



## Our Mount Sumeru Self Obscures the Great, Bright Buddha Nature 我如須彌山，遮大明佛性



An excerpt from an interview with DM Heng Lai  
at Buddha Root Farm, Oregon, on July 14, 2016  
Chinese Translation by Lan Huang

恒來法師2016年7月14日於奧立岡州佛根地的訪談摘錄  
黃藍 中譯

### Question:

In life, we tend to be competitive. When we take up a spiritual practice, it is all too easy to fall back into that habit and constantly try to be the best. However, I can see the suffering that comes with that. How can I deal with that?

### Dharma Master Heng Lai:

You mean something like, “Look, I can sit longer than you, I haven’t moved my legs?” There are people who are like that. I’m a lousy sitter. I like Chan the most, but I’m still a bad meditator. There are people who can sit without budging. During Chan retreats, Master Hua used to tell us that we wouldn’t have to do the walks if we could sit without moving all day. During the big Chan sessions people don’t like to walk for twenty minutes in between the sitting periods. They find it tiresome. You sit for an hour then you have to walk twenty minutes and then you have to run. You might think, I just wanna go to sleep. But no, you’ve got to get up and walk. So those people who can sit in full lotus without moving or falling asleep don’t have to do the walks. Such people could definitely get competitive.

I have never been that way, because I’m completely attached to waking up. I don’t care who beats me. “You wanna be number one? Go ahead! Show me how you do it. You can be my teacher.” That’s the attitude we are supposed to have. Buddhism is the opposite of mainstream culture, “Oh you are better than I am? Good! You’ll be

提問：在生活中，我們很容易跟人競爭；開始修行之後，也很容易陷入這種習氣中，總想爭第一，也嘗到跟隨而來的痛苦。我該怎麼做？

來法師：

你是指「你看，我可以坐得比你久，我一直沒動腿」這種情況嗎？有些人是有這樣的心態。我打坐並不好，雖然我最喜歡禪，但是我坐得並不好，有人卻可以坐著紋絲不動。禪七的時候上人曾經說過，如果我們可以整天坐著不動的話，不需要起來跑香，因為很多人不喜歡在打坐之間起來行香二十分鐘，他們覺得行香很無聊。坐一個小時，然後走二十分鐘，然後還要跑香，你可能會想：「我想睡個覺。」但是不可以，你必須起來行香。所以那些能夠雙盤、不動也不睡著的人，他們可以不用行香。這種人可能會跟人競爭。

我從來不執著這個，因為我的執著完全在開悟上。我不在意誰比我強：「你想做第一？沒問題。教我怎麼做，我跟你學。」這才是我們應有的態度。佛教與主流文化正好相反，「喔，你比我好嗎？很好，那你就做我的新老師。」這是我們該做的。你必須除掉這個假我，粉碎這個我相。這個「我……我……我……我……我……我……我」是你的敵

my new teacher.” That’s how you are supposed to be. You’ve got to kill your false self. You have to kill your ego. You’ve got to smash it. It’s your enemy, it’s not your friend — your “I, I, I, Me, Me, Me.” Shifu used to call it “your self as big as Mount Sumeru”, which means your ego as big as a gigantic mountain.

So what is competitiveness? It is your view of self. It is the “I’m big.” “I’m No. 1.” “I’m better than you are.” “I’m cultivating...” “I can bow longer.” “I can sit longer.” “You are not as good as I am.” Well guess what? You are going to be the last in line. You are going to be the last one to wake up if you cling to that, because cultivation is not a competition to see who can wake up first, or who can sit the best. If you cling to such a view of self, you are going down the wrong road. You are not helping yourself at all.

Besides, nobody cares if you are the best sitter. If you are the best sitter, then be a better sitter. I’ll follow you. If you are a better bower, I’ll follow you. You may think, “I’m a better intellectual, I can memorize this faster than you can,” but this is not something we pay attention to.

In the early days, there was a nun who had an excellent memory. She memorized the *Shurangama Mantra* in a very short period of time. Within a week or two she had the whole thing down. [Audience: A week or two? Really? The *Shurangama Mantra*?] Yes. And Shifu memorized it on a train ride. [Audience: on a train ride...] Yes. That happened when he was a young boy; he memorized the whole thing. I still don’t have it down.

But if you need to show other people how smart you are, then you have a problem because you are obstructing your own Buddha nature when you do that. You are building up your false self, and you are covering up your real self. So you are creating a sin— that’s a real Buddhist sin right there. What you really want is to let your Buddha nature shine forth. Your Buddha nature is awesome. I mean it’s just unbelievable. It beats out all the other stuff by leaps and bounds. So release it. Let it be, what it really is.

Shifu was just very hard on our egos. He was a very gentle teacher; he would never beat us or anything like that, but, boy, he could get under your skin— big time. He mastered that; he knew exactly what your hang-ups were; he knew exactly what you were attached to and he went after it. It would come up in a multiplicity of ways. Trying to save face was of no use. With Shifu you could never win that game.

You could have no sense of pride around him. He would cure you of that real fast. The smarter you were, the more Type A personality you had, the harder it would be on you. A lot of people couldn’t take that kind of teaching because, for some reason, when you have a big self, it’s really hard to take. He helped you actually see the thought of “I’m number one” and to see how arrogant that

人，不是你的朋友。師父總說你們那個像須彌山的「我」，意思是說我們的我相很大，大到像一座巨高山。

爭是什麼？就是你的這個我見——我很了不起，我是第一，我比你強，我有修行，……我可以拜更

久，我可以坐更久，你不如我。但是你知道嗎？一旦有這種想法，你就落到最後一名了，成了最慢開悟的人。因為誰先開悟或者誰打坐得久，根本不是用來競爭比較的。如果你還執著於這樣的我見，那你就走錯路了，對自己一點幫助都沒有。

而且，也沒有人在乎你是不是最會打坐。如果你最會打坐，「好，我跟著你坐！」或者有人最會拜佛，「好，我跟你學拜！」或者你覺得「我比你聰明，我背得比你快」，可是這些都不是我們應該花心思的地方。

早期有一個比丘尼記憶力超強，她可以在非常短的時間內背會〈楞嚴咒〉，大約一、兩個禮拜就全部背會了。（聽眾：一、兩個禮拜？楞嚴咒？）是的，師父在火車上就背會了。（聽眾：在火車上……）是的，在他還是小孩的年紀就全背會了，我到現在還背不出。

但是說實話，如果你對人顯露自己有多聰明，那你就有問題了。因為這麼做，你的佛性就被遮蓋住。你在建構那個虛妄的我，同時也遮蓋了真正的我。所以說你在造罪業，這才是佛教裡真正的罪。你真正需要做的，是讓佛性大放光明。本有的佛性完美無瑕，也可以說是不可思議，它遠超出其它任何事物。所以釋放你的佛性，讓它回歸本處。

師父對於消除「我相」這點要求很嚴格。他是一位非常慈祥的老師，從來不會打我們，但是他也會讓你很受不了，這方面師父是專家。他非常清楚你放不下的東西，他知道你執著什麼，並且會直接指出你的問題。他會用不同的方法讓你的習氣顯露出來，你想給自己留點面子是沒用的，這點你絕對贏不了師父。

在他面前你高傲不起來，因為他迅速會將你的貢高我慢摔得粉碎。你越聰明，越是A類性格（表

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*Buddhism is the opposite of mainstream culture, “Oh, you are better than I am? Good! You’ll be my new teacher.”*

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佛教與主流文化正好相反，「喔，你比我好嗎？很好，那你就做我的新老師。」

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is, but the process can be pretty devastating. It is really hard to break through the self. But, really, it doesn't exist. So why support something that doesn't exist? It just causes you suffering.

It's all part of cultivation. Everybody learns from that kind of experience. In Buddhism it isn't that you feel like: "Oh I lost. I've lost my face. I have no pride left. They figured out my trip. Everybody sees what I am all about. I'm going to leave. I can't take it anymore." Why would you leave? You still have a Buddha nature. You need to break through to it.

It's like when you are trying to do some really hard exercise. Perhaps you are a gymnast and you are trying to do this really fancy move. You keep failing; you fall on the mat, and you are all beat up and bruised. In Buddhism, you just pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and try again. You keep at it; you just keep cultivating. You are not going to be successful the first time. Fine. You are not going to be successful the ten thousandth time. Fine. No problem. Keep working at it, because you are planting seeds that are incredible and they are going to sprout sooner or later. When you are good and ready, you are going to wake up.

It's a funny thing. Only you know, deep down, when you will wake up. You can't depend on somebody else to wake you up. It's not going to be some deity or God or even a Bodhisattva. If they could, they would do it for us. If they could just come down and wake us all up, they would do it in a heartbeat. They can't; we have to do it ourselves.

You have to be the person who gets tired of living in this phony world and says "Enough! Enough!" It's like how the Buddha said "Enough, I'm staying under this tree until I wake up. Enough of this nonsense. No more ascetic practices. No more this, no more that, I'm waking up. I am not moving from under this tree until I wake up. They can drag my corpse away from here. I am not leaving until I wake up." Because he had this profound thought and resolve, he did that. He woke up.

We are all the same way. Sooner or later we will find our breaking point, the point where we just don't want to put up with this nonsense anymore. I'm done. I'm going to break through. Other people might not be tired of it yet. They may still want to play games with themselves for a few more lives. Okay, it's up to you. That's what Shifu would say "It's up to you!" It's not up to him, it's up to you. ❀

現慾強、好爭勝)，這個考驗對你就越困難。很多人無法接受這樣的教導，因為對於我相很大的人，要承認自己「爭第一」，或者認識自己的貢高我慢，其實是很痛苦的一件事，而且也很難克服。但是說真的，這個「我」根本就不存在，那你為什麼要去支持一個不存在的東西呢？這個我相，只會讓你痛苦而已。

但是，這些都是修行，每個人都在過程中學習。佛法不會說：「哦，我輸了，真沒面子，一點自尊都沒有，大家都看到我的錯，都知道我的底細，我不待了，我再也受不了了。」你要離開什麼？你的佛性一直都在，你必須突破障礙。

這就像做一些高難度的運動。譬如你是一名體操選手，試圖完成一個高難度的花式動作，可是卻一直失敗，一直摔到墊子上，甚至摔得傷痕累累。佛法教我們的，就是自己站起來，拍拍身上的灰塵，然後再接再勵。你要不停地嘗試，繼續不斷地修行。你不會修一次就成功，但這沒關係；即使到第一萬次還沒成功，也沒關係，這不成問題，只要繼續努力。因為我們所做的正是播種的工作，這些不可思議的種子早晚會發芽。時機因緣成熟，自然就會開悟。

很有趣的是，內心深處你會知道自己什麼時候開悟。你不能依賴其他人來開悟，不是哪一位神明或是上帝、甚至哪一位菩薩能讓你開悟；如果可以這樣的話，他們早就讓你開悟了。如果他們降生世間，可以讓所有人都開悟，他們一定立刻這麼做。但是他們不能，我們得自己來！

只有當自己厭倦了這個虛偽的世界，對自己說：「受夠了！受夠了！」就像佛陀說的：「夠了，我就在這棵樹下坐著，直到開悟為止。我受夠毫無意義的一切，我不再修無益的苦行，不再這樣、那樣。我要覺悟，如果不開悟，我就坐在這裡不動。除非開悟，否則坐到死，我也不離開。」因為佛陀有湛深的智慧與決心，所以他做到了，他開悟了。

我們也一樣，早晚會碰到這個突破點，再也不想忍受毫無意義的一切，所以「我受夠了，我要突破。」可是其他人也許還沒有厭倦這一切，所以還想再多玩幾輩子。沒問題，這都是自己決定的，就連師父也會這麼說：「你自己決定！」不是師父說了算，是你說了算。❀

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*Why would you leave? You still have a Buddha nature. You need to break through to it.*

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你要離開什麼？你的佛性一直都在，你必須突破障礙。

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