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# Stay Unsettled

DRBU Convocation Speech by Martin Verhoeven, Ph.D.  
Dean of Academics, DRBU on August 18, 2015  
Chinese Translation by Chin-Ben Ling and Chin-Xi Ma

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I would like to welcome you all to convocation; the beginning of another year of learning and exploring. I hope you have settled in a bit by now—with the dorms, dining and campus layout. But do not get too settled, because now the real work begins: getting unsettled.

We say in our mission statement that “Dharma Realm Buddhist University is a community dedicated to liberal education in the broad Buddhist tradition....” This means getting unsettled. Why? Because, as our mission goes on to say, we believe:

*...that students possess a latent capacity for understanding and that education serves as a catalyst that helps precipitate and release knowledge*

歡迎大家參加今天的開學典禮。值此學習和探索開始之際，希望你們在膳宿生活、校園環境等各方面都初步安頓好。但是不能太過安定了，因為真正的工作現在才開始，那就是：不安定。

在我們的教學目標中提到：「法界佛教大學致力於佛教傳統中的博雅教育。」這正意味著要不安定。為什麼？正如目標中繼續闡述的，我們相信：

……學生們具有潛在的理解能力，教育則是一種催化劑，幫助學生將知識沉澱，然後釋放到主動覺知中。而要開發這本有的能力，則需要特種傾向

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# 保持不安定

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2015年8月18日開學典禮講詞

凌親本、馬親喜 中譯

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*into active awareness. Developing this inherent capacity requires an orientation toward learning that is dialogical, interactive, probing, and deeply self-reflective.*

This is just another way of saying, “Get ready to settle into a few years of being unsettled.” Because one does not so much ‘get an education’ but lets an education get you. A real liberal arts education is not a commodity or something you acquire outside and take possession of. Rather it is a process of inquiry that takes possession of you. It tugs, pushes, prods, stirs you up. In a word, ‘unsettles.’ One of the ‘teachers’ you will be studying, Ralph Waldo Emerson, put it this way, “People wish to be settled. Only insofar as they are unsettled is there any hope for them.”

This kind of learning involves knowledge of the larger world all around us, and more importantly, insights into the knower him or herself. This is why another teacher you will be exposed to, Socrates, exhorted his students to “know thyself.” Why? Maybe because we only know that external world through this—our own minds. We cannot know that without knowing this. And to know this, to know

的學習，那就是一種對話式、互動式、探索式，以及深刻自我反省的學習。

也就是說，「要準備着進入幾年的不安定」，因為你不是去獲得某種教育，而是讓某種教育來刺激你。真正的博雅教育，不是從外面獲得佔有的一項商品或者東西；相反的，是一個探詢的過程，這個過程佔據著你，拉你、推你、擠你、刺激著你。換句話說，就是「不安定」。

這種學習，涵涉我們周圍廣大世界的知識；但更重要的是，要洞悉那個知者——他（她）自己。這就是為什麼你們要認識另一位老師——蘇格拉底，他告誡他的學生：「認識你自己。」為什麼？或許因為唯有通過自己的心，才能瞭解外在的世界；不知「此」（自己的心），就不能知「彼」（外在的世界）。然而，真要瞭解「此」，也就是認識自己，這比看起來要困難得多，因為你必須願意去刺探你所認為的「自己」。這也就是為什麼蘇格拉底總是不讓他的學生安於現狀。

蘇格拉底說，我們的目標就是認識自己。他接著說，如果



oneself, is a lot harder than it might seem. You have to be willing to probe into who you think you are, and that's why Socrates unsettled his students.

Socrates said the goal is to know yourself. Then he followed that by saying that if you don't explore this, you're living an unexamined life, and the unexamined life is not worth living. This unsettling of people made him a great teacher and also an irritant. In fact he was called a gadfly, like a bug that buzzes around and bugs people with all these questions.

This morning I was thinking back to my childhood when my sister really began a Socratic method by asking me what I was going to be when I grew up. I wasn't smart enough to answer at the time so I was just dumbstruck. But I thought about it this morning, and I could have said, "Well what's so great about being grown-up?" I mean if you're only born to die and get sick why would you want to grow up? Can't I just grow, without growing up? Or can't I just be, without having to be something? Ah.... Isn't being something an end to growing? And.... If I stop growing, what's the point of being?

A lot of questions could arise if you really started to think about things. Maybe these are the kind of questions you may have asked yourself or are wrestling with. I've been doing it for almost seventy years now, and I don't have all of the answers. Every time a question seems to get answered another takes it place—one that's even more interesting. You could call this perplexity or maybe 'wonder.'

I think it was Laozi who said, "I seem as unsettled as the ocean, blown adrift, never brought to a stop.... But from wonder to wonder, existence opens." This idea of being unsettled, of having doubt is part of our tradition—it's healthy doubt; it's constructive doubt; it's not destructive doubt. There's a saying in the Chan tradition: "If you have small doubt, you'll have a small awakening; if you have great doubt, you'll have a great awakening; if you have no doubt, there's no awakening."

不去探究此事，這意味你正過著一種毫無自省的生活，而欠缺自省的生活是毫無價值的。蘇格拉底的這種「令人不安」，使他成為一位偉大的導師，但也是個令人討厭的傢伙。事實上，他自比為「牛虻」，也就是一隻在你身邊嗡嗡作響的飛蟲，用盡所有問題來打擾人。

今天早晨我回憶起自己的童年，當我妹妹用蘇格拉底方式問我，「你長大了想做什麼」時，當時的我還不夠聰明來回答這個問題，因此只能目瞪口呆。但是今早我想了一下，覺得可以這樣說：「那麼長大有什麼大不了的？」我的意思是，

如果你生下來之後就一定會死或者生病，那為什麼還要長大？我能不能只是長，而不長大？或者我能不能只是存在，而不一定要成為某種人？成為某種人，就是成長的終點嗎？如果我停止成長，存在又有什麼意義？

如果你真正開始動腦筋思考，那麼很多問題就會接踵而來。你可能已經問過自己這些問題，或者你正努力思考它們。我一直在做這件事，幾乎七十年了，我並沒有全部的答案。每當一個問題似乎有了答案，立刻又有一個甚至更有趣的問題冒出來。你可以稱之為「困惑」，或可稱之為「玄」。我想這正是老子所形容的：「恍兮其若海，恍兮其若無所止」、「玄之又玄，眾妙之門」。禪宗裏有一句話：「小疑小悟，大疑大悟，不疑不悟。」

這種抱持疑問、不安於現狀的概念，也是我們所信仰

的一部分。這種懷疑是健康的、建設性的，而不是破壞性的懷疑。

所以，如果觀察這些大師以及他們所遵循的，你會發現他們無一例外地主張問問題，然後再提出建設性質問。這種反覆的詰問，最終將發掘出我們的真心和自性。我看到你們穿的T恤，這件T恤上寫的什麼呢？入法界。你們討論過這個了嗎？你知道這是關於誰嗎？不知





So if you look at these great teachers and what they were following, all of them proposed a method of asking questions and constructively doubting; and that was the rubbing that brought out your true mind and your true nature. So I saw on the t-shirts. The t-shirts say what? “Entering the Dharma Realm.” Did you talk about that? So you know who it’s about? No? Well, it’s about you, of course.

Technically, it’s about a pure good youth called Good Wealth, Sudhana in Sanskrit, who was seeking for real truth and for a real understanding into the deep nature of things, the true nature of reality, which is what the Dharma Realm means. So the ‘entering’ is just exploring and discovering; and the ‘dharma realm’ is the true nature of reality, and your own true nature. Sudhana wonders, “What is it all about? What does it all mean?” He begins with all these questions, and he goes through a series of fifty-plus teachers seeking answers.

Each teacher sends him on to somebody else. He gets a little bit of an insight from one, but each answer opens to deeper questions. Each provides a piece of the larger puzzle. As he doesn’t get it completely, he goes on and on. Now the interesting thing about his epic quest is that when he completes his journey, he ends up where he started from. He starts with this teacher Manjusri, the Bodhisattva of great wisdom, who sends him off to wander and search; and lo and behold, after fifty-plus teachers, he’s back with Manjusri again. So he circles back. Why?

Well, one way of interpreting this is that Sudhana had the answers all along. They were within him, but he didn’t know it. He didn’t realize it. He was, in a sense, partially asleep. So the advisors didn’t pour anything into him, they pulled it out of him. They drew it out of him, as this is the only thing that could be done—the only method of true education and the goal of real learning.

In fact, the word education, has as one of its roots the latin verb educere, which means to draw forth, to draw out. So the process of education is to pull out those abilities, insights, and awaken capacities within each of us—faculty and students alike.

Now to the reason why it’s unsettling. I’ll just say a little bit about this. I go to the Maine wilderness every summer for total emptying out. When I came back from Maine on this trip, the first place I hit was JFK airport, and the amount of scattered energy and distraction at the airport was just overwhelming. My senses were so inundated that I became almost dizzy, drunk. So I started to think a little bit. When the Buddha and Socrates say we need to be awakened, what do they mean when they say we are asleep? They meant, of course, oblivious, unaware, just going through the motions of living—unreflective, in a dream.

The modern form of being asleep or unawakened, I would

道？當然是關於你的。

理論上，這是關於一位童子的故事，他的名字叫「善財」，梵文是Sudhana。他尋求真理，不停地探索事物深層的真实本性，而這正是「法界」的意思。因此，「入」就是探索和發現，「法界」就是事物的真实本性和你的自性。善財童子思考著：「這是怎麼回事？這是什麼意思？」於是帶著所有這些問題，開始尋訪五十多位老師以找到答案。

每位老師都指引他到另一位老師那兒，善財童子也在每位老師那兒都得到一些領悟，而每次的答案都催生了更深層的問題。每個問題，都是整個大謎題的一小片。由於無法得到完解，於是他鏗而不捨地尋訪、再尋訪。當善財童子完成這段艱難偉大的尋訪，非常有趣的是，旅程的終點正是他當初的起點——他又回到了當初啟發他這段探索的大智文殊師利菩薩。你們看看，尋訪了五十多位老師之後，又回到了文殊菩薩那兒。他又繞回來了，為什麼呢？

那麼有一種解釋是，善財童子自始至終是有答案的，答案就在他那裏；但他自己不知道，他沒有意識到這一點。從某種意義上說，他是暫時睡着了；因此這些老師並沒有灌輸他任何東西，只是將他原本已有的東西激發出來，而這也是他們唯一能做的——真正教育的唯一方法，以及真正學習的目標。

事實上，「教育」這個詞，有一個拉丁動詞詞根educere，意味著去引導、去激發。因此，教育就是把每一個人——包括老師和同學——的潛能、洞察力、覺知力激發出來的一種過程。

現在講講令人不安的原因，我只說一點點。每年夏天，我都會到緬因州的荒野地裏把自己完全放空。當旅行結束從緬因州回來，首先到的是甘迺迪機場；機場散亂的能量和讓人分心的事物勢不可擋，我的感官被淹沒，整個人幾乎暈了、醉了。這也令我想到，當佛陀和蘇格拉底說我們需要被喚醒時，當他們說我們都睡着了，那意味著什麼？當然他們的意思是說，我們就像生活在夢裏，缺乏反省，渾然不知，渾然不覺。

那麼到了現今這個時代，所謂的沉睡或者未醒，我認為就是「分心」。我選擇用這個詞，儘管我們通常不會把分心看作睡覺；相反地，我們把它與過度活躍、過度警覺、忙忙忙、緊抓一切不放這些事情聯想在一起。病態異常地想得到一切，然後卻發

say, is distraction. I'm going to use that word, even though we do not usually think of distraction as asleep. Instead, we associate it with hyperactivity, over-alertness, busy, busy, grasping and taking in everything. A peculiar malaise of wanting everything, but then finding everything we want and get is empty.

Let me share something with you. The poet T. S. Eliot was talking about this nearly 80 years ago and suggested that the biggest obstacle keeping us from being fully human is our distraction. "Distracted from distraction by distraction," was how he put it. We are plagued by distraction, yet cannot cut through it, cannot regain focus, because we try to escape distraction by further distraction. We escape from our prison not by breaking out, but by slipping into a reverie of escapism. "Dreaming within a dream," as the Buddha put it. We're distracted, and we mistakenly think the cause of the distraction will be the cure of distraction. We cannot confront our distraction because we avoid it through further distraction. Wow! This is his line: "We're distracted from distraction by distraction."

So the state of uninterrupted distraction, the modern form of drunk and dreaming is distraction within distraction. We can't address it; we can't untangle it because we're "distracted from our distraction by further distraction." We "live lives of quiet desperation," as Thoreau put it. Meaning and purpose are so elusive. We want to find our way out, to get clear, but we can't focus and concentrate. And why is that? The very devices that rob our concentration stimulate us to want more of these devices: techno-thieves of consciousness.

The thing I saw in the New York airport was all these technological devices that people were tuning into, including the two people on the airplane who asked, "Can we switch seats?" They were husband and wife and wanted to sit together. I thought, "How romantic. I'll give them my seat so they can sit together." They sat down, and they both proceeded to take out their separate devices and mutually play different games on their devices for the whole flight. They never talked to each other. Together yet completely alone; shoulder to shoulder in mutual distraction. It is worth quoting more of T. S. Eliot's poem as it so captures the modern mind, the spirit of the times, and the challenge our program is trying to address. He says:

*Neither plentitude nor vacancy. Only a flicker  
Over the time-ridden faces  
Distracted from distraction by distraction*

現，想要的和得到的一切都是空的。

這裏分享一下詩人托馬斯·斯特爾那斯·艾略特的名句，他在80年前也提到同樣的事，並且認為障礙我們保持完人的最大絆腳石就是分心，正如他說的：「從一個分心（的事情）被分心到另一個分心（的事情）。」我們被分心所困擾，卻無法砍斷它，無法重新集中，因為我們總想藉由進一步的分心，從分心中逃脫出來。我們不是打破牢籠來解脫，而是做迴避現實的白日夢，試圖從這個牢籠裏逃出來，就像佛陀說的：「在夢裏做夢。」我們分心了，而又錯誤地使用導致分心的原因治療分心。我們不能面對自己的分心，因為我們讓自己更分心，好來迴避這個問題。這就是詩人的那句話：「從一個分心，被分心到另一個分心。」

因此，無止盡的分心、現代版的醉酒和睡夢，指的就是分心裏的分心。我們不能應對它，也不能掙脫它，這是因為我們「從一個分心被分心到另一個分心」。正如梭羅說的：「我們生活在平靜的絕望之中。」意義和目標是如此地難以捉摸。我們想找到出路，想弄清楚問題所在，但卻難以專心集中。為什麼會這樣？因為那些奪走我們專注力的設備，正刺激我們想得到更多這樣的設備，所謂：意識的技術竊賊。

當我在紐約機場時，看到的都是使用這些科技玩意的人，包括在飛機上碰到的那兩個。他們問我：「我們能換下座位嗎？」原來他們是一對夫妻，想要坐在一起。我想：「好浪漫啊！我把座位換給他們，這樣他們就可以坐在一起了。」坐下後，他們各自拿出自己的設備，然後各自玩着不同的遊戲。整個飛行過程都是如此，完全沒有彼此間的交談。坐在一起，卻又完全孤獨；肩並肩，又互相分心。這讓我不得不再引用托馬斯·斯特爾那斯·艾略特的詩，因為它如此精準地捕捉到現代人的心，以及這個時代的精神，還有我們課程試圖解決的挑戰。他說：

既非充足也非空虛，  
只有一抹神光  
閃搖在飽經滄桑的臉上  
從一個分心被分心到另一個分心  
充滿了幻想和空洞  
極度冷漠而又無所專注  
冷風勁吹前後，人和紙片在風中迴旋.....

這是破壞性的不安定。而愛默生的建設性的不安定，則是抓住要點，超越分心去尋找內心裏的專注，尋找什麼是寂靜的、什麼是清晰的——什麼才是真的。這也正是我們

*Filled with fancies and empty of meaning  
Tumid apathy with no concentration  
Men and bits of paper, whirled by the cold wind....*

So that's destructive unsettledness. The constructive unsettledness of Emerson is to go into the heart of this and get past distraction to find what is not distracted, what is still and clear in us—what is true. That's really what the program is about. The image that comes to me, because of most of my teachers, and I think this is true perhaps with all of us, is that our faculty (our primary source books and instructors, and spiritual exercises) are gadflies. They're really irritating. In fact, if we do a good job, we too should be somewhat irritating. If you think about it, the pearl which comes in the oyster doesn't start as a pearl. It starts as an irritant: a grain or particle of sand that gets into the oyster. It stirs up the oyster to release these chemicals called nacre, that then form the pearl. So in a sense, what you're doing here is you're comfortably settling into an oyster and then letting the sand in.

This is a precious time. It may be the only time you have to explore and wonder in such creative unsettledness. Really enjoy the opportunity to be bewildered, perplexed, and unsettled. And I'll quote to you why you might do that, because unsettledness is not the desired end, only a means to another end. There's a wonderful passage from Laozi, where he talks about the importance of letting yourself become unsettled and murky. He says, "Become as murky as a troubled stream." And then he asks, "Which of you can assume such murkiness to, in the end, become still and clear?"

Murkiness leads to clarity. Sudhana's search leads right back to where he began. The clarity is right there within the murkiness. Eliot's poem ends with these poignant lines:

*We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.*

So welcome! Good to see you. I think we'll have a great murky time together. ❀



課程所關心的。我所遇的大多數老師，或許連同這裏的每個人、全體的教職員（包括教材書籍、指導員以及靈性修練）都是牛虻，都很令人受不了的。事實上，如果我們好好做的話，我們應該也會具有某種的刺激性。想想，牡蠣裏的那顆珍珠最初並不是珍珠，而是一個外來的異物，也許是一顆沙粒跑進了牡蠣，於是便刺激牡蠣釋放一種稱為「真珠質」的化學物質，然後便形成了珍珠。因此從某種意義上說，你們在這裏要做的事就是，安心地接受牡蠣這個角色，然後讓沙子進來。

這是一段寶貴的時間，這可能是你們唯一一次在如此富有創意的不安定中探索與求知。享受這個機會時，你會茫然、困惑而又不安。讓我引用一段話來說明你為何要這樣做，因為不安定不是追求的終點，只是達到另一目標的一種手段。這裏有一段老子的精采論述，他談到讓自己不安定和疑問迭出的重要性。他說：「混兮，其若濁。」然後他接着問：「孰能濁以靜之徐清？」

濁致清。善財童子的參訪又引導他回到了出發的地方——清，正是在濁裏面。這些深刻的文字，也出現在艾略特詩的結尾裏：

我們將不停止探索  
而我們一切探索的終點  
將是到達我們出發的地方  
並且是生平第一遭知道這地方。

歡迎各位的加入！很開心認識你們，讓我們一起經歷這段美好的擾濁時光。❀