

# 好好地活著

## Fully Alive

比丘 近上 講於2010年2月3日萬佛城大殿  
A talk given by Bhikshu Jin Shang on February 3rd, 2010 at the CTTB main Buddha Hall  
陳親文 英譯 Translated into English by Chen Chin Wen

學人近上藉著上台說法的機緣，講一個老和尚教導小沙彌的故事，來跟大眾分享。

有一位不同凡響，抱著理想，自認為是個完美主義者的小沙彌，坐在地上一直地哭著，滿地都是寫了字的廢紙。老和尚很關心地問：「怎麼啦？」小沙彌回答說：「寫不好嘛！」

老和尚撿起了幾張紙來看著，說：「寫得還不錯嘛！你為什麼要扔掉呢？那又為什麼要哭呢？」  
「我就是覺得寫不好嘛！」小沙彌又繼續地哭。「我是個完美主義者啊！一點兒都不能錯！」「問

題是這個世界上，有誰能一點都不錯呢？」這時老和尚就拍拍小沙彌的肩膀，說：「你什麼都要求完美，有一點兒不滿意你就生氣，或者哭，這樣就反而變成不完美了，你說是嗎？」

經過老和尚這麼一說，於是小沙彌就把地上的字紙撿了起來，先去洗了手，再照照鏡子，又洗了一把臉，再把褲子脫下來洗了一遍又一遍。老和尚就問小沙彌說：「唉呀！你這是在幹什麼啊？你洗來洗去已經浪費半天時間啦！」「我有潔癖嘛！」小沙彌說：「我忍不得一點點髒。

I, Jin Shang, a learner of Buddhism, would like to use this Dharma talk as an opportunity to share a story how an old monk edified a young shramanera.

Once there was a unique and aspiring young shramanera who identified himself as a perfectionist. One day he was on the floor crying intensely and couldn't stop himself. Next to him on the floor were piles of used paper with writing on them. His master asked caringly, "What's wrong?" The young shramanera replied, "I couldn't do my writing correctly."

The old monk picked up some of the papers and took a look at them. He said, "The writing is not bad! Why did you throw it away? And what made you cry like this?" "I absolutely believe my writing is not good enough!" the shramanera responded, weeping, and added, "I am a perfectionist. I will not tolerate any imperfection." The old monk uttered, "But the problem in this world is that we cannot find anyone who is perfect all the time!" He patted the shramanera's shoulder and said, "You demand perfection in everything and easily become angry or disappointed. Don't you think that this is an imperfection?"

After hearing this, the young shramanera picked up the papers off the floor. He then washed his hands and after



師父！你沒有發現嗎？當每一位施主走了以後，我都把他們坐過的椅子擦過一遍。」「喔，這叫做潔癖嗎？」師父笑笑說：「你嫌天髒，地髒，人髒；外表雖然乾淨，內心反而有病，那就是不潔淨了。」

隔天小沙彌要去化緣，他就特別挑了一件很破舊的衣服穿；師父就問他說：「你為什麼要挑這一件呢？」小沙彌就答得有點不服氣地說：「唉！您不是說不在乎表面嗎？那當然我就找件破舊的衣服；而且這樣子施主們才會同情我，才會多給我錢。」「哎呀！」師父瞪了瞪眼睛說：「你這是去化緣還是去乞討啊？啊！你這是希望人看你可憐來供養你？還是希望人看你有所作為，透過你來度化千萬人呢？」

爾後，有個大熱天，禪院裡的花被曬萎了；小和尚看著說：「哇，天哪，快加點水吧！」他一面喊著一面去接了桶水，就要往上澆。「啊……」老和尚說：「別急別急，現在太陽這麼大，一冷一熱，非死不可；等晚一點再澆！」傍晚那盆花已經成了梅乾菜的樣子，小和尚就啼啼哭哭地說：「呃……不早澆一點！一定已經死透了，怎麼澆也澆不活了！」老和尚就說：「少囉嗦！澆！」當水澆下去，沒多久，已經垂下去的花，居然全站了起來，而且生意盎然。

「哇！天，可真厲害，非在那兒撐著不死。」「胡說八道！」老和尚就接著糾正他說：「不是撐著不死呀！是好好地活著。」「哦？這有什麼不同呢？」小和尚低著頭就滿臉的悶著氣。「當然不同啦！」老和尚拍拍小和尚說：「問你，我今年八十多了，我是撐著不死，還是好好活著？」

晚課完了，老和尚把小和尚叫到面前說：「怎麼樣，你想通了嗎？」「沒有……」小和尚低著頭說。老和尚敲了下小和尚的頭說：「笨哪！一天到晚怕死的人，那是撐著不死；每天都向前看的人，才是好好活著。我們

taking a look in the mirror, he was compelled to wash his face. Then he changed his pants and washed them again and again.

The old monk noticed his behavior and asked, "What are you doing? You have wasted half a day just washing things over and over again!"

"But I have an obsession with cleanliness! I can't tolerate any filth. Master, have you noticed that I always clean the chairs after visitors leave?" "Ah, is this what's called 'the cleanliness obsession'?" asked the master as he smiled at the young novice. "You complain about the filth of the sky, the earth, and humans. You maintain a clean outer appearance but inwardly you are defiled with a disease; you are not thoroughly hygienic inside and out."

The next day the young shramanera dressed for his alms round; he purposely wore a ragged outfit. His master, curious, asked him, "Why did you pick such an outfit?" The shramanera answered with a defiant attitude, "Well, didn't you say do not care about one's appearance? Then, of course, I should wear rags in order to gain people's sympathy and get more alms money this way." The master lowered his gaze and said, "Aye! Are you going for alms as a beggar?" He continued, "Is your aspiration about longing for others' donations out of their pity, or is it about having people's respect and support due to your outstanding virtues, accomplishments, and resolve to save tens of thousands of people?"

On another day, it was burning hot. The heat withered all the flowers in the monastic courtyard. Upon seeing the ruins, the young shramanera shouted, "Oh, no! We need to hurry and water the flowers!" He ran to get a bucket and filled it with water. As he was about to pour water onto the plants, the old monk stopped him. "Wait! Hold the rush!" he cautioned. He explained, "Right now the sun is burning the plants. If you suddenly pour cold water onto the plants, they will be destroyed by the sudden and drastic change of temperature. We need to wait until the temperature cools down in the evening." By early evening, the flowers had withered into shapes of pickled brown vegetables. This made the young novice aggrieved and he cried out, "It was a bad idea to not water earlier. The flowers must have died, beyond rescue. No irrigation can ever save their lives!" The old monk commanded, "Stop speaking nonsensically. Proceed to water the plants now!" Soon after the flowers were watered, they regained vitality, stretched back up and stood tall.

The shramanera spoke in amazement, "These plants sure are hardy! They were able to hang on without dying." "Don't be silly!" The old monk spoke loudly and corrected the novice. "They didn't linger from dying; they were still fully alive!" "What is the big difference?" the novice sullenly protested. "Of course there is a difference!" The old monk spoke as he patted the young novice, "Let me ask you, I am well over 80 years old this year. Am I just hanging on without dying or am I fully alive?"

After the evening recitation ceremony, the old monk called upon the young novice and asked, "How are you doing? Do you have an answer yet?"

"Nope," the shramanera answered with his head down.

The old monk knocked on the novice's head and said, "Foolish! Those who fear for their lives day-in and day-out are the ones who hang on instead of dying. Those who move vigorously forward through their lives are the ones

人，得一天壽命就要好好地過一天。那些活著的時候，天天怕死而拜佛燒香，希望死後能成佛的，絕對成不了佛啦！」老和尚笑笑說：「今生如果能夠好好過的，都沒有好過；那老天又何必死後給他好好地過日子呢？」這就是老和尚教導小沙彌的一點點小提醒。

再來說呢，有一天有兩個不如意的年輕人，一起拜望老和尚。「師父啊！我們在辦公室被人家欺負，太痛苦了。請求您開示，我們是不是該辭掉工作呢？」兩個人一起就問著。師父閉著眼睛，隔了半天，吐出了五個字：「不過一碗飯。」就揮揮手示意年輕人退下去。才回到公司，一個人就馬上遞上辭呈，回家種田去了；另一個卻沒有動。

日子過得可真快，轉眼間十年就過去了。回家種田的，他就以現代的方法來經營，加上品種的改良，居然成了一個農業專家。另一個嘛，留在公司裡的，也不差。他忍著氣努力學，漸漸就受到了器重，已經升到經理了。

有一天兩個人遇到了。「奇怪喔！師父給我們同樣的『不過一碗飯』五個字，我一聽就懂了；不過一碗飯嘛！日子有什麼難過呢？何必硬巴巴地撐在公司裡呢？所以我就辭職了。」這農業專家就問另外一個人說：「你當時為什麼沒聽師父的話呢？」「我聽了。」經理笑笑說：「師父不是說嗎？不過一碗飯哪，就是要多受氣多受累。我只要想想，不過混飯吃嘛，老板說什麼就什麼，就好了；少賭氣，少計較，不就好了嘛！師父不是這個意思嗎？」

於是兩個人又去拜望師父。當時師父已經很老了，懶懶閉著眼睛隔著老半天，又答了五個字：「不過一念間。」然後揮揮手，示意他們回去了。

後來老和尚圓寂了，小沙彌就成了住持。他總是穿著整整齊齊，拿著醫

who are fully alive! We human beings ought to cherish our existence and live our everyday life in the most meaningful ways possible. Those religious followers who pray and make offerings to the Buddhas solely out of their fear of death and wish to become Buddhas after the end of their lives won't be able to actualize their dreams that way." The old monk smiled and concluded, "If one has lived his or her life in vain, what obligation would Heaven have in bestowing upon this person a great life after death?" In such ways the old monk taught the young shramanera, who gained a bit of insight.

One time two unhappy young men came to visit the old monk. "Master!" they anxiously exclaimed, "We have been bullied at work and have suffered greatly because of the mistreatment. We beg for your enlightening guidance! Should we quit our jobs?" The old monk closed his eyes and paused in silence for a long time. He finally responded with just eight words, "It is just for one bowl of rice." He then waved his hand and gestured the young men to leave. As soon as they returned to their work, one of the young men turned in his resignation notice and went back to his hometown and became a farmer. The other one did not make any changes and remained in the same job.

Time flew quickly. After a swift ten-year's turn, the young man who had quit his job and had become a farmer became a farming expert. He utilized his modern management techniques to operate his farming business, and he also succeeded in improving the agricultural breeds. The other young man who had remained in the same job had comparable success. He tolerated the mistreatment and refrained from allowing his resentment to stop him from applying diligent efforts to advance at work. Gradually he gained recognition and was promoted to become a manager.

One day these two men met again. The farmer said, "Interestingly, the Master gave us the same eight-word answer, 'it is just for one bowl of rice,' and I understood his instruction right away. To me he was saying that working is just for earning food for meals in order to survive. We did not have to adhere to one way of earning a living under such a painful condition; therefore, I quit the job." This farming expert continued to question his manager friend in curiosity, "Why did you not listen to the Master's guidance like I did?" "I did," replied the manager with a smile. "Didn't the Master say, 'just for one bowl of rice'? I took that as we have to endure lots of mistreatment and pain in order to secure a living. I just had to remind myself that 'it is only a job!' Therefore, I cooperated accordingly with whatever the boss said. To me the Master's instruction was for us to not give rise to anger or haggle over trifles and then everything would be okay. Wasn't that what he meant?"

Afterwards the two men proceeded to visit their master again. At that time the master had reached a very old age. With his eyes closed for a long time, master gave them a seven-word answer, "It is just one thought of difference." Then he waved his hand and gestured them to leave.

The old monk passed away, and by that time the young shramanera had grown to be an adult and became the abbot. He had always kept himself clean and neat but he would carry his medicine case to the filthiest and most poverty-stricken districts in order to clean patients' wounds and apply new medications to them. He often returned to the monastery with a soiled body and outfit. He also continued to go on alms rounds in person even after

藥箱，到最髒亂貧困的地區，去為那裡的病人洗膿換藥，然後髒兮兮地回到山門。他也總是親自去化緣，但是左手化來的錢，右手就濟助了可憐的人。他也很少待在禪院裡，禪院也不曾擴建；但是他的信眾卻越來越多，大家跟著他上山下海，到最偏遠的山村和漁港。

「師父在世的時候，教導我什麼叫完美；完美就是追求這個世界完美。師父也告訴我什麼是潔癖；潔癖就是幫助每個不潔淨的人，使他潔淨。師父還開示我什麼是化緣；化緣就是使人手牽手，彼此幫助，使眾生結善緣。至於什麼是禪院呢？禪院不一定要在山林，而應該在人間；東西南北皆是我弘法的所在，天地之間就是我的禪院。」

「不過一碗飯，不過一念間；主動與被動，開闊與桎梏，決定了好好活著或是撐著不死，也決定了人生的層次。」

he became the abbot. He gave most of the alms to poor people in need. Furthermore, he rarely stayed in the monastery and never tried to expand the monastery. More and more devotees drew close to him and followed him to the remote mountains and harbor villages to help those in need.

He said, "While the Master was alive, he taught me the definition of 'perfection.' Perfection is to pursue the greater good and create wholesomeness for this world. The Master also helped me understand the true meaning of 'cleanliness obsession.' It is to commit oneself to help transform people's lives from their suffering in misery and impurity. Furthermore, the Master taught me the purpose of the alms round – it is to connect people with people and inspire them to help one another hand in hand. The ultimate goal is to create compassionate affinities among people. In defining the monastery, the Master instructed that temples do not need to be built only in the high mountains or deep forests, but they should also exist among people. To me all of the lands on earth are the monasteries I serve, and the directions I travel to propagate the Buddhadharma include all the four quarters.

"It is just for one bowl of rice; it is just one thought of difference.' Whether we choose to live life actively or passively, freely or in confinement, determines whether we are fully alive or just hanging on from dying. Our choices define the quality of our life."

## New Year's Grace

## 新年好

Composed by Chubby Guo (fruit) 胖胖果

不是有錢，一定會好。  
人老人少，平安就好。  
很多事情，看開才好。  
天地萬物，感恩就好。

Fortunes in wealth  
Well-being of the young

In dealing with one's life, open-

In treating all creatures in the world, gratefulness can reap fine accord.

All in all contentment is the best to know. Cultivation in blessings and wisdom brings one a good next life to undergo.

Being mindful of one's own striving toward the Way and contemplating upon how many steps forward one cares to go.

Realizing enlightenment and letting go...settling oneself in the pond of Bodhi gold.



總而言之，知足最好。  
修福修慧，來世就好。

認真思量，能做多少？  
悟了放下，明白就好。

guarantee no peace.  
and old brings worldly ease.

mindedness will help one grow.