

Outline short notes for Sister Qinni's House Dana on 13th Jan 2019

Audio : <https://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/Teoh-190113-Qinni-Hse-Dana.mp3>

1. Mind is the forerunner of all things. If you want to have the **good life** you must **take care** of your mind. You must know how to **use your mind** with **wisdom**. If you have this understanding, cultivating the Buddha dhamma is not difficult. If you do not have this understanding, you will have problem resulting from them law of karma. It is due to your own **wrong views** that condition you into negativity of mind states that condition your karmic downfall.
2. Take care of Karma so that your life will be taken care of. Accept 'what is' (the reality of the moment). We are what we are due to our Karma. So act following the Noble Eightfold Path so that no evil will arise. With mindfulness and Samadhi, one will be able to **insight** into the three Universal characteristics of impermanence, non-self and suffering to free the mind. With this understanding, we can be a blessing to all.
3. We are now experiencing the **golden age of civilization** where we get to see the **fast advancement of science and technology** over the last 30 years which our **forefathers** were **not able** to experience. Life has been transformed so **dramatically** for the better. **If you have the means** you can really **experience** the **great marvel and beauty** of life. The level of comfort, sensuality and joy is so intense. The world of fashion, food paradise, beautiful homes, sights and destinations, the world of multimedia, digital, phone, television and video technology, etc. They are **truly enticing and luring** to our human senses. If you have the dhamma, this era is the best era to live.
4. We must understand the Dharma first before we can put it **into practice successfully**. Take your time to read, contemplate, reflect and understand them before starting the cultivation. When we can express these truths in our own words and experience the living dhamma in our daily life, it means we have trully understood the teaching.
5. Dana consists of all kinds of generosity, not just giving food to the Sangha. Perform dana only when there is condition, so as not to result in having the **subtle greed** to perform tainted merits. Having conditions mean the receiver has the condition to receive due to his Karmic affinity. Dana should be performed with understanding and not from feeling eager to give and becoming upset when it does not work out.
6. To be able to live life beautifully and meaningfully, one must understand life clearly especially its meaning and purpose. Understand that we live in a conditioned world which is subject to the 5 universal laws of Nature: namely the physical law of Utu niyama, the biological order of bija niyama, Law of Karma, Law of the Mind (Dependent origination) and Law of the Truth (dhamma niyama). The first 2 are scientific laws. The other 3 namely: the Law of Karma, Law of the Mind and Law of Truth are spiritual laws.
7. We may have mundane success like academic success, career and financial successes but lack peaceful relationships with family members and others. Even if we have everything, we still need to confront old age, sickness and death. We need to learn the Dharma, have the contemplative and the direct seeing wisdom to be able to have

calmness and acceptance (via understanding) to cope with the 1st Noble truth's 8 realities of life.

8. We need to have sila before we can meditate successfully because according to the Buddha, sila (morality) is the source of spiritual joy, spiritual peacefulness of mind and spiritual wealth. To have the condition to cultivate we need to have dana parami.
9. So, we need dana parami and we need to have sila before moving into bhavana (meditation) to arise the wisdom (panna) to end suffering, resulting in wisdom and virtue.
10. There is no right and no wrong, only nature's laws operating. Our suffering is due to our delusion and ignorance.
11. We must have right view on how our mind functions (Dependent origination). Understand that everything within the condition world is dependent originating and conditions arising. There is no permanent unchanging entity that we can claim as the 'Me' and the 'I'. If we attach and cling to the 5 aggregates of form and mind, we will suffer. Emotions are not us because they are impermanent. They arise because of our wrong views which stir our mind (we project our thoughts when we perceive things negatively). The ultimate truth is, everything that is impermanent has no reality. When we realize this, there is no more problem. We will only use the 5 aggregates of form and mind to live life with understanding.
12. There are **3 types of peace/renunciation**: i) **Kaya-viveka** (physical renunciation) where we renounce the world (our family, wealth, possessions, etc.) and retreat to a conducive wayplace to live a monastic life. ii) **Citta-viveka** where we **seclude** the mind **to abide peacefully** within. This type of renunciation **cannot** live life. iii) **Upadhi-viveka** – peace borne of wisdom. The Buddha's peace is not borne of seclusion of mind but borne of wisdom. He is peaceful wherever he is even while in the midst of life with all the dualities and life situations and issues arising.

(Above draft is prepared by Sister Mun Yuen)