

Outline short notes for Bro Teoh's Sunday class dated 21 June 2020

Ref. **The Path to Truth for the Modern-day Bodhisattva Practitioner** by Master Shih Cheng Yen,
(Chapter on 'The practice of Mindfulness' page 73.-75)

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/12-The-Path-To-The-Truth-For-The-Modern-Day-Bodhisattva-21-Jun-2020.mp3>

YouTube : <https://youtu.be/SscFsoWm3tw>

1. The title should be 'The **development** of Mindfulness.' Mindfulness **cannot be practiced** as practice means **to do** something **repetitively** in a **mechanical** way **without** proper **understanding**. Because the doing is always by the **thought** and when **thought is active** *how can one be mindful or be in sati?* The commonly taught **methods and techniques** of meditation to anchor the mind in sati so that it is **not heedlessly loss in thought** is just a **skillful means** to train the mind so that it can be **mindful** of the **object of meditation**. However, when there is **understanding**, **mindfulness** can be **developed without** the need of such **skillful means**. It is therefore more appropriate to **develop mindfulness** base on the **understanding** that *'the moment you are without thought, you are already naturally aware. So just relax and maintain awareness to realize the true mind which is just an awareness nature within.*
2. When we are **relaxed, at ease** and **without thought**, our **mind** will return to its **original state** of **pure inner awareness**. Due to our **lack** of the **5 spiritual faculties**, our **daily life will not be in order** due to our **heedless thinking borne of the 5 mental hindrances**; we will then develop a lot of **habitual thinking/tendencies**. Due to a life of perpetual disorder, it will take the heedless a long time to do away with these habitual thinking.
3. Meditation will only kick in when there is understanding. When we understand that **without thought we are naturally aware**; we are already in the **meditative state** of silent inner awareness. Therefore, *just relax and maintain awareness to stabilize this meditative state so that we can be ever mindful and constantly meditative throughout the day.*
4. When our mind is composed with faith, the spiritual zeal (viriyā) will arise to drive us to cultivate sati. With viriyā, sloth and torpor cannot arise. Instead there will be mindfulness (sati). When mindfulness stabilizes, we will be able to see clearly the mind's movements, thereby understanding how **we function as humans, following the 12 links (Paticca Samuppada)**. *How we form our wrong views and opinions and accumulate them into our memory. How our cultures, traditions, belief systems, education and scars of memories etc. conditioned us and make us rigid and have a certain predictable pattern of behavior to stir our mind.* We then *act according to these accumulated memories, experiences and conditionings*. That is how **we re-act to sense experiences** and **develop conflicts** in life. We have to realize all these in the meditation and understand how the mundane mind arises and passes away based on nature's conditions. How we get ourselves entangled in life leading to suffering. The cause of suffering is always craving which arises from wrong views/self-delusion. When we realize this, our mind frees. We will understand the **4 Noble Truths** and its **3 turnings** and the **Noble Eightfold Path** (Meditation) as taught by the Buddha.
5. We need **to stabilize our sati** until it becomes **Samadhi**, i.e. at the **moment** of sense experiences, our mind will **not stir based on our accumulated memory** that we have **accumulated**. Instead we must **act according to wisdom** via *seeing things as they are*. We know that before we perceive, there was **nothing** in the mind. Then how did those views and opinions and conditionings come about? From **memories** due to our **lack of right views/wisdom**

as taught by the Buddha, isn't it? We then **straighten our views** to **transcend duality**. Wisdom liberates the mind. The mind is not agitated, does not cling or gets entangle with phenomena world of form and consciousness.

6. If we **do not apply** the Teachings, they remain **as knowledge**. When we apply the Teachings, we live our life **according** to Buddha's **wisdom and advices**, i.e. we will have the **embodiment of the N8FP**. We can apply right mindfulness to investigate whatever that arise in the mind and **be awoken to the truth and reality** of the moment. You must **constantly check** whether your actions, speeches and thoughts **can still harm yourself and others**.
7. Awareness is the wisdom light. Without awareness, we are lost in thoughts, hence heedless. Our mind lacks awareness or space between thoughts. This space or awareness is wisdom light.
8. There are 2 types of time:
 - i. **Physical time** is a measurement of the time our planet Earth takes to go round the sun – 365 days in a year, 24 hours in a day, 60 minutes in an hour etc.
 - ii. **Psychological time is mental time**. When we are lost in thoughts, we are creating mental time. The mind **without thoughts** has **no mental** time. It is **tranquility, stillness** and just **an awareness nature within** and there is no mental movement – **timeless Akaliko** (beyond thoughts beyond psychological time).
9. The **true mind** is never born, therefore never die. It is the **unconditioned**. The **true mind** never accumulates memories, it is just aware, lives in the presence and is ever shining with clarity and awareness. This is the mind that Enlightened Being realized. All of us have the potential to realize this mind leading to the enlightenment.
10. The real meditation can only arise when there is **stability of daily mindfulness**, i.e. **ever mindful** and **constantly meditative** while in the midst of life.
11. Brother Song shared how he tackled a case in the office where his **boss wrongly blamed him**. He is aware that his heart was **not at ease initially**. He then **silent his mind** and be with the **agitated mind state**. He is then **at peace** again. Reverse your **negative thinking** if your mind is agitated. Always have right views to be at peace with the reality first.

Please do listen to the recording for full details.

12. Brother Teoh advise Brother Song **not** to use the **thought** to reason or find out **why his heart** was still **not at ease initially**. But instead just to silent his mind and be with the agitated mind state straight away. Do not do anything and just let the mind settle. Understand that his mind is **agitated** due to his **attachment** to the **thought** of his **boss blaming him**. His thought will then say, *"But the problem is still there"*. Bro Teoh said, 'Yes, and the form and mind has to resolve the issue. **Resolve it amicably** with a **settled mind with wisdom** following **Noble 8-Fold Path (N8FP)**'. Use the **silent mind** to investigate into what happened. We will understand that *things are just the way they are. Conditions like that, things will be like that*. Arise the appropriate **right thoughts** and **speeches to resolve the matter amicably**. Even if it is your fault, there is **no need to panic**. If you need to apologize, just do it. Radiate metta. Do not perceive the issue negatively. Just **apply the N8FP**. Do not use the **mundane mind/knowledge** to resolve the matter, e.g. by asking, "How come I can still get agitated?" This is a common mistake of cultivators.

(Draft outline short notes for above was prepared by Sister Chow Mun Yuen)