

FREE

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Awaken

A hand is shown holding a smooth, light-colored stone with a simple smiley face drawn on it. The stone is being held above a stack of three other smooth stones of varying sizes, which are balanced on a bed of sand. The background is a bright blue sky with soft white clouds. A small purple lotus flower icon is positioned to the right of the word 'Awaken'.

to Compassion and Wisdom on the journey of life

Ven Kwang Sheng

Moving Forward
by Cultivating

Good Karma

and

Hope

Handling **Conflicts**
with **Wisdom**

A Buddhist Reflection
on Living With and After COVID-19

Defusing
Duality & Divisiveness

REMOVE HATRED
from Our Lives.
Replace it with
Kindness & Compassion

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Feature

05 A Buddhist Reflection on Living With and After COVID-19

Venerable Dr Rangama Chandawimala Thero explains to us why universal friendship or brotherhood, where differences are embraced, makes this world a better place.

08 Buddhist Advice for Ruling a Kingdom

Venerable Thubten Nyima analyses the teachings on what makes a good ruler given by Nagarjuna in The Precious Garland.



Profile

12 Defusing Duality and Divisiveness

Dr Lee Foong Ming tells Janice Goh how our mental schema traps us in our own reality.

Regulars

02 Abbot's Message

Moving Forward by Cultivating Good Karma and Hope



04 Mindfulness Parenting

On Disconnectedness

14 Did You Know?

Kalama Sutta: The Buddha's Charter of Free Inquiry

Contents

17 Buddhist Tales

Interesting Dharma tales and fables that will set your mind thinking

- 17 COVID-19 Home Recovery: Kampong Spirit
- 18 Handling Conflicts with Wisdom
- 20 The Power of Our Beliefs
- 21 The Power of Societal Programming and Assumption

22 Ponder

A first-person account of the little things in life worth reflecting upon

- 22 The Way Words Affect Our Emotions
- 23 Can a Woman become a Buddha?
- 24 Remove Hatred from Our Lives, Replace it with Kindness and Compassion



25 Q & A

A Reflection on The Three Poisons

26 Savour

A review column that highlights food outlets with delicious vegetarian options

28 Recipe

Yummy vegetarian recipes to tease your tastebuds

31 What's New?

Find out about the latest products in Awareness Place

32 Dharma Apps

Check out these cool apps that connect you to the wisdom of the Dharma

34 Seen, Heard & Read

Reviews of life-affirming films, books and music that are beneficial to your well-being

35 Calendar

Moving Forward

by Cultivating

Good Karma and Hope

2020 and 2021 were unsettling and difficult for most people. The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed our lives: from the way we live and work to the way our children are schooled and things are done. Even today, everyone around the world is adjusting to the impact and a new way of life that the pandemic has brought.

Most people focus on the negative aspects of the pandemic: the fear of the illness and death. However, there is actually a positive aspect as well.

For one, it makes people sit up and take note with greater awareness of the frailty of life and the possibility that death can come any moment. It is not only during a pandemic that people pass away. In fact, at any given moment, even as you are reading this, there are beings who have passed on and beings who are born into our world. This is the way life is in physical existence, in samsara.

With this awareness, people start to pay attention to the things that truly matter in their lives—their family, loved ones and spiritual cultivation. They start to cherish the time they have with their dear ones. They learn to be mindful of the little blessings in life that give joy, such as appreciating the beauty of nature more: the nourishing warmth of the sun, the delightful cool breeze on the face, the gorgeous water-colour palette of the sky and clouds at sunset, the beautiful flight of a newly-born butterfly, etc. They discover what it is they truly want in life. They also express more love, care and kindness to those around them in whatever ways they can.

Just as one can never really understand how sweet the taste of sweetness is if he has never eaten anything bitter in life, one will never truly learn to appreciate joy, courage, inner strength and peace if one has never experienced pain, fear and difficulties. As the saying goes, "Every cloud has a silver lining."

In our physical existence of duality, there are always two sides to

everything. Nothing is inherently good or bad. It all depends on how we handle our circumstances to transcend adversities with hope and courage in our hearts, to grow and evolve in our life journeys.

Our mindstream doesn't die with physical death. Like energies, we merely transform from one form to another. Most people only care about the happiness, pain and suffering of this life. Actually, what we should be more concerned about is the karma we are creating in every moment of this life: "Are my thoughts, speech and actions virtuous and compassionate, or are they not? Do they leave a positive or negative impact on this world?"

Beings are heirs and holders of their karma. Karma is the only component that follows us from lifetime to lifetime. So we should practise cultivating mindfulness of our every arising thought.

May everyone have an enlightening 2022 grounded in inner peace, wisdom and compassion. ❀

Sik Kwang Sheng (Ven)

Abbot, Kong Meng San
Phor Kark See Monastery

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues into 2022, more and more people are experiencing a divided world with increasing disconnectedness (page 4). More societal issues such as disharmony, intolerance and misunderstanding among people can be witnessed.

In such times, we must be mindful of our own aversion and social discrimination of others. As we express ourselves and our beliefs, it should be carried out in a way that is free from animosity and divisiveness (page 24), focusing on building common ground and understanding (page 8).

All humans, regardless of gender, age, creed, race and religion, seek the same goal: to be happy, at peace, safe and well (pages 17 & 18).

Our dialogues should be based on commonality, open-mindedness and a spirit of free inquiry (page 14) and not on hearsay, opinions, assumptions or societal conditioning (pages 20 & 21).

Cultivate introspection and wise discernment. Be mindful and aware too of how our emotions and mental schema can colour and distort our perceptions (pages 12 & 22).

As long as we identify ourselves with 'this' or 'that', our minds will be clouded and we will be unable to see clearly (page 23). The three poisons of attachment, anger and ignorance also prevent us from seeing our true nature and realising the emptiness of inherent existence (page 25).

As Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh encapsulates it so well in a nutshell, "We are here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness" (page 33).

With or without the pandemic, trust, care and consideration, offering help, amiability and love for our fellow members in society are always valued and needed (page 5).

Compassion always makes the world a better place.

May all beings be protected by the Triple Gem, and have a blessed, peaceful new year. ❀

Esther Thien

Yours in the Dharma,
Esther Thien

Spreading
Universal Love & Kindness
in a Divided World

In our darkest moments, our feelings of separateness from others can leave us feeling isolated and alienated. We find ourselves waiting to feel loved, accepted or appreciated by others, while overlooking our own power to give love, acceptance and appreciation ourselves – let alone to ourselves.

Parents have a distinct advantage of knowing how to love others. As the Buddha explained, “Even as a mother protects with her life her child, her only child, so with a boundless heart should one cherish all living beings: radiating kindness over the entire world.” Through the pure, selfless and bottomless love we feel for our child, we understand more about what love is, and can share this purer kind of love with others.

Buddhists cultivate a mind of love through the loving-kindness meditation where they wish others to be well and free from suffering. We send feelings of love to ourselves, to someone we love, a neutral person for whom we have no strong feelings, and then a person with whom we experience difficulty. Finally, we send our goodwill to larger and larger groups of people, concluding with everyone in the world. ✿

“

When our hearts are oriented towards love, we grow in self-confidence for we are closer to our natural state, our true nature, our Buddha nature. Focused on loving, we become less self-conscious and more attentive towards everyone we meet.

Excerpted from the book,
Buddhism for Parents on the Go

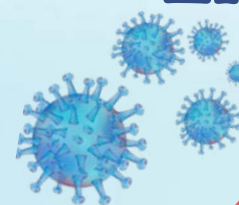
On Disconnectedness



A Buddhist Reflection on



Living with
and after



Social harmony is an essential practice, especially in the modern world today. Universal friendship, or treating each and every one without any discrimination, is frequently lauded in mass media, periodical publications, humanities and sociology conferences, etc.

Embracing differences

Social harmony has become a hot topic today as social distancing has created some societal issues such as disharmony, intolerance and misunderstanding among people. The modern world is a global village, where we live and work with people of different backgrounds. Therefore, we have to embrace the different faiths, cultures and practices of fellow members of society. The world lauds peace, harmony, unity, care, love and compassion as spiritual qualities that we should inculcate. Cultivating such virtues can foster universal brotherhood, which is required for the world today.

Unity of family

As a species, human beings belong to one family, though there are some differences based on skin colour, geographical factors, etc. The truth is that we rarely find people in this world who look alike or are identical. One is generally unique and different from others. This has been proven by science. So are religious views and cultural practices. Members in one family may hold different views and ideologies but as a family, they are inseparable and united. Their different religious views, social inclinations, likes and dislikes will not affect their family cohesion as long as they cherish their family bond and love each other. Family relations are more important than any other thing. The family comes first and everything else comes next. What is the purpose of this life if we alienate one another due to our different beliefs and practices? That is the most ridiculous and unfortunate thing in this world. Think again and again: What's most important to you during this

pandemic? I am sure that it is the unity and support of the family.

Harmony in society

Besides our family bonds, as social beings, we should love and care for each other. We should look at others with cordiality, and live peacefully and amiably with them, like a perfect blend of milk and water.

People come in different forms and with different dispositions. Just as flowers vary in colours, shapes, sizes and scents. Whenever a beautiful garland is made using an assortment of flowers, everyone loves and admires it. What is the reason for that? It is because when the flowers are gathered and combined into a harmonious strand, they synergise and amplify their individual beauty, making the garland more outstanding and attractive than a lone, solitary flower.

Likewise, when people live together in peace and harmony, the world becomes a more beautiful and delightful place.

Nobility is determined by one's actions

According to Buddhist teachings, one does not become superior or inferior by birth, race, creed or geographical location. Whether a person is noble or inferior is determined by his actions. The social stratification prevailing in certain societies due to skin colour, race, region, religion, wealth or monetary status etc., is rejected in Buddhism. According to the *Vāseṭṭha Sutta*, the Buddha taught that as a species, human beings are the same. The Buddha further explained that no differences can be found in the human species, unlike in animals and plants. The well-known *Metta Sutta* teaches us that to live with love and universal friendship is the highest form of living on earth.

Impermanence: The nature of life

Today, the whole world is in a chaos due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic is unprecedented. Although people in the past also suffered various plagues, we have not experienced a situation in such a scale in our lifetime. This is an unforeseen and new experience for our present-day generation.

“

Things happen unexpectedly. This is the nature of life. In a situation like this, we have to accept reality and face it wisely. Everything is subject to change; this is a universal phenomenon. As nothing is permanent,

this pandemic is also not permanent.

As we pray that the pandemic will end soon, we must also remember that this is not a time for us to panic.

Importance of a positive mind

We should look at things objectively, not subjectively. The Buddha taught that a person's strength can be identified through his or her response in an emergency or a critical moment. So, our mental strength is a decisive factor of our physical strength as well. Being psychologically positive in the face of any challenges and adversities, we can overcome our problems to succeed in life. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha taught that happy indeed are those who live with a positive mind, unlike those who are afflicted with negative mental states such as hatred, anxiety and jealousy, etc.

Health is the best gain; contentment the best wealth

According to the *Saccavibhaṅga Sutta*, people do not like even to

hear the word 'sickness' (*vyādhi*); they always wish to be healthy with no illness. However, it is hard to live free from sickness. We might not even be aware of the times we were sick and what caused them. The Buddha taught us that health is the best gain (*Ārogya paramā lābhā*), and that contentment is the best wealth (*santuṭṭhī paramaṃ dhanam*). Therefore, keeping a healthy body and mind is far greater than anything else. A person is stricken by bodily pains and weakness when sick, and becomes helpless, so all of us reject such vulnerability. Those who fall ill need support and care from others. In fact, it was a practice of the Buddha to visit sick wards often and take care of the sick monks. The Buddha himself attended to a sick monk called Pūtigattatissa, who was in the throes of deep suffering due to an unusual illness of ulcers erupting all over his body. The Buddha taught us that attending to sick people is like attending to the Buddha. A person requires more support, care and attention when he is ill.

Generally, most people socialise with other humans who are healthy and strong, but are reluctant to help those who are ill. This is inhumane and one of the cruellest things humans do. Even enemies are treated and cared for if they are wounded in the battlefields.

COVID-19: Dividing people

COVID-19 came along unexpectedly and shocked the whole world. It has affected countless people in hundreds of countries without exception: Asians, Africans, Europeans and even tribal natives became its victims. Many people are still suffering and reeling from its effects that have also affected their livelihoods, the ways societies operate and how they lead their lives.

Unlike other situations or illnesses, COVID-19 segregates and separates people, as people fear and suspect others—neighbours, relatives and friends—of being carriers of the virus.

These days, social distancing, reduced contact and isolation have become the default mode to prevent catching the virus. This is unusual for humans as we are social beings and it is in our nature to interact and live together. While we practise wearing masks and social distancing as protective health measures, we should bear in mind that this is not meant to alienate people. So when these safety measures are abolished in the future, we should discontinue them with equanimity and peace.

“

There are also others who look down upon people who are different or who do not belong to the majority. We must be mindful and aware of such social discrimination. With or without the pandemic, universal brotherhood and good social norms are always valued and needed—unity, trust, care and consideration, offering help, amiability and love for our

fellow members in the society—always make the world a better place.

So, look at your neighbours, friends and relatives with geniality, affection and kindness. However different they are, acknowledge them as a part of society that makes the world a more beautiful place.

Let all beings feel secure, loved, protected and comfortable wherever they are and live in. The COVID-19 pandemic will end sooner or later, but life goes on and the virtues of brotherhood, inclusiveness and goodwill will last forever. ✿

Venerable Dr Rangama Chandawimala is an associate professor at the Buddhist College of Singapore. He was ordained as a Sri Lankan Buddhist monk in 1983, and holds a PhD from the University of Hong Kong. He also has a Diploma in Education from the University of Colombo and has been a Dharma educator since 1996. He has written numerous books, including award-winning publications.

Buddhist Advice for Ruling a Kingdom

Venerable Thubten Nyima analyses the teachings on what makes a good ruler given by Nagarjuna in *The Precious Garland*.

Studying Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* has sparked my interest in looking at his work through the lens of current events. This blends well with some recent discussion online and at Sravasti Abbey regarding socially-engaged Buddhism. The question is: should—or to what extent, should—Buddhist monastics and practitioners in general actively advocate for governmental policies based on equality, justice, peace, compassion and care for the environment?

This question was answered many centuries ago by Nagarjuna, a Buddhist monk and philosopher who lived between 150 and 250 AD. In his text, *Precious Garland* of

Advice for a King, Nagarjuna not only instructs the king on profound Buddhist philosophical points, but also advises him on how to rule the kingdom in accordance with the Dharma. In other words, Nagarjuna advocates for governmental policies based on Dharma principles. He told the king:

125: ...devote yourself to the Dharma of generosity, ethical conduct and fortitude.

126: King, if you undertake deeds that begin with the Dharma, have the Dharma in the middle and Dharma at the end, you will not be harmed in this world or the next.

In order to understand Nagarjuna's approach to advocacy, I wanted to look not just at what he did, but also how he did it. I wanted to understand his motivation, to discern how he

spoke to the king—in what tone, what words he used, and in what context. I also wanted to understand the actual content of his advice—what he focused on.

To explain his motivation, Nagarjuna told the king:

301: If the king acts in a way that contradicts the Dharma or does something that does not make sense, most of his subjects still praise him. Hence, it is hard for him to know what is appropriate and what is not.

Who would dare to disagree with a powerful king? People would be afraid to do so and consequently, the king would not benefit from honest feedback. Nagarjuna then posed a very pertinent question:

302: If it is even difficult to say something beneficial but unpleasant

to others, how can I, a monk, hope to do so to you, the king of a large realm?

This question is a preamble to outline his motivation in offering advice to the king, which Nagarjuna presents as follows:

303: But because of my affection for you, and also due to my compassion for beings, I myself will tell you what is quite helpful but not very pleasant.

It is clear that Nagarjuna cares for the king and wants him to govern his realm well, but he does not stop there. Nagarjuna tells the king to look beyond his own narrow interests and broaden his scope of care and concern to include the whole world.

306: Realising that what I tell you is helpful in this context and others, implement it for your own sake and also for the sake of the world.

Similarly, when we engage in advocacy, we should follow Nagarjuna's example and do it with the motivation of benefiting everyone involved, including policy makers and those who think differently from us. Being keenly aware of our interdependence, we should likewise broaden our scope of care and concern to include the whole world.

“Spoken in a friendly tone, Nagarjuna's words to the king convey respect and care for the king's well-being, as well as a deep understanding of the king's role and responsibilities.

Nagarjuna doesn't shy away from difficult topics. Again, this is an example for us that our advocacy efforts should be free from animosity and divisiveness; and instead focus on building common ground and understanding among different groups of people.

Nagarjuna's advice is clear, concise, direct and touches upon the king's most important spheres of influence. Regarding policy making, he says:

128: Dharma is the highest policy; Dharma pleases the world; and if the world is pleased, you will not be deceived here or hereafter.

129: But a policy that proceeds without the Dharma will not please the world. And if the world is not pleased, you will not be happy here or hereafter.

In terms of social policy, Nagarjuna advises the king to invest in education and pay educators well; to take care of vulnerable populations such as the elderly, the very young and the ill; to pay doctors and other care providers with money from the king's estates to ensure access to medical care for all his subjects. He suggests to the king to focus on enhancing the kingdom's infrastructure and asks the king to show compassion for the homeless, the poor, the ill and all those facing hardships.

239: For the sake of increasing

wisdom, provide for the livelihood of the schoolmasters in all the educational institutions of the land and formally grant estates to them.

240: With [the proceeds from] your fields, establish wages for doctors and barbers [dentists], for the sake of the elderly, the young and the ill so as to relieve the suffering of sentient beings.

241: You of good wisdom, establish rest houses and build parks and causeways, pools, pavilions and cisterns; provide for bedding, grasses and wood.

243: Out of your compassion, always care for the ill, the homeless, those afflicted by suffering, the downtrodden and unfortunate. Respectfully apply yourself to aiding them.

Nagarjuna's advice on economic policy focuses on reducing the burden of unnecessary taxes, tolls, and debt so the population can enjoy economic relief. He also encourages the king to help farmers facing hard times.

252: Provide seeds and food to farmers who have fallen on hard times. Eliminate excessive taxes and reduce the portion [of products taxed].

253: Protect [citizens] from debt; eliminate [new] tolls and reduce [excessive] tolls. Eliminate the suffering of those who wait at your door [with their petitions unanswered].

In regards to the criminal justice system, he asks the king to be compassionate with prisoners and to provide them with food, drink, medical care and clothing. Nagarjuna advocates for ongoing release of prisoners, particularly the ill, and

discourages the use of unreasonably long prison sentences.

331: King, out of compassion, you should always make your mind focused upon benefiting all beings, even those that have committed the most serious misdeeds.

332: You should particularly have compassion for those who have committed the serious negativity of murder; these ones who have ruined themselves are indeed worthy of a great person's compassion.

333: Either every day or every five days, release the weakest prisoners. See that it is not the case that the remaining ones are never released, as is appropriate.

334: From thinking that some should never be released, you develop [behaviours and attitudes] that contradict your precepts. From contradicting your precepts, you continually accumulate more negativity.

335: And until they are released, those prisoners should be made content by providing them with barbers, baths, food, drink, clothing and medical care.

By way of foreign policy, Nagarjuna advises the king to care for refugees and offer assistance to countries hit

by famine and disease. He describes a vast scope of international involvement for the king that is antithetical to waging wars.

251: Always care extensively for [places] in the world that are oppressed or where crops have failed; that have suffered harm or where there is plague, or that have been conquered [in war].

Nagarjuna asked the king to extend his kindness and care to travellers who are tired, thirsty and hungry, to place not only water cisterns by the roads but also medicine, supplies, food, and other useful items. One could argue there is a contemporary parallel here in terms of showing kindness to immigrants who are very much like travellers coming from faraway places hungry, thirsty and tired.

245: At the sites of cisterns, place shoes, parasols, and water filters, tweezers for removing thorns, needles, thread and fans.

246: At the cisterns, also place the three kinds of fruit, the three kinds of salt, honey, eye-medicine and antidotes to poison. Also write formulas for medicinal treatments and spells.

247: At the cisterns, also place ointments for the body, feet and

head, cradles [for babies], ladles and ewers, brass pots, axes and so on.

248: In cool, shady spots, make small cisterns filled with potable water and provide sesame, rice, grain, foods and molasses.

There is also advice concerning care for animals, insects and non-human beings in general. Here, Nagarjuna asks the king to be generous with other beings, take responsibility for their well-being and act accordingly.

249: At the openings of anthills, have trustworthy persons constantly place food and water, molasses and piles of grain.

250: Both before and after each meal, always offer in a pleasant manner food to hungry ghosts, dogs, ants, birds and so on.

Nagarjuna encouraged the king to appoint ministers who valued ethical conduct and upheld high standards of conduct; to appoint military advisers who use resources wisely and are kind and vigilant; and to appoint officials who are skilful, knowledgeable and experienced.

323: Appoint as ministers policy experts who are pious, polite and pure, devoted, courageous, of good family, ethically outstanding and grateful.

324: Appoint military advisers who are generous, unattached, heroic and polite, who properly use [resources], are steadfast, always vigilant and pious.

325: Appoint as officials elders who behave in accord with Dharma and are pure, who are skilful and know what to do, who are erudite, organised, impartial and polite.

Nagarjuna also advised the king to be unselfish, honest and generous. He told the king that truth, generosity, tranquillity and wisdom are four excellent qualities a king should have.

130: A useless [political] theory is one that intends to deceive others. It is harsh and a path to bad rebirths—how could the unwise make such a theory useful?

131: Since that [deception] will just deceive oneself for many thousands of rebirths, how could one intent on deceiving others be a true statesman at all?

To conclude, Nagarjuna provides an example of how to approach advocacy from a Buddhist point of view by having proper motivation, avoiding animosity and divisiveness, and advocating for issues related to the well-being of vulnerable populations, be they domestic or foreign.

Verses 133 and 342 summarise Nagarjuna's advice well.

133: Be generous, speak gently, be beneficent; act with the same intention [as you expect from others]; through these [ways of acting], bring together the world, and also sustain the Dharma.

342: From reigning properly in this way, your kingdom will not be chaotic. It will not proceed improperly nor contradict the Dharma. It will be in harmony with the Dharma.

331: King, out of compassion, you should always make your mind focused upon benefiting all beings, even those who have committed the most serious misdeeds.

342: From reigning properly in this way, your kingdom will not be chaotic. It will not proceed improperly nor contradict the Dharma. It will be in harmony with the Dharma.❁

Editor: To learn more about Nagarjuna's Precious Garland, visit www.thubtenchodron.org to view Venerable Chodron's series of teachings on the text.



Venerable Thubten Nyima

took the Anagarika precepts in 2016 under Venerable Thubten Chodron. In March 2017, she received the sramanerika and shiksamana ordination. Venerable Nyima has a bachelors degree in Business Administration and Marketing, and a Masters degree in Health Administration. Before ordaining, her career spanned both private and public sectors, including 14 years of managerial work for the Sacramento County's Child Protective Services. Today, Venerable Nyima contributes to Sravasti Abbey's administrative functions by thanking donors, helping with community planning meetings and facilitating SAFE courses. She also works on the vegetable garden and enjoys working in the forest when needed.

Defusing Duality and Divisiveness

Dr Lee Foong Ming tells Janice Goh how our mental schema traps us in our own reality.

profile
Text: Janice Goh

Amid the global havoc that the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked worldwide, several bouts of conflict emerged as a result, while others have arisen independent of it.

For example, there are different camps of people, pro- and anti-vaccination, each advocating the merits of their respective stance. Then there was the Myanmar protest in early 2021 against the coup staged by the country's armed forces, decimating many innocent adults and children. Most recently, the United States' boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics in February 2022 was quickly emulated by several other Western countries - citing genocide in Xinjiang, China.

Before you wave these events away because they do not occur in your

backyard, take a moment to ponder the parallels between international affairs and your own relationships at home, in the workplace and in the community. Relationship discord, power struggles, neighbourly disputes and keyboard warriors on social media. These are just microcosms of the events playing out on the world stage.

What causes humans to adopt a dualistic and divisive mindset in our interactions with others?

In contemplating this question, Dr Lee Foong Ming, assistant professor at the Buddhist College of Singapore (BCS), quoted the Buddha's words from the *Madhupindika Sutta* (The Honeyball Discourse): "I proclaim a teaching that one does not quarrel with anyone in the world... [a teaching] where

perceptions no longer obsess and underlie a person..."

“Dr Lee said, ‘Tellingly, the Buddha taught about perceptions and their relation to quarrels. The simple answer to the question is – due to our perceptions. And what a simple answer that belies a profound human condition!’”

Citing the dictionary's definition of perception: "1. the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses; 2. the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted – she noted that both aspects are mentioned in the following stages of the *Madhupindika Sutta*:

1. The eyes see an object, and become conscious of it
2. Data are received
3. Gut feelings arise about the data
4. An idea of the data is formed based on gut feelings
5. Interpretation arises based on past experience, or knowledge. At this point, a perception transforms into a concept about the data
6. More interpretation takes place, based on personal bias, speculation, concepts

7. A personalised conception is formed about the objective data

She elucidated that the objective information becomes increasingly subjective beyond Stage 3, coloured by an individual's mental disposition, which is called schema, in psychology.

Broadly understood, a schema is a cognitive framework or heuristic that helps us to organise and interpret information. While it allows us to interpret a vast amount of information quickly, it can also skew our judgement and predispose us to look at biased information.

Said Dr Lee, "In other words, though schema is useful, it also distorts the information out there to fit into our internal framework. We are then trapped in our own world."

Referring to Stage 7 in the *Madhupindika Sutta*, she added that when we form subjective views about a certain thing, these in turn affect how

we understand its reality. The consequences include being trapped by our own thoughts and living in our own "virtual reality" built upon our perceived truths (rightly or wrongly), among others.

"That is how mental habits are formed and translate into a resistance to change. That is how we develop 'a dualistic and divisive mindset in our interactions with the world' based on our own (limited) experiences and views of the world and people out there."

How do these then play out in our lives?

Dr Lee said the Buddha answered this question in the *Madhupindika Sutta* as follows - "[With] the underlying tendency to lust/greed, aversion, to views, doubt, conceit, ... there will be the resorting to rods and weapons, quarrels, brawls, disputes, recrimination, malice and false speech."

Who is right and who is wrong? While it is easy to

point fingers at the person who thinks differently from us, the answer is not always so unambiguous.

Dr Lee posed a question to challenge ourselves: "Ever wondered if we could also be demons in other people's perspective, too? People in the opposing group are also regular guys with prejudice, judgment, stubborn streaks, just like us. But we call ours principle, justice, determination — glamorous on our side, nefarious on theirs."

"In my mind, our resistance to listen to others and our stubborn insistence that we are right are the real bad guys," she said.

"And then there is this Big Boss behind these bad guys, namely: 'Me, Myself and I'."

In addition, she pointed out that we all have our own blind spots. These blind spots are due to limitations of our subjective perception of people and events, brought about by mental habits and different cultural, religious, racial and educational upbringing, as well as varying geopolitical and socio-economic conditions. As a result, we proliferate our own stories in our own 'inner' world, which will eventually have an impact on the 'outer' world.

Dr Lee said, "These blind spots are the conditions that lead us to a dualistic and divisive mindset that

centres around 'us versus them'."

To mitigate these blind spots, Dr Lee suggested that when we disagree or argue with someone, we could try to go beyond our views with a willingness to be open-minded, and listen to the other side with understanding (wisdom) and compassion.

Another way is to have dialogues, which will help us to broaden and change our perspectives and see more possibilities.

She said, "Real human interactions deepen our understanding, compassion and willingness to be open-minded. This virtuous circle brings people back to being flesh-and-blood humans, not just some on-screen personalities, nameless faces, someone in the crowd."

As we enter a new year, may we all work towards softening our dualistic and divisive stance and broadening our perspectives to become more open-minded and harmonious with others around us. ✨

Dr Lee Foong Ming

Dr Lee graduated from the National University of Singapore and did her postgraduate studies in Buddhist Studies in the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. She specialised in Sarvastivada Abhidharma and received her PhD degree after seven years of studies. Since her return to Singapore, she has been teaching and has eight years of experience in teaching Buddhism for academic courses.



Kalama Sutta

The Buddha's Charter of Free Inquiry

The instruction of the Kalamas (Kalama Sutta) is justly famous for its encouragement of free inquiry; the spirit of the sutta signifies a teaching that is exempt from fanaticism, bigotry, dogmatism and intolerance.

The Instruction to the Kalamas

I heard thus. Once the Blessed One, while wandering in the Kosala country with a large community of bhikkhus, entered a town of the Kalama people called Kesaputta. The Kalamas said: "Reverend Gotama, the monk, the son of the Shakyans, has, while wandering in the Kosala country, entered Kesaputta. The good repute of the Reverend Gotama has been spread in this way: Indeed, the Blessed One is thus consummate, fully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and practice, sublime, knower of the worlds, peerless, guide of tameable men, teacher of divine and human beings, which he by himself has through direct knowledge understood clearly.

He set forth the Dhamma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, possessed of meaning and the letter, and complete in everything; and he proclaims the holy life that is perfectly pure. Seeing such consummate ones is good indeed."

Then the Kalamas went to where the Blessed One was. On arriving there some paid homage to him and sat down on one side; some exchanged greetings with him and after the ending of cordial memorable talk, sat down on one side; some saluted him raising their joined palms and sat down on one side; some announced their name and family and sat down on one side; some without speaking, sat down on one side.

The Kalamas sitting on one side said to the Blessed One: "There are some monks and brahmins, venerable sir, who visit Kesaputta. They expound and explain only their own doctrines;

the doctrines of others they despise, revile and pull to pieces. Some other monks and brahmins too, venerable sir, come to Kesaputta. They also expound and explain only their own doctrines; the doctrines of others they despise, revile, and pull to pieces. Venerable sir, there is doubt, there is uncertainty in us concerning them. Which of these reverend monks and brahmins spoke the truth and which falsehood?"

The criterion for rejection

"It is proper for you, Kalamas, to doubt, to be uncertain; uncertainty has arisen in you about what is doubtful. Come, Kalamas.

“

Do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon tradition;

nor upon rumour; nor upon what is in a scripture; nor upon surmise; nor upon an axiom; nor upon specious reasoning; nor upon a bias towards a notion that has been pondered over; nor upon another's seeming ability; nor upon the consideration, 'The monk is our teacher.' Kalamas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are bad; these things are blameable; these things are censured by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill,' abandon them.

Greed, hate and delusion

"What do you think, Kalamas? Does greed appear in a man for his benefit or harm?"

"For his harm, venerable sir."

"Kalamas, being given to greed, and being overwhelmed and vanquished mentally by greed, this man takes life, steals, commits adultery and tells lies; he prompts another too, to do likewise. Will that be long for his harm and ill?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"What do you think, Kalamas? Does hate appear in a man for his benefit or harm?"

"For his harm, venerable sir."

"Kalamas, being given to hate, and being overwhelmed and vanquished mentally by hate, this man takes life, steals, commits adultery and tells lies; he prompts another too, to do likewise. Will that be long for his

harm and ill?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"What do you think, Kalamas? Does delusion appear in a man for his benefit or harm?"

"For his harm, venerable sir."

"Kalamas, being given to delusion, and being overwhelmed and vanquished mentally by delusion, this man takes life, steals, commits adultery and tells lies; he prompts another too, to do likewise. Will that be long for his harm and ill?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"What do you think, Kalamas? Are these things good or bad?"

"Bad, venerable sir"

"Blameable or not blameable?"

"Blameable, venerable sir."

"Censured or praised by the wise?"

"Censured, venerable sir."

"Undertaken and observed, do these things lead to harm and ill, or not? Or how does it strike you?" "Undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill. Thus it strikes us here."

The criterion for acceptance

“

"Therefore, Kalamas, do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon tradition; nor upon rumour; nor upon what is in a scripture; nor upon surmise; nor upon an axiom; nor upon specious reasoning; nor upon a bias towards a notion that has been pondered over; nor upon another's seeming ability; nor upon the

consideration, 'The monk is our teacher.' Kalamas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are good; these things are not blameable; these things are praised by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness,' enter on and abide in them.

Absence of greed, hate and delusion

"What do you think, Kalamas? Does absence of greed, hate and delusion appear in a man for his benefit or harm?"

"For his benefit, venerable sir."

"Kalamas, being not given to greed, hate and delusion, and being not overwhelmed and not vanquished mentally by greed, hate and delusion, this man does not take life, does not steal, does not commit adultery, and does not tell lies; he prompts another too, to do likewise. Will that be long for his benefit and happiness?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"What do you think, Kalamas? Are these things good or bad?"

"Good, venerable sir."

"Blameable or not blameable?"

"Not blameable, venerable sir."

"Censured or praised by the wise?"

"Praised, venerable sir."

"Undertaken and observed, do these things lead to benefit and happiness, or not? Or how does it strike you?"

"Undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness. Thus it strikes us here."

The Four Immeasurables: amity, compassion, appreciative joy, equanimity

"The disciple of the Noble Ones, Kalamas, who in this way is devoid

of coveting, devoid of ill will, undeluded, clearly comprehending and mindful, dwells, having pervaded, with the thoughts of amity, compassion, gladness or appreciative joy and equanimity, one quarter; likewise the second; likewise the third; likewise the fourth; so above, below, and across; he dwells, having pervaded because of the existence in it of all living beings, everywhere, the entire world, with the great, exalted, boundless thoughts of amity, compassion, gladness or appreciative joy and equanimity that is free of hate or malice.

Four Solaces

“

The disciple of the Noble Ones, Kalamas, who has such a hate-free mind, such a malice-free mind, such an undefiled mind, and such a purified mind, is one by whom four solaces are found here and now.

“Suppose there is

a hereafter and there is a fruit, result, of deeds done well or ill. Then it is possible that at the dissolution of the body after death, I shall arise in the heavenly world, which is possessed of the state of bliss.’ This is the first solace found by him.

“Suppose there is no hereafter and there is no fruit, no result, of deeds done well or ill. Yet in this world, here and now, free from hatred, free from malice, safe and sound and happy, I keep myself.’ This is the second solace found by him.

“Suppose evil (results) befall an evil-doer. I, however, think of doing evil to no one. Then, how can ill (results) affect me who do no evil deed?’ This is the third solace found by him.

“Suppose evil (results) do not befall an evil-doer. Then I see myself purified in any case.’ This is the fourth solace

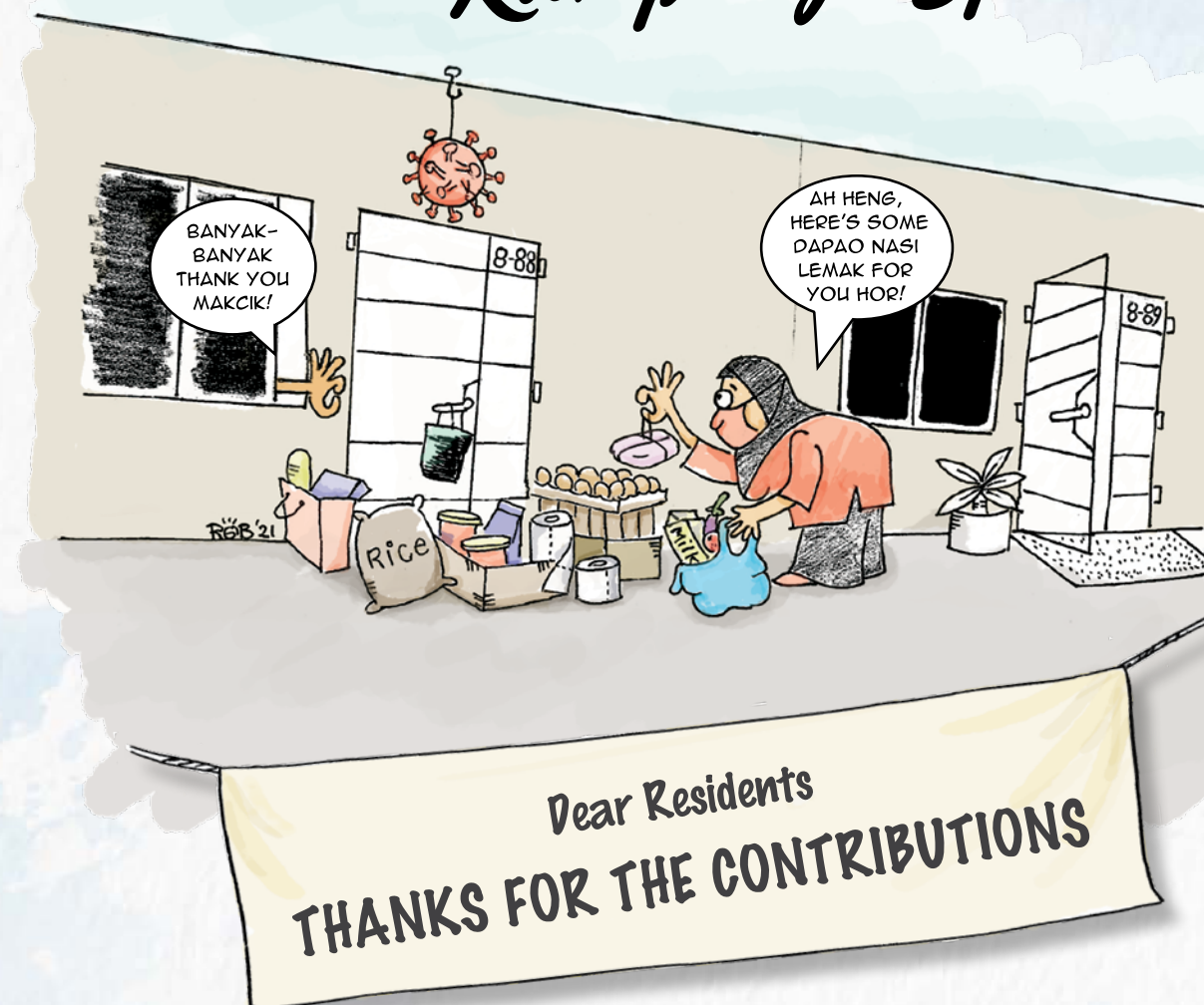
found by him.

“The disciple of the Noble Ones, Kalamas, who has such a hate-free mind, such a malice-free mind, such an undefiled mind, and such a purified mind, is one by whom, here and now, these four solaces are found.”

“So it is, Blessed One. So it is, Sublime one. The disciple of the Noble Ones, venerable sir, who has such a hate-free mind, such a malice-free mind, such an undefiled mind, and such a purified mind, is one by whom, here and now, four solaces are found.

“Marvellous, venerable sir! Marvellous, venerable sir! As if, venerable sir, a person were to turn his face upwards what is upside down, or to uncover the concealed, or to point the way to one who is lost or to carry a lamp in the darkness, thinking, ‘Those who have eyes will see visible objects,’ so has the Dhamma been set forth in many ways by the Blessed One. We, venerable sir, go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma for refuge, and to the Community of Bhikkhus for refuge. Venerable sir, may the Blessed One regard us as lay followers who have gone for refuge for life, from today.” ❀

COVID-19 Home Recovery Kampong Spirit



SHARING

There is a saying that “Near neighbours are better than distant relatives”. The self-quarantine measures during COVID-19 truly drive home the meaning of this saying, as we experience or witness the kampong spirit and support in the community. Neighbours, regardless of religious beliefs, help those who are on the 10-day self-quarantine by buying food and daily necessities out of compassion. They do not hold an alienating attitude, which is heartwarming.

Editor: Sharing and caring with compassion and empathy for each other in the community makes it easier for everyone to pull through in times of great difficulties and challenges.

Handling CONFLICTS with WISDOM

Illustrations & text: Law Wenhui



Siha, those groups of people are attacking one another! Tell me Siha, why are there conflicts in this world?

There are many reasons for conflicts. Craving, desires, attachment to views, stinginess, envy, hatred, ill will, ignorance and proliferation of perceptions etc. all lead to conflict and suffering. They cause us to divide, bring chaos to the world, destroy civilisations and bring suffering to all beings. They all start with our own mind.

One has to see that we are all cats. All of us seek the same thing: to be happy, at peace, go home safely, hug our loved ones, and have a chance to do good and be a good cat. All of us have loved ones. All of us strive to be better cats. As a being of this world, we all have experienced pain and loss. We have much more in common than our differences.



I will strive to be a kind and loving cat like you mum. Thank you for everything.

Thus, instead of focusing on superficial differences, we should also look at our commonality. All of us have been through so much together. Why must we hurt one another? Isn't there enough suffering in life? Why can't we work together? Seeing our commonality arouses our compassion.



Just like being in a burning house, instead of helping one another to get out, one take sides, blame and attack one another. Before anyone knows it, all will perish in the house not by fire but by hurting one another.



Often, we do not see the real danger. The real threat has always been the three poisons in our mind - greed, hatred and delusion. They are the ones that burn all beings and make them turn against one another. They are the root of all conflicts. Every moment, these threats are there.

Of course, sometimes there are disagreements but we have to be mindful and develop compassion, patience, forbearance and lessen our desires and attachment. Sometimes, we also need to seek arbitration, mediation and understanding etc. We must understand that not everything can be resolved immediately.

Remember this. Remember this by heart. Remember this till the end of time. Cat is not our enemy. Even if we are being crushed, we must not turn to senseless hate and violence. Only with a heart of compassion and wisdom will there be peace and reconciliation.



I understand now. We are indeed all brothers and sisters. We have much in common! All of us also have a common enemy, greed, hatred and delusion. These poisons are the root cause of all our suffering! They blind all of us.

I will always respect others and resolve any conflict peacefully. No matter what, all beings are my brothers and sisters, and we will walk this path together!



The Power of Our Beliefs



Retold by: Esther Thien

Once, there lived in a village a martial art champion with great skills and strength. Unfortunately, he was also a bully. The villagers avoided any kind of confrontation with him.

One day, a new family moved to the village. This new family did not know about the martial artist's reputation. The son of this family started a fight with the martial artist, when the latter pushed him around. Knowing nothing about the martial artist's prowess, he overcame the martial artist and was about to deliver a knockout blow when he heard his mother shouting, "Son, he's a kungfu expert. You'll have no chance of winning. Stop!"

Upon hearing this, the son could not finish the fight, which up until then, he had had the upper hand. ❀

Moral of the Story:
Many of our beliefs are based on hearsay and opinions of others.



Once, a popular opera troupe performed in an unfamiliar town. After ending their performances, the troupe pitched their big tents on the outskirts and planned to head to their new venue the next day. As they were doing so, they heard from the locals that the area was rumoured to be haunted. Although afraid, the troupe performers were too tired to move on. After some discussion, they decided to spend the night there.

As the night was chilly, they started a camp fire. In the middle of the night, one of the troupe members woke up to warm himself by the fire as it was getting too frosty for him. Still feeling cold, he went to the props tent and absent-mindedly put on the nearest costume he could lay his hands on, not realising that it was a luminous skeleton costume.

It so happened that another troupe member also left his tent to relieve himself. When he spotted what looked like a moving skeleton, he remembered the rumour. In great terror, he raised the alarm.

This woke everyone up. Upon seeing the 'apparition' they took to their heels and ran. The man in the costume, seeing his troupe mates all running for their lives, assumed that there was danger and followed suit, which caused the rest to flee from him even faster.

When all of them reached the next town at dawn, they could run no further and collapsed in exhaustion. The 'apparition', now clearly visible as a man in costume under the brightening sun rays, panted, "Why did you all flee? What were you all so frightened of?" ❀

Moral of the Story:
It is easy to misunderstand a situation, or make a wrong assumption.

Be aware of the conditioning that we have received since young through family, school and society. Cultivate introspection, self-awareness and wisdom and learn to truly see what is really there.

It is wise to be wary of snakes. However, if what we assume as the snake turns out to be a rope, we need not be afraid any longer.



The Power of Societal Programming and Assumption

Retold by: Esther Thien
Design & Layout: Ada Koh

ponder

the way Words affect our Emotions

Text: Ajahn Jayasaro

The Irish playwright Samuel Becket once wrote that at the very moment that one person stops crying another person begins to cry. But he could also have expressed this idea by saying that at the very moment one person begins to cry, another stops. An identical idea, but the phrasing of it affects our emotions in a very different way.

One of the biggest challenges of Dharma practice in daily life is sustaining mindfulness throughout conversations. An important part of achieving this goal is observing how words, and the way words are put together, affect our emotions.

Lacking mindfulness, when our emotions are aroused, we tend to speak words that we later regret. Some people use language in ways intended to manipulate our emotions for commercial gain; some do it to persuade us to accept their point of view; some do it out of habit, without clear intention.

In every case, try to be aware of what is going on. Don't fight the emotion. Allow it to flow through you; but don't go with its flow. ❀



Text: Ajahn Jayasaro

Can a Woman Become a Buddha?

In the 1970s, a Korean Zen master residing in America was asked, "Can a woman become a Buddha?"

Without hesitation, he replied with a very firm "No".

There were gasps amongst the many women in the audience. After allowing the various reactions to his reply, the master added,

"And neither can a man. As long as you are identifying with being a man or a woman. Buddhahood is impossible."

In the *Samyutta Nikaya*, the bhikkhuni Soma made a similar point.

When Mara taunted her that being a woman she did not have the capacity to achieve liberation, Soma calmly

replied that he was wasting his time.

"Where does womanhood come into it, when the mind is well-concentrated, when knowledge flows onwards through seeing clearly, rightly into Dharma?"

"It is one to whom it might occur, 'I am a woman' or 'I am a man' or 'I am anything at all' that Mara should address." ❀

Ajahn Jayasaro is a Theravada bhikkhu in the Thai Forest tradition. He received full ordination by Ajahn Chah in 1980, and was abbot of Wat Pah Nanachat from 1997 to 2002. In 2019, Ajahn Jayasaro was honoured with a royal title from Thailand's King Vajiralongkorn (Rama X).



Remove Hatred from Our Lives, Replace it with Kindness & Compassion

If anyone were to ask me to pick my best-loved song, my number one choice would have to be, “Try a little kindness”, sung by the well-known country and western singer Glen Campbell. It is one of my favourite songs because to me, the lyrics carry an important message, a forgotten virtue, often overlooked in this complicated world of increasing stress and strain, hatred, greed and selfishness.

The message is to show kindness to one another. The Hollies’ smash hit, “He ain’t heavy, he’s my brother”, is another meaningful song because it too touches on the struggles in life and the apparent need for people to help each other.

Back when things were moving relatively slower before social media came to the forefront of human civilisation, people had less avenues to bicker or quibble over all types of issues. Today, it’s a completely different world where Facebook, Twitter or other social media take centre stage as the main form of communication. You’ve probably noticed how quickly emotions—pride, happiness, disappointment, incredulousness — can spread throughout the online community like bushfire.

As social media has the power to easily influence the thoughts and emotions of people from all walks of life, we must be mindful of how we air our views. Unfortunately, I notice that in general, negative stories often get much more attention and go viral more quickly, as opposed to positive ones.

As technology advances, we see more people, under the guise of anonymity, making rowdy, insensitive, despicable, or hurtful comments that cause harm to others, simply because others are different, or made different choices that do not conform with the majority, without understanding the full context or circumstances.

Social networking is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, there are netizens who are so positive, encouraging, loving and fun. On the other hand, there are also people who are cynical, hateful, racist, misogynistic or negative.

In an article, *Antidote for Online Venom* published in the Straits Times on 7 April 2010, Washington Post writer Andrew Alexander observed how online venom had hurt and devastated many families across America, including those who shared their love stories. Such insensitive and hurtful comments are also posted on

our own discussion boards and blogs here in Singapore. For the slightest wrongdoing, passers-by will seize the opportunity to whip out their cellphones, film an incident and then post it on social media platforms.

While some comments are sensible and can be useful for debates and discussions to review and finetune policies, there are those who use technology for all the wrong reasons: to incite hatred, humiliate, divide and demean innocent people.

This is why I fully endorse what Amnesty International once said, “We all have the right to be treated equally, regardless of our race, ethnicity, nationality, class, caste, religion, belief, sex, gender, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics, age, health or other status. Yet, all too often we hear heartbreaking stories of people who suffer cruelty simply for belonging to a “different” group from those in positions of privilege or power.”

The lives disrupted in almost all parts of the world during this pandemic serves as a stark and timely reminder for every single one of us, regardless of where we are, to treasure life, be kind and to love one another unconditionally. ✨

Q: How can we reflect on the poisons of attachment, anger and ignorance? – G.L.

A: You can reflect on this verse from *The Thirty-seven Practices of Bodhisattvas*:

*Attached to your loved ones,
you’re stirred up like water.
Hating your enemies,
you burn like fire.
In the darkness of confusion,
you forget what to adopt and discard.
Give up your homeland—
This is the practice of bodhisattvas.*

We’re attached to our friends and family. We don’t want to be separated from them. When we are attached to people, we cling to them. We’re stirred up like churning water. We worry that something will happen to them. We’re afraid they will stop loving us. We’re anxious about not pleasing them. Our mind is not peaceful because it is overwhelmed by attachment.

Here, the word “enemies” means people we don’t like. It could be the colleague that you’re jealous of because she got a promotion and you didn’t. The people who don’t give us what we want, the people who don’t respect us, who don’t approve of us, who get in the way of us getting what we want, who criticise us, who say bad things about us behind our back, who hit us, who harm those we’re attached to, those people we can’t stand and we just hate them. Whoever we happen to be upset with at that moment becomes our

enemy. We burn with anger towards the people who disturb our peace and interfere with us getting what we want.

When we’re confused or spaced out, we can’t think straight, and so we forget what the causes of happiness are that we need to adopt on the path. Knowing what to adopt and what to discard is very important in order for our spiritual practice to bear the results that we seek. However, when our mind is clouded by ignorance and confusion, we’re unable to differentiate between what to abandon and discard. As a result, our ethical conduct becomes nebulous, our concentration is foggy, and our wisdom is distorted. We practise the path incorrectly and then wonder why we’re not progressing. The mind is befuddled in the darkness of confusion, so although our wish is to be happy, we create the karmic causes for suffering instead. We don’t know how to live our lives. This is what is called being in cyclic existence.

The first three lines—indicating attachment, anger, and confusion, respectively—point out what are called “the three poisons”. These disturbing emotions and negative attitudes poison our happiness because when they are active in our mind, they make us create destructive karma.

“What is the solution to these three poisons? The ultimate remedy is to realise reality, the emptiness of inherent existence.” The temporary solution is to “Give up your homeland.” This means to remove from our mind the views, attitudes and emotions that form the familiar “homeland” of cyclic existence: all our recurring thoughts, ideas, attachments, aversions and repeated harmful habits, all the conditioning that we grew up with, how we relate to people at work and in school.

For example, we tend to have a lot of authority issues that we re-enact with our boss, our Dharma teacher, and whoever else we see as being in a position of authority. Playing out our authority issues again and again keeps us mentally imprisoned. Dharma practice involves liberating ourselves mentally from these habitual emotional, verbal and physical behaviours; and thinking more creatively about how we relate to others. This is giving up our homeland. We investigate these situations and our habitual reactions to them with wisdom in order to understand their causes and their effects. Then, realising that it is painful and not at all beneficial to hold on to all the conceptualisations that create authority issues, we give them up. ✨

A Reflection On The Three Poisons

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



The Little Red Apple in Teck Whye

Text & Photos: Chloe Huang

How are you coping with the new normal? Working from home and managing the kids' home-based learning may leave most of us with very little time to enjoy a meal of tasty home-cooked food. So, I am always grateful to be able to find vegetarian food stalls around my neighbourhood.

The Red Apple Vegetarian food stall is a delight located in the middle of the Teck Whye neighbourhood. Offering a wide variety of tasty vegetarian local cuisine, it is not surprising to see a long queue forming in front of the stall during meal times.

They have an extensive menu, which left me spoilt for choice. Thus, I had trouble deciding what to order, but the friendly auntie at the stall noticed my hesitancy and patiently explained the morning and dinner menus to me, even though business was pretty busy then. Their morning menu consists of Singaporean favourite dishes

such as *Lor Mee*, *Bak Kut Teh*, *Chicken Rice*, *Laksa* and many more. They serve two different dishes each morning, so if you have a particular dish in mind you wish to try do take note of the day it is available. For dinner, only the *Zi Char* menu is available which comprises familiar Singaporean dishes such as hot plate tofu, sweet and sour "pork", etc.

If, like me, you are craving Thai food after watching a Thai drama series, you can order their Tom Yum Fried Rice at S\$4.50 and top it up with a Peach Gum *Cheng Teng* dessert at S\$3. I could taste the *wok hey* in every bite of the fried rice and it was not too salty, unlike most hawker food. The fried rice portion is generous so share it with a friend or a loved one if you are a small eater. The Peach Gum *Cheng Teng* is cooling and not too sweet, which is fabulous for Singapore's warm weather. Overall, I find their dishes healthy and would recommend them to anyone looking to eat healthy yet delicious vegetarian meals.

Overall Ratings:

Food 8/10
Ambience 5/10
Service 8/10

Address:

Blk 16 Teck Whye Lane,
Singapore 680016

Operating Hours:

Mon-Sun 6am – 8:30pm
(Closed on Tues)



Text & Photos: Jos Tan

Redefining Tradition- New Fut Kai Vegetarian Restaurant

Located in an area where modern buildings are juxtaposed with traditional structures, where trendy cafes meet cosy eating houses, New Fut Kai (NFK) Vegetarian Restaurant at Jalan Besar has stood the test of time, reinventing its menu for the past 10 years to stay abreast with food trends and customers' changing palates. Matching its vicinity, it is a traditional yet contemporary restaurant both in its ambience and menu. NFK is perhaps the only vegetarian restaurant in Singapore that serves charcoal hotpot, using the

age-old tradition of flaming charcoal to keep the food deliciously warm throughout. A full vegan option is available upon request.

Sitting around a hotpot of simmering broth filled with diners' favourite ingredients is a practice common in Asia. A hotpot meal allows people to connect, and strengthens bonds with their family, loved ones and friends as food items are swished and cooked in soup. This tradition, which started almost 1,000 years ago in Mongolia, continues today, especially during Lunar New Year get-togethers.

Instead of getting off-the-shelf ingredients, NFK offers a starter platter that includes a variety of soup, curry, tofu, mushrooms, vegetables and deep-fried dishes to complement staples. There are also hot and cold desserts, and beverages to choose from. Recommended dishes to try include:

1 Herbal Mushroom Hotpot (S\$26 for small-sized hotpot suitable for 2 persons) This mushroom broth is exceptionally light, balanced and delightful. The natural sweetness from the ingredients (mushrooms, vegetables, red dates, ginkgo nuts,

lotus seeds, wolfberries, homemade dumplings and fried lion mane mushrooms) can be savoured, without the over-powering taste of shitake mushrooms. As the broth is created without flavoured soup stock, it didn't leave me dehydrated and thirsty. Each hotpot also comes with an additional big bowl of broth refill. Further refills are chargeable.

2 Yuzu Tofu (Small: S\$15 for 6 pieces) This is a deep-fried dish filled with a mix of tofu, carrots and white fungus. The filling is soft and flavourful. A lot of effort went into this dish with sesame mayo sauce, crushed cashew nuts and candied yuzu peel.

3 Crispy Roast "Pork" (S\$18 for 8 pieces) This interesting dish is made using popiah skin filled with diced chestnut and lion mane mushrooms. Each bite is delectable and chewy, with the fragrant taste of sweet sauce. Lettuce, cucumber and sweet dipping sauce are provided for those who wish to eat it the "Peking-duck" way.

4 Xinghua Noodles (S\$8 for the small portion) Noodle lovers will enjoy this dish of thick, chewy noodles, complete with crispy seaweed, aromatic peanuts, vegetables, mushrooms and tofu puffs. Good choice for those opting for a non-fried dish.

5 Sparkling Mixed Berries (S\$4) If you like something cold, sweet and fizzy, be sure to finish up the berries compote because that is the best part of the drink.

6 Triple Chrysanthemum Goji Tea (S\$6 for a pot) If you are health-conscious and prefer a hot beverage, try this. Using White Chrysanthemum, Baby Chrysanthemum, Snow Chrysanthemum and wolfberries as its primary ingredients, this light-tasting floral tea is known to reduce heatiness and inflammation.

Overall Ratings:

Food 8/10
Ambience 8.5/10
Service 9/10

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208945 Tel: 6398 0836
www.newfutkai.com.sg
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Last orders at 30 minutes before closing time.



1



2



3



4

Try

Known as the poor man's ginseng, the codonopsis can strengthen the immune system, help diabetics by lowering blood glucose, and improve mental acuity and memory. Studies have also shown that this herb has potent anti-inflammatory effects that can protect against fatty liver.

On the other hand, brown rice is rich in essential minerals and vitamins, and a good source of fibre, fatty acids and protein. According to research, consuming brown rice may control cholesterol levels, boost heart, brain and bone health, optimise digestion and help combat anxiety and depression.

1



Cordyceps Mushroom Soup

Ingredients (Serves three)

15g	Cordyceps militaris
8g	Codonopsis (diced)
3pcs	Red date (slit)
4 halves	Walnut kernel
650ml	Filtered water

Seasoning:

1 tbsp	Goji berries
1/2 tsp	Bamboo salt

Method

1. Combine ingredients, bring to boil and simmer on low fire for 1.5 hours.
2. Switch off fire, add in goji berries and bamboo salt, and serve hot.

Brown Rice Tea

Ingredients (Serves one)

20g	Organic brown rice
300ml	Filtered water

Method

1. Soak organic brown rice overnight for 10 hours.
2. Fan dry and lightly roast brown rice on low-medium fire in a pan till golden brown.
3. Mix roasted brown rice with water and boil for 10 minutes.
4. Drink beverage in the evening when lightly cooled

* Do not consume the rice grain, drink only the tea.

2

"Brown rice tea is rich in Vitamin B and is also GABA-rich."
— Wong Kee Yew



Recipes and photos courtesy of Wong Kee Yew, a vegetarian nutrition teacher who conducts classes at Awareness Hub.

Call **Awareness Hub** at **6336 5067**, or turn to page 35 & 36 for more details.

Scan this to find out more about Kee Yew:



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AWAKEN Magazine
88 Bright Hill Road Singapore 574117

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AWAKEN to...

Compassion & Wisdom on the journey of life...

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

Get your free copy from these outlets:

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* whilst stocks last

天天康龄

Age Well Every Day (AWE) Programme



天天康龄活动旨在延缓痴呆症的发作，减少焦虑和抑郁，并增加老年人的社交能力。
Holistic and Evidence-based dementia and depression prevention programme. To improve seniors' quality of life.

项目 Activities:

- 健康教育 Health Education
- 经络拍打运动 Meridian Flapping Exercise
- 正念练习 Mindful Awareness Practice
- 怀旧音乐 Music Reminiscence
- 园艺活动 Horticultural Therapy

日期 Date:
23/2/2022 - 08/6/2022

(每逢星期三 Every Wednesday)
时间 Time:
9.00am - 11.30am

地点 Venue:
光明山普觉禅寺
Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

To register:
Online registration at
<https://bit.ly/3BVt2ab>
询问 Enquiry:
community@kmspks.org
6849 5359
(星期日至星期四 Sun-Thurs 8.30am till 4pm)

*This programme is developed by:
Mind Science Centre (MSC), NUS
Organized by:
Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery
88 Bright Hill Road - 6849 5300 - kmspks.org
Developed by:
Community & Learning Department
NUS

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SG QR

KMSPKS



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with



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

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AWAKEN Magazine
88 Bright Hill Road Singapore 574117

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Issue 47 / May 2020

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弟子規

线上课程

《弟子規》是一部成书于清朝并广为流传的儿童启蒙读物，目的就是对孩子进行启蒙教育，为其将来成长和发展奠定基础。它采纳《论语·学而》篇中“弟子，入则孝，出则弟，谨而信，泛爱众，而亲仁，行有余力，则以学文”的文意，加以引申扩展，以三字一句，两句一韵的形式进行论述，阐释了“弟子”在家、在外、待人接物、为人处世、求学等方面应具备的礼仪与规范。

2022年
2月13日至4月24日
每逢星期日

地点
Zoom 网课

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每加一人另加 \$10

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6849 5317

幼儿班
年龄 5-7 岁
上课时间
9am - 10:30am

成人班
年龄 19 岁以上
上课时间
9:30am - 11am

青年班
年龄 13-18 岁
上课时间
9:30am - 11am

儿童班
年龄 8-12 岁
上课时间
10:30am - 12pm



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/career to view our job vacancies.



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Auspicious golden paper weights to usher in 2022

2021 had been a challenging year for many. If you are a business owner and would like to usher in 2022 on an auspicious note, consider getting these decorative paper weights with gold foil for your office desk.

Choose from three different sizes for the rotating water globe, or gourd version with an intricate walnut-coloured stand. Alternatively, there are the apple, wealth ingot and lucky bag designs.

All styles bear various Chinese characters or phrases of auspiciousness such as abundance, good fortune and peace, and contain floating pieces of real gold foil.

Shake it up to see the shimmering gold foil sheets swim around in the water globe, for a meditative minute of calm, or spark an "Ah-ha" moment when your creativity runs dry in the office.

Purchase it online at www.awarenessplace.com and have it delivered to your residence.



What's new
Text: Esther Thien

If you have been experiencing some really painful circumstances and situations for the past two years, this e-book can offer some helpful advice.

Pema Chodron teaches us that there is a fundamental opportunity for happiness right within our reach, even during chaotic times, yet we usually miss it—ironically, because we are caught up in an attempt to escape pain and suffering.

The only way to deal with mental pain that will bring lasting benefit is to approach painful situations with friendliness and gentleness, says the American Buddhist nun.

This reader-friendly guide to compassionate living shows us how we can use pain to cultivate wisdom, compassion and courage. Besides showing us ways of communication that lead to openness and true intimacy with others, this e-book also demonstrates practices for reversing our negative habitual patterns, methods for working with chaotic situations and ways to cultivate compassionate, energetic social action.

Recently profiled in Oprah's *O magazine*, Pema Chodron is a spiritual teacher for people from all walks of life—regardless if they are on a spiritual path or not. Her heartfelt advice and wisdom, which are a result of 20 years of practice as a Tibetan Buddhist nun, as well as her years as an ordinary housewife and mother before ordination, give her a wide appeal.

This advice strikes at the core with just the right note, offering us comfort and challenging us to live more deeply with awareness in each moment, and contribute to creating a more loving world.

Highly recommended! Also available as an audio book.



When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times

Harper Collins UK

Pema Chodron | US\$9.54

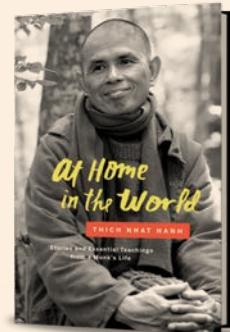
■ Get it from Google Play.



Visit shorturl.at/iGLV5 or
Scan this to download e-book

*“We are here to awaken
from the illusion of our
separateness.”*

— Thich Nhat Hanh



At Home In The World

By Thich Nhat Hanh

S\$23.90



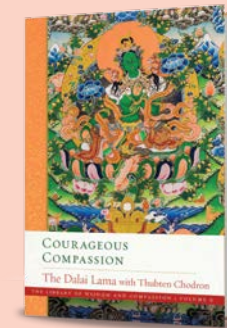
How to Connect

By Thich Nhat Hanh

S\$16

If you have ever wondered how life is like for a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, *At Home In The World* may pique your interest. It tells the personal accounts, stories and experiences of the life of Thich Nhat Hanh, well-known Zen master and peace activist. The book is thought provoking, inspiring and enjoyable to read; and just like the Buddha, he engages people's interest through avid story-telling to impart important teachings, insights and life lessons.

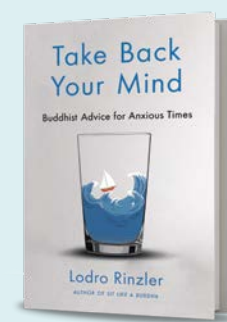
How to Connect is a gorgeously illustrated book in which we learn all the essentials of mindfulness practice that allows us to connect with ourselves, each other and most importantly, with nature. When we bring all our attention to truly connect to whatever we're doing, it takes us back to being present in the here and now, which is the foundation of happiness, says Thich Nhat Hanh. It is a healing balm, a non-judgmental awareness, that puts an end to our sense of alienation.



Courageous Compassion

By H.H. The Dalai Lama with Venerable
Thubten Chodron

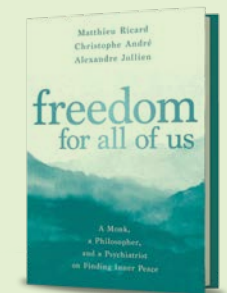
S\$32.90



Take Back Your Mind: Buddhist Advice for Anxious Times

By Lodro Rinzler

S\$22.90



Freedom for All of Us

A Monk, a
Philosopher, and
a Psychiatrist on
Finding Inner
Peace

By Matthieu Ricard

S\$29.50

The sixth book in the Library of Wisdom and Compassion series by His Holiness, this book continues with the teachings on the path to awakening which focuses on opening our hearts with love and compassion for all living beings. It explains in detail the practices of the sravakas and bodhisattvas embodying compassion and wisdom that we can apply in our daily lives. His Holiness also describes Buddha bodies, what Buddhas perceive, and Buddhas' awakening activities.

Take Back Your Mind: Buddhist Advice for Anxious Times is an adorable book with an interesting book cover depicting a sailboat in a tumultuous sea in a glass of water, signifying that many of our worries and anxieties in life are really miniscule, compared to the vastness of the universe, like the sailboat rocking and navigating in the drinking glass. We can live without so much anxiety and stress if we can learn to zoom out and expand our perception about life. We will then learn to train our minds to feel contentment, peace and joy, even in the midst of difficult circumstances.

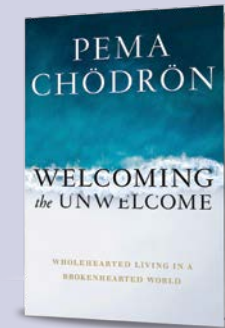
This is a practical and relatable guidebook showcasing easy-to-follow steps on how we can recognise our innate goodness, work with our minds so that we can relax, appreciate and create the reality we want. Only by cultivating the energy and inner strength of peace and compassion can we truly benefit one another.

“We are, nearly all of us,” writes Matthieu Ricard, “the playthings of our whims, our conditioning, our impulses, our inner conflicts, our wandering thoughts, and our afflictive emotions. This servitude of ours is at the root of much that torments us. How do we free ourselves from the prison of these mental mechanisms, in the face of which we often feel helpless, even resigned?”

Three illuminating teachers unfold compelling dialogues on inner freedom, what it is and how we can develop it in ourselves and others, shedding light on every being's true nature: freedom.

Each—a monk, a philosopher and a psychiatrist—shares his unique perspective on the various obstacles to inner freedom as well as the ways to cultivate it. What comes across is an inspiring guide chockful of insights, specific strategies, plus a panoramic vision and road plan for us to break free from our unconscious walls, to overcome barriers that confine us and hinder our liberation.

■ All books are available at Awareness Place stores.



Welcoming the Unwelcome: Wholehearted Living in a Brokenhearted World

By Pema Chodron

S\$25.90

When times are challenging, what the world needs most are human connection, compassion and love. In this book, Pema Chodron, a Tibetan Buddhist teacher and monastic, offers her signature mixture of humour and insight through heartfelt reflections and stories that have made her a comforting figure to turn to for wisdom during times of change.

In an increasingly divided world, Pema shows us how to cultivate and hone our abilities to find common ground, even when we disagree, and influence our environment in positive ways. She shared relatable accounts of her life experiences, and simple but powerful daily practices that help us to transform times of hardship and adversity into opportunities of growth and transcendence, freeing us from the grasp of illusion.

Welcoming the Unwelcome includes teachings on the true meaning of karma, recognising the basic goodness in ourselves and the people in our lives, as well as step-by-step guides for meditation and compassion that anyone can practise to illuminate the pall of darkness one faces.

A QUEST FOR MEANING

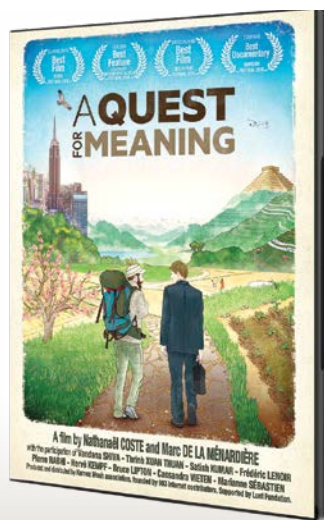
We are in a period of historic transition. The rise of financial conglomerates and multinationals has taken its toll on democracy. Capitalism has outlived its story! How then can we give up the idealism that underpinned the old world and find new solutions based on new values?

A new civilisation begins when beliefs change. We need to ask: Are we currently walking into a world that is ecological, fair and preoccupied with the freedom and dignity of human beings, or will we end up with a totalitarian, post-capitalist regime in which the oligarchy becomes more and more authoritarian?

Marc and Nathanael set off on a worldwide tour to discover what lies at the core of our global situation today and to find new solutions and new values.

To do this, they travelled to India, Mexico, the USA and various countries of Europe to interview the likes of Bruce Lipton, Vandana Shiva and Satish Kumar, cutting-edge thinkers, who are 'walking the talk' of holistic new ways of living, in which happiness, respect for life and dignity for all are the key concerns.

Although we ourselves are shaped by the amazing process of natural creation, man separated himself from Nature at large when he stopped being nomadic and started living in villages and towns. And now we are reaching the limitation of our attempt to dominate it.



Directed by: Nathanael Coste and Marc De La Menardiére

Yet, Nature is the basis of life. While giant corporations are turning everything into a market of commodities, we need a brand new system, a cyclical economy in which we only take what we need from our bountiful natural world and once we've used it, return it.

Indeed, many of the problems that humanity is facing are grounded in the limitations of our consciousness and we, as ordinary citizens must have confidence in our capacity as individuals to bring change. For example, it should be a priority for everyone on Earth to receive enough food, but we don't treat it as such, because our consciousness is too limited to see that this is a must.

Over the centuries, we've learned to see the world as mechanistic and have bought the belief that 'evolution is a struggle' and that the world is not our friend, but as Vandana Shiva said, "There is an intelligence orchestrating this symphony. Spirituality is about understanding your place in the universe and therefore about deep freedom, but we are disconnected from that intelligence."

Indeed if man has no cosmic identity, he acts out of habit on auto-pilot. It's as if we have a damp cloth around our

heart, so it's hard to fan the flame of laughter and joy that abide in all our hearts. Ultimately, we need to be who we really are and not hide behind masks.

Everywhere people should be producing in sustainable ways, generating livelihoods and meeting their needs. Human beings are very creative so recovery of our identity as makers, producers of things, not as consumers, is imperative. Rather than seeking employment where you are a tool making money for the employer, create employment!

This is not just a journey about two young men looking for their own answers, but one with a voice carrying an important message for us all today. We are living within an outdated framework of life that is screaming at us to modify our thinking and to recreate the world in the way that we know is beneficial to all.

Satish Kumar has an answer for this: "If you have enough, you are happy. Trust is the key to good living. Surrender to the process of the universe, let things happen and you will be surprised. Trust yourself, trust other people and be a part of the flow of the universe. You will enrich the universe and the universe will enrich you."

Marc concluded, "To make a better world, WE have to change our vision, WE have to evolve and grow for this to happen, because the real revolution is on the inside."

A journey above and beyond our beliefs.

Visit <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/aquestformeaning> to watch the film, or visit <https://aquestformeaning-themovie.com> to find out more.

Dharma

CEREMONY | PRAYERS



Offering to Buddha and Celestial Beings Puja - Online Puja

1 Jan | Sat | 6.00am – 8.00am
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Front Office @ 9.00am – 4.00pm
Enquiry: 6849 5333

The Great Diamond Gem Repentance Puja

1 Jan | Sat | 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Enquiry: 6849 5326 | sed@kmspsks.org

Online Pledge of Maitreya Buddha Name Chant

Recite the sacred chant of "Namo Dang Lai Xia Sheng Mi Le Fo", and submit your count on our website.
17 Jan – 15 Feb | Mon – Tue
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Enquiry: sed@kmspsks.org

Lunar 27th Great Compassion Repentance Puja

29 Jan | 27 Feb | 29 Mar | 27 Apr
Sat, Sun, Tue, Wed | 10.00am – 11.30am
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Enquiry: 6849 5333

Lunar 27th Great Compassion Repentance Puja - Online Light Offering

29 Jan | 27 Feb | 29 Mar | 27 Apr
Sat, Sun, Tue, Wed | 10.00am – 11.30am
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Fee: \$8 (1 candle with 1 sponsor's name)
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Enquiry: 6849 5326 | sed@kmspsks.org

Chinese New Year Wish Fulfilling Lanterns (TBC) - Lantern Lighting

31 Jan – 15 Feb | Mon – Tue | 7.00pm – 10.00pm
Venue: Hall of Universal Brightness
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Enquiry: 6849 5326 | sed@kmspsks.org

Chinese New Year Bell Resonance (TBC)

31 Jan – 1 Feb | Mon – Tue | 11.30pm – 1.00am
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Enquiry: 6849 5326

Chinese New Year Bell Resonance (TBC) - Online Light Offering

31 Jan – 1 Feb | Mon – Tue | 10.00pm – 1.00am
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Fee: \$8 (1 candle with 1 sponsor's name)
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Enquiry: 6849 5326 | sed@kmspsks.org

Offering to Buddha and Celestial Beings Puja (TBC)

9 Feb | Wed | 6.00am – 8.00am
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Front Office @ 9.00am – 4.00pm
Enquiry: 6849 5333

Chinese New Year Puja (TBC)

• 13 Feb | Sun | 10.00am – 11.15am
• 15 Feb | Tue | 6.30am – 2.00pm
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 4 | Hall of No Form
Registration: Online | www.kmspsks.org
Front Office @ 9.00am – 4.00pm
Enquiry: 6849 5333

TALKS | WORKSHOPS | COURSES

2022 ENGLISH BUDDHISM SUTRA STUDIES

Extraordinary Happiness - Sigalovada Sutta & Dighajanu Sutta

22 Feb – 10 May | Tue | 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 3 | Classroom
Fee: \$35 (10 lessons)
Registration: 1 Dec 2021 – 21 Feb 2022

Discovering Buddhism - Becoming a Buddhist (For Beginners)

This course will cover three important topics:

- Getting to know The Triple Gem
- Buddhist Etiquette
- The Realities of our Life (The Four Noble Truths, Karma and Five Precepts)

11 Apr – 4 Jul | Mon | 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 3 | Classroom
Fee: \$35 (10 lessons)
Registration: 12 Jan 2022 – 10 April 2022

Happiness Through Blessings - Mangala Sutta

24 May – 26 Jul | Tue | 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Venue: VHCMMH | Level 3 | Classroom
Fee: \$35 (10 lessons)
Registration: 25 Feb 2022 – 20 May 2022

Note: We will also be conducting and adding a few more topics to the above Sutra Study Series, in our next issue of the Awaken Magazine (#53).

- Topics include:
- Sutra on the Eight Realizations of Great Beings
 - Ultimate Happiness (Satipatthana Sutta)

Registration:

- Online: www.kmspsks.org
(For the latest update details of the classes, please log on to our website)
- Reception Office @KMSPKS 9.00am – 4.00pm
(Lunch Break: 11.30am – 12.30pm)
Enquiry: 6849 5300 / 6849 5345 | ded@kmspsks.org



Meditation

Relaxation and Mindfulness Meditation (Bilingual)

Basic meditation which involves body scanning and relaxation.

- 15 Dec – 2 Mar | Wed | 7.45pm – 9.15pm
- 17 Dec – 11 Mar | Fri | 7.45pm – 9.15pm
- 19 Dec – 6 Mar | Sun | 4.00pm – 5.30pm

New Run in (April) Tentative Schedules

- Apr | Wed | 7.45pm – 9.15pm (TBC)
- Apr | Fri | 7.45pm – 9.15pm (TBC)
- Apr | Sun | 4.00pm – 5.30pm (TBC)

Venue: KMSPKS Meditation Hall
Fee: \$30 per class

Registration:

- Online: www.kmspsks.org
- Reception Office @KMSPKS 9.00am – 4.00pm
(Lunch Break: 11.30am – 12.30pm)
Enquiry: 6849 5346 | meditationhall@kmspsks.org

calendar

Lifestyle

CHILDREN

Children's Art - Colours of Life

Free expression, reflection and exploration in arts for children to appreciate the beauty of things and their surrounding environment. This programme is specifically designed for children between 4 and 12 years old.

- 5 Feb – 9 Apr | Sat | 1.00pm – 2.30pm ; Or 2.30pm – 4.00pm
- 16 Apr – 18 Jun | Sat | 1.00pm – 2.30pm ; Or 2.30pm – 4.00pm

Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$60 (10 sessions), excluding art materials



ART

Art For Seniors

Seniors stay active and keep dementia at bay with interesting arts and crafts! A beneficial course brought together by qualified and passionate instructors.

- CNY Art: 5 – 19 Jan | Wed | 1.00pm – 2.30pm
- Vesak Art: 27 Apr – 11 May | Wed | 1.00pm – 2.30pm

Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: Free (Donations are welcome)
Registration is required



Zentangle Art

Zentangle® is simple to learn, and requires no prior art-making experience.

The art uses the combination of dots, lines and simple curves to create beautiful patterns. Zentangle® can be used as a "self-help" art therapy to enhance relaxation and focus.

This art helps increase self-confidence, relieve stress and anxiety, and nurture and develop creativity in one's well-being.

Come and join in the fun and learn to personalise your own small tote bag, by using Zentangle® art.

20 and 27 Feb | Sun | 10.30am – 12.30pm
Venue: Awareness Hub

Fee: \$60 (2 sessions)
Material Fee: \$10 (2 sessions), payable to instructor

Registration:

- Online: www.kmspsks.org/lifestyle/
- Reception Office @KMSPKS | 9.00am – 4.00pm
(Lunch Break: 11.30am – 12.30pm)
- Awareness Hub | 11.30am – 6.00pm
(Bras Basah Complex #03-39)
Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspsks.org

Due to the current COVID-19 situation, programmes and dates are subject to change.



Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programme

Learn to cope with stress through Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). MBSR improves emotion regulation by increasing attention, awareness and acceptance of emotions as they arise at any given moment. Developed by Dr Jon Kabat Zinn from the University of Massachusetts (UMASS) Medical School, Centre for Mindfulness, this well-researched and evidence-based programme will improve your focus, well-being and quality of life.

• 4 Mar – 29 Apr | Fri | 7.30pm – 9.45pm
• 15 Apr (public holiday) | Fri | 9.30am – 4.30pm
Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$300 (8 sessions), including 1 full-day retreat @ subsidised rate

Hatha Yoga

• 12 Jan – 23 Mar | Wed | 8.00pm – 9.30pm
(No class on 2 Feb)
• 22 Jan – 2 Apr | Sat | 10.15am – 11.45am
(No class on 29 Jan)
• 24 Jan – 4 Apr | Mon | 6.45pm – 8.15pm
(No class on 31 Jan)
• 25 Jan – 5 Apr | Tue | 10.30am – 12.00pm
(No class on 1 Feb)
• 26 Jan – 6 Apr | Wed | 6.30pm – 8.00pm
(No class on 2 Feb)
• 30 Mar – 1 Jun | Wed | 8.00pm – 9.30pm
• 9 Apr – 11 Jun | Sat | 10.15am – 11.45am
• 11 Apr – 20 Jun | Mon | 6.45pm – 8.15pm
(No class on 16 May)
• 12 Apr – 21 Jun | Tue | 10.30am – 12.00pm
(No class on 3 May)
• 13 Apr – 15 Jun | Wed | 6.30pm – 8.00pm
Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$180 (10 sessions) | Walk-in \$25 per lesson

Chair Yoga

• 21 Jan – 8 Apr | Fri | 12.30pm – 1.30pm
(No classes on 28 Jan and 4 Feb)
• 22 Apr – 24 Jun | Fri | 12.30pm – 1.30pm
Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$160 (10 sessions) | Walk-in \$22 per lesson

Hatha Yoga for Beginners

• 22 Jan – 2 Apr | Sat | 8.30am – 10.00am
(No class on 29 Jan)
• 19 Mar – 21 May | Sat | 6.30pm – 8.00pm
• 25 Mar – 3 Jun | Fri | 10.30am – 12.00pm
(No class on 15 Apr)
• 9 Apr – 11 Jun | Sat | 8.30am – 10.00am
Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$180 (10 sessions) | Walk-in \$25 per lesson

Gentle Hatha Yoga

• 25 Jan – 5 Apr | Tue | 2.30pm – 4.00pm
(No class on 1 Feb)
• 25 Feb – 6 May | Fri | 2.30pm – 4.00pm
(No class on 15 Apr)
• 12 Apr – 21 Jun | Tue | 2.30pm – 4.00pm
(No class on 3 May)

Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$160 (10 sessions) | Walk-in \$22 per lesson



Yin Yoga

Feeling anxious and stressed out? Try our Yin Yoga class for the perfect opportunity to relax your body, calm your mind, and find balance in your life.

• 1 Mar – 10 May | Tue | 6.30pm – 7.45pm
(No class on 3 May)
• 17 May – 19 Jul | Tue | 6.30pm – 7.45pm
Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$170 (10 sessions) | Walk-in \$23 per lesson

Yoga for Diabetes

Learn yoga postures that stimulate insulin production to help manage diabetes. For non-diabetics, this gentle yoga boosts immunity.

• 17 Mar – 19 May | Thur | 10.30am – 11.30am
Venue: Awareness Hub
Fee: \$120 (10 sessions) | Walk-in \$15 per lesson

CULINARY

Online Plant-based Home cooking and Nutrition Course: 'Food Can Be Medicine'

Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food. - Hippocrates

We can heal our body naturally, if we know how to make use of different types of plant-based whole foods in our daily meals and apply the principles of the whole food nutrition chain.

Thus, food can be our medicine.

6 and 20 Mar | Sun | 2.00pm – 5.00pm

Venue: Online Zoom

Fee: \$98 (2 sessions)

Participants are advised to have a copy of Vinitha's Cookbook with Nutrition Guide during the class (Participants' special price of \$18).



Online Wellness Series - The Ins and Outs of Supplements

A course specially designed for modern urbanites who wish to learn how to choose the right nutritional supplements.

15 Apr | Fri (public holiday) | 10.00am – 4.00pm
[break 12.00pm – 2.00pm]

Venue: Online Zoom

Fee: \$80

Interactive Online Nutrition class - Metabolic Syndrome (3 Highs) and Weight Management (bilingual)

The prevalence of diabetes, high cholesterol and hypertension has increased over the decade. Rising obesity is a significant contributor to the rise in this prevalence locally and globally, affecting both the young and the old.

If one's health is not well managed, it will lead to complications such as heart attack, stroke and kidney failure, etc.

The most effective and sustainable way for weight management and controlling the (3 Highs) is through a healthy diet, consumption of whole food nutrition and lifestyle modifications.

17 Apr | Sun | 2.00pm – 5.00pm

Venue: Online Zoom

Fee: \$40

Participants are advised to have a copy of Vinitha's Cookbook with Nutrition Guide during the class (Participants' special price of \$18).

Registration:

1. Online: www.kmspk.org/lifestyle/
 2. Reception Office @KMSPKS | 9.00am – 4.00pm
(Lunch Break : 11.30am – 12.30pm)
 3. Awareness Hub | 11.30am – 6.00pm
(Bras Basah Complex #03-39)
- Enquiry: 6336 5067 | awarenesshub@kmspk.org

• ENVIROMENTALISM

Sorting of Recyclables

Assist us in sorting out items that can be recycled and reused, for sale at the Gratitude Shop.

Every Tues, Thur, Sat | 9.00am – 2.00pm

Venue: VHCMMH | Level 1 | Outside South Wing Office

Enquiry : 6849 5300 | gratitude@kmspk.org

Gratitude Shop

Check out our thrift shop for cheap and good deals. Garden Compost for sale! (2 litre pack @ \$5)

Tue – Sun | 10.00am – 3.00pm

Venue: Outside Dining Hall (South Wing)

Enquiry : 6849 5300 | gratitude@kmspk.org

*Due to COVID-19 restrictions, please check our website for further updates @ <https://www.kmspk.org/services/gratitude-corner/>



• COMMUNITY

Free Community Tuition 2022

Free tuition for secondary school students (GCE 'O' Levels and 'N' Levels), by our dedicated volunteer tutors, providing you with weekly academic guidance.

Subjects : Elementary English, Maths, Science (Physics and Chemistry).

Jan – Oct (Subject to the availability of tutors and tutees)

Venue : Online (via Skype)

Enquiry: 6849 5317 | community@kmspk.org

Food Ration

Monthly Distribution of food ration to low-income families.

16 Jan | 20 Mar | 17 Apr | Sun | 9.00am – 11.30am

Venue: KMSPKS / Sin Ming

Enquiry: 6849 5300 | community@kmspk.org

Age Well Everyday (AWE) - conducted in Mandarin

The Age Well Programme (AWE) is a holistic and evidence-based dementia and depression prevention programme, for seniors to improve their quality and way of life.

23 Feb – 8 Jun (12 sessions) | Wed | 9.00am – 11.30am

Venue: KMSPKS

Fee : Free

Enquiry: 6849 5359 / 6849 5317

community@kmspk.org



Ven Hong Choon Museum

10.00am – 3.00pm

Venue: VHCMMH | Level 3

Free Admission

On:

27th of each lunar month

Qing Ming (5 Apr)

Vesak Day (15 May)

Ullambana Festival (12 Aug)

Birth anniversary of Ven Hong Choon (1 Oct)

Death anniversary of Ven Hong Choon (4 Dec)

KMSPKS = Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

VHCMMH = Venerable Hong Choon Memorial Hall

TBC = To Be Confirmed

Programmes & venues are subject to change.

Details are correct at the time of printing



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