



Story of Monastic Training Experience 1975 to 1976

1975年到1976年的僧團訓練

Dharma Talks by Bhikshu Heng Shun at CTTB Buddha Hall on July 26 and August 9, 2017

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Tonight I'm going to describe what it was like when we did our monastic training in the earlier times in 1975 to 1976 at the original Gold Mountain Monastery on 15th Street. The idea here tonight is to provide a historical description of what it was like and also to reflect upon some of the differences and similarities between the training the Master had us do as novices in 1975-1976 and now. I'll first describe the schedule.

At that time in Gold Mountain the 108-day training we did was actually from April 1976 until we became fully ordained in

今晚，我要和大家分享早期我們在15街舊的金山寺所受的僧團訓練。這段期間從1975年到1976年，我希望留下歷史紀錄，同時也順便反思那兩年師父給我們沙彌和沙彌尼訓練和今天戒期訓練的異同；首先要分享當時的生活作息。

當時在金山寺的108天戒期是從1976年4月展開，同年8月我們受具足戒。那時候的早課只有四十五分鐘，從四點到四點四十五分。

後來早課延長到四點五十五分。等

到我們搬上來萬佛城時，師父說我們一定要做滿一個鐘頭的早課，從四點到五點。我還記得當初有位比丘不到清晨五點就結束早課，結果捱師父罵。

師父說，早課繞佛至少要十分鐘，但也不要太長。因為清晨剛起床，還有倦意，不宜繞佛太久。遇到特別法會時，早課加唱寶鼎讚，繞佛仍照上人指示的十分鐘，這樣早課就超過一



個鐘頭，到五點五分或五點十分結束。

在1974年到76年期間，我們早課完可以喝茶休息一會兒，然後繼續一個鐘頭的打坐。然後跑香二十分鐘，接著再坐一個鐘頭，大約七點三十分結束。總計打坐兩個鐘頭，外加跑香。

那次一百零八天戒期開始前的作息已經跟現在差不多，上午打坐完之後，我們從七點半出坡直到上供，當時的上供是從十點四十分到十一點。接下來的作息時間跟現在一樣，除了晚課是在七點鐘舉行，而不是六點

August 1976. All the training was done at Gold Mountain. The morning ceremony was only 45-50 minutes long, so it was 4:00 – 4:45/4:50 AM.

Later, it went to about 4:55 AM and then later up here at the City, the Master said we should always do the ceremony for one hour, 4:00-5:00 AM. I remember one time one of the novice monks shortened the ceremony by only 5 minutes and the Master reprimanded him for ending it before 5:00 AM.

The Master said when we circumambulated during the morning ceremony, we should do at least 10 minutes and not more than that because early in the morning people do not have so much energy to do it longer- it will tire them out. On special days in which we had the Incense Praise in the morning we would still do 10 minutes like Master instructed. Thus we would end the ceremony at 5:05 or 5:10 AM.

Going back to the schedule at that time in 1975 to 1976, we had a little break for tea after the morning ceremony and then an hour of meditation, a 20-minute walk and then another hour of meditation. We'd be done by about 7:30 AM, with two hours of sitting and a walk in between.

Again before our special training — the 108-day training- the schedule from then on was pretty much the same as we have now. We would do work from 7:30/8:00 AM until the Meal Offering Ceremony. The Meal Offering was a little bit later, from 10:40 to 11:00 AM. After that the schedule was the same then as it is now, with exception that the Evening Recitation Ceremony was at 7:00 PM instead of 6:30 AM, the Master would lecture from 8:00-9:00 every evening. During the week he would lecture every day except Monday and twice on Saturday and Sunday. Thus he lectured 8 times each week.

When I came in August 1974, he was lecturing the *Avatamsaka*

半。師父會在每天晚間八點到九點講經，只有星期一除外；週六和週日每天講兩次經，因此師父每星期總計講經八次。

我1974年8月來的時候，師父正在講解《華嚴經》第三品，每晚師父講完經之後，我們會花半個鐘頭的時間拜萬佛寶懺，一點一點慢慢拜。

1975年7月，我們一共有四個人出家。恆空已經在1973年出家了，1976年4月戒期開始時，有恆實法師和我，另一位沙彌在戒期開始前離開了。有位沙彌尼恆居在那年7月出家；還有位沙彌恆瑠，在佛根地禪七（應該是10月份左右）後出家。恆來在1975到1976年的冬天打餓七36天，接著在1976年的一、二月間決定出家。在108天戒期內，還有一位馬來西亞來的沙彌法光，男眾總共六位，沙彌尼也是六位。

我們在1975年7月成為沙彌之後，舊金山市政府通知我們在15街的金山寺必須進行防震工程。舊的金山寺是磚造建築，防震處理可是很浩大的工程。當時我們剛發現萬佛城這處產業，我們從瑜伽市僱了一些工人到舊金山，教我們如何做防震工程。我們學會各種不同的技術後之後，就自行接手過來做。我們事前已經聲明，一旦學會，就不再僱用他們；我們每個人都學會了一項專門技術。

這項工程跟戒期訓練的相關之處在於，一百

Sutra, and was on Chapter 3, *Samantabhadra's Samadhi*. We had another half hour ceremony after the lecture. At that time we were bowing the 10,000 Buddhas Repentance, which we did section by section every evening.

Four of us became novices in July 1975. Heng Kung (emptiness), had already been a novice since October 1973. When we started the actual 108-day training in April of 1976 there were six novice monks. Dharma Master Heng Sure and myself were two of the six. We had lost two novice monks who returned to lay-life before the training began. They were a Vietnamese Shramanera named Heng Hoan and another American novice named Heng Lu, who had left home in October of 1973. The remaining three novice monks who did the training were Heng Lyou who became a novice in about October 1975 a few months after he first met Shr Fu at Buddha Root Farm. Then Dharma Master Lai became a novice monk after he did a 36-day fast in the winter of 1975-1976. He became a novice in January or February of 1976. During this 108-day training, there was also a monk from Malaysia who already was ordained as a novice. His name was Fa Guang, also known as Dharmajyoti. So during this training period there were six of us novices on the men's side and on the women's side there were also about six novices.

Right after we became novices in July 1975, the San Francisco city government told us we had to make Gold Mountain at 15th Street earthquake proof. It was a brick building and we had to do major construction work that would eventually take about two years to complete. We hired workers from the Ukiah area to show us how to do all this major construction work. It was at this time that several people first discovered the property here that would later become the City of 10,000 Buddhas. Once we learned the various skilled labor tasks, we took over doing the work ourselves and let the workers from Ukiah go. We had told these skilled workers from Ukiah ahead of time that

零八天戒期內，我們出坡的工作是很很粗重的建築活兒。我們早晚還要拜佛，早上拜一個半鐘頭，晚間拜一個半鐘頭。當時也是像現在早晨五點拜願一樣，我們唱誦釋迦牟尼佛聖號，男女眾兩邊輪流拜。

那時候的作息，就像我剛才說的，早上四點到四點四十五分早課；五點到七點三十分打坐兩支香，中間還有跑香。早上七點三十分到九點是拜佛，接著出坡做防震工程到午齋；午齋後繼續做粗重的防震工程到傍晚。本來傍晚五點半到六點半是打坐，不過戒期訓練期間，我們改為傍晚五點到六點半拜佛；七點鐘晚課。廚房和齋堂所在的那個大房間，面積30呎乘120呎；有段時間那個大房間裡堆滿了防震工程建材，根本無法走動。

那時候每天忙完一一就像剛才所說的作息一一之後，我們就聽師父講解《華嚴經》。不消說，聽師父講經令我們覺得所有的工作和努力都非常值得。那種感覺很好。

學習做維那帶領法會，正是沙彌訓練的一部分，之後我們還得當維那很多年。有時比丘也會擔任維那，但百分之九十的時間都是沙彌來做這工作；不管你唱得多麼不好，每人一定要輪流帶領法會。不是每



we'd be letting them go once we learned their various skills. Each of us learned a particular skilled trade.

The relevance of this to the training is that when we did the 108-day training, the work that we did for about 6 or so hours a day was heavy construction. The schedule included bowing in repentance for an hour and a half in the morning and then again for another hour and half in the evening. The bowing repentance was the same for that we do now here at the City at 5:00 AM each morning, that is, we recited Shakyamuni Buddha's name with the men on one side and the women on the other, doing alternate bowing and chanting out loud.

So to sum up the schedule as described above: we had the Morning Recitation Ceremony at 4:00-4:45/4:50 AM, two meditation sits with a walk from 5:00-7:30 AM. Then from 7:30-9:00 AM we'd do the bowing in repentance. After that we'd do heavy labor remodeling at the monastery until lunch from 10:40 to 12:00 PM. The Evening Recitation Ceremony was at 7:00 PM. We did our evening bowing in repentance from 5:00-6:30 PM. Thus we worked from about 12:00 to 5:00 PM, doing this rather heavy-duty construction. In fact at one point during this time we were doing the major remodeling and renovation, that entire dining hall, which was a room 30 by 120 feet was completely filled with lumber and other materials that we used for our work. One could not even walk through that area.

After we did the schedule as noted above, we got to listen to the Venerable Master's one hour lecture (including English translation) on the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. Needless to say, these lectures made all our work and effort well worth it. It was quite nice.

Part of the training as novices at that time and for many years after that, was that had to serve as the cantors who led the ceremonies. Once in a while the monks, the Bhikshus, would be cantors. However, about 90% of the time, every novice had to take a turn to lead the ceremonies. It didn't matter how unskilled you were at doing the ceremonies, you had to do the cantor part. We didn't do it one day, we took a turn of one



天輪，我記得那時候是每個人要輪班當維那一個禮拜。還要學習打法器，等到（76年）8月登壇受戒的時候，我們都已經會打各種法器了。

當時在這個戒期訓練期間，最困難——可能是我這一生所做過最困難的事——就是夜不倒單。金山寺的傳統就是，出家後要訓練自己夜不倒單，從此再也不躺下睡覺。那時候沒有規定非得如此不可，但大家都遵守這個傳統。

當初在金山寺時，男眾這邊到了晚上，所有的沙彌和比丘都在一樓佛殿不倒單。我還記得在佛殿和其他所有的男出家眾一起，我試著學習夜不倒單。因為當時有個嚴格的規矩就是

week at a time as I recall. We also had to learn all the Dharma instruments. By the time we became fully ordained Bhikshus in August, all of us novices could play all the instruments.

The hardest thing of being a novice at that time, and I would say it was probably the hardest thing I've done in my life, was sleeping sitting up. The tradition at Gold Mountain was that when you left home, when you first became a novice, you were expected to sleep sitting up — never lying down to go to sleep ever. This was not a requirement, but a tradition that all of us followed.

At Gold Mountain on the men's side, everybody slept sitting up — that is all the novices and monks- in the main Buddha Hall on the first floor. I still remember being in the Buddha Hall with all the other monks and trying to learn to sleep sitting up. Because there was a strict rule that one could never lay down in the Buddha Hall (since it would be disrespectful to the Buddha and Bodhisattva images), I remember for two weeks, I was constantly tipping over to go to sleep and being prodded by one of the monks to sit up straight. It must've been two weeks of suffering without hardly any sleep. Then after a couple of weeks, like the other monks, I was able to sleep sitting up. If it were not for the fact that all the monks did this practice and assisted me in doing it as well, I would have never been able to pull it off.

The Master's main instruction for us as novices, when we were bowing in repentance — it's actually a very simple practice, alternate bowing — he said we should be really earnest and sincere in your bowing. The Master said we should sincerely repent, three hours of bowing everyday, of the offenses we created in this life and in past lives. That was the essence of the training. That is, doing three hours of repentance, doing the daily schedule of ceremonies, and doing hard physical labor. And of course, listening to Venerable Master's profound lectures on the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. The Master emphasized that novices should always do work for the monastery like that to create a foundation of merit and virtue. That was what it was like in 1976.

I forgot to mention that we also had to memorize the *53 Small Mantras* as well as the *Shramanera Vinaya*. The *Shramanera Vinaya* had just been translated a year before and so we had the book: *General Explanation of the Essentials of the Shramanera Vinaya and Rules of Deportment*. We had to memorize the entire text of the *Shramanera Vinaya* including Great Master Lian Chi's commentary. And we studied the Rules of Deportment, but did not need to memorize them. So again, that's what it was like for our 108-day training period as novice monks in 1976. ❸



不可以在佛殿躺下（這樣對佛菩薩聖像太不恭敬），所以我記得頭兩個星期，夜裡我總是坐得東倒西歪；旁邊的法師就會把我推醒，要我坐直。所以那兩個星期我吃盡苦頭，晚上都沒法好好入睡。幾個星期之後，我也跟其他法師一樣，可以夜不倒單了。如果不是每個男出家眾都修這個行門，並且幫助我也如此修行，我肯定練不成夜不倒單。

當我們拜佛時，那是非常簡單的修行，男女眾輪流拜。上人給我們沙彌和沙彌尼最主要的開示，是教我們至誠懇切地拜佛，每天三小時拜佛來懺悔我們今生和往昔所造的種種罪業。這就是76年戒期最主要的訓練，也就是每天禮佛拜懺三小時，隨眾上殿過堂，還要辛苦出坡做粗活。師父總是強調沙彌和沙彌尼一定要這樣為道場出坡以積功累德，1976年的戒期正是如此。

我忘了提，我們還要背《五十三小咒》和《沙彌律儀要略》。沙彌律的英譯前一年才完成，所以我們就有《沙彌律儀要略》的英譯本。我們不但要背沙彌律全文，還要背誦蓮池大師的沙彌律註解。我們也研讀威儀的部份，但不用背誦。所以，1976年我們沙彌的108天戒期訓練情況就是如此。 ❹