

AMITABHA BUDDHIST CENTRE

The Most Secret Hayagriva Prayer Festival 2019



On 3-4 August 2019, ABC will hold a weekend-long of powerful prayers; The Most Secret Hayagriva Prayer for protection against obstacles and harms. This wrathful aspect of Chenrezig is known to bring numerous benefits. The whole-day of pujas will be performed by Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi and the Sangha.

100 Million Merit Multiplying Day



On the second day of the festival is also *Chokor Duchen*, a 100 million Merit Multiplying Day. This day commemorates the First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma, when Buddha Shakyamuni gave his first teaching. All virtues accumulated on this day is believed to be magnified by 100 million times! Don't miss this opportunity to create oceans of merit by participating in and sponsoring the festival. For more details, please visit <http://www.fpmtabc.org>.

THE BUDDHIST LIBRARY

National Day Retreat



The Buddhist Library will be holding a one-day retreat on 9 August 2019, 8am-6.30pm. The day will start with

observing the Higher *Sila* (The 8 Precepts), followed by a puja, Dharma talk and *Metta Bhavana* (Metta Meditation) by Bhante Dhammaratana and then Mindfulness Meditation by Sis Foo Siew Ee and Siew Fong. There will also be a Dharma talk and discussion with Bhante Dhammaratana, Bhante Wimalajothi, and Venerable Chuan Guan. Lastly, ending the afternoon session will be a Mindfulness Meditation session by Bhante Wimalajothi, puja and chanting. For more information on the programme, please visit <https://buddhlib.org.sg>.

PALELAI BUDDHIST CENTRE

Meditation Retreat



Jointly organised by Nibbana Dhamma Rakkha, ForestWAY and Palelai Buddhist Temple, the 3D2N meditation retreat led by Ajahn Jutipanno (Abbot of Dhamma Light Meditation Centre in Malaysia Pontian) will be held from 10 August 2019, 8am to 12 August, 6pm at the Palelai Buddhist Temple. The overnight stay-in component is mandatory for participation. For details, please visit <http://www.watpalelai.org>.

KONG MENG SAN PHOR KARK SEE MONASTERY

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Prayer



On the 1st to 9th of the Seventh Lunar month (1-9 August 2019). KMSPKS will conduct a nine-day "Ksitigarbha's Remembrance and Repaying of Kindness Puja", from

8-9.30pm at The Great Compassion Hall. Venerables would lead in the recitation of *The Sutra of Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* and dedicate the merits to world peace, well-being of citizens, deliverance of the deceased, and the auspiciousness of those living.

Ullambana Festival



KMSPKS will be holding the Ullambana Festival on 15 August 2019. The Ullambana Prayer is a full-day event, from 8.30am-9.30pm, where the Water Repentance Puja is conducted during the day, and the Yogacara Ulka-mukha Puja in the evening. For details, please visit <https://www.kmspk.org>.

KWAN YIN CHAN LIN ZEN MEDITATION CENTRE

Di Zang Ceremony



KYCL will be holding the Di Zang Ceremony from 11 August 2019, 10am to 14 August, 6pm. There will also be *Di Zang Sutra* chanting on 15 August, 10am-4pm and Prayers for Ancestors, 6.30-9.30pm. For more information, please visit <https://www.kyclzen.sg>.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COHESIVE SOCIETIES INAUGURAL INTERFAITH CONFERENCE

The International Conference on Cohesive Societies (ICCS) kicked off on 19 June 2019 at Raffles City Convention Centre, where President Halimah Yacob said in the Opening Address, “What makes us different is what we are; what unites us is what we do”, and she also highlighted the need to engage with diversity and strengthen social cohesion, “Diversity is a source of strength for societies, and engaging meaningfully with difference is not easy, but it is necessary.”



Collective Strength

A total of more than 1110 delegates from close to 40 countries, representing more than 21 religions attended the ICCS to discuss the strengthening of cohesive societies and interfaith harmony. On the second day of the conference, His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan delivered the Keynote Address and spoke on the importance of international cooperation and dialogue for interfaith harmony, “Dialogue between governments, civil society, and the technology sector has been central... we all do better when we speak to each other, and work collectively.”

ICCS Young Leaders' Programme

One of the highlights of the conference is the ICCS Young Leaders' Programme (YLP), a platform that aims to harness the ideas and energy of the youth leaders, attended by youths and young adults who candidly shared



their perspectives. The inaugural interfaith conference ended on 21 June with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Mr Heng Swee Keat gracing the closing and giving the Closing Remarks.



“Today, we had an exciting array of activities. We had delegates from countries (from) all over the world and they were talking about the various platforms that they could be leveraging and how we could really work with one another, whichever (regardless of) our background. It gave us added confidence. It gave us a deeper sense of conviction that we were moving in the right direction,” Ow Yeong Wai Kit shared in the ICCS YLP Video.

Photo Credits: ICCS YLP Video and Serene Choo

THE GREAT DHARMA MASTER ZHIZHE

MORE THAN A CHARITY OPERA PERFORMANCE



Tzu Chi Singapore held 3 sessions of the “Great Dharma Master Zhizhe” Charity Performance at Kreta Ayer People’s Theatre from 5-6 July 2019. This is aimed at propagating the Dharma through drama and charity giving by channelling all its ticket proceeds to its Charity Development Fund.

Staged by the renowned Tang Mei Yun Taiwanese Opera Company, the plot depicted the moving and inspiring life story of Dharma Master Zhizhe, an eminent monk in ancient China, whilst Tang Mei Yun’s passionate performance, together with the rest of the opera troupe brought to life the challenges and inner struggles of Dharma Master Zhizhe.

THE TUMULTUOUS BEGINNING



The opening scene of the tumultuous era of the Northern and Southern dynasties in ancient China over 1,400 years ago depicted how 17-year-old Chen De An (Dharma Master Zhizhe as a youth) faced the imminent threat of his family being torn apart by the war. As he was fleeing from the pursuers and moving from one place to another, he met an anonymous monk, who kindly gave a bun (which he had received from a devotee) to a poor, old and hungry lady.



Surprised and at the same time impressed by the monk’s gesture and calm disposition, he asked the monk why he did not seem to be affected by the chaos and suffering caused by the war.

The monk calmly replied, “I’m also ‘escaping from suffering’. You all are escaping from the enemy soldiers, but I’m escaping from the suffering of the cycle of rebirth.” Those words struck a deep chord, and a thought arose in De An: “Since I’ve experienced unspeakable suffering from a war-torn nation, I should all the more not trap myself in the cycle of rebirth.”

The chaos of a civil war and the encounter with the wise anonymous monk, foreshadows how De An would become the Dharma Master Zhizhe, renowned for dedicating the rest of his life to finding the answer and helping others to escape from suffering the cycle of rebirth.

THE VOW AND HIS TEACHERS



Since his encounter with the monk, De An contemplated deeply and one day, he knelt before the Buddha statue in a temple and made a vow to enter the Buddhist monastic order. Then, at the age of 18, he took ordination with the Dharma name, Zhiyi and learned the monastic precepts from Dharma Master Hui Kuang.

Later, under the recommendation of Master Hui Kuang, Zhiyi went to seek Chan Master Hui Si as a teacher when he turned 23. Under Chan Master Hui Si's guidance and instruction, and with his own talents, he attained remarkable levels of practice such as attaining "The Lotus Samadhi" in just 14 days after Chan Master Hui Si expounded the chapter of "Happily Dwelling Conduct" from the *Lotus Sutra* and taught him how to enter "The Lotus Samadhi".

THE REMARKABLE BUDDHA DHARMA JOURNEY



Later, when Chan Master Hui Si felt that Zhiyi was ready to be a teacher

in his own right, he asked Zhiyi to go to Jinling (present Nanjing) and preach the Dharma. Before they parted ways, he gave his beloved disciple his last reminder: "Do not use the Dharma to gain favour from others. Do not be the last bearer of the Dharma." From then, Zhiyi continued to faithfully and unwaveringly devote his life to seeking the Truth and spreading the Buddha's teachings, and had many Buddhists learning the Dharma.



and intensive study to come up with a system of teaching to better teach the Dharma. And like the Buddha, when Zhiyi's spiritual cultivation reached a certain level or state, he faced a test from his inner demons and he managed to conquer them.

BEARER OF THE DHARMA



on the *Lotus Sutra*, the *Fahua Wenzhu* (587 CE), and the *Fahua Xuanyi* (593 CE), including the classification of the various Buddhist sutras into the Five Periods and Eight Teachings. In doing so, Zhiyi helped promote the *Lotus Sutra* as a teaching for perfect and immediate Enlightenment that one can truly put into practice, which aligns with the Buddha's hope for his followers to learn the true Dharma.

He also founded the Tiantai tradition of Buddhism, and served as the Advisor to the Imperial Government of the Chen and Sui dynasties in Ancient China and bequeathed his disciples with teachings. He devoted all his time and his life into propagating the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* in both the lay and monastic communities—worked hard to adapt Buddhism into the Chinese culture and to harmonise the monastic community—contributed exceptionally to the "rooting" of Buddhism in China. Thus, leaving behind a remarkable legacy after his 60 years of life, and was honoured as "Sakyamuni in the East" by posterity, and later known as the Great Dharma Master Zhizhe.

Photo Credits: Tzu Chi Singapore and Wong Twee Hee

MANAGING THE FAMILY & HOME FOR HOUSEHOLDERS

CONVERSATION WITH VENERABLE JING YIN (Part 1)

- HE LE -



Partners should be faithful, considerate, gracious and committed in managing the family together with mutual respect. This is also one way of contributing to society.

- Venerable Jing Yin

From time immemorial, love has been a topic that has endured the generations of change but remains an eternal theme that is part of the human condition. Regardless of whether it is an epic episode of passionate love or simple down-to-earth love—they all fascinate and tug at our heart-strings, sometimes even heart-wrenching.

Under the romantic brush strokes of Liu Yong, a poet of the Song Dynasty, “love endures distance and time apart, and the lover has no regrets” even when pining for the other half. In a different culture, renowned English playwright Shakespeare’s melancholic and

famous description that “the course of true love never did run smooth” adds on to the concept that trials and tribulations are part and parcel of what lovers have to go through to find love.

As mentioned in the Sixth Patriarch Master Huineng’s *Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*, ‘The Buddha Dharma is right here in the world./ There is no awakening apart from this world.’ This highlights how full awakening is not a future state or a distant place, but exists right within your own mind—directly and immediately available through experiences in life, including The Five Turbidities¹. So, how can we use the Dharma teachings to approach the concept of love, as well as marriage and family?

¹The Five Turbidities

They refer to the turbidity of:

1. Time (kalpa in decay)
2. Perception (five wrong views)
3. Afflictions (ignorance, negative emotions/ defilements)
4. Sentient Beings (living life of suffering)
5. Lifespan (decrease in longevity)

On 9 July 2019, *For You Information* interviewed Venerable Jing Yin when he was at Fu Hui Buddhist Cultural Centre to give a series of Dharma Talks.

May I ask Venerable, how does the Buddha Dharma approach the concept of love?

To explain love, we first need to understand the three levels encapsulated within it: desire, love and compassion.

Desire – Desire is in all sentient beings. This is seen as a human instinct as it is related to the concept of self and consciousness, which leads to the extension of one’s ego. This creates the phenomenon of self; I, me and myself... and what I desire and what can I do for myself, a “what is in it for me” attitude. Therefore, the initial driving force of love is desire. The characteristic of desire is possession, and all animals have this instinct. However, the biggest difference between humans and animals is that humans are more “educated”, which allows people to “do something” instead of succumbing to physiological impulses, or following feelings. Therefore, people can let desires sublimates into love, but animals cannot.

Love – Love and desire are completely different concepts. Desire is demanding and transactional, while love emphasises dedication and contribution. The Buddhist concept of love recognises that people are not sages. People not only have desires, but also the right to fight for desire. But Buddhism also tells people to be dedicated, selfless and altruistic so as to replace possessive clinging, selfishness and control, especially for loved ones. In addition, love also requires responsibility, and more importantly, there is warmth, affection and feelings rather than cold rationality though love can be conditional (caused by “I am”, “all of mine”, “my possession”).

Compassion – The higher level of the sublimation of love is compassion. It is unconditional and impartial, which is not only for the closest people, but also for every sentient being. This is where love is equal towards all beings, given without judgement, discrimination and expectations.

Then, how should the householder face and deal with the problems related to love, rejection, infidelity, quarrel, diminishing love, divorce and so on?

One should face it with equanimity and understand it from the perspective of ripening karma. Buddhism emphasises equanimity—the ability to maintain calmness and a balanced mind in the midst of chaos to ease the emotions and remain undisturbed.

After that, one must observe and calmly think whether this relationship still can be continued. Make it a rational analysis, with comprehensive and objective inquiry and reflection, weighing all kinds of factors before making the final decision.

And if the karmic affinity has been exhausted and the relationship has reached a dead end, then close the chapter and “let it go” bravely. Move on to meet new karma. This is easier said than done as many, due to wilfulness and refusal to compromise, continue in a marriage entanglement. As long as you are willing to adjust and change yourself—strive to avoid putting yourself first, be empathic (putting yourself in the shoes of the other party), forgive small mistakes and be accepting of faults—there will be more room for change, repentance and chance to start afresh. Then, there will be happiness.

On the other hand, if there are feelings that should not be there (e.g. lustful desires), a relationship that should not exist or acts that should not be committed (e.g. sexual misconduct), then there should be a clean break from all these. And one should be decisive and resolute to put a stop to improper conduct, to shorten the pain cycle, and to avoid harming others.

In fact, from a certain perspective, I see divorce as a form of punishment. I believe that the Buddhist concept of love is to achieve the purpose of education, not punishment. Practice is a process that inspires oneself and the other to recognise mistakes and correct mistakes. Therefore, love and marriage is a practice, with the Dharma as a guide, can enable each other to gain wisdom and progress together.

Then, could Venerable explain if lovers are tied together as “loved ones reuniting” or “enemies crossing paths”? And regarding the union of a couple, is it all due to cause-and-effect?

The story of Ananda and Matanga is recorded in the *Shurangama Sutra*. They have had a husband-and-wife relationship of five hundred past lives. In addition, Bodhidharma's *Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices* also mentions the intricacies of karma and explains that what have been owed to others in the past would have to be repaid when the time is ripe.

We believe in rebirth, and in cause-and-effect, and we should know that when two people come together in this life, there must be a cause, which can be good or bad. When confronted with a bad circumstance (due to bad cause), those who do not learn Buddhism have to accept it as their fate, but those who learn Buddhism will try their best to change their lives.

We must know that it is difficult to inspire people to think and ask questions when things are smooth-sailing. The wisdom of life comes from the vicissitudes of life: just like how the quality of the diamond can only shine after the vigorous process of dicing, slicing and polishing, and how the lotus blooms most beautifully from the deepest and thickest mud.

Only when the troubles are understood, then the Bodhi is realised. Those who study Buddhism will regard their grievances as the object of cultivation that can help their practice, cultivate the mind and increase perseverance, thus making them more mature. Therefore, regardless of the situation, one should cherish, rejoice, and not worry. We must approach it (problem) with equanimity and gratitude, let the grace increase and the resentment be reduced.

Then, how do we deal with the relationship between love-marriage and spiritual practice? Will the two conflict?

If you regard practice as “work”, then there will be conflicts. Because of limited working hours, you will lose sight of this. I do not agree with this notion of cultivating or practising as “professional practitioner”.

The true practice is in the family, in society, in life, as Buddhism advocates the way Zen demands that we engage our everyday activities, particularly work, as spiritual practice. Work is where we learn how to improve our concentration, resolve negative emotions, serve others, and take care of others and we must rely on the practice in life to think about how to use it. Because of this, for the householder, marriage is the best practice, the family is the real Dharma field where you need to plough, till, sow, as well as maintain it with love, compassion and commitment. And tackling problems is also part of the practice.

Buddhists must also bear both family and social responsibilities. While it is commendable for one to become a monk, some people choose to be monks because they are unwilling to take responsibility and take up monastic life to evade their responsibilities. This is irresponsible and immature as they do not understand the cause-and-effect of having the wrong motivation.

Venerable Jing Yin holds a Ph.D. in Buddhism from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He is currently Director of the Centre for Life Philosophy Research at the Chinese Culture Research Institute of Nanjing University, Doctorate Studies tutor at the University of Hong Kong, a member of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Abbot of the Hong Kong Po Lin Monastery. He is also the Honorary Consultant for Hong Kong Buddhist Culture Industry.

This interview has been translated from Chinese and lightly edited by Pema Rinchen. For You Information would like to express gratitude and appreciation to Sister Alice and Brother Zi Xiong for their assistance.

ON MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION AND RETREATS

INTERVIEW WITH HIS EMINENCE GARCHEN RINPOCHE (PART 1)
- PEMA RINCHEN -



***“Love is the only cause of happiness.
Its nature is all pervasive like space.
Love is the sunlight of the mind.”***

- His Eminence Garchen Rinpoche

His Eminence Garchen Rinpoche is renowned for his compassion, love, wisdom and legendary spiritual accomplishments. Regarded as one of the foremost Buddhist masters and accomplished Tibetan Lamas alive in this world today, Garchen Rinpoche is also one of the highest Lamas of the Drikung Kagyu Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. He is also respected by all the different lineages of Buddhism and revered by many across the world.

With his immeasurable compassion, vast realisation and blessings, Rinpoche has inspired and guided thousands of Dharma students and practitioners to cultivate love, bodhicitta, wisdom and cut through self-grasping. He is an eminent master of the practices of Mahamudra and Dzogchen, Tummo, the Six Yogas of Naropa, the 37 Bodhisattva Practices and many others.

Garchen Rinpoche today continues to travel extensively with his annual tour schedule packed with back-to-back teachings in different countries. This year, his itinerary includes the United States, Canada and countries in Asia, such as Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Hong Kong as well as Singapore. *For You Information* had the privilege to interview Garchen Rinpoche on some topics related to Mindfulness, Meditation, Retreats, and Spiritual Guidance (presented in two parts).

Born in Eastern Tibet in 1936, His Eminence Garchen Rinpoche was recognised at a very young age as the 8th incarnation of Garchen Rinpoche. From then, he took up monastic life, studied and practised the Dharma under many of the highest lamas of the Drikung lineage until he turned 19. Following that, he went into a traditional three-year retreat, which was interrupted after two and a half years due to the Cultural Revolution in China. At that time, Garchen Rinpoche was captured and imprisoned. For the next 20 years, Garchen Rinpoche spent his life in prison and labour camps in Communist China. It was in prison that Garchen Rinpoche met his root Guru, the great Nyingma master Khenpo Munsel, who gave him many essential teachings and pith instructions. Enduring unfathomable hardships, Rinpoche practised secretly in prison until he attained great profound realisation and merged his mind with his Guru.

In 1979, Garchen Rinpoche was released. Since then, he has worked tirelessly to restore, preserve and spread the teachings of the Buddha Dharma across Tibet and later, to the rest of the world. This brought him to America in 1997 where he later established his main centre, the Garchen Buddhist Institute, in Arizona and then numerous other centres throughout North America, Europe, Asia and South America.

On Mindfulness

There has been an increase lately in the number of non-religious mindfulness teachings being offered by various groups. Although these mindfulness practices are being taught in a non-religious context, they were adapted from Buddhist practices, and therefore some people have termed these programmes as “deracination” (meaning, “cutting off from its roots”), and a secularisation of Buddhism.

How does Rinpoche view this booming phenomenon of the diversification of traditional Buddhist practices? For example, is there truly a need for it in our society, for people who want to learn mindfulness practices, but don't want a Buddhist religious tag attached to it?

It is an ignorant view to have Buddhist and non-Buddhist tags for the practice. Buddhism concerns itself with the inner mind: it analyses the inner mind in order to experience the vastness of the mind, so that wisdom can become vast. Why is the mind so narrow? And how does it become vast? How does it become relaxed? Buddhists should analyse this. When narrowness is cleared away, the mind becomes vast, and as a result, wisdom arises. This is what we call Buddhist practice.

With ordinary mindfulness, however, one only thinks: “I want to be happy.” With such a motivation, wisdom will not become vast. The wisdom we speak about in Buddhism is vast because it is concerned with the benefit of others. It is concerned with love and compassion for others, which is how great wisdom arises. This is the difference between Buddhist and ordinary mindfulness.

How do Buddhists develop a vast mind? It is only through vast love and compassion, which is also the difference between the different vehicles within Buddhism. The Buddha referred to the narrow state of mind of those who only think about themselves as the Lesser Vehicle. We enter the Great Vehicle by cultivating greater love and compassion because the more love is cultivated, the less self-grasping there will be. What we are calling “grasping” is also referred to as “ignorance”.

Meditation founded on love engenders vast wisdom that is deep and profound. The essence of the mind itself and the nature of wisdom are the same, but due to the presence of self-grasping, wisdom does not become vast within the mind. Wisdom itself is neither good nor bad, as its nature is always the same, so it is only a question of how vast or narrow it is. If one lacks mindfulness, however, there is nothing one can do to realise this vast wisdom. But whatever is done in this world, whether in samsara or nirvana, is done by the buddhas—so this mind engaging in all activities is actually that same wisdom.

Is this a good development, or one that is detrimental to the real Buddhist teachings?

It doesn't cause any harm or detriment at all, though one may, of course, experience a different quality in one's meditation depending upon one's approach. If your wisdom is narrow and not very vast, the results you attain will only be temporary, and will only serve you in this life. But for Buddhists, there is both a temporary and ultimate benefit. This is the only difference, and it is a careful way of using one's wisdom. Some people have a natural imprint of it from their previous lives, and therefore they naturally experience the vastness of their mind. And the more vast one's wisdom, the less self-

grasping exists. Some people's wisdom, even though they are Buddhist, is not very vast. Therefore, it is not about whether one calls oneself a Buddhist or not; it is about the wisdom one has developed.

On Meditation

As Buddhism spreads, practices such as meditation are being opened up to more people. Many lay practitioners are adopting these practices, and it is common these days for Buddhist meditation practices to be taught by lay practitioners and householders, rather than by ordained Sangha members.

How does Rinpoche view the fact that lay practitioners and householders are teaching Buddhist meditation practices?

On the outer level, there seems to be a difference between being ordained and being a layperson. But actually, we have to look within the mind to the inner level. Within the mind, we need to have bodhicitta, and if we have bodhicitta within the mind, the outer appearance of whether one is ordained or not makes no difference.

Also, when the Buddha was alive, some of his closest disciples were laypeople. And some of them were bodhisattva teachers on the Bhumis¹, and others were teachers who were householders. Thus, if you have bodhicitta, it doesn't matter what kind of clothes you wear: you are allowed to teach the Dharma.

¹The 10 Bhumis

The ten bhūmis, or the stages of a bodhisattva, according to the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra*:

1. Extremely Joyous
2. Stainless
3. Light-Maker
4. Radiant Intellect
5. Very Difficult to Conquer
6. Manifest
7. Gone Afar
8. Unwavering
9. Good Intelligence
10. Cloud of Dharma

If you know how to meditate, what you need is bodhicitta, since a person who has bodhicitta can connect with other people's minds. If you don't have bodhicitta, however, you will think there is a difference between yourself and others, in which case there's not much benefit.

²*Drubchen*

In Tibetan Buddhism, a *drubchen* refers to a traditional form of meditation retreat that lasts for about ten days. It typically involves a large number of both lay and monastic practitioners and is led by at least one high lama.

On Retreats

Due to various circumstances, many Buddhist devotees and practitioners today choose to attend one-time, longer-duration practice retreats (e.g. a week-long retreat), rather than perform daily practice and recitations. Some say that the recitation done during the retreat is more effective than what can be achieved by performing daily practice, and so it makes more sense to them to attend such retreats.

What advice does Rinpoche have regarding this?

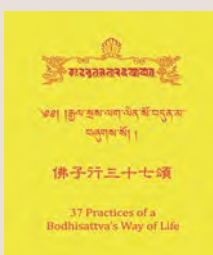
When you take part in a *drubchen*², an imprint of the experience is left within your mind. Due to this imprint, the power of the *drubchen* will always remain with you, which is why the benefit of participating in a *drubchen* is so great. Also, the feelings experienced at the *drubchen* are unique, since many Sangha members come together for the practice. For example, when four Sangha members come together to practice, the power is much greater than if one were to practise alone. And with so many Sangha members coming together, often we do not even know who among them is a Buddha emanation, since such a thing is hidden. In any case, the

greater the number of people coming together, the greater the power of the practice. So the feeling that arises in the mind during a *drubchen* is unique, and you can take this feeling and use it as a basis for your continuous practice. Thus, joining a *drubchen* is generally important. Of course, there is still benefit to doing a retreat for a week on your own. But if you do the practice alone instead of in a *drubchen*, the feeling will not be as strong, because the *drubchen* has a magnifying effect upon your experience. During a *drubchen*, it is as if everything opens up—your eyes, your ears, your mind, your devotion, and your faith. This is what is meant when it is said that the blessings are entering you. When these special feelings arise, if you are able to hold on to them, your personal practice will benefit. That's why it's good to do a *drubchen*, and then later do the practice. Sometimes, it is good to do a week-long retreat (and do it well). And of course, you must continue to do your practice after the retreat is over. If you just do one retreat for a week and then throw your practice away, there will be no benefit. Whether it is a *drubchen* or a week-long retreat, you should sustain a continuum of practice when you get back home, which means you have to continuously merge the experience gained in the meditation with the post-meditative state.

The benefit and power you gain during the *drubchen* is love and wisdom, and this wisdom should be brought into your daily life by following the *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. You need to merge your meditation, your conduct, and your understanding of the view, which is done by combining bodhicitta with the meditation that sustains love and compassion with mindfulness. And in daily life, you need to be a good person with conduct pleasing to everyone, so that people will trust you, so you can therefore bring them help and happiness. The special quality of the Buddhist teachings is that you merge your own benefit with the happiness of others.

For example, if you are a school teacher—even if you are not a Buddhist—and you love the students, you are like a Buddhist teacher. The Buddha is wisdom, and the Dharma is love and compassion. You've simply given it a different name. But if you are a Buddhist and you don't love the students, then you are just an outer, superficial Buddhist, but not a Buddhist on the inside. You may look like an actual Dharma practitioner, but the afflictive emotions are hidden within you, and your selfish motivations control your external activities—though nobody knows about it, which makes it worse.

³*The 37 Practices of a Bodhisattva's Way of Life*



The Thirty-seven Practices of a Bodhisattva's Way of Life was composed by Gyelse Tokme Zangpo whom is said to have composed some one hundred and fifteen works, some of which were printed in a single volume. And amongst them are, *A Commentary on the Seven-point Mind-training* and *The Ocean of Good Saying*, a commentary on the *Bodhisattvacāryāvatāra*.

For more information, please visit <http://garchen.tw/English/Sadhana> or <https://www.37practices.info/commentaries/garchen-rinpoche/>.

For You Information would like to express gratitude and appreciation to Ina Bieler for her Tibetan-English translation, and Sister Ailing for facilitating the process. This interview has been transcribed by Pema Rinchen and edited by Dan Clarke.

Hung Flame & Photo Credits: His Eminence Garchen Rinpoche and Garchen Dharma Institute

THE DASABHUMIKA SUTRA

THE STAGES OF BODHISATTVAHOOD – THE TEN BHUMIS

In the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra* (also known as the *Ten Stages Sutra*), the Buddha describes the ten stages or levels of development and accomplishments that a bodhisattva must progress through or attain to attain full Enlightenment and Buddhahood. Appearing as the 26th chapter of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, this sutra includes the subject of Buddha-nature and the awakening of the aspiration for Enlightenment. Each stage represents a level of attainment and serves as a basis for progression to the next one, marked by greater power and wisdom.



1. **The First – Extremely Joyous (*Pramuditā*):** The bodhisattva has recognised the *Śūnyatā*¹ and in a world of *Śūnyatā*, not a world of ignorance or selfishness, thus joyous at having overcome the former difficulties.
2. **The Second – Stainless (*Vimalā*):** The bodhisattva is free from all defilements, and experiences freedom (from all possible defilements).
3. **The Third – Light-Maker (*Prabhākari*):** The bodhisattva radiates the light of wisdom as the his meditation goes so deep that his *Samadhi* emanates or shines light.
4. **The Fourth Stage – Radiant Intellect (*Arciṣmatī*):** The bodhisattva is at a glowing wisdom stage

where his radiant flame of wisdom has burnt away earthly desires, sorrows and sufferings.

5. **The Fifth – Difficult to Conquer (*Sudurjayā*):** The bodhisattva is victorious having conquered utmost difficulties in practice and surmounted the illusions of darkness, or ignorance where he engages in the Perfection of Meditative Concentration, which is very difficult for demons to overcome.
6. **The Sixth – Manifest (*Abhimukhī*):** The supreme wisdom begins to manifest where it is the *śūnyatā* (emptiness) itself—its embodiment. The bodhisattva has gained an understanding of the *śūnyatā* and sameness of all phenomena through the cultivation of the Perfection of Insight.
7. **The Seventh – Gone Afar (*Dūraṅgamā*):** The bodhisattva has arisen above the states of the Two Vehicles, meaning his practice has progressed, and will keep going further and getting above ideas of self in order to save others. He is far from the habitual karma and can engage in the perfection of skilful means to liberate sentient beings.
8. **The Eighth – Unwavering (*Acalā*):** The bodhisattva is unshakable and engages in the Perfection of Aspiration, whose will to cannot be perturbed or moved by anything—be it any sorrow, false view, desire for money, fame, reputation, good and bad states—he is calm and undisturbed.
9. **The Ninth – Good Intelligence (*Sādhumatī*):** The Bodhisattva has attained the wisdom of fire—finest discriminatory wisdom and he cultivates the Perfection of Strength.
10. **The Tenth – Cloud of Dharma (*Dharmameghā*):** The bodhisattva is not only able to speak the Dharma but can also make Dharma rain to benefit all sentient beings—like a cloud sending down rain impartially on all. He engages in the Perfection of Awareness which brings him into contact with the Dharma in the presence of all the *tathāgatas* of the ten directions.

¹. *Śūnyatā* is a Sanskrit noun that derives from the adjective “*śūnya*” (void). It is a Buddhist concept and a core belief that encompasses several profound meanings related to the Buddha-nature teachings, primordial wisdom or empty awareness—all things are empty of intrinsic existence and nature—emptiness. Photo Credit: Ming dynasty mural of bodhisattvas found at the Fahai Temple in Beijing, China by Xuan Che on Creative Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fahai_Temple_Bodhisattvas.jpg

CHRONICLES OF BUDDHISM IN SINGAPORE

History of The Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre

- Dr. Jeffrey Po -

Presently located at No. 1, Jalan Mas Puteh, Singapore 128607, the Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, was officially registered with the Singapore Registrar of Societies in 1979. Its primary aim is to spread the Buddha's word world-wide. This centre was founded by Venerable Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero, who is also the Religious Advisor, with the dedicated support of a group of pioneering devotees led by Mr. Ee Fook Choy and Mr. Dennis Wang Khee Pong. The centre was registered as a charity organisation. Though it started and commenced its Buddhist activities on a minor scale, it has evolved 20 years later to become an internationally acclaimed institution that radiates and spread the glory of the Buddha Dharma.



Founder Members

(Front row, from left): Mr. Yeo Kit Leng , Mr. Dennis Wang Khee Pong , Venerable W. Sarada Maha Thero, Mr. Ee Fook Choy , Mr. Tony Sng Song Teck.

(Back row, from left): Ms. Gertrude Weerekoon, Ms. Irene Yeo Parm Koon, Mr. Sunny Cheng Chim Heng, Ms. Agnes Lee Peng Gien, Ms. Lau Yoke Kuan, Ms. Rose Weerekoon.

The Founder

Venerable Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero, was born in Sri Lanka in 1941, in a devout-Buddhist family. He was ordained as a Buddhist monk in 1953, when he was just 12. He pursued his higher education at the University of Sri Jayawardhanapura, Sri Lanka, obtained his first degree in 1964. He was Principal, Indurupathvila University College 1967-1969, followed by Principal at Sudhamarama University College. He dedicated himself fully and with

missionary zeal to the spreading of the Word of the Buddha, world-wide. He began his service in this field in Penang, Malaysia. There he was Principal Mahindarama Sunday Pali school until 1979. In that same year, he came over to Singapore and founded the Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre (SBMC). This centre has always been supported by a highly dynamic and devoted group of devotees from Singapore. Venerable Maha Thero, also founded the American Sri Lanka Buddhist Association, of which he is still the Director. In addition, he is the current General Secretary of Japan-Sri Lanka Buddhist Centre, of which he was the founder-President. He is the Chief Incumbent monk of Jayanthi Viharaya, Sri Lanka.



Venerable Sarada Maha Thero



His unique publications programme is distinguished by a whole series of records. He is also renowned for his monumental work, *Treasury of Truth – Illustrated Dhammapada*, an astounding piece of Buddhist work.

Today, he has more than 185 titles to his credit with works appearing in Sinhala, Japanese, Korean, Chinese and English. He has progressed to using electronic media, to present the Buddha Dharma to the world. Following the success and outreach of his magnum opus, *Treasury of Truth – Illustrated Dhammapada*, SBMC, together with Venerable Maha Thero continued to publish the *Illustrated Jataka Tales* with a thousand specially-commissioned artwork to complement and support the text.

Enhancing Knowledge of Dharma-Seekers

For over 25 years, SBMC has organised various activities such as pujas and tours to Buddhist pilgrimage sites, and offered to the world more than 320 publications on Buddhism and related themes. More than a million of its titles, were mostly distributed free for circulation around the globe, enhancing the knowledge of Dharma-seekers. And from SBMC's initial steps of printed media products, they moved into electronic media, producing audio compact discs on Dharma themes, as well as launch of the SBMC website, an invaluable source of information and inspiration to the Dharma world.

Website and Outreach

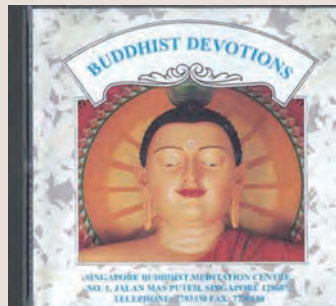
The SBMC website is home to many Dharma-related publications, excerpts, newsletters, audio clips of pali chanting and the list goes on. Though different in format, the electronic medium holds true to the mission of SBMC; enabling the exchange of knowledge and to promote the spiritual aspirations of men and women world-wide, everywhere in this digital age. In Venerable Maha Thero's message on SBMC website, he highlights, "with the global reach afforded by this facility (SBMC website), we are resolved to enhance our service to mankind, presenting to them the Enlightened words of the Supreme Buddha, in sight and sound. Millions of copies of our publications have already circulated far and wide in the world, distributed, in most instances, entirely free."

With the myriad of information and activities, SBMC's efforts are directed towards one aim; a noble end. With the world around us today being ridden with strife and conflict; consumed by riven. Venerable Maha Thero Man shares, "Man destroys fellow man with no compunction at all. Disorder, turbulence, wars, insurgencies and tumults, all plague mankind. The young seem to have lost their bearings and are driven astray by habits and ways of life, that lead to catastrophe. In such a context, our website will hold aloft



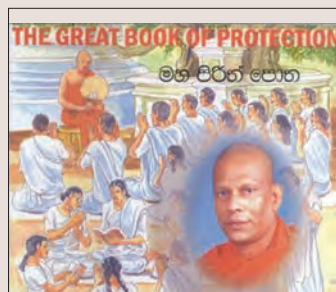
Participants of SBMC Holy Tour chanting the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta at Saranath, India

the torch of true knowledge, to light the path of mankind to happiness, harmony and peace. Visit the website and be at one with Triple Gems- Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. May you be well and happy."



Buddhist Devotions

In all religions, the followers and devotees express their deep feelings of veneration, most frequently and outwardly through devotional chants. The practice of various rituals connected with worship has its own meaning, purpose and series of recitals. The Buddhist religious system, which has evolved over a period of time that exceeds 2,500 years, possesses a vast variety of rites and rituals. In this collection, SBMC has put together the chants that accompany the main rites and rituals of current Buddhist practice. These devotional recitations have been carefully recorded, especially for those who wish to learn the wordings of these ritual chants. The words recited place due emphasis on each expression, so as to facilitate the listener being able to absorb the rhythm and the accurate pronunciation of these ritual recitals. This collection begins with the salutation to the Buddha and popular recital of puja; offering and three main suttas.



The Great Book of Protection

The Supreme Buddha and His disciples recited a variety of chants to dispel evil, allay fears and even eradicate diseases. These chants are believed to possess the power to heal and soothe one's pain and suffering experienced through the countless lifetimes. Twenty-nine main chants of these have been gathered into four compact discs for the benefit of devotees the world over. These chants are recited by Venerable Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero with impressive clarity, where the proper intonation of the words, phrases and stanzas can enable learning and practise of accurate pronunciation of the words. Devotees can listen to these compact discs singly and/or in groups.

DISCOURSE ON THE LAND OF HAPPINESS

CHANTING FROM THE HEART

- THICH NHAT HANH -

"This is what I heard the Buddha say one time when he was staying in the Anathapindika Monastery in the Jeta Grove. At that time the Buddha had with him a Sangha of 1,250 bhikkhus, all arhats and the most well-known among his senior disciples, including Shariputra, Mahamaudgalyayana, Mahakashyapa, Mahakatyayana, Mahakaushthila, Revata, Shuddhipanthaka, Nanda, Ananda, Rahula, Gavampati, Pindolabharadvaja, Kalodayin, Mahakapphina, Vakkula, and Aniruddha. There were also present bodhisattvas of great stature like Manjushri, Ajita, Gandhastin, Nityodyukta and many other great bodhisattvas as well as countless heavenly beings including Indra.

At that time, the Buddha called Shariputra to him and said: "If you go from here in the western direction and pass through hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddha Worlds you will come to a world called Sukhavati (Great Happiness). In that world there is a Buddha whose name is Amitabha and who is at this very moment teaching the Dharma. Shariputra, why is that land called Great Happiness? Because the people who live there do not have to go through any suffering. They are always enjoying many kinds of happiness. And that is why that world is called Great Happiness."

"Shariputra, around Sukhavati there are seven rows of rails, seven rows of spread out netting and seven rows of trees. All are made of the four kinds of precious jewels. That is why the land is called Great Happiness."

"Furthermore Shariputra, in the land of Great Happiness there are many lakes of the seven precious stones, full of the water of the eight virtues. The bed of the lake is made wholly of pure golden sand and on the shores are paths of gold, silver, and crystal. Above these paths are countless pavilions which are built of and decorated with gold, silver, crystal, mother-of-pearl, red agate, and carnelians. The lotus flowers in these lakes are as large as cartwheels. The blue lotuses give out a halo of blue light, the golden lotuses a halo of golden light, the red lotuses a halo of red light and the white lotuses a halo of white light. The fragrance of the lotuses is subtle, wonderful, sweet, and pure. Shariputra, Sukhavati is adorned with such beauties as these."

"Furthermore Shariputra, in this Buddha Land people can always hear the sound of heavenly music. The earth is made of pure gold. During the six periods of the day, flowers rain down multitudes of *mandarava* from the sky. In the morning the people of this land like to take flower baskets made of cloth and fill them with these wonderful flowers in order to make offerings to the Buddhas who live in countless other Buddha Lands. When it is time for the midday meal, everyone returns to Sukhavati and after eating does walking meditation. Shariputra, that is how extraordinarily beautiful Sukhavati is."



"Furthermore Shariputra, in Sukhavati you can always see different species of birds of many wonderful colours, like white cranes, peacocks, orioles, egrets, kavalinkara, and jivanjva birds. These birds sing with harmonious, sweet sounds throughout the six periods of the day. In the song of the birds, people can hear teachings on different Dharma doors such as the Five Faculties, the Five Powers,

the Seven Factors of Awakening, and the Noble Eightfold Path. When the people of this land hear the teachings in the form of bird songs, their minds are in perfect concentration and they come back to practising mindfulness of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha."

"Shariputra, do not think that the birds in Sukhavati have been born as the result of past bad actions. Why? Because the three lower realms of hells, hungry ghosts, and animals do not exist in the land of Amitabha Buddha. Shariputra, in this land, the names of the lower realms do not even exist, how much less their actuality! These birds are manifestations of the Buddha Amitabha so that the Dharma can be proclaimed widely in his land."

"Shariputra, in this Buddha Land, whenever a light breeze moves the rows of trees and the jewelled netting, people hear a wonderful sound as if a hundred thousand musical instruments are being played together at the same time. When the people hear this sound, they all naturally return to mindful recollection of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Shariputra, that is how beautiful Sukhavati is."

"Shariputra, why do you think that Buddha is called Amitabha (Limitless Light)? Because he is the infinite light which is able to illuminate all worlds in the Ten Directions, and this light and radiance never comes to an end. That is why he is called Amitabha. What is more, Shariputra, the life span of Amitabha as well as the life span of everyone who lives in his Buddha Land is limitless. It lasts for innumerable *kalpas*, that is why he is called Amitabha."

"Shariputra, from the time when Amitabha Buddha realized enlightenment until now can be reckoned as ten *kalpas*. Moreover,

Shariputra, the number of his hearer disciples who have attained the fruit of arhatship is also limitless. It is not possible to calculate them, so great is their number. The number of bodhisattvas in that land is also limitless. Shariputra, the land of Amitabha is made out of such beautiful qualities as these.”

“Shariputra, everyone who is born in Sukhavati naturally has the capacity of non-regression. Amongst the people living there, many will attain Buddhahood in one more lifetime. The number of these bodhisattvas is infinite, and there is no method of calculation to number them. It may only be expressed by the term limitless.”

“Shariputra, when living beings everywhere hear Sukhavati spoken about, they should bring forth the great wish to be born in such a land. Why? Because having been born in that land they will be able to live with and be very close to so many noble practitioners.”

“Shariputra, one cannot be born in this land with a lack of merit or wholesome roots. Therefore, Shariputra, whenever men or women of good families hear the name of Amitabha Buddha, they should mindfully repeat that name and wholeheartedly practise visualisation with a mind that is one-pointed and not dispersed for one, two, three, four, five, six, or seven days. When that person passes from this life, they will see Amitabha Buddha and the Holy Ones of that land right before their eyes. At the time of their passing, their mind will abide in meditative concentration and will not be deluded or dispersed. That is why they can be born in the Land of Great Happiness.”

“Shariputra, it is because I have seen the enormous benefit of this land that I want to tell all who are listening now to bring forth the great wish to be born there. Shariputra, as I am now commending the inestimably great benefits and virtues of Buddha Amitabha, there are in the east, in the south, in the west, in the north, above and below, Buddhas as numberless as the sands of the Ganges, each one seated in his own Buddha field, each one with the long tongue of a Buddha which is able to embrace the three chiliocosms, announcing with all sincerity, ‘Living beings in all worlds, you should have confidence in this sutra, which all the Buddhas in the entire cosmos wholeheartedly commend and protect by recollection’.”

“Shariputra, why do you think this sutra is wholeheartedly commended and protected by the recitation of all Buddhas? The reason is that when sons or daughters of good families hear this sutra or hear the name of the Buddha Amitabha and wholly put it into practise and maintain mindful recitation of Buddha Amitabha’s name, they will be protected by the recollection of all the Buddhas, and they will attain the highest fruit of awakening, from which they will never regress. So you should have faith in what I am saying and what all other Buddhas are also saying.”

“Shariputra, if there is anyone who has already brought forth the great aspiration, is aspiring now or will aspire in the future to be born in Amitabha’s land, at the very moment when that person makes the aspiration, they already attain the fruit of the highest awakening from which they will never regress, and they are dwelling already in the Buddha field of Amitabha. It is not necessary that they have been born or are being born or will be born there in order to be present within the Buddha field of Amitabha.”

“Shariputra, while I am praising the unimaginably great qualities of the Buddhas, the Buddhas are also praising my unimaginably great qualities saying, ‘Buddha Shakyamuni is very rare. In the Saha world which is full of the five impurities—the cloudiness of time, the cloudiness of views, the cloudiness of unwholesome mental states, the cloudiness of the idea of living being and life span—he is able to realise the fruit of the highest awakening and is able to communicate to living beings the Dharma doors, which people will find hard to believe if they have had no preparation.’”

“Shariputra, understand that to stay in a world which is full of the five kinds of impurity and to be able to attain the fruit of the highest awakening and also to be able to transmit to all beings Dharma doors which people find hard to believe, like this Dharma door of being born in Sukhavati, is something extremely difficult.”

When Shariputra as well as all the bhikkhus, heavenly beings, bodhisattvas, warrior gods, and others heard the Buddha deliver this sutra, they all had faith in it, joyously accepted the teaching and paid respect to the Buddha before returning to their dwelling places.”

Sukhavati-Vyuha Sutra, Taisho Revised Tripitaka 366. This translation of Discourse on the Land of Great Happiness has been prepared by Thich Nhat Hanh from Samyukta Agama 1071 (The equivalent in the Pali Canon is Theranamo Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya 21.10.) It appears in Thich Nhat Hanh’s Chanting From The Heart (Parallax Press, Rev.Ed., 2006).



Chanting from the Heart – Buddhist Ceremonies and Daily Practices

Chanting from the Heart is a collection of traditional and contemporary Buddhist chants, recitations, and ceremonial texts for daily spiritual practice. This is regarded as a quintessential resource and reference book for Buddhist practitioners at any level of experience, for anyone who wants to celebrate life and practise the art of mindful living, and those interested in liturgy. It contains chants and recitations for daily spiritual practice and for occasions such as blessing a meal, celebrating a wedding, comforting the sick and remembering the deceased. Included are more than twenty discourses comprising some of the most fundamental teachings of the Buddha and his enlightened students, including the *Heart Sutra*, *The Discourse on the Mindfulness of Breathing*, the *Discourse on Happiness*, the *Discourse on Taking Refuge in Oneself* and the *Discourse on Love*.

For more information, visit <https://plumvillage.org/books/chanting-from-the-heart/>.

GOING BEYOND PILGRIMAGE

BUDDHIST & CHARITY TOUR IN MYANMAR

- BODHIRAJA BUDDHIST SOCIETY -



The Bodhiraja Buddhist Society organised and led a special pilgrimage and charity tour to Myanmar from 5-11 June 2019. This Buddhist pilgrimage tour that included charity giving was conceptualised with the advice of Bodhiraja Buddhist Society Chief Religious Advisor, Venerable Dr. Sobhita, together with Venerable Rahula, Venerable Gunasiri and Venerable Suseela.



Trip Highlights

The highlights of the trip were the visits to many Buddhist pilgrimage sites and national monuments such as the Kaba Aye Pagoda

and Marble Buddha, Kyaik Hti Yoe Pagoda (Golden Rock), Mya Thar Lyaung Pagoda, Shwemawdaw Pagoda, the Botahtaung Pagoda, Maharsi Thartnana Monastery, the National Museum, the Mahabandoola Park and the Civil High Court. There were also visits to meet and interact with the local Sangha community in Yangon.



The Chaukhtatgyi Buddha Temple

The most well-known Buddhist temple in Bahan Township, Yangon is the Chaukhtatgyi Buddha Temple. It houses one of the most revered reclining Buddha images in the country, where the majestic reclining Buddha statue is 66-metre long (217 feet).

The Loka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni White Marble Statue

Kyauktawgyi Buddha Temple is a Buddhist temple located on Mindhamma Hill on Mingaladon Township, Yangon. The temple houses a Loka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha that stands at 7.6-metre tall (25 feet). This magnificent Buddha statue is carved out of a single piece of white marble quarried in Sagyin Hill, Madaya Township, Mandalay Region.

Charity Giving

Part of the tour included a full-day programme of visiting the charity beneficiaries such as a school for the disabled. They also made contributions and offerings to temples and monastic training centres (such as South Okkalapa Monastery, Margarmi Tharsai Monastery and Insein Ywarma Monastery), orphanages and schools, in different parts of Yangon. This



charity project was funded mainly by donors from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan and China.



Photo Credits: Bodhiraja Buddhist Society and Singatour Pte Ltd

THE POWER OF MIND

ARE YOU GROWN UP?

- Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre -

Mind is power, just as electricity is power. Nobody will deny the power of electricity, but people tend to doubt the power of mind because as yet, there is no instrument whereby it can be measured. But to those who have had such actual experience of its operation, the power of mind is a very real thing. Sometimes, it can be a startling thing.

Since time immemorial, the East has recognised the power of mind. While the West has progressed far in studying and exploiting the power of matter, the East has progressed far in studying and exploiting this subtler power. Phenomena such as telepathy, hypnotism, clairvoyance and clairaudience, have for ages past been regarded as almost commonplace in the East, whereas in the countries of the West they are still excitingly new. Mind power, like all forces, can both destroy as well as create. And again, like all forces, it operates in accordance with certain natural laws. Many have been those who studied these laws so that they might use this silent, unseen force. Some used it for evil, and reaped the deadly harvest that it yielded. Others used it for good, and their names are still remembered with reverence.

The Greatest of all teachers of mental laws, in accordance with which mind power operates, He taught His followers how to develop and use it for the highest good, the attainment of final deliverance.

The first step on the road to mental culture, according to the Buddha Dharma, is *sila* or virtue. The man who would control his mind, must



*A lone seer, from a tropic land,
Sent forth rays of radiant love,
Intense and immeasurable.
Below, around, above.
And far away, where snowflakes fell,
Death knocked, and round a bed folk sighed.
He past hope, starts, and whispers –
“Look! Look! Love’s rose-light!” – and smiling, died.*

Kassapa Thero

first learn to control his mind and must first learn to control his speech and deed.

The next step is *bhavana*, the practice of concentration and the cultivation thereby of a calm, steady "one-pointed" mind. It is not easy. The Buddha has prescribed forty subjects of meditation for the cultivation of this one-pointed mind. In the absence of an experienced teacher, the aspirant to mental culture must analyse his own nature (always a difficult feat) and choose a subject that suits him.

One of the subjects of meditation that may with benefit be chosen by anybody is *metta*, selfless love, and sympathetic kindness towards all beings. It may be practised with safety, and indeed with definite advantage, even by those whose *sila* is as yet imperfect. It is wholesome and good, bringing bodily health, mental calm and rapid attainment of concentration. To the hurrying bodily multitude, a person seated quietly in the practice of *metta bhavana* may appear to be doing nothing. But those who are aware of the nature of mind-power would know better, such a person is a human dynamo, generating thoughts of love in a world that has almost forgotten how to love. Were there many such, their untied power might yet save the world from self-destruction: For not by hatreds are hatreds ever quenched here in this world. It is by love rather are they quenched. This is an eternal (law).