



# 老當益壯修菩提

—介紹聖城常青居士宋立娟

## Practicing Bodhi to a Ripe Old Age

—Introducing the Ever Youthful Upasika Lijuan Song

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宋立娟居士1924年生在中國東北一個大家庭，入學半年後因病輟學，在奶奶寵護下沒有再復學。她快樂自在地長大成人，許配人家。結婚當天，她見著一個境界：自己由高處掉下落入泥漿，婚後生活果然不開心—雖然先生體貼，環境優越。20餘歲隨著時勢逃到臺灣，先生教書，她生育3個兒女。因為不善家計，丈夫常常不滿意，令她覺得委屈受氣。在她痛苦空虛的時候，走到天主教堂，在那裡心靈略得寄託，在祈禱中她明白原諒寬恕是化解苦境的良方。只是在感恩之餘，心裡深處總覺還有什麼沒學到的；神父卻告訴她做得好。

1988年時夫婦同來美國探望兒子，有一天無意間在電視上看到法總「萬佛臨門」節目一見到上人德相在畫面上時，頓覺：我有什麼問題都可得到解決。她記下電話號碼，與一位法總居士連絡上，她直截了當地說：「我要信佛。」那個週末，經這位居士帶領下到聖荷西聽上人開示，法會後被引見給師父。上人說：「妳來了。」她答：「師父，我由天主教來的。」「沒關係，天主教、佛教是一樣！」兩週後（89年1月）上人主動地問到她，那位居士於是又把她帶到金山寺，再見上人她不禁淚流滿面，上人要她「去拜佛」，她很自然，也沒有人教就會頂禮上人並

Upasika Song was born in 1924 to a big family in Manchuria, China. She dropped out of school after half a year due to illness, and never returned to school due to her grandmother's indulgence. She grew up happily and a marriage was arranged for her. On her wedding day, she had a vision of herself falling from a great height down into the mud. Her married life was not happy, even though her husband was caring and she had a comfortable lifestyle.

When she was 20, her family fled to Taiwan due to the instability in China. Her husband became a teacher and she raised their three children. However, her husband's dissatisfaction with her housekeeping made her feel wronged and bullied. Feeling miserable and worthless, she walked into a Catholic church and obtained a little consolation; while praying, she realized that forgiveness was the way to release her suffering. She was grateful, but still sensed that something was missing deep down in her heart, although her priest told her that she was doing fine.

In 1988, she and her husband came to the US to visit their son. One day, she unintentionally turned to a television program by the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA), "Visiting the Ten Thousand Buddhas." As soon as she saw the Venerable Master's image on the screen, she knew instinctively, "All my problems will be solved." She wrote down the phone number and contacted a laywoman of DRBA, saying, "I want to become a Buddhist." That weekend, following the laywoman's advice, she went to San Jose to attend the Venerable Master's lecture. She was brought to the Master after the Dharma assembly. Master said: "So you've come." She answered, "Master, I came from the Catholics." "It does not matter. Catholics and Buddhists are the same!" Two weeks later (in January 1989), the Master asked about her, so that laywoman took her to Gold Mountain Monastery. Seeing the Master again, she could not hold back her tears. The Master told her to bow to the Buddhas. Without being told, she naturally made full bows to the Master and took refuge. Her Dharma name is Gwo Chang ("Permanent Results").

Afterwards she frequently went to Gold Mountain Monastery to bow the Medicine Master Repentance. One day, seeing the Master sitting alone, she knelt down and said, "I want to go to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas



皈依，法名果常。

後來她常往金山寺去拜藥師懺，一次見到上人獨坐，趕快跪下親近，向來木訥的她，脫口而出：「我想去萬佛城，那裡需要人。」「那裡冬天冷、夏天熱，你能受嗎？……現在不要來，等老了再來。」怕失去機會，她急說：「您什麼都知道，可是您得教我！」「佛法也沒有什麼，就是要把自己修理好。」回家的路上她反覆琢磨「怎麼修理，從哪裡修？」除了做早晚課、誦經，她訂了一個功過表，每晚反省依如法、不如法劃上圈叉，並拜諸佛菩薩

、上人以此來修理自己。過數月請問上人功課需要調整否？上人說：「不用，你按部就班做。再加拜一切眾生，不要為兒女求，要為眾生求；你為眾生求，得的更多。」

1999年先生往生，百日後她想來聖城，心念上人：「師父您在哪裡？弟子要去廟上。」沒想到當晚就有一位法總的居士來電話探問她，還願意帶她到聖城參加法會呢！在聖城受完菩薩戒，她即申請常住至今。果常回想這幾年在聖城遇到的考驗很多，她自認是幼稚園生，來上萬佛城大學的課程，總要經過一關關的考試，大考、小考每天不斷；有時及格有時取得很慘——還得重頭鍊。這時就是靠著上人的名言「一切是考驗，看爾怎麼辦？」給她力量，她體會到不論正面或反面的境界，都是教你學習、幫你成長；人在下坡時，一定要加勁才能不墜下去，否則順勢掉下去就再難攀升了。她的自修功課又多了一項：收心——不胡思亂想。妄想來了，就笑自己「無中生有」的愚癡。

今年80的她，大殿的功課每天從早到晚沒有缺一堂的。她喜歡隨眾，還謙虛地說什麼也不會，一切都要跟大眾學。她回想初來時學念楞嚴咒，總是跟不上維那師，不斷加工努力，不久就可以跟著背了

(CTTB). I believe help is needed there.” The Master replied, “The winter is cold and the summer is hot there. Can you stand it? Don’t go now. Wait till you are old.” Worried that she might miss the opportunity, she hastened, “You know everything. You have to teach me!” The Master replied, “Buddhism is nothing special. You need only ‘repair’ yourself.” On the way home, she kept pondering: “How do I ‘repair’ myself? Which parts need to be fixed?” In addition to doing the morning and evening ceremonies and reciting sutras, she set up a Merit/Fault Table. Every night she reflected on how she had done that day, with a circle for good and an X for bad. She also bowed to the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and the Master, asking them to help her repair herself. After a few months, she asked the Master if she needed to make any adjustments. The Master answered, “No. Do it step by step. In addition, you should bow to all sentient beings. Pray not only for your children, but for all living beings. If you pray for all beings, you will benefit more.”

Her husband died in 1999. A hundred days after his death, she wanted to go to CTTB, so she talked to the Master in her heart: “Where are you? Master! Your disciple wants to go to the temple.” That night, surprisingly, a laywoman from DRBA called her and said she would take her to CTTB to attend the Dharma assembly. Immediately after receiving the Bodhisattva Precepts, she applied to become a permanent resident of CTTB. She has stayed until now. In the past few years at CTTB, Gwo Chang had numerous tests. She considered herself like a kindergarten student taking university classes at CTTB, so she had to take one examination after another, as well as daily tests and quizzes. Sometimes she passed; sometimes she failed and had to start all over again. When she failed, she relied on the Master’s words, “Everything is a test / To see what you will do,” to give her strength. She has realized that whether a situation is favorable or not, it can teach you something and help you grow. When you are sliding down, you have to work extra hard to avoid falling; otherwise, it will be very difficult to climb back after falling off. She has thus added another practice: concentration with no false thoughts. Whenever false thinking arises, she laughs at her foolishness in “making something out of nothing.”

She is 80 years old now, yet she never misses a single ceremony at the Buddha Hall. She likes to follow the group and humbly admits that she does not know anything and is learning from everyone. She recalls that when she first began reciting the Shurangama Mantra, she could not keep up with the cantor; but she vigorously practiced it and could soon recite it by heart. Not only that, but she was able to straighten up her bent spine! During her second year at CTTB, she bowed the Jeweled Repentance before 10,000 Buddhas, but suffered from sciatic nerve pain. She passed this test of enduring the pain by forcing herself to sincerely do the repentance. She recited each Buddha’s name in every period till her throat was bleeding. She then pleaded to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas that she still wanted to praise the Buddhas. She was sick for one year, and got well the next year when she bowed the repentance.

，並且原來彎著腰也直挺起來！常住第二年拜萬佛懺時，坐骨神經痛，硬撐著來誠心懺悔，這個痛關才通過沒事了。她還記得那時每支香都唱誦佛名，唱到喉頭流血，無法再唱，她求佛菩薩她還要讚佛，病了一年，次年拜懺時病癒。

聖城冬季多雨天寒，房間有暖氣，在福居樓用齋，對於道場給予種種方便，她很感激。因為不忘自己曾對上人的承諾「不怕冷熱」，也因為法師都沒有暖氣，她也很少用。

2003年冬季禪七時，80歲高齡的她一天能坐9支香，體會到打坐真可以調身調心，雜念比以前少了。果常憑著她不凡的毅力努力向菩提道前進，她說：「修行說難很難，說易真容易—就是放下身心，不要隨著境界走，只要我們肯修行，心裡就時時法喜充滿，活力充沛，不必等往生，當下就是極樂世界！」

Winter at CTTB is rainy and cold. She appreciates it that CTTB provides a heater in her room, serves meals at the Tower of Blessings (elder nuns' residence), and offers many other amenities; however she hardly turns on the heater because she remembers what she promised the Master, "I will not fear hot and cold," and she is also mindful that there are no heaters in the monks' and nuns' rooms.

During the 2003 3-week Winter Chan Retreat, she was able to sit for 9 periods a day at the age of 80. She has realized that meditation not only regulates the body and mind, but also reduces idle thoughts. Gwo Chang enthusiastically advances on the Bodhi Way with extraordinary persistence. She believes, "Cultivation can be very difficult; it can also be very easy—simply let go of your body and mind. Don't follow states. As long as we want to practice, we will constantly feel the joy of the Dharma and live energetically. We don't have to wait till we die and are reborn. The World of Ultimate Bliss is right before our eyes!"

### 更正啟事

◎本刊第403期佛祖道影文中提到「張松」獻地圖，誤為「張沖」。第30頁五會念佛利益的第一會為「是」除亂意，誤作「寺」。第44頁第八行，「突如其來」的劇變漏了「來」字。謹此致歉！  
—— 編輯部 敬告 ——

◎Correction: On page 41 in Issue #403, "Red Soldiers" should be "Red Guards"; in the sentence, "...he will become a thief someday," "thief" should be "traitor." Our sincere apology!  
—— Editor ——

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時間過得真快！為期六天的講習就在11月2日（星期日）上午，全體一起誦念三遍楞嚴咒聲中圓滿落幕。六天雖短，可是參加者在這段期間掛單佛寺、持守淨行的功德卻是巨大的。最後，全體學員一致感謝般若觀音聖寺的法師們慈悲的引導與教誨。

這次講習會使學員有多方面的受益：大家很高興在這六天中，誦過整部《楞嚴經》和楞嚴咒；有不少人下了茹素的決心；有些人則對於將來準備投身的修行生活方向，有了更深入的了解；也得到寶貴的講法經驗；學員們現在也懂得如何區分正法與邪教了；而背經是一種非常好的學佛方式，因它會在我們的八識田中播下金剛菩提種子。更重要的是，大家現在已經明瞭自己先前所犯的過愆，並發願懺悔改正。

(Continued from page 41)

Time really passed by fast! The retreat culminated with three recitations of the Shurangama Mantra in the morning. Although the retreat was short, students are grateful to the Dharma Masters of Prajna Guanyin Sagely Monastery for their compassionate teaching.

The retreat benefited the students in many ways: Everyone enjoyed reciting the entire *Shurangama Sutra* and the Shurangama Mantra during the retreat. Many have resolved to become vegetarian. Some became clearer about the direction they are going to take in their cultivation. Students also developed their skill in speaking Dharma to the assembly—a rare opportunity. They now have a better understanding of how to differentiate the Proper Dharma from deviant teachings. The method of memorizing the Sutra text was a very good way to learn as it planted vajra seeds in their eighth consciousness. More importantly, many of them have now realized their past mistakes and have vowed to repent and reform.

