

Touch a Life by Teaching

春風化雨潤後生

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諸佛菩薩、宣化上人、各位法師、各位善知識：阿彌陀佛！今晚我要講述一下我在萬佛聖城的經歷。

上一次在這個臺上結法緣，是我十四歲的時候，當時是培德女校的一名學生。那是中文課指定的一項作業，於是我很誠實寫下自己的感受，略述培德女校讀書的經驗。雖然最開始是自己想來這裏讀書，但是到這個學校的第一個月之後，我就想離開了。可是我的父母希望我留下來，因為他們很開心看到這裏是一個很安全，並且提供良好教育的環境。於是每一年都求他們讓我離開，我希望自己生病或者發生一些不好的事，這樣我就有藉口離開。當時我對同學發誓：「我再也不會回到這個地方！」但是現在呢，我成為女校的一名老師。

有一種說法是這樣的：一個人沒有辦法理解父母的辛勞，直到他自己成為了父母。我認為這個理論也適用於作為一名老師。我以前一直認為，因為老師和學生在學校的時間是一樣的，所以他們有同樣的工作行程、同樣的工作量。但是當自己成為一名老師之後，我才發現，無論在人際互動、腦力精神、還有體力消耗上，這些都完全不相同的。比起當學生，教書其實要兼顧更多的事，因為突然間我對很多事變得很在乎。我在乎我的學生聽懂我教的內容，我在乎她們的作業份量是否恰到好處；我關心她們的興趣愛好，以及關心我所教的是否有益於她們的未來。


最開始在女校讀書時，我對所有的人都漠不關心，成績也越來越差。我討厭所有試圖幫助我的人，其中最厭惡的就是階級制

All Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Venerable Master, Dharma Masters, and all good knowing advisors, Amitofo. Tonight, I'm going to talk about my experience here at CTTB.

The last time I came up to speak, I was 14 and a student at our girls school. It was a Chinese class assignment, so I just wrote with pure honesty. I briefly went through each year of my experience and said that although I was the one that wanted to come here at the beginning, I wanted to leave by the first month. However, my parents wanted me to stay because they were happy I was in a safe, cultivating environment. I begged to leave every single year and even hoped I'd get sick or something bad enough to have an excuse to leave. I swore to my classmates I would never come back... And now I am a teacher at the school.

There is a saying that one doesn't truly understand the suffering of a parent until he/she becomes one. I think the same can be applied to being a teacher. I used to think since teachers and students are in school for the same amount of hours and share similar routines, the workload is similar. But now having become a teacher myself, I've learned that the social, mental, and physical aspects become completely different. There is so much more involved in teaching because all of a sudden, I care. I care that my students get my instructions, that the work is balanced, interesting, and conducive to their growth.

As a DVGS student, in the beginning, I was really inconsiderate towards everyone, I had failing grades, and I even



沙門問佛：何者多力？何者最明？佛言：忍辱多力，不懷惡故，兼加安健。忍者無惡，必為人尊。心垢滅盡，淨無瑕穢，是為最明。未有天地，逮於今日；十方所有，無有不見，無有不知，無有不聞，得一切智，可謂明矣！

——《佛說四十二章經》

度。自幼的成長環境讓我變得非常獨立，而且從不接受別人的意見。來聖城讀書第一天，宿舍舉行一次新生訓練，當時一位十二年級的學生要我站起來，這樣她才可以把長板凳搬出來。她當時只說：「喂，Kim，站起來。」我很冷漠地問：「為什麼？」她沒有回答我，只是拉一拉那張長凳，心想我應該就明白她的意思。但是我沒有，並且衝著她喊說：「妳是怎樣呀？」這事現在看起來非常可笑，可是在當時，我真的沒辦法忍受。

像這樣芝麻綠豆的事，在第一個月接連不斷地發生，讓我非常沮喪和不開心。我漠視周遭所有的人，而很多人也無視於我。直到有一天，有一位老師——恒貞師來找我，開始問起我生活上的一些問題。我心想：「這不干妳的事。」但是她非常堅持，之後還成了我的數學老師。於是我得每天面對這位比丘尼，無論如何她都不肯放過我。當然最主要的原因，是因為我數學成績落後一大截，所以必須在每晚聽經的時間接受她的課後輔導。

剛開始我並沒有意識到，但是她卻發現了——其實我並不懂得如何在一個以亞洲文化為主的佛教團體中生活；無論是禮貌方面，或是長幼尊卑的觀念，這些我完全都不懂，因此她犧牲自己的時間來跟我解釋每個生活上的細節。由於有她的幫助，一段時間之後，我開始注意和明白很多人為了幫助我成為更好的人，付出相當多的努力；而他們的這些付出，也驅策我在升學的路上前進，讓我得以踏上正途，得以遇到值得一生珍藏的良師益友，並且獲得全額獎學金進入加州大學洛杉磯分校就讀，甚至到國外當交換學生。一路上我所遇到的種種機會，都是他們所造就的。

上了大學之後，我開始意識到培德女中為我打下很好的基礎，讓我能在社會成為一名好人。說起來有點諷刺，因為高中的時候，我和同學都認為這裏的生活與社會脫節。當老師告訴我們這裏的生活對我們將來有幫助，或是用我們未來的穩定作為理由來訓斥我們時，我們心裏總是嘀咕：「她們懂得外面社會的事嗎？她們住在廟裏欸！」但事實上，聖城這個環境讓我學會和其他人相處，也更瞭解人性。

當朋友覺得我太吵影響到她讀書而憤怒的時候，我知道我應該要為別人著想；當成績單出來時，我認識了

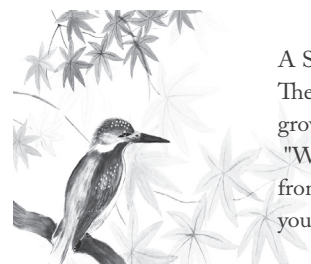
resented people for trying to reach out to me. Most of all, I hated the hierarchical system. I'd grown up really independent and didn't take any kind of comments from anyone. My first day, during the dorm orientation, a senior asked me to stand up so she could move the bench out, but only said, "Hey Kim, stand up." I nonchalantly asked why. She responded by pulling out the bench, thinking I would understand, but I didn't and shouted at her, "What is your problem?!" It seems so ridiculous now, but at the time, I couldn't stand her.

Simple moments like that set me off throughout the first months; I ignored everyone and most people ignored me. One day, a teacher named Heng Jen Shi came up to me and started asking me about my life. I remember thinking, "That's none of your business." But she persisted. She then became my math teacher, so I was stuck with seeing the nun that wouldn't leave me alone everyday. On top of that, I was really behind on math, so I had to get tutoring every night during lecture.

I didn't know it then, but she started noticing I didn't understand anything about living in an Asian-Buddhist community, from social etiquette to the order of respect. So she took her time out to explain every minor detail to me. Because of that, over time, I began to notice and understand the efforts people were putting into helping me become a better person, which then also fueled my drive to study. That set me on a path where after leaving, I met long-lasting friends and mentors, went to UCLA on a scholarship, studied abroad, and was exposed to countless opportunities.

Being in college, I realized that DVGS well-prepared me to be a functioning member of society... This is a little ironic because all throughout high school, many of my classmates and I felt that we were isolated from the real world. When teachers would talk to us about the benefits of our lifestyle or reprimand us using our future's stability as the reason, we would retort, "What do they know about the world? They live here." In actuality, being in a community taught me to live with others and comprehend human nature.

When a friend was upset with me for being too loud as she studied, I understood consideration. When grades came out, I learned about pride and jealousy. When every action had an



A Shramana asked the Buddha, "What is the greatest strength? What is the utmost brilliance?"

The Buddha said, "Patience under insult is the greatest strength, because people who are patient do not harbor hatred, and they gradually grow more peaceful and strong. Patient people, since they are not evil, will surely gain the respect of others.

"When the mind's defilements are gone completely, so that it is pure and untainted, that is the utmost brilliance. When there is nothing, from before the formation of the heavens and the earth until now, in any of the ten directions that you do not see, know, or hear; when you have attained omniscience, that may be called brilliance."

—The Sutra In Forty-two Sections

驕傲與嫉妒；每一件事情發生，無論後果好的或是壞的，都讓我看到人我相互依存的關係。我認識了什麼東西對我有害，什麼會讓我開心，我為什麼會生氣，以及我應該要相信自己。這裏的生活奠定我穩固的道德基礎，也讓我對自己的品德有了信心。當然，這也有它的缺陷和不足。

例如剛進大學時，有個朋友邀我去參加一個吸毒派對，另一個人則要替我準備一張假身份證，這樣我就可以喝酒。當時我拒絕了，結果大多數的朋友就不再與我往來。於是從那時開始，我就明白選擇對於我將來人生的影響，遠比我在高中時期所做的決定更為關鍵。我結識了有類似興趣的新朋友，或者說是同樣地（對毒品等）沒有興趣的朋友，從而使我能夠成為更好的人。

我也開始投入社區服務及志願工作。這類工作經常要跟人群共事，因此誤解誤傳以及混亂失序的情況在所難免，所以都得學會應付這些。令我驚訝的是，當年在女生宿舍跟一群青春期的女孩共住的那些經驗，幫我能迎刃而解這些問題。

大學的生活和學業成績日漸步入軌道，乃至最後學成畢業。即將畢業之際，我檢視自己一路走來的點點滴滴，於是決定回到當初開始的地方，貢獻所學。

剛回來女校服務，感覺自己好像又回到了高中時代。每天早上依然是跑著去參加升旗，因為我負責宣佈事情；我跟著學校的時間作息，每晚也要強迫自己去上晚課。但和以前不一樣的是，現在是懷著感恩心做這些事。環顧四周的景物，令我想起這裏的每一位老師都是充滿善心和好意，這裏的每一位學生都盡全力（或者總有一天會）做到最好。我也想起這是一所義務學校，意味著每位老師是不求回報地付出，唯一的收穫就是學生豁然貫通時的快樂，以及有機會為這個學校盡棉薄之力。我很幸運能擁有勤奮的學生，隨著時間一週一週的過去，我看到了她們的進步，也令我想更努力給她們最好的回饋。

但是說實話，開始教書的頭幾個月我內心有個極大的掙扎。當決定要回女校擔任義務老師時，我並沒有聯想到是回到萬佛城，只覺得是再回去學校。平常我

effect, negative or positive, I learned that we're all connected at the core. I learned what hurt me and what made me laugh, why I became angry and to trust myself. This built security and confidence in my morals and ethics. But it had its drawbacks.

When I entered college, a friend asked me to go to a party with drugs, another offered a fake ID so I could drink, and I said no. I thus lost connection with most of my friends and realized from then on, my decisions would impact my life much more than they did in high school. I made new friends with similar interests or rather, disinterests, that pushed me to be the best I could be.

I started to be involved in my community and volunteer, but that meant working with groups of human beings. This naturally led to a lot of miscommunication and chaos and I had to figure out how to communicate. Surprisingly, it came naturally as I pulled from my experiences living with a dorm full of adolescent girls.

My life and academics slowly started falling into place and I eventually made it to graduation. Nearing graduation and reflecting on my journey to that point, I decided to come back to volunteer at the place where it all started.

Being at the girls school is sometime like being back in high school. I still run to flag ceremony in the morning because I have an announcement to make, I follow the school schedule, and I still have to force myself to go to the evening recitation. Except this time, I do it with gratitude. I look around and remember that every teacher has good intentions and every student is trying their best (or will eventually) to be the best version of them they can be. I remember that we're a volunteer-based school, meaning the teachers are doing it for literally nothing in return, except the joy of getting their instructions across and the chance to give to the community. I've personally been very fortunate to have diligent students and as the weeks pass, I've noticed their improvements. These aspects cause me to want to work hard in return.

However, in all honesty, these first months have been an incredible struggle. When I decided to volunteer at the school, I didn't take into account that I was coming back to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas; I saw it as coming back to the school. It

很容易忘記這兩者其實是同一件事，唯有在佛殿上晚課才提醒了我，自己是住在道場裏。我面臨許多壓力，包括備課的壓力、批改學生作業成績的壓力，還要儲備足夠精力去應付這群女孩兒，再加上要適應聖城的生活，很多畢業校友都開玩笑說這壓力可不輸給外面的工作。

儘管每天和許多人一起共事，但我還是開始感到孤獨和寂寞，因為沒有同齡的工作夥伴。有學生問我：「妳懷念在洛杉磯的生活嗎？」一股絕望的感覺油然而生，但我還是回答她們：「嗯，還好啦！」雖然如此，我還是很感恩這些挫折，因為它們讓我想起那些曾經幫助過我的人。當我還是一個懶惰、叛逆的學生時，她們依然用耐心和愛心對待我，總使他們自己也有一堆問題要處理。於是我領悟到，學校是一個幫助我修行的好地方，但我卻沒有好好善用它。

我以前認為，「我為什麼要成為一個更優秀的人？我並不想這麼做。」有一位老師告訴我這是很自私的想法，現在我同意她的說法。人們到這裏的目的都希望改變自己，成為更好的人，同時也幫助世界其他的人更進步。既然如此，身為這個團體的一份子，我們都有責任更上一層樓。這就是我想到要努力的原因。



is very easy to set the two aside as the only thing that reminds me I'm in a Buddhist monastery is evening ceremony. I battled the stress of preparing for classes, grading, having enough energy for the girls, and transitioning back into the City, which many of our alumni joke as being a job in itself.

And despite being around so many people a day, I started to feel extremely lonely without anyone my age. Students would ask, "Do you miss LA?" and immediately, I would think with desperation, "Yes. So so much." But I can appreciate the downs because they remind me of the dedication of those in my adolescence. It reminds me that when I was a lazy, rebellious student, so many people addressed it with patience and compassion, although they had their own issues. And that was when I realized how the school is a great setting for cultivation and I wasn't taking advantage of it.

I thought to myself, "What do you mean I have to become a better person? I don't want to." A teacher pointed out to me that that is the ego speaking and I now agree. Everyone is here to better ourselves and those in the world and we all have a part to play—that's what.



悌

兄道友，弟道恭，兄弟睦，孝在中。
財物輕，怨何生，言語忍，忿自泯。
或飲食，或坐走，長者先，幼者後。
長呼人，即代叫，人不在，己先到。
稱尊長，勿呼名，對尊長，勿見能。
路遇長，疾趨揖，長無言，退恭立。
騎下馬，乘下車，過猶待，百步餘。
長者立，幼勿坐，長者坐，命乃坐。
尊長前，聲要低，低不聞，卻非宜。
事諸父，如事父，事諸兄，如事兄。

——《弟子規》

FRATERNITY

The way of an older brother should be gentle, just as younger brother should be respectful. If brothers and sisters get along harmoniously, then it is clear they know how to be filial. If we do not think of wealth as important, how could resentment arise. When words are both gentle and patient, bad feelings will naturally disappear. While eating or drinking, or when walking or sitting. Let those who are older go first, the younger ones should follow behind. If an elder is looking for someone, we should look for that person for him. If the person they want is not there, we should first respond to the call. In speaking to those who are older, use the proper terms of respect. When facing our teachers and elders, do not show off or try to look smart. If we meet an elder on the road, we should quickly approach him and bow. If the elder does not speak to us, we should respectfully stand aside. When we riding on a horse or in a carriage and meet an elder walking on the road, we should get down from the horse or carriage to greet him. Having waited until the elder has passed us more than a hundred steps, we can then go on. When an older person is standing, the young ones should not take a seat. We should wait till the elder is seated, and sit down only when we are told. When talking in front of our elders, we should lower our voice. But to speak so low that no one can hear us is not the appropriate way. We should serve all our uncles as respectfully as we serve our own fathers. We should be as friendly with our older cousins as we are with our own older brothers.

—“Standards for Students”

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