

Intention & Surrender :
The Art of “Keeping an Eye on Yourself” (Continued)

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葉祖堯博士 2008年3月17日講於萬佛聖城大殿

A TALK GIVEN BY RAYMOND YEH, PH.D., ON

MARCH 17, 2008 IN THE BUDDHA HALL AT THE CITY OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS

當場就開悟了。以上這些故事，讓我們了解，應該在心裏面留一些空間，讓我們有機會去超越自己。所以「願望」與「放下」，應該是自我轉化過程中，一個銅板的兩面。

宮本武藏能夠走這條矛盾之路，一方面有一個很清晰的願望，想窺見劍道的真諦；同時也能放下自己對生命的珍惜，因為他知道每次去打都可能死掉；他腦子裏總有地方可接受別人的劍法，因而能不斷的創造出新的劍法；同時他也放下了有一個家庭的可能性，因為他隨時會死；他也放下了喜歡任何一種劍。所以當他這些都放下以後，他不但一直的發明、創造新的招式，而在二十九歲以後就不再用真劍比鬥，他僅用一根木劍而已。Howard Lyman、Lance Armstrong跟宮本武藏，都是能夠超越自我限制。

可是，超越自己不是一件容易的事情。因為我們腦海中的模型，雖然不完整，可是它使我們覺得很熟悉與舒服，給我們一種好像我們可以掌握這個世界的感覺。雖然我們皆有無止盡的潛能，但我們往往被我們腦海中模型的時空所掌控。

從前我們在德州住時，有個大房子，有各式各樣的安全設備，所以覺得自己很安全。其實，不知道自己把自己關在一個籠子裏，一直到來到萬佛聖城

以上這些故事，讓我回到前幾次，近畿法師跟蘇居士都談過宮本武藏。當太空和尚把宮本武藏從鐵屋中放出來以後，宮本武藏就立了一個願，他要尋找劍的真髓，所以每次都要找有名的武士跟他們鬥，俾找到劍的真髓。可是跟Lyman和Armstrong不一樣的地方是，宮本武藏身經六十餘戰，在每一次相鬥裏面，他都可以被殺死。蘇居士分享了他的了解——「留一隻眼睛看自己」，是從孫子兵法「知己知彼，百戰百勝」出來的。

宮本武藏從他另外一個老師「佛陀」學到什麼呢？

也許可以在沈家楨居士所講的《金剛經講解》裏面的一個故事找到答案。有一位年輕的修行者，非常想開悟，他最後找到一位開悟的老師。可是經過三年以後，他並沒有得到什麼進展，而老師已經生重病，所以在極端失望之下，他就拿著一把刀對著老師，要老師教他開悟。老師對他說：「即使我可以教你開悟，你的心裏面是否有地方接受我的方法？」這個年輕的修行者聽了，

以後，才了解這個自我限制。在聖城，我們家的門時常沒鎖，而且常常有我們完全不認識的訪客來短住，甚至有時我們根本不在家，也不會擔憂丟東西，覺得很自在。來聖城以後，我與同修都大大的拓寬了我們的心量，減少了一些「害怕」，幾乎所有的人都會「畏懼」一種或某些事物。

記得有一次我在培訓大公司的一群經理時，要他們畫他們自己。有一位年輕人畫了一個很沮喪的臉，脖子上有一條鍊子栓在一根柱子上。當我們把所有的自畫相掛在牆上時，大多數的人表示自己也覺得被鍊條栓住，只是不同的鍊條而已，包括房子貸款、家庭、事業等等。但是像宮本武藏這類的人，總是要超越自己，而活在「邊緣」上——一個在自我覺得舒適的小區域與外邊廣闊無邊的空間之間的界線上。

我想宮本武藏從他另外一個老師「佛陀」學到的，大概就是有一個很清楚的「願望」跟「放下」，放下朝著願望走時所有的結果。佛陀教我們不僅要有大願，也要躬行實踐，行六度波羅蜜。每一度波羅蜜都是幫助我們放下：布施，放下我們所喜愛的事；持戒，放下慾望與瞋恚；忍辱，放下不平的心；精進，放下懶惰與懈怠；禪定，放下散亂；般若，放下自己對任何想法或智力模型上的執著，放下色與空，放下人我是非。

當我們能有一個很清晰的願望，同時能夠放下並活在「邊緣」時，我們也許會很喜歡這邊緣地帶，因為它指向我們最終的自由解脫之路。

(全文完)

These stories bring me back to the story of Mushashi Miyamoto that DM Jin Chan and Mr. Su (Chin Quan) talked about in the Buddha Hall. After Mushashi was released from the iron room by DM Tai Quan, he made a vow to seek the truth of swordsmanship. In doing so, he sought out famous swordsmen to fight in order to learn from them. Like Lyman and Armstrong, Mushashi was tireless in pursuing his vision. But unlike the other two, Mushashi fought 60 battles, each of which could have ended his life. Mr. Su (Chin Quan) kindly shared his insight as to what Mushashi learned from one of his teachers, Sun Zi. He suggested that “keeping an eye on oneself” seemed to derived from Sun Zi’s well-known phrase, “If you know yourself and your opponent, you will always be victorious.” But what did he learn from his other teacher, the Buddha?

Perhaps the following story, related by Mr. Shen Jia Zhen, can shed some light. A young cultivator wanted to reach enlightenment eagerly. He found an enlightened master. However, after three years, he had not improved much and the Master was gravely ill. So, in desperation, he held a knife to his Master, who was lying on his bed, and demanded that his Master teach him how to be enlightened. The Master told him, “Even if I have a method to teach you, does your mind have the space to receive it?” The young man, upon hearing the Master’s words, became enlightened.

The story above suggests that we always need to save some open space in our minds to allow our own transcendence. So perhaps intention and surrender are two sides of the same coin in our process of transforming ourselves. Mushashi was able to walk

on that paradoxical path of having a clear intention while surrendering to the uncertainty of his own life in any given fight. His transcendence was by no means instantaneous. He always had an open mind about all schools of swordsmanship and was able to absorb them all into his own understanding, continuously creating new methods for the sword. He was able to let go of favoring any weapon. In fact, after age 29, he no longer used a sword but instead used only wooden sticks. He also let go of the concept of having a family, knowing that he could die in any of his fights. By letting go of the many conventional approaches to swordsmanship, he created open space in his mind and thus was able to invent many things like using both swords together. Howard Lyman, Lance Armstrong, and Mushashi were able to go beyond their apparent limitations.

But going beyond is not an easy thing as most of us are so confined in our mental models which, though imperfect, are nevertheless comfortable as they give us some sense of control of the world around us. Though the reality is infinite and eternal, our mental models deliberately keep it finite and temporal so that it is easily manipulated by our minds. I remember living in our big house in Austin, Texas before moving to CTTB. We had all kinds of security measures which made me feel safe; I didn’t realize I had locked myself into a cage. Now, our doors are often not locked and many visitors to CTTB, some we don’t even know, have stayed in our house and many times we are not even there. It is such a good feeling to have no fear of losing something. My wife and I have expanded our minds since moving here as we dispelled some of our fears.

Indeed the fear of discomfort is the main reason, at least for me in the past, to step beyond our self-made cage. Almost all people have fears of one kind or another.

I remember once I asked a group of managers to draw themselves. One person drew a sad face chained to a post. Later on, almost everyone else, after seeing the picture, also identified him/herself as being chained to something, be it a big mortgage, their family, their job, etc. But people like Mushashi constantly pushed the envelope and went beyond himself to live on the edge—the boundary between one's own comfort zone and the infinity outside.

It seems that what Mushashi learned from his other teacher, the Buddha, was to have a clear intention—the vow, and to let go, to surrender to the consequences of walking the vow. The Buddha taught us to generate a big vow or intention, and then we should act in our daily life in accordance with the Six *Paramitas* namely; giving, holding precepts, patience, vigor, *samadhi*, and *prajna*. Each of these Six *Paramitas* is a way to help us to surrender something. Giving—surrendering things we like, especially the ego; holding precepts—surrendering desire and anger; patience—surrendering anger; vigor—surrendering laziness; *samadhi*—surrendering randomness or sleepiness; and *prajna*—surrendering holding onto any kind of thoughts or mental models, surrendering form as well as emptiness, or the idea of opposites.

By holding a clear intention while letting go to live on the edge, we might end up loving the edge because it points the way to freedom!

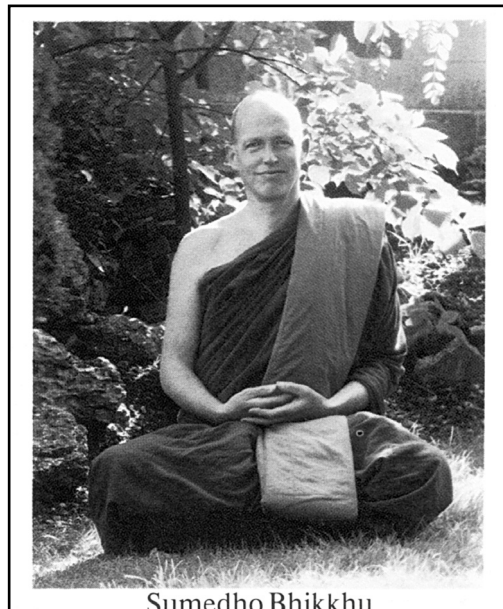
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A Visit from Venerable Ajahn Sumedho (Continued)

阿姜蘇美度法師 2008年六月二十二日 講於萬佛聖城大殿

AJAHN SUMEDHO'S TALK ON JUNE 22, 2008 IN THE BUDDHA HALL AT THE CTTB

蘇美度法師來訪 (續)



Sumedho Bhikkhu

So this sense of oneself as identity with the body, with the conditions that one is experiencing, needs to be looked at and observed, not just to be suppressed or dismissed. My own experience of monastic life involved training in Thailand, learning to speak Thai, learning the Thai tradition and culture, adjusting to different climate and different cultural expectations and to a totally different way of living within the strict boundaries of the vinaya. Of course this brought up the sense of oneself very strongly, my American background, my views, my opinions, my emotions that would be set off, triggered by the various restraints or frustrations of early monastic life. The genius of the teacher, Luang Por Chah, was always his ability to direct my attention to look at what I'm actually feeling, to be able to witness and observe this sense of myself and my belief in what I'm thinking, my attachment to views and memories.

The American cultural conditioning of course has very much developed a sense of uniqueness, of being special, identity with being an individual, with being assertive and demanding rights and very strong views of feeling of independence. And "my life," "my world," "what I think," and "what I want" are very much encouraged within the American cultural conditioning as