

普觉awaken



诗意地栖居在大地上

其地平正，无有荆棘坑坎埠阜，亦无蚊虻
蜂蝎蝎蚤，蜿蜒恶虫，石沙瓦砾，自然沉没，
金银宝玉，现于地上。

杜甫与佛教因缘

圣地的朝礼

特殊的敲门礼节

Antidote to Anger: Cultivating Patience & Effort

Maintaining awareness of our state of mind
can help us deal with anger and aversion
when they arise, says Ven. Tenzin Palmo

Happiness Lies in No Anger

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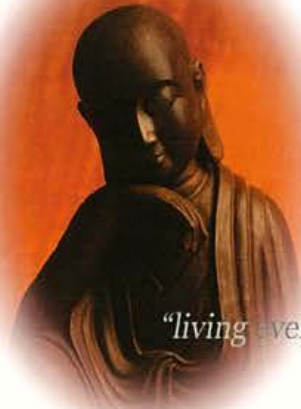
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 -Albert Einstein

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 nusbs.org.sg

Ngee Ann Polytechnic Buddhist Society
 coa_buddhist@np.edu.sg
 npbuddhistsociety.blogspot.com

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For more information on Buddhism and Meditation, contact kmsYM at 6849 5346, youth@kmspks.org, kmspks.org/youth

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AWAKEN to...

Compassion @ Wisdom on the journey of life...

Published three times a year by Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery, AWAKEN is a FREE bilingual Buddhist magazine that aims to help readers gain insight and make sense of life's journey using the Dharma.



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Editors' Note

Living in a harried environment, anger plagues all of us. Sometimes, it could just be a tiny spark of irritation, annoyance or frustration and at other times, a full-blown outburst of strong, raging fire. According to renowned Buddhist scholar and practitioner Professor Cheng Chen-huang, anger has the most destructive power among all negative emotions in Buddhism (pg 46). An instant of anger is said to destroy all the positive merits accumulated over thousands of kalpas through practising generosity, making offerings to the Buddhas, keeping discipline and so on (pg 56). A person who is often angry will be ugly despite being well-groomed and well-dressed (pg 35), and even take rebirth in the lower realms (pg 57). Thus, an angry person is his or her own worst enemy. Anger or aversion is also taught as one of the three poisons or defilements in the second Noble Truth and a cause for our unsatisfactory existence. Therefore, knowing how to deal with anger and other negative emotions on a personal level is extremely crucial if each and everyone of us would like to build an oasis of inner peace and happiness.

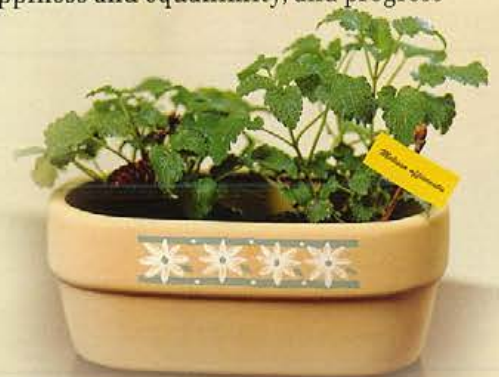
In this issue, we hope to spark your own self-journey of reflection and contemplation on working with anger by presenting a series of articles related to this topic. One way is by generating loving-kindness (pg 58). Putting effort to cultivate patience is another antidote to counteracting anger (pg 41). This wide, expansive quality helps us develop an open heart towards those who annoy us and cause us the greatest problems. To be patient means not to get angry with those who harm us and instead to have compassion for them. It also means having a mind which sees everything that happens as the result of causes and conditions we have set in motion at some time in this or past lives (pg 41 & 54).

Mastering the mind by developing awareness of our emotions, thoughts and motivations is another way to handle anger. We recognise and acknowledge it when anger comes up but we don't identify with it. We let it go, knowing it is not a helpful state of mind. Look at your mind with this mindfulness and clear comprehension and develop the wisdom of seeing this arising and passing away (pg 51).

Mindful consumption is also important, because anger is not separate from these things, says Thich Nhat Hanh. Try not to consume things that nurture our anger, frustration and fear, especially food. Flesh of animals, eggs and milk can contain a lot of anger due to the way they are raised and grown for food. If you eat anger, you will become and express anger. Hence, we have to be careful in our lifestyle choices. For more tips and tools, do check out page 62 for some recommended readings. May all abide in peace, happiness and equanimity, and progress well on the path of the Dharma.

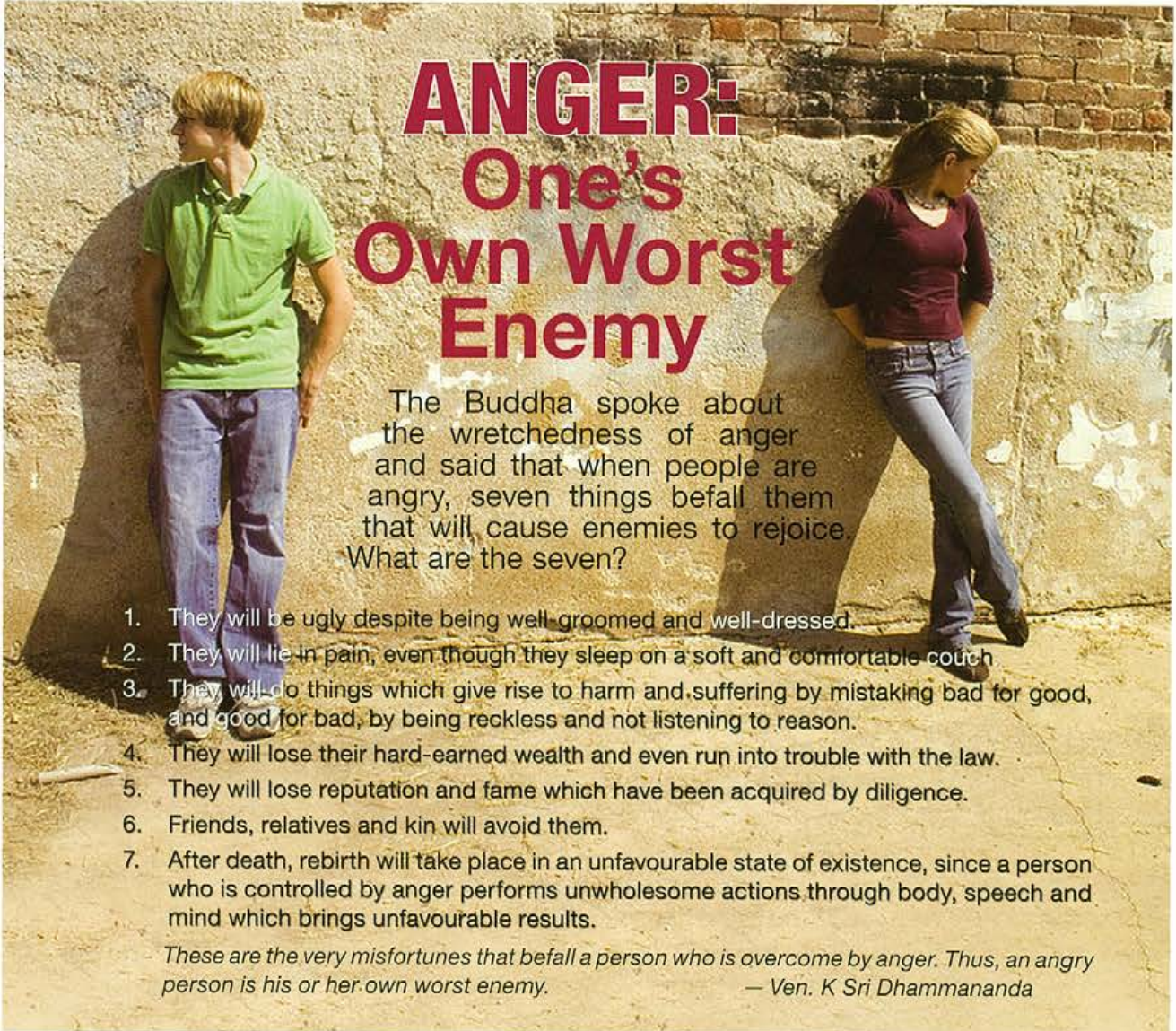


Yours in the Dharma,
Esther Thien



Erratum

The line '*Negative karmic "payback" however need not always be repaid directly to the person to whom the evil was done*' on page 36 of the previous issue should read '*Negative karmic "payback" however, need not always be related to the person the evil was done to*'.



ANGER: One's Own Worst Enemy

The Buddha spoke about the wretchedness of anger and said that when people are angry, seven things befall them that will cause enemies to rejoice. What are the seven?

1. They will be ugly despite being well-groomed and well-dressed.
2. They will lie in pain, even though they sleep on a soft and comfortable couch.
3. They will do things which give rise to harm and suffering by mistaking bad for good, and good for bad, by being reckless and not listening to reason.
4. They will lose their hard-earned wealth and even run into trouble with the law.
5. They will lose reputation and fame which have been acquired by diligence.
6. Friends, relatives and kin will avoid them.
7. After death, rebirth will take place in an unfavourable state of existence, since a person who is controlled by anger performs unwholesome actions through body, speech and mind which brings unfavourable results.

These are the very misfortunes that befall a person who is overcome by anger. Thus, an angry person is his or her own worst enemy.

— Ven. K Sri Dhammananda

Reflections of a Short-term Novitiate Monastic...

I fell ill and even had a bad fall during the 10-day Buddhist novitiate programme I participated in last year. But I was thankful as this experience turned out to be my most fruitful Dharma lesson learnt at Lumbini, Nepal. I was experiencing and contemplating on my sickness when I realised that having faith in the Triple Gem would enable one to overcome whatever difficulties one is facing. Even though the body is physically in pain, constantly reminding one's heart to be soft and gentle, to be grateful towards all who have shown one compassion, feeding and caring for one when one is sick, and understanding that sickness will also come and go since it arises due to causes and conditions have helped me to pull through those difficult times of sickness, obstacles and the ripening effect of past negative karma.

— Jasmine Tan, 28, Project Executive

It is always so inspiring to read or hear the beautiful and profound teachings of the Buddha but yet so difficult to truly live even a single sentence of it in the moments of our everyday lives. Even in the midst of observing the 10 precepts and under relatively conducive monastic conditions, I observed subtle thoughts and feelings of 'cravings' for tastier food, 'discrimination' regarding different lodging conditions and 'annoyance' of long bus journeys arising in me. The 19-day short-term novitiate programme I participated in last year was indeed a humbling experience for me. It imbued me with a deep sense of gratitude for the opportunity and at the same time, I was ashamed at my shallow cultivation.

— Ang T. E., 41, Project Executive

Any Change in the Way Singaporeans

Q: You haven't been to Malaysia and Singapore in some years. What changes do you see in the way people here look at things? — *Buddhist*

A: People here are more stressed out than before. They put more pressure on their children and on themselves to succeed. On the other hand, there has been a lot of progress in the way Buddhism is taught and practised. People have done a good job in giving both Buddhists and non-Buddhists correct information about Buddhism. Before, there was a lot of confusion in Malaysia and Singapore about which practices are Buddhist and which are ancestral worship. Much of this has been clarified now, which is really excellent. Many young and intelligent people are studying Buddhist teachings.

Now it's time for people to practise more. Many people attend lots of Dharma talks but I don't know how many meditate or reflect on the teachings they hear on a daily basis. It's important that lay people practise more and have a clear understanding of Buddhism, since they are helping to propagate the Dharma now, which is excellent. But, please remember the role and importance of monastics and support monastic life.

As it is more difficult to practise as a lay person than a monastic, everyone — lay people and monastics — has to make sure that the monastic life is kept strong.

New monastics must receive a good education and be trained well so that they will keep good ethical discipline, develop compassion, and propagate the Dharma to all those who can benefit from the wise and compassionate Buddha's teachings.

— *Ven. Thubten Chodron*

Q: In our daily life, we come cross many phenomena that arise and pass away all the time. How do we practise true seeing and true knowing in our everyday life? — *Anonymous*

A: Practise seeing just as it is, without attachment. When you hear the bird chirping, just hear the birds' sounds. Our true nature is like a mirror. No matter what our nationality or religion is, our mind, our fundamental nature is like a mirror. When something comes in front of the mirror, the mirror reflects it as it is. And when it disappears, it disappears from the mirror. When something else of a different colour comes in



front of the mirror, it is also reflected as it is in a different way. Likewise, when it disappears, it too disappears from the mirror.

But human beings hold onto their thinking, they grasp the many thoughts that they have, and because of this, they suffer seeing their thinking as real. However, when you perceive this world as it is, like a mirror, with no attachment and no hindrance, meaning when you see, just see, when you hear, just hear, when you smell, just smell, when you taste, just taste, you see the world as it is.

But when you hold onto your thinking, you don't see this world.

My teacher used to say, "When you are thinking, you lose your eyes." When you follow your thinking, you are not seeing, and you are not hearing. Our nature is fundamentally clear, it doesn't need anything for it is complete but we are

Look at Things?



attached to our thinking. We follow our thinking, analysing it, splitting it, and so we can't see clearly, we can't hear clearly, we don't taste clearly and we don't live clearly.

It doesn't mean we stop thinking. It just means that when we meditate, we see that our thinking is fundamentally empty and we don't follow it.

When you don't follow your thinking, you can see clearly, you can hear clearly, you can smell clearly, you can taste clearly and you can feel clearly. You can live clearly in the present moment, and then you and the universe are never separated. When a thirsty person comes, you can give him some water; and when a hungry person comes, you can offer that person some food. If a person in jail needs some clothes you can give him your clothing, even in jail. You just function with this world. But when you follow your thinking, you and the world are separated. ☸

— Ven. Hyon Gak Sunim

YOUR Feedback Matters

We value your comments and welcome your suggestions for improvements to AWAKEN. Tell us how we can improve our magazine to better cater to your spiritual and holistic needs. What new column would you like to see; which articles would you like to read? Send us your praises and flames. E-mail your feedback to awaken@kmspks.org or send them to:

AWAKEN, The Executive Editor
Kong Meng San Phor Kark See
Monastery
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***Please include your full name and personal particulars**

Want your story to be heard too?

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

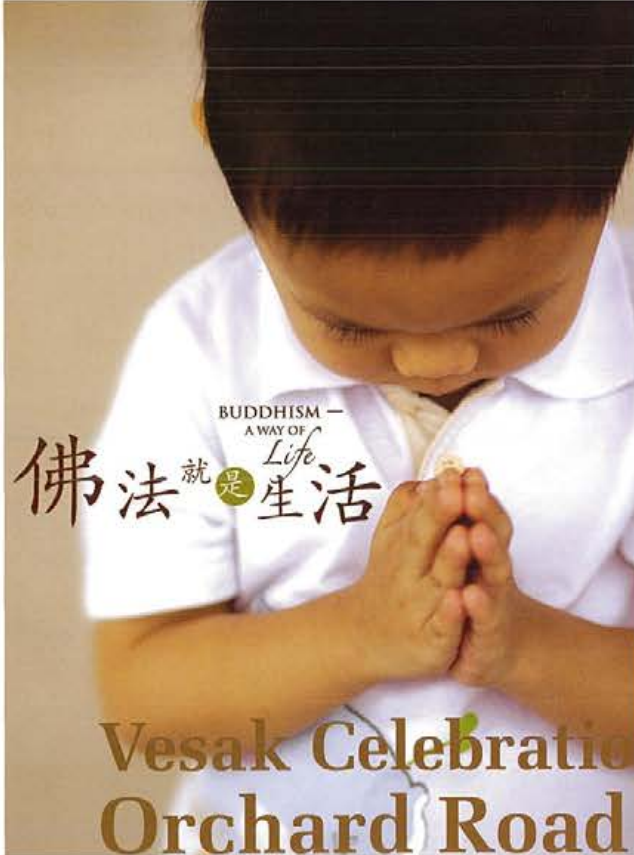
Perhaps you too have a story to tell, a story of how the Buddha and His Teachings so inspired you to walk the Buddhist path, or maybe a simple account of the little treasures and blessings in life? Or perhaps you are a budding poet who would like to share a prose and a verse or two about how the Dharma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



Vesak Celebrations at Orchard Road with a Zen Touch

SINGAPORE — To commemorate the Buddha's universal spirit of love and compassion, the Singapore Buddhist Federation is organising Vesak celebrations on 10 and 11 May this year with a touch of Zen tranquillity, centring on themes like gratitude. Step into a Zen sanctuary at the exhibition area to the accompaniment of nature's lush sounds, flowing water and soothing instrumental music. In this spiritually uplifting and peaceful enclosure, you can learn the fundamentals of Buddhism. And if you want to further immerse yourself in the Buddhist experience, let the friendly and zesty young Buddhists at the event share with you in greater details how Buddhists live and practise. You can also bring home some free Buddhist books and CDs, or join in the relaxation meditation session on Sunday morning for a transformative experience.

Located at the Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza, the Guest of Honour for this event is Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Minister for Finance.

A key highlight of the event is the benevolent and dignified-looking 4-metre tall Guanyin statue. Shrouded in colourful rainbow mist, it showers raindrops of blessings to all who circumambulate and prostrate before it. Also, in conjunction with Mother's Day, two sessions of blessing ceremonies for children and mothers have been especially arranged to repay the deep kindness of all mothers.

Venerables from the three Buddhist traditions will give auspicious blessings to all mothers — young or old, pregnant or planning to have more offspring — and their children. Mothers and children can also purchase limited blessing gift sets to be brought home.

In addition, visitors at the event can bring home a copy of *The Singapore Buddhist Handbook* for a nominal S\$2. The first half of this handy guidebook contains the basics of Buddhism while the second half covers a directory listing of Buddhist organisations, products and services.

Those who would like to express their devotion, veneration or repentance to the Triple Gem can make offerings of flowers and take part in the ceremonial bathing of Prince Siddhartha at the event.

But just as this is a time for Buddhists to contemplate and reflect, it is also a time to celebrate and rejoice. Thus, visitors and their children can try their hand at the games corner, or satiate their hunger and thirst at the gastronomic heaven of 16 delectable vegetarian food stalls at the food fair. Food lovers will have a cosmopolitan variety of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Thai food or local delights to choose from. But remember to bring along your own reusable bags, food containers and cutlery to help cut down on the garbage and save the earth. ♡



A Gala Lunch with a Difference by The Singapore Buddhist Federation

SINGAPORE — In celebration of Vesak 2552, the Singapore Buddhist Federation (SBF) is organising a gala lunch with a difference. To be held on 25 May 2008 in Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery, there will be 110 tables serving exquisite vegetarian gourmet feast.

The Singapore Buddhist Federation was established in 1948 with the goals to unify all Buddhist institutions and Buddhists in Singapore, to propagate the Dharma, and to promote culture, education and social welfare. To achieve its aims, it has provided relief to victims of disasters such as the 2004 South Asia tsunami, Taiwan, Indonesia and India earthquakes and the Lebanon war, and offered assistance to lower-income families with various difficulties.

Its gamut of programmes ranges from conducting SBF Youth Group activities, managing the SBF

Dharma Class Students' Society and SBF Scouts to organising international Buddhist conferences, publishing a quarterly Buddhist journal, providing prison counselling and promoting national cohesion via its active involvement in the Inter-Religious Organisation of Singapore. In addition, it is also affiliated to Maha Bodhi School, Manjusri Secondary School, Marine Parade Maha Bodhi Student Care Centre and Prince Siddhartha Childcare Centre.

Besides covering the operational costs of SBF, the proceeds of this event will go into supporting the educational, charitable, religious and cultural activities it organises. To support this gala lunch, please purchase your ticket at S\$80 per person from SBF at 375 Race Course Road, or Awareness Place outlets at the monastery or Bras Basah Complex #01-63.

con't on Pg 50...

感恩 快乐音乐会
Gratitude Concert 2008
 31 May & 1 June | 7.30pm | 5月31日至6月1日

*To have Gratitude, is to have filial piety, to be compassionate towards all sentient beings, and conscious of the Mother Earth.
 To have Gratitude, is to have the cause of blissful contentment and joy.
 感恩,乃快乐之泉源。
 感恩佛陀,感恩父母,感恩众生,感恩大地,欢喜满人间。*

This Vesak let voices of gratitude, music from the hearts honour the spirit of gratitude! Enjoy an evening of Buddhist hymns, Teochew opera, dance and music with Venerable Sik Kwang Sheng, local artistes such as MediaCorp TV Artiste Nick Shen, Messengers of Dharma and many aspiring young talents!

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新加坡艺人公会会长

周崇庆
Y.E.S. 93.3FM DJ

梨川

沈炜竣
MediaCorp TV Artiste
Nick Shen

董姿彦

广声大和尚
Ven Sik Kwang Sheng

Venue 地点 Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery 光明山普觉禅寺
 Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall 4th Level 宏船老和尚纪念馆 四楼无相殿
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Ticket 门票 S\$10

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Help your loved ones accumulate merits by saving lives. Delight your friends and family this Vesak Day with these savoury vegetarian dishes.

Pumpkin Ball 金瓜球



Skin ingredients:

Pumpkin, 1 kg
Glutinous rice flour, 500gm
Cooking oil, 2 tsp
A little salt

Filling ingredients:

Vegetarian spare ribs, 1/2kg — cut into pieces
Mushrooms, 5pcs — cut into pieces
Parsley, 1 stalk — cut into pieces
Water chestnut, 300gm — cut into pieces
Vegetarian chicken nuggets, 300gm — cut into pieces

Method:

1. Remove pumpkin skin, cut into slices and steam for 20mins. Mash it while hot. Mix the glutinous rice flour, cooking oil and salt into a dough, Divide into 50 portions.
2. Fry the filling with soya sauce paste, sugar, sesame oil and pepper. Add parsley last. Leave the filling to cool and divide into 50 portions.
3. Add fried filling into each dough and form into the shape of a pumpkin. Stick a small bit of parsley stalk into each pumpkin to simulate the stem.
4. Apply a bit of cooking oil on a plate and place pumpkins on it, steam for 10mins.

皮材料:

南瓜1公斤、糯米粉500克、生油2汤匙、盐少许

馅料:

素排骨王半公斤、香菇5粒、茺茜1棵、马蹄300克、素鸡柳块300克

做法:

1. 南瓜去皮切成片，蒸20分钟，乘热压成泥，然后把糯米粉、生油放入，拌匀，再拌成长条切成50粒。
2. 将馅料全切碎。炒香，加入少许的油膏、糖、麻油、胡椒粉。勾芡撒上茺茜，待冷，分成50份。
3. 取1粒粉团包上一份馅料，做成南瓜状，顶端插上一小段芹菜。
4. 蒸盘擦点生油，将做好的金瓜球，入蒸笼约10分钟。

Sliced Vegetables on Lotus Leaf

麒麟浅水伴荷花



Ingredients:

Winter melon, 1kg — de-skin, remove seeds, carve and slice into squares.
Carrot, 1pc — de-skin, carve and slice.
Fresh chinese mushrooms, 12pcs — wash and dry
Vegetarian ham in square slices, 12 pcs.
Fresh/dry lotus leaf (garnish) — soak in hot water.
Vegetarian stock, 3 bowls

Gravy ingredients:

Vegetarian oyster sauce 2 tbsp, potato flour 1 tbsp, a little sesame oil and sugar, a bit of MSG and dark soya sauce

Vegetarian stock ingredients:

Dried straw mushrooms, soya beans, carrots, cabbage leaves, fresh corn, celery

Method:

1. Cook winter melon, carrot slices and chinese mushrooms with 1 bowl of stock in a pot for 4 mins.
2. Lay lotus leaf on a plate, arrange in sequence, in a circle (known as Qi-lin shape), the melon, carrot, mushroom and ham. Steam for 8 mins.
3. Bring to boil 2 bowl of vegetarian stock and gravy ingredients. Thicken with potato flour in water and pour gravy onto the dish.

材料:

冬瓜1公斤 — 去皮、去籽囊、刻花切成方形薄片
红萝卜1条 — 去皮、刻花切成薄片
鲜香菇12粒 — 洗净备用
方形素火腿12片
生/干荷叶(垫底用) — 开水浸泡
素上汤 — 3碗

献汁调味料:

素蚝油2汤匙、生粉1汤匙、麻油适量、白糖适量、味精适量、老抽少量

上汤材料:

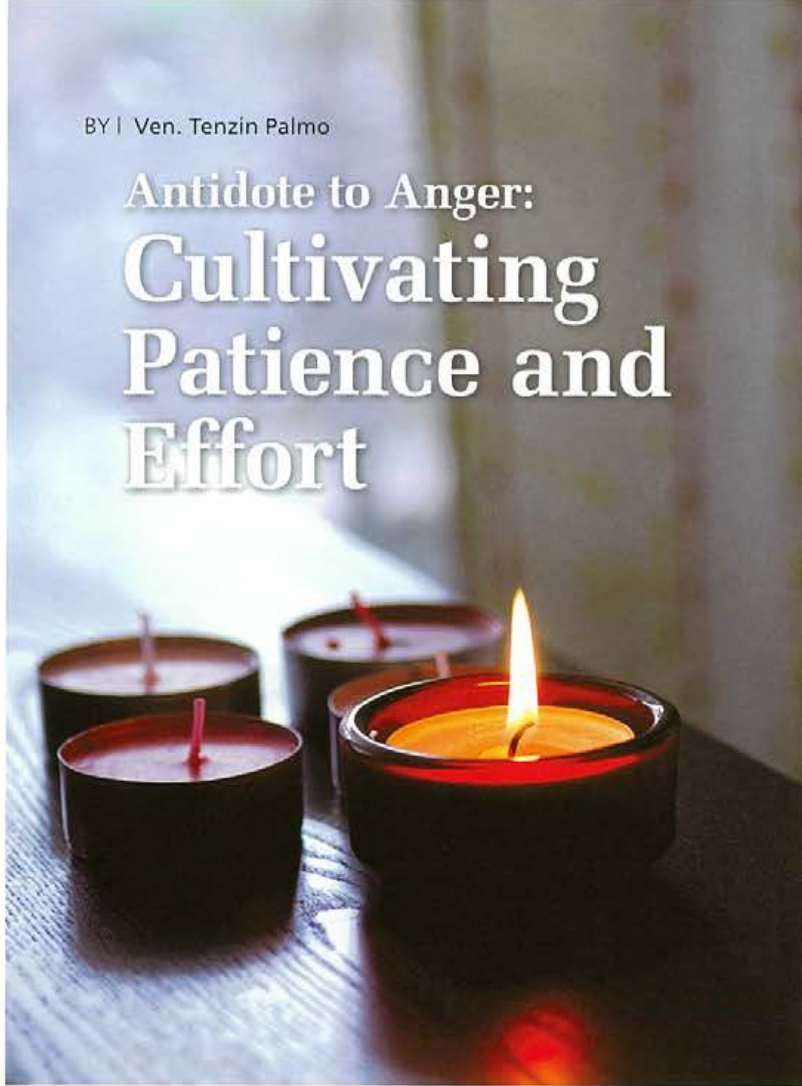
干草菇、黄豆、红萝卜、包菜叶、玉蜀黍、西芹

做法:

1. 将冬瓜片、红萝卜片及鲜香菇放入1碗上汤内焗4分钟。
2. 荷叶垫底，把冬瓜片、红萝卜片、香菇及火腿片，按秩序整齐在盘中排列成圆形(俗称麒麟状)，蒸约8分钟。
3. 上汤2碗，加入调味品，煮滚，勾芡，淋在麒麟片上即成。

BY | Ven. Tenzin Palmo

Antidote to Anger: Cultivating Patience and Effort



The Key in Busy Lives

This idea that only formal sitting, doing prostrations, going to the temple, listening to Dharma teachings, and reading religious books constitute practice, and the rest of the day is so much ballast, can cause us to feel very frustrated with our lives.

We may end up resenting our families and our work, always dreaming of a time when we will be free to do “actual practice”. We might spend the best part of our lives resenting those very circumstances which could provide us with the most profound means of progressing on the spiritual path.

Actually, everything we do, if done with total awareness, is spiritual activity. On the other hand, if we perform an action distractedly, with only half our attention, it becomes just another worldly activity. One could be a great master meditating upon a high throne, but unless one is present and conscious in the moment, it is meaningless to sit there. On the other hand, one might be sweeping leaves, chopping vegetables or cleaning toilets, and provided one maintains complete attention, all these activities become spiritual practices.

If we use every action of the body, speech and mind to cultivating awareness, being present in the moment, seeing things with clarity and understanding, opening our heart in kindness and in love, thinking about other people and how they feel, there is a certainty that there will be a transformation.

And therein lies the key for those of us who have busy lives. We can convert actions we normally regard as routine, dull and spiritually meaningless into karma practice, and transform our entire lives in the process.

There are two separate aspects to bringing about this transformation, although they do converge. One is to create inner space. This is an inner centredness, inner silence, inner clarity, which enables us to begin seeing things more as they really are and not how we normally interpret them. The other aspect is learning to open up our hearts.

Practice Starts With Our Family

It's relatively easy to sit on our cushion and think, "May all sentient beings be well and happy," and send out thoughts of loving-kindness to all those little sentient beings out there on the horizon somewhere! Then somebody comes in and tells us there is a telephone call and we answer crossly, "Go away. I'm doing my loving-kindness meditation."

The best place for us to begin our Dharma practice is with our family. We have the strongest karmic connections with family members; therefore, we have a great responsibility for developing our relationships with them. If we cannot develop loving-kindness towards our family, why even talk about other beings?

If we really want to open up our heart, it has to start with those directly connected to us, such as our partners, children, parents and siblings. This is always a difficult task, because we need to overcome deeply entrenched behavioural patterns.

I think this can be especially challenging with couples. He says this, she says that, every time, and each time the responses are so unskilful. They get locked into a pattern. They cause pain to themselves and to those around them, including their children, and they can't get out. Putting loving-kindness into practice really helps loosen the tight patterns we have developed over many years. It's sometimes a very good idea to just close our eyes, then open them and look at the person in front of us — especially if it's someone we know very well, like our partner, our child or our parents — and really try to see them as if for the first time. This may help us to appreciate their good qualities, which will then aid us in developing loving-kindness for them.

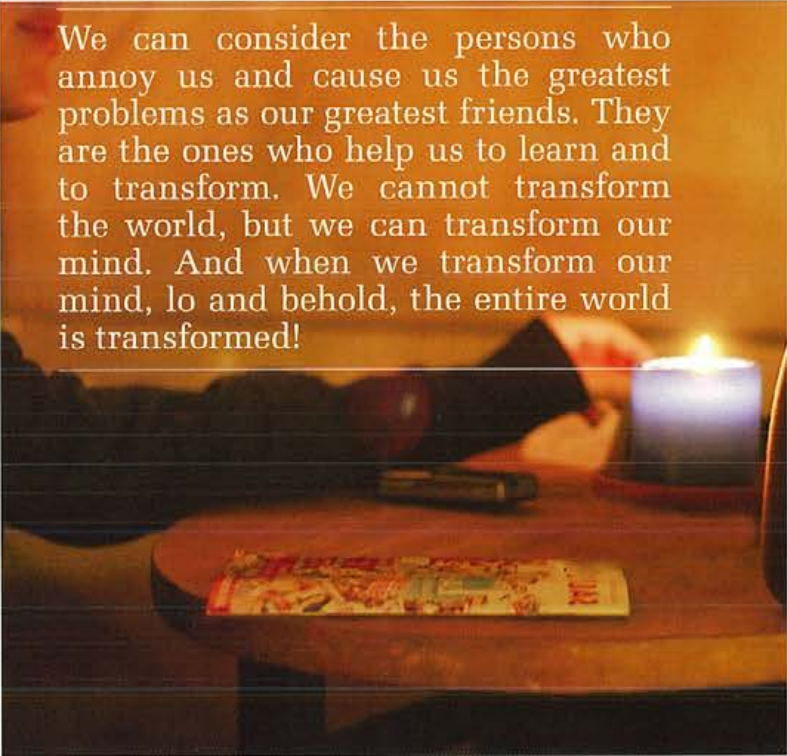
Patience: The Antidote to Anger

Patience is the antidote to anger. From a Dharma perspective, patience is considered extremely important. The Buddha praised it as the greatest austerity. We must develop this wonderful, wide, expansive quality. It has nothing to do with suppressing or repressing or anything like that; rather, it's about developing an open heart. In order to develop this, we need to have contact with people who annoy us. You see, when people

are being loving and kind towards us, saying the things we want to hear and doing all the things we want them to do, it may feel great but we don't learn anything. It's very easy to love people who are lovable. The real test comes with people who are being absolutely obnoxious!

Shantideva, the seventh-century Indian scholar, wrote that the earth is full of pebbles, sharp rocks and thistles. So how can we avoid stubbing our toes? Are we going to carpet the whole earth? No one is rich enough to carpet the entire earth wall to wall. But if we take a piece of leather and apply it to the bottom of our soles as sandals or shoes, we can walk everywhere.

We don't need to change the whole world and all the people in it to our specifications. There are billions of people out there but only one "me" How can I expect them all to do exactly what I want? But we don't need that. All we need do is change our attitude.



We can consider the persons who annoy us and cause us the greatest problems as our greatest friends. They are the ones who help us to learn and to transform. We cannot transform the world, but we can transform our mind. And when we transform our mind, lo and behold, the entire world is transformed!

Once when I was in South India, I went to see an astrologer and told him, "I have two choices. Either I can go back into retreat or I can start a nunnery. What should I do?" He looked at me and said, "If you go back into retreat, it will be very peaceful, very harmonious, very successful, and everything

will be fine. If you start a nunnery, there will be lots of conflicts, lots of problems, lots of difficulties, but both are good, so you decide." I thought, "Back into retreat, quick!" Then I met a Catholic priest and mentioned it to him. He said, "It's obvious. You start the nunnery. What is the use of always seeking tranquillity and avoiding challenges?" He said we are like rough pieces of wood. Trying to smooth our ragged edges down with velvet and silk won't work. We need sandpaper.

The people who annoy us are our sandpaper. They are going to make us smooth. If we regard those who are extremely irritating as our greatest helpers on the path, we can learn a lot. They cease to be our problems and instead become our challenges.

A tenth-century Bengali pandita named Palden Atisha reintroduced Buddhism into Tibet. He had a servant who was really awful. He was abusive to Atisha, disobedient, and generally a big problem.

The Tibetans asked Atisha what he was doing with such an awful guy who was so completely obnoxious. They said, "Send him back. We'll take care of you." Atisha replied, "What are you talking about? He is my greatest teacher of patience. He is the most precious person around me!"

Patience does not mean suppression, and it doesn't mean bottling up our anger or turning it in on ourselves in the form of self-blame. It means having a mind which sees everything that happens as the result of causes and conditions we have set in motion at some time in this or past lives. Who knows what our relationship has

been with someone who is causing us difficulties now? Who knows what we may have done to him in another life! If we respond to such people with retaliation, we are just locking ourselves into that same cycle. We are going to have to keep replaying this part of the movie again and again in this and

future lifetimes. The only way to break out of the cycle is by changing our attitude.

I met a Tibetan monk who had been imprisoned for 25 years in labour camps. He had been tortured and treated badly, and his body was pretty much a wreck. But his mind! When you looked into his eyes, far from seeing bitterness, brokenness, or hatred in them, you could see that they were glowing. He looked as though he had just spent 25 years in retreat! All he talked about was his gratitude to his captors. They had really helped him develop overwhelming love and compassion towards those who caused him harm. He said, "Without them I would have just continued mouthing platitudes." But because of his imprisonment, he had had to draw on his inner strength. In such circumstances, you either go under or you surmount. When he emerged from prison, he felt nothing but love and understanding towards his captors.

Once I read a book by Jack London. I can't remember the title. It was called something about the stars. It was a story about a college professor who had murdered his wife and was in San Quentin prison. The prison guards did not like this guy at all. He was too intelligent. So they did everything they could to harass him. One of the things they did was to bind people in very rigid canvas sacking and pull it tight so that they could hardly move or breathe, and their whole body would feel crushed. If anyone stayed in this for more than forty-eight hours, they died. They would continually put the professor in this for twenty-four or thirty hours at a time. While he was wrapped up like this, because the pain was unendurable, he began to have out-of-body experiences. Eventually he began to go through past lives. Then he saw his interrelationships in past lives with the people who were tormenting him. At the end of the book he was about to be hanged, but he felt nothing but love and understanding towards his tormentors. He really understood why they were doing what they were doing. He felt their inner unhappiness, confusion and anger which were creating the scenario.

In our own modest way, we too must develop the ability to transform negative occurrences and take them on the path. We learn much more from our pain than from our pleasures. This doesn't mean we have to go out and look for pain — far from it. But



when pain comes to us, in whatever form, instead of resenting it and creating more pain, we can see it as a great opportunity to grow — to get out of our normal thinking patterns, such as, “He doesn’t like me, so I’m not going to like him.” We can begin to transcend all that and use this method to open up the heart.

Applying the Four Efforts

Applying the four efforts — the effort to prevent the unwholesome from arising, the effort to discard that unwholesomeness which has already arisen, the effort to create the wholesome which has not yet arisen, and the effort to cultivate and maintain that wholesomeness which has arisen — is another way.

Cultivating wholesomeness, sometimes also translated as skilfulness, means developing states of mind such as understanding, love, generosity and openness of heart which create within us and around us a state of harmony and peace. This is in contrast to the unwholesome, or unskilful, states of mind such as ignorance, greed and aversion which create within us and without us states of conflict.

So, part of maintaining our awareness is to be aware of the states of our mind and where they are coming from. We must have discernment. We have to recognise those thoughts and emotions that are rooted in the negative factors. It’s not a matter of suppression; it’s a matter of recognising them, accepting them and letting them go. We don’t maintain them, and we don’t follow them.

As our awareness grows, we become more acutely conscious of our mental states and are able to see, for instance, when aversion or anger creeps into our mind. We can recognise it. We can even name it and say, “This is anger.” But we don’t identify with it. We just see that this is an angry state of mind. We accept that is what it is. But knowing that it’s not a helpful state of mind, we can also drop it. On the other hand, when positive states of mind come, we can recognise them, we can acknowledge them and we can try to help them remain, to grow, to be appreciated. So, it’s not just a matter of blaming ourselves for all our negative thoughts. There’s no blame here. It’s recognising what is there and being able to let go. And when it’s positive, it’s recognising it and encouraging it. It’s dealing with knowing, knowing what is in the mind, without getting caught in our conflicts.

See the thoughts and feelings as they arise. Recognise them for what they are, accept them and, if they are not useful, let them go.

Mastering the Mind

It’s not our emotions, even our negative emotions, which are the problem. The problem is whether they control us or we control them. The best way to control is through seeing, and the best way to see is through developing awareness. Once we are conscious and aware of our emotions, of our motivations, then we have the wish-fulfilling gem in our hands and everything can be transformed. As long as we are unknowing, as long as we identify with our thoughts and emotions, as long as we are controlled by our thoughts and emotions, we are slaves. So it’s a matter of learning how to master the mind. Who is going to be in control here — our emotions or us? (Whatever ‘us’ may be — we’re talking on a relative level here!)

Most of us are complete slaves to our emotions and thoughts. When we are angry, we are the anger. When we are jealous, we are the jealousy. When we are depressed, we are the depression. We are complete slaves to our desires, our anger, our aversions, our jealousies, our hopes and our fears. We’re not in control at all.

First, we have to learn to be in control of our own minds. After all, our mind is the closest thing we have; it’s how we perceive everything. External circumstances are nothing compared to the internal circumstances of our mind. So if we want to benefit ourselves and others, we have to master our minds. The easiest and quickest way to do that is to develop this moment-to-moment awareness of the mind. By doing this we can find the space to see what is happening within us and to select that which is helpful. That which is not helpful, we can drop. All our Dharma practices are directed towards attaining this mastery and understanding. First we have to understand. Then, through that understanding, we can gain mastery.

The Buddha said that someone who kills a thousand times a thousand men on the battlefield is nothing compared with one who is master of himself. He who conquers himself is the greatest warrior. So

we have to learn to conquer ourselves. But we don't conquer ourselves by creating an inner battlefield; we conquer ourselves through developing understanding, insight and awareness. This takes enormous effort because the inertia of our mind is so deep, so entrenched.

Emptying Ourselves First

Our layers upon layers of opinions, interpretations, elaborations and memories distance us from what is actually happening, who is actually in front of us, what is actually occurring inside ourselves.

Dharma practice is not a matter of learning more and more and studying more and more, although that can also be important. It's not a matter of adding more and more; it's a matter of emptying out, peeling off layer after layer. We're already so full of junk, so stuffed to the top, that first we need to empty out.

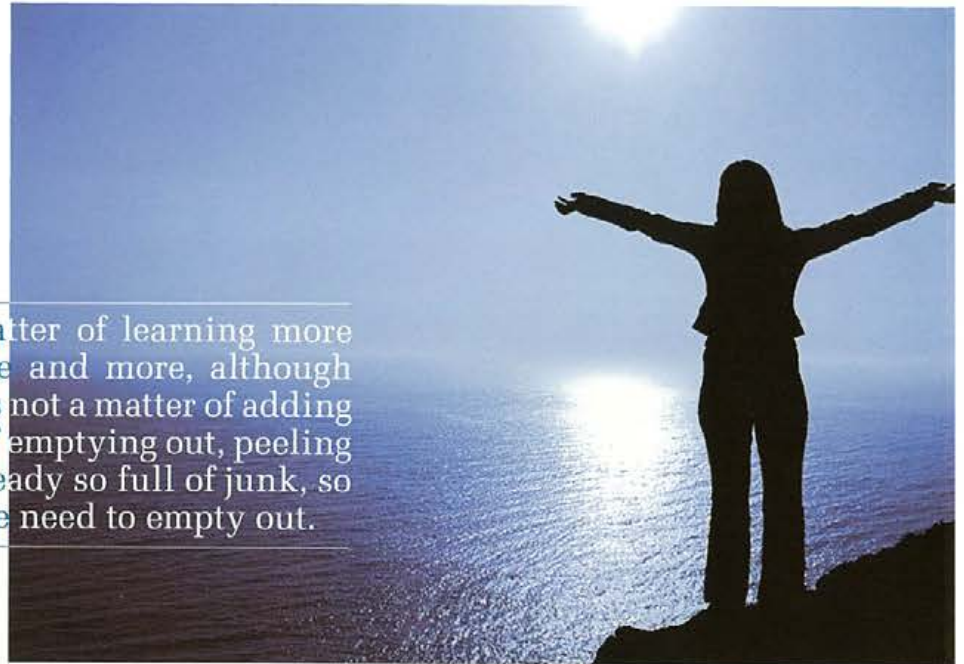
A great Thai master was once asked what his main problem was with people who came to him for instruction. He said that the main problem with them was that they were already so full of their own ideas and opinions, they were like a cup filled to the brim with dirty water. You can't pour anything on top because if you do, it will just become dirty too. First, you have to empty out the cup and clean it, and then you can pour in the ambrosia. And so, for us too, we need to clear out; we don't need to add more at this time. We need to start peeling off all our opinions, all our ideas, and all our cleverness and just remain very naked, in the moment, just seeing things as they are, like a small child.

If we do that, then it gives some space for the innate intelligence to which we all have to surface. And with that intelligence comes a genuine openness of the heart. But if we try to do all these practices on top of all the junk which we already harboured in our mind, nothing is ever affected. We just distort; no real transformation will take place.

Seeing As If For the First Time

Sometimes people ask me what I gained from living for so many years in a cave. I say, "It's not what I gained, it's what I lost." I think that in Dharma

practice it is very important first to really have a period of dropping rather than building up. This is why a practice like *Shamatha*, just quietly sitting, can be so very, very beneficial because it gives us space to begin to peel off and empty out.



Also, during the day, as much as you can, try to bring the mind back into the present and try to see things as if one is seeing them for the very first time. This is especially valuable with people we are very connected to — our spouse, our children, our colleagues at work. Try to look at them as if seeing them for the very first time with completely fresh, new eyes.

Moment to moment, we are. After a while, we become so heavily habituated we don't see any more. All we see are our own ideas, impressions and memories. It's very important that we should practise now so that at the time of our death we can think, "Well, I tried. I did the best I could and so I can die without regrets." ☺

This article is a compilation of teachings extracted from Gatsal, the Newsletter of the Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery & International Retreat Centre, Issue 2, 3 & 4 (www.tenzinpalmo.com), and Ven. Tenzin Palmo's book, Reflections on a Mountain Lake published by Snow Lion Publications (www.snowlionpub.com). Reprinted with permission.

Everybody seeks happiness, and the whole of mankind seeks world peace. But, because of the anger prevalent in all sentient beings, few people feel true happiness, and world peace seems an impossible mission.

Why? According to Buddhism, anger has the most destructive power among all negative emotions. Anger will afflict and weaken one's body and mind. On a larger scale, anger will harm or even destroy the world.

Anger Causes the Greatest Damage

Says the *Maha-prajna-paramita-sastra*, "The damage caused by anger is the greatest among the three poisons of greed, anger and ignorance. Of the 98 negative emotions, anger is the strongest. Of all mental sickness, anger is the most difficult to cure."

Anger arises when one feels that something or someone is against his or her wish. Driven by anger, one will become aggressive, irritated, annoyed, frustrated, prejudicial, hurtful, resentful, disgusted and so on. Conflict, dispute, disharmony, fighting, killing and war will thus ensue.



Happiness Lies in No Anger

Renowned Buddhist scholar and practitioner Professor Cheng Chen-huang tells us in real terms why anger causes the greatest damage.

The Chapter of *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva* in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* singles out the adverse effects of anger, "Whenever a thought of anger arises, one million doors of obstacles open. A single flame of anger will burn down the forest-like merits." Anger is thus recognised as the biggest enemy to meditation, spiritual happiness, interpersonal relationships and world peace.

Due to the above, the *Agama Sutra* stresses the benefit of no anger — "If the mind is purified, sentient beings will be purified." Similar emphasis is found in the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa-sutra*, "Because of the purification of the mind, the world will be purified." Conversely, anger will bring impurities to sentient beings and the world.

On a minute and subtle level, anger radiates unwholesome thought-waves to harm the surroundings. An experiment conducted by a biologist

demonstrated that a flower showered with love would flourish exuberantly while a flower that was subjected to angry words and curses would wither.

Cease Anger by Training

Since the habitual tendency of getting angry has been firmly embedded in our *alaya* or root consciousness, we need to train ourselves over long periods of time to cease our anger. Rome was not built in a day, not to mention eradicating and transforming the negative karmic imprints in our mind accumulated from the beginningless past.

The following are some practical techniques, arranged according to their levels of complexity, which you can try when dealing with anger:

1. Take long inhalation, go jogging, running, swimming, or do qigong, yoga and other workouts to release tension and calm down the outburst of angry fire.

2. Embrace Mother Nature by going hiking. Nature has its own rhythm and way of keeping everything in balance. In natural surroundings, one will feel peaceful and let go of one's defence mechanism.

3. Read or listen to teachings on health, EQ and the Buddha-dharma. Knowledge is power. Reading and listening are the two most efficient ways to strengthen one's mental power.

4. Contemplate and reflect again and again on what one has learned to internalise the understanding of the shortcomings of anger and the benefits of no anger.

5. Take the precept of no anger and observe it strictly. No anger is the basic precept for both laity and monastics. Perfection of tolerance is one of the six or ten perfections of a bodhisattva to attain Buddhahood. The *Agama Sutra* says, "All Buddhas attain Nirvana. But you don't because of your angry fire."

6. Believe and have faith in Karma. What we receive now is due to what we did before. What we do now paves the way for what we will receive in the future. When we receive unpleasant treatment, take it as a way to purify our past bad Karma. If we

hope to be treated nicely in future, we should not get angry now.

7. Accept the principle of rebirth. Because of our unwholesome Karma, we are entrapped in the cycle of birth and death. Our so-called "enemy" in this present life might be our relative or a friend in our past life. We treat our relatives and friends in this life nicely, so how can we get angry with a relative or friend from our past life? In order to get emancipation from samsara, we should develop love and compassion.

8. Practise the seven-point cause-and-effect instruction as taught by Atisha in the 11th century: *recognising all sentient beings as one's mother, recognising the kindness of mother sentient beings, wishing to repay their kindness, generating affectionate love towards all sentient beings, generating great compassion, generating the extraordinary intention of freeing all beings from suffering and bringing them happiness, and developing the enlightened mind or Bodhicitta.* In the above sequence, the preceding factor is the cause of the following factor while the following factor is the effect of the preceding factor. The fifth factor, generating compassion, is the effect of the first four factors on the one hand and the cause of the last two factors on the other hand. Compassion is the pivotal point of the bodhisattva path. Hence, meditation on compassion is the best antidote to anger.

9. Practise the *vijnapti-matrata yogacara veda*. This doctrine states that the world is nothing but the projection of our consciousness or prejudice based on past experiences. The world is empty of inherent nature and thus is unreal. For that reason, we should not be affected by the surroundings. We should develop a peaceful mind in order to see through all phenomena.

10. Abide in Buddha-nature which is beyond duality, imagination and speech. Observe the admonition in the *Diamond Sutra*, "One should generate one's thoughts without any abiding." Also follow Master Hui Neng's advice at the very beginning of the *Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra*, "Everybody has the enlightened mind which is originally pure. Use this mind, and at once you become a Buddha." ☺

Living Her Dreams



Photo: Renee Tan



For those who do not know Ho Lin Huay, they may think that as a producer, director and scriptwriter of several top-notch Buddhist musicals, she must be a solemn and profound person. But nothing could be further from the truth as Lin Huay is in the flesh, a very vivacious, dynamic, genuine and forthcoming person.

Born in Malaysia, Lin Huay has always been interested in the arts. “I dreamt of being a fashion designer or a film-maker as a child.” She’s grateful to her parents who have always been supportive of her pursuit in this area “since primary school” and believes that she is able to play a part in the musical theatre industry because of her “various exposure to singing, dancing and painting since young”.

Lin Huay graduated from the University of Miami in the United States with a degree in motion picture and theatre production. In 1999, she wrote and directed *Siddhartha the Musical*, the biggest Malaysian-produced musical then, which successfully toured Singapore and South Africa. Today, she is the founder of Musical On Stage Productions in Malaysia which has since gone on to produce more hit musicals with a Buddhist slant like *Above Full Moon*, *The Perfect Circle* and *Jewel of Tibet*. She currently works in the television industry as producer, writer and director, and is also an award-winning video music director, as well as a singer and composer with two albums to her credit.

More than just a Performance

Staging Buddhist musicals holds a special place in Lin Huay’s heart. “Buddhist stories inspire me. To me, staging such musicals is more than just staging a performance. It has a greater significance as these stories have greater depth and meaning and reach out to the audience in a deeper manner.” Though staging such musicals in Asia has its fair share of challenges, especially “when it comes to promoting the event because the performing arts are not viewed as significantly in Asia as compared to the West”, this does not faze Lin Huay. In fact, it just spurs her to persevere in working harder “to create

Ho Lin Huay speaks to Awaken on what it is like doing something she loves which allows her to touch the depths of people’s hearts.

BY | Esther Thien

this platform to showcase the myriad of great talents of both performing cast and crew in Malaysia."

"At the end of the day, I feel that as long as we are alive, there is nothing that cannot be solved. I know there is no situation or emotion that is so bad that it will last forever. Things are always and ever changing, so things will get better. Likewise, when things are going well, you appreciate them knowing that they will not last forever. You just start treating the obstacles that come along as part and parcel of life," she explains with this little gem of wisdom.

Grateful to the Buddha's teachings, it is such practical sensibilities that dominate Lin Huay's life in her dealings with people, circumstances and work. "Buddhism is a way of life and not so much a religion for me. By applying the teachings such as impermanence and cause-and-effect in my life, it has become a part of my life."

Ask if this is what attracted her to Buddhism, she says with a smile: "I guess you can say it's my affinity with Buddhism. I have a sister who is a Buddhist nun and I have always felt more comfortable in Buddhist temples even though I had ample opportunities to go to churches while studying in the US."

But even though she feels she's "destined" to be a Buddhist, staging Buddhist musicals was more of an "accidental" development. "Some professionals and I were just sharing some thoughts over lunch and mooted this idea. Somehow, a Venerable came to know about it and asked us to do it. So I started working on the script. Producing such a large-scale Buddhist musical was the first time for all of us involved," she muses. "Never thought it would happen but it did."

Touching her Audience

And Lin Huay has never looked back since. "10 years have passed since we produced our first show, *Siddhartha the Musical*. It has been a great journey for me and I hope I can continue to present meaningful and inspiring shows that will tug at the heartstrings of the audience with their universal message of love, compassion, peace and wisdom."


She was highly touched by what happened in South Africa when the cast and crew of *Siddhartha the*

Musical made its run there in 2002. "Although language was a barrier, there was a particular South African lady who attended all three days of our shows. She sat at the back on the first, in the middle on the second and the front row on the third. On the day we were leaving, she even purposely made an hour's drive just to meet the actor who played the Buddha in the show. She told us she wasn't a Buddhist but was so touched by the story that she wanted to offer a stone which she had kept for a long time to the actor who played the Buddha. We never knew a musical can touch a person so deeply."

The rest of the South African audience, according to her, left the performance feeling very impressed. "Everyone had a great time. The show left an indelible impression on everyone's minds about the Buddha and his teachings. And the feedback was good, even though initially they had no idea what to expect of a Chinese musical because none had been performed there before."

In other runs elsewhere, members of the audience approached Lin Huay and told her how they were so touched that tears just flowed as they watched the musical. "They tell me they never knew a Chinese Buddhist musical could be so touching."

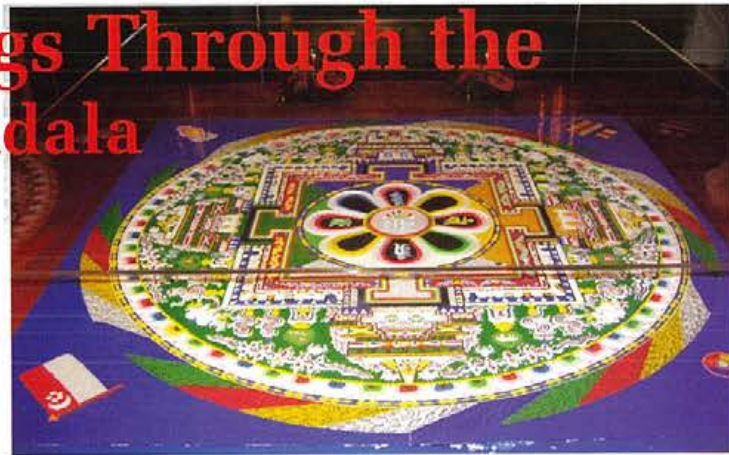
It is little snippets and experiences such as these that motivate her to continue producing Buddhist musicals with high standards of production. "We want to break the misconceptions that Buddhist-inspired musicals are boring and amateurish. Those who have attended any of our shows will know that Buddhist performances can be inspiring, educational and yet very colourful and entertaining with a high level of professionalism and production standards."

Lin Huay is thankful that she has a group of people with the same vision and goals who stood by her for the past 10 years in presenting good Buddhist stories through the performing arts. "If I were to leave this world one day, I know I will have no regrets because I have done what I can to inspire all involved – the cast, crew, volunteers and members of the audience – about the Buddha's teachings. It is most heartening to see more people realising that Buddhism is not an outdated or ritualistic religion meant for the aged seniors, but really a practical religion that can be practised in our everyday lives." 

Spreading Blessings Through the Chenrezig Sand Mandala

SINGAPORE — A most auspicious beginning took place on 8th March this year at the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple. Eight nuns from Kopan Kachoe Gyakil Ling Nunnery in Nepal started the construction of the Chenrezig (Guanyin) sand mandala on this fateful day. Each of these nuns, or “anilas” as they were endearingly called, had two years of intensive training during which they constructed the mandala again and again until they knew the whole design by heart.

In Tibetan Buddhism, a mandala represents the sacred pureland of an enlightened being. As part of the spiritual practice of the Tibetan monastic, intricate mandalas of coloured sand made from crushed semi-precious stones must be perfectly reproduced each time it is created. Everything used in the construction is consecrated, and monastics painstakingly follow the exact proportions and all the details of constructing as recorded in ancient Buddhist texts. This is because every part of the mandala symbolises different aspects of the teachings and the realisations of the enlightened being of that mandala. Though tedious, the nuns rejoiced at having the opportunity to create the mandala time and again. “I feel really happy and proud to be part of the team to recreate the mandala, thereby bringing lots of merits to the many people who viewed it,” said Ven. Thubten Sangmo, a 32-year-old senior nun.



According to Lama Zopa Rinpoche, just viewing the image of a sand mandala can purify even the five uninterrupted negative karmas: killing one's father or mother, drawing blood from the Buddha, killing an arhat, and causing disunity among the Sangha. If even these very heavy negative karmas which cause one to suffer an eon in the lowest hot hell get purified, there is no doubt that the 10 non-virtuous actions such as gossiping, covetousness and so forth would get purified, explained Rinpoche.

Completed on 21st March, the mandala was dissolved on the 26th after a closing ceremony, and the coloured sand was distributed to the public as blessings. The dissolution of the mandala symbolises the core Buddhist teaching that whatever comes into existence through causes and conditions is impermanent. “Like the mandala, first, everything is nice, fresh and beautiful, but one day, everything will age and be destroyed, just like how the mandala was dissolved,” said Ven. Sangmo. ☸

Reflections of a short-term Novitiate Monastic...

Wanting to repay the deep kindness of my parents, I took part in a 10-day Buddhist novitiate programme. I could feel blessings all around me the moment my locks were shorn. Though I had less sleep than usual, I was very happy, at peace and at ease with myself and those around me. We all lived harmoniously like brothers and sisters who cared for one another. The Venerable leading our programme is very compassionate, caring and inspiring. He constantly reminded us to give rise to positive, loving thoughts to all beings. And also told us to generate faith and devotion in our hearts whenever we prostrate to the Triple Gem by thinking of the great qualities of the Buddha, the profound teachings of the Dharma — the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths, and the great disciples of the Buddha. I feel really fortunate to be able to learn the Dharma.

— Tricia Lim, 35, Project Executive

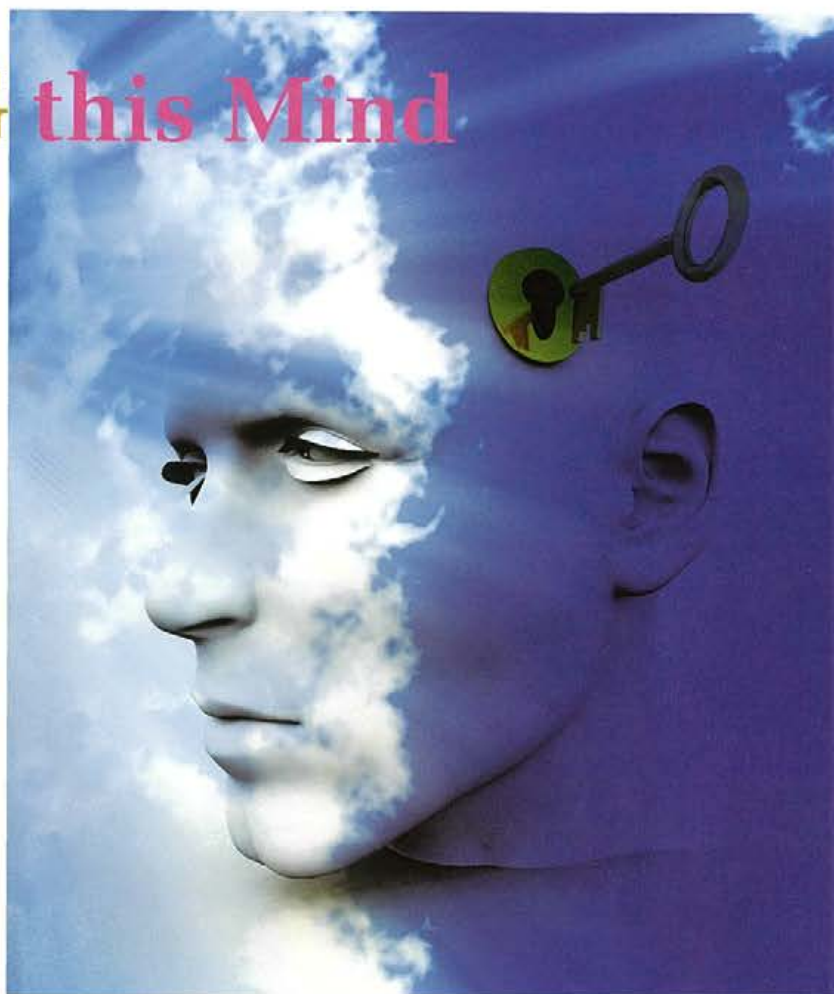
TRAINING this Mind

BY | Ven. Ajahn Chah

About the Mind

Training this mind... actually there's nothing much to this mind. It's simply radiant in and of itself. It's naturally peaceful. Why the mind doesn't feel peaceful right now is because it gets lost in its own moods. There's nothing to the mind itself. It simply abides in its natural state, that's all. That sometimes the mind feels peaceful and other times not peaceful is because it has been tricked by these moods. The untrained mind lacks wisdom. It's foolish. Moods come and trick it into feeling pleasure one minute and suffering the next. Happiness then sadness. But the natural state of a person's mind isn't one of happiness or sadness. This experience of happiness and sadness is not the actual mind itself, but just these moods which have tricked it. The mind gets lost, carried away by these moods with no idea what's happening. And as a result, we experience pleasure and pain accordingly, because the mind has not been trained yet. It still isn't very clever. And we go on thinking that it's our mind which is suffering or our mind which is happy, when actually it's just lost in its various moods.

The point is that really this mind of ours is naturally peaceful. It's still and calm like a leaf that is not being blown about by the wind. But if the wind blows then it flutters. It does that because of the wind. And so with the mind it's because of these moods — getting caught up with thoughts. If the mind didn't get lost in these moods, it wouldn't flutter about. If it understood the nature of thoughts, it would just stay still. This is called the natural state of the mind. And why we practise is to see the mind in this original state. We think that the mind itself



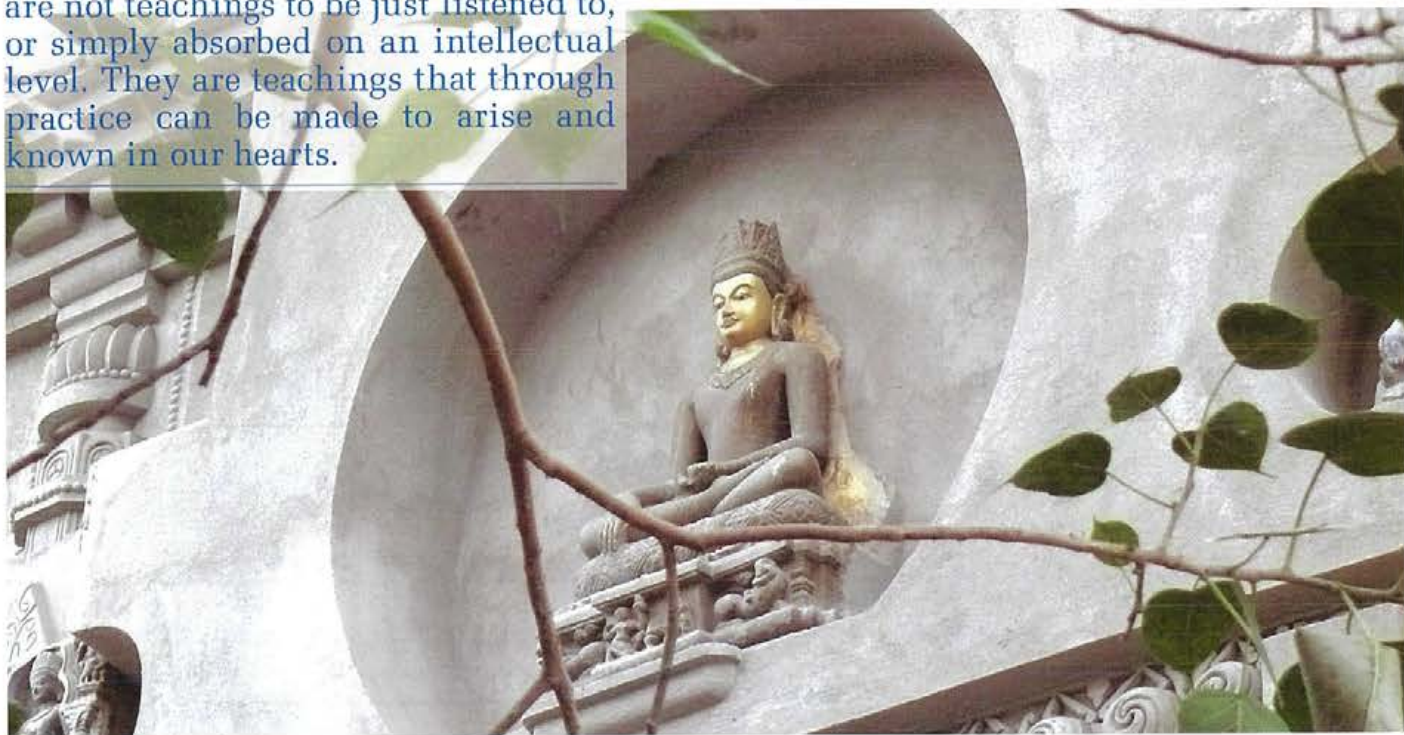
is actually pleasurable or peaceful. But really the mind has not created any real pleasure or pain. These thoughts have come and tricked it, and it has got caught up in them. So we really have to come and train our minds in order to grow in wisdom. So that we understand the true nature of thoughts rather than just following them blindly. The mind is naturally peaceful. It is in order to understand just this much that we have come together to do this difficult practice of meditation.

Arising and Passing Away

To do this practice, remember to regard all the various activities of the mind, all those you like and all those you dislike, in the same way as you would regard a cobra. The cobra is an extremely poisonous snake, poisonous enough to cause death if it should bite us. And so, also, it is with our moods; the moods that we like are poisonous, the moods that we dislike are also poisonous. They prevent our minds from being free and hinder our understanding of the truth as it was taught by the Buddha.

Thus it is necessary to try maintain our mindfulness throughout the day and night. Whatever you may be doing, be it standing, sitting, lying down, speaking or whatever, you should do with mindfulness. When you are able to establish this mindfulness, you'll find that there will arise clear comprehension associated with it, and these two conditions will bring about wisdom. Thus mindfulness, clear comprehension and wisdom will work together, and you'll be like one who is *awake* both day and night.

These teachings left us by the Buddha are not teachings to be just listened to, or simply absorbed on an intellectual level. They are teachings that through practice can be made to arise and known in our hearts.



Wherever we go, whatever we do, we should have these teachings. And what we mean by “to have these teachings” or “to have the truth”, is that, whatever we do or say, we do and say with wisdom. When we think and contemplate, we do so with wisdom. We say that one who has mindfulness and clear comprehension combined in this way with wisdom, is one who is close to the Buddha.

When you leave here, you should practise bringing everything back to your own mind. Look

at your mind with this mindfulness and clear comprehension and develop this wisdom. With these three conditions, there will arise a “letting go”. You'll know the constant arising and passing away of all phenomena.

You should know that, that which is arising and passing away is only the activity of the mind. When something arises, it passes away and is followed by further arising and passing away.

In the *Way of Dhamma* we call this arising and passing away “birth and death”; and this is everything — this is all there is! When suffering has arisen, it passes away, and, when it has passed away, suffering arises again².

There's just suffering arising and passing away. When you see this much, you'll be able to know constantly this arising and passing away; and, when your knowing is constant, you'll see that this is really all there is. Everything is just birth and death. It's not as if there is anything which carries on. There's just this arising and passing away as it is — that's all.

This kind of seeing will give rise to a tranquil feeling of dispassion towards the world. Such a feeling arises when we see that actually there is nothing worth wanting; there is only arising and passing away, a being born followed by a dying. This is when the mind arrives at “letting go”, letting everything go according to its own nature. Things arise and pass away in our mind, and we know. When happiness arises, we know; when dissatisfaction arises, we know. And this “knowing happiness” means that we don’t identify with it as being ours. And likewise with dissatisfaction and unhappiness, we don’t identify with them as being ours. When we no longer identify with and cling to happiness and suffering, we are simply left with the natural way of things.

Dealing With Moods

So we say that mental activity is like the deadly poisonous cobra. If we don’t interfere with a cobra, it simply goes its own way. Even though it may be extremely poisonous, we are not affected by it; we don’t go near it or take hold of it, and it doesn’t bite us. The cobra does what is natural for a cobra to do. That’s the way it is. If you are clever you’ll leave it alone.

And so you let be that which is good.
You also let be that which is not good —
let it be according to its own nature.

Let be your liking and your disliking, the same way as you don’t interfere with the cobra. So, one who is intelligent will have this kind of attitude towards the various moods that arise in the mind. When goodness arises, we let it be good, but we know also. We understand its nature. And, too, we let be the not-good, we let it be according to its nature. We don’t take hold of it because we don’t want anything. We don’t want evil, neither do we want good. We want neither heaviness nor lightness, happiness nor suffering. When, in this way, our wanting is at an end, peace is firmly established.

Peace

When we have this kind of peace established in our minds, we can depend on it. This peace, we say, has arisen out of confusion. Confusion has ended. The Buddha called the attainment of final enlightenment an “extinguishing”, in the same way that fire is extinguished. We extinguish fire at the place at

which it appears. Wherever it is hot, that’s where we can make it cool. And so it is with enlightenment. Nibbāna is found in *samsāra*³. *Enlightenment and delusion (samsāra)* exist in the same place, just as do hot and cold. It’s hot where it was cold and cold where it was hot. When heat arises, the coolness disappears, and when there is coolness, there’s no more heat. In this way Nibbāna and *samsāra* are the same.

We are told to put an end to *samsāra*, which means to stop the ever-turning cycle of confusion. This putting an end to confusion is extinguishing the fire. When external fire is extinguished there is coolness. When the internal fires of sensual craving, aversion and delusion are put out, then this is coolness also.

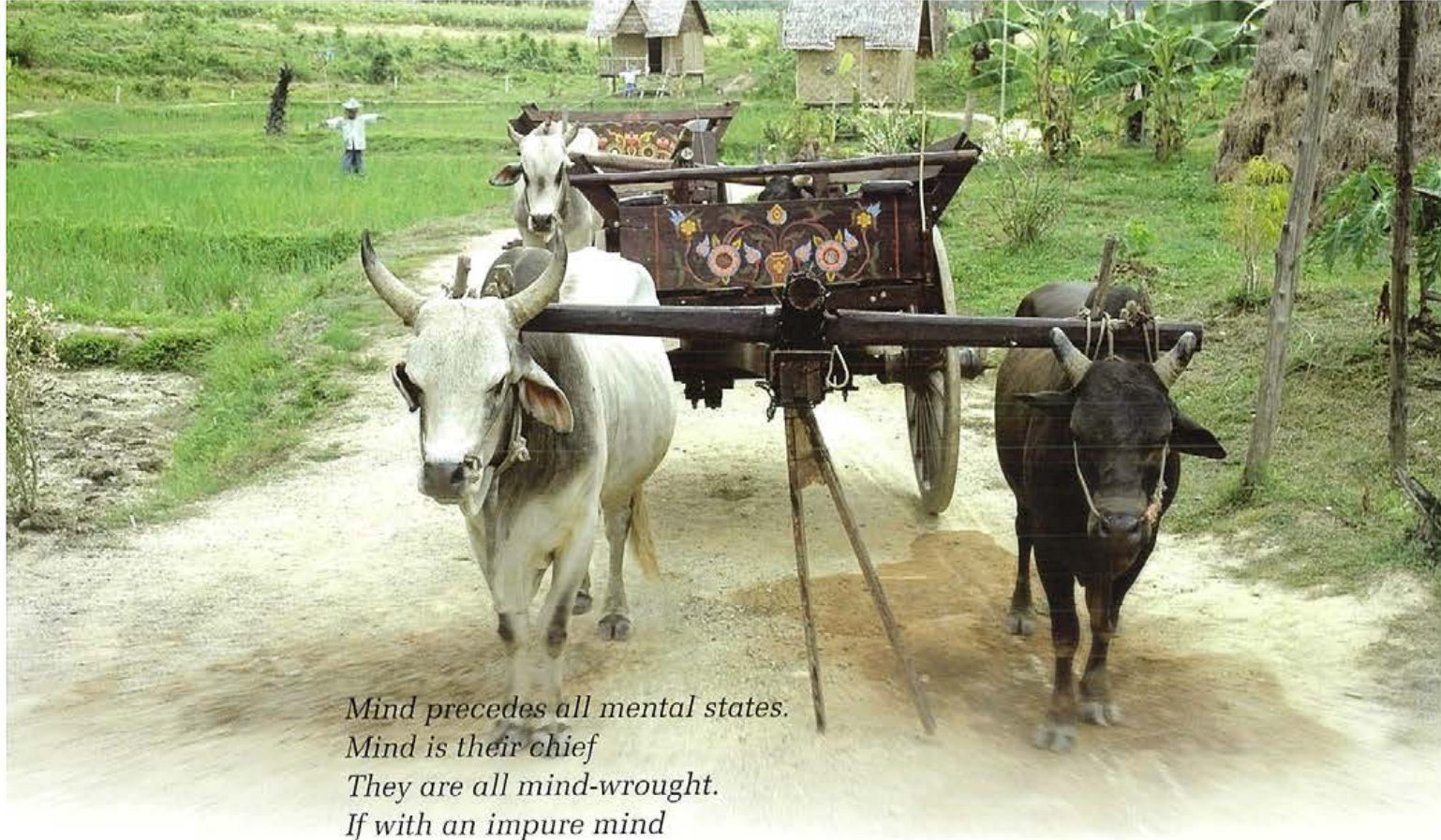
This is the nature of enlightenment; it’s the extinguishing of fire, the cooling of that which was hot. This is peace. This is the end of *samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death. When you arrive at enlightenment, this is how it is. It’s an ending of the ever-turning and ever-changing, an ending of greed, aversion and delusion in our minds. We talk about it in terms of happiness because this is how worldly people understand the ideal to be, but in reality it has gone beyond. It is beyond both happiness and suffering. It’s perfect peace.

So as you go you should take this teaching which I have given you and contemplate it carefully. Your stay here hasn’t been easy and I have had little opportunity to give you instruction, but in this time you have been able to study the real meaning of our practice. May this practice lead you to happiness; may it help you grow in truth. May you be freed from the suffering of birth and death. 🍃

Footnotes

2. *Suffering in this context refers to the implicit unsatisfactoriness of all compounded existence as distinct from suffering as merely the opposite of happiness.*
3. *Samsāra*: lit. perpetual wandering, is a name by which is designated the sea of life ever restlessly heaving up and down, the symbol of this continuous process of ever again and again being born, growing old, suffering and dying.

*This article is a compilation of teachings extracted from **The Teachings of Ajahn Chah** (www.ajahnchah.org) titled “Training this Mind” and “Living With the Cobra”. Copyright The Sangha, Wat Nong Pah Pong. Reprinted with permission.*



*Mind precedes all mental states.
Mind is their chief
They are all mind-wrought.
If with an impure mind
A person speaks or acts,
Suffering follows him like the wheel
That follows the foot of the ox.*

~ Dhammapada Verse 1

Nobody has Victimised Me

BY | Ng Pei Fuen

R | eading this verse again, the analogy of the wheel put into motion by the movement of the animal pulling the cart struck me. Our actions (preceded by mind) are connected directly to the results, just like the beast of burden pulling the cart. If the beast (the mind) moves, the cart moves. And that cart represents our situations, things or events that happen to us in life afterwards. There is no escape and no other way until we master the beast in front — our mind.

The story behind this verse talks about an *Arahant*, Maha Pala, who became blind at the same time that he was enlightened. People were surprised on how this could happen. The Buddha explained that in Maha Pala's past life, he had been a doctor who had blinded somebody in revenge, so even as an *Arahant*, he had to suffer blindness — the consequence of the wheel that had already been set in motion by his own unwholesome action in a previous life.

Reflecting on this, I laughed when I recalled all the comparatively minute and insignificant occasions when I felt that I had been victimised, wrongly accused, blamed or had not received good results for what I thought were good actions.

Since I have not mastered a non-corrupted mind, naturally all speech and action that I do will come with suffering. Even if I try hard to check myself, all speech and actions originating from me would still perhaps be blemished, even if it's only to 0.01 percent for I am speaking or acting with different degrees of greed, hatred and delusion.

So who can I blame when I get blamed?
I have to realise that I have set my own
wheel in motion. Thus I have to face
up and deal with my own muddy mess
of walking into the puddle when it
happens.



Photo: Mern Wen

And also accept that hey, walking in the mud is
NORMAL for all unenlightened beings.

May I continue to strive hard at taming the stubborn
beast in front (the mind) and stop pushing the blame
to other people around for throwing mud in my
path.

I hope I can be like Venerable Sariputta in his
declaration of truth, where the great earth shook
nine times:

*Let me be like the earth,
which accepts anything thrown on it,
be it dirty, smelly, foul,
I will accept it without rejecting,
patiently, quietly embracing.*

*Let me be like the water,
which accepts anything thrown into it,
be it dirty, smelly, foul, nasty,
I will accept it without rejecting,
patiently, quietly embracing.*

*Let me be like the fire,
which accepts anything thrown into it,
be it dirty, smelly, foul, nasty, detestable,
I will accept it without rejecting,
patiently, quietly embracing.*

*Let me be like the wind,
which accepts anything thrown into its path,
be it dirty, smelly, foul, nasty, detestable,
both good and bad,
I will accept it without rejecting,
patiently, quietly embracing.*

*Treat me like a foot rug, step on me,
with light or heavy steps:
depending on the individual,
I will bear your weight, quietly accepting.*

*Treat me like a lowly beggar, I am grateful to you,
for I have nothing and you have more
I will bend my body low,
quietly accepting whatever you give.*


*I'm just like the corpse or a dead snake,
nobody wants to touch or move,
I am detestable, repulsive, useless,
I will understand your hostility.*

*I am full of foul excrement,
there is nothing desirable about my body;
I am detestable, repulsive, unwholesome,
It is only natural that you repel me.*

*I'm a bull with horns broken off,
defenceless, harmless,
so should you attack me, it's only one-way;
I will accept your blows silently, calmly,
having no reason to fight back.*

*So this is how I have practised,
since the day I left home,
since I left behind
the hotbed of greed, ill-will and delusion.*

The Buddha praised him,

“Unresentful like the earth, firm like a gate post,
Equipoised and strong in vows,
Mind without impurities like a pool:
For such a one
the round of births exists no 



Not by mere eloquence or appearance
does one become beautiful,
if jealousy, selfishness and deceit are present.
But when these things are completely cut out,
that person is truly beautiful.

– *The Buddha*

As a destructive force,
there is nothing as strong as anger.
An instant of anger
can destroy all the positive actions
accumulated over thousands of kalpas
through the practice of generosity,
making offerings to the Buddhas,
keeping discipline and so on.
Indeed, there is no fault
as serious as anger.

To counteract the desire
to harm others,
resentment and anger,
it is essential to meditate on patience.
Patience is the best way
to avoid anger.

– *His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama*

Like a treasure found at home,
enriching me without fatigue,
enemies are helpers in the Bodhisattva life.
They should be a pleasure and a joy to me.

– *Shantideva* ལྷོ་གཤམ་པའི་

The way out of suffering
is not through aiming
to have the best of everything,
but through being able
to use wisely what we do have:
the kind of character we happen to have,
with all its virtues and faults,
and the situation we're in,
whether we are a monk, a nun
or a layperson, rich or poor,
employed or unemployed.

– *Ajahn Sumedho*

Genuine enlightenment is free of any attachments.
If you have attachments,
no matter how subtle or sublime they are,
you will continue to have problems
with the things you see, hear or think about.
Experiences with attachments
can only be false enlightenment.
Relying on your own distorted judgment
can lead to problems.

Therefore, it is necessary
to have a teacher

who can judge your experience and
determine if it is genuine or false.

– *Chan Master Sheng Yen*

Anger, cruel words and violent actions
are not our identity.

They are clouds on the pure nature of our mind,
and they can be removed or prevented
through the development of patience,
love, compassion and wisdom.

Patience is the ability
to remain calm and undisturbed
in the face of harm and difficulties,
giving us the space
to evaluate situations clearly and
make wise decisions.

Patience enables us
to live free from the pain of grudges,
resentment and the wish for revenge.
We will then be able
to communicate better with others,
fostering more harmonious relationships.

– *Ven. Thubten Chodron*



The Man With a Grudge

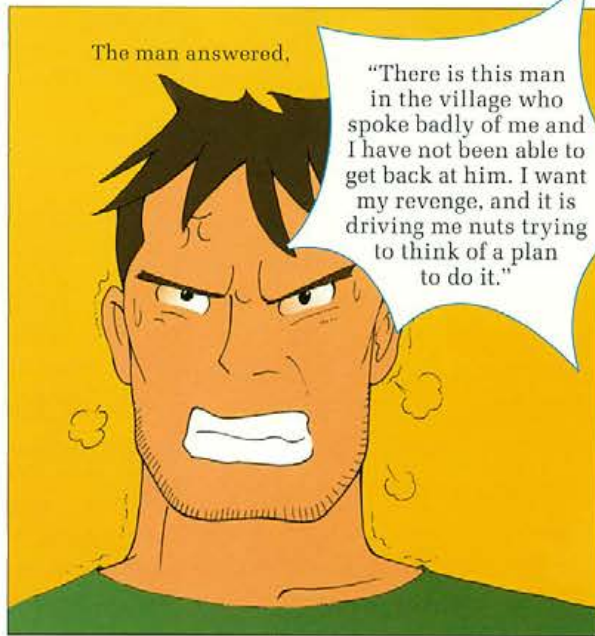
Once upon a time, a man was burning with anger at another man. Day and night, he seethed with rage. This left him petulant and constantly unhappy.

ILLUSTRATIONS | Bee Li



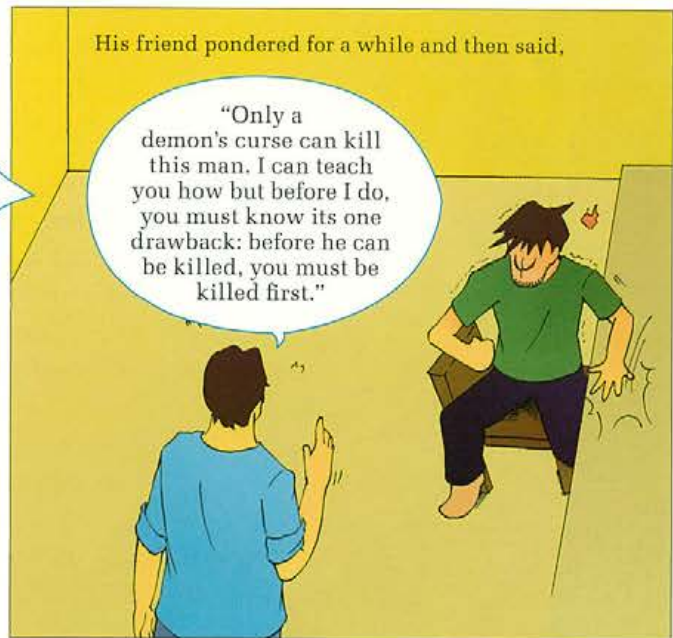
One day, a friend dropped by for a visit and seeing the state he was in, his friend asked,

"Why are you so agitated all the time? What is eating you?"



The man answered,

"There is this man in the village who spoke badly of me and I have not been able to get back at him. I want my revenge, and it is driving me nuts trying to think of a plan to do it."



His friend pondered for a while and then said,

"Only a demon's curse can kill this man. I can teach you how but before I do, you must know its one drawback: before he can be killed, you must be killed first."



When the man heard this, he was not disturbed or dissuaded at all. In fact, he was rather glad.

"Teach me the curse, I beg you. Even if it causes my death, at least it will kill him too."

People often behave like this. Because of their anger, they seek to inflict harm on others. Yet, before they can hurt anyone else, their anger causes them great harm and bitterness. Poisoned by their own anger, they then fall into hell, into the world of animals or the realm of hungry ghosts. There is really no difference between them and this angry fool.

~ Story adapted from
The One Hundred Parable Sutra

Subduing The Elephant Nālāgiri



Devadatta was one of the Buddha's disciples and also his cousin. Thus, he had expected to become the future leader among the monks. To his surprise, the Buddha treated him like everyone else. This made him so angry that he plotted to harm the Buddha. After several futile attempts to kill the Buddha, Devadatta obtained Ajātasattu's permission to use an elephant from the royal stalls at Rājagaha, known to be a man-killer, as a means to secure the Buddha's death. The name of the elephant was Nālāgiri. "The elephant knows nothing of the Buddha's virtues and will have no qualms in destroying him," thought Devadatta.

To put the elephant on a warpath and ensure that things would go as planned, Devadatta fed Nālāgiri some alcohol to make it drunk and crazy. Proclamation was then made, by the beating of drums, that the streets of the city should be cleared as Nālāgiri would be let loose upon them. When the Buddha was informed of this and warned against going into the city for alms, he ignored the warning, and went into Rājagaha with the monks from the 18 monasteries in the city.

On seeing the Buddha, Devadatta had the elephant driven onto the path where the Buddha was walking. At the sight of Nālāgiri, all the people in the city fled in terror. They scattered in panic in all directions, shouting, "Mad elephant! Run for your lives!" Yet, the Buddha kept on walking with his usual dignity and poise.

When Ananda saw the elephant charging towards the Buddha in a wild frenzy, he went, contrary to the Blessed One's orders, and stood in front of the Buddha to protect him. The Buddha had to utilise his supernatural power to move Ananda away. Meanwhile, a woman in her haste and fright to escape the fierce huge

creature dropped the child she was carrying at the Awakened One's feet.

As the elephant came close and was about to trample the baby, the Buddha radiated loving-kindness (*metta*) towards the elephant. So vast and deep was the Buddha's love that as the elephant reached the Buddha, it stopped, became quiet and stood subdued before the Enlightened One.

Then, the Buddha in his usual composure touched the animal's forehead stroking it gently, and spoke softly to it. Suffused in the Buddha's love, the ferocious elephant, to the people's amazement, respectfully bowed down on its knees before removing the dust at the Awakened One's feet with its trunk, and scattering it over its own head. The people further observed that the Buddha delivered a sermon on *Dhamma* to the elephant.

The docile elephant then retreated, with its head facing the Buddha, as far as to its stable, and remained fully tamed.

Usually elephants are subdued with whips and weapons, but the Blessed One tamed the elephant with the power of loving-kindness, transforming the animal's hostility into respect.

It is said that had the elephant not been a wild beast it would have become a *sotāpanna* (the first step to the Arahant hood) after having listened to the sermon. It is also said that nine hundred million living beings, who saw the miracle, realised the Truth.

The Bodhisattva, in a past life, was once riding an elephant when he saw a Pratyekabuddha. Intoxicated by his own glory, he made the elephant charge at the Pratyekabuddha. It was as a result of this action that the Buddha, in this birth, was charged at by Nālāgiri.



Showing Loving-kindness to Everyone

Loving-kindness or *Metta* means showing kindness to others so that they will be well and happy.

We show loving-kindness to others by wishing them to be well and happy. Generating loving-kindness also helps counteract anger and other negative mental states of mind.

One way to demonstrate loving-kindness is to help others so that they will be able to do things by themselves.

We wish ourselves to be well and happy so that we can do good and help others — and because we all want to be happy.

We should try to make our parents and teachers well and happy because they teach us so many interesting things that we do not know about.

We should try to make animals well and happy. Animals are just like human beings because they also suffer pain and sadness.

Before going to bed, we should generate loving-kindness for all beings. If we can always do this, we will be happy and peaceful.



The Tail

BY | Esther Thien

a word, saying that he could not speak without the king's permission.

When the king arrived, the man was still hesitant to disclose his diagnosis. Finally, the king demanded, "Tell us what is wrong. Whatever it is, you have to tell us!"

At last, the man replied, "Well, the eye will get better within a few days — that is no problem. The big problem is that the princess will grow a tail, which will become at least 54 feet long. It may start growing very soon. If she can detect the first moment it appears, I might be able to prevent it from growing."

Hearing this news, everyone was deeply concerned. And what did the princess do? She stayed in bed, day and night, directing all her attention to detecting when the tail might appear, of course. Thus, a few days later, her eye recovered.

Once upon a time, there was a princess who had a small sore in her eye that she felt was really bad. As she was the king's daughter, she was rather spoiled and would lament all the time about her eye problem.

Ironically, when the doctors wanted to treat her, she would always refuse medication. Instead, she would constantly rub the sore spot on her eye until it became worse.

One day, the king proclaimed a large reward for anyone who could cure his daughter. Some time later, a man who claimed to be a famous physician came to the palace. Actually he was not even a doctor. He declared that he could definitely heal the princess and was allowed into her chamber.

After he had examined her, he exclaimed, "Oh, I'm so sorry!"

"What is it?" The princess curiously asked.

The man replied, "There is nothing terribly wrong with your eye, but there is something else that is really serious."

The princess was alarmed and asked anxiously, "What on earth is so serious?"

He faltered and said, "It is really bad. I shouldn't tell you about it."

No matter how much she insisted, he refused to leak

This shows how we typically react. We zoom in on our little problem until it becomes the focal point around which everything else revolves. We have done this time after time, life after life, constantly thinking, "My wishes, my interests, my likes and dislikes come first!"

As long as we operate on this basis, we will remain in the status quo. Driven by impulses to seek the desirable and reject the undesirable, we will tread the paths of samsara without finding a way out. As long as attachment and aversion are motivators in our lives and impel us onward, we cannot rest.

Adapted from the story told in Daring Steps toward Fearlessness: The Three Vehicles of Buddhism, by Ringu Tulku Rinpoche

SEEN

Everything Has a Cause, Even Vengeful Violence

> **Hannibal Rising****Directed by:** Peter Webber **Starring:** Gaspard Ulliel, Gong Li

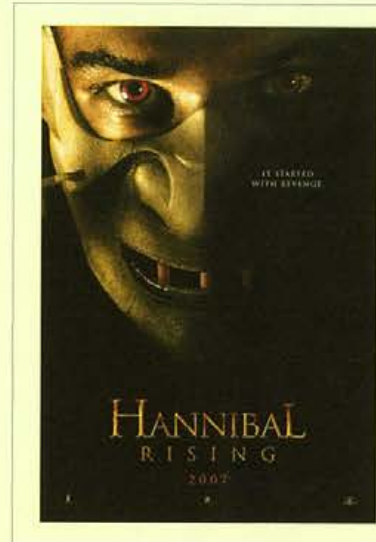
Hannibal Rising is an intriguing and realistic film of how an ordinary human being can devolve into a monster. For the uninitiated, Hannibal Lecter is the infamous serial-killer featured in films like *Red Dragon*, *Silence of the Lambs* and *Hannibal*. This movie, which serves as a prequel to the above, shows us why Hannibal chose to tread the path of a cannibal.

As a boy growing up in Nazi-overtaken Lithuania, Hannibal witnessed the violent deaths of his parents. To his utmost horror, his toddler sister was seized from him by desperate starving mercenaries. With no other sources of food in the midst of a bitter winter, she was killed, cooked and eaten by them. The experience then haunted him through recurring nightmares. This revelation in the film throws fresh light on the development of Hannibal the Cannibal. It turns out, Hannibal, who became a horrendous victimiser, was once a victim too, of war and cruel individuals.

This is perhaps the first important lesson of the story — that the birth of thieves and murderers is often conditioned by society. We forget that victimisers could be victims of abuse and trauma too. We forget to empathise with them, while we easily demonise them. This ironically further victimises the victims (and victimisers). Sympathy for the “devil” is not always evil, while a lack of sympathy can be more so!

As Hannibal grew up into a young man, he coolly plotted his revenge against those who murdered his sister. Driven by seething anger at their lack of repentance, he exacted horrific vengeance — by devouring part of their flesh. That was how his monstrous appetite developed — out of a twisted sense of justice.

In the *Lankavatara Sutra*, the Buddha taught — “Mahamati [Bodhisattva], I see that living beings are in the transmigration of the six paths, being together in births and deaths, they give birth to and foster one another, and cyclically become fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters of one another; They may be men or women, may be the direct line of descent, may be cousins, affinities, uncles, aunts, sons, daughters, grandsons, and other various relatives of one another; They may also be born in other paths (of animal, ghost, god, and so on), whether virtuous or evil, they frequently become the relatives of one another.” Due to this reason, all meats eaten by living beings are of their own relatives. That’s why, the virtue of vegetarianism (and veganism) is expounded as not only worthy but also important in Mahayana Buddhism.



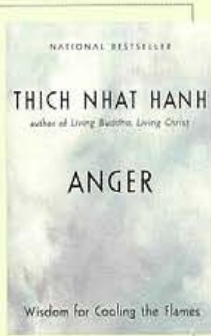
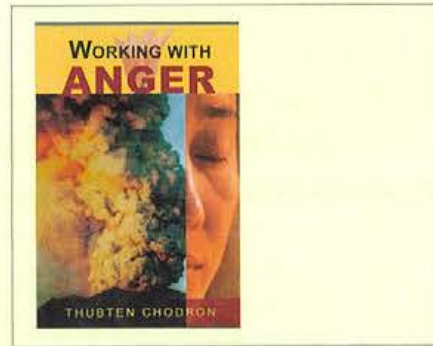
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Learn Practical Strategies On Overcoming Anger, Resentment and Envy.

> Working With Anger

By Thubten Chodron

Are you having trouble sleeping? Do you have a short fuse? Read this genuinely helpful guide for ways to skilfully transform your anger and bring harmony to yourself and your relationships. Published by Snow Lion, Ven. Thubten Chodron offers insights to how we can achieve this through a variety of Buddhist methods and live with greater tolerance, love and forgiveness. Get it from Awareness Place. Priced at S\$26.90.



> Anger, Wisdom for Cooling the Flames

By Thich Nhat Hanh

If you still need more antidotes to curb anger after reading this magazine, try this book. Written in simple and clear language, it explains how, by embracing anger with mindfulness and compassionate communication, we can evict the demon of anger from our minds and hearts to become a source of joy and comfort to all we encounter. Pay \$23.10 for the book at Awareness Place.

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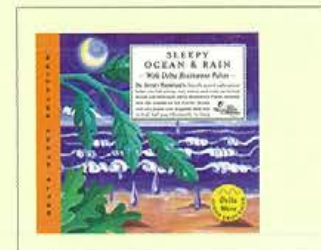


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The Merits of Producing Buddhist Teachings and Buddha Images

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 yakas, 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.

କାହିଁକି ଯାହା ଗୁଣାଏ
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Issue 11

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

Arhant: Foe or Enemy Destroyer. One who has destroyed the enemy of dualistic ego-grasping/clinging, and thus accomplished liberation of cyclic existence. There are three types of Arhats: Shravaka, Pratyekabuddha, Buddha.

Aversion: Exaggerated wanting to be separated from someone or something.

Bodhicitta: The aspiration to help all beings attain True Happiness by becoming Buddhas, by being Bodhisattvas.

Bodhisattva: One who aspires to save all beings from suffering, while saving oneself.

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

Buddha-Dharma: Buddhists do not call the teachings of the Buddha, which they follow, Buddhism; they call them Buddha-Dharma, the Dharma of the Buddhas.

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

Chenrezig: See 'Guanyin'.

Circumambulate: Act of going round an object of veneration (stupa, Bodhi tree, Buddha image) meditatively three times or more in a clockwise direction as a gesture of respect.

Compassion: The quality that makes us aspire to help others with no selfish intention; the ending of selfishness.

Defilements: Our negative qualities - chiefly Greed (Craving), Hatred (Aversion) and Ignorance (Delusion).

Delusion: The quality of lacking Wisdom, not knowing the reality of all things. Same as 'ignorance'.

Dharma: An aspect of the Triple Gem - the teachings of the Buddha or the general teachings of Buddhism. 'Dhamma' in Pali language.

Enlightenment: The realisation of the reality of all things as they truly are. True Happiness is the result.

Four Noble Truths: 1. Life is full of dissatisfactory experiences - ageing, sickness, separation, death etc 2. Causes of dissatisfactory experiences - craving, aversion and ignorance 3. Life can be without dissatisfaction - by attaining Enlightenment or Nirvana 4. The path leading to the end of dissatisfactions - The Noble Eightfold path.

Guanyin: Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva; the Bodhisattva who personifies the perfect Compassion of all Buddhas, who hears and heeds the cries of the world. Also known as Chenrezig in Vajrayana tradition.

Impermanence: All compounded things are constantly changing, as a result or effect of changing causes and conditions. All living and non-living elements are thus subject to decay and renewal.

Karma: The moral law of cause and effect which states that what we experience is the

result of what we had done, that what we do will result in what we will experience.

Lama: Spiritual teacher. An honorary title in Tibetan Buddhism given to one who has completed particular scholastic and yogic training. It is possible to renounce one's monkhood without renouncing one's lama status, for the purposes of marriage.

Loving-kindness: The quality which makes us wish for the happiness and well-being of others. 'Metta' in Pali language.

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

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

Meditation: A practice to habituate ourselves to positive and realistic states of mind.

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

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

Nirvana: Nirvana is a Sanskrit term that is interpreted in various ways: 1)cessation, or extinction, referring to the elimination of the afflictions at the time of enlightenment, 2) freedom from desire; and 3) no longer either coming into being or ceasing to be. 'Nibbana' in Pali language.

Noble Eightfold Path: A systematic and complete formula to rid dissatisfaction and attain true happiness and peace by following Perfect Speech, Perfect Action, Perfect Livelihood, Perfect Effort, Perfect Mindfulness, Perfect Meditation, Perfect Understanding, Perfect Thought (pls read Be A Lamp Upon Yourself published by KMSPKS for detailed info).

Novitiate: the period that a novice or prospective member of a religious order who has not yet been admitted to vows has to undergo training in order to be found eligible or qualified for admission.

Paramita/Perfection: Refers to the six practices, the perfection of which ferries one beyond the sea of suffering and mortality to Nirvana.

Repentance: The recognition of misgivings and the resolution to rectify and never repeat them.

Pratyekabuddha: Solitary Realiser. Follower of the Theravada tradition, concentrating on basic Buddhist teachings like the 12 links of Interdependent Origination, Four Noble Truths etc. to attain liberation.

Pureland: A world without defilements created by a Buddha out of Compassion, for sentient beings to seek birth in, to perfect the practice of the Dharma. The best known being Sukhavati Pureland created by Amitabha Buddha.

Rebirth: The continual cycle of birth and death.

Samsara: This world of rebirth and suffering. Also known as Saha world

Sangha: An aspect of the Triple Gem - the holy community of monks and nuns.

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

Suffering: The physical and mental feeling of dissatisfaction.

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

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

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

Vesak Day: Wesak in Pali, it commemorates the Birth, Enlightenment and Nirvana of Shakyamuni Buddha.

Zen: A school of Buddhism. Also known as Chan.

18~19/5 (Sun) 5pm – (Mon) 8am
3-Steps-1-Bow

Free tickets for 3-Steps-1-Bow are available on **11 May (Sun)**, 9am at Pagoda of 10,000 Buddhas (1st Floor). Tickets are on a first-come-first-served basis. Limited to 2 tickets per person. The ceremony is open to all without tickets after 10.30pm on 18 May 2008 until 8am on 19 May 2008. The ceremony takes about 2½ hours to complete.

NOTICE

- As there is limited parking space in the monastery, devotees are encouraged to use public transport. Any inconvenience caused is highly regretted.
- If first aid is required, please approach the Red Cross staff stationed at the Drum Tower for assistance.
- For any lost or found items, please report them to the emcee stationed behind the Hall of Great Compassion.
- Photocopying and sale of 3-Steps-1-Bow tickets are strictly prohibited.
- Help us cut down garbage & save the earth! – Bring your own reusable bags, food containers & cutlery.
- Participants queuing for the 3-Steps-1-Bow tickets, please note that over night stay in KMSPKS is not allowed.

光明山善觉禅寺 Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery 88 Bright Hill Road Singapore 574117

10/5 (Sat) 7.30pm
Candle Light Offering
Hall of Great Compassion

17/5 (Sat) 7.30pm
Mandarin Dharma Talk by Ven. Chang Qing
Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall, 4th Level

18~19/5
• **18/5 (Sun) 5pm – 19/5 (Mon) 8am**
3-Steps-1-Bow
Hall of Great Strength

• **18/5 (Sun) 6.30pm – 19/5 (Mon) 5pm**
Bathing of Prince Siddhartha
Hall of Great Strength & Hall of Great Compassion

• **18/5 (Sun) 5pm – 19/5 (Mon) 3pm**
Recycling Jumble Sales
Along the walkway & Behind front office

• **18/5 (Sun) 4pm – 19/5 (Mon) 5pm**
Gratitude to Earth & Earthlings
Exhibition on Environmentalism & Vegetarianism
Co-organised with Vegetarian Society (Singapore)
Pagoda of 10,000 Buddhas, 1st Level

18~19/5
• **18/5 (Sun) 5pm – 19/5 (Mon) 5pm**
y. Buddhism 2552: Introducing Buddhism to Youths
Beside Hall of Great Compassion

• **18/5 (Sun) 6pm – 19/5 (Mon) 2am**
19/5 (Mon) 9am – 3pm
Vegetarian Food Fair
Along the walkway

• **18/5 (Sun) 2pm – 19/5 (Mon) 5pm**
Awareness Place :
Vesak Day Bazaar Sales (Up to 70% Discount)
Behind Hall of Great Strength

19/5 (Mon)
• **10am – 5pm**
Gratitude to Parents : Showing our Appreciation
Family & Children Corner, Games stall
Pagoda of 10,000 Buddhas, 2nd & 4th Level

• **9am – 12noon**
Vipassana Appreciation Corner
Dharma Hall, 1st Level

24/5 (Sat) 9am – 3pm
Blood Donation Drive
Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall, 1st Level

31/5 (Sat) & 1/6 (Sun) 7.30pm – 9pm
Gratitude Concert 2008 Tickets at \$10 each
Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall, 4th Level
(For more information, pls refer to Pg 39)

For more information, please call **6849 5300** or visit **www.kmspks.org**

Yoga Fasting Retreat

Date : 14 – 20 Jul 08
Fee : \$699.00
Venue : Kota Rainforest Resort (Johor)
Facilitator : Mr Lim Heng Moh, Jason
Details : Closing date for registration 15 Jun 08. For more information, please call 6849 5317 or e-mail pualk@tenderlovingcare.sg

Y_Cultivation:

Walking the Noble 8 Fold Path in Everyday Life
Date/Time : 7 – 28 Jun 08, Sat, 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Fee : \$18 (4 weeks)

Who is Amitabha – Understanding the Pureland Teaching
Date/Time : 5 Jul – 23 Aug 08, Sat, 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Fee : \$35 (8 weeks)
Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre, Bras Basah Complex #03-39
Details : Call 6849 5345 or 9004 8440 (Billy) or ycultivation@kmspks.org to register or enquire.

Relaxation Meditation Course

Date/Time : 27 May – 15 Jul, Tue, 8pm – 9.30pm
Fee : \$10
Venue : 4th floor, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall
Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300

PKS English Dharma Class

Year 1 Module 2 (10 sessions)
Date/Time : 1 Jun – 3 Aug, Sun, 2pm – 3.30pm
Fee : \$30
Venue : KMSPKS Monastery, Dharma Hall

Year 2 Module 2 (10 sessions)
Date/Time : 29 May – 31 Jul, Thur, 7.30pm – 9pm
Fee : \$30
Venue : 1st floor, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall
Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300

Taiji (Yang Style) – Beginners

Date/Time : 6 Apr – 25 May 08, Sun, 9.30am – 11am (FULL)
13 Jun – 1 Aug 08, Fri, 7.30pm – 9pm (NEW!)
Fee : \$150 (8 lessons)

Taiji (Yang Style) – Intermediate

Date/Time : 15 Jun – 17 Aug 08, Sun, 9.30am – 11.00am
Fee : \$150 (10 lessons)
Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre, Bras Basah Complex #03-39
Details : Conducted by Ms. Jasmine Koh, accredited coach with SSC. Please call 6336 5067, visit www.awareness-place.com, or email semd@kmspks.org to register or enquire.

Pointing To The Nature of Our Mind

Date/Time : 7 Jun – 8 Jun 08, Sat/Sun, 9.30am – 5pm
Fee : \$60 (2 Days)
Conductor : Professor Cheng Chen Huang

Dances With Vegetables

Date/Time : 4 & 11 May or 18 & 25 May 08, Sun, 2pm – 4.30pm
Fee : \$20 (2 lessons)
Conductor : Mr. Wong Kew Yew

Tempeh – Excellence Meat Replacement

Date/Time : 6 July 08, Sun, 2pm – 4.30pm
Fee : \$15
Conductor : Mr. Oh Chong Fah

Morning Yoga

Date/Time : Jul – Oct 08, Sat, 9.30am – 11am
Fee : \$160 (10 lessons)

Yoga for General

Date/Time : Jul – Sep 08, Mon, 7.30pm – 9pm
Fee : \$160 (10 lessons)
Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre, Bras Basah Complex #03-39
Details : Please visit www.awarenessplace.com, email semd@kmspks.org or call 6336 5067 to register or enquire.