

[wén]
Learning



**生命的脚步一刻不停留，
活着就要学习，学习不是为了活着。**

生命的意义在于不断学习、不断充实完善自己，求取能使人心境平静，幸福安康的窍门与精神价值观。每个人都想得到快乐，没有人会愿意受苦。

佛陀在经典里讲了听闻佛法可获得三十二种的功德和利益。佛教教义中的智慧与所强调的正念修行和慈悲心的培养，能使人的心胸开阔并开发我们的智慧。科学家证实了若能将佛法学以致用，实践在生活当中，人的幸福安康便会获得极大的效益。

菩萨为成就佛道，应当学一切法，得一切智慧。

欲知更多详情，请浏览<http://ch.kmspks.org/events/learning-dharma>

***Life Doesn't Stand Still For Even A Moment;
Live to Learn, Not Learn to Live***

Life is all about lifelong learning. It's about learning the skills, knowledge, values and mindset to happiness, well-being and inner peace. Everyone wants to be happy. Nobody wants to suffer.

The Buddha had expounded on numerous texts of the 32 kinds of benefits and merit of listening to teachings on wisdom, compassion and on the true nature of life.

These teachings, or what Buddhists called the Buddha-Dharma, help open one's heart and mind.

Studies have proven that Buddhist practices bring immense benefits to a person's well-being.

To attain complete awakening, bodhisattvas, or noble beings who strive for Buddhahood in order to be of utmost benefit to all, aspire to learn all Buddha-Dharma and cultivate all wisdom.

Visit <http://kmspks.org/events/learning-dharma> for more information.

光明山普觉禅寺与您分享此法讯

This Dharma message is brought to you by

Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery
88 Bright Hill Road Singapore • 6849 5300 • kmspks.org

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修学佛法的功德与利益
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more on how Buddhists learn



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Abbot's Message

Gratitude is the essence of all practices and the foundation of merits and all that one has. I realise how important this is. I remember how in my early days, someone once told me that I have to say whatever food I have received is delicious or I will not be able to have any food in the future. It's true because a lay person who offers food from a genuine sincere heart may be discouraged from making such an offering in the future if the recipient remarked that the food is not good.

But if you hold gratitude in your heart, even if the food is not tasty, you will still find it good out of gratefulness. Therefore, always appreciate the good that others do. Many people these days have forgotten about this important quality. From the moment we wake up, we take many things for granted, such as the fresh air, the warm sunlight, clean refreshing water. We take them for granted, thinking that we deserve them. But in actuality, we are able to enjoy these things due to our good karma.

Gratitude also allows one to attract more happiness. Therefore if you want to be happy, always cultivate gratitude. It will change your life. I had a really traumatic time after my Master, Ven Hong Choon passed away. Those four years were my toughest period. But looking back now, I realise those years trained my resilience and enabled me to deal with any difficulties in managing a monastery and running a Buddhist college. I have to really thank those who gave me such a tough time then. So we should thank those who give us troubles and obstacles. When we overcome them, we will be wiser and stronger. It is not such a bad thing after all. It all depends on your mindset and your mental attitude when facing them. We have IQ and EQ. I think AQ (Adversity Quotient) is also important in this modern age. People who are able to turn unhappiness or unhappy events into something positive will be successful people in life.

I know of an old lady who is very rich. When her husband passed away, her children started fighting over their father's property and even sued her. Her family broke up because of such property and money tussles. But this lady, being a strong Buddhist, took it calmly. So this is life. It is full of challenges, ups and downs. We have to build up our inner qualities so that we can face and overcome whatever challenges that come our way. One of these qualities is gratitude. It is the source of all good things. Repaying the kindness of all beings, who have been our mothers in innumerable lives, by cultivating the enlightenment mind is greatly emphasised in the Buddhist practice.

As is quoted in the Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Sutra, "Without sentient beings, no bodhisattvas could achieve supreme, perfect Enlightenment."

This teaching was given to all staff of Dharma Propagation Division staff during its bi-weekly practice on 24 May 2012.

Transforming the World through Buddhist Values

Singapore recently saw a string of high profile scandals involving senior officials and a law professor separately. News of an accountant who did not claim her mother's body when the senior died in a nursing home also made the headlines of the local papers.

Perhaps a wiser course of action would have been taken had the parties involved been deeply ingrained with a strong bedrock of values like gratitude (pg 34), loving-kindness, compassion (pg 63, back cover) and self-awareness in their psyche? For they would have realised that just as they do not want to suffer, neither do others. And hence they might think twice before carrying out any action that will inevitably hurt others.

To have peace in the world, we have to start with ourselves (pg 41). We have to develop our minds and hearts, filling them with wholesome qualities such as love and compassion for all (pg 37, 38) To achieve this transformation, we have to meditate. Just as Dr Art-Ong had realised through his own meditation, "Happiness and peace come through giving. The more we give and are of service to others, the more we receive (pg 47, 57)."

To guide children, we can tell them wisdom tales imparting good values (pg 58, 60) or watch positive, inspiring films with them (pg 59); we can also teach them the simple meditation of sending friendly wishes (pg 39) and the art of mindful questioning – "Is this good for me?", "Is it good for everybody?"

But most importantly, parents have to act as role models to exemplify these values in their day-to-day conduct (pg 36, 62). So learn to face everything with a smile, think positively and say "thank you" even when you face an unfavourable situation (pg 55), because every situation is a chance for us to learn and grow to become stronger and better beings and to demonstrate to our children how to cope with the stresses in life.

After we have done our best to inculcate the values in our children, we let go and give them the space to learn from their own experience (pg 50).

Through such an education of the mind, children will become more aware, caring, joyful and loving individuals who in turn will change our world as they become masters of the future.



Yours in the Dharma,
Sister Esther Thien



*All the happiness in the world
comes from altruism
~ Shantideva*

*When we are filled with love,
do not harm other beings,
and strive to benefit others,
joy is the natural reward.
~ Dr Lai Chiu Nan*



How can I learn to let go and watch my children make mistakes?

Q: How can I learn to let go and watch my children make mistakes? I want to get out of this suffering of worrying and nagging at them. — Concerned Mum

A: Good for you! When you worry and nag at your kids, you just create a lot of disturbances in your relationship with them. The kids won't want to be around you because every time they are around you, you're nagging at them, or worrying about them. So how do you let your kids make their own mistakes?

You realise that your job as a parent is to educate your children, teaching them good ethical values.

By education, I mean teaching them how to be a good human being, how to be kind etc, and not just on subjects like Maths or English. You teach them how to deal with their frustration in situations where they cannot get what they want. That's a very important life skill that parents need to teach their kids, because kids are going to experience that at some point in their lives.

So you teach them these skills and then you have to let go. You have to let them learn through their own experience. If we all look at our own lives, we can all see that sometimes we have to make mistakes in order to learn some very important lessons. Look at your own life experience, isn't that true? Sometimes you had to do really stupid things to learn something very important. Maybe others tried very hard beforehand to tell you that it was a stupid thing to do but you couldn't understand it. They talked until they were blue in the face, but you didn't listen.

We all had to go through such experience.

Only with that experience did we realise that it was a mistake. As a parent, you may want to protect your children from the suffering of making mistakes but you can't. That's not your job. At some point, or at many different points as your children grow up, you have to let them make their own decisions and, through making mistakes, learn that they have to be responsible for their actions.

It is very important that children learn that they are responsible for their actions, that if they do certain things, certain results are going to come – not only karmic results in future lives but results even in this lifetime.

Sometimes your kids just have to make mistakes no matter what you do. You've given them the tools, so it's better sometimes that you just sit back and let them try and develop their own wisdom. Maybe they'll do it well. Maybe they'll make a mistake, but that's the way they'll learn.

Do you still remember how you were as a teenager or young adult? We thought and behaved like we knew everything. When our parents gave us advice, we thought, "Why are they giving me this piece of advice, when they're not very smart themselves?"

But as we grow older and make mistakes, sometimes we see the wisdom in our parents' advice. But at that time we couldn't see it. The only way we learn is by making mistakes. Remember the times when you stopped worrying and nagging at your kids, and they went out and did something very well. You were surprised then how much you could trust your kids. So give your kids some credit and stop worrying about them. Learn to trust them. Have faith in their own wisdom that even if they make a mistake, they'll learn and it will be good in the end. Also they may not necessarily make a mistake. They may do something very wise. So in fact sometimes your advice may not be the best thing for them. You have to give them that kind of space. ☺

— Ven Thubten Chodron
www.thubtenchodron.org
www.sravasti.org

More Thought-Provoking Films at THIS Buddhist Film Festival

Singapore – If you have enjoyed the films of the previous Buddhist Film Festivals, watch out for *THIS Buddhist Film Festival* this September. With a bigger and more exciting movie line-up at Shaw theatres Lido, be ready to open your mind with 16 thought-provoking films that reflect the cultural, social and religious aspects of Buddhism. Organised by Dharma in Action Limited, the films were carefully selected from 11 countries, including China, France, Indonesia, Japan, Sweden, Thailand and the US. All films will be screening for the first time in Singapore.



Sample *The Outrage (U Mong Pa Meung)*, a captivating Thai adaptation of *Rashomon*, the opening film of the festival with its intriguing tale of truth and morality. The story, told through different perspectives by four characters, possibly with their own respective agendas, will capture the audience's attention with its compelling script, star-studded cast and fight scenes choreographed by Ong-Bak stunt master Panna Rittikrai. The film won the Best Costume Design and Best Special Effects at the *21st Thailand National Film Awards 2011*, and Best Art Direction and Best Supporting Actress at the *20th Bangkok Critics Assembly Awards 2012*. Get your tickets from www.sistic.com.sg.



Scan to watch trailers or visit thisfilmfest.com

July: A Month of Hectic Buddhist Events at KMSPKS

Singapore – July was a busy month for Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery (KMSPKS). Besides being a Satellite Partner of *Hair For Hope 2012* organised by the Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF), KMSPKS also held a Buddhist College of Singapore Graduation Ceremony for the second cohort of Chinese and English Bachelor of Arts Degree graduates and organised the *4th Buddhism and Science Symposium*. The monastery also invited Google Pioneer and "Jolly good fellow" Chade-Meng Tan to talk about compassionate leadership for unusual business success.



More than 200 people turned up at KMSPKS on 1 July to have their locks shorn off in support of children with cancer. They were mostly volunteers, staff and devotees of the monastery. The oldest 'shavee' was a 74-year-old senior, and the youngest was an exuberant seven-year-old boy. Amongst them were also a family of three and a three-generation family. More than S\$130,000 was raised through KMSPKS, far exceeding its target of \$84,000 set for this campaign. The participants were joyous as they felt that they were contributing to a meaningful cause. Said one participant, 15-year old Seah Min Hui: "I was nervous and scared. But I had no regrets shaving my hair

off at this event. Although I don't have relatives or friends who are stricken with cancer, I do know that nobody likes to be alone. I would like to thank all those who supported me, one way or another."

The ambience at the Buddhist College of Singapore Graduation Ceremony was more quietly dignified. Graced by Ven Phrakhrupalad Suvathanavachirakhun, Vice Rector for Foreign Affairs from Thailand's Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University and Professor Tilakasiri Ramya Gamini Dela Bandara, Director, Centre for Distance and Continuing Education of University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, the ceremony was attended by more than 500 local and overseas guests. 21 monastic graduates were conferred Bachelor of Arts degrees in Buddhist Studies on 14 July after five years of study. The English degree is jointly awarded by the University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka, and the Chinese degree, by the Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University in Thailand. Many graduates left Singapore with fond memories of the college. "We learned not only knowledge from books and of particular subjects, but most importantly, we learned how to develop our spiritual qualities and how to handle

challenges and face difficulties in our lives,” said Ven Ming Shi.

In the *4th Buddhism and Science Symposium*, three speakers - Dr Art-Ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, Ven Youwei and His Eminence Khamtrul Rinpoche - presented their views on a value-based education for social change. According to Dr Art-Ong Jumsai, it is important to bring peace to this world, as it is our only home. In order to do that, we have to cultivate a beautiful mind that is full of compassion and love. “For peace to remain, we have to get rid of the ‘I’ and the ‘want’,” said Dr Art-Ong Jumsai. When there is less want, there is less unhappiness. Therefore, learn to see the good in everything and to have positive thoughts. Anger, lust, envy, greed, pride, hatred, attachment, fear and anxiety are the enemies of man as they take away peace from one’s mind. To overcome them, meditate actively, continued Dr Art-Ong Jumsai. “Research has shown that meditation not only significantly reduced stress, worry, fear, anxiety and all other negative emotions, it also improved memory and increased work efficiency, self-confidence and the ability to get along with others.” Added Ven Youwei, “Education must be directed not merely towards developing social and commercial skills, but towards nurturing in the students the seeds of spiritual nobility and stability.” (Read page 41 for Khamtrul Rinpoche’s presentation.)

Metta Goes Round the World

Singapore – To heal and bring love and peace to the world, Ven Mahinda, founder and Spiritual Director of Aloka Foundation initiated



Metta Round the World, an all-year-long initiative to unite all peace-loving people worldwide to connect with one heart, one mind in a short 15-minute meditation or prayer for harmony, stability and world peace. Through this, it aims to harness the collective energy of *Metta* (loving-kindness or compassionate love) to heal the negativity and suffering in the world. Join KMSPKS on 16 and 30 September as we come together with one heart and mind to send waves of loving-kindness to heal the world. Visit youth.kmspks.org or mrtwsg.com for more information. ☺

Chade-Meng Tan is a Google pioneer, an award-winning engineer and a New York Times best-selling author of “Search Inside Yourself”. Popularly known as Google’s “Jolly good fellow”, he gave an inspiring talk that many found easy-to-understand, and which many professionals can relate to in their corporate environment. More than 400 people attended his talks. There were even some who came from across the causeway just to listen to his talks. He also led the audience that night in a simple empathy meditation. ☺



Scan to watch Chade-Meng Tan's talk

More than 47,000 Celebrated 2012 Vesak with Gratitude and Joy



Singapore – Just like previous years, Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery was jam-packed with people beginning

on Vesak Eve. More than 47,000 visited the monastery over the two days. 2,500 people registered and hung Vesak auspicious lanterns, while 9,900 people came to do the 3 Step, 1 Bow circumambulation. For many of those who came, the 3 Steps, 1 Bow circumambulation and bathing of Prince Siddhartha’s statue are a must-do yearly affair as a means of purification. Others came to do light offering and aspiration-making, or just to partake in the vegetarian food fiesta. Families with young children also had a fun time at the Family Entertainment Corner. They enjoyed henna and face painting, viewed a Bodhisattva exhibition, received goodies and watched various performances of Buddhist hymns, skits, dance and drum, balloon sculpturing, magic and comedies. Families also participated in hands-on activities creating lovely gratitude stones and mantra beads. For Ms Lea Eng, this year’s celebration was one of the best she had participated in as the monastery’s ‘live’ updates via Facebook and its interesting activities helped to hype up this special day. ☺

Sending Friendly Wishes

By Susan Kaiser Greenland, author of *The Mindful Child*, and Founder of the Inner Kids Foundation which developed the Inner Kids mindful awareness programme for children, teens and families.

(www.susankaisergreenland.com)

My favourite classical practices cultivate goodwill, and they were some of the first that I shared with my own children when they were little kids. There are opportunities for friendly wishes hidden in every aspect of life, and they are limited only by your imagination. To help get you started, here are some tips:

- Ask your children to send friendly wishes to themselves, imagining that they are happy and having fun, that they're healthy, and that they're safe with their family and friends.
- Next, suggest they choose a friend or family member, hopefully someone in the room with them, and silently send friendly wishes specifically tailored for that person. For example: 'Daddy, I want you to be happy; I hope all your dreams come true; I want you to be healthy and strong; I want you to feel lots of love in your life; I want you to get home from work early so you can play with me; I hope you feel peaceful and calm; I want you to be safe always.'
- After sending friendly wishes to someone they know in the room with them, suggest they send friendly wishes to people who aren't in the room, starting with their family and friends, then moving to people they've met, those they haven't met yet but would like to meet, and finally all living things in the whole wide world. The children might imagine themselves saying to these people, places and living things: 'I hope you're happy; I hope that you're healthy and have a lot of fun, that you're safe and never get hurt, and that you live in peace with people you love.'
- Older children and teens can send friendly wishes to people who annoy them or who are having a difficult time. I steer clear of such practices with young children, though.
- With young children, I close the circle of friendly wishes with the children themselves, by asking the children to internalise them again and say to themselves silently, 'May I be happy; May I be healthy and strong; May I be cosy, safe, and living in peace with my family, my friends, my pets and all those I love.'

As you tenderly nurture your children with wholesome values and qualities, complement that with these wholesome recipes that will raise their energy and give healthful benefits.

Hi-Calcium Sandwich 高钙三明治



Ingredients:

4 slices wholemeal bread, 3 tbsp black sesame powder, 4 tbsp olive oil (first cold press), 1 tbsp Agave nectar, ¼ tsp rock salt, a few pieces of fresh basil leaves, a few slices of tomatoes.

Method:

Mix sesame powder, olive oil, Agave nectar and salt evenly, then spread on bread. Sandwich basil and tomato in between and serve immediately.

Servings: 2.

用料:

全麦面包4片、黑芝麻粉3汤匙、橄榄油4汤匙、糖浆1汤匙、岩盐¼茶匙、九层塔数片、番茄数片

做法:

把黑芝麻粉、橄榄油、糖浆和岩盐依序均匀混合、搅拌成面包酱，涂在面包。夹上九层塔和番茄即可食用。

2人份。

Photo and recipes provided by Mr Wong Kew Yew. Mr Wong conducts cooking class at Awareness Place Well-Being Centre. For more details, please refer to the Calendar of Events on the inside back cover.

Almond Mayonnaise 杏仁美乃滋



Ingredients:

1 cup raw almond (soak in water for 2 hrs and peel skin), ½ cup water, 4 tbsp lemon juice, 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, 3 tbsp miso, 4 tsp raw sugar, 1 tsp dried oregano

Method:

1. Soak almonds for 2 hrs and peel skin.
2. Combine all ingredients, except olive oil, in blender and blend until all ingredients are ground and thoroughly mixed.
3. While blending, slowly drizzle in the olive oil as the mixture thickens.
4. Serve with salad.

Types of veggies for salad:

Green leafy veggies, cabbages, carrot, radish, beet root, turnip, tomato, water chestnut, capsicum, cucumber, bitter melon, bean sprouts, lotus root, veggie sprout, chayote, etc.

用料:

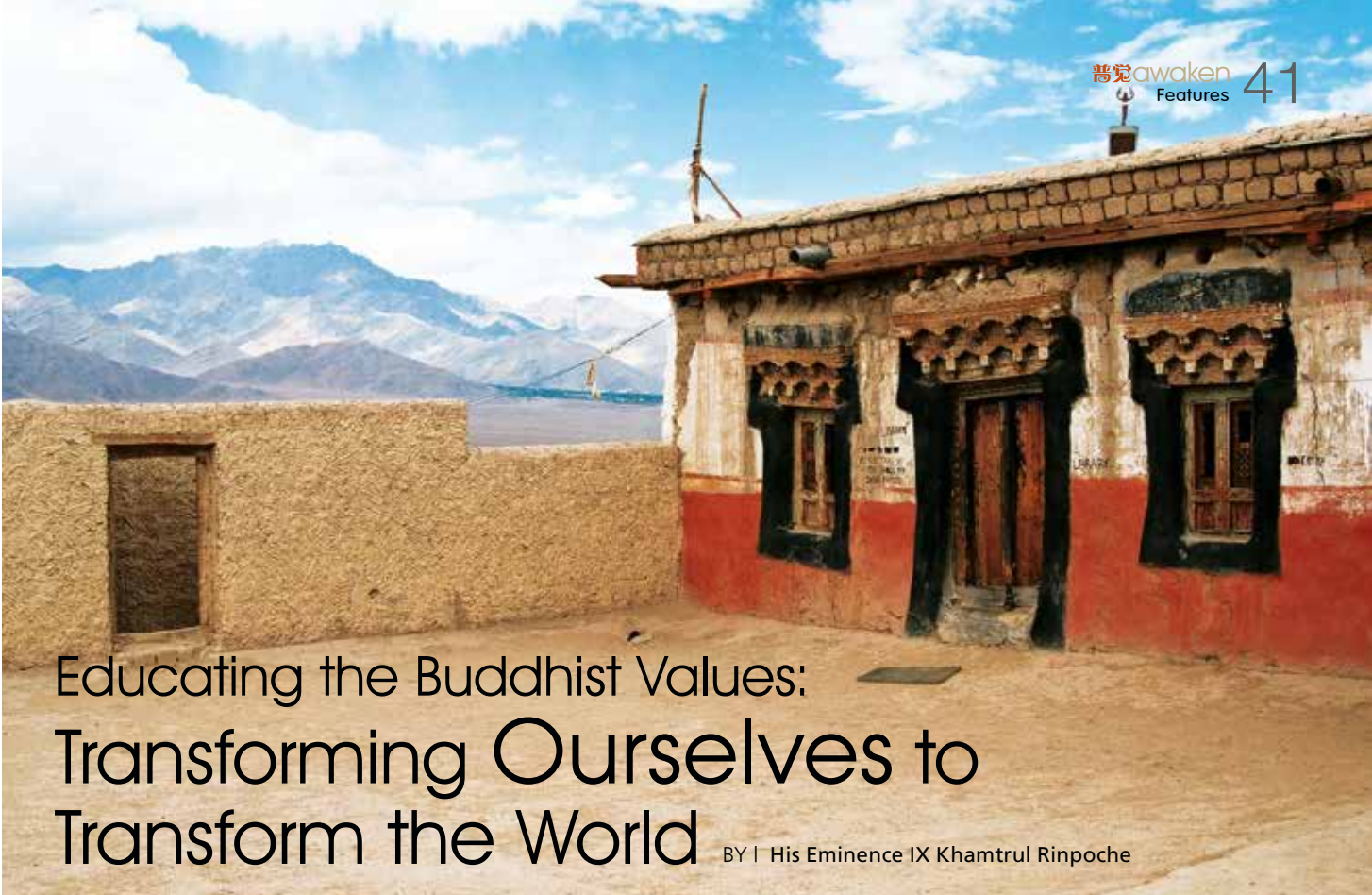
生杏仁1杯、水½杯、柠檬汁4汤匙、橄榄油4汤匙、白味噌3汤匙、蔗糖3汤匙、干牛至叶1茶匙

做法:

1. 把杏仁泡在水里两小时，去皮。
2. 除了橄榄油之外，结合所有的用料倒入搅拌机搅拌。搅脆及均匀混合。
3. 搅拌的同时，缓慢地将橄榄油倒进，搅拌成糊状即可。

制作沙拉的蔬菜:

绿色蔬菜、包菜、胡萝卜、白萝卜、甜菜根、茼蒿、番茄、马蹄、灯笼椒、黄瓜、苦瓜、豆芽、莲藕、菜苗、佛手瓜等等



Educating the Buddhist Values: Transforming Ourselves to Transform the World

BY | His Eminence IX Khamtrul Rinpoche

Why Buddhist Values Education?

Buddhist teachings form a part of the curriculum of many universities around the world and many find certain aspects of Buddhist teachings, such as metaphysics, mindfulness and self-analysis, very compatible with modern neuroscience and psychological studies. We can relate Buddhism and education from that point of view, but today I would like to talk about the correlation between Buddhist teachings and what is termed by educationalists as values education, moral education, civic education, Emotional Quotient (EQ), etc. in different parts of the world.

The simplest idea of values education is about inculcating a set of beliefs and attitudes to mould a person's character and personality, so that these beliefs will influence behaviour and actions in a positive manner and direction, not only for the individual, but also for the society at large.

Values education is taught in various countries. From a Buddhist point of view, however, many of the value systems that are taught somehow often place excessive emphasis on individual rights. For example, the values taught in certain countries do not at all talk of the rights of *all* beings, such

as animals, but emphasise individual rights; and also there is a tendency to de-emphasise social responsibility resulting in psychological individualism.

Character development in those countries highlights individual rights so prominently that tension arises between social responsibility and personal rights; it can be said that social responsibility has somehow become muted.

As psychological individualism or the notion of 'I' develops, it militates against altruism, against community consciousness and against social responsibility. As a consequence, trust, commitment and altruism become undermined. If we don't respect all life equally and allow cruelty towards animals, it will lead to the formation of a habitual pattern of viciousness that will sooner or later be exhibited towards fellow human beings.

On a global level, we are now beset with unprecedented environmental, economic and social crises and many of these problems stem from selfishness or individualism and the concurrent negative emotions of hatred, unlimited desires, jealousy, etc.

If these underlying causes within the human mind are not addressed and an understanding is not developed that happiness (and other positive mindsets and emotions) can be cultivated within ourselves, then societies are bound to adopt a materialistic view of human existence and seek happiness through the insatiable exploitation of our finite natural resources. With the rapid growth of human population and equally rapid depletion of natural resources, if no alternate way of living is embraced, then global conflict and disasters are inevitable.

Even on an individual level, a person's welfare is not just achieved by him or her alone, but is also dependent on communal welfare and social goals as a whole. The foundation for a truly happy society can easily be eroded if the welfare of the community that underpins our profound interdependencies disappears due to the wrong guidance of values education and other negative influences.

Therefore I feel that it is not only necessary but also vital that a basic Buddhist values education is incorporated to assist in expanding our narrow interest of the self to a reasonable degree to enable us to develop our boundaries of consideration and caring consciousness to *all* beings, beyond our friends and relatives.

Teaching Buddhist Values

How can values be taught? In educational institutions, we have both teachers and textbooks. However, children and teenagers also assimilate a great deal of information from the world outside of school. Should their home and outside environment such as parental values, emotions and behaviour be in contrast with what they learn in school, they will discover that we ourselves are in conflict with the values they are being taught to embrace in school.

Therefore I feel it is very important for parents to act as role models to convey their values to their children through their own actions, decisions, emotions and behaviour.

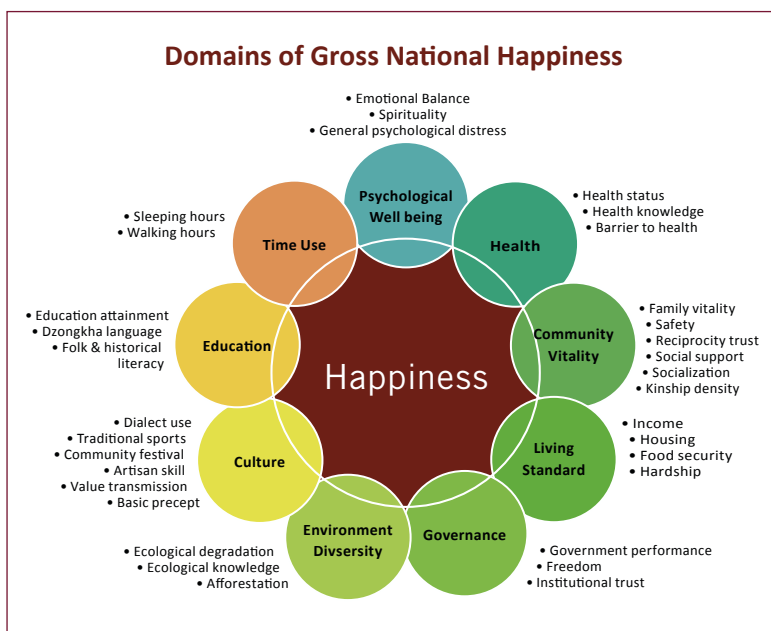
I would like to share a little bit on how

values education has also been very important in my own education personally:

The key concepts to Mahayana practice, such as compassion, non-intrinsic existence, interdependencies, ethical training, ethics, meditation and wisdom, I believe, are convergent with universal human development.

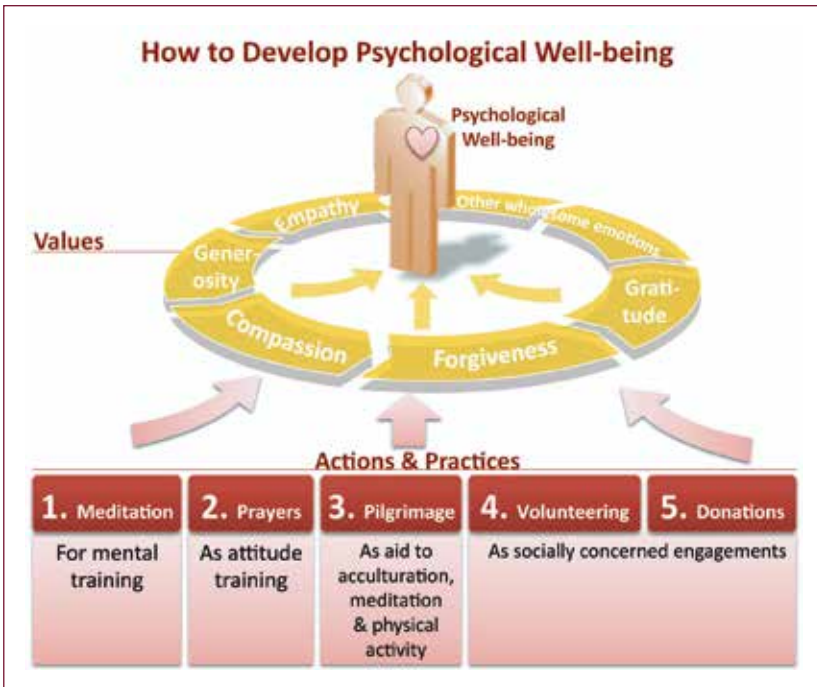
The concept of karma and social responsibility is also very much linked to positive human development: for how can one earn merit and good karma unless one earns it through contribution to society?

The Royal Government of Bhutan came up with the idea of Gross National Happiness, a holistic economic philosophy that integrates Buddhist values with the curriculum of its educational system.



The above diagram shows the the holistic educational approach of Gross National Happiness, an economic philosophy that takes into account all aspects of what influences an individual's life, creating measurable and tangible assessments to foster a near-perfect environment that would generate individual, and more importantly, communal and societal 'happiness.' Buddhist values here influence all aspects to some degree, but it is most directly associated with 'psychological well-being'.

Examples of Buddhist Integrated Values Education



Part of Bhutan’s educational curriculum involves psychological well-being, where the values we have to incorporate are compassion, generosity, calmness, karma and empathy. This diagram demonstrates the kind of practice used in Bhutan to facilitate the formation of positive behaviour, wholesome emotions and character among students through the skilful means of meditation, prayers, pilgrimage, social volunteerism and other forms of socially concerned engagements.

The Kingdom of Bhutan is one example of how Buddhism has been integrated successfully with values education. Another example that I am familiar with, being associated with the Drukpa Lineage and His Holiness the XII Gyalwang Drukpa, is the Druk White Lotus School in Shey in Ladakh. It is the first of its kind to incorporate values that are linked with Ladakh’s unique Buddhist cultural heritage, which will be otherwise lost to its people due to modernisation. Also His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa started religious walking pilgrimages or *Pad Yatras* in order to create environmental awareness, not only globally, but especially with the local youth of Ladakh, who are now actively engaged in environmental promotion and preservation within their communities.

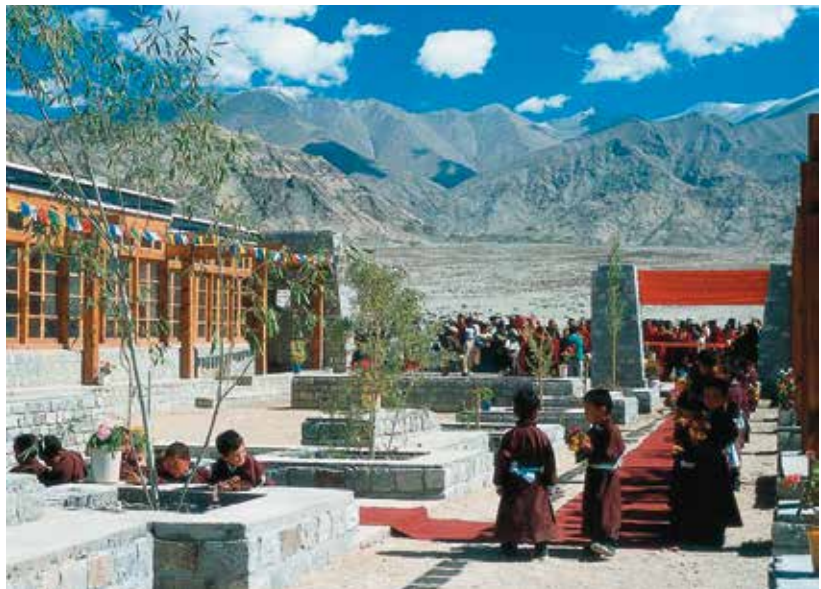
These are two examples of how values education can make a difference in individuals, empowering and enabling them to take charge in creating positive differences and contribute constructively to society.

Transforming Ourselves to Transform the World

Buddhist philosophy is very simple and yet very complex at the same time. It is the kind of education that teaches us about ourselves



Scan this to watch video clips of Khamtrul Rinpoche



Druk White Lotus School in Shey, Ladakh India



Pad Yatra - a pilgrimage on foot to promote awareness of the urgent need to protect our environment.

and our minds, a subject that doesn't change with time, whether it is now or in the future; the mind will always desire, feel jealousy, crave comfort and want 'happiness.'

Values education that includes Buddhist practices of love, self-awareness and compassion, which

are universally accepted tenets, is not part of one religion or a ritual of any kind. It is a training of the mind that is essential in empowering and enabling us to develop and realise our full potential as human beings.

It takes into account the environment, social responsibility and ethical conduct, and encompasses all other beings - even the smallest biological particle is to be respected. Finally, it takes into account the interrelatedness and interdependence of all living and non-living aspects of this world and beyond. I think developing and teaching this kind of view brings about the true perspective of how we should view ourselves within the world, as a part of it, and not *the* one race or species that is superior to the rest. I believe that through such an education of the mind, children will become more aware, more caring and loving individuals who in turn will change our future and bring about a transformation that is greatly needed now. ☸

招募志愿佛学老师

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

Recruitment for Volunteer Dharma Teachers

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

- Heart and passion to educate; to act as a friend and mentor to children/teens
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Healing with Stone 药石按出健康

What is Bianstone?

Bianstone is a healing stone generated during the Cretaceous period when meteorite impacted the earth. Healing stone therapy is the most ancient form of medical treatment and healthcare in China.

How to use?

Bian Stone Therapy can accelerate healing. By using Bianstone Therapy like sensing, pressing, rolling, rubbing, pricking, scratching and knocking technique on back, face and whole body, you can relieve muscular aches, stiffness, detoxify, stimulate circulation of blood, lymph and correct digestive disorders. Please remember to drink water after the therapy.

What are the advantage of Bianstone?

Bianstone therapy has no side effect. It will not cause any stabbing pain or wound the skin. Its function is to activate lymphatic and blood flow, to purify the body by detoxifying organs like kidneys and liver and to enhance the body's immune system.

药石是什么?

药石 - 扁石在白垩纪时期, 当陨石撞击地球时产生的。药石疗法是中国最古老形式的医疗和保健。

如何使用?

在药石疗法的过程中, 在背部, 面部和全身采用遥感, 按、滚、搓、刺、划、敲的技巧, 可以加速愈合, 减轻肌肉酸痛和僵硬, 解毒和促进血液和淋巴循环, 纠正消化功能紊乱。切记药石疗法后要喝水。

有什么功效?

药石无副作用。它不会造成任何疼痛, 刺或伤到皮肤。它的功能是激活淋巴和血液的流动, 净化身体排毒的器官, 如肾脏和肝脏, 并最终增强人体的免疫系统。

Bianstone Comb
砭石梳子



Combing and massaging regularly can improve the condition of the hair. Other than combing, smooth curve end of the comb can be used for scraping, massaging and rubbing the head or any part of the body. Do not use Bianstone comb when the hair is wet. 多梳和按摩头部可以改善头发的状态。梳子曲线光滑的那面可以用来刮痧和按摩头部或身体的任何部分。头发湿的时候请不要使用砭石梳子。

Bianstone Face /
Body Roller
砭石面部/身体辊



The Bianstone face/body roller can be applied for scraping on the head, face or neck to improve skin complexion, and remove excess toxins from our body. 砭石面部/身体辊可以用于头部, 面部或颈部, 以改善肤色。砭石也可以清除我们的身体的毒素。

Bianstone Hammer
砭石锤



Bianstone Hammer can be used to stimulate different body parts through the knocking and vibrating methods in Bianstone Therapy. 砭石锤可以使用于身体不同部位。它适合采用药石疗法的敲和振动的技巧。



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

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Issue 24

YOUR Feedback Matters

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Affable and friendly Dr Art-Ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, Thailand's 1987 Top Scientist of the Year and inventor of NASA's landing system for Mars Viking Mission, the world's first successful Mars landing expedition, and a man of many talents talks to Esther Thien about his first passion - educating the young.

“I meditated three hours a day during my PhD years!”

Awaken: You have such an illustrious career. What made you give it all up, including a US citizenship, to set up a school in Thailand?

Dr Art-Ong: No one seems to know the secret to this question - How can we take all the fame and wealth with us when we die? From meditation, I gradually found out the answer. We have to give and give and serve everyone! The more we give, the more we get. The greater the service, the more peace and happiness we will receive. At the same time, we should not have any desire for our own peace and happiness. Thus, I decided to set up a school and help young children to grow up full of peace, joy and happiness. To teach these children through our free education how to be a good citizen of the world.



Awaken: What are the difficulties you faced in setting up and running this school?

Dr Art-Ong: The main difficulty is to get people and the government (Thailand's Ministry of Education) to accept the idea that the purpose of education is to help the child develop into a good citizen. Most people think that the aim of an education is for their children to be able to have good jobs and earn a lot of money. That means that they want their children to become clever. We had to convince everyone that good character must come first and intelligence will follow automatically. We started the process by training teachers all over Thailand. After training some 15,000 teachers, the teachers demanded to see a school that would educate and teach in this way. Thus, we started the school as a model school.

Awaken: What is so unique about the school?

Dr Art-Ong: No fees are collected. Goodness comes before everything else. Children are happy and peaceful. One hundred per cent of the children are able to enter good universities after graduating from our school. We have organic farms producing our entire requirement for rice and most of the vegetables. The school is totally vegetarian. We utilise many alternative methods to harness energy to help the world reduce green house gases: solar energy, wind energy, solar thermal, bio-gas, bio-diesel, exercising machines that produce electricity. We also produce our own pipe water and drinking water, and use rain harvesting and waste water management.

Awaken: What are the school's Mission and Vision?

Dr Art-Ong: The school envisions nurturing goodness in people. Our mission is to be an educational institution that helps to raise the consciousness of its students so that they become persons of Human Excellence with the highest standards of morality and ethics. To encourage students to abide by the five Human Values of Love, Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-Violence and to respect their own religion, culture and traditions as well as those of others; to have the ability to live in society in peace and to serve others without wanting anything in return. This is what we hope to achieve at the end of the day.

Awaken: How do you juggle running the school and your other responsibilities in life?

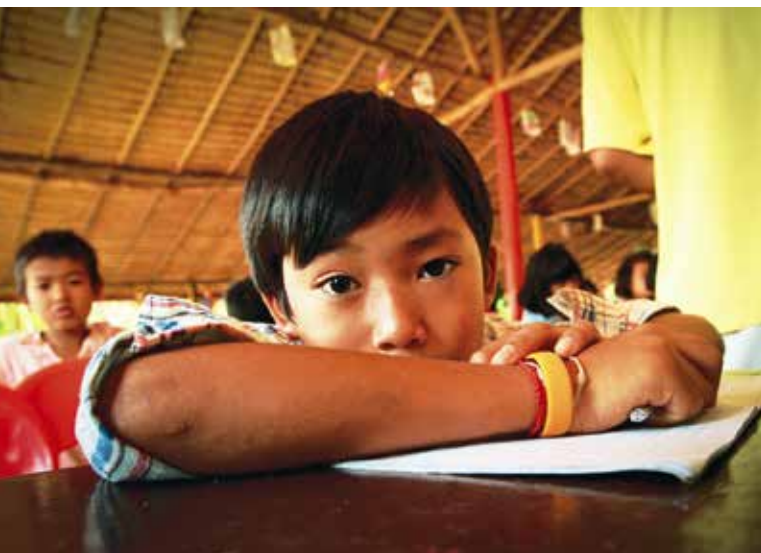
Dr Art-Ong: My main work is education. I was already 50 years old when I announced the decision to set up the school. Although I do accept giving talks and lectures at universities or business establishments, values education has always been a part of my talk. As my children are all grown up, my family and friends gave their full support for me to go into education.

Awaken: How does the school teach mindfulness and other Buddhist values to teenagers and children as young as 5?

Dr Art-Ong: The school is a boarding school so we have control over what we need to do. Every morning at 5.45 the children will proceed to the prayer room.

There, we pray and sit in meditation followed by a story with values being told. After that we radiate love and compassion to the whole world. Every day, the children will start every class with a short meditation. Before retiring to bed, we also have prayers and meditation. In our school, children practise meditation nine times a day.

Buddhist values or human values like generosity and kindness are also integrated into every subject



taught. Thus when we teach subjects in accordance with the curriculum, we integrate values into all subjects.

Awaken: Why do you think transmitting Buddhist values to children and youth is so important in this modern age?

Dr Art-Ong: The present age is full of problems. There are wars and violence. We measure the success of a country with GNP (Gross National Product) – the more products we produce, the more purchasing of products, the more advertising, the



more desires, the higher the GNP. Thus there are more stresses and suffering in life. We have drugs and sexual promiscuity. Adults are difficult to change. Thus the best way is to transmit Buddhist values to children and youth.

Awaken: How do you explain to school children why some people are living their lives on conflicting values, values that are not in line with those taught by the school?

Dr Art-Ong: There is no need to say to the children that others are wrong. We just teach them to understand themselves and to know the purpose of life. We teach them to learn to discriminate by asking two questions: 1- “Is this good for me?” If the answer is “yes” then we ask the second question: “Is it good for everybody?” If the answer is “yes” then we can make use of it. But if the answer is “no”, we reject it.

Awaken: How can meditation help children?

Dr Art-Ong: Children will become calmer and

have greater self-control. Memory will increase and this will help in their studies. If they practise regularly, they will raise their consciousness higher and intuition will be stimulated. That means that they will start to know things without being taught. They will understand themselves and others better and will start developing inner wisdom and understanding. Transformation will take place in the children.

Awaken: How has meditation helped you in your own life’s journey?

Dr Art-Ong: I was a troubled boy who fought back racist bullies when I lived in a boarding school in the UK. At the age of 15, however, I was woken up by a voice, for three consecutive nights, calling my name three times and asking “Art-Ong, why did you do that?” I began to realise what had gone wrong with me. From that day onwards, I took an interest in Buddhism and started meditating 30 minutes every day. My life changed and I became a calm person. When I was in university, I meditated an hour daily. My grades also improved and I topped the school or college in all my exams, up to my PhD. I meditated three hours a day during my PhD years! Meditation leads to wisdom for any subject you are taking an interest in. When I was 30 years old and working as a lecturer at Chulalongkorn University’s Faculty of Engineering, NASA contacted me to develop the landing system for US spacecraft to land on Mars. I spent the first year engaging the mission scientifically - gathering information, developing a theory, creating a prototype. And when I failed, I revised the theory and resumed the process. After failing for the fourth time, I decided to climb up to the top of a mountain in California and spent five days and four nights meditating. On the fifth day, everything just came to me. I just knew how I had to do it. I made three machines for the US to install on Viking I, Viking II and Viking III. The first two were launched and they landed on Mars successfully. ☺



Scan this to listen to a meditation taught by Dr Art-Ong, or visit www.social-care.net/music/meditationmusic.zip



How to **Communicate** with your parents **without** tearing your hair out

BY | Ven Faxun

Many teens often appear angelic outside their homes, but parents complain just as often that their teens have no respect for elders or lie without batting an eyelid... the list goes on. While they (parents and teens) may try very hard to communicate with each other, very often, conversations end up in heated arguments. Each party is unable to handle effectively the tension that builds up quickly, resulting in tempers exploding or cold wars with either or both parties refusing to talk to each other!

The Buddha's teaching on Right Speech is instructive in addressing and resolving this modern issue of communication between parents and children. A good teaching is one that we can apply directly in our day-to-day living and this teaching on Right Speech is certainly one. It is something practical which we can use to transform harsh speech into gentle speech, and false speech into truthful speech.

Here is a typical conflict scenario involving parents and their teen. Teenager Joan made an appointment with a friend to study in a library at a nearby

town centre after school the next day. She informed her parents out of responsibility and respect. Her parents expected her to be home by 5pm, as granny would be visiting that evening before flying off to China. Joan promised her parents to be back by then.

So the next day, Joan and her friend proceeded with their plan, but arrived late at the library as they were held up in school by their teacher and were also caught in traffic. They were deeply engrossed in their studies at the library when at 5pm, Joan's mother called, half screaming on the phone. Hearing her mum's angry voice, Joan looked at her watch and realised that she was late. She turned the phone off in a panic, not knowing what to say at that moment! When Joan got home and was questioned why she had turned the phone off during the call, she lied that the battery had gone flat.

Teenagers often resort to telling lies out of desperation. Most know when they are wrong; they also know it is not right to lie. Yet often, out of fear of being scolded or punished, they try to get out of unpleasant situations by lying, with the hope of covering up their mistakes.

Taking an objective view, Joan obviously felt agitated and frustrated about the whole situation. A noble deed to help a friend with studies turned into a situation beyond her control as she was held up by their teacher and caught in a traffic jam; these had not been taken into account in her plan. She would have also felt guilty for not keeping to the promise to be home by 5pm. Emotionally, there was guilt, frustration, probably anger too. An intended action of goodness turned into an unpleasant situation through no fault of her own. Upsetting indeed!

Her parents, on the other hand, were probably worried when Joan did not return home at the expected time. Could she have met with an accident? Did something bad happen? Or, they might be upset that their daughter has no sense of punctuality. In particular, Joan's mother probably felt angry to be cut off when she called Joan, and might have guessed that Joan had lied about the battery being flat. It would have been too easy to check on the battery level, but such an act of mistrust would only aggravate the whole situation.

Experiential interactions with teenagers reveal that many usually do not know how to handle broken promises (especially with authoritarian parents who scold at the slightest provocation, even when truth is spoken.) Out of desperation or fear of having to face the music, they resort to temporary measures of "escape" such as shutting off their phones or telling lies. Often, they are not aware of the consequences of their actions. While they yearn so much for trust and freedom from their parents, by their reactive actions, they break the trust for which they yearn. Many are constantly caught in such situations and do not know how to cope or get out of the cycle. Such frustrating experiences often result in confused and conflicting emotions and feelings – often the very cause of dysfunctional communication between children, especially young teens and their parents.

Some Guidelines for Teens....

1. Reflection

Instead of getting angry or frustrated, it would be more helpful to calm your mind, check your action and reflect upon it. How do you see yourself when



shutting off the phone and lying to your parents? How do you feel? How would your parents feel? How do you prevent something similar from happening again so that you gain the trust of your parents? What would be a better approach so that you don't lose the trust of your parents regarding your time management or sense of responsibility, while showing care and concern for your friend at the same time?

2. Keep Calm and Be Truthful

Most teens resort to lying out of desperation to cover up a mistake they have made. As a result, they end up telling one lie after another to cover up the previous one. The way out of this endless cycle is to learn to keep calm and be truthful.



The principle is always to be sincere and truthful.

Instead of reacting in an escapist manner, when confronted with a situation which feels threatening or which you feel you do not know how to deal with, take a deep breath and breathe out the anxiety and fear. Then explain the situation by telling the truth.

In the *Digha Nikaya*, the Buddha says: “By giving up false speech, one becomes a speaker of truth.... thus becoming a trustworthy and reliable person..... Giving up harsh speech, he says what is gentle and pleasant, pleasing to the ear, affectionate and liked by most (DN1).” There is no more necessity to lie.

Taking the earlier scenario as an example, Joan should simply explain the situation, that she was held up by the teacher and caught in the traffic, etc. Furthermore, not only do we need to explain, we need to explain calmly and clearly, and not get caught up in our emotions. Always be kind and gentle in your speech.

3. Courage and Acceptance

Most teens know that it is their fault for not keeping a promise. But they are just too afraid to face the music. It might be helpful to seek inspiration from the life stories of great people in the past. For example, George Washington, the first president of America, chopped down his father's favourite cherry tree but was brave enough to admit his deed when questioned. We need to learn to be courageous, admit our misdeeds and accept

the punishment, if any. Courage is a good attribute (quality) to develop. It will certainly enhance our development as responsible adults.

4. Responsibility and Trust-Building

It is your responsibility to inform your parents if you are late. For example, if you are caught up in a traffic jam, you could simply use your mobile phone to send a text message, or better, telephone one of your parents to tell them why you will be late. Do not wait for your parents to call you. Such an act of responsibility will certainly build your parents' trust in you.

5. Time Management

Some teens simply lack time management skills. When your parents ask when you will be home, you should not give an unrealistic time. Otherwise, you will be unable to keep to the time promised. The ultimate consequence is that your parents become upset and you lose even more trust from your parents.

Learn to work out how much time is needed to travel from point A to point B. Let's take the earlier case as an example again - in this case, library to home. In addition Joan will also need to factor in time for packing-up, time for lunch, even for answering nature's call, and also have some time allocated for walking between bus stops and train stations; even time waiting for the bus and train.

Likewise, after you have worked out a realistic time, you may wish to add a few extra minutes' allowance to ensure you return home on time or even earlier.

6. Empathy

Try to put yourself in the shoes of your parents. How would your parents feel when you are not home by the promised time?

Most parents would worry. They become concerned for their beloved child – are you in an accident? Are you safe?

How would you feel if you are a parent?

7. Patience

Be patient; it takes time for you to earn your parents' trust. If you continue to act in a responsible and mature way, eventually you will gain their trust.

Parents will usually let go and give you more freedom once they notice you are mature and responsible.

Saint Francis de Sales said what was necessary for a contemplative life was “a cup of understanding, a barrel of love, and an ocean of patience.”

In essence, we need to re-learn the ancient wisdom handed down by the ancient sages. The Right Speech in the Noble Eightfold Path and the Buddhist Teaching on Loving-Kindness is a good guideline for more effective communication. 🕊

How can one be a good parent?

To be a good parent, understand that children need guidance from their parents. Parents need to set certain guidelines for their children and teach them ethics or good values.

Next, parents have to walk the talk. They themselves have to be good role models of the values that they are teaching their children.

Lastly, let your children know that no matter what happens, you will always love them and that your door is always open for them.

– Ven Tenzin Palmo



Real-life Quotes

It is extremely difficult to be joyful, happy and appreciative when faced with natural disasters, human tragedies, illnesses, pain and afflictions. Nonetheless, during such times, only the energy of joy and appreciation can transform such negative situations into positive ones.

Many years ago, one of my teachers shared with me how she learned gratitude as part of her spiritual development. She would say “Thank you” no matter what she encountered, even if a bowl of soup she carried slipped off and broke into pieces! She understood that the energy of gratitude and joy can create a better tomorrow.

Regardless what seeds we have planted in the past, regardless what fruits we are harvesting now, creation of the future is still within our control. If we can plant the seeds of joy, then our future will naturally bear the fruits of joy.

We generally feel sympathetic towards people who are suffering, but not towards those whose circumstances are more fortunate. This is because our minds are limited by time, and we cannot see

the past or the future. It may be that those who are encountering good fortune now are planting the seeds for future suffering, but they are not aware of this. On the contrary, people who are suffering now may develop the virtues of acceptance (in the face of adversity), patience and loving-kindness. In that case, their future will be better.

During the Ming dynasty in China, a gentleman by the name of Yuan Liao Fan learned from his life experiences that destiny can be changed by thoughts and actions. When he was young, he encountered a capable fortune-teller who predicted in detail how his life would turn out. Later, he found that no matter how much he wanted to change his fate that had been predicted earlier, he could not do so, including the results of his entrance examination. Hence, he decided not to think too much because everything had been pre-determined by fate. Later,



BY | Dr Lai Chiu Nan

Living with *joy* and *apprec*

he met a Zen master who taught him how to change his life. It was then that he realised that fate can indeed be changed, but one must know the correct method. Originally, it was foretold that he would be childless and only live up to 53 years of age. Later, he not only had a son, but lived up to 74 years of age. He wrote down his experiences in a book for his son, which later became widely circulated and was known as "The Four Teachings of Liao Fan". This book discusses four aspects: how to shape one's life, how to change one's life, how to accumulate merits, and the benefits of humility and virtue. This is a good book that is worth reading again and again. The reason why he had a son and had a long life was because he loved and protected the lives of animals and humans, and actively engaged in work that benefited other people. Joy comes from harmony and peace. When we are filled with love, do not

harm other beings, and strive to benefit others, joy is the natural reward.

Le Gong (the practice of happiness) is a form of primordial *chi gong* that had been very popular in China. This is a therapeutic form of exercise that can be used for health and sickness. Many people have used this method and regained their health. This exercise is very easy to practise. All it takes is to be happy all the time. The quiet or passive form of exercise is to be happy when one quiets down. In contrast, the action mode is to maintain a happy mind when one is busy. Beginners start by thinking of an incident or person that brings them happiness, and then becoming immersed in that feeling. If they cannot think of any happy event because of prolonged periods of suffering, they can start by pretending, that is, relax the entire body, and curve the tips of the mouth upwards into a smile. This is using pretence to develop true happiness. Medical research has shown that actors' bodily hormones and internal secretions changed when their facial expressions changed. This demonstrates that "pretending" to be happy can have benefits.

If joy cannot arise during practice, reflect on what obstacles prevent your ability to develop happiness within yourself. Does it have anything to do with not being able to release past memories? Is it about someone you can't forgive? Do you have a sense of remorse? Does it have to do with wounds that need to be cleansed and healed?

Many times, knots in our hearts can be untangled by taking a different perspective. Learn to say "thank you".

An American, Raymon Grace, took lessons from American Indian masters. He liked to help people, and applied what he had learned to relieve the sufferings he experienced in terms of health, life, and financial situation. He also taught others how to use principles of the universe to change their lives and fate. He found that every event and every phenomenon has its own frequencies. Changing these frequencies will lead to changes in these events and phenomena. For example, polluted water has its own frequency. When we are in a relaxed state, we can use our mental power to disrupt the frequency



iation

of polluted water, and then mentally transmit the frequency of clean water to this polluted water. Drops of water that had been purified by Raymon Grace can be added and used to purify other polluted water from wells, rivers, sea and swimming pools. This is because he had programmed all water to be purified if they come into contact with the treated water. There was a well that had been polluted by arsenic. After his treatment, laboratory examination indicated that the arsenic level continually decreased, even after six months. Water purified by Raymon Grace also has therapeutic properties. His friends invited neighbours to swim in a swimming pool Raymon had treated, and they found that their bodily aches disappeared after swimming. In the book "Messages from Water", the author uses a microscope to show that the crystal formation of water can be changed by human thoughts. A lake that was originally polluted was purified through the prayers of 300 people. This shows that Raymon Grace's ability is possessed by everyone. His book "The Future is Yours" and "Techniques that Work for Me" are in the process of being translated, and will be available in Chinese at the end of the year. Raymon Grace is particularly concerned about water cleanliness because the supply of clean water on earth is diminishing while our demand for clean water is increasing. Thus, learning how to purify water is the way to solve this problem. He found that other than environmental pollution, water supplies can be polluted by man's greed.

If water can be transformed using our thoughts, it is not difficult to imagine that the entire material world can be influenced by us. This is because water covers a major part of Earth. Water comprises 70% of the Earth's surface as well as 70% of the human body. If a single person like Raymon Grace can purify water, and 300 people can purify a lake, perhaps millions and billions of people on earth, united in their efforts, can moderate the earth's erratic weather conditions, strengthen the earth's fragile surface and tame the furious oceans?

Many years ago when I was living in Houston, my teacher (who is now approaching 90 years of age) taught us how to tame an impending hurricane. She placed a bowl of water in the classroom to represent the ocean, and asked us to visualize sky blue light and send loving-kindness to the hurricane. She

said that hurricanes are attracted by human anger, but that loving-kindness is an antidote that can transform anger. Maybe it was a coincidence, but the hurricane did not land on that occasion. I have also heard that on many occasions, Taiwan avoided the assault of impending hurricanes through the prayers of members of some organisations.

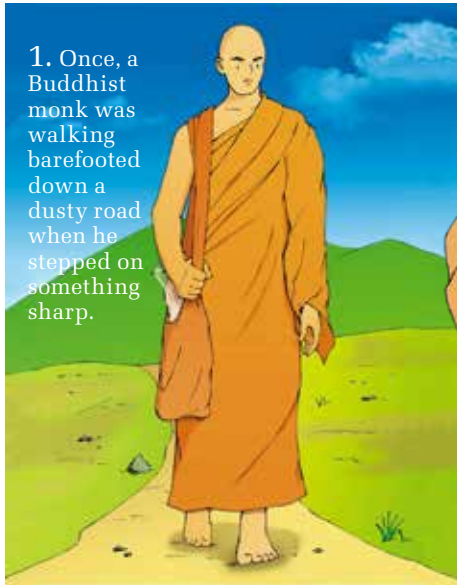
Since ancient times, Chinese people have known that heaven (天) and earth (地) that exist outside us are one and inseparable from our own internal heaven, earth and mental thoughts. Our thoughts and emotions have enormous power, and can influence the occurrence of natural phenomena such as rain and wind, the growth of plants and the purification of water supplies. Bob Cannard, a farmer, frequently emphasises that the most important job of a good farmer is to send friendly messages and love to his plants and farm. During convalescence, it is useful to send love and friendly messages to our cells. In the Chinese language, there is a phrase that juxtaposes natural disasters with human misfortunes. The reason is that natural disasters occur after humans have erred and caused misfortunes on themselves. The human mind influences heaven and earth. The tsunami tragedies of past years have shown us the devastating power and effects when nature strikes back.

Human life is fragile and we can die anytime. Some people live a life where they scheme and engage in pettiness to get the upper hand. But then, what matters at death? It is a gift to be alive, and we have to learn to say "thank you". This is because when we are happy and appreciative, we plant immeasurable seeds of joy, uplift ourselves and those around us, creating happiness for ourselves and for all around us. 🌿

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The Monk and the Beggar

RETOLD BY | Esther Thien
ILLUSTRATIONS | Bee Li



1. Once, a Buddhist monk was walking barefooted down a dusty road when he stepped on something sharp.



2. He stopped to pull the object out. Lo & behold! It was a very valuable and beautifully carved gemstone.

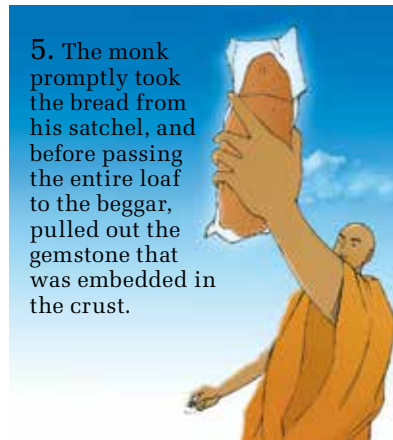


3. After rinsing the gemstone at a well, he tossed it into his satchel, which contained the partial loaf of bread that was to be his meal for that day.



O Venerable Sir!
I'm but a poor starving beggar. May I have a taste of your bread?

4. Then he saw a beggar further down the road. The beggar, seeing the bread, bowed three times to the monk.



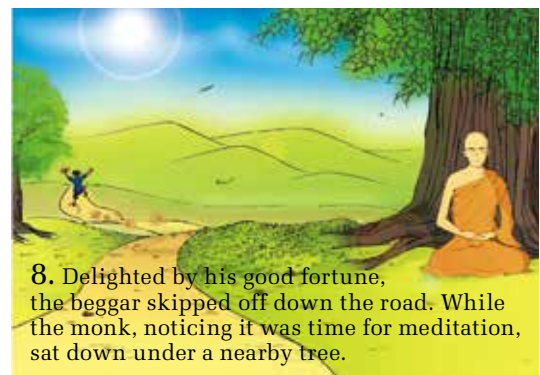
5. The monk promptly took the bread from his satchel, and before passing the entire loaf to the beggar, pulled out the gemstone that was embedded in the crust.



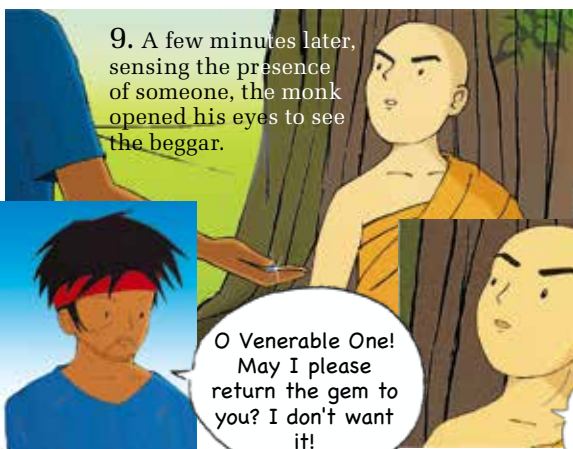
O, Most Worthy One! I have taken your only meal of the day, and this is not right. I see you have a gemstone, which would relieve me of my dire situation. May I return your bread to you in exchange for the gem?



7. Hearing this, the monk immediately gave the gemstone to the beggar.



8. Delighted by his good fortune, the beggar skipped off down the road. While the monk, noticing it was time for meditation, sat down under a nearby tree.



9. A few minutes later, sensing the presence of someone, the monk opened his eyes to see the beggar.

O Venerable One! May I please return the gem to you? I don't want it!

What, sir, do you want?



10.

I want what you have that allows you to give away everything.

A long time ago, a boy named Sama lived happily in a forest with his old parents. His parents would go out to gather fruits for their daily meals. One day, however, Sama's parents did not return. Worried, the filial son went out searching for them.

Hearing their son calling out to them, the stranded parents said: "Son, do not come near us. We have been blinded by the poisonous fumes of a snake when we took shelter under a tree when it rained."

16-year old Sama was deeply saddened. With the help of a long stick, he slowly guided his blind parents to him. From that day onwards, Sama whom they grew to cherish even more than before, was their sole support.

Sama tied ropes and bamboo poles in all directions for his blind parents to follow. He swept their dwelling place clean of leaves and insects, gathered their food and fed them succulent fruits. He bathed them and comforted them. Every day without fail, he would also go to a pond to fill a waterpot for his parents to drink.

Sama, the Devoted Son

RETOLD BY | Esther Thien

With great love and care, he tenderly administered to their every need.

He moved about so gently, with great loving-kindness, that even the deer and other animals, which were timid of other men, were never afraid of him and accompanied him wherever he went.

One day, as Sama was fetching some water, he was shot by King Pilliyakka. The king had let off the poisonous arrow as he was fascinated that Sama had the ability to tame the wild animals of the forest. He wanted to capture Sama and show him off to his ministers. The deer fled in terror and Sama fell.

"Whom have I wronged in this forest? I only have love and kindness for all who dwell here. I am not the least bit concerned about my death, but how will my helpless parents live when I am gone?"

Full of remorse, the guilty king slowly went up to Sama. He asked about Sama's parents, then set off to find them and confess to them his atrocious act.

Stricken with indescribable grief and sorrow, the blind parents came crying to the spot where their son lay. Feeling some warmth still in the body, Sama's parents pronounced an Act of Truth and miraculously revived their dying beloved son.

*After His Enlightenment, the Buddha said:
"No being was afraid of me; nor was I frightened of any. Boosted by the power of loving-kindness did I seek delight in the forest at that time."*



BY | Susan M. Griffith-Jones

SEEN

Be a lamp of kindness that will light other lamps

> Pay It Forward

Directed by: Mimi Leder

Starring: Joel Osment, Kevin Spacey, Helen Hunt

Trevor is an 11-year-old, seventh grader in middle school, USA. He comes from a broken home where both his parents are alcoholics. After a recent round of drinking and abuse that goes with it, his father left and he finds himself living alone with his mother.

As an astute, bright kid, Trevor is attentive to what goes on around him and to classroom activities in general. When his social studies teacher, Mr Simonet gives the class an assignment to think of an idea to change the world and put it into action, Trevor reveals his aspiring potential.

As a teacher who truly cares about his students, Mr Simonet wants to inspire the children to penetrate the meaning of their place in the world. However, this takes deeper root than he could have imagined when he tells the class that “The realm of possibility exists within each of you”, not realising what he has unleashed as Trevor’s mind goes into true altruistic mode.

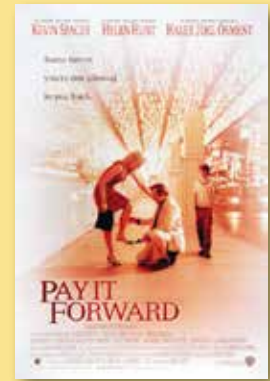
Rather than being crushed by his unstable home circumstances, throughout the film, Trevor not only gains encouragement from his teacher’s instruction, but also gathers strength as he works actively to both repair seemingly shattered lives and to prevent further damage, mentioning that “lives like bikes can also be fixed.” Furthermore, in the true meaning of ‘Charity begins at home’, Trevor penetrates into the heart of his broken family and begins to repair the distorted chords of disharmony.

Through devising a pyramidal ‘help others’ scheme, he demonstrates the meaning of kindness as a lamp that will light other lamps just by shining on them. Alluded is the Bodhisattva ideal of being available for others selflessly, by touching them with kindness in the sense of ‘Kindness to another, breeds kindness in another’, the affected broken heart may mend and in turn gain the ability to touch others.

Based on the understanding that humans inherently have compassion within their nature, it is a scheme that not only works, but infects others with its deep sense of purpose and necessity as a healing tool for a “world that sucks” (as quoted by the kids in the class).

True to the Buddhist teachings where three types of generosity are mentioned - the first being through the action of giving material gifts, the second being to protect those who may be in fear and the third to offer Dharma in the form of teachings - *Pay it Forward* in some way embraces each of these stages of this essential paramita and demonstrates the result of such.

The story ends with an enthusiastic journalist, who becomes a recipient of the *Pay it Forward* scheme by accident, searches for its origin by tracing back how it has touched the heart of each of the recipients he comes into contact with.



READ

Transmit wholesome values through tales of wisdom;
Find calm through useful tools in Buddhist parenting books



> Buddha at Bedtime

By Dharmachari Nagaraja

> The Story of Ziji

By Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche

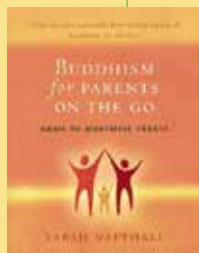
To enchant and inspire your little ones, and at the same time impress on their young minds the qualities of generosity, compassion, peace, loving-kindness and mindfulness, these two books are a good start. **Buddha at Bedtime** presents 20 lively retellings of classic Buddhist tales for parents to read to children. The captivating stories carry the kids on an adventure but also bring greater calm, enhanced creativity, increased self-confidence and heightened empathy towards others. Complete with step-by-step meditations suitable for children. **The Story of Ziji**, is a bilingual book about a pet dog called Ziji and how he learned to give his mind a rest and let his thoughts float by like clouds. These stories give children the means to find a calm place inside themselves whenever they need it – a safe inner refuge. Priced at S\$27.95 and \$17.90 respectively from Awareness Place stores.

> Buddhism for Parents on the Go: Gems to Minimise Stress

> Buddhism for Mothers of School Children: Finding Calm in the Chaos of the School Years

By Sarah Naphthali

The Buddhism for Parents / Mothers series of books by Sarah Naphthali are great help for any frazzled parent who would like greater clarity and calm in his or her life. Offering an approachable and authentic perspective as a parent herself, she suggests invaluable techniques in a warm, honest and accessible manner. Be inspired to be more patient and loving. Create time and space in your busy days to be kinder to yourself, reducing your stress levels and gaining true insight into the ever-changing joys of parenthood. Get them from Awareness Place stores for S\$26.90 and S\$27.90 respectively.



HEARD

Nurture Happy Kids with Happy Songs of Love and Peace

> Happy Children, Happy Singing

By Wind Music

Feel the joy and wide-eyed delight in the cheery voices of the little ones as you listen to this enchanting Mandarin 2-CD pack. One moment they are singing about friendship, and the next they are singing about good manners, expressing the gracious habits of saying "Please, Thank You, Excuse Me".

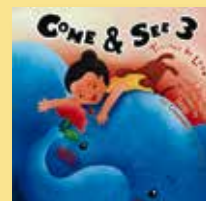
The pack contains a thoughtful booklet with brightly coloured illustrations that translate the meaning of the songs into English. Listen to this and brighten up your day. You're bound to be infected by their happiness and appreciation for life. My personal favourite is the track, "Thank You, My Dear!" The whole pack is available for S\$21.90 at Awareness Place stores.



> Come & See 3

By Viriya Production

Support local talents and production with the *Come & See 3* CD. Containing a total of 24 tracks (eight English song tracks, eight story-telling tracks and eight sing-along tracks), this CD transmits some simple teachings of the Buddha in a fun way. Retailers at \$18.00 at Awareness Place stores.



WHAT'S NEW

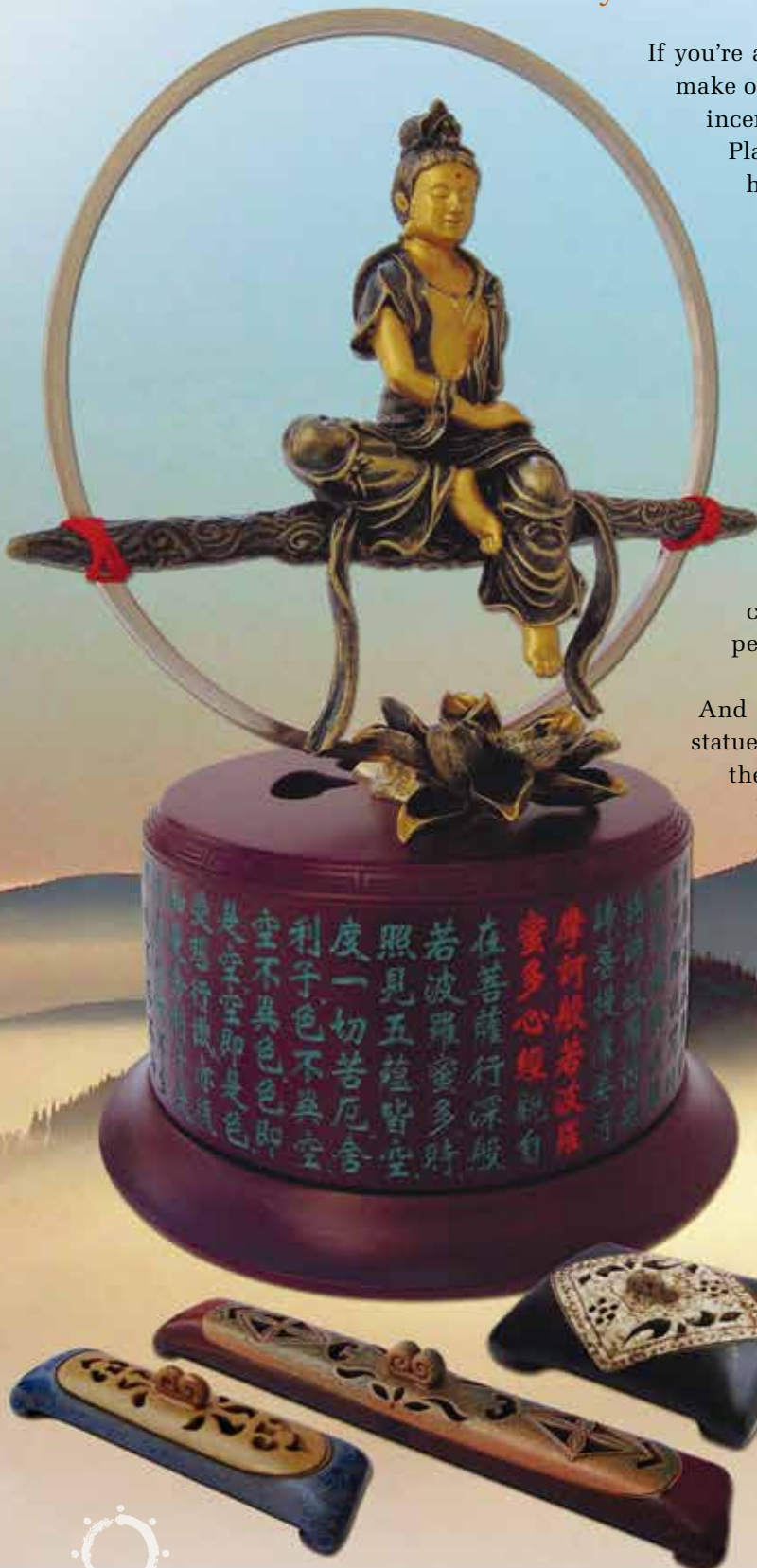
Unique incense holders and mini Bodhisattva Guanyin statues

If you're an ardent user of incense to scent your room or to make offerings to the Triple Gem, you may like the unique incense holders recently imported by Awareness Place. Brought in from Taiwan, these one-of-its-kind holders are lovingly handcrafted by skilled artisans. Made from good quality clay and carefully glazed with various colours, they come in different shapes and ornamental carving.

For the Buddhist who is especially devoted to Bodhisattva Guanyin, there is a specially designed holder for you. Fashioned with an intricate Guanyin sitting at ease atop a solid incense cover that is engraved with the text of Heart Sutra, experience stillness in your heart as you observe this lovely Guanyin statue and feel the blessing carried by the incense smoke wafting through and pervading your room.

And for those who are looking to get mini Guanyin statues for the car or mini shrine, you can consider the two latest statues brought in by Awareness Place. Measuring about seven centimetres in height, the bronze statues are plated in gold and come in the four-armed or thousand-armed versions.

To find out more, please call 6337 7582 or 6452 1732



Dharma Apps

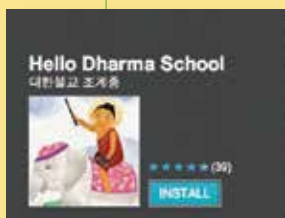
One good thing about having a smartphone or tablet is that if used in a good way, it can bring you closer to the Dharma, as a tool that connects you to the wisdom of the Dharma 24/7.



> Dharma2U

By Arbalest Solutions
FREE

Would you like to read the *Awaken* magazines as a mobile app? Now you can with Dharma2U. A second collaboration between Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery and an app developer, Dharma2U contains simple Buddhist Sutras and mantras, melodious prayer tracks, KMSPKS e-newsletters, magazines, ebooks and a meditation timer. Updated weekly, you will also have access to the latest activities and events of the monastery via the e-newsletters. Other extras include a list of important Buddhist dates, calendar and notes. Available on both the iPhone and iPad, and Google Play Store.



> Hello Dharma School

By Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism
FREE

Get your kids interested in the Buddha and his teachings of Wisdom and Loving-kindness with this animated English Dharma text for children. It showcases colourful attractive illustrations, simple animation and kid-friendly text. Easy to follow and very informative in a simple way for both children and adults. Available on both the iPhone and Google Play Store.



*Use your smartphone's barcode scanner to scan these QR codes for the apps.
If your phone doesn't have one, download a barcode scanning app from iTunes or Google Play Store.*

The essence of love and compassion
is understanding,
the ability to recognise
the physical, material and psychological
suffering of others,
to put ourselves
“inside the skin” of the other.
We “go inside”
their body, feelings, and mental formations,
and witness for ourselves their suffering.

Shallow observation as an outsider
is not enough to see their suffering.
We must become one
with the subject of our observation.
When we are in contact
with another's suffering,
a feeling of compassion is born in us.
Compassion means, literally,
“to suffer with”.

– *Thich Nhat Hanh*

Merit is the intention
that arises in the heart
beginning with the first thought
to do something good.

The meritorious things
that you do
aren't the essence of merit.
The intention to do good
is the essence of merit.

– *Ajaan Lee Dhammadharo*

Once, a group of students met an old auntie
sitting at the pavement under a lamp post
searching for something.
They discovered that she had lost a needle.
So they offered to help.
They searched high and low for it
but to no avail.

Then, one of the students asked,
“Auntie, where did you drop your needle?”
The old lady replied,

“I dropped it in my room
but it is too dark to search there,
the pavement is much brighter...”

In life, we pursue and search
everywhere endlessly
for peace and happiness.
But we forget that all these come
from within us, our own heart,
not elsewhere outside of us.
Just because somewhere else
looks brighter
doesn't mean we can find
what we want by searching for it
there.

Peace and happiness is all within
one's own mind and heart.

– *Dr Art-Ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya*

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.

Bardo: Refers to the state of existence intermediate between two lives. According to Tibetan tradition, one experiences a variety of phenomena after death and before one's next birth, when one's consciousness is not connected with a physical body. These usually follow a particular sequence of degeneration. For the spiritually advanced, the bardo offers a state of great opportunity for liberation, since transcendental insight may arise with the direct experience of reality, while for others it can become a place of danger as the karmically created hallucinations can impel one into a less than desirable rebirth.

Bodhicitta: The enlightenment-mind. The mind dedicated to attaining Buddhahood in order to help all sentient beings.

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

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

Dharma: An aspect of the Triple Gem - the teachings of the Buddha or the general teachings of Buddhism.

Dukkha: The truth that life is full of dissatisfactory experiences.

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

Generosity: The practice of cultivating unattached and unconditional giving.

Guanyin: The Bodhisattva who personifies the perfect Compassion of all Buddhas, who hears and heeds the cries of the world.

Ignorance: The quality of lacking Wisdom, not knowing the reality of all things. Same as ‘delusion’.

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.

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

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.

Liberation: The state in which defilements and karma have been eliminated and no longer subjected to uncontrolled rebirth in cyclic existence.

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.

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

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

Mindstream: Continuity of the mind, stream of moments of consciousness proceeding endlessly in a lifetime, between lifetimes, from lifetime to lifetime.

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).

Paramita : Refers to the six practices of generosity, morality, diligence, patience, concentration and wisdom, the perfection of which ferries one beyond the sea of suffering and mortality to Nirvana.

Purification: Preventing negative karma from ripening and counteracting self-identification with negative energy.

Rinpoche: An honorific used in Tibetan Buddhism to mean “precious one”.

Sentient Beings: Living beings with feelings in the six Samsara realms of hells, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demi-gods and gods.

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.

Virtues: Blessings which transcend Birth and Death and lead to Buddhahood. Depending on the mind of the practitioner, that is, on whether he is seeking mundane rewards (merit) or transcendence (virtue), the same action either to merit or virtue.

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

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

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

KMSPKS Youth Activities

Y talk

A self-enrichment programme for young professionals to rejuvenate and discover the relevance of Dharma in daily life.

Date/Time : Every 2nd and 4th Thu of the month,
7.30pm – 9.30pm

Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre

Y care

• Visit to Brighthill Evergreen Home

Date/Time : 14 Oct & 9 Dec, Sun, 8.30am – 11.30am

Venue : 21 Senja Road Singapore 677736

• Ration distribution to low income families

Date/Time : 9 Sep, 14 Oct, 11 Nov & 9 Dec, Sun,
9.15am – 12noon

Gathering Place : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

KMSPKS Guided Temple Tour (In English & Mandarin)

Date/Time : 29 Sep, Sat & 25 Nov, Sun, 10am – 11.30am

Gathering Place : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Metta Round the World

An initiative to bring together peace-loving people from all over the world to connect with one heart, one mind in meditation and prayer for world peace, harmony and stability. There will be short Dharma sharing and Metta meditation.

• With Venerable Khenchen Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche

Date/Time : 16 Sep, Sun, 10am – 2pm

Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

• With Ajahn Cagino

Date/Time : 30 Sep, Sun, 2pm – 4pm

Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Spiritual Countdown 2012

Good opportunity to meet up and spend a meaningful last few hours of 2012 together at the Spiritual Countdown 2012 @ KMSPKS.

Date/Time : 31 Dec, Mon, 8pm – 11.30pm

Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Details : For more information, please email youth@kmspks.org or visit <http://youth.kmspks.org>

Working With Emotions*

Date/Time : 6, 20 Sep, Thu, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Fee : \$50 (2 sessions)

Instructor : Mr Sean Liew (Bear)

Rainbow Child Yoga*

Date : 9, 16, 23, 30 Sep; 7, 21, 28 Oct & Nov 4, Sun

Time/Fee : 3pm – 4pm (age 4 to 6) \$220 for 8 sessions
4pm – 5.30pm (age 7 to 9) \$265 for 8 sessions

Instructor : Ms. Regina Chua, a Yoga Alliance certified Kundalini Yoga Teacher and Kids Yoga Teacher. She started practising yoga at age 20, and participated in transformational and self-discovery work for past 15 years.

The Goodness Workshop*

Date/Time : 6 Nov – 4 Dec, Tue, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Fee : \$20 (4 sessions)

Instructor : Shi'an, MA (Buddhist Studies)

Dances with Vegetables (Mandarin)*

Date/Time : 14 Oct, Sun, 3pm – 5pm

Fee : \$15

Instructor : Mr Wong Kew Yew

Simple Vegetarian Cooking (English)*

Date/Time : 9 Dec, Sun, 3pm – 5pm

Fee : \$36

Instructor : Mr Wong Kew Yew

Lunch-time Yoga*

Date/Time : 15 Nov – 31 Jan, Thu, 12.45pm – 1.35pm

Fee : \$140 (10 sessions with 1 free organic take-away every session)

Instructor : Ms Ong Ju Lee

General Level Yoga*

Date/Time : 15 Nov – 31 Jan, Thu, 10.30am – 12pm

Fee : \$160 (10 lessons)

Instructor : Ms Ong Ju Lee

Children's Art*

Date/Time : 17 Nov – 2 Feb, Sat, 2.30pm – 4.30pm

Fee : \$60 (12 sessions)

Instructor : Mr Soh Chin Bee, graduate from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

* Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre,
Bras Basah Complex #03-39

Details : Please visit awarenessplace.com, email sem@kmspks.org or call 6336 5067 to register or enquire.

Sat Sun School Enrolment for 2013 (School Term: Jan to Sep)

Saturday Chinese School • 2pm – 4pm (Pr. 1 to 6)

Saturday English School • 3.30pm – 5.30pm (Pr. 1 to 6)

Sunday English School • 8am – 10am (Sec 1 to 4)

Enrolment begins now till 15 Oct, or when classes are full.

Fee : \$30 annually (non-refundable)

Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300 or visit pkssss.kmspks.org

Meditation Group Practice

Date/Time : Every Wed, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Venue : Level 4, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Details : Please refer to kmspks.org for update on non-practice dates.

Train Your Mind, Change Your Brain -

Cultivating the inner condition for genuine happiness

Date/Time : 14 Sep, Fri, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Speaker : Ven Matthieu Ricard

Venue : Level 4, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

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

English Buddhism Course

Year 1 Module 3

Date/Time : 16 Sep – 4 Nov, Sun, 2.00pm – 3.30pm

Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Year 2 Module 3

Date/Time : 10 Sep – 12 Nov, Mon, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Sutta Discussion Module 3

Date/Time : 13 Sep – 8 Nov, Thu, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Venue : Level 2, Pagoda of Ten Thousand Buddhas

Fee : \$30 per Module

Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300

Pureland Practice Fellowship

Date/Time : Every Fri, 7.30pm – 9pm

Instructor : Shi'an

Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300

The 100 Parable Sutra: The 100 Parable Sutra

Date/Time : 1 Sep – 3 Nov, Sat, 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Fee : \$30

Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300