



Sea of Buddhadharma

佛法的海洋

A Talk Given by Kathleen Irby at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas on November 14, 2019

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My name is Kathleen, and I'm in my fourth year of the Bachelor of Arts degree program at Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU).

I joined the DRBU program back in 2013, when it was just starting as a pilot program the year before. In 2012, the university began the M.A and B.A programs with their small staff, and about four students. Now, seven years later, we are an accredited university and have grown to about forty very dynamic students.

I found most important the insightful program that has evolved from DRBU, demonstrating to us what compassion and wisdom looks like in action. I am honored to attend and help build this great educational institution, which carries on one of the Venerable Master's legacy projects.

In the Bachelor of Arts degree program, we study the Great Books. These are the Classic Texts that have stood the test of time. People have found wisdom and inspiration from these universal books. They have transcended time, borders, and cultures.

For example, most Americans are familiar with Confucius's philosophy. However, during our study of the Chinese Classics, I was most able to identify with Laozi. We also studied Euclidean geometry,

我的名字叫凱薩琳，目前是文學士的四年級生。

早在2013年我就參與法大的課程。當時法大在前一年才推出新學程，提供了一些試辦課程。2012年，法大開始招收新學程的學士和碩士班。當時法大只有寥寥幾位工作人員，及四名學生。如今，七年過去了，我們的學分不僅獲得認證，並且擁有近40位活力充沛的學生。

我發現，最重要的是法大提供了極富思考性的課程，教職員為我們樹立慈悲和智慧的榜樣。我很榮幸能就讀並幫助建設這個卓越的教育機構，這也是宣公上人的願景之一。

在文學士的課程中，我們學習名著，這些歷久不衰的經典之作，跨越時間、國界和文化。人們從這些普世著作中得到智慧與靈感。

among other classic texts for mathematics. In addition, we also read the Hebrew Bible and eminent works by Socrates. In our class on Indian Classics, we studied poems by the Sufi mystic poet Rumi.

One memorable moment was a few years back when a guest speaker took our music class to the DRBU Chan Hall, and taught us how to play the Buddhist ceremonial bells, as we had decided to learn the bells from a song. Among the many other activities, this will always hold a dear place in my heart. A little later I will share an experience from the natural science class regarding our Buddhist meditation.

But first, I would like to share my observations regarding the main themes that ran throughout the classical texts. They agree that we have a higher nature, to which we need to reconnect. They also agree that we are wasting our time seeking material objects. They believe that we should live our lives in a simple manner and put our energy into enriching our spiritual lives.

From ancient times to now, people muddy their lives and minds with different things. We are attached to external things, creating problems for ourselves. Just as the Buddha said thousands of years ago, we are learning that this dissatisfaction or suffering does become less noticeable and may even be eliminated entirely when we give our attention to our higher nature, and not to material goods.

The great minds from the Great Books recommend meditation as a way to reconnect with our higher nature. In science class, a question occurred to me: how would it still affect the body on a cellular level? Luckily, the high school generously allowed our science class to use their laboratory and their equipment.

Through their microscopes, we were able to view slides of human and plant cells. It was when I was looking at the human cellular structure that I realized how meditation could quiet all the cells in the body. My next thought was: is that why monastics look so young? From meditation, their cells must not be agitated.

I reasoned that if cells are agitated, that may lead to diseases around aging. Then, I thought about the afflictions from ignorance that force anyone to live in a state of agitation. These happen to us actually before birth. Once we are born in the Saha world, we inevitably live in

例如，大多數的美國人都熟悉孔子的哲學思想。然而，在我們所學習的中國經典中，我最能與老子的思想相應。我們學習歐氏幾何學和其他數學研究。另外，也閱讀希伯來文的聖經、蘇格拉底的偉大著作。在印度經典的課程中，我們還研究了蘇菲神祕主義詩人魯米的詩歌。

其中一個難忘的回憶是幾前年，有位客座講師把我們的音樂課帶到法大禪堂，教我們佛教儀式中的敲磬。後來，我們決定以一首歌來學習敲磬。在各項活動中，這個學習經驗將永遠在我心中占有一席之地。稍後我將會分享在一堂自然科學課程中領悟到佛教禪修的道理。

在此之前，我想分享個人觀察到的一個學習重點，它貫穿這些經典閱讀的課程，也就是我們有一個更純淨的自性，需要與之接軌，並且認同追求外在物質是在浪費時間。這些名著的作者們認為人類應該以更簡單的方式生活，把我們的精力放在提升我們的靈性生活上。

從古至今，人們以不同的事物污染他們的生活和內心。我們對外在物質執著，給自己帶來種種問題。就像佛陀在幾千年前所說的，當我們將注意力放在更純淨的自性和非物質的靈性生活上，對生活中種種的不滿和痛苦就會慢慢放下甚至釋懷。

這些名著的作者們推薦，禪修是我們與更純淨的自性重新接軌的方式。在自然科學課上，我想到一個問題——靜心的狀態如何在細胞層上影響我們的身體？幸運的是，高中部門很慷慨地讓我們在自然科學課中使用他們的實驗室和器材。

從顯微鏡中，我們得以觀察人類和植物的細胞。在觀察人類的細胞結構時，我意識到打坐可以讓我們身體的細胞安靜下來。我的下一個念頭是——這就是為什麼出家眾看起來如此年輕的原因嗎？因為打坐，他們身體的細胞得以不被攪擾。

我因此推斷，如果細胞很躁動，可能會導致和老化有關的各種疾病。隨後，我想到因為種種的無明煩惱，讓我們處於焦慮的狀態。這些情況在我們還未出生就已經存在。一旦來到娑婆世界，我們毫無選擇地活在一個有病痛、

bodies subject to illness and suffering. This is probably why, as humans, we are always subject to our own emotions and anger.

By looking at human cells through a microscope, the image of myself in a tranquil state flashed through and reverberated in me. I knew I had to implement this insight into my meditation practice. The benefits of meditation were reinforced by physical and logical reasons.

Meditation has always made me feel better, but through the natural sciences and Buddhist Classic courses at DRBU, I was able to figure out the connection between meditation and the cells of the body and developed that idea further during meditation. We could extend the tranquility from our minds and cells to others around us and make them feel peaceful as well.

With just a little imagination and some classical texts, I can envision a meditation state that is so still and tranquil. In the midst of this intense concentration, other people can also remain tranquil and stop the cycle of birth and death. While this is just the simple initial step, I hope this can allow me to even more deeply understand the depth of the philosophical discussions that I have experienced at DRBU.

I don't know where this education will lead. But one thing is for sure, I am definitely a better person because of my DRBU experience. I appreciate this wonderful opportunity to learn the Buddhadharma in such a way that this western mind can begin to understand. Thank you for your and the Venerable Master's gift of a great education.

I think I've told this story before, but as a small child, I always had a dream to go to the pier in Long Beach, California, and I convinced my mom to take me there.

I was only about four years old, so I really didn't know what was going on, and it has been such a long time. But I remember thinking to myself, as I saw the Venerable Master walking down to where we were, "What a nice robe." So it was very strange, as he actually answered me back and said, "thank you."

So we had a conversation, and at the end of the conversation, he said, "I hope you can come to my school some day." And I asked, "Where is your school?" The Venerable Master replied, "I haven't built it yet."

So here I am, fifty-six years later actually attending the Venerable Master's school. This is a very precious memory that I have held in my heart for all these years. ❀

有煩惱的軀體中。這或許就是為什麼身而為人，我們總是容易受到自己的情緒和憤怒所左右。

透過顯微鏡觀察人體細胞，心中浮現出自己處於寧靜狀態時的畫面，在我腦中迴盪。我知道自己必須將這個看法落實到禪修中。這些生理上和邏輯上的推敲讓我更加認識打坐的益處。

禪修總是讓我感覺良好。透過法大的自然科學和佛教經典課程，我能夠在打坐中進一步釐清禪修與身體細胞之間的關係。我們可以將心靈和細胞的寧靜延伸到我們周圍的其他人，讓他們也感到平靜。

只要稍加想像，加上一些經典著作，我就能在心中描繪出一個靜謐安詳的禪修狀態。在這種高度的專注中，其他人也可以保持平靜，了脫生死。雖然這只是簡單的第一步，但我希望這能使我在法大的哲學討論課程中有更深度的理解。

目前，我不確定這種訓練將領我走向何方。但可以肯定的是，法大的經驗讓我成為一個更好的人。我很珍惜這個美好的機會，能以西方人的思維來學習、理解佛法。非常感謝大家以及上人在教育上留給我們的禮物。

我想我曾經講過這個故事，在我年幼的時候，總是夢到自己到加州長灘的碼頭那裡。我說服母親帶我去。

當時我年僅四歲，也不曉得發生什麼事，而且已事隔多年。但我記得當我看到上人走向我們，我心想：「這袍子真好看！」妙的是，上人居然回話跟我說：「謝謝。」

夢中上人和我們說話，交談結束前，他說：「我希望將來你能來我的學校。」我問道：「您的學校在哪裡？」上人回答我說：「還沒開始動工呢。」所以，我來了。在五十六年後，我真的來到上人的學校。這是多年以來，一直珍藏在心中的寶貴回憶。❀