

Short Notes for Bro Teoh's 19th April 2018 Thursday class sharing

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Teoh-Thu-180419.mp3>

Before the meditation

1. Bro Teoh's advice -

- a) Meditation is to develop the *training of the mind* to be **heedful**. If your mind is already trained because the *5 spiritual faculties are already there*, then *you can meditate straight away*. Otherwise, if you need to **train your heedless thinking mind**, you train.
- b) The key to meditation is **to establish the clarity of mind** which is *peacefulness, awareness and the silence within to insight into phenomena to see clearly* how you *function as a human being*, to see the **essential dharma** within the form and mind especially the *3 evil roots, the five mental hindrances and the 5 spiritual faculties, the enlightenment factors, etc.*
- c) It is very important to **truly understand** the *3 evil roots of greed, hatred and delusion*. Only then can you see them **via mindfulness** in your meditation and your daily life.
- d) When you have stabilized the training of the mind to be ever mindful (heedful), you can then use it to develop the **daily mindfulness**. That is the **real meditation**.
- e) **Without** the **daily mindfulness**, you **cannot awaken** to the truth. It is *only via the daily mindfulness to cultivate the four Right Efforts and the Noble 8-fold Path* that understanding can arise.
- f) Eventually, **only wisdom liberates and frees** your mind because the moment you understand or awaken *via wisdom, your mind is free*. There is **no need** to do anything else. No need Jhana or special meditative mind states. Bro Eric's case is a good example of this. With **clear understanding** of how his own rather **depressive thoughts** (that **had haunted him for so long**) was **caused** by his own **self-delusion** and **attachment to his own wrong thoughts via memories**, his problems are all gone)?
- g) Meditation is to be done **with understanding**. Then, you will progress very fast. Do inquire – 'what are you doing *in the name of meditation?*' *Are you training your mind to be heedful? Are your spiritual faculties established?*

After meditation

2. Bro Eric's reporting and question:

This time, my meditation is better compared to last time. Thoughts still arise but they are mostly positive thoughts – no longer like before. Is having a desire to chase after titles, etc, acceptable in Buddhism?

Bro Teoh's answer:

- a) **Reality** is to be understood *for things are just the way they are*. Duality of good and bad arises from the **discriminative mind** (for me or not for me, all coming from the Egoic self).
- b) 'Reality IS' - only mighty nature rolling by with its nature's laws operating without the interpretation of good or bad. Reason why the Buddha advised us to see things as they are (the truth, the reality).

- c) The reality is, when conditions are such, the phenomena will unfold accordingly.
- d) Without wisdom, people **can't see things as they are** instead *they see things according to their personal views, opinions and conditioning* leading to *confusion* and *attachment*. The way of mind is to be understood for desires, cravings and attachment to be understood.
- e) Right and wrong are relative or conventional truth – for it depends on the person expressing it.
- f) Without the ego, there is no motivation for the human being to do things.
- g) With the understanding of dharma you can **work towards achieving or realizing** this so-called 'desire' for success or your pure wishes and ambition etc., there is nothing wrong. As long as it is done with understanding via following the dhamma way of no karmic negativity (that is **without** the evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion).
- h) However, if you crave for it so badly that you act **without following nature's laws**, then there will be *karmic implications*. Hence, it is not about whether 'desire' is good or bad? Desire needs to be understood first. For **if desire is a craving with evil roots** then that is action is *via self-delusion* and **not via wisdom**. *Acting according to memory is not acting at all*. Hence to realize and achieve success one must act **with wisdom following Noble 8-Fold Path** to *achieve or resolve issues amicably* then the outcome will always be wholesome and **without** any *karmic repercussion*.
- i) The accumulated memory with its conditioning will give rise to problems for one who works towards the goal without the dharma and the meditative understanding.
- j) Recalling last week's topic on ego, it's the same. When there is **no understanding**, the ego clings onto this form and mind as the Me, I and the Mine leading to self-delusion.
- k) A crucial advice is, whatever one is striving towards, there must be no violation of nature's laws.
- l) Life has given us many examples of so-called Dato's that have used *unscrupulous means* to get such titles which are meant for those who had truly contributed to society. It's good to ponder, 'why do you need such titles?' *Mental intention* is very important to assess the sincerity of our goal.
- m) Bro Teoh reshared the outline notes of our last Thursday (12th April 2018) class talk.

3. Bro Eric's question

Can you explain whether one can be ambitious without creating karmic negativity? Having a thought of making more money, is this the start of karmic negativity?

Bro Teoh's answer:

- a) Such questions arise from our habitual tendencies and most people will think like that.
- b) Success will come if one works towards realizing it with *diligence, sincerity, integrity* and the *understanding* not to violate nature's laws to achieve it. So, it is more important *to train this mind to be heedful* to work towards the desired objective without any karmic negativity.
- c) Instead of resorting to wrong means to get rich, Right Livelihood will ensure that the gains acquired do not disappear through karmic repercussion.
- d) Again, Bro Teoh re emphasizes *the need to take care of mind* then mind takes care of karma and finally the good and wholesome karma will takes care of our life.
- e) Bro Teoh personally doesn't think the title is important because it only helps to boost the ego.

4. Sister Keat Hoon's question

If a person has negative tendencies of ill-will, greed, subtle craving, etc. most of the time, what would be the best way to guide him or her?

Bro Teoh's answer:

- a) This is not possible through **only theory or knowledge**. One must develop the *understanding first* to know how one *gets oneself entangled and retrospectively* through those understanding, reverse it.
- b) Wisdom can come in various ways – through listening, reflection, contemplation and the meditative way via the direct seeing when one is just aware with the silent and non-reactive mind.
- c) Through the **meditative way**, the *wisdom that arises* will cause all the negative tendencies to disappear (rooted out) because it will understand that they are **not intrinsic** within our nature. They are all condition-arising states borne of our wrong thoughts due to *accumulated psychological memory* of past experiences. Through this silent observation, when such tendencies dissipate and disappear, the understanding will arise that these negative emotions of anger, hatred, craving, desire, fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation **are not us** or *who we think we are*.
- d) Do **not fight or suppress or try to do away** with such mind states or emotions but instead just allow them to be. Without feeding them with anymore thought energy, they will slow down and finally cease to be **naturally** if you can just silent your mind to be with them (this is the 3rd way to overcome the unwholesome thought as taught by the Buddha).
- e) With this understanding, whether one is in the meditative or non-meditative state, suffering will not arise anymore.
- f) Certain tendencies or defilements (pain body as termed by Eckhart Tolle) are dormant and they can only be triggered off when there are conditions for their arising.
- g) From this dormant subtle craving mind state, thoughts will proliferate to condition it into strong craving leading to grasping, becoming and finally, birth following the dependent origination links. One then acts out of it – hence the transgression part called 'birth'.
- h) **Only when one is mindful and sensitive**, can **one be aware** of all *these subtle movements of mind*. However, for **normal people** especially for those with strong delusion and craving, they will not be able to see such subtle movements but instead they will stir their mind and be carried away by their powerful negative mental reaction.
- i) To *overcome depressive mind states*, it is important to ask one-self, 'This is my life. Do I want to allow such suffering to continue in me?'
- j) It is never worthwhile to violate nature's laws and allow karmic repercussions to prolong one's suffering. Taking the necessary appropriate steps (such as asking for forgiveness, repenting, determine not to repeat such karmic negativity via determining to follow the Buddha's advice to avoid all evil by keeping one's precepts and cultivating Noble 8fold Path, finally invoking power of merits to turn one's life around). With such wholesomeness, there is very little possibility for unwholesome karma to have the condition to ripen and cause misery. With wisdom, one will also know how to accord and flow and because Karma is such that when one has no negative reaction towards it via ignorant, its effect will ceases to be almost immediately.
- k) The minute one understands these; all our questions will cease to be.
- l) It is important to go through the first phase of dharma, pariyatti (listening and learning of the dharma) before we can move on to the second phase, patipatti (cultivation of the dharma) and eventually gets to enjoy the third phase, pativedha (the fruition of one's cultivation).

- m) When we have wisdom or understanding, we will *know how to live life* and *have a successful career* too. Then life will be wonderful and beautiful. The dharma is ***not confined*** only to the ***spiritual aspect of life*** but it also encompasses (every aspect of life). Understanding has to be applied in all that we do.

Note : (Above draft outline notes was by Puan Chee)