

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-180920.mp3>

1. Sister Tammy shared that her family dog of 10 years passed away in the morning. She did not know what to do and **asked Brother Teoh for advice**. Brother Teoh shared the story of **other kalyanamittas** who also had dogs and had over time **developed attachment** to their dogs. They loved their dogs a lot, and there were memories of many happy moments with their dogs. These animals come to you due to conditions and affinity from the past. When you care for them while they are alive, they are happy and are grateful to you. Dogs can **also sense** when the owner is **not happy**. They are **more reliable** than humans hence the reason why most ladies love having dogs as pets. They are good companions and can have good bonds with humans. Brother Teoh further shared about his mum having a dog in the house at night to protect their house. He fed and cared for the dog during the early years. The dog was fierce and would bark at anyone passing by our shop at night, but not when Brother Teoh came back after being away studying in UM for 3 months. It shows the **dog's ability to sense and recognise** Bro Teoh *with joy even from far*. Brother Teoh advised Sister Tammy on what she can do: *She can share merits with the deceased dog; she can also make dana offering in the name of the deceased dog; she can also think of their good moments and rejoice then invoke power of merit to wish the dog a **better future** in whatever realm it is reborn in. Just like our parents who had given us life; provide for us; taken good care of us; sacrifice and protected us, etc. and in return we need to have gratitude and filial piety towards them. The best is to **repay them** when they are **still alive** and according to the Buddha the *best way to repay your parents is to teach them the Dharma*. If you love and provide wholesomeness towards them and others, the merits accrued will become your blessing and parami or come back to your karmic nature as your inheritance. **Law of karma recognizes relationship** i.e., you and your dog; you and your parents.*
2. **Karma means:** *when you take care of karma, karma will take care of you*. When you **do your duty well** e.g. *you take good care and support your parents and dog, love them and provide for them*. If you have done your **duty well** towards them, in future *you would have parents and other owner who would take good care of you, and you will become that good person's pet*. But if you **mistreat** the dog, you would meet with those owners who will **also mistreat you** because karma is : '**you reap what you sow**'
3. Radiate metta to the deceased dog. Make offerings on behalf (in the name of the dog). Share merits and transfer merits to the dog. Invoke power of merits for its well-being. If you do these for your pet, in future others would do for you too. *Do good begets good, do evil begets evil*.
4. Brother Teoh shared about the first noble truth of realities – birth, old age, sickness and death. Every living being *needs to confront these realities*. So what is death? **When you understand, nothing dies**. For under **ultimate truth** there is **No mark** of a **self**, **no mark** of **living beings**, and **no mark** of **others** including **no mark** of **existence**. This is **wisdom** borne of **understanding** the **unconditioned** dharma. But when you live in the **conditioned world**, there is *such a thing as the law of karma* which **recognizes relationship**. Thus you **need to do your duty well** as this **form and mind is subject to this law of karma**.

5. When condition manifests, things will happen. Thus *no need to be sorrowful or 'pity' anyone*. When you have the dharma, you would **not lament**. When *loved ones are around, love them and do your duty well*. When they are gone, do **what you need to do** (*base on your dharma understanding/wisdom*) to bring about **wholesomeness** – like radiating metta, transfer and share merits, do good and perform dana in their name, expression of gratitude and thanks, invoke power of merits for their wellbeing, etc.
6. According to the **unconditioned dharma**, all *these are not real*. As all conditioned dharmas are **impermanent (not a permanent entity** where you can cling on to and say 'this is 'Me' and this is 'I', therefore all these are mine) hence it is **non-self** and **empty (anatta)**. All **conditioned dharma** are *dependant origination, conditioned arising, and a phenomena world of consciousness* borne of **delusion**. The **only reality** in life **within the conditioned world** is the **present moment**. Moment to moment life passes by what are you doing? As real as it can be, the **present moment - split second it is dead and gone**. Hence the **unreality** of the **existential world**. Thus the reason why the Buddha said, *'mind is the forerunner of all things, mind is chief, when mind arise, everything (the phenomena world of consciousness) arise, when mind cease, all ceases'*. But there is a **nature** behind that is beyond all this. When you know **deeply the conditioned and unconditioned**, you will **have the wisdom to live life** beautifully. By now you should be able to understand how a simple question regarding a dog can also give rise to good condition for such beautiful Dharma to flow and arise.
7. **Question:** Brother Swee Aun read out a **question** by one of his friend, "if I complain I am happy; if I don't complain I am not happy.'
- Answer:** This question brings about **condition** for Brother Teoh to share this *very important dharma discussion topic* regarding '**Application of Dharma** to help **resolve all worldly issues** or so called **problems'**.
- According to Brother Teoh, with **wisdom**, *one can looks at the question differently*.
- The way we **perceive life** is very important. If we **don't complain**, or **perceived a life situation** or **an issue with negativity** we **don't have problem** then **we can be at peace** and **we are always happy**. Applying Dharma to **go beyond duality** is **very important** but *we must also understand* that **duality does exist within the existential world**. The moment the **mundane mind arises, discrimination follows suit**. Human beings are **so-conditioned** as they have *their own opinions and views of things*. Most of the time, they do not agree with one another, leading to **dualities of** – right and wrong, good and bad, happy and unhappy. One needs to **develop wisdom** to understand both the *conditioned and the unconditioned*. Within the conditioned world, **when there is no understanding**, argument and difference of opinion tend to arise. This happens because within the condition world there are **3 ways of seeing the same mountain**. I.e. **Mundane seeing**; supra mundane or **direct seeing** and the **ultimate seeing** (seeing thing as they are with ultimate wisdom).
8. When one complains because of selfish motives, there are karmic implications. When there is condition in the future, others may complain about you in a similar manner. It is **not about doing something to feel good** when **others are suffering, nor is it to create issue or drama**. Instead, be **righteous** and **sincere** is the way because you dare to speak out for the **good** of the many via the **dharma way** (Noble 8-fold path) to resolve issues amicably.

9. A kalyanamitta rented out her condo which was **fully furnished** at a much *higher rental* than other unit. It was rented out to a Dato' who later did not pay his rent for a few months. Agent too can't find the Dato' and finally refused to even answer calls from the kalyanamitta. No rental payments for 5 months. The kalyanamitta was upset and went to consult Brother Teoh. Brother Teoh told her, you have 2 choices: she can either **continue to worry** and **complain** and **be miserable** over it like before or the other way is to understand the law kamma via having **right view** with regards to this law of karma (very likely during her karmic past she might have done similar thing to others, and this life, condition arise, she got the same treatment from this tenant) to resolve this issue amicably following the dharma way. Thus she should ask for forgiveness, act with wisdom and understanding following the noble eightfold path, **invoke power of merits** for turn around to **resolve it amicably**. Eventually she managed to resolve it amicably and beautifully.
10. Complain usually won't help you solve your problem. Do not get emotional, upset or angry about it. The **world is the world, people are just they are, so accept them for what they are**. Be at **peace, have clarity of mind to act wisely** and *take care* of karma via **having virtues**. But if you **act with wisdom following Noble 8-fold path** (dhamma way) **to resolve it amicably** then you can resolve it. This is how you can resolve any issues at hand. Brother Teoh further shares that in a company, the culture should be to resolve every issue **amicably as a team within one organisation**. Teamwork, working towards **organisation objectives to resolve issues amicably** instead of *arguing, pointing fingers, indulging in office politics and blaming, etc.*
11. According to Brother Teoh, **technically** there is **no such thing as a problem** in this world. Brother Teoh defined problem as: 'it is **only a problem** when *one perceives it* with **negativity – fear, worry and anxiety**'. Knowing **how to apply the living dharma to resolve life issues amicably is very important**. Living beings tend to perceive a situation with **negativity** because they **don't have** dharma understanding (wisdom). Wisdom allows one **to see things as they are**, to accept the **reality of the moment**, thus **no problem**. *When causes and conditions are like that, things would be like that accordingly. According to the Buddha, 'we are all born of our karma, heir to our karma, conditioned and supported by our karma and we are what we are because of our karma' and 'whatever that arise there are causes and conditions behind'*. So whatever happens is **definitely related** to karma (99.99%). Also *we reap what we sow, the world is just the world, and people are just the way they are*. Thus we can be **at peace** (knowing this as right view), **accepting the reality** of the *moment with no negativity, no more reacting/projecting our thoughts to arise the fear and the worry/blaming others, etc. This is 'what IS' – the reality. If whatever that happened or arise is a reality then it is no more a problem and we only need to understand it and resolve it amicably with understanding.*
12. The **ego** (sakkayaditthi or **self-delusion**) needs to be realized. Because of ego, **three evil roots** come to be – **Greed, Hatred and Delusion**. Ego or the personality separates one from others, leading to selfishness, causes one to be possessive, hence manifestation of Greed. The evil root of Greed includes desire and lust, craving, possessiveness and authority. As the "I" thinks it exist, it can become **emotional, angry, violent and fearful**. If there is **wise attention (yonisomanasikara)** at the moment of *sense experience* then **it is hey no "you", and hey no "me"**; then who is there to be right or wrong? No reality, no mark of self and others. There is **only the form and mind** with its *wrong view and its conditioning*. Form and mind arguing or interacting with form and

mind. As they are impermanent, if you grasp or cling on to them, they will lead to suffering. It is not a permanent unchanging entity you can cling on to as the “me” and the “I” and the “mine”.

13. When you meditate, you can see that this form and mind are dependant originating, conditions arising, nothing to do with your nature, hence no reality. But the **form and mind** which is **subject to the law of karma** exist in the **conditioned world** because it is **karmically conditioned** and **related** to our **karmic nature**. Although it is **not** “you”, but it is **connected** to your **karmic nature** hence it is *subject to karma*. Without this rather important **Dharma understanding**, you will **entangle yourself** in your daily life as you will **lack the understanding** of *having the right duty* to live life accordingly. Reflect, contemplate, **cultivate the 5 ways** to overcome unwholesome thoughts - **trace the origination factors** (4th way) and then **retrospectively reverse it** through **right view to seeing things as they are; to accept them for what they are**. This contemplation and reflection can **make you realize** that the **ego is false**; there is **no atta** within form and mind. The 5 aggregate of form and mind **is impermanent, lead to suffering, and empty (non-self and anatta)**.
14. Heart sutra – the **5 aggregates are empty**, not what you think. *Feeling is never “you”, form is never “you”, consciousness is never “you”, and its content of consciousness is never “you”. Nobody is there to be right or wrong. What is the point of arguing? The form and mind is just a tool and a vehicle for you to come to this existential world so use it wisely. Use it to take care of karma via doing your duty well while in this world. One needs to stabilize this understanding and most importantly, able to LIVE it.*
15. If one can still be **upset by what others say**, then **there is still a mark of a self**. You still cling to your ego. Whatever people say, so be it. With understanding of the 3 level of clear seeing, (mountain is mountain, mountain is not mountain, and mountain is still mountain), you can still agree, accord and flow with life.
16. One hand can't clap, it takes two to clap. It takes two parties to react to argue. Best is to just smile and keep quiet. Brother Teoh shared about Socrates whose wife nags him a lot while he was in jail. But with wisdom, upon being asked, he replied that his wife is his best teacher, she enables him to cultivate true patience. Brother Teoh further shared that, if you perceive all things and situations with wholesomeness, things and situations would turn around. Not resorting to hatred or negative emotions but with open eyes and ears to see and listen, yet no reaction (**always at peace**).
17. You hold the key to your life destiny, to be happy or miserable is entirely your choice so choose to be happy but why are most people not happy? It is because they **don't have such dharma understanding**. Develop **heedfulness** to **awaken** *via the direct seeing to see things as they are*. When inside is good or okay (with wisdom), outside always no problem; i.e. *always able to have the dharma understanding or wisdom to accept the reality of the moment*.

(Draft outline short notes is prepare by Sister Phey Yuen)