

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

Awaken Publishing & Design

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

Community Development & Training

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



inVibes is a light Dharma and music podcast site for those who seek ancient wisdom and wish to integrate it into their daily lives... inVibes hopes to keep you resonant with the Dharma wherever you are. Meditate a prayer, be someone you care or transform yourself!

WWW **inVibes.net** DHARMA, MUSIC, PRAYERS PODCAST.

Dharma Courses & Activities

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



Pujue E-Newsletter

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



Saturday and Sunday School

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

TLC Student Care Centre

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

Experience The Art of Happy Living

Take a breather from the hustle and bustle of the city and step into **Awareness Place Well-Being Centre**. Leave all your worries and anxiety behind as you engage in a variety of holistic activities. From Yoga and Taiji to art therapy, vegetarian cooking workshops and Dharma programmes, there is bound to be an activity that suits your needs.

We are situated on the first level of Waterloo Centre, just a 5-minute walk from Bras Basah MRT station.

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



Abbot's Message

Impermanence is at the core of the Buddha's teachings. It is the essential characteristic of all experience and the world, as we know it. With the advances in technology, media and information technology and their pervasiveness, we have been facing lifestyle changes at a speed and magnitude quite different from 2,500 years ago. We live in a world of consumerism and are all spoilt for choice. What is the state of our happiness and well-being?

Rapid and dynamic change brings about both opportunities and challenges. Globalisation presents hope for many people for a far better material life, and fear for those who are not able to get on the fast-moving global economic train and are left behind.

The stress and strain from the need to be current, to keep up with our peers and the latest innovations and trends, to maintain a high-level performance, and respond immediately to the demands of work and family all place great pressure on our emotional and mental well-being. We pander to our sense pleasures and material vanity, sometimes compromising our ethical values and the care and concern for our community and environment.

In a recent book written by American economist, Jeffrey Sachs, he observed that America has become ***"a consumption-driven culture that suffers shortfalls of social trust and compassion and has lost its way"***. If a society is driven and distracted by consumerism and sensory gratification, how genuinely happy can the people be?

How can we in Singapore and Asia avoid becoming "distracted" ourselves as we come under the influence of a rapidly changing world? How can we ensure that the rapid changes do not erode our rich tradition, cultural heritage and our endearing values, like filial piety, gratitude and compassion?

Our children and future generations are the ones who will be riding the material and mental 'tsunamis' beyond the likes of what we are experiencing today.

Research has shown that mindfulness practice helps one to cultivate the mental qualities of calmness, focused attention and clarity – qualities that foster well-being, improved interpersonal relationship and mental resilience. If mindfulness can bring about a better society, then it is the priceless gift we get to give our children to ride the massive waves and stay balanced in such rapidly changing times.

I quote from the Dhammapada: ***"If a person is energetic, mindful, pure in thought, word and deed, if he does everything with care and consideration, restrains his senses; earns his living according to the Dhamma and is not unheedful, then, the fame and fortune of such a mindful person increase."***

May all beings be well and happy.

Ven Sik Kwang Sheng,
Abbot

(This message was extracted from the Abbot's opening speech at the 8th Global Conference on Buddhism.)

*Editor's Note***Cultivating Peace by Understanding the Eight Worldly Concerns**

Happiness is something we all want. It is the very root of why ordinary beings are motivated by the eight worldly concerns: because of the desire for happiness (pg 60).

Yet, great teachers taught that all negative actions arise from being attached to the eight worldly concerns. As long as one remains unaware, suffering arises, and whatever one does becomes non-virtue (pg 63, 58).

A Buddhist practitioner tries to see things as they really are. He remembers that everything is in constant flux, and understands the inherent danger in expecting to find permanence or stability in existence.

Meditatively, he strives to develop mindfulness (pg 34) to reduce the unhappiness or potential disappointments that life brings due to unskillful responses to phenomena: grasping when things are pleasant, developing aversion when they are unpleasant (pg 49, 62).

Thus a discerning practising lay Buddhist is not unduly elated or upset by the eight worldly concerns of gain and loss, honour and dishonour, praise and blame, pleasure and pain (pg 52, 54).

He does not seek solely the happiness of this life (pg 56) or expects too much from life or others. He recognises that it is only natural to have one's share of life's ups and downs due to cause and effect (pg 59), and that attachment to what is pleasant in life can only lead to unhappiness (pg 36, 42).

The heart of spiritual practice is to let go of what is unskillful inwardly through cultivating mindful awareness (pg 43). As we integrate awareness and mindfulness with our everyday activities and interactions, our delusions and sufferings begin to fall away.

Only then can peace truly prevail.



Yours in the Dharma,
Sister Esther Thien

Q: Why does attachment to pleasurable things bring us unhappiness? – I.G.

A: Attachment lays the foundation for dissatisfaction, for no matter how much we have, we always seek more and better. Do you know anyone who is satisfied with what he or she has? Most people aren't: they would like to have more money, go on better vacations, buy more things for their homes and have more attractive clothing. Some people become miserable when they can't afford the things they want. They're attached to their possessions and are sad when a treasured gift is lost or a family heirloom is broken. From morning till night, we crave to see beautiful forms, hear pleasant sounds, enjoy fragrant scents, taste good food and touch pleasing objects. When we do, we're happy. When we don't, or when we are in contact with unpleasant sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tangibles, we're upset. Our feelings and moods go up and down each day, depending on whether we like or dislike the sense objects.

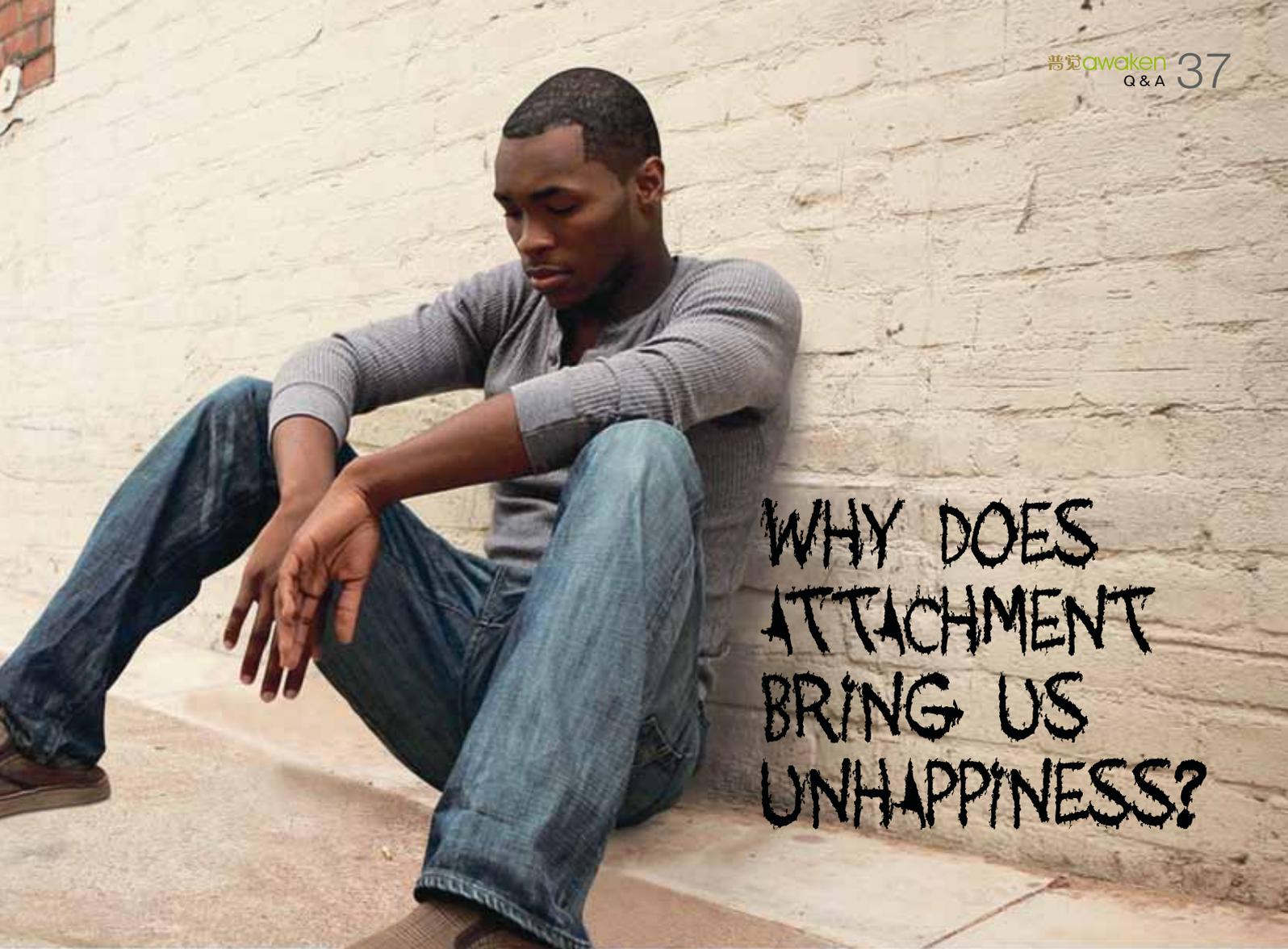
Although we derive pleasure from sense objects, it is limited pleasure. If we examine our experience closely, what brings us pleasure at one time makes us unhappy at another. For example, food is enjoyable when we are hungry, but not when we overeat. Money enables us to have many things, but it also causes us to worry, because we fear it will be stolen or lost. So you see, the things we're attached to don't consistently bring us happiness.

There are many levels of happiness, and pleasure of the senses is one of them. However, we're capable of greater happiness than that experienced by being near beautiful objects and wonderful people. (Editor: Read page 50) Buddhism directs us towards supreme happiness, which comes from transforming our minds. The Buddha observed that when we're attached to sense objects, we eventually become unhappy. The problem isn't in the objects, it's in our way of relating to them.

Attachment is an attitude that overestimates the qualities of an object or person and then clings to it. In other words, we project onto people and things qualities they don't have, or exaggerate what they do have. Attachment is an unrealistic view and thus causes us confusion.



For example, we feel that if we eat tasty food, we would have happiness. Is this assumption correct? If the food were delicious by nature, everyone should like the same food, and the food should always be delicious. But when the food is left out overnight, it becomes stale and undesirable. While previously the food appeared to us to be intrinsically and permanently delicious and we believe that appearance, the fact that it changed shows that the food is neither permanently nor inherently delicious. If happiness were an inherent quality of the food, then the more we ate, the happier we would be. That certainly isn't the case, for when we overeat we feel miserable! If the food contained happiness, then eating



WHY DOES ATTACHMENT BRING US UNHAPPINESS?

the right amount would make us feel eternally satisfied. However, after a few hours, we're hungry again.

So it is important to examine our own experience clearly. We may intellectually understand something without being able to apply it in our daily lives. For example, intellectually we may know happiness doesn't exist inside food. However when the desire for our favourite food arises, our actual perception and expectation of the food is quite different. By recognising this contradiction we'll begin to bring our understanding from our heads into our hearts. We'll be better able to live according to what we know is true, rather than what we unthinkingly assume is true. When we examine our experience, it becomes clear that we have overestimated the qualities of the food and then became attached to it. By eliminating these false projections, we can release the clinging. If we're very picky and always want a fantastic meal, we'll

have little contentment simply because we can't always get what we like.

The Buddha said, "Attachment arises from (wrong) conceptions, so know them as attachment's root. Avoid conceptualisations and then attachment will not arise." Certain basic misconceptions feed our attachment. These are: i) things, people and relationships don't change; ii) they can bring us lasting happiness; iii) they are pure; and iv) they have a real, tangible essence. These misconceptions function whenever we're attached to something or someone.

Ven Thubten Chodron
(excerpted from *Open Heart, Clear Mind*)
www.thubtenchodron.org
www.sravasti.org

3 Refuges & 5 Precepts Preparation Class (English)

Date/Time : 13 Oct, Sun, 9.30am – 11am
Venue : Level 1, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall

3 Refuges & 5 Precepts Ceremony

Date/Time : 13 Oct, Sun, 12.30pm – 2.30pm
Venue : Level 4, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall
Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300 or visit kmspks.org

Classroom Management*

Date/Time : 22 & 29 Oct, Tue, 7.30pm – 9pm
Fee : \$60 (2 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Sujata Cowlagi, Yoga teacher of over ten years' experience. Has taught yoga to organisations, groups, individuals, teachers and schools in India, United States and Singapore. Schools taught include: Singapore American School, Canadian International School, Pasir Ris Primary School. Has also trained teachers from Neev Schools in Bangalore, India and taught yoga to preschoolers.

CNY Vegetarian Cooking Series*

Date/Time : 8 Dec, Sun, 3pm – 5pm (Series 1)
15 Dec, Sun, 3pm – 5pm (Series 2)
Fee : \$60 per session (includes ingredients)
Instructor : Vinitha Ang, a Registered Nurse with more than 20 years of experience in nursing & allied healthcare profession. Trained in nutrition & psychology with a master degree in healthcare management, Vinitha has operated a vegetarian cafe with organic retail business for 5 years. Since 2008, she also regularly conducts Vegan Culinary classes.

Hatha Yoga*

Date/Time : (a) 23 Aug – 1 Nov, Fri, 10.30am – 12nn (Beginners)
(b) 3 Sep – 12 Nov, Tue, 10.30am – 12nn
Fee : \$160 (10 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Ong Ju Lee

Gentle Hatha Yoga*

Date/Time : 3 Sep – 12 Nov, Tue, 3pm – 4.30pm
Fee : \$140 (10 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Ong Ju Lee

Lunch-time Hatha Yoga*

Date/Time : 3 Sep – 12 Nov, Tue, 12.45pm – 1.35pm
Fee : \$120 (10 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Ong Ju Lee

Yoga Flow*

Date/Time : 4 Sep – 6 Nov, Wed, 6.30pm – 7.30pm
Fee : \$140 (10 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Leong Pek Yew

Yin Yoga*

Date/Time : 10 Sep, Tue, 7.30pm – 9.30pm (Session 1)
17 Nov, Sun, 3pm – 5pm (Session 2)
Fee : \$40 per session
Instructor : Ms Jean Yeo, Certified Yoga Trainer with People's Association

Hatha Yoga*

Date/Time : (a) 14 Oct – 23 Dec, Mon, 7.45pm – 9.15pm
(b) 19 Oct – 28 Dec, Sat, 9.15am – 10.45am
Fee : \$160 (10 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Helen Goh

Rainbow Child Yoga*

Date : 8, 15, 22, 29 Sep; 13, 20 Oct; 3, 10 Nov, Sun
Time : 3pm – 4pm (aged 4 to 7),
4pm – 5pm (aged 8 to 11)
Fee : \$180 (8 sessions)
Instructor : Ms Regina Chua, a Yoga Alliance certified Children Yoga Teacher and Kundalini Yoga Teacher.

Children's Art*

Date/Time : 26 Oct – 18 Jan, Sat, 2.30pm – 4.30pm
Fee : \$60 (12 sessions)
Instructor : Mr Soh Chin Bee, graduate from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

Family Art Camp*

Date/Time : 1 Dec, Sun, 3pm – 6pm
Fee : \$50 per pax (includes drawing, painting & sculpture-making materials)
Instructor : Ms Yen Chua, an artist & art therapist. She holds a BFA in Fine Arts & Masters Degrees in Art Therapy & Arts. With more than a decade long experience in conducting art workshops & lectures, she has worked with individuals & groups with social-emotional issues, inmates with addiction habits, children with special needs & teenagers with behavioural problems.

* Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre, Blk 261 Waterloo St #01-42, Waterloo Ctr
Details : Please visit awarenessplace.com, email sem@kmspks.org or call 6336 5067 to register or enquire.
<http://www.facebook.com/APWBC>

Meditation Group Practice

Date/Time : Every Wed, 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Venue : Level 4, Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall
Details : For more information, please call 6849 5300 or visit kmspks.org

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 : 12 & 26 Sep, 10 & 24 Oct, 14 & 28 Nov, Thu 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Venue : Awareness Place Well-Being Centre

Y care

Bright Hill Evergreen Home Outing
Date/Time : 28 Sep, Sat, 9am – 12pm
Venue : KMSPKS

Food Ration Distribution to Low Income Families at Thomson Ville

Date/Time : 8 Sep, Sun, 8.45am – 12pm

Y dharma

A short course on Buddhism conducted by Venerable Chuan Guan catered for youth aged 17 to 25.
Modules : Faith & Confidence, Understanding, Cultivation I and Cultivation II
Date/Time : From 15 Sep, every first and third Sun 2pm - 3.30pm
Fee : \$10 (21 sessions)
Venue : Ven Hong Choon Memorial Hall, Level 1

Sunday@KMSPKS

Time : 10.30am Y cultivation (Youth group weekly cultivation session)
11.30am Yummy lunch
12.15pm Me & My Series
2pm Tea Break
2.15pm Sharing of Dharma

A guided trail through Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

Date/Time : 14 Sep & 9 Nov, Sat, 10.00am – 11.30am

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

An Enriching Experience for All Who Attended the 8th Global Conference on Buddhism

BY | Felicia Choo

About 1200 people attended the *8th Global Conference on Buddhism : In the World of Rapid Change* held on 6 and 7 July 2013 at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery (KMSPKS). The Guest of Honour was Mr SR Nathan, the 6th President of Singapore. The Spiritual Guest of Honour was Ven Sik Kwang Sheng, President of the Singapore Buddhist Federation and Abbot of KMSPKS. Representatives from Buddhist organisations in Bhutan, Indonesia, Malaysia and even Taiwan also showed up for the conference.



Mr Tan Chade-Meng, an engineer by training who became a ‘Jolly Good Fellow’ at Google and designed a popular course for the company called “Search Inside Yourself”. He emphasised attention-training, self-knowledge and self-mastery and inculcation of useful mental habits. Dr Datuk Victor Wee, President of Buddhist Gem Fellowship, Malaysia also gave an enlightening speech

on how Buddhism can continue to flourish with a strategised structure of leadership, management and succession.

Professor Richard Gombrich kicked off the conference with his provocative lecture, via a video recording, on “Challenges to Buddhism: Taking the Buddha Seriously”. He commented on the violence against Muslims in Myanmar, and called on the participants to denounce these anti-Buddhist actions.

Ven Ajahn Brahmali brought the audience back to the basics of Buddhism, reminding Buddhists to place less emphasis on empty rituals and to support the Sangha who play an integral role to the survival of Buddhism. We can do this through our true generosity to them as they live in seclusion, away from the temptations of city life.

Buddhism evolved as it spread to different countries. It has taken on aspects of the popular culture of individual countries, resulting in the inclusion of rituals and objects of veneration. This point was highlighted by Ven Rathanasara Thero when he spoke about the “Evolution of Buddhism in Buddhist Countries”.

Ven Ajahn Brahm, well-known for his wit and humour, introduced a new term to the audience – ‘Kindfulness’. The Buddhist concept of Mindfulness has had moderate success in psychology, medicine and education. It can become more effective when qualities like kindness, compassion and harmlessness are included. The term ‘Kindfulness’ thus combines Mindfulness and Compassion, so that practitioners can show they care in the ‘right now’.

Not all speakers at the conference were monastics. The audience enjoyed a very candid and engaging talk by

Giving practical advice on marriage based on the Noble EightFold Path was Ms Foo Siew Fong, a prominent family law practitioner. Other speakers told inspirational stories of engaging the young and helping the less fortunate around the world. Dr Tan Ho Soon spoke about “The Nalanda Story – a Journey of Transformation” by the Nalanda Buddhist Society’s efforts in providing holistic education with the firm belief that ‘The Heart of Education is Education of the Heart’. Dr Ng Yee Kong told the audience about the Firefly Mission’s community projects to help the materially poorer communities in neighbouring countries. They have reached out to people in more than 10 countries and touched the hearts of tens of thousands.

Ven Thubten Chodron, the Abbess of Sravasti Abbey in Washington State, USA wanted the audience to remember that death is a natural process and gave advice on how Buddhists can make conditions for their loved ones more conducive for an easier transition.

Dr Peter Mack, a certified hypnotherapist, kept the audience engaged when he played actual audio recordings of patients he has helped using past life regression. His work involves helping those who face problems with coping in their present life, because of unfinished drama from a past life.

The 8th Global Conference on Buddhism was a great opportunity to listen to respected Sangha members as well as lay persons as they shared their experiences and thoughts on pertinent Buddhist issues. It was an enriching and rewarding experience, making it a weekend well-spent for all who attended. 🐉

If you are concerned about developing osteoporosis, then strengthen your bones and perk up with our nourishing, calcium-rich organic beverage. You can also detox your system with our highly nutritious version of the fruit rojak.

Black Sesame Walnut Milk 黑芝麻核桃奶



Ingredients:

4 to 5 halves organic walnut (shelled), 1 tbsp organic black sesame, 1 tbsp purple wild yam powder, 1 tbsp organic molasses sugar, 200ml hot filtered water

Method:

1. Rinse walnut and black sesame with filtered water.
2. Place all ingredients in a high power blender and blend till smooth.
3. Optional to serve beverage with three-treasure powder.

用料:

有机核桃 (去壳) 4-5 1/2、有机黑芝麻 1 汤匙、紫色山药粉 1 汤匙、有机黑糖 1 汤匙、热的过滤水 200ml

做法:

1. 把核桃和黑芝麻洗净。
2. 将所有材料放进一个高性能搅拌机搅拌直到光滑。
3. 可另加入素食三宝。

Recipes courtesy of Vinitha from Nutrihub Culinary Art. www.nutrihub.blogspot.com
Call 6336 5067 to sign up for the vegetarian cooking class conducted by the Monastery.

Vegan Fruit Rojak 水果罗惹



Ingredients:

1/2 organic red apple, 1/3 guava, 1 slice pineapple, 100gm Turnip/Bang Kuang, 50gm organic Japanese cucumber, 1 petal Bunga Kantan (Ginger Flower/Torch Ginger Bud; optional; slice finely)

**You can also substitute fruit alternatives such as star fruit or jambu.*

Dressing:

2 tbsps organic raw white sesame butter (Tahini), or raw nut and seed butter, 2 tbsps lemon or lime Juice, 1 tsp agave, 1 tbsp plum jam, 1 tsp liquid amino or Shoyu, 1-2 dash of Cayenne pepper or Paprika powder (Optional)

Toppings:

1 tbsp organic walnuts, 1 tbsp raisins

Method:

1. Wash and cut all the ingredients into wedge slices.
2. Prepare the dressing. Add ingredients and mix well.
3. Sprinkle the walnuts and raisins on top, and serve.

用料:

有机红苹果 1/2、番石榴 1/3、凤梨 1 片、豆薯 100 克、日本黄瓜 50 克、姜花 (可另加) 1 瓣 - 切丝

**您也可以用它其它水果替代如杨桃或水翁。*

沙拉酱:

有机芝麻酱 2 汤匙 (生的坚果或其它坚果酱也可)、柠檬汁或酸柑汁 2 汤匙、糖浆 1 汤匙、李子果酱 1 汤匙、酱油 1 茶匙、红辣椒丝 1-2 或红辣椒粉 (可另加)

添加材料:

有机核桃 1 汤匙, 葡萄干 1 汤匙

做法:

1. 把所有用料洗净后切成块状。
2. 准备好沙拉酱然后加入用料、搅拌均匀。
3. 洒上核桃及葡萄干即可。

By Susan Kaiser Greenland, author of
The Mindful Child.

(www.susankaisergreenland.com)

Asking and answering the five whys is a good place to begin understanding one's motivation. It's as important to ask kids about their motivation as it is to ask adults.

By becoming aware of our motivations, adults and children learn to realise that if a motivation is mean-spirited, they always have the opportunity to shift gears and develop a more positive one. With young children, playing this game allows them to learn how to listen carefully and practise doing it.

One person asks questions and the second answers them. The one who asks, listens carefully to the respondent, and then repeats that response in the form of another question. The person who asks does not judge or offer advice. The aim is for the respondent to discover the answer for himself or herself.

Here's an example:

Q: Why do you want to practise mindfulness with kids?

A: Because I want to help ease children's suffering.

Q: Why do you want to help ease children's suffering? (1st why)

A: Because children are in a lot of pain right now.

Q: Why are children in a lot of pain right now? (2nd why)

A: Because life is too hard.

Q: Why is life too hard? (3rd why)

A: Because the ethical foundation of society has crumbled.

Q: Why has the ethical foundation of society crumbled? (4th why)

A: Because people are scared and looking out only for themselves.

Q: Why are people scared and looking out only for themselves? (5th why)

A: Because they don't see the big picture and that everything is connected.

The 5 Whys





dealing with Praise & Criticism, Pleasure & Pain

As Buddhist students, sometimes we think we already know a lot and want to share what we know with whomever we see. We are so eager to let people know how wise and knowledgeable we are. But we forget to feel for other beings. Such things happen because we know the Dharma only on an intellectual level. We have not digested it internally for it to become wisdom.

We let pride in our knowledge get the better of us. When people praise us, we are happy and “fly to the sky”, thinking “I am a great Dharma practitioner”. When people criticise us, we feel great anger, thinking “How can they look down on me?”. Such are the effects of the worldly concerns staining our minds, preventing us from cultivating the pure Dharma.

What, then, is Dharma cultivation?

Only by being aware of one’s thoughts, can a true Dharma cultivator then know what to practise and what to abandon: To be like the Buddha who gave up all his riches to come down to the ground to be with all beings, and to practise humility, compassion and renunciation.

- Vera Lim, aged 34, Business adviser

The Buddha said, “Pain is certain, suffering is optional. If by leaving a small pleasure one sees a great pleasure, let a wise man leave the small pleasure, and look to the great.”

I believe that pain is related to the body, heart and mind. It can also be a lifecycle which we may have to go through in life. For example, mothers have to endure bodily pain when giving birth. The mind suffers depression or stress, and the heart feels empty. All sentient beings experience pain, including ourselves. We should minimise pain rather than cause ourselves more harm and suffering through ignorant ways.

Everyone likes pleasure. But anyone who is overly attached to pleasure may suffer unnecessary trouble and negative consequences. For example, some people find pleasure in buying branded stuff and end up hurting someone with their words or actions. Pleasure will be more meaningful if it benefits others.

- Eddy Ho, aged 32, Executive



Mindful Eating



Healthy Eating

What does Buddhism say about mindful eating? How do we apply it in the contemporary world where overeating is an issue? Allow Ven Shi Faxun to clarify.

Mindfulness, as a concept and practice, occupies a significant place in the overall scheme of Buddhist meditative training. It is practised and emphasised in all Buddhist traditions, Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana, and is considered a key aspect of the path to realisation and liberation. Mindfulness is translated from the Pali word *Sati*. While it is translated as mindfulness in English, it is translated into Chinese as 念, meaning the ‘present heart or mind’. Thus it has the connotation of awareness, introspection and reflection, as well as recollection depending on the context it is being used. For example, to place the ‘present heart’ on what one is doing (that is to be aware), to place the ‘present heart’ on what one is thinking (that is to reflect), and to place the ‘present heart’ on the teachings of the Buddha (that is to recollect or remember).

“Right mindfulness” (Pali: *samma-sati*) is one aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path leading to an

extinction of suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path is traditionally divided into three interdependent divisions – ethics (right action, speech and livelihood), concentration and meditation (right mindfulness, effort, meditation), and wisdom (right view and understanding).

In right mindfulness, a prefix “right” (Pali: *samma*) is added to “mindfulness” (Pali: *sati*). In Buddhism, *samma* has the sense of skilful and wholesome, leading towards genuine happiness and ultimately the awakening and liberation of beings.

Right mindfulness is a key aspect on the path of liberation. The eighth century scholar Shantideva, wrote in *A Guide to Bodhisattva way of Life*, chapter five on guarding the mind:

*Those who wish to guard their practice
Should very attentively guard their minds
For those who do not guard their minds
Will be unable to guard their practice.*

Shantideva maintained that the cultivation of mindfulness is central to leading an awakened life. The “practice” which he was concerned in the text is of course the bodhisattva’s training, however it could also be applied in daily life to healthy eating. Without mindfulness, he insisted it is impossible to achieve or maintain our “practice”. This is because it is possible to remain utterly inattentive to one’s own lifestyle, failing to take note of situations that call for skilful response (that is having sense restraint). One might even fail to recognise one’s eating attitude and habit even if one is obsessed with the idea of healthy eating. Recently, nutritionist Dr Lilian Chung applied the art of mindfulness from Buddhism to bring about healthy eating. Instead of a prescribed health menu, nutritionists now begin to see mindfulness as an important element to bring about healthy eating.

Traditionally, mindfulness is a practice of introspective withdrawal. In recent decades, there is a widespread application of mindfulness in the West where Buddhism means energetic engagement. Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh coined the term “engaged Buddhism”; he thinks that the way to achieve enlightened freedom from the confines of the physical realm comes directly from how consciously we engage with it. In his book *Peace is Every Step*, he states that mindfulness must be engaged.

Once there is seeing, there must be acting. Otherwise, what is the use of seeing? We must be aware of the real problems of the world. Then, with mindfulness, we will know what to do and what not to do to be of help.

We are living in an era where more and more people are overeating and getting overweight. Obesity has become a trend and a health issue. According to Venerable Hanh, obesity is created by unmindful production and unmindful consumption. He introduces the teaching of Mindful Eating as a response to the suffering of obesity. He skilfully phrased it as follows:

“Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful consumption, I vow to ingest only items that preserve peace, well-being and joy in my body, in my consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of my family and society.”

When one is aware of suffering caused by unmindful consumption, one begins to recognise exactly what to consume and what not to consume in order to keep our bodies, our minds, and the earth healthy and not cause suffering for ourselves and for others.

Mindfulness means to be “aware”. We need to be aware that being overweight will increase the risk of many health problems such as heart attack, hypertension etc, causing suffering to individuals,



family, society and our world as a whole. We need to be aware of the root cause of the problem (craving) and the elements (consumerism and advertising) that contribute to it. We need to question ourselves, in terms of food advertisements: “Who is doing the saying?”, “What is being said?” and “Through what channel?”

Traditionally, religion had great influence over society and religious scriptures provided the guidelines to conduct our lives – what to eat, how to eat, when to eat, how much to eat. Today, the role of religion has weakened tremendously, and capitalist values have invaded almost every society. David Loy highlighted that ‘our present economic system institutionalises greed’, which nourishes the seeds of desire and indulgence. In this capitalist era, we are constantly bombarded with a myriad of persuasive advertisements. A quick survey on food advertisements reveals that “indulgence” is constantly used as a slogan and catch word. These advertisements persuade us to crave and indulge in unhealthy food and drinks such as sweetened beverages and desserts loaded with saturated fat and sugar. While the advertisers promote “indulgence”, from the Buddhist perspective “indulgence” is non-virtuous and will bring suffering to self and others.

In essence, mindfulness enables us to be aware of what the advertisers say and check if what the advertisers said will lead us to genuine happiness so that we do not buy into the consumerist culture and end up overeating or eating unhealthy foods.

In addition, we need to be aware of how we eat. The pace of life in modern living is so fast that we need to be multi-taskers. We are eating while using our iPhone and iPad instead of eating with mindfulness. We need to slow down, be in the present moment and stay engaged with the food we eat. This “simple awareness” is commonly known as “bare awareness” in classical Buddhist scriptures. It is a bare and exact registering of object (in this case the food and taste) without concepts and judgements.

By slowing down and staying in the present moment, such moment-to-moment awareness enables us to de-automise our impulse towards food. It enables us to relearn how to eat and change our bad eating habits. We begin to eat with awareness; truly tasting and enjoying the food. This is the type of joy that brings genuine happiness. It is nourishing and helps us to remain clear and lucid. We need this kind of joy rather than the pleasure arising from indulgence promoted by the advertisers. Mindfulness enables



one to realise that indulging in eating brings toxins into the mind and body which may ultimately create suffering to self and others.

Mindfulness has the element of “protective awareness” where it acts as a “gatekeeper” that exercises sense restraint over the stimuli of the six sense bases. With mindful eating, we begin to look deeply at what we eat and why we eat, which we have taken for granted. We begin to see our desire and guard against it. It then de-automises our impulse to the stimuli (food), thereby empowering us to free ourselves from being “enslaved” to the craving of certain food. Mindfulness has also the element of “introspective awareness”, a form of vigilance where the mind directs its attention to wholesome and skilful states. With mindfulness, one begins to develop the power to choose healthy food and eat moderately.

Mindfulness helps us recollect the Buddha's teachings to bring about wholesome thoughts and images to restructure the mind positively. In the *Samyutta Nikaya*, the Buddha described *sati* thus: And what, *bhikkhus* [monks], is the faculty of mindfulness? Here, *bhikkhus*, the noble disciple is mindful, possessing supreme mindfulness and discretion, one who remembers and recollects what was done and said long before."



The Theravada monastic will recite and reflect on the following verse before eating:

Wisely reflecting, I will take this food. Not for fun, not for pleasure, not for fattening, not for intoxication, but for the maintenance and nourishment of this body. Thinking thus, I will allay hunger and not give rise to new feelings of greed through overeating. Reflecting wisely, may I live comfortably and lead the holy blameless life.

In the Chinese Mahayana tradition, the following Five Reflections are contemplated:

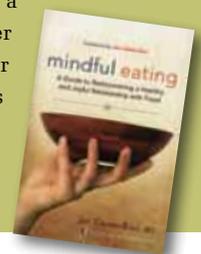
1. Consider the amount of effort and work that went into preparing the food and the sources (计功多少, 量彼来处)
2. Reflect on one's cultivation, consider whether one is worthy of this offering (忖己德行, 全缺应供)

3. Guard against the arising of defilements such as greed, anger or delusion while consuming the food (防心离过, 贪等为宗)
4. Consider food and drinks as medicine to allay the disease of hunger and thirst (正事良药, 为疗形枯)
5. For the sake of cultivation, we take this food (为成道业, 故受此食)

The Buddha advised his disciples to treat food and drinks as medicine. He advised them not to increase or decrease its quantity based on taste, but rather to consume the "right quantity". Just as medicine can heal sickness, food and drinks are meant to relieve thirst and hunger. Such reflections enable us to stay focused on our "practice" of eating healthily and moderately.

Eating with these reflections, we begin to eat with right understanding. We understand that we eat to nourish the body, and not for sensual pleasure. Thus we eat with moderation. Mindful eating enables us to step back and take a look inward at our innermost desire or craving which is the root cause of the problems. In addition, we learn to eat with gratitude and compassion. We appreciate that food is a gift from Mother Earth and are aware of the tremendous hard work and loving-kindness that have gone into preparing the food. In this way, not only do we get nourished physically, but also mentally and spiritually. 🌿

Editor: To have a more in-depth understanding of mindful eating, you can also read the book *Mindful Eating* by Dr Jan Chozen Bays, a paediatrician and meditation teacher who has taught mindful eating for more than 20 years. The book includes a CD of guided exercises and is available for purchase at Awareness Place stores.



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

Dear Reader,

"The Gift of the Dharma Exceeds All Other Gifts."

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

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

For overseas readers, please send bankdrafts in Singapore currency. Please include S\$10 for bank charges. Please note that the monastery is NOT able to accept cheques in foreign currency.

You can also donate online via eNets or Giro at <http://kmspks.org/about/donate>

If you have any enquiries, please call 6849 5300 or e-mail: awaken@kmspks.org

Name: Chinese Name:

Gender: Age: Highest educational level:

Address:

Occupation:

Tel: (H) (O) (Hp)

Email:

Amount: (Cash*/ Cheque No:)

Do you require an official receipt? (Yes* / No) *Please delete where appropriate

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

Where did you obtain this magazine?

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.



Get your free copy from these outlets:

SINGAPORE BUDDHIST FEDERATION
59 Lorong 24A, Geylang S(398583)

SINGAPORE BUDDHIST LODGE
17 Kim Yam Road S(239329)

TAI PEI BUDDHIST CENTRE
2 Lavender Street S(338823)

CI YAN VEGETARIAN HEALTH FOOD
8/10 Smith Street S(058917)

AWARENESS PLACE
Blk 231 Bain Street #01-63
Bras Brasah Complex S(180231)

THE HERBS HOME
101 Upper Cross Street #02-55
People's Park Centre S(058357)

*whilst stocks last



Seeking Fulfilling Careers?



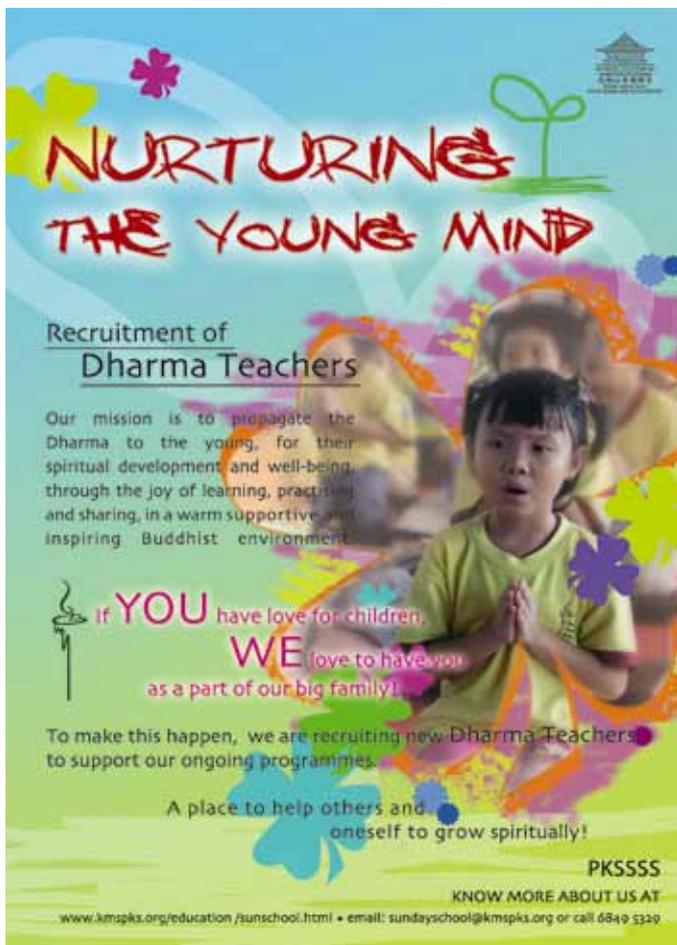
Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

(KMSPKS) is an established Buddhist organisation with a vision to be the exemplary spiritual and service sanctuary for the spread and practice of Buddhism; one that is guided by compassion and wisdom to enrich the lives of the community at large.

If you are passionate about joining us in realising our vision and take pride in producing great work, we welcome you to join our big family.

You may send your resume to: hrdept@kmspks.org OR drop by our HR Office @ 88 Bright Hill Road, Singapore 574117 between 9am to 4.30pm (Mon-Fri), except public holidays.

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



NURTURING THE YOUNG MIND

Recruitment of Dharma Teachers

Our mission is to propagate the Dharma to the young, for their spiritual development and well-being, through the joy of learning, practicing and sharing, in a warm supportive and inspiring Buddhist environment.

If YOU have love for children, WE love to have you as a part of our big family!

To make this happen, we are recruiting new Dharma Teachers to support our ongoing programmes.

A place to help others and oneself to grow spiritually!

PKSSSS
KNOW MORE ABOUT US AT
www.kmspks.org/education/sunschool.html • email: sundayschool@kmspks.org or call 6849 5320

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
Dharma Propagation Division
Awaken Publishing & Design
88 Bright Hill Road
Singapore 574117

***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.

ENHANCE your campus life with Buddhism

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

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

Nanyang Polytechnic Buddhist Society
geocities.com/nybuddhistociety
NYPSB_Membership@yahoo.com.sg

Ngee Ann Polytechnic Buddhist Society
npsbuddhistociety.blogspot.com

NTU Buddhist Society
clubs.ntu.edu.sg/buddhist
buddhist@ntu.edu.sg

NUS Buddhist Society
nusbs.org.sg
president@nusbs.org.sg

SIM Buddhist Bhavana Club
sim.buddhistbhavana@yahoo.com

Singapore Polytechnic Buddhist Society
spbs-act.blogspot.com
spbs_ssf@gmail.com

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

For more information on Buddhist activities for youths, please visit bvtm.at.kongpa.org/youth/



Ven Sangye Khadro speaks to Poh Yong Hui on why the eight worldly concerns can only lead one to unhappiness.

Awaken: It is said to be natural for people to be influenced by the eight worldly concerns. Is there anything wrong with this? Is it wrong for me to be happy when I get what I want?

Venerable: The problem with these eight worldly concerns is that most people in the world—even some people who are supposedly “religious” or “spiritual” — are attached to them, obsessed with them, so most of their actions are geared towards getting the four pleasant things (material gain, pleasure, fame and praise) and avoiding the four unpleasant things (loss, unpleasant experiences, bad reputation and blame or criticism). This attitude of attachment, or obsessiveness, naturally leads to problems:

- We can't always get what we want, so if we are attached to gain, fame, etc, we will naturally

Understanding the Eight Worldly Concerns

be disappointed, upset, and may even become suicidal if we don't get them. Therefore, we will experience a lot of unhappiness in this life; our mind will be like a yo-yo, always swinging up and down.

- Due to attachment to these eight worldly concerns, our actions or behaviours may be unwise, e.g. we may lie, cheat, manipulate people, act pretentiously and even steal or kill etc, in order to get them. As a result, we may cause a lot of suffering, both to ourselves and others, in this life. And the karma we create

through such actions will lead to even more suffering in future lives.

- By indulging in attachment to the four pleasant things and aversion to the four unpleasant ones, our attachment and aversion just get stronger and more pervasive. These attitudes are major obstacles to the attainment of higher states: rebirths in higher realms, nirvana and the full enlightenment of a Buddha.
- Attachment to the eight worldly concerns can pollute our Dharma practice. For example, someone may study and meditate with the goal of becoming a famous Dharma teacher who makes lots of money, has lots of disciples, travels all over the world, etc. If we study and practise with such an attitude, our practice only becomes the cause of samsara rather than liberation and enlightenment.

So the problem isn't simply being happy when we have some nice experience. The problem is *being attached* to the nice experience, and to whatever object seems to give us that experience. Attachment is a grasping mind; it wants to hold on and not let go; it wants things to be permanent, when in fact they are impermanent. So it is unrealistic. It is also self-centred, concerned only about *my* happiness, *my* pleasure, etc.

It's good to work on decreasing attachment, for instance by reminding ourselves of the impermanent nature of things—both the object we're attached to, and the pleasure we experience with it. Then we can learn to be happy with things without being attached to them. We can also decrease attachment by sharing our happiness with others, by learning to be more generous. Or when we have a pleasant experience, such as enjoying a nice meal, we can think of other people and beings who may not be so fortunate as we are, such as those who are hungry, poor, etc, and imagine sharing this pleasant experience with them.

Awaken: Is not wanting to be affected by the eight worldly concerns a sort of affliction, too?

Venerable: Not necessarily; it depends on *why* one wants this. If someone understands the faults and disadvantages of these eight worldly concerns — how

they lead to problems in this life and future lives, and how they hinder our attainment of nirvana and enlightenment — and on the basis of that, wants to overcome his or her attachment to the four pleasant things and aversion to the four unpleasant things, then this is a wise, skilful attitude.

On the other hand, someone may try to avoid them in order to look like a good Buddhist and win others' respect. That is definitely an afflicted attitude; it's part of the eight worldly concerns: attachment to fame and praise, and wanting to avoid bad reputation and criticism. So we need to check our attitude by asking ourselves: "Why do I want to be free from these eight worldly concerns?"

Awaken: How can we transform our minds, and not be influenced by the eight worldly concerns?

Venerable: First of all, I think it is good to contemplate the faults of being overly affected by the eight worldly concerns, such as the faults I mentioned earlier. Try to find examples of these faults in your own experiences and the experiences of others, and get to the point where you see for yourself that it's better to reduce your attachments and aversions. That way, you yourself *want* to change your mind, rather than doing it because the Buddha or your teacher said you should.

The usual remedies to the eight worldly concerns are to contemplate impermanence (as mentioned earlier) and also death: "We are all going to die one day, and in fact death could happen any day, any moment. When I die, I will leave behind everyone and everything—my money, property, possessions, job, reputation, fame, everything. I won't be able to take even one cent with me. The only thing I will take to the next life is the karma I have created, and if I have created negative karma due to attachment and aversion, I will be in big trouble!"

I also find it helpful to do a "reality check". For example, you may find that your mind is saying, "If only I have a million dollars, or if only I am famous, I would be so happy." Check by asking yourself: are all the rich and famous people really happy? No, they are not; they have problems too, sometimes even bigger problems than we do. Many of them rely on drugs or alcohol to drown their sorrows. And one day they too will die and have to leave everything behind.

Another teaching I found helpful was an explanation about the four different kinds of happiness in Ayya Khema's book *Being Nobody, Going Nowhere*. The Buddha taught these four kinds of happiness: 1) sense pleasures (looking at beautiful objects, hearing nice sounds, etc); 2) divine happiness (from cultivating loving-kindness, ethics, etc); 3) the happiness arising from concentration; and 4) the happiness arising from attaining wisdom. Each type of successive happiness is better than the previous ones: more sublime, more satisfying, more long-lasting. If we do not want to get stuck with only the first type of happiness, unable to attain the other three, then we need to overcome our attachment to sense pleasures, and that means the eight worldly concerns.

If you google "eight worldly concerns" or "eight worldly dharmas", you can find some nice material on this topic, from talks by Ven Thubten Chodron and Ven Tenzin Palmo.

Awaken: Failure is part and parcel of life. How can Buddhist practice help one deal with failure?

Venerable: Of course, it is natural to be upset when we experience failure, but it's not helpful to get stuck, or bogged down, in being upset. It's better to do something to transform the situation into something positive or constructive. I like this piece of advice from Shantideva, in his text *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*:

"Why be unhappy about something if it can be remedied? And what is the use of being unhappy about something if it can't be remedied?"

In other words, we can check: "Is there something I can do? Can I try again? Can I seek advice from others that will help me do better the next time?" If there *is* something we can do to remedy the problem, we should do it, rather than just sitting around feeling miserable. On the other hand, if there is nothing that can be done, it's better to simply accept the situation. Being unhappy will just make things worse. It's also helpful to think of the many other people in the world who experience failure; you can empathise with them, and do the practice of "taking and giving" meditation, which is explained in many books, such as Pema Chodron's *Start Where You Are*.

Awaken: How do we achieve success in life without getting caught up with wanting fame, happiness and praise?

Venerable: It's helpful to recognise that even if we achieve fame, self-centred happiness, praise, etc, there's no guarantee we will be truly happy. We may have all these things externally but still be miserable and insecure internally. It's better to have an altruistic motivation for the things we do, i.e. wanting to benefit others, to make others happy. With that motivation, we will find real satisfaction, whether we are rich and famous, or poor and unknown. I read about a study done by the Harvard Business School that found that people obtain more happiness and satisfaction when they gave something to another person than when they gave something to themselves. Loving-kindness is truly the best way to be happy!

We can also remind ourselves how much we are dependent on others: we would not be able to achieve any success if it weren't for the many other people who have helped us in our life, such as our parents, family members, teachers, friends, colleagues, not to mention the people who produce our food, clothes, housing, phones, computers, etc. We would be nobody, nowhere, without them! That helps us to be humble and grateful to others, instead of being puffed up with pride and a big ego.

Awaken: How should we check if we have attachment or not?

Venerable: People sometimes think that they are free of attachment, then one day they have an experience that makes them really upset — for instance losing, or almost losing, a person or object — only then they realise they still have attachment. So you can try to imagine such a situation and check how you react.

It's helpful to travel, because if you go to another country where you don't have the kind of food you like to eat, the kind of bed you like to sleep in, or the nice clean bathrooms you like to use, and you find yourself feeling unhappy, upset and wanting to run straight home, then that's a sure sign of attachment! 

Lokavipatti Sutta:

THE FAILINGS OF THE WORLD

"Monks, these eight worldly conditions spin after the world,
and the world spins after these eight worldly conditions.

Which eight? Gain, loss, status, disgrace, censure, praise, pleasure and pain.

These are the eight worldly conditions that spin after the world,
and the world spins after these eight worldly conditions.

"For an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person there arise
gain, loss, status, disgrace, censure, praise, pleasure and pain.

For a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones there also arise
gain, loss, status, disgrace, censure, praise, pleasure and pain.

So what difference, what distinction, what distinguishing factor is there between the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones and the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person?"

"For us, Lord, the teachings have the Blessed One as their root, their guide and their arbitrator. It would be good if the Blessed One himself would explicate the meaning of this statement. Having heard it from the Blessed One, the monks will remember it."

"In that case, monks, listen and pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, Lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said, "Gain arises for an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person. He does not reflect, 'Gain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful and subject to change.' He does not discern it as it actually is.

"Loss arises... Status arises... Disgrace arises... Censure arises... Praise arises... Pleasure arises...

Pain arises. He does not reflect, 'Pain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful and subject to change.'

He does not discern it as it actually is.

"His mind remains consumed with the gain. His mind remains consumed with the loss... with the status... the disgrace... the censure... the praise... the pleasure. His mind remains consumed with the pain.

"He welcomes the arisen gain and rebels against the arisen loss.

He welcomes the arisen status and rebels against the arisen disgrace.

He welcomes the arisen praise and rebels against the arisen censure.

He welcomes the arisen pleasure and rebels against the arisen pain.

As he is thus engaged in welcoming and rebelling, he is not released from birth, ageing or death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses or despairs.

He is not released, I tell you, from suffering and stress.

"Now, gain arises for a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones.

He reflects, 'Gain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful, and subject to change.'

He discerns it as it actually is.

"Loss arises... Status arises... Disgrace arises... Censure arises... Praise arises... Pleasure arises...

"Pain arises. He reflects, 'Pain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful and subject to change.' He discerns it as it actually is.

"His mind does not remain consumed with the gain. His mind does not remain consumed with the loss... with the status... the disgrace... the censure... the praise... the pleasure. His mind does not remain consumed with the pain.

"He does not welcome the arisen gain, or rebel against the arisen loss.
He does not welcome the arisen status, or rebel against the arisen disgrace.
He does not welcome the arisen praise, or rebel against the arisen censure.
He does not welcome the arisen pleasure, or rebel against the arisen pain.
As he thus abandons welcoming and rebelling, he is released from birth, ageing and death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses and despairs.
He is released, I tell you, from suffering and stress.

"This is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor between the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones and the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person."

*Gain and loss,
Status and disgrace,
Censure and praise,
Pleasure and pain:
these conditions among human beings are
inconstant,
impermanent,
subject to change.*

*Knowing this, the wise person,
mindful,
ponders these changing conditions.
Desirable things
don't charm the mind,
undesirable ones
bring no resistance.*

*His welcoming and rebelling
are scattered,
gone to their end,
do not exist.*

*Knowing the dustless, sorrowless state,
he discerns rightly,
has gone, beyond becoming,
to the Further Shore.* ♪

*Translated from Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
Access to Insight, 2010.*



What are the Eight Worldly Concerns?

Understanding and avoiding the eight worldly concerns is an important part of Buddhist practice. A well-known master once said that if we can avoid or turn away from the eight worldly concerns in our spiritual practice, we reduce the suffering we experience. All the problems of our lives are caused by the thought of the eight worldly concerns.

The eight worldly concerns or eight worldly dharmas describe the ceaseless activities we develop or are involved in to obtain short-term pleasures, which often do not even result in pleasure or happiness. In short, they are concerned with getting what we want, and avoiding what we do not want; wanting (immediate) happiness, and not wanting unhappiness or suffering; wanting fame, and not wanting obscurity; wanting praise, and not wanting blame.

Whatever problems we experience—from insomnia to thoughts of suicide—arise from attachment. If we thoroughly investigate, we will see that every problem that we have ever faced comes from this thought of clinging to the happiness and desire for temporal pleasures and comfort of this life.

Ruled by the thought of the eight worldly concerns, we become their slave and are no different from animals or insects, which too have in the very depths of their hearts the comfort of this life. As slaves to our attachment, we are never satisfied with what we have. We are always looking for more and better. This causes us to engage in much negative karma with the body, and keeps us bound to the wheel of birth and death, circling always in the six different realms of samsara.

It is very easy to do Dharma activities with the thought of the eight worldly concerns. If our motivation is worldly concern, even if we are reciting

prayers or meditating, it becomes a worldly activity. It is *like* Dharma but not Dharma. Thus, a person who ‘practises’ Dharma with a motivation of worldly concern is *like* a Dharma practitioner but not a real Dharma practitioner. On the other hand, worldly activities when done with altruistic motivation can become pure Dharma.

To practise the Dharma means to renounce all the suffering of this and all future lives; renouncing the thought of the eight worldly concerns. Without renouncing this life, nobody can practise pure Dharma.

Renouncing this life doesn’t mean leaving everything behind, or giving away all our possessions. It is not dependent on physical things; it is a mental change. It is renouncing the attachment to the eight worldly concerns.

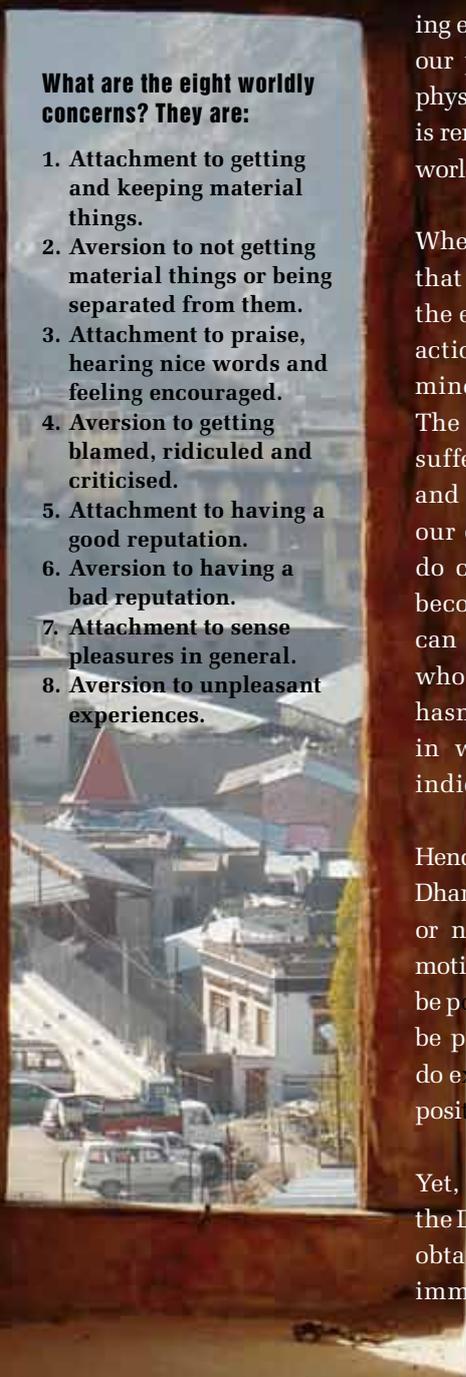
When we live with the pure thought that is not mixed with the thought of the eight worldly concerns, each single action becomes Dharma, and our mind is living purely in the Dharma. The deeper we see the cause of our suffering, the more our wisdom grows and the more we can apply Dharma in our everyday life. Then any action we do can become a Dharma action, can become a remedy to delusions. Nobody can tell from external appearances who has renounced this life and who hasn’t. Renunciation is a state of mind, in which external appearance is no indication at all.

Hence, any action can either be pure Dharma or worldly dharma, virtuous or non-virtuous. It all depends on the motivation. Enjoying sense pleasures can be positive or negative; having wealth can be positive or negative. Two people can do exactly the same thing and one can be positive and the other negative.

Yet, for the one who practises and lives the Dharma, he or she will always easily obtain what is needed, and experience immediate peace and happiness. ☺

What are the eight worldly concerns? They are:

1. Attachment to getting and keeping material things.
2. Aversion to not getting material things or being separated from them.
3. Attachment to praise, hearing nice words and feeling encouraged.
4. Aversion to getting blamed, ridiculed and criticised.
5. Attachment to having a good reputation.
6. Aversion to having a bad reputation.
7. Attachment to sense pleasures in general.
8. Aversion to unpleasant experiences.



Of Haze, Rain and Sunshine

BY | Ven Shi Chuan Guan

For a good part of June, there was one word that dominated all our conversations: haze. Singapore, a small island nation separated from its hinterland by the Johor Straits (in other countries, this is really like the size of a river or large stream!), is cradled between peninsular Malaysia to the north, and the Indonesian island of Sumatra to the south. For the past few weeks in June, we had experienced haze from the forest fires in Sumatra island with PSI levels going as high as 371 and on one day peaking past 400!

Soon, Facebook and Whatsapp were flooded with updates on the PSI levels, with warnings and advisory notes about respiratory safety. Very quickly, people also started complaining about the haze, about our neighbouring country, about the government etc.

For the most part, I was actually oblivious to the haze. I am indoors mostly and when I do give talks in the evening, transport is provided, so it is relatively harder to notice the haze. As a matter of fact, I was wondering why the sunrise from Buddhist Library was so beautiful these days. Then my students started asking me about the haze and I was like, “Ah yes, the haze!”

With N95 and surgical masks being passed around and complaints about the haze abounding, a few observations and reflections came to me. Not to sound callous, but the haze kind of made life quite ‘exciting’! Suddenly, Singapore as a nation was facing a crisis together. A part of me felt like I was in a movie set when I went outdoors. There was this sense of wonder when I saw familiar places in a new light or haze! It was as if the haze had transported the whole nation into a new realm, a new place, without us moving an inch.

I felt like I was a tourist and the hazy look reminded me of the yesteryears in Taipei, especially the charred smell. If the haze had no smell or negative

health impact, it could have been a welcome change. Just a week before the haze, the media had been going on and on about the town council. Then, all that receded into the distance with the haze.

With this haze crisis, we suddenly had a common ‘problem’ that in a way united us. No more awkward lift moments or silent conversation gaps. Anyone could say “The haze is quite bad, isn’t it?” The haze also gave us a convenient excuse to break out of our Singaporean-Asian straight-face culture to show our care and concern to one another, “Drink more water, be careful, okay?”, “Do you need some N95 or surgical masks?” The haze and masks had in one blanketing sweep, achieved what our nation had tried so hard to get us to do: to be more gracious and kind.

Today, I can finally see a clear day with sunny skies. While we enjoy a day or two of respite from the haze, and take a breather from our complaints, perhaps we should also remember those hundreds, thousands, and millions of animals, birds and insects that were harmed or burnt alive.

Perhaps we can and should focus not just on the haze, but also on this massive collateral harm to the ecosystem. The haze went away a few weeks later, but the lives lost can never return and the acres of forest cleared are not so easily restored.

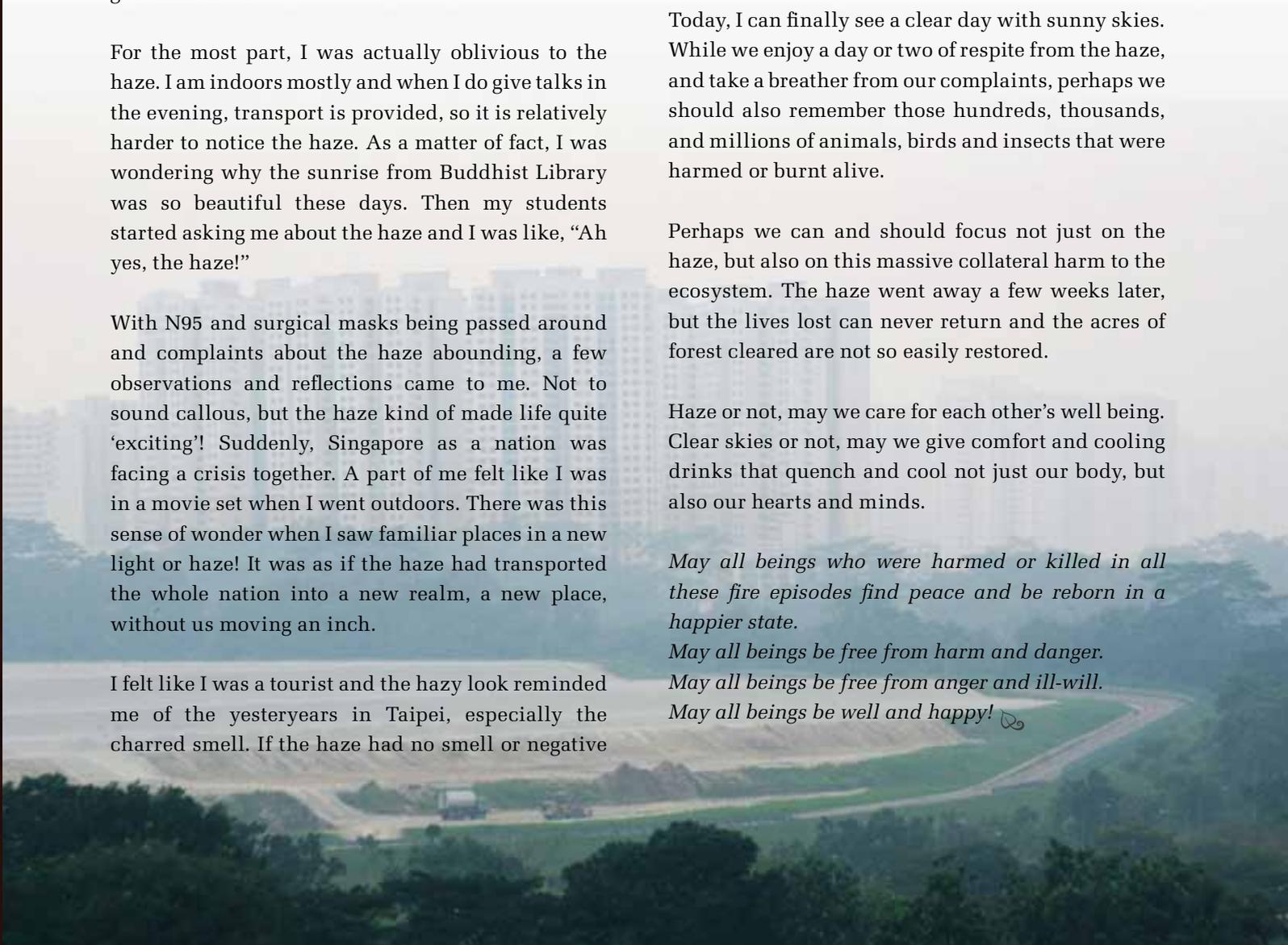
Haze or not, may we care for each other’s well being. Clear skies or not, may we give comfort and cooling drinks that quench and cool not just our body, but also our hearts and minds.

May all beings who were harmed or killed in all these fire episodes find peace and be reborn in a happier state.

May all beings be free from harm and danger.

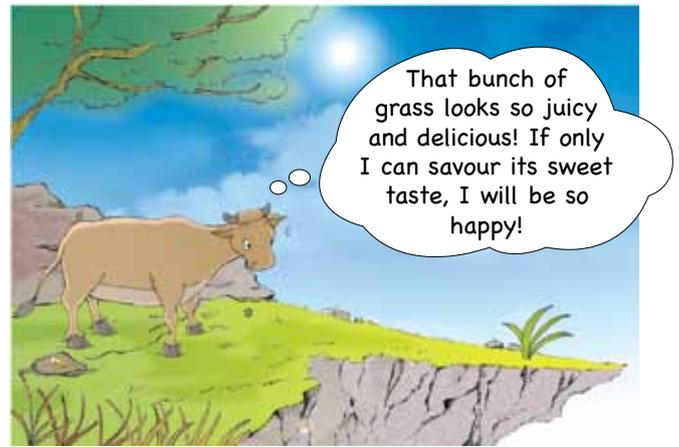
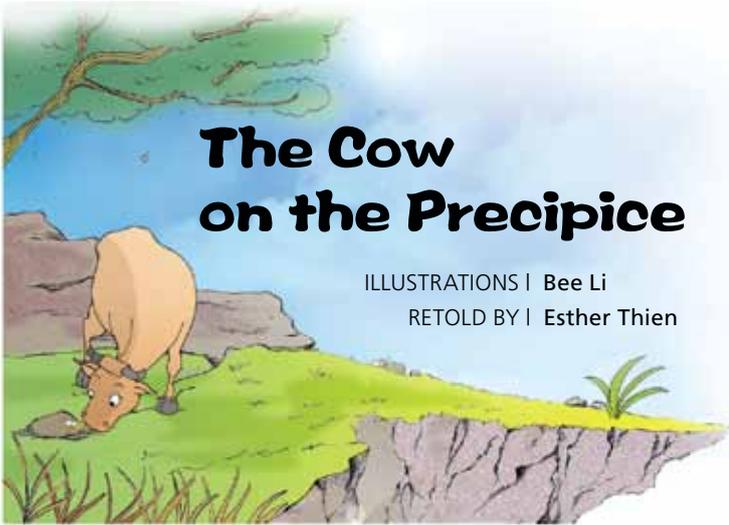
May all beings be free from anger and ill-will.

May all beings be well and happy! 🍀



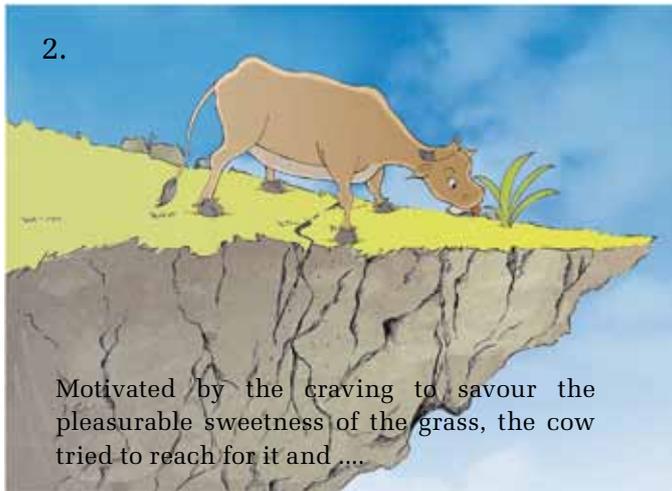
The Cow on the Precipice

ILLUSTRATIONS | Bee Li
RETOLD BY | Esther Thien



1. Once, a cow saw a small bunch of lush green grass growing near a precipice.

2.



Motivated by the craving to savour the pleasurable sweetness of the grass, the cow tried to reach for it and

3.

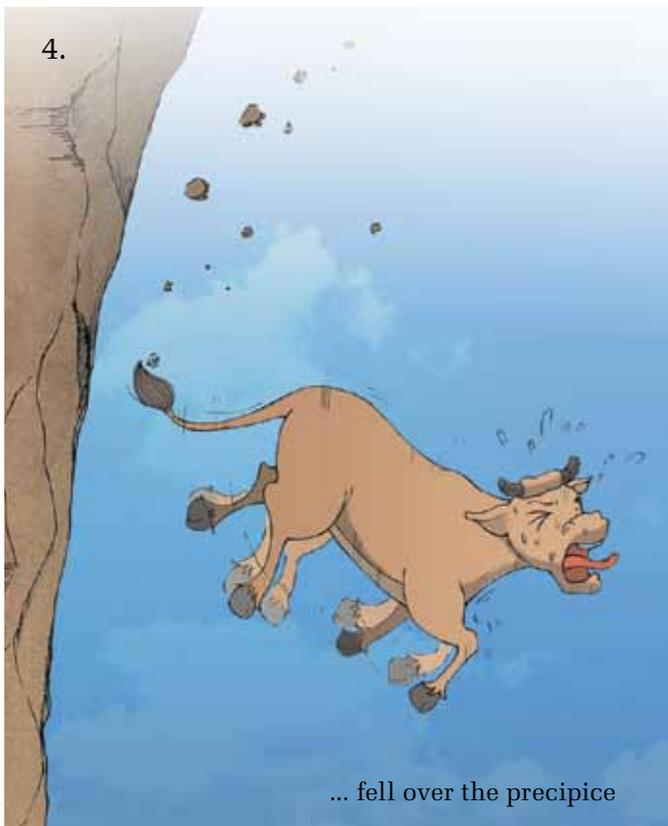


A worldly being who seeks only the happiness of this life is just like the cow. His attachment brings him suffering instead of the happiness he expects. Attached to all sorts of pleasurable experiences, he runs after them without seeing the danger, falls and dies.

When we are attached and solely focused on seeking the happiness of this life, whatever we do only becomes non-virtue. Just like the cow that falls over the precipice while attempting to savour the happiness of the bunch of grass, we are completely deceived by attachment. Even though we want to be happy, the result of our non-virtuous actions is only rebirth in the lower realms.

So be mindful of the eight worldly concerns in your daily life, strive to abandon them and perform the ten virtues instead.

4.



... fell over the precipice

5.... killing itself





RETOLD BY | Wei K. Yong & Esther Thien

The Turtle that Saved a City

Once upon a time, there was a wealthy merchant who venerated the Triple Gem and was very kind and compassionate towards all living beings. One day, while walking in the marketplace, he saw a turtle being put up for sale.

Taking pity on it, he paid a high price for it and brought it home. He cleaned the turtle and tended to its wounds. After the turtle had recovered, he brought it to the river and released it.

A few years later, in the middle of the night, the merchant heard someone pounding on his door. Upon checking, he discovered that it was the turtle that he had previously saved from the marketplace.

The turtle had come to warn him of an impending flood and advised him to leave his home urgently. On learning about the imminent disaster, the merchant quickly informed the king and all the people in the city to move to higher ground. In this way, everyone was saved.

This parable illustrates the importance of showing kindness to others. Instead of being swayed by the eight worldly concerns, especially of our own personal gain and loss due to self-grasping, we must always be mindful of the sufferings of other living beings.

Bringing forth this virtuous mind of compassion and empathy, not only do we benefit others, ultimately we will also benefit ourselves and attain the fruits of happiness and enlightenment.



Practising the Dharma

RETOLD BY | Esther Thien

Once, there was a man who decided that he was going to practise the Dharma. So he started to circumambulate. His teacher came along and said, “Oh, it’s very good that you are circumambulating the stupa but it would be better if you practise the Dharma.”

So he thought, “I will do prostrations then.” The next day, in front of the stupa, he started to prostrate. Up and down he went, perspiring profusely. Then his teacher appeared and remarked, “Oh, it’s very good that you are prostrating but it would be better if you practise the Dharma.”

“Hmmm,” thought the man. “Perhaps I should be reciting Dharma text?” The next day, he was out there reading aloud his Dharma text, thinking that he was doing something holy. Again, his teacher came by and quipped, “Oh, it’s very good that you are reciting the Dharma text but it would be better if you practise the Dharma.”

By then, the man was utterly confused and perturbed. “Am I not practising the Dharma? I was circumambulating, prostrating and reciting the Sutra. What, then, is practising the Dharma?”

His teacher smiled and replied, “Transform your mind.”

This story tells us that the focal point is not on the external things. Rather it is the mind, or the mental state that one has when doing things that determines if one is practising the Dharma. We can never judge whether an action is Dharma or not, just by the action itself. We have to look at the mind that’s doing it.

That’s why in Buddhism, one’s inner motivation is emphasised again and again. In this way, we cut out all hypocrisy. If we are not mindful of our motivation and we think being religious simply means doing all these external things, then we get really lost. We may be doing something externally, but if we still have the same old mind and habitual tendencies to cling and reject, we are not transforming.

So always be mindfully aware and ask yourself, “Why am I practising? Why am I doing this?” Always look internally, at the mind that is doing it.

SEEN

A glimpse of the eight worldly concerns through *The King's Speech*

> **The King's Speech**

Directed by: Tom Hooper

Starring: Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush, Helena Bonham Carter

The King's Speech is a moving life account of King George VI of Great Britain. Known as 'Bertie' to his family, he is the second male child of King George V.

Bertie is not first in line to the throne, but his free-spirited elder brother's inappropriate choice of wife does not allow him to take up his naturally rightful place as king with all its responsibilities. Due to attachment to such pleasures, he has to abdicate and hand over the throne to Bertie, who suffers much emotional difficulty in accepting this challenge as king.

As Bertie gains the throne, he loses his right to all privacy and we hear his fears at living up to the role of a monarch and how he does not feel capable of it. We see that even though the royals seem to have such a privileged life, they too need love and respect as much as anyone else.

The title of the movie holds a double meaning as the story focuses on both Bertie's stammering in general as well as the moving speech he makes at the end of the film to a country about to enter World War II.

His stammer has been a lifelong focus of ridicule for him from both family members as well as the people at large who silently deem him unfit to rule them due to this defect. As monarch, he is required to make frequent public speeches, yet his stammer makes it difficult for him, even though he makes great effort to do so. Now that the 'wireless' has become widely used, he has to speak even more frequently over the radio.

Knowing he must overcome this obstacle in order to fulfil his public role, yet frustrated by the inability of the so-called 'best physicians' to correct his disability since childhood, he eventually overcomes the problem through the marvellously eccentric methods of his Australian Harley street doctor, Lionel Logue, who is officially unqualified in the traditional sense.

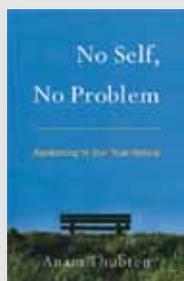
As Lionel searches through Bertie's psyche for childhood traumas, we learn of the unhappy childhood he went through with little love from his royal parents. We also see the side effects of status that openly brings reward and wealth, but carries with it an almost absolute loss of freedom in the broadest sense, displaying the trials and tribulations of the eight worldly concerns that keep sentient beings bound to the wheel of samsara. Indeed, the very first time Lionel meets Bertie's wife, he gives a pertinent and famous quote from Shakespeare, "Poor and content is rich and rich enough". In the same conversation, Lionel ironically terms Bertie's work as "perhaps that of indenture and servitude", a brilliantly true description of royal service.

However, with the constant support of his devoted wife and Lionel, who becomes the friend that he never had before, Bertie finally makes a marvellous speech that rocks the nation and everyone listening to it from around the world.



READ

Awaken to Our True Nature and Live with Wisdom & Compassion



> **No Self, No Problem: Awakening to Our True Nature**

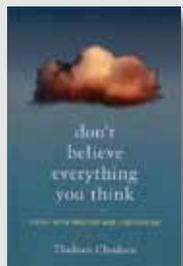
By Anam Thubten

Happiness is something we all want. The very root of why ordinary beings are motivated by the eight worldly concerns is because of the desire for happiness. Yet to achieve true happiness, one needs to cultivate contentment - by letting go of all attachment. Read this book for a better understanding on non-attachment. Get it from Awareness Place stores for S\$22.50.

> **Don't Believe Everything You Think: Living with Wisdom and Compassion**

By Thubten Chodron

The emotional roller coaster of attachment and anger, or clinging and despair, is summed up in the eight worldly concerns, says Ven Thubten Chodron. Yet running after sense pleasures is akin to drinking saltwater when you are thirsty. You just get thirstier! That is why so many people in consumerist societies, no matter what they have, suffer from incredible dissatisfaction and discontent, deceived by the illusory appearance of attractive objects. Read this book and learn how you can deal with the difficulties of encountering the disagreeable. Priced at S\$25.50 from Awareness Place stores.



HEARD

Illuminate your entire being with these Mantras and Messages in Music

> **Mantras of Illumination**

By Imee Ooi

Allow the light and uplifting spiritual energies of these mantras to envelope and permeate your entire being. Listen meditatively to the three tracks of The Heart Mantra of Amitabha Buddha, The Six Realm Diamond Mantra and The Mantra of Vairocana Buddha. And feel yourself descending to a realm of peace and calm. Pay S\$15.00 for the CD at Awareness Place stores.



> **Message In Music**

By Imee Ooi

For those who want to experience life in a deeper and more heartfelt manner, listen to the euphonious music in this CD, and feel the stirring of your heartstrings. Track 1 expresses the remorse for all of one's wrongdoing; tracks 2 and 3 on gratitude for being alive so that one can bring much goodness to this world. Finally, track 4 concludes with the musical energies of contentment and peace. Retail at \$15.00 at Awareness Place stores.





BY | Esther Thien

WHAT'S NEW

Diffuse the meditative scent of nature

If you are keen to scent your surroundings, office area or bag in a completely natural manner, check out the latest range of wooden diffusers and essential oils developed by YUAN. Crafted as a clip, the diffuser is available in four natural types of wood: Acacia, Maple, Rosewood and Beech wood.

Drip two drops of essential oil onto the clip and rub it thoroughly. Let the scent of Mother Nature waft through your space and restore your inner peace. Choose from six kinds of essential oil for your different needs.

Tranquility: To stabilise mood and emotion. Perfect for the whole family, and for meetings, study room, meditation and the living hall.

Hinoki: To naturally eliminate bacteria, viruses, viral infections and fungus.

Purifier: To calm your senses, and promote healing of wounds. Also anti-bacterial and anti-inflammation.

Vitality: To promote a livelier and happier mood and environment.

Repose: To promote better sleep quality, and achieve body and mind equilibrium.

Tea Tree: To relieve sinus congestion, and heal wounds, cuts, burns and skin infections.

The clip comes with a small delicately made cloth pouch for easy storage of oil and clip.



To find out more, please call Awareness Place stores at **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.



> **Buddhism and the Business World**

By Orange Tip Editions

US\$5.98



The business world sees everyone as a potential customer and uses advertisement to influence consumption behaviour. In consumerist societies, human desires are transformed into human needs, and endless consumption causes harm to the genuine well-being of life, society and environment.

Ven PA Payutto, a recipient of UNESCO's Prize for Peace Education in 1994 and a Thai Buddhist monk of the Theravada tradition, offers methods of wisdom on how to deal with business in this eBook app. As Ven PA Payutto said, "People in business should also know what real success is. Success in business or economics is not merely about satisfying the desires of people but to bring about the well-being of humankind."

A useful read for all Buddhist entrepreneurs and business owners. Only available on the iPhone and iPad.

> **Roots of Buddhist Psychology**

By Sounds True Inc

S\$46.94 (Android)

S\$47.98 (Apple)



All teachings of the Dharma offer the taste of freedom. This app invites all who are searching for meaning in life to drink deeply of the Buddha's teachings presented by Jack Kornfield to savour the wisdom that flows from the heart of Buddhism's most useful ideas about the inner life, and what brings awakening, freedom and happiness.

Buddhism views the mind as a labyrinth of feelings, perceptions and emotional states. Unhappiness is rooted in unskilful responses to our world: grasping when things are pleasant, developing aversion when they are unpleasant, and delusion or confusion when they are neutral. Through awareness training, Kornfield teaches one to transform these responses into skilful ones that are the path to true happiness.

Comes with eight hours and 30 minutes of audio teachings, a relaxing slideshow, bonus articles and a bonus video. Available on the iPhone, iPad and Google Playstore.

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.

If we don't know the distinction between Dharma and non-Dharma,
even though we try to practise Dharma our whole life,
nothing becomes Dharma,
because we are still doing things with the wrong motivation.

Non-Dharma is simply anything that is done for the happiness of this life alone.
It is whatever we do motivated by the attachment to the eight worldly dharmas
Dharma is exactly the opposite;
it is anything that is done for the happiness of beyond this life,
whatever that is unstained by attachment to the eight worldly dharmas.

Every action we do from morning to night is either Dharma or non-Dharma depending on this.
Virtue and non-virtue are defined on this basis.
Every action done renouncing attachment to this life is virtue;
every action done with attachment to this life is non-virtue.
If we renounce the attachment that clings to this life's pleasure,
our attitude becomes pure,
and everything we do becomes Dharma.

Even if we don't come to understand any other Dharma subjects,
just knowing this one thing is like opening a big eye.

– *Kyahje Lama Zopa Rinpoche*

“What is the result of actions done with ignorance, anger and attachment? And of actions not done with ignorance, anger and attachment?”

Actions done with ignorance, anger and attachment bring rebirth in the lower realms as a suffering transmigratory being.
Greed causes rebirth in the preta realm,
hatred causes rebirth in the hell realm,
ignorance causes rebirth in the animal realm, and so forth.

Actions done with an attitude not possessed by the three poisonous minds bring the result of rebirth as a happy transmigratory being.

– *Atisha*

All negative actions arise from the thought of the eight worldly dharmas.
As long as this is not renounced but remains in the mind,
all suffering will arise.

– *Sharawa*



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

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

Bhikkhu: A fully ordained male Buddhist monastic, who lived by the vinaya's framework of monastic discipline. Their lifestyle is shaped so as to support their spiritual practice, to live a simple and meditative life, and attain Nirvana. Called bhiksu in Sanskrit.

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.

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

Cyclical existence: The cycle of death and rebirth, taking uncontrolled rebirth under the influence of defilement and karmic imprints. The process arises out of ignorance and is marked by suffering.

Ignorance: 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.

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.

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.

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

Lower realms: The realms of animals, hungry ghost and hell beings

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

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

Meditative Concentration: Calm abiding, Concentration. 1. Meditation method to achieve tranquillity. 2. The resultant tranquil meditative state; the ability to remain single-pointedly on an object with a pliant and blissful mind. Mental quiescence, stilled and settled state of awareness.

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.

Morality: One of three sections of the Noble Eightfold Path and is a code of conduct that embraces a commitment to harmony and self-restraint with the principle motivation being non-violence, or freedom from causing harm. It is an internal, aware and intentional ethical behaviour, according to one's commitment to the path of

liberation and wholehearted commitment to what is wholesome. Various described as virtue, right conduct, moral discipline or ethics and precept. Called Sila in Pali.

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. ‘Nirvana’ 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 KMPKS for detailed info).

Pali: The language of the Theravada Buddhist Canon, Pali was originally a natural, spoken dialect closely related to Sanskrit, which was not used for every day discourse.

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.

Patience: One of the perfections that a bodhisattva trains in and practises to realise perfect enlightenment. Refers to not returning harm, rather than merely enduring a difficult situation. It is the ability to control one's emotions even when being criticised or attacked.

Precepts: The basic guidelines of moral conduct.

Preta: Hungry ghost

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

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.

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

Renunciation: Determination to be free from all problems and suffering (of cyclic existence), not longer having attachment to the pleasures of cyclic existence which lead to more suffering and defilements. It is inner wisdom.

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

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

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

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

Shantideva: 8th-century Indian Buddhist scholar at Nalanda University and an adherent of the Madhyamaka philosophy of Nagarjuna. Renowned as the author of the Bodhicaryavatara or *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way Of Life*, which is a long poem describing the process of enlightenment from the first thought to full buddhahood.

Stupa: A pagoda for the remains of the Buddha, whether relics of bones or scriptures.

Suffering: The physical and mental feeling of dissatisfaction.

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

Ten virtues: Three of the body (not killing, not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct), four of the speech (not lying, not using divisive speech, not using harsh words, not engaging in idle talk) and three of the mind (not coveting, not engaging in harmful thought and not holding wrong views)

Theravada: A foundational school of Buddhism.

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

Vajrayana: Tibetan school of Buddhism.

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.

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.