

SACCA

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF UNIBUDS



BUDDHISM -
THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES

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UNIBUDS

UNSW Buddhist Society

.....where a bud can bloom in full

President's Message

Dear friends in the Dhamma,

How are you? I hope you've had a good summer and that you're ready to face another year ahead with joy and confidence!

My name is Allen KHA and I'm very happy and grateful to have been elected as the 33rd President of UNIBUDS. Together with my fellow Executive Committee members, I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to the new members of our big UNIBUDS family! We will do our best to continue creating opportunities for true friendships to grow while rejoicing in the Dhamma through activities such as retreats, meditation workshops, weekly Dhamma talks, Potlucks and of course our annual spectacular - Bodhi Nite!

What makes UNIBUDS special is there are always good friends to support us and wise teachers to guide us, so let's make the best of our time here to plant the seeds of wisdom and peace within us, which will blossom throughout our lives. This edition of Sacca explores the Four Immeasurables, as we learn about these wholesome states of mind, we can use them to remind ourselves that every moment of our lives can be used to practice the Dhamma. As an example, as I am sitting here in the Departures Hall of Kuala Lumpur International Airport, there are plenty of people to radiate loving-kindness to, to wish them happiness, and it's something that we can give without limit!

The Four Immeasurables lead us to gain inner happiness and to create harmony in all our relationships and interactions with others. Like all the Buddha's teachings, they are only useful when we use them. :)

Thank you for your support and for giving UNIBUDS the warmth it has! I look forward to seeing you around and to developing useful tools together. :)

May you be well and happy, and may our inner lights shine forth for all beings.

With Metta,
Allen

Editor's Message

Dear Unibuddies,

How are you all? I hope you all are fully recharged to start a new year after a long Summer break.

I am Moe Pwint Oo, your new SACCA editor for 2013. I am delighted and grateful to be a part of UNIBUDS, producing its quarterly newsletters. First of all, I would like to thank Yi Wen Neoh, the last SACCA editor who helped me a great deal with this editon. I would also like to thank the writers, photographers, proofreaders and cover designer.

The topic of our Summer edition is about The Four Immeasurables - Love, Compassion, Sympathetic joy and Equanimity which are the foundations of what we want the most in life, no matter how old or young we are, happiness. Nowadays, we tend to measure our happiness with success and fame such as having a good paying job, a nice house, a luxury car even though these material things only give us superficial happiness. To make the most out of our brief lives, let's try our best to obtain true happiness from loving ourselves, others and our environment.

I hope after reading this SACCA, you gain more insight to The Four Immeasurables and are able to infuse them into your daily life. When we all do that, we can live a life we can be proud of and a life that has positive effect on everyone we encounter.

With Metta,
Moe

May you be well and happy.



OPENING THE DOOR OF YOUR HEART

By Ajahn Brahm

Several centuries ago, seven monks were in a cave in a jungle somewhere, meditating on unconditional love. There was the head monk, his brother and his best friend. The fourth was the head monk's enemy: they just could not get along. The fifth monk in the group was a very old monk, so advanced in years that he was expected to die at any time. The sixth monk was sick – so ill in fact that he too could die at any time. The last monk, the seventh, was the useless monk. He always snored when he was supposed to be meditating, he couldn't remember his chanting, and if he did he would chant off-key. He couldn't even keep his robes on properly but the others tolerated him and thanked him for teaching them patience.

One day a gang of bandits discovered the cave. It was so remote, so well hidden, that they wanted to take it over as their own base, so they decided to kill all the monks. The head monk, fortunately, was a very persuasive speaker. He managed to persuade the gang of bandits to let all the monks go, except one, who would be killed as a warning to the other monks not to let anyone know the location of the cave. That was the best the head monk could do. The head monk was left alone for a few minutes to make the awful decision of who should be sacrificed so that the others could go free. When I tell this story in public, I pause here to ask my audience, 'Well, who do you think the head monk chose?'

Some then suggest the enemy. 'No', I say.

'His brother?'

'Wrong'

The useless monk always gets a mention - how uncharitable we are! Once I have had my bit of fun, I reveal the answer: the head monk was unable to choose.

His love for his brother was exactly the same, no more and no less, than his love for his best friend – which was exactly the same as his love for his enemy, for the old monk, the sick monk, and even for the dear old useless monk. He had perfected the meaning of those words: the door of my heart will always open to you, whatever you do, whoever you are.

The door of the head monk's heart was wide open to all, with unconditional, non-discriminating, free-flowing love. And most poignantly, his love for others was equal to his love for himself. The door of his heart was open to himself as well. That's why he couldn't choose between himself and others.

Why is it that most in my audience thought the head monk would choose himself to die? Why is it, in our culture, that we are always sacrificing ourselves for others and this is held to be good? Why is it that we are more demanding, critical and punishing of ourselves than of anyone else? It is for one and the same reason: we have not yet learned how to love ourselves. If you find it difficult to say to another 'the door of my heart is open to you, whatever you do', then that difficulty is trifling compared with the difficulty you will face in saying to yourself, 'Me. The one I've been so close to for as long as I can remember. Myself. The door of my heart is open to me as well. All of me no matter what I have done. Come in.'

That's what I mean by loving ourselves: it is called forgiveness. It is stepping free from the prison of guilt; it is being at peace with oneself. And if you do find the courage to say those words to yourself, honestly, in the privacy of your inner world, then you will rise up, not down, to meet sublime love. One day, we all have to say to ourselves those words, or ones similar, with honesty, not playing games. When we do, it is as if a part of ourselves that had been rejected, living outside in the cold for so long, has now come home. We feel unified, whole, and free to be happy. Only when we love ourselves in such a way can we know what it means to really love another, no more and no less.

Please remember you do not have to be perfect, without fault, to give yourself such love. If you wait for perfection, it never arises. We must open the door of our heart to ourselves, *whatever we have done*. Once inside, then we are perfect.

People often ask me what happened to those seven monks when the head monk told the bandits that he was unable to choose. The story, as I heard many years ago, didn't say: it stopped where I have finished. But I know what happened next; I figured out what must have ensued. When the head monk explained to the bandits why he couldn't choose between himself and another, and describe the meaning of love and forgiveness, all the bandits were so impressed and inspired that not only did they let the monks live, but they became the monks themselves!

"Love is not liking somebody. Anyone can do that. Love is loving things that sometimes you don't like."

- Ajahn Brahm



Blossoming Flower

By Y. Phan

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion.

If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

- Dalai Lama

According to the Oxford dictionary the word 'compassion' defined as *having sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others*. Those who are compassionate or treat others with compassion we usually think right away are nice, kind, charitable, big hearted good people.

However, my Master always tells us that a compassionate person must be "Strong and Firm" with their actions. Well, what does "strong and firm" really mean? Repeatedly in the 'real world' as the good old saying reminds us; "It's a dog eat dog world out there". I for one disagree with this statement but in actual fact, if we just stand on the sideline and observe just for a little while- that good old saying we often hear is actually true!



What have our smart and intelligent people become of?

I often hear and I know you can relate with this as well, that there are individuals who maybe your friends, relatives, co-workers, acquaintances, peers... who are so darn nice, kind, sweet- you may even describe them as a very compassionate person. But why do they not notice their kind, nice characteristics are being exploited as personal gains/advantages by others? Is it really because "It's a dog eat dog world"? or they as well as we failed to understand how to set boundaries and grounds that will not harm us whilst maintaining a helping hand to others?

Truthfully, this 'strong and firm' topic was actually a lesson given by my Master upon realising that her Dharma class is made up of entirely girls and only one boy. The purpose of giving us this lecture, was to remind us- girls that when we help others, we help them with all our effort BUT at the back of our mind we should always remember to have strong confidence and be firm with our actions in order to set boundaries which will not let others take advantage of us in any way. This lesson should not be discriminated against gender, and I believe gentleman, you should learn from this lesson as well, as the situation could be vice versa also.

Back to our topic of compassion, compassion does not simply mean helping or lending a hand to others; compassion is made up of two important factors and to be honest I hear this every week at temple. These factors are; virtue and wisdom. In Vietnamese we refer to it as Lòng Tu Bi and Tri Tue.

In maths we would have it as: $\text{Virtue} + \text{Wisdom} = \text{Compassion}$

When helping others our virtue should not cloud our judgements, which causes us to discriminate on who to help first. Whether a person who has been swearing at us for hours or a person with a red-face that have never seen a patch of sunshine in their life, we should never debate with ourselves with helping only person A and not B, or C and not D because D has freckles. I always remind myself everyday that I should be grateful with everything that is available not only to me, my family, friends, but to everybody that share one Earth with us. So therefore, why should there be any discrimination when it comes to helping?

Wisdom on the other, allows us to realise and differentiate the nature of our help. In other words, it guides and wakes us up from our emotions. Emotions are a hindrance that prevents us from achieving the compassion of our Buddha nature. It is a factor that clouds our senses and unable us to see black and white but only the colour grey. Hence, if our bowl was to be filled with emotions, we wouldn't be able to eat anything! It is not that I'm against emotion, yes, emotions are important in our daily life as it enable us to express our feelings through our actions and expressions BUT as Buddhist children we need to understand that our emotions are also impermanent.

That is a lesson I'm quite fond of after hearing it from our Most Venerable at temple, it makes you all happy and bright inside. As you can see, the title of this piece of writing is 'Blossoming Flower' but I have never once mention anything about flowers or blossoming. Our Most Venerable gave a Dharma teaching one Sunday morning, and he had this beautifully planted flower on the table in front of him. He asked us, "Why is that we human have so many prejudices towards one another?" The Most Venerable then pointed to the flower and told us,

"We should all be like a flower, beautifully scented, pure and innocent"



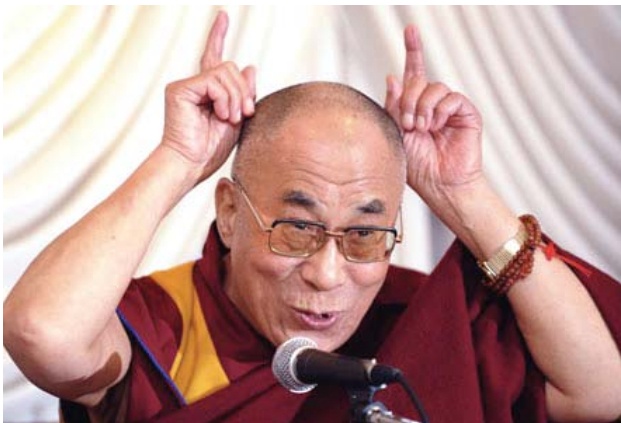
If we want to achieve compassion, let us all be like a flower- when you look at a flower does it not present itself bright and beautiful every day?
If the flower can do it, WE can do it as well!

I often wish others to have a shine day or leave shine as my signature for every messages I send to friends and family - just by doing this I hope it made them smile after seeing it, it's okay if I get called weird or child-like since I'm 20 years old and I'm pretty sure 20-year-olds don't do such childish behaviour. But to know that you actually made someone smile or be happy even just for a few second, then why not?



The small things that you do or leave behind makes others have a good day, and the people that you brought smiles to will transfer it on to others. It's a Win-Win! By doing so, we are able to spread that loving kindness and compassion and are we not the flowers then that are blossoming because we are giving out beautiful scents to others? That is why I believe that we are flowers who are blossoming every day, and each day that we blossom is our step closer to achieving wisdom and virtue on being a compassionate person just like the Bodhisattvas!

I will leave you by wishing a Shine! day, remember to always smile- don't frown!
And remember as the Dalai Lama would say, Be Happy!



The purpose in life
is to be happy.

- Dalai Lama

The Four Immeasurables

By Foh Fan Yong

Loving-kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy and Equanimity

Have you ever wondered why these are called (or translated as) Immeasurables? There may be many reasons behind it but I believe one of it would definitely be related to the values of these virtues. Back in Buddha's time, these were the qualities emphasised over and over again by the Buddha in his 45 years of spreading the Dhamma. All these virtues are said to be sublime because they are the ideal way of conduct not only towards mankind, but also towards all sentient beings.

Loving-kindness (Pali: Metta) is the first immeasurable. It is the wish that all sentient beings be happy. This attitude of loving-kindness is unconditional, or often called, unconditional love. It is a profound attitude that extends love to all beings, not only to those who are caught in the cycle of violence and horror, but also to those who have inflicted violence. Some may wonder why we have to share our love to those who have inflicted violence, this is because those who inflict violence are often those who lack of love. Same as what Buddha has taught us, rather than retaliation, non-violence is the most effective way to overcome violence.

Unfortunately, this understanding is lacking in our modern society. Other than that, it is also a practice of letting go of our attachments, which is the main cause of suffering. It is important to note that we simply want others to have happiness, without any expectations of what these people will do for us, or how good they will make us feel. If we are able to achieve this sublime state of mind, our world will be a peaceful and joyful place for all living beings.

Compassion (Pali: Karuna) is said to be the second immeasurable. Compassion is a wish for all sentient beings to be free from suffering, hoping everyone to be well and happy. With a compassionate heart, we are able to see the beings as they truly are. It removes the heavy bar and opens the door to freedom. A person who has a compassionate heart, would never try to harm others, or want to see someone suffer. For example, when parents see their child seriously ill, they will naturally be moved by compassion and wish their child to be free from sickness. The same applies to those who see their friends and relatives experiencing suffering.

However, in order to achieve the sublime state of mind, we should practise to extend our compassion to all sentient beings, not only to our loved ones but also to those whom we have never met before. It is in this state that we are truly able to be free from suffering and the root of suffering.

Sympathetic joy (Pali: Mudita) is the third immeasurable. It is a wholesome attitude of rejoicing in the happiness and virtue of all sentient beings. We share joy when someone has accomplished their goals, rather than being envious towards their achievements. Being envious will result in hatred which in turn, poisons our mind and causes us to commit harmful acts. This is the reason why the Buddha taught us to share the happiness of others as if it were ours. For example, when a friend has inherited great fortune, we should feel happy for them. We should not feel resentful or envious of what they have

got. Instead, feel joyful and wish that their riches increase even further, andnd hoping that all sentient beings may experience the same kind of good fortune as well. From another perspective, when we are successful, of course we would like others to share our happiness as well. Genuine Mudita is, like Metta, unconditional. We are not happy because we might benefit from someone else's good fortune, rather, we are just happy because we like others to be happy. This is the sublime state of mind.

Equanimity (Pali: Upekkha) is the last immeasurable. It is a perfect, unshakable balance of mind, rooted in insight. This virtue requires deep understanding of the Dhamma in order to be able to fully understand and to achieve spiritually through practice. The term itself means even-minded attitude towards everyone and every living being. There is no prejudice or preference or whatsoever in the mind of the person who has fully understood this. As human beings, we are often trapped in our own thoughts and feelings that when we perceive something, we tend to judge it impatiently. Just look into the modern society we are living in right now, we can notice that things continually move between contrasts; rise and fall, lose and gain, honour and blame, delight and despair, hope and fear. These waves of emotion carry us up and fling us down.

To love
is, first
of all, to
accept
ourselves
as we
are.



If we do not have an unshakable mind, we will allow our feelings to be carried away by these streams of emotion and we will never be able to be at ease with ourselves. In order to achieve this sublime state of mind, we should understand impermanence and let go of our strong attachments to loved one while at the same time, to be kind and generous towards everyone, even our enemies.

While these qualities may seem easy to understand in the intellect level, they are never easy to achieve in practice. In order to fully understand these, one should practise meditation. These virtues can be good focus points during meditation. Often, many practitioners would contemplate on these virtues and try to purify their mind as they practise it. The aim of the practice is to generate a sincere feeling of these qualities in our heart and to allow that to radiate outwards to all sentient beings. When we practise training the mind in these Four Immeasurables, we proceed gradually. First, we consider our own parents, then including our friends and relatives and finally extend it to strangers as well as our enemies. By doing this over and over again, we will come to feel the same love and compassion for our enemies as for our parents. This is the measure of our mind training.

Finally I would like to share this with all of you:

“For one who clings, motion exists; but for one who clings not, there is no motion. Where no motion is, there is stillness. Where stillness is, there is no craving. Where no craving is, there is neither coming nor going. Where no coming nor going is, there is neither arising nor passing away. Where neither arising nor passing away is, there is neither this world nor a world beyond, nor a state between. This, Verily, is the end of suffering.”

— Udana 8:3

*May we all be well, peaceful and happy.
May the light of the Buddha shine upon
everyone.*



THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES

By Bing Sen Koh

The 4 Immeasurables are also known as the *Brahma-vihara* in Pali. What is the meaning of *Brahma-vihara*? *Brahma* represents divine or god; *vihara* means abode, which is also interpreted as the sublime state of mind. Thus the term *Brahma-vihara* is translated as Brahma-like, god-like or divine abodes. In other words, they are the qualities of great beings. These 4 qualities include loving – kindness (*Metta*), compassion (*Karuna*), sympathetic joy (*Mudita*) and Equanimity (*Upekkha*). They are boundless as in their perfection because they extend to all being regardless of nationality, race, class, size, height ... Owing the unlimited range of beings that these qualities reached out, they are known as the 4 Immeasurables.

Loving Kindness (*Metta*)

Metta means unconditional loving kindness; a good will for every being to be well and happy.

The common method to develop this quality is known as *Metta bhavana* which mean *Metta* cultivation or *Metta* meditation. And I would like to highlight some of the benefits of having the quality of loving kindness. Hopefully it could inspire YOU to develop this great mind state.

Benefits:

- Sleeps easily



[Suggestion from me: To those who are having insomnia (even if you don't have insomnia), YOU can consider practicing *Metta* Meditation in the lying position UNTIL you sleep. In that case, you are killing two birds with one stone.]

- Wakes up easily
- Dreams no evil dreams
- One is dear to human beings
- One is dear to non-human beings, e.g. animals
- One's mind gains concentration quickly
- One's complexion is bright
- One dies unconfused

Application in life:

These are a few instances which I applied this qualities in my daily life. For example, frankly, I am quite reluctant to go to lab to perform experiment almost every day. This scenario is similar with the majority working people who are unwilling to go to work. After some time, I made up my mind. Instead of going to lab in such a miserable state, maybe I could divert the mind into a positive mood by wish others and me to be well and happy.

As I walk to the lab, I constantly practice *Metta* rather than thinking of the monotonous lab work. Slowly I manage to step out from the negative state of mind and carry out my work happily. Apart from that, I remember Allen Kha (President of UNIBUDS 2013) once told me, when he was taking care of the Bodhi Nite Marketing Stall, from time to time he will radiate *Metta*. Personally I am very supportive of his action. As mention above, practicing *Metta* will make someone dear to human being. This is because everyone would prefer to be with someone who smiles all the time instead of a person who always shows a sulky face. So remember to smile when YOU are at the UNIBUDS stall!!! In fact, there is a saying: “Smile is the cheapest yet priceless giving (dana).” So ALWAYS SMILE!!! You might brighten up someone life as well as your own life with a smile. Besides that, all 4 Immeasurables including *Metta* are the antidote to anger.

Compassion (Karuna)

Karuna could be explained as the quality of having the good intention to help others out of suffering. Actually every one of us possesses these 4 immeasurables, the differences between us is the extent of our cultivation. Everyone would feel sorry to hear someone’s misfortune and wanted to help. This is the quality of compassion. It would be better if YOU could put

this thought of helping others into action.

The Buddha once mentioned that there are 2 kinds of people who are difficult to find in this world. One of them are people who first to offers help. In other words, those who show compassion and help others are indeed difficult to find. (For your information, another type of people who is rare to find are those who show gratitude.)

Problem: It is quite common to hear something as such: “I have helped this person so much. At the end of the day, he/she treats me badly!!”

Answer: A Dhamma Talk speaker once said something as such: “If you say something as above, it means you are asking them to treat you good after you have helped them. In short, you are not helping sincerely as you are asking for them to repay you. We should help sincerely and do not attach to this action.”

In addition, in Buddhism, we always act with wisdom. As Venerable Neng Rong mention, when you help others, besides having a good intention make sure your action is beneficial to them too. Sometimes the more we help them, they tend to be more rely on us or become greedier. This is the time to be wise. For example, you can teach them to be independent by educating them.

Sympathetic Joy (Mudita)

Mudita is the qualities of rejoicing in others success. When you score well in your exam your parents are happy for you; your friends congratulate you. So, this is the quality of *Mudita*. In fact there are lots of examples of this quality. For instance, I recalled helping in a Buddhist event. At the end of the event, the Thai communities will wish us “Anumondana” which means “Rejoice together in the good merit that have cultivated”. Besides that, when someone did a good deed, the Buddhist community will say “Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu” which is translated as “Excellent, excellent, excellent”.

Application:

This quality is an antidote to jealousy. Sometimes in life we compare ourselves with others. When others are much better than us, we might felt unhappy or jealous. Some might even felt inferior which leads to low esteem. Actually all of these could be overcome when we change our mind set by rejoicing in others success.

These are a few methods that I used to change my mind. Sometimes when seeing my friends’ success, instead of being jealous, I look up to his/her success and aspire to improve myself and be successful too. Apart from that, sometimes we felt jealous because we just focus on their achievement instead of the effort they put in. Hence when understand the struggle and strive behind their attainment, our jealousy will eventually subside. And we will feel

happy for them as they have reaped what they have sowed.

Equanimity (Upekkha)

Upekkha is the quality where the mind is unshaken by the eight winds (gain, loss; fame, defame; praise, blame; pleasure, pain). Our mind is constantly trying to get more of what we like and trying to remove what we dislike. In short, it is constantly affected by the external environment. As happiness is something in within, external pleasure could never satisfy us as it is impermanence. For instance, we eat delicious food more than once and crave for more. This is because the great taste will never stay forever, it disappears as soon as the food leaves the tongue. For those who realise that the eight winds are impermanence and they will past, they will gradually reduce their craving for the liking, accepting the disliking. Ultimately if the truth of non-self is realised, the mind is unfazed by the eight winds.

Nevertheless, do not be mistaken the attitude of “can’t be bothered” as equanimity. The “can’t be bothered” attitude is based on self – centeredness. For example, I am happy with the clothing I am wearing because I am lazy to change it.

Lastly, ironically, do not believe in what I wrote. The Buddha advises us “Ehipassiko” which mean come and see it for yourself. Try to practice these qualities, if it helps in your life continue practicing it.

EQUANIMITY

Excerpt from
'Buddha's Brain'

By Rick Hanson, PH.D.
with Richard Mendius

The word equanimity comes from Latin roots meaning “even” and “mind.” With equanimity, what passes through your mind is held with spaciousness so you stay even-keeled and aren't thrown off balance. The ancient

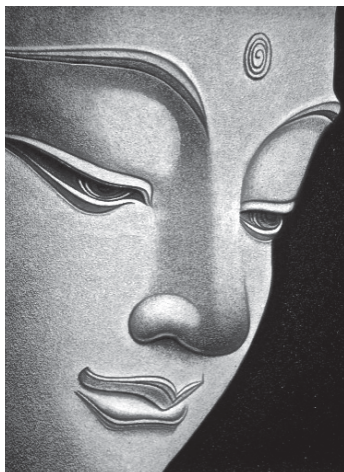
circuitry of the brain is continually driving you to react one way or another - and equanimity is your circuit breaker. It breaks the chain of suffering by separating the feeling tones of experience from the machinery of craving, neutralizing your reactions to those feeling tones.

Equanimity is neither apathy nor indifference: you are warmly engaged with the world but not troubled by it. Through its nonreactivity, it creates a great space for compassion, loving-kindness, and joy at the good fortune of others.

A Taste of Equanimity

If you like, take some time here to get a taste of equanimity. It will give you a feeling for the evenness, clarity, and peacefulness of this state of mind.

- ✦ Relax. Take a few minutes to steady your mind by focusing on the sensations of breathing in your belly or chest, or around your upper lip.
- ✦ Become increasingly mindful of the changing feeling tones — pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral — of your experience.
- ✦ Notice how pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feeling tones come and go. They're constantly changing, and not a dependable basis for happiness.
- ✦ Be aware of passing thoughts and feelings without identifying with them. No one needs to own them.
- ✦ In the pleasant, there is just the pleasant, with no reactions added. In the unpleasant, there is just the unpleasant, with no reactions added. In the neutral, there is just the neutral, with no reactions added. This is the mind of no preferences. Rest as awareness, free from reactions.
- ✦ Abide as equanimity. Breath after breath. At ease. Settle into deeper and deeper layers of equanimity. As you can, sense a sublime freedom, contentment and peace.



**“Equanimity
is a perfect,
unshakable
balance of
mind.”**

-
**Nyanaponika
Thera**

Understanding and Intention

With equanimity, you see into the transient and imperfect nature of experience, and your aim is to remain disenchanted — free of the spells cast by pleasure and pain. In this — rather Buddhist — sense of the word, disenchanted, you are not disappointed or dissatisfied with life; you simply see through its apparent charms and alarms and are not knocked off center by either. Understanding and intention are both grounded in the prefrontal cortex. The intention to remain equanimous relies in particular on the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) hub in the neuroaxis.

Great Steadiness of Mind

Equanimity also involves remaining aware of the passing stream without letting any bit of it hook you. This entails anterior cingulate oversight, especially in the beginning stages of equanimity. As equanimity deepens, meditators report an effortless continuity of mindfulness, which presumably correlates with reduced ACC activity and self-organizing stability in the neural substrates of awareness.

A Global Workspace of Consciousness

Another aspect of equanimity is an unusually expansive global workspace of consciousness (Baars 1997), the neural complement to the mental sense of great spaciousness surrounding the objects of awareness. This could be enabled by stable and far-reaching gamma-wave synchronization of billions of neurons across large areas of the brain, rhythmically firing together 30– 80 times a second. Interestingly, this atypical brainwave pattern is seen in Tibetan monks with a lot of meditation practice — and a lot of equanimity (Lutz et al. 2004).

Dampening the Stress-Response System

The limbic, HPAA, and sympathetic nervous systems react to each other in circular ways. For example, if something frightening occurs, your body will tend to become activated (e.g., increased heart rate, sweaty palms); those bodily changes will be interpreted by the limbic system as evidence of a threat, which will trigger more fear reactions in a vicious cycle. Through activating the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS), you prevent the stress-response system from reacting to its own reactions. This is one reason why the training for equanimity in contemplative settings involves considerable relaxation and tranquility.

The Fruits of Equanimity

Over time, equanimity deepens into a profound inner stillness that is a defining characteristic of contemplative absorption (Brahm 2006). If you can break the link between feeling tones and craving — if you can be with the pleasant without chasing after it, with the unpleasant without resisting it, and with the neutral without ignoring it — then you have cut the chain of suffering, at least for a time. And that is an incredible blessing and freedom.

THE FOUR ASPECTS OF LOVE

Excerpt from 'TEACHINGS ON LOVE'

By Thich Nhat Hanh

The Four Aspects of Love

The first aspect of true love is maitri, the intention and capacity to offer joy and happiness. To develop that capacity, we have to practice looking and listening deeply so that we know what to do and what not to do to make others happy. If you offer your beloved something she does not need, that is not maitri. You have to see her real situation or what you offer might bring her unhappiness.

Without understanding, your love is not true love. You must look deeply in order to see and understand the needs, aspirations, and suffering of the one you love. We all need love. Love brings us joy and well-being. It is as natural as the air. We are loved by the air; we need fresh air to be happy and well. We are loved by trees. We need trees to be healthy. In order to be

loved, we have to love, which means we have to understand. For our love to continue, we have to take the appropriate action or non-action to protect the air, the trees, and our beloved. Maitri can be translated as "love" or "loving kindness". Some Buddhist teachers prefer



"loving kindness," as they find the word "love" too dangerous. But I prefer the word "love." Words sometimes get sick and we have to heal them. We have been using the word "love" to mean appetite or desire, as in "I love hamburgers." We have to use language more carefully. "Love" is a beautiful word; we have to restore its meaning. The

word "maitri" has roots in the word mitra which means friend. In Buddhism, the primary meaning of love is friendship. We all have the seeds of love in us. We can develop this wonderful source of energy, nurturing the unconditional love that does not expect anything in return. When we understand someone deeply, even someone who has done us harm, we cannot resist loving him or her.

The second aspect of true love is karuna, the intention and capacity to relieve and transform suffering and lighten sorrows. Karuna is usually translated as "compassion," but that is not exactly correct. "Compassion" is composed of com ("together with") and passion ("to suffer"). But we do not need to suffer to remove suffering from another person.

Doctors, for instance, can relieve their patients' suffering without experiencing the same disease in themselves. If we suffer too much, we may be crushed and unable to help. Still, until we find a better word, let us use "compassion" to translate karuna.

To develop compassion in ourselves, we need to practice mindful breathing, deep listening, and deep looking. Compassion contains deep concern. You know the other person is suffering, so you sit close to her. You look and listen deeply to her to be able to touch her pain. You are in deep communication, deep communion with her, and that alone brings some relief.

One compassionate word, action or thought can reduce another person's suffering and bring him joy. One word can give comfort and confidence, destroy doubt, help someone avoid a mistake, reconcile a conflict, or open the door to

liberation. One action can save a person's life or help him take advantage of a rare opportunity. One thought can do the same, because thoughts always lead to words and actions. With compassion in our heart, every thought, word, and deed can bring about a miracle.

When I was a novice, I could not understand why, if the world is filled with suffering, the Buddha has such a beautiful smile. Why isn't he disturbed by all the suffering? Later I discovered that the Buddha has enough understanding, calm, and strength; that is why the suffering does not overwhelm him. He is able to smile to suffering because he knows how to take care of it and to help transform it. We need to be aware of the suffering, but retain our clarity, calmness, and strength so we can help transform the situation. The ocean of tears cannot drown us if karuna is there. That is why the Buddha's smile is possible.

The third element of true love is mudita, joy. **True love always brings joy to ourselves and to the one we love. If our love does not bring joy to both of us, it is not true love.**

Commentators explain that happiness relates to both body and mind, whereas joy relates primarily to mind. This example is often given: Someone traveling in the desert sees a stream of cool water and experiences joy. On drinking the water, he experiences happiness. Dittadhamma sukhavihari means "dwelling happily in the present moment." We don't rush to the future; we know that everything is here in the present moment. Many small things can bring us tremendous joy, such as the awareness that we have eyes in good condition. We just have to open our eyes and we can see the blue sky, the violet flowers, the children, the trees, and so many other kinds of forms and colors.

Dwelling in mindfulness, we can touch these wondrous and refreshing things, and our mind of joy arises naturally. Joy contains happiness and happiness contains joy. Some commentators have said that mudita means "sympathetic joy" or "altruistic joy," the happiness we feel when others are happy. But that is too limited. It discriminates between self and others. A deeper definition of mudita is a joy that is filled with peace and contentment. We rejoice when we see others happy, but we rejoice in our own well-being as well. How can we feel joy for another person when we do not feel joy for ourselves. Joy is for everyone.

The fourth element of true love is upekkha, which means equanimity, nonattachment, nondiscrimination, even-mindedness, or letting go. Upa means "over," and iksh means "to look." You climb the mountain to be able to look over the

whole upekkha situation, not bound by one side or the other. **If your love has attachment, discrimination, prejudice, or clinging in it, it is not true love.** People who do not understand Buddhism sometimes think upekkha means indifference, but true equanimity is neither cold nor indifferent. If you have more than one child, they are all your children. Upekkha does not mean that you don't love. You love in a way that all your children receive your love, without discrimination.

Upekkha has the mark called samatajnana, "the wisdom of equality," the ability to see everyone as equal, not discriminating between ourselves and others. In a conflict, even though we are deeply concerned, we remain impartial, able to love and to understand both sides. We shed all discrimination and prejudice, and remove all boundaries between ourselves and others. We have to put our ourselves "into the other person's

skin" and become one with him if we want to understand and truly love him. When that happens, there is no "self" and no "other."

Without upekkha, your love may become possessive. A summer breeze can be very refreshing; but if we try to put it in a tin can so we can have it entirely for ourselves, the breeze will die. Our beloved is the same. He is like a cloud, a breeze, a flower. If you imprison him in a tin can, he will die. Yet many people do just that. They rob their loved one of his liberty, until he can no longer be himself. They live to satisfy themselves and use their loved one to help them fulfill that. That is not loving; it is destroying. You say you love him, but if you do not understand his aspirations, his needs, his difficulties, he is in a prison called love. **True love allows you to preserve your freedom and the freedom of your beloved. That is upekkha.**



The thought manifests as the word;
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character.
So watch the thought and its ways
with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings.

- The Buddha



THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES?

By Den Neil Ooi

Some of you might be thinking: What is it? Immeasurable? And four of them? What does it include? Why is it immeasurable? Well, to fully cover this topic, it might take days and pages and pages of paragraphs. However, I will try to narrow it down and cover some of it.

First of all, for the benefit of those who don't know what The Four Immeasurables are, they are Loving-kindness, Compassion, Appreciative Joy and Equanimity. They are called Immeasurables because they can be directed to an immeasurable number of sentient beings, and because the wholesome kamma produced through practicing them is immeasurable (Buddhanet). Now that we know what they are and why they are called Immeasurables, we can look into each of the Immeasurables.

The first Immeasurable is Loving-kindness which means to wish all sentient beings to be happy. This is best shown among family members, where parents would always wish that their children will be happy, and no matter how bad or naughty their children are, they would still love them and wish them to be happy. It would be great if we could extend this wish towards others as well, such as those who are close to us, like our friends and teachers, or should I say lecturers and tutors in our case, and if we are able, to everyone in our university, our neighbourhood even those who are unkind to us. If we are able to do that, then we can say that we have practiced this to a certain level of "immeasurable".

The second Immeasurable is Compassion which is a wish for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. It normally arises when we see someone in suffering and we wish for them to be free from suffering. For example when we see someone in pain, such as when they are sick, we would wish for them to get well soon and be free from the "suffering" of being sick. This may also be shown towards pets, or animals, such as animal lovers who are compassionate towards animals and wish for the animals to be free from suffering.

The third Immeasurable is Appreciative Joy, which in short is the attitude of rejoicing in the happiness of all sentient beings. People who are easily jealous, or have a slight tendency to feel so, can try to practice this. Practicing appreciative joy can also make people be less self-centred, and this leads to making a lot of friends. For me this practice is the hardest as I always wonder why good things happen to others instead of me. It is really not easy to be happy for others when they got something that you want, or at least for my case, before I know about this. Now, I am getting better at being happy for others, it's not easy, but it is doable. So, let us all practice this and be happy for all.

The last Immeasurable is Equanimity. This is the attitude of viewing all beings as equals, irrespective of their present relationship to oneself. Equanimity is particularly good at countering clinging and aversion. For example, when a child grows up, and settles down with his own family, living in a different life and with new responsibilities, his mother would still have loving-kindness, compassion and appreciate joy towards him, but now all these three are combined with a new feeling of equanimity. She must understand and acknowledge that her son needs to be in this new position in life and does not cling to him. Extending this to the state of mind, we have to extend this feeling towards all living beings.

Understand that the relationship we have right now, with relatives, friends or even enemies are the result of previous kamma. By knowing this fact, we should be able to understand that clinging onto a particular relationship is useless as it may change again in the future.

So, this is my understanding of The Four Immeasurables, hopefully it may help you understand them better. I recommend everyone to try to practice this as it can remove ill will, cruelty, jealousy, clinging and aversion, as according to what the Buddha said. Whether this is true or not, you can try it out, and if it makes you a happier person, then keep practicing. I know that this is easier said than done, but if we never try, we will never find out. So, keep practicing and spread the good practice. Lastly, let me wish that all living beings be happy and peaceful.

THE HEALING POWER OF LOVE

Excerpt from 'Buddhist Boot Camp'

By Timber Hawkeye

If you think that love isn't enough, try going without it for a while and you'll see that it's everything. There is a love-shaped-hole in our lives, and no amount of money will ever fill it.

Friendships nurture our hearts with that love, just as trees nourish the earth with oxygen. Good friends, therefore, are like a rainforest of affection. Just as anyone would drown without air in their lungs, someone in depression is suffocating without love in their heart. You never know when a random act of kindness could literally save a person's life.



So make an effort to meet your neighbors, get to know your co-workers, and befriend your classmates. A stranger is simply a friend you haven't met yet. Never underestimate the healing power of love. It is just as important for our survival as the food we eat, yet it's free and available in unlimited supply.

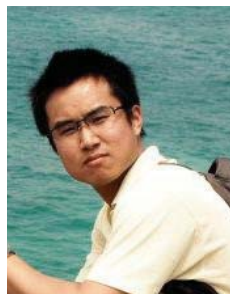
"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

33rd Executive Committee Opening Words 2013 - 2014

ALLEN KHA President

Hello everyone! Welcome to another year of friendship and learning at UNIBUDS! I'm very grateful for this opportunity to serve as the 33rd President of our very special society, and a big thank you to every one of you for your support. From the kindness and selfless efforts of our past and present members, UNIBUDS has become a place of warmth and wisdom, where we can always find something we can keep in our hearts no matter we take our lives. Come and join us in our life journey as blooming buds!



YI HUI WEE External Vice President

Hello Unibuddies! I'm Yi Hui, External Vice President of UNIBUDS. It's a fresh new year with exciting adventures and challenges! I hope everyone will be able to take on all challenges that come your way with a positive heart and mind. There's always something to learn for every little experience! Come along to UNIBUDS events to meet new friends, catch up with old chums and to share the joy of learning the Dhamma together! =D



WEIWEI FAM Internal Vice President

“Dear Buds of UNIBUDS,”

Yups, as the greeting indicates, I'm Weiwei, the culprit who has been (and will continue to be for the next few months) spamming your inboxes with weekly emails. In return, please feel free to bombard me with anything that you want; be it suggestions or complaints for UNIBUDS events, enquiries about our activities, a personal problem, a broken toenail etc. If you ever need a listening ear, you know who to contact =] Looking forward to learn the Dhamma with all of you!



KITIPHUME THAMMASIRAPHOP

Honorary Secretary

A big hello to all Unibuddies out there! I'm Kitiphume and I have the great opportunity of serving as Honorary Secretary for my first EXCO term. Being an 18 year old Medical Science student, I am the youngest member of this new and energetic team. I have to say that being in UNIBUDS has made my Uni life more exciting and I wish to share this with everyone. So with your help, I hope that we can make your Uni life more interesting and worthwhile through Dhamma. I'd like to thank all previous ExcOs and those affiliated with UNIBUDS who have paved and continue to pave a beautiful path for us all. Hope to meet you in our upcoming activities!



TRIYANA LIE

Honorary Treasurer

Hi Unibuddies, I am privileged to serve as the Honorary Treasurer for this 33rd term of UNIBUDS. Everyday is new, everyday is different and everyday we re-commit to create greater opportunities for people to discuss Buddhism, practice meditation and all the while having a great time and building a lasting life experience and friendship. Living in a permanently on-the-move world, we are often left with little time to sit back and reflect. No matter what UNIBUDS will always be the place where friends + wisdom + dhamma + fun are found. I am already looking forward to see you in our activities throughout this year!



BOON JIUN NG

General Secretary

Ello! I'm Boon Jiun the General Secretary for this term. My main task is to look after the UNIBUDS Library either by cataloging or just rearranging the library to make it look a little more comfortable. There're various hidden objects all around the UNIBUDS Library, if you dig deep enough you might be able to literally find a treasure chest with various Dhamma publications of different levels and teachings. So for those who are hungry for the teachings of Buddhism come to UNIBUDS Library and we can all learn Dhamma together. :D Other than that, I'll also be updating all the membership forms and stuffs like that. Oh yea, there's also FOOD! See those food hanging around every UNIBUDS event, well I'm in charge of that as well. :3 All the best and hope I'll see you in future activities!!



LI SEAH LIM

Activities Director

Hi all Unibuddies, I'm Li Seah Lim, the activities director. When I was 18, I kept asking myself what Buddhism is. I was not quite sure until I truly got into it in UNIBUDS. Buddhism encompasses the past, the present and the future. Also, it encircles everything from our daily life including sleeping, eating and etc. I'm very pleased to register myself into this perfect education of wisdom and understanding as the principles learnt are so much broader than the current modern universities. Despite the uncertainty which is to be discovered, let's learn, smile and shine together!



POP CHIRAKIJJA

Sports Director

Greetings to all fellow Unibuddies. My name is Thanawan Chirakijja but I usually go by Pop. I am very glad to be part of EXCO and taking the role of sports director in this 33rd term. I haven't been in UNIBUDS for very long so I'm hoping I could get to know you guys more in the coming year through the various UNIBUDS activities. If you have some time on Sunday morning, I'd like to invite you all to join us for UNIBUDS sports session. It really is a great way to meet and to catch up with other Unibuddies besides other great UNIBUDS activities. Details will be up on the weekly emails. And if you still have any questions please email me at chirakijja@gmail.com or just facebook me (Pop Chirakijja). I

would try my best to arrange sports sessions that suit the weather (very important) and the general preference (also very important). Let's come and play! Afterall, the more the merrier. See you there!



WIN SUM SIEW

Chinese Dhamma Talk Coordinator

Hello everyone! Here comes another new term and I am very happy as well as grateful to be the Chinese Dhamma Talk (CDT) Coordinator. In this great year, let us refresh and acquire new Dhamma knowledge by attending the weekly Chinese Dhamma Talk! We are deeply honoured to have Venerable Neng Rong as our speaker and her guidance would be highly beneficial to us :) So take the opportunity and I hope to see you there!



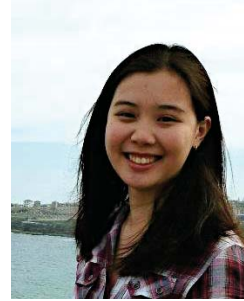
EMILY YAP

English Dhamma Talk Coordinator

Hello fellow UNIBUDDIES!

I'm back and ready for action as your new English Dhamma Talk (EDT) Coordinator! Thank you everyone for giving me this opportunity to be part of the EXCO again. As your EDT Coordinator, I'll be organising UNIBUDS weekly Dhamma Talks and inviting different speakers each week. So if you have any area of the Dhamma you're interested in and want to learn more about it, come and have a chat with me. Or if you're wondering what this 'Dhamma' (Buddha's Teachings) is about, come along and join us! Apart from that, I look forward to meeting you all every Friday!

P.S. It's on Fridays 7-9pm @ LAW163 =D



NEE SHUANG HENG

Meditation Coordinator

Hello everyone! My name is Nee Shuang Heng and I am UNIBUDS meditation coordinator for this year. Let me start by briefly introducing myself, I am a first year architect student and this is my first time being an EXCO. As my position suggests, I will be coordinating UNIBUDS' meditation workshops and everyone is welcome to join. UNIBUDS has certainly given us the opportunity to learn and practice meditation. As we develop our mindfulness and continue in our meditation practice, we will begin to feel peace within us and gain wisdom. So let us begin on this journey of self-discovery together!



MOE PWINT OO

SACCA Editor

Hi all! I am Moe and excited to be part of the EXCO! So far, it has been a valuable and fun experience! I am still learning about Buddhism and happy to walk this spiritual path with everyone in UNIBUDS to reach our destination of inner peace and true freedom.



YAN NI NG
Annual Magazine Editor



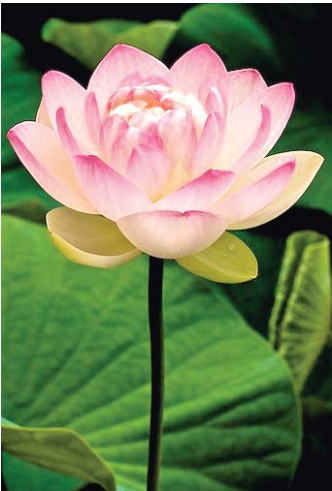
Hello Unibuddies! This is my third year as a Bachelor of Commerce student, my second term as an Exco and my first time as the Annual Magazine Editor. UNIBUDS is an ever-evolving society as the dynamics of its community are never the same each year. As the 2013 Annual Magazine Editor, I hope to be able to capture the essence of what it means to be part of UNIBUDS in year 2013 and present the magazine as some sort of a time capsule of the society. Thank you so much for joining (or rejoining) UNIBUDS and I hope you will have a great year ahead with us!"

CONTACT US



UNIBUDS
THE UNSW BUDDHIST SOCIETY

.....where a bud can bloom in full



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Squarehouse, University of New South
Wales, Kensington NSW 2052

Opening Hours: 12-2pm Mon-Fri

Email: unibuds@gmail.com

Website: www.unibuds.unsw.edu.au

Random Acts of Kindness

Little things can make a big difference.



USE LESS PAPER

You can be a responsible world citizen and protect nature by using less paper. When you can't avoid using paper, make sure you recycle it. Share what you know about paper recycling with your friends and family.

Here are some tips on how you can reduce paper waste:

- Only print things you really need.
- Don't waste paper you can do without.
- Use both sides of paper when writing or drawing.
- Use recycled paper.

VISIT AN ANIMAL SHELTER

Homeless or abandoned animals that live in shelters often have trouble coping because they are lonely. Even if you don't have the means to adopt a pet, you can still comfort an animal at a shelter, while relaxing and reviving yourself from the stress in your own life.

Add visiting your local animal shelter to your weekly to-do list. Volunteer to walk or play with dogs and cats, help cleaning cages and feeding the animals, or provide fundraising or administrative support.



THANK YOUR PARENTS

Have you ever said "Thank you" to your parents or another person who raised you for everything they have done? If not, it's time to do so.

Write a letter or a poem describing how their love and support has helped you become who you are.



Check out
Random Acts
of Kindness
foundation
for more
kindness
ideas.

[http://
www.random
actsofkindne](http://www.randomactsofkindne)

Eat Your Greens Cook of the Year's Recipes



**Seasoned
Vegetables
with
Bread**

Ingredients

- 1 Eggplant
- 1 Red Capsicum
- 1 Yellow Capsicum
- 1 Long Green Pepper
- 1 Medium Batard of Fresh Bread
- 30 mL Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 30 mL White Truffle Oil
- 20 mL Balsamic Vinegar
- 10 mL Lemon Juice
- 1 tsp. Cooking Oil



**Moroccan
Fried Rice**

Ingredients

- 3 cups of rice
- 100g Frozen Peas
- 50g Pine Nuts
- 50g Sultanas
- 50g Cashew Nuts
- For Moroccan Spicing -
- 1 teaspoons ground Nutmeg
- 1 teaspoons ground Cumin
- 1 teaspoons ground Coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon Cayenne Pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon Cinnamon



**Tomato
Salsa**

Ingredients

- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 -2 tablespoon cilantro
- Salt & pepper



**Disaster
Berry
Chocolate
Yogurt**

Ingredients

- Chocolate Sauce
- 1 box frozen blueberries
- 1 box frozen raspberries
- 1L Plain Greek Yoghurt
- 1 punnet Strawberries
- (And a Strong Stomach :D)

Directions

1. Deseed and cut the peppers into thin slices.
2. Heat up a frying pan with cooking oil in it, then pour out the oil into a small bowl.
3. Pour in the peppers to fry, and slice up the eggplant lengthwise into layers, then add to the frying vegetables.
4. Add a little more oil when necessary until the vegetables have softened and stated browning.
5. Pour out into a large bowl.
6. Mix the oils and balsamic vinegar in a separate container, then pour onto the cooked vegetables.
7. Toss thoroughly, then sprinkle some lemon juice on top for extra flavouring.
8. Cut the batard into diagonal slices, then toast lightly until the edges are crisp and lightly browned.
9. Serve with decoration as you see fit.

*Quick,
Easy*

Directions

1. Cook the rice in a rice cooker beforehand and let it dry out until the rice is slightly hard.
2. Mix all the spices together and set aside in a small container.
3. Blanche the frozen peas and drain in a sieve.
4. Lightly toast the pine nuts and cashew nuts in a large frying pan without oil. Add the peas and the rice together, making sure to keep stirring to mix under medium fire.
5. Add Moroccan spicing in small amounts while stirring thoroughly.
6. Stir until all the rice is golden, controlling the heat to prevent rice from sticking to pan.
7. Place the rice onto a plate and serve.

*Delicious
meal*

Directions

1. With a sharp knife, dice the tomatoes straight into a serving bowl.
2. Chop the chilli very finely and add it to the tomatoes.
3. Add onion, coriander and lime juice. Season with salt and freshly milled black pepper.
4. Mix everything thoroughly.
5. Cover and leave on one side for about an hour before serving.

*Fresh,
Healthy*

Directions

1. Defrost blueberries and raspberries.
2. Mix lightly with yoghurt in a large bowl.
3. Cut strawberries and place into the surface of the yoghurt.
4. Pour chocolate sauce until the surface of the yoghurt is covered.
5. Serve as is.

*Sweet,
Simple*



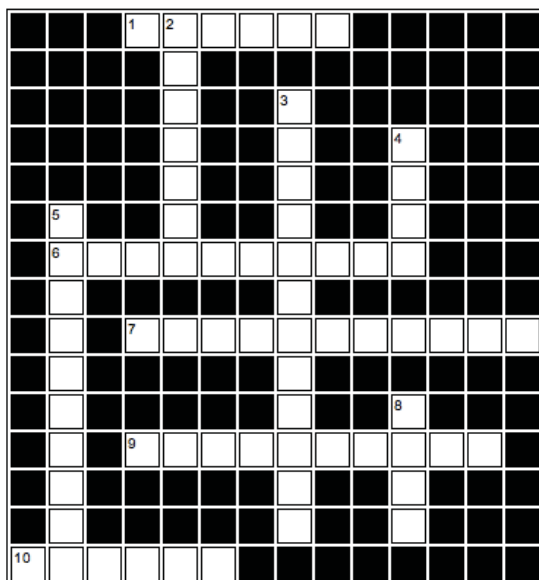
**Love is a deep empathy
with the other's "Beingness."**

**You recognize yourself,
your essence in the other.**

And so you can no longer inflict suffering on the other.

-Eckhart Tolle

The Four Immeasurables



Across

1. Pali word for altruistic joy in the happiness of others
6. Even-mindedness, nonattachment
7. Metta
9. Karuna
10. Pali word for feeling of empathy for those inflicted with suffering

Down

2. Pali word for equanimity
3. The four sublime states
4. Far enemy of mudita
5. Buddha's discourse on love
8. Near enemy of compassion

Answers on the next page.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

May you be safe,
May you be healthy,
May you be at peace,
May you be happy,
May you be free from
suffering.

DECEMBER

Jia Qian Chin
Nathaniel Jensen
Lillian Ong
Karl Li
Wei Chen Seah
Charlie Soo
Senk Siang Thung
Katrina Le
Alise Kha
Corry Mai
Li Ti Chang
Triyana Lee
Johnson Wong
Aaron Au-Duong

JANUARY

Van Tran
Danny Tran
Yonda Surianto
Felicia Sue Yin Lau
Sarah Kong
Ngoc Thai Duy Tran
Mark Jin Ming Tuen
Emily Jansen
Horlacher Martin James
Ivan Lukmantara
Ellie Chung
Winjing Lim
Meng Min Wong
Jian Eu Tai
Elsa Cheung

FEBRUARY

Henry Makgawinata
Wen Di Lim
Weng Sern Loh
Yi Wen Tee
Fiona Zhu
Nicholas Calhau
Francis So
Zhen Xun Chin
Yue Fan
Nivanka De Silva
Wei Wei Fam
Wei Yin Chen
Shiv Chawla
Fang Qi
Hiranya Samanga
Jayakody

1. Mudita 2. Upekka 3. Brahmavihara 4. Envy 5. Mettasutta 6. Equanimity 7.
Benevolence 8. Pity 9. Compassion 10. Karuna

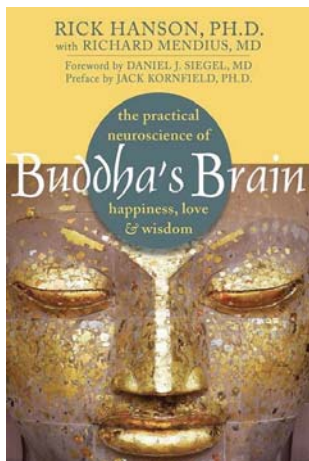
Corner of Our Hearts

Recommended Reads from UNIBUDS Library

Buddha's Brain: The practical neuroscience of happiness, love & wisdom

By Rick Hanson, PH.D. with Richard Mendius, MD

By Pop Chirakijja



Our brain has evolved over the millions of years to be the ultimate structure responsible for myriad functions that help us humans to survive the rough years of human history till today. In order to help human learn what we should do to survive, the limbic system in the midbrain associates them with emotions. Unfortunately, the brain has also been made to pay more attention to negative experiences, which lead to sufferings. The brain organises our negative experiences into memories that are so strong that they can be remembered vividly and create a strong unpleasant sensation whenever recalled or reoccur. The network of neurons connects memories to one another. Activating one memory leads to the activation of another, or many others. Sometimes, in reaction to a single passing stimulus of whichever

nature, we create our own sufferings by spicing up the series of reactions activated by the neural network with The Three Poisons of the Mind – greed, anger and delusion.

The way that the brain helps us to function may not be the path to awakening. Sometimes going against how it works, controlling and limiting what goes through our mind, or ignoring some of those ‘seasoned’ thoughts are needed to steady the mind and reach inner peace and well being. For instance, when stress is experienced, your sympathetic nervous system (SNS), usually active when dealing with stress, is triggered. Meanwhile causing disturbance to the brain chemical and activity equilibrium. By mindfully accentuate your parasympathetic nervous system (PNS), which counteracts the SNS, by relaxing, meditating or taking refuge in whatever gives you positive influences, you can ‘cool the fires’.



Check out Dr. Rick Hanson's seven-part video series—
The Compassionate Brain—that explores effective ways to
change your brain, heart and life.

<http://live.soundtrue.com/compassionatebrain>

Buddhism: The Wisdom of Compassion & Awakening

By Venerable Kun Ching

By Li Seah Lim

As the saying goes, remember the kindness of others and repay their kindness with gratitude. It is important for us to understand the true meaning of the terms Buddha, Dharma, Buddha Dharma and Buddhist teachings because they are vital for our spiritual cultivation. In essence, Buddha means wisdom and the function of wisdom is enlightenment. The Buddha teaches us the true meaning of the second immeasurable, which is the compassion. It is the unconditional care and concern for all living beings and the wishes of all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Nowadays, people tend to lose their original Buddha nature with discriminating, wandering thoughts and attachments, which are the root causes of all suffering and disaster. In other words, possessing great wisdom and enlightenment allows us to truly know all that exists and all that is infinite. Hence, we should all free ourselves from discriminating and wandering thoughts and attachments in order to regain our lost Buddhahood (our self-nature Buddha).

The Heart of the Buddha Amitabha Publication

By Boon Jiun Ng

Ever felt the need for some motivation to do something or just some wanting to read some inspiring quotes? Then, the Heart of a Buddha is a must read. It is a small book with a compilation of many Buddhism related quotes and published by Amitabha publication. It includes the teachings of Venerable Master Chin Kung, and Venerable Wuling who practices the Mahayana traditions.

This minuscule book consist of 95 pages of inspiring quotes which shows us some of the general teachings in Buddhism.

The book is of course for free distribution in our Unibuds Library so head down to our library and we'll be glad to hand one to you.



Hello Unibuddies!

I'm Boon Jiun, the General Secretary for this new term. For this semester, the opening hours for the UNIBUDS Library will be from **12 - 2 pm every weekdays.**

We're currently re-cataloging all previous and new books and we need all the help possible. Hence, I would sincerely ask for the help of any members who are willing to spare some of their time weekly to volunteer as a librarian. Don't be afraid to join us at the library, we won't bite! :)

If any of you are interested to help out, just contact me:

0450556529!

COOK OF THE YEAR

13.OCTOBER.2012

Photographer: Foh Fan Yong



COOK OF THE YEAR

Annual Vegeterian Food Competition

By Steven Lem

On a balmy October Friday night, I stood on a street corner, the borderline between the bustling lights of Kingsford shops, and the serene darkness of the residential area. This intermediate area was a unique vantage point, allowing for the viewing of the workers preparing for their shop to be closed before the next day, and the silhouettes of the neighbourhood homes in the darkness, while not being directly drawn in by either. Jack Shi was to pick us up for late night grocery shopping. I let ideas swirl in my head while observing the cars circle the roundabout.

‘Maybe we can have some barbecued vegetables with this rice dish you have been suggesting.’ A large figure next to me speaks up. Kendrick Lawer had met up with me at dinner in a local restaurant just one and a half hours ago, to discuss what we might be doing for the Cook of the Year event that next day.

We had been grouped into teams in advance, but in true collegiate style, I had been left to the last minute to gather our team members, and even plan what to cook. When Jack picked us up for grocery shopping a few minutes later, we had only come up with a vague idea for two dishes based around a single main one.

The Cook of the Year contest is an event intended to educate people in some of the teachings of Buddhism, as well as to show how it can be related and applied to everyday situations such as a simple meal. Teams chosen beforehand are asked to choose a topic on Buddhism, and create a few dishes which reflect their choice. Then they give a short presentation explaining why before the judges and audience taste (or completely consume) the candidate dishes.

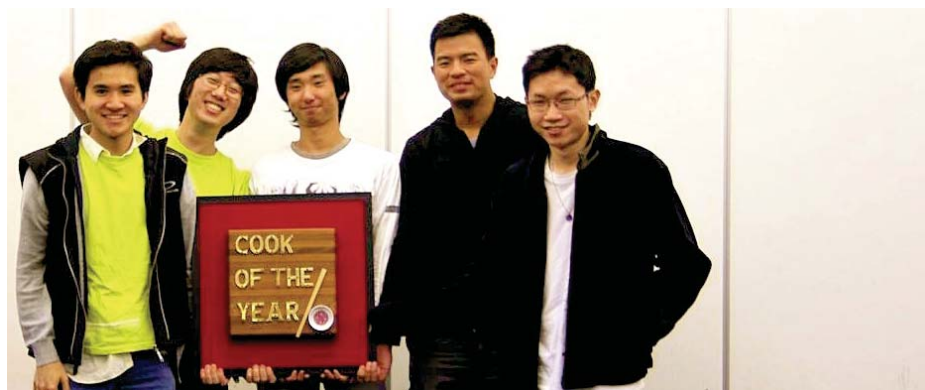
It was seven on a Saturday morning when a group of 5 bleary-eyed, hurriedly-dressed young adults met in the living room of my apartment, a ten minute drive from The Lodge, where the competition was to be held later that day. After a quick pep talk on what to do and how to use the utensils, we set to work. Jack Shi cut the vegetables, Kendrick Lawer monitored the gas stove which we were barbecuing on top of, Keh Huat Lim prepared fruits and berries for the last dish, and Dean Zhao stood over the frying pan cooking the vegetables that had been cut. The excitement of last minute preparation filled the air as the time to head to the university approached, helped by a busy multimedia group of four arriving to film the chaos.

We were the second of three groups to arrive at the Lodge. There were “Sukha” led by Vi Vian Chin, “Cycle of Life” led by Bing Sen Koh, and our group: “The Asuras”. Ours was chosen to match to richly coloured and vibrantly flavoured dishes that we were preparing, knowing that the race of demigods in Buddhist teaching were controlled by their emotions and had forceful personalities. The other groups were named and themed in great variety and intuitiveness, and the food they cooked reflected this range spectacularly. From white porridge to red and green peppers seasoned with truffle oil, the food cooked was ‘well appreciated’ once each team had a chance to tell the audience of the Dhamma behind their creations.

After all the stomachs in the room had been filled, and there were satisfied sighs from many corners of the room, the three judges convened to the UNIBUDS Library to make their decision. A tense few minutes later, and they returned with their decision: the Asuras had won! (by a grain of rice)

Multiple joyous moments later, and the excitement was gone as fast as it came. Everyone packed up, said their goodbyes, and continued with their lives (probably in a local restaurant for afternoon tea). I went home, cleaned up the kitchen with the help of my team, and proceeded to enjoy the rest of my weekend.

Even though the physical event seemed so temporary, so surreal, the memory of our brief time together is permanent; the teachings introduced were better understood; and the significance of our participation in the Cook of the Year contest is solid. I hope everyone enjoyed the food as much as I did, and I look forward to what next year holds.



SUMMER RETREAT 2012

By Triyana Lie

In November 2012 UNIBUDS hosted a three-day retreat entitled 'Reaching Equanimity'. It was held at Hwa Tsang Monastery with the guidance of our Buddhist Chaplain Venerable Neng Rong. A total of 16 participants from varying backgrounds with different areas of expertise and experience joined the event.

Summer Retreat is usually held with different theme each year. What stays the same is the view and objective, to offer an opportunity for people to explore the teaching and practice of the Buddha which are relevant to ones everyday life and to allow people to dive in to meditation and retreat lifestyle.

The first day already started with the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness is about observing what your mind is up to from moment to moment and learning how to nurture some calmness. We developed the being mode of mind, rather than the doing mode of mind. Venerable Neng Rong always reminded us of the importance to practice noble silent throughout the retreat. She guided the participants in becoming fully present by grounding their awareness in every of their thought, speech and action.

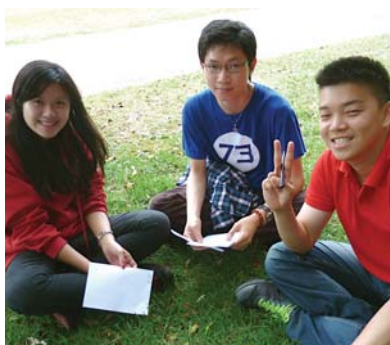
Next morning, following an early chanting, meditation and silent breakfast, Venerable Neng Rong gave a vivid talk about cultivating equanimity. Equanimity is one of the four qualities of mind of heart known as 'the four immeasurables'. Equanimity is essentially a balance of mind, not swayed by exposure to emotions or painful phenomenas. Emphasis was placed on the understanding that equanimity does not stop us from doing what is necessary or responding to what is in front of us right now, on the other hand, it allows us to look over and see the larger perspective that helps us to 'let go' in order to attain balance. Practically, this quality of mind give us the ability to do the very best we can, without attachment to the outcome.

The retreat came to an end with a final Dhamma discussion and 'Bodhi Leaf' session. Participants emerged from their silent contemplations for a period of open-hearted sharing and deep listening. They summed up their experiences of the retreat and shared best wishes to each other through some words written on Bodhi Leaf which they took one home for memories. The lasting and most important element of the retreat was the fact that participants have deepened and expanded their Dhamma knowledge and practice. The learning experiences during the retreat would ultimately be nourishment and aspiration into their real life scenarios.

SUMMER RETREAT

23 - 25.NOVEMBER.2012

Hwa Tsang Monestry





METTA BHAVANA

DEVELOPING LOVING-KINDNESS

<http://info.med.yale.edu/psych/3s/metta.html>

Metta Meditation

The Pali word '*Metta*' is commonly translated in English as 'loving-kindness.' *Metta* signifies friendship and non-violence as well as "a strong wish for the happiness of others." Though it refers to many seemingly disparate ideas, *Metta* is in fact a very specific form of love -- a caring for another independent of all self-interest -- and thus is likened to one's love for one's child or parent. Understandably, this energy is often difficult to describe with words; however, in the practice of *Metta* meditation, one recites specific words and phrases in order to evoke this "boundless warm-hearted feeling." The strength of this feeling is not limited to or by family, religion, or social class. Indeed, *Metta* is a tool that permits one's generosity and kindness to be applied to all beings and, as a consequence, one finds true happiness in another person's happiness, no matter who the individual is.

The Practice

The hard work and repetition required of an individual engaged in *Metta* practice endows the four universal wishes (to live happily and to be free from hostility, affliction, and distress), with a very personal inner love, and by so doing, it has the power for personal transformation. Although serious



practitioners of *Metta* meditation offer *Metta* for an hour or more morning and evening, you may wish to begin by offering *Metta* for just 10-15 minutes each day. You may do your practice as a formal sitting meditation or while walking (preferably without destination). You may also choose to integrate your *Metta* practice with daily chores.

To begin, take a few moments to quiet your mind and focus your attention on the experience of loving kindness. You will begin by offering *Metta* to yourself. If distracting thoughts arise, acknowledge them, make a mental note to return to them after your *Metta* practice, but quickly move them aside to maintain concentration.

Recite the following phrases to yourself at a pace that keeps you focused and alert.

- May I be safe and protected.
- May I be peaceful and happy.
- May I be healthy and strong.
- May I have ease of well being (and accept all the conditions of the world).

Continue reciting the phrases in the first person. Then when you are comfortable, try offering *Metta* to a beneficiary, someone who supports you, who has always "been on your side." Forming visualizations of this person while reciting the phrases can be helpful; for example, imagining this beneficiary as a child or grandparent, can assist in 'opening the heart.'

- May s/he be safe and protected.
- May s/he be peaceful and happy.
- May s/he be healthy and strong.
- May s/he have ease of well being (and accept all the conditions of the world).

Next offer *Metta* to a loved one.

Once your *Metta* flows easily to a loved one, begin to include in your practice one or more of the following categories of persons to whom you will offer *Metta*:

- A neutral person (someone you neither like nor dislike)
- A person you dislike
- All beings (choose whichever word to describe all 'beings' that you please; it may be helpful to break up this category into subcategories; i.e., all men, and then all women). Although one traditionally starts by offering *Metta* for 'oneself' and ends by offering *Metta* to 'all beings,' please do not expect to be able

immediately to offer these phrases to all beings from the onset of your practice. We all struggle to offer this unconditional love to many people in our lives, and it is truly difficult to include everyone, though this aspiration is reasonable if we are committed to *Metta* practice. Between these two 'categories' -- oneself and all beings -- one should choose freely from any category or any number of categories. Categorical divisions serve only as tools to keep *Metta* from overwhelming someone new to the practice. They should not create restrictions within the practice once one gains familiarity with it.

In truth, any one individual may fit into a number of different categories. This ambiguity should be expected and embraced. Awareness of our feelings toward another is always the first step in converting this energy into loving-kindness. Noticing a feeling of aversion, or indecisiveness, when evoking the image of a particular person in your practice does not mean you are failing to offer *Metta*. Rather, you are leaping forward in your practice. According to Buddhist teachings, the worst plague a human being can suffer is one that s/he cannot identify, or does not even know exists. Similarly, aversions (and cravings) that lie below the level of conscious awareness fuel habit patterns of the mind that inevitably lead to suffering. So, as you peel away the layers of self, allow any negative emotions to arise, so that you can actively replace them with *Metta*.

UPCOMING EVENTS & BUDDHIST HOLIDAYS

Mark your calendars!

MARCH						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

9/3 - Orientation Picnic

23/3 - Potluck 1

3/4 - One day Meditation
Retreat

13/4 - Meditation Workshop

14/4- Songkran

25/4 - Theravada New Year*

27/4 - Potluck 2

APRIL						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



*In some Theravada countries, new year is celebrated for three days from the first full moon day in April. In Mahayana countries, new year starts on the first full moon day in January. However, the Buddhist New Year depends on the country of origin or ethnic background of the people. For example, Chinese, Koreans and Vietnamese celebrate in late January or early February according to the lunar calendar, whilst the Tibetans usually celebrate about one month later.

Thank you to each and one of you. Without your kind help and support, this edition of SACCA would not be possible.

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If you would like to contribute articles, photos or recipes for upcoming SACCA, please contact me at unibudssacca@gmail.com.

-Moe

SACCA

夏 十月 2012 - 二月 2013

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF UNIBUDS



四無量心 - 慈,悲,喜,舍

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若遇上了逆境，你可以和它作朋友吗？

By Vi Vian Chin

光阴荏苒，转眼间三年的大学生活就这样结束了。感恩自己能够顺利毕业，也心想毕业后的生活就是为下一步做打算。于是自己就定下目标，势必要在三个月内找到一份会计的工作。但日子过了，事情的发展未必像自己所想象的。寄出十份履历表却得不到一个预期的回应，被拒绝的心情自然不好受。心里难免会感到失望和



沮丧，甚至还开始质疑自己的能力，也减弱了自信心。失业的日子让我觉得很迷茫，空虚，心情更是郁闷烦躁。达不到自己设下的目标而容易对自己生气。因为心情不好，所以对身边的人态度欠佳。发过脾气内心却很纳闷也很愧疚。这种日子过上了一段时间，让我不禁深思，我到底怎么了？

我发觉自己忘了用友善的态度来对待眼前的逆境。我对自己失望，也许是因为对于自己的行为 and 找工作的效率有所预期。当事情和自己所期望的不吻合时，就会责备自己。其实，我不过是执著于自己的预期，也错误地用了情绪来反应这境况，而为自己和身边的人带来困扰。

的确如此。反观现代生活，人容易陷入忙，盲，茫的状态，亦会遇到不同的逆境和顺境。常常觉得快乐的时光过得特别快，很想挽留；当身边发生不如意的事情却觉得度日如年，感觉厌烦，迫不及待地想要挣脱它。我们就这样把自己的情绪和周遭环境紧紧牵系，总觉得自己开不开心，难不难过，失不失望，生不生气，都是因为环境的改变而造成。

岂不是吗？工作完毕回家路上遇到了堵车，我们觉得厌烦；想要的东西被别人抢先一步夺走了，我们生气；一早醒来发现妈妈买的早餐不是自己想吃的，我们发脾气；参与朋友的开心聚会后回家一个人的时候却莫名感觉失落空洞；得到了自己心爱的东西却又害怕会失去而感觉忧虑，压抑等等。这些顺境逆境，我们都习惯轻易地用情绪去反应这些外来环境的改变。

如果尝试细心地去察觉这些情绪，观察它们的因由，我们会发现情绪背后的主因并不是这些我们十分抗拒或喜欢的周遭环境，却是源于执著，方成障碍。我们把‘自我’看得很重，并执著于自己的预期，而忘了怎么去跟外境交朋友。当我们习惯了用情绪去反应事物，就会误以为自己的情绪也只能这样被环境拖着走。在反应的当时，自己被情绪影响而无法灵活地思考，对于处理事情不但没有帮助，反而还为自己带来不必要的负担而于事无补。

如何正确地面对逆境顺境？

没错！就是学习放下自我，放下对预期的执著，这也就是所谓的捨心。这是一种对于生活中无论是外境或内境一切变迁的一种镇定泰然的自在。提醒自己对生活中的得失起落要保持捨心，学习把导致苦乐的原因看清，觉知自己预期的存在。慢慢地，就会发现自己进步，哪怕只是一点点。若心能处于一种平等的状态，就不会再逃避或抗拒那些不想面对的逆境或变迁，亦不会再刻意抓紧不放那些感受过的快乐喜悦。

不管生活多紧凑忙碌，不管时代如何进步，也请不要忘了停下脚步关照自心。努力修习禅修，培养捨心，你会发现生活可以变得很自在，事情也能更好地被处理。同学们，让我们一起在学习佛法的道路上努力吧！

四無量心

By Ian Ch'ng



四无量心（也称为四梵住-brahmavihara），既是：

慈(metta)-予乐，既是给予快乐

悲 (karuna)-拔苦，既是救拔众生的痛苦

喜 (mudita)-看着别人离苦得乐，自己能生起一种欢喜心，能够同喜之心

舍 (upekkha)-舍掉分别、执著的心。断除我见、我执、在顺境和逆境都能保持一种平等心，慈爱心才能广大无边。

四无量心，是佛陀告诫弟子以慈、悲、喜、舍来修行，而它们都是无量无边，不拘于任何对象的，所以才名为“无量心”。

四无量心也被称为四梵住，是因为只要保持这四种心，即能与大梵天（印度教的创造神）同住。梵住之所以称为“住”，也是因为这四种心应该成为心所停留的居所，一个感觉像在“家”的地方，而不是像个客人偶尔短暂拜访的地方。正如《慈经》所描述：行住坐與臥，無有疲倦時，善安住此念，此即謂梵住。

这是一种正念的修行，也是很值得我们学习的一点。在我们忙碌的日常生活中，我们有多少时间是保持着正念观照自己内心？有多少时间我们的心与善心相应？有多少时间我们的心是与烦恼、贪、嗔恚、愚痴相应？常常多问自己这几个问题，是启发智慧很重要的一步。

曾有信基督教的朋友问我：我们基督教的爱是广大无边的，就如神对我们的爱是那么深而远。你们佛教的爱又是如何？佛教的爱，就是四无量心，既然是无量，就不会因为对象和情况的不同而有所改变。就好像阳光，从来不会选择它要照耀的众生。就如佛陀的慈爱，从来不会因为一个人相信或是不相信他而有所不同。所以佛陀不可能会有“信我者永生，不信我者永火”这种强烈排他性的观念。

佛教的殊胜处，是它是一个慈悲与智慧并重的宗教。它不单单是一个注重信仰和劝导我们行善的宗教，而且还要我们对自身乃至这个世界有非常深刻的认识。然后再以此为基础，做着自利利他的事业。这种对于自身，和世界的认知，就称之为“智慧”。

那怎么样的认知才能被称为智慧？佛教的缘起中道，让我们认识了这个因缘和合的世间。因为是缘起的，所以它是苦、无常、和无我的。所谓的慈悲，正是对这无常世间和苦的认知为基础，然后对于众生起怜悯心、大悲心，乃至誓度一切众生。这四无量心也可以当成修禅定的一种方法，在观想中将四无量心扩展至一切众生，它不只能将心调柔，也能修福修慧。除了禅修之外，这种想要度一切众生的心，就是大乘佛教的菩提心，也是行菩萨道最基本的发心。

相信读者们已经可以发现，四无量心并不只是“爱”那么简单。它的内容不只是一种无尽的爱和无尽的行善。它同时也对治贪、嗔、痴三毒，以及断除烦恼和我执的重要法门。如果要对你深爱的、亲近的人慈悲，是很容易的。试想想，倘若要对我们的敌人、讨厌的人、或是不认识的人也有一种平等的爱，和爱自己一样爱，我们的我执自然没有容身之处。而没有了的我执，贪嗔痴烦恼就无从生起。说易行难，但无论终点再远，我们还是得一步一步脚踏实地向前行。我常常在想，要是人们多修习四无量心，人们不再有你和我、人与人、政党与政党、国家和国家之间的斗争，这世界会是多么好的一个地方啊！因为四无量心是超越这一切一切的。

以上对于四无量心的解释，相当粗浅，只能将四无量心的大意给带过。笔者建议读者们深入研究四无量心，然后依照自己的正念将它落实在日常生活中。毕竟一个只是无法运用在生活中的知识，无法帮助我们成为更好的人，充其量也不过是死知识，与智慧无关，更与修行无关。

慈悲喜舍

By Wesley Neoh

慈悲喜舍四无量心，即慈无量心、悲无量心、喜无量心和舍无量心，无量即是无限量的意思。不但是汉传佛教的重要教义，在南传、藏传佛教中也非常重视。如南传的《阿毗达摩》第九章就有专门的介绍；在藏传的很多经典开头就是四无量心，如《文殊菩萨五字真言》开头即是：愿诸众生永具安乐及安乐因，这是慈；愿诸众生永离众苦及众苦因，这是悲；愿诸众生永具无苦之乐，我心愉悦，这是喜；于诸众生远离贪嗔痴，心住平等舍，这是舍。



慈，是希望一切众生幸福快乐。主动去关爱或怜悯所有的人乃至一切生物，使他们获得快乐。即使与我们完全无缘的人也不例外。佛门有偈云：“无缘大慈，同体大悲”。这是一种至高无上的发自内心的情怀，与世间的爱不同，完全超越世间的一切烦恼。在实际生活中如何行慈呢？遇见有人几天没吃饭，给他饭吃是慈；遇见老人过街怕被车撞，牵他们过街是慈；在公共汽车上给老弱病残让座是慈。祇要我们在日常生活中时时帮助别人，爱护小动物、花草树木都是行慈。行慈会使别人得安乐，但那祇是一时的安乐，是不长久的。要劝他们种安乐因，才永远得安乐。如劝他们放生、印经、护持三宝等，他们自己行慈种了安乐因，便会永远安乐。如〈结斋偈〉云：“所谓布施者，必获其利益，若为乐故施，后必得安乐。”慈对修行大有益处，有助于去除嗔心。

悲，是在看到他人遭受痛苦时心生不忍，希望拔除他们的痛苦，是与冷酷的行为相反的。我们人类及其它众生每天都在受各种痛苦，如生、老、病、死等四苦，乃至八苦、无量诸苦。三恶道的苦更是多得不可说。看见动物将被杀，我随缘买下来放生是悲；有人生病无人照顾，我们主动去照顾是悲；看见众生被杀又不能救，我们念佛或往生咒助其往生净土是悲。总之，帮助众生离苦得乐都是行悲。但所行这些悲祇能使他们暂时离苦，若要他们永远离苦，那才是真正的悲，智慧的悲。要给他们开示佛法道理，让他们去恶近善，多种善因，使他们永绝轮回，也就永离众苦因了。

喜，是欢喜、随喜、恭敬、赞叹，就是随喜他人的成就与福德，是恭喜别人，可以帮助我们去除对他人的嫉妒与不满。看见别人做善事，我们随喜赞叹；不但使做善事的人心生欢喜，自己也获随喜功德的利益。看见有人学习佛法，要随喜恭敬。学佛将来必定成佛，可以脱离轮回，免除生老病死苦，这是人生一件最大的要事，最应该赞叹随喜。我们看到任何人得到快乐，要时时随喜，保持一种愉悦的心情。

舍，是没有执着、没有厌恶而平等地对待他人及任何事情的心境，平等的态度是其特相，可以帮助我们去除偏爱和执着的功德心。我们对一切人、事、物不起一点儿憎爱执着。做了好事不记在心里是舍；做了不如法的事，忏悔以后不再放在心里是舍；布施时不执着功德，三轮体空是舍；把慈悲喜舍的功德通通舍掉、回向，不执着，那才是真舍。对众生没有贪嗔痴的心，平等对待，那就是于诸众生远离贪嗔痴，心住平等舍。

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悉发慈悲心

By 达真堪布



慈悲心是菩提心的基础，慈悲心是菩提心的根本。很多人修了那么多年，佛也念了，咒也持了，经也诵了，也打坐了，自认为是老居士，老修行了。可是一遇到对境现前的时候，个性依然是那么强，脾气依然是那么坏，分别心依然是那么重；自己的性格，对众生的态度依然如同水中的石头，无论泡了多少年，拿出来还是那么生冷、强硬。这都是慈悲心没有修好的缘故。在修行过程中，慈悲心被很多人经常提起，甚至被很多人经常挂在嘴上，可是真正修持慈悲心的人却非

常少，具有无伪慈悲心的人更是少得可怜！没有慈悲心做基础就没有菩提心，没有菩提心无论修大圆满、大手印、大中观，都是世间法，都不可能解脱！没有慈悲心，修行就如同是建在沙滩上的大厦，一点点的风浪就会在瞬间令大厦倒塌；就如同建空中楼阁，无论设计有多完美、多壮观，没有地基的建筑物是不可能建成的。

以前的无著菩萨进山闭关，非常热切地想见到弥勒菩萨，可是经过了十二年的苦修，他连一个好梦都没有做过，就在他完全绝望，第三次决定永远地离开闭关房后，见到了一只下半身腐烂又长满蛆虫的狗。他的心中顿时生起了无比的慈悲心！他从自己身上割下一块肉给那只狗吃，他想用手把狗身上的蛆虫抓掉，却怕伤害它们，决定用舌头去舔。就在这时，那只狗不见了，同样的地方却出现了四周带着光轮的弥勒菩萨！无著菩萨的故事告诉我们：十二年的修行慢慢融化了他的业障，让他看到了那只狗，但是真诚感人的慈悲心却令一切业障完全去除了！慈悲的力量广大无边，顷刻之间就会清净并转化修行者的业障；慈悲的力量广大无边，顷刻之间就会打开修行者紧闭多年、狭隘、黑暗的胸怀！

所以真正想解脱、想成佛，必须首先要发慈悲心！

一个只有慈悲心而没有勇气的人就象一位失去双臂的母亲，在见到自己心爱的孩子落水、挣扎求救时，她恐惧因为没有双臂、自认为无法解救孩子，所以只能站在岸边无可奈何、默默流泪。而既有慈悲心又有勇气的人就象一位父亲，听说自己的儿子负伤了，他冒着生命危险、不顾枪林弹雨勇敢地只身冲向战场，真的救回了自己的孩子。无臂母亲的悲心确实令人感动，但是那位父亲所发出的勇敢无畏的慈悲心才是大乘修行者所应该具有的。

那么什么是慈悲心呢？发自内心地想拔除一切众生的痛苦，是悲心；发自内心地想给予一切众生安乐，是慈心。

有的人说，我也想发慈悲心，但发不出来。想发就发，当然发不出来，慈悲心不是想发就能发出来的，而是通过正确的方法修出来的。有的人只在几分钟、几小时、几天发慈悲心，很多时候却根本想不起来；有的人对穷人发慈悲心，对富人却不发慈悲心；有的人对傍生发慈悲心，对人却不发慈悲心；有的人对残疾人、有病苦的人、乞丐发慈悲心，对健康人、正常人却不发慈悲心；有的人对素不相识的人发慈悲心，对家人却不发慈悲心；还有些人对亲近的人发慈悲心，对伤害自己的人却不发慈悲心……

发慈悲心不是去菜市场买菜，去超市买东西，可以挑一挑、选一选，那个好挑哪个，哪个顺眼、哪个自己需要选哪个。慈悲众生不应该有选择，想慈悲谁就慈悲谁、不愿意慈悲谁就不慈悲谁。哪有这样的修行人？哪有这样的学佛人？这都是缺乏正知正念，没有如理如法修持造成的，这些都是错误的。

要不断地深深地思维：众生都是平等的，我的慈悲应该是没有分别的。每个众生都一样，都想远离痛苦，获得安乐，但众生愚痴，想要的和所做的却总是背道而驰。每个众生都非常渴望能得到无上的安乐，但却不会种获得无上安乐的因，不会行善积德、修持善法；每个众生都非常不愿意感受痛苦，但却不会断除一切痛苦的因，不知如何去除烦恼与分别，非常迷茫、颠倒。

与富人相比穷人看似可怜，比如缺吃少穿等等。但这并不是真正的可怜。富人在某些方面与穷人同样可怜，甚至比穷人还可怜。有些富人的钱是坑蒙拐骗来的；有的富人的钱是靠自己打拼来的，在打拼的过程中，他们挖空心思、绞尽脑汁，想方设法去竞争，经历了无数次的挫折与失败，才获得了好车、好房、金钱。得到了以后还想得到更多，同时又怕失去已经得到的，在这种矛盾、得失与竞争的压力下，每天提心吊胆，寝食难安，然后就靠吃喝、玩乐、嫖赌、醉生梦死来麻醉自己、欺骗自己，清醒后精神反而更加空虚。在这个过程中他们造下了无边的罪业，也伤害了无数的众生。他们就象一群疯子，根本就不知道自己在做什么。他们比穷人更快地堕落，将来要遭受更多更惨痛的果报。多可怕阿，难道还不应该慈悲他们吗！

身心不健全的人、乞丐，今生就在感受果报，他们确实痛苦，值得悲怜。但是健康的人、正常的人也 同样值得我们慈悲。他们拥有了宝贵的人身却不知道珍惜。他们有的每天无所事事、虚度光阴；有的为了吃得好一点、穿得好一点、住得好一点、只为了得到眼前一点点可怜的利益，背井离乡、东奔西走、拉关系、走后门、天天吃喝应酬，生活压力特别大，活得特别累，他们不仅不认为自己愚痴，反而还认为自己很能干。他们浑然不知死亡一天天来临，离火坑越来越近，一失人身、万劫不复，多可怜啊！

你的家人及伤害过你的人是你最大的冤亲债主，是与你最有缘份的众生。你学佛了，了解佛法了，有机会解脱了，但他们却什么也不懂，什么也不信，天天烦恼不止，造恶不止！难道你忍心看着他们这样？为什么不慈悲他们？

要无数次地深深地思维：无始劫以来，每个众生都无数次地做过我们的母亲，做母亲的过程中，她们经历了无数的艰辛与磨难。从十月怀胎到呱呱落地，从蹒跚学步到长大成人，我们成长中的每分每秒都牵动着她们的心！有了好吃的，他们舍不得吃，先给我们吃；有好衣服要先给我们穿；为了让我们快乐，她们尽自己所能去满足我们；为了让我们幸福，她们不惜付出一切，甚至去造恶；在我们的生命受到威胁的时候，她们甚至愿意牺牲自己的生命，只要我们能够活下去。

母亲的慈爱是我们用任何语言也无法描述的！母亲的恩情，是我们用任何方式也无法回报的！因为以往的无明、愚痴、颠倒，因为以往为了满足我们的欲望而造下的无边的罪业，如今她们或在地狱，水深火热、涕泪哀嚎；或为恶鬼，饥寒交迫、苦楚万千；或投傍生，任人宰割、痛彻心肺；即使转生为人，也要历尽生苦、老苦、病苦、死苦等等苦难！她们对我们恩重如山，面对她们所遭受的苦难，做儿女的怎能视而不见、听而不闻、麻木不仁、无动于衷呢？怎么能见难不管、见死不救呢？她们的苦就是我们的苦，她们的难就是我们的难，她们所遭受的苦痛，我们连一分一秒都不能忍受，又怎能忍心让她们永劫沉沦呢？我们一定要竭尽全力帮助她们永远地脱离苦海！我们一定要竭尽全力给予她们永远的幸福与乐……

时时刻刻、行住坐卧、一切境界中，都这样如是观、如是想。一天、两天、一月、两月、天长日久，渐渐地从你心底生起的慈悲心是那样的真实无伪、毫不动摇！那个时候，你会明白：法界就是你的家，众生都是你的家人、亲人，众生都是你的父母，众生都是你的儿女，众生就是你自己！你还会明白：法界就是一个大坛城，所有的众生都是你的金刚兄弟姐妹！在你的心里没有怨、没有恨、没有坏、没有恶、没有丑也没有错！见到任何一个众生都觉得那么可亲、可爱，你的心是那么柔软、温和，你所有的一切都已经发生了质的变化。

“发自内心地想拔除一切父母众生的痛苦，发自内心地想给予一切父母众生安乐”，已经成为你此时此刻生命中的主题！

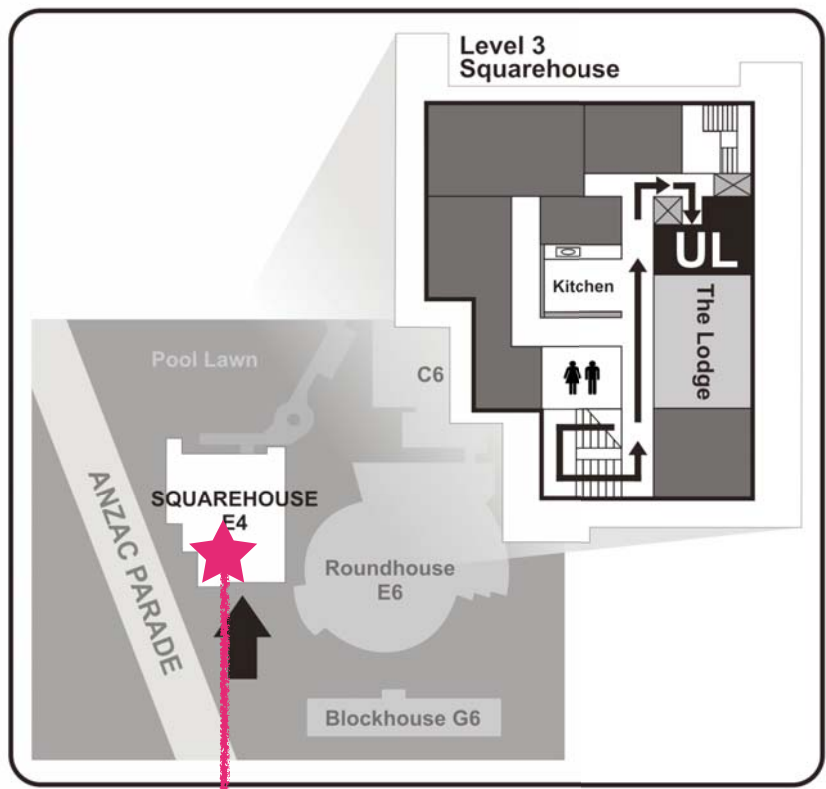
那个时候，你会不停地问自己：怎样才能拔除一切父母众生的痛苦？怎样才能给予一切父母众生安乐呢？这个时候你会发现：凡夫是没有能力救度众生的！你的心是那样迫切，但是你却不足拔除与给予的能力。这时我们将进入下一个修法：悉发菩提心，为救度一切父母众生永脱苦海而一定要修持成佛！

达真堪布

二零零六年三月初一

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