

## The Secret to Cultivation: Eat Less and Reduce Desire

# 修道的祕訣：節食、寡欲

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世界有成住壞空，人有生老病死，這是很自然的道理。你明白這個道理，成就是住，就是壞，就是空；生也就是老，就是病，就是死。若無成，就無住、無壞、無空；若無生，就無老、無病、無死。

可是眾生用妄想執著來分別這些事情，分別幾個大劫，也分別不清楚，時時還是那麼糊塗。剛剛要明白一點，又糊塗了，所以在輪迴中，總是出不去。若想出輪迴，打破這條道路，就可以修行成佛，證得本來的佛果，無來無去，無垢無淨，不增不減，不生不滅，什麼憂愁煩惱也沒有，什麼五濁也沒有了。可是我們人都放不下假的，所以找不到真的，所謂：

「捨不了死，換不了生；

捨不了假，成不了真。」

你不把狂心野性降伏，那麼真正的智慧就不能現前，因為你總用無明覆蓋著自性。

無明有兩個幫兇，兩個夥計，究竟是什麼呢？就是食與色。一個食欲，一個色欲，這兩個幫著無明做種種壞事。所以儒教中說：「食色性也。」好吃、好色是天然的生性。要知道，我們這個無明為何總也不能破？煩惱總也不斷？智慧總也不現？就因為貪吃、好色。

食就是幫助欲，欲就是幫助無明。你看人生來就會吃，小孩子一生出來就會吃奶，沒有奶就哭起來，吃了奶就不再哭，也不叫了，所以這是與生俱來的。有了食欲之後，就生出色欲，男好女色，女好男色，互相迷戀貪著，放不下，看不破。因為飲食所有的精華就變成「精」，精一足，就生出色欲了，所謂：「飽暖思淫

The world goes through the stages of formation, dwelling, decay, and emptiness. People undergo birth, old age, sickness, and death. These are natural phenomena. If you understand, you will see that formation includes dwelling, decay, and emptiness. Without formation, there would be no dwelling, decay, or emptiness. Without birth there would be no old age, sickness, and death.

Living beings, however, use their discursive thoughts and attachments to analyze these phenomena. However, even if they spent several great eons analyzing them, they would still be just as muddled as before. Right when they are about to understand a little, they get muddled again. In this way, they remain within transmigration and cannot escape. If we wish to escape transmigration, we must cultivate to discover our inherent Buddhahood. Then, there will be no coming or going, no purity or defilement, no increase or decrease, and no birth or cessation. There will be no worries or afflictions whatsoever. The five turbidities will cease to exist. But, since we cannot let go of the false, we fail to discover the true.

*If you can't give up death, you can't exchange it for life.*

*If you can't renounce the false, you can't obtain the true.*

If we don't calm our false, wild natures, then genuine wisdom cannot manifest. Our inherent nature is covered by ignorance.

Ignorance has two accomplices—the desires for food and sex. Food and sex support ignorance in perpetrating all sorts of evil. A Confucian proverb says, "Food and sex are part of human nature." We are born with the craving for food and sex. Why is it that we cannot get rid of ignorance, cut off afflictions, and reveal our wisdom? Because we crave food and sex.

Food gives rise to sexual desire, and sexual desire gives rise to ignorance. We are all born knowing how to eat. Once a baby is born, it cries because it wants milk, and it doesn't quiet down until it is satisfied. Thus, the desire for food is something we are born with. Once the desire for food arises, the desire for sex arises as well. Men are attracted to beautiful women, and women are charmed by handsome men. People become infatuated and obsessed and cannot see through their desires. The nourishment from the food we eat is transformed into reproductive essence; and once that essence is full, sexual desire arises.

*When warm and well-fed, one entertains thoughts of lust.*

欲，飢寒起盜心。」

人要是飽暖了，男人就想女人，女人就想男人，就搞這一套。若是窮了，就想去偷盜。你吃有營養的東西，吃得肥肥胖胖的，就會打淫欲妄想。人先有了食欲，想吃好味道，想吃幫助身體健康的食物，可是吃少了，又覺得不夠；吃多了，色欲就生出來了；色欲生出來，就不顧生命了，盡去貪色，所以色與食是死黨。若是無明沒有食、色的幫助，就不會作那麼多怪。

出家人吃得越壞越好，越沒有營養越好，所以對於吃東西的問題，不要看得那麼重，修道人吃得能維持生命就可以了。但是要行中道，不需要吃得太有營養，也不要吃得太壞，否則會弄垮了身體。

我最佩服的人，就是臺灣的水果和尚（廣欽老和尚），他既不貪財，也不貪色。人家給他果儀，他連看也不看，這不是一般凡夫俗子所能做到的。一般人放不下財，都視財如命；但他卻看得那麼輕鬆，也不看果儀包了有多少，放在一邊，誰願意拿就拿。

所以他有些徒弟就偷拿許多錢，然後偷跑還俗去。你說這樣他以後應該會管緊了錢吧？沒有，他還是管也不管，看也不看，你說這老人的定力有多高！他只吃水果、花生，不吃有味的食物，他不入色聲香味觸法，而證得初果。他修行很有感應的，時常保護著臺灣，有些人認識他，但也有人認識他的德行，反而罵他是啞羊僧。他因為年邁身體不好，所以現在就吃點粥了，可是有人就開始呱呱叫，以為他要墮落了。其實他們的觀點是錯誤的，人家吃不吃粥是他的事，怎麼可以管那麼多！如果人人修行都像這位老人那麼不貪不染，那麼佛教一定會發揚光大，正法一定會常住在世。這位老人是我最歡喜的老同參，也可說我們是志同道合。

在萬佛聖城，你不能說我們每一樣都是對的，都是佛法，但我們願意依教奉行，依照佛法去做。所以萬佛聖城所有的人，不注重吃好東西，或穿好衣服，或住好的地方，只要能維持四大假合的身體，能活著就可以了。我們所需要的是法，是無上法味，所以每天在萬佛聖城都講經說法。

*When cold and hungry, one considers stealing.*

When well-fed and well-clothed, men think about women and women think about men. It's always the same old thing. When one is poor, one thinks about stealing. One gorges oneself on rich food until one is overweight, and then entertains thoughts of lust. But first, people have the desire for food. They wish to eat delicious food that keeps their bodies strong and healthy. If they eat less than their fill, they aren't satisfied. If they eat too much, lust arises and they plunge headlong into the pursuit of sex, sometimes even at the risk of their own lives. Therefore, food and sex are inseparable. If ignorance didn't have the accomplices of food and sex, it wouldn't act up so much.

For left-home people, the less rich the food is, the better. Food should not be regarded as too important. A cultivator should practice moderation and eat only enough to sustain himself. We should neither eat very rich food, nor eat spoiled food, for either one could ruin our health.

I really admire the Fruit Monk [Elder Master Guangqin] in Taiwan. He is not greedy for money or for sensual pleasures. He doesn't even look at the offerings people make to him. Ordinary people are so attached to wealth that they value it more than life itself. But this monk is so unconcerned about wealth that he doesn't even check to see how much money the offerings contain. He just puts the offerings aside, and anyone can take them.

Some of the Fruit Monk's disciples stole quite a sum of money from him, and then sneaked away and returned to lay-life. You'd expect him to watch his money more closely after that, but he doesn't. He still doesn't bother to keep track of, or even look at his offerings. How great would you say this old cultivator's samadhi power is? He used to eat only fruit and peanuts and never ate seasoned food. He detached himself from sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, and dharmas, and he attained the first stage of Arhatship. He has had many miraculous responses in his cultivation, and Taiwan is under his constant protection. Some recognize what kind of person he is, but others don't see his virtue and criticize him for being a "mute monk." Since he is now quite old and not as healthy as before, he occasionally eats a little porridge. Some people criticize him for this and say he will fall. Actually, their attitude is wrong. Why should they meddle in his affairs? Whether or not he eats porridge is his own business. If every cultivator could be as unselfish and undefiled as this elder monk, Buddhism would surely flourish and the Proper Dharma would prevail in the world. This old monk is my favorite fellow cultivator. He and I have the same aspirations and travel the same path.

We can't say that we do everything right at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, but we do try to follow the Buddhadharma and practice the teachings. People at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas don't think it's so very important to eat delicious food, wear fine clothes, or live in a fancy place. We are satisfied if we can sustain our bodies, which are temporary aggregates of the four elements anyway. What we really need is the supreme flavor of the Dharma. That's why sutra lectures and Dharma talks are held daily at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.