

# Understanding The MEDITATION

As Taught By The BUDDHA

(PART 2)

(Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recording**

Done during the Thursday meditation class [dated 26.9.13]

Conducted by Bro. Teoh at Bro. Swee Aun's house,  
Subang Jaya, Selangor.)

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

Donated by:

Kalyāṇamitta funds of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon

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## (Biodata of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon)

Bro. Teoh graduated from University of Malaya in Civil Engineering in 1979. He had been a *spiritual practitioner cum 'Meditator'* since 1971. Since his retirement in 2001 from his engineering career, 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* to become a more *virtuous, noble and wiser human being*. He gives talks and holds meditation classes & retreats and weekly Dharma classes at various meditation centers and places that invite him.



## 1. Introduction

This **26/9/2013** weekly *Thursday class meditation cum dharma talk* by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon is a continuation of his **12/9/2013** talk. It is Bro. Teoh's **sincere** hope that Dharma friends, spiritual practitioners, seekers of truth, and cultivators will be able **to make use** of these 2 talks' **transcript notes** (Part 1 and Part 2) on **meditation** to develop **a better understanding** of the **Buddhist meditation as taught** by the Buddha so that they may **progress along the path of dharma** to become more **virtuous, noble** and **wiser** human beings that can be a  **blessing** to all of humanity and mankind.

As these notes were **compiled** based on a **direct transcript** from the recordings done, its wordings will be more like those of **spoken language** rather than a **written text**. Hence it is hope that readers will **be able** to **accordingly** make the **adjustment** themselves to understand its **true meaning** and **intent better**. A **good way** to do this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading these transcript notes. For those who want to listen to the recording they can download the talk at this below **drop box** link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/oslxpd6s7lhqexc/Thurs%20class%20130912.MP3>

Or contact Bro. Ng Swee Aun at [sang47500@yahoo.com](mailto:sang47500@yahoo.com) for further details.

## 2. Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intention** that these transcript notes 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 **Kalyāṇamitta** who had donated and helped out in the **transcription, typing, typesetting, formatting, proof reading, etc** to make this **free distribution** of **dharma dana** possible. **Special thanks** should be accorded to **Sis. Jennifer Wong** who had done **the initial draft dharma transcript** for my **editing** and Mahā Sādhu! to her for her wholesomeness.

**Special thanks** should *also be accorded* to **Sis. Lee Soo Choo** and **Sis. Lim Eng Bee** for helping to *complete* the earlier **Part 1 initial draft dharma transcript (dated 12.9.2013)** for my editing too. This acknowledgement of thanks was **inadvertently left out** from the earlier Part 1 edition. This is my **sincere** apology for having **inadvertently** omitted it.

By the **power of all these wholesomeness** may all beings be **well and happy, free** from all suffering and danger and may there be **love, peace and joy** - deep **within** their hearts. And may it also **pave the way** for causes and conditions for all dharma friends who had donated or helped out and rejoiced in the wholesomeness to realize their **good and noble wishes** soonest possible.

With Metta always,  
By Bro. Teoh Kian Koon  
(Dated: 31.12.2016)

## THURSDAY MEDITATION CLASS dated 26.9.2013

- held at Bro. Swee Aun's Subang Jaya house.

[Conducted by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon from 8.30pm till 10.30pm]

### Understanding The Meditation As Taught By The Buddha

(Part 2 - Based on a **direct transcript** from the recorded talk)

#### 3. Session 1

##### 3.1 Pre-Class And Pre-Pūjā

Bro. YK (Yin Kwang), you got this book? - "Daily Buddhist Devotions" by our late Chief Reverend, **Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda** - it's a very good book. You can have a copy and it is free.

Since we have a few more minutes before we start, maybe I will touch a little bit on the **12<sup>th</sup> September 2013** dharma **recording** that Bro. Swee Aun did. The recording was **very well done** and it was circulated for sharing to all kalyāṇamitta. If you can spend some time **listening** to it, it will benefit you a lot because the sharing was **very good, very complete** and **very clear**. It covers **almost everything** that you need to know including all those dharma that are supposed to be taught **much later** for you all to understand. I had suggested to Bro. Swee Aun to try to gather some of you who can help us do the **transcript** of our last talk dated: **12<sup>th</sup> September 2013**. I hope to finalize it before our coming **March retreat next year (2014)** because it will be **very useful**.

Who is good at doing the transcript, any volunteer? Yes, just **transcribe from the recording**; you listen and write it down, and if you use the computer it's easier because you can pause, then after

that you can go back to wherever you want to listen again. The talk is about 2 hours but you can split out the work, you don't have to do everything yourself. But I need somebody to help **coordinate** and **type it out**. Any volunteer? Sādhu! So regarding the typing we can get Sis. Hui Lin to help us. Others who also want to volunteer, you can let Bro. Swee Aun know, and he can help **to coordinate** the whole thing. It will be very **wholesome** and it will also **benefit** greatly all those who **helped do it**.

If you have some form of **dharma understanding** then it will be an added advantage for you because **as you transcribe** you will learn a lot, then everything will become very clear. Later on we may need to do the **proof reading**. That will be done after I have **edited** the whole transcript. I will listen to the whole recording again and check against your transcript then I will know which word is missing or which word is not so correct, because sometimes English words are like that, sound the same, and you may type in the wrong word. You will get a shock of your life when it's edited, especially so when you re read the **edited version**. It will be like completely different..... That one not so bad, but there was **an incident** I remember, where the **whole meaning** became totally different, - this was only understood after it was edited. Only then that person who transcribed it **realized** how **different** the **actual talk meant** compared to what **was perceived by her earlier on**.

Now it is exactly 8.30pm, we will start the **meditation class**.

Just **relax** your body and mind, and then **compose your mind** to develop the **spiritual** faculty of **saddhā** (faith and confidence) in the **Buddha** and **his teaching** (which is a very important spiritual faculty).



If you can develop that, it will pave the way for you to develop the balance of the other 4 spiritual faculties of **vīriya, sati, samādhi** and **paññā**.

Okay, now we can start the class. **Compose** your mind, develop the **very strong** saddhā/faith and pay respect **mindfully** to Lord Buddha, then we will commence the **pre-pūjā** (devotional practices):

**(Homage to the Buddha, the Blessed one, the worthy one and the fully enlightened one x3)**

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa  
Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa  
Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa

**(Taking the 3 refuges - Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha)**

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi  
Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi  
Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

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

Tatiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi  
Tatiyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi  
Tatiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

## (Renewal of the 5 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

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

## 3.2 Meditation Briefing and Instructions

**Just relax yourself** (body and mind) and **maintain** some form of **attention**, then we can start the meditation. Tonight before we start, maybe for the benefit of those who just came in, I will repeat what I shared just now. There was this 12<sup>th</sup> September 2013 recording that Bro. Swee Aun had done and because it was circulated to all kalyāṇamitta hence I had the condition **to listen to it** this morning. I didn't know it was **so complete** and **beautiful** until I listened to it on the recording again. Then I replied to Bro. Swee Aun and copied to all kalyāṇamitta, advising that if you have the time, it will be **very beneficial** for you to listen to it **attentively again and again**. The reason why I use the words again and again is because for most of you now, it is very **unlikely** that you can **grasp** more than 30 percent of what is spoken except for some of you who **had cultivated before**. If you don't listen to it again, you **will miss** most of **its essence** because the first time you listen, it's like, "you think you understand" but actually the **real understanding** is not there yet because **true**

**understanding** demands actual **cultivation** and **practice**. For those who **have not** developed the **daily mindfulness, heedfulness** and the **cultivation**, a lot of the dharma spoken, you **cannot understand** as yet. You **can only understand up to the level you can understand** and very likely most of it is still at the **superficial** or **knowledge** and **thought** level. But as you develop these **spiritual faculties** of **saddhā, vīriya, sati, samādhi** and **paññā** leading to the **heedfulness** then a lot of transformation will happen to you. With a **stable mindfulness** (or **sati**) when you start to do the **real meditation which is the cultivation** of the four foundations of mindfulness in **daily life**, you will understand better. And **as this understanding unfolds**, the **next time** you listen to this **same recording again** you will be **full of joy** and you **will start to appreciate a lot of those words** (even though you have heard them before but the meaning **doesn't stand out** or strike you or have any impact upon you **then; not until** you had developed the **actual cultivation**). Then as you develop the **ability to understand** those words, nothing can stop you **from progressing**; after that, you will move on your own. You will **progress very fast**.

It's up to you because **it is your life**; only you can decide how you want to develop the above understanding, because dharma talk with this type of understanding is **very rare** and very **difficult to come by**. Thus far, of all the recordings, I think this one is the **most complete** - in the sense that the **questions asked were so relevant** because they cover **almost every aspects** of the **cultivation (from the beginning to the very end)**. It's like my sharing towards the end – "it's meant for **serious cultivators only** but somehow it came out **because there were conditions** for it to arise that night". What I

**felt** was this type of **sharing or recording** is indeed **very rare** and **very important**, as such I have suggested that someone do a **transcript** of its recording. Whoever is **willing to help out**, you can inform Bro. Swee Aun. This 2 hour recording, you can break it up and different people can do different parts and as you do, you **will understand** much more, because through **this listening** and **transcribing** it will become different. The reasons being, when **you slowed everything down** and **listen attentively** and then **write it out**, you will **understand better** because **you can read and read and read them again and again** until you clearly **comprehend**.

That's how all those **earlier** transcripts of those **rather important dharma talks** that I had shared since 2005 came about and some of them, we managed to get them **printed into book form**; like the "Laws of Dependent Origination". The others like the "Five Aggregates of Form and Mind", the "Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta", followed by "Sammā Samādhī", etc. – they are in normal A4 size booklet form. All these came about because during that time there was a group of kalyāṇamitta, who were **very serious** about the cultivation, had helped done up those transcripts. Over the years, since 2008, it didn't occur to me that **we need to do all these anymore until lately**. Hence I hope you all can **contribute** and **help out** so that we can develop **this transcript** books together. The whole process may take a while, but because we are going to have this **meditation retreat** next year, **March** 2014 in Cameron Highlands, I hope **to finish** everything by the end of this year. That means we have another 3 months plus to do it and we should have enough time to finish it. After doing the transcript, somebody will have to **type it out** then forwards it to me to do the **editing**. After my editing, we

will **print out** the **final draft** for **proof reading**, before we do the **formal typesetting** of the transcript to finalize it. After the proof reading and typesetting we can get **it printed** for free distribution to **be shared** by all. This whole process will take a while but 3 months should be enough time. That's about all that I want to share and announce.

Tonight, I have **only one question** and this question is very long but it's a good question in the sense that a lot of people, like her also don't understand. Just like how she phrased her question.

*Qs: 'What is the responsibility of a lay Buddhist'? Most people have these questions inside their mind: 'Who am I? What am I here for? What is the purpose and meaning of life?' Then, there is also this question frequently asked by housewife – 'why is everybody expecting me to do everything and nobody want to help me with the household chores.'*

**Bro. Teoh:** She is referring to this word **responsibility** but I prefer to use the word **duty** which is a **better** and more **appropriate** word. If it's your duty then it's **no longer** a responsibility and you **don't have** to put pressure on yourself by thinking that it is your **responsibility** to get all these household chores done. But if it's **my duty**, then it is different, it means 'I know it's **my duty as a mother and a housewife** then if I can do, I will do but I will do with understanding'. I will not do if you pressure me and say to me, 'this is **your responsibility** and you have to do it'. I don't want to be pressured while in the office, by our bosses and our superior; they can just throw the file at you and say, "You are responsible for all these;

hence you have to do it". At least in the office you are paid but at home as a wife or a housewife you are not paid.

When we talk about responsibility, we are **answerable** but if it is a **duty** given to you, just like in the school, the teacher they put up the duty roster, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, - who is assigned for what duty, like sweeping floor, class decor, washing toilet, etc. So you have your **duties** laid out for you. If it's a duty, then you do it because it's your duty and you want to do. I will elaborate on this later.

Okay now we need to go into the meditation proper. Anybody here who is totally new? Okay there are three of you who are new. Do you all have any **Buddhist based understanding** of the dharma? No? Never mind you don't really need to have any basic understanding of the dharma to attend this meditation class. You only need to have **an open mind, to listen**. Okay, maybe I will just **summarize** again what we are here for.

They call this the **Thursday meditation class** and we are here to develop the understanding of the meditation as taught by the Buddha. But most Buddhists like to use this word "**Vipassanā meditation**" meaning '**Insight meditation**'. "Vi" stands for the 3 universal characteristics of nature and "Passanā" means to "**Insight**" into (not '**inside**') and Vipassanā is a Pāḷi word. When you do the transcript, sometimes instead of 'insight' you will write 'inside' meditation because this is the only word you are familiar with. When you correct it to 'insight' the person who did the transcript will be very surprised because the two meanings are so different. You

don't laugh because it happened before. 'Insight' is about wisdom. Like you **insight** into the characteristics of nature, or you insight into certain things that allows you to have an **understanding** of it or the **wisdom to comprehend** it clearly. This is the meditation that will lead to **insight knowledge, awakening and wisdom**, to free and **liberate** your mind so that you can become enlightened, so that **you don't have any more** suffering. It is mainly to develop this **insight knowledges or wisdom**, needed to **liberate** your mind so that you don't have to suffer **unnecessarily again** from that moment onwards. This insight meditation is very popular and a lot of people are very keen to develop it but it is not something that is **so straight forward** and **easy** for most people.

What we do here is we divide this **meditation class** into **two sessions**. The first session comprise **dharma** and **meditation briefing** and the **giving** of **meditation instructions**. The initial instructions are given to **let you** understand **why you are not peaceful** and why are you **not able** to develop this meditation. You look at the whiteboards, the **essential dharmas** are all written on these *3 whiteboards*. These **essential dharmas** are very important. You need to develop some form of understanding of them. These are all in the teaching but the **understanding of it** is **very important**. Like I always say, the **focus** is on the **understanding**. If you do the meditation **without understanding** you **cannot** progress, it's going to be very difficult. You can have some **meditative experiences** but that may not help you much. But if you do it **with understanding** you can progress very fast because you are **more focused** and you know and understand what **you are doing** in the **name** of **meditation**. These **essential dharmas** will help you a lot when you

are able to understand them. All these 3 whiteboards, they've got different **essential dharma** and **messages written** on them.

The main one is this centre small rectangular whiteboard's essential dharma. We have on the left the **five mental hindrances** which I had **explained** and **elaborated on** many times before but for the benefit of those who are new, I will go through it again. According to the Buddha, the reason why **you cannot** develop the **meditative silent mind** is because you have **mental hindrances** that **hinder** your mind from becoming **peaceful, tranquil, still** and **aware**. The word, **hindrance** denotes something that **hinders** your mind from entering the **meditative state** of inner **peace, calmness** and from **being aware**. These mental hindrances are very real. If you check your daily life, you will come to realize that the mental **hindrances** are there, in **almost every moment** and **every instant** of your **waking moments** unless you have **cultivated** and **trained** your mind to be **heedful**. The **5 mental hindrances** are **sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness of mind and doubt**. If you want to understand this, you should go and listen to **12<sup>th</sup> of September 2013 recording**; everything is there, very clearly explained and recorded. With the recording, I can save a lot of time; I don't need to explain them again. If you are lazy, then you cannot understand, so it's all up to you.

Now I will move on to the **5 spiritual faculties**. These 5 spiritual faculties are the **opposite** 5 mental states that can **allow you to understand** his teachings very easily and it will also help you **overcome** the 5 mental hindrances. These 5 spiritual faculties are all in the teachings but the only difference is the **explanation of it**



**differs.** Not everybody **understands** what they are. If you don't understand what they are then it will be **very difficult** for you to cultivate or develop these spiritual faculties. I had already explained what these 5 things are. In Pāḷi, they are **saddhā, vīriya, sati, samādhi** and **paññā**. The translation is, "**saddhā**" means the **confidence (or faith)** in the Buddha and his teachings, confident in whatever you do, and confident includes **self confidence**. When you have confidence in somebody, you **will have faith** in that person, you will understand what he says and you will have **gratitude and respect** for that person. When you know that his teaching, the Buddha's dharma can bring about **great transformation** in you, can bring about **understanding** that **can lead to awakening or enlightenment**, then your life can be very different because it can **help you understand life**, help you to really **live life** to the **fullest** with great **peace, joy** and **happiness** and there will be **no more suffering**. They are all clearly explained in the 12/9/2013 recording. You should listen to the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2013 recording because it's all explained clearly there. Alternatively you can read the transcript later on when it is available.

"Saddhā" is **confidence** in the Buddha and his teaching. Then "**vīriya**" is the **spiritual zeal** or **tenacity** to develop this cultivation. Through **knowing** how **special** the **Buddha** is and **how wonderful** and **unique** his teaching is, your **vīriya** or **spiritual zeal** will arise. When vīriya arises, you will cultivate and train your mind to be **mindful** leading to a **stable mindfulness** or **awareness** which is termed **sati** in Pāḷi. *Sati* or *mindfulness* is the **3rd spiritual faculty** and it is very easy to develop it **if you understand** what it is. *Do listen carefully again to the definition: 'Mindfulness* or *sati* is the **silent mind** in **awareness**

**before the knowing'** - meaning you're just aware, **before** the arising of the **concept**, the **word**, and the **thought** or **aggregates** of **mind**. When you understand that sati is **awareness** before the knowing, *you will know how to develop it* and you will know how to *train the mind to be in sati*. Which means, *when you pay respects or bows to the Buddha*, your body and mind just **move as one, without thought**, and that is **mindfulness**. When you walk, - **body and mind as one, without thought**, that is mindfulness. A simple way to define it is – *'the moment you are silent (without thought and mental chattering), you are already mindful'*. You **don't have to learn** to be *mindful*. Technically you don't have **to try to be mindful** because the **trying** is by the **thought** that wants to be mindful and when the thought is **active**, **mindfulness** is **not** there anymore. That's the reason why a lot of people **cannot have it** because they use the **wrong instrument** to develop **mindfulness**. They use the **thought** to note here and note there. They are totally off the mark because they **don't understand what sati is?** To be mindful is **very simple**; you **just silence your mind**. But like I explained earlier on, most of them **are heedless**, they cannot be silent. **Heedless** means the **mental hindrances** are there and they make you think a lot. A lot of thoughts arise because of **habitual tendencies** borne of **mental hindrances that conditioned them** into that state of **heedlessness**. Do listen to the earlier recording; it's very clearly explained there.

Then the 4<sup>th</sup> spiritual faculty is "**Samādhi**". **Samādhi is the collectedness** of mind, the **unwavering** mind. It will come about **when sati or mindfulness had stabilized**. When there is sati and Samādhi, you will have mental **clarity**; you **will be able** 'to see things as they are'. Then **wisdom** or **paññā** which is the 5<sup>th</sup> **spiritual**

**faculty** will arise, **understanding** will arise, **insight** will arise, and these will bring about the fulfillment of all the **5 spiritual faculties** that you need to develop. With these **5 spiritual faculties** developed, all the **opposite 5 mental hindrances** will be **overcome**, then you can **receive** and **understand** the Buddha's teachings, which is the dharma, very easily. These *spiritual faculties* will **enable you** to **understand spiritual teaching** and *progress* along the path of dharma easily. With this understanding, we can start our **meditative training**.

### 3.3 Meditation Proper

I will switch off the light and for those who already know how to meditate, you can start straightaway. For those who are **new** and those who **still need instructions**, you just listen, and follow the instructions given to develop this *training of mind to be mindful*, to be **peaceful**, and to be **aware**.

Meditation has 2 parts, like I always explained. First part is to train your mind **not to be heedless** so that you can be **heedful**. **Heedfulness** or *appamāda* means **ever mindful** to develop the **wisdom** as taught by the Buddha. Hence you start by **training your mind** to be **ever mindful**. In this training I will teach you a **skillful means** which we call the **mind sweeping method**, so that you *can train the mind* to be *at the location you want it to be*. Then you just allow the **mind to feel, no more** thinking. This is how you **de-condition** your **heedless** thinking to overcome your **mental hindrances temporarily**. All these are also explained in the 12<sup>th</sup>

September 2013 recording, so you don't have to remember them. You can listen to it later. It will become clear to you.

Initially, what you need to understand is, your **body** and **mind** must be in a state of relaxed **inner awareness**. You just **relax everything**, body and mind. Relax means **don't hold** on to anything, **just let things be**, no more **issue**, no more **problems**, no more **things to attend to**, you're just in a state of **relaxed, silent inner awareness**. Make sure you have a **stable** posture, **backbone straight**, then close your eyes and silence everything and just maintain **awareness or attention** at your forehead. Just **feel** your forehead, **feel**, and **don't think**. If there is **any tension, tightness or stress within**, just mentally, silently **relax, relax and relax, feel** the whole forehead **soothingly relax**. Just feel and relax.

After that, just **sweep it down** to your eye muscles, again you **feel** every strand of your **eye** muscle and arteries, relax them all, feel them *soothingly relax*. Then you sweep it down to feel your **facial muscles**. Normally for most people, if you don't have the understanding, the **joy** and **happiness** in life, you are **not** relaxed and you are **very tense**; there is a lot of **stress within your body and mind**. Your **facial muscles** are normally **quite tense**, so you just **feel** and **relax every part** of it. Initially you may think you have already relaxed your facial muscles but later on when I teach you another **skillful** means, then you will realize that you are far from the relaxed state.

You can use the skillful means of radiating a **radiant smile** to yourself. Visualize yourself facing a mirror radiating a **radiant smile**,

- there is a lot of happiness, a lot of joy, and you just smile. When you do that, you are **really relaxed** because of the **joy** and **peace within you** (there must be **joy** that lead to the relaxed state). When you are happy, you are very relaxed and then **naturally** all the facial muscles will be relaxed because of the radiant smile and joy, it is like on its own it relaxes itself. Your **mental state** is the one that you have to be **aware** of, because whenever you are **not peaceful** and **not happy**, it means **you have** stress, tension and **tightness** within your facial muscles and the various parts of your body, especially your heart area. When **your heart** is filled with **joy, love** and **happiness**, you are in a **relaxed state**, then you realize that your facial muscles are all **naturally relax**, you don't have to do anything. After that it's very easy for you to radiate love and mettā to yourself. Metta is universal love, loving kindness. Love that has **got no opposite** which means *love is just love*; there is **no more opposite** like **hatred, envy, jealousy and unhappiness**, so you learn to radiate love and mettā to yourself. You can radiate as follows:

'May I, this body and mind of mine be **well and happy, well and happy**; (Feel the **well being** and **happiness** deep within your heart, your **entire** body and mind, and your **entire being** while you are reciting it)'. You can repeat it one or two more times:

'May I, this body and mind of mine be well and happy, well and happy'. Feel the **well-being** and **happiness** within your heart then you can continue to radiate:-

'May this body and mind of mine be **free from all suffering**, free from **all physical** and **mental suffering**, may they too be free from

**all harm and danger.** Then, may the mental state of this mind be free from all enmity, ill will, fear, worry, anxiety, etc and may it keep itself happy and peaceful always. May there **be love**, may there **be joy** and may there **be peace** deep within our hearts’.

This mettā will make you **very calm** and **very peaceful** with **a lot of inner well being**. Then you continue to radiate this mettā to your **loved ones, somebody you care for a lot**; can be your **parents**, your **spouse**, your **children**, your **loved ones, close friend, brothers and sisters** or somebody who had taught you well, who have **taken care** of you, that you have **a lot of respect** and **gratitude** towards, you radiate the same **mettā to them all**:

‘May my loved ones too be well and happy, well and happy’ - you can visualize them radiating a radiant smile, and then from your heart you radiate this love. You wish them well being and happiness too. Radiate this **love, well-being** and **happiness** from your **heart**, then after that you can continue to send mettā to them from your heart as follows:-

‘May they too be free from all suffering, free from all mental and physical suffering; May they too be free from harm and danger; May their mind states too, be free from **all negative tendencies** of fear, worry, anxiety and selfishness; May they too be **without enmity, without ill-will** and **untroubled** and may they always keep themselves **happy and peaceful** always; May there be **love, peace** and **joy deep** within their **hearts**.’

Then you can radiate this same mettā to all beings within this vicinity of Bro. Swee Aun and Sis. Mee Fong's house including all the kalyāṇamitta, dharma friends, fellow meditators, cultivators and all beings, seen and unseen, known and unknown, - 'may they all too be well and happy, well and happy, may they all too be **free** from all suffering, both **physical and mental** suffering, may their mind states too, be pure, free of all negativities (negative tendencies), may they too be without enmity, without ill-will and untroubled, may they too be well and happy always, may there be peace, may there be love and joy deep within their hearts.'

Then you continue to radiate this mettā or loving kindness to all beings within the whole of Petaling Jaya, Subang Jaya, Selangor state, whole of Malaysia, South East Asia, Asia, then the whole world (planet earth), then our solar system, our entire galaxy, the milky way, then to all beings throughout the **entire existence** in this universe, - *'may they all too be well and happy, well and happy, may their mind states too be without enmity, without ill will and untroubled, may they keep themselves happy and peaceful always, may they all too be free from all suffering , both physical and mental suffering, may they all too be free from harm and danger, may there be love, may there be peace and joy deep within their hearts'*.

By now you should be calmer, more peaceful and more relaxed, and then you can come back to your facial muscles. You just relax and feel, by now it should be more relaxed (or soothingly relaxed), then you sweep it down to your neck, - feel, relax; shoulders, - feel, relax; hands, back to shoulders, - feel and relax.

Then you bring your attention to your **heart or chest area**. This is a very important location within your body, this is where the **heartbeat** is, this is where the **seat of consciousness** is, this is where your **life force (karmic force) arise and pass away**. This is a very important location within your body. **Just silence your mind and feel**, if there is **any vibration or any tension**, or **stress**, you **just relax** and *relax and relax* them all. For those who already **know** how to meditate and their awareness already developed, you **completely silence** your mind and just feel - whatever you can detect, like any vibration or any heartbeat, you just silence your mind and stay there with it. It will become very quiet, very peaceful and very still **after a while**. This is the **silence mind** that can *meditate and understand*.

But for those who are new, who **have yet** to develop this ability, you don't have to do it; you just **relax, feel and relax the heart area**. Then you move on, you sweep it down to your stomach, - **feel and relax** every part. Then you move it down to your **abdomen area**, again just feel, **silence** your mind and **relax every part**. Your buttock, you feel and relax; your leg, - do the same, just relax and silence your mind to just feel and relax. You can reverse this whole mind sweeping process, from your leg - you feel and relax; buttock, again you feel and relax, stage by stage. Then you come back to your abdomen, do the same; move on to your stomach area, feel and relax; heart area, do the same. Then you move on to your shoulders, hands, back to shoulders - feel and relax every part; then you feel your facial muscle and again, relax every part; your eye muscles, do the same, feel and relax and your forehead, feel and relax.



When you are able to do that, your mind that is able to relax the body, will make it **very calm**, very **peaceful** and the **inner well being** too will be experienced. With these mind states, you are ready **to train** this mind to be **mindful** which is the **most important** thing that you have to do because by now you must **have developed** some form of **de-conditioning** of your **heedless thinking**, so that your thinking is much less and your mind is relatively much more quiet. This **mind sweeping** method training will enable you to develop two **very important** trainings:-

i) First you train the mind to feel and relax, so that it **doesn't** think. This will enable you to de-condition the **heedless habitual** thinking or reactions of mind.

ii) The **second advantage** is it **trains** your mind to be at the **location** you want it to be. You want it to be at the forehead, it is at the forehead. You want it to be at the heart, it will be there. You want it to feel the abdomen, it will be there. ***The mind that is silent is more sensitive.***

Because you already have this ability you can now **train your mind** further to cultivate Ānāpānasati to **stabilize** your mindfulness. “Ānāpānasati” is a Pāḷi word. “Ānāpāna” means in and out breath and “sati” is mindfulness. Hence the word Ānāpānasati means ‘**mindfulness of the in and out breath**’ and this is a **very good meditation object**, because the breath is very neutral, and **suitable** for almost **all personality**. Hence you can develop this training of the mind to be mindful because the breath is always there and in the moment. When we are aware of this “in” and “out” breath, we

will be **silent without thought** within. And this is what “**sati**” is all about. You **silent** your mind **completely**, then you **feel** your breathing in front of your nostril, just like you feel your forehead; you just maintain attention in front of your nostril, then you just silently relax and feel your breathing just like you feel the tightness, tension or stress within your forehead, now you feel your breathing. The **moment you detect** the breathing, you **just allow the mind to be with the breath as one without thought** then just be **aware** of it. Like the Buddha said, “**Breathing in you are aware, breathing out you are aware**”. It means *body and the breath move as one without thought*.

Initially it’s **not so easy** because you have **not trained**, so what you need to do is, you have to remember one very important thing, - ‘**every time** this mind **wanders off** and become **heedless** means you are **not mindful** of the breathing anymore, hence you have to **patiently bring it back to be aware** of the breathing again’. Anything you want to be skillful at, you have to train it. It’s like cycling, learning how to cycle or learning how to play any games. The constant practice or training will make you **skillful**. So, every time the mind gets **distracted** and becomes **heedless**, you just **maintain awareness** and bring the *awareness or attention* back to the breathing in front of your nostril. If you do it with **enough patience** and **sincerity**, and if you are determined to train this way, then not long, may be within 5 or 10 minutes, this Ānāpānasati will come to be and your mindfulness of the in and out breath will happen **naturally**, then your mind will suddenly become **very peaceful** and **very quiet** because the moment it can develop this Ānāpānasati (or mindfulness of the in and out breath), the mind will **naturally settles**

**down** as it is **without** thought and is **just aware**. When it's able to do that, this mind becomes **peaceful, quiet**, and then a type of *joy*, called "**pīti**" will arise. "**Pīti**" is a **spiritual joy, a spiritual rapture**. If it is the first time you are experiencing it, you will like it, and you will like to meditate because this is something most lay people cannot get to experience. These are **meditative calmness, meditative peace**, that arise via the training of the mind. When pīti arise, **continue to relax** into it and allow it to settle down, then after a while the breathing will become **like very, very subtle (and you will experience the long breath)**, very **quiet** and **very peaceful**. Then this Ānāpānasati will develop further. With the refinement of "pīti" it will reach a stage where it will transform into "sukha". Sukha" is a very **blissful state** of mind. The rest are explained in the last week's recording.

You just train your mind to do that, then after the bliss if you continue to relax and silent your mind, it will reach what they call "passaddhi". "Passaddhi" is stillness of mind, **tranquility** of mind, the mind becomes **silent, without thought** but it is **continuously aware**. When this state arises, you will come to realize, that your breathing and all your other bodily activities within your body, had all slowed down, until like little or no more breathing. Everything is like **so subtle** and **so still**. When that happens, just **continue to relax** and **remain silent**. **Don't try to do anything**, don't even try to do **sitting and touching**, just maintain the **silent mind, with inner awareness**, then see what happens. This passaddhi or tranquility/stillness of mind, will cumulate into the **silent mind**, which will then settles down, - it will develop into what we call the higher mindfulness, a **more refined** type of mindfulness. Then the

mind itself **enter sati**, the mind itself becomes the **silent mind** that doesn't need anything **to anchor it**. The mind that has **no dwelling**, it can just **stay still, tranquil** and quiet **without** any **object** of meditation. During that state, the **subtle breathing** will come back to you and you can detect it very easily. When that happen, **without** a stethoscope you can also 'hear' and be **aware of your own heartbeat** - very clear and very loud. After that, wherever **you locate** the mind, that *awareness is so clear, even when you go to feel your forehead, it is so different now*. You can even go into the brain within and develop awareness of what is happening within the brain. Then wherever within your body and mind if you want **to investigate** anything you *just direct* that mind, and it will understand.

You can use that silent mind **to meditate, to develop** the wisdom which is needed for you to arise what they call **insight knowledges** (**wisdom** borne of the **direct seeing** - to insight into the **3 universal characteristics** of nature of *anicca, dukkha, and anattā* or *impermanence, suffering states and non-self*.) All these are also described in the last week's recording. With these, I will allow you to meditate on your own and I will ring the bell in about 15 minute's time so that we can continue with the second session. Now you can continue with your meditation. Just train your mind to be aware, to be mindful, and then stabilize it. Okay?

(After the 15 minutes meditation session - Bell 'Ting! x 3')

## 4. Session 2

For those who still want to meditate, you can continue. For those who had enough, you can **now slowly, silently and mindfully** come out of the meditation. Try to **maintain** whatever **inner peace, inner calmness** and **inner awareness** that you have developed. The mind that is trained is very useful. The mind that is **trained will listen to you** otherwise it will be **heedless**; it will do the things it wants to do. It will ignore what you want to develop. Once you train it, this mind will be different. This **mind will listen to you**, - means, you want it to be silent, it will be silent; you want it to be peaceful and aware, it will just do that; when you want it to arise to know something, to understand something, to develop the clarity of awareness, to investigate into anything, it will do just that. The **trained mind is heedful, fully aware, silent within and peaceful**. The **untrained mind** is full of **mental hindrances**, full of **negativities**, full of **evil roots**, full of **defilement**. The **untrained mind is heedless and it thinks a lot**. For those who had experienced them, they will come to know that the **untrained mind is like a devil's workshop**. Do you know what a devil is? A devil is a **very evil being** and the *devil will take charge of your mind* because it's **not trained**. Like a devil inside there, you know the devil is very evil - that's the reason why it can make you very evil. The evil roots are the cause of all evil, the roots of all evil, hence that's how the **heedless** mind develops all the **conditioning** via the **evil roots** to make you evil. That's how you **entangle** your life. That's how the law of karma takes over and conditions you into misery, and suffering; the various *mind states* of fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation. All these come about

because of **heedlessness**, caused by the evil roots and the mental hindrances within. The untrained mind is very dangerous whereas the trained mind is different. It is peaceful, calm, heedful, and always aware and silent within. So the **key to meditation** is to develop **this training of mind to be mindful** so that this **mindfulness** which is **without thought** can be stabilized. As it stabilize, your mind become more and more peaceful, more and more quiet, more and more aware, **less and less** of this **heedless thinking**. It can only come about when **wisdom** has been developed. **Without** the **wisdom**, chances are it's still a **conditioned state** of training the mind to be 'mindful'. The mind that is **conditioned** into 'mindfulness', with the ability to be 'mindful' of the object of meditation, is not the **silent mind** that we are looking forward to develop in the meditation. That one is still a 'continuous mindfulness' that **had not insight into truth** as yet but it can make you very **peaceful** and **very calm**, and you can even **enter absorption** and develop those **one-pointedness concentration** and **jhanic abilities**.

But when it comes **to developing wisdom**, the Buddha taught **vipassanā** via the cultivation of the four **foundations of mindfulness**. The emphasis is on **awareness, or sati**. On the four foundations of mindfulness: the first foundation is our **physical body, kaya - Kāyānupassanā**. After you had completed the various stages of **kāyānupassanā cultivation**, which starts with **Ānāpānasati**, followed by the mindfulness of the **4 postures**, and then you develop the **daily mindfulness** through cultivating **sati sampajañña**, or **mindfulness with clear comprehension** of all **actions** and all **movements** within the **present moment**, followed by mindfulness

of the **4 elements**, **32 parts** of the physical body and the **9 stages of cemetery contemplation**.

Our **physical body** is made of the **4 elements** – Apo (the **water** element), Pathavi (the **earth** element), Vayo (the **wind** element) and Tejo (the **heat** element) and it has got no knowing hence cannot be you. Then you move on to the **32 parts of the body** (denoting condition arising nature of this body), followed by the 9 stages of **cemetery contemplation** of this **bodily decomposition** to understand the nature of this body when it is **devoid** of consciousness – it goes the way of nature (so as not to be deluded or deceived by the form). All these contemplation have their purpose (it is to help you develop some form of initial insight that will allow you to move on to the second foundation of mindfulness, which is vedanānupassanā). Vedanā is feeling, so mindfulness on all the *feelings that arise within your sense bases upon sense door contacts*. This is for you to understand how *contact conditions feeling* and how *feeling conditions craving*, and then how *craving conditions grasping* and all those subsequent dependent origination links. You will start **to see them** in your **meditation** when you have developed your **sati and mindfulness**. Then you can develop the **understanding** of the *various mind states that arise within that feeling*, whether it's **pleasant** or **unpleasant** or **neutral** feeling. This is how you can develop the wisdom accordingly.

After that you go **deeper** into the **consciousness**, not only at feeling level you **go into the content** of **consciousness**. You move onto the 3rd foundation of mindfulness which is **cittānupassanā**. Citta is mind. When we talk about citta, it is the mind (consciousness with

its content) or we also call it **the thought**. So the **content of consciousness** (which are the aggregates of mind especially saṅkhāra which includes vedanā and saññā) **need to be understood**. You have to develop the **mindfulness** of its **content**; you have to go **deeper and deeper** into the content of consciousness. Then when you **start to understand clearly** how this content of consciousness condition you into **various karmic resultants** (i.e. whether it is **kusala or akusala** karma – because they all come from your **mental intentions/volitons**), then your **right view** with *regards to the law of karma* will become very clear. You will then understand why the Buddha said under **cittānupassanā**, “When your content of consciousness has this **evil root of Greed you must be aware**, or when it is **without** also you must be aware. Similarly when there is this **evil root of Anger, hatred, envy and jealousy**, you must also be **aware**. Finally when there is this evil root of **delusion or ignorance**, of fear, worry, anxiety, etc, you must also be aware.”

You will understand clearly how all these content of consciousness with its **evil roots conditioned** you into the **various negative karmic resultants**. *Without the evil roots* there is **no negative karmic resultant**. This foundation of mindfulness is much deeper. When you have cleared all these, then you are ready to move into the 4<sup>th</sup> foundation of mindfulness which is **dhammānupassanā**.

By now, your mindfulness would have stabilized and you would have the ability to **insight** into phenomena, **insight** into the **universal characteristics of nature**. You can then start to cultivate **dhammānupassanā**. You start off with, the mindfulness of the **5 mental hindrances**; leading to mindfulness of the **5 aggregates of**



**form and mind**, etc. - understanding it clearly. Then you move on to the next stage where you understand how **you function as a human being**, i.e. how your **senses** upon **contact of mind** arises their respective **sense door consciousness**. You develop mindfulness of your **internal 6 sense bases** and the **6 external sense bases** and the resultant **18 sense realms**. All these you will come to understand **very clearly** including the **laws of dependent origination** (or the **12 links**) followed by the **four noble truths** which is the last category of practice. After this internal 6 and external 6 sense bases **mindfulness training** you will move on to cultivate **mindfulness** of the **7 factors of enlightenment**. When this happens, you are **very near to enlightenment already** because by then *all the factors of enlightenment* are there to trigger off the awakening. If your cultivation does not lead you to the 7 factors of enlightenment then you have to check you cultivation. If you had cultivated correctly they will be there. Then when you apply these factors of enlightenment to develop the **mindfulness** on the **four noble truths**, you will awaken and all of the noble truths will become clear to you and you will understand them as they are as what the Buddha has realized. That completes the whole understanding of the four foundation of mindfulness cultivation.

After you had developed the above 4 foundations of mindfulness training, you still have to come out and **live life**, to *cultivate* the **Noble 8 fold path**, starting with **right view**, leading to the **right thought, right speech, right action, right living/livelihood** and the 4 **right efforts** to constantly purify your action, speech and thought processes so that you are able to fulfill the cultivation of the **noble eightfold path** (which is the last **mindfulness** practice), then only

you can become a **noble one**. Noble ones are enlightened ones. Noble ones mean the enlightened ones that are **very noble** in **every aspect** of their life. They are very noble in their **understanding of life**, in their understanding of the **laws that govern** life and existence (no more doubt), they are **very noble** in the way they conduct and **carry themselves**, the way they **arise their thoughts**, the way **they act and speak**, the way they **communicate** with people, the way they **interact** with people and the way they **have relationship** with people and nature.

All these, you will come to understand clearly and you will know **how to live** life **meaningfully** and **beautifully**, you will just **flow** and **accord with life**, you **will not go against anything**, you will not cause any more karmic negativity or misery to fellow living beings. You will have **a lot of love, compassion** and **wisdom to live** life. All these are the characteristics and personalities of the **enlightened/noble ones**. That's why they are called noble ones, noble in every aspect of their life. When you understand all these, you will know how **wonderful** and **special** the Buddha dharma is, how it can lead to all these great **transformation** in you. When all these things happen, you will see **very clearly** how this understanding can lead to **complete transformation in you, both character and personality wise**, and you will be a **totally different** human being. Then for those who can understand or know you, they will know that you **had changed** especially your loved ones and those people who are close to you. They **can see** and **sense** the great **change** in you, and then you will become a great  **blessing to all** of humanity, society and the world.

## 4.1 Reporting Of Meditation

Okay, with that, I will move on to the second session on meditation reporting. You can **report** your meditation, your **experience**, and **ask any question** regarding the **meditation** and the **teaching**; whatever aspect of the Buddha dharma which you don't quite understand, you can also ask. And the last and most important one is you can also ask me any question **that is related to life**, i.e. how to apply **what you have learnt here** and the **Buddha dharma** to help you resolve all your **life situations** and **problems**. Do make use of this condition and opportunity to ask. Before I go into the questions and answers session, is there anyone who might want to report your meditation? This will be very useful, so don't be shy.

Anybody wants to report your meditation? No! What about you? Are you new? You came here before? Oh! First time. How do you feel .....? Okay, good, you can clean your nose first, don't worry. I think you got a slight flu, it's okay. It's a good sign because when you have this type of sickness and flu and you are still able and determined to make it to this meditation, it means you have this **resolve** in you, hence you will learn faster.

According to the Buddha, **when you go through suffering** that is the **best condition to understand his teachings** because he told the monks what he teaches is very simple – 'only two things : **suffering and the way out of suffering**'. If you don't have suffering, it is not so easy to understand his teaching. But when suffering arises, it is easier because the Buddha said, under the **first turning** of the **1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth**, "there are these eight 1st noble truth **life realities** that

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can condition one into misery or suffering, if one lacks wisdom when confronting them. These 8 conditions are birth, old age, sickness and death (your case here is sickness or disease); then there is this separation from loved ones and ones possessions; when you are with people whom you don't like and when you cannot get what you want; then the final summary which is, meditative". The Buddha said, "In short **when you deludedly grasp and cling** on to the **5 aggregates of form and mind** thinking this is what you are, what the human being is all about, then **suffering** will be the result." These 1st noble truth **life realities** which he had proclaimed under the **1st turning**, you will have to develop the understanding of it through the **2<sup>nd</sup> turning inquiry** which is - "this 1<sup>st</sup> Noble truth of dukkha is to be understood".

Now you look at this chart on the white board, the **1st turning wisdom** is called **suttamaya paññā**. *Paññā is wisdom and Sutta is the discourse of the Buddha*". Hence **suttamaya paññā** is **wisdom borne of hearing the sutta or discourse that the Buddha had proclaimed**. When you have this ability to understand what he says under the 1<sup>st</sup> turning proclamation, it means you have **higher wisdom** and you can awaken via **suttamaya paññā**. But if you find it not so easy, then, you have to go for the 2nd turning wisdom. *2nd turning wisdom* is **cintāmayā paññā** which is the *wisdom borne of reflection, contemplation and inquiry* into the truth that the Buddha had proclaimed. When it comes to suffering, the Buddha said under the 2<sup>nd</sup> turning of the first noble truth - "this 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth of **dukkha** or **suffering** is to be understood." The inquiry is - *how can you develop wisdom out of it?* This kind of *2nd turning wisdom* which is **cintāmayā paññā** can only arise via **constant**

*reflection, contemplation and inquiry into what the Buddha had proclaimed* i.e. “this noble truth of dukkha or suffering is to be understood”; so how do you inquire? How do you reflect? How do you contemplate? How do you *start the contemplative training to develop your wisdom?* Anybody wants to give it a try?

*Very good, you start by **inquiring** ‘why **did the Buddha say that?** And why must I understand what suffering is?’* If you don’t know what is suffering then what is going to happen to you? You will **suffer without knowing** what suffering is, right? So how can you meditate and understand his teaching **when you don’t even know what suffering is?** After you had reflected and contemplated on them you will come to realize that, ‘if I don’t understand what suffering is, I can never develop the **understanding and ability to be free from suffering.**’ Hence that’s the reason why this noble truth is very important, so what must you do? *After you had inquired why, you must go more deeply into it.* I will have to develop this **further inquiry of what is suffering?** I will have to go back to the 1st turning proclamation, and then ask, why the Buddha said, “Birth, old age, sickness, and death are suffering?” **Is there really any suffering when I experience all these or when I witness and confront all these realities?**

This is how you develop the understanding of this noble truth, via your **direct reflection, contemplation and inquiry into it through real life experiences.** The mothers will know why birth is suffering. Maybe the man may not know so much because men don’t carry the baby for 9 to 10 months. The **birth process comes with a lot of suffering** when you understand; **when things don’t go your way,**

when the *baby is not what you expect* and *certain complication* happened during birth, all these *can be very traumatic* because ***suffering is very real***. When the mother go through the conceiving stage, followed by the pregnancy stage, - they will experience the ***morning sickness*** and all ***those side effects related to pregnancy***, *how they have to sacrifice, how their movement are restricted, how they have to exercise restraint and endure a lot of things that they want to do or eat but they cannot*. Then as they go through the ***pregnancy process***, they *still need to do the housework or go to work and at the same time carrying the baby in their womb*. All these, you need to go through ***the inquiry*** to understand. The *gynecologists, they understand better* because *they study that field*. Then you have what they call ***old age, sickness*** and ***death***. May be when you are young you cannot experience what old age is but you can see how your parents and grandparents get old, then your great grandparents, your neighbor's grandparents and all those old people, with all their problems while confronting old age, sickness and pending death.

As ***you grow old, you start to develop a lot of sickness, a lot of disease*** and your ***senses start to fail you***, then your ***thoughts start to haunt*** you, *you start to develop this unhappiness* in you via thinking, *'now that I am so old, so useless, people will look down upon me, my children also will look down upon me'* because you are *no longer like before*. The sufferings that come with old age ***can be very traumatic and miserable*** too, especially so *when you are financially dependent on people for your daily sustenance, especially your three meals, i.e. food and shelter*. When you grow old, you tend to have a lot of sickness and diseases too, so your medical bills

will go up. You also fear those diseases like **dementia** etc. This can be very real and rather traumatic.

Then **death is a certainty** and *can be very tragic* too. If you don't have wisdom, most of you will suffer, because most people **cannot accept the reality of death**; especially so if they are your loved ones, they are somebody very dear, important and close to you. Separation can happen in many ways, for example separation during **nature's disasters** like **tsunami, earthquake, flood, building collapse**, etc. Nowadays, **car accident, train accident, plane accident**, and even **snatch thief** and **kidnapping** (can be a big issue, creating a lot of misery too). You can witness all these when you read the newspapers. As you go through life, you start to experience and understand, how when there is separation from things that you own or holds on to dearly **like your business, your wealth, your property, your money, your possession, your loved ones etc.** suffering can arise. Then later on, you will also **encounter relationship problem** which can also lead to **separation, like divorce and relationship failure**. Even those not married, they are not exempted, for they also can be *jilted* (nobody divorce you but you get jilted.) Then the very common word is "you are dumped", like a coconut; dumped, they just dump you. Many of these relationship failures had led to very traumatic experiences; they cried and there's a lot of sorrow, lamentation, bitterness and fear leading to all the hatred, the anger, the jealousy and all those sorrowful things. *When you are with people whom you don't like, suffering can also arise.*

As you go through these **reflections** and **contemplations** you *start to understand* this **noble truth better** because these are the **very realities of Life and existence** that the Buddha had proclaimed. *Without wisdom* when you **confront** them, you **will suffer** and these are **life realities** that you cannot avoid. **As long as you live long enough, sooner or later** you will **have to confront** them. When you are with people whom you don't like, you will experience a lot of these suffering too, especially so when you are still working, and when *your bosses are not so friendly*, and you are *under tremendous pressure to deliver*. Certain bosses, they've got *very funny way of managing their staffs*. They go by this practice – '**management by harassment and fear**'. They *harass you to deliver* and they *put fear* into you because *they know you need the job, and the salary*. A lot of people are forced to commit suicide because of **financial problems** which is also quite common. Also when **your business cash flow is stuck** and *when you cannot find the cash flow for your business to pull through, you can be under tremendous pressure and stress*. Then when the banker starts to terminate your loan facilities and when your creditor starts to come after you, *all these can be very traumatic*. These are real life situations that can lead to a lot of suffering, a lot of fear, worry, anxiety and stress, leading to **health problems**, that *can makes you worse*. Then when you are in this state, you can become **very moody**, and when you come back to your home, your relationship with your loved ones will also suffer - because when you suffer they also suffer. They also worry for you. All these are a chain reaction and these **1st noble truth realities'** suffering are **so real**.



The Buddha asked, ‘if you **had understood** this noble truth, what must you do? We must **not wait until it’s too late**, hence you better make haste to cultivate and develop this type of understanding borne of his teaching to understand what is going on **before confronting** them. Then when the 1<sup>st</sup> noble truth of suffering **has already been understood**, you *don’t have to suffer anymore*. That’s why the **3rd turning** is the **enlightenment part**, with wisdom, **bhāvanāmaya paññā**. Paññā is wisdom, *bhāvanā is the meditative training*. **Wisdom borne of the meditation or meditative training is the third turning wisdom** and once you have that, your mind liberated and free.

When you contemplate and reflect onto the **2nd noble truth**, which explained to you **very clearly how suffering and its cause arises** – your *understanding will arise* because the Buddha said there is a **cause behind all suffering** under the second noble truth and the **cause** is always **craving borne of self-delusion**. When you understand this 2<sup>nd</sup> Noble Truth, *you will know how to manage your life better right?* That’s why his teaching is **very unique** and **very powerful**. This 2nd noble truth can explained to you clearly *why the first noble truth realities can cause you suffering*.

The Buddha explained, it is your **craving** borne of **delusion (self-delusion, or sakkāyadiṭṭhi)** that is the **cause**. That is: you don’t understand ‘who you are, what you are’, **you don’t know what this human being is all about**, you don’t know what this form and mind is all about, hence you deludedly grasp and cling on to it, thinking it is **real**, it is you. That **delusion**, that **sakkāyadiṭṭhi** which is **self-delusion**, is very powerful, isn’t it? The final summary of the 1<sup>st</sup>

Noble Truth according to the Buddha is – ‘when you **deludedly grasp** and **cling** onto the **5 aggregates** of form and mind, **suffering** will be the result’. You don’t have to believe him. You can put it to test, and you can investigate into it. When you **reflect and contemplate** into it, you will come *to realize* that *everything he said is true*.

Let’s take an example, the first four realities of life and existence that the Buddha proclaimed as suffering under the 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth of dukkha. ‘He said birth, old age, sickness and death are suffering when you **confront** them **without** understanding’. How does suffering come to be? When we attach, when we cling, when we have craving, when we deludedly think that this body is what we are. Then you will **worry about this body getting old, getting sick and die, that’s how you suffer**. *The new born baby, you have attachment, because you think you are the biological father and mother. Hence when you give birth to them, you will think it is your child, and you will develop **attachment** to that child, and if anything happens to that child (for good or for bad), it can affect your mental state. When **things go your way**, when you **see them so cheerful, so cute and beautiful** as they grow up, **you will have so much joy** and you **will love them more** and that will cause you to *attach to them more*. Then *when something unfortunate happens*, which is **quite common nowadays** - a lot of *babies got abducted*, they just come and take your baby away, especially when you forgot to off your car engine, then within split second, people just take the whole thing. Nowadays, even in school or while going to school, the kids are not safe.*

Then when you leave your baby to the nanny or those who helped you look after your baby, (which is quite common in our modern day society because both the husband and wife are working) if you don't have a good mother-in-law or own parents who can help you look after your children a lot of ***unfortunate things may happen*** also. That's why you're ***very blessed*** if you have these people to look after your children for you so that you ***can have the peace of mind*** when you go to work, otherwise you may worry. Alternatively is for you to hire a maid, but then, you have seen so many of those stories; even when they install those video camera at home also not much use, because if suddenly you on the computer and you saw how the maid abuse your child, how will it affect you? You totally got no more moods to work, and straightaway you call your husband then you straightaway rush home. Whatever you do is already too late, but you don't have a choice because you don't have the time to look after your own child and you have to entrust it to someone. But as parent you have a duty to find out, to monitor and make sure that these things don't happen but there is ***certain thing that you can't avoid because thing like karma is something you cannot really understand unless you have the wisdom.*** *What you did to people in the past, karmic ally it will come back to you when the conditions are there.* If you had been a maid before (in your previous life) and you do all these abusive things to other people's child, then when the time come, you will become the victim, you will become the parent, and ***your kid will be abused by other maids just like how you had ill treated others before.*** All these you cannot **blame people for what happened.** The Buddha said, "**The law of karma is very powerful, you must have that right view.**" Having this right view **can lead** to understanding, - i.e. when you know the **cause** behind

your suffering, when you know **what suffering is**, you will know how **to manage** your life better so that in future you will not commit any of these **wrong actions or karmic negativity** anymore. At least, to a certain extent you can manage it, but if you want to be **totally free from it and go beyond**, you must develop **wisdom**. That's why *this type of meditation is very useful* and *to cultivate this type of meditation you have to go much deeper than what knowledge can give you*.

What I had explained to you is just the **knowledge part** but if you put it to **cultivation**, and you develop the appropriate **mindfulness** and **heedfulness** to reflect, contemplate and go into the **first** turnings, **second** turnings and **third** turnings cultivation then their **corresponding wisdom** will arise. If you *diligently cultivate (via your heedfulness)*, the **noble eightfold path**, which is the *full range of meditation as taught by the Buddha*, then you can develop the wisdom to be free from all the 1st noble truth **realities**, then after that, no matter what happens, there will be **no more suffering or problem** for you. You will always be peaceful, (anywhere, anytime, and at any place), always full of **happiness and joy**, and yet **the reality is still the reality**. You will know **very clearly** despite what happens, *no more suffering* and **this can be done**. It's not a **myth** or **something theoretical**. Just like the Buddha, *after he had realized the Truth*, he was full of joy and he want to share this understanding with the world. It took him about 3  $\frac{3}{4}$  asankhaya kalpas or world cycles **to perfect himself** so that he can become the **Sammā Sambuddha** and because of that he had **great wisdom** and was **able to summarize all of his understanding of life** (both the **mundane** and

supra mundane aspects of it) into just **4 Noble Truths** which is the **essence of *his great teaching***.

What we are cultivating and developing here is the ***training of the mind*** to be **heedful** to cultivate this *four noble truth understanding*, that's all and *when you understand* the noble truths, you can become **noble ones** and **you can then be completely free from all suffering too** and this is something *possible even in this life*. *This life's present civilization and consciousness are so conducive, and you all are indeed very blessed because we had evolved to the stage where our advancement in science and technology (especially in the field of technological innovations and information technology) is so phenomenal that it can help us so much.* But all these advancements are like a **double edged weapon**, if you use it *wrongly*, then the **human consciousness will decay**, it will go down, and human civilization will fall, but if you use it **wisely** to **enhance our spiritual understanding**, to transform the **consciousness of this planet**, then **we will evolve** to become **beautiful future star beings**.

All these can be understood, and like the internet technology that can help us share information so fast. Now you also got the mini recorder and CDs, that's how the recording can be done, and you also have **pen drive** to help you **copy the recording**, it's all so *convenient nowadays*. 2600 years ago, you may think that the monks and the lay people then who met the Buddha were all **very fortunate** but do you know; during that time, only the people there in that region can hear him because there was **no airplane** to fly there. Even got ship also nobody knows how to steer that far because Captain **Columbus hasn't realized that the Earth was**

**round at that time.** He was also not born yet. All these were not available then and they don't get to meet the Buddha. There was also no recording, no book and no CD then, - nothing at all, and you have to find your way to meet up with the Buddha. It's **not easy** during that time, you don't even know where he is, no newspaper to read, no internet to check, no GPS to trace him, and all these are not available at that time. That's why I say, you don't complain, - by saying, "During the Buddha's time, it is so easy to be enlightened because he was around, and anything we don't know, we can ask him and he can explain to us." But we never look at all those things they don't have. Actually, now you are **much more fortunate** but you must know how to **screen and sieve** through the information available because *all sorts of information* are available in the internet. If you **got hold of the wrong one** and **you are gullible** then you may be *following the blind* (the blind leading the blind) and *end up somewhere else*. But if you are quite **intelligent and wise** and you know how to screen and sieve it out, then when you understand, you will be **very determined** to train yourself. And you will come to understand that the **3 turnings of the 4 Noble Truths cultivation are very important** because they **will lead you to the meditation, the cultivation of the four foundations of mindfulness, the cultivation of the noble eightfold path, and then finally the realization of the four noble truths – all these can happen.** Coming back to what we want to discuss, - I have to finish off this question which I haven't started yet, I think I have to stop the reporting for the time being and deal with the question now.

## 4.2 Questions and Answers

Okay, this is a very interesting question. This kalyāṇamitta wrote to Bro. Swee Aun, who had so kindly printed it out.

**Question:** Hi! Bro. Swee Aun, this question is quite **personal** and my question is **‘what is the meaning of responsibility? I feel that I work so hard to contribute to the family (practically in every sense of it) and to me everyone should be putting in their contribution as well example helping to do housework, such as cleaning and keeping the place tidy, etc. But I find that everything is all up to me, though from young, I’ve been telling my children that they should do their share or part (of course not expecting them to do all but at least contribute) so that everyone is contributing in their own way. (She thinks that is fair to expect but she is not getting that.)** The common excuse from the children is that “mum I’m busy”, I’m not interested in housework and that is the problem. I am actually the busiest person (she said) and I’m not interested in feeding “lazy people”. I hate to pose this question as I felt the feedback is as though I am very calculative or uncaring (*No, you are not. People who don’t understand, maybe they think you are but for people who understand, they will say, you have sacrificed a lot and there is a reason why you behave like that because you cannot understand their behavior and that’s why you brought them up here*) I compromise all the way. I cannot give myself a good answer why I have to push myself so hard, make sacrifices just to keep the house and the home in order. Anyway, this is just airing my view. Thanks for listening, and best regards’

**Bro. Teoh:** This is *a very good and relevant* question. Like most housewives, **she felt as if** she is the only one working, doing all **those household chores** like marketing, cooking, washing, cleaning up the house etc and seeing to all the needs of the family, which is **a very great responsibility**. That is why she uses the word ‘responsibility’ because to her, she believed this is *her responsibility as a wife* and as *a mother*.

Now to answer this question, the *more appropriate* word to use is **“duty”** instead of **responsibility** because when you say responsibility, it is like **people make you responsible** for all these. *But when it’s my duty to do, what does it means?* It is **my duty**, so *I will do it diligently with understanding because it’s my duty*. I got a duty as a mother, as a wife, as a daughter-in-law, it’s just like those duties that the Buddha spoke about in the **Sigalovada** sutta. This sutta laid out the **layperson’s code of conduct or discipline** and it explained very clearly **your role and your right duties** towards each and **every one that you have relationship with**, even between an employee and employer and all these duties that he came up with **comes from his understanding and great wisdom**. Without that great wisdom he cannot tell you all these. So your duty is in accordance to what? You act because of what? **Because you have a duty to do something as a mother, right?** That’s how you hold on to those duties. And the Buddha through his great wisdom **understands the nature’s law** that **governs life and existence**, especially the **law of karma** linking it to all these duties.

He said, “If you perform your **duties in accordance with this law**, then you will **reap the good result or fruition** of your good actions



in the future”. That’s why I always tell you all, **‘right duty is right dharma’**. When you do your duty **correctly in accordance** with the **law of karma** (the law that governs life and existence), then you have **right dharma** – which means you don’t do them **out of heedlessness, foolishness or delusion**. But a lot of people when they do something they will say, ‘I already did so much good’ - but they never question that good, good according to whom? It’s always good according to them, so when it is good according to you, it may not be the **nature’s law side of good** because your definition of good and bad is always **based on your views and your opinions** and before you are enlightened, your **views and opinion** are always **wrong view** because they are mainly **selfish** views with **delusion**. **Then how can it be right?** It must be right according to the nature’s law. The Buddha knew this law of karma hence he can advice you accordingly.

Now coming back to this lady, if you do **your duties** as a mother or **as a wife or as a daughter-in-law** or **as a sister**, you know what will happen? If you do your **duties well** for your children, for your family, and then you **sacrifice for them because they are your loved ones**, then there is a lot of joy *while performing those duties*. You can do that because you believe they are your loved ones and you really care for them and also because you **have love**. When you have **true love**, there is **no anger, no jealousy** and no all those **calculative attitudes**. Just like when you love your child, you can go all out **to sacrifice** for your child, right? That’s why we Chinese have this culture; they can work so hard, to have all of their **life savings** - to just spend them on their child’s or children’s education and to them, this is something they would do, **out of love for them**. But

the other way around is usually very difficult - when you expect the child or the children after they had grown up, to have the **gratitude** and the **understanding** to really go back and **thank their parents** for all the **great sacrifice** and **love** they have given them and to look after them and care for them, unless that child has the dharma, **otherwise very difficult** because most of them **are selfish**. They will tell you, 'You can call the other brothers or call the other sisters to help because they are nearer'. Or they will tell you, 'Last time you pamper them more, or the other brother uses more of your money, or I am really very busy and I don't have time, etc'. There are always all sorts of reasons or excuses to justify why they can't come over to look after you. They always say, 'one parent can raise 10 kids, but 10 children cannot even look after one parent'. This is quite true at times. So don't end up like them. It's because they **don't understand the dharma**, and they behave **selfishly**. But when you have the wisdom, borne of understanding the dharma, you won't do that because you know, **for every action you do** there is a **cause and effect**, and an **equal and opposite reaction**. That's why the Buddha said, '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'. Hence if you don't **take care** of your karma and if you *do things that harm people, cause suffering* to people, - all these will **come back to you, to haunt you later on in the future**. If you neglect your children and your parents, **in future** births when the conditions are there, you will *have children and parents* that will **neglect you** too. So what will happen, when you do your **duty as a mother, care** for your children, **and care for** your loved ones, **and sacrifice** for them (but of course you do to the **best of your ability** and **not** at the expense of your health)? According to the law of

karma you will **reap what you sow**, and **these blessings** will come back to you. Which means in future ***you will have good mother who will love, care and sacrifice for you.***

Our generation was the best; my mother gave birth to 9 children so my mother didn't really have time for us. My mother always tells me, '**from nature the child is born, so nature will care and see to their needs**' and my mother got **no time** to attend to us all because she is so busy. What she told me was based on her wise experience which she learned from life. She said, 'she only needs to make sure that **we are fed**, and then she will let us cry and do what we want to do because she really doesn't have the time, and there were 9 of us. She, where got time to take care of us all like nowadays mum, giving so much 'love' and care to their only kid. They also **pampered them** and at times, worried so much for them. But today's modern day mum finds it so difficult to even look after 1 or 2 kids. During my mother's time, I just wonder how she can deliver and take care of 9 or 10 of us. Must be a fantastic mother right? My mother, when you listen to her story, I think you dare not get married because nowadays mum, having to raise 1 or 2 kids is **already a great sacrifice or burden** for them.

All these understanding will help you and because of the law of karma, when you had taken care of them, when you had loved and do your duties and sacrifice for them, in future when you come, you will have mother to take care of you and sacrifice for you, and you will be like very blessed. If you *know this is karma, you will never be deluded* as to neglect them anymore. For you know if you neglect them, in the future when you come, you will be neglected, you will

have suffering, and you will end up in the orphanage because they will dump you there, they will neglect you just the way you neglect your parents and children earlier on. ***If you as parent, neglect your duties***, especially the ***man's side***, you drink, you gamble, you cause so much **suffering** and you are **so heedless**, in future when you come again, *you will have a father that will do that to you just as how you did to your kids*. So the mother that does all those things, and wants the easy way out will also suffer. Most of them do that because they **couldn't take it anymore**, and they just say, **that's it, enough is enough**, then they just walk out of the family and they just don't want to bother anymore. Then what happens is, in the future you will have parents that **will walk out on you**, so how do you feel? Life is like that. If you take care of karma, karma will take care of you and every life when you come, if you **do your duties well**, then *every life in future when you come, you will have parents and loved ones who will do their duties well towards you*. That's why when you take care of your children's education, take care of their well being, but **don't pamper them** then in the future you will have good parents who will care and provide for you too.

What are your duties as parents? You **guide** them, you **nurture** them when they are young, **protect** them, **care** for them, provide them with all the **basic essentials**, like food, shelter, education and other necessities of life. Then your **other roles or duties** are to give them **proper advice** so that they can grow up and become better human beings, with the **right understanding** so that they will know what is **appropriate** what is **not appropriate**, so that they can be a **blessing** to all, so that they will have **respect and gratitude** for elders, for people who really **love and care for them** and they will

have this **charitable** heart and **generosity** to help others via **relieving** their suffering. If you can train them in this way, then this is what you will receive **as fruition** of that karma. In future, you have parents **that will guide and train you** and **bring that understanding** to you.

*The more you give, the more you receive.* That's why **Warren Buffet** and **Bill Gates**, they are always so wealthy because even in this life despite their **great wealth**, they still **donate** so much. That's why in future when they come they will be very wealthy again because the law of karma is like that. The more you give the more you receive. When you give, it is like you give to your own karmic nature. Similarly when you cause suffering to others, it is like you cause suffering to your own karmic nature, and in future you will reap what you sow; that's why, **do not harm others**.

That's also the reason why all the Buddha's advice under the famous **Dhammapada verse 183** is the same, following this law of karma. i.e. All Buddhas give the same advice. They *said*,

***“Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ kusalassa upasampadā sacitta pariyo dapanam etaṃ buddhanasāsaṇaṃ”*** –

‘Sabba’ is all and ‘pāpassa’ is evil so He said, **“All evil you must avoid”** that's why don't cause suffering, don't have negativity otherwise you will suffer. Then **whatever wholesomeness** and **goodness** (kusala karma), when there are conditions to do, you must do. Then finally, he said you've to train your mind. Sacitta ....., citta is mind, - **purify your mind** so that you will have the **wisdom to confront** life,

so that you will not suffer, otherwise, your life will be miserable and these are the advice of all Buddhas (Eṭambuddhanasāsanam).

Now you understand how the Buddha's advice comes about - it comes from his **right view** with regards to the law of karma. When you avoid all evil and do good, it means you have the right view to take care of your karma, to do your duty in accordance with this nature's law of karma then you will reap the results and the reward in the future, your life will be taken care of. Then the good karma will condition your good life because according to the Buddha, 'each and every one of us is born of our karma, heir to our karma, conditioned and supported by our karma and we are what we are because of our karma.'

So, do not be **heedless**, do not be **deluded**, do not think that you are the only one sacrificing, and that you are doing all these for all these people who are so lazy. These are all **wrong thoughts** and do you know how all these wrong thoughts can come about? Because of her **evil roots** of **anger**, **selfishness** and **delusion** that conditioned her **unhappiness** to arise the **wrong thoughts** that will keep justifying for her - like 'they never respect me, they didn't even say a word of thanks to me, they ***didn't appreciate what I have done and sacrificed*** for them'.

For most mothers they are very simple and it is very easy to make them feel otherwise. Once the other family members **can feel** and **appreciate** what their mum had done for them they will start to **express their gratitude** towards her, and start to say some **nice, sincere** words to her; like, – '**thank you so much mum, you had**

**sacrificed so much for us, we really would like to thank you, and you are our greatest mum.'** If on *mother's day* you really express that, she will be most **happy** and the impact will be tremendous. Then she will be very happy to work for you without anymore complaint because you **appreciate** what she does. But if you don't do that, her thoughts will be negative and these negative thoughts can arise because of karma. Take for example, in the past, as a kid, you never had this **gratitude** towards your parent, so this life you come, you become parent; and your kid also got the same condition, **no gratitude** towards you because this is what happened in the past. Karma is like that, if you want people to be good to you, you must be good to people, if you want to have good life, if you want your children and loved ones to be **very nice** to you, then you must take care of karma, that's it.

There is one last point that I want to emphasis on before I stopped. I always said this to all the mothers. If it's **your duty or responsibility** (whatever word you may use), as long as you are the mother, there are certain things you have to do, whether you like to do or you don't like to do, you still need to do. If you do with **understanding, joy and happiness**, then what you do will become beautiful and karmic ally it will come back to you. When you **cook with joy, happiness and understanding**, with a lot of **sacrifice**, your *cooking also become better*. Otherwise with all the **anger, hatred and unhappiness**, do you think **you can cook well?** When your kids and husband come back and taste your food they will also complain, 'what happened today? Why the food so salty also you don't know?' Then because you already boiling deep inside then the thought (out of anger) will prompt you to say, 'with no word of **appreciation** and

you some more comment like that', you know what will happen? She will shout back, "The hell with you, you cook yourself!", then she will pack up and walk out, go back to her mother or parent's place. Then you will know, she had started to 'boycott' you all. ***What happen when she goes on strike, big problem right?*** I have seen a colleague, telling me that. When the wife went on strike for three days (not at home) only, everything like 'kelam kabut' (hay wire). He said to me, "Teoh, don't play a fool with our wives." Three days my wife went back to her hometown (balik kampung), 'aku mati.' He got three children, only then he **realized** that it is **not easy** to be a housewife. Last time he took things for **granted**. He said to her wife, "Every month I give you more than enough money, to take care of our three children – like that also you want to complain?" One day, the wife just packed up and left for her home town leaving him alone to attend to his 3 small kids. Then only he starts to understand **how difficult** it is to **manage the household** and **the kids** properly when the wife is not around. **So please help out** and say **a few words of appreciation** to help out the situation. Do give **her your support** and **expression of love, care and appreciation** to help her out. That is how through cultivating the dharma you can be **more sensitive** and you **can feel for others** and you **understand better**, that's how you can **sacrifice**, you can do all those proper things, the **right duties**, then your life will become more orderly. Then, in future when you come, you will have no more problems and no more suffering.

When you **understand** the law that *governs life and existence* this way, and you **know how to live** your life **in accordance** with that law, meaning you have wisdom, then, you know how to live and you



*don't have to worry about life anymore, you just live. Then life becomes **meaningful, beautiful**, because you're **no longer** like ordinary **deluded** people, - who always **complain, complain, worry, worry**, every now and then about life; Always getting themselves **entangled**, in anger and unhappy via getting **emotional** and **fearful most of the time**. **Is that life? Is that what you want?** You should ask yourself, I don't know? For me, **that is really, stupid** (pardon me for using this harsh word), **very stupid** indeed. This is **stupidity**, isn't it? Because **your own life**, yet you *do not know how to choose to be happy*, instead you choose to be **so negative** and **so miserable** because of what? **Because you don't understand this teaching**, you **don't know that there is a way to develop that understanding to free your mind**.*

With that we end. Sorry, I have taken extra five minutes of your time. Okay, if you got any questions, the next time you better write it down so that I can spend more time on those questions. I hope I have answered that sister's question, so please have **understanding to develop the joy of doing your duties in accordance with the nature's law well**. You are **not being 'forced'** to do all these things just because you think you are the mother or the wife, and they put you responsible for all these, No! There is **this nature's law** that governs all of **our action, speech and thought processes**. If we have the **noble eightfold path factors** of right view, right understanding, leading to the right thought, right speech and right action etc then no problem. That's how you can overcome all of these so called life 'problem', - *don't try to save on his money, hire a maid* if you *need to*, and forget about trying to save that type of money. Whatever he say, you tell him *'I want a maid otherwise I will go back'*, but **don't**

***be too demanding.*** Sometimes, financially if your husband is *not capable*, then go for **part-time maid**. But nowadays, it is quite normal for wife to be financially much better than their husband and if that is the case then just hire a maid.

Yah! You can ask Joyce about that experience. Despite being a very experienced mother, she still hopes that the maid will come back. Yes, then when she saw the maid, there was so much joy. It was like the husband saw the wife come back, wah! ***It's a big relief.*** Even my wife also said the same, the last time when our maid left; it was not easy for her to cope because of her age now. Then I just tell her, 'In that case we go and hire a maid, Filipino also never mind, just pay a bit more.' Then immediately after the maid came, you can see she is so different already. Now she can go for facial, and have *more time to herself*, that is ***what life is all about.*** Can you understand?

Resolve your problem **amicably** then move on, that's all. Don't **go and complain** and **become miserable** over all these, so called, "problem". Learn **to live** life, **not to complain** and **become miserable** over life. Most people **worry about life, complain about life** and **become miserable over life** for they **never really live**. To live life, is **very simple**, just **be with the moment** in **silent inner awareness** to **experience** all of the **beauty and wonders** of life from **moment to moment** ***instead of worrying about life.***

Okay, I don't want to take up so much of your time. Next time please write down your question or email, or WhatsApp Swee Aun then he can pass those questions to me. What I normally do is, if the question is not that long, you don't have to let me know first,

that day itself I will read out the question, the way I answer is very different. There and then the conditions will arise and I will know how to answer it accordingly. But this particular one is a bit different; this one is **more mundane**, with all the complaints and all the concern, so if you don't send it to me, I may not be able to answer you there and then because I may need to refer to the **Sigalovada sutta**, which I don't really teach. For me, these are **more mundane dharma**, not the **real dharma**, and my emphasis is not so much on that in this life. This life my nature's emphasis is more on the penetrative **wisdom dharma to develop the true understanding**.

If you have a **dharma question**, then no need to let me know first, there and then I can take it up; and the way I answer it will be very different. But if it is a **mundane one**, please, forward to me first so that at least I can look up a little bit, otherwise, I may forget how to pronounce the word. I always forget that word, because too long and seldom used, I know it's Si.... something, or sila something ... Ah Yes! **Sigalovada sutta**, thank you. Anyway, that's what the sutta is all about, if you want to know more, read it up then you will know how to **do your duties** accordingly.

Under that sutta the Buddha laid it out very clearly - **what your duties are**, what you must do, so that your life will be good. **Why you cannot mistreat your employee**; and why you cannot **mistreat** your spouse and your children. And **vice versa** the children also have **duties towards their parents**. And do you know that, according to the Buddha one of your duties as parent is to help arrange for your child's **suitable** marriage. Yeah, it's written in the sutta, you can go and read about it. I remember this is one of the

duties of the parent. Yeah, so that they are properly and suitably married but you don't worry and get panicky. Some children **don't want to get married**, so don't go and say, "The Buddha say I have a duty to do that for you", then you create **unnecessary conflict and misunderstanding**, because you don't understand the Buddha's meaning. The Buddha also respects the individual, and *he said your life you decide and he will never force you to do things that you don't like to do, because he understands, it is your life so you decide*. Also the Buddha understands that 'you are what you are because of your karma' and ultimately there is **no reality**, because Hei! No you and Hei! No me, so he will never interfere. But he can give you the advice as to what you have to do; so your duty is just **to advise** and **not to force** them to do what they **may not like** and they are all in the sutta, okay?

## 5. Closing Pūjā

Now we will do the **closing pūjā** via reciting the following:-

*Sharing of merits with the devas;*

*Transferring of merits to departed ones and those who can receive them;*

*Invoke blessing for the nation;*

*Invoke Aspiration via power of merits.*

**Sharing of merits with the devas:-**

Ākāsaṭṭhā ca bhummaṭṭhā

Devā nāgā mahiddhikā

Puññaṃ taṃ anumoditvā  
Ciraṃ rakkhantu loka sāsanaṃ

May all beings inhabiting space and earth,  
devas and nagas of mighty power  
Share these merits and  
May they long protect the dispensation  
Ettāvatā ca amhehi  
Sambhataṃ puñña sampadaṃ  
Sabbe devā ānumodantu  
Sabba sampatti siddhiyā

May all beings share these merits  
Which we have thus acquired and  
May all devas rejoice and may  
They contribute greatly to their well being and happiness.

**Transferring of merits to departed ones and those who can receive them:-**

Idaṃ me ñātinaṃ hotu Sukhitā hontu ñātayo (x3)

Let these merits accrue to our departed relatives and those who can receive them  
And may they too be well and happy always. (x3).

Okay we shall now invoke the  **blessings for our nation.**

Devo vassatu kālena  
Sassa sampatti hetu ca  
Phīto bhavatu loko ca

Rājā bhavatu dhammiko

May the rain fall in due season,  
May there be a good and rich harvest throughout,  
May the nation be peaceful and prosperous always,  
May the government of the day, the king and the rulers be  
righteous

**Okay you can now make your aspirations:**

Iminā puñña kammaena  
Māme bāla samāgamo  
Sataṃ samāgamo hotu  
Yāva Nibbāna pattiya

By the grace of these merits that we have thus acquired  
May we never follow the foolish and the heedless  
But only the wise and the enlightened one  
Until nibbāna is realized

Sādhu!, Sādhu!, Sādhu!

Okay let us pay respects mindfully to Lord Buddha then we end.

Oh! I forgot. There is a sister whose mother passed away, I think she is 70+ and her name is Madam Tan Lay Ho, **Angie Cheah's mother**. She passed away recently, on **Sunday September 22<sup>nd</sup>** 2013. She requested that we help invoke some **transference of merits** to her mother. We will do it now.

We ***had already rejoiced*** with all the **wholesomeness** that we all had done over our last 2 hours plus of meditation and dharma sharing activity. And all of these wholesomeness like **hearing** of the **dharma, straightening of our views, rejoicing**, followed by the *transferring and sharing* of our merits, the **paying of respect** to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the *radiating of loving kindness* or mettā, the renewal and keeping of our precepts and the meditation, they are very **wholesome**, very **meritorious** and we had together ***rejoiced*** with all those wholesomeness. We will then invoke the power of these merits, blessings and wholesomeness to help our sister's mother via reciting as follows:

“By the **power of all these wholesomeness** that we had all cultivated, may it **arise the causes and conditions** for Angie Cheah's mother, Madam Tan Lay Ho ***to have a better rebirth*** in whatever realm of existence that she may take and may the **blessings of the triple gems** be with her and may the Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha always bless her so that she may have a good life, a happy life in the hereafter. And may she too have the ***causes and conditions*** to come into contact with the Buddha Dharma, so that she can also have the **ability to train her mind**, to develop this *understanding to realize* the ***beautiful dharma*** that can help her in her future life.”

With this, we will ***rejoice one more time, Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!***  
Okay thank you and you all can now pay your respects **mindfully** to Lord Buddha then we end.

## 6. Appendix

### 6.1 Chart 1: Five Spiritual Faculties - Pañca Indriya

<b>Faith</b>	<b>Saddhā</b>
<b>Spiritual Zeal</b>	<b>Viriya</b>
<b>Mindfulness</b>	<b>Sati</b>
<b>Collectedness &amp; Unwavering Mind</b>	<b>Samādhi</b>
<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Paññā</b>

### 6.2. Chart 2: Five Mental Hindrances - Pañca Nīvaraṇa

<b>Sensual Desire</b>	<b>Kāmacchanda</b>
<b>Ill-Will</b>	<b>Byāpāda</b>
<b>Sloth And Torpor</b>	<b>Thina-Middha</b>
<b>Restlessness</b>	<b>Uddhacca-Kukkucca</b>
<b>Doubt</b>	<b>Vicikicchā</b>



### 6.3 Chart 3: Three Turnings of the 4 Noble Truths

The 3 Turnings and 12 Modes of the 4 Noble Truths as proclaimed by the Buddha.					The 3 Phases of Dhamma Cultivation
	First Noble Truth	Second Noble Truth	Third Noble Truth	Fourth Noble Truth	
<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Turning Wisdom:-</b></p> <p><b>SUTTAMAYA PANNA -</b> Wisdom borne of hearing the sutta or Dhamma as proclaimed by the Buddha</p>	<p>Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha: -</p> <p>"This, bhikkhus, is the 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth of Dukkha: Birth is dukkha, ageing is dukkha, sickness is dukkha, death is dukkha, to be with the disliked is dukkha, separation from the liked and your prized possessions is dukkha, not able to get what one desires is dukkha — in brief these 5 aggregates of rupa, vedana, sanna, sankhara and vinana, which are the objects of <i>clinging and grasping are dukkha.</i>"</p>	<p>Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha: -</p> <p>"This, bhikkhus, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Noble Truth of the Cause of Dukkha: It is this <b>craving</b> which causes rebirth bound up with pleasure and lust, ever seeking fresh delight, now here, now there; namely <b>craving</b> for sensual pleasure, craving to be or for existence and craving not to be or for non-existence."</p>	<p>Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha:</p> <p>"This, bhikkhus, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Noble Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha: It is the complete <b>cessation</b>, giving up, <b>abandonment</b> of that craving, <b>complete release</b> from that craving, and complete <b>detachment</b> from it leading to the realization of Nibbana which is the enlightenment in the here and the now."</p>	<p>Hearing/Listening/Reading of the 4<sup>th</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha:</p> <p>"This, bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the path leading to the Cessation of Dukkha, namely the Noble Eightfold Path of: <i>Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Samadhi.</i>"</p>	<p>Phase 1 – PARIYATI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involves the learning of the doctrine/ teachings via the 1<sup>st</sup> turning and 2<sup>nd</sup> turning wisdom.</li> </ul> <p>1<sup>st</sup> turning wisdom - Suttamaya panna can be developed via :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearing the dhamma as shared by someone who understands the teachings;</li> <li>Listening to appropriate dhamma recordings (MP3, CDs, videos, etc);</li> <li>Reading dhamma books, notes and online materials as shared by someone who understands the teaching.</li> </ul> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> turning wisdom - Cintamaya panna can be developed via :-</p>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Turning Wisdom:-</b></p> <p><b>CINTAMAYA PANNA -</b> Wisdom borne of reflection, inquiry and contemplation into the dhamma as proclaimed by the Buddha</p>	<p>Contemplate, reflect &amp; inquire into the 1<sup>st</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha.</p> <p><b>Why did the Buddha say:</b> "This Noble Truth of Dukkha is to be understood?"</p>	<p>Contemplate, reflect &amp; inquire into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha.</p> <p><b>Why did the Buddha say:</b> "The cause of the arising of Dukkha which is <b>craving</b> is to be abandoned?"</p>	<p>Contemplate, reflect &amp; inquire into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha.</p> <p><b>Why did the Buddha say:</b> "The Cessation of Dukkha is to be realised"?</p>	<p>Contemplate, reflect &amp; inquire into the 4<sup>th</sup> Noble Truth as proclaimed by the Buddha.</p> <p><b>Why did the Buddha say:</b> "This Noble Eight Fold Path that leads to the cessation of Dukkha is to be cultivated"?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contemplation, reflection and inquiry into the dhamma as taught by the Buddha to develop further understanding via stabilizing what one had heard and read then assimilating them into one's heart to set the base for developing further understanding later on via either the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> turnings.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Turning Wisdom:-</b></p> <p><b>BHAVANAMAYA PANNA -</b> Wisdom borne of the meditative training - via the direct 'seeing' or awakening</p>	<p>Direct seeing leading to Realisation.</p> <p>"This Noble Truth of Dukkha has already been understood."</p>	<p>Direct seeing leading to Realisation.</p> <p>"The cause of the arising of Dukkha which is <b>craving</b> has already been abandoned."</p>	<p>Direct seeing leading to Realisation.</p> <p>"The Cessation of Dukkha has already been realised."</p>	<p>Direct seeing leading to Realisation.</p> <p>"This Noble Eight Fold Path that leads to the cessation of Dukkha has already been cultivated."</p>	<p>Phase 2 - PATIPATI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involves the cultivation of the Doctrine in daily life via putting the teachings into practice to develop the 3<sup>rd</sup> turning wisdom – Bhavanamaya panna. (Bhavana is the meditative training needed to develop wisdom via the formal daily mindfulness and 4 foundations of mindfulness meditation. Having a good daily religious routine to develop the 5 spiritual faculties will help.)</li> <li>Need to cultivate until one is awoken to move on to the third phase of dhamma.</li> </ul>
<p>Phase 3 - PATIVEDHA</p> <p>This phase is Reaping the Fruits of one's Cultivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LEADING A NOBLE LIFE</li> <li>LIVE THE LIFE OF THE AWAKEN ONES</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: - This the most beautiful phase of one's life where one can truly live life to the fullest to experience all of the noble life as described below :-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>life becomes much more meaningful and good because no more suffering;</li> <li>able to understand life clearly hence a lot of joy/ happiness/ peace/ love &amp; compassion;</li> <li>via heedful living one is able to experience all of the wonders and beauties of Life while in this world;</li> <li>able to always acts righteously with wisdom, Love and compassion;</li> <li>always heedful to live the noble life of peace, joy and happiness hence no more heedlessness;</li> <li>able to Live life in accordance with one's noble understanding hence no need to worry about life anymore;</li> <li>always very mindful of one's action , speech and thought via living the noble life of heedfulness;</li> <li>understands precisely that this form and mind is not oneself but only a karmically conditioned 'vehicle' and 'tool' for one to use to live out this segmented life while in this world.</li> </ul>					



