

Collected Writings from the City of 10,000 Buddhas

Topic:

WHY DID I COME TO THE CITY OF 10,000 BUDDHAS?

Although Buddhism teaches us not to seek, it is a lifetime of seeking that brings me to the City of 10,000 Buddhas. Much of my seeking is negative. I find myself, for instance, running from the incessant noise of television, newspapers, and other forms of media which shout endless variations of the same message--"MORE, BIGGER, BETTER." This media noise surrounds us, permeating our lives. It tells us that we are dissatisfied with what we have because we don't have enough. And yet the burden of our possessions exhausts us; getting them, caring for them, getting rid of them, getting them again, endlessly.

Running away from this noise, seeking quiet, I hear a quiet sound and I follow it. It leads me to the City of 10,000 Buddhas. Here I can listen to the messages passed on quietly for generations, the straight talk of sages, so different from the catchy misleading language of television jingles. The ancient teaching on how to have less and be happier is a treasure anyone can use. I haven't obtained it yet but I see it expressed in the lives of the people here. This is a welcome sight to my media-fatigued eyes.

-Kuo Hsu (Barbara) Waugh, M.A.
DRBU Graduate Student and Teacher.

I came to the City of 10,000 Buddhas to live in a pure place. My life was full of confusion and aimless seeking. From participation in meditation sessions at Gold Mountain Monastery, it was easy to see that the City of 10,000 Buddhas was founded on true Buddhist principles. By coming to live here, I could take advantage of the opportunity to be near the Master and the left-home disciples. The activities and behavior of these people is more controlled and regulated toward the good than that of the general society. I saw living at the City of 10,000 Buddhas as a method, to improve my life and learn Orthodox Buddhist doctrine.

Living in the City of 10,000 Buddhas, I find it less difficult to hold the five precepts than it would be in the social environment outside. Holding the precepts is a continual process of learning more and more about the subtle meanings contained in these five rules. They open the way to understanding the thoughts in the mind and how to control and subdue greed, hatred, and stupidity. If there is another place in the world that is founded on such pure rules. I don't know of it. So we learn about the true meaning of what it is to be a human being.

In modern America it is common for sons to be at odds with their parents. I felt this very strongly before coming here. I didn't know about and had to learn the meaning of filial piety. This is another basic principle at the City of 10,000 Buddhas. Living here learning the Buddhadharma, I naturally grew to be more filial and the difficulty I had with my family dissolved. I can see how much I owe to

my parents for the care they gave me. Since we get along so much better, everyone in the family is much happier. I see how important it is to care for my parents in their old age.

Having a teacher of true wisdom and being near that teacher is included in the benefits of being at the City of 10,000 Buddhas. The Master brings the wealth of the Buddhist Sutras into English and explains the meaning of the teachings so all can understand what they need to know. Learning patience with difficulty and suffering is not easy. The clear example set by the Master and the left-home disciples aids the lay people in seeing what is proper and gives us strength to do right and avoid evil.

So living at the City of 10,000 Buddhas has greatly improved my life. It has taught me to live by the five rules, to practice filial piety, and to follow a proper method of practice which leads to understanding of the Buddhadharma's essential meanings. I am gradually able to look inward to understand the mind and see the nature. I have a knowledge of cause and effect and of karma and retribution. I have to take a good look at birth and death. I am coming to understand why things are the way they are in the world and what the results of our actions will be. A more complete teaching does not exist. Everything is contained within the Buddha-dharma. And the Buddhadharma is just the City of 10,000 Buddhas.

-Kuo Tzai (Peter) Schmitz
DRBU Senior.

We feel that this must be a pure place because here the proper precepts are held by people. Everyone attempts to uphold the precepts with sincerity and without an ego. Pure practice brings a beautiful environment. Such an environment will expand our children's true nature.

We have two daughters and now we have found a good place for them to gain a high school education while simultaneously developing their spiritual practice. We are thankful for the existence of such a place that we might live in.

I myself am trying to put all my effort into finding my own true nature through ch'an practice and concentration on every moment of life.

-Midori Penners
Resident.

I came here to find out who I am. I'm here to cultivate true Buddhism. I wish to practice being a good person so as to end my suffering. I also am putting effort into photography and into meditation. My family could be another place, but we felt the City of 10,000 Buddhas is pure. So I'm here to cultivate my own nature and to practice together with all beings.

-Andrea Penners
Cultivating Virtue High School Student.

I came there because we lived in the temple in San Francisco and I was going to Instilling Virtue School there. I liked that school because they taught proper ways and most of all filial piety. At that time I was five years old and my mom had just left home and become a nun. It was the year 1976.

Then the school moved to the City of 10,000 Buddhas and so I came along too. I liked it here very much and so did my mom, so we stayed. I hope to stay my life here. That's because I want to help build the Pagoda on our mountain and to help construct the podium out on our back property.

-Kuo T'ou (Joshua) Gray
Instilling Virtue School Student (age 11).