



窗外有藍天

Outside There is Blue Sky

羅莉·凱班瑟2004年12月2日講於萬佛城大殿

A TALK GIVEN BY LORI CABANSAG ON DECEMBER 2, 2004 IN THE BUDDHA HALL
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常明 中譯 CHINESE TRANSLATION BY CHANG MING

諸佛菩薩、上人、各位法師與善知識，阿彌陀佛！我是羅莉·凱班瑟。

多年前，我住在西非的賴比瑞亞，為「和平組織」的健康教育做義工。由於和健康照顧小組的工作關係，我到了賴國幾個最偏遠的村子去工作，那裡沒有汽車、卡車；進出唯一的方式，是翻越茂密的樹林、乘獨木舟渡河，或者沿著椰樹林立的海岸，走上幾里路。

對於那裡眾多的村童，我是他們平生所見的第一個非非洲人，以致於有些孩子忍不住尖叫、把臉藏起來，或躲在媽媽後面。我成了這些幼童的恐懼——一個直髮、奇裝異服和淺膚色的怪物。

週日，我常到鎮尾山坡上那間用石灰粉刷的小天主堂，去望彌撒；結果，神父問我是否願意在禮拜時讀經文，所以每週日，我就為信徒讀一段耶穌基督使徒的福音。

在賴國住了一年半後，一天，我們接獲「和平組織」位於曼羅維亞的總部之令，要我們收拾行李到首都去。不到一星期，全體義工就逃離了賴國；因為政府軍和叛亂份子激烈地爭戰，賴比瑞亞開始內戰。

在我住的地方，其實那時我早就有一種感覺：我們這些義工會被撤離；因為政府兵一卡車一卡車地被載到鎮上來。他們那厚重的黑靴子、吊掛在肩膀上恐怖的來福槍，和嚇壞人的表情，令我緊張難安。

離開賴國後，一位朋友從裡面寫信告訴我政府軍和叛徒的暴力與破壞事件。很多人從戰火中逃離，也有很多無辜的百姓、婦女、孩

All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Venerable Master, Dharma Masters, and other Good and Wise Advisors, Amitabha Buddha! My name is Lori Cabansag.

Many years ago I lived in the west African country of Liberia where I was working as a health education volunteer for the Peace Corps. My work with a team of health care workers brought me to some of the most remote villages in the country which were inaccessible to cars and trucks. The only way to get to some of these places was by hiking through lush forests, taking canoe rides on and across rivers, and/or walking miles along coconut tree-lined beaches.

For many of the children in these villages, I was the first non-African they'd ever seen in their life. Some children would scream and hide their faces from me or run behind their mothers. I was a tangible fear to these young ones—a strange-looking being with straight hair, different clothes, and lighter-colored skin.

On Sundays, I always attended Catholic mass in the little whitewashed church on the hill at the edge of town. Eventually, the priest there asked if I would be a reader during the service. So every Sunday, I read the gospels, a reading from one of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

One day, almost a year-and-a-half since I moved to Liberia we received orders from the Peace Corps headquarters in Monrovia to pack our bags and come to the capital city. Within a week all of the volunteers were flown out of the country because fighting between government soldiers and rebel forces had escalated. The civil war in that country had begun.

Back in the place where I lived, I had a feeling we volunteers might be evacuated from the country because government soldiers had been coming into town by the truckful. They made me nervous with their heavy black boots, scary-looking rifles slung over their shoulders, and menacing facial expressions.

After I'd left the country, a Liberian friend of mine wrote to me of the violence and destruction that was happening at the hands of both government and rebel armies. Many people were fleeing





童，或在垂死邊際，或已遭害。我接到友人一封信，說她先生失蹤了——有一天，他再也沒有回家了；我去的教堂那位聽告解的神父，也在設有埋伏的路上遇害。不久，賴國政府瓦解，友人的信函就斷了，我給她的信件，也因而被原封的退回。

我雖然在賴比瑞亞情況惡化前離開，內心卻不時懷有亂世的恐懼，害怕失去家人、害怕未來——不知世界會變成什麼樣？也對自己人生的前景了無所知；我尚有其他如「變老、寂寞、未得安寧、未得快樂、成就及死亡」的種種恐懼。

雖然如此，當我後來的外子給我一本由勞勃米契爾所寫的書〈佛陀的一生〉，我的人生改變了！這本書，講佛陀一生的故事和他對弟子教化的摘要；我全心地感覺佛對事務的解釋是如實的。自從接觸到佛陀對弟子的教化之後，我就知道自己該是個佛教徒，無法再自稱是天主教徒了！

2001年七月時，我初來萬佛城，心中仍然同樣懷著對未來和對自身與親友的死亡的恐懼；未來是個極大的未知數，對它，我也很不自在。

現在，因為伊拉克戰爭，戰爭又出現在我的意識中；每次禮拜藥師佛時，我都緬懷在戰事中受害的人。每當我想及他們的苦難，便感覺愧疚；因為自己在聖城的生活，是如此安寧無憂，我無需面對敵人的攻擊或埋伏。

如何克服恐懼？怎麼樣可以快樂安詳？我所聽到最直接、最簡易的答案是忘我。如果無我，你就沒有欲望、沒有貪瞋癡。有善根和誠心的修道人，能憬悟及此；他們透過每日坐禪、誦經、持咒、念聖號、發願等等法門，化解執著與習氣，使悲智得以開發。

偶而在日間，或清晨醒來時，昔日那種對無知的未來或對失去摯愛親友之恐懼，又會浮現。但為什麼會對虛無縹緲的未來畏懼呢？事情的發生，是有因有果嗎？止散心而安住目前的一種方法，就是練習攝心呼吸；也就是收

areas where fighting was taking place. Innocent civilians, women and children, were dying and being killed. I received a letter from my friend saying that her husband had disappeared—one day he just didn't come home. My father confessor, the priest of the church I'd been going to, was killed on the road in an ambush. Before long, Liberia's infrastructure collapsed, and letters from my friend stopped. My own letters to her were returned unopened, stamped "Undeliverable".

I left Liberia before the situation got really bad, yet I often had fear. I feared losing my family, and I feared the future—not knowing what would happen in the world and in my own life. I also had other fears. I feared getting older, being lonely, not finding peace, not finding happiness and fulfillment, and dying.

My life changed, though, when my future husband gave me a book to read called *The Life of the Buddha* written by Robert Mitchell. It told the story of the Buddha's life and outlined the Buddha's sermons to his disciples. I felt with my whole being that the Buddha explained things exactly as they were. From the moment I encountered the Buddha's teachings to his disciples, I knew I was a Buddhist and could no longer call myself a Catholic.

When I first came to live at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in July 2001, I still had some of the same fears about the future and death—my own, my family's, and my friends'. The future was unknown—a big uncertainty—and I was uncomfortable with that, too.

Now, war is again in my consciousness with the war in Iraq going on. Every time I bow to Medicine Master Buddha I have in my mind the people who are suffering because of that conflict. At the very moment I am thinking about the people who are suffering, I feel guilty because my life here at CTTB is comparatively easy and peaceful. I don't have to face enemy attacks and ambushes.

How can fear be overcome? How can happiness and peace be attained? The straightest and simplest answer I've heard is to get rid of the self. If you have no self, you have no desires, no greed, hatred, and no stupidity. People with good roots and sincere cultivators are able to realize this through constant practice—through daily sitting meditation, reciting sutras, mantras, and/or names of Holy Ones, making vows, and following other practices that lessen a person's attachments and bad habits, and which promote the development of wisdom and compassion.

Sometimes during the day or upon waking in the morning, I feel the old fears again—the fear of an uncertain future, the fear of losing loved ones. But why fear the future when it is intangible? And when things happen because of the law of cause and effect?





攝萬事，把思路歸於當下。當念頭在呼吸上，就如你持咒或誦聖號時，至少你的妄想——那些會導致欲望、不滿、恐懼和憂慮的念頭——起伏會減少。

有一位對戰爭、疑慮和死亡很有經驗的越南大和尚，他專注於有意識的呼吸——把每一呼吸間的醒悟，做為一種安定紛亂思緒、收心於當下的方法。制心於呼吸後，你會留意到藍天、孩童的笑容，和美麗的朝陽；你欣賞當下，你獲得快樂平和。他說：「如果我們平和、快樂，就能有笑容；家庭和社會裡的每一個人，都可從我們的平和中獲利。」

他介紹了兩種可以幫助有意識呼吸的方式，我發覺當自己的思想開始變得過度起伏時，其中一種，用吐納和笑這種動作的意識，來調節呼吸對我有幫助。光是笑這動作，就能放鬆心情；最近的研究顯示：笑能使我們神經系統產生真正喜樂的效果。我想和您分享這個運動！

吸氣時，你念：「吸氣靜我身。」呼氣時，內心說：「呼氣我微笑。」再次吸氣時，你說：「安住於當下。」再下個呼氣，你說：「覺知是好時！」

不論白天晚上，任何時間、任何所在，我們在呼吸間，可默念這四句話：「吸氣靜我身。呼氣我微笑。安住於當下。覺知是好時！」隨著呼吸，你就可簡要地說：「寧靜、微笑、當下、好時！」

我覺得這個練習很管用。佛法已經教我瞭解萬事皆如是，使我看清事理；而這種把自己立即帶回當下的技巧，也免除了我對未來和無常人生那莫須有的憂慮。

這就是今晚我所要講的，若有任何錯誤，請指教。祝福大家安寧，願您們早日達成您們的目標。阿彌陀佛！

One way to stop distracted thinking, to put everything back into perspective and bring the focus back to the present, the here and now, is by practicing mindful breathing. When you're thinking about your breathing—as when you are reciting mantras or the names of Holy Ones—you are, at the very least, minimizing the arising of or movement of “false thoughts”—thoughts which increase desires, dissatisfactions, fears, and worries.

A Vietnamese Buddhist monk and teacher, who has had much experience with war, uncertainty, and death, focuses on conscious breathing—the awareness of each breath—as a way to quiet distracted thinking and come back to the present moment. By breathing mindfully you notice the blue sky, a child's smile, and the beautiful sunrise. You appreciate the present moment, and you find happiness and peace. He says, “If we are peaceful, if we are happy, we can smile, and everyone in our family, our entire society, will benefit from our peace.”

He explains a couple of exercises to help us breathe consciously. One that I've found helpful when my thoughts begin to become overwhelming is one where you coordinate your inhalations and exhalations with conscious thoughts of the action of breathing and smiling. Just the action of smiling can be relaxing. Recent studies have shown that smiling produces the effects on our nervous system that go with real joy. I'd like to share this particular exercise with you.

When you breathe in, you recite, “Breathing in, I calm my body.” When you breathe out, you inwardly say, “Breathing out, I smile.” On the next in-breath, you say, “Dwelling in the present moment”. And on the next out-breath, you say, “I know this is a wonderful moment!”

These four lines can be recited silently as we breathe in and out, at any time of the day or night, and wherever we happen to be: Breathing in, I calm my body. / Breathing out, I smile. / Dwelling in the present moment, / I know this is a wonderful moment! As we follow our breathing, you can say to yourself simply, “Calming, Smiling, Present moment, Wonderful moment.”

I have found this exercise to be very helpful. The Buddhadharma has been very helpful for me to understand the way things are, to help me see things more clearly. And this one technique is something I can do immediately to snap myself back to the present, and to keep myself from needlessly worrying about the future and the uncertainties of life.

That's all I have to present for tonight. Please correct me if I've made any errors. I wish everyone peace. May you reach your goals quickly. Amitabha Buddha!

