

# **Importance Of Having Mindfulness And Heedfulness To Cope With Life's Problems And Suffering**

**(A Method Of Stress Release Via Meditation)**

Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recorded Sunday Dharma talk**  
as delivered by Brother Teoh Kian Koon

On the **23<sup>rd</sup> June 2013**

At Subang Jaya Buddhist Association (SJBA) on the topic  
**'Importance Of Mindfulness/Heedfulness To Cope With Life's  
Problems And Suffering'**

**(A Method Of Stress Release Via Meditation)**

For free distribution (to **non-Muslims** only)

Donated by:

Kalyāṇamitta Funds of Brother Teoh Kian Koon

Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia.

**Website:** <http://broteoh.com>

**Dated:** 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018



# Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>5</b>
1.1 Synopsis And Notice Of Talk By SJBA.....	5
1.2 Introduction by Bro. Chim, President of SJBA .....	6
<b>2 Dharma talk proper by Bro. Teoh</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.1 Essence of the Buddha’s teaching .....	7
2.2 Importance of Heedfulness .....	17
2.3 The 1 <sup>st</sup> Noble Truth .....	19
2.4 Benefits of meditation .....	21
2.5 Question and Answers.....	35
<b>3 Closing Puja</b> .....	<b>50</b>



## Preface

Basing on some very good feedbacks and suggestions from the audience and some of our kalyāṇamittas who had the condition to listen to this talk, Bro. Teoh had agreed to allow this talk to be transcribed and printed into a booklet form for free distribution to all those who are interested and have the affinity to receive it.

It is also Brother Teoh's **sincere** wish that Dharma friends, spiritual practitioners, seekers of truth, and cultivators will be able **to make use** of the enclosed dharma **transcript notes** to develop a **better understanding** of the Buddha **Dharma as taught** by the Buddha so that they may **progress along the path of dharma** to become more **virtuous, nobler** and **wiser** human beings that can be a **blessing** to all *of humanity and the world*.

As these notes were mostly **compiled** based on a **direct transcript** from the recording of the Dharma talk delivered by Bro. Teoh at SJBA on the 23.6.2013; the **text is aligned** as closely as possible to the **colloquial speech** in the talk. However, some **editorial amendments** have been **made** to the **text without detracting** from the **essence** of the talk. With this, it is hoped that readers can **adjust** themselves accordingly to **better understand** its **true meaning and intent**. A **good** way to do this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading the transcript book.

To listen to the **recording (audio file)** you can log on to our <http://broteoh.com> **website** under **Repository** of Dharma material/other audio files/SJBA Talks; Or **Google**: '*Bro. Teoh's Kalyāṇamittas – A Repository of Dharma Material*' to view them; Or **alternatively download** the **audio file** via this below MP3 audio link:

<http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Teoh-SJBA-130623-Importance-of-Mindfulness-Heedfulness-to-cope-with-Lifes-problems.mp3>

**(Biodata of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon)**

Bro. Teoh graduated from University of Malaya in Civil Engineering in 1979. He has been a *spiritual practitioner cum 'Meditator' since 1971*. Since his retirement in 2001 from his **Engineering career**, he has been **sharing** his *understanding* and *experiences* with those who are *keen in their search* for *true happiness, peace* and **liberation** from *birth and death* and *all mental suffering* so that they can be a blessing to all via becoming a **more virtuous, nobler** and **wiser** human being. He gives **dharma talks** and holds **meditation classes & retreats** and weekly **Dharma classes** at various *meditation centers, Buddhist society* and places that invite him.

For *more details* on *Bro. Teoh's dharma activities* and his **Kalyāṇamittaship grouping** please login to his **dharma website** at: <http://broteoh.com>

## Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intentions** that these *dharma transcript books* be **given free** to 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 **Dharma friends** or **Kalyāṇamittas** who have **donated** and **helped out** in the **transcription, typing, typesetting, formatting, proof reading, etc.** to make this **free distribution** of **dharma dāna** possible.

Special thanks should be accorded to **Sister Chee Guit Yeng** (Puan Chee) who has taken her own **initiative** to **volunteer** to develop the **initial draft transcript** for my **subsequent editing** (without instruction or request from anyone) thereby enabling this **dharma transcript book** to be printed. Her email to me was as follow:

Dear Bro Teoh,

Attached is the draft transcript for the 23rd June 2013 SJBA talk. I am **most grateful** that my **understanding is deepening** through my **own cultivation** and **each time** I do the transcript.

**Mahāsadhu!** Bro Teoh for your **clear pointing** and **guidance**.

With **deepest gratitude** and **mettā** always,  
Chee.

By the **power of all these wholesomeness**, may all beings be **well and happy**, free from all **mental** and **physical sufferings** and **dangers** and may there be **love, peace** and **joy** - deep **within** their

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

With Metta always,

Brother Teoh Kian Koon (Dated: 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018)



# Importance Of Mindfulness And Heedfulness To Cope With Life's Problems And Suffering'

(A Method Of Stress Release Via Meditation)

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Synopsis And Notice Of Talk By SJBA

**Re: Dhamma Talk on "Importance of mindfulness and heedfulness to cope with Life's problems and suffering."**

Bro. Teoh Kian Koon is giving a Dharma talk at SJBA this Sunday 23/6/2013 at 10.00am on the topic: "*Importance of **mindfulness** and **heedfulness** to cope with Life's problems and suffering.*" As this topic is **very relevant to life** it is hoped that you all **can find the time** to attend this **rather important talk**.

**Human sufferings** are **very real** and *many people are afflicted* by it. Even our *youngsters* are not exempted from it. Some of them can be **very traumatic** with **suicidal tendencies**. *Grief, sorrow, lamentation, fear, worries and anxieties leading to severe depression and sadness, etc. are very common nowadays.* Some **consult doctors, Psychiatrists, mediums, Feng Shui masters**; some seek **GOD, religions and friends for help** but *are they really effective?* Maybe some are but **most** of them are **only temporary solutions** which **may not be effective at all**. Instead **can meditation together with understanding and medication** help?

If you are interested in such topics then do come for the talk. You can also bring your friends if you like. So hope to see you all this Sunday, 23.6.2013.

## 1.2 Introduction by Bro. Chim, President of SJBA

Today's dharma talk is by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon on the topic 'Importance of **mindfulness** and **heedfulness** to **cope** with **Life's problems** and **suffering**' (A method of **stress release** via meditation). This Dharma talk is in line with **SJBA's mission** statement to build a **friendly** and **caring** Dharma Centre **filled with** love, compassion and wisdom; where there are lots of *members and devotees* with *smiling faces, warm greetings*, and friendly demeanour to lend their *listening ears*, loving care and kindness. **Without problem** and **stress** all these are **achievable**.

Bro. Kian Koon graduated from the **University of Malaya** in **Civil Engineering** in February 1979. He has been a spiritual practitioner cum 'meditator' since 1971. Since his retirement from his Engineering career in the year 2001, he has been **sharing his understanding** and **experiences** of the Dharma with **serious** and **keen spiritual** and **Dharma practitioners** and **others who are keen** in their **search** for **true peace, happiness, joy** and **liberation** from birth and death and all mental suffering. In our present day society, **true peace** and **happiness** is difficult to come by. So it is Bro. Teoh's *sincere wish* that this **Dharma** as taught by the **Buddha** can be a **great source** of very **useful information** to **help mankind understand life** thereby **liberating** their minds from all mental suffering and affliction.

## 2 Dharma talk proper by Bro. Teoh

Thank you so much to Bro. Chim for the kind introduction. A very good morning to all, brothers and sisters in the dharma. Today's

topic as you have heard is on the '**importance of heedfulness and mindfulness to cope with life's problems and suffering**'. I think this topic is **very important** and that's the reason why *I chose this topic at the beginning of the year* when SJBA wrote to me for my *Dharma talks schedule* for this year. Like what I have explained in the **synopsis** (that part was written by me "Human sufferings are very real..."). Most of us have gone through life. We have **experienced** a lot of *ups and downs* in life. But **not everybody** is that *fortunate and blessed*. If you **have not taken care of your life properly**, if you *don't have the good karma to support* you, then as you go through life, there are *a lot of situations or life realities* that **can afflict** you and make you **miserable**. This is what the **essence** of the Buddha's teaching is all about.

## 2.1 Essence of the Buddha's teaching

According to the Buddha, the **essence** of His teaching is the '**Four Noble Truth**'. And this Four Noble Truth - all Centre on suffering, or dukkha. Dukkha is a Pāli word. He said human suffering is *so real* that **liberation** from **birth** and **death**, from **all suffering** that *comes with birth and death* is **not easy**. That's why the Buddha actually, spent a lot of time (for eons and eons) *cultivating wisdom and virtue*. Then finally when He realized the **complete enlightenment**, He came *to realize this very important truth about Life and Existence*.

He called it The Four Noble Truth. This Four Noble Truth focuses solely on dukkha which is **living beings' suffering or misery and problems**. The first Noble Truth talks about the *realities of life and existence that can bring about dukkha*. The Buddha said, '*if you live long enough, you will confront all these realities.*' He has highlighted

**eight of them** in His **first Noble Truth proclamation**. He said *birth, old age, sickness and death, if you **confront** them **without** wisdom, suffering will be the result*. We have all experienced birth in our lives, we have witnessed them too, and sometimes encountered them ourselves. During **moments** of *sickness, disease and pending death or death*; these experiences can be very traumatic. A lot of people are *afflicted and affected*.

Then the Buddha said, the **other realities** are **even more significant**. As you move on and step into life, He said, **you will confront more severe realities**. First major reality is **confronting separation** from *loved ones, from your prized possessions, from your property, wealth and things that you hold onto dearly*. Including all those that *you have given so much meaning to, that you held onto so dearly*. When separation happens, suffering is going to be the result unless you have developed the wisdom to confront them. Regarding this aspect, the Buddha has highlighted a few possibilities: He said, one of the **possibilities of separation** is **divorce** that arise from **relationship failure**. When you face situations where the spouse or the couple are having problems and **they cannot move on** with their relationship (even those who are not married are not exempted) then separation can happen. Then both may suffer. And not only the couple suffers, the **children are also affected** including the *in-laws* and all those who have *relationship with them*. They are all affected. The other **aspect of separation** is **death**. *Death* can happen *in many ways through disease, sickness, through what you call, accidental death* or sometimes, *it can even happen via various types of accidents, nature's disasters, like tsunami, hurricane, twister, earthquake, flood, etc.*

Then sometimes, it can even happen during **normal life** situations, via kidnap, murder, snatch thief and other related incidences. If it has not happened to us, then maybe it *doesn't impact upon us so severely*. But **when you are affected**, it can be *rather traumatic*. Then **forced separation** is another possibility, the Buddha said. When you are young, *because of poverty*, then sometimes, because of crisis, you get separated from your children, your brothers and sisters and all those things. Then moving on, the Buddha said, as you move through life, you will encounter situations where you have to meet up with a lot of people whom you **don't like** or you **cannot be at peace** with. When you encounter these people without wisdom, the Buddha said, suffering will arise. You heard **a lot** about **child abuse**, right? Even in school, the school children are **not exempted**, the Gangsters, the bullies are *quite common* nowadays. Then sometimes, you work in a **career environment** where you are subjected to *a lot of pressure, a lot of stress, a lot of deadlines* that you *have to meet* because you may have *certain bosses or superiors* that are **not so friendly**. Then sometimes, they go by this very harsh type of **management technique** and principles: '*Management by harassment and fear*'. They harass you and put fear into you. Under such circumstances or situation, you can be subjected to **an environment** of *very traumatic stress, full of fear, worry and anxiety* leading to **depression**.

These situations are very common nowadays. Even young people are subject to it. The energy fields are **very negative** when you are faced with such situations. Then there is also what they call certain **problems related to in-laws**. Sometimes, when your **parents remarry**, you will have to *confront* your *step-mother* and *step-father*. Sometimes, they can be **quite abusive** and **not so friendly**.

Sometimes, they can *even do very severe things* that can *cause you a lot of suffering*. You have heard of **incest, child abuse** and **sexual harassment** right? Then the **other reality** that *almost every day, living beings are subject to* (the degree somewhat varies) is what the Buddha called: *'when you cannot get what you want, when things don't go your way, when your expectations in life are not met, suffering is the result unless you have wisdom'*.

This part affects a lot of people. But the more severe one is: *'through **not understanding life** and the Buddha's teaching, living beings deludedly grasp and cling onto their **5 aggregates of form and mind** believing them to be real*. The Buddha summarized all of suffering as follow: He said, *'in short, it is due to human delusion or ignorance that condition them **to grasp, cling and hold onto this entity** (which we call the **human being**), thinking that this is real, thinking that this is what we are; is the **cause of our suffering'***. Then He breaks the human being down into the **five aggregates of form and mind**. He said, as a human being, you have a **physical body, a physical form** and then you have a **mind, a consciousness** that is trapped inside. This consciousness that is trapped inside, can be broken down further into **four more aggregates of mind**. The reason being, the consciousness or the mind that is trapped inside, can **feel**, can **perceive** the world, the **reality**, and it can also arise **emotions, mental states, thought processes, thinking etc**. He called this **saṅkhāra**. Then He said our mind and consciousness together with this physical body that has the **sense bases** can allow us to be **conscious of things**.

We have the organs of the eye, ear, etc. so we can be **conscious of what we see**, what **we hear**, what **we smell**, what **we taste**, what

we **tactilely feel** and **think**. These are the **karmically-conditioned** form and mind that comes with birth. You are **actually endowed** with all these **beautiful senses**. But you *don't know what they are*. You **deludedly grasp** and *cling*: the Buddha said when you do that **suffering** will arise because **craving** leads to *grasping, clinging* and *attachment* which are the **cause of suffering**. So, because of your **ignorance** and **delusion**, you *grasp and cling* and *hold onto these five aggregates of form and mind*, thinking that *they are what you are* and *they are so real*. And because of that, it conditions your **wrong view** that conditions you to **grasp, cling** and arise the **craving** to be **afflicted**. And the **end result is suffering**, when you don't understand. So, this is the **final summary** of the **1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth**: the **reality of life and existence** and **what suffering is?**

First, He *explained to you clearly* how you get **yourself entangled** and **how you** get yourself **afflicted** by all these *realities of life and existence* which **not only you are subject to**, but *all of humanity and living beings who have lived long enough are also subject to*. It is a **common problem**, it is a **universal problem** of humanity. So, the **Buddha's intention is to liberate** from **birth** and **death** because with birth, it will end up with death. And in between, there is what He called, the **reality of life** which will **afflict you** and make you **miserable**. So, this 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth is very important. A lot of living beings suffer without knowing why they suffer, why they are afflicted.

Suffering is so real but they **cannot see**. They **still blame** other people and the **world** for what happened *despite their fear, worry, anxiety, sadness, sorrow* and *lamentation* leading to **severe depression** and **miseries**. And nowadays, if you take a look at the

modern younger generation, they are already being subjected to a lot of stress and pressure, leading to depression at a very young age. They end up *seeing psychiatrists* and *trauma doctors*. And you can see them in hospitals. You can also check around, almost every family, every living being who have lived long enough, they must have gone through a lot of **stressful moments** and **suffering** which is a very *common phenomenon*.

Then the Buddha moved on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Noble Truth: He said, there is a **cause** *behind this suffering*. And the cause He already explained under the **final summary** of the **1st Noble Truth**. It's your **ignorance**, your **delusion** that **conditions** you to *grasp and cling via craving*. *Craving can be positive and negative craving via wanting things your way*. **When you cannot get what you want, suffering is the end result** because the **delusion conditions** you to **crave, to cling, to hold, to grasp** via thinking they are real, thinking you **can own them**, you **can have** them. Just like this body, if you attach and cling to this body, thinking that it is you, then what happen? You will worry about it **getting old, getting sick** and one day **die** isn't it? This is because *you don't understand who you are, what you are and what death is*. That's why **without heedfulness** and **mindfulness**, you **cannot understand life**. So, the Buddha said, the very basis of *living a holy life* is to **understand life**. And how can we understand life? We need to understand the **important laws** that **govern** all of **life** and **existence**. And these laws have two parts, one is the **scientific law** or **materialistic law** within the **conditioned world** of materialism. The other one is the **spiritual law** that **can enable you** to develop the **spiritual understanding** and **wisdom** to understand the **spiritual aspect** of life. And when you understand these laws,



you **will** understand the **secret of life** because these are the **laws that govern life and existence**.

The **Four Noble Truth** is one of the **most important spiritual laws** that you **need to truly understand**. So, the Buddha first explained, what **is suffering** via proclaiming the **1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth** of **dukkha** or **suffering**. Then, the **2<sup>nd</sup> Noble Truth** of the **cause of arising of suffering** which is **craving** borne of your **self-delusion** and **ignorance**. Then, He moved on to say, there is a **3<sup>rd</sup> Noble Truth** on **cessation of dukkha**, the **ending of dukkha**, the **liberation** of the mind, the **realization of enlightenment** where the Buddha said, '**suffering need not be when you have the wisdom**, when you have **trained your mind** to be **heedful**, to be **mindful** to **develop the meditation** as taught by Him so that you **can realize the Dharma** or the **wisdom** that He has taught us, the **Noble Truth** He had **realized** and taught to us'.

Then, **enlightenment in the here and the now** is **possible**; **suffering need not be**, all of **life problems can come to an end**. This is the part that we are interested in: - the **realization** of Nibbāna, the **enlightenment**, that can bring about **complete liberation** from **human suffering**, from **all mental suffering**, free from *all life problems and situations, no more fear, no more worry, no more anxiety, no more sorrow and lamentation*, no more of all those **depression and negativity**. Then, after that, the Buddha moved on to the final Noble Truth which is the **4<sup>th</sup> Noble Truth**. He not only said what is possible, He even taught you how to do it. He said under this 4th Noble Truth, there is a Path that **can lead us** to the **end of all suffering**, namely, the **Noble Eightfold Path**.

If you cultivate *this Noble Eightfold Path* which has **eight noble path factors** that can make you **noble ones** or **enlightened ones**, then, it will lead to the end of (or cessation of) all suffering, then no more problem, no more suffering. This is basically the **introduction** and a **summary** to explain to you how **beautiful the Buddha Dharma is**, how **beautiful the Buddha's message is** and **how fortunate we are as Buddhists** to have **this teaching** that can give rise to **such good understanding of life**.

Now I will go into the **Dharma talk proper**. If you may recall, the Buddha before He passed away or before He entered Nibbāna (they call it the great **Parinibbāna** of the Buddha), over two thousand five hundred plus years ago. What was His final instruction to all his disciples and his lay devotees? Can you all remember? What did the Buddha say? Some of you may know, anybody? Huh, yes, **very good** and Sadhu! **‘Strive on with heedfulness, do not be heedless anymore.’** The Pāḷi word is **‘Appamādena Sampādeṭha.’** This is the **final advice**. Why did the **Buddha** say that? **Because according to the Buddha**, He has **realized this rather important truth** that the only **mind quality** that you *need to have* is this **heedfulness or mindfulness**. Then you are **assured** of the **spiritual life, the noble life** and **enlightenment** will follow. So it **sounds quite easy**, isn't it? **I only need to be heedful or mindful then I am already on the path to enlightenment**. And all these, the **Buddha actually mentioned and emphasized** on them under his **Dhammapada verses**. Have you all **heard of these Dhammapada verses 21, 22 and 23?**

Under the **Dhammapada** there are **423 verses** that the **Buddha spoke** and these are all **eternal truth**. Even until today, **each and every** of these **Dhammapada verse still stand, never get obsolete**

because they are **evergreen**. During my **early days**, I tried to **contemplate** and **reflect**, *'how can the Buddha be so wise?'* **423** of these **evergreen truths!** Ask me to come out with one **truth that can last a century or two**, also **not easy** because a lot of the so-called **truth** that living beings come out with, **sooner or later they become obsolete**. Even certain **scientific truths** can also become **obsolete**. Later **understanding** will make them **obsolete**. But the **Buddha** is so **wise**. All these **Dhammapada verses** that He spoke **2500+** years ago, *had remained eternally valid until today*.

That's why it's **very unique**. There are **twenty verses** *within this Appamāda vagga*. Appamāda is **heedfulness**, the **verses on heedfulness**. And the **starting verse** is **verse 21**. And the **Buddha** made it **very clear**. *He said, 'Heedfulness is the path to the deathless whereas heedlessness is the path to the dead. The heedful never die whereas the heedless are as if dead.'* This is a **very important truth**. It **explains** to you **clearly** the **importance of heedfulness**. Without **heedfulness**, He said, you are **as if dead**, - what **does it mean?** It means, you may be **alive, conscious** of life, but you are **spiritually dead** *because there is no spiritual life for you* anymore. That's why you are **as if dead** **because** through **delusion**, through **ignorance**, you only **existed** *through life*, you **never live**, **whereas** the **heedful never die** **because** for those **who are heedful**, they **understand** *through their cultivation and wisdom, what death is*. And they **understand clearly**, *'Nothing dies and no one dies'* *because it is anattā, non-self and empty nature of existence*. So, *because of that*, the **heedful never die**. And they are **destined** for **enlightenment** **because Dhammapada verses 22 and 23** that follow, **clearly pointed** out to the **monks and the devotees** *at that time, the importance of heedfulness*.

**Dhammapada verse 22** is a continuation of **verse 21**. The **Buddha** said, *‘clearly and distinctly understanding the great difference between heedfulness and heedlessness, the wise intent on heedfulness. And because they do that, they will rejoice in the realm of the Ariyas or the enlightened ones’*. See, when you *intent on heedfulness*, you will be *assured of enlightenment*. You can rejoice in the realm of the *enlightened beings, the Ariyas*.

Then **verse 23** confirms everything. Under *Dhammapada verse 23*, the Buddha said; *‘the ever mindful, constantly meditative and the steadfast one, they will definitely realize the supreme bond-free enlightenment that He called Nibbāna*. So, what is ever mindful? **Ever mindful** means you are **most of the time continuously aware and mindful**. Then **constantly meditative** means using this **mindfulness** that you have developed or trained to **constantly cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path**. Within this **Noble Eightfold Path** is also the **Four Noble Truth** cultivation as stated under the **1<sup>st</sup> path** factor of **Right View** and the **7<sup>th</sup> path** factor of **Samma Sati** (under the **5<sup>th</sup> category of practices of Dhammānupassanā** - the Fourth Foundations of Mindfulness). All His **essential dharma or teachings** spin off from the Four Noble Truth. That’s why when you use it to cultivate the **essential Dharma** that the Buddha taught, that is **constantly meditative**. So, when you combine these two, **ever mindful and constantly meditative**, you **become heedful**. The **steadfast ones** means you hold onto this **heedfulness practices steadfastly or continuously**; you are destined to realize this *Supreme born-free Nibbāna*.

## 2.2 Importance of Heedfulness

This is the *most important* Dhammapada verse that you *should bear in mind*. That's why **heedfulness** is *very important*. **Heedfulness** will lead you to the **cultivation** of the **meditation as taught** by the **Buddha**, which is the **cultivation** of the *Noble Eightfold Path* and only this can free you, *nothing else* in this world. This brings me back to the point where during the month of February, I was supposed to have my first scheduled talk on 'the **benefits of meditation**' here. But, I didn't have the chance to come and give that talk which I must **sincerely apologize** because I had to go through an **angioplasty procedure**. So, I missed out on that talk but *don't worry*. I will include that **topic** in my **today's Dharma talk** because they are **related**.

**Heedfulness** will lead to the *meditation as taught by the Buddha*. So today I will just add in this part – '*The **benefits of meditation***'. When you are heedful, what does it mean? It means you are **ever mindful** plus constantly **cultivating the Noble Eightfold Path** (which is the **meditation** as taught by the Buddha). So, this is **most important** because like what we had discussed just now, the **Fourth Noble Truth** is about cultivating this **Noble Eightfold Path**. If you cultivate this Eightfold Path, it **will lead** to the **cessation** of all **suffering** (all of life's problems *will cease* to be). So, **Heedfulness = Ever mindful + constantly meditative**. **Without mindfulness**, you **cannot** start. **Mindfulness** is an English translation of the word **sati** used by the Buddha. The *real meaning of sati or mindfulness* is **awareness before the knowing**. When you are **silent** and **aware before the thought** or **aggregates of mind** come out, **that is Sati**. And when you are in Sati, you *can 'see things as they are'*, your mind are **not**

**clouded** by the thought, by the aggregates of mind. There is **no activity and no movement inside**. But the **awareness** can allow you to **see things as they are** to awaken to the **truth** and the **reality**. That's how you cultivate the **Noble Eightfold Path**. That's **how wisdom comes** to be. This will bring us to the topic 'the Benefits of Meditation' which I wanted to include in my today's talk.

Since **Heedfulness** can lead us to the **meditation** as taught by the Buddha, then what are the **benefits** that can arise with this type of meditation? Can anybody try and give me some answers? Some of you *have done meditation before*, right? So what are the **benefits** that will come your way if you do *this type of meditation*? We call it the **mindfulness** meditation. Anybody wants to try? The first benefit is very *simple and obvious*, isn't it? When you meditate, what happens to you? You become **more peaceful** and **calmer**, isn't it? So, what type of benefit is it? You gain **Inner peace**, right? **Inner peace** is *very important*, for **Peace** is very difficult to come by nowadays. If you can get **inner peace**, it can *help you so much in life*. Especially so when you are in the **midst of suffering**, having a **lot of fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow** and **lamentation** and your mind **very restless** because you have **problems** related to life. Do you all know what the common problems of life are? Just now, we shared the **eight realities** of *life and existence* which is the Buddha's way of explaining *life's situation* and **problems** during the early days. But nowadays, society has *evolved and become more sophisticated*. So, we can actually **reclassify** the **eight realities** into **actual human problems** and **suffering** that you **can relate to**. Let us now **summarize** what the First Noble Truth is.

## 2.3 The 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth

The First Noble Truth's 8 realities of life and existence are: First, He talked about *birth, old age, sickness and death*. Old age, sickness, birth and death we can **relate them** to your **health problems**, isn't it? Especially getting old, having sickness and facing death; these are rather **traumatic problem** that human beings **have to confront**. Nowadays, **cancer, stroke, heart attack** and a lot of other rather *traumatic diseases* such as *HIV, brain tumour, Kidney failure* etc. are very common. So, health problems are very real. When you and your loved ones are **confronted** with these types of **very severe health issues**, it can give rise to **a lot of fear, worry, anxiety and sadness leading to depression**. The *thought will project* and you will **attach, cling** and **hold** (via delusion) because *you don't understand* what is going on.

So, *health problem* is a major problem. Then, of course, we have the next reality which is old age. Old age means going through the **aging process** which can be *equally traumatic* because you can develop what they call very **severe dementia** and **arthritis** problems. Then, as you age, **your senses** start to fail you and your **health** starts to **deteriorate**. You become **very fragile, very weak** and you are full of *health related problems*. This is what the Buddha label as **old age** or the **reality of aging**. So, **physical suffering** leading to **mental suffering** is **very common** because physically you are affected through old age and your **consciousness which is trapped** inside will **feel it**. Sometimes, you don't need old age to cause such suffering. When you have **an injury due to accident**, you have to confront them too because your *consciousness is trapped inside*. There is a

lot of pain, a lot of suffering leading to *insomnia* (inability to have proper *sleep*), *sadness* and *depression*.

Then, the third reality is what they call, money problem. Money problem in modern term is call **financial problem**. This one can be very real, isn't it? Those with *financial problem*, especially those who got themselves entangled with **loan sharks**, can have very severe problem. Then sometimes when you are **confronted with poverty**, or your children *need to go to university* or you **need money** to resolve certain issues like to help them go through the operation or medical procedure, and you **don't have** the money (especially if they want to go to university) and you become desperate. So, **financial problem** can be quite an issue. Then when you are in **business** you are **caught in a situation** where you are **short of capital** and you have **cash flow** problem and you may be wipe off, that can be **very traumatic** too. Then when your business is **not doing well**, you have *cash flow problems, financial problems* leading to *fear of business failure, bankruptcy*, etc. Even young graduates nowadays - a lot of them have **credit cards problem** leading to *legal actions* by the bank. You have heard of these right? Some of them are *already bankrupt* because a high percentage of them just survive on credit card via paying the 5% minimum charge.

Then the **fourth reality is career** related. This one, career problem can be **very severe** too. What else can torment you? **Relationship problem**, isn't it? Your relationship with your loved ones. This is to help us redefine the First Noble Truth realities. And these are **very real problems** and even if you are very **successful in life**, when you *confront some of these realities or problems, you can still become afflicted* because **relationship problems** is not something money



can help resolve. Or health issues and problem is also not something money can really help you to resolve. It may bring about better conditions for better medical services and affordability but it doesn't finally help you out because money **cannot buy** health. Then, when it comes to **mental suffering** it is worst.

The **sixth reality** is **mental suffering**. That's why we have a lot of **depression cases** nowadays. They have mental issues. They can't actually live with **those thoughts**, those **very negative obsessive, compulsive** and **intrusive thoughts** that constantly arise in their mind leading to **suicidal thoughts** etc. Nowadays, **psychiatrists** recognize such mental problem and they call it **OCD (Obsessive, Compulsive disorder)**.

Then, the **seventh reality** is when you **break the law**, when you **overstep the line**, when you **get yourself into legal problems and entanglement**. So, all these can be **very traumatic, very severe** and it can bring about a lot of problems especially **those problems involving police cases**. Especially if your children or loved ones are involved **in drugs, murder, crime** etc. All these can be **very serious**. And **the fear they go through** can **be very severe**. Those who have experienced all these will know. All these are very real life related issues.

## 2.4 Benefits of meditation

The **benefits of meditation** are very important. When you are faced with all these life related problems, for normal people their minds are **very restless with a lot of fear, worry, anxiety and sadness** and these are all **negative energy fields** which can **cause your immune**

*system* to go **down**. The **reason** being *fear, worry, anxiety, sadness, sorrow and lamentation* can cause your **cells to mutate** and **become stressful**. So, this is the **source of traumatic disease**, leading to death. When you are *confronted with all these* and you **don't know how to recuperate** or **recover** from it, then you go and see doctors; what they can do for you is give you *some form of medication*. Maybe, physically, they can have an impact on you but most of the time, they will tell you, it's more of a **mental problem**. They cannot help you in that sense then you go see psychiatrists. Psychiatrists also depend on which one you see. There **are some** that are **quite good**, they *know how to monitor you and lead you out of it*. But, most of the time it is not a **permanent fix or solution** because *most of them may not have the dharma* to **explain to you clearly how you get yourself entangled**. Most of them, *use drugs, tranquilizer and medication* to help you **sleep better** and **to stabilize your chemical imbalance**, to make you feel better.

Like, when you have these **panic attack, anxiety, insomnia** leading to the **depression** and all those *mental related issues*, what do they do? They will give you *some medication*. Most of it is **sedative**. They call it **tranquilizer** that make you **sleepy** because most people with **depression cannot sleep**. They got **insomnia problem** and they become **very miserable**. That's why it leads to **suicidal thoughts** and **tendencies** and it's very traumatic because they want to sleep, but they cannot sleep. They want to be **peaceful** but they **cannot** because these **panic attacks** can come any time. There's **a lot of fear** in them. So, **this type of suffering** which is **mental suffering** is **so real**. How are we going to deal with it? The Buddha said, you develop **heedfulness**. To develop heedfulness, you **must train** your **mundane heedless thinking mind** in **awareness or mindfulness**.

Then, from there, **use it to meditate**, to **cultivate** the Noble 8-Fold Path leading to **heedfulness**. When you start to meditate, the **benefits of meditation** will help you **recover** and **recuperate from** all these **so-called negative energy fields** or **mind states** that can cause your **immune system** to go down and for you **to succumb** to all these diseases.

When you are mindful, aware and without thought, you are **very serene**, very **peaceful** and **very calm**. So, **inner peace** is the **first mental benefit** that can come about *with this type of meditation*. This **inner peace** born of **Pīti** will arise *when you are mindful without thought*. Pīti is a *meditative joy* or **rapture**. So, when you have *inner peace*, you will have this pīti, leading to sukha. **Sukha** is mental **blissfulness** leading to the **tranquillity** or **stillness** of mind or the state of *passaddhi*. **Passaddhi** is the **silent mind**, the mind that is **without thought** and **just aware**. The **silent mind** will make you **very peaceful** and **very calm**. So, this **inner peace** will bring about a lot of good **positive stillness** and **silent energy**, and this positive **mental energy** is *conserved* because it's *not lost* in **thoughts**, it's **not** channelled into **fear**, **worry**, **anxiety** and **wrong thought**. During this moment, you can understand **truth** because there is **clarity**. And if **you use** it to **radiate mettā** or **loving kindness**, it can bring about the second **benefit** which is **inner well-being**. Your mind and heart feel **a lot better**, you feel a lot **more peaceful**, **calmer**, **more positive** and more **confident** within.

This *inner peace, inner well-being* will lead to **third benefit** which is the **clarity of mind**. Your mind has **clarity** because it's **not pre-occupied** with **fear**, **worry** and **anxiety** and it's also **not restlessness** or **confused**. When you are **very peaceful** and **calm**, you **have**

clarity, you can reflect and contemplate into whatever life's issues or problems that you have. Then, with that clarity, you can develop some form of understanding to cope with it, to overcome it. That's how meditation can help you in a very big way. But the most important thing is to use this clarity of mind (which is the silent mind), to meditate and arise the wisdom *via seeing things as they are*. That's why the fourth benefit is wisdom, the wisdom that arises from *proper meditation can free your mind*. And when you meditate with heedfulness, awareness and clarity of mind, you can know exactly how you get yourself entangled in life, how you actually *via delusion, grasp, cling, hold* and react to arise the craving which condition your suffering; how the evil roots come to be and make you evil and how the evil roots condition your mental suffering. So, all these, you will start to understand. Then you will also start to understand the Noble Truth very clearly. The Buddha's words will become very clear to you. The realities of life and existence, the first eight conditions or realities that the Buddha spoke about will also be very clear to you. Then, all these that I had mentioned will also become very clear to you. If you don't have delusion, all these negativities of mind states will not arise. That's why the Buddha said, suffering need not be when you have the wisdom, when you have the understanding.

When you are able to develop inner peace it means: - Every time, you have a problem, you just go back to a quiet place, to meditate and silent your mind. So, that it will develop the inner peace and inner well-being. But, this is only a temporary solution in the sense that when you are out of it and back to life, the problem can come back to you. That's why when you have these two states of inner peace and inner well-being, you will have this clarity of mind, and

then you must **use it to meditate** to develop the **wisdom** because **without wisdom, you cannot** free yourself. But, when *wisdom* comes to be, all the **delusion** that **conditions** you **to grasp, cling** and **hold** and make you **miserable**, will **slowly and surely fade away**, leading to the **happiness** and **joy** deep within your mind because for the *first time* in your life, you understand **there is a way out of suffering**.

This way is **so beautiful** and the Buddha has taught it to us so clearly. That's why when you start to **insight** into **reality, life and existence**, the **characteristics** of *nature* and when you start to understand the **noble teaching** of *impermanence, suffering state and non-self* (or *aniccam, dukkham, anattā*), your **mind opens up**. It **liberates the mind** because that *clarity leading to the wisdom is so powerful*. It cuts **across all delusion** and **frees** you completely. And for the **first time in your life, life becomes meaningful, life becomes beautiful, no more suffering, no more problems**. Then, after that, the **associated benefits** will come. *You will have good sleep*. A lot of them *with insomnia problem* will like this. Then, you can use this **meditative mind to do good and other wholesome things** so that you can be a **blessing** to the **world**.

And when you **radiate** more **mettā**, **cultivate** the Noble Eightfold Path more and more, you will become more **virtuous**. You will have **right Views**, which means you **understand** the **secret of life**, you understand the **spiritual law that governs life and existence**, you are **no longer deluded**. Then, it will condition you *to arise the right thought, right speech and right action* and you will become such a **beautiful living being**. Then, *the way you live your life, is based on right living and right livelihood*. You will constantly cultivate the

**Four Right Efforts** to purify your thought and to make yourself more and more *virtuous*, with less and less *negativity*. And finally, you **develop mindfulness leading to heedfulness** and the **Samadhi** to **realize the enlightenment**. That's why *Noble Eightfold Path* is very powerful. When you have them, it can actually help you in a very big way.

So, once your mind is *trained, peaceful*, with *inner peace* leading to *inner well-being, clarity and wisdom*, you **will not have any more worry, fear and anxiety** or *any other negativity of mind states*. Your mind will **not have** any more **attachment** and **craving**. *It's a free mind*. That's how this mind can *sleeps very well*. There is very good sleep, and to have good sleep is not easy, do you know that? For those who have **insomnia**, they will know. For some after taking the sleeping pill the psychiatrist or doctor has given them, they will have good sleep and they feel very good. But, most of these **sedative medication** that they gave you, after you wake up, you are still groggy. But, at least, it prevents your mental activity from causing you insomnia. So, it's like **knock you out**, make you **unconscious**, just like when you take **antibiotic**. It's to knock you off so that your *internal system* will have a chance to **recuperate**, so that this *nature* can actually bring about **recovery or healing**. The reason being when you are thinking, your **negative thoughts** prevent your **nature** from *working on the necessary requisite conditions* to **recuperate** you. That's why when you have good and deep sleep, it's like you feel **recharged** the next day. Sometimes, *if you know how to meditate* - when you are very tired, you **just silent your mind** to meditate for *5, 10 or 20 minutes*, you will **recover very well** and you feel very good, because the *inner peace*, the *inner calmness* and *inner well-being* can *heal and recuperate the cells*. All those cells

that *have been stressed out and tired*, they are like **recharged**. The positive energy makes them feel good and your **immune system recover**. So, **good sleep** is one of them. Then, with this clarity of mind and *ability to see things clearly*, you will be able to **study better** or do your **work more efficiently**; which means whatever thing that you attempt to do, *like career, research* or whatever, you will and you can do them more efficiently. You need to have *this type of mind* for you to be *a blessing to all*. When you have the **meditation**, the **wisdom** and the **Noble Eightfold Path cultivated**, you are **very beautiful**. You can *be a blessing not only to you, but to all* i.e. to your loved ones, your friends, your colleagues and anybody who has relationship with you, to society, to the community and even to the environment and the *planetary consciousness* because *every thought you arise is so beautiful*. This is the last benefit - blessing to all. So, all these are the **important benefits** of meditation that **can arise the moment** you develop **heedfulness**. And **heedfulness** comes from **mindfulness** and **to be mindful**, you need to understand two things which the Buddha actually **explained very clearly** under **His teaching**. He said human beings are **not peaceful**, **not mindful** and *not able to develop the meditative or inner peace* and the **inner calmness** to meditate is because they have **a lot of mental hindrances**. He called them the **five mental hindrances** of mind. These five mental hindrances are very real. He said the first two are your **sensual desire** and your **ill-will**. These two are a pair and it's also related to your *evil roots of greed and hatred*.

Every time you see something, hear something, smell something, taste something, or tactilely feel and think, **without wisdom** and the **equanimity** of mind and the Samadhi, you **will react** to what

you see, what you hear, what you smell etc. and your **reaction** is always **either negative or positive**. If you like the *sensual experience* then you have **positive craving** and that is **sensual desire**. The moment you develop this, your mind is **distracted**. You **are preoccupied** with **that sense experience**, there is **no more clarity** and you **cannot meditate** anymore because this mind that is **preoccupied** with *sensual experience* is **lost in thought**, hence heedless. Then *when you react negatively*, you arise fear, worry, anxiety, sadness and dislike. That's why you have *a lot of likes and dislikes, pleasant and unpleasant sense experiences* and these are the **dualities** of life. These are the first two hindrances of mind which **hinders you from entering the meditative state of inner peace and calmness**. That's why there is *no more inner peace, inner calmness leading to inner well-being*.

So, this aspect of understanding is very important. The **third hindrance** is sleepiness, lethargic mind, sloth and torpor. The Buddha said if you don't understand the **importance of meditation**, of **training** this mind to be **mindful**, to be **heedful** and you don't see the importance of it because you cannot understand life, then you will **feel sleepy**. It's just like when you attend a class you don't like, you don't know what's going on and you **will feel sleepy**. That sleepiness is a mental hindrance. When you are sleepy, you are **not aware**. The *mind doesn't have clarity*. That is why you **cannot be peaceful** and **you cannot meditate**. The Buddha said, the **fourth hindrance** which is **restlessness** of mind is the **worst**. Which means your mind becomes very **agitated** and **restless**. Why did it happen? Why are you **not happy** and **peaceful**? It's because *you have problems, like health problem, financial problem, career problem, relationship problem, mental problem, old age and sickness, the fear*



*of death, children's problem, in-law problem, neighbour's problem, etc.* So all these problems lead to *fear, worry, anxiety, sadness, sorrow and lamentation.* That's why your mind becomes **restless and it is not peaceful** because of your *worries, fear and anxiety.* Nowadays a lot of parents worry about their children, their career, their relationship and their children's future.

Then, you also have so many things to worry about: your health problem, your financial position, your business, your relationship with people etc. There are so many things that can make you full of worry, anxiety and fear. So, when these things comes about, your mind is **not peaceful, restless, agitated** and you will **think a lot.** The more you think, the **more fear** arise because it projects the thoughts. 'What happen if.....' these words are not **a reality** yet but you **projected those thought** and develop the **fear unnecessarily.** That's how you become **anxious.** When your children don't come back in time, they are late especially so if they are your daughters, you may **worry like mad.** Then sometimes, spouse, or the husband went out, twelve o'clock midnight still not back yet, you still wide awake, waiting, and waiting; call, the hand phone no reply because switched off, then you worry more. When he comes back, you get angry because **all sorts of thoughts** went *through your mind,* you think that fellow is trying to do *something funny outside.* You confront him via asking, 'why don't you on your hand phone?' So all these **misunderstanding** can lead to **further suffering** in life when there is **lack of trust,** when there is **no sincerity** in the relationship, when there is **no understanding** of each other, then **suffering** becomes *more and more real.* Then when you **take things for granted** especially between spouses; when you don't know **how to arise** the **appropriate right speeches** to make them **feel good** and

**happy**; when you **do not appreciate** their **contribution** to the family unit, then *problems and misunderstanding* will arise. That's why you must **appreciate** life; do **appreciate** what they have done for you, their love, their care and their sacrifices. Even as children, you **should appreciate** *what your parents have done for you*. And as parents, we should **also appreciate** how our children actually think of us, help us in whatever way. Especially between spouses, if you take things **for granted**, there is **no more appreciation and love**, then it develops hatred and misunderstanding. You can see these very clearly because they always argue, the ego will take over. And every time they argue, there is **no right speech** anymore, **gentle, pleasant and kind speeches**, all gone and no more, only angry and egoic speeches comes to be. So, life is like that, when **you don't** have **wisdom**, when **you don't** have **understanding**, the **mind gets agitated** because of the wrong thought. That's why, cultivating **Noble Eightfold Path** is about **abandoning wrong thought** and **cultivating right thought**. **Wrong thought** are **thoughts that condition** your **fear, worry, anxiety, suffering, misery, your selfishness, your emotional negativity**, etc. These are all wrong thoughts. So, very easy, isn't it? Whenever you're **not happy and peaceful**, whatever you think are the **wrong thoughts**. Then, what are *right thoughts*? If you have right thought, it will condition you to have *right speech, right action and right livelihood* following the Noble Eightfold Path, then life becomes beautiful. So, what are right thoughts? The easiest answer is what? Thoughts that don't have the evil roots. Anything that is **not wrong** thought is **right thought**, isn't it?

But you **don't know** how to put it into practice. So, you actually have **to reflect** and **contemplate** on what **constitute right thought**?

In the text, it is mentioned that the 4 Brahma Vihāra are the 4 right thoughts. When you have that as the base, it **becomes right thought**. But, you must understand what these are. The first Brahma Vihāra state is **mettā**. When you have **mettā**, you have right thought. Do you know what mettā is? True mettā, is **universal love**. When you have mettā, you **can never get angry, you can never get jealous**. There is no more negativity, **there is only love**. So, when you arise **thoughts based on love**, there is no **anger, envy and jealousy; they are gone** because you really love and with this love, you can only radiate **well-being and happiness** to all.

And *right thought that has love should be the basis for good relationship*. **When I love you, I respect you, I appreciate what you have done, I care for you, and I will talk to you very nicely. I'm no longer angry with you, I accept you for what you are.** Then I will do my best to bring about **good relationship** via arising the **kind, gentle and pleasant speeches** that can bring about **happiness, joy, harmony and understanding** to our **life and relationship**. Then the **family unit becomes beautiful**. You can go back and try it out. For the first time, if you can go back and tell your wife, (I don't know what you call her, honey or what?) – 'Honey, thank you so much for **what you have done and sacrifice** for us'. She will be very surprised because you never do that. Why all of a sudden like that, then she may think (initially) my hubby must be up to something, otherwise he won't be **so courteous and nice to me**.

But if you **express it sincerely** via *telling her the truth*: 'actually I **have recently reflected** and I really **appreciate** your **great contribution and sacrifice** for our family, for us all. You have helped us looked after the household, the marketing, the cooking, the

washing, etc. and we know **these are not easy things to do**. I hire a **maid also not so reliable**, I have to pay, I have to take the trouble to go to the maid agency to sort all these out: contact maid agency, renew her contract, and pay her levy and agency fee and all the other related things. Besides, there are so many problems related to maid, but you are my wife, I don't have to pay, and yet you willingly do all these for us with **true love** and **sacrifice**, I really **appreciate** and thank you so much. I **truly rejoice**'.

When you do that, your wife will be **very happy** and **she will work** for you more. There is also **a lot of joy** when she does those work because she is being **appreciated**. But, if you **take for granted and ignore her contribution**, do you know what your wife will think? 'This guy thinks I am a maid ('asam poh' in Hokkien); every day, ask me to do all these things but **never appreciate** what I have done'. So, out of that **anger** and **unhappiness**, do you know what will happen? The cooking also no good, the washing also no good, then when he comments, she will tell him off. 'You so good, you wash lah, you cook lah'. Then she may say 'I am going on **strike**. You take care of the children and household.' You just argue. But when you **appreciate** what they have done with the **kind** and **appropriate right speeches**, they feel so good and happy. Then, everything they do for you, you say, '**thank you** so much'. You don't just take things for granted and get angry. Most spouse, they are **not sensitive** to **feel** for their **spouse**; 'I know lah, don't repeat this thing and don't every time nag me!' If you do this then how to communicate, where are the *kind, gentle* and *understanding right speeches*? The wife also unhappy. Whole day, especially housewives, sacrifice doing all these for you and when you come back, not a word of appreciation, some more receive scolding from you, what type of husband is that? Their

thought will think negatively. And when you also think this way, do you think your wife will be happy? And do you know why the husband is like that? Because he himself has **enough problems** in the office. That's why when he comes home, he's already not happy. He then acted out his frustration. But people **without the Dharma** are like that. You **cannot solve** your problems because you **don't have clarity of mind**. You *don't feel for your loved ones*. You don't know how they go through life. But, when you **feel** for them, you **appreciate** what *they have done*, then *you arise your right thought leading to the right speech and right action*.

You tell your wife, 'Honey, you have done well. I think tonight you deserve a good meal. Let's go for dinner. Where do you want to go?' For the *first time* you ask that, I can tell you she will be very happy. There is a lot of joy too but it doesn't mean it's only for the wife. The wife can also *do the opposite for the husband*. You can tell him the opposite, 'I **understand** how much you have **sacrificed** for the family, you **work so hard**, sometimes **at the expense** of your **own freedom**, your **own holiday**. But you make sure that was what they do. Otherwise, it's **not sincere**. You have to bring about, what they call **good relationship** through **understanding** them and **supporting** them. That's why they always have this good saying, isn't it? 'For every man's success, there is a woman behind', correct or not? But sometimes the woman may not be the wife. But most of the time, it's the wife that is responsible. But the funny thing about man is, **without wisdom**, when they have too much money that is the time the wife is worried. The strange thing is when they don't have money, the wife is also worried. So, what do they want? Maybe they want the husband to have just enough money, not too much. This is your fear, isn't it? That's why if you have the Dharma, all these

problems won't arise. Then, the **wealth** will come, the **blessings** that you have **developed** through your **cultivation**, like *your good karma*, your **good merits** will bring about a lot of **goodness** and **well-being** to you.

If you have a lot of **generosity**, a lot of **kindness**, you will have the **good karma**. That's why when you think of **generosity**, it's a right thought. When you think of **helping people**, **contributing back to society**, to **help humanity** in whatever way, **through service**, **charity** or whatever, these are right thoughts. Then, thoughts of **sincerity**, **contentment**, **respect**, **gratitude**; all these are all right thoughts. Not necessary only the four Brahma Vihāra. Then, **learn to rejoice** in the **goodness**, **kindness**, **generosity** and **wholesomeness** of others especially your **loved ones** via saying 'Sadhu to you for you have done a lot of **good things!**' Don't **always complain**, via saying, '*Why simply donate? You think money is not money, ah?*' - Your wife wants to do **charity**, you go and pour cold water. By doing so, you bring about **conflict** and **unnecessary misunderstanding**. But if it's her money and she wants to do this because it is something **wholesome**, then you **should rejoice**. Even if she asks money from you because she is a housewife, she has got **no income**, you **should consider** because this is **goodness**, this is **meritorious**, this is **kindness**, why not if you can afford, you just support her. Then it becomes right thought, no more negativity. So, the teaching is very beautiful. I don't have enough time to elaborate on the cultivation of the **Noble Eightfold Path** because it's *a very wide topic*.

So, **right view** leading to the **right thought**, **right speech**, **right action**, **right livelihood** and the four **right efforts** are very important. If you **can cultivate** this **first six** Noble Eightfold Path factors, it's

already very good especially as a lay person. Then when you **develop wisdom** and the **meditation** via **right mindfulness** and **Samadhi** it will arise the **spiritual understanding** that you need to **complement** your **materialistic life**. This will then bring about the **complete understanding of life**. **Without** *spiritual understanding*, **life is incomplete**. You can still have suffering when you **confront** the Noble Truth **without** wisdom. So, with this, I will conclude my today's talk and I hope it **benefits** you all. Thank you so much for your **patience** and **attentiveness** in hearing me out.

**Bro. Chim:** Sadhu! (3x) Thank you so much Bro. Teoh for your **very interesting** and **enlightening talk** this morning. I think it **has touched** on the **lives of most of us**. We, our families, our friends and relatives have also encountered countless life problems that have caused so much pain, lamentation, grief and despair and anxiety and worry and so on and so forth. And Bro. Teoh has explained to us how to overcome all these through **understanding the secret of life**, the **Four Noble Truth**. Any questions you would like to pose to Bro. Teoh?

## 2.5 Question and Answers

**Question 1 from the floor:** Firstly, thank you very much, Bro. Teoh for sharing your knowledge. In fact, this is *one of the best Dharma talks* I have attended. My question is this: Buddha has definitely described a lot about suffering. **Did He ever describe** about **depression** during his time or any experience He had been dealing with it or He had seen during His time? Thanks.

**Bro. Teoh:** Thank you so much for the question. It's a very good question. I have to be frank with you. I was **not around** when the Buddha was around. I cannot answer that question but **roughly based** on my **nature's understanding** and my **cultivation**, I can share this with you. During the Buddha's time, life was simpler. Society was **not so evolved**, so *sophisticated* and during that time, **renunciation** is actually an **honour** to the family. Going forth by one of your family members becoming a monk, is considered a very **honourable** thing. But nowadays, parents are different. They are **so materialistic**. Once they hear their son wanting to renounce, 'Aiyah! Study for so many years to become a graduate professional and then wasted their life to become a monk'. They cannot understand its importance. Then, during the time of the Buddha, there were not **so many sophisticated economic activities**. Life was not **so stressful** but **simpler**. So, **very likely** they have *no chance for depression*. Do you know why? It is Maslow's need theory or hierarchy which is very simple. What are the **first two basic needs** that human beings look for? **Food and shelter**, isn't it? When there is *not enough food* on the table and *shelter* over the head, what is the *first thing* that you look for in life? You **want to fulfil these two needs**. That's why you work, work and work and *look for these food and shelter* because they don't have such things as health issues etc. The reason being *they can't afford to fall sick*. I remember when I was young, during the sixties when I was *very young*, not to say during Buddha's time, during the sixties and the fifties when I was very young, even in the early seventies before I went to university, I saw in my village, people getting sick. They don't really know what this sickness was because they have no idea of what *cancer was*, *what TB was*. They thought it was normal. **If they could just go on with their life, they would go on**, even very sick until in the death bed, *they still refused*



to go to the hospital. They preferred to go and see the *medium*, the *Chinese Sinseh*. That was the **tradition** at that time and *most of the suffering* at that time was very *much less, not so complicated as our society now*. However for our society now, the **stress and sensuality level** are so high. That's why the *Internet has made a big difference* to what society is nowadays. During the **olden days**, everything was *very slow* and you *need to walk very far*. So, people were mainly towards *agriculture, skill sets, cultivating spiritual understanding and doing small retail businesses*. I believe *there may be some monks who had problems* because as a monk, sometimes, it's not easy. You **feel very lonely at times**, you *meditate until you don't know what's going on*, can be **very confused** because the Saṅkhāra are like that **when one is lacking in wisdom**.

Then, there is also **politics within** the Sangha community. You can read the Sutta, then you will know. They *aligned themselves to different disciples* of the Buddha. That's why you can see the **schism** that Devadatta created. Remember Devadatta, the cousin brother of the Buddha? He wanted the Buddha to **implement strict vegetarian** into the monk's rules. He knew the Buddha **won't agree** because the Buddha has his reasons for it. So, he tried **to impress** the other followers. *'See, the Buddha is not serious,'* he said. **'He didn't even want to implement vegetarian.'** To Devadatta, implementing vegetarian means, he is **more compassionate** but this is just **outwardly**, it's **not at the heart level**. It's outwardly telling people, I'm vegetarian, I implement this rule. So, he managed to pull one group out of it. That's how **schism happened** at that time, due to difference of opinions. Then, later on, they even had this issue before the Buddha passed away, his Parinibbāna.

Some were aligned to Mahakassapa, some were aligned to Ananda and Sariputta. I think this type of politics, *even in the office, you can witness a lot, aligning to whatever factions.* There are a lot of *rather weird human behaviour, a common phenomenon of humanity* because when there is **still delusion**, the *attachment, the clinging, the craving* will be there. So, this question about, *'did the Buddha talk about depression during his time?'* - I really can't answer you because I didn't see it mention anywhere in the Sutra. But, based on *what I understand*, there are **less cases** at that time, even if have, *it's more towards the community of monks* rather than the *lay people*. The lay people their lives were *simpler*. But for those who *renounce and become monks*, they were **more philosophical**. They **thought deep into life**. So, when you think too much, **psychological and mental problems** can arise because **wisdom** is **not to be found** at the **thought** level. So, *this is how I understand and see it. I just share what I understand* and I have to be **very frank**. *Whatever I don't know, I tell you I don't know* because during the Buddha's time, I was not around and I don't read so much of the Sutta so this is how I will understand it, okay? Thank you and I hope I have answered your question. Thank you and sadhu! Anymore questions?

**Question 2 by Bro. Chim:** Just one question for Brother Teoh. My daughter, first year, Psychology and Business student, she's doing her **internship** now at a *psychology Centre* in Kuala Lumpur. Yesterday, she came back and she shared with me that a couple came to the Centre and look for the psychologist, her boss, posing a **very funny question** by the wife. The wife said she was **very depressed** because *she just cannot stand* her husband **staring at other ladies**. So, I just laughed off what she said because over such a small thing also can become depressed. But now, after listening to

your talk this morning, it can be quite real. *What is the remedy you would like to prescribe?* I didn't ask my daughter what the psychiatrist advised. I would like your advice so that I can go back and tell my daughter.

**Bro. Teoh:** Thank you so much for the very good question. Sometimes, you shouldn't think it's a simple or trivial question because *for them to take the step of going to the psychiatric department* to see a **psychiatrist** is already telling you what? It means their case is **serious** right? Otherwise, they won't go there. Don't you think they *will feel shameful* if people come to know? *'Hey, I have to see a psychiatrist,'* meaning I have **mental problem**. The **mental problem** that is being posed by the wife appeared so simple. *'I can't stand my husband staring at girls.'* Luckily, she didn't say beautiful girls. What is the first thought that come to your mind? Maybe like what Bro Chim said, it's very true. For most of us who don't have this problem we may say, *'Aiyoh! She's too possessive and too sensitive'*. Why must she worry about your husband looking at girls? As long as he **don't intend to take them back** then it should be fine right?' I have this joke. One Westerner, he's a planner, a very successful guy, he married a Thai lady, stay in one of the condos in KL during the eighties. *He was our client's planner, I am the C & S Engineering consultant* so we all became close friend. One day he told us this joke. Since he came from Europe so *we thought he was a bachelor* while in KL. But he said, *'No, no. I am married. My wife is staying in a condo in KL and she's a Thai.'* Then we said, *'It means you have to go back early?'* He replied, *"Oh, no need to worry about that.'* Then we asked why? He told us this story. *'My wife is very good. She told me, I understand you very well. Your job and career demands you to entertain and have late nights with client. You can*

go and eat whatever you like to eat but ***please don't 'tapau' back.***" That is the ***only rule she insisted on.*** When he said that, almost everybody was very **envious** of him. 'Wah! A ***very good and understanding wife indeed***'. But the truth is, the wife understands the reality. ***You get jealous for what?*** That's why such problem of jealousy ***needs to be fixed through understanding.*** What I normally advice people is, the ***Dharma understanding*** is very important. It is actually **non-self** but they ***cannot see.*** That's why when you ***approach a problem or a situation,*** you must always look at it with **sincerity** and with **understanding**. Understanding means without the **selfishness** involved. That's why it's **non-self**. When you are **not selfish**, you ***don't have the egoic mind*** because you are **sincere** and you **have love**. Then you will know ***how to resolve issues and problems amicably with love*** so that it ***doesn't hurt*** anybody, so that it **benefits** everybody. How can we approach life this way? When we apply the ***Noble Eightfold Path*** then ***all problems can be resolved.*** Noble Eightfold Path means *Right view leading to right thought*. Have Right view to accept your husband ***for what he is, his life, let him live.*** But it doesn't mean ***you don't care and you let him do*** what he wants. **Acceptance** means we ***don't react*** via *wrong view* or ***emotional negativity of envy and jealousy.*** Then we reflect and contemplate via asking, *what are my options* and how can we ***resolve this amicably? Then we can act appropriately.***

When we have the **right view, to accept, not to react**, it means you have **no more anger** (which is an **evil root**). When you ***don't react anymore*** your **fear** and **anxiety** will be **no more** and then your thought **will not** be **compulsive, obsessive** and **intrusive**. *Because of your fear, it triggers off these thoughts.* The **fear** of your husband *having an affair or marrying somebody; or he may leave you and*

you **cannot survive on your own**. That **fear** is a **very valid** and a **very strong emotion** for ladies especially true for those *who are married* and **don't have confidence in themselves**. And this **fear** is a **thought projection which is not a reality**. Nothing has happened yet. Even if it should happen, so what? You have to understand there is this **Law of Karma to take care** of all these. You have to have this **right view with regards** to this *Law of Karma*. The Buddha said, *'we are born of our karma, heir to our karma, conditioned and supported by our karma, and we are what we are because of our karma'*. So whatever happens, the Buddha said, there are causes and conditions behind. Even if you *should be afflicted* and your **husband makes you miserable**, it's because of what? Karma right? In the past, you **could have** been the man and **you did this to another girl**, make her **miserable**. When you do that you never question yourself then, right? But, when your husband did that to you, you *become so angry, so jealous and full of misery*, you hate him so much. And you complained via say, *'how can he do that to me?'*

These are real people who are afflicted with depression and they talk to me via saying, *'how can this 'bastard' do this to me?'* Last time, its honey, darling, etc. but now *'bastard'*. One of them said, *'I sacrificed so many years of my life, my youth, my puberty, getting married to him, gave birth to two beautiful kids for him and he did that to me'*. You see the *anger, hatred and unhappy evil roots* arising? They are **roots of all evil, that's how you suffer and become miserable**. So, I ask you one very simple question, *'your life, if you continue to do things this way and react like that, what will happens to you?'* Are you happy? You will be **afflicted** and become very **miserable** and **not happy, isn't it?** You cannot eat and cannot sleep because of these **depressive** and **suicidal thoughts**. Until you got to

see **psychiatrist**. Your *husband also not happy and your children and parents are **also affected*** because you **don't have** Noble Eightfold Path **understanding to resolve all these amicably** with **wisdom**. You **don't know** how to bring about good relationship. The husband will drift away further and further. Cos, they will compare. The one outside is *so nice, much younger and prettier, so friendly and so understanding*. This one come back home, only nag, nag and nag; anger, anger and anger... and *this is what is happening* to most families. These *hatred, jealousy and anger* are **evil roots** that make them *very angry, very jealous, thereby conditioning their wrong speeches and wrong actions*. Sometimes, they even go to their husband's office to **create** a scene. If you do that chances are, it is *the end of your relationship*. Why do you want to do all these? Why **can't you resolve it amicably?** I have **helped many really depressed people** who have such problems. Finally, not only the husband came back to them, they also managed to gain back their good life.

I always said, 'when you have the **Noble Eightfold Path**, you will become **so beautiful** and **so virtuous**'. Finally who do you think is the one who will **lose out?** Your husband is the one who loses out because he doesn't know how to choose such a **beautiful (inwardly), virtuous** and **understanding** wife. Like I said just now, no need to pay her like hiring a maid, yet she *does everything* for you. You don't know the *benefits of having a good and virtuous wife*. When you have a good, virtuous and understanding wife who is happy, I can tell you, your **life will be really beautiful**. You are **so blessed**. Where to find *such a good and understanding wife*; no need to hire maid, **yet do everything for you with so much joy and happiness**, you only need to say **some nice words** and **take her out** for dinners and

holidays once in a while and be **faithful**, of course. So, *life is very simple*, isn't it?

So, whatever happens, always remember, **don't react, don't condemn, be at peace** with the situation. Then, with a mind that is at **peace** to accept what happened or 'What IS', there is clarity, isn't it? Because you are **not angry**, you are **not emotional**, there is **no fear** and you are **not agitated**, there is *no more restlessness* in your mind. With that clarity, you can sit down and **contemplate**. What are my options? What can I do? What went wrong? How can I resolve all these amicably via **Noble 8-Fold Path** so that I can move on with my life?

When you *reflect and contemplate*, then you realize, 'Maybe, I didn't give him enough attention. I have taken things for granted. When he comes back, I just **let go of my emotions and unhappy feelings and thoughts**. That's how my husband finds me no more interesting. Not like the early days, when you are dating and courting, he will tell you take your time, don't worry I can wait.' But the **moment they are married**, the husband start to show his true colour via saying, 'Why take so long? What are you doing?' No **more patience**. But this is the **reality**. Like Alexander Pope's famous verse; do you know what he said? His famous verse: 'Reality begins after the first day of marriage'. Before marriage it is all **pretence**, a lot of the actual characters are **hidden, concealed**, with all the **sweet talks**. 'Honey I love you. Honey, how are you? Where do we go for honeymoon?' But when you start to move into life after marriage, if you **don't understand** what **true relationship is**, and **what it means to commit yourself** to a relationship then your relationship will suffer. A **commitment** that can bring about *happiness and joy* to the

*marriage relationship demands a lot of **sincerity and understanding**. When you are **sincere** to **commit** to this relationship, you look forward to a **good life, a good relationship** which means you start to **trust each other**. **Sincerity** will bring about **trust**. When you **trust**, you **don't have jealousy**, you don't query. Then if both of you **keep to that sincerity and trust**, the **marriage is beautiful**, then **give and take**, love each other **sincerely, truly** then be **appreciative** of each other's contributions.*

Don't talk about **negative things**. With **Noble Eightfold Path**, *everything will become beautiful*. Don't go and **project your thoughts** leading to the **fear**. Don't go and do **all the stupid things** that will **arise the evil roots**. That's why *my advice to you is, 'whenever you are **not happy and peaceful**, the **evil roots** are there, the **mental hindrances of mind are there**'*. You are *no longer peaceful*, you are *no longer happy*, you **no longer** have *clarity of mind* meaning you *don't have Noble Eightfold Path*. Then you **cannot resolve** your life problems. So, **Noble Eightfold Path** is a very **powerful meditation**. If you can truly cultivate this, it will be a  **blessing** to you. It will bring about **countless benefits** and **limitless merits**. Cultivating *Noble Eightfold Path* means *cultivate following the **advice of the Buddha***. What are the advice of all Buddha? **Avoid all evils, do good** and **purify our mind** isn't it? The **embodiment** of *Noble Eightfold Path* has **no evil** and **no delusion**. From *Right view* leading to *right thought, right speech, right action, and right livelihood*. So, **no evil** because *everything is right*. It is all about cultivating **wholesomeness** and **goodness**. Right speech, right thought, right action and right livelihood are also **very meritorious**. That's how you can *avoid all evil*. Then **right mindfulness** leading to **heedfulness** and *meditative wisdom is purification of mind*.



That's why *Noble Eightfold Path* are the **advice** of the Buddha and the **meditation** as taught by the Buddha. So, whatever you do *in the name of meditation*, if it **doesn't bring** you back to the *Noble Eightfold Path* cultivation, then, that is **not** the *meditation as taught by the Buddha*. There are other types of meditation. So, do not make the **mistake** of *being gullible*. That is if you go to retreat, you meditate and you have **fantastic meditation**, thinking it is **equivalent** to *good progress, wisdom and enlightenment then you need to check*. If you still **don't have** the *Noble Eightfold Path* quality in you, you are *nowhere near* what the Buddha is saying. You **can interpret** that **fantastic experience** as, 'Wah! I had **insight** into the *characteristics of nature, Aniccaṃ, Dukkha and Anattā*. I have what insight, what nana.' You can go and find out for yourself. After that, when you **come out to life**, do you **have** the **Noble Eightfold Path factors or qualities**? If you **don't have**, it means you still **don't understand** life. You still *can have suffering*. That's why *a lot of these yogis* after many years of attending my classes, told me, 'Yah, Bro Teoh, you are right. I was *peaceful at the retreat, very happy, very calm*. Then when I come out, I *can maintain* it for some time, sometimes one week, sometimes two weeks, and maximum three weeks. After that, I **realize** I have **not really change** because the *same old characters are still there*. I still get angry, I still have fear, I still have problems that can **make me unhappy** and **miserable**. I still have **relationship** problems *and conflict in life*.'

I said, 'Do you know why? You don't have the **embodiment** of the Noble Eightfold Path factors. You **don't have** *right speech, right action, right thought and right livelihood*. You don't have **right view** with regards to the **nature's law that governs life and existence**.

Especially the law of karma. If you want *to improve your life* you **have to change** via **taking care of your Karma** to **avoid all evil** and **do good**. To avoid all evil you have to keep your precepts because those who breaks precepts are evil people with the evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion. So, if you **can explain** these to your daughter: this is how you can *actually take care of the problems*; - see that it is just a **thought projected fear**, it's **not a reality**. Your life, why do you want to allow it to be this way. I always say, 'you have two choices when you **confront** the *realities of life and existence*, (like health problem, death of a loved one, financial problem or whatever). **One choice** is, *react and become miserable*, **project** your *fear, worry and anxiety*. **Second choice** is to have the **right view** to *accept the reality of what has happened*, **don't react, be at peace**, **hence no more fear, no more worry, no more anxiety**. Then, with that **clarity of mind**, *ask yourself*, **what are your options** and how to **resolve this problem** or so-called *issue amicably* so that everybody is happy.

Later on, if I have the time, I will tell you one incident which I had helped resolve so beautifully. That lady was in **depression** over the daughter's adoption and custodian problem. It was like, she's the **maternity mother...** and maybe I just finished off with it. She's the **maternity** mother. When she gave birth to that third child, she was *so stressed out* because she had **no maid** to help her. She told her husband she need a maid, the husband said, we are trying to find but not easy. Instead they have a neighbour friend who is **very wealthy** but **no children**, then they said, 'why not you let us take care of your new daughter'. The husband was very keen, told the wife, the wife was also very happy, passed her over, weekend comes back to them so that on weekdays she can go to work. She

told me the first few years she was so happy. Then, later on, what happened was; the wife came to know (after a few years of affection), this rich couple loved her daughter so much, wanted to **adopt her legally**.

So, the husband wants the wife to give up her rights to her daughter and allow the couple to adopt her. From that moment onwards, the wife **panicked** and **reacted**. Then the husband got angry, the mother-in-law also get angry because to them, why do you do that. This couple they are **without child** and they really liked this child, besides they have a lot of money and wealth, their daughter will get to **inherit** all these. So, to the husband and mother-in-law, *it's a good thing*. But to the mother, my child, how can you just **forced me to give it away**. So, she become **so depressed** and her **relationship** became **so strained** until it became **suicidal**. Then, one of her good friend was a cultivator cum meditator under my guidance for many years. She told her you'd better go and see Bro. Teoh. Then when she came to me, I just explained to her, her condition and told her it is **very simple**, *`You **don't have to react** and become so miserable or afflicted, don't do this. By doing this are you happy? Your **daughter is caught in this**, your **husband also not** happy, your **mother-in-law also not** happy, the *couple also unhappy, so nothing get resolved because there are these evil roots of anger, fear, attachment and real phobia. So, I told her, why not you just **accept this reality**, I don't say **you agree with them** or say *they are right*. You **accept this reality or facts of life first** and then you sit back to reflect and contemplate, `What are your options? How best can you solve this **problem amicably?**`**

So, you should think of *your daughter*, isn't it? **What is best for her?** That's what I meant by a **non egoic** or **selfless** thought. **Not about you anymore.** If you are so egoic, then your thought will **deceive you** via saying this to you, 'I am the mother, how can they do that to me?' This *wrong thought* is going to make you **miserable**'. You are attached to this word, 'mother' and you then want things your way which is *not nature's way*. They are what they are, you have to **accept them** for what they are, and the reality is like that. So, *how can I resolve it amicably?* When I explained all these to her, *she became happy again.* Do you know what I told her? I said, '*you think of what is best of your daughter, her future, etc. and how can you resolve this amicably so that everyone is happy?*' You can talk to your husband: '*Now I understand. I don't want to get angry anymore. I respect you for what you are. I understand your sincere intention and we want to give what is best for our daughter. Okay, we sit down and plan all these so that we can resolve this amicably?*' It means you only need to **ensure** that you are still the **maternity mother** after *you have consented to give the couple a legal adoption.* But you should **ask for your right** to see your daughter and the **right for your daughter to see you.** Then **as long as** your daughter decides to stay with them and **this is what she wants** and **what she really loves**, then you have to tell yourself: your life, you decide, but if it is *your daughter's life, you'd better let her decide.* She may make a mistake and later on decides to come back to you. So you put in the agreement this clause: '*At any time if she decides to come back to you, she has every right to sever that legal document and come back to you*'. You leave that right to your daughter.

Then you will be very happy because **she has been assured a very good future.** The couple promised *her a good education, a good life*

and a good future, etc. So, I said to her, 'if you **resolve it this way**, you will be a **happy mother, your husband will love you more** because you **don't react** and **create a scene anymore**. Your mother-in-law will also say 'my daughter-in-law not bad, now she understands'. Then you are still the **maternity mother**, you can still see her anytime. Then you **wish for her well-being**, her **future**, and **everything else**. You can talk to your daughter, 'As a mum, **I have a duty to take care** of you. But now, the situation is like that, are you happy if they were to adopt you?' You should talk to her although she is still young. But at least she understands her mother loves her and protects her via resolving all these with **wisdom** and **understanding** so that there is **no anger, no hatred and no misunderstanding**. Then, when she listens to all these, she will be happy and love you more because **you really care for her**.

It can be **resolved** just through an **understanding, no need** to be **angry, not need** to be **fearful**. Fear, anger and emotions are **negative mind states** or **emotions** that will make you **miserable**. They are **evil roots, roots of all evil** that **can make you evil**. You must have **Noble Eightfold Path**, right view **to accept** the reality, then with **right thought, right action** and **right speeches to talk to people nicely**, to **resolve issues amicably** so that everybody is happy. Okay? I'd better end. Otherwise, too late. Okay shall we end?

**Bro. Chim:** Thank you Bro Teoh. I think many of us would like to listen to more. But anyway, it's already 11.45a.m. And I'd better stop here. Today, we come here to pay homage to the Buddha, to listen to the Dharma, and to gain some good merits as well. I would like to invite Bro. Teoh to lead us in the **making of aspirations** and **sharing the merits** with all sentient beings.

### 3 Closing Puja

**Bro. Teoh:** We will do the **closing puja**. We shall *invoke* the **sharing of merits** with devas, with all the beings and **transfer merits** to *departed ones* and **invoke blessings** for the nation and make your **aspiration** like what Bro Chim said. It has been a very **wholesome one hour forty-five minutes of sharing**. You have **listened to the Dharma, straightened your view and paid respect** to the Buddha. You have **kept and renewed your five precepts**. Then you have **strengthened your faith and rejoice**. All these are **very meritorious** and some of you have **provided offerings and good services** to SJBA. So, with these, we will *invoke the power of merits* and share them with all beings. Okay, we will start with `Ākāsaṭṭhā ca bhummaṭṭhā'...., sharing of merits with the devas. I will chant in Pāḷi, for those who can understand you can rejoice. If you can follow, you can chant along.

Ākāsaṭṭhā ca bhummaṭṭhā Deva nāga mahiddhikā Puññaṃ taṃ  
anumoditvā Ciraṃ rakkhantu loka sāsanaṃ  
Ettāvatā ca amhehi Sambhataṃ puñña sampadaṃ Sabbe deva  
anumodantu Sabba sampatti siddhiya  
Idaṃ me ñātinaṃ hotu Sukhitā hontu ñātayo (Repeat 3X)  
Devo vassatu kalena Sassa sampatti hetu ca Phito bhavatu loko ca  
Raja bhavatu dhammiko  
Iminā puñña kammena Māme bāla samāgamo Sataṃ samāgamo  
hotu Yāva Nibbāna pattiyā Sadhu (3x)

Ok, please pay **respect mindfully** to the **Buddha. Buddhaṃ pujemi; Dhammaṃ pujemi; Saṅghaṃ pujemi.**

