

# Awareness in the Present: in the Here and Now

(continued)

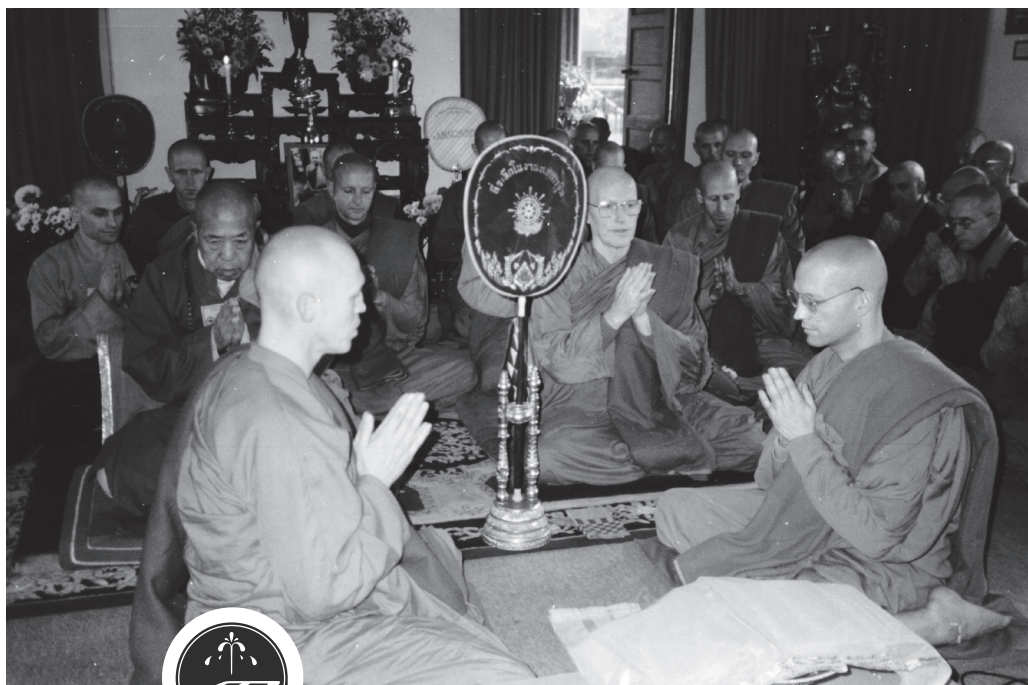
## 活在當下

(續)

Spoken by Ajahn Sumedho  
at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas  
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Mindfulness, that Pali word, *sati*, is establishing awareness, in the present: in the here and now. It's not something you get. You don't become mindful. You are mindful. It's so immediate, that an attempt to define it can be very misleading. It's an ability to just be attentive to the present moment. And in the *satipatthana*, is like the ability to apperceive, to embrace all in the present. It's not about being mindful particularly about one object that you focus on, but on the Totality of this Moment. So the *satipatthana* - mindfulness, intuitive awareness - is the ability to open to the present moment, which includes everything. At this moment, you know your body, your breath, your sensory experience, your emotional state, your memories, or whatever. It's not about right or wrong anymore, it's

正念，巴利文稱為“*sati*”，就是留心覺察當下此刻；正念，不是你「得到」的某樣東西，也不是你「變得」專注，而是一種本能，不假造作。如果要為它下個定義，將會成為一種誤導。所謂「念處」(*satipatthana*)，不是專注在特定的某件事情上，而是全然地接納當下。因此，「念處」、「正念」、「本覺」，指的都是覺知、接納當下所有一切的能力。此刻的你，能覺察自己的身體、呼吸、感覺、還有情緒、記憶等等，本質上都是因緣的變化現象，沒有所謂的對錯。我們與這些現象的關係，就是去認清它的本質，那就是一切法無常。而內觀修練(*vipassana*)，正是思惟觀察這樣無常的變化。在南傳的教法裏，我們經



just an inclusive reality of conditioned phenomena changing. Our relationship to that phenomena is knowing it in terms of what it really is, that all conditions are impermanent. So the vipassana, the insight practice, is all about reflecting and observing impermanence or changing. So in the Pali tradition, we have this continuous repetition of the sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā —all conditions are impermanent.

It's easy enough to understand that intellectually. It doesn't take long to kind of agree to that. But to actually practice that, to relate to phenomena that we're experiencing in the present by awareness of its change —rather than of its quality: whether it's pleasant or painful, exciting or boring, or whatever. It's changing from somebody who's looking for happiness, excitement, an interesting life, entertainment, distraction, running away from boredom, or anxiety, worry, fear, running away from anger or greed, lust, or conditions of this nature, we're actually observing them from the position of Buddha or Buddho or mindfulness, knowing the nature of conditioned phenomena.

So Luang Por Chah uses this mantra,

常唸誦 sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā，意思就是「一切法無常」。

無常的道理，理解起來很容易，也不難同意這種觀念。至於實際運用在眼前經歷的境界時，就是要能覺察認知境界的變化遷流，而不是感受它所呈現的性質，例如快樂、痛苦、興奮或是無聊。這是從一個尋找幸福、興奮、有趣生活、娛樂、注意力分散、躲開無聊、或焦慮、擔心、恐懼、躲開憤怒、貪婪、慾望、以及其他類似性質的東西的人，轉變成以佛陀、正念的角度來觀察有為法的本質。

所以阿姜查用一個很簡單、只有兩音節的字“Buddho”，教我們培養正念。Buddho就是「佛陀」的意思，只是在南傳教法裏，我們把它當作一個誦唸的真言「菩·陀」。“Buddho”是我們正念的歸依處；唯有保持正念，才能到達那個歸依處。什麼是歸依？那是一個安全的地方。當尋求庇護時，你會找一個不僅感覺而且確實也是安全可靠的地方。歸依於佛，不是一種幻想或是虛構的庇護；而是對於此刻當下一種真實的覺知，沒有能比這個更安全的處所了。

歸依於法，就是能夠正念覺知有為法的本質之後，我們真實地認識佛法，明白這個法不是從書本或是老師那兒得來的個人知見，而是對於實相理體自覺自證的內容。歸依於僧，僧伽就是真實依佛法修行、直心向道的人。

因此，剛受戒成為南傳比丘的時候，我其實對





this very simple mantra: Buddhō — as a way we use develop mindfulness. It is a two-syllable word and actually the name of the Buddha, but in Pali they use it in a mantric form. It's the refuge that we take when we are mindful. We are in that refuge of Buddhō or the refuge of the Buddha. That's what mindfulness allows us to be—in that refuge—and what is a refuge? It's always a safe place to be. When you seek refuge, you look for some place where you will feel secure and safe, and you actually are. With Buddha as a refuge, it's not a kind of fantasy, or make-believe refuge. It's actually the reality of awakened consciousness to the present moment. There's no refuge that's safer than that.

In the refuge of Dhamma (Sanskrit: Dharma), Dhammo, it's like once there's an established knowing, this mindful apperception of conditioned phenomena, then we know we actually know Dhamma not from our views or opinions that we get from books or teachers, but from our own inside, our profound understanding into reality. And then in the refuge of Sangha (Sangho), it is those practicing the Dhamma, those actually developing, cultivating the Dhamma, those who practice in the right way directly.

So when I was first ordained in this Theravada Tradition, I didn't really know much about it. I had a Zen introduction. I was a very avid reader of Aldous Huxley when I was a student at Berkeley. He actually puts down Theravada Buddhism. He says they haven't produced any Arhans (Sanskrit: Arhats) other than the Buddha. He really traduces and vilifies Theravada. I thought I really didn't want to bother with all that. He said all they do, the monks do, is just keep rules. They think you can just keep rules and become enlightened. To a graduate student at Berkeley, living at a time where you threw out all the rules, Theravada didn't sound very interesting.

I remember in Berkeley at the time, they were always quoting The Prophet by Khalil Gibran, "Follow your heart wherever it takes you." I saw so many doing that, and it didn't take you to very good places! It is kind of inspiring. It sounds so poetic and beautiful, but you know some of the rules we keep are about all kinds of things that you don't think anyone would make a rule about. So it's strange, going from the Berkeley scene into this very strict orthodox Northeastern Thai monastery, where they keep these rules, even to the smallest detail.

The reason for doing this was because the experience of living a hedonistic life — just on following your desires, impulses, and ideas — the result was that I became a very confused person. At the time I finished my degree, I was totally confused and also disappointed. There was a lot of aversion and self-criticism: a kind of aversion to myself. I didn't like what was happening to me and what I had become. So this interest in Buddhism was the light at the end of the tunnel. It was the only hope I had, which brought me into Thailand and into the Thai forest tradition. Then I found myself in a very strict form, almost totally opposite to the life I had been living before.

於這個傳承教法瞭解不多，我只有一些禪宗的基礎概念。在柏克萊大學讀書的時候，我酷愛阿道斯·赫胥黎的書，但他事實上是貶斥南傳佛教的。他說除了佛陀以外，根本沒人證阿羅漢果。他極度謗毀南傳佛教，我實在不想聽他講那些東西。他還說那些出家人做的，不外乎就是墨守成規，他們認為只要守規矩就可以開悟。而那個年代的柏克萊研究生，最想甩掉的就是規矩，所以南傳佛教聽起來很不好玩。

我記得那時在柏克萊，他們經常引用紀伯倫·哈利勒的話：

「跟隨心的聲音，不管它將帶你到何處。」我看很多人都這樣做，但他們的心並沒有把他們帶去什麼好地方！不過這兩句話挺激勵人的，聽起來也很有詩意。而說起南傳佛教的戒律，有一些是你從沒想過會

拿來當規矩的事。所以一個人可以從柏克萊這樣的地方，走進泰國東北部一個非常嚴格、正統的寺院，持戒守規矩，甚至是一般人認為微不足道的細節，的確是挺奇怪的一件事。

到泰國出家的理由是，在享樂主義的世界隨著自己欲望、衝動、念頭生活的結果，我迷失了自己。拿到學位時，我迷惘和失望到極點。我厭惡自己、批判自己；我不喜歡那種日子，





This is one thing that modern life doesn't understand about tradition and form. We create ideals by thinking in superlative ways: the very best, the purest, the brightest —and we create images of perfection. But life for us is not ideal, is it? It's the way it is. If you have to live in a human body, it's not an ideal form. It's born, grows up, gets old, gets sick, and dies. So it's this changingness. We have to live in the world that is continuously changing that's not ideal.

In this way of reflection, the Buddha was pointing to the way things are, not to the way things should be. We can see, in just my lifetime, the American ideal of democracy and these wonderful ideals that this country established itself on, that there is so much disappointment, because even though it was built on ideals, it has never developed wisdom: an understanding of the way things are. If you only create an ideal in your mind, you're going to be disappointed because none of us are ideals. We are living, breathing, human, feeling forms. We are not like beautiful marble statues that can stay beautiful for a long period of time. We have to deal with sickness, with weakness, with grief and loss, aging and so forth. So that's why the Buddha started this basic teaching on the noble truth of suffering or unsatisfactoriness.

You know in the Pali word “dukkha” is that which you can't bear, that which is disillusioning or unpleasant in our lives. So the English word, “suffering”, is good enough. You get the point. This suffering is raised from a position, because we all want happiness. None of us wants suffering. We're looking for happiness, love,

也不喜歡自己變成的樣子。因此對佛教的興趣，是我黑暗中的一道曙光。這唯一的希望，帶我來到泰國學習南傳佛教。我發現自己過得非常嚴謹而有規範，和我以前的生活簡直是天壤之別。

這種傳統和形式，是現代人很難理解的。人們把理想建立在誇張不實的想法上——什麼都是最好的、最純潔的、最聰明的，塑造的是絕對完美的形象。可是我們的生命並不完美，不是嗎？它就是這樣子。我們的身體，本身就不是一個理想的形式，從一出生開始，身體就會成長、衰老、生病，然後死亡。身體不斷地變化，而我們也勢必活在這個不斷變遷的世界裏，這一點都不理想。

因此，佛陀教我們思惟的是事物的「本質」，而不是它「應該如何」。我們這一代可以看得到的，是美國當初建國時的民主理念和理想，走到最後是多麼令人失望。它雖然建立在自由理想上，但缺乏智慧，就是沒有瞭解諸法的實相。如果你只依理想而活，那你一定會失望，因為沒有人是完美的。身為人類，我們有生命、會呼吸、有感覺，必須面對憂、老、病、死等等現象；我們不像美麗的大理石雕刻，可以長久維持它的美麗。這就是為什麼佛陀最初的教法，是從四聖諦中的「苦諦」開始。

巴利文“dukkha”，意思是無法忍受的，生命中理想的破滅或是不愉快。所以英文用“suffering”（苦）這個字是足夠好的，很容易就明白這個意思。苦和





and security. We want all the best that we can conceive of. We don't want old age, sickness, and death. We don't want anything unpleasant. We'd like life to be fair and good, and everybody to be honest, truthful, dependable, honorable and the best. The best words - we'd like life to be like that. But life is not like that. That is our ability to create images of the best. But Dhamma is about reality - the way things really are - the way it is. So, in terms of Dhamma, it is not about the best anymore. The Buddha, in his wisdom, pointed directly at the way conditions really are. They are changing.

Over the years, in my life, as a Buddhist monk and meditator, it's putting this into practice continuously, whatever happens. Whether you're loved or hated, praised or blamed, successful or a failure, all the worldly conditions - they are all seen in terms of a personal level - I like success, I like to be praised, and I like to be healthy and strong. I don't want to be blamed for anything or criticized. I don't like being criticized at all, and then I want pleasant things, I want life to be fair, I want to feel that I am loved and respected. That's the personal, worldly mindset of human beings - for most of us.

Then in the terms of Dhamma, we're looking at these conditions in terms of change, not in terms of personal preference or personal intonation. They're no longer taking it in the sense of judging our own personal perceptions of the world and ourselves, but looking at them for what they really are. All conditions are changing. We become more and more aware of change rather than spending our lives looking for the best monastery, the best conditions, the best teacher and the best of everything. Whatever monastery you are in, you can always imagine a better one. I know this from experience! No matter how we might try to establish the best monastery, like Ajahn Pasanno established the best monastery as far as I'm concerned, but how many of you are really satisfied with it? You can imagine a better one. This is like the awakening of conscious awareness to the realities of the present.

In the Second Noble Truth, why did the Buddha take suffering as a noble truth, since it's what nobody wants? We more or less see it as a nasty fact of life. I remember as a little boy, being brought up as a Christian, asking my mother, "Why is there pain? Why did God create pain?" If I were God, I wouldn't have created pain! I don't remember how my mother answered it. It's a good question, isn't it? If God is all love and creates only what is good, why is there so much of the opposite? This is the question of a child, a little boy. It's a question about something I don't want. I don't want physical pain. I don't want to feel hurt, or anything like that.

☞ To be continued

快樂是相對的，我們都要快樂，沒有人想要受苦。我們希圖快樂、愛和安全感，只要能想到的東西，我們都要最好的。我們不要老、病、死，不要不愉快的事；我們希望生命美好無憂，每個人都是誠實可靠、正直可信，每個人都是最好的。這就是我們所希望的，然而生命並不是這樣，這只是我們創造出來的完美意象。佛法講的是實相——事物的真實相貌——本來的樣子，而不是最好的樣子。佛陀用他的智慧為我們指出萬事萬物的實相，就是變化無常。

身為一名比丘與禪修者，多年來無論在何種情況下，我都持續地修習觀照無常。世間所有的緣境，無論愛恨、讚毀、成敗、得失，都是以「我」為出發點，譬如我喜歡成功，我喜歡被讚美，我喜歡健康強壯；我討厭被指責批評，我討厭被人數落；我要好的東西，我要有被愛和被尊重的感覺，我要人生過得順利。這就是世間絕大多數人的心態。

然就佛法而言，我們看的是事物的變遷，而不是個人的偏好或重視；不再以自己的認知來評判這個世界和個人，而是直接透視它們的本質。萬事萬物不斷地在變化，當有這樣的認知時，我們就能越來越清楚它們的變化，而不會浪費時間和生命尋找最好的條件、最好的道場、最好的導師；總之，一切一切都要是最好的。無論住哪一個道場，你總是想：「還有一個更好的。」我相信這是很多人的經驗！然而，無論你如何想方設法要建立一座最好的道場，就像阿姜帕莎諾所做的。對我而言，無畏寺是我認為最棒的寺院，但你們有多少人真的滿意？你們總是可以想出一個更好的。所以要轉識成智，認識諸法實相。

四聖諦的第二個——「苦集諦」。人們或多或少都會認為，「苦」是生命中不可愛的部分；既然沒有人喜歡苦，為什麼佛陀還要說「苦」是聖諦呢？我出生在基督教的家庭裏，記得小時候我問母親：「為什麼人會有痛苦？為什麼上帝要創造這個苦？」假如我是上帝，我不會創造它的！我不記得母親當時怎麼回答，但這是一個很好的問題，對吧？假如上帝是博愛的，而且只創造美好的事物，那為什麼會有這麼多令人不愉快的事存在呢？這是一個小男孩的問題，問的就是他不想要的東西：不想要生病受傷、不想要難過委屈，諸如此類「不想要」的事。

☞ 待續