have the **ability to see clearly** how through **delusion** one is **conditioned** into **negativity, grasping, clinging** and **attachment** then how suffering comes to be. Then when they are **just silent** and **aware** they will come to understand how **the arising** of the **non-arisen hindrance** of mind comes to be. Then later on when they continue to be **just silent and aware** they will come to know how the **disappearance or abandoning of the arisen hindrance comes to be**. Then how through **non-delusion** they will know how the **non-arising in the future** of the **abandoned hindrance** comes to be and how all these are possible. This is how they will cultivate the Satipathana or four foundation of mindfulness.

1.4 Leading to Enlightenment

Sati will allow them to also understand how their **mind stirred** via their **delusion to react** to sense experiences **to arise** the **craving** or their **evil roots** to condition their own suffering. This is how **Pure Land chanting** can also lead to the **enlightenment** in the here and the now. (Note: **Sati** is **awareness** or **mindfulness before the knowing** and **Samadhi** is the **Collected and unwavering silent mind**).

1.5 Cultivation of the Five Spiritual Faculties facilitates Meditation

Saddha or faith will make your mind **confident, composed** and **very calm** hence no more **restlessness** and **doubt**. And when there is **viriya**, you will not be **sleepy anymore** because this viriya or **spiritual zeal** will drive you to **diligently** cultivate. Then when you have **SATI**, you are not **heedless anymore**, you are **mindful** and **always aware** and your mind is always with the **moment** in **sati** and when you stabilize it - **Samadhi** will arise. With Samadhi established, the mind will be

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collected and **unwavering** hence it **can see things as they are to understand** the truth and the **reality** leading to the **wisdom**. Once these 5 Spiritual Faculties are cultivated, you will **automatically** know **how to meditate**.

1.6 Mind and Chanting as One

That's why when they chant and chant until that '**Fo Hao**' or the '**Buddha's name**' and the **awareness become one**. I.e. Mind and the chanting as **one** - like there is **no one to chant**; just an **awareness** of the chanting, of the vibration then their Sati will stabilise. At that time, they will be **very different** because the **5 spiritual faculties** that are so stable will **transform** them. Then, throughout the day, even when they are **not chanting** the Buddha's name, they will also have **that type of mind**. It will like chant by itself. You don't chant also, it will be there.

1.7 Awareness of the Chanting

There was this **very soothing** and **continuous chanting** of 'Amitofo, Amitofo, Amitofo' in its background. So as I listen to that chanting which was repeated many times on the background I was also able to follow and chant it **so naturally** and **so mindfully**. I can chant it until it becomes like **very clear** to me. Then, one day while I was driving, all of a sudden this chanting just arise from **inside my brain** and there was **such clarity** that I stopped my car somewhere and **silenced** my **mind** to listen to it. It was like the mind and the chanting was in **complete harmony** and **synchrony - as one**. I remembered initially I was chanting then all of a sudden it was like **no one is chanting** then **everything stopped** then somewhere **underneath** my brain from behind the chanting **automatically** come out and the **mindfulness on it was so stable** and **so clear** and it just stayed there **fully aware** of everything. That's how I came to know this type of Pure Land chanting can also develop the **5 spiritual faculties** of saddha, viriya, sati and Samadhi leading to the wisdom and how the mind can become **one with it**. And there was a realization that there was no one to chant and **the nature within is just aware! Fully Aware!** The chanting just repeats itself and there was just an **awareness** of it. So the real chanting is very different because there is **no one** to chant. It is just the **mind** that is **aware** of **phenomenon** – whether it is **physical, mental or nature's** phenomena. In this case it is a mental phenomenon.

1.8 Cultivation of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness

All these are possible when you had properly developed all these **spiritual faculties** until they are **very stable**. Then **even in the midst** of your **daily life**, your mind will be **very different** because of the **stability** of your **Sati** and **Samadhi**. You will be able to see your **mental intentions**, your **aggregates** of mind (like your feelings, perceptions, activities of mind, emotions, mind states, etc.) including the **consciousness**. Then you will also see your **mental** and **physical flows** and after that you will be able to use it to **cultivate** the **4 foundations** of mindfulness and **your wisdom** will keep on **arising**. The 4 foundations of mindfulness cultivation will bring forth the **enlightenment** because the cultivation of the 4 foundations of mindfulness **will cumulates** into the cultivation of the **4 Noble Truths**. Then the **4th Noble Truth** which is the **meditation** as taught by the **Buddha** is

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the **Noble 8-fold path** (because it leads to the end of all suffering which is the enlightenment in the here and the now). So finally **whatever meditation** you do if does not lead you **back** to the **4 foundation** of **mindfulness**, the **4 Noble truths** and the **Noble 8-fold path** then it is **not** the meditation as taught by the Buddha.

1.9 Cultivation of the Noble Eight Fold Path

Caution: If **you think chanting** alone is the meditation then you can be **deceived**. Chanting is just a **technique** or a **skilful means** to **initially** train your mind to develop the 5 spiritual faculties of **saddha, viriya, sati, samadhi** and **panna** needed **to overcome** the 5 mental hindrances. After that only the **real meditation** begins. That is **after** your 5 spiritual faculties **had been cultivated** and your **daily mindfulness stabilized** then **only the real meditation** which is the **cultivation of the Noble 8-fold path** via **daily mindfulness** can begin. And within the Noble 8-fold path we had the **samma sati** path factor which is the cultivation of the **4 foundations of mindfulness** (which is also the **focus** of our dhamma discussion).

2.0 Understanding the essence of the Buddha's teaching

Hope this is clear and that is also the reason why I had always advised you all that **meditation** is to be **done** with **understanding** otherwise you are **wasting** your time and you **cannot progress** because you are **not focus** and you are actually doing it **without** the proper understanding. So be **very clear** about the **whole teaching**. **Pariyati**, or the **learning of the doctrine or teaching**, is **1st phase** of the dhamma. Only after having a very clear understanding of the dhamma then only can one put the **dhamma into practice** in daily life **effectively** leading to the **2nd phase** of the dhamma cultivation which is **Patipati**. Be patient with **Pariyati** otherwise one becomes **gullible** which cultivating **Patipati**.

2.1 Heedfulness = Sati + Noble Eight Fold Path cultivation

One must **understand** that the **essence of Buddha teaching** is the **4 Noble Truths** and how from there all the other **teachings** come to be. How and why the **Buddha** highlighted the **importance of Heedfulness** via **Dhammapada verses 21, 22 & 23**. And why one must **understand** what **heedfulness is? Heedfulness is Sati + Meditation = Ever mindful to cultivate the Noble 8-fold path** (meditation as taught by the Buddha.)

2.2 Sati – First Factor of Enlightenment

That's the reason why the **1st factor** of enlightenment is **Sati** because **without Sati**, there is **no Meditation** and **without Sati**, there is **no Heedfulness** and according to Dhammapada verse 21 - **without Heedfulness**, you are **heedless** and the **Heedless are as if dead (spiritually)**. All these are very clear, so to connect and develop the meditation **one must** initially **train** one's mind to be **Heedful**.

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2.3 Stabilise the Mind (Sati) to Cultivate the Four Foundations of Mindfulness

This is also the reason why the 1st category of training of the 1st foundation of mindfulness (Kayanupassana) is **Anapanasati** which is just to **train the mind** to be **mindful** or **aware** of the **in and out breath** - to do just that. Then **stabilize it** and used it to cultivate **mindfulness** of the **4 postures** leading to the **daily mindfulness** to develop all the other **subsequent four foundations of mindfulness** training and cultivation.

3.0 PITFALLS of thought-based meditation

So, all these **when you understand**, you will know how to proceed. Otherwise, you just **deviate**, because **most** living beings are **gullible**. They thought meditation is some form of **fantasy** or like **very mystical**. Then, when they meditate and develop some form of **special experience** that other people don't experience, then they think this is very special. Then, they attach and cling, and they want to know, - 'is it a sign that I had achieved or realized'. That's how one **deviates** because they **don't understand** what their **focus is?** They don't inquire to find out - what is meditation? When you don't have a clear understanding of what you do, you will end up – keep deviating. Then you may also end up having fantasies about meditation. That's how many cultivator or meditator **got trapped** and the other danger is they **cannot** see **thought**, they cannot see the **danger of thought**. They cannot **understand** what Sati is and because **Sati is beyond** thought and if you continue to **allow thought** to come in and **distract** you then it will become **thought based** meditation instead of **mindfulness** based meditation. All of **thought-based** meditation will **not** bring you the meditative results that you are looking for because what you want to realize is the **dhamma**, which is **Akaliko**. Akaliko means **timeless** - this dhamma is **beyond thought, beyond time**, so if the instrument you use to meditate is thought, you cannot reach it, because you are **limited** by the **instrument** you use to develop the meditation. So, with this, I think it should be **very clear** by now, that you shouldn't make the **same mistake again**. And by now you all should start to understand why I keep on emphasizing in the past, that **meditation had** to be **done with understanding**. You don't just **blindly followed** instructions. Just like what the Buddha told the Kalamas "You should not belief what the spiritual teacher tell you, even the Buddha himself." You have to **investigate** and **find out**. Then, when you **understand** you will be **very clear**, your mind will be very different and you will know how to proceed with the cultivation. Otherwise, you become **gullible**. Then, again you deviate.

4.0 Sati – “Mindfulness” or “Awareness”?

Q. (Sis. Chwee): Bro. Teoh, I am afraid I had to ask this somewhat simple question. Sati in Pali means **mindfulness** or **awareness** because I see the words being used interchangeably and sometimes I just **get confused**, can you please explain again, thank you.

A. (Bro. Teoh): It is a very good question. You see **Sati** is a Pali word. It is translated as **MINDFULNESS** - a very **commonly accepted translation** but nobody really inquire into this word "mindfulness". If you split up the two words then you will get the meaning – 'Mind in fullness'

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right? But you never inquire or ask “What does this mean? - The mind is full of what?” If you say “**Full of thoughts**”, then that is definitely not Sati. So it is full of what?

Sis. Chwee: I actually defined it as “Mind in fullness of that moment”

Bro. Teoh: It still doesn't explain anything right? When you say, ‘Mind in fullness of that moment’ - what are you trying to tell me? Because within that moment, you can also think – i.e. mind full of thinking within that moment”.

Sis. Chwee: No! You can't think when you are in the moment. How can you think? ...you are supposed to be.....

Bro. Teoh: You can be in the moment and still think.

4.1 A Mind Full of Awareness

But when you are in the moment **without thought**, then it is a different thing. Mind is **full of awareness**, and then you are **without thought**. That's why I said you never inquire – “Full of What?” When mind is full of awareness, it **cannot** have thought. It can only be **aware**. But that word is not use. Only in recent years, later teachers used that word. Then they try incorporating them now. That's why ‘**Awareness**’ now becomes a new word. The actual word should be ‘**Pure Awareness**’ without thought then that is SATI.

4.2 Be With the Moment Without Thought

But they went on to **confuse it** with another Pali word, and then they said, it carries the meaning of **remembrance** and **recollection**. Then, they said SATI has a lot to do **with memory** and **recollection**. So, ‘What is SATI?’ I don't want to know the history because when I meditate, I **can be** with the **moment without thought**, hence I can understand. That's why I know what Sati is. **Sati is “Mind in Fullness”** – Full of **awareness** without thought. That's why I said, ‘Sati is **Awareness before the knowing** and you **just aware**’. Why can't you just be aware? Because you **think a lot**, you are **so heedless** and you are **seldom** aware **within** the moment because of your **habitual tendencies** of Heedlessness or habitual **heedless thinking**. You also have **a lot of fear, anxiety**, and the **hindrances** of mind like sensual desire, ill-will, **restlessness** and **doubt** keep on arising to **haunt** you, hence the reason why you **cannot** be **aware**.

5.0 Sati – Pure Awareness before the knowing

Awareness before the knowing means what? The **knowing** is **your thought's perception**, your **aggregates** of mind. Initially it is **just a pure awareness, before** even **feeling or perception** arises, before the **labeling**, the **words** and the **views** and **opinions** interfere. It is just like what the Buddha said: “In the **seeing**, there is **just only the seeing consciousness**”. Can you understand? And there is **no one to see**, just the **pure consciousness arising** - the **pure awareness** before you

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input the **content** of consciousness or just the **pure direct seeing, without the word, without the labeling, without** your **conscious mind focusing** and **perceiving through memory to recall**, etc.

5.1 General Spacious Awareness

It is just a **general spacious awareness**, - just **aware without** a 'centre'. The moment **thought comes out** - it means, you had already **focused** and **recall through memory** and **that's not Sati anymore**.

So, when you want to understand what Sati is, you need to have a **very calm and silent mind**. If your mind is **not silent**, the **true nature** cannot **shine forth**. The true mind cannot come out because your mind can only do one thing at a time. **Either** it is **Aware within** or it is **lost in thought - heedlessly lost in thought**. The human being because of their **Heedlessness** and their **delusion**, they are **constantly lost in thought** and **seldom** or **hardly aware**. That is the reason why the Buddha said, **'the heedless are as if dead (spiritually dead)'**.

5.2 Awareness and Clear Comprehension (Sati Sampajanna)

Q. (Sis. Chwee): Then, is it okay, for me to think of the 4 Foundations of Mindfulness as the 4 Foundations of Awareness - is it appropriate?

A. (Bro. Teoh): Yes! You can say that. It's not harmful but later part in the sutta, they add in the word **Sampajanna** which is **clear comprehension** and call it **Sati Sampajanna**. So you not **only mindful**, you must also have **clear comprehension** of what you are mindful of. That's why the 3rd category of cultivation under kayanupassana is - **awareness** and **clear comprehension** of what is going on or Sati Sampajanna. There is clarity. Then there is also the sentence 'aware internally and externally'. All these, you will slowly understand when you cultivate. Before you cultivate, when you had not realized the enlightenment as yet, it is very difficult for you to use your **mundane mind's rational thinking** to try to understand. When you **use thought** it is very difficult. That's why Ms. Lee printed out this J Krishnamurti's quote on 'What is Awareness' which I just send out for sharing today. Maybe it is **meant to be**.

5.3 'Awareness is the Silent and Choiceless Observation of What Is' - J Krishnamurti

The below J Krishnamurti's **daily quote** below was read by **Sis Eng Bee** at Bro Teoh's request:

*"Awareness is the **silent and choiceless observation of what is**; in this awareness the **problem unrolls itself**, and thus it is **fully and completely understood**. A problem is **never solved** on its own level; being complex, it must be **understood** in its **total process**. **To try to solve** a problem on only one level, physical or psychological, **leads to further conflict and confusion**. For the resolution of a problem, there must be this **awareness**, this **passive alertness** which reveals its total process." – J Krishnamurti*

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5.3.1 What is “Silent”?

Can you all understand this daily quote? What is “silent”? Not just don’t talk! “Silent” here means **no chattering** - completely **no mental chattering**. No mental chattering means **no thought**. That’s what awareness is. But sometimes when you are silent, it doesn’t mean you are aware because you can be doing a **disciplined** attention. You silent your mind like no thought but you have a thought inside there that disciplined you via saying, “I must be mindful”, then **you are no longer** mindful or aware. That’s why - don’t **try to be mindful** because the trying is **by the thought** but instead **just maintain silence**.

5.3.2 What is “Awareness”?

The moment you are silent, you are **already aware** so why do you **want** to be aware or **try** to be aware?

During one of the recorded ‘Satipathanna sutta workshop’ I heard this funny question that they asked: “Who is aware?” and “Aware of what?” If you inquire this way then you will **get caught** because you **thought** awareness is a **‘knowing’**. That’s why you ask ‘who is aware?’ and ‘Aware of what?’ **Very logical**, isn’t it? But because most people’s **Sakkayaditthi** or **self delusion** is so strong so **how can they be aware?** The **thought always wants** to be **aware** via **verbalizing**. That’s why it is a **focused** attention. Focused Attention means the thought wants to be aware, the thought is **still active** behind the **awareness** so how can it be aware? Understand or not? The thought is **trying** to be silent, to be aware of what it wants to be aware, so the moment you **want** to be aware of that thing, you are **no longer aware**.

5.3.3 Choiceless – Not Making Any Choices or Decisions

Awareness is just **silent**, and then **Choiceless** means what? You don’t try to make a choice; there is **no decision** of what you are aware of. Like the Buddha saying, ‘In the seeing, there is **only the seeing consciousness**’ and there is **no one to see as yet**. It is just the **consciousness**, just like the **physics experiment**, - upon contact, the **light bulb lights up**, which means the **consciousness** just **arise naturally**. Can’t you just be **aware** of the consciousness, the **pure consciousness** before you **input the content** of consciousness? The trouble with you is **you are so fast** and **via memory**, you already label it as flower, book, etc because of your **conditioned thinking**. That’s why you **cannot** see. In order to see, you must have this ability to be **silent** and you must have **SATI and SAMADHI**. Otherwise, these aggregates of mind, they will arise very fast – the **mind stir** and they come up very fast and you cannot do anything about it.

So, that’s why when you read J. Krishnamurti’s quote, ‘Sati is Awareness’ and what is Awareness? J. Krishnamurti said **“Awareness is the silent and choice less observation of ‘What IS’.”** ‘What IS’ is the **reality before the labeling**, that actual thing. So don’t try to go and develop a **duality** to react to **what you see or observed**. That’s why, it is just a **“Choiceless observation of the reality”** - of “What is” and ‘What is’ means the ISness of thing or the reality. ISness is Suchness. That’s why the

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Buddha is called the **Tathagata**, who is an expert in **Tathata** and **Tathata is “suchness”**. So, “the choiceless observation of what is” - is observing the ISness of things or is just the **silent “AWARENESS” of the reality within the moment.**

5.3.4 Listening Attentively Without Thought

Sis. Monica: “In one of my meditation on Thursday, (correct me if I am wrong – whether that is SATI or not?), I could hear the talk that you were giving and I know that there were brothers and sisters around me but there was **this joy** in me (I wasn’t thinking and I know that it was after the whole thing that I started **to recollect** back). I was so joyful, I know that there was Bro. Teoh talking and there were people around but, just that and then nothing else.”

Bro. Teoh: Okay Sadhu! Because when you listen **attentively**, there is **no interference** from **your thought**, from **your opinions**, **your views**, **your conditionings**, etc - you **don’t** comment inside there. You **just listen** attentively - **without** any reaction. That’s what **choiceless awareness** is all about. But the moment you **perceived** or the **mind cognized**, that’s already the mind **coming out of SATI**. But in her case, she is **very good** because she did not allow it to **continue to think**, which means, there is **awareness**; then, there is a **perception** of Bro. Teoh talking, all the vibrations, etc - just goes in. Then, if **she wants** to understand, **she can** understand. But she **did not arise** any **thought to interfere** – which means there is no view, opinion or conditioning coming out of it. Just **an open mind** that **listen** - no right no wrong. That’s how I **investigate** with the **silent mind** to find out whether it is the truth or not? When I can **listen attentively without thought**, which means I have very good Sati or Awareness. Then this Sati can **do dhamma investigation**.

5.3.5 Sakkayaditthi (Self-Delusion) and the Three Evil Roots

I will go on with the JK’s quote then you will understand better. The quote said, “Awareness is the silent and choiceless observation of ‘What IS’.” Then it goes on to say, ‘Problems will **always exist** where the **activities of the self are dominant**.....’ Can you all understand this statement or not? What are the activities of the self? SELF is what? Self is the **“Ego”**, the **personality**, the **“I”**, and the **“Me”** and this **Egoic mind** is your **thought** or the **5 mental aggregates**. When there is SAKKAYADITTHI, or self-delusion, then this thought **becomes egoic**. Which means the thought will have **selfishness**, **emotion**, **doubt** and **fear**, etc and they are part of the **3 evil roots** of **‘Greed’**, **‘Hatred’** and **‘Delusion’**. So, it is exactly like what the Buddha taught: ‘Problems will **always exist** where the **activities of the self (conditioned by self-delusion) are dominant’** or when the **3 evils roots** are there. Because when there is this **self-delusion to grasp** at the Form and Mind, thinking that it is **‘you’**, whether it is the **human being** or the **mental 5 aggregates** of Rupa, Vedana, Sanna, Sankhara and Vinnana then **suffering** will arise. Any of these five aggregates of form and mind, **if you grasp** and **cling** through **self-delusion**, thinking that ‘feeling’ is you, that all these **external forms** you see - you can **own or possess** them and thinking that all of the **perceptions** that you perceived and **labelled are real** – also can be **owned**, can be **possessed**; including all of the **views** and **opinions** that you are **holding on to** plus all of the **phenomena** and

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things that you become **conscious off** - you can grasp and cling on to them via giving them meaning then **suffering will follow** you. Hence the reason why the Buddha said in his 1st Noble Truth final summary, - "In short **the 5 grasping aggregates** (or **Uppadana Kandhas**) are dukkha". So, the teaching is exactly the same because the thought which is the 5 mental aggregates, if you grasp on to them as the **'Me'** and the **'I'** via **self-delusion** then suffering will arise. Or like what J Krishnamurti said via his daily quote: - 'So, problems will always exist where the **activities of the self (which is self-delusion) are dominant**. To be aware - which are and which are **not** the activities of the self, needs **constant vigilance.....'**

5.3.6 Be Constantly Aware and Heedful

Constant vigilance here means **constantly AWARE** and **Heedful**. That is, when the evil roots are there, when the **'Self'** is there, when the **selfishness**, the **emotional negativities**, the **fear**, and the **manifestation** of the **mental EGO** are there, you **have to be aware** - that's **what vigilance means**. The Buddha used the words: - **'Constantly Aware'** which is the same as **Vigilance**. That's why in certain books, **HEEDFULNESS** is also translated as **VIGILANCE**. So, it is only when you are constantly aware, only then you can do something about it, otherwise you cannot because the **mind is so fast**.

5.3.7 Vigilance or Awareness is NOT Disciplined or Focused Attention

Then, what did Krishnamurti said? This vigilance is **Not a disciplined attention**, understand or not? Just like what I had told you all earlier on. How do you discipline and do you know what discipline is? Just like in the military! Full discipline, - 'you **must do this**, you **must do that**, you **must note this** and you **must note that**, you **must meditate** like that', and all these are **disciplined attention or focused Attention**, understand or not? But **AWARENESS has nothing** to do with the thought. Who discipline? The **thought** wants to discipline. The **thought wants to be aware**; the **thought wants to maintain attention**. And the **worst is** – the **thought wants to meditate**. And what happens when the **'meditator'** which is the **thought is so actively 'meditating'**! You are **no longer** aware! - Because you are verbalising via the thought. Now you **can laugh** but last time you just follow instructions and do **without** understanding. **You are just being gullible**.

This Vigilance is **not** a disciplined attention because **once** the **thought is active**, then you are **no longer** in Sati already; for **Sati is awareness or the silence before the thinking or knowing**. Since Vigilance or Sati is an **extensive Awareness** which is **choiceless** as opposed to **disciplined attention** which is **thought based** hence the reason why J Krishnamurti go on to say that: **"Disciplined attention gives strength to the self"**. This is because when the **user of thought is deluded** then thought will be Egoic. **Egoic** means **self-centred**. So, when you **try** to discipline and when you **try** to **'meditate'** with the thought or when you **try** to be aware it is already a **disciplined attention** already because **the trying** is by the **thought**. And when thought is there, you **give it mental energy** and this **will strengthen** the self, the ego which is the **personality**. Then, what happen? You can **no longer see things as they are** because you are **preoccupied** with the doing **via the thoughts** hence you **lack clarity**.

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Whereas **Awareness** on the other hand is **not** self induced and there is **nobody inside** there **to be aware**. It is just an **awareness 'nature'**, which is the **essence of mind** – the **silent mind** which is **just aware** – a **general spacious** or **specific phenomenon awareness** before the **knowing** or **labelling** via thoughts or the aggregates of mind.

5.3.8 Meaning of "What Is"

Awareness or Sati is the **silent** and **choiceless observation** of **What IS!** '**What IS**' is **Suchness** – the **ISness of things**, the **Reality** or the **Truth**. Not a concept, not an ideal, not what you perceived to be but **just 'What IS' – that Reality**. Silence means **mentally** silent. Not just you don't talk; then **Choiceless awareness** means **no views, no opinions** and **no judgement**, etc. You don't go and decide and you don't go and discriminate. You don't go and create **dualities** out of nothing. So **awareness is the silent** and **choiceless observation** of the **Truth** or the **Reality** which is the same as 'when you **see things as they are**' – it means the Truth which is also 'What IS' or the ISness of things.

5.3.9 Self-Delusion and Seeing Things as They Are

Then J Krishnamurti said, "Problems will always exist when the activities of the self are dominant". **Self** as you know is your **atta**, your **self-delusion**, your **misconception** – that **conditioned** you to cling on to these 5 aggregates of form and mind – **both aspects**. The first aspect of it is as a **human being**. We all have a **physical body** or **form** (1st aggregate) then we all have a **mind** which can feel, perceive, think and become conscious (the other 4 mental aggregates). Combining them we have the **1st aspect** of the **5 aggregates of form and mind** as the **human being** or a **living being**. The **2nd aspect** is the **5 mental aggregates of form and mind** that arise with **every moment** of **sense door consciousness**. When you attach and cling, there is this **ego or personality** that you **create** and that is what Krishnamurti call the **Self**. The moment you have this egoic mind or the **sense of 'Self'** created, then it is capable of **selfishness, emotional negativities**, and **fear** through **delusion** hence conditioning the **3 evil roots** to arise and that's why J. Krishnamurti also said the same via his quote that 'problems will always exist when the activities of the self (which is the egoic mind or self-delusion) are dominant'. Then he said, 'In order **to be aware** which are and which are **not** the **activities of the self** you need **constant vigilance** and this vigilance is **not** a **disciplined** attention.' Discipline attention means **regimented attention** – which means **through** the **thought** you **want to be aware** and through the **thought** you **want to discipline yourself**. Like - 'this is how you should meditate and this is how you should note. This is how you should do things'. All these are **disciplined or focus** attention and **not a silent general awareness**. So when you understand that **vigilance is not a disciplined attention** but an **extensive awareness** which is **choiceless** then you can develop the understanding of **what Sati or awareness is?**

Then Krishnamurti goes on to say, 'this **disciplined attention** gives **strength** to the **self**' because the **thought** which is **egoic** is involved. So when you **try** to discipline and meditate with the thought or when you **try** to be aware – who is trying? The **thought is trying** and when the **thought**

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is there **you give energy to it** and it will **strengthen the Self** or the **Ego**. Then what happen? You become more **deluded** and **heedless**. Whereas **Awareness** on the other hand is **not self induced** and there is **nobody inside there to be aware**. It is just an awareness '**nature**' – an **essence** of mind which is **just aware** and **ever mindful within**. It just like **inquiring** – 'who is **aware** of the **silence of nature?**'

In the **middle of the night**, when there is no more **vibration**, which means **no more hearing consciousness** but yet there is still a 'nature' within 'you', that can be **aware of that silence, that stillness**, - the mind that **doesn't chatter** anymore because there is **no more thought** and it is not a **condition arising** consciousness. **So who is aware** of that **silence?** It is just the **essence of mind** that is **aware of silence** and that is '**your**' **true nature**, your **true mind** but you **seldom** or **hardly touches** it. Even when you touch it **momentary**, it is so fast and you **couldn't recognise it**. For most of you, you **only know thoughts**. That is the **only instrument** you have been **using rampantly** to 'live' life since birth and that is why you have a lot of problem and suffering. And because of that you cannot develop **the ability to be aware**. It is because when your thoughts are so **rampantly proliferating**, you hardly got **any space** between thoughts to experience **the silence**.

5.3.10 The Space Between Thoughts

Can remember or not? – The **space between thoughts** which we discussed at our recently concluded **Cameron Highlands retreat**. When you **think continuously** until you got no more **space between thoughts** hence there is **no more clarity of mind** to be aware because you **are so preoccupied** with the **thoughts** and this space between thoughts which is very important is **not** there. Between two thoughts (1st and the 2nd thought) there is this space in between. When you have this space, you can then **realise** that this 'space' is **Silence, Peace** and **Tranquillity** leading to **Stillness**. When you are without thought, this is what you will experience. This space between thoughts **can only be realised** by the **true cultivator** of the way. And they are so different because this is **Heedful living** – and **most of the time** you are **constantly aware** and **ever mindful**. So, this is the part - if you **cannot** understand because you **never meditate** until your mind is **so quiet** and **so still**, then you **can never understand** what **SATI** is. For Sati can only be understood when you **had realized** it. The moment the Form and Mind **realized** it, it will know **what SATI is**. No need any words or explanation. So, the space between thoughts is very important. Reason why J Krishnamurti said, 'Awareness on the other hand is **not self induced**. Nor it is the outcome of a **Practice.....**' - Who practice? - The **thought** practice meditation. That's why it is different because the **real sati** is **without thought**. Understand or not?

5.3.11 Training the Heedless or Mundane Mind

You can train your 'mind' because it is Heedless. So train the **Heedless mind**, the **mundane** mind. Then when that one **ceased** or is **no longer active**, then the '**nature**' **comes out** or **shine forth**, - the 'nature' **don't practice**. You don't **try to practice** to be aware because your **true mind** or your **true nature** they are **already aware** and you **only need** to be silent then it **will manifest** – because

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the 'nature' is **awareness** itself so why must you practise to be aware? What you **already have within your 'nature'**, you **don't have to train or practice** to get it, isn't it? When you don't have, then you have to train, you have to practise - just like the **mundane mind** which is **HEEDLESS, thinks a lot, restless**, with all the **emotions** and **delusion**, - that one you need to train. That's why you only train the **mundane mind** but **to develop Sati and Mindfulness**, you **don't go and practise**, understand or not?

The Buddha taught you **5-ways to overcome unwholesome thoughts** and the **3rd way** is what? **Just Aware**, understand or not? **Don't do anything**. Then the **mundane mind** will **return** to its **original state before the stirring** and you will **come to realize** that the original state of mind (**before the stirring**) is **already aware** and **this awareness** is the **silence, is peace**, is the **tranquillity** and the **stillness**. So you **don't try** to be aware, you only have to understand that **the moment** you **don't think**, **this awareness** is already **there**. It is **in fact all the time there** but because you are **clouded by thought, deluded** by thought, **actively chasing after thought**, you **cannot see** and you cannot **understand**. Why? Because you **lack mindfulness or awareness** and the **'meditator'** which is the **thought is so active**. So, how can there be silence? That's why the **real meditation is just silence**.

But initially you cannot be silent because the **mundane mind** got a lot of **mental hindrances**, a lot of delusion (Sakkayaditthi), - that's why **it thinks a lot** because all of **your conscious** living since birth until now you use thoughts – endlessly using thoughts. That's why they say the **HEEDLESS** thinks a lot. So now you understand why **most of you think a lot**. It is only either **at a retreat** or if you had **cultivated before in the past** then for certain moments of your life, you **may experience** that **silence**. Then the moment you experience it, you will know the big difference between the **HEEDLESS** thinking mind and the **HEEDFUL silent mind**. That's why when you see the difference between the two, you will determine **never** to become **HEEDLESS** anymore because the **Heedful state** is **so beautiful**, whereas the **Heedless state** is so **full of suffering, problems** and **delusion leading** to all the **fear, worry, sorrow, lamentation, anxiety and misery** - all of the so called problems of life and that's the reason why Krishnamurti say: "**Problems will always exist when the activity of the self which is the ego is there**", - **you can never be free**".

Then after that what did Krishnamurti say? "**Awareness**, on the other hand, is **not self-induced, nor is it the outcome of practice**". So, you don't go and **foolishly** practise to be mindful. You only need **to train** your **mundane** mind to be **quiet** via anchoring it to something, so that it **will not wonders off**, so that it can **stay with the object of meditation**. So that it can be **with the moment without thought**. After you had anchored it, you have to stabilize it until it becomes very quiet and still. Anchor it through what? - Through that **awareness**. Since the mind can only do one thing at a time, - so if you **think a lot**, then **how can you train the mundane mind?** So, you have to **anchor it to something** so that it doesn't wander off, - just **aware** of in and out breathe. You train the **mundane mind** to just be **mindful** of the in and out breathe until one day; - when this **mundane mind** comes to realizes that if it listen to you, it will be very **peaceful**. If it didn't listen to

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you, it will become very **Heedless**. This is the beginning. That's why I say, the moment you **can train your mind to be aware**, that's only the **beginning of real meditation**. Now, you understand what I meant. Last time you all could not understand.

Q: You mean after attending all the retreats, I come back I still haven't started the real meditation?

Answer (Bro. Teoh): Yes! You haven't started because you could not understand what SATI is.

5.3.12 Understanding the Contents of Consciousness

Now after you have developed the understanding, you can really laugh because Heedlessness is like that; the mundane mind is like that and you **cannot differentiate** between the two - your **true mind** and the **thinking** mind which is also the **mundane mind** or deluded, sakkayaditthi mind – with self delusion. Then what else did Krishnamurti say?

“**Awareness**, on the other hand, is **not** self-induced, nor is it the outcome of practice; it is an understanding”, which is WISDOM to understand what thought is and all the related problems that thought had created.

Content of consciousness means the **hidden** as well as the **superficial**. You know what is the hidden? The **hidden** is your **sub-conscious** and **unconscious**. That one you cannot 'see'. Whereas, **superficial** is the **conscious** mind. So you have to develop the whole understanding of the whole contents of that so call thought which is related to your so called problems. When you grasp and cling deludedly to the **thought** which is your **five mental aggregates** of Form and Mind, they will become **grasping aggregates**, and then suffering will arise. So, your whole of suffering or problem which is related to the contents (both the hidden and the superficial) you must develop the **understanding** of it. Then, how do you do it?

According to JK: - “The **surface** must be **understood** for the **hidden** to show itself; the hidden cannot be exposed if the **surface mind** is **not** quiet.”

So when the **chattering** is still going on how can you **meditate**? Understand or not? That mundane thinking mind has to be **quiet** only then there is SATI and SAMADHI, then only you can meditate, otherwise the spiritual faculties of SATI and SAMADHI cannot arise. SATI is what? Just a silent inner Awareness and Samadhi is the stability of it. These sati and samadhi also **not developed as yet** and you **want to meditate**. So who meditate? - The **thought** meditate. The spiritual faculties are still not there and you want to meditate. That's why you are wasting your time. Thought based meditation has this problem because the thought is **actively noting** and **labelling - concept after concept**. Next words explained it even better; - JK explained to you how **verbalization** dulls the mind.

So I will read the quote again – “The **surface** must be **understood for the hidden to show itself**; the **hidden** cannot be **exposed** if the **surface mind** is **not quiet**”.

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5.3.13 Silent the Mundane Mind to Develop Understanding

So, you have to really, really **silent** the mundane mind to develop the understanding. The whole process of understanding the **thought** has **nothing** to do with the **words, verbalisation** nor is it a matter of mere **experience** because experience is also from the thought. Understand or not? Who experience, the thought experience, - pleasant and unpleasant; nice, and not nice. Awareness **doesn't** experience anything. Awareness has got **no** mental state and there is no like or dislike. The experiencing comes from the **mundane** mind. So the next word is what? – **Verbalization** and **verbalisation** indicates what? Yes! '**Dullness of mind**' and you all some more go and note, - 'rising, rising, falling, falling...etc' to make your mind **even more dull**. But if you know how to do chanting, then it is different - the vibration comes out and the **awareness is aware of it**, which is **not** the thought **noting** another thought. When you are aware of the thought, it is a different thing - it is SATI. Thought will arise, because upon contact it will trigger off. And there is **awareness** which can be with the **moment** of contact, at the **moment** of that arising of consciousness. Just like what the Buddha said, "In the seeing, it is just the seeing consciousness". When sati is **aware of the moment of consciousness**, then it can **understand** how the mind conditioned by its **content** of consciousness **move** or **stir** inside. You can be with the moment, to be aware of them all. That's why SATI **can see thought** and SATI can **see all the aggregates** of thought but **thought** cannot see **awareness**. So, this one is a very important understanding because Krishnamurti said "Verbalization **indicates dullness** of mind".

And experience being what? 'Cumulative' - means what? Ah! Yes! Memory, you accumulate what you **experienced** as **memory**. That's why Mahayana Buddhism said, - "The 2nd Noble Truth is **accumulation** or 集". The 4 Noble truths they recite as - 苦集灭道 (Ku, Ji, Mie, Tao) - it never said "cause of suffering"; it said - "You continue to **accumulate** suffering". There is accumulation. "So accumulation being cumulative makes for **repetition**". You know why JK said that? When you **accumulate** as memory that is your downfall because if you cannot see that is **just a thought** that you **retrieve** via memory, then it will condition your craving (your positive and negative cravings) because you had that experience before. Let's say you come across **nice food** or **beautiful experience**, or good **meditative experiences**, then what happened? Next time when you do your meditation or when you eat something, you want to **compare** and you want to **measure** - through what? – Memories!

'Wah! Last time that shop very nice or my last meditation was so beautiful'. Then you make a wish – 'how nice if I can repeat that experience'. Then your meditation becomes what? - Good and bad meditation experiences! Then what are you doing? Then where is your Heedfulness? Where is the training? Then, where is the Noble 8 Fold Path? That's how you lost your focus, understand or not? - Because you **got distracted** by the **very peaceful** and **calm state** of that **meditative experience**. That's why JK said:

"Experience, being cumulative, makes for repetitiveness".

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Meaning you want it to be **repeated**. That's how you **develop habits**. That's how you get into delusion. That's how you become **afflicted**. When things don't go your way and when you cannot get what you want, suffering is the result and that's one of the 1st Noble Truth **realities** that can condition ones suffering. And you still happily - are playing with it, thinking that you are very great - 'Wah! I want to meditate until I get back that state'. So now, you start to understand why all these are actually foolishness and delusion isn't it?

5.3.14 Awareness is NOT Determination

The next line is what? "Awareness is not a matter of **determination**". You cannot **determine** to be aware because 'who determine?' The **thought** determine. - "For **purposive** direction is **resistance**" and because thought direct - meaning you **want things** your way. That's why you **resist**. That's why I say you have **to accord and flow** if you want to be **free**. Meditation is **not** about **resisting** anything. You just **relax** and **silent**, **accord** and **flow** and be with the moment, then you will understand.

Then JK continue: - "Which tends towards exclusiveness ..." Means What? - The egoic mind wants that. "Me" and 'I' can do this, - implies very **exclusive**. 'I already improve, my meditation is already not bad', - and all these are the thought. So, that's why when you determine, then there is a **direction**, there is a **goal** where you want to walk towards. That's why the moment you **want to be** an Arahant, you 'dead' already because the becoming 'kills' you spiritually. Who wants to become, the **thought wants** to become. And becoming is **craving**. The moment you **have craving** you **cannot realise** the enlightenment.

5.3.15 The Awakening

So, don't try to become anything. Just **silent**, and **sincerely**, **patiently**, **cultivate**, then you will awaken. The moment the **mundane mind awakens** and **realizes itself** and **ceased**, that's wisdom. And when wisdom arises, there is no more delusion. That's why you could 'see things as they are'. You awaken to the 3 universal characteristics of nature, there is **no more** delusion and thought will have **no more power** over you. Then you 'see things as they are' - which is beyond thought, beyond time. Otherwise, you will continually **used thought** which is **psychological time**. Then you will be trapped in time and trapped within the field of thought.

5.3.16 The Mystery of Life Unfolds

Then, next one is what? After - "**Awareness** is the **silent** and **choiceless observation** of **what is; ..**" **it said**, 'in this awareness the **problem unrolls itself**' - I prefer to use the word '**unfolds**' itself. This can happen because when you **silent** and **aware**, the **phenomenon** will tell you the 'story'. Your silent mind will understand, - the **awareness without thought** will **awaken** to it and understand what it is. That is how, - you will understand **without word**. How '**contact**' **triggers** off consciousness. Not only consciousness, - within the content that you input into, there is also

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feeling which will **simultaneously** also arise. You will come to know them all, - **not** through the **text book**, not through the **one dimensional** dependent origination that says – ‘**upon contact, feeling arises**’ (then you go look for the feeling). This is so gullible isn’t it? Just like the physics experiment - **upon contact, consciousness comes to be**. The **mind** becomes **conscious** first and then within, there is also the **content of consciousness** where **perception** and **feeling** also arise. Then feeling will be **stirred** and be **conditioned** into **craving** because of sakkayaditthi (or self-delusion) due to your lack of wisdom or **wise attention** (Yoniso Manasikara) at the moment of contact. You got instead **ayoniso** manasikara or **unwise attention**. So this is how living being gets into trouble.

So, when you understand all these, the whole **mystery of life** like slowly **unfolds** itself. Then you will start to understand how **you function** as a **human being** following the dependent origination or the 12 links. That’s why when you develop the **silent mind, don’t try to know anything** and when you meditate don’t try to know or try to say “Is this SATI?” or “Is this aniccam?”, or “Is this what the Buddha meant as anatta”? But **after the meditation**, you **can reflect** and **contemplate** but **when you are meditating** or doing it **never ever do that**. If you do that means what? The **thought is trying to come in** from the **back door** to tell you all these things, then how can you **be in sati** anymore? Who say it is aniccam? - Your thought right? That is why Dhamma-based and thought-based meditation will have all these problems. “Oh! I realized already, this is what the book said; this is what the Buddha said”. All these are your thoughts verberlisation.

Q. (Sis. Bee Lan): “Is this the reason why when you go for certain retreats, they don’t allow you to read books?”

A. (Bro. Teoh): Yes, there is some truth in that statement – i.e. ‘when you meditate, don’t read anything’. But it **does not apply** to everybody because some people who had cultivated in the past, if they read, - the **moment they read truth**, they can **awaken straight away** to it. So it doesn’t mean that you cannot read. You can read but **don’t attach** or **carry** that **information** or **knowledge** in your **brain**. When you meditate, have an **open mind**. That’s what **choiceless awareness** is all about. Don’t - in the meditation, **verbalise** – ‘Oh! ...I remembered what the text book said; what the Buddha said’, then you ‘finished’ or become heedless already. Understand or not? Actually it is not the Buddha or the text book; it is **your thought** that said and you **cannot see at all** and you some more say, you **got Sati!** And you still think you are such a great meditator by saying that ‘I have being meditating for 20, 30 or 40 years already so don’t come and tell me all these bulls**t.’ But actually they **cannot see** their own thoughts. They keep on quoting the books or the texts via their thoughts which is **accumulated knowledge** and **not wisdom** and because they cannot see their own thoughts they **got deluded**.

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5.3.17 Voluntary, Involuntary and Spontaneous Actions

Q. (Mr. Chai): Breathing or heart beat, we don't have to think about it because it will go on by itself. But when we come to the unconsciously, sub-consciously, or voluntary and involuntary actions, how do you develop the understanding?

A. (Bro. Teoh): You ask about voluntary and involuntary actions, right? So, you have to ask yourself - "What is action?" Action is the 'Form & Mind' (or human being) doing something through the thought, correct or not? Then **voluntary action** means there is a '**will**' involved as against **Spontaneous action** - when you don't think.

Within the **field of thoughts** and **awareness** there are 3 types of actions, - voluntary, involuntary and spontaneous. But for your case, you only got two because you are only within the field of thoughts. You studied Biology before, isn't it? Voluntary action is when you have a '**will**' to define what you want or intent to do. Like if I want to come out of my sitting, then voluntarily I come out of my sitting but for the Biological experience it is different, - you put your legs crossed up, then the Biology teacher used a rubber hammer to knock your knee, **automatic** and **involuntary** it react. That one is **involuntary action**. That one has nothing to do with thought's intention but from your physical, - through nerves response, it just moves. That's involuntary action whereas voluntary action is through your '**will**'. The 3rd one is **via wisdom**. **Spontaneous action**, - **no 'will'** is involved; **no desire, no craving, no pre-planning, no checking** with the **memories** - to inquire whether to do or don't do? Like that better or like that better? - If you action like that mean you don't have wisdom. If you got wisdom, you **don't have** to think or consider but instead you just **act spontaneously** because according to JK - '**Acting according to memory is not acting at all**'.

You only consider and think initially, - just like when the Buddha taught the Kalama Sutta, to the Kalamas, he said: "Whatever they teach you to do; you have to check, if I do, does it harm myself or harm others". Ah! That one you **use thought** to develop the understanding **initially**. Then, you decide to do or not to do. Then, if it is the truth, if it doesn't hurt you and hurt or harm others, then you do. When you cultivate until **you awaken** already, you will do things **spontaneously** via wisdom. You **don't think** already because the thought is **always selfish** and **egoic**, understand or not? Via **wisdom** you just act **spontaneously**.

That's why that day in the Thursday class; - someone told me she can do things spontaneously already. Ah! It was Sis. Eng Bee - while in the office, - there was a colleague who earlier on had a **misunderstanding** with her. This colleague thought she was the one who did his **year-end appraisal**. He was not happy because he didn't get a good appraisal but later on he came to know that his appraisal was not done by Sis. Eng Bee. Then a few days later after the Cameron Highlands Retreat, she brought some strawberries to her office and place it on the table near the store room, then this colleague of hers walked by and **spontaneously** she talked to him. She said: "There are some strawberries that I bought from Cameron Highlands and you can have a try, it is quite nice". Surprisingly he was very friendly and at that time Eng Bee didn't feel anything but later on when she was on her own, then with her **awareness** she came to realise that it was the **awareness** that enable her to **act spontaneously**. If she had **thought about it** she would not have approach this colleague because there was already the memory that said: "This colleague doesn't like me, so it may arise some misunderstanding if I approach him". When she recalled and reflected upon this incident, she just **smiled**, - because suddenly this colleague was not like before anymore - **so**

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friendly already. He already, like could respond with **such pleasantness** and is now so different. So this is the difference between **spontaneous action** that happens **naturally** and the one **with** the **planned approach** via thought consideration (which is **not natural** at all).

5.3.18 Check and Question the “Thought”

People can see it because that planning is the thought, and thought is always **selfish** and **egoic** before you **become enlighten**. That’s why before you become enlighten, **try not** to use so much thought. When you **had straightened your view** already, then you can use thought. Otherwise, thought is **very dangerous** that’s why **Byron Kathy** asked you to check and question the thought - ‘Is it true? Are you sure it is absolutely true.’ You sure say it is the truth. And then with her 3rd question you will start to understand how thoughts delude you. The 3rd question is - ‘What happened when you think that thought?’ - “Oh..I became Miserable!” Then her 4th question – ‘Without those thought, how will you be?’ “Oh! Before those thought I was normal, happy and beautiful” - then you will come to realize that **all these thoughts** that made you **unhappy, miserable, fearful, selfish** (with the evil roots) are **all wrong** thoughts deceiving you.

That’s why the Buddha states it clearly in the **Noble 8 Fold Path** that you must have **right thought** borne of **right views** or **right understanding**. How to arise right thoughts? The **user** of thought is **very important**, isn’t it? If the user is **deluded**, how can it be right thought? If the user of thought is **deluded**, thought will be evil. That’s why you must put in the **right effort** to cultivate **virtue, goodness, kindness**, etc to arise the **right thoughts** that are still **not** in you **after** you had **straightened** your views. To have **right views** you must understand the **5 universal orders or laws** that **governed all of life and existence**, especially the law of Karma (karma niyama) and the law of the mind (citta niyama). Otherwise, without the straightening of your views via the right views, **your thought** will always be **wrong thought**.

5.3.19 Habitual Tendencies and Memories

Q. (Bro. Chai): How about habits or habitual tendencies that conditioned our actions?

A. (Bro. Teoh): You don’t follow habitual tendencies. Habit is what? **Memory**, understand or not? Because you accumulate experiences, - experiences that **you like** form your habit. Experiences that you **don’t like** also become your habit. That’s why you have **likes and dislikes**. Immediately after you see something, you **react** so fast. Immediately after you hear something you **reacted** already; - smell, taste, tactile and thought you also do the same. Why did you react? Because you have become **so Heedless** and heedlessness develops **habitual tendencies**. And what are habitual tendencies? - No need to think also you will react that way because that is your habitual tendencies and it comes from your **conditionings via your wrong views**. Especially so, your **self-delusion which will condition** you to arise the **3 evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion to react to sense experiences thereby making you heedless. This **heedless mind** will condition you to have very strong **habitual tendencies** to **discriminate, react** and **do things** following your **wrong views**. That’s why when you hear something from your wife, especially for married couple, - straight away you will react. You may say, “Ah..I know what you want to say already... that’s enough!” You may also do it to your son or your children because it has become so habitual. Every time you scold them using the same words like – ‘told you not to do, you still want to do.’ Then one day your children may react back and said. ‘Ah...Mummy or Daddy, that’s enough! – I know what you want to say’. Then what happened? – You will become very sore isn’t it? All these can arise

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because you are **not conscious** and **aware** (or **heedful**) at that time. The habitual tendencies took over - through what? Through your **anger**, your **selfishness**, your **unhappiness**, etc which are your **evil roots** borne of wrong thoughts that **conditioned** your habitual tendencies. Because you already given it **some thought** and you **accumulated** all these **unhappy thoughts** via memories. Then, they become what? - Your **anusaya** (or latent tendencies), - No condition they don't come out, got condition like machine gun, they just pop up. No need to think at all because you **already memorized** and **pre-planned** as to what you want to do the next time when the same situation arises. Then you will retort, - "you think you very good, you also like that before?" Why? Because of the so called **latent tendencies** - waiting to erupt when there is condition for it to arise. So human beings due to their **heedlessness** do a lot of these **foolish things**. Can follow?

5.3.20 WISDOM - Understanding Fully and Completely

Now we continue with JK's quote: 'In this awareness, the problem **unfolds or unrolls** itself, and thus it is **fully** and **completely understood**.' - Which means no more fragmented, - no more only this fragment, that fragment and instead you act with complete understanding as opposed to thought which is **limited** and **fragmented** because thought cannot see the **totality**, the **overall**; that's why thought based meditation cannot develop **wisdom** and **understanding**. Thought can become **cunning**, **smart** or '**intelligent**' - thought can be **very intellectual** but it **cannot** develop **wisdom**. Thought can only develop **knowledge** which is rigid. JK said:

"A problem is never solved on its own level; **being complex**, it must be **understood** in its **total process**."

So, just like what I had told you all just now, you cannot have a **fragmented solution** to **spiritual** understanding. Spiritual understanding needs the **total** understanding of the **whole** of the **thought** and its **contents** and their **limitation**. Also how thoughts **divide via words** and **concepts to deceive** you into **conflict**, **argument**, **wars** and **attachment** etc to arise the fear and suffering in you and how thoughts **project** to arise the **illusionary time of past and future** which are never the **reality** to deceive you make you heedlessness. It cannot be at the **fragmented** level when thought **analyzed** thing, or the way thought **looks** at thing because thought being **limited** and **egoic** only looks at thing from the **logic side**, from **knowledge** and the **intellect** aspect. That's why I used to share with you all this quote, - 'whatever that is logical may not necessarily be the truth, and it is usually always the opposite'.

This Krishnamurti quote if I don't explain, I don't think anyone of you can understand. But after my explanation, you can at least at **the intellectual, knowledge** level develop a very high degree of 'understanding' and that will established and stabilise a **base** for you to receive truth then after that if you **meditate with understanding diligently**, you can awaken very fast. Because if you already had that **base** then with **an open mind** - the moment you see truth, straight away it will **connect**. Connect to what you had **reflected and contemplated** earlier on - for you had understood what that thing is. Then the whole thing just arises and you just awaken. 'Ah! That's what J. Krishnamurti meant' because you had seen it in the **awareness** itself. Which means the truth **had been realized** no more a theory. And you will keep on experiencing this **type of awakening** because when your **contemplative** dhamma is **very stable** (meaning you **had straightened your views**) then you can understand very easily.

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Through this understanding, what will happen to you? You will be **no longer** deluded by **thought-based** meditation. By then, the 'egoic mind'...you can see it very clear already then **unknowingly** it will slowly develop the **stability of understanding** and **wisdom** that will start **to change you**; the way you **live your life**, the **way** you **think**, the way you **approach thing** and the way you **become aware** of things. You will be **no longer** like before. Not like before anymore - the thought tried to be aware! You will just know how to train your mind to just be **silent**.

Silent means what? If your mundane mind is still Heedless, then you need to de-condition it via the **mind sweeping method**. Then after that develop Anapanasati, to anchor and stabilize it or use whatever other skilful means that you are familiar with - like chanting, rising and falling of the abdomen or your heart beat etc. And after that when it is already stable, you just **silent your mind** in meditation so that **this mindfulness** become more and more stable until it develops **Samadhi**. Then, you can use that to meditate.

'A problem is **never solved** on its own level'- means, not look at in a fragmented way. Then 'Being complex or complicated, it must be understood in its total process' - means, the whole of the **content within that thought**, plus the **way of thought**, **power of thought to divide, to delude**, to develop the **egoic mind** with **self-delusion** to be **selfish, possessive** and **fearful**, etc **need to be understood**. And all these can be understood via **just silencing** your mind and maintain a **choiceless awareness** then you will be able to see **how the mind stirs** and how the **habitual tendencies** come to be and how **craving comes to be**; how **attachment** comes to be and how it **conditions grasping, becoming** and **birth leading** to all the suffering.

This is seeing the **dependent origination or 12 links** and the **4 Noble Truths** within your own form and mind. The 3 evil roots, the 5 mental hindrances, and the 5 spiritual faculties - via your SATI. That's the real meditation. That's why in the Satipatthana Sutta especially under Dhammanuppasana, - the 1st category practice is **awareness or mindfulness** of the 5 mental hindrances, followed by the 5 aggregates of Form and Mind then, the 6 internal sense bases and the external sense bases (or the 18 sense realms), followed by the awareness of the 7 factors of enlightenment (because by then you are very near to enlightenment and the 7 factors of enlightenment will keep on arising). After that you will become **very mindful** of the 4 Noble Truths, you will see and understand them all. Then all the **3 turnings** of the **4 Noble Truths**, you will know how to do them. That's how **your meditation can take off**.

Then JK continue, "To try to solve a problem only one level, whether physical or psychological, leads to further conflict and confusion". You cannot do it in a fragmented way.

"For the **resolution** of a problem, there must be this **awareness** (which is SATI), this passive awareness (not an active one) which reveals its total process". An active one means the **thought** has come in **to interfere** already. Then reveals its total process here implies - Is to see the **whole** of the **happening**, - you see it happening. You see how the **mundane mind** gets conditioned out. How upon contact, consciousness comes to be. In the meditation itself, when you are silent, you **will witness** all these arising. Then the dependent origination is no more a theory because upon contact, **you really feel** it inside your meditation, - at the **sense bases** because your **awareness** is always within the moment. It can only be aware of what is **within the moment** and it is **not** a thought because thought is a **movement away** from the **silence** after that. Thought then **can project** into the **future and recall the unhappy past** or scares of memories. That's why thought is

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never in the moment. Thought is **responses to memory** hence it is the **past** - within the **field of the known** and **thought cannot touch the unknown**.

“For the resolution of a problem, there must be this **awareness**, this **passive** alertness, which reveals its total process”. Alertness is what? - **Attention**, hence **no** thought, just **aware**, and then you **just silent** and **aware** during meditation, then with **every moment** of consciousness, you will **witness** the real dhamma arising from within your own form and mind and not through theory. That is, how **upon contact**, consciousness and feeling comes to be. When meditating, always just **silent** the mind and don't go and recall what the book or paticca sammupada sutta said, like - “Upon contact feeling arise” then while meditating you go look for feeling. Who look? The **thought** looked! That's why you cannot meditate like that, otherwise you will get **con** and be **deceived** by your thought because you tend to look for '**insight**' in the form of 'dhamma' which is not the true insight. And who look, again the **thought** looked. And you still think that is the true dhamma. You think, - “Wah! I saw Aniccam already; I saw dependent origination; i.e. upon contact feeling arise”. But actually it is your thought looking for feeling and you feel with your thought which is not sati. And you some more gullibly belief you had seen it.

Then when people explained to you that upon contact apart from feeling, consciousness also arises. You said, “No!...no...no, you are wrong!” - Because you meditate with the text, with the thought. But if you meditate with the **silent mind** you will be very sure. You will understand and awaken without any words, thoughts or verbalisation. When you **had realized**, it will be totally different because upon contact of mind, so many things actually happened, and he who **had awakened** can tell you that it is like that and they don't have to check with the text. That is the real one. The moment you mention something, he can tell you straight away, - “Yes, it is like that.” Just like the 6th Patriarch Hui Neng, who was an illiterate but the moment you speak the truth, he understands. Why? - Because, he had realized them in his meditation before.

This is what J Krishnamurti meant by – “there must be an '**awareness**' in order to have this total understanding” because thought cannot understand. Then this **awareness which** is just a **passive alertness** or **attention** will reveal its total process. Because when you **are silent** you are **fully aware** of what is happening. Then **phenomenon** will show it to you clearly their **3 universal characteristics** of **impermanent, suffering and non-self or empty nature**. Then you will also **witness** what the dependent origination or 12 links is all about? What this world is all about? What life and existence are all about? What phenomenon is all about? Not from the texts or the theory part.

When you just silent your mind, you can understand many things. That's why I always said: “You don't try to 'know' while you are meditating”. You just silent and meditate sincerely with the faith and when the understanding arises - the form and mind will know and you will awaken to it. There is **no thought** involved but just the **awareness** via the **direct seeing** – then one awakens to it. Then that **understanding is wisdom**, the **Intelligence** or **panna**. And through that you **straightened your views** and you can **live life** with that understanding. That's why after that this Form and Mind **does not suffer** anymore because it has got no more delusion hence no more suffering.

Note: Please remind me to also explain the importance of **this JK's quote** during sharing with the Tuesday and Thursday classes kalyanamittas because the **understanding of this JK's quote** can be **very unique** – anyone who can understand this quote, their minds will transform very fast.

Appendix 4


31 PLANES OF EXISTENCE

(Source: <http://www.accesstoinight.org/ptf/dhamma/sagga/loka.html>)

I. The Immaterial or Formless Realm (<i>arupa-loka</i>)			
Realm of:-	Comments	Cause of Rebirth Here	
(31) Neither-perception-nor-non-perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inhabitants of these realms are possessed entirely of mind. • Having no physical body (sense organs), they are unable to hear Dhamma teachings. 	4 th Formless Jhāna	
(30) Nothingness		3 rd Formless Jhāna	
(29) Infinite Consciousness		2 nd Formless Jhāna	
(28) Infinite Space		1 st Formless Jhāna	
II. The Fine-Material or Form World (<i>rupa-loka</i>)			
Realm	Comments	Cause of Rebirth Here	
(27) Peerless devas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are the five Pure Abodes (<i>suddhavasa</i>), which are accessible only to non-Returners (<i>anagami</i>) and arahants. • Beings that become non-returners in other planes are reborn here, where they attain arahantship. • Among its inhabitants is Brahma Sahampati, who begs the Buddha to teach Dhamma to the world. 	4 th Jhāna (7 planes)	
(26) Clear-sighted devas			
(25) Beautiful devas			
(24) Untroubled devas			
(23) Devas not Falling Away			
(22) Unconscious beings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only body is present; no mind. 	3 rd Jhāna (3 planes)	
(21) Very Fruitful devas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beings in these planes enjoy varying degrees of Jhānic bliss. 		
(20) Devas of Refulgent Glory			
(19) Devas of Unbounded Glory			
(18) Devas of Limited Glory			
(17) Devas of Streaming Radiance			
(16) Devas of Unbounded Radiance			
(15) Devas of Limited Radiance	2 nd Jhāna (3 planes)		
(14) Great Brahmās		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of this realm's most famous inhabitants is the Great Brahma, a deity whose delusion leads him to regard himself as the all-powerful, all-seeing creator of the universe. 	1 st Jhāna (3 planes)
(13) Ministers of Brahma		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beings in these planes enjoy varying degrees of Jhānic bliss. 	
(12) Retinue of Brahma			

III. The Sensuous World (*kama-loka*)

(A) HAPPY DESTINATIONS (SUGATI)

Realm	Comments	Cause of Rebirth Here
(11) Devas Wielding Power over the Creation of Others (<i>paranimmita-vasavatti deva</i>)	These devas enjoy sense pleasures created by others for them. Mara , the personification of delusion and desire, lives here.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten wholesome meritorious actions • Generosity • The development of virtue and wisdom
(10) Devas Delighting in Creation (<i>nimmanarati deva</i>)	These devas delight in the sense objects of their own creation.	
(9) Contented devas (<i>tusita deva</i>)	A realm of pure delight and gaiety. Bodhisattas abide here prior to their final human birth. This is where the bodhisatta Maitreya (Metteya), the next Buddha, is said to dwell.	
(8) Yama devas (<i>yama deva</i>)	These devas live in the air, free of all difficulties.	
(7) The Thirty-three Gods (<i>tavatimsa deva</i>)	Sakka , a devotee of the Buddha, presides over this realm. Many devas dwelling here live in mansions in the air.	
(6) Devas of the Four Great Kings (<i>catumaharajika deva</i>)	Home of the <i>gandhabbas</i> , the celestial musicians, and the <i>yakkhas</i> , tree spirits of varying degrees of ethical purity. The latter are analogous to the goblins, trolls, and fairies of Western fairy tales.	
(5) Human beings (<i>manussa loka</i>) 	YOU ARE HERE (for now). Rebirth as a human being is extra ordinarily rare . It is also extra ordinarily precious , as its unique balance of pleasure and pain facilitates the development of virtue and wisdom to the degree necessary to set one free from the entire cycle of rebirths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of virtue and wisdom • The attainment of stream entry (<i>sotapatti</i>) - guarantees that all future rebirths will be in the human or higher realms.

(B) STATES OF DEPRIVATION (APAYA)

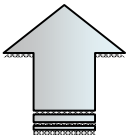
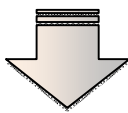
Realm	Comments	Cause of Rebirth Here
(4) Asuras (<i>asura</i>)	The demons — "titans" that dwell here are engaged in relentless conflict with each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten unwholesome actions • Lack of virtue, holding to a lot of Hatred.
(3) Animals (<i>tiracchana yoni</i>)	This realm includes all the non-human forms of life that are visible to us under ordinary circumstances: animals, insects, fish, birds, worms, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten unwholesome actions • Lack of virtue, holding to wrong views. • Behaving like an animal
(2) Hungry Ghosts (<i>peta loka</i>)	Ghosts and unhappy spirits wander hopelessly about this realm, searching in vain for sensual fulfillment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten unwholesome actions • Lack of virtue, holding to wrong views and has a lot of Greed.
(1) Hell (<i>niraya</i>)	These are realms of unimaginable suffering and anguish. Should not be confused with the <i>eternal</i> hell found in other religious traditions, since one's time here is - as it is in every realm - temporary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten unwholesome actions • Lack of virtue, with wrong views • Murdering your parents, murdering an arahant, injuring the Buddha, or creating a schism in the Sangha • Being quarrelsome and annoying to others.

Appendix 5

TEN DHARMA REALMS

十法界

4 Types of Sagely Dharma Realms(四圣)		
1) Realm of the Buddhas	诸佛法界	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full or Perfect Enlightenment via having cultivated the 10 perfections and prajnaparamita needed to become a Sammā Sambuddha.
2) Realm of the Bodhisattvas	菩萨法界	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultivate the 10 perfections and prajnaparamita to realise samyaksambodhi and ultimate nirvana.
3) Realm of the Condition-Enlightened Ones	缘觉法界	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dhamma may or may not be present. Self-enlightened via realization of the 12 links. Pacceka or “Silent” Buddhas, since no proclamation of the Truth is made.
4) Realm of the Sound Hearers (Sāvaka)	声闻法界	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the Buddha Sasana is present. Cultivated the Buddha Dhamma via hearing the 4 Noble Truths. 4 Pairs of enlightened individuals namely Sotapan, Sakadagami, Anagami and Arahant.

6 Types of Mundane Dharma Realms (六凡 - 六道轮回)				
5) Heavenly realms of the Devas & Brahmas	天人法界	HAPPY REALMS 三善道 Kamasugati Bhumi	Increasing degrees of virtues to ascend to higher realms 	Descending due to increasing degrees of Greed, Hatred & Delusion 
6) Realm of the Human beings	人道法界			
7) Realm of the Asuras / Demons	阿修罗法界			
8) Realm of the Animals	畜牲法界	WOEFUL STATES 三恶道 Kamaduggati Bhumi	Born into this realm mainly due to Delusion	
9) Hungry Ghosts / Petas Realms	饿鬼法界		Born into this realm mainly due to Greed	
10) Realm of the Hell-beings	地狱法界		Born into this realm mainly due to Greed, Hatred & Delusion	

Note: *Per Mahayana: **Asuras** are classified under the **Happy Realms of Kamasuggati Bhumi**. They have **blessings** but they also have the **evil root of Hatred**, hence the reason why are they are **very combative** in nature.

*Per Theravada: **Asuras** are grouped under **Woeful States of Kamaduggati Bhumi**.

Appendix 6

TRAINING THE MIND via understanding the Essential dhammas and Meditation as Taught by the Buddha

(Notes compiled mainly from various talks given by Bro Teoh Kian Koon at : Ti-Ratana Buddhist Society Klang on 20 June 2014, Thursday Classes especially the one held at Bro Swee Aun's house on 10 July 2014 and the March, 2014 Cameron Highlands Retreat at Sam Po Temple)

1. A Trained Mind

- A trained mind is **always silent, heedful, peaceful, relax and naturally aware within.**
- It has the **clarity** borne of **inner peace** and **inner awareness** to 'see things as they are' leading to the **wisdom needed** to arise the **wise attention** or **yoniso manasikara** at **every moment** of sense experience so that one is **always at peace** with the **moment** to live life.
- It **will listen** to you: if you want it **to be silent** it **will just be silent; peaceful and aware** - it will just be so.
- You can **use it** and **direct it appropriately** to cultivate the **Noble 8-fold path** leading to the **heedfulness.**
- It will become like a **servant** to you, it **will serve** you well.
- A trained mind is **ever mindful** and **constantly meditative** hence it is the base from which **Wisdom** will keep on arising.

2. An Untrained Mind

- An **untrained** mind is **heedless.** It **thinks a lot** and **reacts easily** to sense experiences and is **constantly lost** in thoughts most of the time and as per Dhammapada verse 21: - the **heedless** are **as if dead.**
- It is like a **devil's workshop** and it will make you very evil.
- You have no control over it. It actually controls you and takes over your life causing you **suffering.**
- The **thinking** mind, the **mundane** mind which is **heedless** need to be trained.
- **Deluded** with wrong views, it easily become **angry, selfish, emotional** and **fearful** hence the suffering.
- It has got **no understanding** of what is going on in life. It **lacks Wisdom** because it is **deluded.**

3. Training the Mind

- **Without** Wisdom, living beings are **heedless** hence they **suffer** because they don't understand life.
- To understand life **one must understand** the **secret of life** which is the **4 Noble Truths** as taught by the Buddha.
- To understand the **4 Noble Truths** one must **train** one's mind to be **heedfulness** to understand what is going on in life so as to understand **who we are; what we are** and **how our mind function** so that we understand what **causes us suffering** and how our **deluded mundane mind** get **muddled up** in life.
- The **untrained mind** is **heedless** and **not peaceful** because of the **5 mental hindrances** of sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and doubt. These mental hindrances will hinders one from entering the **meditative state** of **inner peace** with **inner awareness.** And **to overcome** the 5 mental hindrances one only need to cultivate the **opposite 5 spiritual faculties** of Saddhā, viriya, sati, Samadhi and pañña as taught by the Buddha.
- When the **5 Spiritual Faculties** are there, the **mental hindrances** will **be gone** and the mind will be **trained automatically.** That is why you should work on the **cultivation** of the **5 Spiritual Faculties** via your **puja** or **devotional practices** and **daily religious routine.**
- The **3 phases** of dhamma are **Pariyatti, Patipatti** and **Pativedha:** -
 - 1st phase** - **Pariyatti** is the **learning** of the teaching or dhamma as taught by the Buddha.
 - 2nd phase** - **Patipatti** is the **Cultivation** via putting the **Dhamma learned** into practice **in daily life** so that it can become a **living reality.**
 - 3rd phase** - **Pativedha** is **Reaping the Fruits** of one's Cultivation or hard work.

SPIRITUAL FACULTIES INVOLVED	THE 3 TURNINGS of the 4 Noble truths	THE 3 PHASES OF DHAMMA CULTIVATION
i) Saddhā ii) Viriya	Pariyatti developed through:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suttamaya Pañña - the 1st Turning Wisdom borne of hearing or reading the sutta or Dhamma (talks, recordings, books, notes etc.) • Cintamaya Pañña - the 2nd Turning Wisdom through Contemplation, Reflection & Inquiry into all the Teachings so that one can stabilise and assimilate all of the Dhamma that one have heard and read about to set the base for further understanding later on via any of the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Turnings. 	Phase 1 of Dhamma Cultivation Pariyatti - Learning of the doctrine to develop a very stable understanding of the Dhamma.
iii) Sati iv) Samadhi v) Pañña	Patipatti developed through:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhavanamaya Pañña – the 3rd Turning Wisdom borne of Bhavana cultivation or the meditative training. • The moment the mind is Silent without thought, you are already in Sati • Use the Silent Mind to cultivate the N8FP (<i>i.e. the meditation as taught by the Buddha</i>) to become HEEDFUL. • A truly silent mind sees the real Dhamma via seeing things as they are. 	Phase 2 of Dhamma Cultivation is Patipatti - Cultivation via putting the Dhamma learned into practice in daily life so that it can become a living reality.
BALAS – 5 spiritual powers.	Bro Teoh’s advice:- It is not difficult to cultivate Patipatti if you are really, really determined and sincere . Just cultivate the Saddhā, Viriya and sati leading to the Samadhi (Sati when stabilised will cumulate into Samadhi) until they are unshakable. Then the mental faculties will become spiritual powers or balas then Wisdom will keep on arising, and then you will Awaken.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the most beautiful phase of one’s life when one can truly live life to the fullest. • Leading a Noble Life. • Living the life of the Awaken Ones. 		Phase 3 of Dhamma Cultivation is Pativedha -Reaping the Fruits of your Cultivation or hardwork.

Importance of Sati to walk the Path of Dhamma

Sati is **extremely** important because **without Sati**:-

- 1) One will become **Heedless**;
- 2) One will **not be able** to follow the Buddha’s advice – to *Strive on with Heedfulness* (Appamadena Sampadetha);
- 3) One will **not be able** to follow the advice of the Buddha ‘to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind’ following his **Dhammapada verse 183**;
- 4) One will **not be able to** keep one’s Precepts;
- 5) There **will be no** 5 Spiritual Faculties;
- 6) There **will be no** 4 Foundations of Mindfulness practices;
- 7) One **will not be able to** investigate the dhamma (Dhammavicaya);
- 8) There **will be no** 7 Factors of Enlightenment;
- 9) There **will be no** Noble 8 Fold Path cultivation.

Important Advice to Meditators

- 1) **Don't try to know anything** during meditation.
- 2) Just **Silent the Mind** and **let things be**. The **understanding** will arise on its **own**.
- 3) The **moment** you are **truly silent** and **relaxed**, **Sati** is already there. This is the **silent mind** that **can investigate** into all phenomena, then **let the phenomenon** tell you the 'story', - **don't go and look for the 'story'** with your thoughts or dhamma knowledge.

Note: The **pitfall** of "*thought-based meditation*" is: - one is **limited** by the **instrument** that one uses to develop the meditation hence their **inability** to realise the Enlightenment which is **beyond thought** and **beyond mind**. One needs to **inquire deeply** to find out for oneself - **who is the meditator?** If it is the thought which is **actively** doing all the **noting, labelling, chattering** and **trying** to describe the "*Dhamma*" and trying to **develop** the meditation then that is **not** the **silent mind**. The **real Dhamma** can only be realised when you're **truly SILENT**.

Using the Silent Mind (Sammā Sati)

When your **mind is Silent, without any thought**, you will understand everything that is going on within your 5 mental aggregates of form and mind and you will awaken to the 3 characteristics of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā.

You will understand how, upon Contact, Consciousness comes to be. And then how within the content of consciousness you will see how your mind stirs after you input your mental intention borne of your wrong view. Then how upon Contact, the **7 universals**¹ which are common to all consciousness arise simultaneously. The Feeling part, you will feel it clearly and you will understand how upon Contact, Feeling arises. But because you don't have Wisdom or you lack **Yoniso Manasikara (wise attention)** at the moment of sense experience, feeling will be immediately conditioned into Craving. Hence without wisdom or yoniso manasikara you cannot 'cut' at feeling.

You will see all these within your meditation. And that is the **real direct seeing**. That is how you will come to understand clearly that this **condition arising** mind, the stirring of the mind, and the reactive mind are not your **true mind**. They arise because of your wrong Views.

Then the 4 Noble Truths, one by one, you will come to understand them. You will come to understand the realities of life and existence; what is suffering and the cause behind its arising.

¹*The 7 universal mental factors (sabbacittasādhāraṇa cetasikas) are common (sādhāraṇa) to all consciousness (sabbacitta). They perform the most rudimentary and essential cognitive functions without which consciousness of an object would be impossible. They are:-*

1. Phassa – contact; 2. Vedanā – feeling; 3. Saññā – perception; 4. Cetanā – volition; 5. Ekaggata - one-pointedness; 6. Jīvitindriya - life faculty; & 7. Manasikāra – attention
-

There are 5 Ways to Overcome Unwholesome Thoughts or negative Mental States

The Buddha taught **5 Ways to overcome the unwholesome thoughts or negative mind states** during meditation.

1st & 2nd Ways – Thought-Based	Use skilful means of Right Effort to:	Remarks
1st - To think of the Direct Opposite wholesome thought to abandon the unwholesome thought.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arise the un-arisen wholesome thought; 2. Refine upon and perfect the wholesome thought that has arisen. 	"Do Good"
2nd - To Reflect and Contemplate upon the danger and grave consequences of holding onto this unwholesome thought – they are the 3 Evil Roots that can bring about Karmic negativities. Then arise the right effort to Abandon this unwholesome thought.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Abandon the unwholesome thought that has arisen. 4. Prevent the unwholesome thought from arising in the future. 	"Avoid Evil"

The 3 rd & 4 th Ways are Meditative Trainings to develop Wisdom		Remarks
3rd way – just Silent the Mind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To trains the mind by de-conditioning it from the heedless thinking and grasping at sense experience. By just being Silent and aware, without any thoughts, the mind will settle down on its own and return to its natural state of inner silence and stillness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The moment you are Silent, you will come to know that all these emotional negativities, all the Evil Roots and mental Hindrances, - they are merely condition arising mind states, and they are never ‘you’. I.e. Anger is not ‘you’. The understanding and acceptance of the reality of all condition arising sensations and emotion at the moment of sense experience, without any reaction or stirring of mind, can lead to profound Wisdom. 	<p>“Purify the Mind”</p>
4th way – To trace & reverse Retrospectively via wisdom (“the Wisdom Way”). Using the silent mind to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trace the Origination Factors of the negative thought or mind state and then reverse it retrospectively. Trains the cultivator to develop the True Understanding via mindfulness of the 6 internal and 6 external sense bases (Dhammanupassana practice) to arise the 3rd Turnings wisdom of Bhavana maya pañña. 		
(A) Tracing the Origination Factors of mental states		
Dhammanupassana	Dhamma Investigation	
Mindfulness of the 5 mental Hindrances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See how they arise - usually through the 3 major sense doors of Seeing, Hearing & Thinking then retrospectively reverse it via wisdom to understand how the arisen mental hindrance cease to be; To counter the mental hindrances via cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties of Saddhā, Viriya, Sati, samādhī and pañña cultivated to straighten one’s views. 	
Mindfulness of the 5 Mental Aggregates of Form & Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See how the 5 Mental Aggregates come to be; their condition arising (hence impermanent), suffering and non-self or empty nature. See how you deludedly grasp, cling and attach to them via self delusion or sakkāya-diṭṭhi. 	
Mindfulness of the 6 External & 6 Internal Sense Bases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you had understood what these 5 Aggregates of form and mind are and you had developed a stable Sati to be aware of them, then you can trace the origination factors via the mindfulness of the 6 external & 6 internal sense bases practices – to see clearly how the external sense data, upon contact with mind and their respective internal sense bases, trigger off sense door consciousness and its related mental activities via the 12 links. See how, due to wrong view, your mind stirs easily. When you contemplate and reflect, you will realise that if you don’t do anything via right view to see things as they are, it will cease to be. 	
Mindfulness of the 7 Factors of Enlightenment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To refer to the 4 foundation of mindfulness or Satipatthāna sutta for further details. 	
Mindfulness of the 4 Noble Truths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To refer to the 4 foundation of mindfulness or Satipatthāna sutta for further details. 	
(B) Reversing it Retrospectively - The key here is a Silent Mind.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Silent Mind can trace all the origination factors to develop the much needed wisdom - Yoniso Manasikara (or wise attention) at the moment of sense experience to retrospectively reverse it via wisdom. Per the Satipatthāna: <i>You will come to know how the un-arisen fetter or hindrance comes to be. Then you will come to understand how the arisen fetter or hindrance ceases to be.</i> 		
The 5th way: - with teeth clenched and tongue pressed against the palette, one should with one’s mind restrain, root out these unwholesome thoughts; and in doing so these evil and unwholesome thoughts of greed, hatred and delusion will dissolve and the mind will inwardly become settled and calm, composed and concentrated. Sheer determination via a very strong will to abandon the unwholesome thoughts.		

Appendix 7

DHAMMAPADA 153 - 154

Dhammapada 153 - 154	Detailed Explanation.	Essential Dhammas & Notes
Seeking but not finding the house builder, I travelled through the round of countless births .	The Bodhisatta then had cultivated through countless lifetimes in search for the house builder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Noble Truths • 5 Aggregates of Clinging • Dependent Origination • 3 Evil Roots • Law of Kamma • 5 Spiritual Faculties & • 5 Hindrances of Mind.
Oh, painful is birth ever and again!	Repeated Birth leads to endless suffering or Dukkha	
House	5 aggregates of Form & Mind	
builder,	Craving – that conditions Becoming & Birth which propel beings to tumble through samsara mindlessly/ heedlessly .	
you have now been seen.	Via Direct Seeing of condition arising	
You shall not build the house again.	Craving will not condition future rebirths since it has been completely abandoned .	<p style="text-align: center;">Aspirations to root out Ignorance & Defilements are included in our Personal Pūjā & Aspirations.</p>
Your rafters*	All mental defilements (kilesa)	
have been broken down,	via Perfection of Virtues and Purification of the Mind to arise the appropriate right thoughts, actions and speeches.	
your ridge-pole*	Ignorance (avijjā) - the first in the 12 links	
is demolished too.	via Perfection of Wisdom – completely rooting out Ignorance	<p>Also in our Pūjā & Aspirations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Strive on with Heedfulness to attain the Paths & Fruitions soonest possible; • To Diligently cultivate Silā, Samādhi & Pañña leading to the Ultimate Liberation, the bond-free Nibbāna.
My mind has now attained the unformed or unconditioned nirvana and reached the end of every kind of craving .	Nibbana realised ending of all Craving & Ignorance .	

* The **ridge pole** is the **top main support** for the roof truss and the **rafters** are the bearer beams (sub main supports) spanning from the ridge pole to the base plate of the roof truss needed to support the battens which are needed to hold the roof tiles etc.

Appendix 8 - The 3 Turnings and 12 Modes of the 4 Noble Truths as proclaimed by the Buddha.					The 3 Phases of Dhamma Cultivation
	First Noble Truth	Second Noble Truth	Third Noble Truth	Fourth Noble Truth	
1st Turning Wisdom:- SUTTAMAYA PANNA - Wisdom borne of hearing the sutta or Dhamma as proclaimed by the Buddha	Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 1st Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha: - "This, bhikkhus, is the 1st Noble Truth of Dukkha : Birth is dukkha, ageing is dukkha, sickness is dukkha, death is dukkha, to be with the disliked is dukkha, separation from the liked and your prized possessions is dukkha, not able to get what one desires is dukkha — in brief these 5 aggregates of rupa, vedana, sanna, sankhara and vinana, which are the objects of <i>clinging and grasping are dukkha.</i> "	Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 2nd Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha: - "This, bhikkhus, is the 2nd Noble Truth of the Cause of Dukkha : It is this craving which causes rebirth bound up with pleasure and lust, ever seeking fresh delight, now here, now there; namely craving for sensual pleasure, craving to be or for existence and craving not to be or for non-existence."	Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 3rd Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha: "This, bhikkhus, is the 3rd Noble Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha : It is the complete cessation , giving up, abandonment of that craving, complete release from that craving, and complete detachment from it leading to the realization of Nibbana which is the enlightenment in the here and the now."	Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 4th Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha: "This, bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the path leading to the Cessation of Dukkha, namely the Noble Eightfold Path of: <i>Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Samadhi.</i> "	Phase 1 – PARIYATI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves the learning of the doctrine/ teachings via the 1st turning and 2nd turning wisdom. 1st turning wisdom - Suttamaya panna can be developed via :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearing the dhamma as shared by someone who understands the teachings; Listening to appropriate dhamma recordings (MP3, CDs, videos, etc); Reading dhamma books, notes and online materials as shared by someone who understands the teaching. 2nd turning wisdom - Cintamaya panna can be developed via :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contemplation, reflection and inquiry into the dhamma as taught by the Buddha to develop further understanding via stabilizing what one had heard and read then assimilating them into one's heart to set the base for developing further understanding later on via either the 1st, 2nd or 3rd turnings.)
2nd Turning Wisdom:- CINTAMAYA PANNA - Wisdom borne of reflection, inquiry and contemplation into the dhamma as proclaimed by the Buddha	Contemplate, reflect & inquire into the 1 st Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha. Why did the Buddha say: "This Noble Truth of Dukkha is to be understood?"	Contemplate, reflect & inquire into the 2 nd Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha. Why did the Buddha say: "The cause of the arising of Dukkha which is craving is to be abandoned"?	Contemplate, reflect & inquire into the 3 rd Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha. Why did the Buddha say: "The Cessation of Dukkha is to be realised"?	Contemplate, reflect & inquire into the 4 th Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha. Why did the Buddha say: "This Noble Eight Fold Path that leads to the cessation of Dukkha is to be cultivated"?	
3rd Turning Wisdom:- BHAVANAMAYA PANNA - Wisdom borne of the meditative training - via the direct 'seeing' or awakening	Direct seeing leading to Realisation. "This Noble Truth of Dukkha has already been understood."	Direct seeing leading to Realisation. "The cause of the arising of Dukkha which is craving has already been abandoned."	Direct seeing leading to Realisation. "The Cessation of Dukkha has already been realised."	Direct seeing leading to Realisation. "This Noble Eight Fold Path that leads to the cessation of Dukkha has already been cultivated."	Phase 2 - PATIPATI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves the cultivation of the Doctrine in daily life via putting the teachings into practice to develop the 3rd turning wisdom – Bhavanamaya panna. (Bhavana is the meditative training needed to develop wisdom via the formal daily mindfulness and 4 foundations of mindfulness meditation. Having a good daily religious routine to develop the 5 spiritual faculties will help.) Need to cultivate until one is awoken to move on to the third phase of dhamma.
Phase 3 - PATIVEDHA This phase is Reaping the Fruits of one's Cultivation					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEADING A NOBLE LIFE LIVE THE LIFE OF THE AWAKEN ONES 	Note: - This the most beautiful phase of one's life where one can truly live life to the fullest to experience all of the noble life as described below :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> life becomes much more meaningful and good because no more suffering; able to understand life clearly hence a lot of joy/ happiness/ peace/ love & compassion; via heedful living one is able to experience all of the wonders and beauties of Life while in this world; able to always acts righteously with wisdom, Love and compassion; always heedful to live the noble life of peace, joy and happiness hence no more heedlessness; able to Live life in accordance with one's noble understanding hence no need to worry about life anymore; always very mindful of one's action , speech and thought via living the noble life of heedfulness; understands precisely that this form and mind is not oneself but only a karmically conditioned 'vehicle' and 'tool' for one to use to live out this segmented life while in this world. 				

