

## Outline short notes for Bro Teoh's Sunday class dated 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018

**Audio** : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/4-Cultivating-the-Bodhisattva-Way-11-Nov-2018.mp3>

**Whiteboard** : <https://i1.wp.com/broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/4-Cultivating-the-Bodhisattva-Way-11-Nov-2018.jpg>

**Finding Silence** : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Finding-silence-J.-Krishnamurti.pdf>

**Reference book**: Brother Teoh's transcript book, 'Cultivating the Bodhisattva Way', pages 29-32

1. Brother Teoh started the class with his sharing on "**Finding Silence**" basing on a daily quote by J. Krishnamurti.
2. **Silence** stated here is **not the silence** created by thoughts held in energy field or concentration but via a **free mind**, with no aggregates of mind or sankhara.
3. People **usually want to learn how to meditate** through a *specific method and technique*. However, all these methods and techniques are just various skilful means to train or anchor the mundane mind and they never define the meditation. They are just a series of instructions acting as a skilful mean to do something. To meditate, *there must be the silence to understand 'What Is' or the reality of the moment in silence awareness without the interference of thought*.
4. First, we must know, there are 2 minds, i.e. the **mundane** or **thinking mind** (which is dependent arising) and the **true mind** which is just **silence (aware)**. To **meditate** *is have this silence to develop the wisdom or understanding of the reality (truth) of life and existence*.
5. The **thinking mind** (which is **basically thoughts**) will **never understand truth** (which is *akaliko* or beyond thought) because it is **limited** and it is a **product** of awareness.
6. What are thoughts? **Thoughts are response to memory**. **Memory** are **acquired knowledge** and **experiences**, things that we learn throughout our life. It includes the whole of our views, opinions, conditionings, accumulated fears, traditions, belief system, phobias and insecurities, etc.
  - a) **Thought is limited**. (Without thought we are naturally aware.)

**Explanation**: Initially, the true mind is **just spacious awareness**. When we think (use thoughts) we make **mental contact** thus arising the **mental or thought consciousness**, i.e. the spacious awareness narrows down or shrink into a limited space when we perceive something. Then, we input our content of consciousness via our **accumulated memories** (knowledge, views and opinions, perception, feeling and conditioning etc.) into this limited space to form the thought. **Without wisdom**, *thought will be egoic* and we will input **deluded views** into the *limited space to arise the wrong thoughts* which have the **evil roots** of greed, hatred and delusion **making us evil** and caused **our karmic downfall**. We need to understand the **above deeply**, so that **when we meditate**, we are *most of the time* with the **spacious awareness** and **not loss in thought** via our **heedless thinking**.

- b) **Thoughts divide** through **words** (like race, gender, religion, dualities, etc.), **concepts** (concept of right and wrong, concept of superiority, etc.) and **ideas** (the various ideologies – spiritual, political, etc.) leading to misunderstanding, argument, war, enmity, etc.

(Note: 6 (a) & (b) are **very detrimental** to our **human psyche** as *they create suffering and misery* via the 3 evil roots).

7. As **thoughts** are limited, they **cannot understand** spacious awareness which is **beyond** thoughts. Hence *thought based meditation will not lead to awakening* because thought is limited. When all these are **understood**, we will not believe the thoughts anymore. We will *just silent the mundane mind* and allow the *silent mind to meditate and investigate*. The **mind will be still by itself**.
8. Sometimes, *we may perceive that we are quiet* but this is really the thought that is telling us that we are quiet. The **thought which experiences silence is not the true silence**.
9. In real meditation, there is no one to know. Whatever that is thought-out is of lower intelligence.
10. **Form or Matter** is a **product of thought** (the mundane or thinking mind). Hence form is of **lower intelligence** than thought and because of that *form cannot see thought but thought can see form*. Likewise *since thought is the product of spacious awareness; thought is of lower intelligence than awareness*. So thought **cannot see** awareness but **awareness can be aware of thought and its movements**.
11. When anger arises, **we think** anger is us and we **failed to see the truth about anger** because we are **not aware**. If we are aware, we will be able to see anger as a **separate entity** which is *dependent originating*. Without your **wrong view** to stir the mind there will be no anger, hence **anger is not you**.
12. **Mindfulness is silent awareness**. This silence awareness will enable us to understand all these **movements of thoughts and emotions caused** by our **self-delusion**. When the conditions for its arising are no more, then **anger ceases**. We do not cease anger through *suppression and control*. What we need to do is to apply the **first two** of the 4 right efforts to *abandon or prevent* it from arising.
13. Stay with the anger. Do not label it (via straightening your views). Sati will then take over and then anger will cease when there is no more mental hindrance due to wrong view.
14. Next is to **trace** the **origination factors** as to how did **anger arise**? It is *due to one's lack of wise attention (yoniso manasikara) or right understanding at the moment of sense experience*. Wise attention can only come about due to **constant reflection** and *contemplation* of the Buddha's essential dharma to arise the 2<sup>nd</sup> turning wisdom of cintamaya panna. When we understand (after straightening our view), the defilement will cease to delude us then our mind will not stir to arise the anger.
15. Do not use the **mundane mind** to rationalize during meditation.
16. **Absence of evil is good** (*one is automatically good if one is incapable of doing evil*). Don't try to be good. Good according to you may not be the actual good according to nature's law of karma.
17. Does the Buddha exist after His Parinibbana? The Buddha **we take refuge in** is the **embodiment** of his **wisdom and virtues** (his *nature's 10 perfections*). Therefore the **Buddha's nature** will exist *eternally* in the universe. The thing that died is *his segmented life's form and mind or functional body* of the Buddha at that time.
18. Sakyamuni Buddha was already an Arahant even during Dipankara Buddha's time but due to his vows to save all beings, he kept coming back as a Bodhisattva to fulfill his vows until he became the Samma Sambuddha.

19. Walking the **Bodhisattva Way** is likened to a *tertiary education*. If you stop at primary education, you will not know what *tertiary education entails*.
20. Sister Eng Bee shares how *she sought the help, blessings and protection of the Triple Gem and some great being's nature* to enable her to get back her voice to chant the Heart sutra at Anandagiri Hermitage kathina.
21. **Faith** in the Triple Gem is very powerful. **Faith** is a **spiritual faculty** which will **enable us** to understand the **spiritual teaching easily**. Especially faith in the Buddha and his teaching via understanding how unique and special the Buddha and his teaching are.
22. **Love yourself**. Have **humour, laughter** and **joy**. But **do not harm or hurt yourself** via **heedlessly arising the wrong thoughts** to make yourself **miserable**. **Don't crave** for pleasure via **heedless attachment**.
23. Check on **what** you are **still lacking** in your **cultivation** from the **Avijja Sutra** and **diligently work on them**.
24. **Daily mindfulness** must be stabilized **before** we can start on the **4 Foundations of Mindfulness cultivation** otherwise we will be **wasting our time** if we try to practice the **4 Foundation of Mindfulness** before the **yoniso manasikara** and **daily mindfulness** are established
25. We need to cultivate the **4 Right Efforts** and **all the other 7 Noble Eightfold Path factors** to gain Enlightenment especially the **3 right views of karma, citta and dharma niyamas**.

(Above draft prepared by Sister Mun Yuen)