



# Living the Practice

## 生活即修行

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How do I maintain a spiritual practice after an intensive weeklong Guan Yin retreat? How do I make sense of the daily ceremonies in the Buddha Hall? How can I connect the various teachings of the Buddha? How can I cultivate generosity through my everyday work? How can I develop a heart of gratitude for everyone around me? These are some of the questions that the ten participants of the new two-month “Living the Practice” immersion program investigated together at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas from October 15 to December 18, 2016.

The DRBU Extension team has been organizing classes in English during Guan Yin retreats at CTTB for many years, but this is the first time they have put together a two-month program that gives participants a chance of integrating into the life at CTTB after the retreat and experiencing the benefits of living at CTTB for a longer period of time.

The details of the program are as follows: the program began on October 15, the beginning of the Fall Guan Yin Retreat, and ended on December 18, 2016, the end of Winter Amitabha Retreat. The daily schedule included morning ceremony, meditation, community service, *Great Compassion Repentance*, afternoon class, Sutra class, evening ceremony, and evening activity. Community services included food preparation in the kitchen, building and grounds work, moving books, as well as cleaning. The students were quite inspired to see how hard the community at CTTB worked—so much so that during the final week of the program, the Amitabha Retreat, they still chose to continue their community service. The students saw working at CTTB as an opportunity to practice generosity and repay the kindness they received from the larger community.

In order to provide a solid foundation in Buddhism, the program was built on studying the Sutras directly. Students were encouraged to have a dialogue with the Buddha, and the classroom was simply an extension of that dialogue. This style of study is similar to the format of many of the Sutras themselves, where the Buddha is answering his disciples' questions, asking questions, and posing principles for reflection. The curriculum of the program was designed to give students a sense of the underlying principles as well as the vastness of the Buddha's teachings. Ultimately, the Dharma study was for applying to everyday life—for “Living the Practice.”

The afternoon classes included a Buddhist Frameworks class, lectures on Maitreya Bodhisattva's *Treatise on the Buddha-nature (Tathagata-garbha)*,

一個星期緊湊的觀音法會過後，如何繼續保持靈性上的修行？每天在佛殿做的這些日課有什麼意義？如何跟佛陀所教的義理相應？如何在日用平常中修行布施波羅蜜，如何培養對周圍的人感恩？這些都是為期兩個月的「生活即修行」課程十位學員共同探討的課題。

多年來，法界佛教大學推廣教育中心在聖城觀音七期間都會開辦一週的課程，課程以英文進行。「生活即修行」是該中心首次開設的兩個月學程，讓學員打七結束後還有機會融入聖城的社區生活，體驗更多道場修行的益處。

課程從2016年10月15日開始（秋季觀音七），於2016年12月18日結束（冬季彌陀七）。每天上午課程有早課、打坐、社區服務、大悲懺法會，下午有經典課、晚課和晚間活動。社區服務包括在廚房準備食物、聖城維修工作、搬書、以及清潔打掃。看到聖城住眾的辛勞，學生們備受鼓舞，以至於最後一週的佛七仍選擇繼續社區服務，回饋大眾。對他們而言，這些工作是修行布施和回報聖城社區給予他們的恩惠。

為了堅固學生的佛學基礎，授課採直接研讀佛經，鼓勵學生與佛陀對話，課堂內的討論則是對話的延伸。這種教法，正如佛經裡經常呈現的：面對弟子的提問，佛陀投以問題和道理讓弟子們反思。兩個月的課程規劃，是要讓學生漸次認識佛法的意涵與廣博，最終將佛法的學習落實在日用當中，達到「生活即修行」。

下午課程包括：佛教架構課、彌勒菩薩《寶性論》講座，以及創意寫作。佛教架