

Meditation Retreat at Mahayana Triple Gem Temple, Brinchang, Cameron Highland

Dated: 16th March to 24th March 2018 (conducted by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon)

A. Introduction:

This meditation retreat caters for all participants who may be from **different background** or **Buddhist traditions** with **varying meditation experiences**. The emphasis here is on **understanding** the **Buddha dhamma** and the **meditation** as taught by the **Buddha** instead of **focusing** on **methods** and **techniques** of meditation. The below program was prepared to allow participants **to settle down slowly** into the **retreat proper** via a **less stringent first** session where more **dhamma understanding** will be **emphasized** followed by a **more stringent** second session (20/3 till 24/3/2017) where **noble silence, heedfulness** and the **meditative training** and **actual cultivation** will be emphasized.

B. Main Purposes and intent:

1. To **understand** and **realize** the **noble teaching** of Lord Buddha via **sincerely** cultivating the much need **Heedfulness** (or **Appamāda**) as advised by the Buddha before his parinibbāna via his **dhammapada verses 183, 21, 22, 23** and his final advice - '**Appamādena sampādetha**'.
2. To **train ourselves** during the meditation retreat to develop a **very stable daily mindfulness** (**silent mind** with **inner awareness**) leading to the **heedfulness from the moment** we commence our retreat. To diligently maintain **Noble silence** of mind and speech during the **retreat duration** to cultivate **sati sampajañña** or **mindfulness** and **clear comprehension** of **sincerity of purpose, domains** of meditation, **suitability** and **non-delusion as a sign** of our **respect** for the way place.
3. Learn to be **at Ease, naturally relax** and **aware** via **heedfulness most of the time**. Always **move, speak** and **act naturally** but **with inner awareness throughout** the day **to stabilize** your **5 spiritual faculties** until they become **very stable** and **unshakeable**.
4. With the stable **daily mindfulness** or **awareness** use it to **cultivate** the **Noble 8-fold path** via **constant creative contemplation, reflection** and **inquiry** into the **Four Noble Truths** leading to the '**perfection**' of all the **Noble 8 fold path factors** of *Right view, Right Thoughts, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness* and *Right Samadhi* so that you are **incapable of any evil whenever** you are **heedful**. To maintain this **Heedfulness** (or **Appamāda**) **training throughout** the day **to insight** into the **3 characteristics of nature** to **realize** the **insight know ledges** and **wisdom** needed **to liberate** the **mind** leading to the **realization of Nibbāna** (or **cessation** of the form and mind) as taught by the **Buddha**.
5. To **diligently** develop the **understanding** of the **essential dhammas** needed **to understand** the Buddha's teachings. The **important essential dhammas** are the **5 mental hindrances** (or *pañca nīvaraṇa*); the **5 spiritual faculties** (or *pañca indriya*); the **3 evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion; the **3 right views** (*Karma niyāma, Citta niyāma & Dharma niyāma*); the **12 links**; the **Four Noble Truths**; the **3 turnings** of the **Four Noble Truths**; the **4 foundations of mindfulness**; the **7 factors of enlightenment** (or *satta bojjhaṅgā*); **Dana, Sīla** and **Bhāvanā** & the **5 daily contemplations**.

Meditation Retreat Programme:

16th March 2018 (Friday)

Time	Programme
7.30am-8.10am	Meet at Bro. Teoh's house (No. 8 Jalan SS2/80, Petaling Jaya) for breakfast. Otherwise can arrive by 8.00am. (Those gathering at SJBA to arrive at SJBA by 7.30am latest as bus leaves for Bro. Teoh's house for 2 nd pick up at 7.35am sharp.)
8.10am-8.30am	Leave for Cameron Highlands after a short puja at Bro. Teoh's place. Alternatively to leave at 8.10am and have puja on the bus.
8.30am-12.30pm	Briefing, introduction and fellowship cum sharing of the dhamma while travelling.
12.30pm-1.00pm	Arrive at Triple Gem (Sam Poh) Mahayana temple Brinchang, Cameron. Pay respect to Triple Gems and the chief monk (Dang Jia) of Triple Gem temple followed by short briefing as to where the facilities and rooms are located.
1.00pm-1.30pm	Lunch at Temple. To maintain mindfulness and heedfulness throughout.
1.30pm-2.15pm	Check in to Temple and settle down cum bath for those who need it. For those who are early they can walk around mindfully to familiarize themselves with the way place and pay respect to all those rūpaṃ or images that are <i>worthy of respect</i> .
2.15pm-3.30pm	Opening Puja followed by briefing and meditation instructions by Bro. Teoh. The briefing will be very comprehensive and it will include, retreat objectives, instructions on how to develop the 5 spiritual faculties of faith (saddhā), spiritual zeal or resolve (vīriya), Sati (mindfulness) and Samadhi (collectedness and unwavering mind) leading to the appamāda or heedfulness state of mind to arise the panna (or wisdom) needed to counter the 5 mental hindrances of mind to develop the meditation. Meditation instructions will include the detail explanation of what is meditation and how to develop the 2nd turnings dhamma contemplation wisdom so that the meditation can be done with understanding . (Cultivation to include the Establishment of a proper daily religious routine leading to a sustained period of continuous heedfulness . <i>This is a must</i> to develop good progress .)
3.30pm-4.30pm	45 minutes of Formal sitting or lying down meditation and 15 minutes of daily mindfulness training via bowing, dhamma contemplation, reflection and inquiries WITHIN THE VICINITY of the temple while in walking, standing or sitting postures. To maintain continuous mindfulness with awareness within at all time.
4.30pm-5.30pm	Q & A followed by the review of the Heart Sutra dhamma notes that Bro. Teoh had given out earlier - to develop the proper understanding of the dhamma and the Meditation as taught by the Buddha. Can ask any questions regarding the meditation, dhamma and real Life application of the Dhamma etc.
5.30pm-6.00pm	Dinner - to maintain the Heedfulness and daily mindfulness training at all time.

16th March 2018 (Friday)

Time	Programme
6.00pm-6.45pm	Rest and clean up. To maintain the Heedfulness and daily mindfulness training at all time. Even when answering nature's call - to do it mindfully . (Can also cultivate daily mindfulness via heedful and mindful evening walks and contemplation around the temple areas and its vicinity.)
6.45pm-7.15pm	30 minutes of Formal Sitting or lying down meditation .
7.15pm-7.45pm	Evening chanting to develop the spiritual faculties of saddhā, vīriya & Sati.
7.45pm-9.15pm	Q &A and dhamma discussion and sharing via reviewing the daily mindfulness & Heart sutta dhamma notes given out earlier on. Closing Puja. Rest.

17th to 19th March 2018 (Saturday to Monday)

Time	Programme
5.45am -6.15am	Wake up and clean up.
6.15am - 6.45am	Morning puja followed by simple morning mindfulness cum muscle training exercises. (To bring along a pair of 2 or 3 kg hand exercise weights)
6.45am- 7.30am	30 minutes of Formal sitting & 15 minutes of walking or bowing meditation.
7.30am - 8.30am	Morning breakfast + clean up and rest. To maintain the daily mindfulness training at all time (even while resting) + Cultivation of daily mindfulness via Heedful and MINDFUL walking and contemplation around the temple vicinity after meal.
8.30am-9.00am	Morning chanting and reflections.
9.00am- 10.30am	Minimum 60 minutes of Formal sitting & walking or lying down meditation followed by 30 minutes of daily mindfulness training via standing in contemplation, bowing etc. as before.
10.30am-12.00pm	Q and A cum reporting of meditation followed by dhamma sharing via review of The Heart Sutra dhamma book.
12.00pm-12.30pm	Lunch by caterer – to maintain daily mindfulness and heedfulness at all time.
12.30pm-1.30pm	Rest and clean up as before. To maintain the daily mindfulness training and Dharma contemplation at all-time even during resting period.
1.30pm-3.00pm	Puja followed by briefing by Bro. Teoh on how to i) strengthen the 5 spiritual faculties of saddhā, vīriya, sati, Samadhi (the unwavering or collected mind) and wisdom (panna) to overcome the 5 mental hindrances - sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness of mind and doubt ; ii) develop the understanding of the following essential Dharma: 4 right efforts + 5 ways to overcome wrong or unwholesome thoughts, 5 daily contemplations,

17th to 19th March 2018 (Saturday to Monday)

Time	Programme
	3 evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion, 5 aggregates of form and mind, 12 links, 4 Noble Truths, 4 foundation of mindfulness, 7 factors of Enlightenment & importance of devotional practices or puja etc. (everyday different topic.)
3.00pm-4.30pm	60 minutes of Formal meditation via sitting or lying down or walking followed by 30 minutes of daily mindfulness training via bowing & Dharma contemplation, reflection and inquiries within the vicinity of the temple area while in a relax walking, standing or sitting postures.
4.30pm-5.30pm	Q & A followed by the Review of meditation reporting - to develop the proper understanding of the cultivation, the Dharma and the Meditation as taught by the Buddha. Can ask any questions regarding the meditation, the Dharma and real Life application of the Dharma etc. + closing puja.
5.30pm-6.00pm	Dinner - to maintain the daily mindfulness training at all time.
6.00pm-6.40pm	Rest and clean up. To maintain the daily mindfulness training at all time (even when answering nature's call also to do it mindfully). Cultivation of daily mindfulness via mindful evening walks and contemplation around the temple areas.)
6.40pm-7.20pm	Minimum 30 minutes formal Sitting meditation followed by 10 minutes of daily mindfulness training via bowing/walking/standing in contemplation etc.
7.20pm-7.50pm	Evening chanting to develop the spiritual faculties of saddhā, vīriya & Sati.
7.50pm-9.15pm	Q & A and dhamma discussion and sharing via reviewing of the Heart Sutta dhamma notes that I had given out earlier on. Closing Puja. Rest.

20th to 23rd March 2018 (Tuesday to Friday):

Time	Programme
5.30am -6.00am	Wake up and clean up.
6.00am - 6.30am	Simplified morning puja followed by simple morning mindfulness exercise.
6.30 am-7.30am	45 minutes of Formal sitting or lying down meditation followed by 15 minutes of bowing or walking meditation.
7.30 am- 8.30am	Morning breakfast + clean up and rest. To maintain the daily mindfulness training at all time (even while resting) + Cultivation of daily mindfulness via Heedful & MINDFUL walking and contemplation around the temple vicinity.
8.30am-9.00am	Puja followed by morning chanting and reflections.
9.00am- 10.30am	60 minutes of Formal sitting & walking or lying down meditation followed by 30 minutes of daily mindfulness training via contemplation and bowing etc.

20th to 23rd March 2018 (Tuesday to Friday):

Time	Programme
(20 th March 2017) 10.30am-11.00am	(Taking of the Bodhisattva vows) – Optional
10.30am-12.00am	Q and A cum reporting of meditation followed by Dharma sharing via review of Heart Sutra dhamma book.
12.00pm-12.30pm	Lunch at Temple. To maintain mindfulness and heedfulness throughout.
12.30pm-1.30pm	Rest and clean up as before. To maintain the daily mindfulness training , dhamma contemplation at all time even while resting and moving around.
1.30pm-3.00pm	60 minutes of Formal meditation via sitting and walking or lying down postures followed by 30 minutes of daily mindfulness training via bowing & Dharma contemplation, reflection and inquiries, etc. within the vicinity of the temple area while moving around in the walking, standing or sitting postures. (Always be natural and maintain relaxation of form and mind and awareness at all times.)
3.00pm-5.30pm	Q & A followed by the Review of meditation reporting - to deepen the proper understanding of the cultivation, the dhamma and the Meditation as taught by the Buddha. Can ask any questions regarding the meditation, the dhamma and real Life application of the Dhamma etc. + closing puja.
5.30pm-6.00pm	Dinner - to maintain the Heedfulness training at all time.
6.00pm-6.40pm	Rest and clean up. To maintain the Heedfulness training at all time even when resting or while having an evening walk and doing dhamma contemplation around the temple vicinity.)
6.40pm –7.00pm	Evening chanting and reflections.
7.00pm-7.30pm	30 minutes of Formal Sitting and walking or lying down meditation.
7.30pm-9.15pm	Q & A and dhamma discussion and sharing via reviewing of the Heart Sutta dhamma notes that I had given out earlier on. Closing Puja. Rest.
7.30pm-9.15pm (23rd March 2018)	<p>Closing ceremony (Part 1) - <i>Formal introduction and personal sharing</i> cum feedback by all retreat participants including suggestions (if any) from them on how to improve on future retreat programme.</p> <p>Closing Dharma and advice by Bro. Teoh on how to continue the cultivation after returning to normal daily life followed by acknowledgement of <i>thanks, accounts reporting, rejoicing, asking for forgiveness and closing Puja</i>. (Importance of having a good religious routine to develop the constant daily mindfulness & N8FPath cultivation in daily life.)</p>

24th March 2018 (Saturday) - Last day of retreat.

Time	Programme
6.00am -6.30am	Wake up and clean up.
6.30am - 6.45am	Morning puja + morning chanting.
6.45am-7.15am	30 minutes of Final Formal sitting or lying down meditation.
7.15am - 8.00am	Morning breakfast and cleaning up. To maintain the daily mindfulness training at all time even while resting.
8.00am-8.45am	Closing ceremony (part 2): Expression of thanks to the temple management and presentation of gift/souvenir and offering of donation and cash support to the abbot, monks and staffs of Triple Gem temple. Follow by asking for forgiveness from all and group photo.
8.45am-9.10am	Quick packing - leaving today. Final cleaning up before checking out from temple. Saying of farewell. We will have lunch at Kampar then group may visit Mangala Lodge (tentative proposal). Lunch will be sponsored by our Kalyāṇamitta fund. Leave for PJ/KL at 2.15pm or 4.15pm and expected arrival time is at about 4.30pm or 6.30pm.

Above 9 days annual Meditation **retreat** - conducted by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon.

Dated: 10/1/2018.