

## Outline Short notes for 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Thursday class

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-181004.mp3>

1. Brother Kok Loon shared his meditation experience. He managed to enter the **calm state** within 5 minutes. However later, he almost fell asleep **until awareness** came back again.
2. Brother Teoh advice Kok Loon as follows: when sloth and torpor creeps in, just be **aware** and **mindful**. **Do not give rise to any aversion** towards this *mental hindrance*. Instead, **silent** your mind and just stay with it. You will realize a **shift in consciousness** and the **sleepiness** can just disappears. If you **don't react** to it, there is **no mental hindrance** of **sensual desire** or **ill will**. Eventually, the **spiritual faculty of sati** (or the silent mind) will takes over. Then, you will see a **flash of light** flashes through and your mind will suddenly be **bright and clear** leading to viriya (spiritual zeal). You will become **fully aware** because when viriya is there, sleepiness is completely gone. **Sloth and torpor can also happen if one is tired**. If you are too tired, then it is **better to take a good rest**.
3. Lying down meditation is the easiest and most relaxing. It is **easier to maintain awareness** too because there is *no pain in the legs*. *If you do not know how to relax into the pain* (which can appear in any part of your body), the pain will become more intense. If **pain appears**, just **relax into it**; stay silent **without** any dislike towards it then the **constricted chi will be able to flow through the constricted location**. The silent mind and your understanding will allow the *spiritual faculties of sati* to take over. Sati will lead to piti and sukha. With this calmness, you would not notice the pain.
4. When we are calm and relaxed, the chi will flow and the meditation will progress well. This is how we should develop the **understanding of meditation**. *All these are explained* in our **Heart Sutra short notes book**. The Q&A section on **pages 125 to 127** explained very clearly what we should do.
5. Bro Kok Loon was listening to one of Bro Teoh's audio recording on his way to work. When he heard the turnaround story of the lady, her son and daughter-in-law, he shed tears because he found the story very touching and empowering. Bro Teoh explained that it was just like what happened during most of our spiritual trips. If one has affinity with some of these Great Beings or the beautiful dharma had an impact on them, tears will just flow because their nature can sense them. Those who experienced it **could not explain** why it had happened because the **thought cannot** understand. They were tears of joy and **not** sorrow.
6. There is a **difference between heart and mind**. The heart is the **awareness** or **nature**. There are two types of mind – the **true mind** or **silent mind** and the **thinking** or **mundane mind**. Without wisdom, the mundane mind will cause one to be *entangled in the phenomenal world*. When the *thinking mind doesn't arise*, the **nature** within has a **lot of clarity** and is **very sensitive**.
7. Bro Teoh related the story of the lady whom he met during his trip to Japan. She asked Bro Teoh to help solve her problems involving her son and daughter-in-law. It was main karmic in nature. So bro Teoh helped to resolve her problems by giving her the necessary advice *which she followed dutifully and faithfully*.
8. Another similar case involved another Kalyanamitta whose sister (an Account) for no apparent reason suddenly experienced severe phobias leading to isolation and depression. She visited psychiatrists, monks and mediums but nothing worked. Fortunately, Sis Mee Fong introduced them to Bro Teoh. It took six to nine months for her to become normal again. Initially, her fear and hallucination was so intense that she locked herself up and refused to go to work. All these were **karmic in nature** and *because of severe karmic obstruction she cannot be approached at all*. In such case only the **related loved ones** can on their behalf do something to help save them.
9. In all these cases, *if we know how to apply the Buddha's teaching*, we **can resolve** the **issues amicably**. It is important that one **asks for forgiveness**. In *certain cases where it is not possible to talk to the victim*, the loved ones **can act on his or her behalf**. It has to be done sincerely and with strong faith. Very likely, in the past life or lives, one has done such a karmic act to others. Hence, repentance has to be made sincerely. Whatever that has happened, there are causes and conditions behind. Most of the time, it is mainly due to karma.

10. We should **not blame or react negatively** in such a situation. Instead, accept the **reality and act accordingly**. We should **repent in front of the Great Beings** for *whatever wrong action we did in the past*. Radiate metta to all and develop the **strong determination or affirmation never to repeat any such negativity again**.
11. It is also important that we follow the **Buddha's advice of avoiding all evils** by cultivating the **Noble 8fold Path**. *Keeping the five precepts*, cultivating goodness, performing meritorious actions, rejoicing in wholesome actions as well as **straightening** our views, transferring and sharing merits as well as helping out in the Buddhist community are some of the wholesome activities that we can participate in. If these are done with **understanding and sincerity**, we can **invoke the power of merits** of these actions to help our loved ones turn around.
12. These three things – **asking for forgiveness** through **sincere repentance** (to remove any karmic obstructions), **cultivating merits** and **invoking power of merits** will be able to help our loved ones free themselves of their karmic afflictions.
13. By doing the above, we are arising the necessary causes and conditions to enable our lives or the lives of our loved ones to turn around. With the dharma and the right view, it will transform us **character-wise** and **personality-wise** so that we are **no longer** like before, heedless, emotional, fearful and reactive. When the mind states are negative, we are actually **creating the conditions for negative karma to hit us**.
14. During Bro Teoh's dinner with a few Kalyanamittas, they were discussing about the recent disasters that hit Sulawesi in Indonesia. When karma hits, disasters can strike in series, one after another. When we don't know how to **stay calm** and **peaceful with the clarity of mind to act according to the situation**, we are giving rise to **conditions for karmic afflictions** to arise. The **collective consciousness** of *fear and negativity* can be very **traumatic**. We need the *understanding to reverse all these*. Otherwise, it is not easy.
15. There are beings with loving kindness and compassion who will go and help such victims. They are willing to sacrifice their lives to help these people. Their higher consciousness will help improve the situation of those affected. **Virtuous thoughts** can help to reduce the severity of the situation.
16. Bro Teoh went over **last Thursday class's outline short notes** about the heart and the mind. How does the heart have the pulse or heartbeat? It is the karmic force or life force which conditions the arising and sustenance of the form and mind in this existential world. When the karmic force expires, the remnant of consciousness that is trapped inside the form and mind will have to leave or separate from the form.
17. Question from a Kalyanamitta – When the fetus's heart starts to beats, will the consciousness come in straight away? Bro Teoh explained, initially it is just the *sperm and the ovum* coming together via **conception**. Then the cells will start to **sub-divide** and *later forming the senses and the organs*. When the **fetus heart is formed** and **starts to beat** – it means the **rebirth consciousness** has come in. There are a few hundreds of thousands of deaths and births every day. The *chances of being born on earth* is **very rare** because of the **countless beings** from **other realms and universes waiting to take births too**. The Buddha said that to be born as a human being is **very rare** indeed. The earth is a unique place because it is only here that there is potential for the being to become a Samma Sambuddha. But, without the dharma and this understanding, one can get entangled and even go down to hell.
18. When a **woman conceives** and is ready with the conditions to receive the **newborn consciousness**, who decides which being should take rebirth? Bro Teoh replied that it is **karma which decides**.
19. When the heart beats, the baby is still not conscious. It takes nutrients from its mother through the placenta. When this process starts, the brain is still blank because there is still no conditioning. Eventually, the conditioning comes in through the parents, the caretakers, friends, school, multimedia and society.
20. So what is a human being? It is *actually a* **bundle of memories** with its **accumulated experiences, views, opinions and conditionings** which will mould the individual. The *consciousness* interacts with the **brain** creating thoughts and ideas.

21. Bro Teoh mentioned that the **workings of karma** are **complex**. However, it is obvious among Bro Teoh's family members that their ancestors Fung Sui, etc. has no bearing or nothing to do with their life. The obvious possible answer is mainly karma. If one wants to *understand karma better observe life clearly*. Though he and his brothers and sisters (9 of them) come from the same parents, born in the same locality but all of them differ in bodily features, height, character, understanding and inclination. The only thing common among them is financially, they are all successful and happy. Every one of them have good life.
22. Sis Keat Hoon mentioned that if things and people are due to karma, then we **cannot fault** any person. Bro Teoh replied that this was also what Sister PG said in the previous Tuesday class. She said that if people with bad karma should receive their karmic afflictions, there is then no need to pity them. Bro Teoh mentioned that the Buddha's teaching is not like that. Though the Law of Karma is powerful and it decides the causes and conditions, but it **does not dominate our lives**. We **cannot change** the karmic past but we can deal with the present moments onwards via wisdom to improve our life. It is in this every moment that we can turn karma around through our right thoughts, speech and action. It is not that karma makes one like that but it is because of karma that one is the way one is. Just like some of us have the conditions to listen to the dharma and change our lives while others don't have such conditions. This is because in the past, we have helped people before. As we live life (over the eons), there are certain goodness we have done. They will ripen too depending on the conditions or our affinity with certain Kalyanamittas who will bring us to come into contact with the dharma or the teacher. Hence, at every moment, there is potential for change. Life is not predestined or fatalistic. When we decide to repent and change, karma changes. That is why the Buddha advised us to avoid all evil, do good and purify our mind. When **we take care of karma, karma takes care of us (our life)**.
23. Encountering the dharma is very difficult so we should **cherish it** and be serious about it. Our entire existence (not only in this life) depends on it. We need to carry our vows and aspirations into future births so as to live the noble life via walking the path of dharma ourselves. Just as no one can eat for another person to be full, we ourselves have to walk the Noble Eightfold Path. Wisdom cannot be taught because it is to be realized by the wise each for themselves. If we follow the advice of the Buddha and cultivate accordingly, we will realize the enlightenment as taught by the Buddha.
24. When one **realizes** the **true mind**, we will understand that the **mundane mind** is **not real** but is dependent-originating, causal phenomena. It is impermanent and anatta. No wonder in the Mahayana saying, it is always mentioned that **in true emptiness, life is wonderful**. With wisdom connected to the true mind, the mundane mind is no more a problem. It's the **user of thought** that determines whether we are using the thought as a tool (like a 'knife') correctly or not? Or the tool is cutting and harming us and others instead.
25. Question by Kalyanamitta - Besides karmic energy, what about other conditions that trigger karma to operate. Bro Teoh answered that conditions come from karma. When one is born, the DNA is coded. Before you are connected to the true nature, almost everything is karmic. Bro Teoh has his past cultivations so his nature knows many things and there were things that he just could not do when he was young. Everyone comes with their karmic nature but we can only inherit the spiritual nature, after we have connected to our true mind. It is just like Sakyamuni Buddha. His **Sambhogakaya (spiritual nature)** and **Nirmanakaya (functional body)** transformed him into the **3<sup>rd</sup> body (Dharmakaya)** that enabled him, the fully Enlightened One to teach the dharma after He had inherited his past cultivations while meditating underneath the Bodhi tree. As for Bro Teoh, it happened in the year 1989. Once he was able **to connect** to his true nature, he started inheriting his past cultivations. Once the karmic and spiritual natures are developed, karma becomes very clear. It is not like what people think or say through words or knowledge.
26. All religions use **different words** to indicate the **true nature**. While one uses the word God, kingdom of God, Salvation etc. another may use **Nibbana**, Tao and the **Oneness nature**. Whichever the label may be, no words can explain the unconditioned. It **has to be realized by the wise each for themselves**.

(Above draft was prepared by Puan Chee and her daughter, Sister Phey Yuen )