

## Short Notes for Brother Teoh's October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019 Talk

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-191003.mp3>

Whiteboard : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-191003.jpg>

YouTube : [Daily Mindfulness & Understanding Cultivation Part 4](https://youtu.be/IJOQOdWld2U) <https://youtu.be/IJOQOdWld2U>

1. One needs to develop **meditation** with **some basic understanding** of **mind**. We must understand that we have **two minds**, namely the **mundane mind** and the **true mind**. To **live life** we use the **mundane mind** which is **responsible** for all arising of mind. **Without wisdom** this *mundane mind* will become heedless and **evil**, to arise the 3 evil roots of **Greed, Hatred** and **Delusion**. Then **suffering** will be the result following Dhammapada verse 1. With **wisdom borne of right views**, this **mundane mind** will arise all the **right thoughts, right speeches** and **right actions**, then **happiness will follow us** like the **shadow that never** leaves us following Dhammapada verse 2.
2. It is important to understand *who you are, what are you and what that self-nature is all about*. And that **all things arise** from **self nature** via the **mundane mind's creation**.
3. Understanding the **two types** of the mind is essential. First type, is the **mundane mind/thinking mind**; second type is **supra mundane mind/true mind/self nature/Buddha nature/silent mind/meditative mind**. The reason why most people **don't know** how to meditate is **because they only know** the **mundane mind**. This **mundane mind** is **dependent originating, arises depending on conditions**. However, when you are **able to realize** your **true mind through meditation**, you will come to understand that, *this one is different* because it is **beyond thought and beyond mind** and this **self-nature** is inherent in all beings. **Without thought**, there is **only the awareness nature** within. It is just a *suchness 'nature'* within (not a being), so it **cannot** come out and **live life** because it is *not you nor is it a being*. **But** this is the **nature** that **can awakens, understands truth** and **realizes enlightenment**. From this **self-nature, everything arises** through the **mundane mind's creation**.
4. It is important to reflect on *'the host and guests'* analogy. The **host** (which is the **awareness nature within**) is always there, the **guests** are the **six external sense data**, whereby upon contact with mind, all their **respective** sense door consciousness arises. The guests come and go whereas the **host always stay** (does not come nor go). **Remember you are the host**. You are **aware** of all the **guest's** movements, and **with awareness** and **wisdom**, you **can make use of them** and **stay above** them because your **wisdom** will prevent you from being **deluded or deceived** by them. But **without this understanding** that **you are the host**, you can **be deceived** by all the guests and their complaints etc. and *get sucked into the whole chaotic situation*. However, when you understand that you are the **host**, you do not get involved. Similarly, when **sense data** comes in, upon **contact** what happens (following dependent origination), you will **understand** for *you can see them clearly*. Then you **will not** become entangled in it. On the other hand, if you **do not** understand, that you are just this **true nature within**, which is just being aware, not a being, then your **egoic mind** will **arise to delude** you. When you are **just silent** (without thought), the **true nature** can insight into phenomena to awaken.
5. Thus **meditation** is just the **silent mind** being **aware of what is going on within** our **form and mind**, to see the **truth of dependent origination clearly** via *seeing things as they are*.
6. **Mundane mind before enlightenment is deluded**, thus it **creates** a lot of wrong speech, wrong thoughts and wrong actions. All wholesomeness or unwholesomeness arise via the **mundane mind's creation**. Reason why the Buddha under Dhammapada verses 1 and 2 says, *'mind is the forerunner of things, mind is chief, when mind arise all good and bad arises dependent on the user of such mind'*. If you act with a **heedless mind** borne of delusion (i.e. with

*greed, hatred and delusion*), suffering will follow you like the wheel which follows the hoof of the cart. Therefore **wisdom** is needed to use this **mundane mind appropriately**. When you are **heedful** with **wisdom** to use this mind, you will **train it** to **develop awareness** and **understanding**, and you will **then act according to wisdom** with a **wholesome mind** (*free of the evil roots*), then *happiness will follow you like the shadow that never leaves you*.

7. Therefore it is important to *avoid all evil, do good and purify* your mind **as advised** by the Buddha. Act with wisdom following the **noble eightfold path**, to be **free of suffering**. **USER of thought** is very important.
8. The 5 precepts are vital, **violating them** constitute **committing major evil**. With **mindfulness** and **yoniso manasikara developed**, there can be **sense restraint** to enable us **not** to violate the precepts.
9. We should enquire who actually harm and kill. They are **violent, selfish** and **deluded** people with the 3 evil roots of Greed, Hatred and Delusion. This will **lead to karmic down fall** and this is also **the reason why** keeping **precepts or Sila is vital**. Then you will have **good conditions, good mind states** and **karmic support** to *support* your meditation. With **Sila** comes **Samadhi** leading to **Panna**. (To refer to the brown transcript book on 'Essential dhamma as taught by Buddha' for more detail explanation).
10. The **5 aggregates of form and mind** also has two aspects. 1<sup>st</sup> aspect is as a living being. 2<sup>nd</sup> aspect is as a mental 5 aggregates of form and mind or thought. This 5 aggregates of form and mind is **subject to karma**. Even though it is a **karmically conditioned living being**, but it is **not a permanent unchanging entity** that you can **cling onto** and **grasp onto** as the 'I' and the 'Me', thus it is **non- self**, but it does exist.
11. To **develop wisdom**, you need to **meditate** with the **true mind** to awaken.
12. In short, the **whole of cultivation** can be **summarize** as follows:
  - *Avoid all evil, cultivate wholesomeness and purify mind* following advice of all Buddha.
  - **Cultivate** and **act** following **Noble Eightfold path**. (**Right view** to cultivate *right speech, right action, right thought* and the 4 right efforts).
  - Cultivate the **5 spiritual faculties** of Saddha, Viriya, Sati, Samadhi and Panna.
  - **Constantly listen to dharma, inquire and contemplate** the dharma with a relatively **quiet mind** (i.e. a **creative mind**) to arise the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> turning **initial wisdom (Yonisomanasikara)**.
  - Meditate is to **realize** the **true mind** (until **mind enters sati**).
  - Cultivate **daily mindfulness** and **clear comprehension** leading to sense restraint.
13. To understand that **things are just the way they are**. *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*. There are causes and conditions behind all that happen. Thus when things happen, you must **not react, blame** or **get angry**, then you can be **at peace** with the **reality** of the **moment**, with a clear mind. Then you can **contemplate** on what happened to **resolve things amicably** so that you can **move on** and **not suffer**. Noble eightfold path is the way to end all suffering. When you act with right view, you will know how to utilize the mundane mind.
14. The realization of one's **true mind** is the beginning of **true meditation**.

15. There was an email question by a lady on: cultivating daily mindfulness. She described *how while eating, she is aware of her mental intentions to hold the chopstick, take the vegetable, open her mouth, put the vegetable into her mouth, start chewing' etc.*

**Bro Teoh:** The above is okay but the **more important aspect** of the **training** is *when your hand moves to hold the chopstick you must be **fully aware** of that action and hand movement, that is **body and mind moves as one (without thought) - that is sati** (mindfulness). Similarly for the other activities and actions (like the taking of vegetables, opening of your mouth, putting it into your mouth and chewing etc.) - Just do, until you are **just aware** and **most of the time without thoughts**, then your **mental chattering** and **verbalization** will be greatly reduced and you will become more and more **quiet** and **just mindful or aware**. When mindfulness is *more and more continuous*, it will **stabilized** then your mind is **extra ordinary sensitive** and you **can see many things** which you **never see before** to develop the **understanding** of the **essential dharma** as taught by the Buddha and the *understanding of who you are and what you are? How you function as a human being, etc.**

When u said, *'Then pleasant feelings arise. So I watch the feelings & contemplate it in mind, this feeling is impermanent, suffering & non-self. It is the same for all other feelings. All these awareness is very fast. So I try to do it for everyday activities'*.

The above is what you are normally **taught to do (it that way)** but the **real contemplation** is **very different**. This is *mainly doing* it via **dharma knowledge**. What you **should be doing** is just **silent your mind** and **maintain awareness** (*don't try to know*). The **awareness** will develop the **understanding** to awaken to the **3 universal characteristics** of *anicca, dukkha* and *anatta by itself without words, knowledge or concept*. After this **training** is developed then **only contemplate** to **stabilize** the understanding - **not** before, otherwise it will become just **dharma knowledge based** contemplation which **may not** be effective. (While chewing food, she notes the pleasant sensation, then uses dharma knowledge to relate why this is impermanent and non-self. This is **not the way** to cultivate. When **aware** there is **no word**, understanding will thus come, and then you can link back to knowledge).

16. Develop the **silent mind** and *just be aware*, understanding will come by itself **without** you doing anything. After this, you can **contemplate** with the **silent mind**. Through your **mindfulness** you can awaken, not through your **knowledge** nor **thought** or **memory**.

17. Brother Teoh's daughter did her **cultivation differently** i.e. when chewing, she enquired: - *How do I recognize this as a pleasant feeling? What does pleasant mean to me? How did I learn this concept of pleasant?*

She traced it to **her conditioning borne of memory**. Her these style of questioning had helped her to **discover and understand** more deeply *how she experiences the world while living life*. The thing she **now understand** is **very different** from the **knowledge** she uses to have. In doing so, she becomes more **aware of her life** and her **thought's conditioning**.

18. It is important to develop the **silent, meditative mind** until it is **very stable** and **sensitive**, so that you are **aware** when there is any intention to or **any stirring** of mind via likes or dislikes borne of habitual tendencies. Yoniso manasikara will **prompt you** that this is **attachment** for **thing is just the way it is**. *When there is condition for good food, you can have it. But when there is no condition, there is no suffering because there is understanding.*

19. Brother Teoh encourages kalyanamitta to ask questions to create conditions for him to share. Don't be shy, shyness is by the thought. Not you. .

20. Realization of the **unconditioned cannot** be expressed in words. It is **beyond words** and **beyond thought**. Words and concept are needed to express the dharma within the conditioned world. Hence in **heart sutra**, it is stated that, '*in **true emptiness**, there is **no Four noble truths**, **no one born**, **no one dies or gets sick or grows old** and **no one attains because it is the **unconditioned*****. But in the **condition arising world**, all such thing exist, example there are living beings, getting old, sick and die.
21. The ariyan disciples of the Buddha have 4 **unique qualities** and **conducts**: Of good conduct, right conduct, wise conduct and dutiful conduct.
22. The *one who knows does not speak or talk frivolously*. They only speak with understanding and wisdom when there is condition to speak.
23. To come to this existential world you **need a karmically conditioned 5 aggregates of form and mind**. This is the '*vehicle and tool*' for you to come. Only with this form and mind, can you **realize** your **self-nature** (true nature). All being has this **self-nature**. The mundane mind is the **consciousness trapped inside** the physical body. It is for you to use to live life. *Within this form and mind (near the heart area)*, there is a '**gateway**' to your **self-nature**. This *nature cannot come out* and **live life**. This nature is **not a being** and is **non-self** because it is **not** a *permanent unchanging entity*. This **self-nature** can develop wisdom, understanding and awaken. When you realize the **self-nature and awaken**, you will know, the **form and mind is not you**. It is just a causal phenomenon.
24. The karmic force, rebirth consciousness and physical body – when **these 3 conditions** come together it will **animate into a human being**. Then when heart is formed, **comes heartbeat** and the **karmic force**. This then becomes a fully developed form and mind with all the senses while in the womb before being born into the world.

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