



## 萬佛城求學散記 (四--1)

# 發抖的小豬 (續)

### Studying at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas — Part 4-1 A Shaking Piglet (CONTINUED)

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有一天，無意間聽到了兩個孩子與同學間一段對話，讓我對孟母三遷的故事，又有了更切實的感受。幾個孩子都頗感驕傲地聲稱：

「I am a vegetarian (我是素食者)！」「我也是！」「我也是！」一個怯怯的聲音響起：「我不是，因為我的爸爸、媽媽很愛吃肉。」另一個聲音馬上建議道：「可是你自己可以不吃啊！」「你可以告訴你的爸爸、媽媽，吃素比較健康。」緣緣擔憂的聲音響起：「唉呀，你要是還是吃肉，以後去不了天堂，再也不能跟我們一起玩了，可怎麼辦呢？」怯怯的聲音又開口了：「那我試著跟爸爸、媽媽說，以後不要再給我肉吃了，好不好？」「耶！…」一陣歡呼聲響起，站在門外的我，忍不住也悄悄地笑了。孩子的話未必全對，但在這種大環境下長大的孩子，想學壞都難！

幾天前，帶著兩個孩子去超級市場買菜（如今已住在萬佛城外面了），剛好有新鮮出爐的烤雞正在裝盒，兩個孩子深深地吸了一口氣，一臉的陶醉，我有點好奇，故意問：「香嗎？要不要媽媽買一隻給妳們吃？」又是異口同聲：「不要！」「哦！為什麼呢？」果果答：「聞起來好香喲，但是那是殺生而來的食物，我們不要吃！」

記下這段文字的此刻，是來萬佛城整整四個月之際。兩個食肉動物居然真的轉了性，改當素食擁護者。而且對我端給她們的任何中國菜—青菜、豆腐之類，一概來者不拒，吃得津津有味，大大地滿足了我這個當廚子的虛榮心

Some days after this incident, I overheard a conversation between my girls and their classmates. This conversation made me truly and deeply grasp the meaning of the story: "Mencius's Mother Moves Three Times." [Note: Mencius's mother moved three times in order to find a good learning environment for her son, who was then positively influenced by the studious neighborhood he lived in.] A couple of children were saying proudly, "I am a vegetarian!" "Me, too." "Me, too." A timid voice echoed, "I am not because my dad and mom love to eat meat." Another voice recommended right away, "But you yourself don't have to eat meat." "You can tell your parents that being a vegetarian is healthier." I heard Yuan-Yuan's worried voice, "If you still want to eat meat, then you can't go to heaven and continue to play with us anymore. What should we do?" The frightened, timid voice said again, "Maybe I can try to tell my parents not to give me meat. Is that OK?" "Yeah!" A happy cheering voice echoed. I smiled silently standing outside of the classroom. The children's words may not be one hundred percent correct. However, it is hard for children growing up in this kind of environment to pick up bad habits.

A couple of days ago, I took the girls grocery shopping (I now live outside of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB).) A fried chicken, fresh out of the oven, happened to be packaged right in front of us. The two kids took a deep breath and immersed themselves in the aroma. I was a bit curious and asked on purpose, "Does it smell good? Do you want Mommy to get you some?" They answered with one voice again, "Nope."

"Oh, why not?"

Guo-Guo answered: "Even though the chicken smells good, this food came from killing animals. We don't want to eat it!" The two little carnivores actually changed and became vegetarians within the four months of our being at CTTB. Moreover, they haven't refused any of the Chinese greens or tofu dishes that I feed them; in fact, they eat these with great relish. Such reactions have satisfied my vain ambition



。她們的個子也至少長高了二、三英吋，剛來時，許多穿起來像袍子的衣服，現在已變得合身了。沒有了電視、電腦、電子遊戲，小孩子變得有耐心多了，也有了更充足的睡眠，更多彩的戶外活動空間，被曬得黑黑壯壯的，滿身的活力。剛來時，兩個缺少運動的小嬌娃娃，見到晃來晃去的鞦韆，嚇得哇哇大哭，而今，望著兩隻在鞦韆架上不停地上下翻飛的小猴子

，我禁不住地想，她們的爸爸，再見到她們時，眼珠子會不會驚得掉下來？

### 萬佛城求學散記(五)——三人行

子曰：「三人行，必有我師。」與兩個孩子在聖城朝夕與共的三人行中，她們無染的童心，無形中教了我很多做人的道理，使我獲益匪淺，誰說小孩子不可以為師呢？放下家長的身段，試著與孩子共同來感受、來探索一段嶄新的生命，你會發現自己得到的，比放下的豐盛太多了。

學佛多年，早已知道不可殺生的道理，只是理歸理，我平常就是見不得有任何蚊蟲在家裡橫行。有了孩子以後，更多了一條心安理得的理由，總不能讓蚊子叮咬到孩子，蟲蠅會污染了食物、傳播病菌，所以一旦見到，必定剿盡殺絕。住進萬佛城，仍是積習不改，鄰居的居士幾次婉言相勸後，多少有了一點顧忌，殺生之後，會為牠們念幾遍〈往生咒〉。

一日，正在家裏追殺一隻無意間闖進來的蒼蠅，緣緣忽然開口：「媽媽，老師說蒼蠅、蚊子也都是我們的朋友，不可以殺；妳把門打開，讓牠們飛出去吧！」聽了這話，真讓我這個當媽媽的無地自容，五歲的孩子都有容蒼蠅的心胸，而自稱學佛多年的大人竟無此雅量！學佛、學佛，我到底都學了些什麼呢？從那以後，有潔癖的我，才真的不再傷生了。「總不能連孩子都不如吧？」每當興起殺意時，這句話就成了蚊蟲們的救命咒。

又一次，送孩子上學到樓門口，因趕時間，剛要穿過一小片草地，讓緣緣回頭一眼瞥見，她大叫：「媽咪，妳這麼大，這麼重，會把那些小草踏得好痛好痛！」聞言，心中凜然，孩子

of being a chef. They have grown at least two or three inches taller. Many clothes that used to look like robes on them now fit. Without television, computers or Nintendos, they have become more patient. As a result, they sleep more and have more colorful outdoor activities. They are tanned from being under the sun and are full of energy. I remember when we had just arrived at the CTTB four months ago, the two children, lacking exercise, were frightened to tears by the swaying swings. And now, looking at the two little monkeys jumping up and down on the swings, I can't help wondering whether their father will be shocked when he sees these two girls again.

### Studying at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas—

#### Part 5: In the Company of Three People

Confucius said, "Among three people, one must be my teacher." In my daily interaction with my two children, they have imperceptibly taught me many social principles with their pure innocent minds. I have gained a lot of benefits from this experience. Who says that children cannot be our teachers? As long as we set aside our role as parents and try to experience and explore our lives, we will discover that we can gain much more than we have given up.

Having studied Buddhism for so many years, I know the principle of not killing. However, principles are principles. I cannot bear to see bugs or mosquitoes flying all over my house. After having kids, I had more legitimate reasons for not letting bugs bite my children, contaminate our food and spread disease. Therefore, as soon as I saw them, I had to kill them right away. After moving to CTTB, my old habits did not change. Listening to my neighbor's exhortations a few times, I had some reservations when killing these bugs. Right after killing them, I always recited the Rebirth Mantra and prayed that these bugs would be reborn in heaven. It seemed like chanting for them could counteract my guilt.

One day, I was chasing after a fly that had flown into my house by accident. All of a sudden, my daughter Yuan-Yuan spoke up, "Mommy, the teacher said that flies and mosquitoes are also our friends. We shouldn't kill them. Open the door and let it fly away!" Hearing her words, I felt ashamed and wanted to hide. A five-year old had the heart to tolerate flies, whereas I who profess to be a Buddhist did not have such tolerance. I'm learning the Buddhadharma? What have I learned? Ever since this incident, I, who am immaculately clean, have finally stopped killing any living beings. I reflected, "It should not be the case that I cannot even match up to my children." Whenever I have the intention to kill, this reflection has become the life-saving mantra for the insects.

Another time I walked the children to school. Because I was in a hurry, I was going to walk across a green lawn. Yuan-Yuan turned



大了，懂事了，身為母親，可要時刻規範自身的行為，因為她們那雙純真的眼睛是雪亮的，柔善的心靈是敏感的！

又有一次，小孩子不好好吃飯，吃一口，玩三回，一碗飯吃了近一個小時了還吃不完，實在火大了跟她們大發了一頓脾氣。許久未發脾氣的我一下子跳了起來，一聲河東獅子吼，把兩個小丫頭嚇得愣在當場，淚珠兒在眼眶裏轉了兩轉，居然沒有掉下來。果果一下子抱住了我的腿，聲音顫顫的：「媽咪，我好愛好愛妳喲，妳現在不愛我了嗎？」緣緣也小心翼翼地開了口：「媽咪，老師說，好孩子都不亂發脾氣，緣緣好久都不發脾氣了，妳也不要發脾氣，好不好？」細細一想，才驚覺孩子的改變

，原本脾氣極臭的緣緣真的好久、好久不曾亂發脾氣、尖聲大叫了。孩子都可以知錯就改，難道我竟又是不如孩子？！念頭一轉，脾氣也隨之無影無蹤了。我半蹲下身子，看著孩子的眼睛，口氣仍是嚴厲：「好吧，Let's talk。」…驚奇地發現，心平氣和地與孩子溝通，溫和但又不失嚴厲的管教，比以前用打的、用罵的要有效得多。

我不由想到，英文的「理解，明白」一詞是understand，若是做不到under，也就是屈尊降紆，設身處地，又怎能stand？中國的古訓不也是「己所不欲，勿施於人」嗎？我若想要讓孩子變得溫文有禮、乖巧聽話，自己怎麼可以如此失控，大發脾氣？當父母的可以大吼大叫

，對孩子非打即罵，還美其名是在管教孩子，而孩子在有樣學樣地亂發脾氣，大聲尖叫，卻變成了不服管教、忤逆不孝的壞小孩。身為一個學佛人，在面對孩子桀驁不馴時，往往以一句：「逆子，孽障，前輩子欠了他。」就把孩子簡單的歸了類、判了刑，未免有點推卸父母言教身教責任之嫌。

小果果是家中最小的孩子，出生時才三磅多一點，是我千辛萬苦地把她從閻王爺手中搶回來的，所以格外地嬌氣。她一向是很自我中心的，很難想像這樣一個在家人小心呵護下要風得風，要雨得雨的孩子，遇到事情會替別人著想；但到了萬佛城之後，她的改變也令我驚訝。有一天上

around and saw what I was doing. She screamed, "Mommy, you are so big and heavy. The little grass will be so hurt by your footsteps." I was shocked. My children have grown, and understand so much more now. As a mother, one of my main tasks now is to reflect on how to regulate my own behavior. Otherwise, not only will I be ashamed to face my daughters' innocent eyes and sensitive hearts, but I will also fail to win their respect.

There was another incident in which I lost my temper with my children because they would not eat properly. They would take one bite of food and go off to play. It would take them more than an hour to finish a bowl of rice. I, who had not gotten angry for a long time, jumped and roared like a lion. My two little ones were frightened and stunned. Tears filled their eyes but did not fall. Guo-Guo hugged my feet and said with a trembling voice, "Mommy, we love you so much. Do you not love us anymore?" Yuan-Yuan also said carefully, "Mommy, the teacher said that a good child does not lose her temper. Yuan-Yuan has not been angry for a long time. Could you also not be angry anymore?" Thinking about what they had said, I suddenly realized how my children had changed. Yuan-Yuan, who previously had a hot temper, really did not get mad or scream. The children could even correct themselves when they made mistakes. Was it the case that I couldn't match up to my children again? Shifting my paradigm, my temper vanished without a trace. I got down on their level, looked straight into their eyes, and said with a stern tone, "Okay. Let's talk." I discovered to my surprise that communicating with the children peacefully was more gentle and could be done while still maintaining discipline. It was much more effective than spanking or yelling at them.

This makes me think of the composition of the word 'understand'. If I cannot be 'under'—that is, lower myself and put myself in others' shoes, how can I 'stand'? Don't we also have an ancient Chinese verse, "Do not do to others what you do not want done to you." If I want my children to be gentle, polite, wholesome and obedient, how can I lose control and lose my temper? As parents, if we scream, yell and spank our children, they will learn from us and become temperamental. After we scream at our children, is it any wonder that they become rebellious and never listen? We, parents, then rationalize that such screaming and yelling is necessary to teach and discipline our children! As Buddhists, when we have a haughty and rebellious child, we always say, "This rebellious son is a karmic obstacle. I owe something to him/her from my previous life." We simply categorize the children that way, convict and sentence them. Aren't we just shirking our responsibilities?

My youngest daughter Guo-Guo weighed a little more than three pounds after birth. I exhausted all my efforts to save her life from the



學路上，又碰到一隻野兔匆匆從我們面前跑過，果果興奮地大叫，奮力追著幾乎望不到影的野兔子，大喊：「兔子、兔子我愛你，你給我回來

，讓我再看看你，就一眼！」叫到後半句，眼圈都有點紅了，因為那兔子早已絕塵而去了。我心中大為不忍，衝口而出：「果果，別叫了，我們以後買一隻小兔子回來，給妳在家裏養著玩兒，好不好？」話一出口，自己都覺得有點不可思議了，我一向拒絕在家裏養任何寵物的，這回自己竟然主動開了「支票」，本以為果果會欣喜若狂了，不料她竟是想也不想地一口回絕：「為什麼？」我真的意外極了。她一本正經地告訴我：「小兔兔的家在森林裏，那裏有牠的爸爸、媽媽，還有好多好多小朋友跟牠們玩。妳要是把牠抱回果果的家，牠會哭的，牠的爸爸、媽媽也會哭的！」我內心感動極了，這個善解兔意的小人兒，真的是滿心滿眼地在為兔子著想呢！

看著眼前手牽手，在我面前走著的一對小小人兒，心中湧起滿滿的歡喜，為了她們有一顆溫柔善良的心！我也感恩再感恩，感謝萬佛城裡默默奉獻的老師們，用佛法的魔棒，將這兩個原本頑劣不馴、自我中心的孩子，教化得溫文有禮，柔順善良起來。我也感恩我的孩子，讓我有機會反省一下自己以往的過失，與她們共同成長。母女三人，行走在求學的路上；小小孩童，吾師也！

hands of King Yama. Therefore, she is a bit bratty and very self-absorbed. It is hard to imagine that such a child would become considerate and thoughtful, since she had been spoiled and could have anything she wanted. After moving to CTIB, the changes in her surprised me.

One day, on our way to school, we saw a rabbit running in a hurry in front of us. Guo-Guo excitedly screamed and chased after the rabbit until he could not be seen anymore. She yelled, "Rabbit, I love you. Come back here. I want to see you one more time. Just once!" Before she could finish the sentence, her eyes were red because the rabbit was long gone. Witnessing this scene, I felt bad and said impulsively, "Guo-Guo, it's all right. I'll buy you a rabbit for you to play with at home. Okay?" As soon as I finished saying this, I was a bit surprised. I usually don't invite any trouble and would refuse to have pets at home. Since I had offered, I thought Guo-Guo would be ecstatic. Unexpectedly, she turned me down. "Why not?" This was not what I had expected at all. She told me in a serious tone, "The rabbit lives in the forest with its parents and many little friends who play with him. If we take the rabbit home, he will cry and so will his father and mother!" I was very touched by this. This little one was so thoughtful and considerate for the rabbit!

Seeing my two kids holding hands, walking in front of me, joy rose from the bottom of my heart. Yes, I was proud of them—just for their gentle and wholesome hearts. Appreciation and more appreciation! I appreciate those teachers who silently give and dedicate themselves to teaching. They used the magic wand of the Buddhadharma to teach and transform my two children, who were originally unruly and self-centered, so that they have become so polite, graceful and wholesome. I am also grateful to my children for giving me an opportunity to reflect upon my past mistakes. As we grow up together, the three of us walk down the road of learning. My little ones are indeed my teachers.

