



## Participants' Reflections on the 108x Per Day Shurangama Mantra Recitation Week at Gold Coast Dharma Realm, Australia

### 參加澳洲金岸法界日誦108遍〈楞嚴咒〉感想二則

Written by Wenni Chow

Chinese translation by Cliff Wang

曹慧宇文 / 王立夫 中譯

Who knew something as rare as a week-long 108x per day *Shurangama Mantra* recitation session would be held in my own “backyard” in Australia! So when I found out that Gold Coast Dharma Realm (GCDR) was organising this event, I was keen to sign-up.

#### How it works

Participants would be allocated a seat in the Blessing House (the smaller ‘Buddha Hall’ in Gold Coast Dharma Realm.) We were to recite silently, each at our own pace to complete 108 rounds of the *Shurangama Mantra* within 14 hours. The schedule in brief looks something like this:

有誰能想得到，一場稀有的楞嚴咒七竟然就在澳洲我家的「後院」舉行！當發現金岸法界主辦這次活動時，我立刻迫不及待地報名。

#### 法會日程

參與者被分配在禪堂的座位上（也就是金岸法界的小佛堂）。每個人，按照自己的速度，在14個小時內完成108遍的〈楞嚴咒〉。每日時間表如下：

4:00AM	Start recitation  (Participants need not do the usual morning recitation)	開始持誦（參加者不需要做通常的早課）
6:15AM	Breakfast (optional) and return to recitation afterwards	早餐（可選），結束後繼續持誦
11:00AM	Lunch, then back to reciting afterwards	午齋，結束後繼續持誦
7:00PM to 8:30PM	Evening lecture (mandatory attendance)  (Participants can return to complete recitation for the day, if one has not finished by then)	晚間講座（必須參加）  （如果功課還沒有完成，參加者可以在之後繼續）

Whenever a participant completes all 108x, they call it a day. We can take breaks at any time in between. Doesn't it sound free and easy?

Well, that depends on the individual. A Dharma friend and I did some quick math, and found that the participants would need to complete one round of the mantra in 7 minutes max; and there won't be time to do any community work like helping in the kitchen, or cleaning and such. I wondered if I'd have time to even shower...

### Why I did it

As DM Jin Fu aptly put it to me when I signed up to participate, "...it's a really good opportunity to concentrate and focus in reciting the mantra in 14 hours everyday. It's also a big challenge for you. See you soon. Amitufo."

Oh my Buddha! A big challenge indeed. I almost wanted to give up on Day 1. I wasn't sure if I could sustain enough concentration to meet the target 108 in 14 hours – and for 7 days at that. It didn't help that I hardly slept the night before – as I was preparing to move between countries at that time, and was quite busy at work too.

But I held on as I believed it would help strengthen my resolve for Bodhi and that it was an opportunity to train myself to be more focused. It was also because of recent political events, the Syrian crisis, strange illnesses like the Zika virus as well as the floods, fires, typhoons and earthquakes that were happening all over the world. I remember learning that the *Shurangama Mantra* can help quell disasters and prevent wars.

These were the reasons why I decided to recite the *Shurangama Mantra* 108 times per day for a week.

當參與者完成108遍後就可以休息了，而且期間可以在任何時間停下來休息。聽起來很自由和容易，不是嗎？

其實，這完全取決於個人。一個佛友和我做了些速算，發現必須在七分鍾以內唸完一遍〈楞嚴咒〉才能完成這項任務，並且沒有時間做任何義工的工作，例如在廚房幫忙或是善後清潔等，我甚至懷疑是否有時間洗澡。

### 為什麼我要參加

正如報名時，近賦師告訴我的那樣：「……這確實是個好機會，能夠每天14個小時集中專注在持咒，這也是對妳的一個大挑戰。再見囉！阿彌陀佛！」

哦，我的佛祖！這確實是一個巨大的挑戰，我幾乎第一天就想放棄。我沒把握是否能保持足夠的專注力，好完成14個小時內誦完108遍的目標，而且是連續七天。更糟糕的是，因為即將出國，我忙著趕完工作和打包行李，參加法會的前一晚幾乎沒有睡覺。

但我還是堅持下去，因為我相信這將有助於堅定我的菩提心，這是訓練自己更專注的一個機會。而且當前災難頻傳，敘利亞危機，各種的怪病，例如寨卡病毒，以及世界各地發生的水災、火災、風災和地震。我記得，誦持〈楞嚴咒〉可以幫助平息災害和戰爭。

## The experience

I took almost 14 hours to finish reciting 108x on the first day – mainly because I was so tired from insufficient sleep the week leading up to that day. I kept falling into a kind of micro-sleep, where the mind blanks out and the last syllable I was reciting would dissipate into nothingness like a wisp of smoke.

I'd sit in full lotus while reciting, or stand if I started to feel drowsy. Sometimes I'd be walking up and down the room to shake off the torpor.

### #Lesson 1: Overcoming torpor by reducing energy outflows

That was when I realised first-hand how and why torpor impedes one's cultivation. And why one needs to have enough energy to cultivate – by getting enough rest, and reducing the outflow of energy.

Thankfully I was able to take a vow of silence during that week, and that one less outflow of not talking made all the difference! Gradually, I began to feel more energized as the week progressed – even though I wasn't sleeping as many hours as I would on a regular day. And my eyes weren't at all strained though I had my eyes mainly peeled on the small fonts of the yellow *Shurangama Mantra* booklet all day.

### #Lesson 2: Gratitude helps tame the monkey mind

It seems like I have 2-3 minds running at the same time; one is reciting the mantra, another is jumping around everywhere like a monkey, and yet another is following that monkey or the mantra or something else. So the other big challenge is my multitudes of discursive thoughts.

Initially, I observed that it was harder to focus when I'm reciting the mantra from the book. So I tried putting the book down, and recited from memory instead. I thought I was beginning to focus better, as I mind-mapped my way through the *Shurangama Mantra* terrain. But the false thoughts kept coming, and I still got distracted.

One night, I dreamt of my mum; and when I woke up, all I could think of was impermanence and the kindness both my mom and dad have shown me all my life. I really need to buck up in this Shurangama session to repay their kindness. That morning I could really focus on the recitation, powered by gratitude toward my parents.

### #Lesson 3: Not too fast, nor too slow. Middle Way is best.

That same morning, I was reciting at a steady pace, focusing on every phrase as best I could. Prior to that, I attempted to recite quickly so I could finish earlier. Surprisingly, I found I could cover more recitations at a relatively slower but steadier pace – than if I tried to rush through it.

這就是為什麼我決定堅持一個禮拜每天念誦108遍〈楞嚴咒〉的原因。

## 心得

第一天的108遍，我花了差不多14個小時——主要是因為這一週睡眠不足而導致的疲倦。我持續陷入一種淺睡眠的狀態，內心一片空白；而我念的每一個咒音，會像一團煙霧似地消散在這種虛無之中。

持咒的時候，我是結雙跏趺坐。如果開始感到昏昏欲睡，我就站起來，有時乾脆走一走，以擺脫昏沈。

### # 第1課：減少精氣神流失，以克服昏沈

這是我親身體會到，昏沈如何以及為何障礙一個人的修行，還有為什麼一個人要適當休息，減少精氣神的耗散，才能儲備充足的能量用在修行上。

我幸運能在法會的那一個禮拜止語，而止語所省下的能量帶來巨大的效力。漸漸地，我開始感覺體力恢復了——即使是不像平常睡那麼多小時。我的眼睛一點也不算痠痛，儘管一直盯著那本字體很小的黃色〈楞嚴咒〉小冊子。

### # 第2課：用感恩調伏內心的猴子

我的腦中似乎有三個意識同時存在，一個在誦咒，一個像猴子似的到處亂跳，另一個有時跟著那個猴子，有時跟著咒語，有時候又去跟別的。所以我的另一個大挑戰，就是各式各樣的紛擾亂想。

一開始，我發覺看著本子來念，比較難保持專注；於是我試著把書放下，用背誦的方式來念。因為是運用心力做導航，穿越〈楞嚴咒〉這片境地，所以感覺這種方法比較攝心。但是妄想依然不斷湧進，我還是會分心。

有一天晚上，我夢見了我的媽媽。當我醒來時，存留在心中的是無常，還有父母給予我這一生的慈愛。我真的必須在這個楞嚴法會上振作起來，才能回報他們的恩情。那天早上，憑藉著對父母的感激，我真的就能保持專注了。

### # 第三課：不太快，也不太慢，中道是最好。

那天早上，我以一種穩定的速度念誦，專注於

#### #Lesson 4: Mind my own cultivation

Also, I got anxious when I saw other participants finishing much earlier than I did and so I was trying to recite faster. Another lesson here is, to just focus on reciting, and not compare myself with others as if I were in a competition.

All these lessons aren't anything new. The Venerable Master teaches us these all the time. But experiencing it first hand internalizes the lessons more.

My gratitude extends to the Venerable Master, who taught us the importance and functions of the *Shurangama Mantra*; to the Dharma Masters at GCDR who organised this session, to the volunteers who cooked and cleaned for us, to my friends who helped me to pack and move (if not for them, I'd not have had the time to attend this recitation session.) Thank you to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Venerable Master, Dharma Masters, fellow cultivators in the Dharma, and the volunteers.

沈龍琳 文 / 鐘耀基 英譯

Written by Long-Lin Shen

English translation by Richard Chung

這是第二次參加金岸法界舉辦的楞嚴咒法會。因為平日的功課是拜佛、誦《地藏經》和打坐，並沒有讀〈楞嚴咒〉，所以這次報名參加早上七點到晚上七點隨眾誦唸〈楞嚴咒〉，沒敢報名日誦108遍。

法會第一天吃午飯時，曾經誦過108遍的佛友說她早上四點到下午五點多就可以念完了，感覺很棒，根本沒時間打妄想。聽著師兄鼓勵，機會難遇，於是我鼓起勇氣向法師說想報名念108遍。法師問我能念幾天，我說會念滿剩下六天，而且會努力把第一天沒念滿的108遍補齊。法師笑著點了頭，第二天我就轉進念108遍的精進組，挑戰與考驗也隨之開始。

看著大家坐在指定的坐墊或椅子上聚精會神地念，我卻腿痛腰痛得坐不住。看到有的師兄為克服疲憊昏沉，跪著念或站著念，我

每一句咒語。在此之前，我試圖念快一點，這樣就能提前完成目標。然而很意外地，我發現念得慢一點、穩定一點，反而可以念得比較多遍—比起急急忙忙、快點念過去。

#### # 第四課：照顧自己的修行

另外，看到別人比我先完成108遍的目標，我會變得很緊張—於是就想念得快一點。這個也教會我一件事，就是應該照顧好自己的念誦，而不是像參加比賽一樣，盡拿自己跟他人比較。

以上這些心得都不是什麼新東西，上人一直都是這樣教導我們的。但是透過親身的體驗，才能更深入明白上人的教導。

感恩上人告訴我們《楞嚴經》的重要性和〈楞嚴咒〉的功效，感恩籌辦這個法會的法師們，感恩廚房香積和清潔的義工，感恩幫我打包和搬家的朋友們（如果不是你們，我不可能有時間參加這次法會）。感恩諸佛菩薩、上人、法師、同參道友和護法義工。

This is the second time I participated in a Shurangama Retreat organized by the Gold Coast Dharma Realm (GCDR). At home, I usually bow to the Buddhas, chant the *Earth Store Bodhisattva Sutra*, and meditate, but I do not chant the *Shurangama Mantra*. Initially, I signed up for the session to chant the *Shurangama Mantra* from 7am to 7pm in the Buddha Hall; I did not dare to sign up for the session to chant the Mantra 108 times.

On the first day at lunch time, a Dharma friend who chanted the Mantra 108 times before said that she started chanting from 4am and finished after 5pm, and felt great because there was no time for any deluded thoughts. Since this opportunity is difficult to encounter, I followed her advice and mustered the courage to sign up with the Dharma Master for the 108 times chanting session. When she asked me how many days I could chant, I said I could chant for the remaining six days and finish the 108 times that I missed on the first day. She smiled and nodded. So, I attended the 108 times intensive session the next day where many challenges and tests began.

I saw that all participants were concentrating on their chanting either seated on a cushion or chair. However, I have lower back and leg pain



亦模仿。但是坐著跪著，我都只能堅持幾分鐘，忍不住愧疚地一直更換姿勢。環望四周，佛殿後方兩側有桌椅，提供給無法長久盤腿的人坐。為了不影響周圍的人，我悄悄走到那兒坐著念，睏時就靠牆站著念或走動繞念。

〈楞嚴咒〉漸漸唸得能專注了，但是口乾舌燥，很難加快速度，於是從無聲口唸，轉為無聲心念。發現口唸幾個字就要停頓換氣，而心念好久都不用停。念得越來越熟，彷彿心裡有個自動播放器循環播放一樣，念得聽得歡喜不已。感覺所念的每一句，都是久別重逢的好友名字，今日重逢感到興奮激動極了。念得幾乎都能默背了，但有幾句總是記不起來或是背錯，於是默念頂禮這些咒句。

法會結束前一天，禮拜觀音菩薩時，想到要和這麼多久別重逢的好友們道別，內心些許低落不捨。而目前學校課業已經很忙，若再加上持誦〈楞嚴咒〉這個功課，心裡正猶豫該怎麼辦。繼續禮拜，忽然聽到內心回答：「如果你覺得它重要，就一定能找得到時間堅持念。」

於是法會結束一回到家，又用休息的三天半時間念350遍。現在睡覺或是做飯時，我就聽〈楞嚴咒〉，並且4分零幾秒能念一遍，每天念三遍，迴向正法久住。《佛說法滅盡經》云，末法時，首楞嚴經咒，先化滅去。身為皈依的佛弟子，若不誦〈楞嚴咒〉，實在愧為佛子。❀



念得越來越熟，彷彿心裡有個自動播放器循環播放一樣，念得聽得歡喜不已。感覺所念的每一句，都是久別重逢的好友名字，今日重逢感到興奮激動極了。

My chanting became smoother and smoother, as if there was an automatic machine that kept on playing in my mind. The chanting and the sound came with endless joy. I felt that each line I chanted was the name of an old friend, and I was ecstatic at the reunion of these good old friends.

and cannot sit still. I saw that some of the Dharma brothers overcame fatigue, drowsiness by chanting while kneeling or standing, so I did the same. However, I could only endure sitting or kneeling for a few minutes and guiltily had to change positions. When I looked around, I found that there were tables and chairs at the back of the Blessing Hall, which were for those people who could not sit cross-legged for a long time. Being afraid that my movement might disturb other people nearby, I quietly went to the back, sat on a chair and chanted. When I felt tired, I would chant while walking or leaning against the wall.

Just when I found that I could gradually concentrate to chant, I felt my mouth become dry and my chanting slowed down. Then, I switched from no-sound chanting method to mind chanting method. The reason is that I needed to pause and catch my breath every few words with the no-sound chanting method, but I could chant non-stop for a long time with the mind chanting method. My chanting became smoother and smoother, as if there was an automatic machine that kept on playing in my mind. The chanting and the sound came with endless joy. I felt that each line I chanted was the name of an old friend, and I was ecstatic at the reunion of these good old friends. Most of the time, I was chanting the Mantra in silence from memory. However, there were a few lines that I kept forgetting or got wrong. So, I bowed to these few lines in silence.

On the second to last day of the Retreat, when I bowed to Guan Yin Bodhisattva, I felt unhappy that it was almost time to say goodbye to these old friends. With the current heavy academic workload, I was hesitant to increase my homework in cultivation. So, what to do? I continued with bowing and suddenly I heard an inner voice: "If you really think that it is important, you will find the time to continue chanting."

When the Retreat finished and I returned home, I chanted the Mantra 350 times in three and a half days. Nowadays, I listen to the Mantra when I am sleeping or preparing for meals. I can chant the Mantra in a little more than four minutes, and I do this three times a day and transfer merit to wish the Proper Dharma stay in this world for a long time. In *The Buddha Speaks of the Extinction of the Dharma Sutra*, the Buddha said, "In the Dharma-ending Age, the *Shurangama Mantra* will be the first to disappear." Since we are Buddhists who took Refuge, we should be very shameful if we cannot uphold and recite the Mantra. ❀