



# 念佛法要

## *The Essentials of Reciting Buddha's Name*

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正在打佛七，就來談談念佛。念佛，雖然好像很簡單，但多半我們都太輕視了，所以念得都不是很好。念佛，第一先要息想定慮；要停止一切的妄想，還有狂想、不必要的想，不向外追求。那聰明的人就想了，「哎！我來發明什麼東西來賺大錢。」或者是想，要怎麼樣來一個比較快的方法，來獲得什麼；或者用一個快的方法來修行。這種種的妄想，應該要停止。

因為既然學佛了，明白一切都是從妄想生出來的，都不是真實的。只要安在我們自己的。只要安在我們自己的本分上——我們的工作，我們的生活是很正常的生活，那就安在本分上了，努力讓自己的生活平穩。這樣子，如果你還有多餘的時間，還可以多多地念佛。

不要有太多的憂慮，一件事不要翻來覆去地想這麼久。所發生的任何事情都要勇敢面對，因為都是自己的業緣嘛。但是在面對的時候，要用很平靜的心來面對，很理智地來處理。有了很平靜的心，不向外追求很多的緣，心就安靜了，要念佛，就比較容易。

還有，在念佛的時候，我們也不很快，也不很慢，配合呼吸，這樣子徐徐地念。心平氣和，那聲跟著心，心也隨著聲音；藉著聲音我們來攝心。在念佛當中，應很清清楚楚地，念念分明；這樣念久了，自然妄想就少了，心就很清淨。

念佛法門就是以佛號來對治我們的妄想，所以，如果心不在佛號上了，那就失去了正念。我們的心跟意，就像猴子跟馬——心猿意馬；我們要用佛號，佛號像柱子，把這個猴子跟馬，綁在這個柱子上，不要讓牠跑掉。所以要

Because we're doing the Buddha recitation session, I will talk about reciting the Buddha's name. Reciting the Buddha's name seems very easy so we usually do not take it seriously and don't do a good job. At the minimum, when we recite the Buddha's name, we need to stop all false and crazy thoughts; we shouldn't really have any thoughts -- and don't seek outside. Smart people will think about how to strike it rich, come up with a fast way to obtain something, or find a fast method to cultivate. All these kinds of false thoughts should be stopped.

Since we study the Buddhadharma, we've learned everything comes from our false thoughts; all of them are not real. We should fulfill our responsibilities in our work. We should live a normal life and apply effort to make our lives stable. When we have extra time, we can recite the Buddha's name more often.

We shouldn't have too many worries and shouldn't go back and forth in things we do. We should be brave in facing our problems because everything is from our karmic conditions. We should use a calm state of mind and reasoning to handle things. If your mind is calm and you don't seek outside, it will be easier to recite the Buddha's name.

When we recite the Buddha's name, we shouldn't recite too fast or too slow. It should be coordinated with our breathing. When we recite the Buddha's name, our mind should be calm and our breathing should be stable so that the mind will follow the sound, and the sound will follow our mind. When reciting, our mind should be clear. When we have been practicing it for a long time, we will have less false thinking and our mind will become pure.

The Buddha's name recitation is used to counter our false thoughts. If our mind doesn't dwell on the Buddha's name, then we've lost the proper thought. Our mind and consciousness is like a monkey and a horse. The Buddha's name is like a pole to which we tie the monkey and horse, so they don't run wild. We should have faith when we recite the Buddha's name. With faith and concentration, we should always recite the Buddha's name

有信心，信心要強一點，專心來念，常常念，時時念，天天念；這樣子變成習慣，善根才能夠堅固起來。

在平常就訓練自己，走路的時候，一步一步這樣子，就是念佛。然後，或者很靜的時候，你的呼吸也可以這樣子來念佛。或者比較安靜的時候，可以聽到心跳，那你也可以這樣子來念佛。任何時間，不要放棄；雖然小小的時間，你都不放棄，隨時隨地就把這個佛號，看能夠提多少，就盡量提起來。

再要把念佛法門做好，必須要離開生死的根本，就是愛；要把這個愛，轉成慈悲。這兩種有什麼分別呢？

愛就有一種相對，是相對法；就是說我對你好，你要對我好，起這種佔有的心。有了愛就有取；取，就取為我所有。我所有以後，你就擔心了：「哎呀！會不會失去？」這樣子，心就不能安穩，就有所憂愁恐懼。

慈悲，是智慧的，內心充滿喜悅與平靜。我們希望人人都很平安，得到解脫，對人好並不希望有所回報；所以說也不憂不懼的，能夠隨時隨地內心充滿了喜悅與平靜，隨時努力增長自己的慈悲與智慧。

大德告誡我們，想要把念佛念好，想要息想定慮，平常生活要明白我們的喜怒、好惡、嗜欲。這些都是情，會讓我們起很多的妄想，跟造惡。「養情為惡，縱情為賊，折情為善，滅情為聖。」如果不能把世情看淡了，那我們就被綁住了，不能夠得到解脫；最主要就是這個內心，我們對這個世界就有所眷戀，所以不容易出離。

什麼叫做養情呢？「甘其飲食，美其衣服，大其居處」，都是讓自己覺得非常舒服歡喜的，就是把快樂建立在外境上。對境起執著心；如果境滅的時候，那苦馬上就到了，所以養情是為惡。因為這個養情，在不知不覺當中，就沒有辦法離開，因為你的心起了執著。所以說，這個境有所改變的時候，你就不能接受了。

什麼是縱情呢？「飲食若流，衣服盡飾，居處無厭」；就是追求這種欲望，不能節制這個歡欲的。所以說這就像賊一樣，把法財統統劫走了，命終之後就必定墮落，墮到三途去。

再來就是折情為善。「犯之不較，觸之不怒，傷之不怨，是謂折情。」就是能夠包容別人，自己的內心就很寬廣平靜；這樣子必定能召感吉祥，消災免難。

and recite it daily. This will turn into a good habit that will make our good roots strong.

We should train ourselves that when we walk, with every step we recite the Buddha's name. Or when we're calm, we can use our breathing to recite the Buddha's name. Or even when it's very quiet, to the point that we can hear our own heartbeat, we can use that to recite the Buddha's name. In any place and time, even though it may be short, we should take the opportunity to recite the Buddha's name.

If we want to do a good job in this dharma practice, we need to leave the root of birth and death, which is love. We should turn emotional love into compassion. What's the difference between the two?

Basically, love has a concept of duality. If I treat you well, you should treat me well too. When we have this kind of mindset, then we will want to own or possess something. When we love something, we want to grasp it, so that it belongs to "me." After possessing it, you will have worries: "Sigh, will I lose it?" Because of that, our mind can not stay calm and will be worried and scared.

Compassion isn't dual. It has wisdom. It is full of happiness and calmness. We hope that everyone is peaceful and attain liberation, so when we treat people nicely, we don't want them to reciprocate.

That way, there won't be any worries or fears, and we are full of happiness and are calm. We need try to grow our compassion and wisdom at any moment.

People of great virtue advised us that if we want to recite the Buddha's name in an effective way and if we want to stop our false thoughts and calm our minds, we should contemplate what we like and don't like, and our desires. We should understand these are all emotions, which will cause us to entertain more false thoughts and do evil deeds. A saying goes, "To nourish emotion is evil. To indulge in emotion is thievery. To subdue emotion is wholesome. To extinguish emotion is being a sage." If we cannot let go of worldly attachments, we'll be tied down and cannot gain liberation. We are reluctant to let go of things in the world, so it's hard to be liberated.

What does "nourishing emotion" mean? It means seeking good food, beautiful clothes and a big house. These things give us comfort and happiness and we learn that these things give us extrinsic happiness. When these external things are gone, suffering comes. So that's why it is said, "To nourish emotion is evil." When we nourish our emotion like that without realizing it, we cannot relinquish these states of beings because we get attached. When these states change, we may not be able to accept it.

What is "indulging in emotion"? It means eating and drinking

滅情為聖就是「犯之觸之，傷之如空。反生憐憫，愚癡之心。」起大悲心，能夠救度眾生；這些是大德告訴我們的。

因為情，就是煩惱，會讓你起很多的煩惱；當然，妄想就更多了。如果能夠一方面念佛，一方面在自己的生活上，稍微注意，不要被這些情干擾，那麼在念佛上，會比較容易一點。

既然來參加佛七，我們暫時把一些事情放下，在佛殿裡就專心念佛，不打妄想，告訴自己，現在是念佛的時間，不要想其他的事。

念佛往生，心都要很平靜的；你在往生前不能很平靜，根本沒辦法往生的。我現在講修無法師的故事。

他是清朝末年遼寧營口人，以前以磚瓦匠為業，就是蓋房子的磚瓦匠；感覺到世間的事就是無常，戰爭非常多，所以覺得很苦，因此就出家。因為這個念佛法門是很寬廣的，不管哪一個根基的人都可以。出家之後，他專修淨土，很用功念佛。民國十八年，哈爾濱極樂寺要傳三壇大戒；這位法師，來極樂寺跟方丈和尚說，我願意替病人服務。經過十天之後他就來告假，說要往生了；當時道場派人到寮房來助念。助念的人就說：「修無法師，你要往生了，請留一個偈頌給我們做紀念吧！」他說：「我又不識字，不會作什麼偈頌；不過有一個紀念語句給你們——『能說不能行，不是真智慧。』」講完之後，他就很安詳地坐著往生了。

這個故事讓我們清楚地知道，學佛一定要努力，懂多少就做多少。希望大家好好努力，早日成就佛道。



as if food and drink were flowing water; carelessly using any clothes we have, and expanding our home without satiation. When we seek for these desires, we won't be able to control ourselves. It is as if a thief has plundered our wealth, so we will surely fall into the three evil paths.

“Subduing emotion” means not minding when people do offensive things to us; when someone hits us, we're not angry; when we get hurt, we don't complain. This means that we can accept and tolerate people and have a calm mind. This way we can attract auspiciousness, quell disasters, and avert calamities.

“Extinguishing emotion” is being a sage. When someone offends, hits, or hurts us, we treat it like emptiness. We turn it around and give rise to compassion and pity for their ignorance. With great compassion, we can save living beings. This is what the people of great virtue told us.

Emotion is a type of affliction that generates many false thoughts. If we recite the Buddha's name, we should pay attention to these aspects of life. We shouldn't let emotions disturb us. If we can pay attention to our emotions, then it will be easier for us to practice.

Since we're participating in this session, we should let go of everything, concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name, and not entertain false thoughts. We should tell ourselves that it is time to recite the Buddha's name and not let other things disturb us.

Basically, if we want to be reborn in the Pure Land, our mind has to be very calm. If we aren't calm, there's no way of being reborn there. I will tell you a story about Dharma Master Xiu Wu.

This was at the end of the Qing dynasty, in Liaoning province. Dharma Master Xiu Wu was a native of Yingkou and worked as a bricklayer. At that time war was happening, and he felt that the world was impermanent and filled with suffering. He left home and practiced the Pure Land dharma practice. Because the Pure Land dharma practice is vast, it embraces people with any potentials. He was diligent in reciting the Buddha's name. In 1929 in Harbin at Ultimate Bliss Monastery, the monks were transmitting the Threefold Platform precepts. This Dharma Master went to the monastery and told the abbot that he would like to serve the sick. He worked for ten days and then he asked if he could leave, as he was going to be reborn in the Pure Land. People were sent to his room to recite and they asked him to leave a verse to remember him by. He told them, “I am illiterate and don't know how to compose verses. However, I can tell you something from my experience: ‘If you cannot walk your talk, it's not true wisdom.’” After he spoke those words, he sat there and peacefully departed.

When we study the Buddhadharma, we must work hard. However much we know, we should put that much into practice. I hope everyone will work hard and realize Buddhahood soon.