



Eternal Teachings from an Eternal Master (continued)

永恆的師父 永恆的教誨 (續)

背景資料：

這段採訪在紐約長島家中錄製，
由Richard Josephson（前恒空法師）採訪。
陳果璞、陳姍姍、安果毅整理。

Background information:

This interview was recorded at Fred Klarer's house
in Long Island, New York.

Interview conducted by Richard Josephson (former DM Heng Kong)
and compiled by Yvonne Chen, Xan Schmickel, Michael An.



BODHI FIELD | 菩提田

Interviewer: Who did all the cooking there?

Gwo Hu: Gwo Fa was the designated cook. Gwo Fa and I took refuge at the same time. Shrfu gave me the name of 'Hu' which means 'Protecting', and named him as 'Fa' which means 'Dharma', so together we were the Dharma protecting guardians.

However, Gwo Fa did not earn the reputation of being a good cook. His cooking was mediocre at best, more accurately his food could be described as bland and unexciting. At times, it was also undercooked or partially baked. In other words, each dish was practically tasteless and unappetizing. This was a shock for us as middle class American kids, who grew up with a refrigerator filled with goodies, to suddenly face such shortage of food or being deprived of it. But since Shrfu did not complain so our opinion would not make a difference or matter anyway. Regardless, I still praised Gwo Fa for doing all the cooking for us, though

採訪人：那時是誰煮飯？

果護：果法是我們的廚師。我們是一起三皈依，所以他的法名叫果法，我的法名叫果護，就是「護法」，一起護法。

然而果法並未獲得好廚師的名聲，他的烹飪不過如此；更確切的說他所做的飯菜是單調與無味的，有時，飯菜還做得不熟；換句話說，每道菜都無味並讓人倒胃口。我們很震驚，尤其對於我們這些在衣食無憂環境裡長大的美國中產階級的孩子，突然要來面對這樣的食物短缺。但是因為師父沒有抱怨，所以我們的看法並未產生任何影響，或使狀況改善。不管怎樣，我還是讚揚果法為我們做飯。儘管他所做的飯菜往往低於我們的預期，師父仍然讓他為我們做飯。他每天辛勤地在我們身上練習他的廚藝法門。最後我們

constantly, the food was below expectation. Shrfu still entrusted him to feed us and he diligently practiced this food Dharma on us every day in the same consistent way. Finally, we gave in, came to accept him and the food he made. As far as our hope for a good meal, we entirely relied on the compassion of some elderly Chinese ladies who, whenever they came on weekends, would take over the kitchen and treated us with real monastery meals.

But hold on, that was not all the problems. Cooking was not the only issue that we were not very good at; it became obvious to me that none of us were good at much of anything else. Heng Shou was busy with some assignments from Shrfu and the remaining staff, consisting of only two monks, found themselves with all the responsibilities to handle the rest of the work in that household. As we were very inexperienced and disorganized, the atmosphere was chaotic to say the least.

In terms of our daily homework, Shrfu was strict and started us from the ground up with a full monastic schedule without any breaks or exceptions. We had to do things right as if we were living in the monastery. For instance, we were unfamiliar with Romanized words yet we were required to memorize the complete *Shurangama Mantra*. These circumstances forced us to learn at every step of the way and things had to work like magic too; like you drop a seed, the expectation was for the seed to turn into a monastery immediately. The same applied to Shrfu's joking about my Chinese. Shrfu kept using Chinese with me, at the beginning I did not speak nor understood him, I said 'Shrfu, I don't understand Chinese' He looked at me and laughed. He laughed a lot. He laughed, then he paced, fidgeting, and say, 'I no speak Chinese.' He'd laugh and walk off. That was it. Eight months later, I was chatting with him in Chinese. We lived up to the saying of when there is a will, there is a way, or if you don't want to drown, you better learn to swim. Shrfu worked on our perseverance and trained us to be self-sufficient and great self-starters.

Interviewer: What were your lessons learned with Shrfu and how has the community impacted your life and relationship with your friends and family?

Gwo Hu: This is a loaded question. In summary, the Dharma had transformed my life and Shrfu's teaching had made me a better person. Shrfu once spoke to me in poem, and I thought that Shrfu specially dedicated the poem to me but I later found out that it was one of his earlier works. Let me say it here in Chinese:

*Everything is a test, To see what you will do.
If you do not recognize what is before your eyes,
You'll have to start anew.*

This was to me very profound teaching. Shrfu was patient and extremely optimistic about everyone. All he expected of us was to do things 'right' and there is no set limit as to the number of attempts to try so long as we get it right once and once it is right, we could then move onto something new. Among the great gifts

認輸了，開始接受他與他所做的食物。至於希望飽餐一頓，我們只能完全依靠那些慈悲的中國老年婦女，因為她們每到週末便會來這兒接管廚房，做一些真正的齋飯給我們吃。

但這並不是所有的問題，烹飪並不是唯一我們不擅長的地方。我明顯發現，我們當中並沒有人擅長任何事情。恆守忙於師父交給她的一些任務，剩下僅有的兩個和尚需要負責去處理其他的一切事情，但我們缺乏經驗與組織性，當時的氣氛可以說是混亂的。

在我們日常功課方面，師父對我們十分嚴格，我們起床後，便要開始按照安排緊湊的日程表做功課，而中間沒有任何休息。我們必須把事情做對，就像我們在寺廟中修行一樣。例如我們不熟悉羅馬拼音，卻被要求背過〈楞嚴咒〉，這些情形促使我們在修道路上的一步都要學習，完成事情要像變魔術那樣，就如您種下去的種子，結果即刻變成了一座寺廟。這同樣適用於師父取笑我的中文。師父一直對我講中國話，開始的時候，我既不會講也不懂他的意思。我對師父說：「師父，我不懂中文」，師父看著我並大笑起來，踱著步說：「I no speak Chinese」，之後他便笑著走開了，就這樣八個月以後，我便能用中文和他聊天了。我們在踐行「有志者事竟成」或者「如果你不想淹死，就得學會游泳」一類的箴言。上人在鍛煉我們的意志，訓練我們成為自給自足並能積極自立的人。

採訪人：你從師父那裡學到了什麼教導？這個團體如何影響了您的生活以及您和家人朋友的關係？

果護：這問題很深奧。總之，佛法改變了我的人生，師父的教導使我成為一個好人。師父曾經對我說過一首偈頌，我以為是專門寫給我的，不過後來我知道，那是他早期作品之一。我現在用中文來唸：

一切是考驗，看爾怎麼辦？
覲面若不識，須再從頭煉！

這是很深奧的教導，師父對每一個人都是具有耐心且非常樂觀的。他希望我們做對事情，你這次沒有做對，你再重新開始，一直做到你做對為止，一直這樣。你就是再從頭來，做到做對為止。然後我們才可以開始嘗試其他新的事情。上人偉大的天賦就是他的觀察能力，他能指出你的不足，然後告訴你如何去彌補，他鏗而不捨地使用這種方法。他強調：你就是只要做對一次就好。

那個時候我不喜歡禮拜，雖然我認為拜佛是很好

of Shrfu was his ability to observe, recognize your shortfalls, and show you the way to get it right. Shrfu was very persistent at this method, he emphasized that one time is all you need to get it right.

I used to dislike the practice of bowing, I recognized it is a great practice but I resisted doing it. Shrfu said to me: 'you just have to do it right once, that's just the way things are, keep at it until you get it right one time'. Failure was never the end result and has no place to be, it was a mere indicator or a hint for us to keep trying until we succeed.

This teaching was unpretentious in nature but for some of us, it was easier said than done for it could take a long time to get the simplest things right. Precisely for me, in the last forty four years, all I have been working was to try to get things right. In my mind, all the Buddhist concepts, fundamental teachings and the volumes of books available for study are great resources and very important, yet, they do not equate to having a mentor, a role model who could guide you, offered you advice, work with you, and help you to achieve the next level.

Among many lessons to be learned, one that is of great significance is the concept of our Buddha nature. Every single being will eventually become a Buddha in the end. Keep this thought in your mind and it will ultimately transform your life for the better.

Personally, I have found this thought to be very powerful and I consistently put it to practice over many, many years. It has the ability to ease or even suppress your anger. Whether the being is a person, a cat or a cockroach, you do not get into arguments with that being for the subject is in fact a Buddha to-be and will become a Buddha someday. Instead you find ways to compromise, become more accepting, and continue on with life.

I will give you a great teaching example of Shrfu. A few months ago, through the glass door, I saw a squirrel posing on the head of the Buddha statue in the front of our house. The squirrel was sitting perfectly in-line with the Buddha. There a thought came to mind, 'here is the Buddha, and here is the squirrel, is there any difference?' There is no difference, none that I can distinguish. The Buddha and the squirrel are one and the same. Both are beings with inherent Buddha nature. This conclusion is a very profound teaching of Shrfu. There are many available volumes of Buddhist literature which can turn someone into an expert in the field of Buddhism but Shrfu's method is not so much on academics but it emphasizes on the essence of things like 'what informs and transforms everything?' and that was Shrfu's special and powerful teaching. He went straight to the essence of things.

的法門，但我拒絕那樣做。上人就跟我說：「你只需要做對一次就好。無論哪種行持，你要堅持不懈地做，直到把它做對一次！」在修行的路上並沒有什麼叫失敗的，失敗對於我們來說只是一個要繼續嘗試直到成功的暗示而已。

這個教導是自然樸實的，但是對於我們某些人來說，這說起來容易，做起來卻很難，因為要花很



1969年佛教講堂

1969 the Buddha Lecture Hall

長時間才能把一件很簡單的事情做對。就我而言，過去的四十四年，我一直在做的就是努力把事情做對。在我的腦海中，所有佛教的概念、基本教義及論述，雖然是寶貴的資源並且很重要，但是它們並不能等同於擁有一位良師，或者一位可以指導您的榜樣，給您建議，和您在一起修行，並幫您達到新的層次。

在所學佛法中最具有意義的是對佛性的真正認識，每一位眾生皆堪作佛。記住了這點，它最終會使你的生活變得更好。

我個人覺得這個念頭非常有力，這麼多年來我都是這樣把它付諸實踐，它能緩解或抑制你憤怒的情緒。無論你遇到的是人、是貓、或是螳螂，你都不要去和他爭，因為事實上，那個爭論的對象本具佛性並最終會成佛；相反你去尋找和諧的方式去處理問題，這會使你在今後的生活變得更加包容。

講一個有關師父教導我們例子。幾個月前，我從房裏透過玻璃門向草地眺望，就看到有一隻松鼠，坐在我家前面那尊佛像的頭上，跟佛成一條線，所

I studied *the Commentary of the Avatamsaka Sutra* in my last two years of being a monk, and it was just so extraordinary to see how Shrfu was always able to illustrate this Buddha nature concept throughout his commentaries. He never missed any opportunity to point out that the Buddha nature can be attained instantly, right here, right now. Yet why have we not become Buddha by now, you ask? Shrfu will tell you, that the reason was our lack of attention, that we are not observant enough or have not paid close enough attention to who we are and what we are doing. To further confirm his point, he could rightly show you that some individuals among us were actual Buddhas, but since they were not concentrating in what they were doing, they were unfortunately unaware of the fact that they had already become Buddha. Then there are real Buddhas who did recognize themselves as such and their name was so and so. I was simply quite amazed by Shrfu's ability to identify and categorize these beings.

Interviewer: What was so special about Master Hua and what kept you going even after all these years of being separated from the teacher? What particular influences did he have on you to keep you continuing your practice till this day?

Gwo Hu: From the day I met him until today, I have never felt for a millisecond that I was separated from him.

Interviewer: What set Master Hua apart from other teachers?

Gwo Hu: I really cannot speak for other people.

Interviewer: From your own perspectives, what was that special quality, similar to a seed that never died, that you had for the Master?

Gwo Hu: I had absolute faith in him from the moment I saw him and that has not changed and it never will. Occasionally I did disagree with him about the way he wanted things done, but as far as his teaching, I had complete faith in his methods.

I can share with you one of my silly stories.

While living in New York, I went through some personal crisis and I started to form a series of dreams about Shrfu. So I decided to phone Him after not being in touch with him for seventeen years. Reverend Heng Sure answered the phone. I knew very little about Reverend Heng Sure, I believed he was still a layman then and just started to frequent the Gold Mountain monastery right around the time I moved to Hong Kong and to live in Ci Xing Monastery where I stayed for three years. Anyway, over the phone, I asked to speak with Shrfu and to inquire about his illness. Reverend Heng Sure kindly arranged a convenient time for me to have a conversation with the Master.



早期的弟子在翻譯《華嚴經》
Early disciple was translating
the Avatamsaka Sutra

以我當時看到那個景象就覺得，其實松鼠跟佛有什麼不一樣？都有佛性，有什麼不同？眾生都本具佛性，這是師父所教導的一個很深刻的道理。你可以通過學習研究很多的佛學著作、文獻，成為佛教領域的專家。但是，師父的方法並不是進行很多學術研究，而是強調事物的本質與精髓；例如是什麼在宣說、度化著一切？這就是師父與眾不同而深具力量的教法，他直指事物的精髓與本質。

在我出家生活的最後兩年，我每天研讀師父的《華嚴經淺釋》；其中特別的發現，就是師父無論講什麼內容從不偏離佛性這一概念。他總是利用各種機會指出眾生都可直達佛地，就在此處、此時。如果你問為什麼我們還沒有成佛，師父會回答你說，因為我們不注意，沒有足夠細心地充分注意到「我們是誰，我們在做什麼」。為了進一步證實他的

觀點，他會適機指出我們中的某些人以前就是佛，但是他們沒專注在當下，他們很不幸地沒能意識到自己曾經是佛的事實。真正的佛能夠認出自己是什麼，名字叫什麼等等。師父對眾生的認知與辨別能力令我很驚訝。

採訪人：你離開上人多年以來，上人的哪方面教導讓你印象深刻？哪些教導一直在影響著你繼續修行？

果護：從我遇到上人那天起，直到現在，乃至百萬分之一秒，我都沒有離開過上人。

採訪人：宣化上人跟其他的法師有什麼不同？

果護：我真的對其他的法師不瞭解。

採訪人：就您個人的經驗，上人有哪些特質如無法磨滅的種子一樣，使你一直沒有離開他的教導？

果護：從我遇到師父那天起，我就對師父具有百分之百的信心；這個信心從未改變，將來也不會改變。雖然有時我對師父所期望的完成某些事的方式持不同意見；但是，對師父的教導、他的教法，我從來沒有一點點任何的懷疑！

我可以講我的一個蠢事給大家聽。

當時，我住在紐約，那時我生活裏面有一些危機出現，我會夢到上人來我的夢中，夢境是一系列的。

I never really went through any formal training to study the Chinese language and I only learned to speak it from Shrfu since I had to converse with him back then. Reverend Heng Sure was the interpreter in that phone call.

Shrfu asked, “What prompted you to call me, I am still living and breathing, I have not died yet.” He giggled.

‘I heard that you were sick and would like to come and wish you well.’

‘I am not dead yet’. He repeated.

Would it be fine and appropriate that I discussed some personal matter with you?

Come out here and we will talk.

So I flew to California to see him.

I initially thought that Shrfu was at CTTB, but instead our meeting was in Burlingame where the BTTS is. I entered the building through the front door and started to sit on the floor, Shrfu asked me to sit next to him and Reverend Heng Sure on his other side to be our interpreter. Somehow, our conversation was totally in Chinese.

I had not practiced speaking Chinese since I left CTTB. Interestingly on that day, I spoke almost like a native and Shrfu and I chatted away. Occasionally, I asked Reverend Heng Sure for help on a few words but overall, I managed the conversation well, and Shrfu and I talked for a few hours.

Then Shrfu had a few errands he needed people to run, so I volunteered.

I had not seen Shrfu for about two decades but it felt like as if we were apart for only a few days. I never felt I left Shrfu and my feeling for him had not changed since day one. Though he is no longer physically with us and his body decayed like all bodies do, but that did not change a bit of who he was. I assure you he did not go to any place, he is still spiritually among us but just not available at this current moment. In point of fact, He just came to my dream a few months ago. So how far could he have gone? As precisely stated in the *Vajra Sutra*, ‘the Tathagatha has no place from whence he comes and no place to go, therefore He is called Thus Come’.

To all of us, it really matters not whether Shrfu is with us or away from us. We should still proceed along with his instructions left to us. We should be focusing on what we need to do and should not be shifting plans the moment he is not around. In fact, use that to test how you do on your own temptation to digress. Seriously I failed this test, I fell many times, but I stood up, and I kept trying again. In response to your question, I have never ceased practicing. This thought never came to mind.

☞ To be continued

我決定給在萬佛城的師父打電話，那時我們已經十七年沒有聯繫了。當時是實法師接的電話；我之前和他僅有數面之緣，那時他還是在家居士，他初來金山寺是在我去香港之前不久，我後來在香港大嶼山慈興寺待了近三年。我在電話裡問，是否可以和師父通話、並說我聽到師父生病了。他就約定了時間讓我和師父通話。

其實我從來都沒有正式學過講中文，只跟隨著師父接觸到中文而已。師父接了電話，實法師也在電話上幫我翻譯。

師父問我：「幹嘛給我打電話？我還沒死呢！哈哈！」

我說：「聽說您生病了，想來探望您，希望您快點康復。」

師父又重複了一次：「我還沒死呢！」

我接著說：「我有問題想要和您討論，是關於我生活上的，可以嗎？」

師父說：「過來吧！我們談談。」

我就乘飛機來加州。

起先，我認為師父在萬佛聖城，但我們是在柏林根的国际譯經學院見的面。那時候，我從前門進去，禮拜上人，就要坐下。師父說：「來、來！坐我旁邊。」當時實法師在師父的另一旁要幫我們翻譯，然後我們就開始談話——奇怪的是：完全用中文！

我離開萬佛城這麼多年都沒有講中文；那天奇怪的很，我幾乎就像一個中國人用中國話和師父聊天。偶爾，我會請實法師告訴我這個字怎麼講、那個字怎麼說。我們一談就好幾個小時。

當時師父也有事需要人做，我就自願幫忙。

將近二十年沒有看到師父了，可是感覺就好像只有幾天而已；我對師父的感受一直都是這樣，現在也是。我不覺得師父離開我們、到了哪裏去，雖然師父的色身現在不在這裏——但是我們每一個人色身都會死亡，都免不了老弱衰殘——但是不改變師父他是誰，我向你保證，他沒有去任何地方，他的精神仍然在我們中間，只是此刻暫時不在而已。就在幾個月前，我也才夢到他，他哪兒也沒有去嘛！如來、不來也不去。就像《金剛經》講的：「如來者，無所從來，亦無所去，故名如來。」

對我們所有人來說師父與我們在不在一起都沒關係，我們應該繼續按照師父的教導去做。我們應該專注在我們所應該做的功課，不應在師父離開的時候有所改變。那其實就是一個考驗，看你有沒有認真；而我大多不及格，跌倒、爬起、再來過。您之前問我關於停止修行，我從沒這種想法。

☞ 待續