

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTING
TRUE KALYĀṆAMITTASHIP
AMONG BUDDHIST DEVOTEES, DHAMMA
PRACTITIONERS AND CULTIVATORS



This publication is based on a direct transcript from a recorded talk as given by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon at SJBA on 26 June 2011.

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

Donated by:

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(Biodata of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon)

Bro. Teoh graduated from University of Malaya in Civil Engineering in 1979. He 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.

Preface

It is Brother Teoh's **sincere** hope that Dharma friends, spiritual practitioners, seekers of truth, and cultivators will be able **to make use** of this enclosed **transcript notes** to develop a **better understanding** of the **Dharma 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 the world.

As these notes were mostly **compiled** based on a **direct transcript** from the recording 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 adjust** themselves accordingly to understand its **true meaning** and **intent better** and a **good way to do** this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading this transcript notes. For those who want to listen to the recording they can download the talk www.broteoh.com website or at this link:

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Or contact Brother Ng Swee Aun at sang47500@yahoo.com for further details.

Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intention** that this transcript notes be **given free** to all those who are **interested** and have the **affinity** to receive them. I would like to take this opportunity **to thank** and **rejoice** in the **generosity and wholesomeness** of all those **Dharma friends** or **Kalyāṇamittas** who 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 a Kalyāṇamitta who had personally taken the initiative to forward me her draft transcript for my subsequent editing thereby enabling this dharma transcript to be printed.

By the **power of all these wholesomeness** may all beings be **well and happy, free** from all mental and physical sufferings and dangers and may there be **love, peace and joy** - deep **within** their hearts. And may it also **paved the way** for there to be **causes and conditions** for all dharma friends who had **donated or helped out** in one way or other to realize their **good and noble wishes/aspirations** soonest possible.

With Metta always,

By Brother Teoh Kian Koon

(Dated: 28.8.2011)

The Importance of Promoting True Kalyāṇamittaship among Buddhist Devotees, Dhamma Practitioners and Cultivators (A DHARMA TALK AT SJBA BY BRO. TEOH KIAN KOON)

Introduction by Bro. Chim, the President of SJBA.

This afternoon's Dharma Talk is on **"The Importance of promoting true Kalyāṇamittaship among Buddhist devotees, Dharma practitioners and cultivators of the Dharma"**. The Talk will be given by Bro Teoh Kian Koon. Bro Kian Koon graduated from University of Malaya in Civil Engineering in 1979. He had been a **spiritual practitioner cum 'meditator'** since 1971. And since 2001, he has been **sharing his understanding and experiences with serious and keen spiritual practitioners** and others who are keen in **their search for true happiness, peace and liberation** from birth, aging, sickness and death and **all mental suffering**.

This talk today is in line with **SJBA's vision** to build a **friendly and caring Dharma centre** filled with **loving kindness, compassion and wisdom**, where there are **lots of smiling faces, warm greetings, listening friends, loving care and friendship**. This is what we hope we can achieve for all the devotees at SJBA. So with respect we now invite Bro Kian Koon to give the talk.

Importance of Promoting True Kalyāṇamittaship
Among Buddhist Devotees, Dhamma Practitioners and Cultivators

Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

Talk by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon

Thank you so much Bro. Chim for the kind introduction and a very Good afternoon to all brothers and sisters in the Dharma. Today's topic, as you all have heard is a **very important topic**. The title is **"The importance of promoting True kalyāṇamittaship among Buddhist devotees, Dhamma practitioners and cultivators of the Dhamma."** So the title itself is very straight forward but it is a **very important** stage of your **whole implementation plan**. Like Bro Chim said, it is your society's vision. The SJBA Exco together with your President had come up with this very **beautiful vision** which is **very noble** and **very important**. It happened to coincide very closely with your SJBA mission statement. I saw it at the wall over there and even in your small booklet. Basically, the vision, if you understand, is very noble and very beautiful and if you can really make it into a **living reality** and **realise that vision**, it can **help transform** the Buddhists, not only those within your centre, it will have a great **impact** on the entire Buddhist community. Then when the entire Buddhist community understands the beauty and meaning of this vision, the **message** of the **Buddha** will **spread far and wide** naturally, on its own. Just like before we start the puja, Bro Chim recited one phrase, which was very meaningful and very apt. It said, "like the fragrance of the incense, you can smell it, it spreads far and wide on its own"; you don't need to believe that incense has fragrance because you can sense it and smell it.

The Buddha also said, our **virtue**, our **wisdom** and our **understanding**, borne of our ability to cultivate his Dharma via

following **His advice, to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind** can help arise **Love, Compassion and Wisdom**. The message of the Buddha is **very simple**; it talked about the arising of **Love, Compassion and Wisdom** leading to all the **peace, harmony, joy and happiness in life**. So, this is what will arise when the Buddhist community **understands** the **beauty** of this vision. The vision talks about **“Towards a friendly, loving and caring Buddhist community and Buddhist Dharma centre”** - starting, of course with SJBA. If we were to look at the **important words** within this vision statement - **“Friendliness”** how can you have friendliness, you ask yourself? To be friendly, you must **have kindness, pleasantness and goodness** and to have **kindness, pleasantness and goodness**, you must have the **understanding** of the truth, the teaching; otherwise, you cannot have that. So kindness, pleasantness and goodness are part of the **cultivation** of the Dharma. That’s why, if we **understand** the **beautiful message** and **advice** of the Buddha (**Dhp. Verse 183**), which you all have at your SJBA centre. Don’t know why you all write it at the back of your main gate wall - Dhammapada **Verse 183**. Both the Mandarin and English versions are there. This Dhammapada Verse 183 is actually the **essence** of the **Buddha’s advice** and **his teaching**. In Pāli, if you have heard them before, it should be something very familiar.

The Buddha said: *“Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ kusalassa upasampadā sacitta pariyođapanaṃ etaṃ buddhaṃ sāsanaṃ.”*

The English translation is very simple. **Sabbe**, means all, so the Buddha said, **“All evil you have to avoid.”** That’s why Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ. Then **kusalassa** - kusala is **wholesomeness, goodness,**

whatever goodness and wholesomeness you should **cultivate them**. The last advice is **sacitta pariyoḍapanam** - citta is mind. You have to **purify your mind**. And this is the **advice of all the Buddhas**. If you follow His advice, what will happen to you? You will be free of all evil and negativity, which means you will have **goodness and kindness**, and that's how you can have the **ability to be friendly**. This is how the **first virtue** within the vision statement, which is **friendliness** you can realize it. Then followed by **Love**; to have **love**, you must have the **understanding of His teaching** because **True love comes from the realization of the truth, which is His teaching, the Four Noble Truths**. Without this **realization** of the **Four Noble Truths** which is the **wisdom** that the Buddha has taught us, there can be **no true love**. **True love** is what they call **Love without discrimination**. There is this genuine love for all beings, and not only all beings, you love the entire environment, all of societies that you encounter. Everything that you come into contact with, the plants, the animals, the living things and all the living beings that you encounter - all that have life, you will have the love. Then when it comes to the last part, **caring - how can you be caring?** To have the ability to be caring, we need to have **compassion**. Without compassion, you cannot be caring. So basically to develop this vision, to make it a **living reality**, you have to actually bring about an **understanding** of what the Buddha advice is all about to **each and every individual, each and every member**, starting from the **Exco Committee** who will **lead by example**. You have to cultivate according to the advice of the Buddha, leading to the **understanding** of HIS teaching. Then naturally, these virtues of **Friendliness, Love, Compassion** and **Wisdom** leading to the **caring nature**, the

friendly attitude, the **warm nature** will arise in you. With this, all the Buddhists community within SJBA which is the summation of all the members can **actually transform** into something very **different, very beautiful**. Once this **noble vision** has already been **introduced**, each and every member, including all the Exco members - they will **understand the beauty** of this vision. By participating in this vision's project, it can result in a **win win situation** for the entire project's member because apart from helping the society to achieve their vision, they themselves too **will benefit** when they followed the advice of the Buddha **to transform** themselves **spiritually**. If you all are willing to help the society realise this **great and noble vision**, then you all will have to help the Exco develop the needed **blueprint to implement** this noble vision.

As we all know, the vision can bring about **great transformation**. Once we have the ability to follow the advice of the Buddha, we will have these **virtues developed** via following the advice of the Buddha to avoid all evil, do good, purify the mind, which is the cultivation. This vision will brings us back **to focus** on what the Buddha wants us to do. That's why, before He passed away, the Buddha gave this **very important advice** to the monk. He said, "**Strive on with heedfulness. Do not be heedless**" - "**Appamādena, Sampādeṭha**". So when you can have this advice, deeply taken in, you will know how to focus clearly on the **cultivation**. So this was the reason why I started these series of talks.

I started off by **introducing** and **explaining** to you all how **important** and **how noble** this vision is, which I have already elaborated on. Then after that, I even talked about how to develop **the blueprint**

for you all to **implement** this **noble vision** that you all had come up with. The blueprint can come about through a **series of brainstorming** and **serious discussions** and it has to be driven by a **key** Exco member who must be **very sincere, serious** and have the **perseverance to see it through**. He also needs a lot of **patience** and **understanding**, then together with whoever who can help - like the advisors and others; we develop a **blueprint needed for you all to implement** this noble vision of yours.

So, stage one is to **introduce this beautiful vision**, stage two is to come up with the **blueprint** which I already spoken earlier on. Then from there, you can develop the **third stage** which is the talk today that I'm trying to zero in. After you have introduced the blueprint, you will have to plan the **implementation**. How can you implement this **beautiful vision** so that it can become a **living reality**? So that each and every member of SJBA can be a truly **transformed Buddhist** - a Buddhist that **has the Dharma understanding** and this is what today's topic is all about, **kalyāṇamittaship**. You know what is the meaning of this word - Kalyāṇamitta? You heard of it before? Most of you have **not heard** of this word before? You see, they call it **Dharma friends, spiritual friends** but the Buddha takes the meaning one step further. He said **noble friendship**. You know what are noble friendships? Noble ones are **enlightened ones**. So when you can have a noble friend, you are very fortunate. Having a Noble friend is one of the seven criteria needed to become enlightened - a Sotāpanna. You must have **true dharma friends** and **noble friend** - friends who walk the path of Dharma and friend who has the Dharma. This is the starting message from the Buddha. Then He told Ananda in one of the sutta, I think it's in the Samyutta

Nikaya sutta. In the Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha said, “**Ananda, noble friendship is the whole of the holy life**” and the message is very clear. To become enlightened, to cultivate this holy life, you must have noble friends and the Buddha continued by telling Ananda, it is because the Tathāgata which is the Buddha, He is the **par excellence** Kalyāṇamitta, as a noble friend. Nobody can be better than him, so because of that, He told Ananda, it is due to His ability to be a true Dharma friend or True kalyāṇamitta to all of living beings.... to them. He used the word ‘to them’, to all living beings that are subject to birth, that allow them to cease from birth. Because of that affinity, as a true noble friend, with a lot of these beings that have affinity with Him, he was able to help them become enlightened. He was able to help them to be free from birth and death. i.e. don’t have to come back to all these 31 planes of existence, to go through all the sufferings that are common to all of life’s situations and existence every time they are reborn. So this is the emphasis on today’s talk. Developing and promoting true kalyāṇamittaship among all Buddhist devotees which are most of us, all the members and **Dharma practitioners**, including the Sangha, the monks and the laities - those who are practicing the Dharma. They already understood the importance and beauty of the Dharma, that’s why they want to cultivate and practice them.

Then the third category encompasses the **balance** of the Buddhist - **Cultivators of the Dharma**; there is a difference. Cultivators mean you are on the different stages of cultivation. Some of them can be new, some can be already quite experienced, some of them may have already perfected and realized. They are all Dharma **practitioners** and **cultivators** of the Dharma. The importance of

today's topic is the Buddha's way of introducing this **kalyāṇamittaship** concept which is very **unique**. His mission is to share these **noble truths**, which is the **essence** of his teaching with **all living beings** that can **understand** and **receive** His truth. The main purpose is to do away with all the **divisions** that have happened within the Buddhist communities. When the focus is not there, then we debate. So the purpose and intent of today's topic is - when we can bring everybody back to a common platform, so that all Buddhists, not only just those in Subang Jaya, SJBA members, including all of the other groupings and various Buddhist groups which at the moment (if I am not wrong) they all have their own respective vision, mission and activities and all these are very important and very good - nothing wrong. The only thing I see **lacking** is the **integration part**. We have to **integrate them all** into one **great family** which the Buddha called Kalyāṇamittaship or **Dharma families**. Then we can do away with all the **religious and societies** symbols. Then we won't call ourselves as from SJBA, you are from Brickfields, Mahā Vihāra, you are from Nalanda or Sentul or whatever. All these, if you are not careful, it can lead to a lot of **unnecessary division** and **misunderstanding**. So what we want to avoid is all the **unhealthy gossiping**, all the **unhealthy internal squabbling, infighting** and **power struggles** that is happening in some of these societies. Some of these, I think we have personally come to know them from what we received - like in some of the AGM's Annual Reports. The things that were minuted clearly indicate that many of these things are happening. So why is it that way? Why can't we remain focus, back to the Buddha's teaching, like what the Buddha used to teach us. The message is **very clear**,

We have to **heed His advice**, to cultivate the Dharma that He has taught us so that we can be enlightened beings, noble one, true human beings - to be a blessing, not only to ourselves but also to all those that have relationship with us, to all of humanity, society and the world as a whole, so that there is **love, harmony, compassion and wisdom** which is the message of our Lord Buddha.

In order to bring about all these, we need to **integrate** them into one entity. That's why this concept of **kalyāṇamittaship** is **very important**. That's the reason why, the Buddha said, **kalyāṇamittaship or noble friendship is all of the holy life** - you need to have this. Then like He said to Ananda, "Ananda, it is because the Tathāgata is one of these noble friends of them, that's why all of the living beings who are subject to birth, they can be freed from birth and death." So this message connects and link. On kalyāṇamittaship, I will now go into the detailed part. When we understand the meaning of kalyāṇamittaship, then we will know how **to expand on it** and **help integrate** and **assimilate** this **idea** into all of the Buddhist societies, so that everyone can come back to the **focus** of **cultivating** the Buddha Dharma by following the **advice of the Buddha** to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind so that the **essence** of the Buddha's teaching, the **Four Noble Truths** can be understood and realized, so that the individual can transform. It is only when the **individual transforms**, only then can the **society** and the **centre transform**. And when all the Buddhist societies and centers transform, the Buddhist community will be transformed. When that day arrives, which I hope will happen, then this is what we are **looking forward to**. We will have a Buddhist community that **has the Dharma** that has the **understanding, wisdom and virtue**

within so that just like the fragrance of the incense, it will spread far and wide. Everyone will understand. We don't have to be like other religions that have to promote and do the **salesmanship** to convince people to convert to their respective faith.

This will bring me to another topic that I want to talk about (which is very relevant) so that we can have this understanding and develop it further so that we can be free from those entire unnecessary **religious disharmony** that is happening throughout the world. Not too long ago, I have a classmate who wrote me an email. I have not seen him for many years; he now lives in Perth, Australia. He was a very good Christian – which I didn't know earlier on because before he left Malaysia, he was not a Christian. That was over 30 years ago. Then somehow we caught up and he wrote me an email. More than 30 years ago, he came to my house for a gathering and met a girl whom he ends up marrying. The **bad news** was the wife had just passed away, 10 months ago because of **cancer, fighting cancer**. Then he said, he was lucky because as a Christian, he had this support group that helped him out. But before he told me he was a Christian, he just told me that his wife had passed away. So I wrote back **conveying my condolence** and told him it must be pretty hard for him to go through all these with two kids. Then I told him I have been teaching meditation, sharing the Truth and **have helped many people** who are in similar situations. If there is a need, please you are most welcome to write to me so that we can share this understanding which I hope can be of use to you. Then surprisingly, he was very nice, he didn't get angry at all, he just wrote to me in a very nice way and told me, "Kian Koon, I am a Christian and I have this very beautiful support group that actually allow him and his

wife to pull through the three years of hard battle with this cancer ordeal.” Then I replied and said, **“Good & it is beautiful”**. I said “I rejoice”. Yes, this Christian group must be truly sincere and they are really wonderful and the world will be blessed to have such **sincere** people, who **really cared**, and **helped** them to pull through this really difficult period of their life to gain back their good life. Then I made it very clear to him, for me it’s very simple, **spirituality** - whether you are **spiritual or religious, doesn’t depend** on the **religious label** you carry. Whether you are a Christian, or Buddhist, a Hindu or a Muslim, it is **not** important. To me there are a lot of **black sheep** within every profession and religion. You don’t know what is happening to the world. Most of these black sheep, they are more keen to **promote** and **glorify** their own religion, creating religious **disharmony** by **arguing, by challenging** and doing all those rather fanatical things. But I said, **“To me to be religious, or to be spiritual is within your heart.** If your heart **has goodness, kindness, love, compassion and wisdom**, then you **are religious**, no matter what religion you hold because the **teaching of their respective Teacher** is more or less the same.” All those religion that have the Truth, they teach the same, avoid all evils, do good but some teacher teaches the Truth, purify the mind that is the only difference. So if you have **cultivated** what your great teacher of your religion has taught you, then you will have **this goodness** in you, this kindness in you, **this virtue** in you and **this understanding** in you that will make you **religious and spiritual**. He was very happy after that. So as a Buddhist and a Christian, we can **still coexist**. We can still be **spiritual in our own way**. Which means we have to understand, the **religious label never defines** whether you are

spiritual or not. It is the **individual**. If you understand this, you understand the **message** of the Buddha. The message of the Buddha is very simple. **Don't claim just to be his disciple and never follow His advice. Do you understand?** If you are a true Buddhist who calls yourself a true disciple of the Buddha, then you **better follow** His advice **to cultivate the Dharma**. Develop the understanding of the beautiful Dharma that He has taught us especially the **Four Noble Truths**. When you realize that and when you have that, then you become a **true Dharma friend**. You know what are Dharma friends? Just now I explained. Friends that have the Dharma and If you have the Dharma, you already have the wisdom, the understanding, the love, the compassion, that's why you can be **friendly**. You can be **caring**. You can have **love** and **compassion in whatever you do in life**. So that is what the Buddha wants us to do. As Dharma friends, we are here **to help, counsel, motivate, encourage** and **share whatever understanding we have**, so that we can **together walk the path of Dharma**, so that we can be **co-cultivator, co-traveler** along the path of Dharma, so that we can have this kalyāṇamitta relationship which means all the Buddhist communities can **integrate** through this understanding. No matter which Buddhist society you come from. **We are all Dharma friend, kalyāṇamitta**. Then there are **no more barriers**. Then it doesn't mean if you come from **a very prestigious** Buddhist organization you are more spiritual, or you are more special - no more. Then all the infighting etc, they are **the deviation** from what the Buddha taught. When the message and advice of the Buddha had been followed, then all the unhealthy gossiping, unhealthy power struggle, unhealthy in fighting and squabbling within all

various Buddhist groups and societies, they can never happen anymore. A **person who has the Dharma** will not create the **wrong** actions, speech and thought that lead to **disharmony**, and all the **negativity** that can condition **argument, conflict, and division** leading to all the **misunderstanding**. All these can lead to **downfall** within the Buddhist community. After all these few years of **sharing** of the Dharma with many Buddhist organizations and institutions I had gathered from Dharma friends that there has been a lot of this **negative feedback** which are not so healthy. We have to actually ask ourselves this question. Are we now **focus** on what the Buddha's message is, to be a true disciple of the Buddha, who has the Dharma, so that we are all kalyāṇamittas, Dharma friends, friends of the Dharma, which means we are co-cultivators, co-travellers, then whoever who has already realized, they can become our noble friend. That is the higher meaning of kalyāṇamitta. The Buddha said, **you must have noble friends**, friends that already realized the Dharma so that you can progress and become transformed. So that end of the day, these **noble friends** are the ones who have the true Dharma and they are the ones who **can counsel you, can engage you in the cultivation of the Dharma**. That is why it is **very important** to initially set up all these Dharma groupings of kalyāṇamitta. You can start with small individual groups, and then when these groupings **mature, it will merge**. Like what I started 7 years ago, initially they asked me to start a society, I said please don't create another one. We are Dharma friends here to share. Dharma friends that have the understanding, the sharing is **very beautiful** because I told them we should instead just follow the advice of the Buddha, **no argument, no conflict, no division,**

nothing. As long as there is no division, the Dharma friends, kalyāṇamittaship will grow and they will be a very strong force by itself to be reckoned with because there will be a lot of harmony, a lot of peace and a lot of understanding borne of what? - borne of the Dharma; when you have the Dharma, you will know how to avoid all evils, all negativity, that is why there will be no division no disharmony, no power struggle, no gossiping and no infighting. We just rejoice and continue to develop and cultivate the understanding of the Buddha's teaching which is so wonderful, so beautiful and so meaningful because it can make a big difference to our lives. And when we participate in such noble projects and visions, we have this condition to cultivate the Buddha dharma, following the advice of the Buddha, to avoid all evils, do good and purify the mind, then not only we contribute, we ourselves also benefit from this process.

Then, one day when you really transformed, you will have a lot of joy and gratitude and you will thank yourself for making that beautiful decision to be a part of this noble vision. When the individual transforms from here, it will spread, then their loved ones will start to benefit. They will sense and feel you like the fragrance of the incense, they know you are different. You are now so full of friendliness, kindness, understanding, warmth, love and compassion. And you are so wise, you no longer want things your way, you no longer force things on your children, you are starting to become more and more sensitive towards your loved ones, even to your husband, your spouse. Then from there, you will have the confidence, and then you will see the harmony, within your family unit. From here, it will spread to the temple, then you can be a

blessing to those **newcomers** or what they call Buddhist devotees who are **still new**, who still haven't have the **understanding of what the Dharma is** and how important it is for them to go into the **cultivation to realize the Dharma**. Because for you to really contribute, I have to **emphasize again**, for you to really contribute towards whatever you want to do for your society, you must cultivate the Dharma first, **without** the Dhamma, there is a **limit** to what you can do. Of course, you hear the Chinese saying, "got strength, give strength, got money, give money" which is also good but only applicable at the **mundane level only**. That is the **mundane way of expression** of help which is not bad but what I am talking about is the **spiritual understanding** of how you can contribute in a **very different way**, totally different. When you have that spiritual understanding, borne of the cultivation of the Dharma, borne of the **realization of the truth** and the **enlightenment**, your **nature**, your **character**, your **personality will all change**. You become a **transformed living being**. There are a lot Dharma friends who initially came to me, they have a **lot of life's problems**, situations, a lot of **anger, fear, worry, anxiety** and **unhappiness** because they **cannot understand life**. Whenever **they confront the reality of life and existence**, especially disease, sickness and death, separation from loved ones, relationship problem, career problem, health problem, financial problems etc, they **cannot cope**. They used to have a **lot of fear, worry, anxiety** and **panic**, then they used to be **very stressed out**, even **relationship problem**, between spouse, between children and parents, between brothers and sisters, friends and colleagues, sometimes good friends. They **couldn't cope** but after they **have understood** the Dharma, **not only** they can cope,

they **find true meaning to life** and when they **realize their foolishness**, they **start to change** and **follow the advice** of the Buddha by **avoiding all evil**.

How can you avoid all evil?

The Buddha said you **keep the precept** because those who **violate the precept** commit evil, very simple and very straight forward; then **do good** and **purify the mind** - meaning **cultivate the noble eightfold path**. Starting with the 1st Five path factors of Right view leading to Right thought, Right speech, Right action and Right livelihood. Then you have the Right effort to help you **abandon** all those **unwholesome thoughts**, the **wrong thought**, the **negative thought** and also the right effort **to prevent the arising** of all these negative thoughts, and then you become a **beautiful living being**. You are **incapable of negativities**, means you avoid all evil through **no wrong thought**, **no wrong speech**, **no wrong action** and **no wrong livelihood**. Everything is in accordance with the dharma or the advice of the Buddha that is the reason why you will have **virtue**, you will have **goodness** and **kindness**, that is how you **can be friendly**, can be **loving and caring**. This is what the **vision is all about**. From there you **can contribute** to become a true member of SJBA, a true disciple of the Buddha who **understands the basic Dharma** to become like an **'ambassador'**, to represent your society; When you have the **friendliness, the love and the caring attitude** because of your understanding of the Dharma, and your wisdom and your right view, you can then **really contribute** and make a **big difference** to people's life. And there is a lot of joy when **you see them changed** their lives and **turn around** via this **dharma**

understanding. Whenever you help one individual, when he or she **transforms and understands the consciousness changed** from negative, from **fear, worry, anxiety** and **unhappiness** into one of **joy, happiness, calmness** and **peace.** Because by then they will **know how to meditate,** then there is a lot of **goodness** that transform into **harmony, joy, peace** and **happiness.** Then life takes a turn, everything becomes **meaningful, no more negativity, no more** of all those gossiping, anger, hatred, infighting, power struggle, **egoistic minds to be right,** argument, conflict, misunderstanding and all these can just disappear when the Dharma is within you.

Then you will have a lot of **kindness, gratitude, respect** towards the Buddha for having given you this beautiful **teaching free,** that is how you will have a lot of **gratitude and respect** for Him. Then you will start to understand how **special the Buddha is,** how **unique He is** and why we chant “Namo Tassa Bhagavatā Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa” i.e. “Homage to Thee, the Blessed One, the Worthy One and the Fully Enlightened One”. The meaning you will know, **why you are advised** by the Buddha to chant the **9 Great Virtues** of the Buddha. Iti pi so Bhagavā, Arahamaṃ, Sammā Saṃbuddho, Vijjā Caraṇa Sampanno; etc. This to remind you that he is the Sammā Sambuddha, the Fully Enlightened One because he has got these 9 great virtues which are **so special.** That is why it is very beautiful when you **truly understand** His teaching.

Then I have to move on to explain to you all how to **establish this kalyāṇamitta** grouping. But before that, I would like to dwell on **some compassion in action projects** that the world had already benefited from the **3 great masters.** Have you all heard of

them? These 3 great masters have made a **big difference to the world** and they are **Buddhist based** organizations and they have **global and worldwide network**. For those who had received my email, I sent out earlier on, a few weeks back, will know about it. I wrote that email in reply to a classmate of mine who was **so impressed** by one of them - Master **Sheng Yen**.

Master Sheng Yen is from Dharma Drum Mountains (Fa Ku Shan), he was a very good **meditator** and he is very good in meditation. Over 20+ years ago, I read his book, the **“Buddha’s mind or Fo Xin”** – it is a very **beautiful book** that talk about **emptiness** and he was so **wise**. He passed away in 2009 and that gave me the **condition** to write to our Dharma friends and let them **understand** how the world has **benefited** from these 3 great masters. That’s the reason why you can send your members there for training, they are very good. The 3 of them, if you combine their teachings, it becomes complete. As I have explained, Master Sheng Yen is an **expert** in meditation; he had a lot of branch monasteries set up all over the world. The main one, if I am not wrong is in Taiwan. So if you can benefit from his meditative training and explanation of the Dharma - it will be very beautiful.

But the **most influential** at the moment are the other 2 great masters - **Tzu Chi’s** Master **Cheng Yen** and **Fo Kuang Shan’s** master **Hsing Yun**. You look at Tzu Chi, they are so beautiful. I receive email from Bro. Swee Aun regarding their **monthly recycling** which is helping the world to remain healthy, to remain livable, because recycling is very important, not only for the **environment** but also for our **future existence**. If you don’t do that, you are going **to**

pollute the world **and choke** this planet of ours until one day, you realize it's **too late** to reverse all these. Through her **great bodhisattva vow**, she has this very heavy vow to help living beings. So her **great contribution** or expert field is **compassion in action**, truly, truly going forward, march and move forward **to help the world**. You will come to realize, whenever there is a **major disaster** or **natural calamity** happening to the world, even in Malaysia or anywhere, their members are the **forefront** people who will arrive first to help. And they will be the one, **so organized** and able to help out in so many ways. They have this very good training and they have **a lot of gratitude**, they even said in Mandarin “Gan En” - they will tell the victim Thank You and “**Gan En**” which is **gratitude**. The victim also confused as they said, we should be the one having gratitude for you because you helped us. You came and actually **relieve our suffering**, help us by providing us with so much of your food and all those necessities for us **to tie over those difficult periods**. You know how they reply? It's because of you, you give us the **condition to be here** to do this meritorious and compassionate action that the Buddha actually has recommended to us all to do. Without you having this condition, we won't be here. See, it is so beautiful and their organization grew so far and wide, globally and it's now so famous and so well known.

It's a **blessing** and they **cut across religious lines**, anybody can be a Tzu Chi member. I have seen Christian going there, Muslim going there. They believe in the **embodiment** of **goodness, kindness, love** and the **compassion** that the master taught. Because **they put it into action** and **show it to you**, no **question asks regardless** of your **race** or **religious** background. They just go and do what they have

to do. And the other **meticulous things** that they had are worth mentioning. I came to know about it from my brothers and some of my Dharma friends who are also Tzu Chi members and volunteers. I managed to get to know a Tzu Chi member (a ‘Shi Jie’) who came to collect the **monthly contribution** that my **family members** and my **children contribute** to Tzu Chi. She told me their organization is so well set up, so well planned; you will never believe how they do it. I was told, even if you are a doctor and you want to help, contribute and go and help - you know what they said? They have a rule, they said to fund the Tzu Chi organization and their members and sangha’s expenses, they will not use your donation and contribution; they will find their own money. If you contribute towards that particular disaster or crisis, they **make sure** the money is only used for that. Even as a doctor, you want to be flown there to help, you have to go and find your **own finance** to buy your own air ticket and fly there. They are not going to pay for you.

This is what people do and I have a Dharma friend who has the condition. She worked with University Hospital. She called me one day, she said, “Bro Teoh, do you want to help me?” I said yes! No problem. She said I worked in UH (Universiti Hospital) and I know this doctor, he is **very kind** and **compassionate**. He has volunteered to go and help, forgot if it’s China or Myanmar, the 2008 Sichuan earthquake or Myanmar’s flood. He said he volunteered but he did not know that he has to buy his own air ticket. So I said to her, no problem, we will finance the air ticket and she said, good, you pay half, I pay half. I said Sadhu! and I just send the money – I think it cost about a thousand over Ringgit. That’s what we did and he went, so beautiful.

The other great master is **Master Hsing Yun of Fo Guang Shan**. He has very beautiful monasteries all over the world. I visited a few of them, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Auckland, Christchurch and Australia. The way they designed their monasteries they are **so meticulous** and **so meaningful**. Everything is **along the line of Dharma**, that's why when we were in New Zealand, we were so lucky. One of the **lady cultivator** cum dharma practitioner from Singapore who was there many months; she was **so kind** and she **volunteered** to be our guide. I went there with a group of Dharma friends, including Swee Aun and his wife, Mee Fong. It was a **very good** and memorable trip. It was **Dharma cum tour**. The tour of the monastery was so beautiful because she explained to us **all the design**. According to her, all the abbots assigned, knew that the Master is **very meticulous** so whichever monastery that he built with the funds that he received, he makes sure it is channelled and directed towards the purpose. And he comes with a different mission base on his vow. He contributed in a different way. He is the one that built monasteries to be **places of great Buddhist learning and cultivation**. They have very beautiful Buddha Dharma **syllabus**. They got great teachers who can teach you very **profound Zen or Mahayana** and even **Pure land Dharma** - really very beautiful and very unique. These are the 3 very great masters.

If you go to Master Hsing Yun of Fo Guang Shan, you can graduate with a PhD in Buddhist studies and cultivation. The places are so **conducive** and **so beautiful**. You go to **Tzu Chi**, you put the Dharma into practice - **compassion in action** then wisdom come later through listening to the teachers or the master's sharing. They got this "Ta Ai Tai" their special TV programme which

is free. You only have to pay a one-off installation cost. It's very convenient. Finally, if you want to develop your meditation, you go to Dharma Drum Mountain monastery of Master **Sheng Yen**. So these 3 places - they are so beautiful.

When you start to understand and appreciate true compassion in action projects, you come to realize there are so many ways you can do it. And these great masters have shown us the way. They have paved the way for us, and showed examples for us to actually have an idea of how it can be done, and it's so beautiful.

When there is a **great Bodhisattva** that can have the vow to carry this **noble vision** through, the Dharma will **flourish** again. That is the reason why when this **vision takes effect**, it can be the **4th contributing factor to the world**. The **golden era** of the **Buddha Dharma** will rise again. When all of kalyāṇamitta can come together as a big Buddhist community to sincerely cultivate the Dharma, so that **each and every member** has the Dharma then it can **be a great force** to be **reckoned**. Then the world will **understand**, you don't have **to promote and sell**. People will come to know you via your **virtue** and wisdom and this is the beauty of it.

Then I have to summarize the last part. How to set up this beautiful **kalyāṇamitta group** within our Buddhist society and organizations? Whoever you have as Dharma friends, who are very **sincere**, very **true**, or very **helpful** that you believe they can be your **Dharma friend** - you start with them. Then you try to look for somebody **who has the Dharma**, who has the **understanding**, who **can share** with you those understanding, they call them noble friends. If you can find even one of these **noble friends**, it is

enough. Your whole **understanding and training will change**. Then you will know how to move, how to cultivate and progress, you will know how to become a **true disciple** of the Buddha.

Back then what we, kalyāṇamitta did was..... I will give you an example of what we did 6 or 7 years ago which was very good. Like what the Buddha has taught us, the very **basic Buddhist devotional practice**, we call it the PUJA. You have the **pre-PUJA** before a Buddhist event starts. Just like today, then you have the **closing PUJA** at the end. Closing PUJA is mainly **sharing of merit, transfer of merit** then you make **an aspiration**, then you can also **ask for forgiveness** if you want to. But the **opening PUJA is very important**. Like what you all did just now, **you call to mind the great virtue** of the Buddha, then after that, you **pay respect**, then you **renew your salutation** to the Buddha. Then after that you **take refuge** to develop the **affinity to connect to the Triple Gems – Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha**. Then you renew your **5 precepts** to avoid all evils, and then you renew your **sincerity to cultivate the noble Eight fold path**. All these are so beautiful. When you understand their significance **you will know how pay respect** to the Buddha **mindfully** and you will also do it with the **very strong faith and understanding** so that **your faith or confidence (Saddhā)** in the Buddha in his teaching will become **very stable**.

The Buddha calls this saddhā the first of the **Five spiritual faculties**. He said human being **cannot** develop the **cultivation of his teaching** is because they **don't have** these Five spiritual or mental faculties that are needed to **understand his teaching**. Instead He said, the living beings are **so heedless** and because they are so heedless, they

have this **delusion or ignorance** that conditions their **five mental hindrances of mind**. Heard of this Five mental hindrances? You know what is hindrance isn't it? Something that **hinders your mind from entering the meditative state of inner peace and calmness**. What are the other thing that hinders you? Why can't you **become peaceful**? Why can't you **train your mind and develop the meditation to understand** the Dharma?

How many of you have never heard of these five mental hindrances and Five Spiritual faculties before? None Ah! Good! Then I can explain, it will help you a lot. This is very important. Your school and universities also **never teach** you this. The Buddha says because we are human beings, we have the **5 physical senses** i.e. your eyes, your ears, your nose, your tongue, your body which is the tactile and your thought process - six senses in all; 5 physical and one mind hence the "six sense doors". The Buddha said, **if you don't understand** how you **function as a human being** and **how** do you **know** the world and how you **interact** with the world, then you **don't know how to live**. That's how you get yourself into **trouble**; you **entangle** yourself with **all the unhappiness** in your life. It's because your **hindrances of mind** are very strong, it hinders and **block** you from **understanding truth**. So regarding the first two hindrances of mind which are sensual desire and ill-will - whenever you see something, whenever you hear something, whenever you smell, taste or tactilely feel or think, the tendency is, you are **heedless** which means you have **not trained** your mind; You have not develop the cultivation of the Dharma, the teaching that He has taught you, **you don't understand life**, you don't understand the **laws that governs** your life and your existence. So because of that,

you are bound **to suffer**. The Buddha said, whenever you see something, hear, smell, taste something or tactilely feel or think, you **react to what you see, hear, smell, taste and tactilely feel and think hence arising the first 2 hindrances of mind**. Hot also complain, cold also complain. Anything you see, nice ones you **cling**, you **grasp**; the thing that you **don't like**, you develop the **unpleasantness, aversion and the anger**, and you want **to push it away**. You start to develop **hatred** towards it. So the Buddha said, the first 2 hindrances of **sensual desires** and **ill will** with arise when you don't have the wisdom and the teaching that He has taught you at the moment of sense experience because you **tend to react**. All of **your reaction will condition your fear, worry, anxiety and unhappiness**.

These **sensual desire and ill-will** are the **dualities or your** positive and negative **response to** what you see, what you hear, what you smell, taste, feel and think. When you see something you are not happy, what happens? Your thought will start **to proliferate**, so you are **preoccupied** with what you see and **your reaction** to what you see. A mind that is doing this is **heedless**, that's why you **cannot be peaceful**. The Buddha says this is a **hindrance**, you are drawn away. You **cannot be mindful within**. You **cannot be silent and peaceful within anymore** to develop the **meditation** because you have this **sense experience, drawing** you away. You start to **react to it**, so your **likes and dislike, pleasant and unpleasant feelings, your reactions** to all of your sense experience are the first 2 hindrances of mind that human always encounter throughout the day.

Then the **3rd hindrance** is also very important. The Buddha said, When you are doing something that you **don't like**, and **don't have the interest and the passion**, what happens? You feel **sleepy** and your **mind dull** and **lethargic**. He calls it sloth **and torpor**, especially if you haven't meditated before; you go and try to do the meditation. You will feel **sleepy**. Even in school, you've experience before, while attending the lecture class that you **don't like**, what happened? You feel **sleepy, boring**, but if the topic is something you like, your mind **is full of alertness**. There is this interest. This one the Buddha called **zeal (or spiritual resolve or tenacity)** - it is for **spiritual** knowledge. If it is for normal worldly knowledge, then it is called the **passion, the love, the zeal, the interest** that you expressed, that is a spiritual faculty not a hindrance. The **hindrance** is when you don't have that, and then you become **sleepy**. You cannot concentrate because this is not something you like so this is the **3rd hindrance** of mind.

The **4th** one is the **worst** He calls it **Restlessness of mind**. Why is your mind restless? Why is your mind not peaceful? Why? Because you have problem isn't it? It is these **problems of Life** that condition your fear, worry, anxiety and unhappiness. That's why the mind becomes **restless**. It **thinks a lot** then it **worries**, that is why fear, worry and anxiety condition the **restless mind**. When your mind is **restless**, there is **no clarity**, when there is no clarity, you make very bad decisions. That is why you become **fearful** and you make **a lot of mistakes**. When you have fear, you don't have confidence. That is why the first important mental faculty or spiritual faculty of **confidence** is missing. When you are confident with yourself, they said half the battle is won. Whenever you have no confidence,

chances are you will fail. In the spiritual sense, it is **saddhā or confidence** in the Buddha and his teaching because you know He is **very special** and different. He's not only enlightened, He is **fully enlightened**. Perfect in enlightenment, that's why He has the **wisdom and understanding** to share with you. To transform your understanding so that you understand the laws that governs your life and your existence, so that you know how to become a real human being, so that you can become a truly happy person, a noble one and an enlightened one, so that you can make a big difference to the world. You can be a **true blessing to all**. This is what the teaching is all about.

So restlessness will not be there if you **don't violate** the precepts, don't make mistakes and do wrong and evil thing. If you don't kill, you don't harm, you don't cheat, don't swindle, you don't commit sexual misconduct. If you don't go and lie and do all those **deceitful things** and get yourself **entangle** with **drugs, intoxicants** that cause your consciousness to be very low then breaking all your precepts, you will have **no restlessness** in mind. People who have this restlessness are people who **break all the precepts, violate everything**, that condition them to be fearful and worrisome because of their **selfishness**, their ignorance, their greed and their hatred. So the **evil roots** are very evil. These **3 evil roots** that Buddha talked about are your **greed**, your **selfishness**, your **anger**, your hatred, your ill-will, your jealousy, your envy and your **delusion**. When you understand that they are the **roots of all evil**, you have to abandon them. You have to **reverse all these** via cultivating goodness, kindness, virtue, sincerity, honesty, gratitude, contentment, compassion, love and wisdom. All these will counter

the restless mind; will counter the fear, worry and anxiety because these are **right thoughts**. **Wrong thoughts** are the **thoughts** that **condition** your **fear, worry, anxiety and make you restless**. Always remember that. These wrong thoughts are thoughts that you go and think and make **yourself miserable and unhappy, fearful and full of worries**. That's why if your mind has all these worries, throughout the day (human beings have a lot of these), how can you **meditate**? How can you develop the training of the mind?

The last one is **doubt**, when you are not sure of **what the teaching is**. When you are not sure of how the meditation is to be done. When you are not sure of how to develop the training of your mind; you have a lot of **doubt**. You tend to argue with people.

So the Buddha said, reverse all these **5 hindrances of mind** through the PUJA. **Pay respect** to the Buddha to develop the **faith and the confidence or saddhā** in Him so that you yourself have this confidence. Your mind will then be **very calm, very composed**, to develop the interest, the spiritual **zeal**, the **vīriya** which is the second **spiritual faculty** through **having faith** in Him, the Buddha. I.e. when you know the Buddha is so different, He is so **wise** and so **beautiful** your faith in Him will be very strong then you are determined **to follow His advice**, determined to cultivate the Buddha Dharma. That's how the spiritual joy or zeal (vīriya) will come about. So when Saddhā and vīriya arise, then you will know how to pay respect to the Buddha. You will pay respect **mindfully**, hence the 3rd spiritual faculty which is **mindfulness or sati** will arise. When you have **Saddhā, vīriya** and **Sati**, you transform. These **3 spiritual and mental faculties** will make you

very strong, and then your mind will be **very calm**. There is clarity. Then **you see things without distraction**, without fear, without worry, without anxiety. You make better decision; you become a better human being. Then you can actually solve a lot of your **life's problems** with that mind that can understand. Then if you were to meet up with those noble friends that can guide you, that can train you and make you understand the teaching, you will progress very fast. After you had progressed your character and personality will change. When you **understand the truth** you will change completely. Because we hold **the key to our Life's destiny** and to **be happy or miserable** is entirely our choice so choose wisely! When you ask yourself this question - **my life, I will choose to be peaceful and happy**, I will choose to have **harmony within** my family, within all of my relationships, I will **never allow** any of these negativities, **these evil roots to arise again**.

That is how you can **make a difference to your life**; this is also how you can contribute. When you **volunteer** to participate as a member in this **noble vision**, you yourself stand to gain and it's a win-win situation isn't it? So when the **individual transforms**, your **loved ones will transform**, then this will **spread and influence others**. It will include your colleagues, your friends, even the temple people. One can spread to many and many can spread to even more. That is how finally, it can **touch the hearts** of all living beings. And it can really bring forth the conditions for the **golden era** of the **Buddha Dharma to arise again**, so that the **Buddha Sāsana** can **continue to flourish** for centuries and centuries to come. So that we can really develop this beautiful and **very noble vision** to reach a level of **maturity** that all Buddhist within our

Buddhist community can have these understanding and **commit themselves to train themselves** to cultivate the Buddha Dharma to bring about the realizations of this **great and noble vision**. So that we all can be a true human being to be a blessing to all.

Now, I will touch on the last part, do I still have time? No more? Then I will stop, I will continue next month, on 31st July I got two talks one in the morning and one in the afternoon. So with this, I will end my today's talk. Then if you have time for Q & A maybe I can take some questions. Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

Questions & Answers

Qs. 1: No microphone so question is inaudible. First is sensual desire.....

Bro Teoh Yah! Yes!No! No! No! You talk about spiritual faculties it should be hindrances of mind. Ah! Ah! First two is sensual desire and ill will and the 3rd one is sloth and stupor, sleepiness, dullness of the mind, lack of interest. Ah! Yes! Doubt, very doubtful. Ah! Okay that is a very good question.

Bro. Teoh
Answer
for Q. 1

You see **Depression** is the result of **long accumulation of wrong thoughts** after your hindrances of mind had arisen. You lack wisdom and you don't understand and because of **ignorance** you continue to think. And the thinking if you don't have the understanding it will trap that human being until they become so **angry** and so

Bro. Teoh
Answer
for Q. 2

unhappy that they **enter depression**. Sometimes not only depression, I have actually **helped** quite a number of these people. They like can **hear voices in their heads** - like somebody talking to them. Asking them to **commit suicide**. That's why you don't allow this **fear, worry, anxiety** and **restlessness** to condition you until you become **so unhappy**, and then you will continue to think and think and think - because you are trapped in the **cocoon of thinking** due to your egoic mind and ignorance. And because your ignorance is so strong, you **enter depression**. And when you become depressed it's very difficult to come out, unless **you have somebody who understands** and explain to you **how your mind work and functions**. That is why the Buddha's teaching is **so wonderful** and **so beautiful**.

The Five Spiritual Faculties

Yes! Now I will explain the **5 spiritual faculties** to you. The 5 spiritual faculties **counter** the 5 hindrances of mind. Just now I already explained to you all, **without wisdom, without understanding** you **tend to react**. That's why **sensual desires and ill-will** are there **throughout the day**. Living beings experienced them because living beings **react to sense experiences** very often and very fast. Throughout the day, you have **your like and dislike, oscillating**. That's **why you are never peaceful**. That is why **it's a hindrance of mind**. When your mind **is pre-occupied** with the **duality**, your like

and dislike, and happiness and unhappiness, etc will arise. When **things go your way**, you feel good, joyful for a while, then you **attach to this good state**. When things **don't go** your way, you become **unhappy, miserable**, and then **you get angry**. Then sometimes the **anger condition** you into **hatred** because you think and think and think and the thought keeps telling you - how could that guy do that to you? He is too much, you **should take revenge**, then it becomes hatred, then you plan, you scheme, then it becomes **more entangle**. After that when there is a condition, like when you see him, you become **violent and transgression takes place**. This is how human beings **enter conflict**; create all the **negativity of true karmic offences**.

Qs. 3 :You can use the microphone.... How can I help this person that I love so much?

Bro Teoh What is his problem?

Qs. 3 **Depression.** He cries a lot

Bro Teoh You have to talk to him slowly.

Qs. 3 : The trouble is I **don't have** the patience. I just say you bow down in front of the Buddha and perform the PUJA.

Bro Teoh That's what I was saying..... it brings about a very good condition for me to repeat what I try to share with you

all just now.

The Buddha's advice before he passed away is **“Strive on with heedfulness” – “Appamādena Sampādeṭha”**. You must follow his advice via cultivating His teaching; His Buddha dharma to develop the wisdom so that you are in a position to help. Do you understand? When you yourself are also not ready, you **also need help**, how can you help somebody who is in that situation?

There is a sutta - Sallekha sutta where the Buddha gave an analogy; You know what is a quagmire? A very muddy situation in a pit. He said if you yourself are **stuck in a quagmire** how can you **rescue somebody** who is also stuck with you. That is why **you must come out of it first** then you can pull him out. Like you said, you are **impatient**, you **don't have** enough understanding so after you listen to a little bit of what I said, and chances are you cannot explain and express that understanding to him as yet. That is why I say **it takes time**. If there is condition and if there is somebody who is **really serious about life** and **wants to understand why he is like that?** You can check with him, you can make an appointment with me and I can talk to him. I have talked to many and almost all of them turned around. I don't do anything. Don't get me wrong! I'm not a psychic. I just **share** the Buddha Dharma with them. **It's your life; you decide how you want to live**. If you are

not even concerned about your life, If you **choose not to be helped**, nobody in this world can help you. But if you have understood **how great and beautiful** this teaching of the Buddha is, you will really have a lot of **gratitude and respect** for Him. Then you will **treasure** and **cherish** what He had given you.

These people in **depression**, they cannot see, they will hide themselves, go and drink and **drown** their sorrow and become worse. They really don't like to see anybody. You know why? Have you all seen the show - "**Tuesdays with Morrie**"? I think Bro. Swee Aun has the video. There is also a book. It's the same with Morrie. This guy, he was a professor, **very famous and successful**. Of course he had some bad childhood experiences. His mother passed away when he was very young and he had problems but he recovered. Then he became **very famous, very successful**, he can skate, he can dance, he can do a lot of other things and he really **enjoyed life**. Then suddenly, one day, he got an injury, he fell, **spinal cord below paralyzed**, and he lost his life. He became so depressed, so unhappy, he shut himself out, and then he drinks and became **so miserable** - like he totally destroyed his life. One day, one good friend talked to him. He said, "your life you decide how you want to live. If you choose to be like that, you'll be worse and worse, then finally you will die." Then not only you, if you continue to be this way, **so negative** and **so depressed**, not only you suffer and become

miserable, **what about your wife?** She will worry for you **and suffer** too. Your children also **will worry** for you and suffer. Your students, your friends, your colleagues, everybody **worries for you and suffer. Is that what you want?** He just asked him this one question.

Out of love and compassion for your loved ones, you should be **strong** and **decide to pull yourself up and recover.** And you know what happened? After that talk, the next morning, he woke up, still not very sober, he just said one word, **Detach!** He recovered and he became even more beautiful than before, the paralysis. He came **to realise** life can be **even more beautiful** with the **paralysis. He only has to accept this reality. Detach from all the thinking** that he was carrying, that made him **depressed**; Questions like I used to be so successful, I used to be so famous, so agile. I used to have all these. Now I have lost them all. **Why is God so unfair?** All these questions arise because he cannot get what he wants. That's why he was **trapped in a cocoon of thoughts** and he became **so depressed** and **so unhappy.** The thought will say you don't deserve this. It's really unfair. So, all these are what the thoughts say. **Not a reality,**

negative or wrong thoughts.

What are negative and wrong thoughts? Thoughts that condition your **depression, your unhappiness, your fear, your worry, your anxiety, your sadness and your sorrow and lamentation - all these are all wrong thoughts.** Noble 8-fold path is about what? **Right thought.** You are supposed to arise the **right effort to abandon** your wrong thoughts. That is why the word **“Detach” he abandoned them all and he moved on.** Your life, you accept the reality of the moment and you move on. Then **you gain back your life. You don’t react to it anymore.** Because the reality or truth of the matter is - **you are paralyzed.** Do what you have to do, get a good doctor, seek good medical advice. **But don’t attach, don’t cling** because body is just a body. Not so real, **not you and when you meditate, you understand it is only elements.** It cannot be you. The **consciousness that is trapped inside is different.** That is why when **your body is sick, your mind need not be sick and the Buddha said these are wisdom;** and when you have the wisdom, you can accept the reality - that’s why he became so famous after that.

Then the reporter interviewed him and the newspaper wrote about him. After that he **advised** so many people. Their family members could not believe. Just overnight, **detach and** he became so different. Then he saw the wife, became so happy and so cheerful. The children all have joy and they came back and support

him, talked to him. Then he realized - with that understanding, he is no longer angry and unhappy, no longer caught in the wrong thoughts. His mind became **very calm and very peaceful**. **There was so much joy**. That was how the **spiritual faculty** came to him. The **faith in himself again**. The **very peaceful mind**, the **clarity**, the **spiritual zeal** came back to him. Then he was determined to **gain back his life** and from this day onwards, changed for the better. After he realized he start to see things differently. He starts to enjoy all of **nature's phenomena**. The **chirping of the birds**, which he never heard before, so beautiful and so meaningful. And all of the nature's sounds, vibration and music, he even enjoyed. Even though he cannot dance but he can still listen to the beautiful music and he can still rejoice with all the strong support the family members had given him. **He starts to see the joy, the glow** in all the family members, friends and students that come to visit him. That gives him so much happiness not only to him but to all those people too. Only through what? Through **change! Detach!** one decision only. And **only one person** need to change or turned, then all these loved one and those who have relationship and affinity with him also completely transformed. The **consciousness of depression, anger, worry, fear, anxiety all disappear and overnight he transformed**. That's why this **noble vision** and the message of the Buddha can **transform the world** into a very beautiful world if you understand. Okay?

Qs. 4:

Sadhu!

That someone could be enlightened or actualized over a

day but there is this situation, a couple, I think they know they love each other very deeply but both of them are caught in the **cocoon of thoughts** like what you said just now. One is **very self-centred** and the other one is going to the extent that he or she is feeling **imbalance by saying**, “Why am I the only one that is giving in?” As simple as they were talking about mindset. The one that is **self-centred** will ask the next one. Why don’t you change because the Buddhist said this? I think this **family turns Buddhism upside down**, by using their own interpretation of Buddhism for their own selfish convenience. How can we make them see this?

Bro Teoh

Very easy. This is very common. I have a lot of people **with separation, divorce, marriage problems, relationship problems**, etc coming to see me and talk to me and I helped them via explaining to them the true Buddha dharma. And most of them after I talk to them **they started to change**. A lot of these problems have to do with the **law of karma**. **When things go wrong, it’s nothing to do with the religion, it’s you**. I always tell them if you have the understanding of the Buddha dharma **nobody can make you angry. Nobody can make you unhappy, nobody can make you sorrowful, and do you know why? Unless you choose to allow it to happen**. Human beings always point outward. But when you point outside you don’t understand what is going on inside because if you have the **understanding and the wisdom, your peace, your happiness and your**

joy - Does it depend on what people say and what people do? It doesn't isn't it?

It can only disturb you when you **deludedly** think, what he said is wrong according to **your views, your opinion** and your wrong **perception** of the reality. But what is nature's law? The reality is what? An angry person says angry things. Deluded person do deluded things. **They are just the way they are! You should accept them for what they are!** That's why don't always said "You Buddhist you must change. You cannot speak angry speech!" There is nothing wrong with that isn't it? If you are a true Buddhist, you won't speak **harsh and angry** speech **but because** you are not a true Buddhist as yet, the Dharma is not there, that's why when your spouse said something, it **hit your ego**. You still have delusions – **Sakkāyadiṭṭhi or self-delusion, thinking that you exist**. That is why when they said something negative, through your **hearing consciousness**, it goes in and you react because you don't have the wisdom. If you have the wisdom, you will be at peace. **He is what he is**. He can decide what he wants to say and what he wants to do. **If I accept him for what he is, I'm at peace**, and then I act. I still act. It doesn't mean as Buddhist, everything also we let things be! Don't care. No! **Let things be!** - The meaning is **very deep**. Let things be means - at that moment when things arise, the causes and conditions are like that and the reality is like that. We cannot go against it. You cannot react,

you cannot blame, otherwise you suffer. This is the reason why the Buddha said, **attachment and clinging borne of delusion is the cause of suffering**. So when you attach and cling to your **views and opinions** and you **want things your way you suffer**. But if you accept the reality of the moment and **don't react, have a clear mind, a calm and peaceful mind to understand that thing is just the way it is** and they are just the way they are! Then I act with **Noble 8-fold path** i.e. without **negativity**. Then I ask myself, my life, I choose to be happy and peaceful. I choose not **to react** then I am at ease and peaceful.

This morning I heard at near the end of the talk. You remember somebody ask one question. If he has a boss who doesn't want to talk, silent, they don't know how to answer the question. You see, it is the same, **he is what he is**. Do you understand? There is a reason for everything.

That's why I told this lady who came and **consult me** some months back, "if you continue to be **so angry** and everybody is wrong, only you are right then you will be karmically **very miserable**." Because there is this lady, who was very depressed. The voice in the head talking to her and wanting to commit suicide and she is in very severe depression. I spend 2 over hours talking to her and explained to her and she finally understands. I just give her an example. I said, maybe you need this

example **to wake you up**. Say, one day your husband comes home and he had got a lot of problem in the office, something major happen. So what is going to happen? He will surely be unhappy, and then he is like not himself. As a wife, you call him he also did not respond. If you are the wife that **does not** have the understanding and the sensitivity, what will you do? Most wives will say, **what the hell is happening to you? Why are you like that?** Come back home also don't want to talk, call you also you don't respond. You know what the husband will say? Don't disturb me. Today I'm not in the mood to talk. So what will you do? You go and think and then your thoughts will say - how can he do that? He is my husband, you know? Who the hell he thinks he is? You are boiling inside. After that you will shout out at him and then you know what happen? He will walk out of the house, drive the car and look for a friend and then he will tell the friend. Come, help me, and let's go for a drink, then he will tell his sorrowful story. I already have so many problems; I went home, my wife some more tell me off. What type of a family is this? While drinking it will be worst, if the friend will to suggests - come tonight I take you for a massage then you are finished. Then what will you do? You stay at home worry for him and looking at the clock. How come 12 midnight he still didn't come back yet? So who suffers? **You suffer. Through what?** Wrong speech, angry speech - **your ego is so big** and you are **so**

impatient and insensitive.

If only you can reverse all these through the Dharma, like what the Buddha teach. That is **don't get angry**, be **sensitive**, be **aware** then tell yourself. He is like me. If he has got a problem, he will be like that and he is just the way he is because there is something disturbing him. If I want to understand him, what must I do? You can try this - "**Hey, honey, you don't look good today, is there a problem?**" Ha, this is right speech, correct or not? **Pleasant, kind and understanding** speech. Then your husband will **definitely yield** and **respond well** to talk to you. He will then say Ya! Today I had a very bad day..... Explaining to you what happened. Then if you want to be a good and **supportive wife** then you can advise him, "Honey, don't worry, I will support you all the way even if you choose to resign from the job, no problem. We will continue to survive, **(more frugally)** and no problem".

You must give him the confidence, the faith, and support to talk to him **nicely**. Then the whole situation will not disrupt into what happened. If you are not careful and not tactful, out of anger, **which is an evil root**..... you wait, wait and wait - 2 am already also haven't come back. Then what happen? You start **to worry** and get even **more angry** then when you hear the car sound, you are boiling inside. You prepare your question; I'm going to blow out at him because he didn't even want to answer my phone calls and you even

asked – “how can you walk out on me just like that?” Especially when you call, he switched his phone off, which is very common and all the wives know. There is a **Dharma way** to free yourself. Your life, **why must you get angry? Anger is an evil root.** So, don’t lose your head, don’t become **heedless, have love, have compassion, have wisdom** and **understanding** to feel for fellow living beings, then you will have the **kindness and the friendliness** to talk. That’s why if you have this Dharma, you will be **friendly** to your husband. You will have **love, compassion** and **wisdom**. Then you will be **very caring** and **friendly** and you will talk to him very differently. You don’t start to get angry with him and blow out at him anymore. That is what the Dharma is all about. It is **so simple**. If you want to understand it, it’s so simple but if you **choose not to understand** then the **evil roots** are very active inside. ‘Tuesdays with Morrie’ is a reality. You go and read that book and see the video. Everything is there; you can learn a lot of **things** from it and he is not a Buddhist but the teaching, the **message is so clear**. Oh! 2pm already! Sorry I have to end. Anymore question? Otherwise we end. My next month talk is 31/7/11 – I have morning and afternoon sessions. Maybe you all can prepare your questions. It is all on the same topic but I will speak in a different way. Every title, every heading I will speak in a different way but the dharma and the message will be the same. Okay?

CLOSING


Bro. Chim

Thank you, Bro. Kian Koon. I think we got to stop because many people are waiting for Bro. Kian Koon right now. Anyway Bro. Kian Koon will continue to give a series of these talks and the next one is on 31/7/11 so do come and join us. We had invited Bro. Teoh Kian Koon to give these series of talks in our effort **to promote a friendly and caring Dhamma centre at SJBA**. A centre where we will have a lot of smiling faces, warm greetings, listening friends, loving care and friendship. Hope it certainly don't sounds too alien to some of us. Some of us come to temple, **they forgot how to smile**, how to show **their care, their friendship**. Hopefully, through this series of talks and through other activities which we have started again, where we visit people who are in needs. Recently, we went to Ladang Bukit Ceraka to give food, items to these poor people. So look out for our announcement so that you can join us together, help us to promote a friendly and caring nature among our members and hopefully through all these activities and talks we can have a friendly and caring Dhamma centre here. Shall we invite Bro. Kian Koon to lead us in the sharing of the merits closing puja?

Bro. Teoh

Okay I will chant the pāḷi version and if you can understand you can chant together otherwise you just silent and compose your mind and rejoice. Basically, it is sharing of merits with the devas then we transfer merits to departed ones then you make your aspiration.

Then Bro Kian Koon recites the sharing of merits, transfer of merits and aspirations in pāḷi.



Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

Buddhaṃ pujemi, Dhammaṃ pujemi, Saṅghaṃ pujemi.

Importance of Promoting True Kalyāṇamittaship
Among Buddhist Devotees, Dhamma Practitioners and Cultivators