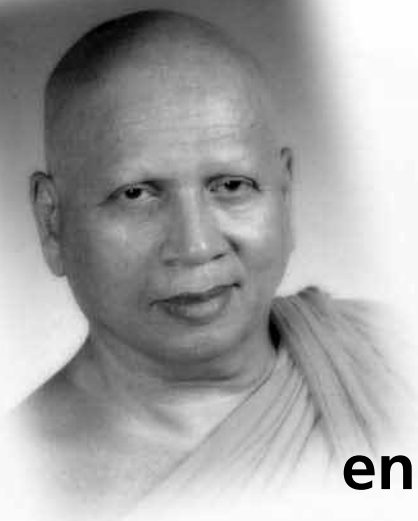


MICA (P) 011/10/2008



Bhante Says “What are the important practices for attaining enlightenment?”

This was the question that Venerable Sariputta, one of the 2 leading disciples of the Buddha, asked the Buddha in a short discourse called the *Kingsila Sutta*.

Let me explain the background of sutras. How did the Buddha usually come round to expounding such discourses?

The Buddha usually gave teachings for a variety of reasons.

Sometimes, the Buddha asked the monks a question. When the monks did not answer or give appropriate answers, the Buddha would give a sermon to guide the monks.

In some cases, certain incidents happened and, based on those incidents, the Buddha delivered his sermons.

In other cases, the Buddha, on realising that a certain disciple's mind was ripe for enlightenment, gave a sermon to guide him towards enlightenment.

Usually, the Pali word '*sila*' means morals or ethics. And so we talk about the layman's 5 or 8 precepts or even the monk's 227 higher ordination precepts.

But in the title of this discourse, the meaning of the term '*sila*' is quite different.

Here the term refers to practices.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and in no way represent the views of the editor, Buddhist Library or the Buddhist Research Society. We accept no responsibility for any organisation, product, service or any other matter featured or advertised.

We welcome contributions which we may edit, if accepted. Write to - The Editor, The Path of Joy, Buddhist Library, Nos. 2 & 4 Lorong 24A Geylang, Singapore 398526. Email: joyeditor@gmail.com. Fax 67417689 Telephone 67468435 BL's website: <http://buddhilib.org.sg> Please include name and contact details. We may publish letters of general interest, subject to editing.

The Path of Joy Editorial Board

Religious Advisor
Ven B Dhammaratana

Editors
Chwee Beng
Tjiej Hoe

Chinese Translation
Huei-Hong

Layout
Geelyn Lim

Co-ordinator
Leila



Why did Venerable Sariputta ask the Buddha this question?

During the Buddha's life, a young man from a very rich family of bankers ordained as a disciple of Venerable Sariputta. He was the only son in his family but he gave up everything in order to become a monk.

Most probably, owing to his family background, the young monk felt an urgency to attain enlightenment. He thought he could do this pretty soon.

And because of this sense of urgency, the young man soon became disappointed. After training under Venerable Sariputta for some time, he thought he was not making much progress.

In the end, Venerable Sariputta found it difficult to train this young monk. So he brought him to see the Buddha.

In the presence of the young monk, Venerable Sariputta asked the Buddha, *"What are the practices necessary for attaining enlightenment?"*

He thought that the Buddha's answer would be helpful to his young disciple and help him resolve his problem.

In response, the Buddha answered as follows.

Avoiding obstinacy and carelessness

A person who wants to attain enlightenment should not be obstinate. Stubbornness goes with pride. The ego is very strong.

When a stubborn disciple sees his teacher, he starts to think. *"I know so much already. How can this teacher help me?"*

In this way, he expects too much from his teacher.

But, ironically, in a sense, he doesn't have such high expectations from himself. He only expects a lot from his teacher. He wants his teacher to do everything.

To be able to understand what a teacher is saying, a student should be humble enough to keep an open mind.

If we are stubborn and proud, how can we understand the Dharma?

This can be clearly illustrated by a story also taken from the Buddha's life.

King Bimbisara, one of the Buddha's closest friends, had a queen whose beauty was legendary.

The King received many teachings from the Buddha. As a result, eventually he attained the 2nd, even the 3rd stage of enlightenment. (In Buddhism, there are 4 stages of enlightenment).

But the Queen refused to accompany the King whenever he went to listen to the Buddha's teachings, even though the King made special arrangements for her to go with him.

Why did the queen feel this way?

Because she had a lot of pride in her beauty and the Buddha used to talk about the impermanence of beauty.

Later, realising this, the Buddha changed his approach. He talked to the queen in a different way. As a result, the queen was able to listen to the teachings and benefit from them. In the end, she even attained the 2nd stage of enlightenment.

Knowing the right time to approach the teacher

Some people think that if they can have access to the teacher all the time (or what nowadays we call '24/7'), they can attain enlightenment easily.

This can be seen commonly in the west. Certain popular people have many followers. They are called groupies.

Dharma students should not be like groupies, blindly following the teacher. There will be no benefit in such a situation.

It's not necessary to follow the teacher all the time. We should be mature enough to decide for ourselves the appropriate time to approach the teacher.

Nevertheless, there are certain times when it is necessary to see the teacher personally.

For example, when we do meditation practice daily, we may face certain problems like fear or doubt. At such times, of course, we should go and see the teacher.

On the other hand, from the teacher's side, a good teacher will always have time for a student who deserves attention and help.

Let me give an example.

At one time the Buddha was living in Jetavana Grove. A young man who lived more than 1,000 miles away heard about the Buddha and wanted desperately to go and see him.

He became an ascetic and walked all the way to find the Buddha.

When he was approaching Jetavana Grove, he came upon the Buddha who was performing his daily alms round.

Right there and then, the young man requested teachings from the Buddha.

Of course, the Buddha had to decline, saying that he was going to collect his food at that time.

But the young man persisted.

For the 2nd time, the Buddha gave him the same answer.

Then, for the 3rd time, the young man asked the Buddha to teach him.

This time he said to the Buddha *"Venerable Sir, I have come a long way. Please give some teachings, even a very short one."*

Upon hearing this, the Buddha finally relented.

Being diligent in training

Venerable Sariputta's disciple was so engrossed in getting results that he had slackened in his efforts in putting into practice what he was taught.

Similarly, we should all be careful that we do not fail to put into practice what we are taught with some wisdom and equanimity.

Setting priorities

Dharma should be a student's first and last concern. He must live according to the Dharma.

Venerable Sariputta's disciple wanted very much to

attain enlightenment. There was no doubt about this. But his priorities were wrong.

His pride or ego was his first priority, instead of practising the Dharma.

Nowadays, when we talk about practising the Dharma, it's very difficult.

We live a very sophisticated way of life. Practising the Dharma in such a context can seem impossible.

It is understandable that earning a livelihood especially in a modern environment has to be accorded 1st priority. But, even if that were the case, surely spiritual practice must at least be given 2nd priority.

But, of course, in the case of a monk like Venerable Sariputta's disciple, there's no doubt that practising the Dharma must always be his first and last priority.

In conclusion, I would stress that, even today, the Buddha's answer is very relevant.

Of course, today, we don't think about attaining enlightenment very often. But we should not lose sight of the fact that a spiritual life still remains very important.

Having said that, we should not go to the other extreme and make the same mistake as Venerable Sariputta's disciple.

If we do, when we don't get what we want, we become disappointed or discouraged. We may even think of giving up our spiritual practice.

Bhante B Dhammaratana

Religious Advisor

Buddhist Library

**To be able to understand
what a teacher is saying,
a student should be
humble enough to keep
an open mind.**

Minding our Mind in a Financial Meltdown

**'I am older now
I have more than what I wanted
But I wish that I had started
Long before I did**

**And there's so much time to make up
Everywhere we turn
Time we had wasted on the way...'**

Crosby, Stills & Nash – 'Wasted on the Way'

The series of talks, seminars and meditation retreat aptly titled *'Balance of Heart and Mind'* held in December 2008 and given by Dr B Alan Wallace was a resounding success.

Oversubscribed and fully attended, it must surely rank as one of the most successful events conducted by BL. And not just in quantitative terms.

A participant in Alan's meditation retreat was a close friend of mine. ('Sherman' for the purpose of this editorial.)

Life seldom, if ever, renders us, ordinary folk, a 2nd chance. Except, perhaps, for Sherman.

He'd originally agreed to join me for the meditation retreat conducted by Alan in Sydney, Australia in May 2008. But for some reason he couldn't make it.

Then BL invited Alan to Singapore. The mountain, it seemed, was moving to Sherman.

And Sherman did not make the same mistake twice.

In recent years, Sherman had been undergoing a really hard time. He had his own financial meltdown well before Wall Street.

For the first time in his life, he lived one day at a

time, trying to prevent his financial problems from destroying his life. Above all, he struggled to keep them from swamping his mind.

Instead, Sherman took a hard look at his situation and realised that he'd allowed his ego to get the better of him. Unlike many in Wall Street and elsewhere, he did not take refuge in excuses.

During this unnerving period, Sherman was sustained, not by faith in God or some deity, but by a familiar Zen koan which fit his predicament like a glove.

'Encountering a tiger, a man fled and came to a precipice.

He held on to a vine and gingerly climbed down the precipice.

Then he noticed another tiger below.

At that moment, a mouse ran down the vine and started to nibble at it.

What could he do?

Noticing a luscious strawberry drooping from the vine, he grabbed it and put it into his mouth.

'Ah, how sweet it is!' he exclaimed.

Not surprisingly, Sherman found that Alan's meditation instructions were just what the doctor ordered.

He'd been trying to meditate for some time but had found it extremely difficult. In Sherman's own words, he felt like *'someone in Basement 4 of a 70 storey building'*.

Now Alan had given him a clear, eloquently painted big picture with a graduated path to follow.

Among the methods of *samatha* meditation that Alan taught, Sherman found the *'settling the mind in its natural state'* and *'samatha without signs'* meditation techniques extremely difficult to contemplate, let alone practise.

And so, he decided to stick to *'mindfulness of breathing'* for the time being.

One day, daunted by what he'd learned from Alan about the Buddhist motivation for practising meditation (namely, to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings), Sherman felt that his own motivation was *'not proper'*.

He was practising it merely to improve his finances so as to better provide for his family.

"I don't think that that's necessarily improper," I told him, *"so long as you realise that it's only a short-term goal."*

I described to Sherman my own situation.

I've always been interested in Buddhism and meditation.

But my reason for meditating was fear.

Reading about people paralysed from the neck down – the late Christopher Reeves, for instance – I became terrified of having an active mind trapped in a lifeless body. How would I cope in such a situation?

Meditation seemed a plausible way out.

Now, as a cancer patient (thankfully, in remission), my situation, if anything, has become even more urgent.

What better way to handle pain and fear than to try and develop some semblance of a disciplined and focused mind?

And what better way to prepare for the death that will engulf me soon enough than to leave this life with a measure of loving kindness, compassion,

renunciation and equanimity?

Perhaps I may then have a chance of being reborn - not just as a human being but also as a Buddhist - to continue my spiritual path, such as it is.

I began this editorial quoting from a well-known pop song. The composers of that song lamented having wasted time in their youths, time during which they could have become rich and famous.

As Buddhists, we're told all the time by our Dharma teachers not to waste time.

But, of course, the goal of the Buddhist spiritual life is not fame and fortune but the attainment of enlightenment.

Nevertheless, as our Bhante B Dhammaratana reminds us in *'Bhante Says'* in this issue –

'We live a very sophisticated way of life. Practising the Dharma in such a context can seem impossible.'

It is understandable that earning a livelihood especially in a modern environment has to be accorded 1st priority. But, even if that were the case, spiritual practice must at least surely be given 2nd priority.'

And so, we habituate ourselves – and our children – to thinking that the spiritual life, let alone attaining enlightenment, is something best left to the gurus or the birds. Who needs spiritual practice anyway?

Instead, we allow mundane goals to monopolise all our attention, time and energy. How can we get that promotion? How can our children be super-scholars? Where's the best and cheapest place for our next shopping holiday?

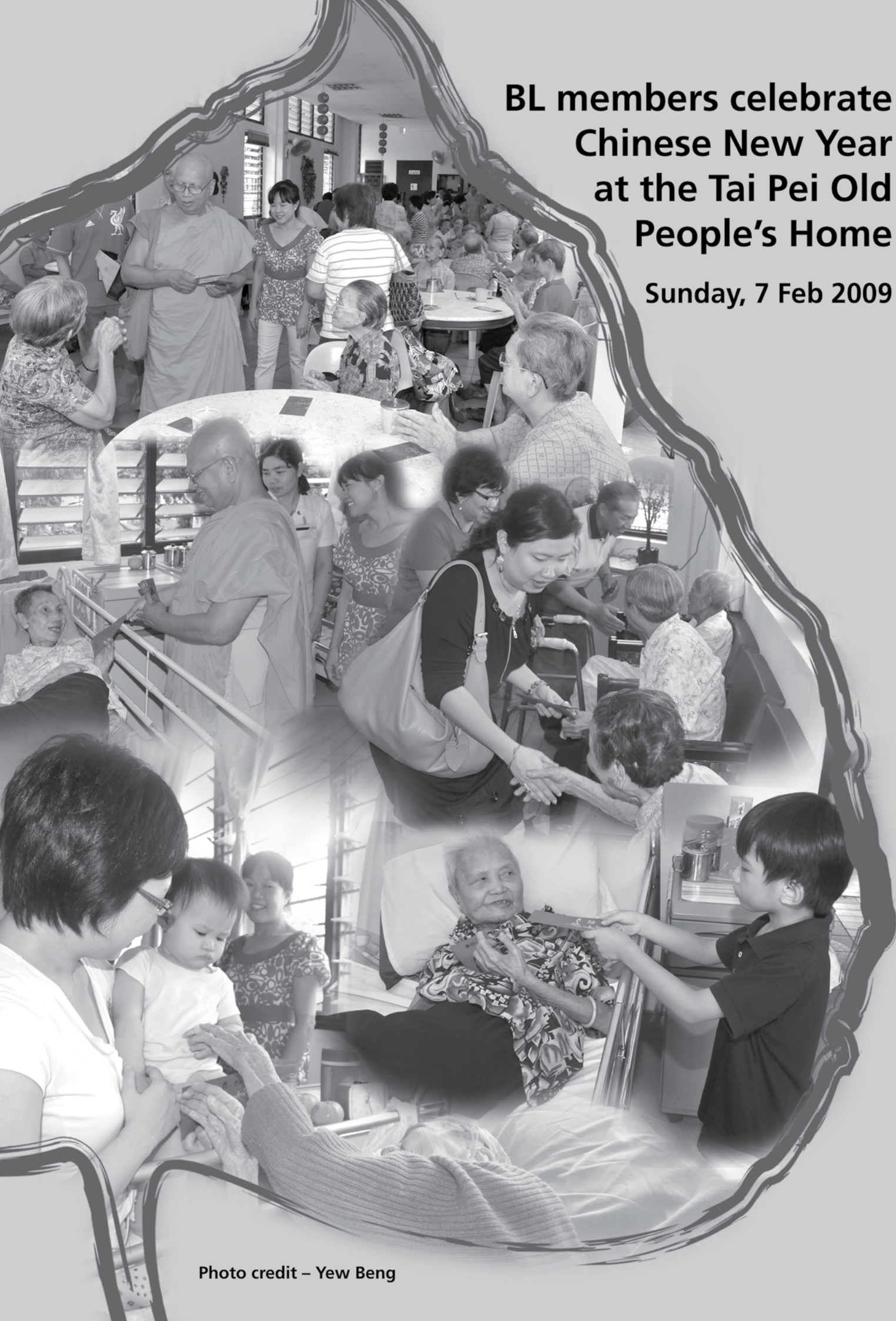
When we have attained all these goals, we figure, we'd be fine forever.

But, of course, we won't.

In our heart of hearts, as Buddhists, we all know that.

We just can't bring ourselves to adjust our priorities in the order that we should.

As always, I wish you pleasant reading.



BL members celebrate Chinese New Year at the Tai Pei Old People's Home

Sunday, 7 Feb 2009

Photo credit – Yew Beng

[book review]

Guided Meditations on The Stages of the Path

Written by Venerable Thubten Chodron

Published by Snow Lion (2009)

(224 pages with a CD)

Reviewed by Geok Hua

Bhikkhuni Thubten Chodron is known for her clear and practical explanations of the Buddha's teachings.

In this book, Ven Chodron explains clearly the meditation teachings of 'lamrim' as like 'ready-made clothes' that are easy to wear — they're systematised so that we can 'wear' them right away, enabling us to learn and practise them in an organised fashion.

'Lamrim' can be translated in various ways – 'stages of the path', 'steps on the path', or 'gradual path'.

The translation 'gradual path' reminds us that the process of transforming the mind, unlike so many other things in our 'hurry-up' society, is a slow and thoughtful one.

The 1st section of *Guided Meditations* explains how to establish a daily practice, how to approach the 2 kinds of meditation – stabilising and analytical.

The 2nd presents the meditations.

The 3rd covers an overview, instructions for working with distractions, antidotes to mental afflictions, advice for newcomers, and suggestions on how to deepen Dharma practice.

The accompanying mp3 CD contains over 14 hours of guided meditations. Individuals who lead busy lives will appreciate the personal guidance offered with these meditations.

Ven Chodron begins by asking this frequently-asked question: 'Why meditate?'

The Buddha's teachings describe meditation as the last of the trilogy of hearing (which includes studying and reading), thinking, and meditating.

We need to begin by studying the Buddha's teaching so that we will understand the role of meditation and the correct way to meditate.

She alerts us to the problems faced by some people who prefer to begin with meditation, and while their motivation may be sincere, they often encounter difficulties which in some instances may obscure their minds even further.

However, if we begin by studying the Dharma, we will gain an overall view of our present situation and have a sense of the direction in which we want to progress spiritually.

We will also have the correct motivation for meditation, which is essential for accomplishing our spiritual goals.

The 2 types of meditation – stabilising and analytical meditation, – and their intended purposes are clearly explained.

The former is done primarily to develop single-pointed concentration (*samadhi*) and serenity (*shamatha*) while the latter is done mainly to cultivate understanding and special insight (*vipashyana*).

The author covers a broad scope beginning with a concise list of the meditations, followed by the expanded points for each meditation on the gradual path.

A beginner will find the outline extremely useful because with a glance one can quickly refresh one's memory of the topic to be analysed.

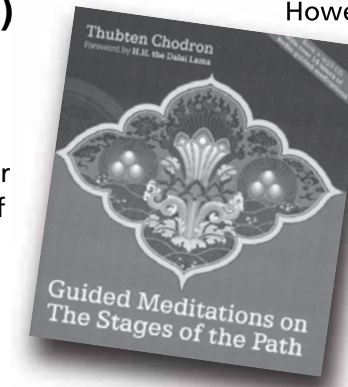
The conclusion in this section of the teaching is that we must make a determination to abandon any chaotic way that falsely promises happiness and to follow the paths of ethical conduct, concentration and wisdom.

The next section covers the scope of meditation of the 3 levels of practitioners - initial, middle, and advanced.

In order to practise the path of the initial level practitioner, we first reflect on our current human life, its meaning and purpose and its rarity.

Having a human body, do we possess complete and healthy sense and mental faculties? Do we live at a time when a Buddha has appeared and given teachings? Do those teachings still exist in a pure form? Do we live in a place where we have access to them?

We come to understand that it is extremely rare and



difficult to have great purpose and meaning. But how much does this understanding influence our daily lives? Do we spend most of our time cultivating our minds and hearts? Or, are we ruled by our attachment and anger, being tangled up in distractions?

We turn to the Buddhas, Dharma, and Sangha for guidance.

Having entrusted spiritual guidance to the 3 Jewels, the initial level practitioner needs to first understand the working of karma and its effects.

Contemplating the relationship between specific actions and their effects helps us to understand the causes of our present experiences and the future results of our present actions. This, in turn, enables us to take responsibility for our happiness by avoiding destructive actions, purifying those already done, and acting constructively.

As we go deeper into Dharma practice, we see that while preparing for our future lives is important, it does not free us from cyclic existence altogether. For this reason, we contemplate the various disadvantages and sufferings of cyclic existence and its causes in order to generate the determination to be free from it and to attain liberation (nirvana).

This leads us to the path in common with the middle level practitioner.

Understanding the unsatisfactory conditions of our

present condition, we consider the difficulties we experience as human beings such as birth, ageing, sickness and death. We can then develop the determination to free ourselves from cyclic existence and to practise the path to do so.

Through this practice we realise the disadvantages of the afflictions and make a strong determination to abandon them.

But we should not stop here. Rather, seeing that all sentient beings are in the same boat, we work to generate '*bodhicitta*'—the altruistic intention to attain enlightenment in order to benefit all sentient beings, the motivation of the higher level practitioner.

Throughout this meditation, Venerable Chodron skillfully takes us through the points of reflection and helps us arrive at a meaningful conclusion at the end of each session.

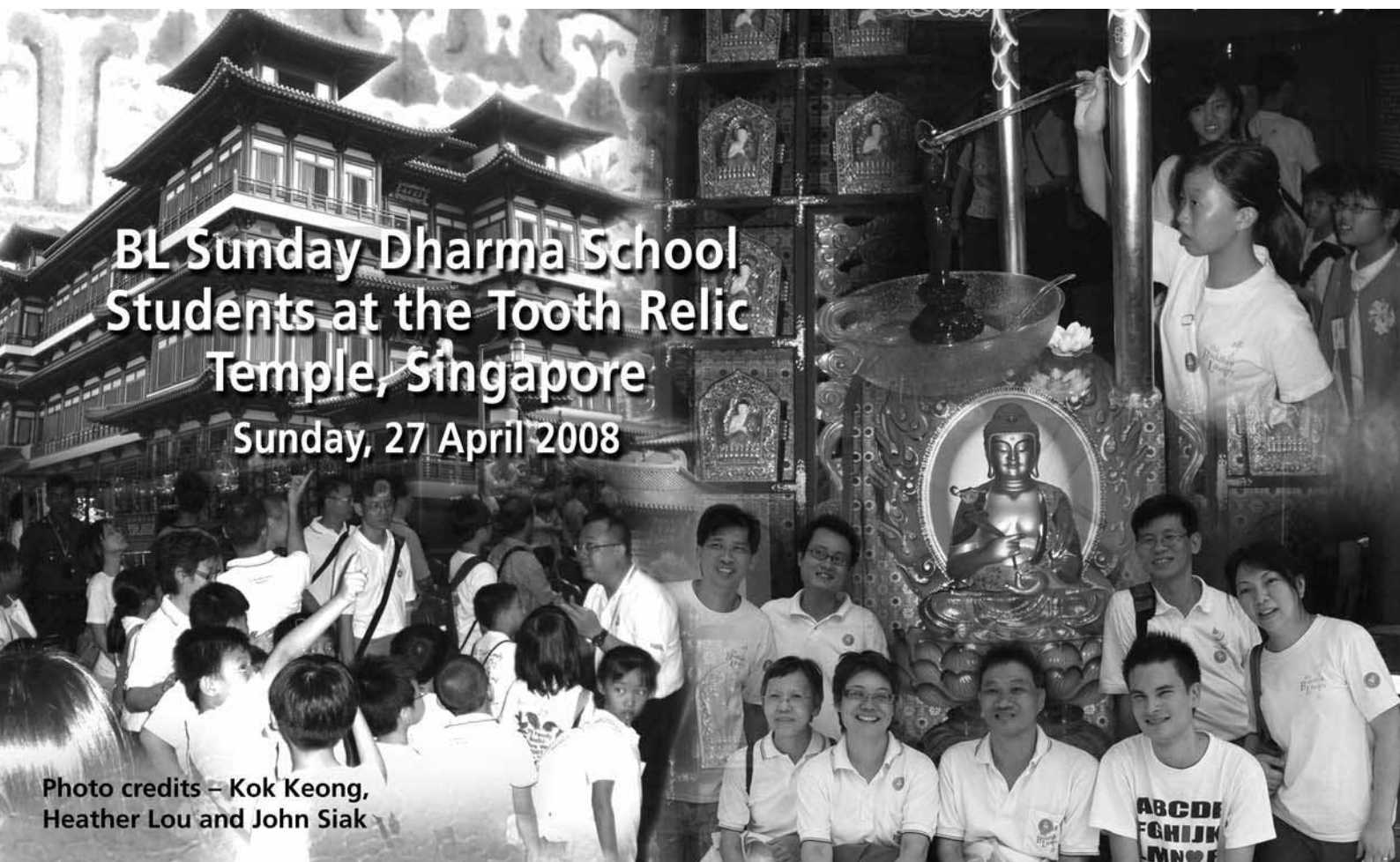
These conclusions are extremely beneficial in helping us to integrate Dharma practice into our daily lives. Only by making meditation a part of our daily life routine will we be able to experience its benefits.

This book is concise and user-friendly. The author reminds us that Buddhism is not about intellectual concepts. Practice is essential.

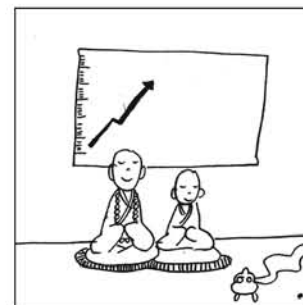
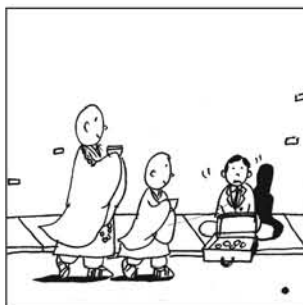
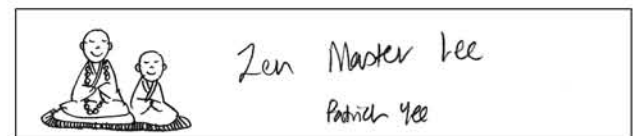
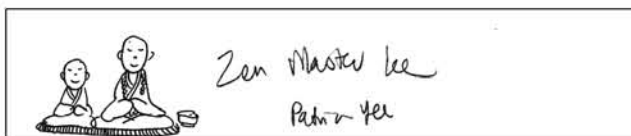
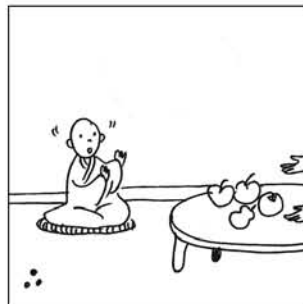
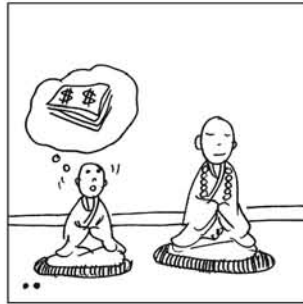
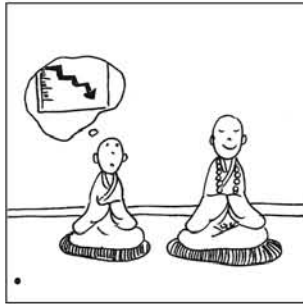
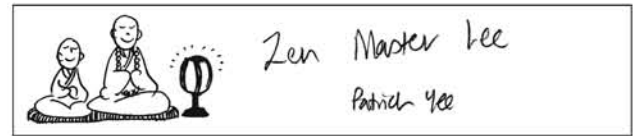
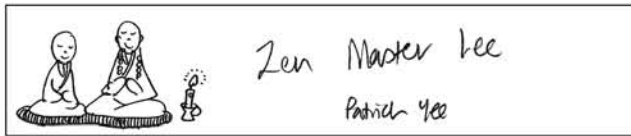
It's also a timely reminder for others whose meditation practice may have slackened.

BL Sunday Dharma School Students at the Tooth Relic Temple, Singapore Sunday, 27 April 2008

Photo credits – Kok Keong,
Heather Lou and John Siak



Cartoons by © Patrick Yee 2009



在经济危机中关怀心智发展

“如今我已苍老
我拥有的多过我所要求
但我希望能更早就开始努力

在每一个转弯处
有那么多时光我希望能追回
这一路上我们已虚掷太多时光...”

Crosby, Stills & Nash –
'Wasted on the Way'

去年12月由B. 艾伦·华勒士博士所主讲的一系列“心灵平衡”讲座、研讨会和禅修营取得空前成功。

由于报名者超额、会上座无虚席，这可算是佛教图书馆历来举办过的最成功的活动之一。不过，其成功并不只在于出席者众。

艾伦禅修闭关营的其中一名成员是我的好友谢尔曼 (Sherman)。

对一般人而言，人生甚少有两次的机会，但谢尔曼也许是例外。

他原本答应和我一起参加艾伦去年5月在澳洲悉尼主办的禅修闭关，但他因事无法参与。

后来，新加坡佛教图书馆邀请艾伦前来演讲，谢尔曼的好运似乎开始出现。

谢尔曼这次可不会再错失良机。

近年来，谢尔曼的日子不好过。早在华尔街陷入经济危机之前，他已经陷入经济窘境。

这是他生平中第一次，过着度一日算一日的生活，避免被财务问题击倒。更重要的是，他努力不让这些问题蒙蔽他的心智。

反之，谢尔曼认真检讨自己，并发现到过去的他过于自我。和华尔街许多人不同的是，谢尔曼没有为自己找借口。

在这段灰心丧气的时期，谢尔曼坚持了下来，他靠的不是信仰上帝或其他神明，而是靠禅的一个公案。

一名男子碰上老虎，逃命时被逼来到悬崖边

他抓紧山藤，小心翼翼地往下爬

后来他发现了另一头老虎在悬崖下

就在此刻，一只老鼠沿着悬挂着的藤开始啃咬。

他能做什么？

发现肥美的草莓垂挂在藤上，他当场摘下往口里放。

“啊！好甜美！”他惊叹道。

毫不令人感到意外的，谢尔曼发现艾伦的禅修方式是必要的。

他曾尝试禅修了一段时间，但却不得要领。谢尔曼形容，那种感觉就像是“一个人被困在70层楼大厦内的底下4层”。

如今，艾伦让他豁然开朗，为他引导了一条证悟之道。

在艾伦诸多的奢摩他禅修法当中，谢尔曼觉得“使身心安顿在自然状态中”及“无相奢摩他”的禅修法极难思议，修持更困难。

因此，他决定现阶段专心修持“出入息法”即可。

艾伦所教导的佛法是：佛教徒禅修的目的是为了利益一切众生而证悟。有一天，谢尔曼几经思索他的教导，才发现自己的动机不恰当。

他禅修的目的纯粹是为了赚取更多钱，从而让家庭过更好的生活。

我告诉他：“我不觉得有什么问题，只要你清楚这只是短期的目标。”

我告诉谢尔曼自己的现况。

我向来对佛教及禅修感兴趣。

但我是因为害怕而做禅修。

例如，看到过世前的克里斯托弗·里夫 (Christopher Reeves)，全身从颈项以下瘫痪，这令我感到害怕，一个灵活的脑筋被困在一个无法动弹的身躯里，换作是我，该如何是好？

禅修似乎是一条出路。

现在身为一名缓解期的癌症病患，我的情况更显危急。

有什么方法能比一个坚强及稳定的心智，能更有效地应对病痛和恐惧感？

有什么方法能比以慈心、悲心、放下及平静心，能更有效地面临即将到来的死亡？

或许，如此才能有机会让自己转世为一名佛教徒，继续现在未完成的禅修。

我以著名的流行歌为此篇文章的开头，作曲人为年轻时所浪费的时间感到可惜，因为那段时间也许能让他们富有及扬名。

身为佛教徒，佛法老师一直叮咛我们不要浪费时间。

当然，佛教徒的修行目的不为出名或赚大钱，而是求证佛道。

然而，如同达摩拉达那法师在本期的“法师说”里的开示——

“我们的生活方式很精致，在这种环境修习佛法几乎是不可能。生活在现代社会，人们把维持生计放在首要位置是情有可言的，但至少也应该把佛法的修学摆在第二位。”

因此，我们让自己和孩子，习惯性地以为宗教生活事不关己，觉得修行根本是没意义的，更别提悟道。

我们让许多世俗化的追求耗费了全部的精神、时间和能量。例如我们应该如何获得擢升？我们的孩子如何变成超级学者？我们下次度假购物，哪里是最好又最便宜的地点？

当我们达到所有的目标时，总以为从此永远顺利。

当然，这是不可能的事。

在所有佛教徒的心坎里，我们都清楚。

我们就是无法如理地安排事务。

一如往常，我祝你阅读愉快。

Chwee Beng 编辑

(接自第12页续)

他觉得佛陀的答案可以解除这名年轻弟子的疑难。

因此，佛陀作出以下的回应。

避免顽固及粗心

想要觉悟的人，不应该固执。顽固往往伴随着傲慢，让人拥有强烈自我。

顽固的弟子见到师父，就会开始想：“我已知道这么多，这位师父还能帮我什么？”

如此一来，他对师父就有过高的要求。

但相反的，他对自己却没有那么高的要求，他只对师父有高要求，把一切都推给师父。

若要明白师父的教诲，弟子应该保持谦卑和开阔心胸。

倘若我们顽固又骄傲，就无法洞悉佛法。

这也可以从佛在世时的一个故事中获得启发。

频婆娑罗王是佛陀的一名好朋友，他有一个貌美如天仙的王后。

国王从佛陀处学习了不少教法，因此他最终证得了二果、甚至是三果的悟境。（佛教共有四果的悟境）

然而，即使国王用心安排，王后还是拒绝陪同国王前往佛陀处听法。

为何王后会如此？

因为她对自己的美貌感到无比的骄傲，而佛陀却常常讲述美貌即无常的道理。

佛陀知道后改变方法，以不同的方式向王后说教。王后因此愿意聆听佛法而受益，最后她也证得二果境地。

晓得适时亲近师父

有些人以为如果可以每周七日如影随形地亲近师父，就可以轻易获得证悟。

西方人常误以为此。某些著名的人物，会有许多追随者，他们通常被称为“粉丝”。

学佛者不应像粉丝那样，盲目追随师父，如此并没有什么实益。

不一定要如影随形地跟着师父，我们应该有足够的成熟判断力，决定何时才是亲近师父的正确时候。

然而，有时却有必要单独向师父请教。

例如，我们在每日的禅修当中，也许会面临一些问题如恐惧或疑惑，此时自然应该去请教师父。

另一方面，就师父的角度而言，一个具德的师父肯定会腾出时间来协助需要帮助的弟子。

让我举个例子。

有一次，佛陀在祇树给孤独园，有一名住在1000里外的

青年迫切想见佛陀。

他成了苦行者，一路步行来找佛陀。

当他快要抵达祇树给孤独园时，碰到了正在托钵的佛陀。

青年当下就向佛陀求法。

当然，佛陀当时正在托钵，只好拒绝他。

但青年坚持到底。

佛陀再次拒绝他。

到了第三次的时候，青年还是恳切向佛陀求法：“尊贵的佛陀，我千里迢迢至此，恳请您传授教法，即使简短的教法也聊胜于无。”

听到这里，佛陀终于答应。

精进修行

舍利弗尊者的弟子因为急于成道，而忽略了修习师父之前传授的教法。

同样的，我们也应该警惕自己，时刻以智慧和平等心修习师父已经传授的教法。

设定优先顺序

佛法是学佛者贯彻始终的目标，他应该如法生活。

舍利弗尊者的弟子无疑迫切想要获得证悟，错就错在他优先顺序不当。

他应该把精神放在佛法上，但却把自我与傲慢摆在首位。

现在要修行佛法，谈何容易。

我们的生活方式过于精致，在这种环境修习佛法几乎是不可能。

生活在现代社会，人们把维持生计放在首要位置是情有可言的，但至少也应该把佛法的修学摆在第二位。

不过当然，以舍利弗尊者的弟子来说，毫无疑问的，修习佛法必然是他优先要做，同时也是必须贯彻始终的。

最后，我需要强调的是，即使到了今天，佛陀的答案还是很实用的。

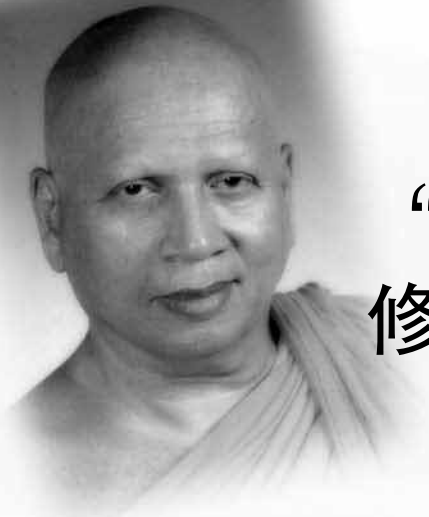
当然，我们现在甚少想到觉悟的事，但却不可忘却，宗教生活仍然是很重要的一环。

话虽如此，我们不应走向极端，与舍利弗弟子犯同样的过失。

否则，当我们所求不得，就会感到失望、信心消减，甚至可能放弃宗教修行。

达摩拉达那法师
宗教顾问
佛教图书馆

MICA (P) 011/10/2008



法师说 “有哪些重要 修行可让人达 到觉悟？”

据Kingsila Sutta经记载，佛陀两大弟子之一的舍利弗尊者如是问佛陀。

让我解释此经的由来。佛陀通常如何传授法教？

佛陀通常基于几种理由传授法教。

有时，佛陀会问出家弟子问题，如果他们无法回答或答不对题，佛陀就会说教引导他们。

有时候是因为一些事情的发生，佛陀可能基于情况传授教法。

另一些时候，则是因为一些弟子的悟道因缘成熟，佛陀传法引导他们觉悟。

“sila”在巴利文里一般解释为道德或论理，例如在家弟子的五戒或八戒、或是出家僧人遵守的227条戒律。

但这部经的经题“sila”意思却不一样。

此处所指的是修行。

为何舍利弗尊者问佛陀这样的问题？

在佛世时，有一名独生子来自富有的银行家族，为了出家，他毅然放弃了一切，成为了舍利弗尊者的弟子。

也许是独特的家庭背景所致，这名年轻的僧人认为自己可以很快觉悟，因此急于成道。

但在舍利弗尊者的循循善诱下仍然屡试不果，不久他便开始感到失望，觉得没有什么进展。

最后，舍利弗尊者无计可施，只好将他带往佛陀处求助。

在年轻僧人的陪同下，舍利弗尊者问佛陀：“有哪些关键的修行法可以让人觉悟？”

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and in no way represent the views of the editor, Buddhist Library or the Buddhist Research Society. We accept no responsibility for any organisation, product, service or any other matter featured or advertised.

We welcome contributions which we may edit, if accepted. Write to - The Editor, The Path of Joy, Buddhist Library, Nos. 2 & 4 Lorong 24A Geylang, Singapore 398526. Email: joyeditor@gmail.com. Fax 67417689 Telephone 67468435 BL's website: <http://buddhlib.org.sg> Please include name and contact details. We may publish letters of general interest, subject to editing.

**The Path of Joy
Editorial Board**

Religious Advisor
Ven B Dhammaratana

Editors
Chwee Beng
Tjiej Hoe

Chinese Translation
Huei-Hong

Layout
Geelyn Lim

Co-ordinator
Leila