

OUTLINE SHORT NOTES for Thursday class dated 21 JUNE 2018

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Teoh-Thu-180621.mp3>

INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE MEDITATION

1. According to Bro Teoh, it is **very important** that we understand **what is meditation** and **what is it that we are doing in the name of meditation?** Essentially **Meditation consists** of two parts:
 - If we **still need to train the mind to be mindful**, then train it using the **mind-sweeping** method followed by **metta** to **decondition** the **heedless thinking** mind.
 - If the mind is **already** trained, we **can meditate straight** away. The key points in meditation are **to relax into every mind state that arises**, then **maintain silence** and **awareness within** to develop the **wisdom**. The wisdom or understanding will **unfold naturally** when one is **HEEDFUL**.
2. The **mind's original state before the stirring and reactions of mind** is already **stillness, silent** and **aware**. So, just let every mind state that arise settle down on its own. There is **no need to do anything** (such as focusing, noting, concentrating etc.) but **just maintain awareness within**. If an object of meditation is **needed to anchor the mind**, one can use *Anapanasati (mindfulness of the in and out breath)*. Very soon, the mind will calm down and return to its **original state of silent inner awareness**. When one **does not give** any mental energy to the thought or mundane mind, the **silent mind** will develop on its own and one's meditation will **progress naturally** leading to **sati and samadhi**. The silent mind can meditate on its own. One will then experience *piti, sukha and passadhi* which is *tranquility or stillness of mind (the silent or meditative mind)*. When **passadhi stabilizes** the mind will **enter sati**, then one can be **ever mindful in the midst of life** and activities to cultivate the **daily mindfulness**.

INSTRUCTIONS AFTER MEDITATION

3. Bro Teoh advised fellow Kalyanamittas not to be **gullible** by *following meditation instructions blindly*. We have to understand what we are doing in the name of meditation. Without **heedfulness**, we **cannot** meditate. All meditation starts off with the training of the mind to be **heedful** as per dhammapada verses 21, 22 and 23.
4. One needs to **understand how to cultivate heedfulness**. First, **train** the mind to be **mindful** and then **stabilize it** to be **ever mindful**. Next, use this **trained mind** to **cultivate the Noble 8-fold Path in the midst of life**.
5. To be **ever mindful** and **constantly meditative** are essential qualities of mind states for one to realize the **supreme born-free Nibbana** as stated by the Buddha via his dhammapada verse 23.

6. If the **mental hindrances** are still present, the cultivator must develop the *opposite five spiritual faculties* to counter them. Puja can help cultivators develop them. **Faith** in the Buddha and his teaching will arise when we reflect on **how wonderful** and **unique a being the Buddha is**. This will encourage us to have the **viriya** to strive on diligently to train the mind to be **mindful** and then stabilize it to arise the **Samadhi**, leading to the **wisdom**.
7. The Buddha emphasized the **importance of heedfulness** via dhammapada verse 21.
8. When the mind settles down, it becomes so quiet that *it will enter sati*. When *that happens*, the *mind in sati* is **not only aware but ever mindful**. One can then use *this trained mind state to meditate* via the **daily mindfulness** while in the midst of life. There is *no need to train* the mind anymore because this trained mind in sati can be heedful in the midst of life on its own. This **stable mindfulness** coupled with the **silent mind** can enable one **to insight** into *the three universal characteristics of anicca, dukkha and anatta*.
9. Hence, the word vipassana which means **to insight into** or **awaken to** the three universal characteristics is **not** a practice but **an understanding**. One *cannot practise* vipassana to reach enlightenment because it is **not** a doing. **Practice** is a **repetitive doing** via following **a series of instructions to do things** - which is **mechanical** in nature
10. However, most people have been taught to meditate using **thought-based methods and techniques** to realize the so-called awakening. These are **all samatha** and **energy field practices** involving *focusing, concentration* and **suppression**, resulting in jhanic states, absorption of mind and fantastic meditative mind states and experiences.
11. According to Bro Teoh, there is **no need to focus** or **force the mind** into any form of practice. One only needs to **relax into every mind state that arises** and **maintain awareness** to **realize the silent (true) mind**. The moment one is **without thought**, one *is already aware*. So, there is no need **to try** to practise to be aware. Any form of **doing or practice** is by the thought and by doing so **thoughts make the mind active again** so sati which is *awareness before the knowing cannot be developed* via *such thought-based practices*. Sati is to be understood.
12. We tend to **give meaning** to *almost everything we perceive* hence **we accumulate** them via memory through our *conditioned thinking* and *attachment*. **Thought is response to memory** so *the mind via delusion* reacts, stirs, grasps, clings and attaches to everything thoughts create causing one to be **heedless most** of the time.
13. Once **we see** all these *happening in our meditation*, we will then understand the *need to straighten our views* via *understanding* the Buddha proclaimed of: *'Sabbe sankhara aniccam, sabbe sankhara dukkham and Sabbe dhamma anatta'*. That is: all off sankhara (mental states and activities) are **impermanent**, lead to **suffering** when we want things our way. When we understand that even this body and mind do not belong to us, then the mind with such an

understanding will start **to behave differently**. It will **relinquish** the grasping and clinging borne of delusion.

14. One *cannot practise to be wise neither can one practise letting go or to have non-attachment* because **only wisdom frees**. **Without wisdom**, one will hold, cling and attached. Who practises? The thought which is egoic practises. Who needs to let go? Only the one who holds, right? **When there is wisdom, one will not hold** so is there any need to let go? Only deluded people practise letting go!
15. Similarly, meditation is not about practice. It is about **training the mind to become silent** so that it **can insight into phenomena**. But, most people are *so gullible* that they are *impressed by words* and *flowery dharma* to the extent that *they meditate without knowing exactly what they are doing*.
16. The **four supports for awareness based meditation** are: *relax, aware, maintain awareness 24/7 (during waking and sleeping moments) and trust*. Initially, it is difficult to be aware during sleeping moments. But as one's mindfulness becomes so stable, it is possible to carry that state into the sleeping state.
17. Bro Teoh cautioned on the dangers of doing thought based energy-field meditation because though it can make one's mind very powerful, it **cannot** liberate one from suffering. One can be drawn into the **psychic field** of psychic powers thereby conditioning *more craving and delusion* leading to *suffering* later on.
18. Question by Bro Pan - Why is it important for cultivators to locate the gateway to our self-nature?
Bro Teoh's answer:
 - i) This is only necessary for those who wish to walk the **Bodhisattva way**. The first three supports for awareness based meditation **are sufficient** for those *who wish to walk the sainthood way* while the fourth support is for those **who wish to walk the Bodhisattva way**.
 - ii) The gateway leads to one's nature and it is **a very unique point** because whatever energy that one has accumulated or developed will be *neutralized once it goes through the gateway* before being **turned into pure energy**. It is a beautiful **outlet** for trapped energy. The **pure energy** will on its own *activate the chakras and nadis*, making one feel fresh, still and energized from within. Transformation of consciousness will occur and *even the cultivator's health will improve greatly* because the *pure energy has the potential to heal one of all diseases and discomfort* during that time. However, the body which goes the way of nature will eventually get sick, grow old and die over time. This again shows the nature of impermanence.
 - iii) Master Hui Neng's teaching **takes us direct to the true mind**. Enlightenment is *beyond thought and mind* so when people lack the understanding that **there are two minds**, they

become gullible, cultivating with the mundane mind – doing **thought-based meditation** which are still within the field of thought.

- iv) Bro Teoh advised Bro Pan not to think too much about the question he had asked because when one's **mindfulness is still not stable**, one **cannot understand** what this is all about. Even to see the dependent origination is **so difficult** because everything happens so fast. When contact arises, it is **not just feeling** that arises but is *accompanied by the 7 universal mental factors* (or cetasikas) which **arise simultaneously**. It is **not** a *single-dimensional* event but *multi-dimensional*. Only a **trained mind that is still** (having a very **stable sati**) *can detect and understand* all these. It becomes so sensitive that even the slightest **very subtle mental stirring or movement** can be detected straight away. The form and mind which is **connected** to the **true nature** will understand what is happening, thus giving rise to the **wisdom which is connected** to the form and mind. Eventually *because of this wisdom connected*, the phenomenal world loses its power to deceive the form and mind (or 'cultivator') who has realized the enlightenment.
 - v) Without this training, one can only understand through theory and knowledge. The true mind is **clouded** by the **thinking (sankhara)** which are **your emotions and thoughts, etc.** Through the **meditative silence**, one *can understand* how the **condition-arising mind** has been deceived by **avijja** again and again. As one keeps on **straightening one's views** regarding kamma niyama, citta niyama and dharma niyama, one's form and mind becomes wise. With this wisdom, it will understand that this form and mind is **not me** and **not real**. It is **subject to karma** and **goes the way of nature** (anicca, dukkha, anatta).
 - vi) It is important *to plant the seed of Bodhi (Bodhi mind) deep within our nature* so that life after life when we **have to come or choose to come**, we can **inherit** our **past spiritual cultivation**. Unlike the karmic nature which follows us life after life **immediately after birth**, the **spiritual nature** can only be **inherited** after the **body and mind is connected to the true nature** through the **silent mind via meditation**.
 - vii) **Trust is most important** for one **who walks the Bodhisattva path**. Through trust, one can connect to the true nature and inherit one's past **spiritual cultivations** just like what has happened to Bro Song many years ago. When that happens, he can understand a lot of things especially those **profound teachings** and **dharma** which he did not understand before, even after reading through them many times.
19. Bro Teoh **emphasized** the need **to understand** the **basic essential dharma** of the Buddha. Otherwise we will be wasting our time going into meditation (just like what happened to the four monks during Bodhidharma's time who sat in meditation **not understanding** what they are doing in the name of meditation).
20. **No amount of sitting can transform us** if we **lack the wisdom**. So, it is not the posture that matters but one's wisdom which **enables one to break free from one's delusion and suffering**. As long as

we do not understand that we have two minds and we keep on cultivating using the mundane mind, we are wasting our time.

21. All dharmas arise from the self-nature. Wholesome and unwholesome and all forms of duality arise from this nature. If we cannot understand this basic teaching, we can forget about meditation. All forms of **thought-based meditation** will not lead us to the **true awakening**.
22. All the essential dhammas spin off from the Four Noble Truths. So, it is important that we understand the basic essential dharma of the Buddha which have so often been emphasized by Bro Teoh in all his talks especially the 3 right views of kamma niyama, citta niyama and dharma niyama.
23. Finally, this talk is a like a revision for everyone to reinforce their understanding so that their understanding can **go deep into their nature**. We should **continue to aspire, invoke vows** and **affirmations** via power of merits to have the causes and conditions to have this **right understanding** life after life so that we can still cultivate **accordingly with understanding** even when the sasana is not around. The reason is, it is very difficult for this form and mind to encounter the genuine Buddha dhamma to cultivate. Planting the bodhi seed deep within our minds will also create conditions for us to be reborn with this kind of understanding so that we can continue to perfect our nature life after life without having to fear getting lost again during the periods devoid of the Buddha sasana.

(Above draft outline notes were prepared by **Sister Puan Chee**.)