

Experiencing Joy in the Self-Nature

喜悅從自性中來

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I would like to talk about my experiences with Venerable Master Hua from the '70s and '80s. My experiences with the Master are based on what he taught as well as his presence and being.

To get a sense of Master Hua's spirit, I'm going to read a verse from the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, because I think this verse really sums up what I felt when I was in his presence and what Shifu was like to me.

*He has much happiness, much liking,
And much pure faith, as well;
He has courageous vigor to the utmost,
Along with much elation and rejoicing.*

*He is quite free from contention,
From troubling and harming, and from hatred;
He knows shame, respect, and rectitude,*

我想談談印象中在七、八十年代追隨宣公上人的個人經歷；以及自己對上人教導的學習和體會。對我而言，上人的一言一行就是他言教的最佳體現。

為了讓大家感受上人的精神，我想讀一段《華嚴經》裏的偈頌，因為這段偈頌真實地總結上人在我心中的模樣：

多喜多愛樂	亦復多淨信
極大勇猛心	及以慶躍心
遠離於鬪諍	惱害及瞋恚
慚敬而質直	善守護諸根
救世無等者	所有衆智慧
此處我當得	憶念生歡喜

I'm not bringing Chinese Buddhism to the West. I'm not even bringing Buddhism to the West.
I'm bringing humans back to their nature.

我並不是要把中國佛教帶到西方。我甚至不是要把佛教帶到西方。我所做的只是令人回歸自性。

And well-protects and guards his faculties.

*He seeks all the multitudes of wisdom,
Of the one incomparable in the world:
'This place is one I should achieve,
Mindful, giving rise to happiness.'*

*Upon initially entering the First Ground,
He immediately transcends the five-fold fears:
Not staying alive, dying, bad reputation,
Evil destinies and the assembly's awesome virtue.*

*He attaches neither to self,
Nor to what pertains to a self;
All of these disciples of the Buddha,
Leave all fearfulness far behind.
Always practicing great kindness and pity,
He constantly has faith as well as reverence;
He is replete with the merit and virtue of repentance,
Night and day increasing wholesome Dharmas.*

*He delights in Dharma's true and actual benefits,
And does not love the reception of desires;
He reflects upon the Dharmas he has heard,
Far free from the practice of grasping.*

*He has no greed for benefits or offerings,
And he only delights in Buddha's Bodhi;
With one mind he seeks the Buddha's wisdom,
Concentration undivided with no other thought.*

This verse says that a Bodhisattva's will is immovable as a mountain, joyful, serene, resolute, modest, and respectful with superior honesty. His Bodhi mind is forceful, yet nonviolent and harmless, free from anger. In anticipation of this state, one is self-

始得入初地	即超五怖畏
不活死惡名	惡趣衆威德
以不貪著我	及以於我所
是諸佛子等	遠離諸怖畏
常行大慈愍	恒有信恭敬
慚愧功德備	日夜增善法
樂法真實利	不愛受諸欲
思惟所聞法	遠離取著行
不貪於利養	唯樂佛菩提
一心求佛智	專精無異念

這段偈頌提到菩薩的志願不動如山，時時刻刻都是歡喜而寧靜、對佛法有堅固、精進的菩提心；不會好勇鬥狠，也沒有瞋恚心；只有謙下質直、恭敬萬物的心，菩薩善於收攝自己的六根，自制而不令放逸；時時護念眾生的知見，並為此而感到歡喜。當菩薩證得這個境界，就已遠離所有的怖畏。

這些怖畏也就是所謂的不活畏、惡名畏、死畏、惡道畏、大眾威德畏；這些恐懼都永遠置諸度外了。

為什麼菩薩能遠離這些怖畏呢？因為菩薩已經捨棄我見，甚至連自己的色身都能夠捨下。

因此這段偈頌總結自己對上人的真實感受。在上人座下，我們學到的是我們的自性本具無以言表的喜悅。雖然，佛最初教導眾生苦諦，但佛真正的目的不僅是教導我們離苦，而且還要找

controlled and remembers the immeasurable knowledge that can save the world. When attaining this stage, one becomes joyful and leaves all fears behind.

This is to say the fear of not staying alive, of bad reputation, death, the evil destinies, and the awesome virtue of the great assembly—all such fears are eternally left behind.

Why? It is because these Bodhisattvas are free from the thought of self. They do not even cherish their own bodies.

So this verse sums up my actual experience from being around the Master. What we learned from Master Hua was primarily the notion that our fundamental nature is incredibly joyful. Although we first heard about suffering, the point that the Buddha was trying to teach us is to get rid of suffering in order to get to joy, happiness, contentment, and so forth. Everyone has this basic, content and happy nature, but suffering occurs when we are confused or attached.

If you watched Master Hua in the way that he lived, his life was completely free. His mind was completely free; he wasn't attached to anything. Therefore, nothing moved in one way or another. And in that state of not being moved one way or another; he had this incredible kind of happy contentment, yet at the same time, he wasn't attached to the happiness. He had that freedom of mind—this incredible kind of content happiness. And because of that, he was always incredibly genuine, warm, caring and generous, even when a lot of people think of him as being sort of severe and serious.

But the reason that you would have a sense of him being serious was due to how much he cared about every living being that he came in contact with (in ways that I don't even understand); he just had this incredible concern, care and compassion. And so, he didn't want people to waste their time in all this confusion and ignorance.

I remember my father met Master Hua a couple of times over at Gold Mountain Monastery in the 70s. After my father talked with the Master for a while, I asked him, "What did you think of Master Hua?" He said, "He has the greatest sense of humor of any person I've ever met. I've never met a person with such a great sense of humor."

Generally people who met and converged with Master Hua felt that he had this extreme lightness of being; in other words, he wasn't heavy. He wasn't attached. There was nothing that you could really pick up about him—whether he was trying to get something, having some kind of agenda, or that he was teaching

到快樂、幸福、知足等這些本有的自性。人人都具有這些知足、喜悅的本性，卻因為迷惑、執著等等的原因而受苦。

我們有幸一睹這般的風範——觀察上人的生活日常，他的生活方式全然自在，他的思想也全然自在。對任何事情他都不執著，因此，對任何事情都能如如不動。儘管如如不動，上人有一種不可思議的喜悅知足，但又不執著在這種境界裏。上人是如此的自在、快活。因此，即使當有些人覺得上人既嚴格又嚴肅，上人也總是展現無比熱忱、關愛、慷慨的心。

我們之所以會覺得上人很嚴肅，是因為上人非常關心每一位他所有接觸過的眾生（甚至以我無法了解的方式）。上人對每個眾生都非常的關心、愛護與慈悲。因此，不願意看到他們繼續在困惑和無明中虛擲光陰。

我記得我父親在七十年代跟上人在金山寺見過幾次面。有一次，在父親和上人交談之後，我問父親：「您對上人有什麼看法？」他說：「他是我見過最幽默的人！我從未見過如此風趣的人。」

凡是和上人見過面、談過話的人，都會感受到上人那種無與倫比的自在；換句話說，他不沉悶、也不執著；你在上人身上找不到一絲他想得到什麼、想計劃什麼、或是想教導什麼思想。事實上，上人說：「我並不是要把中國佛教帶到西方。我甚至不是要把佛教帶到西方。我所做的只是令人回歸自性。」上人講的法，是用他的心對著眾生的心說法——這種心與心的感應，打開一個令人感到輕盈的空間（一種自由自在）。

上人多次在講法和開示中提到（我記得一次是在觀音七）：我們口念「南無觀世音菩薩」聖號的時候，耳朵也應該清清楚楚地聽到「南無觀世

some ideology. In fact, he said, “I’m not bringing Chinese Buddhism to the West. I’m not even bringing Buddhism to the West. I’m bringing humans back to their nature.” And there was a sense that he was speaking to every human being from the heart—from his heart to our hearts and opening up the space of lightness of being, a kind of freedom of being.

Many times in his lectures and talks, he would talk about open heartedness. In one of his lectures on Guanyin Bodhisattva, he said, “When your mouth recites, your ears should hear the sound of Namó Guanyin Pusa very clearly, sending the sounds to your heart. It’s your heart that invites the Bodhisattva. When the mouth recites clearly, the mind remembers; when the mind remembers, then the gates of the six sense organs (the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind) are mindful of Guanyin Bodhisattva.”

So the critical element that Master Hua taught was practicing to be a Bodhisattva, in the sense that the Master was practicing being a Bodhisattva himself; it was not being compassionate toward people as an intellectual ideal or trying to do good as a goal. The only way that a Bodhisattva could operate in a real sense was to have this kind of fearless open-heartedness that does not move and is unattached to anything. The Bodhisattva is always alive and aware and uses his heart to touch other living beings’ hearts. And when you touch people in such a manner, they are moved to open to their own nature, their own heartfulness, and their own joy.

The Master also said in another Guanyin Session, “You should maintain proper knowledge and proper views; keep proper thoughts before you. When you recite the name Guanyin Bodhisattva, you must be mindful of your own Guanyin Bodhisattva; don’t pay attention to other people’s Guanyin Bodhisattva. What do I mean by your own Guanyin Bodhisattva? I mean that you recite until you become the same as Guanyin.” What I learned from Master Hua is that one major focus at the City of 10,000 Buddhas is practice, but also it is about bringing forth a religion of joy and happiness, as all the teachings are aimed toward people accomplishing this within themselves.

By having the opportunity and the blessings to be around the Master, I really was able see his manifestation of joy and how we all at the City are still attempting and trying to help people in the world to understand why they suffer and to experience true happiness and joy from their basic nature. ❀

音菩薩」。把聲音送到心裏去，就是把菩薩請到我們的心裏。口裡清清楚楚的唸，心裡也清清楚楚的憶念。當心裏憶念「觀世音菩薩」，六根門頭（眼耳鼻舌身意）都能憶念「觀世音菩薩」，這就是「都攝六根」。

上人教導中的要點是教導我們行菩薩道，從某種意義上說，上人也為我們示現菩薩道——而非僅是把慈悲心、幫助眾生當作一種理想、一種目標。學習菩薩道的行者要能無所怖畏地打開自己的心量，同時又能「隨緣不變」——不為一切的境界而有所動心、有所執著；並且以這種廣大的心量去對待眾生。當人們受到感動，就是幫助他們打通一條通往他們自性的道路，從而讓他們回歸本有的自性與快樂。

上人在另一個「觀音七」的開示提到：我們應該保持正知、正見、正思維。稱念「觀世音菩薩」聖號的時候，我們要念自己的「觀世音菩薩」，別管別人的「觀世音菩薩」。什麼是自己的「觀世音菩薩」？意思是，我們要一心稱唸觀世音菩薩的聖號，一直到自己和觀世音菩薩合而為一。我從上人那裏學到的是：萬佛城的重點在於修行，同時也在帶來喜悅，快樂。所有的教義都是基於幫助眾生回歸自性中本有的快樂。

此生有如此的機緣與福報能跟隨上人，也讓我有機會見證這種「喜悅」如何真實的展現。在聖城的每個人都不斷地在幫助眾生明白他們受苦的原因，讓他們在「離苦」上取得進展，進而能夠「得樂」——感受那種源於自性的快樂與喜悅。這些都是我們所想要強調的。❀