

Short Notes for Brother Teoh's Thursday class dated 19th September 2019 Talk

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-190919.mp3>

Whiteboard : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-190919.jpeg>

Youtube : [Daily Mindfulness & Understanding Cultivation Part 3 \(Without Thought that is your True Mind\) https://youtu.be/ELi6crA9cgg](https://youtu.be/ELi6crA9cgg)

1. Your **original state** of mind (**without** the thought) is your **true nature**. This is **your meditative mind**. With this **understanding**, to **meditate** is very easy, just **Relax, aware, and silent** (or let things be). When you are **silent within**, you can see **how thoughts actually arise, due to conditions and it is dependent originating**. There is **no 'thinker'** behind the thought, hence it is **non-self (anatta)**. Thought is **respond to memory**. If your **daily mindfulness and silent mind is very stable**, you can also see the **birth and formation** of thought and this **thought (namarupa)** is the **2nd aspect** of the 5 aggregate of form and mind. **Initially** it is just the **pure vinanam (pure consciousness)** before the **content of consciousness** goes in to **form** the thought (namarupa).
2. **How does thought arise? Why is thought limited?** You are **initially** the **spacious awareness without a center**. When you **shrink** your **spacious awareness** into a **small space** to **perceive something**, thought becomes limited. Initially this is just **pure awareness** before the **content** of consciousness goes in. That is '*in the seeing, there is only seeing consciousness' no one to see as yet*. But with your **views, opinions and mental conditioning**, the **wrong content of consciousness** are inputted through **perception and memory**, and **this cause** the pure awareness/pure consciousness to **become an egoic thought**. This happens **very fast** (when you **lack a stable daily mindfulness** and the **initial wisdom** or yoniso manasikara) borne of the **1st and 2nd turning wisdom**. Reason why there is **grasping** to the **5 aggregates of form and mind** due to **ignorance, leading to dukkha**.
3. In the **12 links (Paticca samuppada) or Dependent Origination** teaching the Buddha said, '*avijja paccaya sankhara; sankhara paccaya vinnanam; vinnana paccaya nama rupam;*'. That is '**Dependent on ignorance** (ignorant of truth), mental activities or thinking arise. When *thinking arise, mind makes contact with brain*, then just like the **physics experiment, upon contact the light bulb lights up**. The lighting up is **vinnanam** i.e. the pure 'thought' consciousness **before** the input of its content. In Satipatthana sutta, Buddha used the term **citta**, meaning the pure **vinnanam with its content**. Thus the Buddha instructed the monks as follows: when the **content of consciousness** has *delusion or lust (greed) or hatred*, you **must be aware**.
4. To **meditate is not to create more thoughts**. Instead you **need sati** (the **silent mind**) to see *the essential dharma, to know who you are and how you function as a human being*, and to *know clearly* the Paticca samuppada (the Law of Dependent Origination) links and teaching clearly.
5. The following Mahayana Dharma saying by **Master Bo Yuen Chang Lau** of WPCS are very important: -
 - **心静** (xin jing) - **Still or silent mind, the meditative mind**;
 - **无念是真心** (wu nian shi zhen xin) – **without thought that is the true mind**;
 - **动念即无明** (dong nian ji wu ming) – **stirring of the thought is delusion**.

6. When **you think a lot**, it **means** there is **ignorance**. You **lack wisdom** and you are **heedless**. (Instead the enlightened ones **only think** when *they need to, or else they are most of the time silent within*).
7. For your **meditative mind** to arise, you **need** to have the **initial wisdom**, the **5 spiritual faculties**, and the **daily mindfulness developed**. The reason being, *our mind can only do one thing at a time*; i.e. it is **either aware** (within the moment) borne of wisdom or it is **loss in thought** (preoccupied with the thinking due to avijja or ignorant). **When it is aware** it is **with the true mind** (without thought). Whereas **when you are loss in thoughts**, it is with the **mundane mind heedlessly thinking and proliferating**.
8. For those who **can't have the meditative mind** developed, they **cannot meditate**. Reason why they need an **object of meditation** or a *skillful means to anchor and train* the mind. Most of them **focus their mind** to do **Samatha meditation** via the 40 objects of meditation so that their mind is **not heedless (think a lot) and restless**. One **can only be mindful** when the **5 spiritual faculties** are there, otherwise the **mental hindrances** will be there **to hinder** their mind from **entering the meditative state of inner peace and inner awareness**. The object of meditation is **only their initial skillful means to help suppress their obsessive thoughts**. This is **suppression via a conditioned state of focusing (concentration)**! Not borne of wisdom. Reason why their defilements *borne of ignorant cannot be rooted out* because they are **all suppressed by the concentration or energy field**.
9. The **5 spiritual faculties** make one **calm, composed and ever mindful** and it **can** enable one to understand **spiritual teachings** easily. The 5 spiritual faculties are:
 - a) **Faith/Saddha** – your **faith deepens by knowing clearly who the Buddha is?** He is **not only enlightened but fully enlightened**. He is **perfect in wisdom and virtue**, he **understands life completely** and his **rather unique and beautiful teaching can liberate** the mind of living beings from all suffering.
 - b) **Spiritual zeal/Viriya** – the **spiritual tenacity to cultivate (borne of seeing the importance of such cultivation)**, to make you awake. You **need a good daily religious routine to train your mind to be ever mindful in midst of life**. When you do the formal meditation, it is to **train your mind enter sati and to realize passaddhi**.
 - c) **Sati/mindfulness** – awareness (without thought), before the input of the content of consciousness. When you are in **sati** there is **no thought** hence there is **no negativity of mind states**.
 - d) **Samadhi** - mind that is **collected and unwavering**. (because of Samadhi, when you see something, your mundane mind does not stir. Then you **can see things as they are**, and you will **not stir your mind to act according to memory** (which is not acting at all) through inputting the **content of consciousness** according to your memory's accumulated **views, opinions and mental conditioning** which leads to evil roots and wrong thoughts.
 - e) **Wisdom/panna** – will arise **when I can see things as they are** with **Samadhi** leading to the **last enlightenment factor of upekkha (equanimity borne of wisdom)**.
10. Thus it is **important to train** your mind to be **ever mindful (without thought)** by **cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties** and the **daily mindfulness**. You need this because once you **enter life**, your **6 sense doors are fully engaged** so if you **cannot** be in this **meditative state** when you are in the **formal meditation** then it will be **near to impossible** for you to be **mindful** while you are fully **engaged in life**.

11. It is **important** to be **mindful** of your **6 internal** and **6 external sense bases** to **understand** how *you function* as a human being, because **you interact** with the *world through your sense bases*. When you are aware of all these, you will know **how you** become **lustful, fearful, emotional, angry** etc. You are *able to see them all in your meditation* - all the *essential dharma as taught by the Buddha*: the 5 spiritual faculties, 5 mental hindrances, 5 aggregates of form and mind, 4 noble truths, 7 factors of enlightenment, 10 steps of the avijja sutta, 3 turning of the 4 Noble truth wisdom, etc.
12. The **Dharma is akaliko** (beyond time and beyond thought) i.e. **timeless**. Thus you cannot use thought to meditate to realize the dharma which is beyond thought. You need **sati** to **realize this true dharma**.
13. **Thought is matter**, thought is **trapped energy** ($E=mc^2$). *Thought can see form; form cannot see thought*. Thus *thought is of higher intelligence than form*. From 0 comes 1 (the 1st thought of ignorant) then from 1 comes infinity. When we meditate, **awareness can see thought** but **thought cannot see awareness**. Thus **awareness has higher intelligence**. Thought arises from your **true nature**. From this oneness nature, all things come about.
14. When you walk this path of dharma, you develop wisdom leading to virtues, naturally. **Without wisdom**, there is **no genuine** virtues. **True Virtues** must be accompanied with **wisdom otherwise** it is **virtue** according to **oneself**.
15. Human beings have two minds: the **mundane mind** and the **supra mundane mind**. Supra mundane mind will realize that the 5 aggregates are empty (empty nature of existence) thus non-self and impermanent.
16. In our **daily cultivation**, we **start** from **understanding** the **mundane mind** via comprehending **Dhammapada verses 1 and 2**. According to the **Buddha, Verse 1**: *'Mind is the forerunner of all things; when mind arises, all things arise. If you act, speak and think with the unwholesome or evil mind that has the 3 evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion, then suffering will follow you as the wheels that follow the hoof print of the ox that draws the cart. Whereas Verse 2: if you speak, act and think with a pure mind (free of the 3 evil roots), happiness will follow you like a shadow that never leaves you.* Thus you need to train the **mundane mind** to be **heedful**.
17. Your life, you hold the key to your own life's destiny. To be happy or unhappy is entirely your choice. So choose to be happy, choose to develop wholesomeness, to train your mind to be heedful and constantly meditative always via **following the advice** of the **Buddha to Do good, avoid all evil and purify the mind**.
18. But when it **comes to meditation**, we start with understanding the **true mind**. Meditate **to realize and connect** to our **true nature**. **Wisdom** that *arise via the direct seeing* is **connected** to your 5 aggregate of form and mind and thus the form and mind (or human being) is enlightened, but it is **not you** because the 5 aggregate of form and mind **is not a permanent unchanging entity**. As this 5 aggregate is **no longer deluded**, thus there is no more suffering. This is how awakening happens.
19. If you **plant the seed of wholesomeness**, you **will reap the fruit of goodness**. On the other hand, **evil begets evil**. Thus it is **important to keep the minimum 5 precepts**. This will enable you to **avoid all the major evils**. If you **violate** these precepts, **karmic fruition** will surely hit back. Out of love and compassion for human beings, Buddha taught the 5 precepts. Then **cultivate wholesomeness**, and **develop mindfulness** and **wisdom** to purify mind to have the good life. To live the **3rd phase of dharma –Pativedha dharma** (life of an enlightened being).

20. In avijja sutta, **sense restraint** is vital. With **sense restraint** you **can't break** your **precepts**. This comes about after **having listening** to the **true dharma** and then **investigated (via constant reflection, contemplation and inquiry)** into them to develop the **faith** and the initial **wisdom** (yonisomanasikara) borne of 1st and 2nd **turning wisdom**. Real meditation **only begins when sati sampajanna** (mindfulness and clear comprehension) has stabilized. With this, one **can keep to precepts naturally**, as one knows the consequence from not doing so.
21. With **wisdom**, thought may arise but **no more proliferation** due to **wrong view** and **self-delusion**. You are aware and mindful at the moment of sense experience **most of the time** and this **yonisomanasikara** will prompt and guide you, on **how to act according to wisdom**, following **Noble 8-fold path**. When you perceive something, wisdom sees it just 'as it is'. Suchness.
22. Qi Xin Dong Nian” (起心动念) – the **arising of mind, creates thinking hence stirring of the mind comes to be!** Or in Theravāda term it is “avijjā paccayā saṅkhāra” – “*Ignorance conditions activities of mind*” (the first two links of the paṭicca-samuppāda)
23. Originally **before the stirring**, the **true mind** is already in the **meditative state** of *inner peace, silence and still awareness within*. So the **stirring of the mundane mind** comes about only when we **do not** have the **wisdom** and **understanding** of this **fundamental principle**. Through our **own ignorance**, we cause our **mundane mind to arise** via **our reactions to sense experiences** at the *moment of sense experience*. **Train the mind** to have **the silent inner awareness and clarity to see all these clearly** then there is **no more delusion** and we can just “**let things be**” then no more suffering or problem and **tranquility will return** by **not trying to do anything** via the **thought to suppress** or **control**. I.e. just **be patient** to maintain the ‘**silent mind**’ with **clear inner awareness** within, to let everything **return to its original state before its stirring**. Always remember; when there is no delusion or ignorance there is no stirring of the mind because “**only wisdom frees the mind**”. i.e. the moment you have wisdom, your mind will not stir and you are free, so **no need to do anything after that** because **things are just the way they are!** – **Suchness** or Tathatā.

(The draft for this short notes were prepared by Sister Chong Phey Yuen.)