



Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery works tirelessly in all areas to benefit all sentient beings. We do our best to skilfully bring the Dharma home to each and everyone.

Awaken Publishing & Design

Do you yearn for words of timeless truth that talk straight to your heart? Looking for means to overcome your problems, difficulties and the challenges you face in life? Everyone wants to be happy and free of problems. The free Dharma books, CDs, DVDs and magazines published by the monastery tell you simply and clearly how you can achieve happiness in this life and the next... Get them from the monastery and Awareness Place Well-Being Centre at Bras Basah Complex #03-39 or visit media.kmspsk.org. May the Dharma bring light to your life!

Community Development & Training

The community development and training department's mission is to empower individuals and groups of people with knowledge and skills they need to effect change in their own lives and in the community. We provide training opportunities for individuals and groups of people to acquire, practise, experience and share skills and knowledge to make life meaningful and fulfilling for themselves and others. Dhammic values and principles are the essence of all the department's programmes. Call 6849 5300 or email community@kmspsk.org

Dharma Courses & Activities

Understand what Buddhism really is about. Learn various authentic methods of Buddhist meditation, or realise deep insights through guided retreats by Dharma masters. For these and more, visit kmspsk.org/featured and kmspsk.org/events/prayers

Pujue E-Newsletter

Pujue is an interesting monthly Chinese Buddhist e-mail newsletter that encourages all to live each day mindfully. It also informs readers of the latest local Buddhist activities. Sign up for the e-newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/t5tYX> or visit <http://tinyurl.com/my6vexw> to view past issues.

KMS Dharma School

Established to sow and nurture the seeds of Buddhahood in our younger generation, it shares the Dharma with the young in a warm, supportive and inspiring environment. Call 6849 5329, visit dharma.school.kmspsk.org or e-mail: dharma.school@kmspsk.org to be a Dharma volunteer, or sign up for the school.

TLC Student Care Centre

Looking for a place where your child can learn about the spirit of compassion? Tender Loving Care Student Care Centre nurtures your child's self-esteem, mental attitude and ethical conduct with a modern holistic educational approach. Call 6310 6410, e-mail enquiry@tenderlovingcare.sg or visit tenderlovingcare.sg to find out more.

Experience The Art of Happy Living

Take a breather from the hustle and bustle of the city and step into Awareness Place Well-Being Centre.

Leave all your worries and anxiety behind as you engage in a variety of holistic activities. From Yoga and Taiji to art therapy, vegetarian cooking workshops and Dharma programmes, there is bound to be an activity that suits your needs.

We are situated on the first level of Waterloo Centre (Blk 261 Waterloo Street #01-42), just a 5-minute walk from Bras Basah MRT station.

Our opening hours are 11.30am to 6.00pm daily (Closed on public holidays).
For more information, please visit awarenessplace.com or call 6336 5067.



Set Your Goal on *inner peace for 2015*

2015 heralds a new year and a fresh start for many. For some, it is also a time for self-reflection and for setting the New Year's resolution to be a better and kinder person.

This new year is the Year of the Goat, an animal symbolising gentleness and kindness, so why not set your goal on inner peace by cultivating mindfulness, gratitude and compassion?

Research has shown that mindfulness practice helps one to establish qualities that foster well-being, enhanced interpersonal relationship and mental resilience.

Regardless of our age, gender, nationality, religion or culture and language, we all share the common human experience of wanting happiness and fearing pain.

By cultivating love, compassion and mindfulness, we bring peace and happiness into our own hearts and minds.

Only then can we spread this energy of positivity and goodness of the heart to improve society and benefit the masses. Each of us is vital in playing this role to bring altruism into this world in our thoughts, words and deeds. Every little kind act matters.

Just as it is stated in the Dhammapada, 'Think not lightly of good, saying, "It will not come to me." Drop by drop is the water pot filled. Likewise, the wise man, gathering it little by little, fills himself with good.'

Sometimes, a small act of kindness and compassion is all it takes to bring light and hope to another person's dire circumstances.

In this way, we benefit others and make the world a better place.

May all beings be happy and well. ☺

Sik Kwang Sheng (Ven)

Abbot, Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

Ever wondered why some Buddhists are vegetarians and some are not? Those who choose to go the meatless way are spurred by compassion towards animals (pg 59). Animals are sentient beings that are like us in wanting happiness and not pain and suffering. Ancient records tell us that living creatures are not without feeling and intelligence (pg 64). Closer to home, we have read news of pet dogs saving their owners and more recently of a grief-stricken alpha male monkey making agitated distress calls and refusing to leave the scene when a pregnant female macaque was killed in a hit-and-run incident at Bukit Timah. You can also find numerous accounts on Google of unusual friendships between different species of animals.

The Buddha taught that all living beings have been our relatives cyclically since beginningless times (pg 70) and demonstrated the karmic consequences of killing (pg 63). Nonetheless, the sutras also mentioned that the Buddha allowed meats that are pure in three aspects, a practice which is still followed by the Theravada tradition today (pg 52).

Be inspired by the story of Huiping, a Singaporean working mum and a vegetarian for more than two decades (pg 44). Besides becoming a vegetarian, read page 40 on how we can benefit animals with wisdom and compassion. Not only do we prevent cruelty to animals (pg 60), studies show that vegetarianism helps prevent 13 causes of death (pg 54) and is good for our environment.

Making efforts to protect the earth is in accordance with the Buddha's teachings (pg 48). We live in an interdependent world, and should be grateful for the incredible connections between all beings (pg 61). In line with this, the Monastery is reviving its environmentalism efforts, and organised a vegetarian food hunt and talks, as well as collaborated with Firefly Mission on a humanitarian trip (pg 42).

Ready to do your part for our environment and the animals? Flip to page 60 and try out our cool new vegetarian recipe, or discover new cook books (pg 68) and a neat app featuring vegetarian recipes from all over the world (pg 69).

By cultivating love, compassion and gratitude, we benefit others and make the world a better place (pg 38).

Have a wonderful New Year. ☺

cultivating love and compassion for animals

Esther Thien

Yours in the Dharma,
Sister Esther Thien





How can we benefit animals with wisdom and compassion?

Q: Buddhism is a religion that advocates wisdom and compassion. How can we benefit animals and our environment with wisdom and compassion in our daily life? – L.M.

A: Animal liberation is a wonderful Dharma practice when done with a compassionate motivation and in a wise manner. The purpose is to save the lives of animals or insects who are about to be killed. By doing so, we create merit that we can dedicate to the awakening of all living beings.

Nowadays, some distortions in this practice have occurred. For example, some people deliberately catch fish, birds and other creatures for Buddhists to buy and liberate. This is not animal liberation, for these animals were not going to be killed and we are not saving their lives. We practise animal liberation with beings who are otherwise going to lose their lives.

In addition, when we liberate animals, we must put them in an environment where they will be safe and where they will not damage other living beings in that area. Thus, before freeing animals, we must know their natural habitat and place them there. Otherwise we could make the delicate ecological balance of an area go askew, resulting in the deaths of many other living beings. This contradicts our motivation to save life.

Animal liberation also includes removing insects from our home without killing them, covering buckets of water left outdoors so that insects do not drown in them, and helping to find homes for stray dogs, cats, puppies and kittens so that they are not euthanised.

Animals benefit greatly when we recite Dharma texts, prayers and mantras so that they hear them. You can recite your daily practices with your pets in the room, whisper a few mantras when you pet dogs in the park, and chant mantra out loud when you walk in nature or work in your garden. Doing so puts good imprints on the mindstreams of the animals and insects in the environment. These imprints will ripen in their future lives and enable them to make a Dharma connection.

Recently, a friend of a friend, from Singapore, wrote me about the practice of animal liberation. What follows are excerpts from her letter:

“About twenty years ago, as someone who had just turned vegetarian and awakening to animal cruelty, I occasionally bought captive birds, brought them home and released them. It felt good and I thought I was being compassionate. Only years later did I realise that it may have harmed the birds and the environment they were released into.

The intention of releasing animals into the wild is very positive. But the impact is being shown to be negative to the animals as well as environments they are being released into, and to the other animals in them. I am so grateful that the American Buddhist Confederation, together with Humane Society International, discourages this practice.

I have spent almost two decades working for the welfare of animals in various ways. I have asked myself why my mind has been focused on this particular issue in the last few years. These are the reasons:

- **Save animals and the environment**

Animal groups such as the Environment and Animal Society of Taiwan and Humane Society International have documented the suffering that captured and released animals undergo. Conservation groups have documented damage done to the environment. An end to this practice will stop this cycle. It will not stop animals from being caught for consumption but there are more direct and resource-efficient ways to stop that, such as going vegetarian, supporting vegetarian groups etc.

- **Support right livelihood**

Some businesses make their living by catching animals from the wild or breeding them in captivity. This results in immense animal suffering. When people buy these animals, they are directly supporting these trades, encouraging them to continue. Sometimes the very animals that are released may be caught again and again, if they survive. As consumers, we have the choice to support compassionate businesses and charities which are actively doing good in the world. Given the amount of money spent on animal release, this translates to a lot of other more positive uses for that money.

Here are some alternatives that could replace animal release:

- *Visit an animal shelter or animal rehabilitation centre and support their work.*
- *Take part in animal release programmes that are carefully managed by animal protection or conservation groups.*
- *Make lifestyle changes. Eat less meat or become a vegetarian. Use products not tested on animals or which don't have animal parts; choose entertainment that is animal-cruelty free; choose clothes that aren't made from animal skins, etc.*

I hope that more Buddhist leaders like you could lend support to efforts to replace the practice of animal release with powerful alternative actions that can help many lives through compassion, wisdom and truth. ☺

With Gratitude, Anonymous

- Ven Thubten Chodron

text: **Chang Wei Si**

KMSPKS Revives its Environmentalism Efforts

Singapore – Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery is reviving its environmentalism efforts after its 88 Recycling Project was stopped for some time. The new name for its new environmental drive is 'Gratitude Corner'. Gratitude Corner is unlike the 88 Recycling Project which solely focused on recycling. Gratitude Corner will also act as platform to create awareness and educate people on the concept of mindful consumption.

The concept of mindful consumption is about making purchases mindfully by taking into consideration our purchases that may create an impact on the environment, people living in third world countries and our future generations. By being mindful about our purchases, we can re-evaluate our requirements and distinguish our needs from wants.

Gratitude Corner is therefore more than just about recycling. It serves as a platform to groom volunteers to become ambassadors. In keeping with the Buddha's teaching on gratitude, the ambassadors will lead by example through doing recycling work, caring for the environment as well as caring for the less fortunate, and educating the public on the importance of sustainable consumption, and lastly, internalising the value of gratitude in all levels of their daily activities.



Gratitude Corner is a long term holistic effort that will require like-minded individuals to make these environmental projects into sustainable ones to benefit all. The Gratitude Corner also requires professionals who can volunteer to contribute their expert knowledge on energy saving and consumption, as well as to look at alternative energy sources and water-saving projects in the future. ☺



Benefiting the Environment through Vegetarian Food Hunt and Talks

Singapore – KMS Youth organised an Annual Vegetarian Food Hunt on 26 October 2014. There were nine groups of participants who registered and they included student and youth groups from the Singapore Institute of Management, Nanyang Polytechnic and Tzu Chi. The participants were issued portable utensils after a short briefing on vegetarianism and the rules of the game.

The first and last food items were given to the groups, and they were required to use the last Chinese character of the previous food item as the first Chinese character for the next food item. Each team needed to link a minimum of 10 vegetarian food items as well as to finish them.

The teams found food items ranging from simple snacks from mum-and-pop stores to dishes from vegetarian food stores. One team bumped into Singapore's famous vegetarian food blogger, Luke Otter also known as 'Hungry Ang Moh', in one of the food outlets.

After all the teams had completed the hunt, Venerable Ren Xu gave a short discourse on vegetarianism and its relationship with Buddhism, especially Mahayana Buddhism. He also shared his experience of being a vegetarian, particularly when he was studying in Sri Lanka.





Venerable Ren Xu was then invited to lead the signing of the Food Hunt Pledge. Pledgers promised to go vegetarian for the next seven days to benefit the environment, animals and themselves. Many participants volunteered to sign the pledge. The Food Hunt Pledge was also placed online to allow other interested people to participate and share their experience.

The KMS Youth Annual Food Hunt ended with prizes presented to the first three teams who completed the race. CapitaMall vouchers were presented to the winning teams by Venerable Ren Xu.

In addition, KMS Youth also organised two separate talks during that period on vegetarianism with speaker Hungry Ang Mo. Titled *Survival Guide for Vegetarians In Singapore*, Luke shared his experience of being a vegetarian, vegetarian surviving tips in Singapore and the joy of being a vegetarian. ☺



KMSPKS Collaboration with Firefly Mission on Laos Humanitarian Trip

KMS Dharma School and Firefly Mission collaborated on a joint project in Laos from 23 to 30 November 2014. The trip presented an opportunity for participants to help the children in Laos through volunteering and humanitarian efforts. It was also a chance for participants to understand and gain first-hand experience of the local culture and living conditions.

Firefly Mission was established in 2000 with its focus on overseas humanitarian efforts. It encourages young Buddhists to do community work, especially by helping the less fortunate in neighbouring countries. The organisation consists of dedicated Buddhists who understand how fortunate it is to be staying in Singapore and would like to help the less privileged elsewhere. In line with the Buddha's teaching of supporting and giving to the less fortunate, Firefly Mission encourages people to practise and enjoy the pleasure of giving to others. Firefly Mission has been doing mission work helping the under-privileged communities in countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India as well as along the Thai-Border for the last decade. The organisation gives and supports these communities by funding the building of schools and student hostels; and supplying stationery and refurbished computers to students etc.

KMS Dharma School sent 46 participants, comprising students, parents, volunteer teachers and staff, to the Laos Cultural Immersion cum Humanitarian Trip 2014. The participants helped to build a wall fence and a gate for a nursery, visited local schools and interacted with the children. They lived with the villagers in their houses and huts and prepared a sumptuous banquet dinner for the villagers. Together with Firefly Mission, the participants took with them refurbished computers, clothes and stationery to donate to the locals.

To prepare for this trip, KMS Dharma School had an internal fundraising exercise in July to raise building funds. The participants also helped to pack the computers on 18 October and attended a briefing session on 25 October at the monastery before leaving for this meaningful trip in November. ☺



To donate, participate or find out more about Firefly Mission's upcoming projects, please visit www.fireflymission.org or facebook.com/Firefly-Mission/110479342315729

Hui Ping, a Singaporean working mum with an eight-year-old son and a vegetarian for more than two decades speaks to Esther Thien about the benefits of choosing a meatless diet and raising her son as a vegetarian.

Awaken: Why did you choose the vegetarian route?

Huiping: There were many factors that led me to become a vegetarian. My parents were vegetarian; my baby sister was born and raised as a vegetarian; plus my love for vegetables; and not wanting to kill animals for food. However, even though my parents were vegetarian, they never imposed it upon us or forced us to be vegetarian. My wise mother won me over with her delicious vegetarian food. I can still recall vividly that important day I made my choice more than twenty years ago. I was eating my favourite fishball mee with lots of sambal chilli at my school canteen but that very night, I followed my heart and chose to become a vegetarian and have never looked back.

Awaken: How have things changed since you become a vegetarian?

Huiping: I feel great being a vegetarian. Life is simpler and more peaceful. My son has a very kind and loving heart which I attribute to the benefit of being a vegetarian. My hubby also experiences less acne problems and has better skin. After choosing the vegetarian path, I started reading food labels and this led to greater awareness of what we are putting into our stomachs. Personally, I feel more energised and less prone to eating junk food. I also realise that being a vegetarian makes me more creative when it comes to preparing meals at home.

choosing **greens** over meat



Awaken: Has it affected your social life in any way?

Huiping: Initially when I was a teenager, people asked me all kinds of questions because they were curious. But these days, vegetarianism is so common, I even have colleagues who are vegetarians! Nowadays, many restaurants also carry vegetarian or vegan options. Even though I travel overseas very often for work and holidays, I don't have many issues with food. After all, salads and fruits are everywhere. So I don't really find it affecting me in any way.

Awaken: Some people feel it is more costly to choose a meatless diet. What do you think?

Huiping: I think the benefits of being a vegetarian cannot be measured by tangible benefits such as cost savings. Whether it is more costly or not depends on individuals and their choice of vegetarian food. I think as a vegetarian, I eat to live and not live to eat, so life is a lot simpler. I often imagine if I'm a non-vegetarian living in Singapore, a food paradise, I will be eating non-stop and always hunting for good food during weekends. In the long run, I think being a vegetarian is not only less costly to our finances, it is also kind to my waistline and health.

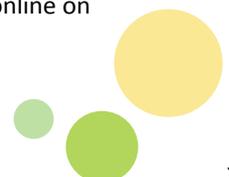
Awaken: Was it difficult to raise your son as a vegetarian? Did you encounter any problems at school?

Huiping: Other than raising some eyebrows when I tell people that my son is a vegetarian, we do not find it difficult to raise our child as a vegetarian, especially in Singapore where vegetarian food is easily available. It is actually easier to raise a child as a vegetarian, than to convince him to be a vegetarian when he is older. There are definitely challenges along the way, but I always believe that where there's a will, there's a way.

The most important thing to me is to get my son's agreement to be a vegetarian. Although I raise him as a vegetarian, I do not want it to be something forced on him just because I want it. I always make use of opportunities to talk to him about vegetarianism. Our usual topics include cruelty to animals, delicious vegetarian food and healthy lifestyle. Because of that my son grows up with a compassionate heart. I remembered on one occasion, when he was 4 years old, we were having dinner at the food court when he suddenly made a comment about the chicken rice stall. He said sadly: "Mummy, look at those dead chickens. So many of them died because man killed them for food." While other people see them as food, he sees them as corpses. I knew at that instance, he's a vegetarian to stay.

As a working mother, my main concern when my son was a toddler was his childcare arrangement. We want him to grow up in an environment that encourages vegetarianism. This can be challenging as most childcare centres do not provide vegetarian meals and most of them do not allow home-cooked food to be consumed at the centres. So we were very grateful when we were able to enrol him into a vegetarian childcare centre. Although the childcare centre was not near our house, it was certainly worth the trouble because I knew my son would be well taken care of at the vegetarian childcare centre.

When my son was ready to go to Primary One, I started looking for his student care arrangement. I was relieved when I learnt about the Tender Loving Care (TLC) student care centre near my house. At that time, the centre was full and unable to admit him. I thought of putting him in another non-vegetarian student care centre nearby, but I would have to prepare his meals at home every morning. As my job required a lot of overseas travelling, we were worried about not being able to prepare his meals every morning. I even thought of quitting my job to look after him as the last resort. So I was very grateful when TLC student care centre accepted him after my appeal to the management. Now, my mind is at ease because I know my son is well taken care of by the centre. After solving the student care arrangement, I only need to take care of his recess in school. As the school canteen stalls do not sell vegetarian food, I started researching online on what food to prepare for him to bring to school, hence embarking on my bento making journey.



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I also taught him to check the food that is given to him, and to highlight to people that he is a vegetarian so that his teachers or friends will be aware. Whenever I sign him up for any holiday camps or workshops, I will also check with the organisers if vegetarian food can be arranged. Most of the time, there are no major problems as vegetarianism is getting more common these days. Otherwise, I will pack bentos for him to bring along.

When we go overseas for holidays, we have no issue with food because my son loves salads, so that makes it very easy for us to find food. It is important to expose a child to vegetables, salads and fruits from a young age when raising the child as vegetarian.

Awaken: Your hubby is a non-vegetarian. Does this create conflicts at home, especially regarding raising your son as a vegetarian or having just vegetarian meals at home?

Huiping: Although my hubby is not a vegetarian, we never have any conflicts related to vegetarianism. This is because we are always ready to discuss and work out any issues together. Communication and mutual respect are important to minimise conflicts. My hubby accepted me as a vegetarian and I never impose vegetarianism on him. When we were planning our wedding, he was the one who proposed and persuaded his parents to have a vegetarian banquet. When I was pregnant with our son, he was the one who suggested raising our son a vegetarian and again convinced his parents on this. To persuade his parents, he asked them these questions: “Will you serve beef to your friends and relatives even though you don't eat beef due to your beliefs?” and “Will you eat beef and forsake your beliefs just because someone tells you that beef is good for you?”. They understood where he was coming from, and so, we had our vegetarian wedding banquet, vegetarian buffet for house warming, and now raise our son as vegetarian. Whenever we visit my in-laws, my mother-in-law cooks vegetarian dishes for us. I am grateful for all these and always count my blessings.

Influenced by my mother, who believes the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, I try to cook at home as often as possible. Even though I am no chef, I realise my hubby and son do appreciate and enjoy eating home-cooked food at home. It's most rewarding to me when my son finishes his food and tells me that he loves my cooking. I guess when the food is prepared with love, it just tastes different. When I was young, my mother always learnt new vegetarian dishes to cook for us, so that we do not feel deprived of good food as vegetarians. Today, I'm doing the same for my hubby and son. I try to improve my culinary skills, and cook more often at home.

Awaken: Since you are a vegetarian, how was it like during your pregnancy? How did you handle food cravings and ensure you got ample nutrients for both the growing baby and yourself?

Huiping: When I was pregnant with my son, there were occasional remarks from relatives and friends that I should quit being a vegetarian for the sake of the baby. I would always smile and thank them politely for their concerns, rather than to start a debate and get agitated over it. After all, I knew they meant well.

During my pregnancy, I went over to my parents' house for dinner very often. My mum would prepare dinner and cook vegetarian herbal soup for me. Besides the folic acid and iron supplements that the gynae prescribed, I did not take any other supplements as I preferred to get the nutrients from food naturally. I tried to eat a wide variety of food but I was never into planning my meals or worried about not getting enough nutrients. I always believe that it is more important to stay happy and be at peace.



Awaken: What inspired you to create such adorable and cute children's bentos? How long have you been creating them?

Huiping: When my son was about to enter Primary One, one of the concerns I had was whether there's food for him to eat during recess. During the Primary One Orientation, I checked out the school canteen stalls and to my dismay, there was not much healthy vegetarian options.

I knew I would have to prepare a snack box for him to bring to school, so I started researching on vegetarian lunch box ideas and that was when I came across all the cute bentos made by Japanese mothers. Initially, I had only intended to pack a simple lunch box for my son, as the focus was to provide him with healthy food during recess. But since I love making crafts, I thought making cute bentos was a perfect hobby for me too. I can prepare healthy vegetarian food for my son and at the same time, it's my creative therapy. I also love to challenge myself and show everyone that vegetarian bentos can be as cute as non-vegetarian bentos. This is also why I set up my instagram account @hpBento and facebook account - hpbentoveg - to share ideas online.

Whenever I saw my son beaming with joy after seeing the bento I had made for him, I became more inspired to make more bentos for him. It's been a great two years making bentos for my son. As he grows older, he prefers less cute bentos, so his bentos are simpler now. More importantly, I know he is eating healthy food prepared by me.

Awaken: What advice would you give other parents who would like to create such wholesome vegetarian bentos too?

Huiping: Have a variety of food in the bento. For example, a peanut butter sandwich, some cherry tomatoes, a few grapes and a slice of apple. It will be more interesting for the children. You can even introduce new food in small quantity in the bento as they are more likely to try new food when in small quantity.

To save time, I use food cutters and cute food picks to make the bentos attractive. Don't stress over how the bentos turn out. Whether the rabbit's ears are crooked or not, our children will not notice such details at all. These bentos do not have to be perfect.

Have fun when making the bento. During weekends, involve the children too and it can be a great bonding activity. ☺





Living in Harmony

When Things Fall Apart

**Empowering ourselves to respond to
environmental degradation**

All of us know about the environmental degradation that our planet faces and we may have some inklings of how, if it is not checked, it will affect our lives and those of future generations. Nevertheless, most of us tend to get stuck when it comes to responding to this situation in an appropriate way. Instead we get sidetracked by feelings of helplessness, blaming others, and lack mindfulness. Let's investigate these detours and see what we can do to overcome them.

Overcome helplessness by strengthening determination

Last year, I attended a Buddhist monastic conference on the environment and learned that there is now a new psychological ailment called “climate anxiety or environmental anxiety.” That is, people look at the environmental devastation and become fearful, angry, anxious or apathetic in response. There is so much to do and so little time to make the necessary changes that, rather than face the challenge with creativity and fortitude, we stay stuck in our emotions and do very little. It is as if a corner of our mind thinks, “If I can’t fix this problem quickly and easily, why even try?” and we sink into despair.

Making efforts to protect the earth is in accord with the Buddha’s teachings.

This debilitating mental state becomes an extra, added obstacle to rectifying the problem of global warming. It is also contrary to the attitude the Buddha encourages us to have as Dharma practitioners. If the Buddha were to think that since infinite sentient beings are drowning in cyclic existence, it is impossible to lead all of them to liberation and if he then threw up his hands in despair and refused to teach after he had attained enlightenment, where would we be today? But the Buddha knew that just because something is difficult, it doesn’t mean we give up and don’t act. Instead, he knew that whatever he did to teach and guide sentient beings would benefit them, even if the final objective of having all the countless sentient beings attain enlightenment was virtually impossible. He called up his hope, optimism and joyous effort and did whatever he could, and so must we to heal the natural environment.

Avoid blaming others by being responsible for our part

Another way our mind becomes side-tracked is by blaming others for the environmental mess, complaining, “This is due to the greed of corporations, their CEOs and shareholders. It’s the fault of engineers who didn’t plan ways to stop the flow of oil should a rig break in deep-ocean drilling. The government isn’t doing enough to control companies and stimulate research into alternative energy strategies.” This way of thinking creates feelings of helplessness, which we mask with rage and blame. It is a clever way that our self-centred ego has of abdicating our own responsibility, expecting others to fix everything, and justifying our lack of involvement.

Instead of attributing evil intentions to others, we would be better off examining our own minds, owning our bad motivations, and changing them. Instead of pointing the finger at others’ greed, how about acknowledging our own? After all, we are the ones who over-consume and deplete natural resources. I think it would be more productive to look at what we could do to change the situation than to get stuck in finger-pointing.

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This is not to say that we overlook the carelessness and greed of corporations and the inertia of governments. Those have to be called to people's attention. However, let's not think that we are not involved in the problem, for we have bought into the view of a materialistic society that wants to consume without restriction.

Become heedful by seeing interdependence

This leads us to examine how we live "on automatic," with little heedfulness and mindfulness regarding how our individual lifestyles affect the planet. For example, some years ago I met a couple who were both university professors teaching ecology. They cared deeply about the environment and the people and animals living in it and were very concerned about global warming. One day their children came home from school and said, "Mum and Dad, we need to recycle our paper, plastic, metal and glass to protect the environment," and "We want to carpool with our friends when we go to after-school activities. Can you carpool with other professors when you go to work? Or how about riding the bus? Let's get cloth bags for our groceries. Using so much paper and plastic isn't good for the environment."

The parents were surprised. They had never thought about the effect of their own lifestyle on the environment. They had not taken into consideration what they could do on an individual level in their daily lives to protect the environment and the living beings they cared so much about.

Acting in a more environmentally-conscious manner in our own lives is an antidote to the feelings of despair, helplessness and anger. In doing this, we face the mind that says, "But it is inconvenient to carpool or ride the bus. I want to go and come by myself when I want to," or "It takes time to clean glass, cans and milk cartons, and to separate recyclables," or "It's tiresome to keep track of cloth bags. It's so much easier to get a bag at the store." Here we have to face our lazy and self-centred attitude and remember that we live in an interdependent world.

Recalling that each and every sentient being wants to be happy and avoid suffering as intensely as we do, we focus on the kindness we have received from others. This way of thinking generates within us a strong determination to live in a way that cares for other living beings. If this means enduring some inconveniences, we can do that because it is for a greater purpose. We should encourage ourselves in this way, knowing that we will feel better about ourselves when we think and act in ways that care for others.

I think that if the Buddha were alive today, he would establish precepts to recycle and to stop wasting resources. Many of our monastic vows arose because lay people complained to the Buddha about what the monks or nuns did. Each time this happened, the Buddha would establish a precept in order to curb the detrimental behaviour. If the Buddha were alive today, people would complain to him, “So many Buddhists throw out their tin cans, glass jars and newspapers! At the temples they use disposable cups, chopsticks and plates, which not only make more garbage but also cause the destruction of many trees. They do not seem to care about the environment and the living beings in it!” I would feel embarrassed if I was doing that and someone complained to the Buddha about my behaviour, wouldn’t you? So even though the Buddha isn’t physically here to establish a precept to recycle and to curtail consumption, we should voluntarily do this as it is in accord with his teachings.

Stay connected in the heart

After the oil spill in the Gulf, someone told me that the constant images in the media of birds and sea animals covered in oil and dying brought up feelings of sadness as well as anger in her. She asked me how to work with the situation, seeing that she could do little herself to remedy the situation.

I recommended doing the taking-and-giving meditation (*tonglen in Tibetan*) to increase our own love and compassion. Here we imagine taking on the suffering of others—in this case the birds and sea animals—and use it to destroy our self-centred thoughts and then imagine giving our body, possessions and virtue to others

to bring them joy. It is good to do this meditation for the oil company executives and engineers as well as for all the people affected by the oil spill. In this way, we remain connected to those living beings in our heart and avoid falling into apathy. In addition, this meditation enhances our love and compassion so that when we have the opportunity to directly benefit others we will be more willing and confident to do so.

We are all citizens of this planet and thus each of us has the responsibility to be mindful of how we use its resources. Rather than indulge in blaming others for the environmental degradation and climate change, feeling helpless to do anything about it ourselves, falling into the stupor of apathy, and being heedless regarding our own personal impact on the environment, let’s do our part—however big or small that may be—to lessen and stop climate change and the destruction of nature. In this way, our lives will be meaningful and our minds optimistic as we bring the Buddhist principles of interdependence, wisdom and kindness into our daily actions. ☺

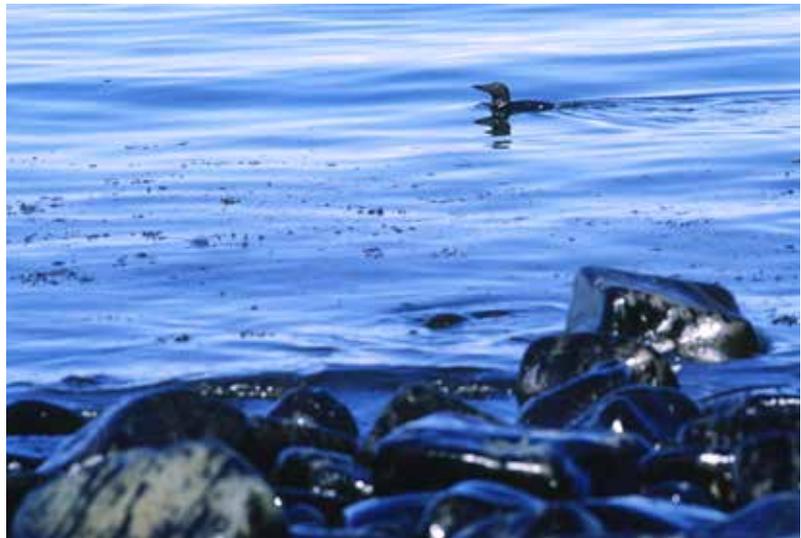


Photo taken from www.ideastream.org

text: **Ven Thubten Chodron**

This article was a paper presented at the World Buddhist Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on September 25-26, 2010.



What the Buddha Said About Eating Meat

Since the very beginning of Buddhism over 2500 years ago, Buddhist monks and nuns have depended on alms for food. They were, and still are, prohibited from growing their own food, storing their own provisions or cooking their own meals.* Instead, every morning they would make their day's meal out of whatever is freely given to them by lay supporters. Whether it is rich food or coarse food, delicious or awful tasting it is to be accepted with gratitude and eaten by regarding it as medicine. The Buddha laid down several rules forbidding monks from asking for the food that they liked. As a result, they would receive just the sort of meals that ordinary people ate - and that often included meat.

Once, a rich and influential general by the name of Siha (meaning 'Lion') went to visit the Buddha. Siha had been a famous lay supporter of the Jain monks but he was so impressed and inspired by the Buddha's teachings that he took refuge in the Triple Gem (i.e. he became a Buddhist). General Siha then invited the Buddha, together with the large number of monks accompanying Him, to a meal at his house in the city the following morning. In preparation for the meal, Siha told one of his servants to buy some meat from the market for the feast. When the Jain monks heard of their erstwhile patron's conversion to Buddhism and the meal that he was preparing for the Buddha and the monks, they were somewhat peeved:

"Now at the time many Niganthas (Jain monks), waving their arms, were moaning from carriage road to carriage road, from cross road to cross road in the city: 'Today a fat beast, killed by Siha the general, is made into a meal for the recluse Gotama (the Buddha). The recluse Gotama makes use of this meat knowing that it was killed on purpose for him, that the deed was done for his sake!...' [1]."

Siha had in fact made the ethical distinction between buying meat already prepared for sale and ordering a certain animal to be killed, a distinction which is not obvious to many Westerners but which recurs throughout the Buddha's own teachings. Thus, to clarify the position on meat eating to the monks, the Buddha said:

"Monks, I allow you fish and meat that are quite pure in three respects: if they are not seen, heard or suspected to have been killed on purpose for a monk. But, you should not knowingly make use of meat killed on purpose for you." [2]

*Editor: This depends on the Buddhist tradition and lineage that the monastic follows.

There are many places in the Buddhist scriptures which tell of the Buddha and his monks being offered meat and eating it. One of the most interesting of these passages occurs in the introductory story to a totally unrelated rule (Nissaggiya Pacittiya) and the observation that the meat is purely incidental to the main theme of the story emphasises the authenticity of the passage:

Uppalavanna (meaning 'she of the lotus-like complexion') was one of the two chief female disciples of the Buddha. She was ordained as a nun while still a young woman and soon became fully enlightened. As well as being an arhat (enlightened), she also possessed various psychic powers to the extent that the Buddha declared her to be foremost among all the women in this field. Once, while Uppalavanna was meditating alone in the afternoon in the 'Blind Men's Grove', a secluded forest outside the city of Savatthi, some thieves passed by. The thieves had just stolen a cow, butchered it and were escaping with the meat. Seeing the composed and serene nun, the chief of the thieves quickly put some of the meat in a leaf-bag and left it for her. Uppalavanna picked up the meat and resolved to give it to the Buddha. Early next morning, having had the meat prepared, she rose into the air and flew to where the Buddha was staying, in the Bamboo Grove outside of Rajagaha, over 200 kilometres away! Though there is no specific mention of the Buddha actually consuming this meat, a nun of such high attainments would certainly have known what the Buddha ate.

However there are some meats which are specifically prohibited for monks to eat: human meat, for obvious reasons; meat from elephants and horses as these were then considered royal animals; dog meat as this was considered by ordinary people to be disgusting; and meat from snakes, lions, tigers, panthers, bears and hyenas because one who had just eaten the flesh of such dangerous jungle animals was thought to give forth such a smell as to draw forth revenge from the same species!

Towards the end of the Buddha's life, his cousin Devadatta attempted to usurp the leadership of the Order of monks. In order to win the support from the other monks, Devadatta tried to be stricter than the Buddha and show Him to be indulgent. Devadatta proposed to the Buddha that all monks should henceforth be vegetarians. The Buddha refused and repeated once again the regulation that he had established years before: that monks and nuns may eat fish or meat as long as it is not from an animal whose meat is specifically forbidden, and as long as they had no reason to believe that the animal was slaughtered specifically for them.

The Vinaya, then, is quite clear on this matter. Monks and nuns may eat meat. Even the Buddha ate meat. Unfortunately, meat-eating is often seen by Westerners as an indulgence on the part of monks. Nothing could be further from the truth - I was a strict vegetarian for three years before I became a monk. In my first year as a monk in Northeast Thailand, when I bravely faced many meals of sticky rice and boiled frog (the whole body bones and all), or rubbery snails, red-ant curry or fried grasshoppers, I would have given ANYTHING to be a vegetarian again!

On my first Christmas in Northeast Thailand an American came to visit the monastery a week or so before the 25th. It seemed too good to be true, he had a turkey farm and yes, he quickly understood how we lived and promised us a turkey for Christmas. He said that he would choose a nice fat one especially for us... and my heart sank. We cannot accept meat knowing that it was killed especially for monks. We refused his offer. So I had to settle for part of a villager's meal - frogs again.

Monks may not exercise choice when it comes to food and that is much harder than being a vegetarian.

Nonetheless, we may encourage vegetarianism and if our lay supporters brought only vegetarian food and no meat; well, monks may not complain either! May you take the hint and be kind to animals. ☺

text: Ven Ajahn Brahmavamso

References: [1] Book of the Discipline, Vol. 4, p. 324 [2] ibid, p. 325

This article was originally published in the Newsletter, April-June 1990, Buddhist Society of Western Australia.



Foods That Avert Diseases, Extend Life and Promote Spirituality: Recipes From Grandma's Kitchen

A hundred years ago, the founder of anthroposophy, Dr Rudolph Steiner, once raised the importance of nutrition to a young student who had his mind set only on spiritual practice. His student was curious why his teacher placed so much emphasis on nutrition.

Dr Steiner explained that the reason why human spirituality has been unable to make progress all this while is attributable to the issue of nutrition or diet. The Western diet is relatively more meat-based, and Dr Steiner, using his special abilities, could tell that animals' emotional toxins such as fear, hatred and their animalistic nature will enter a person's body and mind when their flesh are eaten. A person's physical and astral (emotional) bodies need to digest these pollutants, and this can cause long-term physical and mental harm. The astral body needs to be rejuvenated at night but if it is unable to recharge itself, the consciousness cannot be nourished or obtain guidance. This will cause daytime activities to be disconnected from spirituality, and is a source of harm both to the earth and, needless to say, to the person's spiritual growth as well.

Ancient Indian wisdom also recognises that the subtle energies and colours of food constitute the ingredients for our consciousness. They have a direct impact on our aura. Only plants have vitality that can nourish our consciousness and fill our hearts with radiance, bliss and joy.

For instance, consider suicide, the tenth most common cause of death in the US. Suicide is related to depression. **A vegetarian diet can prevent and cure depression. Research has found that a person's mood can improve after two weeks on a vegetarian diet. Plants contain serotonin, a hormone that can stimulate happiness in humans.**

Ordinary fruits that contain serotonin include pineapples, kiwifruits, bananas, plums, tomatoes and green vegetables. Not ingesting the fear and anger of animals can also improve one's mood. A person who switches from a meat-based diet to a vegetarian diet will feel relaxed and joyful and have fewer afflictions. This is more effective than taking sedatives and has no side effects.

There are new research findings which indicate that a vegetarian diet ensures good health and longevity. A vegetarian diet can prevent the 14 major causes of death in the US, including heart disease, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, stroke, accidents, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, renal disorder, respiratory tract infection, suicide, inflammation, liver failure, hypertension and Parkinson's disease. The Harvard University's *Nurses Health Study*, involving panel data that spanned 35 years, found that a vegetarian diet has protective properties that exceeded the researchers' expectations.

Take the case of heart disease. The health risk of a person who eats an egg daily is equivalent to that of a person who smokes five cigarettes every day for 15 years. On the other hand, the protective properties of a cup of oats daily or two servings of walnuts are equivalent to that of jogging four hours a week.

Having a normal cholesterol level does not mean that there is no risk of having heart disease. The so-called "normal" reading is actually too high – 50% of heart attack victims have cholesterol levels within the ideal range. Only by lowering one's cholesterol levels to that of vegetarians would one be safe from heart diseases. Finland originally had a high incidence of heart disease among its population. The Finnish government actively promoted vegetarianism and discouraged the consumption of animal-fat based products and dairy products, as well as chicken and pork, etc. The government also subsidised the conversion of dairy farms to orchard farms that produce fruit jams. The result was an 80% decrease in heart disease mortality, and an increase in female and male life expectancy by six and seven years, respectively.

Why is meat consumption so harmful? There are, of course, many reasons. One of them relates to a recent finding that the toxins produced by the bacteria in the decomposing flesh of dead chicken, duck and fish are not destroyed by high heat. Neither are they broken down by digestive juices after they enter the human body. Hence, they enter the blood stream through the digestive system. High fat content in the body accelerates the assimilation of these bacterial toxins into the blood stream, causing vascular inflammation paralysis. This inflammation reaction arising from a meat-based meal takes about five hours to subside, and if a second meat-based meal is taken during that period, the inflammation reaction repeats itself. Hence, the blood stream is continually infected. Once the consumption of these toxins stops, the body has an immediate improvement and the person's life span is increased. The second cause of death in the US is cancer, and its incidence is lowest among vegetarians. The use of a vegetarian diet to prevent and treat cancer has long been researched. Currently, there is more detailed research in this area.

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The Pritikin Research Foundation investigated the relation between human blood and the growth of cancer cells. The researchers found that the efficacy of human blood in killing cancer cells was eight times higher among vegetarians compared to the average American on a normal diet. After switching to a vegetarian diet, this efficacy doubled. With respect to exercise, those who took an ordinary American diet and also exercised for 30 to 60 minutes daily over 14 years had blood efficacies that were only half that of vegetarians who did not exercise. The amount of IGF1, the cancer-producing hormone in the blood stream that promotes cancer, is proportionate to the amount of meat consumed. After taking a vegetarian diet for 11 days, the liver will discharge IGF1 binding proteins such that the quality of IGF1 will significantly decrease. If IGF1 is injected into the blood stream of vegetarians and sportsmen, the protective qualities of a vegetarian diet and sports completely disappear. This proves that diet has an important relation to the occurrence of cancer.

Other than preventing these two major causes of death, a vegetarian diet can also prevent the following 11 causes of death.

The third cause of death is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The lungs can become inflamed as a reaction to the intake of meat, and thus can be immediately prevented by taking a vegetarian diet.

The fourth cause of death is stroke. This can be prevented by taking food with high potassium. Tomatoes, dates, green beans, and all vegetables and fruits have the highest potassium content.

The fifth cause of death is dementia. The study found that the number of people with dementia who had been eating red or white meat was two to five times higher compared to vegetarians. The longer a person had been a vegetarian, the lower the chances of getting dementia. A vegetarian diet not only has preventive effects but has healing effects as well.

The sixth cause of death is diabetes, and this is also preventable and treatable by a vegetarian diet. The incidence of diabetes is very significantly lower for vegetarians than for meat eaters. Further, a vegetarian diet has slimming effects. Among meat products, chicken meat intake leads to weight gain most easily.



The seventh cause of death is degeneration of the kidney function, which can be prevented by adopting a vegetarian diet. The kidney is filled with blood vessels which can be easily harmed by animal protein, fat and cholesterol. The kidney function can be improved within a week with a vegetarian diet. Hence, vegetarians tend to have better kidney functions.

The eighth cause of death is respiratory infection. Vegetables such as kale have immune system enhancing properties. Taking more fruits and vegetables can significantly improve one's immune system.

The ninth cause of death is suicide. The role of fruits and vegetables in improving one's mood has been previously discussed.

The tenth cause of death is infection of the various body systems. Meat is generally the source of infection. Some research using DNA evidence has found that infection of women's urinary tract comes from the faeces of chicken.

The eleventh cause of death is liver function degeneration. A vegetarian diet can protect one's liver function.

The twelfth cause of death is hypertension. Dr McDougall's research showed that hypertension declined after 11 days of a vegetarian diet.

The thirteenth cause of death is Parkinson's disease, which is related to the consumption of pesticides, particularly those in dairy products. Those suffering from Parkinson's disease tend to have higher concentration of the T1Q pesticides within their brains.

I have benefited physically and mentally since becoming a vegetarian when I was nineteen years old. Many friends, family members and readers have also benefited. I also like to collect recipes, and had this idea of publishing a cook book. Eventually, *Lapis Lazuli Light* in Malaysia published a cook book containing Southeast Asian recipes, along with some of the recipes that I had written over the years. Hopefully, this cook book will be a helpful reference to friends who have just embarked on a vegetarian diet, and also provide more sumptuous options to those who have been vegetarians for a long while. I hope to continue collecting special recipes from various countries, with the theme *Grandma's Kitchen*. This is to preserve some culinary methods that may become extinct.

Nowadays, busy people rarely cook - they either eat out or buy pre-cooked food. They have handed over their nourishment to the fast food operators, whose major concern is to make profits. It is important to remember a Chinese phrase: "Better to nourish with food than with medicine". The real hospital is the farm that grows plants and vegetables with a complete spectrum of colours and essential minerals. The real dispensary is the kitchen. The chef controls life and death, and can either be a doctor who saves lives or a killer who kills without mercy.

I hope that *Grandma's Kitchen* will enable everyone to taste nature's varied offerings, and experience nature's warmth and love. May a blissful vegetarian diet lead everyone to a blissful new earth. ☺

*The original Chinese article is published in Lapis magazine and is accessible online at:
<http://lapislazuli.org/TradCh/magazine/201211/20121101.html>*

text: Chiu-Nan Lai, Ph.D.

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What spurred you to turn **vegetarian?**

text: Janice Goh

The Foundation which I volunteer and work at inspired me to change my diet with its advocacy on compassion. I became a full-fledged vegetarian in 2009 to help our planet and our overly violated animal friends.

I was an extreme "carnivore" from young till 2009. My meals were all about meat, and I went to the extent of picking out any form of vegetables, down to the smallest single strand. Naturally, my immunity wasn't optimal. I often took days to weeks to recover from a common cold or other minor illnesses. I gradually adopted a healthier and more eco-friendly diet. From consuming three types of meat and no vegetables, I switched to eating two choices of meat and one portion of vegetable.

When my diet became totally meat-free, I knew that I would never go back to my meat-eating days because the comfort I got from a meatless diet was so enjoyable - I simply felt "load-free" in my stomach. That and my improved immunity convinced me and my family that I had made the right change in my diet after all those years of eating meat. Another bonus I gained from adopting a green diet was the frequency at which I needed medical leave - from at least six to seven days a year to just one day in my first year of vegetarianism.

In addition, I have become more settled spiritually. My complexion also emits a more radiant glow now. ☺

- by Jae Seah, aged 31, full-time staff at a Buddhist Foundation

In terms of vegetarianism, I consider myself fortunate. I classify myself as a 'born' vegetarian. This simply means that from birth, I never felt the desire or want to consume animal flesh. I didn't watch any video, read any book, or saw any shocking image that made me this way, it was simply born innately within me. Having said that, I was raised by two meat-loving parents who insisted that I ate meat. It was only at the age of 11 that I took a stand against my parents and insisted that I would no longer consume any meat. Although initially opposed to the idea, my parents slowly accepted my new lifestyle, and eventually my mother even converted to become a vegetarian as well – my father is still a work in progress.

The core basis for my feelings of repulsion towards consuming meat was simple, I didn't see the need to kill any animals for food. I have always loved (and still love) animals, and couldn't comprehend why anyone would slaughter them.

Fast-forward 14 years, to the age of 25 when I decided to exclude all animal products (milk, egg, cheese etc) from my diet. Adopting a vegan diet was tough, and required a lot of will-power. But when I see the reality of the milk and egg industries, and the unimaginable suffering that takes place within those confines, I just couldn't bring myself to support that cruelty. In many ways, drinking milk is more unethical than eating meat. For meat, the animals' suffering is at least ended by death. For milk, the animal undergoes a much lengthier period of (equally miserable) suffering.

The arguments for removing animal products from one's diet are getting stronger and stronger, whether it is the environmental havoc these industries are causing to our planet or the undeniable link to fatal diseases such as cancer and heart diseases. There is no longer any educated argument in favour of consuming animal products.

A Reflection of a 'Born' Vegetarian...

When I moved from England to Singapore in 2008, I received a lot of perplexing feedback that vegetarian food can be difficult to find in Singapore. I couldn't disagree more with this view. In fact, I found Singapore to be one of the best places in the world (perhaps only second to Taiwan and India) for vegetarian food. I found it to be a travesty that

people didn't know about the myriad of excellent vegetarian options in this country, so I decided to document them all on a central website, which I called 'Hungry Ang Mo'. As of today, I have reviewed almost every vegetarian restaurant, coffee shop and hawker stall in the country, and the website has received over two million hits.

Making the decision to become vegetarian (and subsequently vegan) has been the best decision I have ever made. It has allowed me to achieve a good level of health and broadened my mindset to become more compassionate. For anyone reading this article who is not yet a vegetarian, reflect inwardly and consider what is stopping you. Muster the will-power and make the switch, you won't regret it! ☺

text: Luke Otter





Mindful eating is a brilliant way to pay attention to what we hear, taste, see, smell and touch all at the same time, and we can do this at every meal of the day. Eating mindfully helps us to develop a keen awareness of our environment.

With this awareness exercise, your kids and you can share a transformative experience just by eating a raisin.

Eating a Raisin Mindfully

- 1 Start by looking at a raisin, its uneven crevices, irregular shape, rich brown colour, etc.
- 2 Imagine the fertile earth from which the grapevine burst forth, the rays of the sun, the rain, the buds that appeared and the harvest. Then imagine the people who harvested the grapes and the process it takes for the grapes to become raisins.
- 3 Look at the raisin again, and feel the wrinkly roughness of the raisin's surface between your fingers.
- 4 Then hold it beneath your nose and breathe in. Do you like the subtle but sweet scent of the raisin? Are you feeling pleasant, unpleasant or neutral physical sensation? Do you have any mental, bodily or emotional reactions to the physical sensation?
- 5 Now it is time to eat. Place it on your tongue. Allow your tongue to roll over the irregular texture.
- 6 Savour the natural sweetness of the raisin's surface and feel its unbroken skin.
- 7 Then bite into it. Feel the juice? Allow the moistness of your mouth to mix with the juice. How does this feel? Pleasant, unpleasant or neutral?
- 8 Savour the taste as it fills your mouth, and check your mental reactions. Any arising of desire, aversion or indifference?
- 9 Finally, we end this by feeling gratitude for the incredible connections between all people, places and things that brought us these raisins that were once grapes. ☺

text: **Susan Kaiser Greenland**,
author of *The Mindful Child*.
(www.susankaisergreenland.com)



Sold on the benefits of a vegetarian diet? Try our tasty recipe and kickstart the new year on an auspicious note of well-being and good health.



Cabbage Roll 高丽菜卷

Ingredients*:

- Vegetarian ham
- Pumpkin
- Carrot
- Black fungus (shredded)
- Cabbage leaves (blanched and flattened stem)
- Bean curd skin (minced)
- White waterlily snowflake stem (blanched and cooled)

* Quantity can be adjusted according to one's wishes

Seasonings:

- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 3 tbsp Japanese kombu sauce
- Pepper to taste
- Salt to taste
- A little flour (mixed with water into a batter to 'seal' the cabbage rolls)

Method:

- Heat sesame oil and stir-fry vegetarian ham, pumpkin, carrot and black fungus over low heat.
- Switch off fire and sprinkle pepper, salt and minced beancurd skin into stuffing and mix well.
- Spread a cabbage leaf on dish, place an appropriate amount of stuffing on it and roll it up. Seal it with a small amount of flour batter and tie it with a white waterlily snowflake stem.
- Place cabbage rolls in a pan. Mix Japanese kombu sauce with half bowl of water, and add this mixture into the pan.
- Cover pan, bring to boil and serve.

材料: 素火腿、南瓜、红萝卜、黑木耳（都切丝备用）
高丽菜（整片烫软后，削平中间硬梗）
豆腐皮（剁碎备用）
水莲菜（略川烫放凉）

* 食材数量可以随意增减

调味: 香菇昆布、胡椒粉、盐、麻油（适量）
面粉少许与水混合成面糊（封口用）

做法: 冷锅下所有切丝食材，用一匙麻油小火炒香。
关火后晒些胡椒粉及盐和豆皮拌匀成馅。
将烫软的高丽菜叶铺平，放适量馅料卷起，涂面糊封口。
用水莲菜卷好放平底锅中排好，将3匙香菇昆布及半碗水调好下锅，加盖煮滚，即可起锅排盘。盛盘后将锅中汤汁加1匙太白粉水勾芡，淋上菜卷就完成了。



食谱 / 照片: 谢家绫 提供 (台湾)



The Karmic Result of Killing



It is said that during the Qing Dynasty, in the 16th year of Taoguang, there lived an illiterate man called Zhang A-xi. He made a living by catching frogs and teaching others the art of cooking them.

Even though the magistrate of his county had put up a notice prohibiting people to catch frogs, A-xi stubbornly persisted in such livelihood.

Everyone around him advised him: "The frogs are beneficial creatures that protect the crops. Even the government has put up a notice to prohibit us from catching them. Why don't you earn a living by other means? Why do you insist on hunting them?"

But A-xi wouldn't listen, and continued with this mode of work.

One day, there was a rainstorm which caused the water level in the river to rise rapidly. As usual, A-xi went to the riverbank to catch frogs. As he was not careful, he slipped, fell and drowned in the river.

Two days later, his corpse was found floating in the river with countless frogs devouring his flesh. ☹



Retold by Esther Thien
Illustration by Robert Yeo

If some woman or man who is a killer of living beings, murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence and merciless to living beings, comes to the human state, he or she is short-lived wherever he or she is reborn. This is the way that leads to a short life.

But if some woman or man, having abandoned the killing of living beings, abstains from killing living beings, lays aside the rod and knife, is considerate and merciful and dwells compassionately for the welfare of all living beings... if he or she comes to the human state, he or she is long-lived wherever he or she is reborn. This is the way that leads to a long life.

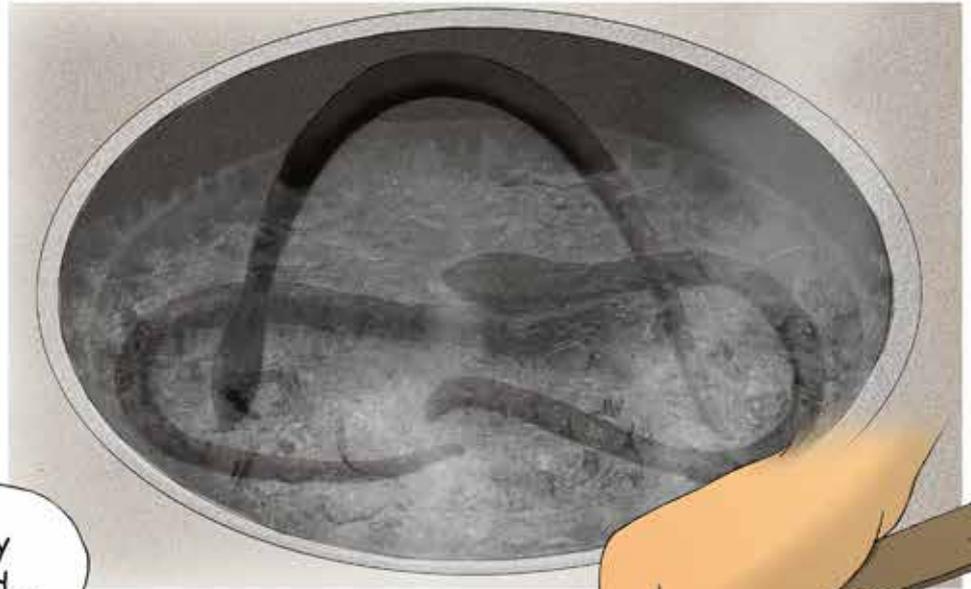
1. Once, a scholar named Chou Yu decided to cook alive some eels to eat.

A Scholar Named Chou Yu

Retold by Esther Thien
Illustrated by beeli chua

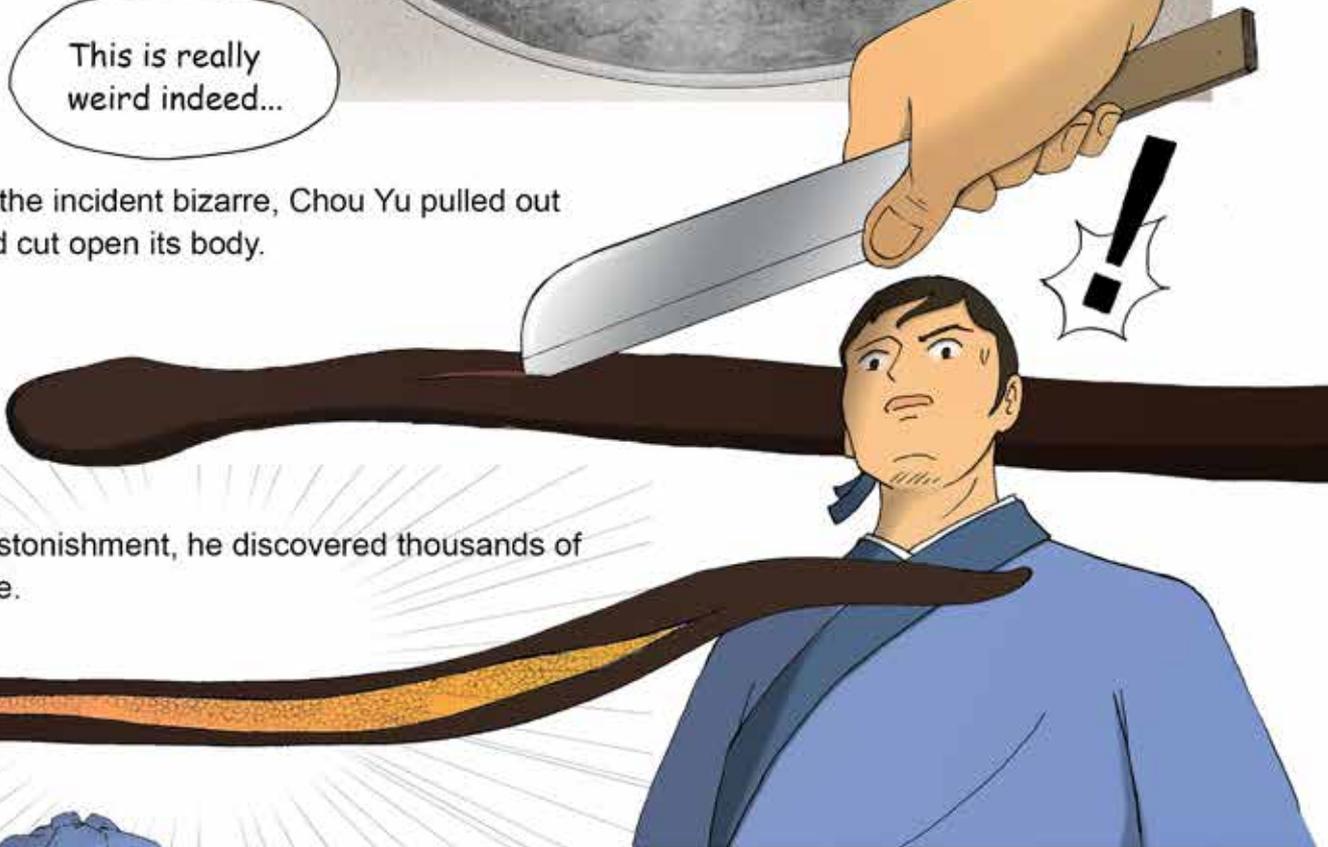


2. He noticed that one of the eels was behaving in a strange way. It was arching its body vigorously such that its head and tail were in the boiling water but its body was above the water. Eventually, the eel succumbed to the heat and fell into the soup dead.



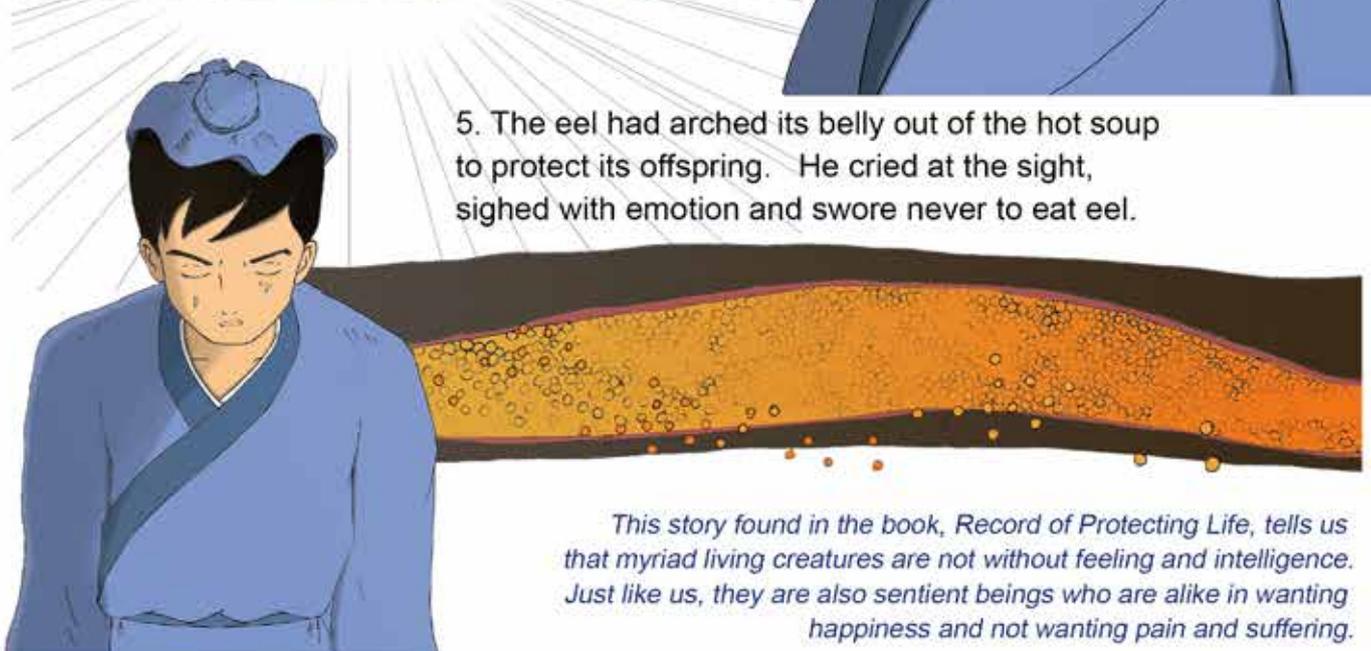
This is really weird indeed...

3. Finding the incident bizarre, Chou Yu pulled out the eel and cut open its body.



4. To his astonishment, he discovered thousands of eggs inside.

5. The eel had arched its belly out of the hot soup to protect its offspring. He cried at the sight, sighed with emotion and swore never to eat eel.



This story found in the book, Record of Protecting Life, tells us that myriad living creatures are not without feeling and intelligence. Just like us, they are also sentient beings who are alike in wanting happiness and not wanting pain and suffering.

The Merits of Producing Buddhist Teachings and Buddha Images

- 1 One's light karmic misgivings will dissolve, while heavy ones lighten.
- 2 One will be protected by devas, and be unharmed by natural and man-made disasters.
- 3 One will always be free from the suffering of hatred and vengeance.
- 4 One will be unharmed by yaksas, evil spirits and wild beasts.
- 5 One's mind will be at peace, free from harm and nightmares.
- 6 One's complexion will be radiant.
- 7 One will be full of auspicious energy.
- 8 One who practises the Dharma wholeheartedly will have adequate living necessities.
- 9 One's family will be harmonious and be blessed with fortune and wisdom.
- 10 One who practises what one preaches will be respected and loved by all.
- 11 One who is dull-minded will gain wisdom.
- 12 One who is ill will gain health.
- 13 One who is poor will gain wealth.
- 14 One will be free of being reborn in the negative realms.
- 15 One will be able to help others grow in wisdom and gain great merits in doing so.
- 16 One will always be able to learn the Dharma, till one's wisdom and spiritual penetrations are fully grown and one becomes a Buddha.

Dear Reader, "The Gift of the Dharma Exceeds All Other Gifts."

Do you wish to offer this greatest gift to others, so that more can be touched by the beauty of the Dharma, and be inspired to lead happy and meaningful lives? If so, you can share in the production costs of AWAKEN Magazine for free distribution. Simply photocopy this page, fill in the sponsorship form and mail it back to us together with your cheque or money order. All cheques and money orders should be made payable to "KMSPKS Monastery" and sent to:

Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery
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 88 Bright Hill Road Singapore 574117

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 Would you like to receive emails on upcoming talks, retreats or other events of the monastery? (Yes* / No) *Please delete where appropriate

Where did you obtain this magazine?

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Issue 31 / 2015

ENHANCE

your campus life with

Buddhism

Experience how you can make sense of this world by first making sense of your life. Study hard and have fun with a group of close-knitted spiritual friends along the way.

Find out more about Buddhism (the fun way) through these clubs at your local campus.



"The religion of the future will be a cosmic religion... if there is any religion that would cope with scientific needs, it would be Buddhism." - Albert Einstein

for more information on Buddhist activities for youths, please visit www.kmfm.org or kmpks@kmspks.org



- Nanyang Polytechnic Buddhist Society
gaocikss.com/nypbuddhistociety
NYPBS_Membership@yahoo.com.sg
- Ngee Ann Polytechnic Buddhist Society
npbuddhistociety.blogspot.com
- NTU Buddhist Society
clubs.ntu.edu.sg/buddhist
buddhist@ntu.edu.sg
- NUS Buddhist Society
nusbs.org.sg
president@nusbs.org.sg
- SIM Buddhist Bhavana Club
sim.buddhistbhavana@yahoo.com
- Singapore Polytechnic Buddhist Society
spbs-act.blogspot.com
spbs.sps@gmail.com

招募 志愿 佛学老师

Recruitment for Volunteer Dharma Teachers

Grow & blossom together in our big Buddhist family!
 引导儿童和少年在佛教大家庭里一起成长、提升

If you are a Buddhist who practise the Teachings of the Buddha, and you possess the following:

- Heart and passion to educate; to act as a friend and mentor to children/teens
- Able to commit for at least one year

如果你是遵循佛法教义的佛教徒，又符合以下条件：

- 有一颗热忱和慈悲的心，能对孩子和少年扮演益友良师的角色
- 能承诺服务至少一年

Brought to you by

Enquiry 查询 6849 5300, 6849 5328/
dharmaschool@kmspks.org

kms
Dharma Scho
 光明山少儿佛学班

text: Esther Thien



A Useful & Long-lasting Offering

Cracking your head on what alms to offer an ordained one? Consider offering an all-natural wooden soap dish made of Beech wood or Rosewood.

Featuring fine workmanship and delicately scented with the lovely and refreshing fragrance of the wood variant, the palm-sized soap dish is a useful gift that would last a long time.

Perfect for the Venerable who may need a soap dish to contain the small bars of sandalwood soap offerings he or she may receive from devotees.



To find out more, please call Awareness Place outlet at 6337 7582 or 6452 1732.



**The Enlightened Kitchen:
Fresh Vegetable Dishes
from the Temples of Japan**

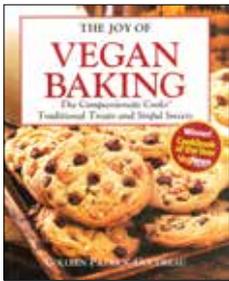
By Mari Fujii

S\$37.10

**The Joy of Vegan Baking:
The Compassionate Cooks' Traditional
Treats and Sinful Sweets**

By Colleen Patrick-Goudreau

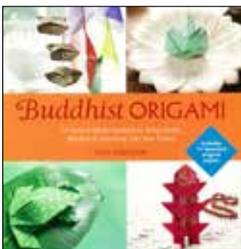
S\$27.80



A vegetarian diet is believed to bestow numerous physical and spiritual benefits. Light on the stomach yet satisfying, these natural and healthful recipes are high in nutritional value, as artificial flavourings are never used in temple cuisine. Even a meal that consists of one simple dish can be made with

care and attention so that the diner can savour “the spirit of heaven and earth in every dish”. In *The Joy of Vegan Baking*, readers get to learn to make scones, muffins, biscuits, breads, cakes, pies, tarts, cookies, brownies, strudels, crepes, puddings, shakes and smoothies that are kind to the environment, other living beings and oneself.

Carrying out ordinary chores such as cooking and baking earnestly is good spiritual practice. In the midst of life’s daily rush, take the time to slow down and perform daily tasks mindfully with love and care. A must-have for vegetarians and anyone with an interest in healthy and compassionate eating! Both are available at Awareness Place stores.



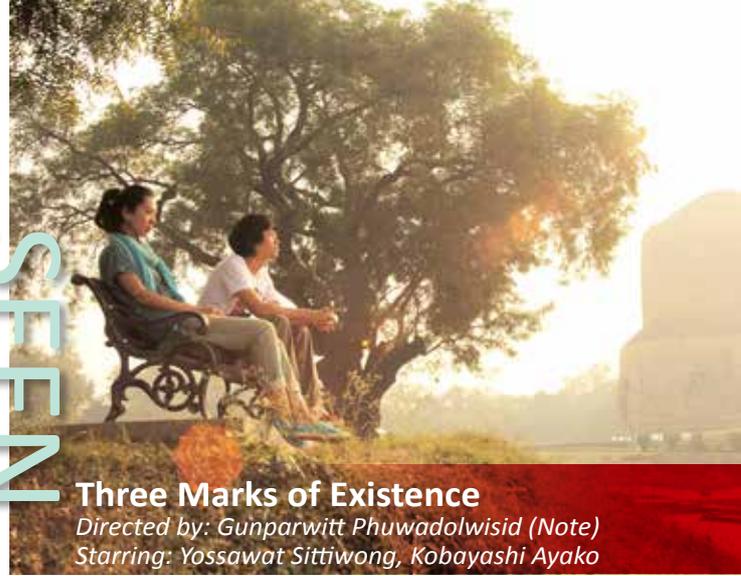
Buddhist Origami

By Krista Lester

S\$24.50

The Japanese craft of origami, or paper folding, has long been associated with inner serenity and wisdom. Clear and simple instructions are given in this book featuring 15 easy-to-make Buddhist symbols.

As you progress from relatively simple paper crafts to more intricate designs, feel the peace, relaxation and concentration that come with making these delightful Buddhist sculptures. Each book comes with 15 beautiful origami papers and retails at Awareness Place stores.



Three Marks of Existence

Directed by: Gunparwitt Phuwadolwisid (Note)

Starring: Yossawat Sittiwong, Kobayashi Ayako

Delivering the heart of the Buddha's teaching text: Chan Boon Kian

Three Marks of Existence is the sole Thai offering at the recently concluded *THIS Buddhist Film Festival 2014*.

It features a young Thai man M’s lone pilgrimage to India. On his journey, he meets people who shape his understanding of Buddhism in many unexpected ways: Uncle Kamol, who hopes to heal his own pain; Ayako, a Japanese backpacker searching for an answer to a question she does not understand; and Jane, a “hipster” who has everything M could ever want but is never satisfied.

Though delivered as a light-hearted comedy, the drive behind this film and the intended message of the story are admirably spiritual. It was after a pilgrimage trip to India that Director Note felt his understanding of Buddhism was superficial. He then began to read up more on the Dharma and had the epiphany that the religion he is associated with all along is actually a theory of how the mind works.

Yet, in a ritual-centric Thai society, this perspective seems to be lost. He thus decided to make *Three Marks of Existence* to deliver the heart of Buddhism to the audience.

Following M’s first-person narration, one can easily relate to the day-to-day dilemmas depicted in the film. Sufferings abound and M wants out but has yet to find out how. While it is entertaining to see how klutzy M can get, it is also illuminating to realise how at certain times, I was as unwise and as unmindful as this blundering M.

By having M to deconstruct his mental self throughout the movie to reveal self-grasping and attachment, the director has effectively gotten his core message across – that all our minds have the potential to work in a more agreeable manner and that the Buddha’s teachings are meant to show us how.

The placement of Uncle Kamol as a character M would meet along his journey is also interesting. Uncle Kamol is an old man who had just lost his daughter. He turned to intense meditation with the belief that it will help him communicate with his deceased daughter. What transpired was somewhat misleading – the daughter indeed appeared!

It was only during the post-movie Q & A that Director Note explained this part of his debut feature film was meant as mild mockery at the current meditation fad in Thailand, where some learn it with the hope of being blessed with tangible gains.

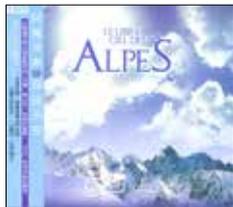
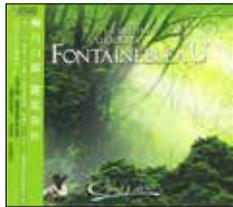
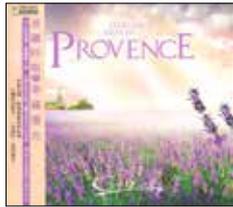
An effort laudable for both intent and outcome, Director Gunparwitt Phuwadolwisid’s *Three Marks of Existence* brings you on a contemplative journey - to see things as they really are.

Watch out for the next *THIS Buddhist Film Festival* in 2016. More details at www.thisfilmfest.com.

Le Libre Ciel Des Alpes Le Heureux Soleil En Provence La Spiritue Lle Foet De Fontainebleau

By Terra Humma Group
S\$19.90 each

Immerse in the freedom of the vast blue skies of Alps, bask in the warm, delightful sunshine of Provence or connect with the spirit of Fontainebleau Forest through three separate musical collections that distil the essence of these magical places of nature. Each album contains eight tracks of euphonious compositions that blend sounds of nature with enchanting instrumental music. All three albums can be bought at Awareness Place stores.



Melody Tree: The Day Dream

By Wind Music
S\$19.90

Korean talents produced this album containing 13 tracks of gentle, caressing piano music. The piano takes the centrestage with three tracks being solo piano pieces. Listen and let your heart sing to the joyful yet somewhat melancholic tunes as you savour a cup of Earl Grey on the patio! Track five: *A Princess of Goguryeo* is my personal favourite. It is now available at Awareness Place stores.

HEARD

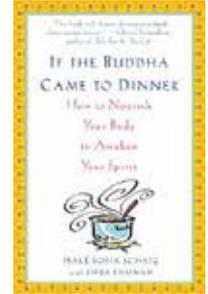
Dharma Apps

text: Esther Thien
One good thing about having a smartphone or tablet is that it can be used to connect you to the wisdom of the Dharma 24/7

If the Buddha Came to Dinner: How to Nourish Your Body to Awaken Your Spirit

Hyperion
\$11.95

If the Buddha were to have dinner at your home, what would you serve? Chances are you'd feed your honoured guest a delicious meal prepared with love and care. But the next time you have dinner, what will you eat? How we fuel our bodies is a reflection of how we nourish ourselves.



Besides nourishing our bodies with wholesome foods, we also need to

nourish our own inner wisdom. Peppered with numerous true-life accounts, this e-book gives a spiritual approach to physical nourishment. It also includes a good plan for cleansing, great recipes and ideas for keeping your energy balanced throughout the day. Recommended by readers! Available on Google Play.

https://play.google.com/store/books/details/Hale_Sofia_Schatz_If_the_Buddha_Came_to_Dinner?id=qQSZAAAAQBAJ



I'm Hungry: Vegetarian Recipes

YaYaApps
Free

Keen to make vegetarian diet a part of your lifestyle? Arm yourself with this neat app that features vegetarian recipes from around the world. Choose from American, Chinese, French, Indian, Italian or Japanese, Mexican, Middle Eastern,



Spanish and Thai cuisines at your fingertip. Several users gave the thumbs-up for the many yummy and easy to cook recipes. Accompanied by visually appealing photos. Available on Google Play.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.yayaapps.imhungry>



Mahamati, listen carefully,
I am telling you the offences of eating them.
Alcohol, meat, shallots, leeks, garlic and scallions,
are obstructions to the holy Way.
I see that in the three-realms,
all living beings, including sages,
have cyclically become relatives of one another since beginningless time.
How could we eat any of them?

- **The Buddha** (*Lankavatara Sutra*)

A disciple of the Buddha must not deliberately eat the flesh of any being,
for if he does so, he thereby cuts off great compassion,
kindness, and the seed of Buddha-nature
and causes all beings who encounter him to avoid him.

Therefore, all Bodhisattvas must abstain from eating the flesh of any being,
for meat-eating is the source of limitless offences.
Hence, if a Bodhisattva deliberately eats meat,
he thereby violates this minor precept and commits defiling offence.

- **The Buddha** (*Brahma Net Sutra*)

Ananda, if the debt involves money, material goods or manual labour,
then once it is paid, the debt is resolved.
But if in the process of repayment
the lives of other beings were taken or their flesh eaten,
then it will start a cycle of mutual devouring and slaughtering
that will send the debtors and creditors
up and down endlessly for as many aeons
as there are atoms of the universe.
There is no way to put a stop to it,
except through Shamatha or through a Buddha's coming to the world."

- **The Buddha** (*Shurangama Sutra*)

Buddhists who insist on vegetarianism
have a simple and compelling argument to support their case.
Eating meat encourages an industry
that causes cruelty and death to millions of animals
and a truly compassionate person
would wish to mitigate all this suffering.
By refusing to eat meat one can do just that.

- **Ven S Dhammika**

Attachment: Attachments are what keep us turning on the wheel of rebirth. In the Four Noble truths, Buddha Shakyamuni taught that attachment to self is the root cause of suffering: From craving [attachment] springs grief, from craving springs fear; For him who is wholly free from craving, there is no grief, much less fear. (Dhammapada) Becoming enlightened is nothing other than severing all our attachments. What is meant by “attachment”? It is the investing of mental or emotional energy in an “object”. We can become attached to people, things, experiential states, and our own thoughts and preconceptions. In Buddhist teachings attachments are usually divided into two general categories: attachments to self and attachments to dharmas. For the seasoned practitioner, even the Dharma must not become an attachment.

Awareness: Attentive consciousness of the reality of things (especially of the present moment).

Arhat: One who has destroyed dualistic ego-grasping/ clinging and achieved liberation of cyclic existence. There are three types of Arhats: Shravaka, Pratyekabuddha and Buddha.

Bodhisattva: One who aspires to be a guide to save all beings from suffering with the Buddha-Dharma, while attaining liberation.

Buddha: An aspect of the Triple Gem - The Awakened or Enlightened One. A Buddha is one who has attained liberation from all suffering, attaining True Happiness, Perfect Wisdom and Perfect Compassion, among all other virtues for the sake of helping all sentient beings. “The Buddha” refers to the historical Shakyamuni or Gautama Buddha, who is the founder of Buddhism in our world.

Buddha-nature: The original nature present in all beings which when realised leads to enlightenment. It is often called the essence of Buddhahood or enlightened essence.

Compassion

The quality of helping to remove suffering in others; the ending of cruelty. *Karuna* in Pali.

Dharma: Refers to three types. 1. All phenomena. 2. Principles of Nature. 3. An aspect of the Triple Gem - the teachings of the Buddha or the general teachings of Buddhism. In this context, the Dharma refers to the teachings of the Buddha. *Dhamma* in Pali.

Enlightenment: same as Buddhahood, full enlightenment/ awakening. Highest level of development, having forever eliminated all defilements and karmic imprints, and having developed all good qualities and wisdom to their fullest extent.

Interdependence: Also called dependent origination or conditioned arising. The principle that nothing exists independently, but comes into existence only on dependency of various previous causes and conditions. That is, a phenomenon exists in condition that the other exists; it has in condition that the others have; it extinguishes in condition that others extinguish; it has not in condition that others have not.

Karma: Refers to action, which is the cause ripening into the results. That is we experience the result of what we had done, and that what we do will result in what we will experience when conditions gather.

Loving-kindness: The quality of wishing and giving happiness and well-being to others. *Metta* in Pali.

Liberation: The state after removing the defilements and karma which cause uncontrolled rebirth in cyclic existence.

Mahayana: The Greater Vehicle. The dominant Buddhist tradition of East Asia that emphasises the Bodhisattva ideal.

Mantra: Prescribed syllables (in Sanskrit) to protect the mind from defilements. They express the essence of specific energies. Recitation of mantra is always done with specific visualisations.

Meditation: A practice to habituate ourselves to calm and positive states of mind, conducive for one to see ultimate reality.

Merits: Blessings, positive potential. Imprints on the mindstream of positive actions, leading to future happiness.

Mindfulness: An aspect of the ‘Noble Eightfold Path’ - the quality that enables us to remember, and keep our awareness and attention on what is beneficial to one and all in terms of thoughts, speech and actions. *Sati* in Pali.

Precepts: The basic guidelines of moral conduct.

Refuge: In the Buddhist context to take refuge means to accept the Buddha and the Buddhist teachings as the path one wants to take.

Shamatha: Tranquility meditation. A basic sitting meditation in which one usually follows the breath while observing the workings of the mind while sitting in the cross-legged posture. The main purpose of shamatha meditation is to settle or tame the mind so that it will stay where one places it.

Sutra(s): The recorded teachings of the Buddha. Spelt as *Sutta* in Pali.

Triple Gem: The Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

Venerable: An honorific addressing of a member of the Sangha.

Vinaya: Vinaya is a word in Pali as well as in Sanskrit which means 'discipline'. It constitutes the regulatory framework for the Buddhist monastic community, or Sangha, based on the canonical texts called Vinaya Pitaka.

Virtues: Blessings which transcend Birth and Death and lead to Buddhahood. Depending on the intention of the practitioner - whether he is seeking mundane rewards (merit) or transcendence (virtue) - the same action will then result in merit or virtue.

Wisdom: The understanding or discernment based on the direct realisation of the Four Noble Truths, Impermanence, Interdependent Origination, Non-self and Emptiness. The Buddha taught that all things are impermanent, arising and passing away, subject to change, and that knowing this — not in a rational, but empirical manner — is wisdom.



2015

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Calendar of Events

DHARMA

CEREMONY | PRAYERS

- **Offerings to Heavenly Realms Prayer**
1 Jan | Thu | 6am
Venue : Hall of Great Compassion
Registration : Front Office
Enquiry : 6849 5300

- **Alms and Sangha's Offering**
1 Jan | Thu | 8am (Alms Offering)
11am (Sangha's Offering)
Venue : KMSPKS
Registration : Front Office
Enquiry : 6849 5300



- **Chinese New Year Prayers**
18 Feb, Wed | 27 Feb, Fri
1 Mar, Sun | 5 Mar, Thu
Venue : KMSPKS
Registration : Front Office
Enquiry : 6849 5333
- **Qing Ming Festival Prayer**
5 Apr | Sun
Venue : KMSPKS
Registration : Front Office
(starts 5 Feb till fully registered)
Enquiry : 6849 5333
- **3 Refuges & 5 Precepts Ceremony**
Through taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, one enters the Buddhist Path, whilst undertaking the precepts (basic moral guidelines of moral conduct) helps one to develop mindfulness.
Apr | Sun | 12.30pm – 2.30pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Enquiry : 6849 5300 | sem@kmspks.org

TALKS | WORKSHOPS | COURSES

- **English Dharma Talk – What the Buddha taught and where to begin?**
19 Mar | Thu | 7.30pm – 9pm
Venue : APWBC
Registration : Free (Registration is required)
Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org
- **English Buddhism Course Year 1 | Conducted by Venerable**
Introduction to Buddhism - the life story of Shakyamuni Buddha, Buddhist observances, the Triple Gem and core principles in Buddhism.
Mar – Nov | Thu | 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 9
- **English Buddhism Course Year 2 | Conducted by Venerable**
Introducing more Buddhist principles, understanding the development of Buddhism after Buddha's Parinirvana and the Four Immeasurables.
Mar – Nov | Mon | 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 9

- **English Buddhism Course Year 3 | Conducted by Venerable**
A course on Sutra Study.
Mar – Nov | Thu | 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 5 – 6
Enquiry : 6849 5300 | sem@kmspks.org

MEDITATION / RETREAT

- **Self-Meditation @ Lunch**
Rejuvenate your mind and body! Take an hour break during lunch to join our meditation practice. (Registration is required)
7 Jan – 29 Apr | Wed | 12.30pm – 1.30pm
Venue : APWBC
Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org
- **Urban Retreat (Observance of 8 Precepts) | by Venerable**
Free yourself from the hustle and bustle of city life by observing the 8 precepts.
Jan | Sat | 7.30am – 9.30pm (Tentative)
Venue : VHCMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Fee : \$30 (subject to change)
- **Mindfulness of Breathing Meditation | by Venerable**
Learn meditation through mindfulness of breath to develop awareness, mindfulness and concentration.
Jan – Mar | Mon | 7.30pm – 9pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Fee : \$40 (subject to change)
- **Meditation Group Practice**
A weekly meditation practice for all ages. Basic meditation knowledge is necessary. No prior registration required.
Mar – Nov | Wed | 7.30pm – 9pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Enquiry : 6849 5300 | sem@kmspks.org

YOUTH

DHARMA

- **Temple Trail**
A bi-monthly guided temple trail to introduce KMSPKS' history and its unique architectural styles, with an introduction of Buddhism. (Conducted in both English & Mandarin)
24 Jan & 21 Mar | Sat | 10am – 12pm
Venue : KMSPKS
Enquiry : 6849 5359 | youth@kmspks.org
- **Sunday Group Cultivation** (Open for all ages)
Join us every Sunday for a short chanting, short guided meditation & a not so short discussion led by Venerable Chuan Guan. No prior registration required.
Every Sun | 2pm – 3.30pm
Lunch Dana : 4 Jan & 1 Feb | 11.30am – 1.30pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 5
Enquiry : 6849 5345 | youth@kmspks.org
- **Animal Liberation**
A way to practise kindness and compassion towards animals by saving them from being killed for food.
25 Jan & 29 Mar | Sun | 9.30am – 12.30pm
Venue : Changi Jetty
(Gathering point at KMSPKS, VHCMH)
Enquiry : 6849 5345 | youth@kmspks.org

LIFESTYLE

- **Y Talk**
A self-improvement and self-help initiative targeted at young adults and professionals. There are various themed topics and invited speakers will share their stories and experiences.
Every 2nd & 4th Thu of the month | 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Venue : APWBC
Enquiry : 6849 5345 | youth@kmspks.org

ARTS | MUSIC

- **Ukulele Class**
Learn to play simple songs on the ukulele!
9 Jan – 24 Apr | Fri | 7.30pm – 9pm
Fee : \$50 per person (30 Sessions)
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Music Room
- **Vocal Training Class**
Learn the techniques of singing and sing your heart out in the next KTV session!
4 Jan – 26 Apr | Sun | 1pm – 2.30pm
Fee : \$50 per person
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Music Room
- **Basic Music Composition Class**
Learn to compose your own music and songs in this class!
4 Jan – 26 Apr | Sun | 3pm – 4pm
Fee : \$100 per person
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Music Room
- **Zen Drumming**
A music activity that helps one to cultivate concentration. As one learns to focus on the drum beats, it helps to improve coordination of the mind and body.
7 Mar – 25 Apr | Sat | 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Fee : \$450 per person (30 Sessions)
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Music Room
Enquiry : 6849 5359 | arts@kmspks.org

COMMUNITY

Y Care

- **Food Ration**
Play your part for the community! Join us to deliver food to the low-income families at Thomson Ville Estate.
11 Jan, 8 Mar, 5 Apr | Sun | 8.30am – 12pm
Venue : KMSPKS
- **Outing with Bright Hill Evergreen Home (BHEH) residents**
Join us to bring our BHEH residents for a day of shopping and eating! Make their day and make yours too!
19 Jan | Sun | 9am – 12pm
Venue : Bright Hill Evergreen Home @ Punggol
Enquiry : 6849 5345 | youth@kmspks.org

Y Tuition

A free tuition programme providing academic guidance to GCE 'O' / 'N' Level students.

- **Mathematics**
Jan – Sep | Sun | 10.30am – 12pm
- **Chemistry**
Jan – Sep | Sun | 1pm – 2.30pm
- **Physics / Biology**
Jan – Sep | Sun | 3pm – 4.30pm
Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 Classrooms
Enquiry : 6849 5359 | youth@kmspks.org

LIFESTYLE

ARTS

- **Buddhist Art Therapy**
A workshop that uses art as a medium to explore and express our understanding of Buddhist concepts.
7 Apr – 26 May | Tue | 7.30pm – 9pm
Venue : APWBC
Fee : \$200 (8 sessions)
Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org
- **Refashioning of T-Shirts**
Transform your old T-shirts into something new and fashionable! Participants will learn how to make a bag and weave mini slippers at this workshop.

Workshop 1:

19 Apr | Sun | 3pm – 5.30pm

Workshop 2 (2nd-run):

26 Apr | Sun | 3pm – 5.30pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$30 per workshop

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

FAMILY | RELATIONSHIP

Emotional Freedom Workshop

Recognise your emotions and increase your emotional intelligence to better take charge of your life and happiness.

2 Jan – 6 Feb | Fri | 7pm – 10pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$200 (6 sessions)

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

Journey to an Intimate Relationship (English) Conducted by Sean Liew

Enrich your relationships with self & others ~ opening the door to your inner happiness

14 & 21 Mar | Sat | 10am – 12pm

Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 5 – 6

Fee : \$30 per person, \$50 per couple

Enquiry : 6849 5300 | community@kmspks.org



Talk on Life Skills Coaching for the Elderly and their Caregivers

Learn about relationship building, conflict management, communications and self-care at this talk.

23 Apr | Thu | 2.30pm – 4pm

Venue : VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 9

Enquiry : 6849 5300 | community@kmspks.org

HEALTH

CNY Organic Shopping Tour @ Batu Pahat, Kluang

A good blend of recreation, education on healthy living and organic lifestyle-in-practice.

31 Jan | Sat | 7.15am – 8.30pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$110 per person

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

Vegetarian Cooking Class

7 – 28 Mar | Sat | 2pm – 4pm

Venue : VHCMH | Level 2 | Dining Hall

Fee : \$80 per person (4 Sessions)

Enquiry : 6849 5300 | community@kmspks.org

Vegan Cuisine

Learn to cook healthy and delicious vegan cuisine!

29 Mar & 5 Apr | Sun | 3pm – 6pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$55 per session

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

Simple Detox Workshop

A detox workshop on using fruits and fruit juices to improve immune system and digestion, boost energy levels and aid colon cleansing.

16 Mar | Mon | 8.30am – 5pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$150 per person

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org



Vegetarian Health Series 'Dietetic and Nutritional Science'

Understand the 8 food groups – water, protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, fibre and phytonutrients. Learn to consume them in a healthy manner and understand their healing properties as well as the pitfalls to avoid and the principles of a balanced diet.

15 Mar – 15 Nov | 2nd Sun of the month | 9.30am – 11.30am

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$250 (8 sessions)

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

WELLNESS

Hatha Yoga

Learn to do simple poses and stretches that can help release tension of the neck, shoulders, lower & upper back and legs.

5 Jan – 30 Mar | Mon | 7.45pm – 9.15pm

3 Feb – 21 Apr | Tue | 10.30am – 12pm

11 Feb – 29 Apr | Wed | 7.30pm – 9pm

26 Mar – 28 May | Thu | 9.30am – 11am

23 Jan – 17 Apr | Fri | 10.30am – 12pm

(Beginners)

7 Feb – 25 Apr | Sat | 9.30am – 11am

14 Mar – 23 May | Sat | 7pm – 8.30pm

(Beginners)

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$160 (10 sessions)



Hatha Yoga @ Lunch time

Join us for an easy 50 mins yoga session and improve your wellness!

3 Feb – 21 Apr | Tue | 12.45pm – 1.35pm

6 Feb – 8 May | Fri | 12.45pm – 1.35pm

(Beginners)

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$120 (10 sessions)

Gentle Hatha Yoga

Learn joint-loosening methods through breathing exercises, as well as basic effective yoga postures and relaxation techniques.

3 Feb – 21 Apr | Tue | 3pm – 4.30pm

13 Mar – 29 May | Fri | 2.30pm – 4pm

(Beginners)

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$140 (10 sessions)

Hatha Yoga (Flow)

Learn about synchronisation of breath with yoga movements in this class.

7 Jan – 25 Mar | Wed | 6.30pm – 7.30pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$140 (10 sessions)

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

CHILDREN

Children's Art

A workshop for kids to explore and express themselves through fun art activities.

14 Mar – 6 Jun | Sat | 2.30pm – 4.30pm

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$60 (12 sessions)

Rainbow Child Yoga

A workshop for children to learn healthy routines for mind and body balance.

11 Jan – 15 Feb | Sun

3pm – 4.15pm (for aged 4 to 7)

4.15pm – 5.30pm (for aged 8 to 11)

Venue : APWBC

Fee : \$120 (6 sessions)

Enquiry : 6336 5067 | sem@kmspks.org

Opening Hours

本寺各殿堂开放时间

- Front Office 寺务处
8.30am – 4.30pm
- Reception 接待处
8.30am – 5pm
- Hall of Great Compassion 大悲殿
7am – 5pm
- Hall of Great Strength 大雄宝殿
8am – 4pm
- Hall of Medicine Buddha 药师殿
8am – 4pm
- Hall of No Form 无相殿
8am – 4pm
- Hall of Precepts 甘露戒堂
8am – 4pm
- Hall of Pureland 净土堂
8am – 4pm
- Hall of Universal Brightness 光明殿
8am – 4pm
- Ancestral Hall 功德堂
8am – 4pm
- Crematorium 火化场
8am – 4pm
- Pu An & Pu Tong Columbarium 普同塔与普安塔
8am – 4pm
- Library 图书馆
9am – 5pm
Sat & Sun 星期六及星期日
Inclusive of Public Holiday
包含公定假日

