

# The Path of Joy

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*If my sickness is of benefit to  
living beings, let me be sick.  
If my death would benefit  
them, may I die.  
But if my recovery would help,  
may I be cured.  
Bless me to accept whatever  
happens with **JOY** and use it  
as my **PA TH**.*

**Gyelsay Togmay Sangpo**

Painting of Buddha image by Artist  
Dr Jayasiri Semage



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# Bhante Says

## Balancing Generosity with Wisdom

I would like to say something based on a *Jataka* story. It may be a very simple story but it is still very interesting. People may think that they don't have to study Dharma because they can simply listen to these stories (which are very easy to listen to) or read them in the books. But *Jataka* stories can provide us with very profound and valuable teachings.

*Jati* in Pali means birth. *Jataka* also means the same thing. *Jatakakatha* is the biggest Theravada literature, a collection of about 550 stories of the Buddha's past lives. It is very popular.

In most of the *Jataka* stories, there are two important characters - the future Buddha practising the Ten Perfections as a *bodhisatta* on the path to enlightenment and Devadatta who, as you know, made himself an enemy of the Buddha during his lifetime, creating a lot of trouble and obstacles for the Buddha. I don't like to use such a strong word as '*enemy*'. Perhaps it is better to say '*opponent*' or '*adversary*'.

On a deeper level, it is also important to realise that, in a world governed by the law of dependent origination, without an opponent, whether it be Devadatta or anyone else, to test the bodhisatta's patience and other virtuous qualities, it would not have been possible for the bodhisatta to perfect these qualities and attain enlightenment. And so when so-called evil people commit their evil deeds, they may, at the same time, also perform useful roles, even if it was not their intention to do so and even if the negative aspects of their lives overwhelm the positive ones.

The *Serivanija Jataka* is a story of two merchants. These two men operate small businesses so we can also call them hawkers. Some years ago, I

saw many hawkers in Singapore but nowadays there are very few, if any, hawkers, only hawker centres, in which the sellers stay put in one place to conduct their business. But generally, hawkers are itinerant. They sell food and other items, moving from place to place, a kind of mobile shop. This is a very ancient practice, stretching back to well before the Buddha's time.

Serivanija is thus called because he came from a place called Seriva. The other hawker, Kacchaputa, also hailed from the same area. Almost every day, they would go from place to place to sell their ware. They had a kind of mutual agreement. To avoid going to the same house at the same time, one of them would go to one village in the morning and the other would go to another. In the evenings, they would switch places. This happened for many years.

One day, they had to cross a river to go to the villages. With the help of a boatman, they crossed the river and went to their respective villages.

When Serivanija went to his chosen village, he saw an old lady and her little grand daughter. Previously these people had come from a very rich family. But, owing to an epidemic, they had lost all their belongings. In India, epidemics used to occur on a regular basis. Sometimes a whole village would be wiped out. Fortunately, grandmother and child survived and lived in a small house.

When Serivanija arrived, the little girl saw some beautiful bangles that he was selling and wanted them. She asked her grandmother to buy them for her but the old lady had no money. So the girl burst into tears and would not stop crying and howling.

In the end, grandma asked the merchant to come to their house and told him to take anything that he fancied in the house in exchange for a few bangles. But he refused.

Finally, to placate her grand daughter, the old lady had no choice but to take out a dark coloured object which happened to be gold. She said this was the only thing they had which could be sold.

Serivaniya examined the object carefully. He took out a needle and scratched it. He found it to be pure gold. But he kept his cool, not wanting to betray himself and alert the old lady. He had secretly decided to keep the gold for himself and so he chucked it aside, muttering that it was worthless. He knew that in the evening he could come back and retrieve the object, giving the old lady a few bangles for it. He then departed.

Later in the day, Kacchaputa, who represented the bodhisatta, came along. Seeing bangles similar to the ones that Serivaniya was selling in the morning, the little girl started crying again. The old lady explained the situation to Kacchaputa and made the same proposal to him that she had made to Serivaniya.

Just like Serivaniya, Kacchaputa took out a needle, scratched the object and found it to be pure gold.

But instead of harbouring a secret agenda, he freely admitted to the old lady that it was pure gold and that he did not have enough money to pay for it. But if she insisted on buying the bangles, he could hand over all his merchandise to her together with all the money in his possession. Being then penniless, he would need some money to pay the boatman for the return journey so he requested her for a few coins.

In due course, Serivaniya returned and approached the old lady for the gold, saying that he took pity on the little girl and was willing to oblige her. The old lady then told him what had happened. Serivaniya was outraged. Strong hatred borne out of greed overcame him and he vowed to kill Kacchaputa .

When he reached the river bank, he saw Kacchaputa in the boat in the middle of the river. He yelled to the boatman to return with his boat to fetch him.

Kacchaputa sensed the danger he was in and related what had happened to the boatman. He pleaded with the boatman not to bring him back to Serivaniya but to continue the journey.

Overcome with anger and frustration, Serivaniya suffered a heart attack and died.

As I said, this is no doubt a very simple story. But there are many aspects of this story that are worth paying attention to. However, I just want to stress one aspect which relates to Buddhist economics.

Generally speaking, people think that we have to be greedy in order to be rich. If we are very generous, we cannot progress and be rich. Even nowadays, people think that greed is very important to spur us on and make us competitive enough to earn and accumulate material wealth.

Sometimes we see an advertisement in which there is an apparent attempt to put down a competitor’s business.

Thus people generally think that Buddhists cannot be rich because if they practise Buddhist ethics, they cannot be competitive and greedy. But I can see a different teaching in this story.

Serivaniya was an example of an extreme level of greed which turned into hatred very fast. On the other hand, Kacchaputa had a supreme level of generosity or kindness. The most important thing I can see in his character was his honesty. He instantly and spontaneously told the old lady the truth about the gold and gave her a fair price.

I personally believe, based on my Buddhist studies and understanding of Buddhism, that honesty and generosity are, contrary to conventional wisdom, very important ingredients for achieving material success. It is not that they are hindrances to material progress.

In fact, in this modern world, although some people don’t see it, honesty is very important in developing a business. People go to certain companies to buy their products because they have confidence in them. These companies don’t cheat customers or cut corners. People trust these companies enough to buy their products because they are assured of good quality. Thus these companies are able to run big businesses.

On the other hand, if a company has a bad reputation, nobody likes to go to there. It is a very clear thing but nobody seems to pay attention to it. This *Jataka* story may be about a simple country man doing a simple business but the quality that the story highlights is not simple. It is the same quality that forms the basis for doing business even in a multi-national company, that is, honesty and trustworthiness.

For example, when I was a very young boy, people used to say bad things about Japanese products. ‘*Oh, it is Japanese, don’t buy, don’t buy!*’ But now, it is very different. If you want a good camera, you will probably buy a Japanese camera. It is the same with food products. If people know that the food produced by certain companies is safe and healthy, they won’t even mind paying a bit more. The same thing that worked before the Buddha’s time also works today.

Thus extreme greed is a real obstacle in accumulating wealth, whether we realise it or not. Furthermore, with the advent of the internet and social media, it has become even more important for businesses to be conducted on an open, honest and fair basis. Why? Because it has become very easy for complaints to be disseminated widely and quickly to the public and at a relatively small cost . Once publicised in this way, the business concerned can be badly damaged.

But, of course, as the Buddha taught, generosity and honesty should be practised in a balanced way. Balanced by what? Balanced by something that we often tend to forget – wisdom. And so, just as we won’t end up happy by accumulating wealth via dishonest means, we also will not end

well if we practise generosity to an extreme level. In fact, it is very dangerous to be very generous without wisdom.

In the *Dighajanu (Vyagghapajja) Sutta: To Dighajanu* , the Buddha put it this way –

*‘And what does it mean to maintain one’s livelihood in tune? There is the case where a lay person, knowing the income and outflow of his wealth, maintains a livelihood in tune, neither a spendthrift nor a penny-pincher, [‘thinking’], ‘Thus will my income exceed my outflow, and my outflow will not exceed my income.’ Just as when a weigher or his apprentice, when holding the scales, knows, ‘It has tipped down so much or has tipped up so much,’ in the same way, the lay person, knowing the income and outflow of his wealth, maintains a livelihood in tune, neither a spendthrift nor a penny-pincher, [‘thinking’], ‘Thus will my income exceed my outflow, and my outflow will not exceed my income.’*

But with these three qualities – generosity, honesty and wisdom - practised in a balanced way, we will be able to achieve material progress while, at the same time, remaining faithful to our basic ethical principles. This *Jataka* story guides us to pay attention towards that. This is the right advice for people who want to achieve material progress in a balanced way and lead a fruitful, satisfying and happy life.

Bhante B Dhammaratana  
Religious Advisor  
Buddhist Library

Reference:  
*Dighajanu (Vyagghapajja) Sutta: To Dighajanu* (AN 8.54). Translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

*‘On a deeper level, it is also important to realise that, in a world governed by the law of dependent origination, without an opponent, whether it be Devadatta or anyone one else, to test the bodhisatta’s patience and other virtuous qualities, it would not have been possible for the bodhisatta to perfect these qualities and attain enlightenment. And so when so-called evil people commit their evil deeds, they, may, at the same time, also perform useful roles , even if it was not their intention to do so and even if the negative aspects of their lives overwhelm the positive ones.’*

Bhante B. Dhammaratana



## Generosity and Happiness

John Caudwell's life has been remarkable in many ways.

He lost his father to an illness at an early age, forcing his mum to work and bring Caudwell and his brother up in a cramped house all by herself.

This experience left an indelible impression in his young mind. At the age of 8, he made a resolution. To be financially secure. And to be a philanthropist although, at the time, he wasn't sure what that meant.

Today, Caudwell is a billionaire. Success did not come easily. Nevertheless, some years ago, he sold his mobile phone business for some 1.5 billion pounds, a business that, at one time, was credited with selling 26 phones every minute and employing over 8,000 employees worldwide.

Entrepreneurship and business aside, Caudwell is ironically also well known for his 'non-businesslike' principles. Like remaining in the UK to pay a high level of income tax rather than migrating to a more tax friendly environment. Becoming the highest tax payer there. Founding, and running to this day, the Caudwell Children Trust, a vehicle through which he has helped thousands of handicapped children. And, not least, deciding to leave half of his fortune to charity.

In an interview on the BBC programme, *Hard Talk*, Caudwell told Stephen Sackur that as many rich people as possible should join the 'Giving Pledge,' the scheme started by Bill Gates whereby the rich bequeath half of their fortunes to charity, as Caudwell himself has done. Only when these philanthropists become the 'the norm' rather than 'the loony exception,' Caudwell reasoned, will they make a real difference to society.

When questioned by Sackur why he is not leaving his entire fortune to his family, as most people in his shoes would have done, Caudwell explained that he was already leaving them 'a reasonable sum' to encourage them to be 'successful in their own right, successful and happy, and content.'

Sackur ended the interview by asking Caudwell his 'cliché' question - whether money makes him happy.

*'Doing great deals in business can be addictive but that feeling doesn't last long. Ultimately it's a bit sterile and it doesn't reward the soul.'*

*'Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to see the difference that we have made to the children (we help).'*

*'I don't think money makes you happy but what you might be able to do with it makes you happy. The charitable work that I do makes me immensely happy. All the materialistic things that I have make me happy but not in the same way. I can do without most of them as long as I've got my health and my bike... I am lucky really that I don't crave them. I have them because I can afford them but what really satisfies my soul is humanitarianism.'*

A few months ago, after a British couple, David and Kathleen Long, beat odds of 283 billion to one to win a 1 million pound prize in a lottery - not once but twice, Dr Mark Griffiths, Professor of Gambling Studies at Nottingham Trent University, wrote an article in *The Conversation* to attempt to answer a question very similar to the one Sackur asked Caudwell. According to the article, research has shown that winning lots of money does not have a lasting effect on the winners.

*'... everyone has a certain level of happiness that stays relatively constant but can be changed by particular events that make the person happy or sad ... Thankfully, this change*

*only lasts for a short period of time. For instance, if someone is a generally happy person and a close relative dies, research shows that after a few months or so, the person will go back to the same happiness level that they were previously. However, this works the other way too. If a person is not very happy in their day-to-day life, they could win a large amount of money gambling and they would probably be happy for a couple of months but then they would 'level out' and go back to life at their normal unhappiness level.'*

This finding dovetails quite nicely with what Caudwell told Sackur - that being rich alone does not lead to lasting happiness. There needs to be something else - like giving to charity - before this can happen. Which begs the question - why?

We can gather some clues from a couple of discourses taught by the Buddha two and a half millennia ago.

In the short *Ugga Sutta*, Chief Minister Ugga told the Buddha, "It's amazing, lord, (and) awesome, how prosperous Migara Rohaneyya is, how great his treasures, how great his resources!"

*The Buddha asked him, "But what is his property, Ugga? What are his great treasures and great resources?"*

*"One hundred thousand pieces of gold, lord, to say nothing of his silver."*

*"That is treasure, Ugga. I don't say that it's not. And that treasure is open to fire, floods, kings, thieves, and hateful heirs. But these seven treasures are not open to fire, flood, kings, thieves, or hateful heirs. Which seven? The treasure of conviction, the treasure of virtue, the treasure of conscience, the treasure of concern, the treasure of listening, the treasure of generosity, the treasure of discernment. These, Ugga, are the seven treasures that are not open to fire, flood, kings, thieves, or hateful heirs."*

And in the *Dhana Sutta: Treasure*, the Buddha proceeded to elaborate what he meant by 'the treasure of generosity.'

*'And what is the treasure of generosity? There is the case of a disciple of the noble ones, his awareness cleansed of the stain of stinginess, living at home, freely generous, open-handed, delighting in being magnanimous, responsive to requests, delighting in the distribution of alms. This is called the treasure of generosity.'*

In other words, while the act of giving and the amount given may benefit the recipients

enormously, as in Caudwell's case, in so far as the giver is concerned, it is the mind that accompanies the act of giving that makes the difference whether any happiness that the giver experiences will last. Is that mind, in the Buddha's words, 'cleansed of the stain of stinginess, ... freely generous, openhanded, delighting in being magnanimous, responsive to requests, delighting in the distribution of alms'?

Generosity, of course, is not limited to the act of giving money or material things. Many people are extremely generous with their time, their efforts, care and concern and, in some cases, even life and limb.

The golden thread that runs through generosity in all its manifestations is the notion of putting others before self. During his lifetime and even before that, as detailed in the *Jataka* stories, the Buddha consistently put others before self.

A good illustration of this is the Buddha's advice to the monks in the *Brahmajala Sutta*.

*"If, bhikkhus, others speak in dispraise of me, ... the Dhamma, or ... the Sangha, you should not give way to resentment, displeasure, or animosity against them in your heart. For if you were to become angry or upset in such a situation, you would only be creating an obstacle for yourselves. If you were to become angry or upset when others speak in dispraise of us, would you be able to recognize whether their statements are rightly or wrongly spoken?"*

*"Certainly not, Lord."*

*"If, bhikkhus, others speak in dispraise of me, or ... the Dhamma, or ... the Sangha, you should unravel what is false and point it out as false, saying: 'For such and such a reason this is false, this is untrue, there is no such thing in us, this is not found among us.'*

*And if, bhikkhus, others speak in praise of me, or ... the Dhamma, or ... the Sangha, you should not give way to jubilation, joy, and exultation in your heart. For if you were to become jubilant, joyful, and exultant in such a situation, you would only be creating an obstacle for yourselves. If others speak in praise of me, or in praise of the Dhamma, or in praise of the Sangha, you should acknowledge what is fact as fact, saying: 'For such and such a reason this is a fact, this is true, there is such a thing in us, this is found among us.'*



In his book, *Genuine Happiness: Meditation as the Path to Fulfillment*, B. Alan Wallace, the well-known author, translator, meditation teacher and pioneer in mind science research talks about ‘genuine happiness.’

*‘This is a happiness gained not through the outer conquest of nature or the acquisition of wealth and fame, but through the conquest of our inner obscurations and the realization of the natural resources inherent in our hearts and minds.*

*Once the afflictions of the mind are dispelled, genuine happiness arises of its own accord. We don’t need to find it outside ourselves. This is a direct path to the authentic realization of nirvana, to the final cessation of suffering and its source.*

*I believe that all human beings are yearning for genuine happiness, a quality of well-being deeper than transient pleasure, entertainment, or intellectual stimulation ...*

*... This quest for genuine happiness sharply contrasts with our attraction to fleeting pleasures. There is nothing wrong with savoring the pleasures of life: pleasures that we experience from being with dear friends and loved ones, delicious food, and wonderful weather are aroused by stimuli coming in through the five physical senses. We also experience pleasures that require no sensory input, for instance when we think of a pleasant memory. But when the stimulus is withdrawn, the pleasure vanishes. Genuine happiness, on the other hand, is not stimulus-driven.’*

Though ‘genuine happiness,’ as defined above, and the happiness that accompanies the ‘treasure of generosity’ may differ in terms of practice, intensity and resilience, nevertheless generosity opens the door to the rest of the Perfections that lead to enlightenment and genuine happiness. And that is why the Buddha taught generosity as the first of the Ten Perfections (Six Perfections, in Mahayana Buddhism) - generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, effort, patience, truthfulness, resolution, loving kindness and equanimity.

As always, I wish you pleasant reading.

Chwee Beng  
Editor

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*Genuine Happiness: Meditation as the Path to Fulfillment* by B. Alan Wallace.



# BL EVENT

BL EVENT : Chinese New Year Visit to Tai Pei Old People’s Home

Date : February 28, 2015

Venue : Tai Pei Old People’s Home

Photo Credit : Dr Wong Weng Fai







# BL EVENT

BL EVENT : Mothers' Day Celebration  
 Date: May 24, 2015  
 Venue: Hotel Royal @ Queens  
 Photo Credit: Dr Wong Weng Fai

# BL EVENT

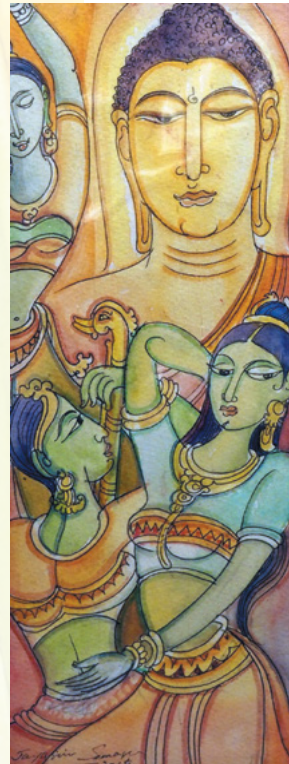
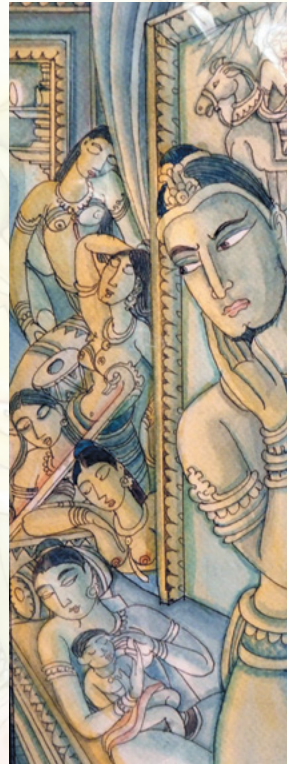
BL EVENT : Buddhist Counselling Course  
 conducted by Dr Wasantha Priyadasharna  
 Date: May 17 – 24, 2015  
 Venue: BL Auditorium  
 Photo Credit: Yeo Koon Teck





# BL EVENT

BL EVENT : Art Exhibition featuring works of Dr Jayasiri Semage  
Date: May 30 - June 2, 2015  
Venue: BL Art Gallery  
Photo Credit: Tan Yew Beng



# BL EVENT

BL EVENT : Vesak Celebration  
Date: June 1, 2015  
Venue: Buddhist Library  
Photo Credits: Tan Yew Beng & Dr Wong Weng Fai





# BOOK REVIEW

## Don't Worry, Be Grumpy

by Ajahn Brahm

Published by Wisdom Publications (2014)

224 pages

Reviewed by Lam Hui Yun

*Don't Worry, Be Grumpy.* This unorthodox title will probably catch many people by surprise. While we often expect others to offer us words of comfort such as *Don't worry, Be happy*, Ajahn Brahm decides to add a twist to this saying.

Admittedly, I was slightly baffled by the title, which was why I decided to read this book. Besides, it was written by Ajahn Brahm, the author of another bestselling book, with a similarly quirky title - *Who Ordered This Truckload of Dung?*

Ajahn Brahm has been a Buddhist monk for over thirty years and he is the Abbot and Spiritual Director of the Buddhist Society of Western Australia. He is well known for his good sense of humour.

Thus, as you pick up this book, be prepared to laugh aloud till your sides ache!

If you are looking for a light-hearted read to chase your Monday blues away, this is definitely the right book for you. Feel free to laugh aloud as you look at life anew with the 108 stories in this book.

Toni Bernhard (author of *How to Wake Up*), when requested for his perspective about this book, said, *"I love a book that I can open randomly to any page and know I'll find a valuable teaching. With every story, the irrepressible Ajahn Brahm gently challenges our conventional views, giving us a fresh perspective imbued with wisdom and compassion."*

As for my own personal experience, I literally laughed as I read the book for 3 hours straight. I even forgot to take my lunch!

However, if you are looking for a more in-depth book on Buddhist philosophy, then this might not be a suitable book for you. This book is meant for light reading only as it simply shares light-hearted moments.

While the stories are in general witty and humorous, each story does offer us a valuable piece of wisdom. Each story challenges us to relook at our lives in a different light.

As I read on, I soon found out the rationale for having such a quirky title. The wisdom that Ajahn Brahm is trying to impart to us here is that our own state of mind is very much in our control. If we open our hearts to anything and everything, we can then find our own true happiness and contentment.

Story 89 - *The Happiness License* - is about people who think that they do not deserve to be happy. This could be due to the fact that they have done something wrong in the past for which they cannot forgive themselves. Or it could have been that they suffered abuse from others and have lost their sense of self-worth.

Ajahn Brahm shared a story about his pessimistic student who needed assurance that he can be happy. As a result, Ajahn Brahm handed him a signed happiness license to remind his student to stop rejecting moments of joy and allow himself to be happy. Though being happy may seem to be a trivial thing in our ever busy lives, it is nonetheless important as it allows us to find peace within ourselves.

My favorite story is what I would call *the timeless classic* of Ajahn Brahm reflected in story 11 - *Good? Bad? Who knows?*

In this story, a king suffered an injured finger. The injured finger then escalated into an amputation due to an infection. The mishap did not stop there but I will not spoil the story by revealing more details. Yet, the doctor that was serving him always replies, *"Good? Bad? Who knows?"*

The story is simple and the message is clear. In our lives, we sometimes find ourselves running into circumstances that we deem to be unlucky or unfortunate. We lament about it and it ends up making our lives miserable. Things always seem not to go according to plan and the feeling of disappointment seems to eat us alive. However, in life, it is really all about, *"Good? Bad? Who knows?"* The reason is that every cloud has a silver lining. Sometimes things happen for a reason. For instance, in one of the stories, Ajahn Brahm speaks of a businessman who got lost while being driven in a taxi, causing him to miss his crucial flight. At that point of time, the business man was infuriated with the confused taxi driver and he simply could not contain his anger.

However, subsequently, he witnessed the plane that he was supposed to board take off – and explode in mid-air within minutes of taking off, killing all on board. At that point of time, his life-view instantly changed. He became immensely grateful for the delay caused by the taxi driver.

The supposed mishap had saved his life. He no longer viewed things so superficially and narrowly. Good? Bad? Who knows? Things may not be as bad as we think they are.

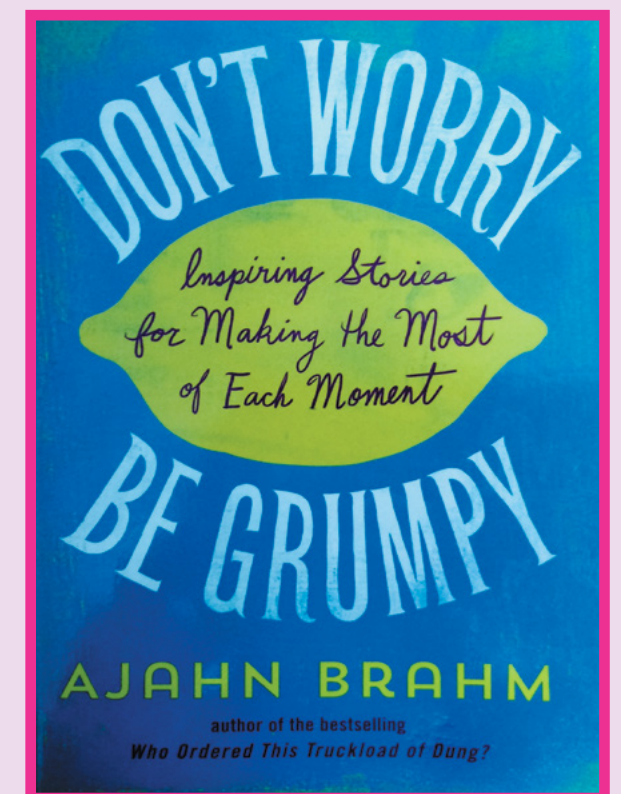
Sometimes, in our hectic lives, we just simply need a book that is fun to read to help us relax.

The reason I am recommending this book is that it comes in 108 little stories. Hence, even if you are really busy and your schedule causes your reading to be disrupted, you need not fear because each little

story will offer you a piece of wisdom. You can feel free to flip to any page of the book and you will definitely find some valuable teaching in it.

No doubt, as you might have guessed by now, this book is highly humorous. Once, I burst out laughing in a public transport resulting in a few awkward stares. However, one thing I can assure you is that, after reading this book, you will be rejuvenated. You will definitely gain a fresh perspective imbued with wisdom and compassion.

On a side note, for those who would like to recommend a Buddhist book to their non-Buddhist friends, this is a book that you can definitely recommend! It allows people to get in touch with Buddhist ideas such as letting go in such subtle ways that your friends may even find themselves largely agreeing with the many concepts explored in this book. The wisdom gleaned from this book can be used in everyday life. The good news is that, if you apply the positive thinking that the book may inject into your lives, you are likely to find yourselves much happier than you may think possible.





慧。」这七样财富是不被大火，洪水，政府，小偷，或冤情债主所能夺走的。”

在《佛说布施经》，佛陀解释何为真布施。

“爾時舍衛國王白佛言：「世尊！我等云何而行布施？」佛言：「大王！若求勝妙福報而行施時，慈心不殺，離諸嫉妬；正見相應，遠於不善；堅持禁戒，親近善友；閉惡趣門，開生天路；自利利他，其心平等。若如是施，是真布施，是大福田。」

换句话说，虽然布施和布施的金额能大大的帮助收益人，就如考德韦尔的例子一样，开心的经历是否会延续关键在于布施者的心。就如佛陀所说这颗心是否“慈心不殺，離諸嫉妬；正見相應，遠於不善；堅持禁戒，親近善友；閉惡趣門，開生天路；自利利他，其心平等。”

布施当然不限于给钱财或物质品。很多人在时间，精力，和给予关怀方面上相当慷慨，甚至能舍己为人。

无论是什么方式，布施的重点是把他人放在自己前面。无论是在佛陀时期或更早之前，就如《佛本生故事》里所记载的一样，佛陀都会先把他人放在自己前面。

一个很好的例子就是佛陀在《梵網經》里给僧众的劝告。

“余人谤我、谤法、僧者，诸子不得痛心，不得忧恨，不得怀忿怒。”反之，“余人赞我、赞法、僧者，诸子不得欢喜，不得欣悦，不得怀愉快。”因为无论是对其他人毁谤佛、法、僧的言论表示痛心，还是对赞扬佛、法、僧的言论表示欢喜，都会造成思想上的障碍（“当成障碍”），不利于修行。但对毁谤或赞扬的话，又“不可不辨别”，“不可不审定”，要知道前者“非属事实”，而后者“斯属事实”。“凡夫赞叹如来之言，惟以琐细，惟以卑近，惟以戒行。”（同上）一般人赞叹佛教，因为它有各种“琐细”的、“卑近”的戒行。

在有名作家，翻译，禅师，和心灵科学研究家 B Alan Wallace 的一本《Genuine Happiness: Meditation as the Path to Fulfillment》里记载着以下内容。

“快乐并不是从战胜自然或夺取财富和名利，而是从战胜自己内在的封闭和领悟心与意的自然资源。

当心灵的痛苦被去除后，真实的快乐才会浮现。我们不需要向外寻找。这是一个直接到达证悟涅槃，离苦得乐的道路。

我相信所有人都奢望拥有真实的快乐，美满的人生而不仅是享有无常的乐趣，娱乐，或智能刺激。。。

。。。这项寻找真实快乐的探索和吸引我们对过眼云烟的享受有着很大的差异。享受生活的点滴是没有错的：我们因为五官受到刺激而能享受陪伴朋友和爱人，美食，和好天气。我们也能体验没有运用五官的享受，比如想起一段美好的回忆。不过一旦刺激因素被撤走，乐趣也就没了。真实快乐就不同，是不需要刺激因素的。”

虽然以上对于“真实快乐”的定义，和陪伴快乐的“真布施”在实行上，强度和润度有所不同，但布施依旧开扇了一道能通过其他波罗密而到达证悟和真实快乐的门。这也是为什么佛陀以布施为首来教导十度波罗密（北传佛教称之为六度波罗密）-布施、持戒、出离、智慧、精进、忍辱、真实、决意、慈悲与喜舍。

一如往来，我希望您阅读愉快。

Chwee Beng

编辑

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# 社论

## 布施与快乐

John Caudwell 约翰.考德韦尔的一生在很多方面都相当精彩。

他自幼父亲病逝，由母亲一人辛苦工作，在一间狭小的屋子里亲手带大他和弟弟。

这段经历深深的刻在他幼小的心灵。在他八岁那年他发了一个愿，一定要经济稳定和做一名慈善家，虽然他那时候并不了解什么是慈善家。

今天，约翰.考德韦尔已是个亿万富翁。成功得来不易。尽管如此，在几年前他在生意巅峰时以一亿五百万卖掉它的手机生意。在那时，他在世界各地拥有八千多名职员并每分钟能卖出二十六台手机。

除了企业和生意，考德韦尔也因为他的“非生意模式”原则而引人注目。比如选择留在工资税高的英国也不愿移民到其他工资税低的国家。为此，他成了当地缴最多税的人。再来，他也创办了《考德韦尔儿童基金》，让上千名残障儿童获益。不仅如此，他还决定把一半的财产留给慈善机构。

在一个BBC 的节目专访《Hard Talk》，考德韦尔告诉Stephen Sackur 史丹芬有钱人都应该参加一个由Bill Gates 比尔.盖茨所创的方案《Giving Pledge》，像他一样把一半的财产捐给慈善机构。考德韦尔解释只有当这样的慈善家“普遍化”而不被列为“神经例外”，才能真正的改变社会。

当被史丹芬问到为什么不像一般人一样把所有的财产留给家人时，考德韦尔表示他已经把一个“合理的数目”留给家人并且鼓励他们要“拥有自己的成功，因成功而开心和满足”。

史丹芬用他那一成不变的问题“钱能使您快乐吗？”结束了专访。

“做成大生意的时候很过瘾但那感觉不能持久。最终还是有点发闷，对心灵也没有好处。

看到孩子们因为我们的贡献而生活上有了改变，就是我最大的喜悦。我不觉得钱财能让你快乐但它的用途可以使你快乐。

慈善工作让我非常快乐。物质享受也让我快乐但那是不一样的快乐。我可以舍弃多数的物质享受，只要能保住我的健康和摩多单车。。。我很幸运自己对物质享受没有太大的欲望。我拥有它们是因为我负担的起，但真正能够满足我的灵魂是人道主义。”

几个月前有一对英国夫妇，David 大卫和Kathleen Long, 打破两百八十三亿的赔率，赢得英镑一百万的博彩，还赢了两次。Dr. Mark Griffiths, Nottingham Trent 大学赌博系的博士在《The Conversation》写了一个文章来回答类似史丹芬问考德韦尔的问题。根据文章，研究发现赢得很多钱对赢家没有长期的效应。

“。。。每个人都有一定的开心指数但能因为一些特别的事件而感到开心或伤心。。。还好这种感觉是短暂的。比如一个一向开朗的人有个亲人去世，研究显示几个月后，那个人的开心指数就会恢复。但是，相反的话也是一样。如果那个人的日常生活过的不开心，即使他们赢了大笔的钱财也只能开心几个月后，就回到之前的不开心指数。”

这项发现完全符合考德韦尔告诉史丹芬的那句话- 单单财富是不能让人享有永久的快乐。还需要做其他的事情，比如捐献给慈善机构。这又引来一个问题- 为什么呢？

我们可以从两千五百年前佛陀的开示找到一些线索。

在短短的《优伽经》(UggaSutta) 中记载，“优伽对佛陀说：「尊敬的世尊，我有个朋友富能敌国，令人敬佩。」佛陀问：「他到底有多少财宝呢？」优伽回答道：「大约有十万两黄金，无数白银。可敬的世尊。」佛陀问：「优伽，这些是真正的财富吗？尽管我们不能说这不是财富，但这些财富都是无常的、暂时的，大火可以把它烧毁，洪水可以把它冲走，小偷可以把它偷走，政府可以任何一种借口将它充公，冤情债主可以败光。但世间有七种财富是真正的财富。它们是：信心、美德、精进、布施、闻法、喜舍、智



是给予那些要用平衡，圆满的方法来追求物质享受的人最好的忠告。

达摩拉哒那法师

宗教顾问

佛教图书馆

参考：

淨心文教基金会- 《长膝经》



Photo Credit: Loo Huei-Hong



Signing of Memorandum of Understanding  
between BL Graduate School and  
University of Kelaniya  
Venue: BL Auditorium  
Date: May 2, 2015  
Photo Credit: Yeo Koon Teck

和Serivani ja一样，Kacchaputa也用针刮探物品，并发现物品是纯金。不同的是，他没有抱任何私心，而且还坦诚的告诉老妇人那物品就是纯金，并说明他没有足够的钱购买纯金。但如果她坚持要买手镯，他可以把他所有的产品和钱财来换取纯金。交易之后，他便要求老妇人给他一点钱搭船回去。

当Serivani ja倒回去找老妇人时，他说他因为怜悯小女孩才肯同意。老妇人便把经过告诉了他。Serivani ja 恼羞成怒，誓要把Kacchaputa杀死。

当他到达河畔时，他看见在河中央的Kacchaputa，便大喊船夫让他掉头回来接他。

Kacchaputa 见势不妙便把经过告诉船夫。他恳求船夫不要掉头回去接Serivani ja 并继续前进。

Serivani ja也因为过度愤怒而心脏病发致死。

如我所说，这绝对不是一个简单的故事。这故事有很多方面值得关注。但我要提倡的是佛教经济学。

一般而言，人们都觉得要有贪念才能富裕。如果我们很慷慨，就不能进取而发达。就连今时今日的社会，人们也觉得贪念是个很重要的因素来激励我们，有足够的竞争精神去累积财富。有时我们也会看到一些广告专门贬低对手的生意。

因此，人们一般觉得佛教徒因为修持佛教伦理而不会富裕。因为他们不会进取也不贪心。但我却在这个故事中看到另一个教义。

Serivani ja 是一个极度贪心转变成嗔心的例子。另一方，Kacchaputa 有着一个高层次的诚信或善心。我在他的人品当中看到了最重要的一块便是他的诚实。他诚实无私的把纯金的实情告诉老妇人，并给她一个合理的价钱。

依我对佛学的理解，我个人认为诚实和慷慨，相对予俗世智慧的理解，是成功得到物质的重要因素。而并不是障碍追求物质的因素。

其实在这个现代社会，虽然很多人不以为然，但诚信是做生意非常重要的因素。人们是因为对某个公司有信心才会购买他们的产品。他们不会欺骗顾客或偷工减料。因此人们信任这些公司因为他们可以安心买到品质好的产品。这些公司也因此能做大生意。

另一方面，如果公司有不好的名声，没有人会想要光顾。这是一个很明显但似乎又没人察觉到的事情。这个《佛本生故事》虽然描述的是一个简单的村民做着简单的生意，但是故事所要带出的重点绝不简单。那是相等于跨国企业做生意的基础：诚实和信用。

举个例子，在我小时候人们常说日本货的不是。比如“啊，这是日本货，不要买！不要买！但现在就很不同。如果你要买一台好的摄像机，你大概会买日本的摄像机。食物也是一样。如果人家知某个公司出产的食物是健康又卫生的话，他们不介意多花一点钱购买。同样的事情在佛陀之前的时代行得通，如今也是一样。

所以说，不管我们有没有意识到，极度贪心是累积财富的真实障碍。此外，在日新月异的网络与社交媒体的推动下，公开，诚实和公平对生意来说更为重要。为什么？因为现在很容易的就能投诉到广大的公众。一旦被投诉，生意很可能被严重影响。

当然，佛陀教授的慷慨和诚实也应该平衡的被采用。如何平衡？就是用我们经常遗忘的智慧来平衡。这样一来，我们即不会欢喜的利用不诚实的手段累积财富，也不会极端的布施。其实，不用智慧的布施是很危险的。

《长膝经》云： 虎路，什么是生活平衡呢？虎路，在此，在家人知道钱财的收入，知道钱财的支出，维持生活的平衡，既不奢侈，也不贫寒：‘让我这样维持收入超过支出，不让我的支出超过收入。’  
虎路，就好像商贩或商贩的学徒，拿着秤杆知道‘下斜了这么多，或上倾了这么多。’同样的，虎路，在家人知道钱财的收入，知道钱财的支出，维持生活的平衡，既不奢侈，也不寒酸：‘让我这样维持收入超过支出，不让我的支出超过收入。’  
虎路，假如这个在家人收入少但却过着奢华生活，将会有人说他‘这个在家人好像无花果一般食用钱财。’虎路，又假如这个在家人有大量的收入，但却过着贫苦的生活，将会有人说他‘这个在家人将会像饿殍一样饿死。’  
因此，虎路，在家人要知道钱财的收入，知道钱财的支出，维持生活的平衡，既不奢侈，也不寒酸：‘让我这样维持收入超过支出，不让我的支出超过收入。’虎路，这叫做生活平衡。

当我们能平衡慷慨，诚实与智慧这三项素质，我们便能在追求物质的当儿，忠于基本的道德原则。这个《本生故事》指引我们要注意这点。这





# 达摩拉哒那法师开示

## 《平衡慷慨与智慧》

我想说一些关于《佛本生故事》Jataka Tales的事。《佛本生故事》虽然简单但也相当有趣。很多人认为不需要读佛经，只需要从简单易懂的《佛本生故事》学习就足够了。但是《佛本生故事》确实能给予我们深刻和宝贵的教诲。

Jati 在巴利文指的是生。Jataka 的意思也是一样。《佛本生故事》是南传佛教最大的文学，一共有550个关于佛陀前身的故事。此文学相当受欢迎。

在多数《佛本生故事》里有两个主要人物，为了悟道成未来佛而修持十波罗密的菩萨，和制造麻烦及障碍，与佛陀为敌众所周知的提婆达多。我不想用敌人这么强的字眼来形容他。用对手或对头会更加妥当。

在更深的层次上，了解这个世界是由因缘法所支配是很重要的。如果没有像提婆达多这种对手来考验菩萨的耐性和其他的优良贤德，菩萨便不可能圆满修证十波罗密而得佛果。即使所谓的恶人无意中扮演了这种有益的角色，他们生活里的负面影响也远远超过正面的。

Serivanija Jataka 是一个关于两个商人的故事。故事里的这两个人经营一些小生意，我们也能称他们为小贩。几年前我看过有很多小贩遍布新加坡全岛，可是现在小贩们都只在小贩中心营业。总的来说，小贩的生意是流动性的。他们贩卖食物或其他产品都是流动性的，像流动商店一样。这是一个古老的做法，在佛陀时代之前就有了。

Serivanija的名称来自一个地方叫Seriva。

另一个小贩叫Kacchaputa，也来自同一个地方。几乎每一天，他们都会到各个地方贩卖他们的产品。他们之间有一个协议。为了避免在同一时间

在同一户人家贩卖产品，其中一人会早上去一个村庄，另一人去另一个村庄。到了傍晚在对调。这样的安排维持了好几年。

有一天，他们两人需要过河去村庄。经过一名船夫的帮助下，他们过河到了各自要去的村庄。

当Serivanija 到了他选择的村庄后，他看见一名老妇人和她的孙女儿。之前这户人家非常的富有，但经过一场瘟疫后，他们丧失了所有的财富。在印度，瘟疫非常普遍。有的时候，整个村子会因此被毁灭。有幸的是，这两婆孙生存了下来，并住在一间小房子里。

当Serivanija抵达时，小孙女看见漂亮的手镯并很想要。她要求婆婆买给她但老妇人没钱。小孙女便吵闹起来，泪流不止。

最后，老妇人只好要求小贩到她们家去选任何东西来换取这些手镯。但是小贩不肯。

为了安抚孙女，老妇人没办法只好把家里唯一能卖钱的深色物品拿出来。这深色物件竟然是纯金。

Serivanija 仔细验证物件。他用一支针刮探物品，并发现物品原来是纯金。他假装若无其事的样子，担心自己的反应会惊动老妇人。他暗地里打算把金留给自己，所以便轻易的把物品丢置一旁，并说物品没有任何价值。他心想等傍晚时分再回来用几个手镯跟老妇人交换纯金，就这样离去了。

随后，代表菩萨的Kacchaputa 也到了老妇人的家。看到早上那些类似Serivanija贩卖的手镯，小孙女又哭闹了起来。老妇人把状况向Kacchaputa 解释了之后，便提出向Serivanija同样的交换条件。