

Short Notes for 10th October 2019 Thursday class

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-191010.mp3>

Whiteboard : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-Thu-191010-150x150.jpg>

YouTube : [Daily Mindfulness & Understanding Cultivation Part 4 Revision](https://youtu.be/ri2F9sqFjgQ) <https://youtu.be/ri2F9sqFjgQ>

1. Bro Teoh went through the 3rd October 2019 last Thursday class outline short notes. He reminded cultivators about the importance of understanding the 2 types of minds, namely the **true mind** and **mundane mind**. The true mind is inherent in everyone but most of us are not aware of it. It **cannot** come out **to live life** because it is **not a being**. It is just a **nature within**, which is **beyond thought** and **beyond mind**. It is the **awareness nature** or **suchness nature within**. It is from **this nature** that **everything arises** leading to the **creation** by the **mundane mind**.
2. When one awakens to this **True nature**, one can understand *what life is all about, who you are and how you function as a living being*. Meditation will lead one to the **understanding** of **how creation arises** via the **mundane mind** or '**mano**'. Everything is **mind-made** because the '**mano**' is the *dependent-originating mundane mind*. Without **memory**, '**mano**' cannot arise. But to awaken, we **need to meditate using the true mind**. Thoughts cannot lead us to that realization of the unconditioned dharma which is beyond thought and beyond time. Hence, **all thought-based** meditation **cannot lead** to the awakening of such truth. The **true mind** is *without words and concepts*. Once the silent (meditating) mind **realizes** the **true mind** and **awaken**, the wisdom which is **connected** to this form and mind will enable the mundane mind to have the wisdom. The **mundane mind** will then be **able to see things as they are** and **not be deceived** by the *phenomena world of consciousness*.
3. Hence, *unenlightened normal people or puthujanas* are **heedless most of the time** due to their **ignorant** that deceive them to act heedlessly (according to their memory (which is **mainly thought** and **knowledge based**) instead of wisdom. This is the **only way** they know how to act to live life **not knowing** that there is another **self-nature** within them which is **beyond thought**. That nature is able to **insight** into phenomena via the **direct seeing** to awaken to the truth.
4. This was what Master Hui Neng realized when he heard the **Diamond Sutra** expounded by the **5th Patriarch**. When he came to the passage, '**... to use the mind yet be free from any attachment...**' immediately, he **came to great awakening** - that *all dharma* are **inseparable from the self-nature** and He then exclaimed, '*How amazing that the self-nature is originally pure and inherently complete by itself! How amazing that the self-nature is the unborn and undying! How amazing that the self-nature neither moves nor stays! How amazing that all dharma come from this self-nature.*'
5. One day, Master Hongren (the **5th Patriarch**) announced, '*the question of incessant rebirth is a momentous one. Day after day, instead of trying to free yourselves from this bitter sea of life and death, you seem to go after tainted merits only (i.e. merits which will cause rebirth). Yet merits will be of no help if your Essence of Mind is obscured. Go and seek Prajna (wisdom) in your own mind and then write me a stanza (gatha) about it. He who understands what the Essence of Mind is will be given the robe* (the insignia of the Patriarch

ship) and the dharma (the ultimate teaching of the Chán school), and I shall **make him** the **Sixth Patriarch**. *Go away quickly. Delay not in writing the stanza, as **deliberation is quite unnecessary and of no use**. The man who has realized the Essence of Mind can speak of it at once, as soon as he is spoken to about it; and he cannot lose sight of it, even when engaged in battle*’.

6. All creation starts from this self-nature. **How is thought created?** From the **true nature**, the **awareness nature**, the **spacious awareness** *shrinks* into a **tiny space to perceive something**. With the *input of memory* (content of consciousness), it **becomes a thought**. But the *spacious awareness* or the *oneness nature* is so *immense*. With this understanding, one can understand why thought is limited and how to meditate easily and correctly to realize the true mind.
7. To answer Sister Angie’s question, **whether we can use thought to live life**, Bro Teoh explained that the form and mind is just a **‘vehicle and tool’** for us to come to this **existential world**. But, before the form and mind become enlightened, the **mundane mind is deluded**. Hence, one **needs to meditate using the true mind** whereby with the **direct seeing**, one can **insight into the three universal characteristics of nature to awaken**. The **wisdom** or **understanding** that arises will enable one to **realize that the form and mind** (both the 2 aspects) are **not real**. They are **dependent-originating**. **Not a permanent** unchanging entity. Hence we cannot cling and hold onto anything, thinking we can own or possess it.
8. This **wisdom will arise** when **one connects** to the **true nature** to **see clearly** how the **mundane mind** has been **deceiving us** to *crave, grasp and cling all this while*; thinking **everything is so real**. Acting according to **memory**, is **not acting** at all. It is **only true action** when **one acts with wisdom**. The reason **being, memories** are our **accumulated experiences** (both good and bad). Especially our **Psychological memories**, *comprising our phobias, fears, insecurities, scars of memory, all forms of negative emotions, craving, lust, selfishness and insecurity, etc*. This is the **source** of all our **wrong thoughts** that conditions us to arise the **evil roots** of Greed, Hatred and Delusion when we act with our memory, leading to suffering.
9. Technically, **without wisdom**, there *is no way one can act appropriately*. Wisdom can be develop through constantly listening to the **true dharma** to arise the 1st turning wisdom of *suttamaya panna*. This is the **initial wisdom**. To stabilize it, one needs to **reflect and inquire deep** into the dharma as proclaimed by the Buddha to arise the 2nd turning wisdom of *cittamaya panna*. When the **understanding is stabilized**, it can then **be assimilated into one’s nature**. With awareness (mindfulness), one can see how the **mundane mind is responsible** for everything **following Dhammapada verses 1 and 2**. *‘Mind is the forerunner of all things. If one acts or thinks or thinks with an impure mind, sorrow will follow one just like the wheel that follows the hoof of the ox. Mind is the forerunner of all things. If one thinks or acts with a pure mind, happiness will follow one just like the shadow that never leaves.’*
10. It is only **when one awakens** to the **true mind** that **one can live life well and use the mundane mind wisely** in following the **Noble Eightfold Path**. Otherwise, **our action springs most of the time from self-delusion** leading to **wrong thoughts**. Strangely, Bro Teoh has been *expounding the same dharma* for more than ten years and it has been repeated so often yet **many still cannot get it**. It has taken so long for most to **understand** this message. So there is a **need to really see the urgency** to *understand it*. Otherwise, no

amount of meditation (without this proper understanding) can help you. Without the correct understanding, one will be wasting a lot of time cultivating **thought-based, superficial dharma**.

11. It is **crucial to reflect** on the **host and guests analogy**. The **host nature** is **always** there, *whether one is aware of it or not*. Without the **stability** of mindfulness (sati), one is **not able to be with the true mind**. What happens is, one who is **heedless**, is always being **deceived** by the guests that come in and go out. The guests symbolize our **6 external sense data**. But **if one is aware** of the **guests' movements**, one **can stay as the host** (the **pure awareness** nature) and **not be deceived** by the guests or arising phenomena. *Wisdom will keep one grounded* instead of being **distracted** and **deluded** by them. When **one knows**, one is the **host**, one **doesn't get involved** via **self-delusion**. Instead, **one just does one's duty with understanding** following one's **right view** with **regards to the law of karma**.
12. Eventually, we will understand that **nobody suffers** and **Hey no 'You'** and **Hey no 'Me'**. The **user of thought** with the wisdom within will act wisely and appropriately. Yet, the host is also **not you** because it is not a being. Instead, you are that **eternal nature** which is the **unconditioned**. When one **awakens to that understanding**, how can there be **fear of the unknown** and **any suffering**? That **nature never dies**, so life becomes **so beautiful, meaningful** and **wonderful** when this **whole understanding of dharma** has been established. This understanding is so different and it is **not like** what other people used to tell you because it is a **realization** borne of **an awakening** through the silent mind.
13. To **understand meditation**, you **must understand mind** which I have mentioned before. This is **basic understanding**. The two types of mind are: the **mundane mind** and the **true mind**. **Very few people can realize the true mind**. *'Meditation is to silent the mind to be aware of the truth and reality within the moment'*. The true nature is connected to the form and mind. **True Meditation** has **nothing** to do with **techniques and methods** of meditation as these are just **skilful means to train the mind initially to develop awareness**. However, **without this understanding**, one will be **wasting one's time going round and round** (*cultivating superficial dharma*). The **egoic mind** will keep on **deceiving** you. **Without a stable daily mindfulness develop**, one **does not** stand a chance at all.
14. Everybody is interested in dharma but the **true dharma** is the **unconditioned** which is **akaliko (beyond thought** and words). After awakening, one can then use words to share with others.
15. With **wisdom**, one **can act free** of the **evil roots**. It is *important to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind*. It is therefore very important for cultivator to develop the **first and second turning wisdom** before using **one's thought**. But that doesn't mean that you do not think. At least, have some basic understanding of **what constitute right thoughts** and **understand what constitutes evil**. Keeping the five precepts is just as important. Having dharma friends, constantly listening to the dharma, arising faith, arising the initial wisdom, cultivating daily mindfulness and meditating with the silent mind are key factors to help us **progress along the path of dharma**.
16. **Without** the *above understanding and training*, it is **very difficult** for the **restless mundane mind** to settle down. When one violates nature's laws, the **mental hindrances** will keep on arising to prevent one from **entering the meditative state of inner peace and inner awareness within**.

17. Cultivating with right view supported by the four right efforts as well as having the five spiritual faculties are just as important. With the **initial wisdom** (yonisomanasikara) and **daily mindfulness (sati sampajanna)** developed as support, **sense restraint** becomes automatic.
18. We are what we are because of our karma and things are just the way they are. With this understanding, one does **not need to react** when **things happen**. We can be **at peace with the moment** and **reflect with clarity** to act following Noble Eightfold Path, to resolve the situation amicably with wisdom.
19. The **realization of one's true mind** is the **beginning** of **true meditation**. It is only from here that the **real meditation** starts. As long as one is **not heedful** while in the **midst of life**, the **real meditation has not started**.
20. Bro Teoh mentioned about a lady who wrote to him regarding her experience when eating. She could see many things and how her pleasant feelings arise. As she watched and contemplated, she said she saw that feeling was impermanent, so it was suffering and non-self. However, Bro Teoh said that she was using thought and knowledge to analyze her experience. When the **thought is active** (trying to be the meditator), she **failed to understand** what is **going on** because **she lack awareness or mindfulness to see things as they are**. Noting with the thought is **not** mindfulness. **True sati or mindfulness** (awareness) is **without thought**. ***Awareness and phenomenon moves as one.***
21. It is **only through this silent inner awareness** that one can **awaken** to the **three universal characteristics** of nature, without words and concepts. Awareness has no word. Understanding will arise and then one can link back to what has happened. Hence, it is **essential** to develop the **silent mind** to be **aware of the reality** within the moment.
22. The realization of the unconditioned cannot be expressed through words. In true emptiness, there is no one to attain (as stated in the Heart sutra). In the conditioned-arising world, living beings do get sick and die. But in reality, there is neither existence nor death.
23. Memory is a tool for us to use. But if we cling onto it, it binds us and becomes an obstruction. As quoted by J. Krishnamurti, the most dangerous person in this world is the one who says 'I knows.' All knowing comes from thoughts via memory. Perception of form is consciousness and its non-perception is wisdom. All of knowing is knowledge borne of memory. When one says he already knows, he cannot learn anymore.

(Above short notes draft is by Puan Chee)