



Group portrait in Gold Mountain Monastery in 1973 including the California Dreamers (adults shown standing in the row behind the Master and children sitting cross-legged in front)

1973 年上人與「加州夢幻者」(上人後排的成人及前排的小孩)的團體照

From the Hell of Prison to the Hope of Enlightenment

浪子回頭

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A talk given by Kuo Jyu Antalek at the Buddha Hall of
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At the age of sixteen, I left my parents and became an “emancipated minor.” I lived at the Boys Town in Buffalo, New York for awhile, and then afterwards had my own apartment. It was at this point that I ended up making some very bad choices. These choices would lead me to prison.

I had never been in trouble before or after my arrest, but somehow a year of my life was taken from me. This was probably my karmic retribution from past lives.

The first time I heard the iron doors of the jail close, I went into a state of shock. It felt like a thousand blades were cutting me into pieces. For the first three months of my confinement, I cried every night until eventually no tears would fall. I prayed each night for my “heavenly parents” to take me from this world. Such was my reality in prison at seventeen.

During my captivity, I kept to myself and spoke to no one. The prison hired a new psychologist whose first task was to get me to open up about my personal life. After our very first meeting, he told me he had a book that he wanted me to read. He felt compelled to give it to me. It was the fictional account of the Buddha’s life by Herman Hesse entitled *Siddhartha*. As I began reading the book, I could see myself back in ancient India cultivating the Way. Suddenly, the hell of prison gave way to a genuine sense of hope—that is, the hope for the pursuit of enlightenment.

I then asked some of the old timers in prison who were beatniks for more books on the Buddha. They gave

me books on Zen Buddhist teachings by D.T. Suzuki and others. In one of D.T. Suzuki's books I read, "When the student is ready, the spiritual teacher will appear." So, each day and night I repeated the following phrase in my mind, "My spiritual teacher, I don't know where you are, but I am coming to be with you soon."

I repeated this phrase every day, like reciting a mantra, until I was released from prison. When my moment of freedom arrived it was like watching a bird being released during the Liberation of Life Ceremony at the City of 10,000 Buddhas. This bird had opened its wings, and flew off in search of the Dharma. I then began traveling everywhere searching for Dharma friends and preparing to seek out a Good Knowing Advisor. All roads pointed west.

While in New Haven, Connecticut, I announced to my girlfriend that it was time for me to go and find my spiritual teacher. So I left my girlfriend and hitchhiked 3,000 miles until I reach San Francisco. When I visited the Zen Center of San Francisco, one of the monks there informed me that their spiritual teacher, Suzuki Roshi, was dying. He directed me to a small group of American Buddhists studying under a Chinese Master at Gold Mountain Monastery on 15th Street in San Francisco. After knocking on the door of Gold Mountain, a nun answered. It was Dharma Master Heng Chih.

She asked me what I wanted and I told her quite innocently, "I have come to look for my spiritual teacher." She immediately led me inside. After being there for just a few minutes, she taught me how to bow to the Buddha. Later, I was taken upstairs by the American monk, Dharma Master Heng Jing who was close to seven feet in height. As he walked to show me to my room on the third floor, a middle-aged Chinese monk slowly passed by us. He stared intently at me, and his eyes seemed to penetrate the depths of my soul. My spine tingled as his eyes probed me up and down. I knew this was the spiritual teacher of everyone present. This was the first time I saw my master, the Venerable Great Master Hsuan Hua.

Although I cut off my shoulder-length hair to stay at Gold Mountain Monastery, I later left to work at St. John's Church not too far away. Though I did not live at the monastery, I returned daily to attend ceremonies and lectures.

During this period of time at Gold Mountain, the ceremony for Taking Refuge in the Triple Jewel was not widely advertised. And, for this reason, I did not feel it was a priority, so I continued to work, study, and travel. Then in the beginning of the summer of 1972, I went off to visit a small Burmese Buddhist temple in the Adirondack Mountains.

在十六歲的時候，離開父母成為一個自立自主的少年人。當時我在紐約州水牛城的男孩鎮住了一陣子，之後搬入自己的公寓。就這樣做了一些壞的選擇，這些選擇讓我銀鐺入獄。在被捕之前或之後，我從沒有犯過大錯；但是還是喪失了一年的光陰，這或許就是前世惡業的果報吧！

第一次聽到監獄鐵門關閉的聲音時，我十分驚嚇，就像是被千刀萬剮切成了碎片一樣。在被監禁的最初三個月裡，我每晚哭泣，直到淚水乾枯。夜夜祈禱我的天父帶我離開這個世界。這就是我十七歲在監獄的真實情況。

在被囚禁的期間裡，我完全禁語，不與他人交談。監獄新雇了一位心理學家，他的第一個任務就是要讓我開口說話，談談我個人的生活。在我們第一次會面時，他說他有一本書，希望我能讀一讀。他覺得應該要給我這本書。那是一本由赫曼·赫瑟所著述的書《悉達多》，一本小說性質的佛陀生平故事。當開始閱讀這本書時，我想像自己是在古印度修行。突然間，監獄的狀況就被真實的希望所取代，那就是我想要追求悟道的希望。

我向一些獄中屬於「遺失一代」的老獄友要有關佛陀的書籍，他們給了我鈴木大拙和其他作者著述的禪學書籍。在鈴木大拙的書籍中我讀到：「當學生準備好時，其精神導師就自然會出現。」因此在自己腦海中日以繼夜重複此字句：「我的精神導師，雖然現在不知道您是誰，但我將很快與您相會。」

每天重複這句話，就像在念誦咒語一樣，一直到被獄方釋放為止。出獄的那一刻，就像在萬佛聖城放生儀式中的小鳥被釋放一樣，展翅飛往尋求佛法之路。之後，開始到處旅行，尋求法友和善知識，所有的道路都指向西方。

當我在康涅狄克州新海文市時，對女友宣布：現在是要去尋找我的精神導師的時候了！所以離開女友，搭了便車前進三千英哩，直到抵達舊金山。當我拜訪舊金山的禪學中心時，其中一位和尚說，他們的精神導師鈴木先生快要往生了；所以他引導我去一個美國佛教徒的小團體，他們受教於舊金山市十五街金山寺的一位中國法師。在敲了金山寺的門後，一位比丘尼開了門，她就是恒持法師。

她問我要什麼，我非常天真地告訴她：「我來尋找我的精神導師！」她立即引我入內。稍候數分鐘，她教我如何禮佛。後來，被一位身高七呎的美國法師恆靜帶引上樓。他帶我到三樓我的房間時，一位中年的中國和尚與我緩緩擦身而過。當他凝視

While hitchhiking on the way there, I bedded down off the road in a swamp somewhere between Syracuse and Albany, New York.

Late that night, I awoke to the full moon. Standing in front of me was the Venerable Great Master Hsuan Hua. The Master said nothing. He just stood there smiling radiantly in the swamp with the full moon glowing behind him. All I could do was stare in utter amazement. After the sun rose, I was still ecstatic. I knew without a doubt it was time for me to return to San Francisco to take refuge under the guidance of the Venerable Master.

I returned to California and ended up taking refuge with the Venerable Master on March 18, 1973. I was given the Dharma name Kuo Jyu (果鉅). Coincidentally, the day of my taking refuge there was also an earthquake in San Francisco.

Perhaps this event had something to do with another group of people who took refuge with the Venerable Master at the same time as myself. This group of people (who were given the nickname, the “California Dreamers”) had all been followers of the recently deceased spiritual teacher named Sufi Sam. All of them simultaneously had the same identical dream in which Sufi Sam instructed them to take refuge with Venerable Master Hua. So the California Dreamers and myself took refuge with the Venerable Master on March 18, 1973. After that time, they would visit Gold Mountain every year on March 18 to pay their respects to the Venerable Master.

These are some of the events that led up to my taking refuge with the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua.

著我，他的眼光似乎可以穿透我的靈魂深處。當他的眼神上下打量我，這時我的脊樑開始發顫，知道他就是在場大眾的精神導師。這是第一次見到我的導師，宣化上人。

雖然剪去齊肩的長髮，以便在金山寺住下，但是後來我離開到距此不遠的聖約翰教堂工作。雖然沒有住在寺院裡，但每天都會回來參加早晚課和聽經。

在金山寺的期間，皈依三寶的儀式並沒有被大為宣傳；因此並不覺得它很重要，所以我繼續工作、學習和旅行。後來在1972年的夏初，我要去拜訪一個在愛榮德克山裡的一座緬甸小佛寺，當搭便車前往時，我在紐約州西拉秋士市和阿伯尼市之間一個沼澤地的路邊睡下。

在深夜時，在滿月下醒來，發現站在面前的正是上人。他站在沼澤地默然不語，臉上帶著璀璨的微笑，明亮的月光從他身後照耀著。我只能凝視，也充滿訝異。當晨曦升起時，我仍是心懷喜悅；知道這是要回金山寺的時候了，要在上人的指導下皈依。

回到加州，在1973年的3月18日那天皈依了上人，法名為果鉅。很湊巧的是皈依的那天，舊金山發生了地震。

或許這個事件和另外一群與我同時皈依上人的事有關。這群人(他們的外號叫「加州夢幻者」)一直是追隨他們剛往生的精神導師山姆·路易斯，他們每一個人同時都做了相同的夢，他們的導師指示他們要來皈依上人。所以「加州夢幻者」和我就同時在1973年的3月18日皈依上人。此後，他們每年3月18日都會回到金山寺來禮見上人。

這些是引導我去皈依上人的部份事件。