

## SHORT NOTES OF TALK ON 3 MAY

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Teoh-Thu-180503.mp3>

### 1. Sharing by Sis Adeline

- a) During her recent retreat at Cameron Highlands with a few Kalyanamittas (Mahayana Retreat), there was a lot of chanting. It was a struggle for her on the first day, but on the second day, her faith and mindfulness was so strong that her mind settled down and became one with the chanting. The five mental hindrances ceased and were replaced with the five spiritual faculties.

### 2. Sharing by Sister Padmasuri

- a) She explained the wordings and meaning of the chanting done during the recent Mahayana retreat. It will help a lot if one can chant them with understanding because their meanings are very profound. If one has strong faith in Kuan Yin, during times of danger and difficulties, Kuan Yin's nature via its vows can appear to help bless, protect and guide one.

### 3. Bro Teoh's answer

- a) When doing repentance, do it with sincerity and understanding from the heart.
- b) Asking for forgiveness has a slight difference as compared with repentance. Repentance is more effective and powerful because there is a strong determination not to repeat this karmic negativity anymore.
- c) If one is a true cultivator, never allow one to break the precepts and commit karmic negativity that will give rise to negative karmic fruition.
- d) One should really repent and vow never to repeat the old ways. Instead, determine to change to a new way of living life via following the advice of the Buddha.
- e) As one goes deeper into the practice or cultivation, one's understanding of the dharma deepens in stages.
- f) If one has cultivated before in past lives, it will be much easier to connect to the true mind.
- g) The real cultivation begins when the mind is just aware and silent within (without thought).
- h) When the stability of the silent mind is strong, one can awaken to the 3 characteristics.
- i) Understanding path and fruition in cultivation. For some, they can bypass certain stages if they have cultivated before in the past.
- j) One should not be impatient with one's cultivation. If one uses the mundane mind to give rise to doubts, this becomes a mental hindrance. Instead, one should understand the nature's laws. Only when there are causes and conditions, things will unfold accordingly.
- k) We too have to go through the stages of cultivation unless we have our past. If we have not cultivated before in the past, we should put in more faith and diligence this life as well as learn to make aspirations for causes and conditions for us to progress along the path of dharma. It is not easy for these teachings to come about.
- l) Whatever we do in the name of cultivation or meditation, if it doesn't bring us back to develop the 5 spiritual faculties leading to **heedfulness** to cultivate the **Noble 8fold path**, then it is not the meditation as taught by the Buddha.
- m) Before the transformation happens, we cannot understand many things, so don't worry but just proceed on with faith and sincerity to cultivate accordingly because after the transformation, the understanding will unfold naturally. The key thing is: 'train your mind to be heedful.'
- n) Hence, don't be gullible and be influenced by what others tell you. Bro Teoh advised us to constantly check ourselves with these questions – i) am I training my mind to be heedful? ii) Are my 5 spiritual faculties developed? iii) Am I cultivating the Noble 8-Fold path?

- o) It is essential that we see the importance of **returning to daily mindfulness** training via bowing and chanting etc. Also to develop the spiritual faculties, cultivating mindfulness of the 4 postures and sati sampajanna leading to the silent mind. If the spiritual faculties are still not developed as yet then to use the mind sweeping method & metta to **de-condition the heedless thinking** first, before stabilizing the silent mind with anapanasati leading to a stable mindfulness. When the mind becomes so quiet and still with hardly any movement until the mind enters sati and to bring this trained mind state into daily life so that throughout the day, you are mindful and heedful with awareness and clarity within.
  - p) Coupled with the Noble 8-Fold path cultivation, we can reflect or contemplate on all the essential dharma as taught by the Buddha. Even if one manages to have a glimpse of Nibbana, there is still the need to constantly reflect and contemplate all dharma to develop the stability and more penetrative understanding.
  - q) As one gains more insights, wisdom grows leading to further straightening of one's views. One begins to see how all the essential dharmas are connected. One also starts to see things as they are without the grasping or clinging. The wisdom that arises will help one deal with the reality as they are (without the memory or conditioning coming in to interfere and distort ones seeing. The sensual desires and ill-will cease because most of the time, one is aware and peaceful within due to one's wisdom.
  - r) The transformed mind has less sankhara and it becomes more and more quiet/silent. Eventually, one reaches the silent mind state of passadhi leading to Samadhi to arise the direct seeing and then wisdom keeps on arising. The views will also keep on being straightened out.
  - s) As one's views continue to be straightened, one is peaceful and aware most of the time. The world of duality doesn't delude us anymore because of the ability to see things as they are. The world is the world so it cannot be otherwise. **Problem only arises when we perceive the phenomena with negativity**. Everything is dependent origination and condition arising, - mind made are they. One will then realize that the phenomenal world is a world of consciousness. The form and mind is for us to use without the need for us to worry about it growing old, getting sick or die. We can then accord and flow with whatever that manifests then Life becomes meaningful, beautiful and wonderful.
4. Sharing by Sister Adeline continued
- a) After a few days of chanting during the Mahayana retreat, her sati developed. She felt very light and her sitting became very easy. There was **no more pain** and she could get into the silent mind state straightaway. Her consciousness need not stay at the brain area anymore and she could stay at the heart to listen from her heart most of the time. She felt very relaxed and mindful most of the time. There were no more sankhara to disturb her. Her brain was always clear and light. She could just walk mindfully in a very relaxed and natural manner.
5. Bro Teoh explained the importance of making aspirations and cultivating the spiritual faculties. Sister Adeline's determination to be **mindful most of the time** bore fruit during her retreat in Rayong, Thailand. And this has helped her to progress further. She has strong faith and sincerity in her cultivation.
6. Sharing by Bro. Song:
- a) He shared his experience before the March 2018 Cameron Highlands retreat. During puja in one of the Tuesday classes, the chanting came from his heart.
  - b) During the retreat, he hardly sat or lay down. Instead, he helped out at the kitchen area and did not participate in the morning chanting.
  - c) He just walked in a relaxed but mindful manner most of the time.
  - d) On the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the retreat, he was doing sitting meditation at the Shrine Hall. He experienced his form disappearing leaving only the breath which was very clear, long and slow. He was very calm and everything dropped to his heart. He could hear his heartbeat very clearly and the sound of the motorbike though it was a distance away.

- e) His heart's vibrations slowed down and there was **deep silence** within. After 20 plus minutes, his consciousness started to appear. He returned to normal consciousness and then went to help out in the kitchen.
  - f) When he was listening to the dharma (shared by Bro Teoh), he didn't feel the need to listen.
  - g) On the eighth day, while talking to Sister Alicia, he saw his mind arise from the heart. He realized the meaning of being ever mindful to cultivate the Noble 8fold Path.
  - h) His understanding came from his experience and not from thoughts. When he went back to work in his office, the minute he heard the Heart Sutra on his computer, the heart area started to vibrate. When he was told about the Kuan Yin Retreat at Cameron Highlands, he immediately felt like going though later, he asked himself why he needed to go. He finally decided to follow his first instinct to attend the Mahayana Retreat. However during the retreat, he did not chant but remained silent. On the third day, he continued reciting his Bodhisattva vows and realized his mind state was different. His heart kept vibrating and he could feel his whole body vibrating. When he joined the Mahayana chanting and walking meditation of going round the Bodhisattvas, he felt his movements becoming awkward if he had kept to their walking paces. Initially, he wanted to correct his movements to keep up with their paces but the realization came that there was no need to do so. Again, he gained new insights by doing so.
  - i) Kuan Yin Bodhisattva has served 10,000 billion Samma Sambuddhas and her vows are deeper than the oceans.
  - j) After his recent Cameron Mahayana retreat, he realized he does not have the chattering mind anymore. His faith and understanding by following Bro Teoh's advice has helped him move from one level of cultivation to another.
7. Bro Teoh's answer:
- a) If one's faith is strong, our aspirations or vows can manifest.
  - b) Bro Teoh explained how the Heart Sutra book was published. It has helped many people learn very fast.
  - c) For this year's retreat, the Penang group has benefited greatly because their understanding of the dharma has deepened. They have attended many dharma talks before in the past but they still did not have a clear understanding of the dharma and how to apply it in their lives as so clearly explained by Bro Teoh.
  - d) Bro Teoh emphasized the need to be heedful and ever mindful to cultivate the meditation as taught by the Buddha (which is the Noble 8-Fold path)..
  - e) If one takes the Sainthood way, the mind can still arise though there is wisdom.
  - f) However, if one goes the Bodhisattva way, even when things happen, one doesn't use the brain but straightaway go to the heart. One acts through understanding (wisdom) and accepts the reality of the moment so that there is peace within always.
  - g) With **wise-attention** or **yoniso manasikara** at the moment of sense experience, questions of why and how do not arise anymore. There is the understanding to accept things as they are as well as accord and flow with the conditions that unfold.