

迴光返照觀自在

Shining the Light Within, Contemplating at Ease

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音之大者，譬之於海潮。又海潮無念，不違其時。與大悲之音聲，應時機而說法相似。故《法華經普門品》曰：「梵音海潮音。」

A magnificent sound, it is just like the tides. The tides are without thought and doesn't go against time. It is like the sound of great compassion which speaks the Dharma at every opportune moment. Hence, it is said in the Universal Door Chapter of the Lotus Sutra, "A pure sound, a sound like the sea tide."

During the recent Guanyin session, we had English discussions on *the Heart Sutra* every evening, so I want to discuss one line from the Venerable Master's verses in *the Heart Sutra*.

The Master's verse for *the Heart Sutra*'s first line begins, "Shining the light within; contemplating at ease." This is explaining the name of Avalokiteśvara, which Great Master Xuanzang translated as 觀自在 (*guan zi zai*), "contemplating at ease," although this Bodhisattva's name is more commonly translated as Guanshiyin, or "contemplating the sounds of the world." The Venerable Master says "Shining the light within" refers to looking inside to see if idle thoughts have arisen. How do we know? When somebody

上一個觀音七期間，每晚都有關於《心經》的英文討論，這裏我想和大家分享上人《心經非臺頌》裏的一句。

這是《心經非臺頌》裏的第一句，「迴光返照觀自在」，這一句是解釋觀世音菩薩的名字。雖然觀世音是較常見的翻譯，但是把它翻譯為「觀自在」。上人說，迴光返照就是往內看，看自己是不是在打妄想。怎麼知道我們有沒有打妄想呢？當有人對我不好的時候，如果我打個妄想「他對我不好」，那我就錯了。基本上，只要起一個念頭，任何的念頭，那就是錯了，因為當下已經離開了我們的自性。所以，觀自在就是觀自己在不在：我在這裏嗎？我在當下嗎？如果打妄想，我肯定不在，而是在別的地方，在過去，或者在未來。所以這裏把修行的方

mistreats us, if we think that somebody mistreated us, then we are wrong. Basically if we have a thought—any thought—we are already wrong because we have already abandoned our nature. “Contemplating at ease” means, literally, “contemplate self here (*zi zai*自在)”: contemplating: am I here? Am I present in this moment? Of course, when we are having idle thoughts, we are not here. We are somewhere else, maybe in the past or in the future. So this summarizes the cultivation method. We just look within and see if we have idle thoughts and if we are present.

Guanyin Bodhisattva also gives us a method that gives us something so we will not have so many idle thoughts. This method is to single-mindedly recite “Namo Guanshiyin Pusa” (Homage to Guanyin Bodhisattva) and to hold on to the name, to seize it with our minds, to recite it whole-heartedly as if we are calling up for help in a very desperate situation, and to listen to it single-mindedly as we recite. It is like dialing Guanyin’s number. Guanyin Bodhisattva’s method of awakening is to listen to his own nature so when we dial Guanyin’s number, we can connect to Guanyin Bodhisattva’s nature. Also, when we listen to ourselves reciting Guanyin Bodhisattva, we are basically listening to our own nature too, which is connected or is the same as Guanyin Bodhisattva’s nature. Then we can gradually realize that who we normally think we are, is false and limited. Our self-identity includes our name, where we were born, who our parents are, what culture, ethnic group, and nationality we belong to, our age and profession, our likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, our memories, and so on. This identity is actually a very limited sense of ourselves.

Usually people come to Buddhism because they feel a sense of dissatisfaction with their lives. Whether they have suffered greatly or have had very smooth lives even, they feel a sense of dissatisfaction because they are constraining themselves to identities that are much more limited than our true nature. Our true nature is like Guanyin Bodhisattva. It is unlimited in its wisdom, its compassion, its joy, its equality, its kindness and everything. It has all these meritorious qualities. However, failing to recognize and use this true nature, we have forgotten about it.

But there is a little voice inside that gives us this dissatisfied tone that says, you know, I am not satisfied with my life as a successful engineer or a happy parent of great kids. That’s not enough. Then we come here, and we learn how to recite, how to listen to our recitation, and how to connect with our nature. And we remember that we are ultimately like Guanyin Bodhisattva. Then we aspire to practice in order to change this habit of seeing our self as a small limited person, and in order to dig down deep and connect with our real nature.

We should remember that the goal of cultivation is to understand that our true nature is boundless, filled with vast wisdom, compassion, and all kinds of good qualities. And our identity as we think of ourselves is actually very limited and somewhat false. This is easy to say, but in daily life, we interact with many people who have their own perspectives and opinions, often disagreeing with ours. The important thing is not to assume that I am right and everyone

法講得很清楚，就是要往內觀，看看我們是否在打妄想，是否念茲在茲。

當然，觀音菩薩也給我們一個方法，讓我們可以少打妄想，這方法就是一心稱念「南無觀世音菩薩」，猶如身陷危難之中的殷切呼救，念念不空過。稱念觀世音菩薩的同時，還要聆聽自己稱念的聲音，就像給觀音菩薩打電話一樣。觀世音菩薩是通過反聞聞自性而悟道，所以當我們撥打觀世音菩薩的號碼時，我們就能與觀世音菩薩的自性接通。當聆聽自己稱念觀世音菩薩，也就像在聽聞我們的自性，因為我們的自性和觀世音菩薩的自性是彼此相通，沒有差別的。然後，慢慢地就能瞭解，原來那個平常所認為的「我」是假的，是有局限的。不論我們認為自己是誰，比如我叫什麼名字，我在哪裏出生，我的父母是誰，我屬於哪個文化，我的種族、國籍、年齡、職業、好惡、優缺點，我的記憶等等，這些都是我們的「我相」，是非常局限的。

人們走近佛法，通常是因為對生活感到不滿。不論是生活歷經苦難的人，或是生活一帆風順的人，都會有一種不滿足感。這是因為人們被有限的我相束縛住了，我相是無法與真正的自性相比。真正的自性就像觀世音菩薩一樣，具足無量的智慧、慈悲喜捨，擁有種種無量的功德；卻因為我們不認識它，不會善用它，因而被遺忘了。

雖然如此，內心裏依然有一個微弱的聲音，訴說著對生命的不滿，雖然已經是個成功的工程師，或者成功的父母，依然感到不滿足，依然感覺若有所失。於是我們來到這裏，學習持名稱念，學習聆聽自己稱念的音聲，學習與自性連接，想起最究竟之處我們和觀世音菩薩是一樣的。這樣我們就有了修行的動力，來改正自己的習氣，不再把自己認定為一個狹隘局限的「我」，並且繼續努力修行，直到照見真正的自性。

所以我們應該記住，修行的目的是要讓

else is wrong, not to take ourselves so seriously. Each person has their own causes and conditions and their own limited perspective makes sense in their own frame of reference. So if we can learn to be like Guanyin, to listen to everyone's sound, and to respect, hold, and embrace multiple perspectives without reacting when these perspectives don't agree with our own, then we can create a powerful sort of collective wisdom. But sometimes it is really hard to accept other people's ideas, especially when their idea opposes our view. They seem to be attacking our identity, undermining who we think we are, which can be painful and uncomfortable.

But from the point of view of cultivation, it is actually a good thing. We should regard those people as our wise mentors, because they are helping us to weaken our sense of self. Our sense of self, our identity, started forming early in childhood and colors our perception of everything. So if from a young age, we got the idea that we were not good enough, that maybe we were not loved as much as our brothers and sisters, then no matter how much our parents or other people try to love us, praise us or care for us now, we doubt their words and hear them in a way that reinforces our childhood self-image. So instead of appreciating their love and care, we hear their words as criticism. It gives us a reason to continue to feel unloved and uncared for. Or maybe as a child, we were put in a scary situation and lost our confidence. So no matter how accomplished or strong we are now in our career or social status, we still feel nervous and insecure.

In cultivation, we are trying to dig deep and uncover not only our Buddha nature, but also where our childhood narrative came from, so that we can understand and overcome it. Some of the seeds planted in our consciousness in childhood may not have been so positive. But now by reciting Guanyin, we plant positive seeds that affirm our Buddha nature, which is fearless and all-encompassing. And we also learn how to clear our mind of idle thoughts so that it becomes calm and pure, and no longer reacts when people seem to be attacking our view of self. We realize that the view of self is false anyways.

As a community we are bound to have many different perspectives, and this is really a good thing not only for our own cultivation, but for the whole group. It is healthy to embrace diverse perspectives because then we can better understand each situation. For example, in the school, we have to decide which students to admit, which teachers to hire or recruit, and so forth. Some people are very compassionate and wish to accept and help every student and volunteer who wishes to come. That is a commendable Bodhisattva attitude. However, as an institution, we also have rules, standards and practical needs, and sometimes we are not able to help every single person right away. There may be people

我們明白，真正的自性是無量無邊的，具足無量的智慧，慈悲以及種種功德。而我們腦中的我相，實際上是非常局限的，是假的。然而，說起來容易，做起來難。日常生活裏跟人相處，大家可能都有不同的意見，不同的看法，每一個人的觀點都是有限的。所以我們不可以覺得我一定是對的，其他人是錯的，不要把自己看得太重要。因為每個人的觀點、知見的產生，都有他個人的因緣，所以站在他的角度來看，他是對的。如果我們可以學習觀音菩薩，學著去聆聽每個人的聲音，去尊重、了解、接納不同的觀點，而不是直接去反對不同的意見。包容，我們才能集思廣益。當然，有時候接納他人意見真的很難，特別是當別人的想法和我們的觀點相反的時候。因為這是直接挑戰我們的我相，試圖瓦解我們的自我意識。所以我們會感覺很痛苦，很不舒服。

但是從修行的角度來看，這其實是好事。我們應該把這些人當作善知識，因為他們在幫助我們去除我執。「自我」在我們很小的時候就開始形成了，它影響著我們對所有事物的看法。比如說，如果很小的時候就覺得自己不夠好，覺得父母愛我們不像愛其他兄弟姐妹那麼多，那麼不論父母親如何盡力來愛我們，表揚我們，關心我們，我們都會懷疑他們說的話，或者用一種加強我們童年的自我形象的方式來解讀。於是，不但無法感激他們的愛與關懷，反而會覺得他們處處都在批評自己，然後我們就不斷地覺得自己是不被疼愛和關心。或者小時候曾經被棄置在害怕的環境中，喪失自信心，那麼當我們長大以後，不論事業上多麼有成就或者社會地位多高，我們還是感到緊張，沒有安全感。

所以修行的過程中，我們不僅要努力發掘我們的佛性，也包括發掘兒時形成的我相、我見到底是從哪裏來的，這樣才能瞭解並且去克服它。這些兒時埋在意識裏的種子，有些可能是負面的；但是現在誦持觀世音菩薩的聖號，我們種下了正面的種子，來增益我們無畏而圓融的佛性。同時，我們也學習去除心裏的妄想，使內心變得安定、清淨；當別人來攻擊我們的我相時，我們就不會反應，因為我們明白那個我相是假的。

作為一個團體，一定會有許多不同的觀點，這不僅對個人的修行有益，對團體本身也是有幫助的。各種觀點百家爭鳴是很好的，因為這樣才可以周全

who are not ready to be in this environment whether for academic or other reasons. Or there may be undesirable consequences down the line if they insist on coming when their causes and conditions are simply not ready. However, it is very important to keep in our hearts a very positive wish to create good affinities with those people whom we cannot accept. We sincerely hope that we can help them in the future.

Lastly, I just want to say that I am very happy to see that the translation teams (online and not) have really taken off. Everything starts small but it has really gone beyond what I ever imagined. There are many different teams now working on different texts and chapters of sutras. Many people from all over the world participate, doing their best to contribute with whatever skills they have. They are translating into English and even Spanish, and I believe some efforts are also underway in French, Italian, and Portuguese. Even though I myself am not helping at all, I would just like to highlight and rejoice in the work that is being done and the fact that this team style is helping everyone learn from each other as well. Also there is a Chinese online research team and online sutra lectures as well.

In this modern age, this kind of technology allows people to be able to participate even if there is no monastery nearby. In this age, it's really important that we can reach out to people, because there is a great deal of fear and suffering in the world. People are very lost and searching for something that is different from what they can find in the world with its materialism, cynicism, violence, and lack of caring. People are seeking something that speaks to their true nature that is authentic. Even if what we do is not at all perfect, as long as we are trying to reach out, it can give more people an opportunity to access the Dharma. I think what the Venerable Master said today about speaking Dharma is also very important—that we should not speak with an arrogant tone, which I think has been a shortcoming at least for myself. When we are speaking, we need to have an embracing and tolerant attitude, and not make people feel like we are exclusive. I have made mistakes in that regard. It is good that the Venerable Master reminded us of how we need to really think of how we can skillfully bring our audience into the Dharma rather than speaking thoughtlessly and scaring them away.

Are there any questions or comments?

Question: Do you think speaking Dharma in this hall is easier or harder than speaking outside? Which one do you prefer?

Response: It is not for sure which one is more difficult. When speaking outside, the audience typically has less background in Buddhism, so you might need to use non-Buddhist terms to explain some concepts. Amitufo. ❀

地考慮各種情況。比如說在學校，需要決定接受哪些學生，聘用哪些老師等等。有的人很慈悲，所以希望接受每位想來的學生和義工。這是種值得稱讚的菩薩精神，但是學校有一定的規章制度和實際需要，所以有時候沒辦法立刻幫助到每一個人。有的人因為學業或者其它原因，尚未做好加入這個環境的準備；或者如果堅持進來之後，可能會產生不良的後果，因為目前因緣還沒有成熟。但最重要的是，我們心底保持著與他們結善緣的善願，希望將來可以幫助他們。

最後我想說，很高興看到各個翻譯小組正在蓬勃發展。雖然不積跬步，無以至千里，但是它們發展的速度真的超越了我的想像。現在有很多小組在翻譯不同的佛經或是不同的章節。來自世界各地的人共同參與，各盡所長，盡其所能。他們不僅僅把佛經翻譯成英文，現在還有西班牙文，我知道好像法文、義大利文、葡萄牙文的翻譯也開始了。雖然我沒有幫上忙，但是希望在此提出並且隨喜大家努力的成果，也隨喜這種團隊合作的方式，幫助大家互相學習。另外還有一個線上中文研討小組。

現代的科技，讓那些家附近沒有寺廟的人們也可以參加這些活動。在這個時代，佛法的傳播尤其重要，因為這個世界上有很多的恐懼和苦難，大家都很迷茫，都在尋找一個和這個物質主義、犬儒主義、暴力、冷漠充斥的世界不同的東西，人們在尋找真正能和他們自性相應的東西。即使我們現在做的還不圓滿，只要我們盡力去傳播佛法，就能給更多人接觸佛法的機會。還有上人說過，講法時不能帶著一種我慢的語氣來講。這一點也是很重要的，我覺得至少我自己有這個毛病。講法的時候，應該用接納和寬容的態度，不要讓別人覺得被排斥，我就犯過類似的錯誤。因此上人提醒我們，要思考如何善巧地讓聽眾接近佛法，而不是不經思考就講，結果把別人嚇跑了。

請問有沒有問題？

問題：你認為在萬佛殿講法或是在外面講法，哪個比較容易？

回答：沒有一定的。在外面的聽眾大部分是沒有佛教的背景，所以不能用太多的術語，有時需要引用不是佛教的用語來解釋佛教的觀念，讓他們可以理解。阿彌陀佛！ ❀