

winter  
edition  
jun 14  
aug 14

# sacca

quarterly newsletter for members of unbuds



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# Editor's Message

Dear Readers,

In this edition of Sacca, we will be exploring more about "Attachment and Letting Go". So how exactly is this related to the title?

"99 Red Balloons" is an antinuclear song sang by the German band Nena in 1983. It satirizes the exaggerated paranoia during the cold war by portraying the mobilization of an entire army in response to 99 balloons floating harmlessly in the sky.

The song clearly exemplifies the strong attachment to a singular perspective such that even innocuous objects such as balloons are viewed as signals to attack. From the song itself, it can be seen that attachments will only bring about suffering.

*"When this is, that is.*

*From the arising of this comes the arising of that.*

*When this isn't, that isn't.*

*From the cessation of this comes the cessation of that."*

Letting go is the solution to be free from suffering. Yet, letting go does not mean apathy or irresponsibility. So what exactly is letting go? Read the featured articles to glean a better understanding about attachment and letting go =]

Also, grab the opportunity to reminisce UNIBUDS events (including one-day meditation retreat, Buddhist Exhibition and Vesak Day) through the words of fellow UNIBUDS members. In addition, look forward to our next biggest event of the year – Bodhi Nite 2014!

So what are you waiting for? **Let the balloons float free! =]**

With Metta,  
Weiwei

# Bearing Witness to your Life

by Tina Ng

The time we spend living our life is not as often as we think. In fact, life is experienced most intimately exactly in those times when we don't think. This may be a difficult fact to grasp. After all, thinking takes up so much of our mental activity, we have come to accept it as being a necessary part of our minds. For many people, they cannot think of what it would be like to not think. They cannot imagine what it would be like to have a mind that is quiet and free from the endless chatter and commentary that accompanies us every moment of the day.

So we develop an attachment to thinking.

An ingrained habit to think. We have been conditioned to judge ourselves and others on our ability to think. We believe that it is our intelligence that separates our species with other species, and indeed we even separate our own species into classes based on our different levels of intelligence. We think our thoughts give us the power to be creative,

imaginative, innovative, analytical and above all, to survive in this fight of the fittest. To not think would lead us to act with reckless disregard for others and the consequences of our actions, to fall into chaos without any plans or structures, and regress developmentally into babies.

And so we hang onto our thoughts. We place them on a pedal-stool in our minds and believe in everything that is projected by it. We believe



the stories that are conjured up; we get lost in our fantasies; we relive our distorted memories of the past; we worry about problems we think may arise in the future; we torture ourselves with anxiety and fear from the movies playing in our minds. What is most concerning is how we allow our thoughts to rule us – throwing us into anger and worry with thoughts of negativity, then entrapping us with thoughts of desire, shrouded with a layer of illusions.

In time, we come to experience the world through our thoughts, perceptions and interpretations. **Most of the time, these are distorted perceptions and misinterpretations.** So many times we think we know something, or interpret events a certain way, only to find out later that we had got it all so very wrong.

So we come to see the world not as it is, but as we think it is or as we think it should be. Over time, we forget there is a way to experience life directly, and that to truly see the world and our life for what it is, we can only do so by removing the filters that stand in between us and the reality that is occurring at each moment.

So the practice for this week is to bear witness to your life. To come closer to reality than you have ever before. To truly understand that your thoughts play a role in your life in helping you navigate this world, but your thoughts are not you, nor are they in command of you.

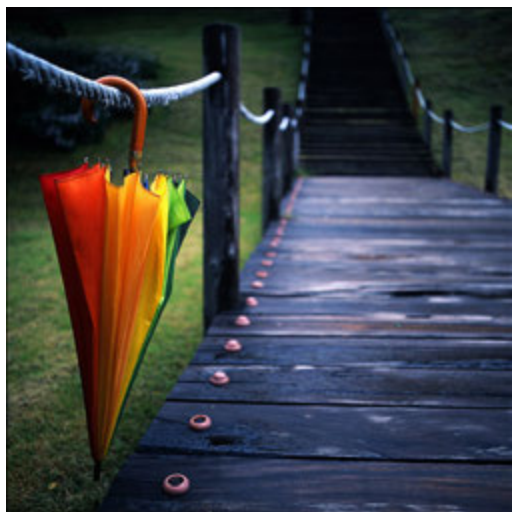


Here's some ways I've found have helped ground me in reality:

1. Be present: Reality only occurs in the here and now. By the time you contemplate what has occurred, the reality is already replaced by what you think took place. Likewise, contemplating what is to come is simply you guessing what will take place. So if you want to see reality for what it is, you need to be here for it, at the time when it happens. As you become more centred in the present, you remove the tendency to jump into the past or the future.

2. Be open: So much of our time is spent on resisting what is happening or being afraid of what will happen. Conversely, we may be chasing after what has past or what has yet to come. Being open to the present moment as it is, without wanting to change it in any way, takes away the filters of fear, worry, anger, and discontent.

3. Be observant: we spend so much of our time doing and rushing, or changing reality to suit us, that we don't usually stop to just watch life unfold in its natural way. If we are to understand reality, our life, our nature, this existence, we must observe it in the same way a scientist observes without interfering. This kind of observation at its purest form is free from thinking, but a direct experience of what is occurring at the present moment.



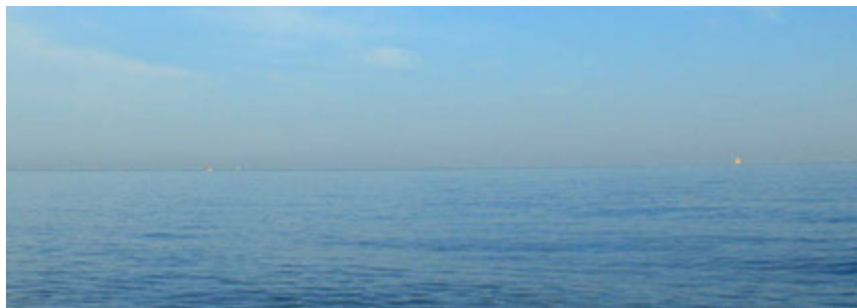
In our observations, we move from observing the obvious to the more subtle and refined. For example, we move from observing our displays of anger, to our inner anger, to finally see the seeds and causes of our anger. To do so, we try to catch each spark of anger, watch how it stays, and watch how it disappears. Over time, we will see how anger operates; we come to understand anger and anger becomes a choice rather than an automatic reaction.

4. Be centred: There will be times when we are confronted with reality, we want to run away in pain, or we grab it tightly with desire, or we simply don't know what to do with it. Being centred allows us to maintain an equanimous, calm yet strong mind, to face head on with whatever reality presents to us. It is this ability to be centred and equanimous that allows us to see clearly what is going on, without bringing our own emotions, self-interests and preconceptions into our observations of reality.

5. Be sharp: Unlike what people may think about direct observation, the lack of thinking does not mean the mind becomes dull, but quite the opposite. The mind becomes extremely sharp, sensitive and concentrated, so as to pick up very fine details and penetrate deeper into the reality of whatever object of observation you choose. Developing this ability, you build an awareness and concentration, that helps you direct your mind to whatever you wish to use it for. Your mind becomes less scattered and more focused. In daily life, you will see how the sharpness of your mind can also be used to sort through very quickly enormous data that your mind receives at every moment.

6. Be patient: The development of the mind is rarely achieved overnight. It is something that is developed over time, or perhaps over an entire lifetime. When you first begin, you will be inundated with thoughts. This is normal, as it is the habit of your mind to think. To help settle the thoughts, you need to be gentle with your mind. You need to give it the time and space for it to settle on its own, but you can help it by anchoring your mind on something, such as your breath if you are doing meditation. The idea is not to stir the thoughts up with more thoughts. In its own time, the mind will become clearer and the thoughts will quieten down.

### Want to try?



To get an idea what it is like to experience life directly without the filters and to experience the richness of life, you can try this exercise. You may need to do it a few times or in different settings for it to work. Whilst doing this activity, see if you can feel the difference between the two experiences.

Firstly, find a spot on your body that is touching another surface, such as your legs or back. Try and describe that experience to yourself. Can you feel hardness, pressure, heat, etc?

Secondly, drop the descriptions and just feel the experience as a whole.

Do you notice a difference?

Try this at different moments throughout your day. When you're on the train, when you have a moment to take in the last rays of sunshine, when you are out walking.

Do you notice a difference in the moments when you are in thought, and the moments when you open yourself to the experience as it is?

For me, when I first opened myself to the experience of walking as it is, it was like walking for the first time. Since then, these moments of direct experience of life fills my heart with a joy that is so extraordinary for the most seemingly ordinary things.



I wish you a joy that surpasses the worldly joys, and a life that is made up of moments that string together to make this life a most meaningful one.



# Open Your Eyes: An Extract

by Ajahn Chah



Extract from:

It's Like This.  
108 Dhamma Similes  
by Venerable Ajahn  
Chah

Translated from Thai  
by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

People, if they don't feel pain, don't open their eyes. If they're happy, everything shuts down and they get lazy. When suffering stabs you: That's what gets you thinking, and you can really expand your awareness. The greater the pain, the more you have to investigate it to see what causes it. You can't just sit there and let the pain go away on its own. Right now my arm feels heavy – why? Because I've picked up this glass. If I let it go, the glass won't be heavy, or at least won't be heavy on me, because I'm not connected with it.

The same with stress and pain: Why is it heavy? Why is it painful? Because you're holding onto it. But you don't understand that it's stressful. **You think that it's something special, something good. When you're told to let it go, you can't let it go.** When you're told to put it down you can't put it down. So you keep on being heavy, keep on suffering.

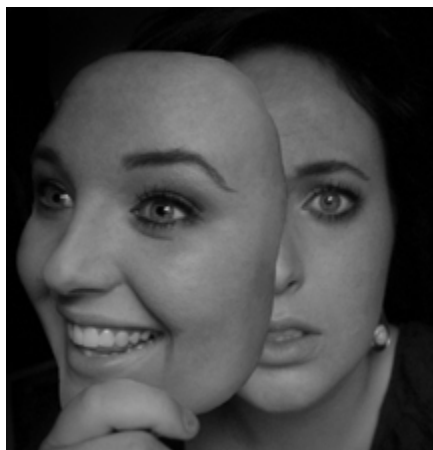
# Letting Go and Daily Life

## An Interview with Ven. Thubten Chodron for Eastern Horizon 2005

*1. The Buddha says that attachment leads to suffering; hence, we should practice detachment in our lives. What does the Buddha mean by this?*

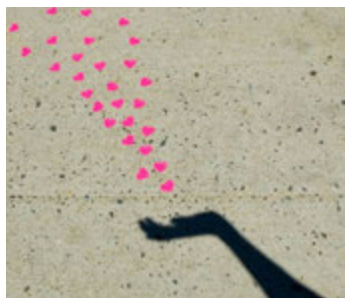
By examining our own life experiences, we can clearly see that attachment leads to suffering. When our mind is needy or greedy, thinking, “I want this. I need that,” we aren’t at peace. We’re searching for something external to fill the emotional void inside our hearts, but external people and things don’t have the ability to do that.

How do we know that? Many times before we’ve gotten what we’ve wanted—delicious food, romantic relationships, prestige, and so forth—and while we may have been happy for a while, it didn’t solve the uneasiness in our hearts and minds. Why not? Because it’s not the lack of something that causes our mental and emotional suffering, it’s the attachment itself that does. Getting what we think we want or need doesn’t eliminate the attachment, it simply masks it for a while, and thus the dissatisfaction remains.



Under the influence of attachment, we lie and deceive others to get what we want. We retaliate, physically or verbally, when someone prevents us from procuring the love, appreciation, possessions, respect, fame, or ideal situation we want. This leads to problems in this life, and through creating so much negative karma, we create problems for ourselves in future lives as well. Our mind becomes more and more obscured, and we are further from enlightenment. While temporarily satisfying a craving may give us a hit of happiness, in the long run, it’s like drinking salt water—our thirst and frustration increase.

Detachment—maybe a better translation is non-attachment—is the state of mind that is the antidote to clinging and craving. It's a balanced state of mind that is free from obsession. With it, we won't be pulled here and there by the whims of attachment, but will be peaceful, content, and open. Many people misunderstand the word "detachment" and think it means apathy or indifference. They have the image of Buddhists just sitting there like a bump on a log, shrugging their shoulders and saying, "I'm detached. I don't care." That is not non-attachment; that's laziness and boredom, which are afflictions to be abandoned on the path.



When non-attachment is present, the mind is clear and we are able to exercise wisdom in our daily lives and make wise decisions. Free from the bias and prejudice of attachment, our heart is open and concerned with all beings equally. We feel connected to others and care about them. **But this care is free from the expectations of attachment.**

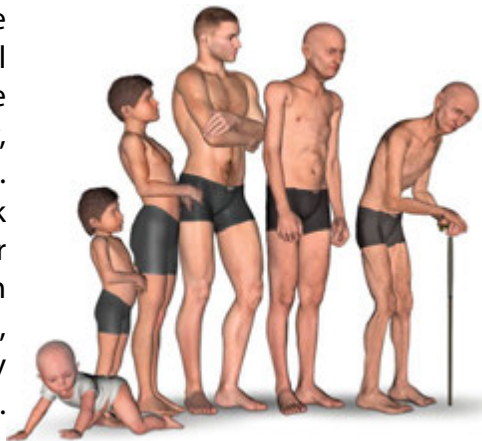
*2. Can you provide some guidelines on how we can practice detachment without becoming monks or nuns?*

Many people assume letting go of attachment is a painful process. They think, "I can't have what I want and will be unhappy." These people haven't reflected on their own experience, as I mentioned above, and thus have come to an incorrect conclusion. Actually, the more we understand how clinging causes suffering, the more we'll be eager, even joyful, to vigilantly counteract our attachment.

How do we do this? First, contemplate the disadvantages of attachment, clinging, and craving. Make many examples from your life so that you understand how so many of your repeated difficulties and emotional pain are due to attachment. When we see that clinging and craving harm us, we will have the energy to do something about them.

What do we do? Meditating on impermanence and death is an effective antidote. For example, when we see that the object, situation, or person

that we're attached to is changing every moment, we'll understand that it's impossible to hold onto it. One time I was in a park with a teenage girl, who was so distracted looking at the attractive guys playing basketball that she couldn't enjoy the people she was with. I said to her, "You know, these guys are in the process of aging. Before too long, they're going to look like that old man over there." Her jaw dropped as she imagined them aging before her eyes. After that, she was able to enjoy our company during the picnic and had a lot of fun.



Through reflecting on our own mortality, we ask, "What is important in life? What goes on to the next life?" We see that the things we're attached to don't go with us into the next life, and in fact, the attachment to them makes us do many negative actions, and that karma will influence what we will experience. Through this wise reflection, we'll begin to set priorities and will do what we've determined to be important for ourselves and others.

When we live according to wise priorities, our life is much more harmonious. This small taste of non-attachment brings peace in our mind. Through experiencing even a little of the happiness that comes from non-attachment, we'll be inspired to let go of deeper and deeper attachments. As we do so, we'll experience more and more satisfaction in our minds.



3. *Some Buddhists, after undergoing long meditation practices, become introverted, reclusive, and want to let go of everything, including their responsibility as parents and breadwinners for the family. How can they reconcile their spiritual pursuits with their responsibilities?*

At the Buddha's time, some householders gained genuine understanding of the suffering of cyclic existence and the value of their precious human life. **They chose to become monastics. These people were not abandoning their responsibilities.** This is quite different from someone who has become introverted and reclusive in an unbalanced way and wants to neglect their responsibilities. People in the latter group may have an intellectual understanding or an emotional feeling of renunciation, but it's superficial and unstable. Someone can redirect them, explaining that with a motivation of bodhicitta one is able to fulfill their responsibilities as well as practice Dharma within having a family life and career.

To prevent this type of imbalance, **it's important to include meditation on the four immeasurables**—equanimity, loving-kindness, compassion, and joy—in our Dharma practice. In this way, we balance the compassion side of the path and the wisdom side of the path. We live in a world in which we are completely dependent on the kindness of other living beings. These sentient beings also want to be happy and avoid suffering as intensely as we do.



It's essential to understand how deeply we are connected to others. It's reality, and in addition it prevents us from getting self-obsessed in our Dharma practice. Meditating on bodhicitta, the loving and compassionate aspiration to become a Buddha in order to benefit sentient beings, keeps us from getting stuck in our meditation practice.

4. *Can the practice of detachment also lead to a state of indifference?*

Not if people understand correctly what non-attachment means and how to cultivate it.



*5. What about compassion—can too much of it lead to attachment, especially towards someone we love?*

If it does, then it's contaminated compassion not genuine, compassion. Of course, for us ordinary beings, our loving-kindness and compassion are bias towards those people we're attached to. That's why meditating on equanimity towards all sentient beings is important. **With equanimity as a basis, the love and compassion we cultivate become pure.** For example, the love and compassion of a bodhisattva are extended equally to all living beings. They are unsullied by attachment, expectations, and disappointment and thus are stable and unshakable. Bodhisattvas don't lose their compassion if someone insults them or betrays their trust. Of course, due to social conventions and different social relationships, bodhisattvas act differently with each sentient being, but in their hearts, they care about all of them equally. It's said that bodhisattvas love us more than we love ourselves and that their compassion for us is deeper than our compassion for ourselves. Such love and compassion are difficult to actualize, but if we continue to practice the methods for doing so, we'll experience the result.



*6. Can a husband and wife practice detachment and letting go in their relationship?*

Yes, of course. The more they are able to let go of unrealistic expectations about each other, the more harmonious and satisfying their relationship will be. If a couple puts the Dharma at the center of their relationship, the ups and downs of life won't dismay them.

*7. To inculcate spiritual values among children, how best can we teach them detachment or letting go?*

By modeling it yourself! It's essential for parents to cultivate and live what they wish to teach their children. Children learn more by observing their parents, than by listening to lectures. When parents cultivate appreciation and respect for other living beings, their children will directly see that happiness comes from caring about others, not through being attached to them. When parents cultivate generosity, their children will learn that joy comes from giving.



*8. In the modern business environment, competition is the key word. How can we apply this principle of “letting go” in such an environment?*

Someone who lets go and is less greedy will be more honest in his or her business dealings. Thus his clients and customers will trust him and will continue to do business with him as well as refer their friends to his company. In the long-term, this means his business will be more stable and successful. People who are greedy and competitive will do or say anything to make the business deal, including deceive the other person. Inevitably the other person finds out that they've been lied to or cheated and will no longer do business with that greedy and selfish individual. Thus, in the long term, honesty and genuine caring bring success and stability in one's business.

*9. Finally, Tibetan monks and nuns are cheerful and smiling whenever we meet them. Has this anything to do with their letting go of attachment?*

Yes, I believe so. **This goes not only for Tibetan monastics, but also for any human being who lets goes of the afflictions of clinging and craving.** Letting go isn't accomplished by nonchalantly saying, “I don't care,” but by actively applying the counter-forces to attachment and other afflictions and by cultivating compassion and wisdom.

# Bodhi Nite 2014

I Grasp, I See, I Let Go

~A Loosened Bind, A Peaceful Mind~

30th August 2014

**I GRASP**  
**I SEE**  
**I LET GO**

**A LOOSENED BIND.  
A PEACEFUL MIND.**

**bodhi  
nite  
2014**

CELEBRATING  
THE  
34TH  
ANNIVERSARY  
OF  
UNIBUDS

**DATE**  
30TH AUGUST 2014  
(SATURDAY)

**TIME**  
6 - 10 P.M.  
(6 - 7 P.M. DINNER)

**VENUE**  
SIR JOHN CLANCY AUDITORIUM  
UNSW

**TICKET**  
\$12 (MEMBER)  
\$15 (NON-MEMBER)  
\$18 (AT DOOR)

**CONTACT**  
KITIPHUME 0405 595 409  
kitiphume@gmail.com

EDO 0405 998 088  
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**A DAZZLING NIGHT OF STAGE  
PLAY, SINGING AND MULTIMEDIA!**

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AFFILIATED WITH **Buddhist Churches Australia**

ORGANISED BY **UNIBUDS**

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# Bodhi Nite 2014 Promotion

As we quickly approach the second half of the year, UNIBUDS' spectacular, Bodhi Nite, is near!

Bodhi Nite is UNIBUDS' annual performance night showcasing the sublime teachings of the Buddha through fun and creative means such as stage play, singing and multimedia. This year, Bodhi Nite celebrates UNIBUDS 34th Birthday Anniversary and celebrates who we are as a Buddhist society.

**I Grasp, I See, I Let Go**

What things do you grasp in your hands? What things do you grasp in your mind? How can we clearly see what they are? How can we clearly see their impact on our minds? What is the Buddhist concept of Letting Go?

This year, UNIBUDS will take you on a journey to explore the theme of Attachment and Letting Go and how it can be used to benefit you and those around you. So, note down the date in your notebooks, diaries, phones and laptops! See you at Bodhi Nite 2014!

**Date: Saturday (30th August 2014)**

**Time: 6.00pm - 10pm (6pm - 7pm Dinner time)**

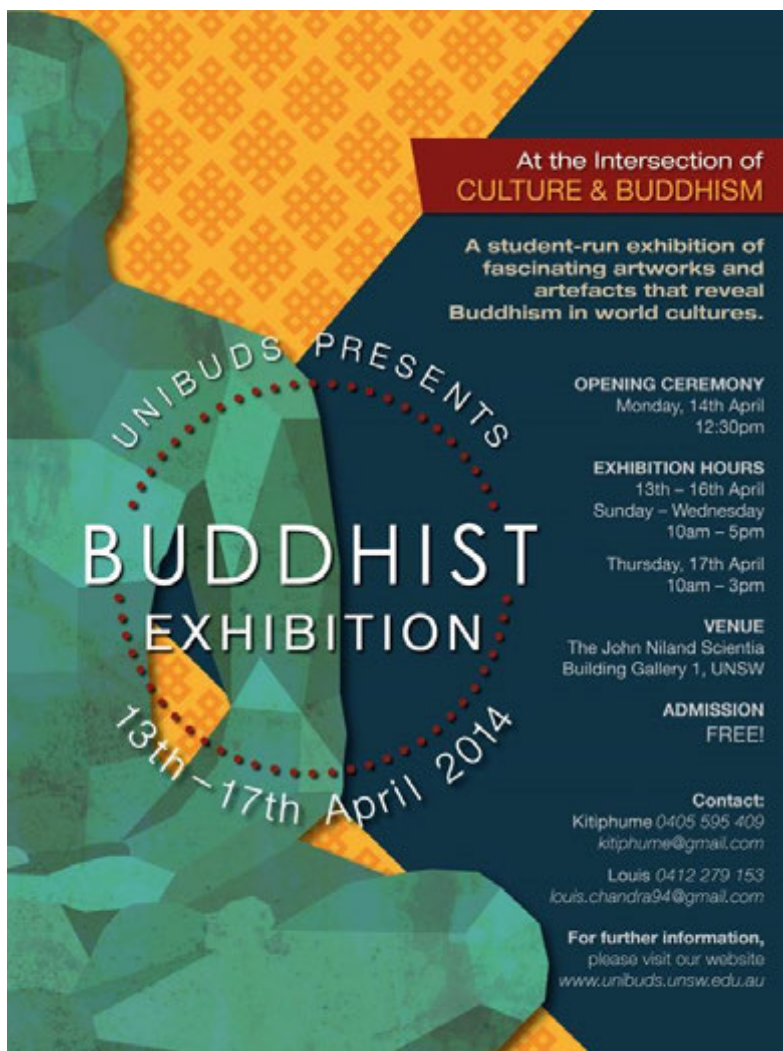
**Venue: Sir John Clancy Auditorium**

In order to make Bodhi Nite happen, we need lots of help from everyone. If you would like to be part of the night, make new friends, involve yourself with extracurricular activities or to add colour to your Uni life then feel free to join us on this wonderful journey! There are 12 different departments for you to choose from so you should be able to find one that interests you. We hope to hear from you soon

# Buddhist Exhibition 2014

**~At the Intersection of Culture and Buddhism~**  
**13th - 17th April 2014**

*A student-run exhibit of fascinating artworks and artefacts that reveal Buddhism in world cultures.*



**At the Intersection of  
CULTURE & BUDDHISM**

A student-run exhibition of  
fascinating artworks and  
artefacts that reveal  
Buddhism in world cultures.

UNIBUDS PRESENTS

**BUDDHIST  
EXHIBITION**

13th - 17th April 2014

**OPENING CEREMONY**  
Monday, 14th April  
12:30pm

**EXHIBITION HOURS**  
13th - 16th April  
Sunday - Wednesday  
10am - 5pm  
Thursday, 17th April  
10am - 3pm

**VENUE**  
The John Niland Scientia  
Building Gallery 1, UNSW

**ADMISSION**  
FREE!

**Contact:**  
Kitiphume 0405 595 409  
kitiphume@gmail.com  
Louis 0412 279 153  
louis.chandra94@gmail.com

**For further information,**  
please visit our website  
[www.unibuds.unsw.edu.au](http://www.unibuds.unsw.edu.au)



# **Buddhist Exhibition 2014 Review**

## **~A Walk through the Exhibition and Beyond~**

### **by Weiwei Fam**

Walking into the dimly lit Gallery One, I was blocked from entering by a receptionist. A flash of annoyance arose. The amicable receptionist kindly requested me to register before proceeding. Charmed and welcomed, the feeling of annoyance disappeared.

The same receptionist then handed me a copy of the exhibition booklet. The exhibition book itself deserved attention. The quality printing of the cover page and thickness of the booklet indicated the wealth of information contained within the booklet. This was a huge contrast to the seemingly empty and narrow pathway which lay right in front of me.

Upon closer inspection, the walls of the narrow pathway were done with exquisite artworks portraying the life story of the Buddha. Each artwork was hand-drawn and painted. I wandered down the pathway like a child raptured by a colourful pop-up story book.



At the end of the pathway, this surreal story-like experience ceased. A large map of the world greeted me next. Multi-coloured pins and strings (green, pink and yellow) crisscrossed each other on the map. Each string represented the geographical spread of Buddhism from India to a different part of the world. A complementary timeline next to the map detailed the temporal spread of Buddhism. The sheer amount of words was undeniably off-putting on paper. Yet, the same information in the mouth of the curator made this history lesson much more interesting and interactive.

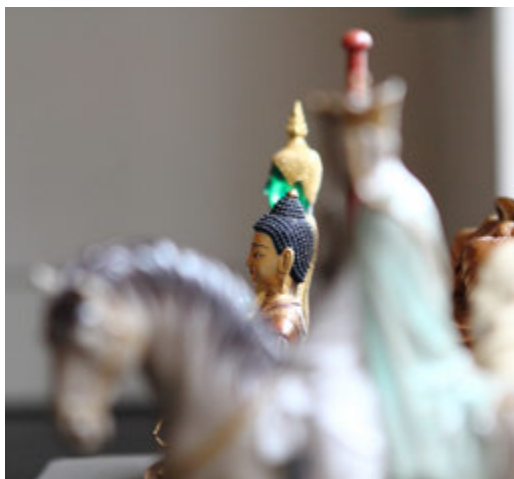
Situated next to the map were artefacts from India where it all started:

miniatures of Asoka pillars, the Buddha's footprint etc. Each artefact was explained in details within the booklet. An A3 poster summarised the 2600-years-long history of Buddhism in India, providing a context for the collection of artefacts.

By piecing together the little bits of history and artefacts, the relationship of how Buddhism affects India's subsequent culture (such as the portrayal the Buddha as the 9th reincarnation of the Vishnu god of Hindu), and how the culture of India influence Buddhism (such as the rise in esoteric Buddhism around 700AD) was slowly revealed.

Although Buddhism is absorbed into Hinduism in present day India, the temporal evolution of Buddhism in India (which gave rise to the three major traditions of Buddhism - Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana) is captured in the practice of Buddhism in other countries. This is primarily due to the direct spread of Buddhism from India to a particular country at a particular point in time. For example, esoteric Buddhism was widely practiced in India in the 700AD. Thus Tibetan Buddhism, which was introduced directly from India around the same period, retains similar features of esoteric Buddhism with added influences from Tibetan's culture.

Through the process of understanding the significance of the artefacts in the context of the history and culture of a particular country, Buddhism was explored in six other countries including Sri Lanka, Thailand, China, Korea, Tibet and Australia. While the practices of Buddhism may differ slightly from one country to another due to specific cultural influence, they can still be categorized into the three major traditions of Buddhism (Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana). For example, paying respect to mountain spirits in Buddhist temples is common practice in Korea due to indigenous influences, but not in



China. Yet, both the practices in China and Korea are known as Mahayana tradition, where the Heart Sutra is commonly studied and the values of compassion and wisdom are emphasized more heavily.

All three traditions of Buddhism were introduced to Australia primarily by practicing Buddhist migrants from all around the world. The opportunity to be exposed to all different traditions in one single location allows us to better appreciate and understand the core teachings of the Buddha amidst the different cultural influences. This is because the core teachings of the Buddha, which underlies all three different traditions, are one and the same. These core teachings include (but are not limited to) the Four Noble Truth, the Eight-fold Path, Dependent Origination, the Three Marks of Existence and the Four Immeasurable. A wave of gratitude washed past me.



*"May all beings be well and happy and free from suffering."*

And so, this wish of mine (written on a piece of Bodhi leaf-shaped paper) was hung up onto the "branch" of a Bodhi tree in the center of the exhibition, together with all the well wishes left behind by other attendees to the exhibition.

As I made my way out of the exhibition, I was greeted once again by the friendly receptionist, who asked if I wanted to leave any feedback.

Dear receptionist, this will be my belated reply to you:

*"Yes, I do. In another five minutes, all the artefacts, posters and people will be removed from Gallery One. As one of the organiser of this Bud-*



*dhist Exhibition 2014, I would like to thank you for discharging your duty professionally as a receptionist right to the end of the exhibition. To the entire Reception department, thank you for providing a wonderful experience to the guests.*

*To the helpers of the Decoration department, thank you for researching, compiling and editing all the information in the exhibition from a wide variety of sources. Thank you for providing insights to Buddhism and the different cultures through the artefacts and histories of all seven countries.*

*To those in the Publication department, thank you for collating the information into one very informative booklet. Thank you for the professional presentation and neat organisation of the booklet.*

*To Technician department, thank you for enhancing the artefacts through the creative usage of lightings. Thank you for the music and the ambience.*

*To the Monastery Visit department, thank you for searching and sourcing for these fascinating artefacts. Without the artefacts, there will be no exhibition.*

*To Transport department, thank you for ensuring the safe journeys of the artefacts from their homes to the exhibition and then back to their homes again.*

*To the Security department, thank you for protecting the artefacts from theft and defacement.*



*To the Marketing department, thank you for making people aware of the exhibition and inviting everyone to come and enjoy the Dhamma.*

*To the Program Master department, thank you for the interesting opening ceremony and for taking care of the venerables.*

*To the Archive department, thank you for documenting all the precious moments throughout this journey of preparing and presenting the exhibition.*



*To the monasteries who lent us the artefacts, thank you for trusting us with your precious artefacts, and allowing us to exhibit them.*

*To everyone else who visited our exhibition, thank you for gracing us with your time and presence. We greatly appreciate your support for UNIBUDS.*

*Although the exhibition which took months to prepare have come to an end, the entire process had been a fruitful one. Moreover, the journey of learning the Dhamma has not ended. Let us cherish all our opportunities (past, present and future) in learning the Dhamma and continue spreading the joy of Dhamma to others."*

# Buddhist Exhibition 2014

~At the Intersection of Culture and Buddhism~

13th - 17th April 2014





# Buddhist Exhibition 2014

~At the Intersection of Culture and Buddhism~

13th - 17th April 2014



# One Day Meditation Retreat

## 23rd April 2014



# One-Day Meditation Retreat

by Roanna Chan

On a bright sunny morning on the 23rd April a bunch of chirpy UNIBUDS hopped on a train and merrily headed up to the Southern Highlands for a constructive day of meditation and history. Who am I kidding? It was cold and dark, 6am and we were running on pure sugar from a very balanced Tim Tam breakfast.

However, despite this rather uninspiring start I was surprised to note most people were enthusiastic and cheerful, with just a sprinkle of sleep-deprived hysterical laughter. This was the first time I'd been up to Bundanoon with a cohort of UNIBUDS and it seems my initial impression that this is the most cheerful society on campus was not mistaken.

Our leaders in green shirts stood out directing us to ticket terminals and herding the rowdy group into formation. We started at Central and as we went further south accumulated more and more smiling folk. The train ride could probably be characterised by one word. Hectic. Food was ferried up and down the aisle as we practiced generosity and receiving with gratitude, (not so) mindful meditation was demonstrated by a sleepy group who curled up in the carriage corner and it seemed everyone else was practicing breathing meditation- to see who could speak the fastest, loudest and longest without taking a breath.

A quick train transfer at Moss Vale and we were on our way to Sunnataram Forest Monastery, picked up by first class chauffers who, thankfully for us, were well rested and alert. The abbot of Sunnataram, Venerable Phra Mana Viriyarampo was invited to Australia from Thailand in 1987 and has been dedicated to educating the public about the Dhamma and benefits of mindfulness up in the idyllic Southern Highlands. Despite visiting many times in the past, Sunnataram never fails to enchant me. Perhaps it's the sweeping view of Kangaroo valley or the crisp mountain air, but the thing that always strikes me is the innate sense of calm and peace. Perfect for a meditation retreat.



Emily and Kim kick started the day with our schedule: Tai Chi and Meditation followed by Dana, lunch, Dhamma talk and then back to Sydney- all in six hours. By this time day had arrived and we started Tai Chi looking down upon the Valley and morning sun. Now you may think Tai Chi is easy. Think again.

Despite its relative slowness and the fact that little old ladies do it in the park, Tai Chi is much harder than it looks. The very fact that you're moving your arms slower than any other time in your life makes you realise just how heavy they are. Bending your legs slowly with control is ten times harder than just running without mindfulness. Phra Mana makes it look easy, but that comes with years of practice- I usually end up looking like an awkward scarecrow. However, it was the perfect start to the day, leading us to reflect on the present in and outflow of the breath.



We followed this with meditation. Harder still. Funny how physically simple tasks are the hardest to perform mindfully. Just like in Tai Chi we followed the flow of breath, centering ourselves in the present, in and out, in and out. Thoughts, memories, feelings inevitably enter the stream of consciousness, however **the key is not to empty the mind but to be at peace with the thoughts and let them continue to flow, observing passively.** Sometimes I reach a point where I feel it- completely aware of sounds and movements of the body and environment yet also calm and centered. It's a rare and often fleeting sensation but it's empowering to know peace is so close, all you need is an open mind and the breath.

Time flies and by 11:30am we're getting ready for Dana (which means giving in Pali), practicing generosity by offering lunch to the monks. Phra Mana urges us to eat with mindfulness, abstain from talking and to again focus on the act of nourishing the body. So often in our busy lifestyles we

lose mindfulness, so absorbed in our plans of the future and memories of the past that we forget to live and appreciate the present.

Also, for those who despair because you are too busy to sit down and meditate every day, mindfulness is not a unique practice reserved for the Sangha (disciples of the Buddha such as monks or nuns). Mindfulness can be executed in every action, from eating breakfast to walking to the bus stop or waiting for a lecturer to arrive.

Following lunch we make our way over to the Dharma Amphitheatre, a huge 3D map of the ancient world mapping the Silk Road and the spread of Buddhism from Nepal to India and even, surprisingly, Greece. Surrounding the map is a circular arrangement of stone carvings and artefacts dating back to 200 BC, telling the story of the Buddha and the cultural influences behind the very diverse aesthetic portrayals, from a carving of two feet on a lotus, to a statue resplendent in Ancient Greek finery, complete with curly hair and Hercules as a bodyguard.

Phra Mana explained the five gates (yes, literal doorways that some poor guys had to pick up and lug around) representing body, feeling, memory, thought and consciousness. The five aggregates make up the conscious being and are all impermanent (anicca), if we attach to them their inherent fleeting nature will inevitably cause suffering.

However while most people think of attachment as chasing after something we desire like a new Apple laptop or a BN story idea, **it also works the opposite way. The flip side of attachment is aversion**; Phra Mana used the example of the very hot curry we had for lunch, just as the



heat made many of us avoid the curry and spend time nursing our burnt tastebuds with cake (or was that just me?), we stress about and spend time running away from things that do not give us pleasure. Trying to find happiness by chasing our desires and running away from pain may seem like the logical path however all it does is cause anxiety (dukkha) if either of those actions fail. Letting go of attachment is not separation from family and friends, hiding in a cave in the mountains to meditate all day (though I respect the people who can accomplish such a feat!). Letting go is awareness that our external environment is constantly changing and to be at peace with it (equanimity), free from the compulsion to chase fleeting pleasures and run from pain, free from letting our environment control our emotions. Though I have to admit, much easier said than done. But hey, at least I know next time I find a burning curry on my plate I can accept it, drink some water and be thankful someone cared enough about me to spend time and energy cooking.

Surrounding the theatre there is also an Asoka Pillar, a mini Stonehenge, huge marble spinning ball and engraved stone steps "leading to nirvana". Green ferns and grape vines creep up from the wooden pillars and there are still hints of the leafy canopy which blooms every spring. Every time I visit there are new developments and I'm sure by the time I next return there will be yet another artefact and interesting piece of history. By this time the sun was setting fast, and we hadn't even gotten around the amphitheatre yet- time really does fly when you're having fun.

Our day ended with some chanting which I've always found to be soothing to the point of being almost like a lullaby (thankfully I didn't fall asleep) and we all made our way back to Sydney in cars or by public transport (except Kitiphume, who spent part of the way in the boot of a car). It was truly a great experience and I'd like to thank the execs who made the day run so smoothly as well as the Monks and Kim from Sunnataram for their support and generosity. We all left with wider smiles and minds a little more enlightened than when we arrived. I can't wait to visit again soon!

# Vesak Day Celebration

## 11th May 2014





# Vesak Day Celebration

by Zhi Sin Lee

Learning how to let go is not easy. In order to let go, you need to forgive. That is what I have learnt from listening to the talks from the patrons during the Vesak Day celebration.

The Vesak day celebration started with Theravada chanting led by one of the patrons. It was a solemn event, but for some reason I can't help but feel excited. This was the first time that I took part in chanting and it turned out to be an eye-opening experience to me. After the chanting, the Buddha bathing session took place, in which everybody had the chance to bath the Buddha statue.

Following the bathing session, one of the patrons delivered his talk which revolves around the theme "attachment". In Buddhism, attachment refers to clinging, which is closely associated to craving. In order to be happy, we need to let go of our attachments.



Attachments can be in many forms, such as wealth, success, social status and relationships, but they all arise due to desire and greed. Learning how to let go gives us freedom and freedom is the only condition for happiness. To help us in understanding and practicing the concept of not being attached, **the patron gave us some daily life situational examples faced by university students which are more relatable to us.** He also gave us some practical advices on how to end sufferings, such as practicing meditation and upholding the Four Noble Truths - the nature, cause, end and the path leading to the end of suffering.



The second patron also talked about the art of letting go of attachments through realizing the origins of suffering and trying to overcome them. Thus, detachment or “non-attachment” would bring about happiness and is the way to enlightenment. Too often have we thought that happiness is brought about by being attached to something or someone. However, such attachments do not make us happy. It is only by letting go of our hope and expectations towards life, that we will feel blissful and peaceful at heart. Most importantly, we should learn how to distinguish between desire and craving (for the desirable). It is all too often that we thought that Buddhism discourages all sorts of desires. However, this thought proves to be misleading. Having desires is part and parcel of human nature. **It is how we recognise and deal wisely with our desires that matters;** merely rejecting or suppressing the desires is unhealthy.

After the Dhamma talks from the patron, the Vesak Day celebration officially ended with a group photo session.

In short, the key to happiness is learning how to let go of attachments. Letting go!





## June

Simon Garrod  
Frank Kyang  
Micheal Wu  
Nee Shuang Heng  
Than Naing Htut  
Yon Ting Koh

## July

Jacqueline Mach  
Zhong Zhuang  
Eka Sugiarto  
Tai Hang Lu  
Jana Lazaris  
Amy Chung  
Nat Pornvarojanabun  
Shelvy Chandra  
Fu Xiu Heng  
Adeline Lukmantara  
Jiajun Tor

## August

Adeline Sugianto  
Sarah Angkhawut  
Meng Kiat Nicholas Tay  
Allen Kha  
Chia Chean Lim  
Ferani Atmadja Heng  
Wirya Tanuwijaya  
Shaleen Batra  
Janice Ma  
Jessie G Lin  
William Lao  
Dennis Wei-Shen Lim

# Mark your Calenders!

## Upcoming Events

7th June 2014  
Meditation Workshop

11th-13th July  
**Winter Retreat**

23rd July, 28th July-1st August  
Orientation Day/Week

2nd August  
Potluck

**30th August**  
**Bodhinite**

## Weekly Activities

Every Thursday  
from 6th March 2014  
6 - 8 pm  
Chinese Dhamma Talk

Every Friday  
from 7th March 2014  
7 - 9 pm  
English Dhamma Talk

1.15 - 2 pm  
Lunchtime Meditation

*UNIBUDS requires your continual support for all activities. If you are interested in helping out in any of the above events, contact us at [unibuds@gmail.com](mailto:unibuds@gmail.com). Your participation is very much appreciated. Looking forward to seeing you!*

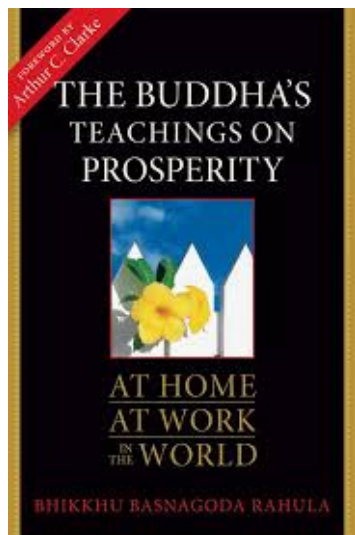
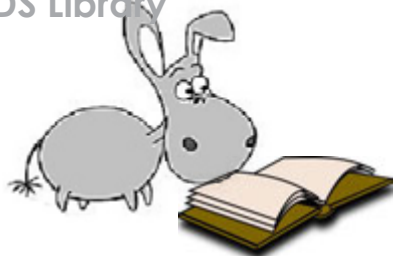
# Corner of Our Hearts

## Recommended Reads from UNIBUDS Library

### The Buddha's Teachings on Prosperity

Bhikkhu Basnagoda Rahula

Reviewed By Allen Kha



What did the Buddha say about things such as money and investment, family, relationships, work and business or sex?

Actually the Buddha said quite a lot about these worldly concerns. He had a keen insight into the concerns of laypeople like you and I, and gave many teachings directed towards lay people. These teachings were meant to guide those who were not monks and nuns, towards living more fulfilling, peaceful and truly happier lives.

Many of the Buddha's lay disciples were very wealthy and successful people, and indeed he encouraged all his lay disciples to strive for success and wealth in a wholesome way, without neglecting the values of spiritual life. This is an excellent example of how the Buddha is Anuttaro purisadamma-sàrathi satthà deva-manussànaṃ – the unexcelled trainer of those who can be taught, teacher of all humans and divine beings.

The teachings contained in this book offer very do-able guidance for anyone with the wish to minimise suffering and maximise happiness and peace.

# Annual General Meeting

## EXCO Portfolio Duties

### PRESIDENT

- Acting as the spokesperson of UNIBUDS
- Chairing meetings
- Coordinating the Executive Committee (EXCO) members
- Being responsible for day to day operation of UNIBUDS
- Ensuring that all duties delegated to others are carried out
- Liaising with Honorary Secretary regarding meeting agenda and minutes
- Liaising with Honorary Treasurer regarding financial matters

### EXTERNAL VICE PRESIDENT

- Assisting the President
- Acting as Acting President in the absence of the President
- Booking rooms for functions
- Coordinating the publicity of UNIBUDS activities
- Managing relations with external organisations
- Liaising with Webmaster for the maintenance of UNIBUDS website

### INTERNAL VICE PRESIDENT

- Attending to the welfare of the members
- Updating members with UNIBUDS activities through weekly emails
- Enhancing the Buddy system
- Organising celebration of members' birthdays and graduations

### HONORARY SECRETARY

- Recording of agenda and minutes of official EXCO meetings
- Managing correspondence with external organisations
- Collecting report of activities
- Collecting mails (from mailbox in Religious Centre)
- Keep custody of all documents, forms, records, and files of UNIBUDS
- Recording all UNIBUDS activities held throughout the year

### HONORARY TREASURER

- Handling of all the financial matters
- Presenting up-to-date financial position of UNIBUDS during meetings

## GENERAL SECRETARY

- Updating membership list of UNIBUDS
- Distributing publications to members
- Maintaining and organising the supply of free distribution books
- Replenishing refreshments in UNIBUDS Library for Dhamma talks and other activities
- Maintaining UNIBUDS Library including books and audio-visual materials on Buddhism
- Coordinating the cataloguing of library books
- Coordinating librarians

## ARCHIVE SECRETARY

- Maintaining UNIBUDS Library Archive
- Organising UNIBUDS Archive including past and current photographs, past membership forms, files and documents
- Collecting and archiving photographs from UNIBUDS events
- Managing the YouTube channel; UNIBUDS.Video

## ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

- Organising and coordinating social activities that are different from the current activities

## SPORTS DIRECTOR

- Organising and coordinating weekend sports activities

## ENGLISH & CHINESE DHAMMA TALK COORDINATORS

- Coordinating and organising weekly Dhamma Talks
- Liaising with speakers of the talks
- Liaising with Webmaster for uploading Dhamma Talks voice recordings to the UNIBUDS website

## MEDITATION COORDINATOR

- Organising and promoting regular lunchtime Buddhist Meditation sessions and a few workshops at the University
- Providing reference and information in regards to Buddhist Meditation practices

## SACCA EDITOR

- Publishing quarterly Sacca Newsletter
- Coordinating the Sacca Editorial team
- Promoting better communication among UNIBUDS members through newsletters (e.g. Informing members about past and upcoming activities)
- Promoting Buddhism within the University and among the public

## ANNUAL MAGAZINE EDITOR

- Publishing the Annual Magazine
- Coordinating the Annual Magazine editorial team
- Promoting Buddhism within the University and among the public
- Recording the activities for the year of UNIBUDS

*\*\*Apart from the listed duties stated above, each member in the EXCO will be involved in organising some other activities throughout the EXCO term such as potlucks, retreats, O-week stalls, Bodhi Nite, etc.*

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## SUBCOMMITTEES

Apart from the EXCO, there will also be a Subcommittees team to assist the EXCO throughout the term. The list are as follows:

- Publicity Team
- Welfare Team
- Library Team
- Activities Team
- English Dhamma Talk Team
- Chinese Dhamma Talk Team
- Meditation Team
- Sacca Team
- Annual Magazine Team

# AGM Nomination Form

27th September 2014



## UNIBUDS

The University of New South Wales Buddhist Society

UNIBUDS c/o The Religious Centre, Room 311, 3rd floor, Squarehouse  
UNSW, Kensington, NSW 2052 AUSTRALIA

### OFFICIAL NOMINATION FORM FOR THE 35<sup>th</sup> UNIBUDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_ (signature) would like to  
nominate \_\_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_ (signature),  
an Ordinary / Associate member, to the UNIBUDS Executive Committee  
position of: \_\_\_\_\_

This nomination has been seconded by:

\_\_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

*All candidates standing for the election of the Executive Committee shall be duly proposed and seconded by ordinary members of UNIBUDS present at AGM<sup>1</sup>. Nominations for the top 5 positions (President, External Vice President, Internal Vice President, Honorary Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer) must be submitted and received AT LEAST 2 DAYS before the AGM. Nominations for the other 9 positions are also accepted before the AGM or may be called out on the day of the AGM.*

*If you would like to stand for any of the positions but unsure of the duties involved, please feel free to talk to any of the EXCO members.*

<sup>1</sup> Ordinary members are current students of UNSW, and are current members of UNIBUDS.

For all further enquiries please contact UNIBUDS at [unibuds@gmail.com](mailto:unibuds@gmail.com)

# Editorial

## Big Thank You to everyone!

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**Proofreads** Weiwei Fam

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Allen Kha

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The UNSW Buddhist Society

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The theme for our upcoming spring edition of Sacca is "Mindfulness and Concentration". Contributions of any kind - articles, drawings, photographs - are welcomed. The possibilities are endless!

Please feel free to contact me at [fam.wwei@gmail.com](mailto:fam.wwei@gmail.com) to find out more =]

~Weiwei



冬  
六月2014  
八月2014

# saccd

慧 命 社 季 刊

执着、放下



# 目錄

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by Bing Sen Koh

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by 不詳



亲爱的读者，

在这一期的季刊里，让我们放下执着，解脱束缚，轻安自在。

慧命社季刊是代表会员们的汗血呈现至其他会员，因此，感谢大家的合作及协助。如果你有兴趣参与或分享你的佛学所得，请尽情与我联系 [fam.wei@gmail.com](mailto:fam.wei@gmail.com)。希望您可以抽出时间参与这有趣又有意义的佛学机会！

范伟玮上

## 活动介绍

6月7日  
禅修班

7月11-13日  
Winter Retreat

7月23日，7月28日-8月1日  
Orientation Day/Week

8月2日  
自带饭菜聚餐

8月30日  
普提之夜

每逢星期四  
从3月6日起  
6 - 8 pm  
中文达摩班

每逢星期五  
从3月7日起  
7 - 9 pm  
英文达摩班

1. 15-2 pm  
午间静坐班

# 生活里看不到的

by Bing Sen Koh

我们人生做了那么多，到底是为了什么？

我还记得，我曾经为了买游戏机，日夜都上网看游戏机的价钱，耗费了不少时间。终于看到合适的，便在网上订购。买过后，心里非常高兴。但有了游戏机，就得买电视机才能玩。于是又日夜都上网看电视机的价钱，又浪费了不少时间。哈哈，终于给我买到一个便宜的电视机。有了游戏机和电视机，没有游戏碟也是不能玩。所以我又要重复地上网找游戏，买游戏碟等。

其实这整个过程，我觉得有点累。当时我想，用了那么多宝贵的时间与精力，不就是为了满足自己“贪”玩的念头。

佛教说“贪、嗔、痴”就是“苦”的来源，一点都没错。

当我们仔细回想自己的经验，就会突然发现其实我们都曾亲身体会过因为想“得”而无谓的奔波忙碌、因为怕“失”而提心吊胆。这一切多从“贪”而起。

除了“贪”以外，我们也常被“嫉妒”与“嗔恨心”纠缠得日夜难眠。

再来，我们出世的那一刻，就由“痴”左右。“痴”使我们错误地把所接触的“色、声、香、味、触、法”归为自己的。

释迦太子一心就想突破“苦”而离开王宫，他曾向当时有名的老师拜师，也曾经修过苦行，但始终找不到超越“苦海”的方法。于是他便决定在一棵树下打坐，把心定下来。心入“定”后便“观”这个“心”和启发“智慧”。慢慢地他成功破解了每个人心里的“苦”，而从此得到解脱。

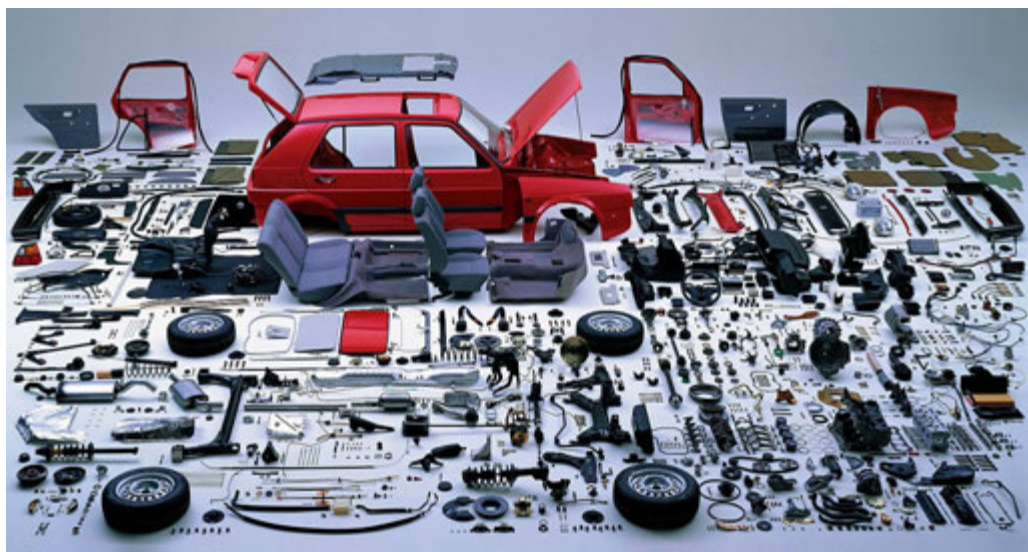
佛陀用了四十五年来教当时的人怎样离苦得乐，说了许多法门，但其中最被重视的是《三法印》。《三法印》指的就是自然现象的三个特性“苦、无常、无我”。

为什么说“苦”是自然现象？我们的“心”自然地会浮动、不能安定；不能安定就是有“苦”。在十分钟内，没做东西，“心”就不能安定、不能满足、蠢蠢欲动。

那么“无常”是自然现象吗？我的样貌，十几年了还是一样，没有改变，还是那么帅；我的固执，十几年了还是一样，没有改变。许多“身外”的东西看起来好像一样没有改变，但是其实它们一直在变动，只是变化不明显。我们的“身”无疑的在变动，心脏一直在跳动、肺一直在呼吸、手脚一直在移动。

“心里”的“受、想、行、识”也一直都在变动。我们时时刻刻的感触其实都不一样。我们的“感受”从冷变热、从烫变凉、从苦变甜、从臭变香；我们的“想法”从“这个好吃”变成“这个不好吃”（因为吃太多了），从“这是我的”变成“这是他的”（因为顾客付了钱）；我们心里的“行动”从“我要这个”变成“我不要这个”；我们的“识”从“清醒”变得“模糊”。由此可见，我们“心里”的变动其实非常澎湃，只是往往我们都没去注意它。

“无我”难道也是自然的法则？是不是说我不存在呢？其实佛陀“无我”的指的是“我”是由“五蕴”（色、受、想、行、识）和合而成的。就比如说“车”是由轮胎、引擎、螺丝等东西和合而成。但从小到大，我们就一直有“我”的观念，看不到其实是“色、受、想、行、识”的自然运作。就比如说我们只看



到“车”在跑，没有看到引擎、机械、轮胎的运作。所以，佛陀要用“无我”的观念来放下“心里”一直都执著着的“我”的观念。

这《三法印》听起来有点道理，但是对人生有什么用呢？佛说人生是苦，不是很消极吗？

曾经有一位美国军人，在越战时候被敌人擒去，关在监牢很久。终于有一天，他获救了。大家都好奇地问他是否抱着乐观的态度煎熬过监狱里的日子。他便回答说，乐观的人反而经不起监狱里的生活。因为，他们都坚信下个圣诞节便能被释放。但一年接一年，希望变失望，失望便绝望，最后因绝望而死去。相反的这位军人，并没有抱着不实际的希望。他没有日夜盼望出狱的那一刻，反而接受被困的显示，并且适应监狱里的生活。



其实，《三法印》是自然的法则。我们在日常生活中都不知不觉地在经历着。若我们能够接受“苦、无常、无我”，我们就会象那军人一样，在困境中过得快活。逃避反而会使人忧郁、崩溃。

要彻底地接受这自然的法则，其实并不容易。但大家请不要灰心，只要有耐心，终有一天会有觉悟的可能。我再此，希望大家能在学佛的道路上能够慢慢地得到解脱。



# 佛弟子文庫 - 適當的放手

by 不詳



新來的小沙彌，按法師的吩咐，去另一座寺院送經書。幾百本經書由一匹棗紅馬馱著。

在途中，小沙彌一直緊緊地牽著馬的韁繩，惟恐它不好好走，甚至怕它脫韁而逃了。越是這樣，那匹馬越是在後邊拖拉著，越走越慢，越走越沒精神，小沙彌就把韁繩扯得更緊了。結果，沙彌和馬之間不但形不成默契，還爭執別扭著。本來並不遠的路途，居然用了整整一天的時間才打了個來回。

回到寺院裏，小沙彌就向法師告馬的狀，說這匹馬太不聽話了，越拉越不走，急死人了。

法師就笑了，對小沙彌說：“與任何一匹馬同行，都不能強拉硬拽，要因勢利導，發揮和調動馬的積極能動性，讓它自己走，讓它在前面走，或與它並排走，絕對不能在前面拉它。這匹棗紅馬是一匹最聽話的老馬，對這樣一匹馬，就更省心了，所謂的老馬識途，它在這些寺院與寺院之間的路途上，走了已不止一遍，走了也不止一年了。明天再去另一座寺院送經書時，放手讓它自己

走，你試試看。”

小沙彌半信半疑地休息去了。

第二天，當小沙彌與那匹棗紅馬再次踏上路途時，小沙彌想起法師說的話，就及時地放開手，把韁繩搭在馬的脖子上。那匹棗紅馬像是受到了莫大的尊重，馬上精神起來，朝小沙彌嘯嘯兩聲之後，揚起四蹄嗒嗒嗒地朝目的地走去。小沙彌在一側跟著，既輕鬆又愉快。

更令小沙彌感動的是，在回來的路上，在一塊半米見方的巖石旁，棗紅馬忽然不走了，還銜住他的衣袖往它背上搭。小沙彌忽然明白了棗紅馬的意思，在騎上它之前，把自己揣在懷裏的半塊白饅饉給它了。

結果可想而知，與昨天差不多的路程，今天只用了少半天的時間就順利歸來。

省思：

每一個人，對待每一件事，都有一個成熟的過程和熟悉的過程。因此來說，有的時候，你過多地約束和牽制，並不能起到預期的效果和作用，倒不如適當放手，來得智慧和省心。



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