

饮水思源

清明祭祖的未来趋势感言

摄心梵呗

清静庄严

正法、像法与末法

Thrive in the Age of Disruption
With our
Simple Guide
to Life



39

9-12月 | sep - dec
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These days, there are daily news reports about terrorist attacks, natural disasters, potential regional conflicts and others. It seems we are living helplessly in a world of continual chaos.

In the last decade, we have also seen in some areas a widening of racial and religious fault-lines. All these have deeply-rooted, complicated and unresolved historical issues. Hence, maintaining social harmony is an even greater challenge for countries such as Singapore with a multi-racial and multi-religious make-up.

Reflection on Thriving in an Age of Disruption

Our government has been working hard to establish mutual trust and understanding between Singaporeans of different races and faiths. As such, Singapore's founding vision is one of a fair and just society, where meritocracy and secularism are the guiding core principles, which will bring about progress and opportunities for all.

Shakyamuni Buddha also taught more than 2,500 years ago that universal love and unbounded compassion are the true solution to any conflict. And that any phenomena, even those that are volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, are essentially the manifestations of impermanence and dependent origination at the heart.

In addition, the key to all such manifestations originates from each of our minds. Mind is the forerunner of all. Therefore, the best antidote in dealing with a chaotic world stems from working on our mind.

Most people live their lives with their attention fully tuned to the outside world. Their minds are constantly shifting with the ever-changing external conditions, and continually giving rise to likes or dislikes, greed or aversion. As a result, they can never be at peace.

Buddhism is essentially about the training of one's mind. Through meditation, we cultivate an open and steady ability to introspect, guarding our mind and thoughts at all times. We are at ease and understand that with such a clear and steady mind, we can manage all of life's challenges.

I wish everyone blessings of inner peace, good health and happiness always! ☺

Sik Kwang Sheng (Ven)

Abbot, Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

The world is getting increasingly smaller. We live in an age where we have to face disruption on multiple levels in our lives. The digital age also brings with it disruptive technologies that transform the way people live, work and play. As the Buddha taught, change is the only constant in life, thus finding opportunities and being equipped with the skills to deal with disruption is far more practical and crucial for our peace of mind (pg. 46) than resisting the change that has developed.

On page 41, Robert Bogoda gives us an overview and a simple guide on leading a good life that can help us when disruptions take place in our lives.

Although dark clouds will appear from time to time, they will not be there forever, for clouds come and go. They will not remain forever (pg. 58 & 69).

The stories on pages 54, 57 and 59 also allow us to see the disruptions we face in life from a different perspective and may help us regain inner peace. We may even develop the courage and confidence to free ourselves from an unfavourable situation (pg. 60).

If music relaxes you and can temporarily ease you from your worries, check out our recommendations on page 70. Or seek out the simple yet profound book by Haemin Sunim (pg. 66) to steer your mind towards positive thinking and happiness.

You can also take joy in offering light to the Buddha to accumulate vast merits and Dharma wisdom, to lessen any suffering you may feel (pg. 71).

May all things be auspicious and joyful for all. ☺

Living in an Age of Disruption



Esther Thien

Yours in the Dharma,
Sister Esther Thien



Singapore – *The Voices of Harmony Charity Concert* organised by Kong Meng San Phor Kark See (KMSPKS) Monastery with assistance from the Singapore Buddhist Free Clinic (SBFC) was successfully staged on 20 May 2017 at the Singapore Sports Stadium to raise funds for the SBFC Medical Fund. The concert attracted 6,500 participants and raised more than \$2 million.

Since its establishment, the SBFC has always adhered to the non-discrimination principle of providing medical care to all in need, regardless of religion or race, so as to embody the Buddha's compassionate and selfless spirit to serve the community, especially the vulnerable groups, by administering to their medical needs and alleviating their suffering. Today, the SBFC has expanded to operate seven clinics islandwide and its staff strength has increased from the initial seven to eight persons to over 140 members who deliver high-quality medical service to more than a thousand patients each day.

With increasing standards of living, the SBFC's operating expenses have also increased. To meet the expenditure, SBFC Chairman Venerable Sik Kwang Sheng has,

Propagating the Dharma through Voices and Sounds

through KMSPKS as the main organiser, held numerous fundraising concerts and personally participated in the performances as an exemplary role model to lead the fundraising efforts in recent years.

This year's concert kicked off with Venerable Sik Kwang Sheng paying tribute to the Buddha in song. In praise of Shakyamuni Buddha's infinite compassion to alleviate all suffering and assist all beings, this melodious, moving and poignant ballad was akin to a refreshing cool stream soothing the audience's mind. Coupled with Venerable Kwang Sheng's resonant and captivating baritone voice, it evoked inexplicable respect and tugged at the heart-strings of all who were present.



UNICEF Ambassador from Nepal, Anni Choying Dolma gave a rendition of ***The Great Compassion Mantra*** as well as many Tibetan Buddhist songs. Her spellbinding voice, emitting clarity and tranquility, reverberating with loving-kindness, was mesmerising like the Tibetan skies – clear, enchanting and majestic.

The prodigious pianist from Xiamen, China, Niu Niu (whose real name is Zhang Shengliang) first entertained the audience with a number of solo performances on the piano. Subsequently, he played to the accompaniment of the erhu. His superb mastery of the piano earned the audience's resounding applause. Although only 19 years old, he has toured the world, and impressed with his skills on the piano since young, winning numerous awards.

Dance Ensemble Singapore, ADDO Chamber Orchestra, The Philharmonic Winds, Vocal Associates Choir and Children's Choir, as well as *HANDS Percussion* from Malaysia, also put up spectacular performances.

The grand finale was a performance by Venerable Sik Kwang Sheng who sang *Smiling Heart*. The upbeat, lively tune captured the audience who clapped along in unison.

Buddhist music is a key to opening the door to our hearts, a cooling stream for our weary body and mind. It is a catalyst to ignite the heart's wisdom, an enervating energy to uplift and build uprightness. As stated in the ***Avatamsaka Sutra***, to "propagate the Dharma through voices and sounds" is to pay tribute to the Buddha through singing praises and creating beautiful music, so as to unlock our inner wisdom and access the pure dharma, by quietening our agitated restless mind so that it may be full of radiance, gratitude, harmony and love. ☺

by : **Oh Puay Fong & Esther Thien**

Robert Bogoda gave an overview of how one can view life with its challenges, and be directed to lead a good life that is in sync with Buddhist teachings.



A Simple Guide to Life

The right view of life

To be happy, successful, and secure, we must first learn to see ourselves and the world as they truly are and then shape our everyday activities in keeping with this view. We must also look for solutions to our problems in terms of cause and effect, for the universal law of causality operates in the field of human behaviour as much as it does in the physical world.

The foundation for a fruitful life is an understanding of the moral law of karma. We need to recognise clearly that wholesome and unwholesome deeds produce corresponding good and bad results. Good begets good, and evil begets evil.

Karma is also cumulative. Not only do our deeds generate pleasant or painful results, but in their cumulative force they also determine our character. The deeds we perform in any one life are transmitted to future lives in the form of dispositions. These dispositions constitute our character traits.

There are ten unwholesome courses of action (*akusala-kamma-patha*), deeds which originate from the defilements of greed, hatred and delusion. These are: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, slander, harsh speech, useless talk, covetousness, ill will, and false views. In contrast, there are ten bases of merit (*puññakiriya-vatthu*), deeds which spring from the virtuous qualities of detachment, goodwill and wisdom, and which generate wholesome karma: generosity, morality, meditation, reverence, service, dedication of merit, rejoicing in the good deeds of others, hearing the Dharma, expounding the Dharma, and straightening out one's views.

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It is the lack of right understanding and ignorance of the underlying laws of life that accounts for the prevalence of materialism in today's world, where people worship money regardless of how it is earned, hunt for pleasure no matter where it is found, chase power and fame regardless of the cost to their personal integrity.

A true follower of the Buddha accepts the moral law of karma as just, recognising it as the chief reason for the many inequalities among human beings with regard to health, wealth and wisdom. He also learns to face life's losses, disappointments, failures and adversities calmly, without complaining; for he knows that they are the results of his own past misdeeds. If he asks himself: "Why has this happened to me?" the answer will be expressed in terms of action and result. He will try to solve his problems to the best of his ability and will adjust himself to the new situation when external change is not possible. He will not act rashly, nor fall into despair, nor try to escape his difficulties by resorting to drink, drugs or suicide.

For a genuine Buddhist, then, one's everyday activities, by way of thought, word, and deed, are more important than anything else in life. A proper understanding of the Buddhist moral law of karma and rebirth is essential for happy and sensible living and for the welfare of the world. In the Buddha's own words:

The slayer gets a slayer in his turn; The conqueror gets one who conquers him; The abuser wins abuse, the annoyer frets. Thus by the evolution of the deed, A man who spoils is spoiled in his turn.

— *Samyutta Nikaya, Kosala Samyutta*

Right understanding is the foundation for developing a proper sense of values, so sorely lacking in our age. Right views will point us towards an enlightened sense of values: towards detachment and kindness; towards generosity of spirit and selfless service to others; towards the pursuit of wisdom and understanding. Right understanding will give us a purpose for living.

A life plan

To make the best use of our human potential, we need not only a practical aim in life, but a life plan for achieving that aim, by organising our life within the framework of the Noble Eightfold Path. At the start, we require an honest understanding of ourselves. We should ask ourselves how far and to what degree we are generous, kind, even-tempered, considerate, honest, sober in morals, truthful, diligent, energetic, industrious, cautious, patient, tolerant and tactful. These are the qualities of a well-developed Buddhist, the qualities we ourselves should emulate.

We need to improve our weak points. A little practice everyday is all that is necessary. We should remember that the more often an action is performed, the easier it becomes for us to perform it in the future and the stronger the tendency to do it again and again until it becomes a habit, an ingrained part of our character.

Our life plan should cover all the main areas of a normal householder's life, including occupation, marriage, procreation and raising children, retirement, old age and death. The happiness of lay life consists in finding out exactly what one can do and doing it well. A clear mental picture of a practical aim in life and a realistic sketch of the steps needed to achieve that aim will help to guide us towards the fulfillment of our ideal. We tend to become what we really want to be, provided we act realistically and effectively to realise our aim.

Obstacles to an upright life

There are five states that prevent or block the success of our efforts to lead the upright life of a Buddhist lay follower. The Buddha called them the five mental hindrances (*pañcanivarana*) because they close the doors to both spiritual and worldly progress.



Sensual craving

The first of the five hindrances is sensual craving, obsessive hankering after possessions or for the gratification of the senses. While the lay Buddhist will seek wealth and possessions as an integral part of mundane happiness, he will also be aware of the limits to be observed in their pursuit. He will recognise that if one obtains wealth and position by unjust means, or becomes excessively attached to them, they will become a source of misery and despair rather than of joy and contentment. Money alone cannot solve all our problems. Many people never learn this, and spend their time and energy accumulating wealth and the so-called "good things" it can buy. In fact, the more they acquire, the more they want. Such people can never find happiness. A lay Buddhist must be moderate in all things. Extreme desires — for riches, the enjoyment of sex, liquor, the ostentatious display of one's success — are sure signs of internal insecurity, and should be avoided.

Ill will

Ill will or hatred, the second hindrance, is the emotional opposite of desire, yet it is an equally potent obstacle to personal development. Because we are attracted to desirable things, we are repelled by what is undesirable. Like and dislike are the two forces that delude the world, leading people astray into conflict and confusion and drenching the earth with blood. Both are born of ignorance. Desire colours everything in tinsel and drives us to acquire what we want. Hatred colours everything black and drives us to destroy what we suspect is inimical to our interests. The best way to overcome hatred is by cultivating loving-kindness.

Indolence and mental inertia

Indolence and mental inertia is the next hindrance, the obstacle to strenuous effort. The lazy person is not inclined to strive for correct understanding or high standards of conduct. He is a drifter or a dreamer, easy prey to the thieves of craving and hatred.

Restlessness and worry

Restlessness and worry are twin hindrances very much in evidence today. Restlessness is manifest in the agitation, impatience, thirst for excitement, and unsettled character of our daily existence. Worry is the guilt and remorse that one feels when one broods sadly or regretfully over an evil deed that has been done or a good deed left undone. The best remedy for a lapse or transgression already committed is to decide never to repeat it; the best remedy for neglecting to do good is to do it without delay.

Doubt

The last hindrance is doubt. Doubt is the inability to decide, the lack of resolution that prevents one from making a firm commitment to higher ideals and from pursuing the good with a steady will.

These five hindrances are great handicaps to one's progress. They deprive the mind of understanding and happiness and cause much unnecessary suffering. By cultivating the five cardinal virtues — confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom — and by constant effort one can reduce their harmful influence.

Relaxation leads to happiness

Modern life is full of stress and strain. Therefore relaxation is a necessary ingredient of happiness. By understanding the causes of stress and by regulating these causes, we can live calmly even in the midst of strenuous activity.

Hard work without tension never killed anyone. Why is it then that some people always work anxiously and feverishly? Generally, such a person is driven by craving, by intense desire. He wants to achieve his goal so eagerly, with such avidity, that he simply cannot rest until he gets it; or he is so fearful of losing something he prizes that he cannot relax and enjoy the present moment; or he is driven by resentment against those who obstruct his thirst; or he is constantly hankering after power, position and prestige on account of some irrational need to prove his worth to himself and others.



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If a person wants to avoid stress and strain, then he will have to train his mind to view everything he encounters — persons, objects, events and experiences — realistically, as transient phenomena, dependently arisen through conditions.

He should reflect upon them in terms of the three characteristics — impermanent, unsatisfactory, and without a self. Doing so will help him to reduce the investment of self-concern in these phenomena, and thereby reduce the craving and attachment for them. He should also avoid anger, anxiety, and pride — the thoughts of "me" and "mine" — since such emotions produce stress and strain. When one adopts this attitude to life, one will discover greater detachment, deeper calm, more durable peace of heart even amidst the same situations that previously produced nothing but stress and worry. **The key to managing stress is through the disciplining and mastery of the mind.**

One can also reduce stress by forming good work habits. One should confine oneself to doing one thing at a time, since attempts to juggle multiple tasks only lead to poor results in all of them. One should keep work and leisure separate. One should work in a relaxed frame of mind, repeatedly reminding oneself during the course of the day that one can accomplish more work and better work if one works calmly and intersperses one's routine with breaks.

The following are also helpful to combat stress and tension:



- **Keeping the Five Precepts conscientiously.** The feeling of guilt increases stress. By observing the precepts, a person leads a blameless life and thereby enjoys freedom from the nagging sense of guilt that harasses one who violates the basic rules of morality. A guilty conscience is a vexing companion during the day, an uncomfortable bedfellow at night.
- **Controlling the sense doors.** The mind is constantly attracted to pleasant sense objects and repelled by unpleasant objects. Wandering recklessly, it becomes scattered and distraught. By guarding the sense doors, this wasteful agitation is checked. The mind becomes calm and settled, and as a result one experiences an unblemished happiness.
- **Meditation.** Meditation, or *bhavana*, purifies the mind. As the mind is gradually cleansed, one can see with greater clarity the true nature of life. One then becomes increasingly detached from worldly things and develops an equanimity that cannot be shaken by the fluctuations of fortune.
- **Cultivating the four sublime attitudes.** The four sublime attitudes (*brahmavihara*) are loving-kindness, compassion, altruistic joy and equanimity. These are enlightened emotions that reduce the stress and strain of daily life, improve interpersonal relationships at home and in the workplace, promote racial accord and amity, help in the development of an even mind, and increase calm and inner peace.

One final piece of practical advice: Time, energy, and funds are limited, while wants are unlimited. Therefore a person must have a sense of priorities. A

lay Buddhist, in particular, must be able to discriminate: know what is really essential to a wholesome life; what is desirable but not urgent; what is trivial and dispensable; and what is detrimental. Having made these distinctions, one must pursue what ranks high in the scale of priorities and eschew what ranks low. This will enable one to avoid unnecessary waste and worry, and help to promote balanced, frugal living.

Observing the Five Precepts

Unvirtuous conduct is harmful to oneself and others and strengthens the defilements of greed, hatred and delusion. The opposite of unvirtuous conduct is virtue (*sila*).

Virtue involves the avoidance of immoral deeds by voluntarily accepting ethical principles of restraint. Virtuous action springs from the three wholesome roots of non-attachment, goodwill, and wisdom. By undertaking moral precepts one pledges to regulate one's conduct in accordance with these three virtuous qualities.

The minimal code of ethics followed by a lay Buddhist is the Five Precepts of virtue (*pañcasila*). These precepts are moral rules voluntarily undertaken to promote the purity of one's own conduct and to avoid causing harm and suffering to others.

The Five Precepts are:

1. To abstain from killing living beings;
2. To abstain from taking what is not given, i.e., from stealing;
3. To abstain from sexual misconduct;
4. To abstain from false speech;
5. To abstain from intoxicants and harmful drugs.

Following the Five Precepts also implies shunning the five kinds of occupation forbidden to a lay Buddhist: trading in arms, in human beings (i.e., including slavery and prostitution), in flesh (i.e., breeding animals for slaughter), in intoxicants, and in poisons.

Virtue, though formulated negatively in the precepts, is not a mere negative state. On the contrary, it is most decidedly a powerful mental achievement. To observe the precepts conscientiously in one's daily life brings a simultaneous growth in mental purity, skilfulness and wisdom. Refraining from killing, for example, increases compassion and loving-kindness for all living beings, two of the "sublime attitudes" extolled by the Buddha. Honesty gives courage, generosity and love of justice. Sexual restraint results in physical strength, vitality, and keenness of the senses. Truthfulness makes for uprightness. Avoiding intoxicants and stupefying drugs promotes clarity of mind. Finally, mindfulness is essential to observing all the precepts, and one's constant effort to maintain the precepts in turn promotes the clarity of mindfulness.

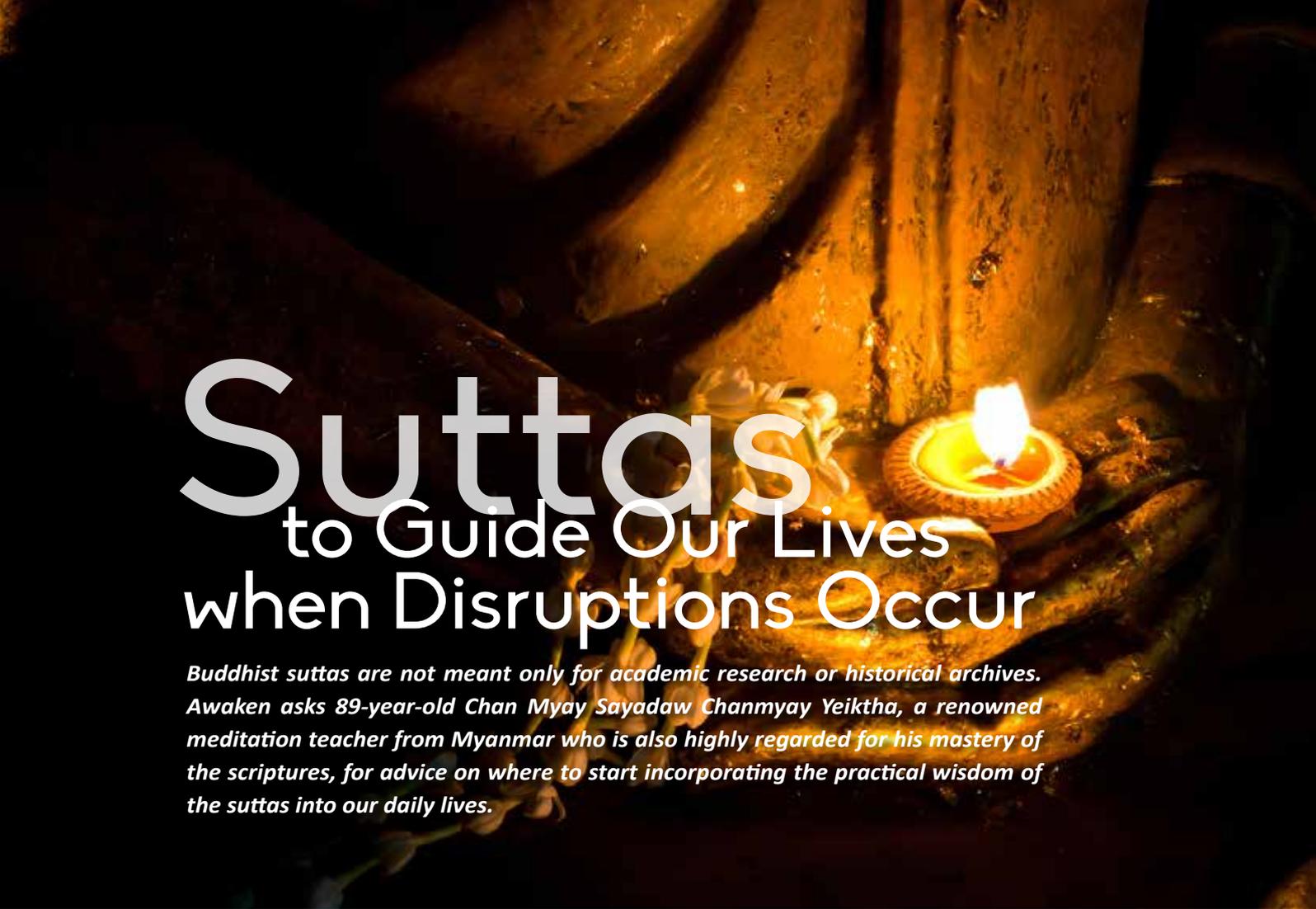
The habitual practice of the Five Precepts leads to increased self-control and strength of character. The mind that succeeds in controlling desire, even to a slight degree, gains in power. Desire is a force every bit as real as electricity. When desire is uncontrolled, allowed to run riot, it expends itself in the pursuit

of things that are harmful to oneself and others. The Buddha's teaching, far from encouraging the proliferation of desire, counsels us in the methods by which we may harness, divert and sublimate the powerful force of desire and use it for worthy ends.

Virtue is the first stage in the development of the Noble Eightfold Path; it comprises the path factors of Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood. The energy conserved by virtue is then used for the practice of the second stage, concentration of mind, which in turn is the soil for the growth of wisdom.

The observance of the Five Precepts is a voluntary act which each individual must undertake on his or her own initiative. The Buddha did not formulate the precepts as commandments, nor did he threaten anyone with punishment for violating them. However, this much has to be said: The Buddha perfectly understood the workings of the universe, and he proclaimed the inviolable moral law of cause and effect: good deeds beget pleasant fruits, unvirtuous deeds beget painful fruits. The Five Precepts are the guidelines the Buddha has bequeathed us to steer us away from unvirtuous conduct and towards the lines of conduct that will prove most beneficial for ourselves and others. When we mould our actions by the Five Precepts, we are acting in accordance with the Dharma, avoiding future misery and building up protection and happiness for ourselves and others both here and in the hereafter. Thus the closer we live to the Five Precepts, the more our lives will be blessed. ☺

Editor: *The Monastery is conducting a Three-fold Refuge, Five Precepts Ceremony on 29 October. Please see page 72 for more information.*



Suttas to Guide Our Lives when Disruptions Occur

Buddhist suttas are not meant only for academic research or historical archives. Awaken asks 89-year-old Chan Myay Sayadaw Chanmyay Yeiktha, a renowned meditation teacher from Myanmar who is also highly regarded for his mastery of the scriptures, for advice on where to start incorporating the practical wisdom of the suttas into our daily lives.

Awaken: In this age characterised by disruptions and turmoil, are there any relevant teachings in the suttas that people can apply to help them cope with their fears and worries?

Sayadaw: The ‘Akankheyya Sutta’, Mulapannasa of Majjhima Nikaya, helps people to cope with their fears and worries.

Here is an excerpt from the Sutta:-

“If a bhikkhu should wish: ‘May I become a conqueror of fear and dread, and may fear and dread not conquer me; may I abide transcending fear and dread whenever they arise,’ let him fulfill the precepts”.

Awaken: How can Buddhists maintain inner peace when the outer world seems to be churning in chaos?

Sayadaw: Mindfulness Meditation is the way to maintain inner peace in the world.

Awaken: How can Buddhists help others around them cope?

Sayadaw: Buddhists help others around them by providing them with whatever they need.

Awaken: Any advice from the suttas on conflict resolution, e.g. between family members, friends, colleagues, or even strangers and enemies?

Sayadaw: Please read the Mahasamaya Sutta together with its commentary. The *Mahasamaya Sutta* is in Mahavagga, Digha Nikaya.

(Editor: Please read page 48 for this Sutta.)

Awaken: Buddhists have been criticised or misunderstood as being passive and inept because they only know how to withdraw into themselves in meditation instead of proactively fighting for worthy causes like world peace. On the other hand, many feel that monastics, having renounced the world, should not engage in political activities. How can we make sense of this?

Sayadaw: I would like to recommend a good book, 'Contribution of Buddhism to World Civilization and Culture' by P.N. Chopra.

Awaken: I read conflicting advice on whether people with mental health issues can do meditation. Based on your experience, what do you recommend?

Sayadaw: One who has an unhealthy mind should not practise any kind of meditation.

Awaken: I observe Singapore having increasing numbers of patients with cognitive impairments, e.g. dementia or stroke. Would meditation be of any help to them when they seem to have problems with concentration or info-processing? If yes, which method is appropriate for them – Insight? Loving-kindness? Mindfulness of breathing?

Sayadaw: Meditation is a form of mental training and mental development. No method of meditation is suitable for them when patients are suffering from cognitive impairments.

Awaken: According to recent news reports, there are increasing cases of adultery and divorce, which are breaking up families and causing distress to the couples and children. Generally, as our lives become more complex with globalisation, we seem less able to deal with temptations. Instead, taking the easy way out via questionable or even outright illegal means to earn mega-bucks, for example, is seen as being smart. What should we do about this? How can such a trend be stopped?

Sayadaw: For this very long question, I would like to recommend reading the 'Ambalatthikarahulovada Sutta', Majjhima Nikaya in the scriptures.

Here is an excerpt from the Sutta:-

"What do you think, Rahula? What is the purpose of a mirror?"

"For the purpose of reflection, venerable sir".

"So too, Rahula, an action with the body should be done after repeated reflection; an action by speech should be done after repeated reflection; an action by mind should be done after repeated reflection".

"Rahula, when you wish to do an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: 'Would this action that I wish to do with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results? When you reflect, if you know: 'This action that I wish to do with the body would lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results', then you definitely should not do such an action with the body".

Awaken: In recent years in the USA, for example, a number of famous cult-like meditation teachers have emerged. They had huge following and made lots of money before they were exposed. What advice do you have for lay people on how to select an authentic meditation teacher, Buddhist or otherwise?

Sayadaw: I would recommend you to read 'Nagaravindeyya Sutta', Uparipannasapali, Majjhima Nikaya in the scriptures.

Maha-samaya Sutta: The Great Meeting

translated from the Pali by **Thanissaro Bhikkhu**

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling among the Sakyans at Kapilavatthu in the Great Wood, together with a large Sangha of approximately five hundred bhikkhus, all of them arahants. And most of the devatas from ten world-systems had gathered in order to see the Blessed One and the Bhikkhu Sangha. Then the thought occurred to four devatas of the ranks from the Pure Abodes: "The Blessed One is dwelling among the Sakyans at Kapilavatthu in the Great Wood, together with a large Sangha of about five hundred bhikkhus, all of them arahants. And most of the devatas from ten world-systems have gathered in order to see the Blessed One and the Bhikkhu Sangha. Let us also approach the Blessed One and, on arrival, let us each speak a verse in his presence."

Then, just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, those devatas disappeared from among the devas of the Pure Abodes and reappeared before the Blessed One. Having paid homage to the Blessed One, they stood to one side. As they were standing there, one devata recited this verse in the Blessed One's presence:

A great meeting in the woods:
The deva hosts have assembled.
We have come to this Dhamma meeting
To see the invincible Sangha.

Then another devata recited this verse in the Blessed One's
presence:

The bhikkhus there are concentrated,
Have straightened their own minds.
Like a charioteer holding the reins,
The wise ones guard their faculties.

Then another devata recited this verse in the Blessed One's
presence:

Having cut through barrenness, cut the cross-bar,
Having uprooted Indra's pillar, unstirred,
They wander about pure, unstained,
Young nagas well tamed by the One with Vision.

Then another devata recited this verse in the Blessed One's
presence:

Those who have gone to the Buddha for refuge
Will not go to the plane of woe.
On discarding the human body,
They will fill the hosts of the devas.

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks, most of the devatas from ten world-systems have gathered in order to see the Tathagata and the Bhikkhu Sangha. Those who, in the past, were Pure Ones, Rightly Self-awakened, at most had their devata-gathering like mine at the present. Those who, in the future, will be Pure Ones, Rightly Self-awakened, will at most have their devata-gathering like mine at the present. I will detail for you the names of the deva hosts. I will describe to you the names of the deva hosts. I will teach you the names of the deva hosts. Listen and pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks replied. The Blessed One said:
I recite a verse of tribute.

Those who live where spirits dwell,
who live in mountain caves,
resolute, concentrated,
many, like hidden lions,
who have overcome horripilation,
white-hearted, pure,
serene, and undisturbed:
Knowing that more than 500 of them
had come to the forest of Kapilavatthu,
the Teacher then said to them,
disciples delighting in his instruction,
"The deva hosts have approached.
Detect them, monks!"

Listening to the Awakened One's instruction,
they made an ardent effort.
Knowledge appeared to them,
vision of non-human beings.
Some saw 100, some 1,000, some 70,000,

some had vision of 100,000 non-human beings.
Some gained vision of innumerable devas
filling every direction.

Realizing all this,
the One-with-Vision felt moved to speak.
The Teacher then said to them,
disciples delighting in his instruction,
"The deva hosts have approached.
Detect them, monks,
as I describe their glories, one by one.

7,000 yakkhas inhabiting the land of Kapilavatthu,
powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

6,000 yakkhas from the Himalayas,
of varied hue,
powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

From Mount Sata 3,000 yakkhas
of varied hue,
powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

These 16,000 yakkhas of varied hue
powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

500 yakkhas from Vessamitta, of varied hue,
powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

Kumbhira from Rajagaha,
who dwells on Mount Vepulla,
attended to by more than 100,000 yakkhas —
Kumbhira from Rajagaha:
He, too, has come to the forest meeting.

And Dhataratha, who rules
as king of the Eastern Direction,
as lord of the gandhabbas:
A glorious, great king is he,
and many are his sons
named Indra, of great strength.
Powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,

rejoicing, they have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

And Virulha, who rules
as king of the Southern Direction,
as lord of the kumbandas:
A glorious, great king is he,
and many are his sons
named Indra, of great strength.

Powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, they have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

And Virupakkha, who rules
as king of the Western Direction,
as lord of the nagas:
A glorious, great king is he,
and many are his sons
named Indra, of great strength.
Powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, they have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

And Kuvera, who rules
as king of the Northern Direction,
as lord of the yakkhas:
A glorious, great king is he,
and many are his sons
named Indra, of great strength.
Powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, they have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

Dhatarattha from the Eastern Direction,
Virulhaka from the South,
Virupakkha from the West,
Kuvera from the Northern Direction:
These four Great Kings
encompassing the four directions,
resplendent, stand in the Kapilavatthu forest.

Their deceitful vassals have also come
— deceptive, treacherous —
Maya, Kutendu, vetendu,
Vitu with Vituta,
Candana, the Chief of Sensual Pleasure,
Kinnughandu, Nighandu,
Panada, the Mimic,
Matali, the deva's charioteer,
Cittasena the gandhabba,
King Nala, the Bull of the People,
Pañcasikha has come

with Timbaru and his daughter, Suriyavacchasa.
These and other kings, gandhabbas with their kings,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

Then there have also come
nagas from Lake Nabhasa,
Vesali, and Tacchaka.
Kambalas, Assataras,
Payagas, and their kin.
And from the River Yamuna
comes the prestigious naga, Dhatarattha.
The great naga Eravanna:
He, too, has come
to the forest meeting."

They who swoop down swiftly on naga kings,
divine, twice-born, winged, their eyesight pure:
(Garudas) came from the sky to the midst of the forest.
Citra and Supanna are their names.
But the Buddha made the naga kings safe,
made them secure from Supanna.
Addressing one another with affectionate words,
the nagas and Supannas made the Buddha their refuge.

"Defeated by Indra of the thunderbolt hand,
Asuras dwelling in the ocean,
Vasava's brothers — powerful, prestigious —
Greatly terrifying Kalakañjas,
the Danaveghasa asuras
Vepacitti and Sucitti,
Paharada, with Namuci,
and Bali's hundred sons, all named Veroca,
arrayed with powerful armies
have approached their honored Rahu
[and said]: 'Now is the occasion, sir,
of the monk's forest meeting.'

Devas of water, earth, fire, and wind have come here.
Varunas, Varunas,
Soma together with Yasa,
the prestigious devas of the hosts
of goodwill and compassion have come.
These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue,
powerful, effulgent,
glamorous, prestigious,
rejoicing, have approached
the monks' forest meeting.

Vendu (Visnu) and Sahali,
Asama and the Yama twins,
the devas dependent on the moon
surrounding the moon have come.
The devas dependent on the sun
surrounding the sun have come.
Devas surrounding the zodiac stars
and the sprites of the clouds have come.

Sakka, chief of the Vasus, the ancient donor, has come.
 These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue,
 powerful, effulgent,
 glamorous, prestigious,
 rejoicing, have approached
 the monks' forest meeting.

Then come the Sahabhu devas,
 blazing like crests of fire-flame.

The Arittakas, Rojas,
 cornflower blue.

Varunas and Sahadhammas,
 Accutas and Anejakas,
 Suleyyas and Ruciras,
 and Vasavanesis have come.

These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue,
 powerful, effulgent,
 glamorous, prestigious,
 rejoicing, have approached
 the monks' forest meeting.

Samanas and Great Samanas,
 Manusas and Super Manusas,
 the devas corrupted by fun have come,
 as well as devas corrupted by mind.

Then come green-gold devas and those wearing red.

Paragas and Great Paragas,
 prestigious devas have come.

These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue,
 powerful, effulgent,
 glamorous, prestigious,
 rejoicing, have approached
 the monks' forest meeting.

White devas, ruddy-green devas, dawn-devas
 have come with the Veghanas
 headed by devas totally in white.

The Vicakkhanas have come.

Sadamatta, Haragajas,
 and the prestigious multi-colored,

Pajunna, the thunderer,
 who brings rain in all directions:

These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue,
 powerful, effulgent,
 glamorous, prestigious,
 rejoicing, have approached
 the monks' forest meeting.

The Khemiyas, Tusitas, and Yamas,
 the prestigious Katthakas,
 Lambitakas, and Lama chiefs,
 the Jotinamas and Asavas,
 the Nimmanaratis have come,
 as have the Paranimmitas.

These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue,
 powerful, effulgent,

glamorous, prestigious,
 rejoicing, have approached
 the monks' forest meeting.

These 60 deva groups, all of varied hue,
 have come arranged in order,
 together with others in like manner [thinking:]
 'We'll see the one who has transcended birth,
 who has no bounds, who has crossed over the flood,
 fermentation-free,
 the Mighty One, crossing over the flood
 like the moon emerging from the dark fortnight.'

Subrahma and Paramatta Brahma,
 together with sons of the Powerful One,
 Sanankumara and Tissa:
 They too have come to the forest meeting.
 Great Brahma, who stands over
 1,000 Brahma worlds,
 who arose there spontaneously, effulgent:
 Prestigious is he, with a terrifying body.
 And ten brahma sovereigns,
 each the lord of his own realm —
 and in their midst has come
 Harita Brahma surrounded by his retinue."

When all these devas with Indras & Brahmas had come,
 Mara's army came as well.

Now look at the Dark One's foolishness!
 [He said:] "Come seize them! Bind them!
 Tie them down with passion!
 Surround them on every side!
 Don't let anyone at all escape!"

Thus the great war-lord urged on his dark army,
 slapping the ground with his hand,
 making a horrendous din, as when
 a storm cloud bursts with thunder,
 lightning, and torrents of rain.
 But then he withdrew-enraged,
 with none under his sway.

Realizing all this,
 the One-with-Vision felt moved to speak.

The Teacher then said to them,
 disciples delighting in his instruction,
 "Mara's army has approached.

Detect them, monks!"

Listening to the Awakened One's instruction,
 they made an ardent effort.

The army retreated
 from those without passion,
 without raising even a hair on their bodies.

Having all won the battle

— prestigious, past fear —

they rejoice with all beings:

Disciples outstanding among the human race.

Manjushri Bodhisattva's First Generation of Bodhicitta Resolve

At that time the king called Universal Protection, together with a great assembly of eighty hundred million nayutas of his subjects,

went to the abode of Thunder Voice Buddha, prostrated before his feet, made seven circumambulations, bowed respectfully, folded his palms towards that Buddha, and said the following stanza:

"I request the Most Superior One,
Please explain to me
How does one become
Foremost and respected among men,
Whom the world relies upon?
I have made vast offerings,
But my mind is undecided
As to the objective of my dedication.
I have cultivated vast merits,
But how should I dedicate it?
Perhaps I should aspire to the position of Brahma?
Or Sakra, or chakravartin?
Perhaps I should aspire to become a shravaka?
Or maybe a pratyekabuddha?
As I was having these thoughts,
The devas in space advised me,
'Great King, you should not
Have an inferior mind of dedication.
You should bring forth vast aspirations
For the sake of all sentient beings.
For the benefit of the world,
You should generate bodhicitta.'
Now I beseech the Tathagatha
Who possesses mastery over the Dharma
To explain the skilful means
For giving rise to bodhicitta.
May the One Honoured Among the Bipedes
Explain to me in full."

As extracted from the Great Jewel Heap Sutra (大宝积经)

Translated by : Dr Vincent Lim Sui-leong

At that time, Thunder Voice Tathagatha, spoke the following stanza for the king called Universal Protection:

"Great King, listen attentively!
I will explain to you in sequence.
Everything is circumstantial,
It depends entirely on your wishes and inclinations.
Whatever aspirations you make
The results you will gain accordingly.
In the past, I too
Generated bodhicitta.
For the sake of sentient beings,
I vowed to bring them benefit.
In accordance with my aspirations,
In accordance with the bodhicitta generated,
I became irreversible on the path to enlightenment,
And my aspiration was swiftly perfected.
Great king, be steadfast
In your practice of the various conduct,
And you will surely attain the vast
And unsurpassed enlightenment of the buddhas."

The king called Universal Protection became joyful and enthusiastic after hearing this from the Buddha. Having experienced the unprecedented, he let out the lion's roar, and spoke the following stanza:

"Now, before every sentient being,
I shall generate the bodhicitta resolve.
For the sake of each and every being,
I vow that until the limits of the future,
Throughout the endless rounds of birth and death,
I shall accomplish their great benefit.
Arming myself with bodhisattva conduct,
I shall save every sentient being from suffering.
If I should violate my vows,
If I should give in to avarice,
Jealousy, and hatred,
Then I would have deceived the buddhas of the ten directions.
Furthermore, from today onwards,
Until I accomplish enlightenment,
I shall constantly follow the example of all the buddhas
In their practice of brahma (pure) conduct.
I shall abide in accordance with the pure precepts,
And abandon all transgressions.
Furthermore, I shall not rush
To attain enlightenment,
But I shall work to bring vast benefit to all beings
Till the limits of the future.
I shall purify and adorn buddhahelds,
Limitless and inconceivable in numbers.
I shall cause my name to be heard everywhere
Throughout worlds in the ten directions.
I shall now bestow my own prediction,
I will surely become a buddha.
As my intention is superior and pure,
There is no doubt about it.
I shall purify the karma of the three doors,
And not allow non-virtue to arise.
By the power of the truth,
I shall become a buddha, honoured among men.
If my intention is truthful,
May the ground shake in six ways.
If my speech is truthful,
Devoid of any deceit,
May empty space
Be spontaneously filled with music.
If I do not harbour hypocrisy
And the mind of hatred,
By the power of the truth,
May mandarava flowers rain down!"

At that moment, after the king called Universal Protection had spoken the above stanza with truthful intention, one hundred million lands in the ten directions shook in six ways, music spontaneously resounded in empty space, and mandarava flowers rained down. Twenty hundred million followers of the king were greatly overjoyed, and they said in a self-congratulatory manner: "We too shall attain the unsurpassed enlightenment." They followed the example of their king in generating bodhicitta.

The Buddha (Sakyamuni) told the great assembly: "Do you know who the king called Universal Protection at that time is? He is presently Manjushri Bodhisattva." ☺



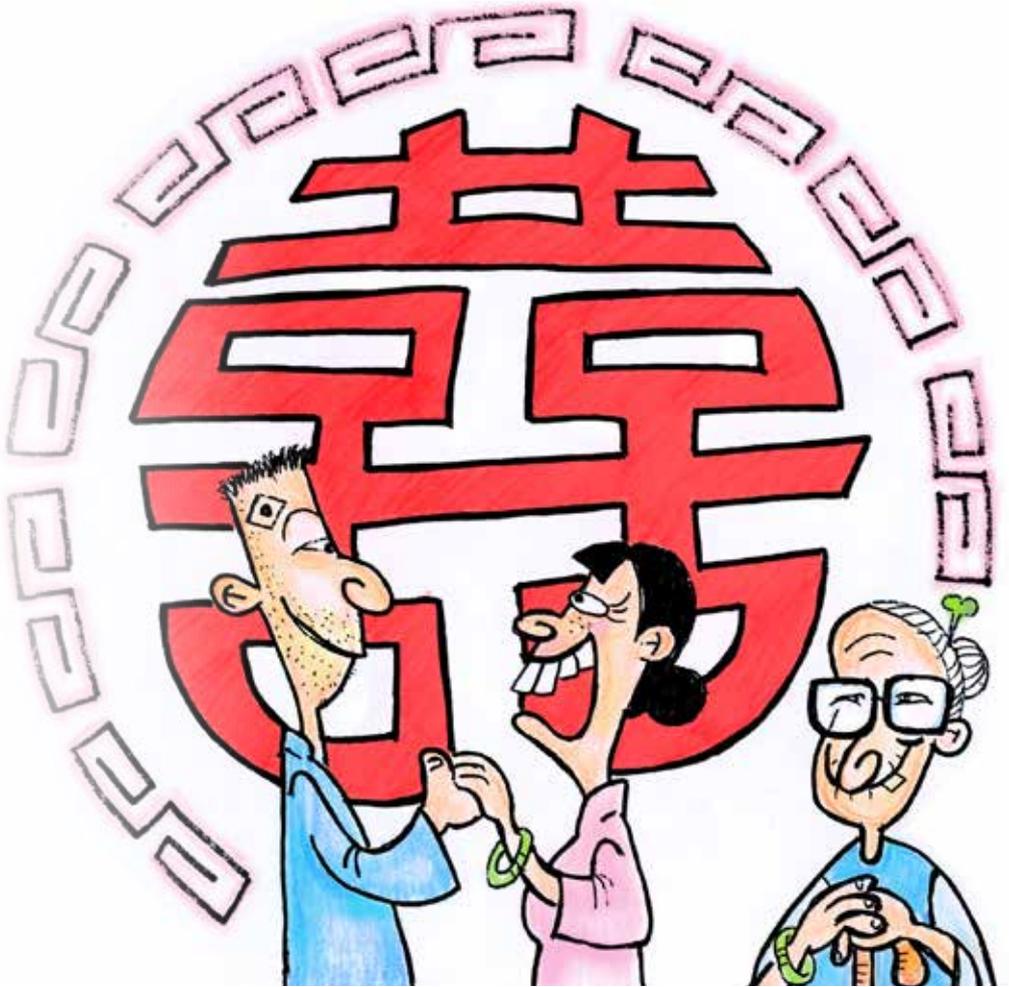
retold by : **Esther Thien**
illustration by : **Robert Yeo**

There once lived a young man and his elderly mother who were very poor. The son was always working in order to support his mother. One day, the village elders realised the young man had yet to have a marriage arranged for him.

Thinking the man had a very admirable and good character, the elders searched throughout the district for a good-hearted woman who was willing to marry a poor farmer. Finally, they found a woman from a poor family who appeared gentle and caring, and the elders arranged for them to get married.

Soon after the wedding, the young man realised that his wife wasn't as kind and selfless as everyone had thought. She was never satisfied with the money he earned, and he noticed she treated his mother harshly, often not preparing proper meals for his elderly mother. With each passing week, the elderly mother became thinner and weaker.

Being good-natured, the young man reflected and tried to understand the situation from his wife's perspective, even as he struggled with his anger about his wife's behaviour.



The Greedy Daughter-in-law

“Well, it must be hard being the wife of a poor farmer, trying to make ends meet when there's never enough. At the temple, they say that our basic nature is inherently good and compassionate, so if I treat her with compassion and loving care, perhaps I can draw out these qualities within her, and she will treat my mother better.”

Thinking so, the young man tried this approach. But instead of improving, his wife's behaviour worsened. Eventually, he came to the realisation that he would have to do something rather than wait for his wife to change her behaviour. He contemplated deeply on the situation for several days, until an idea finally hit him!

He came back a week earlier than expected from his yearly trip to the capital to sell his grains at the end of the harvest season. Rushing into their courtyard, he shouted for his wife. When she came out, he glanced around to see if anyone was nearby and listening before whispering to his wife:

“You won’t believe what I saw in the city! I stumbled into a side alley off the big market, and found a street where people were buying and selling grandmothers. The plump ones were going for a thousand string of copper coins! Let’s sell my mother there, and we will make a thousand string of coins, as easy as snapping our fingers!”

“Do you think we can get that much for your mum? She is kind of scrawny...”

“You are right, we have to fatten her up first. Don’t breathe a single word to anyone. If others start selling their mothers, we won’t get a good price.”

At that time, a thousand string of coins was a lot of money, and the wife wanted it all. That night, all the wife could think of were ways to make her mother-in-law healthy-looking and plump. In the following days, she conjured recipes, experimenting with different foods and medicines that were purportedly good for the elderly. As days passed, she became obsessed with her mother-in-law’s health.

With such care, her mother-in-law recovered her strength and health. One day, as she took her grandson for a stroll, she met some old friends and extolled with amazement how virtuous and filial her daughter-in-law was!

Soon, accounts of how well the wife took care of her mother-in-law spread throughout the surrounding villages and to the ears of the district governor. Impressed, he ordered a stone monument to be erected, in honour of the wife and holding her conduct as a paradigm of virtue for others.

Originally, the wife had started caring for her mother-in-law with the intention of getting rich. But as she cared for the elderly woman, her own greed and selfishness began to melt away.

Seeing the stone monument was the final straw. She broke down in tears, determined to truly become the person inscribed on it. ☺



Our fundamental mind, our Buddha-nature, contains infinite wisdom. However, this isn’t something you can find without making an effort. Like the young man, you have to diligently reflect and ponder your questions inwardly, while searching for a solution that will benefit everyone.

If you do this, then the wisdom of your Buddha-nature can shine forth. However, no matter how great the wisdom, you won’t see any results without ceaseless effort and strong faith.

If you want to achieve something in your life, throw away self-centredness and greed. Then, with faith, entrust everything to your fundamental mind. Be patient and continue to observe, use both body and mind to put your understanding into practice. If you can make this kind of effort, you will certainly find the best way forward in any difficulty.

- Zen Master Daehuang

(Buddhist News in Brief)

Learn to Meditate with Tea and Fruits!

Singapore – The Institute of Chinese Buddhism is organising a *Chan* Workshop on 23 and 24 September this year at the Buddhist College of Singapore. Held over a weekend, the workshop will start at 9am and end at 9pm, and is led by Venerable Shi Da Xing, an Italian turned *Chan* Buddhist monk of the Chinese Mahayana tradition who has led several retreats over the past decade in Italy, China, Taiwan and Northern California.

The workshop will begin on Saturday with an introductory segment on the Patriarch *Chan* principles, from the time of Lord Shakyamuni Buddha down to our present age. Next, teachings on the practice, followed by relaxation exercises, sitting meditation and Tea *Chan* will be taught. The day will end with a talk on the unique characteristics of Buddhism and the *Chan* approach, which distinguish it from other spiritual and non-spiritual traditions. On Sunday, participants will learn the importance of having a universal mind, techniques on Fruit *Chan* and how to apply Buddhist principles and practice at home in daily life.



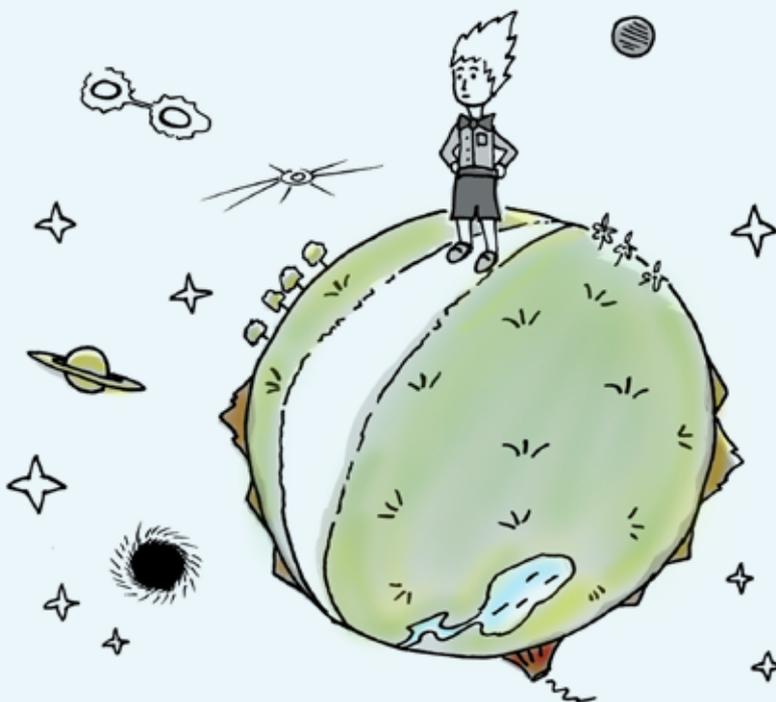
The teachings of Venerable Shi Da Xing are deeply rooted in traditional *Chan* Buddhism, but are offered in a fresh, new and dynamic way to make the classical *Chan* approach more accessible to the English-speaking communities. He uses skilful means to teach students practices that can take place in a variety of indoor and outdoor settings.

To register or find out more about the workshop, please visit www.icbuddhism.org. ☺

Everyday Zen

by : Johny Tay

*All roads actually lead nowhere.
You alone decide your destination.*



facebook.com/everydayzencartoons





It's Hard to Say

retold by: **Esther Thien**
 illustration by: **Robert Yeo**

An old man once lived in ancient China. He bred horses for a living. One day, his best stallion ran away. Friends and neighbours came to console him for losing such a fine animal. But he didn't seem bothered by the matter. In fact, he spoke as if it wasn't such a big deal.

"If you have something, eventually it has to leave, doesn't it? And when something leaves, something else comes along, won't it?"

Sure enough, a few days later, the stallion returned together with a magnificent mare. Everyone crowded around and congratulated the old man for having gained another splendid, beautiful horse.

"It's hard to say. When you gain something, you often lose something else. There is no point getting overly excited about it," replied the old man stoically.

True enough, days later, the old man's son broke his leg in an accident while riding the newly-acquired mare. Despite treatment, it was clear that the son would have to live with a limp for the rest of his life. With his only son now a cripple, people expected the old man to be shattered and tried to console him. However, he surprised them again, saying, "It's hard to say, there might be some blessing in this accident."

Years later, the country was plunged into unrest and civil war. In the chaos that followed, one of the contending armies raided the village and took away all of the young men, leaving behind the young man with a bad limp – the old man's son. ☺

Gain and loss are like the two sides of a coin. You cannot have one without the other. Most people celebrate gain and mourn loss. But if you understand that they always go together hand in hand, you won't get caught up in either of them. The old man realised that, and so was able to remain calm and grounded. Unexpected windfall didn't fill him with delight, neither did sudden loss plunge him into despair. Isn't this a wise way to live?

If you reflect deeply about the joy and sadness that people feel about gain and loss, you will realise that these arise from greed, which in turn is caused by ignorance. If you want to live wisely, with clear insight, start by letting go.

Entrust all that you encounter in your life journey, along with all the emotions arising within you, to your foundation, your Buddha-nature. At the level of your foundation, "important", "unimportant", "good" or "bad" do not exist. It is the place where everything dissolves and disappears, and the place that sends forth everything into this world.

Thus, if you keep returning everything to this place, even though you haven't awakened and don't understand how things truly work, you'll be less and less caught up by the good and bad things that confront you. You will find yourself taking the middle way regardless of the circumstances that arise.

- Zen Master Daehuang

The glorious days of stability and predictability that were very much alive in the past have now abruptly drawn to a close – only to be overtaken by a period of heightened uncertainty.



Finding Renewed Hope Amidst Uncertainties

Across the globe, people, including governments are worried sick about economic uncertainty; terrorism that results in innocent lives being lost; deadly infectious diseases that spread fast and furious; and climate changes that adversely affect the lives of millions of us. With companies downsizing and restructuring worldwide, including here in Singapore, it is normal for employees to worry about how they are going to feed themselves and their families, and pay their bills.

Inevitably, when the future feels uncertain, when things seem to change, or we find ourselves on a new journey in this life, we start to feel the pressure and stress of it all weighing down heavily on our hearts and minds.

Thankfully, our government is mindful of the dark clouds forming, and is taking concrete steps to ensure that our laid-off workers have the much-needed support and skills training to help them rebuild their lives. **Although dark clouds will appear from time to time, they will not be there forever, for clouds come and go. They will not remain forever.**

There are Family Service Centres and the Social Service Offices spread across Singapore that can, subject to means testing, provide temporary financial assistance to needy Singaporeans.

Look for a star!

We must never allow any setback to take control of our lives. Instead, we must remain positive and find renewed hope in the midst of uncertainties. Have you ever watched the stars at night? Beautiful, aren't they? Even when we are gainfully employed, we can always find what I term as “pipelines”. Always enjoy what you are doing. And when you enjoy what you are doing, you can be very productive. It can be writing, cooking, public speaking or simply interacting with people – as in my case.

Another virtue which we must practise is patience, and to be constantly on the lookout for opportunities. It is not true that if you are old, you cannot find work. Look at the fast food chain, McDonald's. They not only hire the elderly, but also welcome students on board. It may be just \$5 or so an hour, but any job – part-time or full-time – gives the unemployed a sense of worth, and creates the opportunity for them to have friends and not feel isolated and all alone.

Be on the alert for job opportunities

Recently, I stumbled across a job opening which delighted me as it was not only a part-time position, but one that welcomed seniors. The organisation: The Singapore Science Centre. The job scope: Seniors with a positive attitude towards their own age to host and guide visitors in a new exhibition “Dialogue with Time”.

The “Dialogue with Time” experience will be facilitated by seniors who will lead visitors through various zones in the exhibition. The key highlights will be two discussion zones where the senior guides will facilitate dialogues with visitors to overcome stereotypes or misguided assumptions associated with old age.

I want to get on board. What about you? ☺

text : Raymond Anthony Fernando

Thank you for the chance to hear my boy call me daddy. These are often the thoughts that I wake up with each day after being, in a sense, **reborn**. This is my story.

In 2012, once the doctor said those dreaded words – you have leukaemia – my world came to a standstill. I'd just had a son the previous year, the first for my wife and me. That was supposed to be the happiest time of my life, full of joy and anticipation. However, instead of playfully bickering with my wife over whether our son's first words would be mummy or daddy, I had to face the very real possibility that I might never live to hear those words that every new parent longs to hear.

My heart was full of disbelief and anguish. How could it be that such a wonderful child might have to grow up without his father? And when I thought of my wife, the most pressing feeling was guilt. How was she going to raise our baby boy alone? That wasn't the life I'd promised her when we started our family.

The thoughts running through my head were so overwhelming. Worries and fears clouded my head, I did not have a single moment of peace after receiving the diagnosis.

Through the despair, anger and confusion that enveloped our lives after the leukaemia diagnosis, there was a ray of hope. My doctor told us that a blood stem cell transplant could save my life. By replacing my damaged immune system with healthy stem cells from a donor, there was a good chance that I would be able to defeat the leukaemia that had already caused me painful rashes, and worse still, affected my ability to continue my daily activities due to exhaustion.

According to my doctor, there was a possibility that my brother might be a suitable bone marrow donor. I harboured great hope and tried to remain optimistic that he could provide the compatible stem cells that would save my life. Unfortunately, it was not to be. My brother was not a match.

The search for an unrelated bone marrow or cord blood stem cell donor was on. The months dragged on, and just as my optimism was gradually turning into doubt, I received good news. Four months after the search began, there were two cord blood matches found in the Singapore Cord Blood Bank (SCBB) database. My life, which had been in limbo since the leukaemia diagnosis, was finally revived.

Though the recovery period was challenging in its own way, life has both improved and changed drastically after the cord blood transplant. I've had to change jobs, giving up my physically demanding job as a service engineer and starting over as a technology assistant. Nonetheless, nothing compares to being able to hold my wife's hand as together we watch our baby boy grow up strong and healthy.

This experience helped me to realise how life has a way of giving back.

In 2011, when my son was born, my wife and I donated his cord blood to the SCBB with the hope that one day, his cord blood could be used to save someone's life. In 2012, less than one year later, I was given the gift of life through the generosity of two other families that had made the same choice.

I cannot imagine what my life would have been like if there were no SCBB and no precious cord blood donations by parents and their babies. Without the transplant matches from SCBB, I would not be alive today! I am grateful for every single day, having come full circle, and living to hear my boy call me daddy. ☺

Coming Full Circle: The Gift of Life

text : Yap Hock Lai

Editor:

Kindness and love can change people's lives.

What you give will come back to you due to the natural law of cause and effect.

To help others, visit www.scbb.com.sg to find out more.

Developing the Courage to Free Ourselves from a Bad Situation

Q: How can we develop the courage to free ourselves from a bad situation? – S.A.

A: The first principal realisation of the path is the determination to be free from all problems and dissatisfaction. This arises from recognising that our present situation isn't completely satisfactory and that we're capable of experiencing greater happiness. Thus, we'll determine to free ourselves from a bad situation and to aim for a better one. The determination to be free is an attitude.

There are two levels to the determination to be free. The first is to be free from difficulties in future lives and to have happy rebirths. The second is to be free from all uncontrolled rebirth in cyclic existence and to attain liberation.

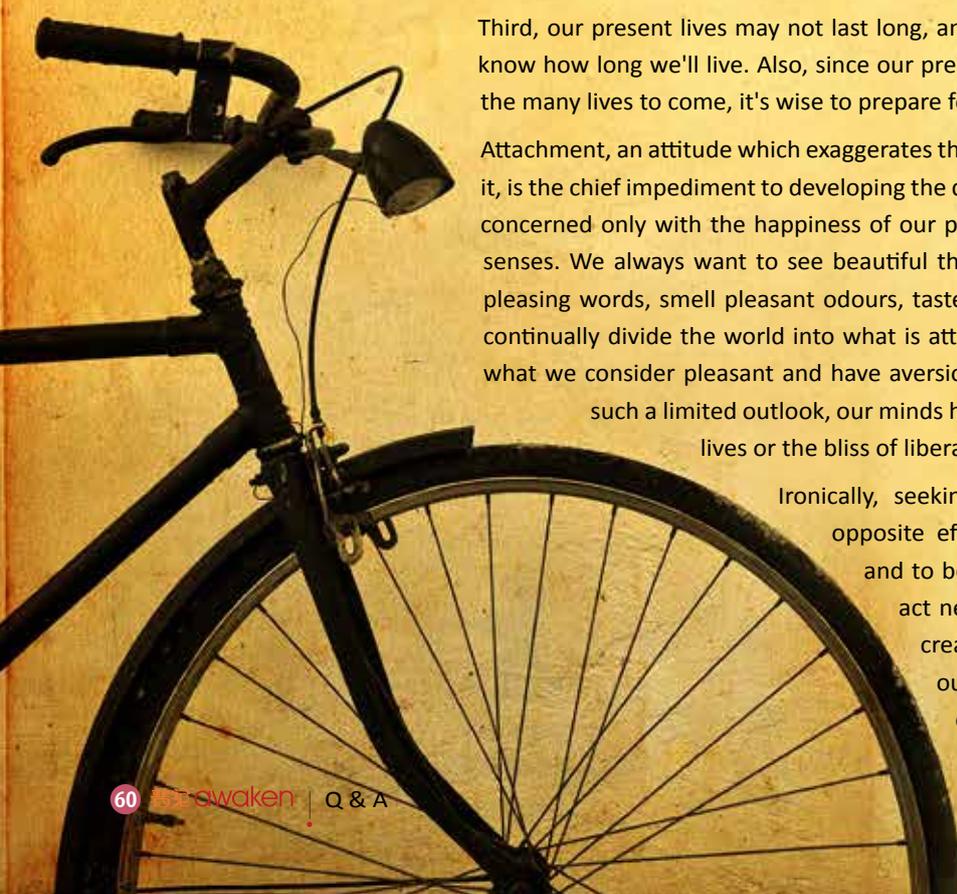
Why should we prepare for future lives? What about this life? There are a few reasons. **First, preparing for future lives automatically makes our present life happier. To create the cause for happiness in future lives, we need to live ethically. When we avoid killing, stealing, unwise sexual behaviour, lying, slander, harsh words, idle talk, coveting, maliciousness and wrong views, we'll naturally become kinder people.** We'll get along better with others, and they'll like and trust us more because we've stopped harming them. Also, we'll be free from regret and guilt and will have a greater sense of inner purpose.

Second, preparing for the future isn't something unusual. Most people prepare for their old age, in spite of the fact that many never live that long. On the other hand, preparations for future lives will never go to waste, because our minds continue after death.

Third, our present lives may not last long, and our future lives may begin soon, for we don't know how long we'll live. Also, since our present lives are short compared to the duration of the many lives to come, it's wise to prepare for future lives.

Attachment, an attitude which exaggerates the good qualities of a person or thing and clings to it, is the chief impediment to developing the determination to be free. Most of us are primarily concerned only with the happiness of our present life. We seek happiness by gratifying our senses. We always want to see beautiful things or nice-looking people, hear nice music or pleasing words, smell pleasant odours, taste delicious food and touch pleasing objects. We continually divide the world into what is attractive and what is repellent. We're attached to what we consider pleasant and have aversion towards anything we deem unpleasant. With such a limited outlook, our minds have no space to consider the happiness of future lives or the bliss of liberation.

Ironically, seeking the happiness of only this life brings the opposite effect. To secure the objects of our attachment and to be free from those we have aversion for, we may act negatively and selfishly. These destructive actions create immediate problems as well as lay imprints on our mindstreams which will generate unpleasant experiences in future lives.



For example, why do we angrily criticise other people? Attached to our own happiness, we lash out at those who seem to obstruct it. At that moment, we don't care if we hurt their feelings. Sometimes we criticise others to feel powerful or to retaliate. When we succeed in harming them, we're happy: "I got even! They're miserable!" But what kind of people are we when we rejoice and gloat over others' misery?

When we act negatively, we get very confused. If we steal, we don't feel comfortable with ourselves. We can't sleep well and are anxious that the authorities might investigate our affairs. If we engage in extramarital affairs, we become worried, and lie and make excuses to cover up. The relationship with our spouse deteriorates and mistrust grows. Our children suspect something is wrong, and feel insecure and upset. They lose respect for us. In addition to the problems such activities create now, they leave imprints on our mindstreams which cause us to encounter unhappy situations in the future.

When we're very attached to the happiness of this life, we tend to exaggerate the importance of certain things. For example, we think, "I have to earn such and such a salary in order to be happy." Until we earn that much, we feel unfulfilled. We overestimate the importance of money, and ignoring all the other good things in our life, become obsessed with accumulating it. Even if we get it, our attachment brings new problems: we fear others will steal our money or worry that people are friendly to us only because we're rich. If the stock market goes down, we're depressed.

The disadvantages of attachment were discussed extensively in my book, "Open Heart, Clear Mind". It must be emphasised, however, that the Buddha didn't say sensual objects are bad or wrong. He encouraged us to examine our own experiences to determine whether or not sensual pleasures really bring the happiness we think they do. Also, he stressed that the problem lies not in the objects of the senses themselves, but in our attachment to them.

Without true understanding we may verbally pay tribute to the idea that attachment to sensual pleasures or to dear ones is to be abandoned. Then, when we try to avoid craving that person or thing, we face an internal civil war: our emotions say, "I want this," and our intellect says, "No! You're bad!" Such an internal battle is useless. Instead, we can pause, examine our lives, and conclude that attachment makes us dissatisfied and unhappy. With such irrefutable proof of its disadvantages, we'll no longer want to get involved with it.

Understanding the faults of attachment, we'll determine to be free from clinging to the happiness of this life and all the sufferings it brings. Of course, we'll still want to be happy now, but we won't be obsessed with getting everything we think we need or want. In addition, we'll recognise the importance of preparing for future lives.

The principal method to prepare for future lives and to eliminate turmoil in the present life is to observe cause and effect - karma - by abandoning destructive actions and practising constructive ones.

To follow cause and effect, we must train ourselves in the techniques to subdue gross attachment, anger, jealousy, ignorance, deluded doubt and pride. Although the wisdom realising emptiness is the ultimate way to subdue these disturbing emotions, for us beginners, meditation on impermanence is a good general antidote.

The meditation on impermanence involves recollecting that all people, objects and situations change each moment. They don't stay the same. Remembering impermanence helps us to avoid exaggerating the importance of what happens to us. ☺

The Boneless Kitchen

Overall Rating

Food - 8/10
Ambience- 7/10
Service - 7/10

Address

1 Irving Place #01-31
The Commerze@Irving,
Singapore 369546

Opening Hours

Tuesdays to Sundays
12.00pm – 9.00pm
(Last order at 8.30pm)

text : **Jos Tan**



Meal



Kimbap



Korean Army Stew



Kimchi Jeongol

Those of us who have visited South Korea before would know the difficulty of finding proper vegan and vegetarian food in the Land of Kimchi. Even the nation's most popular side-dish, kimchi, is not vegan-friendly even though it is vegetable-based because of the sauce used in the preparation process.

Singaporeans are very fortunate to be living in a city where vegetarian food is readily available. The Boneless Kitchen, the first meatless Korean casual dining restaurant in Singapore, moved to its current location in Tai Seng about two years ago. Garlic, onion, animal products and seafood are not used. However, egg and dairy products may be used in some of their dishes.

The restaurant has table and chair-seating, and floor-seating for those who prefer a more authentic dining experience. One of the best things about the restaurant is that there is no service charge and GST, on top of the consistent food quality!

A total of four appetising side-dishes (*banchan*) is served at the start. Unlike other restaurants, the side-dishes are refillable but with a small charge to avoid food wastage.

Their range of main dishes is comprehensive and includes every evergreen Korean favourites such as Korean Army Stew (*Budae Jjigae*), Kimchi Stew (*Kimchi Jjigae*), Spicy Soft Tofu Stew (*Soondubu Jjigae*), Stir-fried Sweet Potato Noodles (*Japchae*), Kimchi Fried Rice (*Kimchi Bokkeumbap*) and Scorched Rice with Vegetables (*Bibimbap*) etc., which are available in single-person portions. The main dishes are reasonably priced between \$9.90 and \$12.90.



Japchae

Ala carte side-dishes such as *Kimchi pancake (Kimchi Jeon)*, *Korean Rice Cakes (Tteokbokki)* are available as well. The side dishes are mostly under \$6 each and the portion size is quite decent. Some dishes may contain egg, but diners may request the egg to be omitted.

When I am there with friends, my preference is to go for the hotpot stew (*jeongol*), which is similar to our oriental dining culture of having steamboat. The *Korean Army Stew and the Kimchi Jeongol* are highly popular. The soup can be refilled at a small charge. It is quite enjoyable to have a slow meal, laze around in the cosy restaurant and enjoy the K-pop songs. However, do be mindful and considerate if the queue waiting outside the restaurant starts to build up.

In fact, the restaurant can get quite crowded especially on Fridays and the weekends. To avoid the hassle of waiting with a growling stomach, make an online reservation through the restaurant's website (www.thebonelesskitchen.com).

식사 맛있게하세요!

(Enjoy your meal!) ☺



Side Dishes

Afterglow

As city dwellers, we spend the majority of our time eating out so our meals are oily and mostly made from processed ingredients. It takes great determination to lead a healthy lifestyle in such a context. So I was really excited to discover *Afterglow*, a vegan restaurant which serves creative, raw plant-based food.



It was a rather refreshing dining experience for me. The main dishes were designed creatively. I ordered a *Raw Burger (\$20)*, *Raw Zucchini Linguine with Walnut 'Meat' Balls (\$20)* and a *Pink Soy Latte* made from beetroot. No pasta or bread is used to prepare the dishes. No need to worry about gluten and carbs! It was truly a light and healthy meal, so I have to warn big eaters to think twice about eating at this restaurant. The pricing of the food is slightly high. Overall, the restaurant has great ambience and is an ideal place for afternoon tea and small group gatherings. ☺

Overall Rating

Food - 7/10
Ambience - 8/10
Service - 7/10

Address

24 Keong Saik Road
Singapore 089131

Opening Hours

Every day except Sundays

Mondays, Tuesdays
Fridays & Saturdays
12.00pm - 2.30pm
5.30pm - 10.30pm
(Last order at 9.15pm)

Wednesdays & Thursdays
5.30pm - 10.30pm
(Last order at 9.15pm)

text : **Chloe Huang**

Does the hot weather deter you from cooking? Or you just want a quick meal? Instead of reaching for instant noodles, why not whip up delicious sesame butter noodles with ease in ten minutes? The ingredients may seem simple but they are high in nutritional value. Both sesame and edamame are rich in protein, calcium, iron and various minerals while tomato and zucchini are rich in vitamins.



Sesame Butter Noodles

Ingredients :

- Dry noodles : approximately 60g
- Edamame : a handful
- Tomato : 1 pc
- Zucchini or cucumber : a small section

Sauce :

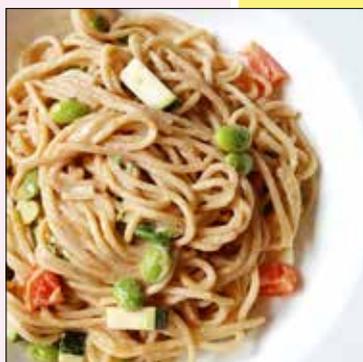
- Sesame Butter : 1½ tbsp
- Vinegar : 1-1¼ tsp
- Soya sauce : ¼ - 1 tsp
- Pepper : a dash
- Water : 1 tbsp

Method :

- 1 Cook noodles according to package instructions. Drain and set aside.

Note: You can use any dry long noodles, for example, ramen, soba or spaghetti. Check the label when buying noodles and go for healthier options, with simple ingredients like flour, water or salt (spaghetti is salt-free). Avoid noodles with vegetable oil (usually palm oil) and a long list of additives. For quick-cooking noodles, you can go for soba.

- 2 Add edamame into the hot water used for cooking noodles. Cover for 3 to 4 minutes. Drain and remove from pods.
- 3 While cooking noodles and edamame, prepare sauce and vegetables. Mix together all sauce ingredients. If the sauce is too thick, you can add more water. You can choose low salt and low sugar sesame butter, which is also good for spreading on bread.
Note: Seasoning proportions used in this recipe are based on a low-salt, low-sugar sesame butter. If you are using sugar-free sesame butter, you can add half a teaspoon of sugar to the sauce. Adjust the seasoning based on your preference.
- 4 Cut tomato and zucchini. You can also use other vegetables like shredded carrots and spinach.
- 5 Add sauce to noodles, edamame, tomato and zucchini. Mix and enjoy the noodles. Serves one person. ☺



芝麻酱面

大热天懒于下厨？或是只想快速填饱肚子？不要再吃速食面了，只须10分钟，就能轻松烹煮美味的芝麻酱面。材料简单却富营养，芝麻与毛豆含丰富的蛋白质、钙质、铁质等矿物质而番茄与西葫芦含丰富的维生素。

材料：

- 干面条约60g（一人份）
- 毛豆1把
- 番茄1粒
- 西葫芦或小黄瓜一小节

酱料：

- 芝麻酱 1½ 大匙
- 醋 1 - 1¼ 小匙
- 酱油 ¼ - 1小匙
- 胡椒粉 少许
- 水1大匙

做法：

- 1 依照包装指示，将面条煮熟，捞起备用。您可选择任何细长干面条，如拉面、荞麦面、意大利面等。购买面条时，请查看标签，较健康面条应该只含（面）粉、水或盐（意大利面无盐），而并不含菜油（多属棕油）以及长长的一大堆添加物。一般荞麦面较易熟，适合快速烹煮。
- 2 把毛豆加入煮面条的热水，盖上锅盖焖3 - 4分钟。捞起去皮备用。
- 3 煮面与毛豆同时准备酱料与其它配料，把酱料材料混合均匀。若酱料过于浓稠，可再多加一点水。芝麻酱可选低盐低糖款，平时也可用来涂面包。此食谱使用的调味以低盐低糖芝麻酱为标准，若使用无糖纯芝麻酱，请加入半小匙细砂糖。可依个人喜好再加重或减少调味。
- 4 番茄与瓜切块。蔬菜配料可依个人喜好选用，红萝卜丝、菠菜也是不错的配料。
- 5 面条淋上芝麻酱，加入毛豆、番茄与瓜，拌匀即可享用。（以上食谱为一人份。）

Recipe / Photography 食谱 / 照片: Joyce T

预知更多纯素贴士或参加素食烘焙班，可浏览
For more vegan food ideas and vegan baking classes, check out
www.facebook.com/rejoyceveg

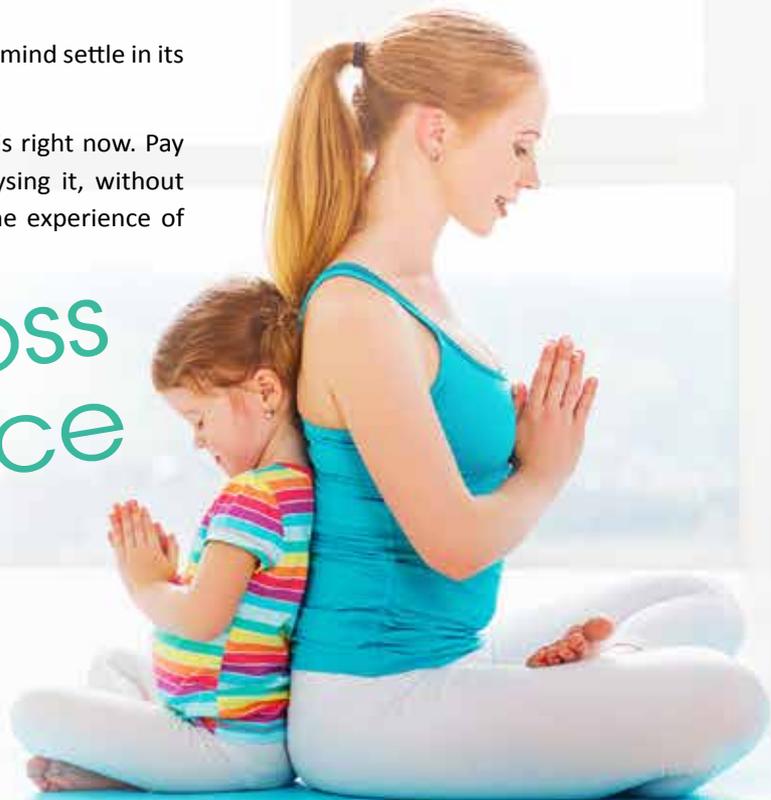
An untrained mind wanders from thought to thought, and from one story to another. Learning mindfulness of breathing can anchor us to feel what's happening in our mind and body as we rest in the sensation of our breath. There's no right or wrong way to breathe; long breaths are no better than short ones, deep breaths no better than shallow ones. The aim is to fully experience what it's like to be alive right now, in the present moment.

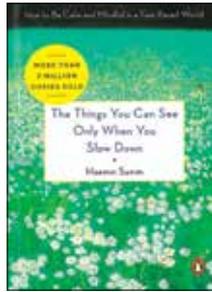
If you are stuck in the mud, you cannot help others out of it. When you protect yourself, you protect others. When you protect others, you protect yourself.

Teach your children mindful breathing as follows:

1. Sit cross-legged on a pillow. One leg over the other, with weight distributed evenly between your two knees and bottom, a pose that kids call crisscross applesauce.
2. Your back is straight and your eyes are closed or softly focused downwards.
3. Help the children find a relaxed and upright posture with the "Zip Yourself Up" method.
4. Do this together by imagining you have a zipper running up the middle of your body, starting at the belly button and ending just below the chin.
5. With the right hand held in front of the torso, near the belly button but not touching it, and the other hand behind the torso, near the base of the spine but not touching it, move your hands along your spine and chest and over your chin while saying "Ziiiiip!"
6. Now that you're all zipped up, with your hands stretched high above your head and reaching for the sky, give a silent cheer, by waving your hands without saying a word.
7. Then, drop your arms back down and start all over again, with the left hand in front this time.
8. Zip up and cheer again silently before you drop your hands back down to rest easily on your knees. In this centred and comfortable posture, you and your children are ready to focus your attention on the feeling of your breathing as your breath moves in and out of your body.
9. Relax your body and mind; then let your mind settle in its natural state.
10. Feel the sensation of your breath as it is right now. Pay attention to how it feels without analysing it, without doing anything other than resting in the experience of breathing and being alive. ☺

Crisscross Applesauce





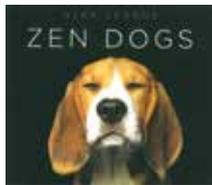
How to Be Calm and Mindful in a Fast-paced World The Things You Can See Only When You Slow Down

By Haemin Sunim
\$25.90

I really enjoyed reading this book. Containing beautiful, peaceful and reflective illustrations, paired with the simple proses by Haemin Sunim, this book set a contemplative mood as I slowly digested the nuggets of wisdom that were not only practical but also brought much serenity to the heart.

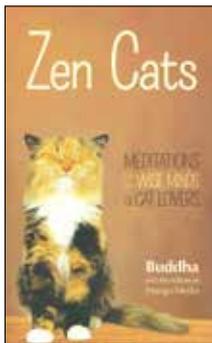
Sometimes, just changing one's mindset and habitual thought patterns can steer one towards happiness and joy in life.

Highly recommended! Available at Awareness Place stores.



Zen Dogs
\$22.50

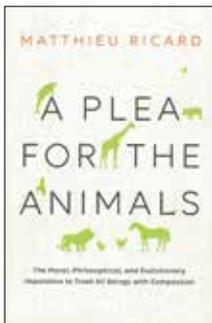
Zen Cats
By Alex Cerans
\$28.90



A Plea for the Animals
By Matthieu Ricard
\$35.90

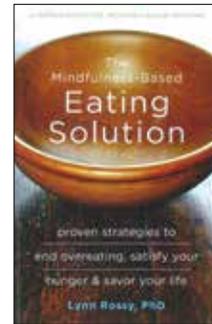
Zen Dogs is a gorgeous compendium for every dog lover, animal enthusiast and anyone looking to add some peace and joy to his or her day. It comprises 80 stunning photos of canines of various breeds in meditative *Zen* moment. This book also sprinkles words of wisdom from the Buddha, Gandhi and other meditative masters, that accompany the tranquil beauty of the visuals to warm the heart and soothe the spirit.

If dogs are not your cup of tea, zero in on *Zen Cats*, which is another lovely contemplative book. Splashed with adorable cat photos, it offers 120 verses from the *Dhammapada* for you to meditate upon for greater wisdom and happiness as you manoeuvre your journey in this river of life.

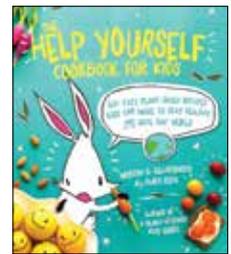


And if you are not an animal lover, read *A Plea for the Animals*. In a compelling appeal to reason and kindness, Matthieu Ricard puts forth a powerful imperative that compassion towards all beings, including our fellow animals, is a moral obligation and the direction towards which any enlightened society must aspire.

All three books are available at Awareness Place stores.



The Mindfulness-Based Eating Solution
By Lynn Rossy, PhD
\$24.60



The Help Yourself Cookbook For Kids
By Ruby Roth
\$27.60

Truly nourishing ourselves and experiencing genuine well-being begins with cultivating wholesome, healthy habits that celebrate life and its wonders. And eating is one of them. In the Mindfulness-based Eating Solution, psychologist Lynn Rossy provides her breakthrough programme that has been proven to effectively help you slow down, savour each bite, and eat less. Readers learn how to listen to their body's intuition, uncover the psychological cause of overeating and be more mindful during meal-times.

The Help Yourself Cookbook For Kids is an adorable and quirky book that showcases more than 60 simple plant-based recipes which kids can make to stay healthy and save the world. Bright and colourful, this interesting cook book features easy-to-do recipes for the child who loves to explore the culinary world, and yet eat healthily.

Visit Awareness Place stores to purchase.



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AWAKEN, The Executive Editor
Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery
Dharma Propagation Division
Awaken Publishing & Design
88 Bright Hill Road
Singapore 574117

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Are you touched by the stories and
interviews featured in this magazine?

Perhaps you too have a story to tell, a story of how the Buddha and His Teachings so inspired you to walk the Buddhist path, or maybe a simple account of the little treasures and blessings in life? Or perhaps you are a budding poet who would like to share a prose and a verse or two about how the Dharma changed your life forever?

Whatever your story or poem may be, we welcome you to write in to us. Share your inspiring tale of faith and awakening with the rest of the world.

Send your entries to
awaken@kmspks.org or:

AWAKEN, The Executive Editor
Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery
Dharma Propagation Division
88 Bright Hill Road Singapore 574117

Please include your full name, address and contact details.
We reserve the right to edit the stories and letters for space and grammar considerations.



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.

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Dear Reader, "The Gift of the Dharma Excels 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:

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88 Bright Hill Road Singapore 574117

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Issue 39 / Sep 2017

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 情绪低落沮丧	Sad
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 生活压力繁重紧张	Stressed
<input type="checkbox"/> 情感上碰到状况	Stuck in a relationship rut
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 需要一位聆听心事的人	Simply in need of a listening ear

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Alternatively, you may log onto: www.kmspk.org and click onto "kmspk", followed by "Livelihood" to view our job vacancies.



Me Before You

Directed by : **Sharrock**

Starring : **Emilia Clarke, Sam Claflin, Steve Peacocke
Jenna Coleman, Charles Dance**

In this heart-wrenching film, a young man called Will, who was once full of life, becomes a quadriplegic survivor of a road accident. Although paralysed from the chest down, as a member of an old, rich, established British family living in a classic English country home with large acreage, he wants for nothing and is constantly cared for by private medical assistants, who watch and administer his medication and bodily needs. But having been a great sportsman with a

burning drive to enjoy life to the full, he's lost the will to live and is generally irritated and argumentative... until a young, genuine and loving girl, Louisa Clark from an ordinary family in the village, takes up the job as his companion and tries with heartfelt effort to give his life a second wind.

But the lessons go both ways here as she has never aspired to anything beyond staying at home with her family and having a regular job in her home village. Seeing that her potential is for greater things and that she has a character of gold, Will not only opens up to her, which he has never done with any of his other caregivers, but encourages her to look beyond her present boundaries, to start fulfilling who she really could be, which he tells her is the purpose of life. He indeed advises her to put herself first for once and to achieve what she is capable of, because it is her nature to only consider the welfare of others, which is ultimately to her own detriment. Even though the film's title, 'Me before you' sounds selfish, it is not when considered in this light and this aspect is possibly where the movie's name emerges from.

However, another issue enters into the plot when she overhears his parents discussing a matter that becomes the focus for the rest of the movie. Will has decided to euthanise himself in Switzerland and has given his parents six months before he will do so. Louisa becomes determined to stop him by making him see that he can still live and enjoy life. She thus organises a schedule of different activities and takes him out to various places in order to show him that he can still 'live' despite his condition.

Inevitably, they fall in love and the question throughout the whole of the second part of the movie is whether she will succeed in getting him to change his mind. From a Buddhist perspective any type of harming to self or others may be considered killing, one of the ten negative actions and should be avoided at all costs, but here another argument is presented: the necessity for each person to have and exercise free will, an essential quality of being human.

Questions about the moral issues of euthanasia in general are raised from different perspectives through various characters: Will's mother and father, Louisa's family, Louisa and Will himself. We are forced to look at these points from many different angles and considering the situation at hand, must think very deeply as to whether it is both right and justified that Will should be able to choose to take his own life.

From another perspective, this film also allows one to contemplate to live one's life to its fullest potential, no matter what difficulties one is plagued with because conditions are impermanent and always changing. ☺

Everything in this universe is evanescent.

Because it is evanescent, it is also precious.

Spend this precious moment wisely and beautifully.

Life is like a theatre.

You are assigned a role.

If you don't like the role,

keep in mind that you have

the power to recreate the role you want.

- Haemin Sunim



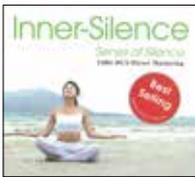
Watch it online here:



The Voice of Nature: Tsang Yang Gya Tsho
by Yungdrung Gyal & Wangmo
S\$30.00

The Voice of Nature is a fascinating compendium of 12 songs expressing love, meditation, karma and the Buddhist teaching that every one is a Buddha, and that every Buddha before finding enlightenment was once a person of emotions and sensory pleasures.

Its music projects a sympathetic energy and magic that transcends language, nationality and culture. This CD is available at all Awareness Place stores.

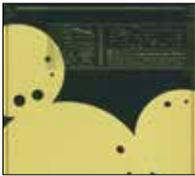


Inner Silence
S\$25.00

Evening Star
S\$19.90

Ocarina Playground
S\$29.90

Daniel Ho x The Beatles
S\$19.90



Unwind the tension in your body; take a deep breath and lift your mind off from your “to-do” list with this assortment of pleasant instrumental music.

Best-selling relaxation album, *Inner Silence* contains 12 tracks of new age music to relax you and bring ease to your mind.

Evening Star consists of 17 classical pieces. Feel your heartstrings stir with the well-known, beloved pieces from Chopin, Schubert and Rachmaninoff, played to soulful perfection by cellist Kenneth Kuo.

Next, jump from classical to contemporary hits with the *Ocarina Playground*. Another 12-track album, this third collection showcases Oscar-winning and adored soundtracks from popular Disney animated films brought to life with the lyrical wonders of the ocarina. Enjoy familiar songs from movies such as *Frozen*, *The Lion King*, *Mulan*, *Aladdin*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and Beast*, *Pocahontas*, *Hercules* and *Pinocchio*.

Or if like me, you prefer the oldies, you will enjoy the last album which brings you all the best-loved hits from the Beatles in guitar strums. My personal favourite is track 3, *Yesterday* for its nostalgic feel.

Get the albums from any of the Awareness Place stores. ☺



What Buddhists Believe
E3X Global Limited
Free

If you enjoy reading the books written by the late Dr. Sri Dhammananda and find the Dharma he taught highly practical and applicable, consider downloading this app on your phone.

This app features the original digitisation of the book “What Buddhists Believe”. One of the first few books written by this well-known Theravada

Buddhist monk who was foremost in Malaysia and Singapore, it contains all the answers to the pertinent questions you may have about the Buddha’s teachings.

Users rated this app with more than 4 stars.

Available from Google Play. ☺



Scan this to download app

The offering of light is often seen in many Buddhist temples. It signifies the illuminating brilliance of wisdom, which dispels the darkness of ignorance on one's path towards enlightenment. The light also represents the wisdom of the Buddha's teachings which illuminates the way to end our suffering.

By offering light, we accumulate inconceivable vast merits. It is stated in the sutras that if we make such offerings, we become like a light in the world, in this life and future lives. We accumulate Dharma wisdom and clairvoyance. Offering light also creates the karma to have great wealth for many hundreds or thousands of lifetimes, to be reborn in a pureland or higher realms, and to swiftly attain enlightenment. Therefore, offering light with a pure motivation is an especially quick way to collect merits and to receive blessings. It is even more meaningful if one offers it during the special holy days of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, such as the birthdays of Nagarjuna and Ksitigarbha Bodhisattvas in September.

Awareness Place is now having a promotion for bulk purchase of all its butter lamps. Lightly scented with the sweet fragrance of butter, the candles are crafted from pure vegetable oils and come in different sizes and styles.

Customers enjoy 25% discount when they purchase the candles in cartons. Get up to S\$50 savings from this promotion, depending on the item selected. ☺

To the Buddha, who is the light, we offer light.

From his great lamp, a lamp we light within us.

The lamp of awakening, shining within our hearts.

Offer Light
to accumulate vast merits
and Dharma wisdom



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

Calendar of Events 2017

09
sep

12
dec



DHARMA

♦ CEREMONY | PRAYERS

Ullambana Prayer Festival

Participate in this prayer to express gratitude to deceased loved ones as well as to liberate the sufferings of sentient beings in the three lower realms.

5 September | Tue

Venue: KMSPKS

Tablet booking: \$250, \$100 & \$50

Registration: From 9 Jun onwards till fully registered

Enquiry: 6849 5333

Medicine Buddha Prayer

23-28 October | Mon - Sat | 7.30pm

Venue: Pagoda of 10,000 Buddhas

29 October | Sun | 10am

Venue: Hall of Great Compassion

Registration of names:

6 names - \$100; 2 names - \$50; 1 name - \$10

Registration: 1 Aug onwards till fully registered

Enquiry: 6849 5333

Threefold Refuge & Five Precepts Ceremony

Through taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, one enters the Buddhist path, whilst undertaking the precepts (basic guidelines of moral conduct) helps one to develop mindfulness.

29 Oct | Sun | 12.30pm - 2.30pm

Venue: VHCMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form

Registration:

1) Online: <http://bit.do/3R5P0317>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

(Please bring along your NRIC for registration)

Enquiry: 6849 5300 | sed@kmspks.org



The Grand Prayer that Blesses and Benefits All Sentient Beings

One of the grandest and most meritorious Chinese Buddhist Pujas to liberate all sentient beings, including the deceased, from suffering. Generating extensive merit through the offering of food and the Dharma, sentient beings can attain happiness and enter into the path of Buddhahood.

Consecration: 19 Nov | Sun | 2pm

Prayers: 20-25 Dec | Mon - Sat

Sending Off: 26 Nov | Sun | 1pm

Venue: KMSPKS

Registration of names:

Inner Shrine:

\$36,000; \$21,000; \$11,000; \$5,600; \$3,200

Grand Shrine:

\$2,000; \$1,000

Shrine of Various Sutras:

\$300 (5-6names); \$200 (1-4 names); \$20 (1 name)

Pureland Shrine:

\$300 (5-6names); \$200 (1-4 names); \$20 (1 name)

Food Offering to Triple Gem:

\$3,000; \$2,000; \$1,000; \$500; any amount

Registration: 9 Sep onwards till fully registered

Enquiry: 6849 5333

Usher in 2018 with prayers and 108 "Bell Resonance"

Join us to make wholesome aspirations in our prayers and offerings.

31 Dec | Sun | 10pm - 2am

Venue: Hall of Great Compassion

Enquiry: 6849 5300



♦ TALKS | WORKSHOPS | COURSES

Threefold Refuge & Five Precepts Preparatory Class

Get to know about the Threefold Refuge and Five Precepts prior to attending the Ceremony.

29 Oct | 9am - 10.30am

Venue: VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 9

Fee: Free Admission

Registration:

1) Online: <http://bit.do/3r5pepc>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

(Please bring along your NRIC for registration)

Enquiry: 6849 5300 | sed@kmspks.org

Buddhism 101 for Youth: Handle Stress Like a Boss

Join five Buddhist professionals to learn the art of handling stress like a boss in this six-session course.

1 Oct - 5 Nov | Sun | 2pm - 4pm

Venue: VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom

Fee: \$30 (6 sessions)

Registration:

1) Online: <https://goo.gl/dGsgNF>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

Enquiry: 6849 5345 | DED@kmspks.org

Sunday Dharma Practice

Be a part of a community to learn and practise the Dharma, and connect with fellow English-speaking practitioners.

3 Sep - 12 Nov | Sun | 2.30pm - 3.30pm

Venue: VHCMH | Level 1 | Classroom 5 & 6

Fee: Free Admission

Enquiry: 6849 5300 | DED@kmspks.org

English Dharma Talk Series - Noble Eightfold Path

The Buddha told his last disciple Subhadra that the Noble Eightfold Path is unique only to Buddhism. It is the path for the noble ones, ie. the enlightened ones (Ariyas) that lead them to liberation. How do we practise them?

21 Sep | Thu | 7.30pm - 9pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: Nominal donation of \$5

Registration:

1) Online: <https://goo.gl/sfwc7U>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org

English Dharma Talk Series - Six Paramitas

A Buddha's virtues are complete and ultimate. To attain buddhahood, he or she must undergo the journey of a bodhisattva's practice of benefiting others, as well as oneself via the Six Paramitas of Giving, Morality, Patience, Diligence, and Meditation to give rise to Wisdom.

21 Dec | Thu | 7.30pm - 9pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: Nominal donation of \$5

Registration:

1) Online: <https://goo.gl/sfwc7U>

2) Reception Office@ KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

3) Awareness Hub | 11.30am - 6pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org



MEDITATION | RETREAT

3-Day Loving-Kindness Meditation Retreat

Metta Meditation Retreat of Mahasi Tradition. Includes Dharma teachings, guided practice, Dharma sharing and customised interviews.

29 Sep - 1 Oct | 8am - 8.30pm

Retreat Preparation (Compulsory): 28 Sep

7.30pm - 9pm

Venue: VHCMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form

Fee: \$75

Registration:

1) Online: <https://tinyurl.com/3dmtmr17>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

Enquiry: 6849 5300 | sed@kmspks.org



LIFESTYLE

♦ ART



100 Bliss Blanket Workshop

Let us rekindle a tradition that delivers and expresses love through the 100 bliss blanket to people we love and care about.

16 Nov and 30 Nov | Thu

Grp 1: 2pm - 4pm | Grp 2: 7pm - 9pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: \$40 (2 sessions)

Material Fee: \$48 (payable to instructor)

Registration:

1) Online: <https://goo.gl/sfwc7U>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

3) Awareness Hub | 11.30am - 6pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org

Floral Hand Bouquet (I)

Learn to construct 5 different hand bouquets including VIP bouquet and the different types of ribbon bows to go with them.

13 Oct - 17 Nov | Fri | 7pm - 9pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: \$140 (6 sessions)

Material Fee:

\$35 (per session, payable to instructor)

Registration:

1) Online: <https://goo.gl/sfwc7U>

2) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

3) Awareness Hub | 11.30am - 6pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org

Coming Together for Rhythm Rejuvenation

28 Sep, 26 Oct, 28 Dec | Thu | 7pm - 9pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: \$30 per session

Registration:

1) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

2) Awareness Hub | 11.30am - 6pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org

Sacred Heart of Mandala Pastel Art

6 Oct | Fri | 10am - 5pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: \$155

Material Fee: \$45 (payable to instructor)

Registration:

1) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

2) Awareness Hub | 11.30am - 6pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org

Lotus Zen Nagomi Pastel Art

8 Oct | Sun | 3pm - 6pm

Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: \$86

Material Fee: \$45 (payable to instructor)

Registration:

1) Reception Office@KMSPKS | 9am - 4pm

2) Awareness Hub | 11.30am - 6pm

Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspks.org