

Lighting Up the Dharm Joy Inside

開敷內心的法喜

A talk by Brooks Hansard at Buddha Hall of CTTB on August 20th, 2012

Chinese Translation by Lan Huang

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黃藍 中譯



BODHI FIELD | 菩提田



Good evening all good and wise advisors. Amitofo! This evening I would like to talk about a wholesome quality of mind that I think is an important aspect of the Path—Dharma joy. A few weeks ago I learned an interesting fact when talking to a Bhikshu here at CTTB. I learned that in the Southern Buddhist tradition there are some who believe that a Buddhist practitioner will not create merit when practicing a Dharma-door unless if he or she also gives rise to joy in response to that practice. What I found interesting about that view is the great importance that it places on Dharma joy. In that sense, I can certainly agree with such a standpoint. I think a mind that produces joy while cultivating a Buddhist practice gives rise to much more merit and virtue than a mind that is merely going through the motions in a state of indifference to the practice.

There are several benefits that I see that derive from establishing Dharma joy in one's mind due to one's own practice or due to rejoicing in others' merit and virtue. First of all, Dharma joy can cool and moisten our minds during intense practice. If our minds give rise to Dharma joy in response to our practice, then that Dharma joy can act as cool, sweet dew that can nourish our minds by making them soft, moist, flexible, and pliant, full of youthful energy and vivacity.

Moreover, I believe Dharma joy is a necessary requirement for those who want to stay vigorous on the Path for many years. Perhaps a person can stay vigorous on the Path for two or three years relying on sheer will-power and strong resolve alone. However, I feel like such vigorous practice cannot be maintained over the long run if the practitioner isn't also relying on the beneficial effects of Dharma joy. Dharma joy keeps us inspired and motivated, as we look forward to our next opportunity to cultivate.

Rejoicing in others' merit and virtue is also very beneficial. For one, it helps to stop jealousy from arising in the mind. When we are living and cultivating amongst many sincere practitioners, we encounter lots of people finding success in their practice. Rather than getting jealous at their accomplishments, we can instead cultivate wholesome dharmas by rejoicing in their achievements and aspiring to someday emulate them ourselves.

各位善知識，大家晚上好。阿彌陀佛！今晚我想和大家分享一種良好的品質，也是修行路上很重要的一個方面，就是法喜。幾週前，我在與一位聖城法師的交談中聽到一件有趣的事。原來，在南傳佛教裡，有的人相信，一個修行人如果在修行一個法門的時候沒有產生喜悅，他是沒有得到什麼功德的。我覺得這個觀點有趣的地方在於，它把法喜放在一個很重要的位置。從這一點來講，我也有同感。我覺得在修行的時候，一顆有法喜的心，比一顆對修行比較冷淡的心，獲得的功德更大。

因為自己的修行，或者隨喜他人的功德而產生的法喜有以下幾種利益。首先，在高強度修行的時候，法喜可以滋潤清涼我們的心田。如果我們的心因為修行而產生法喜，那麼它就能像甘露一樣，滋養我們的心，讓我們的心變得更柔軟、滋潤、靈活，充滿了青春的能量和活力。

第二，我相信法喜是長期精進者修道的必要條件。如果僅僅憑著意志力和強大的決心，一個人也許可以堅持精進修行兩三年。但是，我覺得，如果這個修行人沒有借助法喜的利益，這樣精進的修行可能沒有辦法持續很長時間。法喜時時啟迪著我們，激勵著我們，讓我們期待下一次修行的機會。

隨喜他人的功德也是非常有益的，它可以防止我們嫉妒心的升起。當我們和很多真正的修行人住在一起，一起修行時，會遇到很多在修行上有所成就的人。我們不要去嫉妒他們的成就，我們其實可以通過隨喜他們的成就來修習

There is no doubt that rejoicing in others' merit is a valuable practice, because Universal Worthy Bodhisattva teaches the importance of sympathetic joy by including it as the fifth vow of his 10 Great Vows.

I'd like to share with you a first-hand experience I had with this a few weeks ago. During Morning Ceremony I started contemplating our Way Place here at CTTB. I contemplated how in today's age it's very difficult to encounter a Sangha that places high importance on the *Pratimoksha* and the precepts, and how difficult it is to encounter a lineage of an enlightened master who places great importance on virtue. I contemplated how I have been very blessed to encounter such a Sangha and to live amongst such good and wholesome friends who can inspire me on the Path. I then contemplated the pure lifestyle of the Dharma Masters here and while contemplating that purity, great joy arose in my mind, as I thought, "Wow, this is wonderful! How rare!" For the rest of the Morning Ceremony my mind single-pointedly contemplated that thought, and the joy never ceased. I then returned to my room and meditated for one hour. During the walk back to my room and during that one hour sit, I continued to rejoice in the merit and virtue of the pure lifestyle of the Dharma Masters here. During that meditation my mind became the most pacified and free of afflictions that it has ever been. After I got up from the sit, I contemplated how Universal Worthy gives great importance to rejoicing in others' merit and virtue and I realized that I had just seen first-hand why that is considered to be such a powerful practice.

Another way in which rejoicing in others' merit can benefit us on the Path is through applying it in a very expedient way, which I learned from reading the teachings of Nagarjuna Bodhisattva. In *the Mahaprajnaparamita Shastra*, Nagarjuna explains how, if a Bodhisattva expediently combines the practice of sympathetic joy with the practices of transference of merit and prajna paramita, his or her merit will surpass even the merit of the person whose action the Bodhisattva is rejoicing in.

I will first give his definition of sympathetic joy, or as we call it here at CTTB, rejoicing in others' merit and virtue. He says: Here is an example of sympathetic joy. Someone is practicing the qualities of enlightenment, such as generosity, morality, dhyana, etc.; a spectator rejoices in it and congratulates him, saying: "That is good; in this impermanent world enveloped in the shadows of ignorance, you are strengthening the great mind of bodhi and you are planting this merit." Nagarjuna goes on to say:

善法，並且發願將來要效仿他們。

毫無疑問，隨喜他人的功德是非常好的修行方法，因為普賢菩薩曾經在十大願王裡講到隨喜的重要性，他把它列為第五大願。

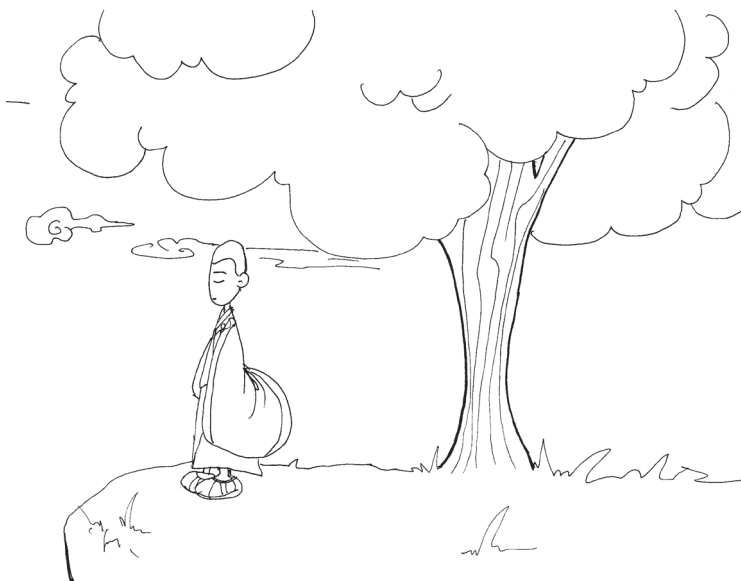
我跟大家分享幾週前的一次親身經歷。那天做早課的時候，我開始思惟我們萬佛聖城這個道場。我思惟著在這個時代，很難遇到這樣一個僧團，如此重視波羅提木叉和持戒，也很難遇到如此重視道德的，而且是一個已經開悟的法師的法脈。我思惟著我是有多大的福報才

能遇到這樣一個僧團，還能與一群在修行路上時時激勵我的益友們住在一起。然後我思惟著這裡的法師過著很清靜的生活。當我思惟著這清靜時，我想到，「天啊，這真的太棒了！太稀有了！」這時我心裡產生了很大的法喜。接下來的早課時間裡，我一心如此思惟，而法喜也持續著。然後我

回到房間打坐了一個小時。在我走回房間的路上，在我打坐的時候，我繼續隨喜法師們過著清靜生活的功德。打坐的時候，我的心從未如此平靜，遠離煩惱。當我起身的時候，我思惟著普賢菩薩如何強調隨喜功德的重要性，我才意識到剛才的親身經歷讓我明白了為什麼這種修行方法被認為是如此有力。

我從龍樹菩薩的教導裡學到，隨喜功德還可以通過一種善巧的方式來利益我們。龍樹菩薩所著的《大智度論》裡講到，如果一位菩薩能善巧地將隨喜、功德迴向和般若波羅蜜的修行結合起來，他的功德甚至會超過他所隨喜功德的那個人。

我先給出他對隨喜的定義，也就是我們在聖城講的隨喜他人的功德。龍樹菩薩說：「隨喜名有人作功德，見者心隨歡喜，讚言：善哉！在無常世界中，為癡闇所蔽，能宏大心，建



Imagine there is a seller and a purchaser of all sorts of wonderful perfumes; a third person comes near and stands to one side. He also breathes the perfumed air; the perfume, nevertheless, does not diminish at all and the two people doing business lose nothing. Imagine also a donor and a recipient of the donation; a third person, standing beside them, is joyful in the good action. He rejoices with them, but the other two lose nothing. Such is the characteristic of sympathetic joy.

Nagarjuna then explains how a Bodhisattva can use sympathetic joy to surpass a Sravaka's or Pratyekabuddha's qualities of enlightenment if he or she also practices the perfection of wisdom. He says: The bodhisattva-mahāsattva who, by a thought of sympathetic joy, wishes to surpass the generosity of all the úrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, must practice the perfection of wisdom. The bodhisattva-mahāsattva who, by a thought of sympathetic joy, wishes to surpass the morality of the úrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas must practice the perfection of wisdom. .

He also explains how a Bodhisattva can combine sympathetic joy with the transference of merit to become a great disciple of the Buddha. He says: “By means of a simple mind of sympathetic joy in regard to the virtuous qualities of another, the bodhisattva gains merit infinitely superior to the merit of all other beings, for he transfers this merit to anuttarasamyaksambodhi. Taking delight in the virtuous qualities of another and transferring the merit to anuttarāsamyaksambodhi places the bodhisattva in the first rank of the Buddha's disciples.”

He then goes on to state a potential question that someone could ask, which is: “How can the bodhisattva, by means of a mind of sympathetic joy, surpass the úrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who, themselves, are the ones involved in giving?” Here is Nagarjuna's answer: “While the úrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are making such gifts, the bodhisattva who is standing by, notices them. He thinks about it carefully, is pleased thereby and congratulates the authors of those actions. Taking the merit resulting from this sympathetic joy, he then transfers it to anuttarasamyaksambodhi. Thus he gains immense Buddha attributes. By means of the twofold merit of sympathetic joy and the transference of merit, he surpasses the generosity carried out by the úrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Furthermore, by means of his knowledge of the emptiness of dharmas and his sympathetic joy, the bodhisattva surpasses the generosity of the úrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.” Nagarjuna goes on to say: “What has been said here about generosity is also true for the other qualities of enlightenment of the úrāvaka: By means of a single thought of sympathetic joy, the bodhisattva surpasses all such qualities.”

Finally, Nagarjuna says: “The úrāvaka and pratyekabuddha adepts are diligent and struggle to practice the qualities of enlightenment; the bodhisattva, on the other hand, is silent, but by his sympathetic joy and the power of his wisdom, his merits surpass those of the former.” “ Thus, just by a mind of sympathetic joy, the bodhisattva surpasses the practitioners of the two Vehicles. What more could be said if he himself also practices the qualities in which he is rejoicing?”

In conclusion, Dharma joy is an invaluable asset for someone walking the Buddhist Path. My Dharma name is Chin Xi, which means “Drawing Near to Joy.” Therefore, I hope all living beings will join me in drawing near to Dharma joy and thereby diligently progress on the Bodhisattva Path. Amitofo! ❀

此福德！譬如種種妙香，一人賣，一人買，傍人在邊亦得香氣，於香無損，二主無失。如是有人行施，有人受者，有人在邊隨喜，功德俱得，二主不失。如是相名為隨喜。」

接下來龍樹菩薩解釋說，如果一位菩薩修習般若波羅蜜，他如何通過隨喜而超越聲聞或辟支佛證悟的境界。他說：「一切求聲聞、辟支佛人佈施時，欲以隨喜心過其上者，當學般若波羅蜜！一切求聲聞、辟支佛人持戒時，欲以隨喜心過其上者，當學般若波羅蜜！」

他也講到一位菩薩可以把隨喜和功德迴向結合起來，這樣他就成為第一等的佛弟子。他說：「只是生起了一念隨喜功德的心，隨喜別人的美德，這位菩薩他會得到遠遠超越所有眾生所得的勝妙功德，因為他把功德迴向給阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。因為他隨喜他人的美德，並把這功德迴向給阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，所以這位菩薩可以說是第一等的佛弟子。」

接著，他假設有人問：「菩薩云何能以隨喜心過聲聞、辟支佛人以財佈施上？」他回答說：「聲聞、辟支佛行是佈施，菩薩於傍見之，一心念隨喜，讚言：善哉！以此隨喜福德，回向阿耨多羅三藐三菩提；為度一切眾生故，以此為得無量佛法故，以二種功德，過求聲聞、辟支佛人所行佈施上。復次，以諸法實相智慧心隨喜故，過求聲聞、辟支佛人佈施上。」他接著又說：「持戒、三昧、智慧、解脫、解脫知見，亦如是。」

最後，龍樹菩薩說：「求聲聞辟支佛人，勤身作功德疲勞；菩薩默然隨喜，智慧力福德過其上。」「以是故，菩薩但以隨喜心，過於求二乘人上，何況自行！」

所以說，法喜是修行人寶貴的財富。我的法名叫「親喜」，意思是「親近喜悅」。所以，我希望一切眾生都和我一樣能夠親近法喜，從而能在菩薩道上不斷地精進。阿彌陀佛！ ❀