Outline Short Notes for Bro Teoh’s 25th July 2019 Thursday class


1) For meditators whose spiritual faculties are quite developed, meditation is relatively easy because technically they do not need to train their mind, they can straight away relax body and mind, silent their mind and allow whatever thinking or thoughts (if any) to slow down on their own, then the silent meditative mind will arise. Relax into whatever mind states that arise. Remember the first 3 supports – relax, aware and maintain awareness for as long as you can (no matter what happens). Just be aware of any tactile feeling or sensation that arise. When one becomes more skilful, one will be able to be aware of our subtle breathing (or whatever object of meditation used). Finally, the awareness will drop to the heart area. Just silent everything and feel or maintain awareness. Don’t do anything else. Just aware, aware and aware…. And no more thoughts proliferation.

2) The 4 supports for awareness base meditation are: 1st support - relax, 2nd support – aware, 3rd support - 24-hour continuous awareness to be maintain for as long as you can, finally when you can detect the gateway to your true nature, just let nature do the meditation via . the 4th support - trust, with no interference from the thought. If you don’t use the mind, it will silent very fast. Your true nature, which is just aware will surface. Stay with the awareness, stabilize it. It has the ability to understand many things. Use this silent mind to develop wisdom and understanding.

3) Without awareness one cannot be mindful and heedful. Only through a stable sati, can the mind become collected and unwavering, quiet and peaceful. Then the meditation will happen by itself.

4) The important point of understanding is, you can use any object of meditation (as a skilful mean) to quieten and still the mind until the mind enters sati, to realize the silent mind which is also your true mind. When sati is stabilized, the mind will enter sati and the more refined sati will arise. With no movement or activity, stay with that silence, to stabilize it until a natural state of free mind in Samadhi borne of understanding arise.

5) Consciousness is trapped inside the physical form, - so when the sense data and the conscious mind makes contact with the sense bases, the respective sense door consciousness arises. Then through the silent mind, you can understand clearly what the Buddha’s dependent origination teaching is. That is – upon contact what happens, etc.? What is “avijja paccaya sankhara”; you will also see and understand clearly. You can then have a very stable and sensitive mind in sati to observe and develop the wisdom and understanding. Without this stability of mindfulness, you cannot do it.

6) For meditators who lack the 5 spiritual faculties, they need to train their mind, through mind sweeping method and anapanasati to develop sati first. When sati is developed, the mind will calm down, you will experience piti/spiritual joy/rapture/calmness. Remember to relax into whatever mind state that arise, otherwise one may be led astray to develop absorption and
one pointedness concentration meditation. This Relaxation step, is very important (for you to avoid from falling into such concentration). Mind becomes quiet, calm and tranquil when you relax into it. It also frees the body and mind from stress, tension and tightness. The more relax you are, the more refined your meditation will be. The ability to relax is something we must learn. It is very deep, there are many levels and stages of calmness and awareness. When you are in sati and you know how to relax, you can release whatever stress within the form and mind. Actually most of you are not really relaxed! When you are truly relaxed, your mind is a free mind, not holding onto anything, always at peace without the need to do anything and you are most of the time with your true mind, without thought and have no mental movement.

7) The thoughts come in very fast (when you try to know), so don’t try to know. It will disrupt the tranquillity, the stillness of mind. Just let things be. Whenever contact arises let it be, just aware and don’t let the thought proliferate. That is how you can meditate with understanding to progress along the path of dharma.

8) First train the mind to develop sati, stabilize it until mind enters sati to realise the stillness and tranquillity of mind leading to passaddhi. When that mind arises, you can use it to meditate and develop a lot of understanding. Your initial wisdom borne of the 1st and 2nd turnings wisdom is very important. Without the initial wisdom, it is not easy to develop the meditation.

9) Sister Tammy shared during meditation, how her mind made comparisons, rejecting or accepting the thoughts. She reflected on her first meditation experience, then later she realised, she had fallen asleep but when she became aware again, her thoughts flashed by quickly. She felt rejuvenated and refreshed after that.

10) Bro Teoh explained that Tammy felt recuperated because her mind actually rested when she fell asleep. In daily life, if her mindfulness spiritual faculty is not stable, sankhara will arise. Sankhara moves very fast. In puthujjana, it is like non-stop sankhara activities leading to proliferation of thoughts. The untrained mind is heedless and it thinks a lot, so expect this sankhara activities to arise, let it arise, and do not resist it, then your mind can settle down and you can be at peace.

11) Cultivate mindfulness to tame the heedless thinking (untrained and wild) mind. Train your mind to go beyond mere conceptual (heedless) thinking leading to a mind state of pure, still and undistracted tranquillity and well-being. That is real meditation.

12) There is an internal conflict created by the mundane mind wanting to be quiet, this wanting is a craving (a mental hindrance) which will prevent you entering the meditative state of inner peace, inner calmness and inner awareness. If you don’t create dislike for this state, the craving and the ill-will will not be there. If no mental hindrance, sati will take over. Meditation will fall into its place.

13) Most cultivators tend to make this mistake. The mundane mind actively doing things (in the name of meditate). They thought to meditate there must be a meditator. But they never inquire, who is the meditator? The thought is the meditator! And how can the thought meditate? The
reason being once the thought is active there is no meditation because this thought’s thinking prevents the cultivator from realizing their silent mind. The gullible thought will also think of thought based methods and techniques to meditate. So thought is actively verbalizing, noting and arising the mental heedless thinking and thought conceptions. This is not meditation. Then it also reacts to sense experience and tactile sensation arising in meditation. When there is pain or numbness, mind becomes restless, agitated and not at peace thereby creating more mental hindrances. So how can you meditate?

14) The meditation as taught by the Buddha is very simple. It is just heedfulness and to be heedful there are 2 parts: Ever mindful + constantly meditative. So the inquiry should be, ‘Am I training my mind to be mindful leading to heedfulness?’

15) Heedfulness = ever mindful + constantly meditative [constantly cultivating the Noble Eight Fold Path, (N8FP)]. To be ever mindful, you must first develop mindfulness. Then stabilise it, to be ever mindful, only then can you use it to cultivate the N8FP. The outcome of it is heedfulness. This is also the reason why all meditation starts with the training of mind to be mindful, to be aware and not to focus or concentrate the mind.

16) Dhammapada 21 - Heedfulness is the path to the deathless. The heedful never dies. Whereas heedlessness is the path to the dead and the heedless is as if dead. It means if you are heedless, you don’t stand a chance.

17) Bro Teoh advised Tammy to understand the meditation taught by the Buddha and to forget about the thoughts telling her this and that and getting herself involved in thought based verbalisation and activities. Don’t fight or suppress these mental hindrances, they arise because you lack the 5 opposite spiritual faculties. So train your daily mindfulness and spiritual faculties till they are very stable, then one becomes heedful and the mental hindrances will naturally cease to be on its own and meditation will be easy because no more mental hindrances.

18) Most people don’t have the resolve and ability to train their mind to develop the continuous daily mindfulness to become ever mindful because it is not easy to do that. Unless you are the serious type, who constantly listen to the Dharma and determined to be ever mindful. Then constantly reflect, contemplate and inquiry into the dharma to arise the initial wisdom. With the initial wisdom developed, when you are in the formal sitting meditation or daily mindfulness training, your mind will settle down into stillness very fast. Spiritual faculties together with daily mindfulness training will also make you less heedless leading to more heedfulness while living life.

19) When you are less heedless, you are most of the time aware and you can go into the meditative state straight away and easily. Sati will take over. In order to do that you must not have any mental hindrance borne of the initial wisdom. Otherwise, mental hindrances will hinder your mind. So if you have problem in life while confronting the 1st Noble Truth realities, it means you do not have the Dharma, then fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation will make you miserable. You cannot settle down and you cannot meditate. Don’t fight, control or suppress the mental hindrances. Just relax. Let them be. Understand that the untrained mind is heedless.
Without spiritual faculties, it will think. When I let it be, I don’t develop desire or ill-will towards such sense experiences, then my mind can be at peace. When you understand this, you will progress because you will come to clearly understand that the purpose of meditation is just to develop heedfulness. Then you are home.

20) J Krishnamurti expressed heedlessness differently. He uses the words, “Your life is in disorder. Your mind is confusing and chaotic because there is no order.” It is like our society, when it is in disorder; it is chaotic with lots of problems because there is no rule of law.

21) Heedless living (without the sila) is karmically very negative. Therefore, you cannot develop the meditation. This understanding must be very clear before you can meditate.

22) Bro Teoh advised Tammy not to worry about the background thoughts during her sitting meditation. Just let it be and to reflect on the meaning of meditation until it is very clear. What is it that I must do to develop the meditation? Heedfulness! Right? So starts from there.

23) Bro Teoh explained to Tammy on the **how to deal with disturbing thoughts**, wanting her to deal with some of the 1st Noble Truth realities. Talk to the thought to give her the space to meditate and not to disturb or hurry her during meditation and in return promise the thought, to deal with the situations later (after the meditation).

24) 1st Noble Truth realities: the **8 conditions** that are common to all living beings. Without wisdom, when confronting them, one will be entangled and suffering will arise. **Worry and fear will not solve** your problem. Worry is associated with fear and anxiety leading to sorrow and lamentation. This is how living being suffers. Then they slip into depression and develop suicidal thoughts. Actually it is just mere thought! The thought is never you! How come the thought has such power over you? Why allow the thought to have such power to make you so miserable? Because through ignorance you think the wrong thought. When you have the wrong thought it conditions your fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation, insecurity and scars of memories. That’s how one got entangled and suffered. Reflect and contemplate until very, very clear especially when face with 1st Noble Truth realities. Inquire: What actual happen? What are my options and **how can I resolve it amicably and how can I come out of it**?

25) Most common 1st Noble Truth realities are: 1) Death, 2) Disease 3) Relationship problems and 4) Financial problems. The 4th one, financial problem is the easiest to resolve.

   a. **Medical fee financial problems**: If cannot afford, Bro Teoh’s advice is to go to government hospital. Charges are very low if above 55 years old. If sibling is a government servant, medical is free for parents. Always inform staff you have retired or is not working. If you tell staff you are an Engineer or an account, etc., the charges are different - much costlier.

   b. **Business failure/ Cash flow or Credit card financial problems**: If cannot afford to pay, worst case scenario is to declare bankruptcy or cut loss and take “hair-cut” to resolve it amicably. Resolve problem by applying right view leading to right thought, right speech and right actions following N8FP.
26) If karmically related, **ask for forgiveness, repent and invoke the power of merits** for turn around. **Don’t panic** and react. Resolve it amicably through understanding. Apply N8FP: right view leading to right thought, right speech and right actions. To resolve karmic issues, acknowledge with **right view** in respect to **Law of Karma**. In the past, you **must have done certain things** to certain people to entangle yourself karmically. This kammic fruition now arises. You must not get **angry, fearful and react** and be miserable because they will **not solve** your problem, instead they make you worst. You **can avoid being afflicted, if you have the dharma, the wisdom and understanding**. If you can accept this 1st noble truth realities and then **act with wisdom**, according to understanding following N8FP then you can **resolve your problem amicably**. With right view, I **can accept** what happened, because this is a common reality. Therefore, I **do not panic**; I do not develop the fear, the anxiety, sorrow, and lamentation. No more **wrong thoughts** and I am calmness. I have **clarity of mind** to inquire, what is my problem? Try to understand what actually happened. **Write them down**. How can I **resolve it amicably** in order to move on? I **only have to make a decision**. E.g. cut loss or declare bankruptcy etc.

27) Bro Teoh advised Tammy to forget about her restless mind and her thought dealing with another thought telling her what to do next, should I do Anapanasati etc. It is more important for her to understand what meditation is. Train the mind to be mindful and heedful. Learn to be **mindful** in the midst of life, start **daily mindfulness** from home, then to office (career activities) and back to home. Make it into a **good religious' routine**.

28) A sister shared an effective method on how she forgives her **disturbing thoughts** and became a better person later. Bro Teoh explained that **when you forgive others or yourself, you free yourself**. Because you no longer dislike or hate the person, there is no more aversion, no more reactive emotions like before. The evil roots are gone. Indirectly, it will make you happy and **transform** you. If you can forgive your wrong thoughts and other people you will become a better person.

29) Tammy reported her restlessness, her wanting to escape and her thoughts trying to rectify this and that. Bro Teoh explained, not to fight the mental aversion/hindrance. Fighting gives the mental hindrance power. Just relax, accept the fact that the untrained mind is heedless.

30) Bro Teoh shared his early day’s **religious routine** cultivation and his **daily mindfulness and awareness** in daily life activities cultivation. Aware of all actions and moments in the present moment. His advice is to write down a daily list of things to do, to avoid having to remember them. **Prioritise** important matter first and handle it immediately, properly and mindfully.

(Above outline short notes draft was prepared by sister Poh Cheng)