

Lesson 71 Sutra of Infinite Meanings (无量义经 Wu Liang Yi Jing)

dated 24 August 2021



(Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recording** of the Dhamma Talk Conducted by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon at his Tuesday Dhamma class dated 24 August 2021)

Donated by:

Kalyāṇamitta funds of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon
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(For free distribution to **non-Muslims** only)

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(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**. With these **understanding** it is hoped that they can become **more virtuous, nobler, and wiser** so that they **can** be a **blessing** to all. He gives **dhamma talks** and holds **meditation** classes & retreats and weekly **Dhamma classes** at various meditation centres, Buddhist societies and places that invite him.

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

1 Preface

It is 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 Dhamma** as taught by the Buddha so that they may **progress** along the **path of dharma** to become more **virtuous, nobler, and wiser** human beings to be a **blessing** to all of humanity and the world.

As these notes were mostly **compiled** based on a **transcript** from the recording of the **lesson 71** of the **Sutra** of Infinite Meanings dhamma class (dated 24.8.2021); 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 accordingly **adjust** themselves to **better understand** its **true meaning** and **intent**. A **good** way to do this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading the transcript notes.

To listen to the **recording (audio file)** you can log on to our <https://broteoh.com> **website** under **Repository** of *Dharma material* OR **Google** '*Bro. Teoh's Kalyāṇamittas – A Repository of Dharma Material*' to view them.

2 Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intentions** that these *dharma transcript notes* be shared with 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** in the **transcription, formatting, proofreading, publishing etc.** to make this **free distribution** of **dharma dāna** possible.

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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** in one way or another to **realize** their **good and noble wishes/aspirations** soonest possible.

With Metta always,
Brother Teoh Kian Koon
(Dated: 30th Sept 2021)

3 Lesson 71 of the Sutra of Infinite Meanings (Dated 24th August 2021)

3.1 Pre Pūjā chanting and sharing

Legend:

Normal fonts: Brother Teoh's sharing (to expand on its deep meaning)

Italics underlined: is the original texts of the reference book

Underlined: sharing by Kalyāṇamitta

Greeting by Bro Teoh: Today is 24th August 2021, Tuesday, and we will be continuing our sharing from this book, "The Essence of Infinite Meanings" teaching from the 'Sutra of Infinite Meanings' (無量義經). We are at page 370. Let us compose our mind and develop the Saddhā, vīriya and sati to commence our pre-Puja chanting now. **End of Puja chanting.**

3.2 Awareness-based Meditation

As usual, we will have our half an hour of **awareness-based meditation**. We will turn off the lights and you can proceed with your meditation. Just **relax** the **body** and **mind** and **maintain** some form of attention, then we shall have our half an hour of "**awareness-based meditation**". Always remember "**awareness-based meditation**" is to develop the **awareness within**. So, we just **silent** our mind, **relax** the body and mind, then **maintain awareness**. Just do that, **no need** to know anything, **no need** to do anything. Make your **mind alert**,

attentive, and **aware**. Just aware. Whatever arises, “aware-finish”. No need to **continue** with the **thinking** or **mental stirring** or **proliferation** of thought process. Just **aware, silent; aware, silent**; to have more and more **moments of awareness**. Then later, the “**awareness**” will become **your main activity**. Meaning your mind is **most of the time just aware**. Then whatever **object of awareness** (initially it can be a **heartbeat or any vibration** within your heart area) that you use to anchor your awareness, rest there. Later, when all these activities and movement have become **very subtle** and **very still**, then there is **nothing** for you to hold on or anchor to. During that time, you just **stay around the heart area** or if you are **using your breathing**, Ānāpānasati as your object of meditation, then stay with your Ānāpānasati to develop **awareness of in and out breath**. Meaning maintain the awareness, just aware like what the Buddha said, ‘*breathing in aware, breathing out aware*’. Whenever the mind wanders off, bring it back and **develop the training** of your awareness until this **breath becomes very subtle, very still**.

So, it is the same whether you start with the object of meditation or you straight away start at your heart area or **wherever you can place your awareness**, you **just stay there**. Those who are familiar with the rising and falling of the abdomen can also do the same, you can stay there at the abdomen and maintain **awareness** there. Those are the activities to allow you to **anchor your mind**, to allow your **mind to stay there** but **finally, ultimately**, you *must return to your heart*. So, if that's the case, you might as well **go to the heart straight away**. But for those who do Ānāpānasati, you don't worry. Ultimately, the Ānāpānasati will take you down to the heart area, because the in-

breath will take you down to the heart and from the heart, it will develop the movement outwards.

So, when you **can stabilize** your awareness (sati), your mind will start to become different. You will have **no more thought**. You are **only aware**. **When you are aware, you cannot think**. And because you **don't think**, you will be **very quiet, very peaceful, and very still**. That's why you **can experience pīti, sukham** and finally **passaddhi** (the *tranquillity of mind, stillness of mind, the silent mind*). *When everything becomes very quiet and very still and very subtle, don't do anything, just stay at the heart area, stay there. The mind will stay there without any movement of thought, nothing*. Then let it stay there until the **mind enters sati**. You must develop it until the **awareness nature** within is so stable, so clear until like *no more movement of thought, no more saṅkhāra activity*. Everything is **very quiet, very still**. That is your **true mind, your meditative mind, your silent mind, your awareness nature within**. That is the one you need to **realize**. Without that, you **cannot realize** the first hallmark of Hui Neng. Master Hui Neng said you must realize the **first hallmark of no thought: 無念的境界. 無念** is **without** thought. Inquire: **without** thought, who are you? What are you? You will understand when you reach that state. That is why the **initial training** to be **aware** is very important. **Spend time** on it, **stabilize it**. Then you will **progress** in your meditation. Okay, now I will **let you meditate on your own**. I will now set the alarm for 30 minutes so that you can have 30 minutes of awareness-based meditation.

The **four supports** are very important. Allow your **body and mind** to be **completely relax**. **Relax** means **don't do anything, be at ease, let things be. Whatever arises, just aware**. Because you are relaxed, all your stress, tension and whatever tighten and unrelaxed part within your physical and mental, they will slowly adjust itself and reach a state of being at ease. Meaning, you are **truly relax**. When you are

completely relax, means there is **nothing troubling** you. Your **mind** is **at peace**, your **physical body** is **without stress, without tension**. So, when that **physical body** is **so relaxed** that you are completely **without** tension or any stress, that is the **meditative body**, that is the **mind that can be aware** because it is **at ease**. There is **nothing to trouble the mind**. You **got nothing** to attend to. You can just **let things be** and the “**awareness nature**” is very important. That is your **true mind, your inner nature, your true nature, your silent mind**. So, that “awareness nature” you must stabilize and realize it. Okay now I will let you meditate on your own.

Ting! x3 (End of 30 minutes of **awareness-based** Meditation).

3.3 Post Meditation Dhamma sharing

You can now slowly, and mindfully come out of the meditation. Try to **maintain** whatever **inner peace, inner calmness, and inner awareness** that you **have developed** *for as long as you can*. These are the **mind states** you **need to use**, to live **life** and to **develop** the **daily mindfulness (awareness)**, to be **aware throughout** the day, leading to **Heedfulness**

3.3.1 Sharing from Essence of Infinite Meanings

Okay, you can be seated, we shall continue from where we stopped, we are at page 370, at the adapted verse of this book, “**The Essence of Infinite Meanings**”. This teaching is **very beautiful** because **all these teachings** are from the **adapted verses** of the “**Sutra of Infinite Meanings**”. I will read on.

When we give rise to an **unwholesome** thought, that thought **destroys the seeds of goodness**. As a cultivator, we **must bear in mind** this **understanding**. That is why The Buddha's advice is to avoid all evils. When you give rise to an unwholesome thought, that has the evil roots of greed, hatred, and delusions, that thought will **destroy** the **seeds of all goodness**. So be mindful of them. Similarly, the **opposite is also true**. When we give rise to a **wholesome** thought, that thought **destroys countless evils**. That's why you **must constantly** follow the advice of the Buddha, to avoid all evils, meaning **not to give rise to any unwholesome thought to cultivate wholesomeness, goodness, and to purify your mind**. This **understanding is very important**. The **absence of evil is good**. When you do not give rise to an unwholesome thought, you will become *beautiful*. That is the reason why The Buddha taught us the **four Right Efforts under the Noble Eightfold Path cultivation**. He said if you are **not** able to do that, then your **heedlessness** and **habitual tendencies**, can cause you to arise these **wrong, unwholesome, and heedless** thoughts that have the **evil roots** of greed, hatred, and delusions. When this happen, what must you do? You **must be aware**; you **must** have the "**awareness nature within**" to **enable** you to be **aware** of these wrong thoughts. Also, you need to **understand clearly what constitutes evils**.

3.3.1.1 How to recognize unwholesome thought (Defilements)

What are **unwholesome** thoughts? Thoughts that have the greed, hatred, and delusion. And you **must understand** what these **major**

evils of **greed, hatred** and **delusion** are. If you don't understand the **deep meaning** behind the **three evil roots** of *greed, hatred, and delusion*, then you **cannot cultivate**, you **cannot** develop the *training* to abandon them because **all precepts** start with "we **undertake the training rule** to **abstain** from all evil".

How do we do that? We **must** be **mindful, aware** and **understand** what **constitutes evil**. And when we had identified that this is an **unwholesome/evil** thought, a **wrong** thought that has the evil roots of greed, hatred, and delusion, what must we do? We must arise the **first Right Effort** to **abandon** it. How do we abandon it? If you have **gone** through the **mind map** that **Soo Yee has done** for you, you will know.

3.3.1.2 Five ways to overcome unwholesome thoughts

There are **five ways** to **overcome unwholesome thoughts**. The most important ones are the **third** and the **fourth ways**. First two ways are still **thought-based cultivation**, but they are suitable for **normal people** with certain types of negative tendencies.

The Buddha said: The first (1st) way is to apply the **direct opposite wholesome thought** to overcome **whatever unwholesome** thought that has arisen. Take for example: if you have given rise to a **selfish** thought, that has these evil roots of **greed, selfishness, possessiveness, and covetousness**, so the **direct opposite** wholesome thought of **generosity** and **sincerity** are very important. We must have the **sincerity** not to be selfish. To be sincere, generous, kind, gentle, and pleasant, - all these are **virtuous thoughts needed**

to **counter** the **unwholesome** thought. So, when we have the angry thoughts or unwholesome thoughts of anger, hatred, envy, and jealousy, we must arise the opposite wholesome thoughts of **love, compassion, and kindness** to overcome them. Then the other one is when there is this cruelty in you; you must arise compassion. And if there is **envy** and **jealousy**, you must develop **sympathetic joy** (*muditā*), to **rejoice** in the wholesomeness of others. This is how the four Brahmavihāra can also help you. Then the other one is when you have **lustful** thought, you must develop **contentment**. Otherwise, this thought cannot go away.

In the **2nd way** the Buddha said, you must reflect on the **danger** of having such wrong thought, that is the **consequence** of holding on to that **wrong/unwholesome** thought, - will **make you evil**, cause your **karmic downfall**. If that is **not what you want**, then you **better abandon it**.

The third (3rd) way is the **meditative way** - whatever **unwholesome** thought or **wrong** thought that **has arisen** they will have the **evil roots** of *greed, hatred, and delusion (whether it is craving, desire, selfishness, anger, aversion, fear, worry, anxiety, insecurity, phobia or whatever)*. All these are *unwholesome thoughts with the evil roots of greed, hatred, and delusion* that **can cause you to stir** your mind via **making you evil**.

The Buddha said: to **abandon** it you **just silence** your **mind**, like how we learn to develop the **awareness-based meditation, don't do anything**. Initially just **aware** that they (any of the negativity of mind states) has arisen. Then just silent everything and stay with it, be with it. It's just like when you are **meditating**, you are just **aware** of your

ānāpānasati or meditation object, or your heartbeat, or whatever object of meditation located within your body (kāya) where you **maintain** your **awareness**. When it comes to defilement, wrong thought, unwholesome thought, it is the same. You allow your **awareness** to go there, meaning the **awareness** and the **emotion** becomes **one**. Whether it is **anger, hatred, fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow, lamentation, unhappiness, phobia, panic attack** or whatever mind state to be, just **stay with it, silent** and **don't think, don't do** anything. Stay with it, just **relax, maintain awareness**, then **find out** what **happened**? You will come to a **very beautiful realization or insight**. I.e., **whatever mind state** that **arises**, they are all **dependent originating**. They are not **intrinsic** within your **true mind**. They **arise** because of **wrong thought, wrong view**. Because you **react** to sense experience, you **stir** your mind, you **create** the **evil roots**, the **wrong thought** via your **delusion**. When you **silence everything** and just stay with it, you **realize it ceased**. That's wisdom.

According to **J. Krishnamurti**, *“the very flowering of that emotion or that thought, is the **very ending** of that thought”*. So let it **flower**, let it **cease** because these are **negative energy, evil root** borne of **wrong thought**, borne of deluded **mundane thinking**. When you *allow it to be, and don't feed it with anymore wrong thought energy, then what happens? That emotion will slowly flower and disappear/cease as per J Krishnamurti's explanation*. Like the flower, when you allow it to flower until it cannot flower, what happens? it will **wither off** and it **disappear**. That is **how** thought **ceases** because they are **dependent originating**. So, when you cut away the fuel or the causes and conditions for its arising, meaning no more **wrong thought**, no more **wrong view**, then it **will cease**.

How to have **no more wrong thought** and **no more wrong view**? If you **have not trained** your mind, you will **surely think**. Also, when you try **to reason or analyse**, thought becomes **more active**. Then it will **not cease**. This **analysis/reasoning** will cause you to come out with your own **version** of right and wrong, good, and bad, that is **not the way to solve spiritual problems or develop spiritual understanding**. The *true understanding* is you **don't go and think**. How can you stop all this thinking? Our **awareness-based meditation** is the **answer**, the **solution**. That is why you must **silence everything** and **be with it** and **allow** this **awareness to stay there**, then **finally everything** will **cease** because **no more thinking**. Then this **true mind**, your **silent mind**, or your **intrinsic true nature**, which is your **meditative mind** will **arise or return**. That is **how you meditate**, that is **how you develop the wisdom**. All these emotions whether it is greed, hatred or delusion, anger, fear, insecurity, envy, jealousy, phobia or whatever, they are **all dependent originating, condition arising, causal phenomena**. If you do not feed upon it, and **silent** everything; - **without thought**, what happens? **Everything ceases**. Then you will **realize** your **true mind**, your **silent mind**. That is **how you meditate**, then you **realize anger was never you, fear was never you**, so why must you **go** and **suppress** the **fear**, the **anger**, or **try to do away** with the **anger**, all these doing are **delusion**. When you have the **wisdom**, it will **cease** on its own. You **don't have** to do anything. The **abandoning of defilement** is through **wisdom**. When you **straighten** your **view**, **silent** your **mind**, then **everything** ceases.

So, this third (3rd) way is for you to **experience** the **true mind**, the **silent mind**, the **awareness within** that has **no duality**, because it **does not think**. When it does not think there is **no thought, no**

thought means **no duality**; **no duality** means **no good, no bad**; **no right, no wrong**; **no wholesome, unwholesome**; **no pleasant, unpleasant**; nothing, **neutral**. Just that **nature, aware**, everything else **ceases**. Then you will **realize** the **profound meaning** of what The **Buddha taught**, *sabbe saṅkhāra aniccā* because all these are saṅkhāra (mental activities, mental states, emotion, wholesome and unwholesome); And all saṅkhāra are impermanent (*aniccā*), because dependent on conditions, they arise; when condition ceased to be, they ceased. If you cling on to it, hold on to it and give meaning, it led to **suffering**; reason why the Buddha said, ‘*sabbe saṅkhāra dukkhā*’ (it brings about suffering, misery, affliction), **that is what the dharma is**. Then finally because it is impermanent, it is **not a permanent unchanging entity**, where you can **hold onto, cling onto and grasp onto** and say **this anger is me, this hatred is me**, there is **no such thing**. That is **delusion** because you were never the anger or the fear, and when you realize that it becomes **so beautiful**. If anger is not me, fear is not me, I **don’t have to do** anything, because these are **not intrinsic** within my **nature**. *So, I don’t have to suppress it, control it, or push it away or do away with it, that is wisdom! That is the understanding!* Then you will come to realize that the **five aggregates of form and mind** is **not a permanent unchanging** entity hence **Not You**, exactly as explained by the Buddha in his teaching, - that is, because it is **impermanent**, it is **not a permanent unchanging entity**, hence **non-self**. And because it is **non-self**, it is empty; **empty nature** of existence, it comes and it goes, condition arising, causal phenomena.

Like the Buddha said: *“Whatever that arise, there are causes and conditions behind, when causes and conditions ceased, it ceased to*

be". So, it is just **nature's conditions** evolving and moving, transforming. Only **mighty Nature** rolling by. When you silence your mind to **observe**, then you **realize** you **don't have** to do anything to **understand the above**. So that is how you **develop the meditative wisdom** through the third (3rd) way.

Fourth (4th) Way to Overcome Negativity: After that you still need to cultivate the fourth (4th) way to develop the **ultimate wisdom**. The Buddha said, 'Through the 4th way (which is also meditative), you can **trace the origination factors** of the *wrong thought* and **retrospectively** via **wisdom reverse it** to develop the **ultimate wisdom**. So that in future when you **confront** the same **sense experience** or **similar nature** of sense experience, you **are no longer deluded**. You are no longer with the **wrong view**; you will **not stir your mind anymore**. The Buddha said: When you are **silent, aware, mindful, you can investigate, observe, to trace the origination factor, or recollect through memory, how did you get angry?** How did **fear arise** in you? Then you will come to a very **clear understanding** that it is through one of your **sense doors**. Either when you see somebody, you don't like, or you hear something you don't like, or you **recall through memory** something very negative (it could be your phobia or scars of memories that triggers off). Then you realize, at that moment, you **stir your mind** and **develop** "the fear" and "the anger" because of your **wrong perception** borne of **wrong view**.

So, you must **reflect, contemplate**, why did I do that? Yes. This is a **habitual tendency**. How does it come in and make me the way I am? How come I am so **conditioned** to do all these things? I am like a robot, very mechanical in my **reaction to what I see, hear, smell, taste, think and tactilely feel**. That is **mindfulness leading to dharma**

understanding. So, The Buddha said: Trace the origination factors. Now that you have traced it coming through one of the senses, you can then *via wisdom retrospectively reverse it*. Which means - **why can't you accept that reality? Why can't you see things as they are?** Like what the Buddha always said: *'Things are just the way they are. Conditions like that, things will be like that. Whatever that arise, there are causes and conditions behind'*.

So, if I understand this **Law of Dependent Origination**, Paṭicca Samuppāda, then I **will not have** any **more problems** or **doubt**, because **everything is just the way it is, condition arising, causal phenomena**. I react and stir my mind because I have **wrong view**. So how can I **straighten** my view? So that I will **not perceive** him with **negativity**, so that I will **not perceive** whatever recollection through memory, to arise my **phobia**. I **must develop** the wisdom, the **understanding**, to be **at peace**. So, to do that, we **must reflect** and **contemplate** on what the Buddha had taught us. The Buddha always said: *'Learn to see things as they are, not the way you perceive it. Not the way you are being conditioned into believing it, because that is wrong view'*. Before you become enlightened, you will perceive things wrongly. You will create all the wrong thinking and the thought process that **conditioned** you to **stir** your mind, **react** to sense experience and **entangle** yourself, to develop all the **evil roots** leading to all the **karmic negativity** and **affliction**. And this is how the **true dharma** is to be understood. *How can I see things as they are?* I must **develop** the **understanding**, right? That is why, to help cut short your training, I straight away teach you all the **wisdom** I had **realized** from my **past** cultivation. I always said, *according to the dharma, every phenomenon* has its **universal characteristics** of Aniccaṃ,

Dukkham and Anattā. The Buddha also said: *‘Whatever that arise, there are causes and conditions behind, so they are just the way they are. So, if I can learn to ‘see things and people as they are’, then I can **accept all situations** and people for what they are. Which means it is **no longer** about right and wrong. And that **Acceptance** is **not** about I am agreeing with what they do. No! Acceptance here means **accept them for what they are, accept whatever that arise, that reality.** Because at that moment and that instant, the causes and conditions already fixed (or decided), it must be this phenomenon, this arising, this **reality** (that has arisen). That is, this phenomenon and happening are there because of nature’s laws. So, if I accept first, it means I can be **at peace**, via my ability to **see things as they are**. I can **accept** the reality of the **moment**, I can accept “**What Is**”, but it **doesn’t mean I can’t, or I don’t act**. After that **I can still act**. So, **acceptance through wisdom and right understanding, frees the mind**. Then I start to **reflect and contemplate**; Ya, the Buddha is very wise! Why? Because He said: *‘Learn to **see things as they are**’.* So, *if I see things as they are, meaning I can see the world as it is, and I can see human beings the way they are, then I can be at peace to accept what is.**

Then you all can also come to this **profound realization** as taught by me to you all. I.e., *angry people do angry thing, deluded people do deluded thing, and selfish people do selfish thing. They are just the way they are, meaning **I don’t condemn** what they do. I **don’t even fear** what they do, I don’t **even want** to **react** or **stir my mind** because of what they do. I **accept** them for **what they are**, but I may not **agree** with what they do, because **what they do** may be **delusional**, is **wrong action**, that has the **evil roots**. That is how, they become what they are. So, *when I accept through this Right View and Right**

Understanding, I can be at peace, then I can act. Act with what? – with Noble Eightfold Path. Because that is the meditation as taught by The Buddha under his 4th Noble Truth teaching.

The Buddha said: *If you act according to Noble Eightfold Path, via cultivating its noble eightfold qualities, it will lead to the end of all suffering.* So that is the **answer**, that is the **wisdom**, that is the **way to live life, to act**. That is why **you must** have the **embodiment** of the **Noble Eightfold Path**, starting with having the **Right View** to **accept the reality of the moment**, to be **at peace first**. Then when you are **at peace**, you **don't stir** your mind, you **don't get angry**, you **don't get emotional**, and you **don't become fearful**, then you will have **clarity of mind**, then you can act. Act with **wisdom** and **understanding**.

Then you inquire *“how can I resolve this amicably?”* How can I move on, how can I avoid negativity, meaning resolve all these amicably? So that nobody gets hurt, or nobody gets affected, or what our society says, **“develop a win-win situation”**, that is **free of negativity**. So, to **resolve issues amicably**, the **only way** is to follow **Noble Eightfold Path**. Because Noble Eightfold Path is the **advice** of The **Buddha**, which is basically *Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā*. When you have **Noble Eightfold Path**, you have the *Right View leading to Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood and Right Effort, Right Sati and Samādhi*. There is **no negativity** at all. You are *incapable of evil*; this one *leads to wisdom*. That is *how the dharma teaching can become very powerful, very effective* and it **can solve every human problem**. And it can let you **develop the understanding**. Then *when you can see things as they are – meaning you can accept the reality of the moment, you are always at peace. No matter where you are, under any circumstances, any condition,*

*any situation, you are always at peace with the wisdom. When you have that wisdom, to come to terms with the reality, to see things as they are and accept the reality of the moment, that is the **most beautiful Dhamma understanding.***

3.3.1.3 How to break (root out) habitual tendencies

These **3rd and 4th ways** are both **meditative ways** needed to develop the **understanding to free** your mind, so that you **no longer stir and react** like before, - that is how you **break your habitual tendencies**, otherwise these **habitual tendencies** cannot be **rooted out**. **Without wisdom**, it will **always be there**. A lot of cultivators **used to discuss this topic** with me. They will ask, *'Brother Teoh, the monkey mind is very, very cunning, and creative, sometimes they come through the back door!'* Such habitual tendencies are **so difficult** for them to **root out** because according to them, they keep on **experiencing** these **emotions of anger, hatred, fears, worry and anxiety, phobias, etc.** So, I told them the reason; it is because it has been there for so long, they are **so conditioned** until it has **become so habitual**, then to root it out **demands** a lot of **understanding** and **wisdom**. *You must reflect and contemplate why you must root it out? Why is it so important that you must root it out? Because The Buddha already said: These are evil roots, root of all evils, it will make you evil; cause your karmic downfall.* To cultivate the **3rd and 4th ways successfully** one must **first train** their mind to **develop a very stable daily mindfulness and awareness nature** within. **Otherwise**, the **3rd and 4th ways cannot** be cultivated.

3.3.1.4 Four right efforts to avoid all evil and cultivate wholesomeness

The **four Right Efforts** are very beautiful teaching. When you **can apply** the **1st right effort to abandon** them (the wrong thoughts) through the **third** and **fourth** meditative ways (as described above), the **2nd Right Effort** can then fall into place. The next time when you **confront a similar sense experience** then you **can prevent it** from **arising** because you **have developed** the **initial wisdom** and the **understanding** already. Because you know, no point reacting. Why React? Why stirs your mind? That is why the **2nd Right Effort** can only be developed when you have the **initial wisdom (Yoniso Manasikāra)** developed. Then after that you can **cultivate** the **3rd Right Effort, to cultivate** whatever **virtues** or **right thoughts** and **wholesome thoughts** that are **still not in you**. Then the **4th Right Effort** of course is **to refine upon** whatever **virtue, right thoughts** that are already in you **until** you can **perfect them all**. These **four Right Efforts** when you **cultivate them consistently**, you **become beautiful**. Then you **can develop** the **understanding to free** your mind and after that you **can meditate** very easily.

3.3.1.5 To cultivate the sainthood way

You can then develop the **silent mind** to cultivate the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness** following the **Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta**. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness cultivation will lead you to the **ultimate wisdom**, to **liberate** your mind, to **free** your mind of all the

ten fetters, even the last fetter of ignorance is also rooted out. Then all the *other fetters of restlessness, self-conceit, attachment to whatever, all can be rooted out*. That is **how you realize arahantship or full enlightenment**. Initially the enlightenment of the **sainthood way**, covering the first stage of sainthood, second stage of sainthood, or the third stage of sainthood, which are Sotāpatti, Sakadāgāmī, and Anāgāmī will be realized. Finally, you will **realize** the Arahantship. That is how you **transcend birth and death**, after that, **no more birth and death through the normal deluded, ignorant way**.

3.3.1.6 To cultivate the Bodhisattva way

Then if you have the **conditions** to go the **Bodhisattva way**, you can **still come back**. To go the **Bodhisattva way**, you must take the **four basic vows of a Bodhisattva**, you **must plant** the seed of Bodhi to arise the **Bodhi mind**, develop the **faith**, the **sincerity**, and the **perseverance** to go this **way**. And you must aspire strongly, **out of love and compassion** to develop the **first basic vow of a Bodhisattva**. Meaning you **vow** to take across all **sentient beings**, the **limitless sentient beings throughout saṃsāra** until they are **all liberated**, or take them **across** to the **other shore**, to **realize** Nibbāna. That one is *out of love and compassion, to arise the **pure mind**, so that you **can come again**, so that you can **take rebirth through a pure thought, a wholesome thought, with no more delusion or ignorance***. This understanding is **very profound** and very **much deeper** than the **ordinary cultivation** of the **sainthood way**. This cultivation of the **Bodhisattva way**, following the **Mahāyāna tradition** is **very different** from that of the **Theravāda tradition**. Because it is as if **not**

mentioned in their teaching at all, it is **only briefly mentioned** that the Buddha did it, that's it; finished. But there is **no teaching** on *how to develop it, how to cultivate and perfect it?* Not until you go into the Mahāyāna teachings. Then all these **are clearly explained** or **spelled out**. So, these are the **extra understanding** which I hope will be useful for most of you.

Okay now I will continue with our sharing from the commentaries of this book. I will read the title again. *When we give rise to an unwholesome thought, that thought destroys the seeds of goodness.* This one I had explained. Similarly, the opposite is true. *When we give rise to a wholesome thought, that thought destroys countless evil.* As a cultivator we must understand this, properly and act appropriately.

3.3.1.7 Our intrinsic Buddha nature and True nature

Then according to the commentaries, it said: *Everyone intrinsically has a pure, clear, and thoroughly undefiled treasure trove within.* This is very true, because our **Buddha nature**, our **true nature within** is **intrinsically** pure, clear, and thoroughly **undefiled**. It is because of **ignorance** that conditions living beings **to stir** and **arises** the **Mundane Mind**. That's how **evil comes** to be. Before that, there was none. That's why you **must meditate** to **realize** that **Buddha Nature**, that **true nature**, that **self-nature** or your **true mind**, which is your **silent mind**. *And the only one who can open-up your own treasure trove is you,* which is **very true!** Because the Form and Mind has the **gateway** to the **treasure trove** and only you, your *5 aggregates of Form and Mind* can develop the *understanding* during the **meditative**

training to realize that: and to *open-up that treasure trove*. That's why you **must realize** that **true mind**, that **self-nature**, that **Awareness Nature** within. If you *don't touch it*, you **can never develop Wisdom**. You can **never understand** the **true teaching**, the **dhamma**. That's why the **1st Hall Mark** of Hui Neng, is to realize "**No Thought (无念)**". **No thought** means the **Silent Mind**. That **Awareness Nature** (which is without thought) is your **true mind**. *Without thought* you are *already aware*. That is your **Nature**. That is your **True mind**. It is **so simple**. To **meditate** is *not to think, not to enquire or do anything*. Instead, just **relax** and **maintain awareness** to realize our *True Mind*. *Understand this and you will transform*. That's why this type of *awareness-based meditation* is *very different*. You *straight away silence, relax, and maintain Awareness*. *Don't have to do anything*. That is the *correct understanding and the correct way to do it*. Okay, then I will read on and maybe you can understand better.

*Only by looking within and uncovering this **true nature** can you **manifest infinite wisdom***. See, the Author also knows you must go within. **Silent** your mind and use that **Awareness** to see within. If you don't go within, you *cannot develop the understanding*. If you don't go within, you **cannot realize** that **True Mind**, that *silent mind*, that **Nature** within. And that is the one that can give rise to infinite wisdom. The **Silent Mind** can **insight into phenomena**, and **awaken** to the 3 **universal characteristics** of Aniccaṃ, Dukkhaṃ and Anattā. That **Silent Mind** can **observe** and **develop** the **Wisdom needed to straighten** our view after **developing** the understanding. It is the **silent mind** that **can see things as they are** and **awaken**. That's why

the **silent mind** is very important. That **self-nature**, the **true nature**, the **Awareness Nature** within is very important.

Then *the Buddha comes into this world repeatedly to teach us the dhamma. He tells us all, repeatedly that we all intrinsically have this Buddha-nature within, but we remain unaware of it and therefore cannot* put it to *good use*. Why? Understanding this is very important because most human beings are **deludedly** caught up in their **thinking**. The **thought processes**. They **do not realize** that they have another **Nature within**, the **True Mind**, the **silent mind**. They thought, the **Mundane Mind** (the **heedless thinking mind**) is **what they are**. That's how they get themselves **deluded**. And that one **obscures** their **true nature**, causing them to **think a lot**. That's why they **cannot realize** that **nature within**. That nature can only **surface or manifest** when your **thoughts stop**. Living beings are **so heedless**, even when they **sleep**, they still **have activity of mind**. Their **subconscious** and **unconscious mind**, their **phobia**, everything else still moves. That's why you **tend to dream a lot**, you **cannot have a peaceful sleep**. You cannot have a **good, very well-developed** type of sleep. When you sleep, if you have **the dhamma understanding**, to **silence**, your mind **can relax in still awareness**, to allow **your nature to heal** your body, so that you can **recuperate** and you **wake up fresh** as if you **have rested very long**. **Initially** you only need to be in the **meditative state for 5 to 10 minutes**. You will **feel the big difference**. Then later, you will know the **body is just the body**, and **as it ages**, you will **need a longer period to recuperate, but it is beautiful**. That's why if you know **how to meditate**, it can **make so much difference** to the way you **get to understand life**, to **live the meaningful life** and how you get to maintain a relatively **healthier** physical body.

Otherwise, it is **not easy**. That's why *normal human beings* are **completely heedless, lost in thought** most of the time and they **cannot do it**. So, this understanding is very important.

I will read on:

So, as we learn the Buddha's Way, we are learning the methods for uncovering this treasure trove within ourselves. In a way this is very true! "When we give rise to an unwholesome thought, that thought destroys the seeds of goodness." If we give rise to a single unwholesome thought, the seeds of goodness cannot be planted in our minds. This is like when a field's soil is littered with trash. This prevents the nutrients in the soil from being properly absorbed. Even if the field is tilled and seeds are sown, nothing will sprout. The same applies to the field of our minds. We need to diligently cultivate the mind so it will not give rise to any unwholesome thoughts. Otherwise, not only will the seeds of goodness not sprout and grow, but they will also be ruined.

So, like I always shared with you all, our mind is very important. A very good analogy is to use the analogy of your **garden** in your house (if you have some **empty land**). Do you know what a garden is? If you don't take care of the garden and don't weed it and trim it or clear the "lalang" or vegetation and allow it to be invaded by all these untidy *undergrowth of weeds or wild plants, there is no way you can have a proper garden*. So, to have a proper garden, you must look after it, manage it. Then initially, pull out the weeds and do the thing that you have to do.

To take care of the mind is the same. You must clear whatever **unwholesome thought** within, whatever **wrong thought** within. Then

you must **give it space**, you must **not clutter the mind** with a lot of **belief systems, tradition or taboo, superstition, rites, and rituals**. Because all these *prevent movement, prevent freedom*. It's like you *don't have space to move*. It is just like at home you have a table, if you put many things on the table or take the example of an altar is the best. If there is *no space*, you *can't even move*, but if there is *space, orderly, neatly, you can still put certain items, then you can still move around because there is space*. *Space is energy, allows freedom of action and movement. With space, there is also clarity*. Then you can *reflect, contemplate, your brain is not cluttered*. So, *space is what the mind needs. Especially space between thoughts*. Space between whatever saṅkhāra or mental activities that arise. When there is space, there is **beautiful pure energy** from the **Nature**. When there is *no space it means you are lost in thought, heedless, cluttered with all the ignorant, heedless thinking, giving rise to all the wrong thought*. **Space is Awareness. Space is silent, tranquillity, stillness**, that is your **True Mind**, your **silent mind**, your **nature**. So, **space** is needed to realize the **meditative mind**. So, hopefully, with this understanding, it can help you all develop the cultivation.

Then I will read on and see what they have shared:

*On the other hand, "when we give rise to a wholesome thought, that thought destroys countless evils." If we can form and sustain a wholesome thought, even if we still have **many habitual tendencies** and **unwholesome thoughts**, these can be **slowly eliminated**. Then we will no longer be **tainted** by the negative causes that surround us and would have caused us to become more **deeply ensnared**. Since good and evil arise and cease in **opposition** to each other, when a bit of evil arises, a bit of goodness is destroyed. By continuing to **sustain***

our wholesome thoughts, even evils as numerous as the sands of Ganges can be eliminated, one by one. This one is given as an analogy only. The actual happening is after you *have developed wisdom, right view, and right understanding, only then it can root out all these.* You don't have to root it out one by one. It will **just go** when the **wisdom is there.** Before that, it may be very difficult.

The same applies to karma. It is often said, "we take nothing with us when we die, (来也空, 去也空) only karma follows us to our next life." The karma we have in this life is what we brought with us. If we can encounter good conditions, negative causes and conditions can be dispelled. But if we do not give rise to wholesome thoughts, even if we encounter good conditions, we will not be able to make use of them. That's why you need to be heedful. Therefore, we must constantly nurture a wholesome state of mind. This is beautiful.

"New things constantly arise and cease, (which is very true) and then arise again." continuing endlessly, to give rise to good and evil phenomena. So that is what Nature is. Within **nature** we can see the ups and downs of life. We can see phenomena. The way people perceive it, is all different. That's why you will constantly give rise to duality which we call good and evil phenomena. The Buddha comes to this world to explain the difference between these two, so that we can cultivate the field of blessings with wisdom and good deeds.

So, this title is very unique, very special! If you understand, it will help you develop **profound wisdom.** When we go through life, when we observe nature, we realize every moment, every instance, new things arise. They constantly arise even within our own life, our own society, our own country, and the world. Every moment, every instance,

phenomena arise, new things arise, and they continuously evolve, then there is a lot of dualities. All these arising and passing away will continue endlessly. That's why you have this **duality**. Sometimes if things go your way, then there is joy, there is happiness and there is a celebration. When there is this good occasion to celebrate or do something wholesome it can give rise to joy and happiness.

But when there is a catastrophe, when there is war, riot or whatever; like what happened recently, I think a lot of bad weather, heavy flooding, natural disaster, and war happening everywhere. Then there is this political situation, scenario and crisis that arise due to world conflict, misunderstanding, economic problem, and humanitarian crisis, - the world is full of all these issues and problems.

*So, how do we develop understanding to free our mind so that we can stand above all these? And made use of it to develop the wholesomeness to be a blessing to all and to improve on the totality of our planet's consciousness. Like J. Krishnamurti said: "To arise change, the individual must change". When the individual changes, the totality has a possibility of change. Unless the **individual changes**, the **totality can never change**. Because the **totality is a massive movement of forces**, the **collective consciousness** which can **condition** the *weak mind, the deluded, to move in certain pattern*. That's how a lot of *cults with different views and opinions and racist ideology (like Trumpism) can arise to influence humanity and create a lot of problems for the world.**

You look at the United States, they have so much problem, the racial problem, the various types of conflict between the politicians, religious groupings, and fanatics. You have the democrats and the

republicans always fighting. Then you have the issue of too easy access to **weapon possession**, threatening the American public. Sometimes the individual can just, maybe because they have this funny thinking, they can just take out their weapon and shoot around. A lot of these illegal unlawful killings are happening. And this is happening very often, not a rare occasion, but it is happening almost every week within the United States, even in some European countries. Then there are war-torn countries having conflict, civil war, and economic crisis. So, all these are happening in the world. So as a cultivator, as an individual, how do we develop understanding of all these and how do we move and act so that we can be a blessing to all. So, this is what the Dhamma is, the topic is. So, we go back to the adapted verse.

In this world, whether in time, space, or among people, “new things constantly arise and cease.” Then arise again. Continuing endlessly to give rise to good and evil phenomena or duality. The Buddha comes to this world to explain the differences between the two. That’s how the Buddha's teaching becomes relevant and useful. So that we can cultivate the field of blessing to be a blessing to all. This field of blessing comes with wisdom and good deeds.

In this world, whether in time, space, or among people, “new things constantly arise and cease.” which we have gone through. *The second that just passed may be said to have “ceased”. The second that follows can be said to be “arising.”* *The sentence I just spoke has ended, and the next sentence is now beginning. At every instant, new thoughts continue to arise and at the same time old thoughts continue to cease. In the world, in everything from people to matters*

to objects, “new things constantly arise and cease, and then arise again.”

3.3.1.8 Samsara, Karma and Afflictions due to Ignorance

In our daily living, things all around us are arising and ceasing every second, yet we are unaware of this because of **heedlessness**, because we **lack awareness** and **mindfulness** within. During the brief span of time between their birth and their death, the arising and ceasing of their lives, sentient beings continue to **create karma, accumulate afflictions and ignorance, and be dragged along by karmic forces down the ever-flowing river of time (Samsāra)**. As a result, we constantly hear about and witness natural and manmade disasters as well as conflicts among people. This is an example of how things “continue on endlessly to give rise to good and evil phenomena.”

Okay I think we stop here.

3.3.2 Meditation reporting and Q & A session

Now I will open the class for meditation reporting and questions and answers session. You can also share whatever dhamma in daily life experience that you had. Whoever want to come in can just on the mic and come in.

Poh Cheng: Can I say something?

Bro Teoh: Can, Can, no problem.

Poh Cheng: It was said in the book, constantly there is this arising and ceasing phenomena happening, yet we are **not aware** of it. What I want to share is, during one of my so-called **daily cultivations** in daily life; you know this oximeter, right? I want to use the oximeter. But I have never really used it before. I just started to use it sometimes last week. It was with me, but I didn't go and put the battery and use it. So, I recently started testing it and trying it, to find out what my oxygen level was. So, I use it and put in my finger. Anyway, the manual's words are too small to read, and my eyesight is also not good. So, I don't read it. I just do, test it myself, try it out. So, the reading shows like 97, sometimes 98, sometimes 99 percent.

Bro Teoh: That is good, reading above 95 is already good.

3.3.2.1 Feeling pulsations and vibrations

Poh Cheng: And then just a few days ago, I sit down and try. Then Brother Teoh, do you know what happened? Suddenly, the awareness at the finger, like you said, arising ceasing, arising ceasing, arising ceasing, so strong!

Bro Teoh: Sādhu. You can feel the vibration and the pulse there is because your whole body has the pulsation. We call it the **pulse of life**. That is **our life force** arising from **our heartbeat**. It triggers off and sends the blood to all the organs and locations within our body where there are these arteries and veins. So, all this **pulsation or vibration**, if you have **trained** your mind to be **mindful, to be aware**, you **can feel them** even when you **lie down** to rest. There is a **lot of vibration** within your **entire body**, not only the place that is in contact

with the cushion or with the bed or with whatever you sit on, the couch or whatever. Even your **heart area**. The other **tactile activities** that are **within you**, you can feel them all. The **vibration** is **very clear**. That is why when you are **sensitive**, when put on the oximeter, you **can sense it**, the movements, the activities. Sādhu to you. So, you can feel them. Very good, sādhu.

Poh Cheng: Yes, I don't know what the oximeter is doing. It's just a black box to me. But when I put the finger in, instead of the oximeter giving me a reading, I am reading my own pulsation. Do you know what I mean? It was like as long as I can feel it, it keeps on pulsating. It is rising, ceasing, rising, ceasing.

Bro Teoh: your ability to have such sensitivity to be aware, is very good. That is why when I read the sharing from this book (Essence of Infinite Meanings: Teachings on the Adapted Verses of the Sutra of Infinite/Innumerable Meanings), that verse that says, 'the phenomena, they keep on arising...' you **straight away can understand**. But **most people** are **hardly aware**. They don't really perceive it or know what is happening. They are *mostly too busy thinking, planning, heedless and worrying about life* so much so they **never live**. So, that **meaning** is **very deep**. If you are **not aware**, it means you **existed** through **life**. Indirectly, you are **not awake** (living life). You may be **conscious** of life, but you are **not aware**, which means, you are **not really living life** because to me, to **live life** is to be **aware**; then only you live. Otherwise, you are **lost in thought, heedless**. You are **not aware**. *Not aware means heedless or indirectly unconscious of what life is*. So, that understanding is very important. I used to share this understanding with Kalyāṇamittas in the early days. I said, you may be *conscious that you are alive but are you*

aware of life? Meaning, are you truly aware and living life? Most people never live life. Why? Because they are heedless, they are lost in thought, they are hardly aware. So, I always use the word, they existed through life. “Gong gong tua, gong gong chiak, gong gong si” (In hokkien with meaning: growing up with delusion; deluded while living life; and die deluded too. 傻傻的长大, 傻傻的生活/吃, 傻傻地死去.) They exist, they go through all these **phases of life**, but they are **not aware**. That is why they are **not living life**.

Unless you have the dhamma, you are aware, and conscious. Then you can truly live life. You can experience all the pristine beauties and wonders of life - every moment and every instant. Your mind is completely silent, aware and with the moment, not lost in thought, not agitated, not worrying here, worrying there, thinking here thinking there, then stirring here and there, creating all the emotions. Sometimes you laugh, sometimes you cry. The reaction to sense experience is so strong. The duality keeps on arising, like and dislike, pleasant and unpleasant. All this is heedless living. This is not true living. True living is when you are fully aware, in charge of your life. When you can understand things so clearly, you have that understanding, the wisdom, the dhamma and you can understand what the true nature is, the wisdom that is connected to it and what those five aggregates of form and mind is, what thinking is, what saṅkhāra is, what the karmic process is. Then you will know how to use it to live the meaningful life. That is why I always say, the highest wisdom is to understand that the form and mind is a karmically conditioned “vehicle and a tool” for us to come to this existential world. So, use it and do not be deluded by it. Like what the Fifth Patriarch told Hui Neng. And when Hui Neng heard that, he

immediately came to a **great awakening**. My **nature** also can **understand** what this thing was before I even read this “Sixth Patriarch Platform Sutra”. That is why when I saw it on the internet, I knew that was the correct translated version. The other versions, I will know is not so correct. That version that I choose and share in the Heart Sutra is the correct version, - so far, that version is the best and I only amended a bit of the English words. Most of it was beautiful because to translate from dhamma into English is not easy. Translating it into Mandarin is easy because Mandarin is a dhamma language. But English is not so easy because English is a language that is not so **spiritually orientated** and conducive for spiritual communication, elaboration, and explanation. So, to express it in English when you translate, the meaning may not come up **clearly unless** you have the **understanding within** your **nature**; or the **profound** understanding of its **deep meaning**, when the **mandarin words** are used.

That is why all these are so **beautiful**. Then I take that internet source, that version, because the other versions were less accurate. The first two versions sent to me were not correct, the explanation did not really reflect its true meaning, my **nature understands** and **knows**. Then I suddenly clicked onto the internet’s “Six Patriarch Platform sutra” link, and I so coincidentally came across this version which is very good. Then I modified it a bit and shared it in the “Heart Sutra” text. That is why the sharing turned out to be very good. Very good, Sister Poh Cheng, sādhu to you.

3.3.2.2 Feeling heartbeat, qi, and warmth

Yoon Chun: I just want to add on to what Sister Poh Cheng mentioned. I have experienced this before, for a while. I can feel the heartbeat and after a while, the heartbeat sends the chi to the palms. Then I can feel the warmth in the palm. I can also feel the warmth that goes to...

Bro Teoh: Can you feel the vibration in your palm area? That one is more important. You tend to be more sensitive to the chi flow. Yes, I think you have been trained in reiki.

Yoon Chun: I can feel, it is the heartbeat that sends, ...

Bro Teoh: Correct, that is the life force. Life force triggers off that pulsation. They call it the pulse of life. Then, this one can be transformed into heat energy or whatever energy, and they can also be translated into vibration within your palm. That is why I asked you, can you feel the **vibration within** your palm? All the **vibration**.

So, next time you try, you just put your palm on the floor or on your bed or on anything. Initially you need to feel something to feel the **vibration** but later without putting on anything, you can also feel it. *Wherever you locate your awareness, you can feel it.* That is why, for those who have really train their mind, the “awareness nature” is very stable already; then wherever you put your awareness, you can feel everything, and the mind is like an X-ray. And of course, you cannot see, but you can feel the sensation, the vibration. And which part of the brain is being responsible for that movement, that activity and all these things. That is why we can feel our body condition very well. With the “awareness”, you can know many things.

So, what you experience is also good, and you are more sensitive towards “chi” because you used to do reiki.

Yoon Chun: Ya, last time.

Bro Teoh: Then, later, you can try to feel the **vibration** or **pulse** on your palm. Initially, put it on the ground or on the cushion where you sit, then silent your mind to feel.

Yoon Chun: I can feel the vibration on the palm.

Bro Teoh: Oh, very good, if you can feel it. Which means you know how to be silent. If you are not silent, you cannot feel at all because of the saṅkhāra activity, the thinking which is active/moving. But when you are completely silent, you become sensitive. That is why you can feel it, especially on the floor because the floor is more cooling and the vibration becomes very distinct, very clear. Then, later, you can feel it on any cushion or whatever. Then, finally the true sensitivity is where you don't put on anything, you just **silently relax** and **maintain awareness**. Then you develop the awareness of your palm area, you can feel it. So, all these are exercises of awareness that you can do. That is why when you are at rest waiting for something or resting, you just stay “silent”; then you can feel all these movements, the vibrations. Initially it is very gross, then as you allow it to be, don't do anything; it is like slow down... slow down... slow down. Then it becomes more and more subtle, more and more subtle. Then later, very quiet, very still until no more saṅkhāra, no more thought activity and movement. Then you *experience a type of tranquillity, stillness within your mind. That is meditation.* So, you give it a try and do all these exercises and see how it goes. Then maybe

later, you will be able to share a lot more of this beautiful happening. So, yeah very good. Yoon Chun, you can continue.

3.3.2.3 Question on cultivating Daily Mindfulness

Yoon Chun: Let's say for **daily mindfulness**, we are doing something, and you are concentrating on what you are doing and then you forget to be **aware** of your **bodily movements**

Bro Teoh: Oh yes, I understand what you mean. You are in the **initial stage** of your cultivation. You are trying to be aware and yet want to do things. I **already told you**, you **can** only do **one thing** at a **time**. So, when you are **trying** to understand something, you are **aware** from **inside**, your **awareness** is there. **When** you are **aware from inside**, you **can continue** with your thinking, your planning, your reflection, your contemplation but it is a **creative process**, you are **not lost** in **thought at all**.

Any movement, any activity, the awareness is there. You want to be aware; you can be aware but most of the time is like “*specific phenomena awareness*”. Your awareness and the thing you are doing just move together as one; so, it will **not disrupt** your whatever **planning** or **things that you are doing**. Like when you cook, you **can still be aware** and **cook very well**, because you are able to do it with that **understanding** and **training**. The **moment you are silent**, you are **already aware**, so **don't try** to be aware. What you are doing is, you **are trying to be aware**, then you recall that you have totally lost your ability to be **aware** of your **bodily actions** and **movement** because you think **that is meditation**. Having that thought is quite important,

which is not wrong; but the **actual understanding** is **not to go** and **allow the thought to come in** and **want to be aware**. When the **thought wants to be aware it cannot be aware**. You **only need to remember to silent and relax**. So, *when you train*, you just **determine to be mindfulness** of all your **actions** and **movements**, maintain that **ability to be aware first**. Only, **after** you have trained **until the awareness is very stable**, only you **can move on to the next step of developing awareness** while **walking**, while **driving**, while **doing things**. Do you understand, Yoon Chun?

Yoon Chun: Yeah ah. Yes! (acknowledging)

Bro Teoh: Actually, **before** you **stabilize** your **daily mindfulness**, you **cannot do it**. That's why I know why you have **such a problem**. Like you explain, when you are *concentrating on something, or trying to resolve something; your thoughts take over completely* and make you heedless because *you have not developed* the stability of "daily mindfulness" to enable you to be **aware from within** (the heart area). That's why I always advice, *when you need to stabilize that mindfulness, you train to stabilize it first. How do you stabilize it?* Listen again, **this one will help you, Yoon Chun**.

A Lot of people are like you trapped at that level. **First** in the **formal meditation, silence everything**, even if you are doing rising-falling or ānāpānasati, etc. Just Relax, maintain awareness, and develop ānāpānasati until that breathing becomes **very subtle** and **very still**. Until the **mind enters sati**. When the mind enters sati, you become very different, and *your form and mind will know*. You must *stabilize the awareness until that level*.

Even *if you stay at the **heart area***, is also the same. Meaning: you need to **stabilize** the awareness of your heartbeat until it becomes **very subtle** and **very still**. Whatever meditation you do is also the same, if you **can maintain** the **awareness** then you **are doing it correctly**. It can be **anywhere** within your body (kāya). Or you can do your **walking**, or you can be in a **lying down posture** or **bowing movements** to do your **awareness/mindfulness training**. When you do all these training to **stabilize** the mindfulness/awareness until **body and mind becomes one** (*move as one in complete synchrony*), that is the **stability** of **mindfulness** that you must have, then there is no more issue of “like you want to be mindful”. Then **suddenly you realize**, how come *all your actions and movements; the awareness is with it*. It's like the **awareness is a part of you already**, automatic already. That is the **stability** you need.

When “the mind has entered sati”, you will know because when you come out of it, all your movements are like “magnified”. *All your actions and your movements, even the slightest shift or movement is like “magnified”*. Then the **awareness** is all the time there. Then you realize, last time you **cannot** be aware, now **strangely** the **phenomena and awareness** can be **seen to move as one**. When you come out of the formal meditation, like the Buddha says, *the four (4) postures, from lying down to arising, sitting to standing*, the **awareness is always there**. Then not only while **walking**, but whatever you do the **awareness is always there**. You **must reach** that **stability first**, then only you **can translate** it into **driving, going to office** and **everything else**. That awareness training you must develop it in stages. You must realize it, stabilize it. That's why the **daily religion routine** is important. **Determine to be aware throughout the day**, - whatever

you do. Initially you cannot be aware, never mind. *Just do. Like playing badminton. Initially the stroke is very clumsy; like not skilful, not graceful, not smooth, never mind.* Try, keep on trying until *suddenly the stroke becomes very graceful.* Daily mindfulness is the same, when you can be **silent** and **determined to be aware of every action, every movement in the present moment**, then the **daily mindfulness will come.**

The **other way** is through **formal meditation.** **Silent** until the **mind** becomes very **quiet, very still**, very **subtle** and the *object of meditation becomes very subtle, very still until the **mind enters sati.*** **All mindfulness training** is the same. When your formal meditation reaches that stage, its result is the same as your *daily mindfulness development.* And when you come out of the **formal meditation** you can see your **mindfulness/awareness** and **other movements** acting and moving together as one entity. So that is the **stability** that you need to establish. That is why it is **not easy but can be done.** And I did it within **two weeks** when I **was determined to be aware in 1989.** Then I realized after that, *my awareness is with me all the time.*

Then later when my **mundane mind collapses**, I **don't** have to do **anything already** because that **nature has shine forth.** And the **specific phenomena awareness** and the **spacious awareness without a centre** becomes a **part of me already**, *automatic awareness; like that **mundane mind is completely gone.*** At that time, *I also **don't know what happens** to that **mundane mind.*** I just know there is **nothing to cloud my nature** already. The **gross mundane mind with a lot of images and saṅkhāra movements is gone.** That's why in everything I do, I'm in that *silent awareness.* That is why my

nature can be aware of so many things, it is **very sensitive**. But no need to *know everything*. Why do you want to know everything?

A lot of information is **not necessary**, but you **are sensitive**, you are **aware**, that's why I can **see signs**, I can **feel signs**, I can **understand** many things including what a particular *form and mind* is going through. From their *feelings, their sensations, their expression, and the way they express themselves, my nature can know roughly what the likely cause of their present conditions are*.

That is the **understanding** and **sensitivity** that this **nature** can have, when the **awareness** within is **so stable**. Then of course it comes with the **wisdom borne of cultivation** and when **my nature inherits** from **my past** all these **understanding** come back to my nature. Then together with the form and mind, it *animates and manifests* into what you call **Brother Teoh**, this life's segmented form and mind of mine. But that **nature within, behind** is **different**. That **nature** is like any of the **cultivator's nature**. *Even Guan Yin has his nature, all the great beings, they have their nature*. So, my form and mind also have that nature behind. So, all these as you **go through** the **cultivation**, you will **come to understand**. You will develop all this understanding that you **can hardly** find in **books**. And I also believe you cannot **hear** from another cultivator unless that cultivator has that understanding and ability, which is very, very advanced, and very beautiful. It is not easy to encounter cultivators who have all these understanding because these are not the **normal Dhamma** that you can find in textbooks. It is about **cultivation, perfections, mindfulness, and awareness development**. These are all words, but the actual thing is so different.

That is why after my explanation to you today, if you can listen to it again attentively, like what Song has done you will **progress very fast**. Listen to it attentively, over and over again. Then slowly, when you reflect, and contemplate on them, do the cultivation, the understanding will come to you, then you will progress very fast.

Without the “**daily mindfulness**” it is very difficult. A lot of the things I share, for people **without** that **stability of daily mindfulness**, they **cannot penetrate**, cannot go in “**deep enough**” to develop the **true understanding**. Today’s sharing is very good and will help you a lot, Sister Yoon Chun.

Yoon Chun: Okay, thank you Brother Teoh.

3.3.2.4 People being unhappy with life

Chin How: Recently I encountered one thing which is very strange to me, a lot of people are, not happy with their life.

Bro Teoh: Oh Sādhu! That is a very profound discovery.

Chin How: Yes, when I ask them if there is a next life, will you come? A lot of them say, they **don't** want to come.

Bro Teoh: Hahaha! Because they are **so fed up with life, they don't see happiness in life**. They don't see a reason to come back. These are *people who **don't have Dhamma understanding***. Please continue. Very good.

Chin How: I mean they are seeing a lot of suffering, regardless of whether they are young or old. Even elderly people, because they

notice that life is no longer the same as it was in the past, you can see society and the value system has changed so much.

Bro Teoh: Yes, it's very **stressful** for them. They **cannot cope** with what is happening. So that stress makes them **miserable, frustrated, and unhappy**. It is like **everything is not right**. The world is **so competitive** and like there is **no place** for them and there is **so much problem**. What you say is **very true**. In fact, 90% of human beings are like that, **suffering, miserable, unhappy**. Very seldom you can find one, genuine one, who has the understanding who can tell you that life is beautiful, meaningful. You please continue.

3.3.2.5 Career problem, Life struggles and Depression

Chin How: The other one that I encounter, is a lady friend. She is working in a big corporate company. She is going through a lot of office politics

Bro Teoh: Ya! Ya! That one also **causes a lot of stress, mental energy wastage, proliferation** of mental thinking. And **a lot of negative types of emotion**.

Chin How: And she is quite soft. She is not that aggressive type. She was like being bullied, taken advantage of until she wanted to learn to be like those kinds of cunning characters in the drama (those that can fight back) I don't know how to talk to her because I also understand her feelings. Because she has been taken advantage of in that kind of corporate environment. People want to present the best of themselves. They “stab” each other and a lot of them only

“talk without action” or doing or working on it. If you don't know how to talk your way out

Bro Teoh: The corporate sector has a lot of this type of people, they can put on a strong impression and talk their way out of situations. And sometimes they take advantage of the situation. I mean that is life, that is the **career, corporate sector** and I have heard about **corporate sector**, and it is **not easy** to survive because there is **a lot of politics, backstabbing**, very **competition** environment, and a lot of other problems associated with work environment, and sometimes their life will be threatened. If you put **too much emphasis** on your **job security** you will be afraid, frustrated, and unhappy and like what your friend had described to you, she is a soft and timid type, not the aggressive type (not like sister PG). Sister PG is small size but can take care of herself very well.

So, she doesn't have that ability but for you, if you want to help her, you can apply the Dhamma provided she is **willing to listen** because **life is not about competing**. It is **not about trying** to be **better** and all those **ugly career related** things. **Life** is to be **understood** so that we will **live honestly**. Do your best. I always tell people who are working, try your best, do your best as long as you are sincere and true to yourself, there is no need to **fear**. That is why **take care of Karma, Karma will take care of your life**. That is, it. If you don't have any negativity, **nothing will harm you**, unless it is a **past karmic thing**.

Then a lot of this thing they must understand. It is like what the Buddha said, *“whatever arises there are causes and conditions behind and most of it is Karma related”*. The Buddha states under his fifth (5th) daily contemplation very clearly: *“We are all born of our karma,*

heir to our karma, conditioned and supported by our karma. We are what we are because of our karma". So very likely, it is all karmic related.

So, when you say that, they may understand. You can explain, very likely you face this type of **boss** or this type of **superior** or this type of **colleague**, is because in the past you also created this type of **stress to others**. So now you **become** the victim, the condition is reversed via karma (you reap what you sow). So, you must **resolve all** these **work issues amicably via dhamma way**. If she is **willing to listen** and **develop some understanding** then maybe you **can help**, otherwise **just let things be**. If there is **no condition, just let things be**. Just listen to them; then see how it goes. Also provided you yourself **have the ability**, otherwise **there is not much impact** as far as I know.

So, it all depends. If they really want to develop some form of understanding, the **Dhamma** can help them, the **Dhamma can give them solutions** and **understanding**. And **life need not be that way, suffering need not be**. *Career is career, life is life*. So, those two, they are independent. But when you have Dhamma, you can have both, career, and life. You will know when to retire. When to stop, otherwise human beings, they are caught in between. On the one side, they say they **need the money**, the **salary**, the **pay**. On the other side, they **feel the stress**, they feel the **pressure**, they feel the **unhappiness** within the corporate environment, the politics etc.

So, for those who **don't have** the **Dhamma** or the **right view** and the **right understanding**, they will **react**, they will **stir**, they will **trigger off** *fear, worry, anxiety, phobia, and job insecurity*. Then *at night they cannot sleep, develop insomnia, fear, worry, anxiety, phobia, and*

stress, etc. So, there is the **reason** why most **people** are **unhappy** with their **career, their life**, with **whatever they do**. Maybe with this sharing it can help you develop **more understanding** to see how you can help her the next time. Okay Chin How. Before we continue, I want to find out, how is your sister?

Chin How: Oh, she fully recovered already.

Bro Teoh: Oh, that is good news, so continue to take care.

Chin How: And then back to the topic. Like you say, I want to talk to her, but I see there is no condition at this moment...

Bro Teoh: Then let it be.

Chin How: There is no condition and then I also reflected, when I was younger, in my 20's or 30's, I also went through all these kinds of similar issues. At that time, the very hot topic, I tend to read and follow, is the topic on "how to be successful" ...

Bro Teoh: Yeah, motivation stuff and all those career improvement seminars ...

3.3.2.6 See purpose in Living Life

Chin How: And now I'm so glad that I follow the **right way**, the right path because ...

Bro Teoh: That is why with the **Dhamma** you become **different**, you see things very differently, do things very differently. Not only you **have understanding**, but you also have **contentment** because of your

clear dhamma understanding. You are very **contended** with life, and **appreciative** of life because you **understand life** differently. Not following the old thinking, the traditional conditioned thinking of most people to chase after materialistic success at the expense of one's health and life.

They want to be **successful**, so they are like that. Who is that **young man that got depression**? What is his name? The one that came to the Thursday class, saw me, and recovered, ah, Eric. Do you remember? He used to share with us. He was so badly affected because according to him half of his life was trapped in severe depression with suicidal thoughts. He went through those depression phases that he can never understand why his life is like that, until he finally even came to "believe" what the mother tells him may be true, *'maybe he is "stupid", maybe he is not up to the mark or whatever'*

So, when you have such a situation the mind becomes **so conditioned, so confused** and they **cannot break free**. So, you finally need the Dhamma. That is why when I explain to him about **memory**, then he **starts** to understand how the **accumulated fear, phobia**, and various **wrong thoughts** caused him suffering and misery. Because these are all **wrong thoughts, thoughts** with the **evil roots** that condition his misery, his suffering, his unhappiness. Then he starts to understand because he held on to those wrong thoughts he deposited in his memory. And they became very strongly **accumulated memories** that trigger off the **wrong thoughts** via response to those **psychological memory** of **fear, sorrow, lamentation, scars of memories, insecurity, and phobia, etc.** And whenever he recalled through those memory, those **unconscious and subconscious phobias** also spring out; like the words of his mother

telling him off, then being scolded by the boss, etc. So, all these are the **mind states** of living beings who **don't have the Dhamma** understanding. So, they will continue to go through all these, not until they can meet somebody who can help them understand all these. So I use the Dhamma to explain to him in layman terms, using normal day to day language, like the type that J. Krishnamurti used. He **understood** and he **came out of depression**. That's why it can be done. So, all these are possible.

3.4 The End – closing puja

Okay so we shall **end** our today's sharing. Let us **rejoice** one more time. Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu! Then we will chant the closing puja.

