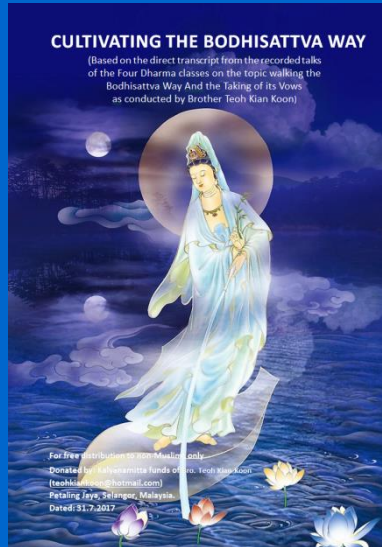


10th Lesson on Cultivating the Bodhisattva Way



(Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recording** of the
10th Lesson on Cultivating the Bodhisattva Way
[dated 10th March 2019]

Conducted by Bro. Teoh at Wu Pin Chin Seah,
No. 4, Jalan 11/8, Petaling Jaya, Selangor)

For free distribution - to **non-Muslim** only

Donated by:

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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 from his **Engineering career** in 2001, 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 so that they can be a blessing to all of humanity via becoming a more virtuous, nobler and wiser human being.*** He gives **dharma talks** and holds ***meditation classes & retreats*** and weekly ***Dharma classes*** at various *meditation centres, Buddhist society* and places that invite him.

For more detail of Bro. ***Teoh’s dharma activities*** and his ***Kalyāṇamittaship grouping*** please login to his ***dharma website*** at: <http://broteoh.com>
You can also view his YouTube video recording channel at:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCjClbc-7-upsZ2Kg5Re4pQ/videos>

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 **Dharma as taught** by the Buddha so that they may **progress** along the **path of dharma** to become more **virtuous, nobler** and **wiser** human beings that can 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 **10th lesson** on Cultivating the Bodhisattva Way (dated 10.3.2019); 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 **adjust** themselves accordingly 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 book.

To listen to the **recording (audio file)** you can log on to our <http://broteoh.com> **website** under **Repository** of *Dharma material* OR **Google** '*Bro. Teoh's Kalyāṇamittas – A Repository of Dharma Material*' to view them or **alternatively download** the audio file from this below MP3 audio link:

<https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/10-Cultivating-The-Bodisattva-Way-10-March-2019.mp3>

2. Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intentions** that these *dharma transcript book* be **given free** to 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 out** in the **transcription, typing, typesetting, formatting, proof reading, etc.** to make this **free distribution** of **dharma dāna** possible.

Special thanks should be accorded to our late **Sister SK Hoong** (Hoong Suet Kun) who had earlier on taken the **initiative** to volunteer to develop the **draft transcript** for my **subsequent editing** thereby enabling this **dharma transcript book** to be printed. May this **wholesomeness pave the way** for her to **realize her good and noble wishes**.

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

With Metta always,
Brother Teoh Kian Koon
(Dated: 31st July 2019)

3. 10th Lesson on Cultivating the Bodhisattva Way

Bro. Teoh: A very good afternoon to all, Brothers and Sisters in the Dharma. Today is Sunday, 10 March 2019. We are having our dharma class at Wu Pin Chin Seah. Please get ready for Puja. Let us **compose** our mind, **develop** the **faith (saddhā)** and **vīriya**, then **mindfully** commence the puja chanting.

3.1. Pūjā

We shall recite the salutation following the **Mahayana tradition** first:

Nā Mó Běn Shī Shì Jiā Móu Ní Fó (南无本师释迦牟尼佛) (3x)

Nā Mó Guān Shì Yīn Pú Sà (南无观世音菩萨) (3x)

Námó fó púsà (3x) (南無佛菩薩) (3x)

Now we will chant the Theravada tradition. We will start off with the Salutation to the Triple Gem: The Buddha, Dharma & Sangha.

Vandanā - Salutation to Lord Buddha: -

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa (3X)

Tisaraṇa - Taking of the Three Refuges: -

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi,
Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dutiyampi Dhammaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dutiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Tatīyaṃpi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Tatīyaṃpi Dhammaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Tatīyaṃpi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Pañca Sīla - Renewing of the Five Precepts: -

Pānātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;
Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;
Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;
Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;
Surā-meraya-majja-pamā-daṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ
samādiyāmi

Sādhū! Sādhū! Sādhū! (Rejoicing)

Now let us pay respect **mindfully** to Quan Yin Bodhisattva and all the other great beings that are worthy of respect and the **Triple Gems** to end the **pre-pūjā**.

Buddhaṃ pujemi; Dhammaṃ pujemi; Saṅghaṃ pujemi.

3.2. Dharma and sutra sharing by Bro. Teoh

You can be seated. We will continue from where we stopped. We are at Page 56. We will go back one paragraph before that, Page 55, so that we can recap what we had discussed last week.

“There are **additional vows** to clear all **Karmic obstructions** to bring about the way. The first one is to ask for **forgiveness** from The Triple Gem”.

This is very important. In fact, this is also taught in the Theravada tradition. Many traditional Theravada practitioners did not understand the **importance of such request for forgiveness**. They chant it under “Kāyena vācā cittaena.....” meaning if through action, speech or thought, if you have done anything wrong unto the Triple Gem, you **sincerely** ask for **forgiveness**. But they only chant it during the **closing Puja** and **sometimes during the meditation retreat, towards the end before going back**. But **karmic offence** is not only to Triple Gem but **also to all beings** as well. So the 1st additional vow to clear all **Karmic obstructions** to bring about the way is to ask for **forgiveness** from The Triple Gem and this is **most important** because these karmic offences from Triple Gem, if you ask for forgiveness, it is **automatically cancelled** and **you are freed and liberated** from those karmic offences but if you don’t ask, those karmic offences can be a **severe hindrances** and it **can trap you** for **very long**. The reason being all these enlightened beings, especially the Bodhisattvas, they know these karmic offences are **very severe** so they make their vows to **forgive** all beings, past, present or future (whether knowingly or unknowingly) that have caused any karmic negativity towards their karmic nature. This part is **very useful**.

We shall now chant:

*‘If by action, speech or thoughts, whether knowingly or knowingly, via ignorance, delusion or heedlessness, this nature of mine has offended or done anything wrong unto the Triple Gem, the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha, this nature of mine would like to **sincerely** ask for forgiveness.’*

We have to do this because the **moment** you ask for forgiveness, it will **connect** to the Nature's Law because the Triple Gem and all these great beings have already **forgiven** every living being via their vow (pure wish). You only need to make the request for forgiveness.

Then after that, the second vow is:

*'Whosoever from the **distant past** until now, whether knowingly or unknowingly, that this nature of mine has caused any **Karmic negativity**, misery, and suffering or mislead, this nature of mine would like to **sincerely** ask for forgiveness from them all. May my **sincere request** for forgiveness be **accepted** by all so that all these **Karmic obstructions** can be **amicably dissolved** or **watered down** or **lessened** thereby enabling this nature of mine to continue with its cultivation **to realize** the true Dharma with ease. Then this nature of mine also vows **to repent** and **from now onwards**, vows **never** to repeat any of these **Karmic negativity** borne of **greed, hatred** and **delusion** by following the **advice** of the Buddha to **avoid all evil, do good** and **purify** the mind via striving on with **heedfulness** to keep the **5 precepts** and **cultivate** the Bodhisattva way **diligently** so that it will never violate this Law of Karma again whenever it arises.'*

If you do this, the Way will be a lot easier, otherwise the karmic obstruction can be very strong. Then the final part is also very important. Finally, you have to **invoke** power of merits by reciting the following:

*'By the power of whatever wholesomeness or merits that this nature of mine has cultivated since the **distant past** until now, may it **arise***

*the **causes and conditions** for this **nature of mine** to have the ability to overcome all my **Karmic offences, obstructions or obstacles amicably** so that this nature of mine will be able to gain back its life, to walk the Path of Dharma to realize and fulfil all its Bodhisattva vows.'*

This invocation of power of merits has to be done every half yearly or 6 monthly so that it will help you.

The next paragraph explains why karmic obstructions are very powerful. Since **karmic obstructions** are **very powerful**, so if you **don't invoke the power of merits for causes and conditions to resolve them amicably**, chances are, *when you come, you **will still be obstructed***. Many of you have already witness these; sometimes you **mislead** people for many lives in the past, yet you don't even know then the **karmic fruition** can *trigger off* **Karmic obstruction** later on. This is how you can develop the cultivation. Then there are other **miscellaneous vows** to *enhance the cultivation*. I will go through them with you later on.

The final part of the notes is about the cultivation of the **10 perfections**. You have to remind yourself that, **as you cultivate the Bodhisattva Way**, the **10 perfections** are being **perfected naturally**. The first of the 10 perfections is *generosity* or **dana**, followed by **sīla** *which is morality*. The 3rd is renunciation or **nekkhamma**, the 4th is wisdom or **paññā**, the 5th is **vīriya** or spiritual zeal, the 6th is patient endurance or **khanti**, 7th is truthfulness or **sacca**, 8th is **adhiṭṭhāna** or determination or affirmation of truth (aspiration and resolution), 9th is loving kindness or **mettā** and the last is **upekkhā**. These are

the 10 *important virtues/perfections*. We will do the actual taking of the vows on **26th April 2016**. (That was about 3 years ago. That was the time the Bodhisattva Vows were taken).

Ok, Padmasuri, I will pass to you the ***original copy of the vows*** for you *to help Photostat 80 sets for free distribution*. Don't distribute them until that day. If you want to Photostat additional copies to keep, you can. But please, **don't abuse** it and **don't simply pass** them to people who **don't understand**, because they ***may create unnecessary negativity*** of Karma ***without*** them realizing it, if they *simply comment on them* **without** understanding. If they do that, they are going to get into serious trouble. We didn't do anything. These are **Nature's Laws** so if they **don't have the condition** to **receive** them or they don't have the **understanding to appreciate** what this is, then please ***don't try to 'help'***. If there are **no conditions**, then just let things be. All these people who have the conditions will appear and they will have their own conditions to come into contact with this teaching. They will approach us to receive it. Otherwise, ***don't try and don't go and think*** that this can help *everybody* and you want to *promote* it. No! If it is **not meant for them**. It is for you only because you have conditions and *if you are serious, you will progress very fast. You will benefit tremendously from it*.

Okay. Now we will go into the **book proper**. I will read the Foreword to you. For those who have the e-copy that I have sent out, you can refer to it. Turn to the Foreword page. 'This book consists of a series of talks on the **Bodhisattva precepts given by Master Sheng Yen** at the **Zen Meditation Centre** in *New York* from **Dec 6th to 8th, 1997**'.

This is what is written in the Foreword:

*'We sincerely hope that this commentary on the **Bodhisattva precepts** will provide the reader with **a clear understanding** of their **meaning**, as well as the **inspiration** to **integrate** these teachings into their lives'.*

That is why **life itself** is the **cultivation**. *Without going into life*, there is *no cultivation*, so you have **to integrate** all these **teachings** into your **life**.

*The reason why you **have to integrate Dharma** into your **life** is **because** it is a **living Dharma**, **not theory** or **knowledge**; otherwise, it is **not the true Dharma**. It is an **understanding** which can only be **cultivated** in the **midst of life** and this **understanding** can be **realize** because it **stands up** to investigation.*

That is why the **true Dharma** is **not rigid**, **not a knowledge**. It is an **understanding**.

'We wish to acknowledge our thanks to several individuals for their help in producing this booklet'. The people whom they have acknowledged are mainly those who are responsible for the translation:

Guo-gu - translation

Simeon Gallu - organization and editorial assistance

The International Affairs Office

Dharma Drum Mountain

January, 2005 (which was 14 years ago)

This book was printed in the year 2005, about 11 years ago, because that time when I spoke on this topic it was in the year 2016).

Okay. Please turn to the next page on Introduction.

There is a saying in Mahayana Buddhism: ***‘those who have precepts to break are Bodhisattvas.’***

What do you think of this sentence? Does it really make you feel funny? ‘Those who have precepts to break are Bodhisattvas’. Why did he say that? Anybody wants to try to answer that? Sheng Yen Fa Shi puts it in such a **humorous** way. ‘Those who have precepts to break are the Bodhisattvas’. Why did he say that? Because the precepts they hold are **very extensive**. They are not ordinary precepts; do you understand? They are not the 5, 8, 10 or the monk’s 227 precepts. They have to hold onto the **3 sets of pure precepts** and the **precepts are very pure and extensive**. That’s why it is so different and if you want to talk about breaking precepts, only the Bodhisattvas, have them because they hold onto these precepts **very extensively**. These are **very pure precepts**.

Do you agree? They are *so serious* and that’s the reason why *they have precepts to break* because *it’s very difficult not to break them when you have these vows*. That’s why the Buddha is very wise. He never said, ‘Thou shall not.’ He said, ‘we undertake the *training rule* to **abstain from breaking them**.’ It’s through an understanding.

That's why the training rule after you understand, you train yourself not to violate. Then they continue, 'those who have *no precepts* to break are **outer-path**.'

Do you know what is **outer-path** or 'Wai tao' in Mandarin? It means **not following** Buddha Dharma. It is an **external path** teaching based on their understanding.

Then, 'Many Buddhists **know that receiving the *Bodhisattva precepts generates great merits***.' This is very important. Another name for outer-path is external path teachings based on their understanding which is not following the Buddha-Dharma. So when you want to receive or generate a lot of merits, you have to take the Bodhisattva precepts or vows. So this part you have to make a note that 'Many Buddhists **know that even by just receiving the *Bodhisattva precepts can generate great merits***.'

For you to have the pāramī to receive the **3 sets** or **pure precepts** and the **4 basic vows**, you **must have already generated a lot of merits**. I will continue.

See, when you receive **these Bodhisattva vows**, you **generate great merits**.

'Yet they believe this *without a real understanding* of the *profound* meaning of the *precepts*.' So this is stated in Sheng Yen Fa Shi's booklet, the introduction part. Then I explain:

‘That’s why you **must do it with understanding**. You **must receive** it with **understanding**. So when you have the understanding, you become very different’.

‘Or what does keeping these precepts entail? They receive the precepts as a matter of course, knowing only that receiving them is a *good thing to do*. To try to remedy this situation, we are conducting the **transmission** of the ***Bodhisattva precepts*** over the *course of **three days*** so that prior to the **formal transmission ceremony**, I can explain to all participants ***the meaning and significance*** of these precepts within the Mahayana tradition.’

So this one is by Sheng Yen Fa Shi and they have it over 3 days. He used the first 2 days to explain to all participants the meaning and significance of all these precepts.

We shall continue.

Bro. Teoh: So, you must **understand clearly why** you take all these precepts. This book has a lot of **good advice**. Master Sheng Yen has developed them but he ***didn’t explain*** how all these **precepts come about**. It is from **Right View with regards** to the **Nature’s Law of Karma** and it comes from the **advice of all Buddha**. The Buddha’s first advice is ***to avoid all evil via keeping our precepts***. Also, who are the ones who will ***violate the precepts***? If you check all the precepts, those who **violate these precepts** are **evil people**. They have the **evil roots** of ***greed, hatred and delusion***. That is why to avoid all evil; you must keep the ***minimum basic 5 precepts; for violating them can give rise to very severe offences***. That is why you

must **not allow** your form and mind whenever it arises, **to violate** these precepts. You must **not kill or cause any harm** to fellow living beings. You must **not steal, cheat or deceive** or **take things** that do not belong to you. Then **you must not have sexual desires** or **lust to conduct sexual misconduct**. Then you must **not have wrong speech**. They must **not tell lies, not backbite, and not give rise to harsh, angry** and **deluded speech**. They must **not speak frivolously**.

Do inquire. Who kill and who harm? Those who kill and harm are **selfish people, deluded people** or **violent people** who are **evil**. Violent means having *emotional negativity, like anger, hatred, envy and jealousy*. That's why such people are **capable of killing** and **causing harm** to fellow living beings. They can also *bring about war* due to their **delusion**. You can also **check** on the **other** precepts. They are the same. Who steal? **Greedy people, selfish and deluded people**. Then who commit *sexual misconduct*? **Lustful people**. **Lust** is *part of greed and delusion*. They are even willing to sacrifice their *family unit's harmony, peace and love*, just for some **short moments of fun** (cheap thrill) due to their **lust**. When you **don't have** this understanding, you become **deluded** and **make a lot of such mistakes**.

The Law of Karma is, 'you reap what you sow' hence in future, you will become the victim. I. e. Now you do this to people, in future, you become the victim. This is the Law of Karma. If you don't want it to happen to you then **don't do it to others** for you reap what you sow and that is the reason why the law of karma is **very powerful**. In mandarin it is: "*Zhong Yin Jie Guo; Zhong Shan Yin, Jie Shan Guo;*

Zhong E Yin, Jie Er Guo” (种 因结果，种善因，结善果，种恶因，结恶果);

So the advice from Master Hsuan Hua is:

“Qian Wan Yao Xiao Xin” (千万要小心)

“Bu Yao Zhong Cuo Yin, Jie Cuo Guo” (不要种错因，结错果)

This advice is very important. ‘You reap what you sow’ means *whatever you plant, good or evil, you will reap them as the fruition*. So you must bear this in mind, ‘*if you plant the seed of evil; you will reap the fruit of evil*’. You can never run away from it. In that sense, always remember, *never be Heedless; never be Deluded to plant the wrong seed and reap the wrong fruit*. Otherwise your life will be **afflicted**. You will become **miserable**.

To be **heedful** is to have this understanding; i.e. not to allow the mind to **heedlessly do** the **wrong things**. That is why **keeping** the **precepts** is **not easy** when you **don’t have** the **understanding**. When you **understand what constitutes evil** and **when you understand** what this **Nature’s Law of Karma** of “**You Reap What You Sow**” and “*you are born of your Karma, heir to your Karma, conditioned and supported by your Karma and you are what you are because of your Karma*”, you will be **very, very careful with Karma**. Whatever you do comes back to you. Be it Good or Bad/Evil.

To **transcend good and bad**, you have to **develop wisdom**. Without wisdom, you **cannot liberate** your **mind**. When you cannot liberate your mind, you cannot transcend birth and death; you cannot

transcend Karma. So understanding the importance of having this Right View with regards to the Law of Karma is very important, very powerful. This part Sheng Yen Fa Shi **did not explain**. He just tells you this precept must be held with understanding.

Ok, I will read the second paragraph.

When people do that to you, you complain by saying, *'how can my spouse or my husband do this to me?'* But in the past, when you did that to others, you never asked this same question of, *'how can I do this to fellow living beings?'* That's why *as a Bodhisattva, you can never do this because you **come for the living beings***. You keep your **vows**, you keep your **precepts**, and you **uphold them with understanding**. So likewise, for the **other precepts**, they are the same. When you partake **intoxicants**, you make your **consciousness very low** and then you will fall. That's why it will arise the condition for you **to break** all the **other 4 precepts**. These can be very dangerous. Through **delusion**, this can happen. That's why **self-delusion** will lead to **greed, hatred, anger, envy, jealousy and selfishness**.

*'Each participant, after **understanding** what **keeping** these **precepts involves**, is **free to decide** for himself or herself **whether or not to take them**. In this situation, many participants in the past did decide to take the precepts (meaning the **Bodhisattvas precepts**) and were able to **happily commit themselves** to the **Bodhisattva way**. Transmitting the precepts in this way via **allowing aspirants** to take them in **good conscience** and with **proper understanding** can **help aspirants plant the seeds of Bodhi** for **Buddhahood** with **no feelings***

of **compulsion or guilt** in their minds. The **virtue** in **vowing to observe the Bodhisattva precepts** enables us to **practice or cultivate the Buddha dharma diligently** leading to **purification of minds**.

These *codes of behavior* may also help us *interact with others* in a **more peaceful and harmonious manner**. If we can **purify** the actions of our body, speech, and mind **through cultivating the three sets of pure precepts, the five precepts** and the **ten meritorious actions**, then, **with the wisdom, such cultivation or practice has given us**, we can **banish or eradicate craving, covetousness, anger and all other afflictive emotions**. With a **Bodhisattva's mind of compassion**, we can **accept and cherish all sentient beings**, and by **purifying our own conduct**, we can **help to transform society at large**. **Even in the midst of suffering**, every sentient being can **attain the altruistic Bodhi-mind and also help others arouse this awakened mind of wisdom**.

The **combination of vows and precepts** that we are **transmitting here includes the four great vows**. That's why we have the **three sets of pure precepts**, and the **four great vows**. The **three sets of pure precepts, the five precepts and the ten good deeds** are quite accessible to everyone. There is ample **flexibility in practicing the three sets of pure precepts**, so long as their **fundamental principle** are adhered to. These precepts can be **adapted to the different situations** that **a practitioner of the Bodhisattva way** may encounter. Such **flexibility makes these precepts relatively easy to cultivate for a wide variety of people**. As these **precepts** also **function as guidelines for wholesome behavior** for Buddhists, the

commitment to cultivate them is a valuable undertaking for all practitioners. I dare not change the **content** of the **Bodhisattva precepts**, nor do I have the *virtues necessary* to invent new ones. I have simply referred to the various ***systems of Bodhisattva precepts*** in both the Chinese and Tibetan traditions and adapted them *to fit the needs of modern practitioners*. In doing so, my hope is **to promote the actualization of the spirit of the Bodhisattva precepts**, and I **encourage** all **practitioners** to **receive and practice them**’.

So the above is by Master Sheng Yen from his book. Then I will continue.

The above understanding is very important. Always remember *you have nothing to lose*. So don’t listen to what people say and what the **thought tells you**, like - ‘Are you serious? This is a serious matter. This is not for you.’

Nothing to do with all these, do you understand? Just ask yourself, ‘***what have I got to lose by taking the Bodhisattva vows?***’ I have **nothing to lose**, but **everything to gain**, right? And I can develop much understanding from it. The vows ***can guide me along*** and *give me all the understanding to connect*, to develop **affinity** with all the *Buddha, great beings (Bodhisattvas, etc.)* and **to connect** to their *nature* so that they *can always protect, bless and guide me*. Then I can develop **profound gratitude** and **respect** towards them. Then all the **wholesomeness** will arise for me to strengthen my **resolve** to **transform** my *spiritual faculties* into powers.

From then on, I **will progress very fast**. Then I **will determine** to do all these *because I have benefited* from all *these great beings* that go this way, do you understand? It is your turn now if you **have the conditions** and the **understanding to go this way**. So that in future, **you can also benefit other living beings by playing your role**.

Whenever you do all these, you are **not only doing it for living beings** because the *nature's Law of Karma* is such: **'you reap what you sow'**. Hence **whatever you do or have perfected is for your own nature**. That's why in future if you come again, you will *receive all this wholesomeness* because it is just like what I used to share with you all; *'when my nature came, how come everything could just come along together? And how come this nature of mine could receive the Buddha dharma so fast. Sometimes the teacher, or guide or whoever who spoke the truth had not realized or penetrated those truths but this nature of mine just listened and it understood and penetrated the truth'*. This is because this is *the way this 'nature' has been giving and sharing for so many lives (eons) before*. That's why when it came, it can receive equally fast. That's the reason why *whatever wholesomeness you do, it will come back to your nature* because **'you reap what you sow; if you plant the seed of wholesomeness, goodness, virtues, you will receive the fruit of virtues, and wholesomeness'**.

The Mandarin description is even more beautiful. That's why the **Law of Karma is such**, *'You plant the conditions, you will receive the results, the fruit of it. You plant the seeds of virtues; you will reap the fruit of virtues. You plant the seed of evil; you will reap the afflictions of suffering and evil.'* This is the **Law of Karma** and it will just

manifest. That's why between the two, which will you choose? Do you want to choose **to plant the seed of heedlessness** through *your delusion?* Then your **karmic nature will fall, you will become miserable, life after life when you come.** The **choice is very obvious** isn't it? If you want **to plant the seed of wholesomeness and virtues,** then what must you do? You *must train your mind* to be **heedful, to understand what constitute evil.** Then you *have to keep your precepts* because this is the **Law of Karma;** '*you reap what you sow*', *do good begets good, do evil begets evil.* So ultimately it is just the *advice of the Buddha but you have to understand them.*

The reason why you have to do this is because according to the Buddha, this is a **nature's law** and ***each and every living being, 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.*' Since **karma plays such a great role in your life,** if you still ***don't wake up to this Right View*** and ***determine to follow the advice of the Buddha to avoid all evil and do good*** so that ***you can take care of your karma,*** you are going to have ***a lot of suffering and affliction in future.***

Even if you *start cultivating now,* it's going to take you quite a while to clean up all these **karmic negativities** from your past. But these *good conditions can from now onwards, give rise to more wholesome karmic fruition with little or no more negative/evil karma.* Then only can you have the **causes and conditions to plant this goodness over a long period of time** so that in the future, whenever you come, you **don't have to pay back anymore** of those

karmic negativities borne of evil actions. So that whatever negativity of karma left, will be very mild.

Likewise, when my left leg had problem recently because the *muscles developed spasms and I can't stand*, it **was like meant to be**. The treatment by Bro. Vincent took *one and a half hour* and I had **to endure** the **pain**, which I endured. Bro. Vincent the 'doctor' came twice to my house to help treat me and I had **a lot of gratitude towards him** and **I thanked** him. But *I would rather take this pain in this form on this physical body via this way* rather than having to pay it back through an **accident via** landing up in hospital **which will be a lot worse**. Instead of having **severe bodily injuries**, you just take it through a *different way which is a lot milder*. So sometimes, don't complain. Do you understand? It is actually a **blessing in disguise** but you don't know. *That is why when you sit in meditation, if you have affliction and suffering, it is good. It helps you to take the suffering in your form.* Otherwise you cannot run away from its fruition because whenever there is condition, you may end up having severe accidents and injuries.

This cultivation can bring about this understanding for you to avoid some of the karmic negativities. This is possible because you know **how to break your karmic obstruction** first. Then you vow to **repent and not to repeat all these**. *You also know how to invoke the power of merits* for you to go the right way. In future, after that, all your cultivation will be **in accordance** with the **Law of Karma** and **your progress will be all the way up, no more falling back**. Then life after life, you will **accumulate** a lot of **blessings, virtues** and

understanding until you *can* **hardly commit any evil**. I will explain all this to you later. I hope you all can understand.

This life when I came, I realized I had *very little karmic debt to pay back* and they were relatively minor. Even though minor, they were still there but *comparatively*, I **felt very blessed** because *everything went my way*. It was like I was very **well protected everywhere I go, every moment, every instant** while going through life. This is possible because my nature **understand the teaching** and know how to **invoke the power of merits** and **vows**; develop **affinity** with all the **Great Beings** and **their nature to protect, guide** and **bless** me. All these are very important understanding.

I shall read on. But before I read on, maybe I will explain to you all the part on **cultivation**. You see, when you start your cultivation, you must start from **square one** with a **clear slate** as if you **don't know what the Dharma** is. Then you take your chance in life through *whatever good roots* you may have. You investigate into all truth. Then suddenly, you may have *bumped into some conditions* that gives you, the *condition to encounter the Buddha Dharma*, the *Triple Gem*. You then have the condition to take the refuge. From the refuge, you develop the **faith** and the **affinity** through an **understanding** of its **teaching**. Then with the **understanding**, you **cultivate**. As you cultivate, you come to understand that *your Karma is very mixed initially and you have a lot of heedlessness before you know the Buddha Dharma*. Then when you know the Buddha Dharma, you have the condition **to improve your understanding** and **your life** from that moment onwards via **cultivating diligently, sincerely** and **with faith** until you have the understanding of how to

develop a **good spiritual life**. Initially the **cultivation** may not be **stable** and not **strong**. But as you **persevere**, you **accumulate** some **good conditions** for you to develop the **affinity to connect** to the Triple Gem during the **sāsana** period and **this merits** can help you progress along the path of dharma. It can also help you with *your future cultivation*. But when the **sāsana** is no more, you may get lost again. That's why your **Karmic conditions will continue to oscillate between the wholesome and unwholesome phases** and you continue to come as a normal human being, having the usual problems.

But like I mention just now, this **nature** came **to realize** this very **important understanding**: 'That is *after you have the condition to meet up with the true teaching again (especially during the **Buddha sāsana**), you **must** then **make** this **strong resolve** to go this way, through taking the **Bodhisattva Vows to plant the seed of Bodhi** with **very strong faith** and **understanding** as taught by my nature*'.

Then after that, you will come to realize, in the future when you come; *every life somehow the **conditions** will be **activated** and you **will know how to move** following this **Bodhisattva way** cultivation*. Then *as you move along this way*, you **will accumulate** more and more **wholesomeness, merits, virtues** and **understanding**. *But initially as you come, you will still reap the effect of your karmic past*. But because from then onwards, your **cultivation** becomes so different, because every life you come, almost 70, 80 or later 90 over percent, if not near to 100% of your life, is all wholesome; which means there is little or almost **no more karmic negativity left**. Can you understand? Then your **karmic nature** becomes better and

better. Then as you **pay back all the Karmic negativity's fruition** that you have *accumulated in the past, through each and every life that you have cultivated*, you **would reach a point where your Karmic fruition or negativity of karma is very little left**. Whatever that is left, **is very minor, non-issue type**. By then, your nature will become very different. By that time, whenever you come, you are like very blessed and very beautiful. **For so many lives when this nature of mine comes, everything appears set and everything is already there in place for this nature of mine. The timing, the conditioning and whatever things that it needed will be there. It's like all of these are meant to be and preplanned through an understanding.**

As I have explained in my sharing, I hardly have any problems. All the things I go through are very minor karmic issues which I paid back when I was very young and these were very trivial or minor issues. I don't have any issue at all with life. Everything is smooth sailing, like **very blessed** and **people use to say 'I am very lucky'**. But I don't think it has anything to do with luck. It is **all through the understanding** of the *dharma, the vows, the karmic nature and the spiritual nature*. That is why you can have all those conditions. So in cultivation, you **need to reach that stage** where your **progress** is most of the time **uphill**, which means *your cultivation has stabilized because you hardly have any more karmic negativity*. So the **accumulation of wholesomeness and merits far outweigh** whatever **karmic negativity that is still possible until later, you can hardly do them**. This is because after you **have progressed to certain level, especially after you have gone beyond the Arahant stage**, you would have **stabilized your understanding** and after you have reached the

3rd stage of Bodhi mind development. Your nature becomes very different, very different indeed; for **every life you come or choose** to come, you **don't have** to go **through** all those **sufferings or miseries anymore**. Then every life you come, you **will connect** very fast; you will **connect early** and you **will develop** the **understanding** very fast. The **way this nature of mine gave (in the past)** and the **way it receives** is also very fast when it comes. *That is the reason why I realized when I came, my nature learnt very fast. I received things very fast. I used to share with you all, my teachers and my guide **hardly teach** me anything because I **seldom see them** except my **2nd last teacher** whom I happen **to have the condition to spend more time with her** because she is a local Malaysian. The rest are from overseas. I don't know them all.* Somehow they came and we met up. I usually hardly see them, perhaps once a year or maximum twice a year. Usually, I met them when they came and I took them around and listened to their sharing. After that they are gone. Sometimes, after many years, when conditions arise again, I would visit them during Kaṭhina time. Apart from that, I hardly see them. This is unlike you all and me because I am local and you all are mostly local, so we have the conditions for our **kalyāṇamitta activities** to be held on a weekly basis. It goes to show that you have **very deep karmic affinity** with **Guan Yin** and **all the great beings** and **my nature**. *Otherwise, you can't be here.* A lot of these have to do with **past karmic affinity, past life encounters** and **conditions**. ***Without those affinities, none of these can happen.***

So coming back to the topic on cultivation, hopefully by now you all can understand the **importance** of this **window of opportunity** (*this present Buddha sāsaṇa*). If you make use of it, to set everything in

place, then in future when you come, the **Bodhi mind** or **Bodhi seed** you have **planted this life will be activated** and you will know what to do, life after life, *even during period without the Buddha sāsaṇa*. You will progress all the way until one day, you will come to realize, you can't fall anymore because your cultivation has transformed and **every life you come you will not be heedless** any more. This is how the **real understanding can bring forth the way and cut short your cultivation** even though people say the **Bodhisattva way cultivation** is a very long way. Yes, indeed, it takes very long. But when you go through it you will come to **understand it better** and you actually will **choose to come again and again because it is so wonderful, so beautiful and so meaningful**. By then you will come to know, that the so called long period is a **relative thing** and is **no more significant or not more a reality**. Long and short has **no reality** because the *phenomenal world is a world of consciousness, empty, not real and not what you think*. But there is such a thing **as life**. There is such thing **as living beings**. There is such thing as **existential law that governs life and existence**. The law of karma. So there are a lot of **understandings** that *come with existence and living life*. When you have the **understanding of both (the conditioned and the unconditioned)**, you will **understand all these very clearly**. We will stop here, "The source of compassion". We will continue later.

Anybody has anything you want to ask or any sharing regarding this particular topic on **Cultivating the Bodhisattva way**. You all do not have any questions? Ah, Tammy! Please pass the mike to Tammy.

Tammy: Good afternoon. Previously when Brother Teoh talked about one of the Perfections of Adhiṭṭhāna, I couldn't really get it

and I don't know what that is. Then, a few days ago, a friend wanted to go somewhere, but we cannot go. Then all of the sudden I was thinking about the *law of attraction* because I just got to know the *law of attraction*. I thought about it and then it came to me that the law of attraction and adhiṭṭhāna is *kind of similar* and *it rings a bell*. **May be Brother Teoh can explain a bit.**

Brother Teoh: Can, I will explain it. You see, there is what we called the *theory* on, **the law of attraction**. This is more towards the ***motivational theory*** type of *teaching*. They tend to hold seminars and teach this theory. They say, *this law of attraction means positive thought attract positive thought*. So, **they encourage** you to have ***positive thinking***. That, to a certain extent is helpful at times but it doesn't play such a big role, because the ***overall picture is different***. The ***big picture has a lot more things involved***. I will explain that. *Your question is good*; it creates condition for that teaching to be ***compared to the Buddha Dharma***. Then *you will come to know why the Buddha Dharma is so much deeper, so much more extensive and so much more superior*. The general **law of attraction** is just a **simple law** but *to them it is like a very fantastic law*. In fact, it is just a theoretical law but they treat it like a scientific law.

They **didn't know** that it **involves** the **mind**. When it involves the mind, it ***goes beyond the scientific law***. Which means it is *not an ordinary scientific law* any more. So, the law of attraction means if you have **good thought**, you **will attract people with good thought** to you also. So, *if you want to be successful*, they will tell you to create this confidence in you with the good thought, for instance "*I want to be a successful person*" or "*I want to have financial*

freedom". So, every time **you imbue yourself** with this **positive thought** of meeting up with the **right person** who can help you, **guide you** and **make you successful**. *They believe that when you have positive thought, you will have confidence, you will attract positive people and you will have the ability to be successful.* So, they go for *this motivational talk*. Then they try it. Initially, of course, it will have some result, isn't it? Do you know why? *Because all along they seldom have positive thoughts.* They are not confident. So their *motivational course motivates you*, do you understand? So, if you develop positive thought, it will **help you initially**. But the **big picture is different** because according to the **dharma**, the Buddha **said your life is governed by what?** What is the major cause or contributor? Yes, **Karma**. *So if you don't take care of this karma and you expect to improve your life, it will be very difficult.* It's just like that day, at Susan's house, do you all remember? She invited us for lunch, and Luangpor Jumien is supposed to come to her house, but somehow he was not available to come. So, Susan **invited me instead** to go to her house to give some **dharma sharing** and that was just immediately after the Chinese New Year. Can you all remember? I started off the sharing by saying we, Chinese have this good tradition of wishing people “祝福你, 新年快乐” which means “Wishing you Happy New Year” and wishing you a happy and prosperous New Year. Wishing you good health, good life and everything also good. Then “心想事成” - meaning whatever you think and wish for, you will receive. And I asked, **‘is it by only wishing then all these good wishes will materialize?’** By wishing people, do you think it can materialize, it can't, isn't it? If it can, everybody will be very happy, very prosperous and having the good life, isn't it? **So, no amount of wishes can bring**

forth the condition for it to materialize. Of course your pleasant and good wishes can make people feel good. They may thank you for your greetings, for your good wishes, for your kind words and so on. But then, it just ends there, do you understand? It is not going to make any difference.

The **only way** for it to **bring** about the **result** is to **understand** the **Buddha Dharma**. *When you understand the Dharma, then you will understand life. So, understanding the Buddha Dharma is very important. When you understand the Buddha Dharma, you will understand life then you will know how to live life.* As taught by the Buddha, the **law of Karma** is **very powerful**. All of our *lives depend on Karma*. So, for it to **materialize**, we **have to take of Karma**. That's why you have to follow the **advice of the Buddha**, you **must avoid all evil to avoid Karmic negativity**, you **must cultivate wholesomeness, goodness, virtues**, and then **you must purify your mind** to develop **wisdom** for you to transform. **Otherwise**, it **cannot bring** about the **causes** and **conditions** to bring about the **good life**. Good life means - *you take care of Karma and Karma takes care of your life*. So what does having **positive thought** mean? It means you just **make use** of your **good Karmic condition** earlier, a little bit similar to using "Feng Shui". Do you understand? Because it will help you to **avoid** all those people with **negative thought**, people with **no confidence** and who **do not belief** in **becoming successful**. There are many people **who lack understanding** and do not have the **confidence**. If you talk to *them and advise them that they should try this, change their job, do this or encourage them to do investment and become successful*, their response is typically negative: like, "*ah, this one is not for me*". This shows that they *lack*

confidence and choose to close the door. They don't even want to give it a try and they don't even want to change for the better.

At **least** this motivation theory teaches them to have confidence, to have faith, to have **those positive thinking**. However, if they **don't** take care of their **Karma**, *they can have all the positive thinking*, and *interact with all these people*, their good wishes, **still will not** materialize. They may have more chances to listen to some good ideas and **if they go ahead and work towards it sincerely then things will go their way and they can make it**. There are quite a number of them who had gone to such motivational courses, maybe they can share their experience with you. *Initially they tend to do well, and sometimes they make it. But then it is just like the good Karma, and 'feng shui', do you understand?* Every time you do this, you invoke the usage of your good merits and this is like drawing on your bank account. All the **good merits** that you have, will give you the *conditions for you to reap what you sowed*. But once there are no more merits left, then *no matter what you do, nothing will happen*. So, this *law of attraction* in a way is **misleading** because it is not a **scientific law** but rather it involves the **mental consciousness**, the **mental intention part** of the **thought**. This **thought is limited** because **it is subject** to the **law of Karma**; if you **don't have the full picture and understanding** and you **don't take care** of your **Karma** then it **may not work**. Sometimes you try to **cheat and deceive** people and you go and join those **pyramid schemes**, etc. Initially you may **make some money** but later you are caught because the **law of karma** may *come after you and you end up miserable again*.

Whereas, *Adhiṭṭhāna* is different, it is a **spiritual understanding** that you **can make use of**. Actually, Sākyamuni Buddha taught that. You can develop *Adhiṭṭhāna* by **making affirmation** using: - *‘by the power of truth or by the power of merits may it arise the causes and conditions for certain good wishes to be fulfilled*. In the Sutta there are many examples of these being used, for instance in the **Angulimāla Sutta**, they recite this: *‘by the power of this truth’*. And in the Jāyā **Mangala Sutta** they also recite: *‘by the power of this truth, may this and that happen’*. These are all possible because they are all part of nature’s law. To **arise this Adhiṭṭhāna, you need to have merits**, *you need to input the power of merits for causes and conditions for it to arise, or through sincerity, or power of truth, or power of merits*. Even like **asking for forgiveness to break Karmic obstructions**, *is the same because it involves one of the spiritual law’s understanding*, otherwise, it will **obstruct you**. All these are so complete, comprehensive, and extensive. If you don’t do all these, and **you only** go for **the law of attraction: positive thoughts, positive thoughts.....** etc. **what you wish for may not materialize**. And before you are **enlightened** the *positive thought that you think of, may not* be the **real positive** thoughts which are **without** the evil roots. That’s why if you **achieve things** through **evil means** with the evil roots, there will be **karmic implication**. *It can bring forth the Karmic fruition to torment you. So, all these need to be understood*. Otherwise, you are **limited** in your **understanding**. So this is the **main difference**. Many years ago, people get excited with this ‘*law of attraction*’ because *this theory was so popular during that time*. I can still remember, it was more than 10 – 20 years ago, people came and asked me regarding this subject. They are quite interested in it because it was **so popular then**. So I asked for a copy of the

book from them to have a look as to what they teach. I also search the internet. Then I knew it **was limited** because they **don't have** the **full understanding**.

So, a lot of these are **motivational theories** taught by others to **motivate you**, but they **don't look** at the other aspect of things **especially** the **law of Karma** which is **most important**. That's why they **cannot** develop the **full benefits** and **understanding** of these **nature's laws** to bring about **causes and conditions** for it to **materialize**. So whatever you want and wish for, you need to have the understanding. Take for example, 心想事成 (Xin xian shi cheng) – the meaning is, '*whatever you wish for, may it come true*'. This **can only take effect** if you **have the Dharma**, if you **understand** the **nature's law of karma** that **governs all of life**. That's why the **pure wish** of the **enlightened beings** is **very powerful**. When they saw the conditions, they **may radiate** this **pure wish**, which is **very powerful**. *It is very powerful, because it is from their pure mind. So, this pure wish can bring about great conditions for it to manifest, and it will come true, but there must be conditions for it to happen. They cannot be giving out all these pure wishes, without the appropriate conditions. Without conditions, there is not much effect. It's not potent. For it to be potent, there must be condition, and when the condition comes the enlightened being will know, then it will match '相应' (Xiang ying).* Then it will manifest. So, is this clear? Sadhu to you Tammy for your **good question**.

Okay, any more question?

Ah, wah, Sister Soo is back. This is our New Zealand friend. Sadhu and welcome home.

Sister Soo: Brother Teoh, since you asked, 'is there any more question?' I have one. There is this word '**cetasika**' that I have just heard, so, can you *please explain what 'cetasika' is and how can cetasika helps us in our cultivation?*

Brother Teoh: Okay, *this is a very good question.* You must have heard it from your **Abhidhamma classes**. This word '**Cetasika**' means **mental states** or sometimes they translate it as **mental concomitant**. *Actually 'cetasika' means mental states. All of the mental states within your saṅkhāra are cetasika. And they are nothing special. It's just a pāli word used in the abhidhamma teaching to expression these mental states.* Then people get **excited** by this word. **Cetasika** are actually your **mental concomitant**, all of your **mental states** within your **mind states**. *When you develop the cultivation, and once you have the stability of mindfulness, you can see them.* That's why with mindfulness your mind becomes **different**, your mind becomes **sensitive when you are mindful**. Then when you can see them, you know *these are cetasika within*. That's why in the Abhidhamma teaching, there is this part they call the **content of consciousness** or **cetasika** which is also called **mental concomitant**. It said within **every consciousness** that arise there are **seven universals** cetasika. Have you heard of these **seven universals**? The seven universals mean that these are the seven cetasika that **are common** to all consciousness. Because they are **universal**, so, *all consciousness must have these for it to arise.* We have gone through these seven universal earlier on. One of them is **contact**, the other one is **feeling**, then **perception**, and then you have **ekaggatā** (one pointedness) and **Cetanā** or **mental intention**. Then

the other one is **attention** or ‘**Manasikāra**’ in pāḷi. That’s why **Yoniso manasikāra** is *wise attention at the moment of sense experience*. Then you have the **life stream or energy** called **Jīvitindriya** in pāḷi. All these **seven universals** are **common** to all consciousness. For consciousness to arise, they must have them. So for **consciousness** that is **without** the **content**, these seven universals are not there as yet. But the **moment you input the content**, these seven will be there. The only cetasika that is there before the content went in is **contact**. *When there is contact, there is the pure consciousness ‘viññāṇaṃ’, and the moment you input the content, the saṅkhāra all go in, the feelings, perception, all the other things will go in, then wholesome/unwholesome and all these will come in.*

So, this word, cetasika is another word for **mental states, mental concomitant, or every mind state** your mundane mind can transform into. When you develop it through meditation, then these **cetasika** are what you have to look for. When you are **mindful**, you will have the **stability of daily mindfulness** and **awareness** in your daily life to *be aware when your mind reacts and stirs*. All these cetasika will arise. That’s why under **cittānupassanā**, you will have to be mindful of them (the **content of consciousness**). *The consciousness that have greed, that have fear, that have envy, jealousy, that have all the various mind states, you must be aware.* So, the **consciousness is spacious awareness** and *when experiencing pīti, sukha, you must be aware*. These are the cetasika, the mental states within. When there is an expanding consciousness. You will have to be aware, spacious awareness or whatever. The cetasika are the **mind states** that are inside whether it is **peacefulness, tranquil,**

still, joy, pīti and so on. *Or whether there is envy, jealousy, fear, worry, anxiety, and phobia. All these are called cetasika.*

According to **Abhidhamma** there are **fifty-two** of these mind states as described under **saṅkhāra**. These fifty-two include the first **two mind aggregates of feeling** (vedanā) and **perception** (saññā), if you take this two away, the balance of cetasika is fifty. This is done because, *this is related to meditation*. You have to be mindful of these **two mind states** in meditation. Like the Buddha's explanation, when these mind states arise, you must know your mind has stirred. If your mind **has not** stirred, it will remain in the **tranquil and stillness** state of silence. Pīti and sukha wholesome mind states can also be experience.

When you **input the content of consciousness, wholesome and unwholesome** (kusala and akusala) and **neutral feeling mind states** will arise depending on your understanding. These various understanding of these **mind states** are described in more detail in the sutta under **saṅkhāra**. If you want to know more of these **mind states**, you have to refer to the term **saṅkhāra** as taught by the Buddha. He *sub-divided saṅkhāra into a total of 52 mind states*. The **52 saṅkhāra mind states** are taught by the Buddha in the Abhidhamma pitaka. You can read through them.

Basically, these, cetasika is nothing special, except people find it very interesting because this word is **seldom taught** or discussed. It is an Abhidhamma word. Abhidhamma is the **higher teaching** and it is one of the **three baskets of the Tripitaka**. First, you have the Vinaya pitaka – the monk's precepts, which is the Pātimokkha part covering the discipline of the monks. Then you have the Sutta pitaka,

the second basket, consisting all the *discourses of the Buddha*, then the third basket is the *Abhidhamma pitaka*, they called it the higher teaching. In the *Abhidhamma pitaka*, they go into **consciousness**, much deeper, and they classified them into all the various types of consciousness. They also have the **consciousness for lay people** and **consciousness for enlightened beings, mundane** and **supra mundane** consciousness and so on with the various classifications.

But as far as my nature is concern, this Abhidhamma teaching **can only be understood** by the **wise**. Because in the early days when people came to see me and ask me about this topic, I say to them I don't know because I don't read Abhidhamma. But many years later, I managed to get hold of one Abhidhamma book after my University graduation. Somebody gave me this book which is quite good and it was written by **Venerable Narada**, I think the title is '**A manual on Abhidhamma**'. *After 1989 when my nature had understood the dhamma, I flipped through the book and I find the things written there rather interesting.* I **realized** that **these teaching cannot be understood by the unenlightened beings** because all these are mostly **concept, theory and knowledge** and the **words** are not easy for living beings to understand. But if you **have awakened and transformed**, *when you read, you will understand what they are trying to tell you.* In fact, *some of the translations and commentaries are not so correct.* The actual happening is not like what they have described. But they try their very best to **express** them. *I think in the olden days when they still have the understanding of this teaching (if I am not wrong), they try to use words to describe them, and quite a number of things that they said are quite correct.*

*For example, when consciousness arises, they always ask this question, which one arise first? Perception first or feeling first? There is a Singaporean, I remember, he asked the monk, he said, at moment of consciousness, when I see, do I see the colour first or the shape first or the thought about the thing first? The monk doesn't know how to answer him. But actually all these, you cannot understand **because the mind moves very fast.***

At the moment of consciousness, like the physics experiment, the light bulb, lights up, do you remember? The light bulb lights up means the **true mind, just become conscious**, this is the **pure awareness**, pure **consciousness, without the content as yet**. The moment you input the content, which is very fast, these **seven universals**, they arise **simultaneously**. Upon contact you input the content, all these went in with the **other cetasika**, whether wholesome or unwholesome, it all **arise simultaneously**, then your **mind decides**, *you can be at the moment of feeling, at the moment of contact, at the moment of saṅkhāra activities movement, and which one you want to go to is up to you. That's why the monk cannot understand him*, because **his mindfulness is not so stable**, he **hasn't reached** that **stage of stability**. But when you have reached that stage of stability of mindfulness, you can answer him.

*It is not what you think because you are speculating with your thought. The actual happening is different because mindfulness that can be aware can be at the moment anywhere. It can **only be at one** of these **cetasika** at any one time but it **can move very fast**. It can just **silent everything** and **be aware** of the **whole content**. So, this is the **power of mind, power of mindfulness**, and this is **why mindfulness** is very important. **Without** mindfulness, **you cannot***

have that type of **sensitivity**, the **ability to be aware**, to **understand** all these.

So, Abhidhamma to me is like the Mahayana teaching, it is written for **enlightened beings**. If you are **not enlightened**, when you read you **cannot understand**. You can only perhaps interpret them. That's why you **need to develop** the **cultivation**. When you have the **cultivation**, the **understanding** and the **transformation**, *your mind functions differently* and **you can see** all these very **clearly**. By then, whatever that is written, you can have a clearer understanding of what those things are *and what is written wrongly, you will also know*. So, this is not a new word, it is just a Pāli word that a lot of people may not understand. So, the English equivalent word is **mental concomitant**. It is actually all your **saṅkhāra mind states** that is within the content of consciousness. And there are a lot of descriptions on these cetasika.

(Silent awareness Meditation for **30 minutes**.....)

Okay, I have sent out a **soft copy of the file link** on **cetasika for sharing** by all. *My wife found it on Google. It is quite a complete and good write up. The adobe link is: Chart_Cetasika_en.pdf*

I will go through it with you all. It is quite similar to what I have just told you, except instead of **mental concomitant**, they use another term '**mental factor**'. The **fifty-two mental factors** are stated there in the **table of classification** which is *very good and clear*. (Refer to the 2 **tables**). The **first seven** are the **7 universals** that I have thought you all. The **second six** are the occasional, then there are **fourteen unwholesome** and **twenty-five wholesome cetasika**. So if you add *them all up, there are a total of fifty-two*.

Down there, the coloured section, with the English and Pāli equivalent words are shown the **seven universal mental factors** and they are: **Phassa** (contact), **vedanā** (feeling), **saññā** (perception), **cetana** (mental intention), **ekaggatā** (one pointedness), **Jivitindriya** (the life faculty) and **manasikāra** (attention). So, these are the *seven universal mental factors*, then you have the **next six, occasional mental factors**. These are mainly the **Jhanic factors** and **some enlightenment factors**. Vitakka (initial application of thought) and vicāra (sustained thought) are the Jhanic factors. Then **Adhimokkha** is intensified interest; **Vīriya** and **Pīti** are **enlightenment factors** and **Chanda** is passion. The Buddha **taught lay people** the **four accomplishments or 4 bases of success**; **Chanda** which is passion, is the first one, then **vīriya** (zeal), **Citta** (will power) and the last one **Vimansa (investigation)**. These are the **four bases of success** mental factors.

Category one: are the **unwholesome mental factors** or **mental concomitants**. They are altogether **thirteen** of them: **delusion**, **shamelessness**, **moral fearlessness**, **restlessness**, the **three evil roots**, **Lobha**, **wrong view**, **conceit**, **hatred**, **envy**, **stinginess**, **worry**, **remorse**, **sloth and topper (thina midda)** and **sceptical doubt (Vicikicchā)**. Many of these are mental hindrances.

Then you have the **25 beautiful mental states**: **Saddhā**, **Sati**, **Hiri** (Moral Shame), **Octopak** (Moral fear), **alobha** (non-greed), **adosa** (non-hatred), **equanimity**, **Kayapassati** (tranquillity of mind), **tranquillity of consciousness**, **tranquillity of mental factors**, **lightness of mental factors**, **lightness of consciousness**, **pliancy of mental factors**, **pliancy of mental consciousness**. These are all **meditative and spiritual mind states**. Then you have the

Kayakammannata, these are the **adaptability** of mental factors. Followed by: adaptability of mental consciousness, proficiency of mental factors, proficiency of mental consciousness. Rectitude of mental factors, rectitude of mental consciousness, right speech, right action and right livelihood, compassion, sympathetic joy and wisdom. So, these are the fifty-two mental states. This Chart and table gave a very **complete definition** and this is **for your information**. These are mental states/mental factors/mental concomitants taught in the Abhidhamma. If you are interested, you can read through them but they are not really important. This type of teaching, you can **only truly understand** when you are **enlightened**, when you have the **mindfulness** to **realize them**. When you have the ability to go through all these mind states, then the words have meanings. Sometimes the **word** they use, the **meaning** is wrong, but you will know. For example, **Chanda**; Chanda is passion, not vision. Your passion or strong tenacity to do certain thing is Chanda.

3.3. Meditation reporting

Now is meditation reporting and Q & A session. You can report your meditation or ask me whatever question related to your meditation and the dharma. Anybody? Ah, pass the mic to Brother Song.

Brother Song: Brother Teoh, I wish to report my meditation experience for this week. Last Saturday night, when I was listening to your sharing at Susan's house Dana, as usual, I dose of after 10 minutes. Suddenly there is a **very bright light** illuminate from inside. Then **my awareness arises**, then I wonder, why is it so bright, I thought I didn't switch off the lights in my room, but when I open

my eyes, my room is dark. I've switched off the lights. The light illuminated very brightly from inside. Then the next morning, Sunday, when I woke up, my mind was **totally silent, very aware, no aggregate**, it is in **total silence**. (Brother Teoh said, Sadhu!)

Then, I went to the garden and looked outside, I was in total silent. Then, my mind arises and say that I must use this mind to cultivate Satipaṭṭhāna. Then the next moment, **a voice arises** saying that there is no Satipaṭṭhāna. After that I contemplate: why is it so? Then I realize when you are at that mind state – in pure awareness, you don't have to do anything, you don't have to cultivate Satipaṭṭhāna.

(Brother Teoh again commented: Right, Right and Sadhu!)

Then, on Wednesday night, while I was listening to your Tuesday night's sharing on the topic: 12 links, the light strike again from within even though I was listening with my eyes open. Nowadays, I like to look outside from my garden. On Friday, suddenly, I realize that I can be aware of the birds flying high above me in the sky, then I suddenly realize, this is **general spacious awareness** without a centre. Then I relax into it to **maintain awareness** of whatever that is within my field of vision: the moving cars, people, birds, ***I can be aware of them all.***

Brother Teoh: Sadhu!

Brother Song: Yesterday (Saturday), When I was washing my clothes at home, I usually make use of the time when I am washing my clothes to ***cultivate mindfulness***, but half way through my washing, the **understanding** of all the **essential Dharma** that Brother Teoh

had taught us **suddenly arise** and **unfold in front of me like a flower flowering**.

Brother Teoh: Yes! Yes! Yes! And Sadhu!

Brother Song: Then, it was as if at that moment, I **can understand** all the Dharma taught.

Brother Teoh: Good! This **can happen** because now you can link them (all the dharma). It means you have **already stabilized** your **understanding**.

Brother Song: Then last year, during our Yunnan, Shangri La, spiritual trip, while in the bus, the understanding also arise, but yesterday's experience was different, the **understanding** is like a flowers, keeps on blooming, keeps on unfolding. Recently, my mind state is **very clear**, and I **can see** my **mental intention** very **clearly**. Then I came to realize, actually, **before** our **understanding arise**, **every** of our **mental intentions** are with the **evil roots** and our **mundane mind** is **very egoic** in nature. After I can see these **3 evil roots clearly**, I started **to straighten** my **views**. And because I have **this** very stable **mindfulness**, that's why it is **very easy** for me to be **aware** of them. And from then onward, I know how to go about **cultivating** the **Noble Eightfold Path** via acting with **right views and wisdom**. No more acting from memory.

Brother Teoh: Yes, correct, correct.

Brother Song: When you are aware of it, it will cease by itself because of the wisdom.

Brother Teoh: Yes, because of the **wisdom** and the **understanding**, it **will not arise**. So, as I have told you all, the **twelve links** can only stop at **feeling if there is wisdom** (especially *yoniso manasikāra*), **without** wisdom, it will *continue to flow and move* and **condition craving straight away**. Very good. Sadhu! Anymore to share?

Brother Song: Actually, I realize this year, my mind state is very different again.

Brother Teoh: Yes, it has transformed already.

Brother Song: Last month, when I read the “The five aggregate of form and mind”, I can understand all of them. Previously, it is only at the **knowledge level**. Last month, when I read, I can understand all of it. It is **not easy to understand** this 5 aggregates of form and mind *because there are two mind, the pure consciousness, its content, perception, saṅkhāra, etc.* Previously I can only understand knowledge wise. I can’t really understand it deeply, but last month when I read it, I can **truly understand** all the Dharma Brother Teoh Shared in that book.

Brother Teoh: Yes! Sadhu! And correct. Let us rejoice. Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

That’s why when you have the **ability to connect**, you will **understand** and **cultivate correctly**, and then the **transformation** can **happen**. *That’s why he can go through all this cultivation.* He can see and understand the **links clearly**. Now he can understand what I spoke before because it is in transcript form. He can see all the **subtle mental intentions** and **saṅkhāra activities** occurring within his mind. Last time, he never sees, because at that time it

was mainly **dharma knowledge** and he tries **to link** the Dharma to what he thinks he understands. To develop the **ability to transform**, your **awareness**, your **consciousness** and your **mindfulness** needs to **become more and more stable**, more and more **deep, clear** and **refine**. **When the mind enters Sati**, then **all these stages** will **manifest, it will happen**.

Initially he went through the stage: like *the consciousness becomes very bright*, like day light. That one actually is *one of the ten defilements of insight*. If you cling to it and think that you have transformed, you have special ability, then you will **stagnant** there and **be trapped** there. But he knew, this is part and parcel of the *spiritual training, the spiritual path*. Just like **Master Xu Yun** (虛云老和尚)'s case; before he **had the condition** to become **enlighten**, just before the **retreat** and before the **hot water spill** onto his hand, to awaken him - a few days before that, he was in **deep Samadhi** and it was actually **at night** and he was in **a dark room**, then suddenly he experience this brightness of mind state, like it was day light. Just like Brother Song's case, he thought he had forgotten to switch off the light, and when he opened his eyes, the whole room was dark. It is the same like Master Xu Yun, he realized the whole place was in darkness but when he was in that state that so called Samadhi, it is the **mind's manifestation** which can show to you the **brightness**, the **luminosity** and so on, but **these are all mind states**. As long as it **doesn't bring about wisdom, forget about it**. It is part and parcel of cultivation, the **by-product** of **deep Samadhi**, hence it will **manifest**. That type of mind is the mind that is capable of transformation if you are **not trapped** by it, you are **not deceived** by it, and you do not cling and attach to the **psychic ability** and the

special **mind manifestation**. All these manifestation, *if it doesn't bring about understanding or wisdom, forget about it, because these are only conditioned mind states. Nothing special*, so don't go and attach and cling via saying, 'Wah! I must have gone through certain insight or certain mind transformation. I can see this; I can see that'. No, these are **defilements of insight** that *will manifest through mind states*. It is a **condition state**, just like those people in **Jhāna, in concentration**, in *one pointedness of mind*; they can **see nimitta**, have **psychic ability** and so on.

So, when you develop the cultivation in accordance with the teachings as taught by the Buddha, it is just **Sati, awareness and mindfulness** leading to **heedfulness**. Just stabilize it, then through this **stability of mindfulness** that **nature can see** by itself, can **awaken by itself**. *He was able to be in this state because he has connected quite long ago, a few years already. That's why earlier on, he still has the questions of the thought. Then I told him, forget about the thoughts. If you go to the thought, it will continue to deceive you. So, you just do, don't try to know, then you will understand.*

That's why I said, **whatever happens, relax** into it and **silent your mind**. So, that knowing part, is the knowledge, forget about it. Don't **try to know** when you are **in formal meditation**. Just **do until** the whole **wisdom stabilized**, then the **understanding will unfold**. The **understanding will shine forth**, then **your nature** will know and then this **understanding** is with **your nature**. *When it is with your nature, you don't have to remember them because it is not knowledge, it is an understanding which is always there and you will understand what this thing is.* That's why when he was in the garden, he can be

aware of the birds flying very high up there, then the nature's movements, the car, the plants, the leaves, everything else, and then he realizes his mind is different already. Then there is a thought that tells him, maybe you should use this to do the four foundation of mindfulness, the Satipathana. Then from the nature inside, it says, there is no Satipathana, he has done it. All these, the cultivator with the understanding and wisdom connected, will understand. Then it will just know how to live life. Just like what he said, the five aggregates of form and mind, that book that we printed became so clear to him now. You all should go and read through it to develop the clear understanding.

The last time when he read, he thought he understands, but mostly still theory, because it involves so many things. There are two types of mind and if you cannot understand that, you cannot penetrate the Buddha Dharma. Then the two aspects of five aggregates of form and mind, then the twelve links, the dependent origination. The mental intentions, the fine movements, the various mental states, etc.; *all these you cannot just understand them through knowledge or theory.* There may be words to describe them but the actual awakening is via the direct seeing with the mindfulness, the awareness. That's why you must have the understanding and if you have faith, and you diligently cultivate accordingly, *you will awaken.* That's why the *first phase of Dharma, understanding it clearly*, then *put it into practice, don't try to know*, just cultivate it. Then silent the mind until the mind enter Sati, until your daily mindfulness is very stable, Sati Sampajañña also very stable. Most of you have the initial wisdom already, except for some of you, it is *not stable yet.*

Check against, the **ten steps** stated in the **Avijjā Sutta's enlightenment sequence**. The **1st step** is to have **Dharma friends**, which you all have. **2nd step** is **listening to the true Dharma**, which is *what you all have been doing all these while*, and then the **3rd (third) step** is to develop the **faith** which you all also **have already**. So, **once the faith** is there, you will develop the **spiritual Zeal (Vīriya)** to **move forward, to cultivate the first turning and second turning wisdom** cumulating into the **initial wisdom (Yoniso Manasikāra)**, and that is **step 4**, which is what you have to develop. The first turning wisdom is through hearing or reading. When you have the Dharma understanding borne of pariyatti (first phase of the Dharma), then through **constant hearing** of the **true dharma**, it can awaken you because your **understanding** has **stabilized**. Then after that when you **reflect, contemplate and inquire further**, you start to **develop deeper** understanding, then you **start to assimilate everything** that you have heard and studied, and assimilate then into your nature's understanding. First is to **stabilize the understanding** through **constant reflection, contemplation and inquiry**, then *the assimilation part is when you take them all in, then the understanding will prepare you to receive the third turning wisdom*, which is **more penetrative** leading to the **true awakening**. So, the first turning and second turning wisdom can bring about the **initial wisdom**, which is *Yoniso Manasikāra*. This **initial wisdom is needed** for you to develop the **stability of mind**, leading to a stable **daily mindfulness**.

When you have the initial wisdom, at the moment of sense experience, **feeling will remain as pure feeling**, you will **not stir**, you will **not react**. That's why you can have **more moment of peace**,

more moment of calmness, more moment of awareness. Your *mindfulness becomes more and more, then more and **more stable**.* That's why **after that step 4**, you will **move on** to the **5th step**, which is **sati sampajañña** (mindfulness with clear comprehension). After this the **6th step** which is the **sense restraint will arise because your daily mindfulness with clear comprehension is already very stable.** When you already have the **initial wisdom and sati sampajañña**, you will have the **sense restraint** because *your mindfulness* is very stable, and you can then, like what **Brother Song** went through, see the **evil roots** clearly, and they **cannot move like before** because of **understanding.** *The 3 evil roots are the roots of all evil, but the moment your wisdom is there, it will prompt you with the appropriate dharma and it will stop because you will understand that these are all delusion, illusion, empty, having no meaning, so why do?* Then the 2nd right effort to **prevent the wrong thoughts from arising can be done.**

That's why you **will not be like ordinary people** anymore. You **cannot stir your mind**, you **cannot react**, you *cannot become emotional*, you **cannot become fearful**, and *you cannot become unhappy and miserable any more. All these will stop.* It is like you are **completely different now.** What ordinary people do, you cannot do any more. You **can't cheat people**, you **can't deceive people**, and you **can't have that mind that is cunning** because you know it is **not** worthwhile. It is **not worth doing** all these wrong things. The **sense restraints** will be there. With **sense restraints**, you are **incapable of negativity** and that's how you can move on to the **7th step** to arise, the **3 ways of good conduct.** It's only after that step 7, you can develop the cultivation of the **four foundations of mindfulness.**

So, after **Yoniso Manasikāra**, you will have a **very stable daily mindfulness** leading to **Sati Sampajañña** or **daily mindfulness with clear comprehension**. Then your **sense restraint** will arise. Once your **sense restraint** is *stabilized*, the **three 3 ways of right conduct**: *Right action, speech and thought will be there*. With the **3 ways of right conduct**, the **four foundations of mindfulness** cultivation (which is **step 8**) will become very easy. You will *skim or breeze through* it. Then you will have the condition to experience the **seven factors of enlightenment** which is **step 9**. Then you know you are on the right path leading to **step 10** which is **enlightenment** in the here and the now. That's how you awaken. The ten steps all fulfilled.

So, what you all need is **just to develop the initial wisdom** and the **stability of daily mindfulness** leading to **sense restraint**. Then after that, *what you hear from Brother Song's sharing, you will be able to go through to experience them*. After that your **sense restraint** is **automatic**. You **cannot do** all the **funny things** like before because the **wisdom is already there**, the **understanding is there**, by then **everything is so clear to you**. That's why under the **dependent origination** (the twelve links) teaching, it is said, upon contact, feeling arises, and then **with this wisdom** developed **feeling cannot** condition **craving**. It **stops there**. Feeling will remain as just **pure feeling**, and *it stops there*. Then, **there is joy, there is wisdom**, there is **understanding** and the **mental states** (cetasika) of **peace, tranquillity** and **equanimity** will be there. The **joy**, the **lightness** of mind, the **tranquillity** and **stillness** of mind, the **love, compassion**, and **contentment** of mind, all these **very beautiful mind states will be there**. Then all the **unwholesome** mind states cannot arise. Then, the **sense of shame is automatic**. *You cannot do them anymore*,

because no point. This type of things only the normal beings can do, but not for **transformed beings**. *An ariya can never do all those things,* because **no more delusion**. So, that part is **very beautiful**. That's why *if you check your cultivation against the **ten steps** of the **Avijjā Sutta** you won't go wrong.* Then when the seven factors of enlightenment arise, you know you are on the **right path**. Otherwise the **enlightenment factors** won't be **there**. When the enlightenment factors are there, it is a condition for you to become enlightened, awakened.

Insight Knowledge in the here and the now leading to the **enlightenment or liberation of mind** is the **final step**, step number 10. This is beautiful. So, hopefully with this understanding, you all can have the faith. ***A lot of you will transform and awaken.*** It is **not** difficult because of the present sāsana. The sasana's **consciousness** is *very special and unique*. This **special condition** that *enable you all to be born during this Buddha sasana's golden window can help you realize this awakening. Everything has evolved so well, so beautifully for you and the coming retreat will be even more beautiful.*

Okay, let us rejoice with Brother Song's sharing. (Sadhu 3X).

Do you all have any more meditation question and reporting? Just now PG suggested maybe we can get Sister Soo to do some sharing. Soo, do you have something to share? You just came back from your India spiritual trip, right? You just share whatever you want to share.

Sister Soo: Recently, I went for this second pilgrimage to India. During the pilgrimage, I am perplexed as to why I have no feeling? I feel nothing. I **don't feel joy**, I **don't feel regret**, rejoice also

sometime a little bit only. Basically, *I have no feeling, sometime no thought* also. Why? Brother Teoh, *can I have your opinion, why I have no feeling?*

Brother Teoh: Okay, no problem.

You see, when you go for all these types of **pilgrimage or spiritual** trips, if you have the **faith**, chances are your **mind** will **transform**. *But this one that you experience is a calm state of mind which is conditioned by your determination to be seriously calm during this spiritual trip.* You are **conditioned** into believing that there is a sort of mind that is **without feeling**, associated with **equanimity** and conducive for **enlightenment**. Meaning you are **neither** excited nor joyful, or sad or whatever. You **are just calm** and **peaceful**. **But if you** are **mindful**, it is **different** and the experience is **not** like that. If you **are mindful**, **relax** and **just aware**, it is a **free mind**. The **free mind that is in Sati** is very **different**. Yours is a **conditioned state borne of faith**. Do you understand? You *become calm and peaceful* because **your faith is there and that is a conditioned state**. Because your mind *has been conditioned* into believing; *‘I don’t want to have feeling, I want to have equanimity’*. How can you not have feeling? There is feeling **but you suppress it**, so it *becomes calmness*, is like you are *neither happy nor unhappy because you are in that state of calmness*. People who are in Jhāna also behave like that. So, **faith and spiritual way place can bring about** that **calmness**, that **peacefulness**. Your **mind** become **very composed**, **very calm**, **very still** and **most of the time** if you **move** in those **spiritual places**, together with the cultivators there, their **collective consciousness** and **energy** (especially if they are doing mostly concentration or

Samatha meditation), you **can go into calmness very fast**. Do you understand?

But for those who **practice mindfulness** and **awareness** it is **different**; theirs is **wisdom energy**, and if you **know how to draw** from it (after **you have connected** to your **nature**), it will **open up your heart's consciousness**. It will not only make you **very calm** and **peaceful** but It will also give you that **wisdom energy** to *transform you so that you can have the free mind* that is **very quiet**, very **peaceful, still and tranquil**, yet it is **fully aware**. It is **sensitive**. It is **not** the **case** that you have **no feeling** at all but that one is **very sensitive**. It **can sense** and **feel many things**. It can have the **spacious awareness** without a **centre**. It can have **specific phenomena awareness** and **most** of the **time** that **mind state** is with **joy, Pīti** and **understanding**. With **wisdom** and **understanding**, there is *so much joy* and you will understand, '**everything is just the way it is. Cannot be otherwise**'. So, this is the explanation why you are in that state.

You **cannot maintain** this state because this is the **conditioned** state. Coming back to the *daily life*, may be for the first few days, you can still maintain that **quietness**, but after you start to **interact with others in** life, you will lose that mind state and you will become like normal again. You *can still have fear, worry and anxiety, and emotions again, maybe not immediate, but after a while, when you go back to society*, when you **go back to life**. But the **other one** is different it is a **pure mind in Sati** with wisdom, and the **moment they understand, awaken** and **transform**, their mind becomes different. No matter what happened, they **will not behave** like before; the **heedless thinking**, all **cannot arise**. Whatever happens,

they can **understand** and they can **accept the reality** of the moment. *They can even smile and move and be active; not need to hold on to a **conditioned** state of mind to become peaceful.*

Sister Soo: Because before I left, I have been telling myself, okay, I shall silent my mind, I shall not be a 'Kay Poh' (busy body), so, when I silent my mind, I should be calm. So, I have been telling myself that. So, my is a **conditioned mind** and I **quite agree** with Bro Teoh's explanation.

Brother Teoh: Yes, that is the conditioning you arise. Ok, Sadhu

Sister Soo: Um... ok, I shall share with you all my trip in India. Initially, I had **difficulty in overcoming** my **aversion** until towards the end of the trip. You see, **the dislike**, towards those beggars who come, asking for money. This trip they are **more aggressive**, they come and hold you and touch you, I actually **cringed**, whenever they do that. So, **I had this problem**. Then I thought maybe I should send Metta to them. It may have lessened **the effect but** towards the end, I still have **this aversion** which I am not able to overcome. That is one lesson for me. The No. 2 problem is, I could see the strong **desire for blessings**, the **desire for fame**, and the **discrimination** that is going on around me. I could see the **suffering** in people at the end of the trip. The message that came to me was: it is **about time I look inward**, rather than **outward**, that's all I have to share.

Brother Teoh: Good, Thank you for your sharing, Sister Soo. Let us rejoice with her good sharing. Sadhu 3X.

You see, when you **don't have** the **full understanding** or the **clear understanding**, it is **very easy** for you to be **conditioned by what**

you hear, what people teach you. This is what **she came to realize** after hearing my explanation. She confirmed what happened to her is **a conditioned state** because before she went for the trip, she made the **determination not to become** a 'Kay Poh' and **she wanted** to be **silent with no emotion** during the **entire duration** of the trip. This is how she gave rise to that **conditioned mind state**. But because she has very **strong faith** her **conditioned mind state** of peace and calmness become **stronger**. That's why, she **agreed** with my explanation. Then the other thing that makes her agree is, she still has this problem of **aversion**. She said the **aversion towards those beggars** who are **more aggressive this time around**. Do you know in India, there are a lot of these beggars? So when they come, it is how you attend to them that counts. These are **worldly phenomena. Worldly conditions**. So, when conditions arise, it's like lightning strike, etc. if **don't have the wisdom** and the **understanding**, there is **sudden fear at moment of lightning strike**, especially so, when you are **caught unaware**. Do you understand? That's why when the **beggars became aggressive**, she **cringed**. Cringe is like you don't like. It is like they are disgusting, disturbing and harassing you. So, she realized she has that problem. But in **cultivation**, you have **to reflect** and **contemplate** to develop the **understanding via inquiring**: *why did I do that? Why can't I reflect and straighten my views? Why do I still cringe and react?* When you **contemplate and reflect** on them, you become different, which means you will come to **understand** that you **don't have right view, to accept them for what they are**. You should reflect, *'I have to remind myself, I am in India, these people have no money, no food, and they want to get something out of the tourists, and so they will come after you'*. In the early years when I went to Indonesia, it is

the same. When I was in Medan, and when I was in Jakarta, these kids also came and harass us. Some of them are **pickpockets**. They will come after you, and they will ask for money from you. They will crowd around you to distract you and steal your things. So, you have to be **mindful**, you have to be **aware**. What I normally do is, I just smile, then **I look after my important things** like my **purse** and **passport**, then I **will stare** at them and said to them, '**please don't come near**, I have **nothing for you**'. So, when they see you do that they will not come for you, but when they see or sense you **having fear**, they will come after you. They **like those people who have fear**, because that is the way of living beings. When you are **heedless**, it is like that.

So, you **have to learn to straighten** your views, via inquiry: *how can I not react and stir my mind? How can I, not have the fear?* My mind must **not be** in a **conditioned state**. I must have a **free mind** that is aware and understands, then only can I **have love and joy**.

Like she said, she **tried to radiate Metta or loving kindness**. This won't work because it is as if, when you want to answer nature's call, only you look for toilet? It will be too late, because your Metta must be with you in the first place. When you already have the Metta in you then only the Metta can come out. Then **no need to verbalize**, they **can feel** your mettā and they will know you are different, and they won't disturb you. Like I told you all before, the **gangsters** also won't come near me, even when I was very young. They can feel your **mind state**, especially your **fear**. It is the same with dogs, they will bark louder and they will chase after you if they **can sense your fear**. But if you have **no fear**, and **you look at them**, they **will look back at you**, and then **they will walk away**. Do you know why? The

dogs have **little thoughts** so they can sense you. They are *more sensitive*. Base on the **law of attraction**, when you **have fear**, you *attract people* who are **aggressive**, who want **to prey** on your **fear**, do you understand? It is *not difficult for living beings* to develop the *understanding*. When you **reflect** and **contemplate**, you will come to **realize the choice depends** on your **wisdom**. If you **don't have** wisdom, *you will do all* those **wrong** and **foolish** things. You will arise the fear and panic. To **protect yourself**, you *just have to be* **calm** and **aware**, just in case they are **pickpockets**. When you travel **make sure** your **passport** and your other **important documents** are tucked inside your body, I always put them inside my singlet here, so it is always with me. At the most, they only take my money. But so far so good, touch wood, nothing happened. When you take precautions, you are being **mindful** and **aware**, *even while in the midst of a* **commotion**, you are **fully aware**. You *make sure your things are with you*. When you are **fully aware**, you **will know** how to **respond**, there is **no fear** and **you do not panic**. This is how when you have the **understanding**, **you will act appropriately**, because you **act with wisdom and understanding**; you *no longer act with fear, with aversion and delusion*. When you **have the Dharma**, you are **different**. This **understanding** is **very important**.

But the **last part** she shared is very good. That is the **beginning** of **true learning**. Can you remember what she said? She said, 'she can see other **people's suffering, their desire, craving** etc. *That is part of* **cultivation**. Then she said *she has to reverse the light and go inside to see her own* **fear, her own suffering, her own desire and craving**. This is what the Satipaṭṭhāna training is all about.

When you are **aware externally**, what do you do? You are also **aware inwardly**. But the ***actual cultivation is the other way round***. She **saw in others first**, which is **outside**, and then **she tried to go in**. The **actual cultivation is to go in first**, *see your own fear, your own desire, your own suffering, and your own craving*. When **you can see your own defilements, you can understand others**. What ***she saw was the gross one***, the ***gross suffering and fear that other people manifest on the street***, but the **fine ones deep inside their consciousness she cannot feel or see**, because she is **not sensitive enough**. But later on, as shared by Bro Song, *'when you can see your own subtle defilements inside you, then you can see others on the street, or when you are near somebody, you can sense through your sensitivity of mindfulness, and you will know, this person has problem, he has sadness, he has deep fear. That's why when people with depression come to my house, my nature will know because their vibration is very different. I can sense their fear. When they have the karmic affinity, my nature will also know. Then I will share accordingly. If you are a true cultivator, you will have this type of sensitivity. Then from the way they answer and report to me, my nature will understand what their likely karmic conditions are. I can use the mindfulness's sensitivity of mind and dharma wisdom to understand myself, others and the outside world. That is real cultivation.*

Yours is **just the beginning**, you start **seeing others** suffering, craving and desire first. Then you reverse the light and see your own defilements within yourself. After that you start to come to the Dharma classes to look for answers. *Then when you start to meditate, only then do you realize that these are gross suffering and*

defilements. The fine ones are deep inside; do you understand? How your cocoon of negative thoughts develops and accumulate through your wrong views and wrong thoughts which conditioned you into depression and misery. Then how all these become very strong in you, until it develops into habitual tendencies. This cocoon of negative thoughts is like a tape recorder keeps on repeating itself and make you miserable. And your negative thoughts conditioned your fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation, etc. brings about deep resentment, unhappiness and suffering. You tend to ask all these wrong or unbeneficial questions like, 'Why these people do this to me? How come my life is so bad? Why my own children also don't respect me? Why can't they understand me?' Then suicidal thoughts that say, 'might as well die.' That means you only look through your own selfish wrong thoughts. You are not using the awareness to be aware. When you are using the awareness to be aware, you will not be caught by the thoughts. The proliferation of thoughts doesn't grasp you, or cause you to cling and suck you in. You are not being swallowed into it. Do you understand?

So, the dependent origination is very clear. Upon contact, feeling arise; when feeling arise, if you have delusion, you will attach, cling, grasp and hold, do you understand? This is craving. Then you grasp at it and you become that. It has transgressed out. That's why you can do funny things and these links, you also cannot see; these are still very gross and very intense movements, with suffering. But you are not sensitive. That's why it can move until like that, and you are still not aware. But when you have mindfulness, the slightest movement to react with like and dislike, pleasant and unpleasant

feelings, is like **so gross** to you because you are **so sensitive**, and you realize after that you **cannot arise** them *like before*. The mind **just stops, no more stirring**, because this is **delusion**. The **stirring** of mind, **creates mental hindrances** and is **causing mental suffering**. And the links will continue. When you hit **suffering link**, it means you are very, very '**teruk**' already or meaning you are totally **not mindful** at all. Do you understand? Because you are **not mindful** of **feeling** transforming into **craving**, then **craving** transforming into **grasping** also you are **not aware** because you lack **sensitivity** of mindfulness. Then from **grasping**, it condition **becoming**, leading to **birth** and the **whole mass** of suffering also you are **not aware**. Your consciousness has become so heedless, it is **already concocting** ('cooking'); *saṅkhāra-saññā*, the **thinking keeps on moving**. Concocting means 'cocking' or 'boiling'. It is like the *saṅkhāra-saññā* activities' or *mental movements are very fast*. The **moment you perceive**, you **think**, then you **react**, and you **stir your mind**, and this is what I call 'cooking'. 'Cooking' in your mind. *That's how people can become depressed*. This is **how depression sets in**. The **cocoon of depressive thoughts** is so strong. This is **how suffering becomes intensified**, and **if you are still not mindful** even at that stage, then you **cannot blame anybody**, *why you suffer*. Do you understand? To me that is **intense suffering**. You are already so **miserable**, yet you **keep on clinging** onto it and *keep on behaving like a tape recorder, repeating and playing* the same old wrong thoughts. Your **whole thinking** is just **those cocoon of wrong thoughts**. You are trapped in it. You have **become that** and still you are **not aware**. When you take 'birth', it means the **transgression** part where the whole mass of suffering is going to **attack** and **haunt** you. That's why you will be **engulf** by your **anger, hatred, fear, remorse, deep resentment** and

other **negative emotion afflicting** you. When you grasp and grip on to such **wrong thoughts**, they will make you **miserable** mentally and this mental suffering conditions your physical suffering, that's *how your immune system and health will be affected*. It *can cripple* you. Do you understand? Those types of **negative energy** can give rise to **conditions** for **more negative Karma**. *Without wisdom you cannot stop them*. You will be badly afflicted; do you understand? So, *all these are very beautiful sharing* because *there are conditions to share them*. That's also the reason why, it *has been raining non-stop all this while*. Do you have any more questions?

Today is very good, somehow PG created the condition for Sister Soo to share. Then Brother Song also gave a very beautiful sharing.

If you all don't have any more questions, I will make use of this 5 minutes or so, to share with you this Mahayana sutra which is very important: **The Three Fold Lotus Sutra**.

Have you all heard of this **3-fold Lotus Sutra**? Since you all are mostly of the Theravada tradition, I will have to introduce and share this sutra with you all because later on we may do our sharing basing on this Sutra. This Sutra, the **3-fold Lotus Sutra is very powerful**. Sister Eng Bee, do you know how to write the mandarin words? 'Fa' is Dharma. Padmasuri, she asked you to write. In mandarin they pronounce it as, '**Fa Hua San Bu Jing**' (法华三部经), the Three Fold Lotus Sutra. In Pinyin it is 'Fa Hua San Bu Jing'. This is a very important Sutra. This is the Sutra the **Mahayana based on to cultivate the Bodhisattva way**. The other one is the **Avatamsaka Sutra** (华严经). We have covered most of the Mahayana Sutta, except these three and the **Avatamsaka Sutra**. By now, you all are

ready to study these sutras. This 'Fa Hua San Bu Jing' or 3-fold Lotus Sutra is very long, and not easy to understand.

They have a total of **3 books**:

- the first book is 'Wu Liang Yi Jing' (无量义经),
- the second one is 'Miao Fa Lian Hua Jing' (妙法莲华经), and
- then the last one is 'Guan Pu Xian Pu Sa Xing Fa Jing' (观普贤菩萨行法经).

This 'Wu Liang Yi Jing', (*Sutra of Innumerable Meaning*) is very important. This **first Sutra** is to introduce The **Lotus Sutra**. There are a total of *3 sections within this sutra*. **Section I: Virtue, Section II: Teaching or Preaching of Dharma**, where the Buddha told the Bodhisattva, when you understand this **sutra of innumerable meaning**, you will **know how to share and teach the Dharma and liberate living beings**. The **third section** is on the **Ten merits**; (these ten merits are not the ten meritorious actions). These are the very **deep cultivation** of the ten merits taught by the Buddha.

After that is the **Lotus Sutra** (妙法莲华经), the **Wonderful Dharma Lotus Sutra**. This sutra is very beautiful and there are twenty-eight chapters, but there are teachings in this sutra, unlike the Diamond Sutra where there is **hardly any teaching**. The Diamond sutra, only teaches you **how to cultivate** at those **levels of mind transformation**. But there are a lot of teachings and stories in this Lotus Sutra. It also has a lot of **predictions** of Buddhahood by Sākyamuni Buddha for his disciples. Sariputta is one of them. He will become a Sammāsambuddha and a lot of his other disciples

(especially the top ten) will also become Sammāsambuddha. And they also have the **parable** of the burning carts. There are a lot of beautiful teachings inside this sutra and this one will take years to finish if you really want to go through it.

We will see how it goes. At the moment **I can't even find one book** with the **English translation** that is really good for us to use in the sharing. Master Hsuan Hua's version consist of about twenty over to thirty volumes and they are all very thick. I am talking about the English translation, not the mandarin version. Whatever it is, this Lotus Sutra is very, very beautiful. And the last one is the **sutra on meditation** by **Pu Xian Pusa**, 普贤菩萨, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Later on if we have the condition, after we finish this book, 'The Cultivation of the Bodhisattva Way', then I will see how it goes. I may use this book, 'Wu Liang Yi Jing' first because it is a very important teaching book. There is also the other book, 'The Path to Truth', which I told you all, I may go into that too. Because that book also covers the cultivation of the Bodhisattva way. That book is from Tzu Chi (慈济).

Now the **condition** has arisen for **all these teachings** to be shared. Last time, I cannot share all these because if I share, you all may not understand as these teachings are very **profound** and **not easy to comprehend**. But recently the condition just arises. Last Friday, while at the office, I have nothing to do, so I clicked on my computer, I was actually looking for *Chinese movie* and *as I browsed down, I saw this Three Fold Lotus Sutra*. I wonder what is it, so I clicked on it then I found it to be so beautiful. I straight away understood what it is and how they were put together, the first part is the introduction and the ending part is the summary, which is very beautiful.

3.3. Closing Puja

So, we shall stop here. The next class will be after the retreat. It is a good condition today and the sharing has been so beautiful. The rain is also **about to stop**. We shall do the sharing of merits and the transferring of merits, etc. then we end. (End of session)

3.4. Outline Short Notes, audio and video links

Outline short notes for Bro Teoh's Sunday class dated 10 March 2019 (Cultivating the Bodhisattva way)

Audio link: <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/10-Cultivating-The-Bodisattva-Way-10-March-2019.mp3>

Whiteboard link: <https://i2.wp.com/broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/10-Cultivating-The-Bodisattva-Way-10-March-2019.jpg?ssl=1>

Video link 1: Law of Attraction vs Law of Karma (YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9wJnrtti4U&feature=youtu.be>

Video link 2: Understanding Cetasika or Mental Factors (YouTube)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AcK_bA2rFk&feature=youtu.be

Ref. Book: Bro Teoh's transcript book, 'Cultivating the Bodhisattva Way', pages 55-62

1. Karmic **fruits** can trigger karmic **obstructions** and they can be **very powerful obstructions**.
2. To **clear** karmic obstructions, one need to **sincerely** ask for forgiveness from **the Triple Gem and all beings** and vow not to **repeat** all these karmic negativities via **following the advice of the Buddha** to avoid all evil, cultivates wholesomeness and meditates to purify one's mind. Then **invoke power of merits** for **turn around and recovery**.

3. The **10 Perfections** cultivation are *generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, spiritual zeal, patience endurance, truthfulness, determination/aspiration, loving kindness and equanimity.*
4. Dharma is not just theory. It has to be **cultivated** while in the **midst of life** because it is a **living dharma**, not theory or knowledge which is **not** the **true dharma**. Investigate the Dharma in our daily life activities. When the Dharma stands up to investigation, there will be understanding and faith.
5. Only Bodhisattvas have precepts to break because Bodhisattvas have **very extensive vows** and **work** to do.
6. It is **very important** to understand **what constitute evils** so that they **can be recognized** and **abandoned**.
7. Strive on with heedfulness to **connect** to our **true nature** early in every life. Learn the Dharma fast so that the **Bodhi mind** or seed can be **activated early** to **perfect our karmic nature** until it cannot fall back any more.
8. Long or short period of cultivation time is of **no significance** for a Bodhisattva who had realized the Enlightenment.
9. Question from Sister Tammy: Is **Adhiṭṭhāna** and **Law of Attraction** the same?

10. Brother Teoh explained that the **Law of Attraction does not give the whole perspective** of things as it **does not take into account the law of karma**. Even though the *thoughts are positive and motivating* but **with evil roots**, *negative karma* will arise. Then, those positive thoughts (with evil roots) may only work for a while in the beginning until the negative karmic fruition kicks in. (Do **view** and **listen attentively** to the **video recording** which is **very clear** and **complete** to understand this topic better. This video recording is available in our **broteoh.com** website under recording of classes.)
11. Question from Sister Soo: What is **cetasika**? How can **cetasika** help in our cultivation?
12. Brother Teoh explained that cetasika are just mental concomitants/states/content of consciousness which we **must be aware of while cultivating our daily mindfulness**. (Do view and **listen attentively** to the **video recording** which is very clear and complete to understand this topic better. This video recording is available in our **broteoh.com** website under recording of classes.)
13. Brother Song shares his cultivation **experience**, where he **experienced heightened awareness and understanding** of the Dharma. His **consciousness** experience **bright lights** and was **aware** of even the birds flying high above his head but he was **not** distracted by such experiences. He **continues** to **relax** and **maintain awareness** until he can be aware of his **very subtle**

greed, resentment and dislike including all the very **fine mental movements** and mind **states** within his mind.

14. Brother Teoh rejoiced with Brother Song's rather good **progress** and **understanding** and **cautioned others against attaching** to the **manifestation of bright light** (consciousness very bright) which is one of the 10 **defilements of insight** because it is just a **conditioned state**. Clinging will block progress. **Silent the mind** until the **mind enters sati**. **Stabilize the daily mindfulness until one** can **develop** the **direct seeing** from their **pure nature**. (Must listen attentively to the audio recording from the **2hr 7 minutes** onward to develop the **clear and deep understanding** of the actual cultivation.)
15. At the moment of sense experience and feeling, if there is the **initial wisdom** (yoniso manasikāra) the mind will not stir and one **will then have more moments of silent awareness (sati Sampajañña) leading to sense restraint**.
16. Sister Soo asked why for a period she can have no feeling and thoughts during her **recent spiritual trip to India**. She also asked why at one stage she at the same time also has so much **dislike** or **aversion** towards those beggars that harassed her and causing her to **cringe**. Later she can also see other people's suffering, desire and greed for blessings and fame. She then decides to reverse the light and look within or inwards to see her own defilements.

17. Brother Teoh explained that her **faith** and **conditioned** mind brings about the initial **calm state** of mind that **conditioned her to associate** every encounter with **equanimity**. If she is **mindful** with a free mind it will ***not be the same***. If she **had relaxed** into it and **maintain awareness**, it will **change into a free mind**. Regarding the beggars, there must be **understanding** to ***overcome or root out the aversion***. The last part she did - to reverse the light and see within was good. Actual cultivation is usually the **opposite way**. One must reverse the light and look within to see our own defilements and how these defilements condition us via our own **self-delusion** to stir and project our thoughts leading to all the **fear, worry anxiety** and **suffering** borne of wrong thoughts. Through understanding ourselves we will be able to understand others. (Must listen attentively to the **audio recording** from **2hr 26 minutes onwards** to develop the **clear** and **deep understanding** of this cultivation.)
18. Bro Teoh introduced and shared the **3-Fold Lotus Sutra** (Fa Hua San Bu Jing) with kalyāṇamittas.