

# *Fruition*

*The Ripening of Xamma*



*Unibuds Annual Magazine 2008*

*It only takes one moment of awareness  
To sow the seeds for wisdom.*

*And only one moment of heedlessness  
To plant the seeds for regret.*

*It only takes one pause  
To halt the cycle of habit.*

*And only one cause  
To lead to its effect.*

*One seed it begins  
The forest is formed.*

*One drop then another  
The ocean is made.*

*One choice at a time  
A lifetime is lived.*

*Have you ever wondered why one moment  
Can change a million after it?*

# *Acknowledgements*

This magazine would never come to fruition without the amazing efforts of the Annual Magazine Team, the Dhamma teachers, the contributors, and the silent supporters. The Editor expresses her sincere gratitude to all those involved and rejoices in the good kamma sown today.

Editor  
Tina Ng

Assistant Editor  
Yi Zhang

Layout Assistant  
Lucky Joeng

Cover Illustration Series  
Wilsen Lius Lau

Photo Section Layout  
Jack Shi

Photo Contributors  
Adeline Lukmantara / Cheng Hiang Lee / Khai Yi Ng / Lucky Joeng / Wilsen Lius Lau

Editorial Team  
Adeline Sugianto / Amy Chung/ Bernard Chen / Cheng Hiang Lee / Julian Craig / Khai Yi Ng / Mandy Pang / Ming De Teh / Puay Yeong Teh / Rosiana Lim / Yee Herng Yeo

Special Thanks  
Our honorable patrons: Venerable Tsang Hui and Venerable Chao Khun Samai, for their continuous guidance and support. UNSW Buddhist Chaplain, Venerable Neng Rong, for her encouragement and assistance, in particular, the Chinese articles and their translations. Dhamma teachers who have approved of the use of talk transcriptions as articles for this Magazine. Members who have submitted their personal contributions. Staff at the Uniprint for their kind assistance in the print job and the test runs.

This Magazine is the publication of the University of New South Wales Buddhist Society and is intended only for free distribution. Any part of this Magazine may not be reproduced without the permission from the Editor. For further enquiries, please contact:

UNSW Buddhist Society  
Religious Centre  
University of New South Wales  
Sydney NSW 2052

T: +61 (02) 9385 6082  
E: [unibuds@yahoo.com](mailto:unibuds@yahoo.com)  
H: [www.unibuds.unsw.edu.au](http://www.unibuds.unsw.edu.au)

# Contents

## Messages

**Editor's Note 2**

**Messages from our Patrons**

**Venerable Tsang Hui 4 / Venerable Chao Khun Samai 7**

**Message from the President 9 / Messages from the Committee 10**

## Dhamma Insights

**Buddhist View on Cause & Effect / Venerable Neng Rong 15**

**佛教的因果觀 / 能融師父 24**

**Overcoming Difficulties / Venerable Thubten Chokyi 31**

**Buddhist Attitude to Death and Birth / Rod Lee 35**

**How to Avoid Conflict / Jim Teoh 40**

## Member's Contributions

**Glasses/ Amy Chung 43**

**Transformations into Pacifism / Alex Serpo 44**

**Not that Vicious a Cycle / Puay Yeong Teh 46**

**Explanations of Kamma / Rosianna Lim 48**

**Two Donkeys/ Jack Shi 49**

**Nothing Ever Repeats / Pojdanai Sukijjakhamin (Aun) 50**

**When Near a Village / Tracy Weerasinha 52**

**Blossoms of Life/ Tina Ng 54**

**Seeds of Tomorrow, Blossoms of Yesterday / Su Sian Teh 55**

## Finale

**UNIBUDS 2007-2008 in Pictures 56**

**List of Members 64**

**Spiritual References 65**

**Glossary 66**

## *Fruition*

*According to the seed that's sown,  
So is the fruit you reap therefrom.*

*- Buddha (Samyutta Nikaya)*

Dear Reader,

I welcome you to the 28th edition of UNIBUDS' Annual Magazine by first inviting you to take a moment to retrace the events of your life, to find a connection between a deed done and the eventuating effect experienced. As the magazine unfolds itself before you, I hope it will engage, and add to, your understanding of kamma.

Kamma is the law of moral causation. It inspires faith that goodness ultimately brings happiness, and deters the doing of evil as it brings misery. It explains the existence of inequality amongst individuals in the world – why some are born kind, intelligent, wealthy or beautiful, while others aren't. It places the responsibility of your actions back with you, and also places the ability to shape your life back in your hands. It gives due weight to everything you do, for all actions have a consequence.

Although kamma is often understood by equating good with good, and evil begetting evil, it is not due to a judgmental system of rewards and punishments. Rather, it is considered a natural phenomenon, similar to a seed germinating to fruition. This is an important distinction for two reasons. First, it dispels any qualms as to the existence of an external being conferring salvation or condemnation on us. Secondly, since moral judgments are limited and malleable according to a particular time and place, kamma as a natural phenomenon remains unperturbed by changes in social attitude and (un)acceptability.

This practical and positive outlook gained from an understanding of kamma is emphasised by Venerable Thubten Chokyi in her Dhamma talk, "Overcoming Difficulties" (page 31), Mr Rod Lee in "Buddhist Attitude to Death and Birth" (page 35), and Mr Jim Teoh in "How to Avoid Conflict" (page 40).

# *The Ripening of Kamma*

Another common definition of kamma is “cause and effect”. In fact, kamma specifically refers to intentional action, which includes the word, thought and deed. The effect or result is called *vipaka* in Pali. So if kamma is the potential seed, then *vipaka* is the fruit that arises from the tree. Nonetheless, inherent in kamma is the potential of producing the corresponding effect, for although the cause produces the effect, it is the effect that explains the cause. Venerable Neng Rong explains this connection further in her Dhamma talk, “Buddhist View on Cause and Effect” (page 15).

The Buddha comprehended and expounded the intricate workings of kamma over 2500 years ago. Over time its definition and use has varied, but the essence of what the Buddha taught on the subject remains relevant and ever so important to our modern life. It is a subject which connects with most topics in Buddhism; a subject which connects with most events in our daily lives; a subject which you can return to again and again, and still discover a deeper layer of truth. Truly, it is by kamma that this world is led.

As you peel through the pages of *Fruition*, may you discover the intricate workings of kamma.

Yours in the Dhamma,  
Tina Ng  
Annual Magazine Editor  
2007-2008

*A Note from the Editor*

# 如是因，如是果

慧命社選擇了“昨日之果實，明日之種子”為今年菩提之夜的主題，試圖闡明“今日”的重要性以及佛教的三世因果觀。三世的因果由業力牽連，然它並非如許多人所誤解的宿命論。因果業報為佛教一重要觀念。因此，慧命社年刊編委再以“如是因，如是果”為論題，希望對此概念做進一步的探討，這是值得鼓勵的。

佛教的因果業報論是活潑、充滿希望的。世間的一切皆為緣起，業力亦不例外。它是緣生法，是可變的。重要的是我們要認清痛苦與煩惱的根源，針對問題去解決，不能非因計因。我們要正見因果，了解因果之間的必然規律，明辨善惡，培養善因，以得善果，進一步的，種清淨的因，以得清淨的果。雖然我們的無明，頑固的煩惱與習氣常常左右我們，但我們要記得我們還有自由意志。唯有堅強的意志，才能像一位有方向的司機，帶領我們走向正確的方向，而不隨煩惱習氣而去。這樣，我們才能突破惑、業、苦的枷鎖，超越輪迴之苦。

要培養自由意志，我們必須啟發智慧。唯有智慧，才能讓我們在這充滿五欲誘惑的世間看清方向，作正確的判斷，不被煩惱習氣牽引，穩穩的把握著方針，朝著清淨自在的目標前進。因此，我們要多聆聽、閱讀佛法，培養正見與正信。同時，在生活中實踐佛法，思惟佛法；並進一步修持禪定，養成平靜專注的心，觀照自我身心與世間的真相，體解佛法深義。啟發智慧的方法不外聞、思、修、證四個步驟，而聽聞佛法為重要的起步。因此，希望大家掌握親近善知識，多聞熏習的機會。

個人的未來要靠個人的身心行為去提昇，共住的環境有賴共同的力量去改造。這是共業的原理。因此，我們有照顧我們的大環境之責任。同樣的，佛教的興衰亦是每位佛教徒的責任。我們若希望佛教界清淨，正法久住，那麼，我們就應該努力學習佛法，建立正確的見解與信念，積極推廣正見與正行。佛教徒都有正見、正信、正行，才能讓佛教的真精神顯現，使正法久住。

慧命社是學佛的苗圃，亦是培養正因的好園地。菩提種子需要佛法的養分讓它成長。希望大家細心照顧心中的菩提種子，在這菩提苗圃裡鞏固學佛的道心，加強自己對佛法的認識與修持。同時，我們也要關心苗圃裡其他的菩提種子，願大家都能健康成長，共同創造一個美好的菩提園，給更多人帶來清涼與慰藉。

盼大家發菩提心，自利利他，護持慧命社，與同學們分享佛法的利益，讓慧命社不斷的在校園裡推動正法，扮演它應盡的角色與責任，為清淨佛法的流傳、正法的久住盡一點綿力。

願有朝一日，菩提種子皆長成茁壯的菩提樹，成就菩提正果。



# ***Such is the Cause, Thus is the Effect***

***Venerable  
Tsang Hui***

## 導師的話

UNIBUDS has chosen “Seeds of Tomorrow, Blossoms of Yesterday” as the theme of this year’s Bodhi Nite, so as to highlight the importance of “today” – the present moment, as well as the Three Births Theory of Cause and Effect in Buddhism. The teaching of cause and effect in Buddhism covers three births, that is, from past, present and to the future. The cause and effect of the three births are linked by the force of Kamma. Many people often misunderstood the theory of cause and effect, and Kamma, as “fate” or “destiny”. As the teaching of cause and effect and Kamma are important concepts in Buddhism, I am glad that “Fruition – The Ripening of Kamma” is chosen as the theme for this year’s Annual Magazine as this allows us to explore these concepts further.

The Law of Cause and Effect and Kamma provide a hopeful outlook on life. Everything in our universe arises from causes and conditions, and so does Kamma. Since Kamma is influenced by the causes and conditions, it is also subject to change. It is important that we recognise the root of our pain and sufferings and attempt to resolve our pain and sufferings from the root cause. In order to do that, we need to have a right understanding of Kamma, to understand the relationship between cause and effect, to distinguish good from evil, and to plant wholesome causes so as to reap wholesome effects. Eventually, we can cultivate pure causes to reap the effect of purity. Although we are often influenced by our ignorance, afflictions, and unwholesome habits, we need to constantly remember that we have our free will at all times. Having a strong will is like being a driver who knows the way and leads ourselves in the right direction on our journey, preventing us from going down the unwholesome path, and not to be carried away by our afflictions. It is only then that we will be able to break through the entanglement of ignorance, Kamma, and suffering, and liberate ourselves from *Samsara*.

We need to cultivate wisdom in order to fortify our free will. It is only wisdom that can give us clarity and guide us to make the right choice in this world that is full of temptations. It is only wisdom that we can hold firmly onto our guiding compass in life and not be influenced by our unwholesome

habits, and walk towards peace and tranquility. Therefore, we need to listen to and read about the Dhamma and develop right understanding and right faith in Buddhism. At the same time, we should always reflect on and practice the Dhamma. We also need to practice meditation and develop a calm and focused mind, and contemplate on the true nature of our body, mind, and all phenomena in the world. The cultivation of wisdom does not fall outside of the four basic steps – to read and listen, to think and reflect, to practice and contemplate with a mind that is focused, and finally develop true understanding. Among these four steps, reading and listening to the Dhamma is the important starting point of our journey. Therefore, I hope that all of you will make good use of every opportunity to attend Dhamma talks, listen and learn the Dhamma from the wise teachers that you encounter.

One's future is dependent on one's individual actions; similarly, our collective effort is required to change our global environment for the better. The latter is known as 'collective Kamma'. Therefore, we all have the responsibility to take good care of our environment. In the same way, the rise and fall of Buddhism is the responsibility of every Buddhist. If we wish for peace and harmony within the Buddhist community, and for the righteous teachings of the Buddha to be prolonged, we need to make diligent effort in learning the Dhamma and establishing right understanding and right faith in Buddhism. In addition, we need to actively promote right understanding as well as the right conducts in our community. It is only when all Buddhists possess the right understanding, right faith and right conduct that the true spirit of Buddhism can be portrayed. Hence allowing the righteous teachings of the Buddha to be prolonged.

UNIBUDS provides a fertile ground for the learning of Buddhism as well as the planting of *Bodhi* seeds (causes). The *Bodhi* seeds require the nourishment of the Dhamma to grow. I hope that every one of you will take good care of your *Bodhi* seed, to further develop your interest in learning and gaining a deeper understanding and practice of the Dhamma on this fertile soil. At the same time it is important that we care for the other *Bodhi* seeds around us. May all *Bodhi* seeds grow healthily, and together create a wonderful garden, and bring peace and comfort to more people.

I hope that everyone will aspire to develop your *Bodhi* mind, benefitting oneself and others. Give your support to UNIBUDS so that it can continue to play its role in spreading the Dhamma on campus, and helping with the prolongations of the righteous Dhamma for many years in the future. I sincerely wish that one day in the future all the *Bodhi* seeds will grow and flourish into strong *Bodhi* trees, and bear the *Bodhi* fruit of perfect enlightenment.



Above: Venerable Tsang Hui  
Source: Khai Yi Ng

The law of kamma

# The Law of Kamma

Venerable Chao Khun Maha Samai

Buddhism as we know comes from the Pali words, *Buddhasasana*, literally translated as the teachings of the Buddha, or the teachings that help to purify the knowing minds. In the numerous teachings of the Lord Buddha given to many different kinds of people in many different places, apart from the Four Noble Truths, the law of Kamma is very much emphasised. From what we have learned, originally, our knowing mind is very bright and shining. It has been darkened because of the visiting defilements that come to cover it. Once there is much effort to remove those bad elements away that knowing mind would move back to its former glory again. Here is the starting point of all actions; wholesome and unwholesome, negative and positive. The Lord Buddha had said: "Mind is the chief, mind is the master; everything comes from the mind. If one speaks or acts with an impure mind, suffering would follow as the hoof of the ox follows the wheel. In reverse, mind is the chief, mind is the master; everything comes from the mind, if one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness would follow as a shadow never leaves the body.

We can say without making any mistake that the knowing mind is the house of *Samsara*, the wheel of birth and death. If we turn the wheel of Dhamma over that knowing mind, it because *Bodhicitta*, the seed of Enlightenment. When good mindfulness and true wisdom have not arrived, ignorance is the great living force that plays around in the minds of all living beings. All kinds of bad Kamma, bad speech comes from it. Once the Lord Buddha was asked about the way of life that a good householder should follow. He replied that a good householder should lay aside any form of violence in respect of all living beings. He should not take part in any form of stealing. He should avoid sexual misconducts, always respecting others as his dear relatives and friends. When meeting with different kinds of people, he should not speak falsely or allow anyone to lie on his behalf. He should stay away from drinking intoxicating drinks at all times.

Once the bad Kamma, physically and verbally has been stopped through a very strict living of moral life, all kinds of noble virtues such as loving kindness, compassion, sincerity and mindfulness have a chance to grow. Since the good and the bad never grow together, if one prospers, the other has to be in great decline. In this kind of spiritual warfare, once a good fence of strong morality has been built up six good guards of mindfulness have to be stationed at every gate that leads the way

to the city of knowing mind. Generally speaking, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind itself have to be under good control. No liking and no disliking would be allowed to disturb the knowing mind. At this level, a regular meditation is another way of life that we have to follow.

Naturally, water is clean and clear by itself. It becomes dirty and muddy because of the mud and all kinds of dirty particles that are thrown into it. Once we let the water settles down, it goes back to its clarity and purity again. Our knowing mind is exactly the same. Once it has been purified by morality and meditation, it goes back to its brightness and clarity again.

On the day when our Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment, after having his meal in the morning, he went to float his empty tray on the Niranjara River, wishing that if he attains Enlightenment together may his tray go against the stream. To his great joy, the tray did run against the stream as far as his eyes could see and dropped into the bottom of that river.

From this story we should draw a great lesson. If there is any wish to attain Enlightenment, we have to go against our human nature. Generosity must replace greed, compassion must replace anger and wisdom must replace delusion. Furthermore, sensual pleasures, even very subtle forms of distractions such as liking and disliking, have to be overcome before we could come to see clearly the origin of *Samsara*, the cycle of birth and death. Here there are two separate paths to turn to. It is the Noble Eightfold Path, morality, meditation and wisdom that lead us to Nibbana, the end of suffering. Down below is the way of *Samsara*, greed, hatred and ignorance that lead us to great suffering. The law of Karma starts from here, if we do good we receive good. If we do bad, we receive bad. There is no external power to give us any reward or a punishment. The law of Karma has arranged it. Everything good and bad stems from the knowing mind. Please take care of it.

May all living beings be well and happy.



Above: Venerable Chao Khun Samai  
Photo: Lucky Joeng



*To all my friends in the Dhamma,*

I sincerely hope that everyone has had a fruitful year, learning much about the Dhamma and making friends along the way. Let us learn from both the good and bad from the past year and welcome the coming year with courage, wisdom and enthusiasm.

Let me first express my thanks to the 28th Annual Magazine Editor, Tina Ng, and her assistant Zhang Yi for putting together this magnificent piece of work that forms the essence of UNIBUDS from 2007-2008. Also a special thanks to their team for doing this wonderful job.

Whatever that has happened, is a result of past actions. The UNIBUDS' activities and events over the year 2007-2008 were the collective effort of the 28th Executive Committee. Their hard work and diligence, sacrifices and good intentions made the spread of Buddhism on campus possible. Through this opportunity, I would like to express my thanks to the team.

Action, without direction, can be misguided. It is like providing wind to a sail without a captain on the ship. Sadhu to our patrons, Venerable Tsang Hui and Venerable Chao Khun Samai for providing us with the direction and inspiration to carry on Buddhist activities. A special thanks to our Buddhist Chaplain Venerable Neng Rong for encouraging and being supportive of our activities.

Our present is determined by our past. Whatever actions we have done have left an impact. Maybe it is smiling at someone, that can leave a pleasant memory in the person, or maybe it is an unskilful action, such as losing our temper and saying something silly, that could leave an unwholesome impact. Such is the law of kamma, the law of moral causation. Our past is gone, but we can still follow the laws of kamma and create a better tomorrow! Our present is determined by the past, but our present determines our future. Let us leave our unhappiness behind, learn from our mistakes and carry on our wise actions. Let us not despair in our current troubles but move on skilfully to create a more wholesome tomorrow.

This year, many fruits from UNIBUDS members have blossomed, bringing happiness and joy to many people, such as Bodhi Nite, Cook of the Year, Vesak Day, Winter and Summer Retreats and so on. I hope that committee members, members and all friends have picked up something that stays with them throughout this Dhamma journey. It could be listening to Dhamma talks, practising the Dhamma in life, or making new friends. Personally, I find that having the opportunity to be exposed to the Buddha's teaching is my greatest blessing. On top of that, having the opportunity to serve the greater Buddhist community as president of UNIBUDS is just as rare.

I truly appreciate the chance to serve UNIBUDs and I truly treasure the teachings and friendship along the journey. I hope that everyone will continue learning the Dhamma and more importantly, put the teachings into practice. May all be well, happy and peaceful. May all be free from enmity and suffering. Whatever merits we have done, may these merits be shared by all. Sadhu!

*Metta, Ming De Teh*



Left: Ming De Teh      Source: Lucky Joeng

# Message from the President



## **Mandy Pang – External Vice President**

Dear friends in Dhamma, it has now come to an end of 28th Executive Committee term. Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to all members for giving me this opportunity to serve you as the 28th External Vice President and am grateful for your support and effort in UNIBUDS. It is the collective Kamma of everyone that allows UNIBUDS to bloom and continue the Dhamma journey. This term is indeed enriching for me as I am honoured to be able to practice the Dhamma with many insightful friends. UNIBUDS is like a parent to me, protecting me yet allowing me to grow. Just like how a bud blooms into a tree with the love and care from the gardener (parent). Lastly, I made a wish here, for UNIBUDS to continue blooming and may this light of wisdom be passed down in many years to come. May all be well and happy always. May all be guided and blessed by the Triple Gems always.

## **Khai Yi – Internal Vice President**

Dear Dhamma friends, it has now come to the end of the 28th EXCO term. It seems that I just took on the role of IVP, and now it is time to let it go. It is my pleasure being able to serve UNIBUDS and UNIBUDS' members for the whole year. Throughout the journey, I have gained new experiences, friendships and most importantly, the Dhamma. UNIBUDS has given me the chance to grow and learn through organising events and socialising with members. With the guidance from our Patrons and senior members, UNIBUDS has blossom from a tiny little seed to a tree, and I believe that it will continue to grow. The theme of the Bodhi Nite this year, KARMA reminded us that we can make the change we want to see. For UNIBUDS to continue blossom, let's set the right conditions, together with the effort and support from all, I believe that the light will continue to be passed down! May we all continue to walk on this Dhamma journey together. May we all be well and happy.

## **Alvin Phua - Honorary Secretary**

Dear fellow members of UNIBUDS, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to serve each and everyone of you as the Honorary Secretary this



past year. It has been a great experience throughout this one-year term, being able to learn many things from the people around me. Through organising and participating in the activities of UNIBUDS, I have gained much more insight about Buddhism from the limited knowledge before joining UNIBUDS, and I hope that you have experienced the same as well. I guess this links back to the theme of Bodhi Nite 2008, where I have planted the seed, and it blossomed. Every decision we make, a seed has been planted. We then nourish and nurture it, till it blossoms and bear the fruits of our hard work. Whether the result is positive or otherwise, we should look back and learn from the process, which is what matters. Finally, I would like to thank the 28th EXCO for being there for all the help and wonderful journey. Wishing all Annual Magazine readers good health and may you be well and happy always.

### **Adeline Sugianto – Honorary Treasurer**

Hi everyone! I hope you all well and happy. This year was my 4th year being an EXCO and I still enjoyed it as much as when I started my first EXCO term. Every year has always taught me a lot of things and given me a new chapter to write about and share with others. Having realised that nothing is permanent, I would like to use this opportunity to thank all of you who have been continuously supporting UNIBUDS and just simply being part of such a great and warm friendship in the Dhamma. May the Triple Gem be close to your heart and may they always be your guidance. May you once again be well and happy.

### **Hadi Kusuma – General Secretary**

Dear Friends, time really flies!! It is time to bid farewell as the 28th EXCO term has come to its end. I would like to thank all EXCO members and UNIBUDS members who helped UNIBUDS throughout this year. The life as an EXCO would not be complete without the existence of supporters like YOU and I hope to see you again in near future. May all beings be well and in peace.

### **Pojdanai Sukijjakhamin (Aun) – Activities Director**

Hi fellow buds, my second and last EXCO term ended with a hint of sadness, an element of joy and some anticipation. I feel a little sad knowing that it's time to pass on the honoured responsibility of sailing this youthful Dhamma ship to 12 other people. I feel joyous and relieved knowing that these 12 will do their very best to take Dhamma passengers safely to shore. I am now ashore waving my goodbyes. I can see the ship slowly drifting away. I am now turning around and finding myself in





the unknown territory. I may no longer be on the ship, but I am eagerly continuing my Dhamma journey on foot – in the direction that I will now choose.

Every bud takes his or her own course in this Dhamma journey. Some may consider on boarding the ship, some are on it, the others, like me, have left the ship and explored other paths. Each bud is driven by different causes and conditions, and each of us just has to sense what feels right for the Dhamma practice at any given moment. For those who have chosen to board the ship, I encourage you to do your best to explore every corner, every room, everything and anything that this ship has to offer. Because one day, you will have to walk on foot and continue your own journey only with your previous Dhamma experience to guide you. In the end, however, it does not matter too much where you are, as long as you do not lose sight of your Dhamma Journey.

Bon Dhamma Voyage, Aun

### **Rosiana Lim – EDT Coordinator**

Hi everyone! I hope you have a great day today. Buddhism has always been a part of my life for many years. It has helped me in my spiritual development and growth. I'm very grateful for being given a chance to be an EXCO and helped the members to learn more about the Dhamma. I also want to thank everyone in the team for being supportive and for the friendship. A short message from me to all of you: let's cherish the present moment, don't regret your past but learn and grow from it. Don't worry about the future because it is not yet happened and it is uncertain. I hope you have a wonderful life. Take care!

### **Zhang Yi – CDT Coordinator**

Another year has passed by and I am happy to say that it has been another fruitful year with UN-IBUDS. Thank you for your support all this while, be it helping out in the background, bringing joy and laughter to everyone in the foreground, or to simply turn up and participate in our events. As your collective effort (note: collective Kamma) made UNIBUDS and Chinese Dhamma Talk what it is today. Having studied and practiced Buddhism for a few years, I grow to realize and appreciate how profound an effect it can have on my life; for it brought me purpose, balance and peace. I wish the same for every one of you, that learning the Dhamma will enrich your life as it did for me. And I also wish that UNIBUDS could help you out in that, that you will be able to learn the Dhamma in the comfort of people who will support you on this journey. Please continue to support UNIBUDS in whatever way you can and may you have courage, wisdom and good humour always to live your life with grace and poise!





### **Shi Ying Ooi – Meditation Coordinator**

For me, being in the 28th Exco term began with myself, an individual as the Meditation Coordinator, but ended with the realization that I was only a small part of an engine running this UNIBUDS vehicle. It was a humbling and character building experience to learn and grow from the rest of the EXCOs, members and teachers and part and parcel of the Dhamma journey. Four Meditation Workshops were held this year, lead by speakers of different background and tradition which I sincerely believed had assisted many in learning and deepening their understanding in one of the most important Buddhist practice- Meditation. Throughout the year, two weekly Lunch Time Meditation Sessions were held in the Unibuds Library, attracting like-minded practitioners to come together and uphold the practice, amidst our busy schedules. A special thanks to the attendees, also to Hong Seng Toh who often led the sessions in my absence. Not to forget, dear EXCOs who trod along this path hand in hand, through the happy and difficult times. Sadhu.

### **Linus Melingele – Sacca Editor**

Dear Members, how's things? Hope life is relaxing & enjoyable as it should always be. I joined UNIBUDS 2 years ago, and to be honest last year, the year when I was one of the EXCOs, produced all the biggest dramatic exaggerations of my whole life so far. There was great company along with great joy and laughter, great challenge along with great accomplishment, great events along with great pressure, great pressure along with great conflict within or without myself, great troublemaker as I was, however, tolerated by great understanding, hence now. I'm proud to have found great growth within me, and I certainly couldn't have done it otherwise. Thank you all 28th ExcOs who helped me through all this. Come and join us!

### **Tina Ng – Annual Magazine Editor**

In 2004, UNIBUDS opened its arms to me, and I've never left its embrace since. Thank you to all my Dhamma friends who have been there for me through life's ups and downs. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a part of the EXCO team for so long. It's been quite an experience to be able to take on so many different roles, organise various events, and share such memorable memories with you all.

Because of UNIBUDS, I have been inspired to walk the Buddhist path of compassion and wisdom. Because of UNIBUDS, I have learnt the Dhamma at its essence. Because of UNIBUDS, I am now so much more than I was. Because of this, I am forever grateful. My sincere best wishes to all those who have been embraced by UNIBUDS – may your bud of Enlightenment bloom in full!





# *Dhamma Insights*

Source: Lucky Joeng

# *Buddhist View on Cause and Effects*

## *Venerable Heng Rong*

### **1.1.1 Foreword: What is Kamma**

In this world, there are people who believe in cause and effect, but sometimes, they wished there was no such law as cause and effect. When they have done good deeds, they wished there will be cause and effect and kamma, but when they have done unwholesome deeds, they wished they would not be accountable for the deeds they have done. There are other people who feel that the law of cause and effect is very restrictive and hence, would rather not believe in the existence of this law.

There are people who might ask: "If someone does not believe in the law of cause and effect, would they still reap the effects of their actions?" The law of cause and effect is a natural law in the universe; it is a universal truth. Whether we choose to believe it or not, the phenomenon would still take effect on our mind and body. Kamma is the most unbiased law in the universe. If someone committed an unwholesome deed, even if the police failed to catch him/her, even if no one else saw it, the person who committed the deed would still reap its effect. Hence, we do not need to trouble ourselves with the relatively trifling inequalities in life.

In actual fact, every minute thing in life cannot exist independent of kamma. If someone rejects kamma, but gets upset and takes his temper out on others everyday, would he be welcomed? The answer is, no! People would still dislike this person. Why? Since he is unpleasant to people everyday, therefore his friends keep a distance away from him. The existence of "since" and "therefore" links causality, and that is kamma.

Take another example: a chemical experiment. In performing a chemical experiment, we have to observe the chemical substance change. "Since" there was a change in colour of this substance, "therefore" it proves this is a particular substance. Once again, this is a "since..."-"therefore..." linkage. Scientists can arrive at a conclusion by relying on many "since...". Similarly, if we ask why we get depressed, we would also answer with reasoning that "since" we have too much work, "therefore" we get depressed. Again, this is a "since"-"therefore" statement.

### **1.1.2 Constructing the right view on kamma**

## **1.2 Wrong views on Kamma**

### **1.2.1 Kamma just for one lifetime**

Although we dwell in kamma everyday, at every moment, some people are still reluctant to believe in kamma, not to mention believing in kamma in our future lives. These people may think: "What kamma is there? If there are flowers to be plucked today, we should pluck them straight away and not wait for them to wither. If there is money to be spent, it should be spent and enjoyed first." The lifestyles of these people can be quite risky, and they can fall into extremes easily, daring to do almost anything because they do not consider the consequences. However, at the same time, these people might feel lost in life because there is no goal to work towards. They might be thinking: "If I die, I will cease to exist, so why should I spend so much effort in this lifetime?" This is such a pessimistic and melancholic view on life.

### **1.2.2 Fixed-Fate Theory**

The most common misunderstanding on life is that kamma is restrictive and binds our lives to a certain outcome with no way of changing it and all the happenings now are determined by the past. We suffer with troubles and dissatisfaction today because we have done unwholesome deeds in the past. Our present is pre-determined and our lives are completely ruled by the past. What meaning is there for us in this life then? This particular view on kamma is not the right view of kamma by Buddhist standards.

### **1.2.3 Assuming wrong cause to be the cause**

The teaching of kamma is not unique to Buddhism alone. Kamma has also been mentioned by other religions in India, but their explanation of kamma is different from that of Buddhism. In ancient India, many practitioners believe in kamma, and many practitioners wanted to find out the cause of suffering and be free from it. However, they did not find the right causes to produce the results that they had hoped for, hence the saying of “assuming wrong cause to be the cause”.

For example, the practitioners understood that there is a lot of suffering and troubles in this world, and they reasoned that it was due to many unwholesome actions in the past. They also thought that in order to remove these sufferings, they had to torture themselves, hence they practiced asceticism, such as fasting for long periods, upholding an inverted position everyday, burying themselves in the hot sand, tolerate extreme heat or cold and many more. They used many methods to torture themselves, hoping to “release” their unwholesome results through suffering. They thought that the tougher the torture, the faster the “release” of unwholesomeness and the earlier the arrival of bliss. When Prince Siddharta left the palace to pursue the universal truth, he also started with practicing asceticism, and he trained himself harder than other ascetics. He took only one grain of rice per day and he was so thin that he could probably touch his spine from his stomach. However, he soon realised that not only was practicing asceticism not the way to enlightenment, it made his body weaker and his mind more confused.

This is termed “assuming wrong cause to be the cause”. In other words, the truth behind suffering has not been discovered, but people are practicing in ways that they thought were right. Hence people tortured themselves but never got closer to the truth. This is due to a lack of wisdom, hence using a practice not directed at realising the truth.

### **1.2.4 The Theory of No Cause**

In ancient India, there were many people who believed that the world was too chaotic and confusing. However, they thought that there was no reason behind all this chaos, and things just happened randomly. This school of thought is known as the Theory of No Cause. They are trapped in the cycle of life and death and have both felt and generated more kammic seeds. Due to their lack of wisdom, they were unable to see the cause and effect of events and hence fall into the trap that events happen randomly, but the fact is not as such, and this is yet another misconception of kamma.

### **1.2.5 Right view on Cause and Effect**

The Buddha was born in a time and place where there were many schools of thoughts, including those mentioned above. However, he felt that they were incomplete and through his own practice, he gained wisdom and realised the natural law of cause and effect. There are always causes behind the arising of all phenomena. The events that we have encountered are not borne of nothing, and the question lies at whether we are able to see through the truth of it. The rising of a phenomenon needs to have a causative seed, and also the nurturing conditions in order to produce the effect. There is a certain order as to what kind of seed can bring about the desired fruit. This is also the common saying of “do good, get good; do bad, get bad”. It is impossible to do good but get bad





Source: Lucky Joeng

effects, and similarly, do bad but get good effects.

We need to cultivate the right kinds of causes in order to follow the Law of Cause and Effect to arrive at enlightenment. The Law of Cause and Effect is not created by the Buddha, but a natural law of the universe. Trees would wither without water; this is the law of cause and effect at work. The pollution that exists in our world today is also the effect of humankind's ignorant behaviour, and not the wrath of some higher beings. When a cause has been planted, there is bound to be an effect. Although the common saying goes "Do good, get good; do bad, get bad", but it is hard to describe an effect as good or bad. Hence, it is more accurate to say good actions creates happy results and bad actions create unhappy results.

The teachings of cause and effect in Buddhism places emphasis on sentient beings, but the Law of Cause and Effect also applies to non-sentient objects. Nevertheless, the Buddha's teachings were taught with humans as the main audience, teaching us how to follow the Law of Cause and Effect to arrive at Nibbana. After the Buddha attained enlightenment, he taught us to find out the cause of our suffering and frustrations, and he taught us how to practice with eradicating this cause as the goal.

We are often trapped in planting the "cause of suffering" (the second Noble Truth in The Four Noble Truths). Greed, hatred, ignorance, jealousy, self-centeredness are causes of suffering. If we lead our lives with these causes of suffering constantly, it is only natural that we end up creating more results of suffering. When we are engulfed by our greed, hatred, ignorance, jealousy and self-centeredness, our thoughts, actions and speech would have these impure contents in them, and the result would be that we are more troubled than before. If someone's dying thoughts are of hatred and revenge, would this person be reborn? Of course he would! Not only that, he would continue to lead a life of afflictions and frustration after being reborn. Hence, if we keep entertaining these unwholesome thoughts, our fruits would be unhappiness. If we are lucky enough to be reborn as humans again, we would be born with all these unhappy thoughts. As we have already learnt, these unhappiness and frustrations do not stem from nothing, but as seen, it is from our current defilements of greed, hatred and ignorance, and it is these ignorance and defilements that keeps us in this cycle of life and death.

The Buddha made some observances of worldly people: everyone wants happiness, but yet most people are still unhappy and in suffering. Why is everyone's life different from their dreams? Why? The reason behind this is that most people's speech, actions and thoughts are motivated by greed, hatred, ignorance, and jealousy to the point that it goes beyond control and ethical rights and their capacity. Great pressure is being placed on the person due to lack of self-control, and this brings about suffering. Our greed and endless desire constantly agitates us, and does not allow us to have peace of mind.

Endless desire drives us to the point when we lose sight of our pursuits. This driving force does not

allow our minds to be settled, and this in itself is a kind of suffering. In the course of our pursuits for our desires, there is bound to be some clashes with other people. Whatever it is that we desire, other people will have the same craving too. When the other party has more possessions or better achievements than us, we feel jealous, then angry, and then hold hatred. If we had some rationality, self-discipline and restrain, we may curb our temper. If we were to lose our self-control, we might hurt someone. It can be seen that while we are pursuing happiness, we have created many seeds of unhappiness at the same time, and we have also strengthened our greed, hatred, ignorance, jealousy, suspicion, arrogance and self-centredness. When we constantly have this thought: "This is mine, all other people shall not have it", we have only built up our ego, and also suffering. The Buddha saw this truth that our cravings and self-centeredness are the reasons behind our suffering, leading to greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, jealousy and other afflictions.

However, because we cannot see the truth, we carry our thoughts, speech and actions with an impure mind. At the same time, the goal of our pursuits is also imperfect and impure. For example in the pursuit of a position, there will always be a higher position and when we start comparing positions, there will be suffering once again. Even if we manage to achieve a specific position, we will start worrying that we will lose this position, and again, there is suffering. When we have not achieved it, we go through suffering to achieve it, and when we achieve it, we go through suffering in fear of losing it. Everything is impermanent and we cannot stay in that position forever. Even if we can stay at the position until we retire, we might still cling onto that position, and we might start comparing the new person in that position with ourselves, and think that we are better than the new person.

The cause of suffering is borne from our lack of wisdom to understand the truth of the world, of our self and the lack of understanding that everything is impermanent. While grasping for what we think is permanent, unwholesome thoughts arise and we create unwholesome deeds that push us into rebirth. Hence, we entangle ourselves in endless cycle of ignorance, wrong deeds, and suffering.

The Buddha saw clearly the cause of suffering, and with practice, he realised that these causes can be eliminated, and he taught us how to practise. In our speech, the Buddha taught us to be more understanding, and to reflect upon ourselves: "Why did I say something offensive? Why did I tell lie? Why must I create conflict among people? What is the reason behind all these?" With these benchmarks as guidelines, we reflect our speech and gradually remove the unwholesome thoughts we have. At the same time, we should cultivate compassion and try to put ourselves in others' shoes while making decisions and be less egocentric. In life, we should try our best to cultivate right speech, actions, thoughts, and take the initiatives to lessen our greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance and jealousy. In this way, we can reduce the unwholesomeness in our mind gradually. At the same time, as we try to be more peaceful and wholesome, our relation with other people will be more harmonious, our lives would be more peaceful and we would be closer to our goal of attaining bliss and happiness. The Buddha taught us to practise the Noble Eightfold Path, to plant more wholesome seeds (wholesome causes) in order to achieve the fruit of Nibbana one day. This is also the way how the Buddha has achieved enlightenment.

Many people understand that our past actions influence our current life, but many people overlook the fact that current actions can affect the future. It is with wisdom that we can see the truth of suffering and not get deluded by our afflictions in order to practice and be free of the cycle of life and death. Hence, as long as we are not liberated from the cycle of rebirth, our lives are not like those who view cause and effect just for one lifetime that we cease to exist when we die. We should understand rebirth, and not misunderstand the Law of Cause and Effect or reject the existence of cause and effect. We should start planting more wholesome causes.

#### **1.2.6 What is kamma? What is kammic energy (kammic force)? What is kammic effects/fruits (retributions or rewards)?**



When we talk about cause and effect, we will always come across another two words: “kamma” and “retribution or reward”. Kamma refers to action. An action leaves behind potential energy, an influential power. Just like studying, the act of studying leaves behind a form of energy that is useful during an examination. Although the action has passed, it leaves behind an influential energy, this is known as kammic energy or kammic force. When the conditions are right, the kammic energy will bloom as kammic effect (retribution or reward). If someone praised us earlier in the day, that action has already passed, but we would still feel happy for a period of time. This is the underlying influential energy. As we feel happy, we might buy a cake for the person, and this is the kammic effect. Similarly, someone who hurt another person would reap unwholesome kammic effects in a similar fashion.

### **1.2.7 Time of reaping effect – This life, next life and future lives**

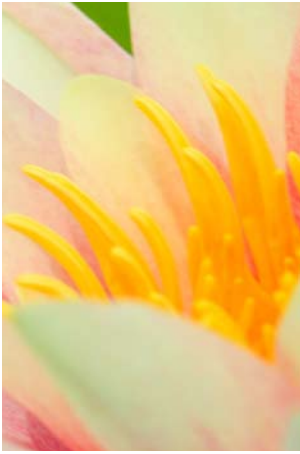
When would we reap the kammic effects? It depends on conditions. In terms of time, there are three possibilities. Some would reap the effect within this lifetime, some in the next lifetime, and some in much later times, such as in future lives. This difference in time can sometimes depend on the severity of the kammic actions. Most of the effects reaped within this lifetime are from mild actions or it can also be partial retributions of serious wholesome or unwholesome actions.

Kammic seeds require conditions to nourish them. Only when the conditions are ripe would the effects take place. If we provide different conditions from when the seed was planted to when it ripens, we can change the severity of the kammic effect. For example, if we hit a person, this person would bear a grudge against us, and we stared at this person the next time we see him, that would only add to his agitation and he might hit us back. However, if we took a different approach and apologised after we hit him, this person might soften up and just give us a scolding instead of a hard punch!

This illustrated that after the kammic seed has been planted, with different conditions provided, we can reap different effects. In other words, although we are reaping the effects of our past actions now, it does not mean we have to wait passively for things to happen because we can provide new conditions to change the effect. This is what Buddhism emphasises, that kamma can be changed. Kamma is also brought about by causes and conditions; hence, as long as we have enough time, we can provide the right conditions to make changes.

There is hope in life as kammic effects can be changed, and our efforts are worthwhile. If everything is predestined by our past, and in the past we have done many unwholesome deeds, then our present life would be quite terrible. Why then do we study Buddhism? We study Buddhism to make positive changes to our lives. Similarly, if we start doing foolish things now and let our troubled minds take over, then our lives can also deteriorate.

Kammic effects may not show up immediately. Some people worked hard for a while and give up



when they did not see any positive changes. Many people are told to do good deeds when they encounter difficulties, and they perform good deeds meticulously for three months. But when they do not see any changes in their lives, they start to lose confidence in this positive practice. We need to understand that we have done so much unwholesome deeds in the past, and under good advice now only we started to perform good deeds. In addition, the good deeds that we have performed are still for ourselves. With an egoistic mind, the deeds that we performed can have limited results. For countless cycles, we have performed so much unwholesome actions, and it has shaped our current behaviour. How can we expect all these to disappear within just three months worth of good effort? Not only that, the effort is also impure.

Like a piece of rag that has not been washed for over a year, it is quite impossible to expect all the dirt and grease to be removed from it by one wash. It would probably take a few cycles of washing with lots of bleach before all the dirt can be removed. In addition, besides making it clean, we need to make it fragrant, hence we need to put in more effort and continue doing more wholesome deeds. By this rag analogy, we need to have confidence in the Law of Cause and Effect, and be patient in our practice.

Take another example: if we played a fool in primary school and did not study hard but we decide to change when we reached high school. In the beginning when we study hard, our results may not improve much. In actual fact, we are still catching up with materials from primary school. If we give up at this point, we may stay at that level. If we persevere, we will catch up eventually. The same goes for our kamma. If our past wholesome deeds are lacking, we might not feel any difference when we start doing wholesome deeds, but this does not mean there is no effect. We should have patience and faith, and remember that kammic effects may not just show up in this life. With perseverance and faith, things will change gradually.

### **1.2.8 Types of kamma**

### **1.2.9 Wholesome kamma, unwholesome kamma, neutral kamma**

In order to become a human being, we need to have Right Understanding, to know what is wholesome and what is unwholesome. Some people may understand wholesomeness and unwholesomeness, but do not understand kamma, hence their emphasis on wholesomeness and unwholesomeness can dwindle. Some people may ask: "I understand there are wholesome deeds and unwholesome deeds, but why must we do wholesome deeds and not the unwholesome ones?" This ties in with the understanding of cause and effect, kamma and retributions. It is only by understanding that doing wholesome deeds we can reap wholesome results and vice versa that we are motivated to do more wholesome deeds. Hence wholesomeness and unwholesomeness should be explained with the teachings of cause and effect, and kamma and retribution to make it more convincing.

Many people think that "creating kamma" automatically means "creating bad kamma". In reality, every action that we do creates a kamma. Hence in order to create wholesome kamma constantly, we need to be able to differentiate wholesomeness from unwholesomeness. The judgement of





wholesomeness and unwholesomeness must come from our motivation, action and the end result. Firstly, we need to observe our mind if it is pure and clean, or is it full of greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, jealousy and other impure factors. If we harbour such thoughts, then it is not perfectly wholesome and pure. In terms of motivation, we may not achieve absolute purity now, but we can try to reduce the amount of impure thoughts. Secondly, from the point of view of results, we need to make careful, wise thoughts about the action done, and whether the result benefits ourselves and others, or at least benefit others. It should not only benefit ourselves while harm others. Only when we can make good judgements on wholesomeness and unwholesomeness, will we do right things. Every of our action, speech and thought can leave behind kammic imprint. When we talk about kamma, we pay special attention to intentional actions. Actions like blinking of the eye and scratching are actions that do not go through much of our thinking process, and they are termed neutral kamma. This kind of actions do not leave behind strong kammic imprint. However, all speech, action and thoughts that have gone through our mental process will create wholesome or unwholesome kamma.

#### **1.2.10 “Expressed”, “unexpressed”, “collective”, “individual”, “guiding” and “completion” kamma**

There are many types of kamma besides wholesome, unwholesome and neutral kamma as mentioned before. There is also “expressed” kamma, which are speech, action and thoughts expressed through our consciousness. There is also “unexpressed” kamma, which are not expressed, but have left some energy that can change our mind, such as angry thoughts, while not expressed, can affect our mind.

There are also collective kamma and individual kamma. Collective kamma is the collective energy from everyone’s speech, actions and thoughts. For example, the collective ignorance of everyone caused the environmental pollution we see today. The environment that we live in is closely tied to everyone’s actions. In general, we are all fortunate enough to stay in a comfortable place like Australia, and it is comfortable because of the collective wholesome kamma of everyone. However, if we do not take good care of this place that we live in, there can be pollution, accelerated erosion and global warming amongst other problems. It takes everyone’s effort to make changes to the environment; hence it is everyone’s responsibility to take care of the environment. However, if we look more carefully, we realise that within this generally comfortable and well living environment, there are some people who live in poverty and others who are wealthy. This is due to the person’s individual kamma.

Kamma can also be classified into “guiding” kamma and “completion” kamma. “Guiding” kamma is the guiding force to what we shall be reborn as and it is a very strong kammic force. This kammic force is not always a single, powerful event, but can be the collective effects from our daily habits and actions. If a person is lazy, likes to steal, takes drugs, likes gambling, indulges in alcohol and prostitution and has no human virtues, this person would have naturally cultivated kammic energy

suitable for the animal realm because that is exactly how an animal lives: eat when hungry, steal or snatch when unsatisfied and have sexual relation(s) when lustful. Would it be likely that this person be reborn as a human?

If one wishes to remain as a human in future lives, the minimum requirement would be to uphold the Five Precepts – do not kill, do not steal, do not have sexual misconduct, do not tell lies and do not indulge in intoxicants. If a person was to break all the precepts, indulge in promiscuous sex, alcohol, drugs and steal and rob, this person would not have lived like a human, and he would have cultivated kamma for the evil realms. The habitual tendencies and kammic actions he performed has a strong influence to where he would be reborn. This is “guiding” kamma.

When some beings arrive at a specific realm, they would have different outcomes as other beings in the same realm. Some people are born in happy families, with good looks whilst others are not as gorgeous. Some are tall, some are short, some are fat, some are thin, and there are all sorts of outcomes. Some people are born in places with lots of calamities such as earthquakes. Although sentient beings are born as humans, we can see that everyone faces different outcomes in different environments. This is due to the person’s “completion” kamma, which determines how perfect will his/her physical body and life in the retribution be.

If we were to assume that to be a human requires a passing mark of fifty percent, and some people achieve that fifty percent by upholding the Five Precepts. However, some people may not only uphold Five Precepts but also engage in charity work actively, such as practising generosity, doing good deeds and gaining wisdom, hence this person may well have scored seventy or eighty percent. It can be seen that both of them could be reborn as humans, but the person who managed fifty percent would probably be born in a less well-to-do family with more difficulties in life than the latter. The latter could be born in a wealthier family and have better looks. “Completion” kamma determines looks, complete sense organs, voice and other attributes. However, we should not feel inferior if we were born with less than satisfactory “completion” kamma, as we can make changes through our present efforts and learning Buddhism to increase our wisdom.

### **1.2.11 The nature of kamma**

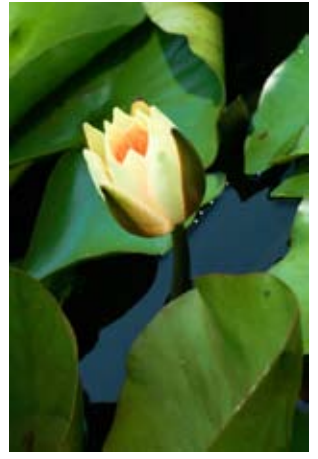
After the brief introduction of some terms of kamma above, we shall look into some right understanding of kamma in Buddhism:

#### **1.2.12 Kamma can be changed.**

#### **1.2.13 Kamma cannot be erased/cancelled off.**

Some people believe that after committing a wrong deed, praying to Buddha and repenting can “erase” or “cancel off” the unwholesome kamma. The unwholesome kammic seed that has been planted after committing an unwholesome act is planted in our subconsciousness and cannot be “erased”. In order to prevent this unwholesome seed from blossoming, we must prevent nurturing it by not giving it the right conditions. Unwholesome kammic seeds need unwholesome conditions like jealousy, hatred, self-centeredness among others to nurture it. If we can keep our minds calm and pure most of the time, we would naturally prevent nurturing unwholesome seeds and it would not have a chance to blossom. Similarly, wholesome seeds require wholesome conditions such as compassion, truthfulness, respect, and humility to nurture. If we can keep ourselves pure and wholesome, we can cause our wholesome seeds to blossom. Therefore, we must understand that kamma cannot be “erased”, but we can control the conditions that we provide it with.

Some people may ask: “What about the kammic seeds of enlightened ones like Buddha or Arahants?” Buddha and Arahants have attained ultimate enlightenment and are completely pure. They have realised the ultimate truth of non-self, and they have got rid of self-centredness, greed, hatred,



ignorance, arrogance and other defilements. Since there is no self to cling onto, and there is no outlet to produce suffering, their kammic seeds would be likened to have fallen on concrete floor and can never bloom.

Since kamma cannot be “erased”, then what is the point of repenting and praying to Buddha? Repentance, praying and reciting suttas can help to inspire and strengthen our wholesome thoughts, to provide right conditions for past wholesome kammic seeds and to plant more wholesome seeds in our sub-consciousness. Events can be smoother if we deprive unwholesome seeds of their nutrition and prevent their blossoming. It is just like probability. If green beans were unwholesome seeds, and red beans were wholesome seeds, and we mixed both green and red beans in a bottle, upon adding more red beans on top and shaking the bottle, the chances that we pick up red beans would still be higher than picking up green beans. Therefore, we should strengthen our wholesome thoughts, actions and speech. Kamma cannot be “erased” but we can always control the conditions that we provide and prevent unwholesome seeds from ripening.

#### **1.2.14 Is kammic result fixed?**

Would performing certain kammic action bring about definite results that cannot be altered? Just as mentioned before, kamma can be changed, but it will depend if there is sufficient time for changes to happen. If an extremely evil person has committed patricide and matricide, and does not repent, upon dying he will most likely enter the hell realm. Depending on how much time he has after the killing, he may not have enough time to repent and change his effect. If he committed suicide right after killing his parents, he would not have enough time to repent his actions. He may have thought he could express his regret through committing suicide, but in actual fact, he deprived himself of any chance to repent, do good and change his outcome.

Some Buddhist sects believe that certain kammic seeds will have definite kammic results and they cannot be changed. In general, these sects say that there are certain severe kammic actions that are definite, such as patricide, matricide, killing an Arahant, hurting a Buddha and causing dispute among the Sangha. However, strictly speaking, all kamma can be changed, and the question lies in time and effort spent. These evil kamma mentioned above can also be changed, but the kammic energy is usually too strong, there is usually insufficient time to make changes, the resolution to make changes is not strong enough, and unwholesome habitual tendencies are overwhelming, that changes cannot be made in time. Nonetheless, if we have a firm resolution to change, and we can maintain a pure, wholesome mind, and we put in extra effort to change our unwholesome habitual tendencies, even severe kamma can be changed.

#### **1.2.15 Do not oversee small kamma**

We should not ignore little good deeds or little bad deeds. We should encourage even the smallest good deeds and avoid the smallest bad deeds, because even the smallest deeds can cumulate into strong influential power and have huge impact on our lives.

## 1.2.16 Conclusion

By establishing Right Understanding on Buddhism's Theory of Cause and Effect, we know that there is hope. We are reaping the blossoms of yesterday, but we are also planting the seeds of tomorrow at this present moment. We should not blame anyone for what we encounter because we should be responsible for our own actions. We should be mindful of our actions and we should take every opportunity to improve ourselves. In addition, we should care for our environment and play our part in creating a better society and world. This is the principle of collective kamma. May everyone have the right understanding of the Buddhist teaching of cause and effect and kamma, may everyone establish a happy, positive and responsible view of life.



# 佛教的因果觀

## 講師：能融師父



### 1. 前言：甚麼是因果

在這世界上，有些人相信因果，但有時又不希望有因果。做好事時，期盼有因果，做壞事時，卻希望這筆“賬”不會被記上。又有一些人，覺得因果把他們束縛得緊緊，所以不願意相信因果。

常有人問：“如果一個人不相信因果，那他所做的事情，會不會遭受果報呢？”因果是宇宙自然的法則，無論我們相信與否，無論我們是否佛教徒，因果法則還是會在我們身上下起作用的。因果法則是宇宙間最公平的法則，它有它最公平的裁奪。一個人做壞事，即使警察沒抓到，別人不知道，做壞事的人自己還是要受報的。所以，我們不必太過為一些小事而感到憤憤不平，氣惱不堪。能明白因果自報，對許多事情就會看得比較開。

事實上，我們生活中的每一件事情都離不開因果。一個人即使不相信因果，但他天天罵人，會有人喜歡他嗎？不會的！人人還是會討厭他。為甚麼大家會討厭他？“因為”他天天罵人，“所以”朋友都遠離他。“因為…所以…”，這就是因果。

再舉個例子，做化學實驗時，我們必須觀察化學原料的變化。“因為”它產生這個顏色，這樣的變化，“所以”證明它是甚麼東西。這不也是“因為…所以…”嗎？科學家的種種推論，都是“因為”某些理由，第一點、第二點、第三點…“所以”結論是如此。這都是“因為…所以…”。還有，為甚麼我會這麼消沉？因為功課太多。這也是“因為…所以…”。

### 2. 建立正確的因果觀

#### 2.1 一世因果

雖然我們天天生活在因果當中，但有些人還是不太願意接受因果的觀念，更不相信有來世的因果。這些人常想：“有甚麼因果？有花堪折直須折，莫待無花空折枝。有錢就先拿到手，享受了再說。”這樣的人生觀是相當危險的。這樣的人常常容易走入極端，甚麼事都敢做，因為他們不去想有甚麼後果。但在另一方面，他們對人生也容易感到茫然。“反正死了就完了，努力有甚麼用？人生有甚麼意思呢？”這是多麼的空虛與無奈！沒有正確的因果觀念，容易使我們的人生觀與價值觀落入無限悵惘。

## 2.2 宿命論

最常對因果產生的誤解，就是認為因果把我們困得死死的，沒辦法改變。這種人認為因果是不變的。一切的遭遇都是過去的命運注定的，不能改變的。我們今生為甚麼會有這麼多的煩惱，都是我們過去所做的惡行為帶來的。過去的業主宰我們，無法改變，我們只好認命，這樣的人生，有甚麼意思呢？這種定命論，不是佛教的因果觀。

## 2.3 非因計因

因果的說法並不只存在於佛陀的教法中。印度的其他宗教也提到因果的觀念。但是，他們對因果的解釋有些不同。古印度時代的許多修行者都認為有因果，他們也想找出世間苦的根源，期望得到快樂與解脫。但是他們終究沒有找到正確的因來圓成他們希望得到的果。所以就有所謂的“非因計因”。也就是誤把不正確的理由當成是原因。

例如，他們覺得世間很苦，有很多煩惱。但是，造成苦的原因在那里？他們認為那是因為過去做了太多不好的事，所以現在苦惱。但要如何去除這些苦呢？他們認為必須折磨自己。因此他們修苦行，不吃飯、天天倒立、把自己埋在沙里、刻意使身體承受酷熱的苦、冬天時候躺在冰塊上忍耐刺骨的寒冷。他們用種種方法折磨自己，希望能把自己過去所做的壞事“磨掉”。他們以為折磨得越嚴苛，苦就消得越快，快樂很快就到來。釋迦太子在離開皇宮後也曾經修過苦行，而且修得比別人精進，甚至一天只吃一粒穀，瘦得從肚子就能摸到背後的脊椎骨。但是他發現這樣的修行方法並不能使他覺悟，反而讓他的身心更疲勞，腦子更不清醒。

這就是所謂的“非因計因”。換句話說，他們沒有找出真正造成苦惱的原因，而盲修瞎練。他們想用折磨肉體的方式，把苦磨掉，但是花了這麼多的精神和體力，還是不能帶他們朝向清淨、自在、解脫的聖果。這是因為智慧不夠，沒有對症下藥。

## 2.4 無因論

在那時候，也有人認為世界太複雜了。可是他們認為那是沒有原因的，事情就是莫名其妙地發生的。這種想法就是“無因論”。我們不斷地在生死中輪迴，所面對的因緣是錯綜複雜的。當我們的智慧不夠時，就覺得很難看清楚事情的前因後果，所以就覺得事情好像沒有原由的，都是偶然、碰巧發生的。但是，事實並非如此，這是對因果不正確的認識。

## 2.5 正見因果

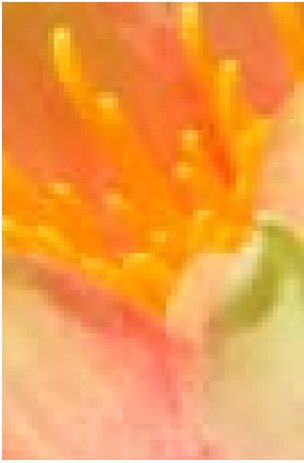
佛陀出生在這樣一個思想混雜的時代，也聽過以上一世因果、宿命論、非因計因、無因論等說法。但是，他覺得不圓滿。於是，透過自己的修持，啟發真智慧，體會到因果的必然性。因是原因，果是結果。一切現象的產生都有其原因，我們遇到的事都不是無中生有的，問題只是在於我們能否看得透徹而已。一個現象的生起，有其主因和次要的緣，然後果才能生起。甚麼樣的因會帶來甚麼樣的果，也有它必定的規則。這即是大家所熟悉的：“種善因，得善報；種惡因，得惡報”。這是必然的法則。不會有種善因，得惡報，也不會有種惡因，得善報，這是不可能的。

我們要培養正確的因，才能隨順因果法則去達成解脫，不能非因計因。因果法則並不是佛陀創造的，而是宇宙的自然法則。樹木沒有水就會枯萎，這是因果。我們生活的大環境被污染，也是人們破壞環境的行為造成的，而不是那位神明發脾氣把地球暖化了！有因必有果。雖然一般說“善因得善報，惡因得惡報”，不過，果報難分善惡，應該是說，善因得樂果，惡因得苦果。這是對因果一個簡單解釋。

佛法談因果，特別強調有情眾生，然在非有情上，亦可看到因果法則的運作。但佛法主要是針對人而說，教導我們如何隨順因果法則修行，進而得到解脫。佛陀證悟後，他教導我們尋找讓我們生活得不自在、使我們苦惱的原因——苦的根源是甚麼？然後告訴我們如何針對這個原因去實踐解決的方案。

我們常常沉陷在招感苦的原因中——集（聚集苦的原因）。貪、嗔、癡、嫉妒、自私都是造成苦的原因。如果我們每天都在這些不善的因素中打滾，所得的結果必然是苦果。當我們每天都被自己的貪、嗔、癡、慢、疑、嫉妒困擾時，所發動的身口意行為，都包含這些不善的因素，所有的念頭都以自我為出發點，那麼，我們的生活必然充滿煩惱。有的人死的時候還緊握著嗔恨的念頭：“恨死





這個人，恨死那個人，我下輩子還要報仇！”請問這樣會不會輪迴呢？肯定會輪迴！而且輪迴了還是一樣那麼煩惱！所以，如果我們每天都在這些煩惱中打滾，所得的果就是苦果。即使我們僥倖繼續做人，我們的生活中還是會有很多不愉快的事情，例如：憤怒、嫉妒、怨恨、討厭，不安等等。這些苦不是無端端冒出來的，它是我們自己的貪、嗔、癡等煩惱造成的，它們給我們帶來痛苦，使我們輪迴生死。

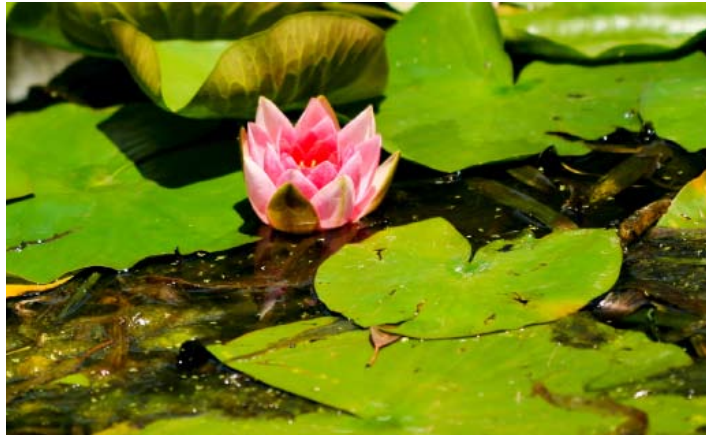
佛陀觀察世界的人：大家都希望得到快樂，但是為甚麼每個人還是那麼苦惱？為甚麼每個人的生活和他們的期待似乎都不是一樣的呢？為甚麼會這樣呢？原來很多人都被自己的貪欲、嗔恨、嫉妒等推動，不能自制，甚至超越了應有的道德及自己的能力範圍。這樣就給自己帶來壓力，也給別人帶來很大的痛苦。貪染和不止息的欲望使我們心不得安寧。

不斷的追求，到最後我們也不知道自己要追求甚麼？心不能安寧就是一種痛苦。在追求的過程中，我們必然會與人產生一些衝突。我們想追求，別人也想要，而別人得到的又比我們的好，我們心里就不甘願。嫉妒心一起，越想越生氣，嗔恨心也來了。若還有理智的話，我們可能還會壓制自己的憤怒，暗暗咬牙切齒。如果被憤怒沖昏了頭，可能就開始打人或殺人，那事情就嚴重了。我們往往在追求快樂的過程中，製造了很多痛苦與煩惱的因，而且不斷加強心裡的貪欲、嗔恨、愚癡、嫉妒、驕慢、懷疑和自我意識。常常想：“這是我想要的，你們不能拿。”自我越大，痛苦也越多。佛陀透視到自我的執著與膨脹是苦的根本原因，從此引申貪、嗔、癡、慢、疑、嫉妒等煩惱，造成無邊的痛苦。

然而，我們不能了解真相，因此，在追求事物的過程中帶著許多煩惱的心理。同時，所追求的目標也是不清淨的。比如地位，一個職位的上面還有更高的職位，比較起來，又是煩惱。即使追求到了，不久又開始擔心，不知會不會有人搶走我的位置？那時，煩惱又生起了。還沒得到時，拼命追，得到之後，又擔心失去。一切是無常，我們不可能永遠留在那個位置。即使在那個位置做得很好，還怕別人競爭。就算做到退休了，可能還放不下。新人上任了，還要比較“我在位的時候做得比他好！”，一直在“想當年”，那是很苦的！

苦的產生是因為我們不明白世界與自我的真相，不了解一切是無常的。同時，在執著於每件事情時我們又生起貪、嗔、癡種種染污的心理，起惑造業，所以我們一直在輪迴。種了苦的因，得了苦的果，繼續被苦與煩惱困惑，越來越糊塗，惑業苦輪轉不已。

佛陀看得很清楚，知道苦的根本原因。他透過自己的修持，知道這些苦的原因是可以去除的，於是教導我們如何的修學。在言語上，佛陀教我們要多體諒別人，反省自己：“為甚麼我要說罵人的話？為甚麼要撒謊？為甚麼要挑撥離間？這些話背後的因素是甚麼？”用這些準繩來反觀自己，把不善的因素去除。同時，培養善心，多站在他人的立場考量問題，幫助減輕我們的我執。在生活上盡量培養正確的語言、行為、思想、意念，慢慢的調整自己，降伏貪、嗔、癡、驕慢、嫉妒的心理。這樣，我們心中不善的因素才能漸漸的減少。同時，由於我們用比較清淨的心和方式與他人相處，人際關係自然比較和諧，生活也會更祥和，而達到我們所期待的快樂結果。佛陀告訴我們要修八正道，以這樣的修行方法，種下善良、清淨的因，逐漸完成清淨涅槃的果。佛陀的解脫亦是透過因果法則去體現的。



許多人常認為因果是說明過去的業影響現在，但他們忘了現在的業也可以影響未來。佛陀徹底了解因果法則，隨順因果法則去修持，而得到正覺的果。如果我們只陷在苦與集這個圈子裡打轉，那我們就在世間輪迴，這叫世間因果。若能依八正道去修學，減少貪、嗔、癡和自我的染著，提升智慧，體解真理，就能超脫生死輪迴，得到寂靜涅槃的快樂。這便是出世間因果。

佛教所說因果是通三世的。過去的業影響我們現在，現在的行為又影響我們的未來，唯有智慧，才能讓我們看清煩惱的真相，不被煩惱迷惑，而突破惑業苦的循環與生死的輪迴。所以，只要還沒得解脫，我們的生命並不像一世因果論者所想像的那樣，死了甚麼都一筆勾銷！希望大家要正見三世因果，不要非因計因，或抹殺因果的存在。我們要種正因。

### 3. 甚麼是業？甚麼是業力？甚麼是業報？

談到因果，也常常會提到另外兩個字——“業”和“報”。業，是指業因，報，是指果報。甚麼是業？業，一般人稱它為“Kamma羯磨”，也就是指動作，或行為。一個動作或行為做了之後會產生一個潛在的力量，一股影響力。就像讀書一樣，讀了之後，會有一股潛在的影響力，考試時就可以用得着。所以說，所造的業，時間上雖然已經過去了，但還留下一股潛在的力量，這就是業力。當因緣具足時，業力會招感果報。比如說我今天稱讚了你，在時間上，這句稱讚的話已經過去了，但是你還會高興三天，這便是潛在的力量。而你因為高興，又買了蛋糕給我，這便是果報。同樣的，打人罵人過後，也會有其後果。

#### 3.1 受報時間——現報，生報，後報

但是，果甚麼時候成熟呢？這要看因緣條件。在時間上，有幾種可能性：一、今生就受報，叫現報；二，要等到下一生才受報，叫生報；三，在更久的未來，不知道甚麼時候才受報，叫後報。這時間上的不同有時和業的輕重有關。一般的現報，是比較輕的事情，馬上能見到其果報。

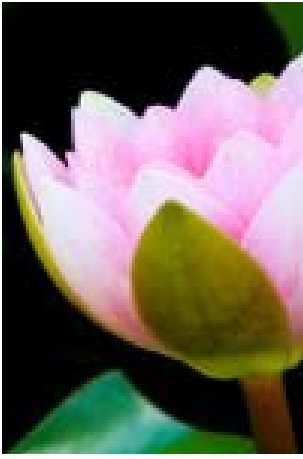
種下了業因，還需要一些緣的配合才會成果。因緣成熟時，果報才會現前。從因到果成熟的這段時間當中，如果我們加入一些不同的業力，果報的輕重性也會有所改變。比如我們打了人，這個人懷恨在心，而下次見到這個人的時候我們又瞪他一眼，那就刺激了他，結果我們可能就被揍了一頓。但是如果我們在做了不對的事情後，懺悔、道歉、賠罪，那位被我們打的人可能原先很想打我們，但因為我們接下來的行為是友善的，他可能狠狠地罵我們幾句就算了。

這是說明因種下以後，再提供不同的條件下去，可以影響未來所遭受的果報。換言之，我們曾經做過的事情會影響我們的現在，但這並不代表我們只能被動性的等著果報現前。因為我們現在還可以提供不同的因緣條件去改變它。這也是佛教特別強調的一業是可以改變的。因為業也是因緣條件促成的，只要有足夠的時間，我們可以提供因緣條件去改變它的。

因為業是可以改變的，所以我們的生活才有希望，我們的努力才更有價值。如果一切是過去注定的，而過去糊塗時種下了很多不善的種子，今生豈不是倒霉？那今生學習佛法又有甚麼用呢？我們之所以學佛，就是因為業力是可以改變的。這也提醒我們，如果我們做事情糊里糊塗，不經大腦思考，煩惱躁動，本來生活不錯的我們也會退步的。

談到因果受報的時間，我們要了解果報並不一定馬上現前。有一些人努力了一陣子，還沒看到結果，就覺得好像沒有因果，所以就放棄了。很多人遇到了困難，聽人家說要行善、布施、做好事等





等，就努力去做，但做了三個月，還不見有改變，就失去信心。其實我們要明白，我們從過去到現在，做了多少愚癡、瞋恚、貪欲、嫉妒、吝嗇、自私等事情，現在遇到了困難，在人家的勸導下才開始行善，而且行善的心都還是為了自己，要自己的苦趕快解除，抱着自私的心，所種的福是很有限的。更何況，我們現在有這樣的習氣，相信過去也差不多如此。一不願行善、貪小便宜、嫉妒等。無始以來，我們造了多少愚痴的惡業，養成了多少頑固的習氣，現在努力三個月而已，而且還不是很清淨的善行，就想把一切業障去除，馬上得到快樂，這有可能嗎？不是那麼容易的！

就像一塊布，整年都沒有洗，一下子放進洗衣機裡洗，即使我們倒下很多漂白水也要洗好幾次才能洗得乾淨，它不是一下子就能洗乾淨的。此外，洗乾淨以後我們還要讓它芳香起來！那麼，我們就要繼續種更多的善因。所以我們要了解自己曾經花多少時間去污染這塊布，現在只花短短的時間就想把它洗乾淨，這是不太可能的。我們要了解因果有其必然性，對因果法則要有信心，耐心的去改變。

舉個例子：如果我們在小學沒好好讀書，混著過日子。到了中學以後改過自新，想好好念書。開始用功時，成績的分數並不會一下子進步很多。這是因為我們實際上是在追補以前的功課。如果我們就此放棄，那我們將停頓在那里。如果我們繼續努力，我們就可以慢慢追上了。我們的業也是一样。如果我們過去善業做得不够，開始行善時，效果不會明顯，但這並不表示它沒有用，我們要有耐心與信心。要記得，果報現前的時間是不一定的，但我們要明白“不是不報，時間未到”。只要我們有恆心，慢慢的會有所改變的。

### 3.2 業的類別

#### a) 善業、惡業、無記業

因果與善惡有很大的關係。我們要繼續做人，就要有正見，知道甚麼是善，甚麼是惡。有些人知道有善惡，但是對因果不甚了解，因此，對善惡的價值觀就容易動搖。有人問：“我明白有善惡，但是為甚麼要行善不能做惡呢？”這關係到因果的認知。因為了解行善得善報，才能顯出行善的價值，才有說服力。所以善惡觀要配合因果觀，才有作用。

很多人認為“造業”就是造惡業。其實我們的每個行為都是在造業。要造善的業，避免惡業，就要清楚甚麼是善，甚麼是惡？善惡的判斷，要從我們內心的動機與行為的結果去探討。首先，我們要反觀自己的心是不是清淨，是否參雜了貪、瞋、癡、驕慢、嫉妒、自私等種種不淨的因素？如果我們的心含藏了這些煩惱，那就是不善、不清淨的。從動機來說，我們現在可能很難做到百分之百的清淨，但至少我們應該儘量減少不清淨的因素。其次，從結果來看，我們對要做的事情必須做謹慎、智慧思考，期使其結果自利利他，或至少能利他，不要損他利己或損他損己。能夠對善惡有正確的判斷，我們才不會非因計因，把錯的事情當作成是善的。

我們每一個身、口、意行為都會產生一個影響力。但當我們談到業的時候，特別重視意志思考所發動的行為。其他的，比如眨眨眼，抓癢等沒有經過意志思考的動作，我們叫“無記業”。這種行為不會造成太大的影響力。凡是經過我們意志思考而發動的身、口、意行為都會造成善業或惡業。

#### b) 表業、無表業、共業、別業、引業、滿業

業，有很多名詞，剛才介紹了善業、惡業、無記業。此外，還有表業，也就是透過身、口、意表現





出來的行為。另外，還有無表業，也就是沒有表達出來，但會影響我們的心理之行為，比方說憤怒加強了我們的嗔恨心。

此外，還有共業和別業（不共業）。共業就是大家共同的行為所造成的影響力。比如大家污染環境，造成空氣污濁，這就是共業。我們居住的環境的好壞跟每一個人的行為都有關係。大家生活在澳洲，大體上我們的環境還算不錯，這是大家的共業促成了這個良好的環境。但是，如果我們不好好照顧這個環境，破壞水土，慢慢的就會影響這個環境，形成污染、暖化等等問題。要改變我們的大環境，有賴大家一起努力。因此，保護大環境，是每一個人的責任。但是，在同一個大環境裡，有人貧窮，也有人富有，每個人的生活水平不一樣，這是個人的別業。

業還分為引業和滿業。所謂引業，就是能引我們到那一道去投生的業。引業是一股特強的業力。但是，它不一定只是由一個特別的業造成的。它可以是我們生活中所累積的行為而產生的一股特強的業力。比如說有的人懶惰，又愛偷盜、販毒、賭博、喝酒、嫖妓，沒有人倫道德，一輩子過著這樣的生活，禽獸不如。這就種下了像畜生一樣的業因。因為動物的生活就是這樣。餓了就吃，吃不飽就去搶，亂淫，沒有道德倫理觀念。一個人的生活若是如此，做人不像人，那他來輩子還能當人嗎？

一個人要想繼續當人，至少要守五戒一不殺生、不偷盜、不邪淫、不妄語、不飲酒。如果一個人常常邪淫，又偷又搶，又販毒，常常喝得醉醺醺的，這樣的人不像人。他不是在種做人的業因，而是種往惡道的因。他所造的惡業與習氣就會產生一股很強的力量牽引他到某一道去。這就是引業。那麼，生到了那一道去又會有種種不同的情況。比如人，有的人很幸福，有的人長得很漂亮，有的很丑陋，有的很高，有的很矮，有的很胖，有的很瘦，有種種不同的樣子。有的出生在很多災難的地方，有的一生下來就有地震。雖然都生為人，但是每個人的果報體與所處的環境不一樣。這些是屬於滿業，也就是決定這個報身的圓滿性。

如果說做人的及格分數是百分之五十。有的人守持五戒，勉強拿個五十分。但是，有些人不但守持五戒，還行布施、做善事、提升智慧，那他可能得到七、八十分。兩者雖然都可能達成做人，但是那位只勉強及格的可能就會生到比較貧窮的家，或常常碰到困難，福報有限。而那位得八十分的，不但生為人，還有進一步的福報，在滿業方面就比較豐裕。他可能生在比較有錢的家里，在生活上事事順利，長相也比較莊嚴，不會那麼苦惱。相貌莊嚴、六根具足、聲音優美等，這些都是滿業的影響。然而，如果我們生出來後滿業不理想，也不必太自卑。我們還可以透過現生的努力，了解因果，學習佛法，慢慢提升及改變自己。

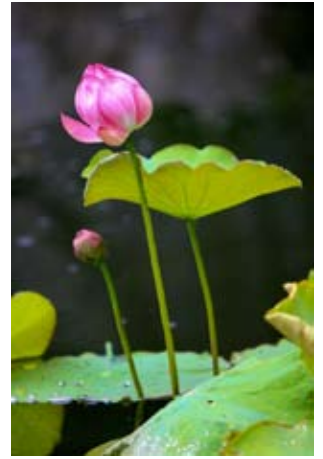
### 3.3 業的性質

以上介紹了一些有關因果的名詞。另外，我們對佛教的因果觀要有幾項真確的認識：

第一、業是可以改變的。

第二、業是不能抵消的。

有人認為做錯了事，趕快去拜佛、拜懺，‘抵消’惡業。造了惡業，惡的種子就會留在我們的八識田中，它是不能抵消的。要避免惡種子的發芽，我們能做的就是不要提供它所需的養分。因為因需要附屬條件（緣）才能够生長。惡種子需要一些不善的因素，如嫉妒、憤怒、自私等去滋潤它，惡的種子才會長大。如果我們能常常保持清淨的心，不提供惡種子所需的營養，它就無法發芽。同樣



的，善的種子需要慈悲心、誠懇心、恭敬心、諒解他人的心等善心去引發。我們若能常常培養清淨、善良的心與行為，我們將滋潤、引發我們的善種子。所以，我們必須明白，業是不能抵消的。只要還沒感果，業種子不會失壞。我們所要做的是控制它的緣。

有人問：“那麼佛陀和阿羅漢解脫了，他們的業種子怎麼辦呢？”佛陀和阿羅漢是清淨的。他們透視了自我的真相，沒有自我的染着，貪、嗔、癡、慢、疑、嫉妒完全斷除。既然沒有我的執著，沒有煩惱的滋潤，業種子就像落在水泥地上一樣，長不起来了。

既然業不能抵消，那麼拜懺、念佛有什麼用呢？拜懺、念佛，誦經能幫助啟發我們的善念，加強我們清淨的意念。這樣，就給過去的業種子製造善的緣，同時，也加強我們八識田中善的種子。不提供惡的緣，惡的種子就不被熏發，事情才會越來越順利。就像數學的機率學一樣。我們把紅豆和綠豆置放在一個瓶子里，如果綠豆是惡因，紅豆是善因。起初綠豆很多，現在趕快加入許多紅豆，盡量把綠豆壓在下面不滋潤它，那它長起來的機會就少。即使我們把瓶子搖一搖，手伸進去捉幾顆豆，捉到紅豆的機率也還是比較高。所以我們應該加強我們的善念，多行善，多種善因。業不能抵消，但是我們可以從緣方面下手去控制它，改變它，讓惡的果報不現前。

### 第三、 定業或不定業

種下的業因是不是一定要得到甚麼果報？有沒有所謂的定業，不能改變的業呢？就如剛才所說的，業是可以改變的，只是看改變的時間够不够而已。例如，一個很惡劣的人，殺父殺母，又不懺悔，死後會墮地獄。如果他殺了之後想要懺悔，那要看他的時間够不够。如果他本身的惡念很强，殺了父母，雖然生起慚愧心，但是自己也自殺了，那他就沒有機會做進一步的懺悔工作。他或許以為可以用自殺來表示後悔，但實際上，這樣反而減少了他懺悔、改過、行善，種善因的機會。

一些佛教部派認為有些業是定業，是不能改的。事實上都能改，問題只是在於時間够不够，和所下的功夫多少而已。一般說某些重業是決定性的，如：殺父、殺母、殺阿羅漢、出佛身血、破和合僧。但是，真實來說，並沒有真正的定業。一切都是可以改變的。只是因為業太重，時間不够（生命有限）去改變它。同時，自己的意志與正見不够堅固，惡念與習氣太强，心不能清淨，不容易改變而已。但是，如果我們的決心很堅定，心念清淨，非常精進修持，強過以往的惡念與習氣，那麼，重業是可能改變的。

### 第四、 微小轉廣大

再者，我們要記得，不要以為小小的善事沒有用，小小的壞事沒關係。再小的善事我們也應該盡力去做，再小的壞事我們都要避免。因為微小可以轉廣大，小小的事情亦可累積成一股大的力量，影響我們的生命。

### 4. 總結

正確的了解佛教的因果觀，讓我們知道過去的業因造成今生的果報，而今生的努力又可以改變它，並創造未來的成果。這給我們帶來希望。我們不應該怨天尤人，一切遭遇都是自己的行為所帶來的，我們要對自己的行為負責。我們要謹慎自己的每一個所作所為，掌握每個時刻去提升自己。此外，我們也必須關懷我們的社會與環境，盡我們的一份責任，共同創造美好的社會與世界。這是共業的道理。希望大家正見佛教的因果觀，建立一個樂觀、積極、負責任的人生觀。

# Overcoming Difficulties

## Venerable Thubten Chokyi

When difficulties and problems arise, they provide opportunities for us to transform our minds, to take our suffering into the spiritual path as well as to see our problems and life's difficulties as gifts to help us in our practice. Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the spiritual director of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) reminds us again and again to learn to love our problems like we love ice cream. Clearly ice cream is not a valid or lasting cause of happiness, although it might provide some temporary delight for our taste buds. Similarly, we can see our problems as temporary obstacles or impermanent phenomena and not everyone experiences the same phenomena as problems. There are many and varied flavours of ice cream!

The practice of *metta* equanimity meditation is a practice of seeing impermanence of the labels -- friend, enemy, or stranger, and to develop equal compassion towards all beings. In so doing, we break free of our usual perceptions of like, dislike or indifference towards friends, enemies or strangers. However labelled, all sentient beings have been our mothers many times in previous lives and have shown enormous kindness again and again. We have a saying that our enemies are our best teachers. Without others, we would not achieve realisations, so we should have great appreciation of all other beings. Without those who irritate us, frustrate us, or annoy us, we would not be forced to confront our own negative states of mind. If we were only surrounded by people who agree with us, support us, and share the same beliefs as we do, we would make little progress spiritually. If everything is going along smoothly, we do not learn. By facing difficulties, we are also deepening our practice. This is like the university level of Buddhist practice. It motivates us to really want to practise to transform our minds, and to work with the energy of all situations.

In January, I was sick with pneumonia. On New Year's Eve, I arrived back to Sydney from a two-month retreat in Nepal and India. The day after I arrived back, I was ill. I had rushed home to be back in time to help organise and attend the teachings by Choden Rinpoche on Geshe Chekawa's "Seven Point Mind Training". Instead, I ended up in the hospital feeling sorry for myself. Then I got a message from Choden Rinpoche to not be upset that I was missing the teachings and to see my illness as a blessing from the Buddha; it is an opportunity to work with my mind. I was reminded that as a human I can take the suffering of illness as a means to transform my mind, to develop compassion for others who are suffering physically, mentally, emotionally, and to contemplate in a meaningful way, which is the first teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha on the Four Noble Truths -- a realisation that all cyclic existence is in the nature of suffering. So, I set my mind to contemplate that all suffering has causes and conditions and that in this human life, with this human body, I can work with those causes by applying effort to purify negative karma. This is something we can do with a precious human rebirth – animals cannot do this. In this way, I can use difficult life circumstances to be free of negative mind states and to cultivate positive mind states, by really facing these situations head on, not avoiding or escaping, but reflecting on the benefit for myself and others by engaging in spiritual practice to reduce self grasping and becoming aware of and connected to the suffering of others.

So, when I was in the hospital, I was very aware of those suffering around me and quietly practised *tonglen*, visualising taking on their suffering and giving them love, compassion, empathy and wishing them freedom from suffering. Hospitals are a perfect environment for this practice. It did not necessarily have any impact on my fellow patients, but it did have an impact on my own peace of mind. When I was leaving the hospital, the woman in the next bed requested me to pray for her. I did not mention to her that I had been praying for her all week!



So from that practice we can awaken a fearless compassionate attitude towards our own pain and problems as well as those of others, and dissolve the dualistic tension between us and them. Lying in the hospital bed, the thought that we are all here suffering together was never far from me. To feel compassion for the woman in the next bed who had the TV blaring all night and day and was always calling out for help, to feel her fear and anxiety and truly wish her to be free of it, rather than being annoyed by the fact that the TV was keeping me awake, was a practice of compassion and slowly chipping away at my own self centeredness. To really see that she was suffering enormously was tremendously empowering and it freed me from my stuckness.

Difficulties in life, all our small and big problems, are like that: points of stuckness. When that stuckness arises, when we become narrow minded and self focused, the point is to notice it, sit with it, let go, relax, and be prepared to work with whatever arises; to notice what happens in our minds in a non-judgmental way. It is to simply notice, to become familiar with our own disturbing thoughts and negative reactions (our anger, resentment, jealousy, fear), to breathe them out, to let them go, or to dissolve them in the light of loving kindness. We realise we can open our hearts and minds beyond limit. We can be kind and patient with ourselves.

This is what Pema Chodron calls "leaning into sharp points". It takes fearless determination to sit with the fear, inviting in what we avoid. Fear is a natural reaction to moving closer to the truth, so we can sit with the fear and look at it head on, and transforming fear into courage, self awareness and resilience. It is a part of life to feel fear, or not knowing what to do next, but these feelings do not have to overwhelm us. We can change our ways of reacting to life's situations. This is freedom. I can still recall the first time I realised that I do not have to react in the same old negative ways to difficulties. It was a great revelation and an experience of great freedom, a breathing space. It was many years ago, but the joy of that discovery has stayed with me profoundly.

In *shamatha* (calm abiding) meditation, we can apply a method called 'settling your mind in its natural state'- that is simply observing the

thoughts, sensations, images, memories, the moments of mental activity that arise in our mind. We can imagine all the moments of mental activity – the thoughts, memories, plans, images and so forth - to be like water bubbles or pockets of air that arise and dissolve back into the spaciousness of the mind in its natural state. When I observe my thoughts, I become aware that they are not solid, not real, not matter. They have no substance, though they can feel as if they do. They are impermanent, momentary. They arise and dissolve constantly and I do not have to act on them. This is true freedom. In fact, if I do not give them energy, if I do not keep perpetuating them, getting caught up in the story, the thoughts will die away in their own accord.

The Tibetan word for meditation is '*gom*'. This means to become familiar (with our minds). So at first, we are aware of the activeness of the mind; the negative states of the mind that arise. In the book *Healing Anger*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama writes about his efforts to deal with the arising of anger in his own mind. By facing, becoming familiar with and shining the light on the difficulties that confront us, externally in the world or internally in our minds, we are able to subdue our minds, to quell our reactivity. And out of that quiet knowing, answers will come.



Source: Lucky Joeng

It is at those times when we are faced with life's problems and they feel like insurmountable difficulties, that we all need to be reminded and encouraged to relax with whatever arises. One time when I was physically run down and emotionally drained, I spent some time turning my awareness inwards and meditating on what my body needed. The answer came simply - water. It was so easy that I laughed. We are all good at making life difficult, which we need to overcome. We need to be constantly reminded to apply the teachings of the Buddha, to subdue your mind and do no harm. This is the essence of all the Buddha's teachings.

If we stay present with our fears and difficult situations, things become clear. Mindfulness meditation taps into our deep knowing and the ability to deal with difficulties in life arise out of that still peace. That is a spiritually centred response, rather than a self centred one, that is coming out of our connectedness with our own Buddha nature and connectedness with others at a profound level.

Meditation is neither an escape nor a vacation from problems in life. In fact it brings us closer to them. It is an invitation to really look at and examine the problems we face, to look at them right in the eye and in so doing, to undo old ways of seeing, hearing, thinking and responding to the world. Engaging in the practice in this way, we are continually humbled. I was helping another nun last month. At least, I thought I was helping her. However, she got upset by my actions. I was shocked and felt misunderstood. My intention had been good. How could she be upset? It took me two days reflecting in detail on what I had said and done and how this might have been interpreted differently. I really had to look hard and recall each moment. This required effortful application of mindfulness. It was a process of recalling: calling each moment to mind, analysing it, and calling into question my intention. Then, the REAL challenge was to not to slip into self absorbed guilt or wounded pride. This is really hard to work at. True humility allows no room for arrogance. True humility is the courage to let go of attachment to a sense of self, an invitation to continuously kill off the ego. From this comes a deepening confidence and resilience. Only when we open ourselves again and again

to annihilation can that, which is the indestructible and immutable *vajra*, be found within us. We do not have to be right; we do not have to be concerned about looking good. We can give the victory to others.

This is not about giving ourselves a hard time, being overly self-critical. We are already good at harming ourselves. We have cultivated the self critic to perfection. Our most difficult times are the ones we give ourselves. It is not that. It is truly allowing ourselves to let our concepts and fixed ideas to fall away, to open ourselves to the ever-changing nature of self and all phenomena. This is a softening, an opening. This is the spirit of true awakening, an opening to become a Buddha, to be fully awakened.

When Shakyamuni Buddha sat under the papal tree (Bodhi tree) at Bodhgaya and vowed to remain in meditation until he attained Enlightenment, he overcame *Mara*, mind delusions which manifested as seductive sirens and marauding armies on the attack. He overcame them by sitting quietly with them, until they subdued. He gave them no energy and they simply ran out of steam. When things are shaky or difficult and nothing is working, we are in a vulnerable place. We can get resentful, shut down, and become rigid in our thinking which is ego-driven. Or we can sit with it, and let go and realise that this is an opportunity to open our hearts. Difficulties in life, like the *Mara* visiting the Buddha, can be a kind of test, but they can also be an invitation to healing. When we are faced with a situation we think we cannot handle, this is the best opportunity because we have no choice but to accept what is happening. All addictions come from running away from situations which we cannot face up to. But all that addiction does is disturb us even more, hence creating greater problems.

Reaching our limit is actually a sign of health. A further sign of health is that we do not get knocked off centre by difficult situations and get overwhelmed by them. The spiritual path is continually going beyond hope and fear, going beyond the known and stepping into unknown territory.

Meditation is an invitation to see clearly what is going on with our thoughts and emotions, to shine a light in the darkest recesses of our minds

to illuminate our ignorance and develop clarity and wisdom. This is why it is good to meditate daily to continuously familiarise ourselves with the state of our mind and our mental afflictions. Continuously 'bringing our minds back home', learning bit by bit to subdue our minds. We do not sit in meditation to become good meditators. We sit in meditation to be more AWAKE in our lives.

Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche said that the simple out breath is as close as you can come to simply resting the mind in its natural state, to become friends with whatever arises in your mind. When we become good friends with ourselves, the situations become friendlier too.

It has been said that we are in 'the quarrelling age', an extremely difficult time on this earth when violence and greed are everywhere and there are many obstacles in practising the Dharma. In order to succeed in listening to, contemplating and meditating on the path to Enlightenment, we must practise thought transformation, or mind training, using whatever experiences we encounter to generate realisations along the path to Enlightenment within our own minds. Instead of disturbing you, problems can help you develop your mind and practise thought transformation, using suffering in the path to Enlightenment and unsurpassed happiness.

It is always helpful to remind yourself that meditation is about opening and relaxing with whatever arises. We are not trying to make pain go away, to make our problems go away. We are surrendering, giving up control altogether and let concepts and ideas fall apart. Happiness and suffering are dependent on our minds, upon our interpretation of events and situations of life. It is a sunny day, yet two people can experience it very differently. One can bask in the glorious sunshine while the other is annoyed by the heat. The choice is ours.

Happiness and suffering do not come from outside, from others. All of your happiness, all of your suffering is created by you, by your own mind. This is the first part of the teaching on the Four Noble Truths. The second part is the good news: we can be free from the suffering and how can we achieve that? It is by following the path that Shakyamuni Buddha had followed and

achieving the omniscient mind of a Buddha. In order to achieve the omniscient mind, we need to follow the path to the omniscient mind.

The key is to start with loving kindness towards oneself. The practice of taking on the suffering of others and giving loving kindness to others breaks through our self centredness and self grasping, but we can only do this from a base of loving kindness towards ourselves. This is why we start with ourselves, with where we are.



Source: Lucky Joeng

# *Buddhist Attitude to Death and Birth*

## *Rod Lee*

For the ordinary human being, the cycle of birth and death is inevitable. If you are locked in *Samsara*, you are born and then you will die. So we haven't got any time to waste. Between birth and death is the journey – that's what we need to make meaningful. So how do we make the journey meaningful? How do we enjoy the journey? Let's look an example of a meaningful life journey.

### **Meaningful Life Journey**

This is an unusual story. A friend of mine opened a Dhamma centre for all the people who were not fitting into the accepted 'normal' role of human society e.g. transvestites, prostitutes and heroin addicts. He helped people with exactly what they need – just as the Buddha did. An incredible story happened one evening. A bikie was about to beat up a young transvestite. My friend pushed the transvestite behind him and the bikie hit him. He said that the next thing he knew, he was sailing through the air and then hit the ground. He got up, folded his hands to his attacker and said a prayer to the man who had hit him. The bikie looked puzzled and even frightened, took no further action and then just ran off.

That's the quality of an ordinary Buddhist person, who has taken Buddhist teachings to heart and uses it in an everyday way. We all have that ability – in an ordinary way and at every opportunity, use the teachings for the benefit of others. The compassion that we can bring to everything that we do and the wisdom that couples with it. If we don't have the two together, we have what we normally call "idiot compassion".

### **Compassion + Wisdom**

Idiot compassion is when we step in and think that we're doing the right job without the wisdom. If we don't have the wisdom coupled with compassion, we can do a lot of harm. For example, you see a little old lady standing on the side of the road, and you decide that she needs to cross the road. Halfway across, she's hitting you with her umbrella saying "I don't wanna go!"

Compassion with wisdom is about helping people directly with what they need. If someone comes up to you on the street asking you for money, you give them some money. However, if you know that they are going to harm themselves with that money, then it is better not to give the money in the first place. The law of kamma is that prosperity and wealth comes from generosity. It may not happen in this life, but it will happen at a certain stage. There is no harm in generosity. Sometimes even our parents will say "Don't be generous; keep it to yourself". It is unwholesome for people to criticise generosity, but you do occasionally witness such behavior in our daily lives.

We also have to be sensible too. There is no point in giving all our money away and then having to borrow money from someone else. We need to strike a balance so that we are able to look after ourselves, without a self-centred focus on looking after ourselves. We need to be able to be generous and have that understanding in our minds. That's what generates happiness. Brain scans of monks and meditators have proven that when a per-



son is generous, the left hand frontal lobe lights up – this is the area that lights up when we're happy. If you want to be happy, be generous.

## Training Your Mind

Between birth and death, it's how to make your life most meaningful. Then by making your life meaningful between birth and death, you will have a good death. In all religions, the most important thing for the person dying is to have a peaceful, happy mind. The mind at the time of death has a very powerful effect on our next re-birth. So that's why it is important to be made to feel comfortable at the time of death. But if our minds cultivate negativity our whole lives, then at the time of death, it is outrageous to try and cultivate a peaceful mind.

When someone says "I'm an angry person" and they accept that way, what they are doing is reinforcing something that they can actually change. We have incredible power over our lives. Yes, we will experience difficulties if we're living in *Samsara* and we haven't been liberated. But

depending on how we train our minds, we can view it in different ways. We can see it as a disaster or as an opportunity. We can train and direct our minds to positivity.

The past is finished, we can't do anything about that, and the future has not begun. All we have is this moment now and this is the point where our power is. This is where we are generating kamma. So we have to work out how to generate positive effect. For example, say someone steals money from us – we can have a reaction of incredible anger. A person may see it as their bad luck, they are furious about it and they may even want to harm the person who has stolen it. From a Buddhist perspective, we can look at it as a previous negative kamma – at some point, I have created the kamma for this to be stolen.

By recognising that, we recognise that the kamma is finished and the money is gone. That doesn't mean you walk around with a \$10 note sticking out of the top of your pocket and invite people to steal it. But you can let it go. If we let it go, there's not going to be much suffering. The next step is to see it as a gift for that person – they needed the \$10 more than me! This is very powerful. So it is about changing the view from a negative to a positive one.

## Dealing with Anger – Patience

In the mid 80s, there were anger workshops where people get a tennis racquet and a mattress and go, "I hate so and so!" The problem was that if you spend your life reinforcing the anger, you become an angry person. You have to acknowl-

edge your state of mind as it is but that doesn't necessarily mean that you indulge in it. So if I get angry at you, the next step is recognising, "I'm angry at you because of this and that, and it's like I'm stoking the fire with coal." Conversely, I can say "I'm really angry at you, I don't think being angry is a good

state of mind and I recognise why I'm angry. You don't have to go "I'm not angry, I'm not angry" – that is lying to yourself.

Patience is the antidote to anger because it gives you the chance to analyse the situation. The person who has just stepped on your toe didn't mean to. If we step back, we realise that it was an accident. Patience stops us from reacting so quickly and that is why it is an antidote to anger. One Tibetan Lama said, "if you're angry, say 'I am angry' 108 times, but don't say 'because'." It gives you the chance to recognise the state you're in, and then you try and transform it. People often think that love is the antidote to anger. The actual way of dealing with anger is to stop, then analyse and say "I don't want to be that way".



Source: Cheng Hiang Lee



## **Dealing with Jealousy – Rejoice in Others' Good Fortune**

A man in his 50s said that his family used to hate the Smiths – the wealthy family in his old neighbourhood. His family had this incredible jealousy of the Smiths and considered it to be normal to be jealous of wealthy people. He realised that he had carried this prejudice his whole life – that those wealthy people were horrible even though he didn't even know them. One day he went back to the old Smiths' house and spent an hour rejoicing in their good fortune. Then he felt as if this whole weight had been lifted off his shoulders – he had let it go and genuinely felt happy for their good kamma. Ultimately, it is kamma that creates good fortune.

A number of years ago, Rajneesh said in a statement "myself and Krishnamurti are the only Enlightened people on the planet". This is a rather outrageous statement. A very wise Lama said "you must rejoice, because if he truly is Enlightened then there is much merit for you to rejoice in an Enlightened being. If he's not, doesn't matter." This was such a positive statement in a situation where anyone could have said, "this is a load of rubbish". If someone says they're Enlightened, rejoice in it – they may very well be a Buddha. Unless you're a Buddha, you wouldn't know.

## **Choosing Your Attitude**

If I want a negative or nasty person to go away in my life, I need to create the karmas for them not to turn up in my life as a negative person. How do I do that? I become incredibly nice to the nasty person and the kamma that I am creating at that time will eventually turn out to be positive. The person won't turn out in my life in the future as a negative person, because I will only have the karmas that allow that person to be positive. How can we do this specifically? Firstly, we have to be patient with them. Secondly, you have to change your attitude of seeing this person as an enemy. If we recognise that this person has come up as a result of our past kamma, we are not going to blame them as the enemy.

As a Buddhist monk says to a group of beginners "it's all your fault – and that's the good news"

because if it's someone else's fault, you can't move. That's the good news about the Buddhist perspective: it is our fault and therefore we can change it. We always have choice. Sometimes we don't have a choice about the body, but we always have a choice regarding our attitude. That is what creates meaning in our lives.

## **Purifying Your Kamma**

When there is action – there is a karmic seed. When that cause starts there is going to be an effect. However, in between cause and effect, you need conditions for the effect to ripen. If we create a fertile ground, then the plant will grow. In a positive mind, we have love, compassion, understanding, forgiveness – this creates a fertile ground for positive karmas to come through. In a negative mind, we have anger, jealousy, anxiety, hatred – this allows negative karmas to come through. For example, a young martial artist from New York always gets into fights wherever he goes. His whole attitude was that the world is a dangerous place and he was looking for the next guy to attack him. That was the fertile ground for that kamma to ripen.

There are four functions of kamma: the object, the intention, the action and the completion. This creates the complete kamma that will definitely ripen. The object is another being, the intention is to do something to them and then we carry the action out. For example, I decide to kill somebody and I actually kill. The action is done and I feel justified. This will ripen into a complete kamma at some stage in the future when the conditions are right. I meet that person again and they have some karmic connection with me and all of a sudden, bingo – I die.

Kamma is inevitable unless it is somehow opposed. We can stop positive karmas coming through by being angry - anger is the greatest destroyer of positive kamma. We can also purify negative kamma by taken at least one element away – the rejoicing in the act. I can remove that negative kamma by saying "I do not rejoice in that negative act in the past". Therefore that kamma then becomes extremely weak because it doesn't have the full intention. That is how we can travel backwards and remove one element of that complete kamma. If we continuously do that, then the karmas that are coming through

become weaker and weaker. So instead of the jumbo jet taking off, it's a tiny little moth in terms of the power of that action. So eventually, according to Buddhist thought, we can get to the stage where we completely purify our kamma and there is no more kamma acting on us. That is the state of liberation or nibbana.

For example, someone robs a bank and they are really happy that they got the money, and they get away with it and they live a happy life. Someone might say "they have just done a negative and they got a positive out of it – that's not the law of kamma". The law of kamma is that we are getting the money due to a previous positive kamma. The negative kamma that they are creating from robbing will happen at another time. The big problem with kamma is that there is a gap between the cause and the effect. That is caused by the conditions having to be right for the kamma to take effect. According to Buddhism, only the Buddha can see the direct relationship between cause and effect.

## **Two Kinds of Kamma**

We have two kinds of kamma. We have throwing kamma at the time of death and completing kamma. Throwing kamma determines the state of your next rebirth. This is created by a peace, happy mind in the last stages of death so we can be born into good conditions and a comfortable life. Completing kamma determines the quality of the ongoing kamma of the next life. This is created by how we live our life in the present. Kamma is not an external thing but an internal reaction. It is the way we view things.

There is a tune of the radio – 10 people think it's the best tune they have ever heard and 10 other people think it is the worst load of noise they have ever listened to. What is the determining factor? It is the listener and the listener's taste. That is the kamma that view the object. The object hasn't changed, it is the viewer that has the different opinion. If we put positive kamma in our minds constantly, we see the world as a positive place.

## **Turning to Positivity**

Create harmony wherever you can, even when someone does something terrible to you – find it

in your heart to be compassionate because you are creating the future. If you create a negative future by being angry, hateful and resentful – that is how you are going to experience life. It is about changing that view and creating the kind of life that you want to have. Sometimes it is hard to go against our nature because society says revenge and anger is good. We see it in movies – the hero blows up the badie and everyone's cheering at the end. That kind of experience is actually creating negativity. Everyone who is rejoicing in the suffering of someone else is creating the kamma for suffering in their future life.

A man who was wrongly convicted for murder hadn't seen daylight for 13 years and he had been sentenced to life imprisonment. He became a Buddhist and practised meditation for 8 hours a day. He wrote in a letter to a Lama that "it doesn't matter whether I leave jail now or not, I feel completely free." The Lama wrote back saying "many people on the outside are imprisoned, and you can become free on the inside." This is an incredible story and it is about transforming your life. If you think you have trouble transforming your life with some petty attitudes, look at someone in a really difficult situation.

My teacher used to begin lectures by saying "I have lost my boyfriend... I have lost my girlfriend... I have this problem, I have that problem... This is useless thinking that you throw out like bad socks." In other words, this is just engendering a negative attitude. If you walk around with negativity in your mind, you are creating the world for yourself as a negative place. Yes, we are going to have sorrow and loss. That is inevitable. But this doesn't have to be the way we view life. We can change our attitude. We may not be able to change the world but we can change the way we look at it.

The way we can change negative thinking is firstly recognising that we don't want it anymore. You can take a vow for a day not to entertain that and you become mindful. The moment we become mindful, we start to break the habit down. Then at the end of the day you give yourself a pat on the back and rejoice. We have to reinforce the positives. So to change a habit, you have to be mindful not to entertain that habit – not having that habit as a guest on your table.

Just recognising “I don’t actually want to feel that way”. So if you want to get rid of anger, become patient with everyone that you meet. If you want to get rid of jealousy, rejoice in everyone’s good fortune.

## **Creating a Positive Life**

Our careers are going to be a large part between our birth and death. It can become a drag but we can become enthusiastic and passionate. It doesn’t have to be saving the world or saving lives, but we can bring meaning to exactly what we’re doing. Within that career, we are going to interact with many people. Are we going to be that grumpy person in the corner? Or are you going to be a person that people want to be around? That’s how we can create harmony and positivity around us. Or we can create negativity. We have the choice.

When you create positivity for others, you’re helping yourself. It’s about understanding what you can fix and what you can’t, understanding how your reaction is going to create ripples and how to change that in the most positive way. So where do we begin? We begin with the absolutely smallest things that we do. The way we think, the way we interact with people and the way we talk to people. How we talk to people is a reflection of how we feel about ourselves. If we treat others the way we would like to be treated, then we create harmony around us.

My friend’s Buddhist teacher told him, “when your boss comes into the room, stand up as a mark of respect. If you make a mistake, tell your boss you made a mistake”. My friend thought this was embarrassing since he worked in an open office but he did it. Four months later, when 25 people got retrenched – he got a promotion. Just simple courtesy and honesty created a whole different scenario for him. So it’s not the huge things we do, because we don’t do a lot of huge things. But if we can make the little things work to the best of our ability, then the big things will take care of themselves.



*Source: Cheng Hiang Lee*

# *How to Avoid Conflict*

## *Jim Teoh*

Conflict is viewed by different people in different ways. In tonight's talk I shall talk about conflict in the sense of 'struggle' or 'battle'.

As I look at it there are two types of conflict. One is that which we see or hear about very often, such as wars, aggressions, and fights. To many of us, these seem very unpleasant, however, many view conflict as being justifiable and unavoidable in human existence.

There are many who rely on conflict for their success in life or even their existence. Those so called victors in warfare or the oppressors of others, and even those who are successful in litigation can be cited as examples.

The other conflict, in my opinion, can be referred to as the internal conflict which every one of us experiences very often. It can be simply put as one's own struggle within one's self such as decisions, making choices, putting up with one's likes and dislikes and also to deal with doubts.

Most people view conflict as inevitable and are resigned to the fact that we have to live with them. However the Buddha taught otherwise and often taught his disciples to live a life free of conflict.

In encouraging his followers to keep and uphold the five precepts of avoiding killing, stealing, adultery, lying and consumption of intoxicants, the followers would be able to live a blameless life and therefore avoid conflicts with others. The Buddha was of course foremost in this way, living free of conflict with others and he is recorded as saying the he did not have problems with others, but others may have problems with him in the sense that he did not venture to find fault with others.

The fact that the Buddha did not find fault with others can be found in many parts of the scriptures. When the Buddha talked about unskillful matters he said 'others may do it, but I do not'. In other words, he did not impose his standards on others who were unwilling to accept them and therefore did not initiate any conflict. The reason for the Buddha not initiating conflict is that he had a very clear idea of how they arise and the consequences that come with it.



Source: Lucky Joeng



Although there are many types of conflict, they share a similar pattern of development. To start with, we can say that ignorance or delusion makes most people place the source of conflict on others. They think that others are responsible for their miseries and from that point make enemies out of them mentally and when the time is right, this hatred manifests itself physically and therefore causes a great deal of harm to themselves and others.

Now that we understand the source of conflict lies in the mind, we can look at how it develops. I have mentioned before that the pattern of development is similar in every case. It all starts with the actions of the body and the mind and from the things that we see, hear, smell, taste, touch or think of when they come together. For example when one sees an object, sensation arises and from this perception follows which in turn gives value to this experience as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.

From the pleasant or unpleasant sensation, we develop a liking or disliking. This in turn becomes attachment to the sensed object. When this attachment arises, the desire to commit a mental or physical deed arises. Where there are no moral or ethical restraints, evil deeds are committed which result in harm to one's self and

others. In this way, according to the Buddha, a person goes round and round in the sea of existence and suffering.

The guidance given by the Buddha to his followers is that they should cultivate the ability to see the process which allows these unwholesome deeds to arise. The logic is very simple; if there is no attachment, there will be no intention to commit evil deeds, and if one develops the skill through one's practice, one should be able to sever the connection between sensation and attachment and therefore avoid evil deeds.

Many of us have often read or heard the words 'let go'. This 'let go' simply means to let go of attachments. It is very simple, yet many of us, in fact, most of us find it difficult to do so. There is, however, a light at the end of the tunnel – the teachings of the Buddha. What was taught by him was simple. Develop our mindfulness and awareness to allow us to have clear thinking and be able to see how this attachment arises in us and what effect it has on us. Learn how to let go and be unaffected by emotions.

When we cultivate our mind in this way, we can be certain that we will not initiate conflicts and if we happen to be involved in them we will find a way out.



Source: Cheng Hiang Lee

A photograph of a stone staircase with green grass growing between the steps. The text "Members' Contributions" is overlaid in a white, cursive font.

# *Members' Contributions*

Source: Lucky Joeng



A black and white photograph of a pair of glasses with dark frames and clear lenses, resting on a piece of weathered, cracked wood. The background is dark and out of focus.

# *Glasses*

*By Amy Chung*

*He walks along the garden path  
His glasses covered in grime  
"The world is dark!" he says  
Then he plants the bitter seeds*

*Blinded by the filth-masked specs  
He trips over his own two feet  
"The world is treacherous!" he says  
As he tastes the bitter fruit*

*He scrapes at the dense dirt one day  
Spots of sunrays shine through  
"The world has light!" he says  
Then he plants the sweet, sweet seeds*

*He walks along the garden path  
His glasses sparkling clean  
"The world is wonderful!" he says  
As he tastes the sweet, sweet fruit*

*Whether the world is bad or good  
Depends on what glasses you wear  
It all comes down to your perception  
Then you plant the seeds for your fruit*

Source: Lucky Joeng

# *Transformations into Pacifism*

*By Alex Serpo*

Those who know me within the UNIBUDS community will have heard that I first came to Buddhism through martial arts, where trickles of Buddhist philosophy seep through between the sweat and violence.

My training in martial arts has come to an end, but my original reason for studying it remains. Like everybody I met in martial arts, I was trying to fight against demons and issues in my life that I hoped to face, and ultimately defeat.

One part of martial arts is to prepare oneself for a fight. Generally, the approach to this strangely futile goal is to practise moves, simulate scenarios and increase one's fitness. At each stage, you imagine your opponents.

Unfortunately, there are only two kinds of imaginary opponents: those you can beat, and those you cannot beat. The former need not be considered; martial arts is only concerned with the latter.

Training to overcome a stronger imaginary opponent is an interesting process. See, every time you become that one bit stronger, somehow your imagination catches up and makes your opponent that one bit stronger. And the training continues upward.

Eventually, the futility of this race becomes apparent. No matter how strong you are, or how fast or fit, there will always be someone stronger, faster, fitter. You begin to realise that in almost any violent confrontation, you will be out-gunned, out-matched and likely caught unaware.

This leads you to start asking a different sort of question. Rather than seeking to overcome your opponent, you start to question exactly what it means to be defeated. Rather than asking how you fight your way out of a violent confrontation, you start asking if you could get out without fighting, or if you could avoid the confrontation altogether.

This is the point where martial arts teaching truly begins. My teacher used to say that the best form of defence is awareness. So rather than learning a new move, you begin to start training yourself to be continuously aware of your surroundings. Rather than studying how to escalate conflict, you begin to study on how to avoid it.

At this point, martial arts training also gets really muddled. After all, if learning to fight cannot ensure your security, why learn to fight at all? What is the value of the Kamma (the action), if the consequence is likely to be more violence?

My teacher used to say that carrying a gun made you less safe, not more safe, because it could always be taken off you and it would ultimately only escalate conflict. Even in the hands of a child, a gun can kill, even if only by accident.

Could the same be true for martial arts – could the gun become a metaphor for the training itself? Could being trained to fight be seen as a similar act to carrying a gun? And if so, could the kamma of fighting only lead to an escalation of violence?

Questions like these lead one to stop looking outward and begin looking inward. After all, what is defeat? And can you truly escape violence? Once born, death is inevitable, as is suffering, old age and sickness. These are all also forms of violence.

The answer to this question is, of course, that you cannot escape violence. Even becoming the greatest fighter in the world will not protect you from plane crashes, earthquakes, bombs, sickness, disease and ultimately, death.

This is the point where I became stumped for



a long time. Like reaching a dead end in a maze, only to turn around and find the way you entered suddenly sealed by a wall. It causes you to stand still and contemplate your hopeless situation.

From this place of contemplation, two realisations came to me. Firstly, there are many things about the world that I cannot change; some opponents, like death, cannot be overcome. This leads to a second realisation. What if, instead of trying to change the world, we tried to change ourselves?

This process leads to a contemplation of action, or a contemplation of Kamma. After all, I have always considered Buddhism to be a theory of action. Contemplating on action leads you to discard many things in your life. The things you can control become your Kamma, the things you cannot control become your fate.

This leads us back to thoughts about violence. Since we cannot change the violence of the world, can we change the violence within ourselves? If we overcome fear, doubt and hatred (please note, all delusions), then perhaps it would be possible to react to violence only with compassion.

True skillful action is to meet hatred with compassion, fear with courage, doubt with certainty. To suffer violence and ridicule from another, yet return only compassion and patience, this is the true essence of pacifism, and is more powerful than any form of violence. It is what I believe to be true Buddhist Kamma, or skillful action.

The realisation of this truth is not the end of my journey, but rather the beginning. For it seems the only way to have a self without fear or hatred, is to have no self at all. Of course, even if we could completely overcome our hatred, our fear of violence, death, and loss, we would still be confronted by it. But then again, if we have lost our fear of everything, even death, what do we have to lose?



Source: Lucky Joeng

# *Not that Vicious a Cycle*

*By Quay Heong Teh*

"Karma." In a glib way, often this is the word that a lot of us use to justify the good and bad things that happen to us. When traceable, it can be used to validate or defend one's actions, giving emphasis to the past. Say for instance, we pass our exam because we studied for it, or we fail because we did not put in enough effort. It is a simple law of cause and effect that most of us can understand and agree with logically. Interestingly, karma also applies if we pass without studying, or fail after putting in countless hours of work. Because when the results are not apparently linked in any coherent order, the reaches of karma can also be quite handily extended as far back in time as one can imagine; to childhood, to being in the mother's womb and even to past lives – which most of us cannot remember or even be totally sure really existed – hence providing the tidiest explanation for anything that simply cannot be rationalised otherwise.

It is therefore not surprising that a common abuse of the concept of karma is by adopting a self-defeating attitude to life. Since it is already written in the stars of fate and destiny, why should I bother to work hard, live an honest life or do charity? If the fact that I am a lazy bum or a slow dimwit now is a result of karma, and I am doomed to be the sum of all my past karmic parts, then why bother to fight it? I may as well give up and succumb to what is meant to be. People use this as an excuse all the time; after all, it is a brilliant leave pass for getting out of dealing with our shortcomings.

What some of us fail to realise is that as much as we are the fruit of seeds previously sown, more importantly, we are also in the midst of creating our future in each moment, with our every action, words and thoughts. "If you want to know who you are now, find out what you were like in the past. If you want to know who you will become, see what you are like now." I have heard this saying numerous times from different teachers, and I could not agree more. So while it is all well and good to use our history to shed light on our present, it is of utmost importance that

we do not stop there. The future awaits, and its shape and form is up to us to mould now.

People are creatures of habit. And what we practise, we become good at. Be it writing, driving, or climbing a mountain... if we do it repeatedly, we normally get better at it. So each time someone hurls an insult at me and I let myself get angry and lash out in bitter self defense, each time I fail at something and I let myself give up disappointed – this is the kind of conditioning and habit patterns that I am passively allowing myself to become good at. And if I want to be an angry and disappointed person for the rest of my life, this is one of the best ways to become exactly that. Just put the blame on past karma, and my conscience is clear.

On the other hand, if I realise that I too have a hand in creating my destiny, then things get a little more interesting. I have always started brushing my teeth from the left, and one morning, I consciously decided to start from the right. Even though it was the same toothbrush, same teeth, and the same set of brush strokes, it felt totally different simply because I had chosen a different starting point. Hard to believe that brushing my teeth a different way can have much to do with creating my destiny though. The point is, where I was sitting placidly in the backseat before, now I am taking the steering wheel and when required, having the wisdom to pull the handbrake. Someone insults me, I hear the words, cognise and understand it is an offensive remark, feel my body constrict in hurt or rage, and it is at this point that I arrive at a crossroads. To be angry, or not to be angry. Personally, I hardly think I have a choice here. The tide of fury has probably surfaced too quickly for me to stop. So the more pertinent question here is whether to lash out, or not to lash out. If at this point I choose to hold my tongue and maintain my composure, then not unlike choosing to start brushing my teeth from the right instead of the left, I have chosen a different route and an altogether new direc-

tion. A new habit pattern is formed, and it is from there on that it's up to me whether to continue to reinforce this new practice. Suddenly, a whole new perspective has come to light.

Going back to the question of whether to be angry, or not to be angry, I think anger as an emotion in general has a pretty bad reputation. No wonder so many people mistakenly interpret that good Buddhists should be good pieces of emotionless logs! There may be some who practise meditation for the sole purpose of controlling and subduing their feelings, until they attain a certain level of peaceful emptiness within themselves. But in the real world, we can hardly remain in a meditative (read vegetative) state all the time. People are interactive creatures who are, and will always be, constantly stimulated by external factors. Of course there will be occasions when anger will arise! Instead of suppressing it straightaway or pretending it never came up in the first place, I think it is essential to have some self awareness and understanding of what this anger is arising from.

Is it hatred or love that is the source of my anger? It is hatred if I hurl insults back at someone who has just delivered a blow to my ego and humiliated me in front of others. It is love if I give a stern warning to a child who has crossed a busy road without watching for traffic again. The underlying intention of the anger is a determinant of the karma that is formed thereafter. So, anger is not always a "bad" thing. In fact, sometimes I think we need to show anger in order to deliver a kind message effectively. Having said that, if anger has arisen out of hatred, rather than stifle or neglect this ugly old friend, why not sit by its side and hold its hand? As much as we would show compassion in love, let us too be gentle with hatred.

Having good intentions then, it is natural to expect good results. I think this is another common interpretation of karma. Good begets good, evil begets evil. Ho-hum, if only we live in a perfectly symmetrical world where the total always equals the sum of its parts. I am sure most of us will agree that things do not always work out that way. Everyday we see injustice in one form or another – crime, poverty, accidental deaths – inequality that cannot be reasoned in the short span of one lifetime. The workings of karma is complex and non-linear. To quote Thomas Merton, "Do not depend on the hope of results... you may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect. As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on the results but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself."

And so we try.



Source: Lucky Joeng



Photo: Lucky Joeng

*"Mind is the forerunner of (all good) states.  
Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one  
speaks or acts with pure mind, because of that,  
happiness follows one, even as one's shadow  
that never leaves" Dhammapada*

I wanted to write something about kamma or karma (in Pali language), so I did my research. I typed in the word kamma in Dictionary.com. I was surprised to find out that kamma is considered a word in the English dictionary. According to Dictionary.com, kamma is defined as (1) [Hinduism, Buddhism] Action, seen as bringing upon oneself inevitable results, good or bad, either in this life or in a reincarnation: in Hinduism, one of the means of reaching Brahman; (2) [Theosophy] The cosmic principle according to which each person is rewarded or punished in one incarnation according to that person's deeds in the previous incarnation; (3) Fate, destiny; (4) The good or bad emanations felt to be generated by someone or something.

It is very interesting to the range of definitions of the word kamma. The third definition caught my attention the most. It shows that there is a widespread understanding that kamma is fate or destiny. In fact, this is a common misunderstanding amongst Buddhists. Fate is the notion that a person's life is pre-arranged for him or her by some external power, and he or she has no control over their destiny. Kamma, on the other hand, can be changed.

When I was young, I actually believed in fate. I believed that our lives, to some extent, had been destined to be a certain way even before we were born, due to our past life's kamma. I

believed that my "luck" this lifetime is a result of my previous life's kamma and what I do in this lifetime would determine my future life's destiny. That is not totally wrong. Indeed my current luck is because of my past kamma. But it does not mean that the past is from my past life. The past could be yesterday, a year ago, or maybe my previous lifetimes.

According to Buddhism, kamma means actions and reactions. The actions are like seeds you plant and the reactions are the trees or fruits you bear. If the seeds are mango seeds, then the trees that you will get are mango trees. That is the basic principle of kamma –good begets good and evil begets evil. For the seeds to grow, right conditions are essential. For example, a tree needs water, sun rays, and oxygen in the right proportions to bear fruit. In other words, without the right conditions, we could not reap the benefits of the good kamma we have planted.

Since kamma consists of actions and reactions, it means that every action we do now would affect our future. It gives so much power to the now. Indeed it is very important that we are mindful of each of our thoughts and actions at each present moment. Only in the present moment, we have full control of our mind. This versatility shows that kamma is not merely fate or destiny.

Once again, kamma is neither bad nor good. It is just a natural phenomenon of life. So as long as we live our life with a good heart and intention at each present moment, I believe our future would be good. May all beings be well and happy.



# Two Donkeys

By Jack Shi

"Kodo, Kodo, Kodo." Two donkeys strode down the road towards the city on a hot sunny morning. In front of them walked a wealthy merchant who was carrying rice from the country side to sell in the city.

Both donkeys were carrying the same load. The gray scruffy donkey was leading, aggressively pounding up the road with all his might. Trailing behind is a silky dark donkey, walking languidly up the road at its own pace.

The distance between the two donkeys got further and further. In the end, the merchant had no choice but to shift some of the rice bags to the gray donkey for he was going to be late for the market. The dark donkey's pace picked up, but was still far from the gray donkey's. So the merchant kept stacking the gray donkey with the dark donkey's load till both were evenly paced.

By this time, the dark donkey was carrying nothing at all while the gray donkey staggered up the road, struggling with each step on shaky legs trailed by droplets of sweat. Seeing this, the dark donkey laughed: "Toil and sweat, this is what happens when you work so hard."

After the merchant got home from the market, he thought to himself: "Why should I feed both donkeys when only one did all the work? I might as well give all the food to the hard working donkey and leave none for the other." And that was what he did.

The gray donkey was hard working. Even though his diligence was taken advantage of by the dark donkey as it struggled down the road with the load of two donkeys. But in the end, both donkeys got what they deserved.

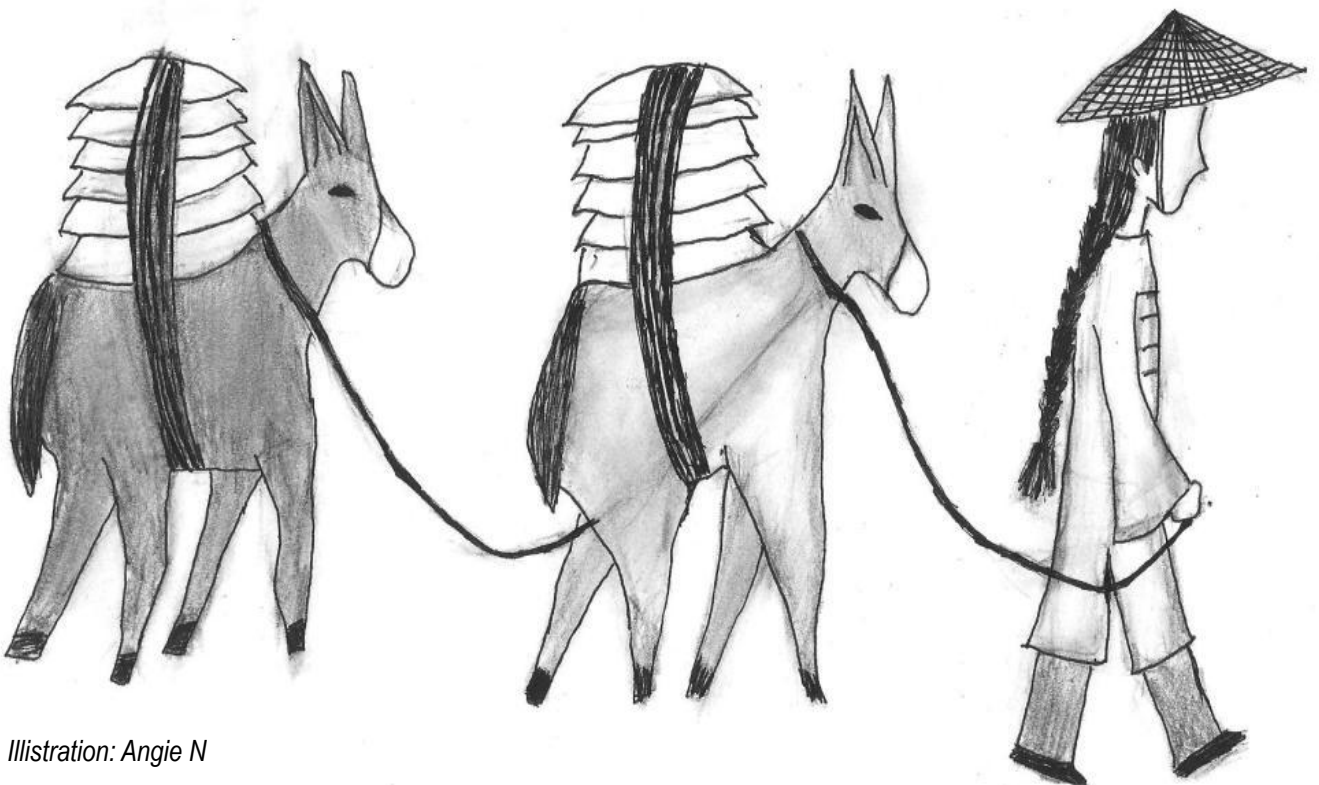


Illustration: Angie N

# *Nothing Ever Repeats*

*By Lojdanai Sukijjakhamin (Aun)*

The sand is peached by the street lights behind me; filled with a day's worth of random footprints. The black sky is studded with silver stars – frequently occluded by strings of soaring seagulls. The dark sea is flooded with strong white waves echoing their majestically low pitch. The smell of seaweed accompanies the occasional wind that playfully seeps through my hair. All of which makes me wonder what I am doing out here on a cool, breezy night.

Again, I have escaped to a place where the silence is so overwhelming I can hear my shouting thoughts. Another stressful day passed. Another boring night unwelcomely arrived. It all seems so mundane and pointless.

My body continued to lay on the footpath just off the beach, whilst my mind, resistant and stubborn, leaked out to visit the old memory lane. This time, it was first year at uni, and my mind sat me down in the Mathews Lecture Theatre. The lecturer's voice faded into the background as I was shaken by a sense of *déjà vu* about what happened earlier that day. I remembered it well. I remembered uttering "I have dreamt this before" in disbelief.

A month prior to this event, as incomprehensible as I usually am during sleep, I dreamt myself yet another silly, meaningless dream. I found myself in a clinic with an African-looking girl who is shouting to the receptionist. A few awkward seconds later, she burst out in tears and stomped out of the clinic. I had no idea who she was, but in my dream, I quickly followed her. As I was stepping out of the clinic, I turned back and waved to the receptionist, brief enough for the African girl not to notice.

I woke up perplexed and confused. Who was she? Why did I follow her? What happened next? Before I could ask any more questions, my logical cells shut my thoughts up, telling me it was

just another random thought not to be taken to mind. But in the morning of that lecture, everything finally made sense.

That morning, I bumped into Sarah, the Thai-African girl in my Psychology class whom I had just met a couple of weeks prior. She asked me if I could accompany her to see a GP at the UNSW clinic at the Quad, as there had been a mistake. She went to see the doctor because of her stomach problem. Instead of being medicated, she was accused of being anorexic and was told to eat as a solution. I accompanied her to the clinic where we were informed by the receptionist that the doctor was busy and unable to speak to her. The rest of the story played out exactly as I dreamt. Feeling embarrassed and apologetic, I waved to the receptionist as I walked out the clinic's sliding doors. It was not until a good few hours later in that lecture theatre that I realised what had just happened.

I thought to myself, "Great! I have just experienced *déjà vu*!", but what struck me more was the after-thought. The events in my dream and in reality happened in the exact same way. The only difference is that I could not make sense of what had happened in the dream, but I sure understood the actual event. My encounter with Sarah two weeks before the incident had made all the difference. In reality, I knew who she was. I had interacted and conversed with her. My past kamma imprinted the memory of her into my being. You could say that the events happened twice, once in my dream and once when I was awake; but they were not the same. In fact, no two events, real or imaginary, can ever be identical.

I was introduced to the chaos theory four years after that incident while I was attending a career development tutorial class. The premise of the theory is that underlying what appears to be a series of random events, there usually is a pat-

tern. These patterns appear periodically, albeit never identical. The tutor went on to demonstrate this point by asking everyone to stand up and walk towards the front of the classroom on two separate occasions. The results were intriguing. While we organised ourselves randomly into a row in front of the class, it was evident that all girls tended toward the front whereas the guys gravitated toward the back of the group. The second occasion yielded a very similar pattern as the first, although the exact positioning of each student was influenced by where we sat after we disbanded on the first occasion. The tutor then summarised this key aspect of the theory by stating that:

Nothing...ever...repeats  
Nothing...ever...repeats  
Nothing...ever...repeats

By the time the tutor finished saying the phrase the third time, there were a few giggles. It is common for anyone to emphasise a point by mentioning it twice, but not three times. In reality, the three phases sound exactly the same. But our experience upon hearing the phrases can never be the same. Our past kamma of processing the phrases the first two times became a part of our working memory, which influenced how we perceive the phrase the third time around. Our experience of an event is shaped by our perception, and perception is shaped by who we are, which in turn, is the (temporary) product of what we have thought, said and done up to that point.

My mind returned home to the footpath on this cool, breezy night. The peached sand, the stars-studded sky, the waves-ridden dark sea, and the seaweed-scented wind are all here; but they are not exactly the same as they were. Mundane and pointless as it seems, I was reminded of how life really is; that nothing...ever...repeats. That there is perpetual uniqueness in life, with endless possibility.

And for you who are reading this, who you are now is not the same person who was about to read this article ten minutes ago. What you have just read also forms a part of your memory that affects how you now perceive the world. If you go back and read the title of this article again, you will probably have a different reaction this time. Your kamma of reading this article in the past ten minutes have made all the difference.

We are constantly being shaped by our thoughts, speeches and actions. Our experience of the world is always different and new every single time. There are no repeats. Try asking yourself what you are going to do in the next ten minutes. I hope you choose wisely, because what you think, say or do now will affect what you think, say, or do next, and who you will later become. And there is certainly no second chance.



Photo: Lucky Joeng

# When Near a Village

By Tracy Weerasinha

*"Kamma is action, and Vipaka, fruit or result, is its reaction. Kamma is like a potential seed; Vipaka could be likened to the fruit arising from the tree – the effect or result. It is experienced as happiness, bliss, unhappiness or misery, according to the nature of the Kamma seed."*

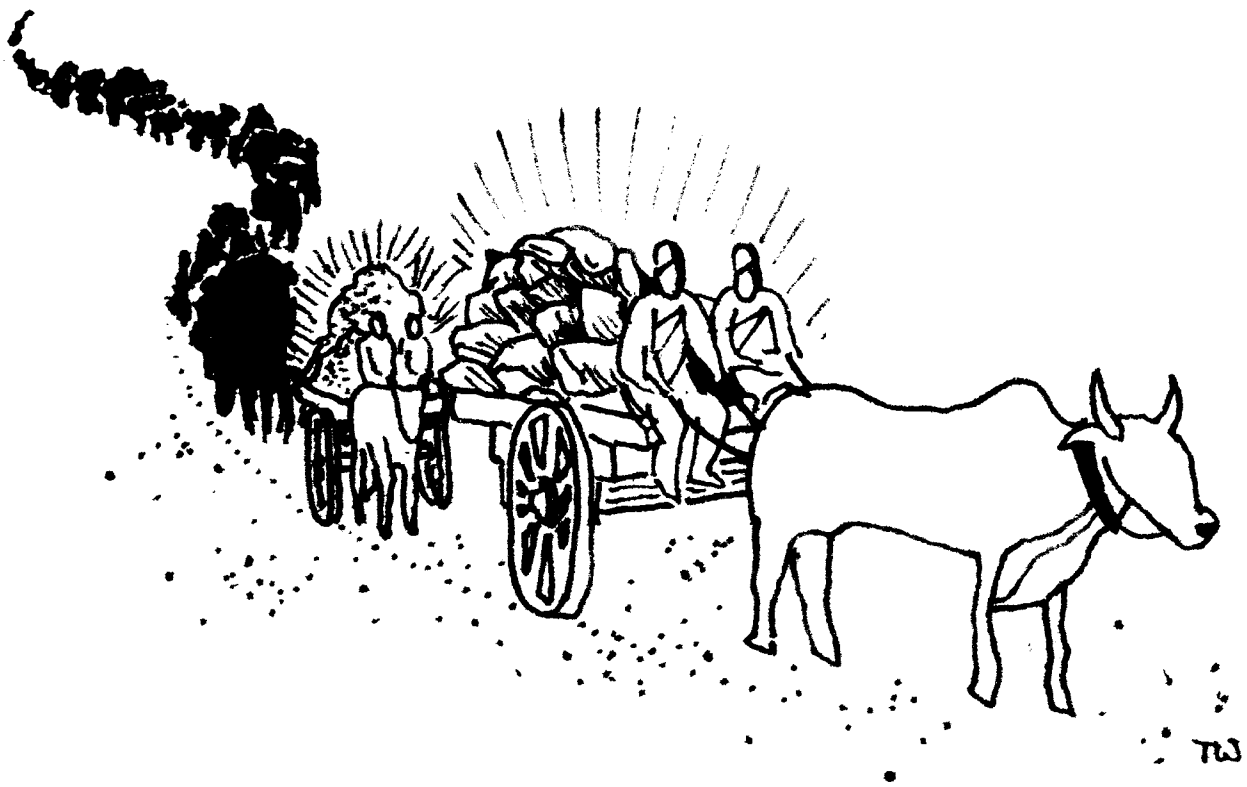
Ven. Sayadaw U Sobhana, "Theory of Kamma"

Although the term Vipaka relates to the mind, a story of one of the Lord Buddha's past lives tells of how so long ago, he was an expert too in discerning physical fruit and seed. He could tell by a glance up at the tree what fruit was green, what nearly ripe, and what quite ripe, and so on. And what he said was always found true.



So the story goes...

Once upon a time in India, a boy was born into a merchant family in Benares. When he became an adult, and was leading a five-hundred waggon chain along the road to a distant town by the moonlight, he stopped before the border of a great forest. There he advised his caravan, "Poisonous trees grow here. Do not taste any strange or unfamiliar fruit without consulting with me first."







There was a village within the border, and next to the village grew a What-fruit tree. As it so happened, the What-fruit tree exactly resembles a mango tree in appearance, taste and smell, down to the leaves, flowers and fruit. The fruit, when eaten, is poisonous and causes instant death.

Some greedy members of the caravan came upon this tree and, mistaking it for a mango tree, plucked some of its fruit to eat. The merchant observed what was happening, and immediately said, "This 'mango tree' is a What-fruit tree; do not touch its fruit."

Formerly, caravans before them would eat the fruit they mistook for mangoes. The villagers living next to the tree would come at dawn, and seeing them lying dead on the ground, would fling them by the heels into a hidden place, departing with all the belongings of the caravan, waggons and all.

This time round too, the villagers ran to the scene, already claiming the spoils as their own: "Our oxen!"; "These must be our waggons!" But when they reached the caravan, there was the caravan alive and well!

"How did you know this was not a mango tree?" demanded the disappointed villagers. "We didn't know," said the caravan, "it was our leader who knew."

So the villagers came to the merchant and asked him how he knew.

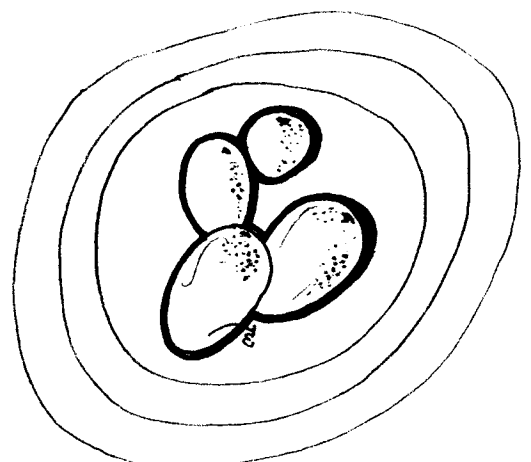
"Two things," said he:

When near a village grows a tree  
Not hard to climb, 'tis plain to me,  
Nor need I further proof to know,  
No wholesome fruit thereon can grow!

Having completed this verse, he thereafter led his caravan to safety.

The Buddha's followers were the people of the caravan, and the Buddha was the caravan leader.

*(Based on Phala-Jataka No.54, The Jataka Vol. 1, Prof. E. B. Cowell (ed.), Scanned at sacred-texts.com, January, 2006. Proofed and formatted by John Bruno Hare.)*



# Blossoms of Life



*Lyrics: Tina Ng  
Composition: Ozlem Degerli*

## Verse 1

It is the way of the world  
That whatever seed we plant  
Then whatever fruit we'll get  
So whatever good we do  
Then whatever good we'll reap

## Chorus 1

We make the world what we want it to be  
By being the change we want to see  
We make our lives what we want it to be  
Living in peace and harmony

## Verse 2

You are where you are  
Because of where you've been  
Because of who you are  
So that's where you will go  
And so that's where you will be

## 8 Bar Instrumental Interlude

## Chorus 2

We make the world what we want it to be  
By being the change we want to see  
We make our lives what we want it to be  
Living in peace and harmony

## Bridge

With every smile  
We brighten up our day  
With every laugh  
We bring happiness our way  
We plant the seeds for our tomorrow  
We enjoy the blossoms of our yesterday

## Chorus 3

We make the world what we want it to be  
By being the change we want to see  
We make our lives what we want it to be  
Living in peace and harmony

## Verse 3

It is the way of the world  
At times you may feel sad  
If you choose to see the light  
Then you can make your path right  
May your future shine so bright

## Coda

So I make a wish tonight  
For all the buds to bloom in full

# 昨日之果实，明日之种子

## *Seeds of Tomorrow, Blossoms of Yesterday*

可曾疑惑过 为何世间有苦有乐 可曾质疑过 为何世间有祸有幸	Have you wonder before, Why there is suffering and joy in this world? Have you question before? Why there is happiness and misfortune in this world?
世间的一切，有着深而难解的因缘 有了因，造就了果 有了果，又造就了因	Everything in this world have a deep and difficult to understand's cause. When there is a cause, it brings about an effect When there is an effect, it brings about a cause
可曾留意过 世事变迁在分秒间 可曾尝试过 勤去证悟这一切	Have you pay attention before the happenings in this world change within minutes and seconds Have you tried before understanding all these diligently
没有人能够改变过去的业 但你我能创造此刻与未来 精进在于勤，善恶在一念。	No one can change the past Karma But you and I can create our present and future Improvement comes from diligent, good and evil comes from a thought
取昨日的果实，为明日播下美好的种子 让那不圆满的昨日，创造圆满的明日。	Take the blossoms of yesterday, and plant the seeds for tomorrow Let the unfulfilled yesterday to create a fulfilling tomorrow.





# Unibuds 2007 - 2008 in Pictures

0 Week

*Begin the semester with  
laughter and friendship*



*Picnic*

Get to know everyone  
while having fun in  
the sun!





The buds blossom  
in the  
summertime...

The buds blossom  
in the  
summertime...



And keep each other  
warm during  
wintertime.





1. Once Upon a Time  
(The Lodge, Squarehouse)



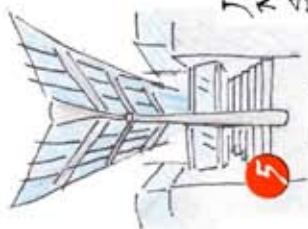
2. The Mission  
I'mpossible Station  
(Ground Floor, Squarehouse)



3. Observe your path  
(E-Spot, Red Centre)



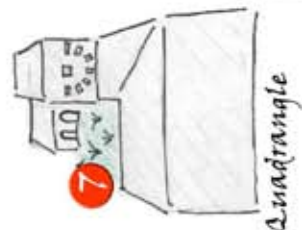
5. 10up5  
(Staircase to  
Scientia)



Basser Stairs



7. Follow Me  
(Quadrangle Lawn)





8. Mix and Match  
(Australian School of Business)



Australian School  
of Business



Law Building



Round-House



1

2 Square-House



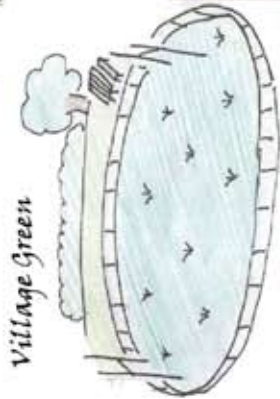
Uni-Gym

UNSW Main Walk Way



The Red Centre

4. Sensible Senses  
(Metal Ball in front  
of EE Building)



Village Green

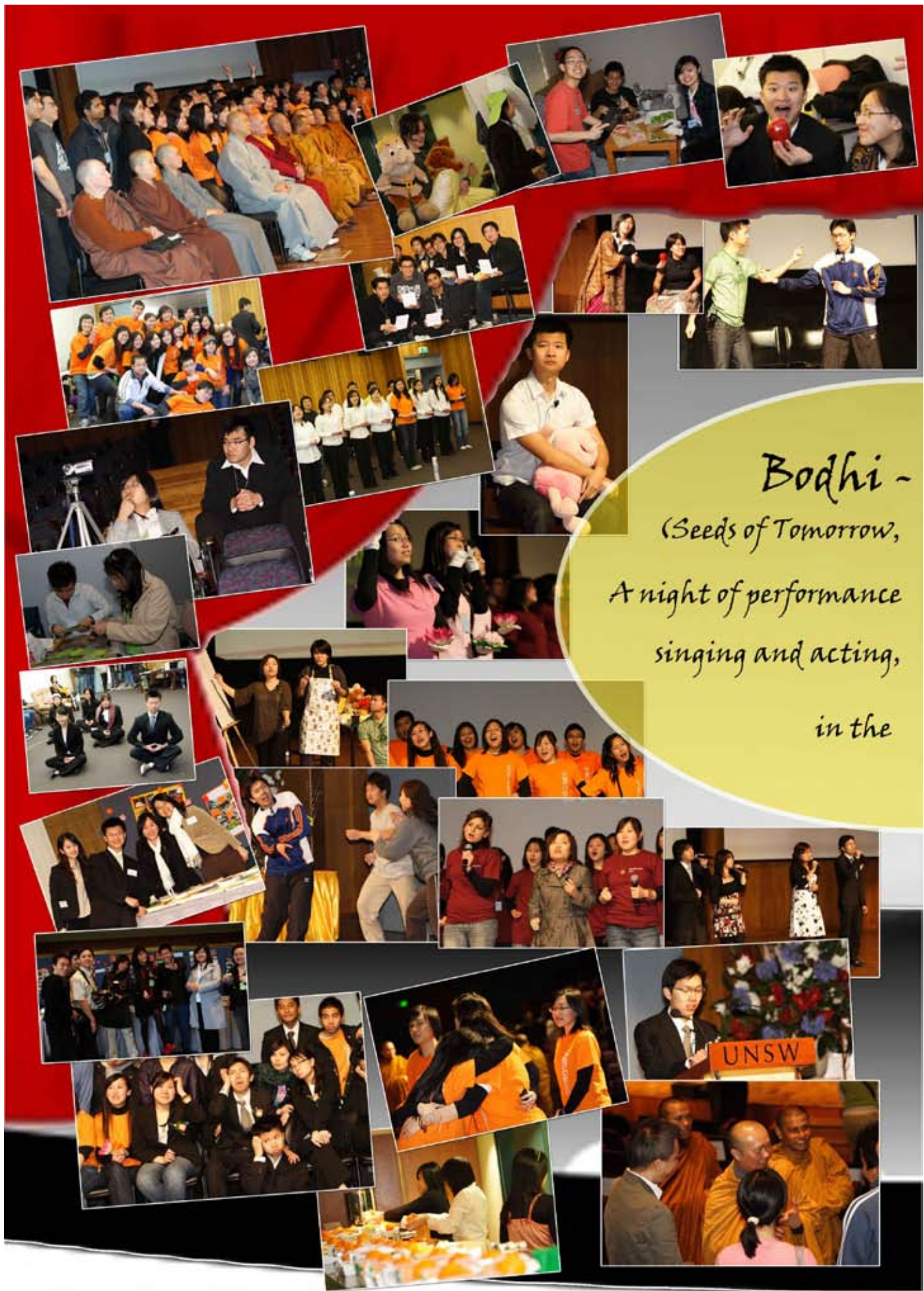


# Amazing Race

An Amazing Race indeed!







*Bodhi -  
(Seeds of Tomorrow,  
A night of performance  
singing and acting,  
in the*





*Night 2008  
Blossoms of Yesterday  
and dhamma talks,  
to over 8000 people  
audience!*



## Vesak

The celebration of the Buddha's birth, Enlightenment and paranibbana.



## Songkran

The Thai water festival at Wat Pa Buddharamsee.



## Other Events



Celebration of Chao Khun Samai's birthday



Annual General Meeting



Meditation Sessions, Dhamma Talks and Weekly Activities



*At unibuds, it's all about the members...*

## PotLuck

*where food is shared,  
songs are sung and  
fun is had together!*



## Graduations

*We celebrate the final  
milestones of our members'  
university careers*



## Birthdays

*And we celebrate our  
members' another-  
year-wiser birthdays*



*So join us for a lifetime of memories of good friends and good times!*

**Photo Section Layout:** Jack Shi Amazing Race **Layout Assistant:** Rosiana Lim

**Photo Source:** Khai Yi Ng / Cheng Hiang Lee / Lucky Joeng / Wilsen Lius Lau

# List of Members 2008

## Honorary Members

### Honorary Members

LIM Ching Liang  
SAW Quee Kin  
LEE Kway Yung  
TENG Wai Loon  
NG John Joon Hu  
SEE Graeme  
WONG Kah Loon  
ONG Yen Lee  
KIDDLE Michael  
WEERASINHA Tracy  
ONG Desmond  
CHANDRA Merry  
GOOI Chien Hong  
SANTOSO Agus

### Associate Members

ALSOP Laurie  
CHEN Wen Wei  
GARROD Simon  
HO Milani  
LAU Wilsen  
LEE Cheng Hiang  
NG Tina  
ROBERTS Anjali  
SUKIJJAKHAMIN Pojdanai  
TANADINATA Christian  
TEH Su Sian  
WONG Ka Yee Kelly  
WONG Phyllis  
YE Yu Lan  
YUDA Yuvon  
ZHANG Kate Yi

### Ordinary Members

ARIYARATHNA Dilshan  
BROWN Cadence Jane  
CHANDRA Herry  
CHEONG Phoebe Sue May  
CHEW Kia Sheng  
CHI Tzi Chieh  
CH'NG Ian Xiang Yuan  
CHITTASY Viriya  
CHUNG Amy Zi Qi  
DE ROSA PONTELLO Anthony  
DJIMRIC Peter  
FOO Gilbert Hock Beng  
GAMAGE Chamira  
HENG Hiang Yang  
HETTIARACHCHI Ravin  
HIRUNVIVAT Sally Nipapat  
HO Peng Chong  
HORLACHER Martin James

HUSSAIN Jawaid  
IGOE Annabel  
JAENSCH Samantha Lee  
JOENG Lucky  
KALUPAHANA Pasan  
KAMPWERTH Henner  
KARKI Anant  
KERR Emma  
KHAW Ju Bee  
KITTIARAM Kittikhun  
KUOK Freddie  
LAM William  
LANG Alice Virginia  
LIM Ying Sean  
LIZADJUHRY Meikana  
MARSDEN JONES Daniel Clive  
MENG Linus  
NG Huey Shyan  
NG Xin Yi  
NG Khai Yi  
NOURI SORKHABI Negar  
OOI Shi Ying  
PANG Mandy  
PHUA Alvin  
SHIVANANTHAN Dinesh Mohan  
SUGIANTO Adeline  
SURACHARTKUMTANKUN Jiraporn  
TAN Yu Ang  
TAN Zhi Bin  
TANG Patrick  
TARR Lauren Alexandra  
TEH Ming De  
TEO Ee Vonn  
TEOH Mei Ling  
TILLOTSON Nicole  
TIWARI Dinesh  
TOH Hong Seng  
TOLANI Aakash  
TONG Jessica  
VARMA Sam  
VIJENAYAKE G Baghya Nirmani  
VIRGO Peter  
WIBISONO Sudjono  
WIJAYA Jethro Octavianus  
WIN Ma Thin Mar  
WONG Betty  
WONG Craig  
WONG Derrick  
XIE Tian Qi  
YEO Yee Herng  
YONG Han  
YU Lisa  
ZHANG Teng

## Associate Members

## Ordinary Members



## *Patrons*

### **Ven. Tsang Hui**

Hwa Tsang Monastery (Mahayana)  
29 Mackenzie St, Homebush West NSW 2140  
Ph: (02) 9746 6334

### **Ven. Chao Khun Samai**

Wat Pa Buddharangsee (Theravada)  
39 Junction Rd, Leumeah NSW 2560  
Ph: (02) 4625 7930

## *Student Organisations*

### **MacBuddhi** (Macquarie University Buddhist Association)

Box 16 Student Council, Macquarie University, North Ryde NSW 2109

### **Unibodhi** (University of Sydney Buddhist Society)

Box 100 Holme Building, University of Sydney, Camperdown NSW 2122

### **UTS Buddhist Meditation Society** (University of Technology Sydney)

PO Box 3210, Broadway NSW 2007

### **Charles Sturt University Mitchell Buddhist Group** (MBG)

c/o Mitchell Association of Student Councils,  
CSU LPO P.O. Box C227 Bathurst NSW 2795

## *Library and Information Services*

### **Buddha Dhamma Education Association Inc.** (Non-Sectarian)

78 Bentley Rd, Tullera NSW 2480  
Ph: (02) 6628 2426

### **Buddhist Council of New South Wales** (Non-Sectarian)

Level 1, 441 Pacific Highway, Crows Nest NSW 2065 Ph: (02) 9966 8893

### **Buddhist Information Centre** (Info Service)

Shop 90 BKK Evans Ave, Eastlakes NSW 2018  
Ph: (02) 9669 3053  
City Centre: Shop 2, 242 Elizabeth St, Surry Hills NSW 2018  
Ph: (02) 9280 0000

### **Buddhist Library and Meditation Centre** (Library)

90-92 Church St, Camperdown NSW 2050  
Ph: (02) 9519 6054

# *Spiritual References*

For the convenience of readers, a list of explanation for the terms used in the Magazine has been included. Care has been taken to provide the simplest and best possible explanation of the terms and the Editor apologises for any inaccuracy of term explanations rendered here. Wherever possible, the English, Pali and Sanskrit version of the terms are provided so that readers could cross-reference between the languages that they are familiar with.

## Note on Abbreviations:

eng – English	ch – Chinese
pl – Pali	tib – Tibetan
skt – Sanskrit	

**Abhidhamma (pl)** One of the three baskets in the Tipitaka. It is largely a commentary on the sermons or suttas, and subjects them to analysis. **Abhidharma (skt)**

**Alaya (skt)** Human beings have six sense organs – the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. They each represent a consciousness of their own, but in addition there is the seventh and eighth consciousness. While the first six consciousnesses may momentarily stop functioning during a coma, for example, we would continue to have body heat, blood circulation and digestive system still at work. These functions are controlled by the seventh consciousness – the Manas consciousness. It serves primarily to sustain and renew life by acting as the sower of seeds on the eighth consciousness - the Alaya consciousness. This eighth consciousness acts like a storage house that contains all our kammic traces and underlies all experiences of individual life.

**Anatta (pl)** See Non-self (eng) **Anatman (skt)**

**Anicca (pl)** Impermanence.

**Arahat (pl)** Holy one; liberated being; one who has destroyed all his mental impurities. **Arhat (skt)**

**Bhanaka (pl)** A person who mastered the skill to memorise long passages and have the ability to recite these passages from memory.

**Bhavana (pl)** mental development; meditation. The two divisions of bhavana are the development of tranquility (samatha), corresponding to concentration of the mind, and the development of insight (vipassana), corresponding to wisdom.

**Bodhicitta (skt)** The spirit of Enlightenment, the aspiration to achieve it; the mind set on Enlightenment. It involves two parallel aspects: the determination to achieve Buddhahood and the aspiration to rescue all beings. **Bodhi Mind (eng)**

**Bodhi (pl)** Being awakened from the slumber or stupor (inflicted upon the mind) by the defilements and comprehends the Four Noble Truths. **Enlightenment (eng)**

**Bodhisatta (pl)** Literally, 'Enlightenment-being'. Those who aspire to Supreme Enlightenment and Buddhahood for themselves and all beings; also for anyone who has developed the Bodhi Mind – the aspiration to save oneself and others. In the Pali Canon, it is used specifically to designate Siddhattha Gotama in the time before he achieved full Enlightenment. **Bodhisattva (skt)**

**Buddha (pl/skt)** A Supremely Enlightened One, Awakened One. The term Buddha generally refers to the historical Buddha Sakyamuni who lived in India more than 2500 years ago and founded Buddhism. 'Buddhas' naturally refers to all Enlightened Beings.

**Buddha-nature (eng)** According to the view of one of the Mahayana schools, Buddha-nature is the true, immutable and eternal nature of all beings. Since all beings possess

Buddha-nature, it is possible for them to attain Enlightenment and become a Buddha, regardless of the level of existence they occupy. Tathagata-Garbha (skt)

Dalai Lama (tib) The word 'Dalai' means 'great ocean' in Mongolian, and was a title granted to the third Grand Lama of the Gelugpa School in 1587 by Gusri Khan, a Mongol prince. There have been 14 Dalai Lamas; the current 14th Dalai Lama is "HH the XIVth", Gyalwa Tenzin Gyatso.

Dependent Origination (eng) The chain of conditioned arising; causal genesis. The process, beginning in ignorance, by which one keeps making life after life of suffering for oneself. Also a fundamental Buddhist doctrine of the interdependence of things. It teaches that all beings and phenomena exist or occur only because of their relationship with other beings or phenomena. Paticca samuppada (pl) Pratitya samutpada (skt)

Deva (pl/skt) A divinity or god; a heavenly being. Devas, including Hindu gods, are believed to inhabit the heavens above the human realm, but are still unenlightened, bound to Samsara and subject to birth and death.

Dhamma (pl) This word has several meanings: (a) The teachings of the Buddhas (generally capitalised in English); (b) Law, doctrine; (c) Things, events, phenomena. Dharma (skt)

Dhammapada (pl/skt) The most famous scripture in the Pali Canon, this sutta exists in two versions; i.e. the Theravada and the Mahayana. The many translations of the Dhammapada has given it worldwide popularity, representing for Buddhism what the Tao Te Ching is for Taoism.

Dukkha (pl/skt) Suffering; unsatisfactoriness. One of the three basic characteristics of existence and the first Noble Truth. The term dukkha is not limited to painful experience, but refers to the unsatisfactory nature and the general insecurity of all conditioned phenomena, which, on account of their impermanence, are all liable to suffering: and this includes also pleasurable experience.

Emptiness (eng) The concept that entities have no fixed or independent nature. This idea is closely linked to that of dependent origination. Sunyata (pl) Sunyata (skt)

Enlightenment (eng) Being awakened from the slumber or stupor (inflicted upon the mind) by the defilements and comprehends the Four Noble Truths. Bodhi (pl)

Five Aggregates (eng) These are the five aspects in which the Buddha has summed up all the physical and mental phenomena of existence: matter, consciousness, perception, feeling and reaction. Aggregates: Khandha (pl) Skandhas (skt)

Five Precepts (eng) The five moral rules, which are binding on all Buddhist laymen, are: (1) Abstaining from killing any living being, (2) from stealing, (3) from unlawful sexual intercourse, (4) from lying, (5) from the use of intoxicants. Panca sila (pl)

Four Noble Truths (eng) The briefest synthesis of the entire teachings of Buddhism, which explains the cause of suffering and the means of deliverance therefrom. This was the first doctrine taught by the Buddha after his Enlightenment. They are: the truth of Suffering, of the Origin of suffering, of the Extinction of suffering, and of the eightfold Path leading to the extinction of suffering. Ariya sacca (pl)

Four Stages of Liberation (eng) These are the four stages of Enlightenment in the Theravada tradition, namely the stages of (1) stream-enterer, sotapanna (pl), srotapanna (skt) (2) once-returner, sakadagami (pl) (3) non-returner, anagami (pl), anagamin (skt) (4) the holy one, arahat (pl), arhat (skt).

Kamma (pl) Action performed by oneself that will have an effect on one's future. Correctly speaking denotes the wholesome or unwholesome volition and their concomitant mental factors, causing rebirth and shaping the destiny of beings. Karma (skt)

Kuan Yin (ch) The Bodhisatta of Compassion. Also known as the 'Goddess of Mercy' in China and 'she who hears the cries of the world'. Kuan Yin is one of the Three Pure Land Sages and is generally represented in

the feminine form especially in East Asia. Avalokitesvara (pl/skt) Chenrezi (tib)

Loving-kindness (eng) Loving-kindness; selfless love and good will. One of the qualities of a pure mind.  
Metta (pl) Maitri (skt)

Mahayana (pl/skt) The Great Vehicle tradition. Mahayana is one of the main traditions of Buddhism, and expounds on the Bodhisatta practice as the means towards Enlightenment of both oneself and others.

Mantra (skt) Incantation. Literally, 'uniting and holding', i.e. uniting all Dhammas and holding all meanings. A mantra is a formula said to protect one who recites it and to benefit him by virtue of its mystic power. Mantras are recited in Sanskrit and sometimes have no literal meaning. They are especially valued in esoteric Buddhism.

Metta (pl) See Loving-kindness (eng) Maitri (skt)

Middle Path (Noble Eightfold Path) (eng) The path leading to liberation from suffering. It is divided into three stages or trainings: (1) Sila, which includes right speech, right actions and right livelihood, (2) Samadhi, which includes right effort, right awareness and right concentration, (3) Panna, which includes right thought, right understanding. Ariya atthangika magga (pl)

Mudra (skt) Literally, 'seal, sign'. Ritual gestures of the hands used in symbolic magic, especially in the esoteric schools. They are used in conjunction with mantras as aids to meditation. Buddha images are found in a variety of mudra positions.

Nibbana (pl) Freedom from suffering; the highest and ultimate goal of all Buddhist aspirations, i.e. the absolute extinction of the life affirming will manifested as greed, hatred and delusion, and convulsively clinging to existence. Nirvana (skt)

Noble Eightfold Path (eng) The path leading to liberation from suffering. It is divided into three stages or trainings: (1) Sila, which includes right speech, right actions and right livelihood, (2) Samadhi, which includes right effort, right awareness and right concentration, (3) Panna, which includes right thought, right understanding. Ariya atthangika magga (pl)

Non-self (eng) Egolessness. Neither within the bodily and mental phenomena of existence, nor outside of them, can be found anything that in the ultimate sense could be regarded as a self-existing real Ego-entity, soul or any other abiding substance. Anatta (pl) Anatman (skt)

Pali (pl) The canonical language of Ceylonese Buddhists, believed to be very similar to the colloquial language spoken by Sakyamuni Buddha, in which the canonical texts of the Theravada are composed.

Panna (pl) Wisdom; insight. The third of the three trainings by which the Noble Eightfold Path is practised. There are three kinds of wisdom: received (heard) wisdom, intellectual wisdom and experiential wisdom. Prajna (skt)

Parami (pl) Perfections. The stages of spiritual perfection followed by the Bodhisatta in his progress to Buddhahood. In the Theravada ten qualities are given: (1) Perfection in Giving, (2) Morality, (3) Renunciation, (4) Wisdom, (5) Energy, (6) Patience or Forbearance, (7) Truthfulness, (8) Resolution, (9) Loving-kindness, (10) Equanimity. In the Mahayana scriptures, a partly differing list of six is given: (1) Liberality, (2) Morality, (3) Patience, (4) Energy, (5) Meditation, (6) Wisdom. Paramita (skt)

Parinibbana (pl) Translated as 'perfect quietude'. This term originally had the same meaning as Nibbana (Nirvana) and referred to the stage in which all illusion had been eliminated. It is commonly used to indicate the passing away of the physical body of a Buddha. Parinirvana (skt)

Paticca samuppada (pl) See Dependent Origination (eng) Pratitya samutpada (skt)

Relics (eng) The cremated remains of Enlightened Beings.



Sacca (pl) Literally, 'truth'.

Samadhi (pl/skt) Concentration; fixing of the mind on a single object; control over the mind. The second of the three trainings by which the Noble Eightfold Path is practised. When cultivated as an end in itself, it leads to the attainment of the states of mental absorption, but not to total liberation of the mind.

Samsara (pl/skt) Cycle of rebirth; conditioned world; world of suffering. Also more precisely refers to the unbroken chain of the fivefold aggregate-combinations, which constantly change from moment to moment continuously, one upon the other through inconceivable periods of time.

Sangha (pl/skt) Literally, 'congregation'. The monastic order founded by the Buddha, the members of which are called Bhikkhus (males) or Bhikkhunis (females). Sangha is the third of the Three Jewels (Triple Gem) of Buddhism, i.e. the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

Sila (pl) Morality; abstaining from physical and vocal actions that cause harm to oneself and others. It is the foundation of the whole Buddhist practice and is the first of the three trainings by which the Noble Eightfold Path is practised. Buddhist morality does not consist in the mere not-committing of evil actions, but is in each instance the clearly conscious and intentional restraint from the bad actions in question and corresponds to the simultaneously arising volition. For a lay person, sila is practised in daily life by following the Five Precepts. Shila (skt)

Sravaka (skt) Literally, 'hearer'. One who has heard the Buddha's teaching. In Mahayana Buddhism, sravaka generally refers to a person in the Theravada school. Sravaka is also translated as 'disciple'.

Stupa (skt) A Buddhist monument, generally of a dome-shaped form, originally erected over sacred relics of the Buddha and at places consecrated as the scenes of his acts. In East Asia, the stupa developed into the tower-like pagoda, in which are enshrined various objects sacred to Buddhism.

Sutta (pl) Discourse of the Buddha or one of his leading disciples. In the early stages of Buddhist history, suttas were memorised, and only in later times were they written down. Sutra (skt)

Theravada (pl) Literally, 'teaching of the elders'. The teachings of the Buddha, in the form in which they have been preserved in the countries of south Asia (Burma, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia). Generally recognised as the oldest form of the teachings. Sometimes called Southern Buddhism or Pali Buddhism.

Therigatha (skt) A collection of verses attributed to 'senior' (theri) nuns of the same period. It forms part of the Khuddaka-Nikaya, which is part of the sutta-pitaka in the Tipitaka.

Tipitaka (pl) Literally, 'three baskets'. The three parts of the Tipitaka are the Vinaya Pitaka (Code of Ethics), Suttanta Pitaka (Discourses of the Buddha) and Abhidhamma Pitaka (Buddhist Philosophy). Tripitaka (skt)

Tonglen (tib) Tibetan for 'giving and taking' (or, sending and taking), and refers to a meditation practice found in Tibetan Buddhism where one visualises taking onto oneself the suffering of others, and giving one's own happiness and success to others.

Triple Gem (eng) The Three Jewels or Three Gems, which by all Buddhists are revered as the most venerable things, are the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Holy Sangha. Tiratana (pl)

Vajra (skt) means literally both "thunderbolt" and "diamond". It is a short metal weapon commonly used as a ritual tool or spiritual implement in Tibetan Buddhism. Also known as dorje (tib).

Vajrayana (skt) Tibetan Buddhism. Also called Tantric Buddhism and Lamaism. Found principally in Tibet, also now Mongolia, India and parts of China. It is hierarchical and presided over by the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama.

Vinaya (pl/skt) The body of ethical rules and disciplines for Buddhist monks and laypersons prescribed by the Buddha.

Vipaka (pl/skt) The fruition of kamma, the result of intentional actions.

*"I am the owner of my kamma .  
I inherit my kamma.  
I am born of my kamma.  
I am related to my kamma.  
I live supported by my kamma.  
Whatever kamma I create,  
Whether good or evil, that I shall inherit."*

*- The Buddha (Upajjhatthana Sutta)*

*"Intention, monks, is kamma I say.  
Having willed, one acts through  
Body, speech and mind"*

*- The Buddha (Nibbedhika Sutta)*



*Unibuds Annual Magazine 2008*