

# 在孩子的高度看天空

## *To Watch the Skies from A Child's Height*



邱如伶講於2014年4月12日萬佛城大殿

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諸佛菩薩、宣公上人、諸位法師、諸位善知識：阿彌陀佛！今晚學習心得分享，如我所說有不如法之處，懇請諸位慈悲指正。今年是我教書的第二十年，今晚我想與各位分享一點心得與反思。

上學期我給培德女校高中部的學生一個作文題目——聖城之美。在孩子的心目中，聖城最美的景色之一是「天空」。時而湛藍，時而五彩繽紛，還有千變萬化的雲。在她們的眼中，一朵朵的雲，有時看起來像龍、像鳥，還有通往天國的階梯。

我想在座各位一定有不少人同意孩子們的看法，聖城的天空真的很美。不同的是，當我們仰望天空時，希望看到的可能是佛光，是西方三聖，或是朵朵蓮花。「心如工畫師，能畫諸世間」，我們與孩子們的期待不同，也就勾勒出不同的景象。

接下來，我想分享兩個小故事。第一個故事是一對母女站在花園看著盛開的花，母親很開心的跟孩子說：「你看，是蝴蝶耶！」孩子回答說：「不是，是蜻蜓！」母親接著說：「明明是蝴蝶啊！」孩子也辯駁說：

Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Venerable Master, Dharma Masters, and all Good Knowing Advisors, Amitabha. Tonight is my turn to share some thoughts. If I've said something that is not in accord with the dharma, I earnestly request all the Good Knowing Advisors to compassionately point it out. This is my 20th year of teaching. Tonight, I wish to share with all of you some reflections.

Last semester, I gave the students from Developing Virtue Girls' School an essay to write. The topic was The Beauty of the Sagely City. The children here see the skies of CTTB as beautiful scenery: sometimes the sky is blue, and sometimes it is colorful, and there are clouds whose forms are constantly changing. In their eyes, the children see the clouds turn into the forms of dragons, birds, or they may even see a stairway to heaven.

I guess most of us here would agree with the children's view, that the skies above CTTB are really beautiful. However, the difference is when we, the adults, look up at the skies. We probably hope to see something like the Buddha's Light, or the Three Sages of Western Pure Land, or lotus blossoms. The mind is like a painter who can illustrate all kinds of worlds. So whatever we adults are looking forward to, it is different from what the children are looking forward to, and therefore we will sketch different pictures in our minds.

Next, I would like to share two short stories. The first story is about a mother and a daughter. Both the mother and the daughter were in the garden looking at fully bloomed flowers. The mother

「不是，是蜻蜓！」母親終於耐不住性子而責備孩子：「都這麼大了，怎麼蝴蝶、蜻蜓還分不清呢？」孩子委屈地跟媽媽說：「我看到的真的是蜻蜓。」母親這時蹲下身子，站在孩子的身邊，抬頭真的看到了一隻蜻蜓。

原來母親與孩子的高度不同，看到了不同的景象。如果這個媽媽沒有蹲下來，站在孩子的角度去觀察，那她永遠都不知道孩子面對的境界與問題，還可能因此錯怪了孩子。

第二個故事，是一位學生在兒童教養院做義工後的分享。一群大學生到教養院關懷了一陣子，發現有一個孩子總是撐著一把傘，蹲在牆角，不說話也不理人，久了也就沒有人跟她互動。有一天一個學生心血來潮，她很想知道雨傘下的世界究竟是什麼樣子，於是她撐起一把傘蹲在孩子的身邊。這時，孩子抬頭看著她說話了！孩子問這個學生：「妳也是蘑菇嗎？」

原來，這個孩子一直把自己當作一朵蘑菇。而出於好奇，這個學生終於進入了孩子的內心世界，最後將她轉介到兒童心理輔導機構接受治療。

這兩個小故事，讓我重新思考老師這個角色。剛開始教書時，總是一股腦地想把所學都教給學生，不管學生懂不懂，跟不跟得上。過去我教的是經濟學，需要利用圖形與數學做為分析工具，而這些對於非商學院的傳播科系學生來說，是相對困難的。曾經有一個新聞系的學生問我：「老師，妳可不可以不要教數學，也不要教圖形？」我想了想，回答他：「那我要教什麼？」

我只會這樣教啊，因為我就是這樣學的！當時我並不懂什麼是因材施教，因病給藥。漸漸的，我看到學生臉上的無奈與困惑，才終於瞭解到要改變的是我，不只是學生。不同背景的學生，就像不同的米，我應該適時地調整水量與火候，當然還需要更多的耐心與陪伴。

教書十年後，我重回到學校進修，看著艱深無比的課程，我也很渴望老師可以看到我臉上的困惑；可惜的是，老師總是視

happily told her child, "Look, there's a butterfly!" The child answered, "No, that's a dragonfly!" The mother then said, "Obviously it is a butterfly." The child argued, "No! It is a dragonfly!" Eventually, the mother lost her patience, and scolded her daughter, "You have almost grown up, how can you still not tell the difference between a butterfly and a dragonfly?" The daughter told her mother sadly, "But I really do see a dragonfly." The mother squatted down at her daughter's side, and she looked up, and then she did indeed see - a dragonfly!

When the mother is not at the same height as the child, what they see will be different. If the mother does not squat down, using the child's point of view to observe, then she will never understand her child's perspectives and problems, and might blame the child wrongly.

The second story I would like to tell, is a sharing from a student who does voluntary work at the Children's Institution. Once there was a group of college students who helped out for a period of time at the Children's Institution, and they found that there was a particular child who used to open up an umbrella and sit down in the corner of the room. This child never talked, and she ignored everyone around her. Eventually, no one communicated with her. One day, there was a student who had a sudden thought, wishing to know about the world under this child's umbrella. Therefore, she too took an umbrella and opened it up, and sat beside the quiet child. At that very moment, the little girl, who had been silent, looked up and spoke. She asked the student who had just joined her, "Are you a mushroom too?"

So, all this time, the child had regarded herself as a mushroom. Due to curiosity, the college student had the chance to walk into the inner world of the child's mind. Eventually, she referred the child to the child psychologist for treatment.

These two short stories have made me reconsider my role as a teacher. When I first started teaching, I only thought of transferring all of my knowledge to the students. I didn't care whether the students understood, or if they were able to catch up. In the past, I taught Economics. Most of the time, I used graphs and mathematics as analyzing tools. However, it was too difficult for the students who studied Broadcasting, to understand them. Once, there was a Journalism undergraduate who asked me, "Could you please not teach us math? Please don't teach us graphs, either." I thought over it for some time, and I asked him, "Then, what should I teach?"

That was what I taught, because that was what I had learned. At that time, I didn't know about the principle of "teaching according to the student's capacity, and prescribing medicine according to the patient's illness." Gradually I realized that the students' faces had shown that they were helpless and lost. I then understood that not only did the students have to change, but I had to change, too. Students from different backgrounds are like different types of grains. I had to use the right temperature and the correct amount of water in order to cook the grains, and most importantly, they needed more patience and companionship.

After ten years of teaching, I went back to school to further my studies. Looking at the difficulty of the course I was taking, I too was longing for my teacher's attention. I wanted the teacher to notice my puzzled look, but

若無睹，甚至無情地羞辱我。這大概是我的現世報吧！我在心裏不斷地告訴自己，我一定不要這樣對待我的學生，因為我自己嚐到了那種苦澀的滋味。

在〈普門品〉中，觀世音菩薩依眾生根器化現三十二應身，應以何身得度者，即現何身而為說法。我想這除了是四攝法中的「同事」之外，另一層的意義，便是與眾生站在同一個高度，以同理心看待眾生面對的問題，再適時地引導與教化。我們熟知的「魚籃觀音」即是如此，觀音菩薩深知眾生習性，以方便法循循善誘，最後達到教化的目的。

2005年，我和幾位老師帶著五個大學生到泰國北部清邁做教育志工，教華語。在泰緬邊界著名的金三角，住著一群亞細亞的孤兒。之所以稱為「亞細亞的孤兒」，是因為他們是國共戰爭時，由中國逃出來的中國國民黨國軍的後裔。他們沒有國籍、沒有身份，是亞洲的邊緣人。因為始終認為自己是中國人，不願歸化泰籍，最後為了下一代，迫於現實還是屈就了。白天他們在正規學校讀書學泰文，放學之後才在部落簡陋的教室裏學中文。

假日我們帶著滿滿的愛心、先進的設備，到山地部落辦營隊。電腦、投影機，還有精心製作的教具，一切就緒，開始上課了。小朋友們看著像電影一樣的投影機螢幕，興奮得目不轉睛。可是好景不長，不到五分鐘的時間，延長線負荷不了先進設備的龐大電力需求，燒掉了。授課老師瞪著大眼睛看著我說：「沒有電腦怎麼上課？」我說：「寫黑板啊！」大夥七手八腳地開始找粉筆，終於找到像寶貝一樣被收藏著的粉筆，而每一段只有指甲一般的大小；在臺灣，這些早被當作垃圾處理了。

接下來的團康課程，大學生們設計了新奇的分站遊戲，孩子們把鞋子脫了，開心地跟著老師和大姐姐們一起玩。我在教室裏準備著下午的課程，一個孩子羞澀地走到我面前，遞給我一張剛才上課發給他們的白紙，我不知道他要做什麼。我隨手拿起來，折了一架紙飛機給他，他開心地在

unfortunately, the teacher not only ignored me, but even humiliated me. I guess this was the retribution that I had to receive in this present life. Now, I keep telling myself that I don't want to treat my students like that teacher treated me, because I myself have suffered from this kind of feeling.

In the *Universal Door Chapter*, Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva transforms and manifests into thirty-two bodies in response to the living beings' roots and capacities. Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva will transform into a particular body if it means that someone can be liberated by that form. I think besides engaging in the same activities as the beings from the Four Dharmas of Attractions, there is another deeper meaning behind this, which is to stand at the same height as all living beings, which means to use an empathic mind and by using other living beings' perspectives, to understand their problems. Meanwhile, we try to guide them, to teach and transform them, while using the right timing. The well-known story of Guan Yin with the Fish Basket is exactly the same. Guan Yin Bodhisattva deeply understands the natures and habits of living beings. Therefore, she uses the most expedient methods to guide them toward goodness. This gradually teaches and transforms them.

In the year 2005, a few teachers and I brought five college students to Chiangmai, in the northern part of Thailand, as education volunteers, to teach Chinese to the children. There was a group of Asian orphans who lived in the well-known Golden Triangle, at the Thai-Burma border. They were called the Orphans of Asia because they were the descendants of people from the Chinese Nationalist Party who had fled from China during the time of the Nationalist-Communist Civil War. Therefore these people did not have a nationality or citizenship. They were a marginalized group in Asia. However, they still called themselves Chinese and were unwilling to identify themselves as Thai. Eventually, for the sake of the younger generation, they finally accepted the reality of their location, and later, all of them became nationalized Thais. During the day, they would study in the regular schools, learning the Thai language, but after school, they studied in shabby classrooms with their tribe.

One time, when it was a holiday, our minds were filled with loving kindness. We brought all kinds of advanced equipment into the mountainous tribal camp. There were computers, projectors, and many well-made teaching tools. We were all set and were ready to conduct our class. When the kids saw that the projector screen was just like watching a movie, they were all very excited and stayed focused. Unfortunately, not even five minutes after we had begun, the extension cord burnt off because it couldn't support the high voltage needed for our advanced equipment. The instructor stared at me and said, "How are we going to conduct the class without a computer?" I said, "Just write on the black board!" Everyone hurried to search for chalk. Finally we found some pieces of chalk that were hidden like some kind of treasure, and each piece of chalk was only as big as a fingernail. If we had been back in Taiwan, all of these chalk pieces would definitely have become trash.

Next, were the entertaining group activities. The college students had designed many exciting and fun games for the kids. The kids took off their shoes and happily followed the teachers and big sisters to play the games.



教室裏飛舞。外面的小朋友看到了，紛紛拿著白紙來要紙飛機，一下子教室成了飛機場。原來他們要的是這麼簡單！

下課了，我們發給孩子們有著精美包裝，五顏六色的糖果跟巧克力。不一會兒功夫，教室內外都是糖果紙。我跟孩子們說：「要撿起來放在垃圾桶裡。」孩子狐疑地看著我，點點頭跑開了。我看著地上的紙屑一點也沒有減少，就再跟孩子們說一次。孩子終於開口了，他們說：「我們家沒有垃圾桶。」剎那間，我愣住了。這個部落，沒有垃圾車，更沒有焚化爐，我們從來都沒有想過；我們帶來的除了自以為是的愛心之外，還有不屬於他們的文明污染與欲望。另一批老師與學生進入一個更窮困的部落，當地華語學校的校長要求的課程之一，是教孩子們勤洗手，養成良好的衛生習慣。

老師依著臺灣標準的教育方式，分成幾個步驟說明。第一、先開水龍頭把手沖濕，然後用洗手乳……。老師和大姐姐們賣力地教，孩子卻一臉茫然。終於一個孩子說話了，孩子說：「老師，我們家沒有水龍頭。」大學生們心頭一陣酸楚，我們沒有經歷過這樣的生活，洗手對我們而言，是這麼簡單又理所當然的，從來沒有想過這會是問題。

這趟的志工之旅，我想我們是受者，而不是施者。在過去的經濟學教學中，第一堂課教給學生的概念是：「資源有限，欲望無窮。」也正因為資源有限，所以要學習如何分配，才能有效地滿足我們無窮的欲望。可是在那裏，因為資源有限，選擇不多，所以他們可以安於簡單的生活，而不用太傷腦筋。

在上山之前，我們被告知不能飲用當地的水，甚至連洗手都不行，因為我們的身體沒有抵抗力。看著孩子們自在地在山裏跑跳過生活，而我們卻

I was in the classroom getting ready for the afternoon class. There was a shy kid who walked up to me and gave me a piece of paper. I had given the white paper to the children earlier. I wasn't sure what this child wanted. So I just simply took the paper and started to fold it into an airplane. He happily ran around the classroom with his paper plane. The kids outside saw this, and each of them brought in a piece of paper and asked for paper planes too. In just a short while, the whole classroom turned into an airport! For them, happiness was just as simple as that.

After the class, we gave colorfully wrapped sweets and chocolates to the children. Soon enough, the whole classroom, and even outside of the classroom, was full of the beautiful candy wrappers. I told the kids to pick up the wrappers and throw them into the trash bin. The kids looked at me doubtfully, and nodded their heads. Then they ran off. Still, when I looked at the floor, the wrappers didn't seem to be going anywhere, so I told the kids the same thing again. This time, there was a kid who finally spoke up, and said, "Our home has no trash bin." At that moment, I was taken aback. In this tribe, there was no garbage collecting truck, so of course there weren't any trashcans. We had never thought of this before: what we brought along with us to the tribe was not only loving kindness, but we had also brought along desires and pollution from civilization that did not really belong there in those mountains.

There was another group of teachers who entered an even more impoverished tribe. The local Chinese school's principal required the kids to learn how to wash their hands as part of their curriculum, so that the kids would have it as a regular hygiene practice. Therefore the teachers used the standard Taiwanese way to educate the kids how to wash their hands properly, step by step. First, you need to turn on the tap and wet your hands, then use the hand soap... so on and so forth. When the teachers and the big sisters were trying their best to teach the kids, the kids all were lost. All the kids looked totally blank. Finally, one of them said, "Teacher, our home does not have a water tap." When the college students heard that, they felt heartache. We had never experienced this kind of life, and to us, washing hands was just so simple that we had not ever thought that it could be a problem.

After this trip being volunteers, I thought that we were the receivers, not the givers. In the past, when I was teaching Economics, I usually taught my students this concept in the very first class: "Resources are limited, but desires are endless." Due to the limitation of resources, that is the reason why people need to learn how to distribute them, so that people can effectively meet and satisfy everyone's desire. But in this tribe, due to the limited resources, there were not many choices, so the people there were at ease living a simple life, and they did not need to go through too many troubles.

Before we entered the mountainous area, we were told that we could not drink the local water, or even wash our hands using the local water. The reason was because our bodies did not have adequate immunity to their water. Looking at the children running all around the mountains in a carefree way, we realized that we were the ones who were tied up instead of these people. I really didn't get it: were they the happy and blessed ones, or were we? From the vision of the people of the mundane world, we are indeed happy and blessed, because we own everything. However, after learning the Buddha Dharma, I have gradually come to understand

是綁手綁腳的，實在不知道幸福的是他們，還是我們？以世俗的眼光，我們是幸福的，因為我們什麼都有。學佛之後，慢慢地體會到，其實我們擁有的盡是由貪念堆積而成的幸福；想要的，永遠比需要的多很多。

在《佛遺教經》中，世尊教導弟子所謂的無求功德。世尊說：

汝等比丘，當知多欲之人，多求利故，苦惱亦多；少欲之人，無求無欲，則無此患。直爾少欲，尚宜修習，何況少欲能生諸功德！少欲之人，則無諂曲以求人意，亦復不為諸根所牽。行少欲者，心則坦然，無所憂畏，觸事有餘，常無不足。有少欲者，則有涅槃，是名少欲。

我曾經在醫院當義工，看到生的喜悅，也看到加護病房內外的兩樣心情；看到因為親眼見到兒子跳樓自殺的師姊，剎那間重摔倒地而成植物人。我也曾經無語的面對學生哭著問：「被殺害的妹妹，法醫解剖完了，現在怎麼辦？」還有學生問我：「從小照顧她長大的奶奶去世了，現在在哪裏？」如果沒有學佛，我想我只能跟著她們一起哭。

福報有限，業力無窮！福報怎麼樣才能有效率地分配於生老病死之間呢？沒有人可以告訴我答案。2010年三月底，我參加了這一生中的第一個觀音七，一個夢境讓我深刻反省，人到臨終時，自己做不了主，別人幫不上忙。觀音七結束後，回到臺北的第一件事，就是提出辭呈。

從七歲入學到辭去教職，我的生活圈始終離不開校園。當開始在道場學習做義工，我就像剛進小學的新生，懵懂無知，跌跌撞撞，充滿好奇，又有些恐懼。我會犯錯，就像孩子們一樣；我想學好，也想改過，也曾因為害怕而不知所措。如果沒有善知識的引導，我甚至不知道該何去何從。許多的良師益友，屈就我的高度，彎下身子來陪伴我，今天我才有機會回到這裏，我真的很感激。✽

that the so-called happiness and blessings that we have, are all coming from our greedy minds. What we want is always more than we need.

In the *Sutra on the Buddha's Bequeathed Teaching*, the World Honored One instructed his disciples on the merit and virtue of non-seeking. The World Honored One says,

**All of you Bhikshus! You should know that people with many desires suffer much, because they constantly seek for their own benefits. People who reduce their desires, who are free of seeking or longing, do not have such trouble. Being straightforward and with less desire, a person is well-suited for cultivation, not to mention that less desire can generate all kinds of merit and virtue. People who reduce their desires, do not flatter in order to get what they want from others. Moreover they are not dragged along by their sense organs. People who reduce their desires have, as a result, minds which are peaceful, without worry or fear. When situations arise, they are ever satisfied and never discontent. One who reduces his desires can realize Nirvana. This is my teaching on reducing desires.**

I once worked as a volunteer in a hospital. I've seen the joy of birth, and I've seen people's moods who stayed in the Intensive Care Unit, and the people who waited outside the ICU. I've also witnessed one of my Dharma friends collapse onto the floor and turn into a vegetative human, right after seeing her son jump off of a building in order to commit suicide. I've also experienced one of my students coming to me crying, asking me what she should do after her sister was brutally murdered. I was speechless at that time. Also, once another student came to ask me where her deceased grandmother was now, the woman who had taken care of her since she was young. If I had not learned the Buddha Dharma, the only thing I could have done would have been to cry along with them.

Our blessings are limited, and the power of karma is endless. How are we to allocate our blessings and divide them for birth, old age, sickness, and death? Nobody could give me the answer. During March of 2010, I was able to participate in the year's first Guan Yin session. It was the first time I had done so in my life. I had a dream during the session. The dream enabled me to deeply reflect. Only then I realized that when we approach the end of our lives, we can't really decide anything for ourselves. Others cannot help either. After the session, the first thing I did when I returned back to Taipei, was to submit my resignation letter.

My life had been engaged to the school campus since the day I entered school when I was seven years old, until the day I resigned from my teaching career. When I started doing voluntary work in the monastery, I was like a new student who had just entered elementary school. Confused and ignorant, I stumbled and fell, but I was full of curiosity and at the same time, I was somehow fearful. I would make mistakes just like the children. I hoped to be good, and wished to turn over a new leaf too. Once I was very fearful and did not know what to do. If there had not been guidance from the Good Knowing Advisors, I really wouldn't have known which path to walk on. There are many different kinds of teachers and helpful friends who yield to my height. They have bent forward to listen to me, and accompanied me along the way. Without them, I would not be here today. I am very grateful for this.✽