

## SHORT NOTES OF TALK ON 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-180913.mp3>

### A. INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE MEDITATION

1. Bro Teoh gave some *simple instructions before meditation*. First, **relax body and mind**. Then, **maintain silent awareness** within. If there is a *need to train the mind, go ahead*, otherwise, **just relax and maintain silent and let the mind settle down** on its own to **arise the heedful mind** that is **just aware** within. (**Note**: When we are **without attachments or thinking**, the mind will **return naturally** to its **original state** of inner **awareness and stillness** before the stirring.)
2. Meditation is very simple when one understands. **Keeping precepts** is *very important* because it is the **source** of **spiritual joy** (Silena sugatim yanti), **spiritual wealth** (Silena bhogasampadam) and spiritual **peacefulness** of mind (Silena nibbutim yanti). **Reason why** Meditation must always **start** with **Sila** or **morality following the prescribed format** of Sila, Samadhi and Panna).
3. Remember the **4 supports** for **awareness-based meditation**: they are **Relax, Aware, 24 hours** and **Trust**. First, **relax** (1<sup>st</sup> support) into *every mind state that arises and let things be*. When the mind has **settled down** and **returned** to its **original state** of **quietness** and **calmness**, **awareness** (2<sup>nd</sup> support) will arise then *maintain awareness for as long as you can (24 hours awareness or 3<sup>rd</sup> support)*. The *meditative mind* is the *silent mind without thought*. It is just the **essence of mind** within. We need **this mind** to **arise the wisdom needed for awakening**. When **we have this understanding**, we will **not create unnecessary thought** during meditation or **use thoughts** to do **thought-based meditation**. Thought-based meditation **will not lead to heedfulness** and **awakening**.
4. **Without realizing the true mind**, we **cannot have the state of no thought**. Then, we **cannot** develop the **4<sup>th</sup> support** of **Trust** to develop the *ultimate meditation*. *Trust means allowing the nature to move or meditate by itself without the interference of thought. Just relax, aware and silent.*

### B. Questions & Answers AFTER MEDITATION

5. The problem with most Buddhists is they **don't know** how to **apply the dharma** in *real life to truly live life*. Last night Bro Swee Aun brought a lady (with certain 1<sup>st</sup> noble truth problem) to see/consult me to get my advice. The lady came with a friend from SJBA. This lady was having *some serious personal problems* and she **was suffering** very badly and she found life to be **very difficult**. She finds it **so difficult** to even **confront life's 1<sup>st</sup> noble truth realities** of **pending separation** from *loved ones* and **when she is with people whom she doesn't like she becomes miserable**. Bro Teoh agrees with her comment that if one **doesn't understand life**, then life can be **pretty difficult** (really not easy). But **when one understands**, then life can become **beautiful, wonderful and rather meaningful**. When we have the **Buddha Dhamma cultivated**, there is **joy and understanding** within. This **Dhamma understanding** can **transform a person completely** into a very **wise and virtuous human being** with *great character and personality* to become **a blessing** to all. There is **no more need to go through suffering** anymore and one can then **live life to the fullest**. One only needs to understand the Buddha's teaching or dhamma deeply.
6. The lady left with much better understanding of the Buddha Dhamma after talking to Bro Teoh for about two hours. She became **more calm, confident and peaceful**. She *felt much better*. Bro Teoh just explained to her the **Law of Karma & the 4 Noble Truths** to let her understand her present problem and situation and **how she can apply** the *Buddha's teaching to help her overcome her problem and life situation; to do what she needs to do to turn her life around*. Bro Teoh also explained to her that she is **not the only one** who suffers this way for every human being who **lives long enough** will also have to **confront** the **eight 1<sup>st</sup> noble truth realities** and

**they will also suffer** if they **don't** *have this understanding*. Some suffer less and some suffer more - it all depends on their karmic past. How life can become so miserable for some people. The **application of dharma** is very important because when we understand that **we hold the key to our life's destiny** and **to be happy or miserable is entirely our choice** then we will know how *to come out of this predicament*.

7. Bro Teoh told her - **there is so much more to life** than *just worrying and going through such misery* via allowing people to mentally torment you. If we cling on to all these **wrong or unhappy thoughts** as memory and problem then we will definitely suffering. It is **better to forget the whole thing and let it pass via resolving such issues amicably with understanding** and then **move on** with our **new life** which is **much more meaningful** instead of holding on and clinging to such wrong thoughts/memory. Life had so much more to offer. We can choose to be happy and live life to the fullest with love and understanding. We can travel and do the things we like to do.
8. Memory is necessary for us **to store important things** but **not to store psychological memories of fears, phobias, insecurity and scars** of memories, etc. that *brings about suffering and make us miserable*. The commonly used words, *letting go* is a *fallacy or myth* because: 'who wants to let go? The one who holds, right? So how can the person who is still holding and clinging, let go?' If we **don't understand** that those wrong thoughts are **tormenting us** and **making us miserable**, then we **will continue to hold** via *worrying about them*. We **must see this with understanding to break free** from the recurring **wrong thoughts** that always come up with ideas and words to tell us things which are **very negative** and **not the reality**. Hence our problem can't be **resolved amicably with understanding** because of the way we **react to such situation via the evil roots of selfishness, anger, emotion and delusion**.
9. When we can **see clearly** how our **wrong thoughts** with *the 3 evil roots* are **causing us so much suffering** through **our reaction** to *sense experiences and life*, we will **wake up straight away**. Understanding the *Law of Karma* and the *Buddha's essential dhamma/teachings* can help us **break free** from our **deluded habitual thinking pattern** which has been deluding us all these while. However, **many Buddhists cannot see** this, and that is the main reason why they **don't know how to apply** the *Buddha's teaching* to help them live life.
10. *When we take care of karma via avoiding all evil, doing good and purifying the mind, our life changes*. There is no point **believing** in *feng shui* and *fortune tellers* because the main thing that matters most in life is **karma** and *nothing else*. Whatever that happens to us **at any one time** has its causes and conditions behind and these causes and conditions **are mainly due to karma** because *according to the Buddha, 'we are all born of our karma, heir to our karma, conditioned and supported by our karma and we are what we are because of our karma*. The 1<sup>st</sup> Noble truth **8 realities** of life and existence that **afflict us** are also **mainly due to karma**. We have to accept these realities because our life misery is not caused by somebody else.
11. Most people think karma is just: - Do good begets good, do evil begets evil; you reap what you sow; but, is that what karma is really all about? This is **only a very small part** of the real understanding.
12. Karma is not like what people think, only cause and effect. Whatever **causes** that *arises due to karmic volition* will give rise to **karmic potential**. Its effect is **not immediate** most of the time. Whether good or bad, it will create the karmic potential which is stored in one's **karmic nature**. Within **one complete** thought process, there are usually seventeen thought moments. The **seven** determining thought moments during volition are called javana. If it occur on the first javana then if there is **not condition** for it *to ripen in this life*, it **will cease**. If it is on the seventh javana, then its *karmic potential will only be active until the next life*. If there is **no condition** for it *to ripen*, it will also cease. The second to the sixth javana will follow us for eternity.
13. The past is already gone and we **cannot change** our past karma. *So how do we deal with life?* Understanding that we need conditions for karmic potential to ripen. Otherwise, they will not happen or cease to take effect

if the karmic potential is already over. With this **understanding**, we are in a *better position to understand* how *karma can ripen or cease*. If we can avoid the conditions for evil karma from ripening via following the advice of the Buddha then we can have better life conditions. Which means when things don't go our way or when we are confronted with the 1<sup>st</sup> noble truth's 8 realities, we should via **right views (wisdom)** with regards to this law of karma **remain calm and peaceful without reacting to stir our mind** to become emotional via **self-delusion**. If we **can do this** then there is **not evil roots to condition** our karmic negativities; then we will not create the conditions for the *negative karmic potential* of ours to have a chance to ripen. That's how **wisdom frees**. Karma is such, when there is **no more condition to afflict** one then the **karmic effect** will **reverse** itself. In order to have this **ability** we must **not create karmic negativity** when **confronted** with the 1<sup>st</sup> noble truth realities (which most human beings don't understand). Most people when hit with the *first noble truth realities* will **react with anger, violence and fear, etc.**, thus arising the **karmic negativities** with the evil roots of greed, hatred and delusion. These will arise the **very conducive** conditions for **negative karmic potential to ripen**. This is the reason why most human being **suffers** when they **do that via ignorant**.

14. Bro Teoh himself went through the tests many years ago. So, karma is not something cast in stone. If we **don't give rise to** the conditions, we **can avoid** the *karmic potential or consequence from arising*.
15. Knowing how **to apply the dhamma in life** is very important. Many people don't understand how this can be done. The lady whom Bro Swee Aun brought to see Bro Teoh kept saying that, 'this guy had done so much wrong yet nothing bad had happened to him'. Bro Teoh explained, *when the karmic potential hasn't ripened yet* (because there is no condition) then it will appear that way but when there are conditions, karma will take its effect. This is just like the **politicians in our country** who may be powerful at one time **but recently after 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018** when **conditions change**, their karma *will ripen accordingly* because of the **dawn of a New Malaysia**.
16. *Causes and conditions from the past* can give rise to *karmic potential in the future*. Bro Teoh mentioned the case of Moggallana (one of the Buddha's chief disciple) who **finally succumbed** to his **karmic repercussions** from the past and was *clobbered to death* though he had *psychic powers*.
17. **Understanding** the *Law of Karma* and the *other essential dhammas* enables one to have the **understanding to apply the Buddha dharma** to life thus transforming oneself to **become a blessing to all**. With this understanding, one will have the *ability to share this understanding to help others*.
18. In the **Diamond sutra**, these four lines stanza are **very potent and powerful** : -  
*All are conditioned dharmas within the conditioned world;*  
*They are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, and shadows,*  
*Like the morning dew and a lightning flash;*  
*One should contemplate them thus.*
19. This *poem can bring about wisdom* to help us **break free** from **delusion** from the *existential world*.
20. Dhammapada verses 1 and 2 also highlight the **importance of right thought** : -

**Dh Verse 1** - All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain or suffering will follow him, as the wheel follows the hoof print of the ox that draws the carriage.

**Dh Verse 2** - All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of

our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

21. **Everything** within the **conditioned** world is in a **state of flux** so we **cannot cling and attach**. But within the conditioned world there is *such a thing* as **the law of karma** and our **5 aggregates of form and mind** (the human being) is subject to this law of karma. That is the reason why **right duty** is very important within the conditioned world as explained by the Law of Karma because the **law of karma recognizes relationships** and **not everything is non-self and empty** within the **conditioned** world.
22. 'Right duty is right dharma,' as advised by *Bro Teoh's teacher Phra Ajahn Yantra* to him in the late 80s. But, this understanding is **seldom** or **hardly taught** among Buddhists. Reason for the *lack of understanding* to live life.
23. It is important that we cultivate the *Noble Eightfold Path* which can lead to the end of all suffering. When one becomes enlightened, one will have the **embodiments** of all the *Noble Eightfold Path's path factors* of **right view** with regards to the three spiritual laws (Law of Karma, Law of Mind and Law of Dharma), right thoughts, speech, and action, etc.
24. Without this **right view**, one **cannot** start to live one's life. *Right view will condition the right thought* because one won't violate the Law of Karma but instead will use the **4 right efforts** to *purify one's thoughts* leading to right speech and action. **Yoniso manisakara** or **wisdom** at the **moment of sense experience** is able to help check one's thoughts. Eventually, *we still have to cultivate the right thoughts, speech and action that are still not in us*. With this understanding, *life itself is the meditation/cultivation* and **meditation is never apart from life**.
25. Based on the above right view the Buddha always advised us to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind. But, if *we don't understand how all these are inter-related*, we will not be able to apply the dharma in life.
26. *Byron Katie uses her 4 lines of questioning to help people overcome their problems via questioning their thoughts* :-
  - a) Is it true? (Yes or no. If no, move to 3.)
  - b) Can you absolutely know that it's true? (Yes or no.)
  - c) How **do you react** or **what happens**, when you **believe** those *wrong thought*?
  - d) Who would you be **without** those **wrong** thought?
27. We can abandon the **wrong thought** using the **third way** or the **meditative way** of awareness as taught by the Buddha. Just **relax** and **silent** your mind and be **aware** to **realize that thoughts and emotions** like *anger, hatred* and *fear*, etc. are **dependent originating** hence **impermanent** and **not you**. Without *wrong view*, we **won't react and stir** our mind. But, a lot of meditators even after having gone in and out of retreats still *cannot transforming* their minds because *they failed to develop the meditation correctly* to **realize this truth**. If we are trapped in **duality** created by the **mundane mind** just like Shen Xiu who was practicing at the thought level, it is **very difficult** to *break free*.
28. *Instead, allow whatever mind states that arise to cease on its own*. Then using the **fourth way** to **trace the origination factors** via *mindfulness of the six internal and six external sense bases* to develop the **wisdom** to **straighten our views**. **Without wisdom** we tend to **act according to memory** (which are our views and opinions, our culture and traditions borne of our conditioning; our belief system, fear, insecurities and phobias etc.) to **react** to **situations** via our *wrong thoughts*. Eventually, when we *have cultivated and developed the*

*wisdom and understanding, we can then accept the world as what it is; for the world is the world and people are just the way they are. When conditions are like that, things will be like that. We can then accept the reality of the moment which is 'What IS!' – The IS-ness of things. We can then act with wisdom following the Noble 8-fold path; the dhamma way.*

29. *With this wisdom, there is **no need to suppress** the anger or use the charms and amulets to ward off fear anymore.*
30. *The dhamma must be learned and understood via **phase 1** of dhamma (Pariyati) then put into practice in daily life via **phase 2** (Patipatti). When we awaken, we will receive the fruit of our hard work to live the noble life which is **3<sup>rd</sup> phase** of dhamma (Pativedha).*
31. *Sometimes if there are **karmic obstructions**, we need to ask for forgiveness (repentance) and **vow never** to repeat all these negativities again. Since *according to the Buddha whatever that arises in life, there are causes and conditions* behind hence there is *no need to lament*. Instead, ask for forgiveness and determine to change via following the **Buddha's teachings** to avoid all evil, *cultivate wholesomeness and develop wisdom to **improve our life** and **transform our self for the better**. When we repent, grow in virtues, meditate and develop wisdom via this cultivation, we can then **invoke the power** of such merits for our **life situations to improve**. But if we continue to have the wrong mind states, we are just **arising the conditions** for the **bad karmic potential and repercussions** to ripen.**
32. *When one has faith and asks for forgiveness, Mother Nature will response accordingly regardless of whichever religion one is having.*
33. *Do it for at least for 3 months to see the result and change in you and your life situation. Then invoke power of merits for **turn around**. This is **not** psychic or magic but **only an understanding** of **how nature's law function** via the *dhamma way*.*

**(Above outline short notes draft is by Puan Chee)**