



The Role of Emotions in a Lifetime of Practice

情感，在終身修行中所扮演的角色

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The great contemporary Chan master, Venerable Master Xuyun, revived Chinese Buddhism during a time of great turmoil and difficulty. Even at a young age, he was strict in self-discipline, austere in practice, and displayed an unwavering resolve. The pictures of him show a composed Buddhist monk completely at peace and in control of his senses. But his autobiography shows us another side of him. It shows us a person with very human emotional responses: shame, admiration, profound gratitude, joy, and at times even distress to the point of tears.

These responses raise a question: How did his emotions make sense given the Buddhist teachings that to become free of the cycle of birth and death, one must let go of emotions, often expressed in a four character Chinese phrase, *duàn yù qù ài* (斷欲去愛), literally translated as “cut off desire and cast out love”? Are Venerable Master Xuyun’s experiences inconsistent with the Buddha’s teachings? I will explore this question by investigating: (1) the Buddhist concepts of desire, love, and emotion, (2) the emotional relationships Venerable Master Xuyun left behind when he ran away from home to become a monk, and (3) his later transformation of these relationships—especially his relationship with his parents—through spiritual practice.

當代禪宗泰斗虛雲老和尚在最困苦艱難的時期，復興了中國的佛教。在年輕時，他便自律甚嚴、苦修，並且展現無可動搖的決心。他的法照展現出來的是一位沉穩寂靜的佛教高僧，安詳自在、收攝六根。而他的自序年譜中，卻讓我們看到他的另一面——人性的情緒反應：羞慚、仰慕、由衷的感恩、喜樂、有時因沮喪而涕零。

這些情緒反應，衍生出一個問題——既然佛教的教義教導人們，要跳脫生死輪迴，就必須放下情感，也就是「斷欲去愛」，意思是「斬斷欲望，拋棄情愛」。那麼，老和尚的情緒反應怎麼符合這個道理呢？虛雲老和尚的體驗是否與佛教的教義不相連貫？我將從以下各方面來探討這個問題——1) 佛教理念中的欲望、情愛及情感；2) 當年虛雲老和尚逃家、出家後所遺留下來的感情關係；3) 他之後如何以精神上的修持轉化這些關係——尤其他跟父母之間的關係。

Defining Desire, Love, and Emotions

The first layer of misunderstanding around emotions in Buddhism can be addressed by clarifying the definition of the terms *yù*, “desire,” and *ài*, “love.”¹ In English, these words have a large range of meanings. For instance, the word “desire” can be used when speaking of a desire to seek material gain but might also be used to speak of an aspiration for awakening and goodness. The word “love” can be used to mean a form of lust or universal care for all.

Moreover, “emotion” comes from the Latin *emovere* where *e* (out) + *movere* (move) (Online Etymology Dictionary). Therefore, emotion has the sense of “moving out,” “agitation,” or an internal stirring that is often in contrast to reason and the intellect. In everyday usage, emotions include everything along the spectrum from sorrow and grief to joy and happiness. Hence, all three words point to a broad range of potential meanings.

To address this vagueness, a better translation of *yù* and *ài* might be “craving” and “lust,” which reflects their Sanskrit equivalents, *trṣṇā* and *rāga* more accurately. *Trṣṇā* literally means “thirst” and is introduced by the Buddha in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* as being the origin of *dukkha*, “suffering,” the experience of never being satisfied. He continues to explain that *trṣṇā* takes on three forms: craving for sensual pleasure (*kāma*), existence (*bhava*), or non-existence (*vibhava*) (In the Buddha’s Words 75-78). The first form of craving will be addressed in the discussion on *rāga* later. The second form, craving for existence, feeds the cycle of birth and death as living beings crave for renewed existence in *samsāra*. The last form, craving for non-existence, is a wish for annihilation that rejects existence.²

Rāga, translated as “lust,” is similar to the first *trṣṇā*, “craving sensual pleasure.” At the coarsest level it manifests as sexual desire; at a more subtle level, it refers to an “underlying tendency to lust for pleasurable feeling” (In the Buddha’s Words 31-32). In the *Dart Sutta*, the Buddha compares an ordinary person of the world with a trained noble disciple. After an ordinary person is struck by the first dart (physical pain), he experiences the second dart, (mental suffering and anguish). The noble disciple, on the other hand, although he too

定義欲望、情愛及情感

人們對佛教中情感的第一層誤解，可以先由釐清「欲」及「愛」¹定義來闡明。在英文裏，這些詞彙有很廣泛的意義。譬如，「欲」可以用以表達物質上的追求，也可以是尋求覺醒及善良的意願。「愛」字本身，可以是欲望，也可以是對所有人的普遍關懷。

再者，「emotion」這個字，源於拉丁文的 *emovere*，是 *e* (out出) + *movere* (move移動) 的複合字 (資料來源：網路辭典)。因此，情感有「外移」、「激動」、「內心激盪」之意，而相對於理性及理智。日常使用時，情感的範圍可以從痛苦、傷心到喜悅、快樂的所有情感。因此，這三個詞涵蓋極為廣泛的潛在意義。

為了釐清字義上的模糊，「欲」及「愛」可以更佳地翻譯為“craving” (渴求) 和 “lust” (情慾)，較能正確反映出梵文中的同義字 *trṣṇā* 及 *rāga*。*trṣṇā* 意為「口渴」；在《轉法輪經》中，佛陀引介為痛苦的根源，也就是永不滿足的體驗。他進一步地以三種形式來解釋 *trṣṇā*——對感官享受的渴求 (*kāma*)，對有的渴求 (*bhava*) 及對無的渴求 (*vibhava*) (在佛陀法語 75-78)。第一種形式的渴求將在討論 *rāga* 時闡明。第二種對有的渴求形式造成生死的輪迴週期，因為眾生渴求輪迴重生。最後一種對無的渴求卻是拒絕存在而有斷滅的期望。²

1. In fact, the Chinese words themselves can also be misleading as well. *ài* (愛), similar to “love,” ranges from emotional attachment, to a mother’s care for a child, to unconditional care for humanity. Possibly a reason for the misunderstanding of the term in English coming from the Chinese is because it is already vague in the Chinese.

事實上，中文字本身可能也起了誤導的作用。『愛』相似於『love』，可以是母親對子女的感情依附，也可以是對全人類無條件的關懷。英文中對這個字辭的誤解，也有可能是因為中文本身的字義就很模糊。

2. The Buddha’s teaching that “craving for non-existence” is a cause for suffering is more evidence that he is not teaching that human feeling should be rejected or “cut off.” Instead, he is offering a methodology that leads to freedom that comes from constant mindfulness of internal feelings guided by wisdom.

佛陀教義中——『對無的渴求』是一種痛苦的根源，明顯地教導我們不要排斥或斷絕情感，反而指導我們一種方法，以智慧不斷的觀照內心情感而導向真正的自由。

experiences pain, does not react. According to the Buddha, what makes the noble disciple different is that he experiences the first dart of physical pain without being averse to pain or seeking pleasure and is then not hit by the second dart, the mental afflictions. The real work of cultivation is in the letting go of the underlying tendency of lust.

Speaking of emotions generally, Buddhism broadly categorizes them into two groups: liberating emotions and entangling emotions. For instance, three skillful mental qualities given in Yogācāra clearly have an emotional dimension, such as trust (*śraddhā*), conscience (*hrī*), and sense of shame (*apatrāpya*). The sense of shame that arises when one does harm produces an internal stirring; however, this feeling, although potentially unsettling, is useful feedback and should be heeded and developed. On the other hand, Yogācāra also lists many unskillful mental qualities which are obstacles to spiritual growth, such as lust (*rāga*), hatred (*pratigha*), pride (*māna*), and jealousy (*īrasyā*). These qualities also stir the heart in a way that entangles it in more confusion. Because of this, Yogācāra masters encourage us to let go of them. In Buddhism, then, emotions are to be reflected on with wisdom and cultivated appropriately. General statements such as “all emotions are bad” or, even worse, “all emotions need to be cut off” can lead a practitioner astray thinking that they are supposed to not feel anything.

Renouncing the Family

Leaving the family life to enter the monastic Sangha seems to be the most drastic act of “cutting off” emotions and human relationships. Fundamental relationships, such as those with parents and with spouses and children are torn asunder. Parents grieve; wives lament; children cry. To his family, the aspiring monastic seems cold and heartless. He seems to be abandoning his family to pursue his or her own aspirations. Venerable Master Xuyun is a case in point. At nineteen, he ran away from two wives, a stepmother, and a father, all of whom were deeply attached to him.

From Chinese society’s perspective, Venerable Master Xuyun’s decision to leave home is unfilial

Rāga 譯成情慾，類似第一種渴求感官享受的 *trṣṇā*。最粗略地說，就是性慾；較微細地來說，是一種慾求愉悅感受的基本傾向（佛法語31–32）。在 *Dart Sutta* 《飛鏢經》中，佛陀將世界上一個平凡的人跟一個受過訓練的貴族弟子作比較。在平凡的人被射第一鏢後（身體疼痛），又體驗到第二鏢（精神上的痛苦及鬱悶）。另一方面，雖然貴族弟子也感受到痛，但沒有反應。根據佛陀所說，貴族弟子之所以不同，在於雖然他受到第一鏢的身體疼痛，但是他沒有規避疼痛，或尋求愉悅，所以不為心靈煩擾的第二鏢所中。真正的修行在於放下情慾的基本傾向。

一般來說，佛教廣泛地將情感分成兩大類——釋放情感及糾結情感。譬如在瑜伽行的教法中，三種善心所有清楚的情感分野，如信心、良心及慚愧心。當人做了損害之事，產生慚愧心而激盪內心；這種激盪雖然有潛在性的不安，但卻是有益的回饋，應該聽取、令其衍生。另一方面，瑜伽行也列出很多阻礙心性成長的惡心所，如情慾、忿恨、驕傲及嫉妒。這些心所法攪亂人的心性，並使人在迷惑中更加糾結。因此，瑜伽行的大師們鼓勵我們放下這些惡法。佛教則教導我們以智慧迴光返照情感、適切地用以修行。一般性的說法如「所有的情感都是不好的」，或更糟的說法如「須斷絕所有的情感」，則會誤導修行人，誤以為他們應該沒有任何情感。

出家

離開俗家，出家修行似乎是斷絕情感及人際關係中最猛烈的行為。跟父母、配偶及子女的基本人際關係由此四分五裂。父母傷心、妻子悲嘆、子女哭泣。對家人來說，這個有抱負的修行人好似冷漠無情。他好像背棄自己的家人，來追求自己的志願。虛雲老和尚正是一個很好的例子。他十九歲時離開兩位妻子、繼母及父親，而這些人都深深地依戀他。

以中國傳統社會的角度來看，虛雲老和尚出家的決定是很不孝順、不負責任的。他沒有履行做兒子的責任，尤其是沒有傳宗接代。他沒有考慮他妻子們的情感需求，並在妻子們非常年輕的時候就離開她們，也沒有留下任何子嗣——他跟她們沒有任何親密關係，而保持完全獨身（虛雲老和尚自述年譜英譯，虛雲22）。十九歲時，虛雲老和尚擁有一切，所有的外在指標，皆顯示了他是位成功人士。



and irresponsible. He did not fulfill his responsibilities as a son, especially that of carrying on the family line. He did not care for the emotional needs of his wives, but left them at a very young age without bearing them any children—he had no intimate relationships with them, but remained completely celibate (Empty Cloud: The Autobiography of the Chinese Zen Master, Hsu Yun 22). At nineteen, Venerable Master Xuyun was completely provided for by his family and displayed all the external signs of worldly success. He was smart and intelligent, belonged to a wealthy household, and had two wives of good family, but he left it all to become a monk. He clearly had a different set of values. These values can be seen in Venerable Master Xuyun's poem for his wives when he left them at nineteen:

Once there is birth, death then will follow; everyone knows this.

Why moan and gripe?

For wives and riches,

for heir and fortune, you ruin your future.

It's all due to anger and greed.

For what sort of profit,

for what kind of fame have I wasted nineteen springs? [...]

Much more should we, in the Dharma's demise,

Fraught with anguish and difficulties,

Now strive to be like those of old

in search of our enlightenment.

(Song of the Skin Bag BTTS Translation)

他聰慧伶俐，來自富裕的家庭，有著兩位來自門當戶對的妻子。但他毅然放下一切，出家做了和尚。很顯然地，他有一套很不同的價值觀。這些價值觀可以從他19歲離開妻子時，留給她們的一首詩中窺見——

有了生。必有死。人人曉得莫嘖呻。

為妻財。為子祿。誤了前程是貪瞋。

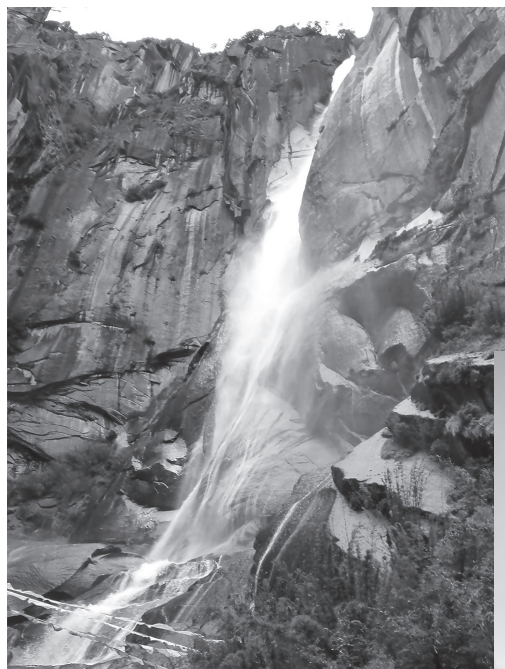
為甚名。為甚利。虛度光陰十九春。

[...]

況末劫。甚艱苦。如何不悟古人比。

(皮袋歌，佛經翻譯委員會)

上面這段文顯示出老和尚出家的動機——1) 對生命無常的認知；2) 世俗的成就（財富、名譽、婚姻）是毫無意義的看法；3) 效仿古德並激勵他人學習古德的願望。他並不是為了擯棄他的妻子或家人而出家，而是面對眼前世間的流逝性和不滿足感，他要尋求解脫。某方面來說，他是為了妻子們最終的幸福著想。別離是生活中的事實，畢竟有生



The above passages show the motivations for his departure: 1) a recognition of the impermanence of life; 2) a feeling that worldly success (wealth, fame, marriage) was meaningless; and 3) a wish to emulate the ancient sages and inspire others to do likewise. He was not leaving the household in order to reject his wives or family, but instead, saw the fleeting and unsatisfactory nature of worldly existence and wanted to find a way out. In a way, he was looking out for their ultimate well-being. Separation is a fact of life; where there is birth, there is death. But he wanted to find a way out, and he left a poem for his wives hoping that they will seek liberation as well.

Oftentimes a different cultural perspective sheds light on some hidden assumptions within another cultural framework. Compared to traditional Chinese society, modern America values give children much more freedom and independence in choosing their path in life. The expectation that kids will live out their parents' dreams and carry on the "family line" is much less. Deborah Metcalf, the mother of an American Buddhist monk, Rev. Heng Sure, writes in an article about her son: "I know he will never marry or give me grandchildren, which is

就有死。但是他想要找尋出離之道，並留了一首詩給兩位妻子，希望她們也能尋求解脫。

在一個文化框架中所隱藏的前提或假設，通常可以從另一個文化的角度裏，找到答案。與傳統的中國文化相比，現代的美國價值觀，給予孩子在人生道路上，有著更多自由及獨立的選擇。對於孩子們必須要實現父母的夢想及傳宗接代的期待也比較少。一位美國佛教比丘恒實法師的母親黛博拉·梅特卡夫女士(Deborah Metcalf)，在一篇文章裏談到她的兒子說「我知道他永遠不會結婚，或給我孫子。雖然那令人失望，但是他比當一位父親，影響了更多的孩子。這令他比我所認識的任何人更快樂。我可以誠實地說，我以他是佛教徒為榮。」（一個驕傲母親的來信）。她已經接受她兒子所選擇的人生道路，也接受他不會有子嗣。她會想要有孫子，但不會特別憂傷——可以看出來她已經放下那樣的期待，並從中轉化，因為她已經看到恒實法師對其他孩子們的影響，及從中衍生的快樂。終究而言，出家的真實精神並沒有否定孝道，反倒提升並擴大了孝道的意義和範圍。

disappointing, but he is influencing many more children than he ever would as a father. It makes him happier than anyone I know, and I can honestly say I am proud that my son is a Buddhist (“Letter from a Proud Mother”).” She has come to accept her son’s chosen path in life and can also accept that he will not be having children. She would like grandchildren but is not terribly grieved—there is a sense that she has let go of that expectation and transformed it into seeing the influence Rev. Heng Sure has had on other children and the happiness it brings him. In the end, the real spirit of leaving home does not negate filial duty, but elevates and enlarges it.

Transforming Emotion through Spiritual Practice

After leaving home, Venerable Master Xuyun lived and practiced on his own in the mountains for a number of years. In order to hide from his father’s scouts, he spent three years in hiding practicing repentance (23). He was then told to come out and serve in the monastery, but after four years of service, he felt that the work was hindering his practice, and he decided to strike out on his own again to practice in seclusion in the mountains (24). His inspiration came from his admiration of Dharma Master Xuanzang who went through great “austerities to reach his goal,” and Venerable Master Xuyun reflected: “Who am I that I should not follow his example?” (26).

Venerable Master Xuyun, modeling himself on the great masters of old, wanted to let go of all physical comforts and attachments and follow an ascetic way of life. However, his understanding of what he was doing was transformed unexpectedly. At thirty-one, he meets a Chan monk who praises him and requests the Dharma from him. Venerable Master Xuyun has an emotional response to this. In his autobiography he says, “I felt very ashamed at this and replied, ‘My knowledge is shallow, for as yet I have had no chance to call on learned Masters (27).’”

As discussed before, a sense of shame is a skillful mental quality that can guide one on the path. Here Venerable Master Xuyun’s sense of shame causes him to reflect on his own understanding and realize that although he is living a peaceful existence as an ascetic, he has no Dharma to share. He is possibly embarrassed by the praise from the monk because he knows that it is not warranted. It is noteworthy that Venerable Master Xuyun did not respond with negative emotions such as greed, pride, deceit, and shamelessness. He was not greedy for praise or prideful of his accomplishments. He also did not pretend to understand the Dharma or repress his conscience. Any of these could have made this moment of turning into a moment of hardening.

Venerable Master Xuyun could have responded: “Yes, I’m quite accomplished, and have a great deal to teach. Have you heard of the poem I wrote at nineteen, *Song of the Skin Bag*?” Instead, his response comes from a place of humility and openness. He may have developed these traits through his practice of repentance and reform—a practice which can help us recognize our faults and become more attuned to our conscience.

從精神層次的修行轉化情感

虛雲老和尚出家之後，在山間獨修了好些年。為了避開父親的偵察，他躲了起來，並在這期間修行萬佛懺（23）。之後，有人請他出山，在佛寺為眾作務；職事四年後，他發現作務妨礙了他的修行，於是決定辭去職事，到山上閉關修道（24）。他的靈感來自對經歷重重苦行、以達到目標的玄奘大師的仰慕。虛雲老和尚返照自己「我何人斯。敢弗效法？」

虛雲老和尚效法古德，想要放下所有身體感官的舒適及執著，遵循苦修的生活方式。但是他對修行的理解，卻不期然地被轉化了。三十一歲的時候，他遇到了一位禪師，禪師對他讚譽有加，並向他請法。虛雲老和尚對禪人此舉有了情緒上的反應。在年譜中提及這段：「深感慚惶。乃曰。『智識愚昧。少所參學。』」（27）。」

如前所說，慚愧心是一種可以引導人向道的善心所。在這裏，虛雲老和尚的慚愧心使他思考自己對修行的理解。他體悟到自己雖然詳和自在地修苦行，卻無法義可分享予人。他或許因禪人訪至的讚歎而汗顏，因為他知道那讚歎是沒有根據的。值得一提的是，虛雲老和尚並未因此而有負面的情緒，如貪婪、驕傲、欺騙及無恥心等。他並不貪圖讚譽，或以自己修行的成就而感到驕傲。他也沒有假裝他了解佛法或壓抑自己的良心。任何一種負面的情緒，都可能使這個轉折點變成苦難的時刻。

虛雲老和尚當時可以這樣地回應「是的，我很有成就，也有很多法可以教你。你聽過我十九歲時寫的詩「皮袋歌」嗎？」相反地，他很謙虛並坦陳地回應這位禪師。也許他已經由真實的修行懺悔而養成這樣的人格特質——懺悔可以幫助我們認知到自己的錯處，而更契合自己的良心。