

# Unlocking the Lock of Ignorance

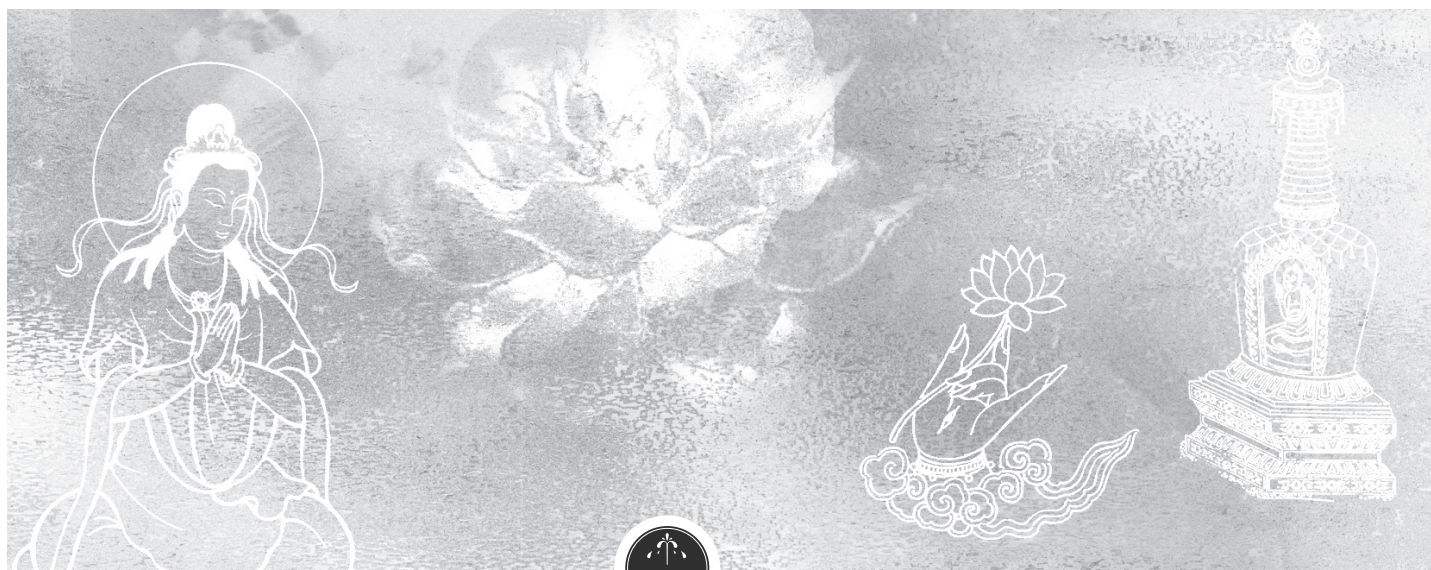
## 打開無明鎖

A Talk by Susan Rounds at the CTTB Buddha Hall on April 23, 2015

Chinese Translation by Elaine Jiang

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Tonight I'm going to share with you some of the things I've learned from my practice of reciting Guan Yin Bodhisattva. This has been my practice since I became a Buddhist over 40 years ago. I still consider myself a beginner so I hope that everyone will consider my remarks in that light. My name is Sue Rounds, I became a disciple of the Venerable Master in 1974. My husband and I lived at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas for a number of years. I've worked in the schools here and am now the president of Dharma Realm Buddhist University.

What are benefits of the practice of being mindful of Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva? Of course there are many benefits and I will only speak about a few of them tonight that are from my own experience. Even then, I am not speaking about all the benefits that I myself, have personally experienced.

In the *Twenty-Five Sages Speak of Enlightenment Chapter of the Shurangama Sutra*, the dharma prince Great Strength Bodhisattva explains being in tune with Guan Yin Bodhisattva like this: Consider someone who is always thinking of another person. This second person though, has completely forgotten about the first person. Even if these two people were to meet, they might as well not have met. And even if they catch sight of one another, they might as well have not seen each other. But consider two other people who always have each other in mind, so much so that they

今晚我想和大家分享個人持誦觀音菩薩聖號的一些故事。身為佛弟子，40年來我一直都是持觀音菩薩的聖號。現在依然把自己當成一個初入門的人，我希望大家也這麼來看我。我的名字叫蘇珊·朗德，1974年皈依上人座下。我和我同修曾經在萬佛城住了若干年，我為這裏的學校服務，現在是法界佛教大學的校長。

持觀世音菩薩的聖號到底有什麼好處呢？當然有很多的好處，我這裏只是說少少的一部分，這部分是基於我個人的體驗。就算這樣，我也沒有辦法將我個人體驗的全部好處表達出來。

要持誦觀音菩薩，就要像《楞嚴經》裏二十五聖圓通章所講，大勢至法王子說：「譬如有人，一專為憶，一人專忘；如是二人，若逢不逢，或見非見。二人相憶，二憶念深，如是乃至從生至生，同於形影，不相乖異。若眾生心，憶佛念佛，現前當來，必定

will be in lifetime after lifetime as a man in his shadow. In the same way beings who are always mindful of the Buddha, always thinking of the Buddha are certain to see the Buddhas now or in the future. They will never be far from the Buddhas.

The Venerable Master explained it more than once by making an analogy to a radio. Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva is always broadcasting but if we don't have our radio on, we can't receive the signal. So one of the benefits of recitation, of being mindful of Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva, is that we bring ourselves into Guan Yin Bodhisattva's neighborhood. Isn't that a wonderful place to be?

Another benefit of recitation is that it helps to focus the mind. Have you noticed in today's world, no matter where you are, if you are out among people, almost every person you see is doing at least two things at once. What are they doing? They are walking and they are looking at their phones. I even saw someone circumambulating during the Guan Yin Session just a week or so ago, checking her phone as she walked around the Buddha Hall.

In today's world, people are very, very busy, rushing around and doing many things. I noticed that many people are proud of their ability to multi-task. They say I can do several things at the same time. They might check their email on the phone and at the same time they're chatting with a friend and in their mind they're planning a meeting agenda and maybe they're thinking what they'll have for dinner.

I wonder what it would be like if instead of being obsessed with multitasking we focused on "tasking" instead. That is, doing one thing and giving it our undivided attention. In fact, there's research that shows people who think they are being super efficient by doing many things at once are actually much less efficient than they think. The researcher who studied this says that we are in the midst of the culture of distraction.

Practicing the recitation of Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name is a way of working toward that single-minded focus and calm. I have always loved the phrase from the Amitabha Sutra that speaks the benefits of reciting Amitabha's name for seven days with one heart unconfused. In my own life, I have found that reciting Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name helps me get closer to that clear, calm place of single-minded concentration.

Not getting caught by the thorns – I recently told a friend who was going through a difficult time agonizing in her mind about a dilemma that I thought thinking sometimes, was overrated. Now this may seem like a strange comment from someone who has been an educator all her life. Particularly now that I am the president of DRBU, where some very serious thinking and learning is going on in the classrooms every day.

Let me explain what I mean by my comment. Of course thinking is important; our ability to think, to reason, to consider and be thoughtful about issues, to solve problems, to discover new things, to study and

見佛，去佛不遠。」

上人在解釋這一段時，多次用「收音機」來打比方。觀世音菩薩一直在廣播，但如果我們不把我們的收音機打開，我們就不能接收到信號。持誦憶念觀世音菩薩的一個好處，就是讓自己成為觀世音菩薩的鄰居，這豈不是住到一個很妙的地方？

持名的另外一個益處，就是能夠幫助我們專心。有沒有注意到當今社會，無論你在哪裏，只要置身人群中，就可以看到幾乎每一個人都在同時至少做兩件事。他們在做什麼呢？他們一邊走路，一邊看手機。上周觀音法會期間，我甚至看到有人在佛殿一邊繞念，一邊查看她的手機。

現今的社會，大家都非常非常忙碌，忙著做很多的事情。我留意到很多人都很自豪他們可以同時做多件事。他們說：我可以在同一時間做好幾件事。他們也許一邊在手機上查郵件，一邊和朋友聊天，同時他們腦子裏還在盤算著會議計劃，或者想著他們的晚餐。

我在想，如果我們不以散亂心，同時做很多件事，而是專注的做一件事，會怎麼樣？做一件事的時候，我們全神貫注。研究顯示人們同一時間做很多事，自以為很有效率，事實上，結果遠遠不像他們想的那麼有效率。進行研究的人表示，我們現今活在一個很分心的文化當中。

持觀世音菩薩的聖號，可以幫助我們一心不亂和平靜。我很喜歡《彌陀經》裏講的，「聞說阿彌陀佛，執持名號，若一日，若二日，至七日，一心不亂」的好處。生活當中，我發現持觀世音菩薩聖號，可以幫助我的心變得澄靜、平和，可以越來越接近一心不亂的境界。

「不要被刺絆住」——我最近對一位朋友這麼說，這位朋友很苦惱，處在一個兩難的困境中。我覺得有時候我們的思考被高估了，從我這個人一生從事教育的人嘴裏說出這句話，好像很奇怪，而且現在我又是法大校長，我們在課堂裏每天都在很認真的思考和學習。

這裏我想解釋一下這句話，當然思考是很重要的，我們能夠去想、去推論、思維、關注事物、解決問題、發現新事物、向偉大的老師學習，這些都是上天賦予人類很有價值的一部分。

同時我們也會有可能困在一種思維模式裏。如果這樣，思考不但沒有幫助，甚至會有害處。如

learn from great teachers; all of this is a very valuable part of being human.

It is also possible for a thinking mind to get caught up in a kind of thinking that I have found to be not helpful, in fact even harmful. If you have ever been at CTTB during blackberry season and you have gone out to pick blackberries when they are ripe and juicy, you perhaps have experienced that urge to reach just one more berry that is hanging very, very high up on a branch but just so close. Before you know it, you find the leg of your trousers is caught in a blackberry thorn. And when you reach to untangle it, your sleeve gets tangled as well. Before you know it you are hopelessly entangled and it takes great patience and persistence to get yourself free.

I have found that my mind can get entangled in thorns like this when I indulge in certain kinds of thinking. Thinking that stems from the persistence of the three poisons – anger, desire, delusion or greed, hatred and stupidity. If I can catch myself indulging in those kinds of thinking and instead begin to recite the name of Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva, I can begin to free my mind from those brambles, thickets and thorns. Here are some examples of thorns I can find myself caught on.

One kind of thorn is fretting or worrying about the future – either about something that's going to happen very soon or something that may happen in the distant future. Sometimes we might find ourselves thinking repeatedly about something that is about to happen. We may construct elaborate scenarios in our minds of what might happen or what we wish will happen or what we're afraid will happen.

We may think out a scenario A and then plan what we will do if that scenario comes to pass. And then we go on to construct scenario B and start to plan for that one in case scenario A doesn't happen.

Here is an example from my own life. For many years, I was the administrator of a teaching credential program. Every spring, I placed student teachers in schools around Mendocino and Lake Counties. These student teachers work closely with the classroom teachers for a whole semester with mentoring from Dominican University supervisors.

Usually these situations worked out very well, but sometimes a student teacher would be performing unsatisfactorily. For example, by not doing adequate planning or by not maintaining control of the class or by not working in a cooperative fashion with his or her directing teacher or by not taking suggestions of his Dominican supervisor.

One spring I received a call from the supervisor who was teaching in a high school classroom in Kelseyville, a town in Lake County about an hour's drive from Ukiah. This student was apparently managing to be unsatisfactory in almost every possible way. The teacher was on the verge of asking us to remove the student from her classroom.

I was asked to go out to Kelseyville and moderate a meeting between the student, the classroom teacher and the Dominican supervisor. Situations like this were amongst the most difficult and unpleasant that I had to deal with in that job. My first thought as I began to prepare for the hour long drive to Kelseyville, was that I should try to organize my mind around what

果您曾經在萬佛聖城的黑莓季節採摘過成熟多汁的黑莓，你也許有過這樣的經驗。有一個黑莓高高的掛在某個離你很近的枝幹上，你構著採摘的時候，不知不覺褲腳就被黑莓的刺絆住，當你想清除這些刺時，衣袖又陷進去了。就算是花上很大的耐心與毅力，都還是很難脫身。

我發現自己在想某些事情的時候，就像上面說的這種情形，很容易像被刺纏繞。這種「想」是源於三毒，就是瞋、欲、癡，或者稱為貪、瞋、癡。如果我能及時發現這些刺，並開始持誦觀世音菩薩，我就可以把自己的思維從這種荊棘、刺中釋放出來。以下是一些我被刺卡住的案例。

有一種刺，就是擔心、焦慮未來。要不是擔心某件即將發生的事情，就是擔心很久以後可能發生的事情。有時候我們會反覆思量將要發生的事情，也許在心中編造出可能發生的情節，或是我們希望發生的，或者害怕發生的情節。

我們會想著某個情節，開始計劃如果這個情節發生了該如何處理。然後我們又開始琢磨，如果第一個情節沒有發生的話，那第二個情節是怎麼樣，接著計劃第二個情節的應對方案。

我自己有個親身體驗，我擔任教師認證項目主任很多年。每天春天，我將實習老師安排在曼都仙諾郡和湖郡的學校。一整個學期，這些實習老師會和課堂教師，以及多明尼肯大學的導師一起工作。

一般情況下都會很順利，但也有些時候實習老師表現不太令人滿意。比方說，沒有做好充足的計劃，或是對課堂的控制力不夠，或是和他的課堂教師不是很合作，又或者沒有採納多明尼肯大學導師的意見。

一年春天，我接到導師的電話，這個導師在湖郡的小城——凱西維爾高中教書。那裏離瑜伽市大概一個小時的車程。這次的實習老師顯然各方面都無法讓大家滿意。所以課堂教師幾乎是打算不再讓實習老師留在她班上。

他們要求我到凱西維爾，去主持與實習老師、課堂教師和多明尼肯大學導師的會議。

I would say at the meeting and what the possible ramifications might be.

Fortunately I recognized the thorn and I pulled my sleeve away. I decided instead to recite Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name all the way to Kelseyville. For the next hour, every time my recitation began to falter and the fretting mind wanted to take over, I plowed ahead with my recitation.

When I got to the meeting and we began to talk, I discovered the concerns that seemed so insurmountable were able to be resolved. The teacher agreed to keep the student in her classroom, we agreed on the steps he would need to take and he was able to successfully complete his assignment and receive his teaching credential.

I am not telling this story to claim that because I recited Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name that the Bodhisattva intervened in this situation to fix it but I can attest to the fact that my recitation gave me calm, clear focus and serenity of mind so that when I went into the meeting, my mind was not full of negative emotions of fear or worry or anxiety. Therefore I was able to hold the meeting space in a calm and peaceful way so that we could all come to a reasonable and equitable solution.

We should use our thinking mind when it is useful and helpful to us. When it starts to get us stuck in the thorns, we can use our recitation to give our thinking mind a much needed rest.

The Venerable Master once said, "Reciting Guan Yin's name is analogous to unlocking a door." We are locked in the prison of our ignorance and Guan Yin's name is the key to the prison's door. Each time we recite it, the lock of ignorance opens up a little. The more we recite, the more the lock opens. ❀

這個對我來說是工作上最難處理，也最不愉快的狀況。在準備去凱西維爾的時候，首先想到的是儘量理清我的思緒，想想在會上要說什麼，有哪些是可能衍生的問題。

很幸運的是我意識到這根刺，並且把我的衣袖拉開。我決定不去多想，一路上我要念觀世音菩薩。那一個小時車程，每當我開始分心或者焦慮的時候，我都會把自己拉回來繼續念誦。

到了開會的地方，大家開始談，我發現原來似乎很棘手的問題，變得可以解決。課堂教師同意將實習老師繼續留在她班上，我們制訂出實習老師接下來要採取的步驟，讓他可以完成功課，並且最終取得他的教師證照。

我講這個故事，並不是要說，因為我念觀世音菩薩，所以菩薩幫我扭轉了不好的局面，幫我解決了問題。我想說念誦觀音菩薩讓我有一個平靜、清晰的心境。到了會議現場，我就不會充滿了恐懼、擔憂、焦慮等負面情緒。所以我才能平和地主持會議，讓大家一起合理公平地解決問題。

當我們的識心可以幫助我們時，我們要好好運用它。當識心讓我們陷入荊棘之中時，我們可以藉著念誦，讓識心停下來獲得必要的休息。

上人曾說，念誦觀世音菩薩就好比開一扇門。我們被關在無明煩惱的監獄裏，觀音菩薩聖號是一把鎖匙，可以打開這個監獄的門。每次我們念誦的時候，無明鎖就會開一點，念誦越多，鎖就開得越多。❀



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