

我對念佛法門的感悟（續）

My Insights regarding Buddha Recitation (Continued)

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七天專念佛號的過程中，我儘量使自己做到行、住、坐、臥都處在念佛中，或是觀想阿彌陀佛，以及觀想蓮華等的情境中。在七天中，昔日所念的有口無心的佛號，逐漸轉變成像在沙灘中寫字般，可以在心中稍留片刻了，只是最終仍是被無明的海浪沖走，佛號仍是無法久駐心田。當念到第七天時，偶而感覺到幾句佛號，像是進入了身體的肌肉與筋骨中，而那份感覺使身心起了前所未有的變化。

首先，佛號猶如能夠滋養身體的養分一般，由最外圍的肌膚，逐漸的滲透到血管與筋骨中，似乎能夠調和身體的五臟六腑，使氣血逐漸的充足起來。

其次，佛號開啟了昏睡已久的純淨善良的心扉。直到那時，我才略為領悟到《大勢至菩薩念佛圓通章》中所說的「十方如來，憐念眾生，如母憶子；若子逃逝，雖憶何為？子若憶母，如母憶時，母子歷生，不相違遠」而這份「如母憶子」，以及「子若憶母，如母憶時」的情境是要在真心念佛的過程中才能逐漸的浮現出來。

若是念佛能念到心裡去時，將會喚醒與生俱來的那份無私付出愛心的感覺，而這份對愛心的感悟，就像慈母疼惜憐愛子女，乃是發自內心的無條件的付出。而子女也能感受到雙親那份無怨無悔所付出的關懷，進而無時無刻的憶念著雙親。

當我們能夠在心中真實的感受到這份愛心時，並且能夠將這份發自內心的感受投入念佛中，那麼你就能將每一句佛號視如稀世珍寶，並且對念佛法門產生堅固無比的信心，永遠不離不棄。

In the process of this seven-day Buddha Recitation session, I tried to keep on reciting the Buddha's name whether I was walking, standing, sitting, or reclining; or I would contemplate the image of Amitabha Buddha, the lotus, etc. During the seven days of Buddha recitation, I slowly changed from reciting the Buddha's name with my mouth and not my heart to reciting akin to writing letters in the sand at a beach. The recitation would stay in my heart for a few seconds before it got swept away by the waves of ignorance. I still could not make the Buddha's name reside permanently in my mind ground. While reciting on the seventh day, occasionally I felt as if several sounds of the Buddha's name had entered my body and into my muscles, tendons, and bones. That sensation caused an unprecedented transformation to my body and mind.

First of all, the Buddha's name is like nutrients nourishing the body. From the skin and flesh, it can penetrate gradually to the blood vessels, tendons, and bones. It seems that it can regulate the five viscera and the six bowels of the body, gradually vitalizing the breath and blood.

Secondly, the Buddha's name has awakened my pure good heart from a long lethargic sleep. That was when I finally came to realize a little what the "Great Strength Bodhisattva's Perfect Penetration through Mindfulness of the Buddha" chapter meant when it said: "The Tathagatas of the ten directions are tenderly mindful of living beings just as a mother remembers her son. But, if the son runs away, of what use is the mother's concern? However, if the son remembers his mother in the same way that the mother remembers her son, then in life after life mother and son will never be far apart." This state of "just as a mother who remembers her son" and "if a son remembers his mother in the same way that the mother remembers her son" can only surface gradually and be felt through mindfulness of the Buddha with a true heart.

If we can recite the Buddha's name and be mindful in our heart, we can also awaken the innate feeling of impartial loving-kindness. This realization of impartial loving-kindness is like that of a kind mother who cherishes her children and showers them with tender loving care. This giving is unconditional and it comes from her heart. Likewise, her children can also feel their parents' affection which are free from regrets and complaints. In turn, they are also mindful of their parents at all times.

If we can truly experience this loving-kindness in our hearts, and apply this inner perception to recite the Buddha's name, then we will realize

另外，佛號也像子女能夠感受到慈母所給予的無盡愛心一般，使你在念佛的當下，心中很自然的充滿幸福感、滿足感。若能運用這份幸福的感覺去念佛，即使你念佛念上千句萬遍也不厭倦。並能使你所念的佛號深植心中，永不抹滅。

假使你能夠將佛號視如金剛鑽似的，確信無疑的認為佛號是世間獨一無二的無價之寶，很有感覺的念下去，心存感激，心生愉悅、充滿幸福感的老實的念下去。假以時日，深信你將會感受到身心在這句佛號中所發出來的訊息。

因為佛號會使你的身心感受到如春臨大地一般，並使你枯槁的身心靈突然感到生機無限，讓你體驗到「枯木逢春」的驚喜！內心深處的生命力，也會因為這句佛號而得以激發、顯現出來。

換言之，再簡單不過的一句佛號，是含藏著無限的生機，只要肯用心去感覺，去體會，定能使你的身心靈有所轉變，無須在往生西方淨土之後，才能體會到西方淨土的極樂。因為只要在專心念佛的當下，即可體悟到了！因為你的身心靈將會隨著這句佛號漸趨完善、純淨、美好，進而達到西方極樂世界的境界。

因為近兩年來積極的修習禪坐，所以已經養成端坐念佛或念咒時，配合呼吸的打坐方法。在參加念佛共修時，仍採用端坐念佛，只是此次還增添一份專心聽著帶領法師的念佛聲。當我一句句的配合著念下去時，身心似乎起了些許變化。

隨著念佛時間的增長，身心也逐漸能與佛號配合了。因為僵硬的身體漸趨柔軟，而四肢與軀幹的氣血也漸漸疏通。雖然雙腿仍處在酸麻的階段，但是佛號似乎已能安撫雙腿，令其稍安勿躁，漸漸的能夠將腿痛酸麻的感覺拋諸腦後；很想起身走動的煩燥念頭，也逐漸的被那句佛號按捺住，不再蠢蠢欲動了。

雖然垂下的雙眼，並未睜開，但是腦海中的種種影相，不時的浮現，且揮之不去；即使很努力的想用心聽著法師的念佛聲，但是耳朵還是會去聽內心突然升起的妄念。於是下定決心，要專心聽著自身所念的佛號，不再隨妄念起舞。最終，隨著持續不斷的佛號聲，一點一滴的滲入心田，佛號就猶如金鐘罩似的，將妄想雜念慢慢隔離了。

that every single sound of the Buddha's name is a rare gem. You will then give rise to a firm and resolute faith in the Dharma practice of Buddha recitation which we will never abandon.

Moreover, the Buddha's name is also like the children who can perceive their kind mother's infinite love for them. When we are reciting the Buddha's name, naturally we will feel bliss and happiness, and a sense of fulfillment in our heart. If we can employ this blissful feeling to recite the Buddha's name, we will never get weary even if we have recited thousands and tens of thousands of times. The Buddha's name we recited will be rooted deep in our heart and never get wiped away.

If we can treat the Buddha's name like a vajra diamond and undoubtedly believe that the Buddha's name is the world's most unique and priceless gem, if we can honestly recite it with much feeling, with gratitude, with joy, and with happiness in your heart, then in due time, I truly believe that both our body and mind will get the message from this very sound of the Buddha's name.

It is because the Buddha's name can allow our body and mind to experience the refreshing arrival of spring time. Suddenly, our withered soul will sense an infinite vitality, and we will be pleasantly surprised at getting a new lease of life just like the saying, "bare trees in spring time". The vitality of life buried deep in our heart will be stirred to action and manifest because of this single sound of the Buddha's name.

In other words, this one very simple sound of the Buddha's name holds boundless vitality. If we are willing to feel it with our heart and discern it, it will transform our body and mind. And we need not wait till we are reborn in the Western Pure Land to experience the ultimate bliss. All it takes is our mindfulness to recite the Buddha's name, and right on the spot we will be able to realize it. It is because our body and spirit tend to become more complete and perfect with each sound of the Buddha's name. They become pure and wholesome, and eventually we can attain the state of the Western Land of the Ultimate Bliss.

As I have been actively practicing Chan in the past two years, I developed a meditation method to coordinate my breathing as I sit upright to recite the Buddha's name or a mantra. When I participate in an assembly to recite the Buddha's name, I still sit upright to recite. In addition, I also concentrate and pay attention to the voice of the leading Dharma Master. As every sound of my recitation harmonizes with hers, it seems that my body and mind also undergo a little transformation.

After reciting the Buddha's name for an increasing period of time, slowly my body and mind are able to synchronize with the Buddha's name. My stiff body becomes softer, and the blood circulation of my four limbs and my body are more decongested. Although my legs are still numb and aching, the Buddha's name seems to soothe my legs so that they could remain patient. Eventually, I can let go of the pain and numbness of my legs, and the frustrating desire to get up and walk around is also subdued by the Buddha's name. My legs become incapable of acting up again.

Though my eyes remain closed, various images from my mind keep flashing up, and I am unable to get rid of them. Even if I try hard to focus and listen to the Dharma Master's chanting of the Buddha's name, still my ears keep hearing the polluted thoughts as they pop up in my mind. Therefore, I make a firm resolve to listen to my own recitation of the

當身心能夠漸漸的遠離這些妄念，體內的氣脈緩緩地通暢了。首先，丹田的溫熱感，逐漸升起；接著，心輪部位猶如受到陽光照射一般，逐漸擴散開來。然後這份祥和溫暖的氣團，漸漸將溫煦的蒸氣輸送到身體的各個部位。最終，使整個身體像是一個充滿陽氣的汽球裏，既輕鬆又自在。

身處在這種既踏實又放鬆的狀態中，佛號似乎能夠穿透有形的身軀，逐漸的往心靈深處航行。心中所念的佛號，似乎能夠使頭腦更加清醒，對內心世界所發出來的妄念，與外在環境所傳來不可避免的聲音時，都能夠很有決斷力的放下，然後再度全心投入在那句佛號中。

就在這份堅定信念的驅使之下，穿梭在一呼一吸之間的句句佛號，隨著專注力的增強，以及漸趨平緩的呼吸狀態之下，也就越念越舒暢了！突然間，感覺到佛號與呼吸，猶如依循在一個會逐漸擴展的橢圓形軌道上，緩緩的旋轉不已。在這當下，頓時豁然開朗！

當喜樂之情逐漸充塞心胸之際，突然憶起師父宣公上人曾經說過的一句名言：「要深心念佛，不要打妄想，一句佛號念到底！」於是重整心緒，再將心思投入念佛中，集中心力在佛號上。時間就在佛號聲中一分一秒的飄逝，一呼一吸也更加的趨於緩和微細，更加清晰感受到呼吸之間的轉折點，是那樣的平順與自然！最終，呼吸幾乎被遺忘了。

在這似有似無的呼吸轉折點的時刻出現時，佛號竟能敲響我內心最深層的那根心弦，而內心深處的那根心弦也隨之回應，道出：「念佛不是為自己念，應該要為眾生念！」的心聲。這趟美妙的心靈之旅，就在心聲冉冉升起的那一瞬間，卻因引罄聲響起之際，而畫下休止符了。

在念佛的過程中，卻使我感悟到佛號有如一葉扁舟，載著我穿過高低起伏不定的小溪，順流而下，越過湖泊，最後划向一望無際、深不可測的大海。而在那猶如浩瀚無邊大海的念佛法門裡，雖然我只掬到一瓢而飲，可是箇中的妙用，卻是很值得我用畢生的心力去一探究竟的。

上述純屬個人的體驗，願與喜歡禪坐與念佛的佛友分享！

Buddha's name instead of being steered by my polluted thoughts. Finally, the continuous sound of my Buddha recitation little by little starts to permeate into my mind ground. The Buddha's name is like a golden bell that wards off my scattered and distracting thoughts.

When my body and mind are free from polluted thoughts, the breath and pulse inside my body slowly unclog and clear out. First, I have a lukewarm feeling in my dantian acupressure point. As it slowly rises up, the area of my heart chakra feels as if it is illuminated by sunlight, and it begins to expand beyond. Then this ball of warm energy in turns transports warm vapor to every part of the body. Finally, my whole body feels like it is enveloped in a balloon full of yang energy. It is so relaxed and at ease.

As I stay in this steadfast and relaxed condition, the Buddha's name seems to be able to penetrate the physical body and navigate into the core of the heart and soul. When I recite the Buddha's name in my heart, it seems to clear up my mind even more. I can decisively let go of all the polluted thoughts that arise from my inner world and the inevitable sounds broadcasted by the external environment, and once again pull myself back to recite the Buddha's name wholeheartedly.

Driven by this firm belief, with the Buddha's name maneuvering between every exhalation and inhalation, my recitation becomes more and more smooth and comfortable as my focus sharpens, and my breathing is more even and gentle. Suddenly, I feel that the Buddha's name and my breathing seem to be slowly circulating on an expanding elliptic orbit. Right at that point, all of a sudden, everything is clear and visible.

As joy and happiness began to fill in my heart, I suddenly recall the Venerable Master Hua's famous saying: "You must recite the Buddha's name deep within your heart. Don't strike up polluted thoughts. Recite each Buddha's name to its very end." So I gather my thoughts and once again focus myself to recite the Buddha's name. As seconds and minutes pass, each exhalation and inhalation becomes more gentle and subtle. I can clearly distinguish the gap between each breath. It is so smooth and natural! In the end, even breathing is almost forgotten.

When this gap of breathing and not breathing emerges, the Buddha's name can also strum the heart chord in the deepest level of my innermost feeling, and it responds: "Reciting the Buddha's name is not for yourself; you should recite it for the sake of all living beings." The instant my inner voice slowly elevates, this wonderful trip of the soul ends with the sound from the hand bell.

This process of Buddha recitation allows me to perceive and recognize that the Buddha's name is like a small boat that carries me to pass through high and low landscapes. Flowing downward, I cross through lakes and end up paddling towards an unfathomable great sea that is far beyond the horizon. In this immeasurable and boundless great sea of the dharma practice of Buddha recitation, although I can only scoop water for a drink, the wondrous functions within it are worth the effort of my entire lifetime to explore.

The above account is purely an individual experience. I wish to share this with all fellow Buddhists who enjoy sitting in Chan and like to recite the Buddha's name!