

Outline Short notes for Thursday class dated 27th December 2018

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-181227.mp3>

Whiteboard : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-181227.jpg>

1. Brother Kok Loon **expressed** his **thanks** and **gratitude** to Bro Teoh for sharing with him **such beautiful dhamma** which **had helped him so much** and **turned his life around** for the **better**. He could still remember what he heard during his first class on 23rd January 2018 where Bro Teoh mentioned in his talk about the **wrong usage** of thoughts. Instead of **using thought correctly**, people harm themselves by using it like a knife to `cut`, hurt and harm themselves and others. That sharing woke him up from all the wrong thoughts he had been having for so long. He also related the **three miracles** that he experienced after that:
 - a. **First miracle** - After Bro Kok Loon's first meditation class, he went to his study room and opened the book `Buddhist Pilgrimage' which he received 3 years ago. Somehow, the page he open had Bro Swee Aun's face. To him, it was a message and sign of faith for him to walk the path of the dhamma after meeting Brother Swee Aun in person recently.
 - b. **Second miracle** - His earlier relationship with his father had been strenuous. He had also disconnected from his elder brother. One day, he had an argument with his father concerning his elder brother. Instead of continuing with the argument, he saw the ego of two people who had their **own views and opinions** arguing. He then kept quiet and remained aware within instead of being drawn into the commotion. That was the first time he had such a realization and his mind was able to remain calm because of the new understanding.
 - c. **Third miracle** – Bro Kok Loon shared about the dhamma talk he was listening to while driving his car. It was about the lady and her daughter-in-law. While listening, he started to shed tears. Somehow, he learnt a lot of very good dhamma from that sharing by Brother Teoh. Among them was the **workings of karma** and **how** to apply the **dhamma understanding to resolve one's life's problem**. He reflected and contemplated on it. He then asked for forgiveness and invoked power of merits to overcome whatever difficulties he had been encountering. He also thanked fellow kalyanamittas for giving him the conditions to learn the dhamma and help him understand life clearly. His life is now **more meaningful, joyful** and **peaceful** and he is **also happier**.
2. Bro Teoh mentioned that metta and compassion **cannot be cultivated** in the **true sense of these words**. Similarly, one **cannot** practice wisdom. But, we **can develop the arising of such virtues** via **understanding or wisdom**. Once such virtues are well developed, we can become a blessing to all. Hence, it is through wisdom cultivation that such virtues can arise and it is to be **developed via an understanding** but **not via a practice**. Once, there is genuine love and metta, even the animals can feel it.
3. Bro Teoh shared his experience with a very big dog he encountered when he was in Melbourne. When the big dog broke loose from its owner, it ran very fast toward Bro

Teoh's direction. However, instead of charging at him, it was full of joy when it approached Bro Teoh because it can sense Brother Teoh's **rather strong** and **soothing metta**. Brother Teoh can also sense the dog's joy from a far when he saw its furs blooming and tail wagging. Even the owner of the dog was dumbfounded and he asked Brother, 'who are you? I thought my dog was attacking you'. There were other occasions when Bro Teoh received similar experiences when he radiated metta to two strangers, one in front of him and another time someone behind him. He received similar responses when they both turned to smile at him without knowing why.

4. Bro Teoh mentioned that in most Buddhist teachings, devotees are **not taught** the **meaning of wrong thoughts**. These are thoughts that harm us. When one understands what wrong thoughts are, only then is one able to cultivate the **right effort to abandon them** and then **later cultivate the right thoughts**. It must be **nurtured** through an **understanding**.
5. After **overcoming wrong thought**, we can cultivate **wholesome thoughts** that are still not in us. Right thoughts lead to the **cultivation of virtues** which **can protect** us. Negative vibration cannot affect those who have **virtues** and **wisdom** to protect them.
6. However, when we face challenging situations, it is not possible to bring about **such mind states to act** as protection if we **had not developed** them. A Kalyanamitta asked **Ajahn Passano** during our recent November 2018 trip to Anandagiri Hermitage, whether forest monks can radiate metta to ward off attacking animals while in the forest. Ajahn replied that it won't **work** unless one **has skilfully cultivated** such virtue (**wholesome qualities**) before facing the situation.
7. Bro Teoh touched again on the **third way** (via pure awareness) to handle **negative mind states** that arise, that is, just via remaining **silent** and **aware within**. Then, when the **negative mind state disappears**, the **understanding** will **arise**. There is **no effort involved** yet by **remaining mindful** and **introspective**, one **can learn** from the experience. When the **arisen mind state disappears**, the cultivator will **realize that the mind state is not real** for it comes and it goes **dependent on conditions**. It is dependent originating, hence impermanent and may lead to suffering. It is anatta and empty because it is **not a permanent unchanging entity**.
8. To develop further wisdom, the cultivator can **trace the origination factors** for the arising of such unwholesome mind state. It is always via one of the **sense door contact** borne of **one's wrong view**. This **wrong view** condition the **wrong content of consciousness** causing one **to stir** and **reacts to sense experience**. One can then **straighten one's view** to arise the **wise attention** needed to **cope** with **sense experiences**. Hence, without **wise attention** (yoniso manisakara), the mind will stir and cause suffering. This is why the Buddha taught us **to see things as they are** through **wisdom (wise attention)** at the moment of sense experience.
9. The **four supports** for **awareness based meditation** are **very important** and it can cause one's **daily mindfulness** to be **very stable**. Only then can one **remain** in a **meditative state all the time** so as to be **ever mindful** in the **midst of life**. The **four supports** are: – **relax, aware (or silence), 24 hours and trust**.
10. When **thinking arises**, **awareness** is lost. Hence, the **real cultivation** has **nothing** to do with **thought**. Insight into the truth is via the direct seeing (awakening) and **not a**

knowledge. Wisdom is **not rigid** because one will be able to act according to any situation according to one's understanding via applying the Noble Eightfold Path. Wisdom enables the cultivator **to accept** people and situations for what they are. There is **no stirring** of mind hence the **peaceful** mind with **clarity** and **right view** will arise the **right thought** leading to right speech and right action, etc. to act appropriately.

11. With **constant** reflection and contemplation, the cultivator can **stabilize** their wisdom. Cultivator should also keep on straightening his or her views to improve on their understanding as their wisdom grows. **Form delusion** is very **powerful** and **without wisdom** one can be **easily deluded** and **deceived** by it.
12. Once one **can see beyond form and mind**, only then **can one see truth**. One has to have the ability to see things as they are **without** the word.
13. Every living being has the same **eternal nature**, which is **unborn**, the original nature, and the source. Yet it is not you. Once one has developed the **awareness** needed to see **before** the perception (to seeing things as they are), one will not be deceived by the phenomena world of form anymore.
14. Master Hsuen Hua once mentioned: - that the world is not what we think. It is not that the **world is not peaceful**. It is our **mind that is not peaceful**. When the mind is peaceful, the world is also peaceful. Even Ajahn Yantra, one of Bro Teoh's teacher, used to mention this – 'Inside ok, outside ok. Inside not ok, outside big problem'. Inside means our **inner nature** and **wisdom** within.
15. Through delusion, the form and mind entangles itself and creates so much suffering. This is what heedlessness is all about. With right cultivation, we will have the right understanding to live life well and life can then become truly wonderful and meaningful.
16. J. Krishnamurti mentioned in one of his quotes, 'the most dangerous person in the world is the one who says I know.' For there is nothing to know because all knowing come from the thought or memory which are knowledge, not wisdom. Also the dhamma we hope to realize is beyond thought and beyond mind.
17. Bro Teoh touched on the **5 ways to abandon wrong thoughts** as taught by the Buddha:
 - a) **1st way** > Think of the **direct opposite wholesome thought** (e.g. to overcome anger think of metta or love. When there is love one cannot get angry. To overcome cruelty, think of compassion, etc.)
 - b) **2nd way** > Think of the **consequence of holding onto the wrong thought** (e.g. wrong thoughts with the 3 evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion will be harmful to our mind, body, and environment. It will also bring about *karmic downfall*. Your life – if this is not what you want then determine to abandon it.
 - c) **3rd way** > **Silent the mind and maintain awareness** (this is the **meditative approach**. By **not disturbing** or **stirring** the **mundane mind** via **wrong view**, the **mind will return to its original state of inner peace and inner awareness before the stirring or reaction of mind**)
 - d) **4th way** > **Trace the origination factor and retrospectively reverse it via wisdom** (the **wisdom approach**) by cultivating **mindfulness of the 6 internal and 6 external sense bases as taught under dhammanupassana**.

e) **5th way** > with **tongue** against the **palette, determine to abandon it via own will power.**

18. The **4 right efforts** within the Noble 8-Fold path:

- a) **1st right effort** to **abandon** the unwholesome thought that has arisen
- b) **2nd right effort** to **prevent** the arising of the **yet-to-arisen unwholesome thought** – this needs constant heedfulness (mindfulness) and understanding.
- c) **3rd right effort** to arise the **right effort to cultivate** the **appropriate right thought** which **are not in you** regularly.
- d) **4th right effort** to continuously arise the right effort **to refine upon** the wholesomeness that is already in you until it becomes **perfected** (instead of just maintaining the wholesomeness as stated in most texts)

19. Progress along the Bodhisattva way will be **very swift** as one cultivates with understanding. It prepares the cultivator to receive the **higher truth** which is **beyond the sainthood way**. The cultivation is according to the Sixth Patriarch Platform Sutra teaching which takes you straight to the **true mind** to cultivate the **3 hall marks** of Hui Neng's teaching comprising: **No thought, no mark and no dwelling**. When the cultivators reach the state of no thought and no mark, they will realize their true mind and the understanding that there is neither the mark of a person inside cultivating nor mark of others or living beings and there is also no mark of dhamma or the phenomenal world. When the cultivator cultivates to the state of no dwelling, the mundane mind would have collapsed. There is only either **specific phenomenon or spacious** awareness in the **midst of life and existence** and the nature, which has shined forth is always there.

20. After Bro Kok Loon's sharing, Bro Teoh **advice all kalyanamittas to rejoice** and he then help invoked the power of such merits for all kalyanamittas to realize their good and noble wishes soonest possible.

(Above draft is by Puan Chee)