



亂世裏的定心明珠

A Stabilizing Mani Pearl in the Chaotic World

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過去未來世 現在諸導師
無有說一法 而得於道者
佛知衆生心 性分各不同
隨其所應受 如是而說法

—— 錄自《華嚴經》〈菩薩問明品〉第十

佛教徒怎樣決定專修何法？所有的行門中，哪一種最適合我、你或他？我們當採取何種標準來選擇這一生的功課？此即我覓得佛教之後所思考的問題。

60年代末，我此生對佛教的尋覓，導引我來到舊金山中國城的佛教講堂。當我在那小小廳堂，與一小組人在師父的指導下靜坐時，我想：過去生什麼因緣，使我此生此刻遇到佛教？更重要的是，我開始檢視此生需播下何種種籽，方可來生、多生皆能與佛教續緣。

一小時接著一小時，坐在那簡樸廳堂的長板凳上，省思著我對我們睿智的導師——宣公上人——的最初印象。他的教導所呈現的智慧，在我心靈中深深共鳴，迴盪於記憶之中，存乎於神思之外。他謙然懷德、他藹然行慈；並且，我確信無疑的一點，他對我們每個人由裏到外都看透了，爲了維護我們的自尊，總以正面的方式栽培我們。

那年夏天，師父講解《楞嚴經》，並勉勵大家勤學此經。學經之外，師父還特別著重〈楞嚴咒〉、素食與靜坐。他告訴我們，釋迦牟尼

*In ages past and times to come,
As well as in the present, no guiding master
Speaks only a single dharma
To help beings attain the Way.
The Buddha knows sentient beings' minds
Are uniquely different in nature.
Based on what they need to be saved,
He speaks Dharma for them accordingly.*

—— Avatamsaka, Chapter 10
The Bodhisattvas Ask for Clarification

How does a Buddhist decide what methods to focus on in cultivation? Which, among all the potential practices, are most appropriate for me? For you? For anyone? What criteria should we use to choose our life's work?

That is some of what I pondered after I found Buddhism. In this life, my "finding" of Buddhism brought me to the Buddhist Lecture Hall in San Francisco's Chinatown in the late '60's. As I joined the small group meditating in that tiny hall and being guided by the Master, I wondered what had happened in the past that brought me to Buddhism at this point, in this life. More importantly, I began to look at what might need to happen in this life so that I could find Buddhism in my next and future lives. As I sat on that bench hour after hour in that simple hall, I reflected on my initial impression of our wise mentor, Venerable Master Hua. The wisdom of his teaching resonated deep within my psyche, reverberating through my remembered experiences and beyond. He wore virtue humbly; he bestowed kindness graciously; and, although I was aware beyond any doubt that he knew each of us inside out, he allowed us our dignity and nurtured our potential in positive ways.





尼佛，遺留給我們豐富的遺教之外，也早已指出，我們所置身的這個世界和時代，人類會導致法滅乃必然的趨勢。

課程結束後，我恢復靜坐；我發現到自己的視野拓展了，包括如何導引我在佛教的未來，乃至於我能做什麼，以確保佛教未來。我想，那便是我初發心萌芽的時刻吧！我願做個佛教徒，並給予當下及未來的世人成為佛教徒的機會，大家一起同臻圓覺。

現在，我已知此生修行的方向；我要努力讓此種非常之教法及修練保持生生不息，因為它們的消亡，正是宣告佛教毀滅的開端。師父已告訴我們了，此法即為《楞嚴經》與〈楞嚴咒〉；我能做什麼，維持它們于不墜來續佛慧命呢？我可以每天翻開經典，並讀誦、研究，甚至背誦它；我可以加入英文譯經的行列；我可以熟背此咒，然後盡可能勤加誦念；我可以奉經教為行事準則，並與諸有緣，一起分享此經咒為職志。

這是個不完美的世界，我們也不是完美的人。生命充滿相對性，我們常置身在矛盾之境，迫使我們只有兩害相權取其輕。要在這些無止境的對生境況中找到出路，必須具有勇敢的意識，與浴火重生、前仆後繼的意願。掌控混亂，並保持安穩和清醒，是我們一生的挑戰；這需要具備保持警覺的智力——這就是在經驗整體中的動力、在面對選項的平衡中點；此外，行事不失靈活通融，亦永不喪失原則。

對我而言，我是不可能獨力做到這些的；此乃為何自第一天從上人那兒接觸到《楞嚴經》與〈楞嚴咒〉後，我便對它一直篤信不移的原因。我們居住何等世界、如何應付它、如何修行才能一脫永脫它——此經之種種詮釋，即是我日常修行必讀的指引。此咒之淨化旋律與其無形力量，亦常令我驚歎難息。從第一個音節到最後，反覆地一遍又一遍，它就像一根定心線，藉著它的大威神力織入我生命的經與緯。

The Master explained the *Shurangama Sutra* that summer, encouraging us to study it diligently. In complement with that study, the Master emphasized the Shurangama Mantra, vegetarianism, and meditation. He told us that besides leaving us a vast legacy of teachings, the historic Buddha, Shakyamuni, advised us that in this world, in the age in which we have been born, the tendency will be for people to bring about the demise of the Dharma.

After that lesson, I returned to my meditation and found that now my vision was expanding to include not only how to direct my future in Buddhism but also what I could do to help ensure Buddhism's future. That, I guess, was the moment of my initial resolve. I wanted to be Buddhist and to give everyone in the world, now and forever, a chance to be Buddhist too, so that all of us together could advance to full awakening.

Now I knew how I wanted to direct my own cultivation in this life. I wanted to keep alive the very teachings and practices whose disappearance would herald the beginning of the end of Buddhism. The Master had already told us which dharmas those were: The *Shurangama Sutra* and the Shurangama Mantra. And what could I do to help keep them alive? I could open the sutra text every day and read and study it and even memorize it; I could join in the task of translating it into English; I could memorize the mantra and then chant it as often as possible; I could try to live by the teachings in the sutra and to share those with anyone who wanted to listen.

This is not a perfect world and we are not perfect people. We live in the midst of dualities that place us continually in conflicting situations and force us to make choices that are often the lesser of two evils. Finding resolution within those ceaseless dichotomies requires a sense of daring and a willingness to pick ourselves up and continue on our way each time we fall. To maneuver through the chaos and remain safe and sane is a lifelong challenge that requires the ability to remain on the edge—that point of dynamic tension in the gestalt; to balance at the mid point between every set of options; and more, to be flexible while doing so and yet, to never compromise our principles.

For me, it would be impossible to do all that unaided and that is why I have been faithful to the *Shurangama Sutra* and the Shurangama Mantra ever since the day I first was introduced to them by the Venerable Master. The sutra's explanations of what kind of world we live in and how to cope with it and what to do to leave it once and for all are my daily guide. The mantra's cleansing air and latent power always take me by surprise. From the first syllable to the last, over and over again, it acts as a stabilizing thread, weaving its might and majesty into the warp and woof of my life.

