

Outline short notes for Sister Alicia & Brother Freddy's House Dana dated 28 July 2019

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/190728-House-Dana-Alicia-Freddy.mp3>

Youtube : [3 Universal Characteristics \(Aniccā, Dukkha & Anattā\)](https://youtu.be/tOHYI3nn4mc) <https://youtu.be/tOHYI3nn4mc>

1. Sister Tan Hui Lin shared her **unexpected heart by-pass surgery** while **travelling in Spain**. 2 of her main arteries were 100% blocked and another 1, 90% blocked. Despite this, she has **no fear** of her predicament. **Medical fee** was covered by **ETIQA travel insurance** and she was **admitted into** one of the **best hospital in Spain**. It was indeed a **blessing** in disguise for her.
2. Sister Karen requested Brother Teoh to explain the **3 universal characteristics** of *anicca, dukkha and anatta*.
3. Brother Teoh explained that *anicca, dukkha and anatta* are the **3 universal characteristics of nature inherent** in all *physical, mental and nature's phenomena*.
4. Anything that is **perceivable by the mind** is a **phenomenon**.
5. Within our **conditioned world** everything **changes according** to **nature's conditions**. **Without conditions, nothing happens**. When *conditions arise, phenomenon arise* and everything is in a state of flux (constantly changing). This is **anicca** (impermanence).
6. Our aim is **to be able** to 'see' and **understand** this **truth of anicca clearly** with our **mindfulness** while in **meditation**. And since all physical, mental and nature's phenomena **manifest** this truth, with a **stable daily mindfulness** we can **insight** into them via the **direct seeing**.
7. When our mind is **silent without** thought, we can **perceive** a lot of *vibrations within* our **physical body** (e.g. our **pulses of life**, our **heartbeat**, etc. We can also be **mindful of** our feelings, mental thinking, mental emotion, perception and consciousness. And also **nature's phenomena** like, insect's sounds, flowing stream, nature's breeze, traffic sounds and other vibrations within nature, etc. We will see them **all arising** and **passing away** all the time because **everything is always** in a **state of flux (dependent originating and condition arising)**. They are just **causal phenomena (not a permanent unchanging entity)**, hence, impermanent, empty and not so real.
8. We **must reflect** and **contemplate** on all these **when we come out** of the **meditation**. Especially on what we **perceive, see** and **feel** while in the **state of silent inner awareness** during meditation.
9. When we understand anicca, we will understand dukkha and anatta because **everything follow nature's laws**. When there is **no right view** at the **moment of sense experience**, there will be **craving** (wanting things our way which is **against nature's way**) then it will **leads to suffering** because **our craving is not in coherent** with the **nature's laws that govern life and existence** (or 'what is'). When **we cannot get what we desires or want**, suffering arise. **Impermanent** imply all

conditioned phenomenon is not a **permanent unchanging entity**, hence **non-self** and **empty**. The first aspect of anatta is **non-self**. The **second** aspect is **empty nature** of existence.

10. We must understand **Paticca Samuppada** (the 12 Links, the law of dependent origination) which explains how human being's mind functions. Suffering is due to **craving** and **attachment** borne of **self-delusion** (not understanding the laws of nature).
11. We **must understand** the **1st noble truth of dukkha (suffering)**, i.e. **not only you** but all **living beings** (if they live long enough) will need to **confront** these **1st noble truth's 8 realities of life and existence** covering birth, old age, sickness (disease) and death, separation from loved ones and prized possession, when you are with people whom we don't like, when **things do not go our way** and the **5 grasping aggregates** of form and mind.
12. We must have the **right view** with regards to the **law of karma**, i.e. *whatever arises, there are conditions behind*. There must be **clarity of mind** and **wisdom to accept** these **realities confronting** us. Non-acceptance leads to suffering.
13. After acceptance, we **ask for forgiveness** to **break karmic** obstruction. **Keeping precepts** and **perform merits** via following the **Buddha's advice** to **avoid all evil** and **do good** and then **invoke power of merits** for causes and conditions **to turn around** for the better.
14. We need to act according to **wisdom**, **not according to our memory**, which are all our **views, opinions** and **conditionings**.
15. The 5 aggregates of form and mind **are conditioned arising phenomenon** hence **impermanent**. And there is **no one inside**, therefore **not me, non-self** and **empty**. The 5 aggregates of form and mind are just a **karmically conditioned vehicle** and **tool** for us to come to this **conditioned world**.
16. Mahayana saying: *'You come empty handed (during birth) and you go (at death) also empty handed then why do you grief over emptiness in between birth and death? Whatever you hold or cling via memory is not a reality. We cannot bring back the past.*
17. **Life is related to existence and existence is time related** – past, present & future. **Past already gone** so not a **reality** anymore. **Future yet to come, also not a reality**. So the **only reality** is the **present moment** and it is the **highest** in Life. But **how stable** is that (present moment)? Moment to moment, life passes by, what are you doing? Are you **too busy thinking, planning** and **worrying about life**, so much so, you never get to live life? Most people just **existed through life** for they **never truly live life** because they are **incapable** of **having mindfulness** to **live life from moment to moment**. To **realize** the **pristine beauty** and **wonders of life** within the moment.
18. The first and second Noble Truths explain the **mundane aspects of life**. The third and fourth Noble Truths explain the **supra mundane aspects** of life. **Life becomes wonderful** and **meaningful** when we understand the **4 Noble Truths**.

19. Brother Gerald asked if perception is from his 5 senses, why is it he can suddenly think of phoning Brother Teoh? How did that thought arise?
20. Brother Teoh explained that we are **all conditioned** by our past experiences. We are **a bundle of memories** with **its views, opinions and conditioning**. And **we tend to act from memory** because of delusion. That is why the Mahayana says, **accumulation** via **memories** is the **cause of suffering**. Hence, we must act **with wisdom** and **understanding** through **mindfulness** from **our nature**, i.e. from the heart.
21. With right views, there is **no fear** and **insecurity**.
22. People are just the way they are. **Be at peace with them**.
23. There must be causes and condition before, for Brother Gerald to have the thought of phoning Brother Teoh.
24. **Wrong thoughts** are **thoughts** that conditioned your fear, worry, anxiety. Sorrow, lamentation and grief, etc. These thoughts **have the evil roots** of **greed, hatred** and **delusion**. **Don't arise** these **wrong thoughts** via having wrong views. Cultivate the **right views** and apply the **4 right efforts** to root them out.
25. Since **acting according to memory is not acting at all**, so when consciousness is at the brain it will lead to hell. So goes the saying, 'brain is hell and heart is heaven'.
26. Sister Alicia shared that only recently can she truly understand what '**conditioned dharma**' is, and why **sankhara is suffering**. When she silent herself through **understanding**, the **suffering goes away**.

(About outline short notes draft is by Sister Mun Yuen)