

मर्मसूत्र

Lake of Lotus

Bimonthly

Issue No.33

Hong Kong May 2011

Taiwan June 2011

蓮
花
海

2011年5月香港
2011年6月台灣
(逢月初出版)
雙月刊

The Grandest Series of Talks on "Near-Death Experiences" Ever in Hong Kong History
How to Open Up More Windows of Life?
How to Directly Elevate the Functions and Merits of One's Own Mind?
How to Directly Link Up With the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas?
Why Should "Death" Be a Must Task for "Life-long Learning"?



HK\$10

香港

NT\$80

台灣

ISSN 1816-8019 05



9 771816 801006

ISSN 1816-8019



4 712070 144637

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English Version

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Mourning A Prayer for All Those Death Victims Across the Whole World

Dudjom Buddhist Association

Why should mourning be held for those death victims? Please read the following unfading article: **“For whom the Bell Tolls”**, and then you would come to realize what **“life”** is supposed to be.



John Donne (1572-1631 / London, a great scholar and representative during the Age of Renaissance)

“For Whom the Bell Tolls” :

“No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.”

This is a famous direct quotation from the poem entitled **“A Devotion: For Whom the Bell Tolls”**, by **John Donne** (1572 – 1631), a great scholar of England and a representative of the Age of Renaissance. The original verse was not intended to be a poem and was taken from his work entitled **“Devotions upon emergent occasions and severall steps in my sicknes - Meditation XVII, 1624”**, which was structured more as a prose of essays.

(**Note**: Source: Donne, John. The Works of John Donne, Vol.III. Henry Alford, ed. London: John W. Parker, 1839, pp.574-5.)

The **Dudjom Buddhist Association** extends its **most sincere and whole-hearted condolences and blessings** to all those victims of death, injuries, and illnesses across the whole world, regardless of natural and human causes, or of whatever reasons!



Wishing all those death victims across the whole world would have the care, concern and blessings of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for their future rebirths to the **“Pure Land of Great Happiness”**, and to be distant from all kinds of sorrows, sufferings and tortures!
Wishing all those victims of injuries and illnesses would also have the care, concern and blessings of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Under the atmosphere of auspiciousness, active engagements and energetic supports, all of their difficulties would be resolved, and all of their sufferings would be extinguished. All the hopes of their lives would be rekindled and re-ignited, and all of their vitalities and perseverance of will-power would be re-installed, so that they would all rise up again!
Please listen: you are not alone! All over the world, the whole of humankind and all its countless sentient beings are making their **whole-hearted prayers and blessings** for all of you!



The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (33)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Simon S.H. Tang



Why Should “Death” Be a Must Task for “Life-long Learning”?

How to Open Up More Windows of Life?

The Grandest Series of Talks on “Near-Death Experiences” Ever in Hong Kong History

Excerpt of Last Chapter: Various Reasons on the Formation of Different Scenes at the “Moment of Death”

The “scenes at the moment of death” can be roughly classified in the following categories in accord with the varieties of the “main causes” and “auxiliary conditions”:

1. The “Separation of the Four Elements” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”, including all kinds of memories) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the ‘Separation of the Four Elements’ in the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death” (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 8 and 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



2. The “Endorphins Inside the Brain” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the “endorphins inside the brain” of the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death” (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 21 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

3. The “Karmic Forces” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the “karmic forces” of the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death”. This can be further classified into the following two kinds:



i. **Wholesome Ones** – arising from: (a) virtuous retributions (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 21 of the “Lake of Lotus”); and (b) the efforts of one’s Dharma practice (the main theme of this article in this issue).

ii. **Unwholesome Ones** – arising from: (a) vicious retributions; and (b) the forces of karmic creditors in seeking compensations on one’s karmic debts.

According to the records of different surveys, most of the dying people had seen the following scenes:

1. **Protectors or avengers:** (i) **good ones** – saw kith and kin who had passed away, unknown protectors, deities or Buddhas coming to fetch for oneself

(ii) **bad ones** – being besieged by a crowd of ferocious persons or beasts, and going along in company with groups of people who looked confused.

2. **Strange places:** (i) **good ones** – saw pavilions, balconies, buildings, flower fields, rivers, light zones, towns or cities.

(ii) **bad ones** – saw wilderness, forests, darkness, caverns, hells.

3. **Messy Issues that cannot be recalled clearly.**

How would the Buddhist point of view comment on these phenomena? According to the Buddhist teachings, it was said that rebirth would take place within forty-nine days after a person has passed away, then why would a dying person see the kith and kin **who had passed away long time ago** still coming to fetch for him or her? Why had not the kith and kin taken rebirths after so many years posthumously?

Are the appearances of these deceased persons merely the illusions of the person who is going to die? Or were they really true? Are there any other reasons? Are those strange places the destinations where they are going to be reborn into? Under what circumstances would the normal rebirth of a dying person be negatively encumbered? Is there any way to help a deceased person to avert sufferings and elevate to a better place of rebirth?

Human beings have four kinds of conditions of consciousness (please refer to the article “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”) as follows:

1. **Beta β waves** – the “conscious condition” of daily living;

2. **Alpha α waves** – the relaxed “consciousness condition”, such as in entering into the elementary stage of ‘visualization’, or at the first stage of “mental concentration”; or the condition when the “spiritual body” is **slowly separating** from the “physical body”;



3. **Theta θ waves** – the peaceful “conscious condition” of having entered into higher levels of “visualization”, or at the deeper levels of “mental concentration”;
4. **Delta δ waves** – slow “conscious condition” of not having any dreams, and in a stage of slow-wave deep sleep.

In fact, how does the arising of the different stages in approaching death and its “transformation of consciousness” affect the thoughts and behaviors of dying patients? What are their relationships with the “scenes at the moment of death”? How should the family and kin and kith who take care of the dying patients respond to the “transformation of consciousness” and change of “scenes at the moment of death” for guiding the emotions and spiritual direction of the dying patients? Could the “transformation of consciousness” and the change of “scenes at the moment of death” be complementary to each other? Furthermore, the “**disintegration of the Four Elements**” of the physical body **also affects** the “transformation of consciousness”, as well as on the change of the “scenes at the moment of death”. Hence, how should one support and provide guidance to a dying patient in order to **reduce or resolve** the predicament from these problems?

What is the Ultimate Assistance in the First Stage of Approaching Death?

The care-givers, kin and kith and professional counselors should perform the following steps when a dying person is **approaching the “first stage of death”**:

1. [Accepting and Understanding](#)
2. [Listening and Observing](#)
3. [Analyzing and Adopting](#)
4. [Leading Out and Guiding In](#)
5. [Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus](#)

The key points of application and their importance on the

issues of “Accepting and Understanding” and “Listening and Observing” had been clearly highlighted in the cases of the last chapter ([please refer to the article “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 30 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)). To most people, the issues of “Accepting and Understanding” and “Listening and Observing” are not difficult to do and it is relatively easy to carry out under the **call of “love” and with one’s wisdom**. Not too many skills will be required. Even though a person has never learned of the relevant know-how nor have received any such relevant training, he or she can still spontaneously provide proper care or resolve various problems for the seriously-ill persons, or dying patients.

However, the quality and depth of the resolution to a problem would be inadequate or imperfect, due to lack of relevant know-how or training by the participants. In order that both the care-giving family members and the dying patients do not have remorse which will be too late to repent later on, but only **ultimate offering in farewell with a “heart-to-heart connection and having no trace of regret”**, the following three steps should be included in the issues that must be done when a dying patient is **approaching the “first stage of death”**.

3. **Analyzing and Adopting** – Analyzing is an important element in every case of success. However, why did so many people fail although having made detailed analysis in advance? Even though they are successful, but then the results are just marginal and barely satisfactory. Many people attribute the outcomes to fortune, or the trend of times, or ability. However, the question is not merely due to these issues. Most importantly, whether the key point has been wrongly set when an analysis is made? Are the facets and direction of the analysis pinpointing to the problem?

There are at least two parts to the issue of “Analyzing and Adopting”. The first part of “Analyzing and Adopting” is to be led by a dying patient, while the





second part of “Analyzing and Adopting” is to be led by the care-givers, kin and kith and professional counselors. The first part had been discussed in the last chapter (please refer to the article “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 31 of the “Lake of Lotus”), and so now we are going to discuss on the issue of “Analyzing and Adopting” as being led by the care-givers, kin and kith and professional counselors.

Why Should Death Be a Must Task for Life-long Learning ?

“Death should be a must task for our life-time learning. A person who refuses to learn to face death would experience tremendous frustration when he gets old. On the contrary, a person who has accepted the reality and nature of death would live more freely, and will be able to open more windows of life.” -- by Erik H. Erikson, psychologist and psychoanalyst.

“While I thought that I have been learning how to live, but, in fact, I have been learning how to die.” -- by Leonardo da Vinci.

How important is this “learning of death” to the dying patient at the end of one’s life, as well as to his relevant family members who survive him? How one should learn about this? Are there any other issues that one should pay attention to, besides the issues of “analyzing and adopting”, as well as on the decisions of whether to resuscitate or not? Furthermore, among the different issues on “maintaining one’s life, maintaining the quality of one’s life, and maintaining one’s final dignity at the last moment of one’s life”

which of these should be given the first priority? How should we take good care of the dying persons?

People who have suffered serious illnesses would discover that: different persons would suffer the impacts of illness and sorrow differently. The relations of the patients with their relevant kin and kith would also be changed owing to such experiences. What are the other points in the issues of “analyzing and adopting” that are worthy of attention and analysis by the caregivers, kin and kith, and professional counselors? What kinds of strategies could be “adopted”? Acting in the role of a medical practitioner, Dr. Po-chang Lee, professor of surgery at the medical School of the National Cheng Kung University of Taiwan, has made the following suggestions to the contemporary medical professionals, as well as all people and their relevant family members who will be bound to face death:

1. Dare to confront: one must take serious thoughts and considerations towards the issue of life and death – as if one’s view on death sentence, there will be tremendous differences in emotional responses of what is happening to the others and of what is happening to oneself.
2. Dare to accept: try to grasp on any opportunity of survival, but one must be prepared to accept death – the objective of medical care is never to give up on a valuable life. However, the occurrence of cancer could not be predicted. In most cases, illnesses develop in a chronic manner, and so any opportunity of survival is worthy of attempts to cure it. Yet, the medical science still has its limitations, and so one must be prepared to accept death. In general, patients with non-life-threatening diseases could recover, or would appear in chronic manner, and so they would not have the pressure of imminent death. Yet, though there is no pressure of death, one should still need to give serious thoughts and attention as to how to deal with death. When death actually comes to oneself,

the relevant person would be **inconceivably lost in an out of control situation**. Hence, one must first **accept death, and then try to endeavor for one's survival on the ground of death**. Under such a circumstance, it is possible for one to pass through the difficulties more smoothly.

3. **Be frank and open: medical practitioners are not almighty gods, and so there is no way that they can tell as to when will be the time for one's ending of life** – however, there are lots of scientific data that the medical practitioners can advise the patients and their family members as to how is the chance of one's curing, or in the slowing down on the development of one's cancer disease. Physicians **must face the situation honestly**, and elaborate on the details to their patients and their family members, so that they can have sufficient information and time **to learn how to deal with the various symptoms and its eventual death**. Professor Po-cheng Lee was asked to pay a visit to a friend whose liver cancer had already been metastasized to multi-sites, and the patient could not take meal and ascites were developed. He asked the patient's husband cautiously as to whether he knew the current situation of his wife. The answer was unexpected that, **for two years, he was innocent about the situation of his wife, and he had no clue that his wife was approaching the end of her life**. Both the patient and her family members were kept in the dark. Professor Po-cheng Lee was very sad about this: with the advancement of medical technologies and the reform of medical education, it is questionable **whether the "medical ethics" has been taken seriously or not?** Is the rather active current treatment method scientifically meaningful to the "rate of survival"? Professor Po-cheng Lee deemed it necessary that all medical practitioners must properly carry out **due "consideration and selection" with good sense of moral conscience and responsibility**.

4. **Ask oneself from the bottom of one's heart: all**

physicians must understand and empathize with the moods of long-term battling of their cancer patients with their family members – their family members are under the torment and helplessness in witnessing the sufferings of the patients, as well as their own hovering around offices, hospitals and residences, which are long-term responsibilities and burdens that they have to shoulder. If the physicians would take these factors into account, they could help to reduce many **unnecessary** medical procedures. For instance, many dying patients, even those bed-ridden terminal cancer patients, are still subject to multiple rounds of newly-developed chemotherapies unceasingly before their deaths. Furthermore, there are those patients who have been diagnosed of metastasis to multiple sites and were sent for surgeries to remove parts of the tumor tissues. As such, **these many patients have to suffer much or unnecessary pains and traumas**. Hence, Professor Po-cheng Lee deems it necessary that all physicians **should ask themselves all the times** the basic and fundamental question of what is the real meaning and value to a patient in carrying out these surgeries or chemotherapy. The objectives of these procedures must not be aimed for either the gaining of more clinical experiences, or even worse the getting of better incomes.

5. **Active education: development of rational attitude in society** – Medical practitioners must recognize their own limitations, and **discuss** with their patients and their family members about **the dying process**. Both the medical profession and the society in general should cultivate a rational attitude to accept the fact that terminal cancer patients would die eventually. They should not use "not-giving-up" as an excuse to **evade** the responsibility of the medical profession!

6. **Dare to shoulder responsibilities: physicians and patients should jointly examine the limitations of medical care** – Professor Po-cheng Lee recalled



the situation when his mother was hospitalized in the National Taiwan University Hospital in 2008, due to cardiac disease, diabetics and uremia. During that time, his mother was still conscious and with mobility. Both his brother and himself tried every effort in giving every opportunity for their mother's recovery, including the applications of cardiac stent, peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, pacemaker, tracheotomy, medical ventilator, and so on. They have found that their mother was gradually recovering.

Nonetheless, in the afternoon on the 30th September, while he was lecturing in his class, Professor Lee received a phone call from his brother informing him that their mother's heartbeat had stopped in the hospital ward. After a brief discussion, they have decided not to carry out any resuscitation for their mother. His brother was waiting for him, while Professor Lee immediately took an express train to Taipei. They changed the clothes for their mother, and stitched up the wounds together. Every

time in remembering this scene, his eyes would get red. Yet, they were calm at heart. For the last half-year during their mother's life, they had fulfilled the filial piety to their mother, and did not let her suffer at the end of her life. All along, Professor Po-chang Lee considers that all medical practitioners should have the attitude of treating all patients as if they are their "own family members". They should shoulder the responsibility of examining the limitations of medical care together with the patients, and to find out appropriate treatments of best quality for the "physical, mental and spiritual care" to their patients. This is, indeed, the kind of "medical ethics".

How to Open Up More Windows of Life?

Professor Po-chang Lee has taken his own experiences as an example to illustrate a "dirge of life and death" in the form of a "rational and touching" manner. In fact, among the different issues on "maintaining one's life, maintaining the quality of one's life, and maintaining one's final dignity at the last moment of one's life", which of these should be given the first priority? Could it be possible to maintain

the balance of the three issues without causing too big conflicts in-between? Professor Po-chang Lee has demonstrated the best answer to this question. (Please refer to an article "Should the cancer patient of terminal stage be rescued?" by Po-chang Lee, 29th May 2010, "China Times" in Taiwan).

In fact, how important is the study of "death" for both "the survived family members and their dying relatives"? If you are

present in a hospital, like what Professor Po-chang Lee did every day, you will be able to witness all sorts of tragedies due to the "ignorance of death", and will understand thoroughly the ways that so many people are not willing to face "death", and in avoiding to talk about "death". As a result, their most beloved ones would have to suffer acute and unbearable pains, and their consequences are inconceivably severe. Only when you have the personal experiences of the kind of suffering as if being wounded in cuts, will you be able to have a much deeper understanding on the fact that only when one can accept "death", will one be able to deal with "death".



When you get older will you be able to realize better why the late psychologist and psychoanalyst, Erik H. Erikson, had mentioned the following words: "Death should be a must task for our **life-long learning**. A person who refuses to learn to face death **would experience tremendous frustration** when he gets old." Similarly, one would then start to realize the meanings behind it when the wise man Leonardo da Vinci had said, "While I thought that I have been learning how to live, but, in fact, **I have been learning how to die.**"



indeed, the **"art of life"**. Do you know that there are other more profound levels and meanings? When you realize all the kinds of experiential adventures that the survivors of "Near-Death Experiences" have gone through, you would then come to understand that life will continue on even after death. Thus the key point of the **"art of life"** lies in the **"drill for death"**. Furthermore, **"one's departure** from the human world **should be taken with the same** kind of attitude as one's

arrival in it -- to face and start afresh on **a new page of life.**"

When you have mastered all the knowledge about "death", you would then better understand the meaning of what Erik H Erikson has said: "... a person who has accepted the reality and nature of death would live more freely, and will be able to open more windows of life." The importance of learning about "death" to both "the dying persons and the survived family members" is **to open up more** opportunities and **"windows of life"**. This is, indeed, **the real "meaning of life"**.

Being honored as the "Mother of Palliative Care in Taiwan", Dr. Chao Co-Shi gives over 100 talks per year. The subjects of her talks are always around the themes of **"how to have good death"**, **"how to die in peace"**, and **"how to avoid sufferings at the end of one's life"**. You must be wondering why this lady is always "talking about death" with people when everybody else is thinking about the "beauty and hope of life". Why is it that Dr. Chao Co-Shi can face "death" so calmly and be so determined as to service the dying patients for her whole life, when everyone tries hard to get away from it? This is because Dr. Chao Co-Shi wants to share with others the meaning of "palliative care" towards life, how to face death calmly, and how to pass away peacefully with dignity and respect at the last moment of one's life. This is,

"The art of living is a drill for death."----- Socrates

"Men must endure, their going hence even as their coming hither." --"King Lear" by W. Shakespear

The Grandest Series of Talks on "Near-Death Experiences" Ever in Hong Kong History

In order that more people can have the opportunity to know about the "meaning of near-death experiences" from a **more rational and more scientific** attitude, the "Dudjom Buddhist Association" has participated in the charity activity of the **"Love Ideas ♥ HK" Campaign of the Li Ka Shing Foundation**. Our topic on **"Stimulating Our Thinking Towards Life and Death"** has received the generous support of popular votes from the general public via on-line voting, and was thus granted the financial sponsor and support from the Foundation. With the funding, we are now able to invite **three world-renowned professionals and scholars who are the top authorities in the research area of "Near-Death Experiences"** to give talks in Hong Kong by sharing their top-notch frontier medical and scientific research findings on the relationship between the human brain and the "consciousness",

as well as by investigating into **whether or not the “consciousness” still continues to exist after death**, and so on.

It is, indeed, the first time in the history of Hong Kong that such a large scale event on the topic of “Scientific Evidence on Near-Death Experiences – A General Discussion of Life and Death” will be explored and open to the general public. It is an unprecedented event on the dissemination of **high-level knowledge** on the topic of “Life and Death” and has never happened before, such that it is **most fortunate for our Hong Kong people** to have such a rare opportunity to **broaden their vision and horizon on “Life and Death”**. This event is now scheduled to be held on 9th October, 2011 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Due to the limited availability of seats, those readers who do not want to miss this great opportunity are most encouraged to book their tickets as soon as possible. The following are the brief introductions of these three world-renowned researchers:

1. Dr. Peter B C Fenwick

BA (Cantab), MBBChir (Cantab), FRCPsych



Dr. Fenwick has a wide area of professional expertise which covers psychiatry, neuropsychiatry, neurology and neurosurgery, head, brain and spinal cord disease and injury, sleep disorder and especially epilepsy. He has had a special interest in **the relationship between brain function and the mind, and with longstanding and intensive research in this area.**

Dr. Fenwick had held many key positions in several medical and academic institutions. He had been

Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at the Maudsley Hospital which he ran for 20 years, Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford and Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, London.

Currently, his is the Honorary Clinical Consultant neurophysiologist at Broadmoor Hospital, UK and Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, University of Southampton, UK. In the past ten years, he has spent several months per year in a research laboratory for the study of Magnetoencephalography in Japan. He also **involves in large hospice projects in UK, Holland and Japan. He is the Chairman of the Scientific and Medical Network, as well as the Chairman of the Research Committee, Integral Medical Foundation.**

Dr. Fenwick **has longstanding research in the areas of “near-death experiences and the dying process”**. He **has studied over 300 cases** and has strong expertise knowledge in this special area. He has **published over 240 academic papers and 6 books of special topics**. He is considered as the major authority in clinical research on “Near-Death Experiences” (NDEs) in the United Kingdom.

2. Dr. Pim van Lommel



Dr. van Lommel graduated from the Medical School of Utrecht University, Netherlands. In 1976, he became a cardiologist and worked in the Rijnstate Hospital for 26 years. He has extensively published many professional papers on cardiology.

Due to his work, he has come across many patients who survived a cardiac arrest informing him about

their “near-death experiences”. This had taken his attention and so he became interested in the subject. In 1986, he started studying “near-death experiences” in patients who survived a cardiac arrest. He has studied over 500 cases.

In 1988, he co-founded the Merkawah Foundation, IANDS (the International Association of Near-Death Studies) in the Netherlands. In 2001, Dr. van Lommel and others published their Dutch study in the reputable medical journal “The Lancet”. In addition, he has authored chapters in several books about “near-death experiences” and also published articles about the subject. In 2007, he published his book in Dutch ‘Eindeloos Bewustzijn’ (Endless Consciousness) in the Netherlands. This book was a bestseller, and within one year over 120,000 copies were sold. Thereafter, the book has been translated into English and French.

In the past several years, Dr. van Lommel has been invited to give talks on the topics of “near-death experiences” and the relationship between brain function and the mind all over the world. In 2005, he was granted the ‘Bruce Greyson Research Award’ on behalf of the IANDS. And in September 2006, the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, awarded him the ‘Life Time Achievement Award’ at the World Congress on Clinical and Preventive Cardiology in New Delhi, for the recognition of his great contributions.

3. Professor Erlendur Haraldsson


Professor Haraldsson studied philosophy at the University of Edinburg, England and the University of Freiburg, Germany. He furthered his study in psychology and obtained a Diploma in Psychology from the University of Munich, Germany, and a



Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Freiburg respectively. During the interim period, he held an internship in Clinical Psychology at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Virginia, USA.

He had been teaching at the Department of Psychology at the University of Iceland for over a quarter of a century. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Virginia, Adjunct Research Faculty Member at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, California, USA, and Research Professor at the Institut fur Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene, Freiburg, Germany.

Professor Haraldsson has a wide range of research interests, including psychic experiences and folk-beliefs, miracle makers, death-bed visions, apparitions, contacts with the dead, and so on. His study on reincarnation is especially world famous, and is considered one of the pioneers of western scholars in this special field. He has been researching in places like Sri Lanka, India and Lebanon for studies of children who claimed that they could recall memories of their previous lives. The cases studied are over 100 and more than 100 academic papers and five books of special topics have been published. He is a world-class authority in contemporary research study on the cases of reincarnation.

Professor Haraldsson had been in longstanding research collaborations with Professor Ian Stevenson of the Medical School, University of Virginia, USA, and with Dr. Karlis Osis, a world-class leading psychologist. The book ‘At the Hour of Death’ (authored by Drs. Haraldsson and Osis) is a rare book on death-bed visions, which has been translated into 12 languages. Over the years, Professor Haraldsson has been invited across the world to give over one hundred academic talks which are highly appreciated by his fellow colleagues, as well as by the general public.....(To be Continued) 

[Remarks:

1. **Erik H. Erikson** – One of the most famous and influential persons of the neo-Freudian approach. He had extended the inspiration derived from psychoanalysis into other cultural areas, such as studies on children, the psycho-biography of great men, and the medium of psychology and socio-dynamics. He has specifically developed the concepts of “identity and identity crisis”, which has affected the professional domain of social sciences. His three major contributions are: (1) besides the development of sexual psychology, an individual also experiences socio-psychological development and the development of ego. (2) Personality development is a continuous process throughout one’s whole lifetime. (3) The consequences on each of the stages of one’s development could either be positive or negative. His book on “**Childhood and Society**” was considered the most famous book in 1950, and was appointed a full professorship at Harvard University in 1960. In 1969, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for the contribution of his research work on Gandhi. He has brought new stimulations and framework for “psychoanalysis”, and has successfully introduced the Freudian approach to a new area of development, in which he showed his great concern to behaviors due to social and cultural impacts, and has thus integrated the disciplines of psychology, sociology and anthropology together in mapping out the future direction of personality psychology.



2. **Leonardo da Vinci** (also known as Leonardo di ser Pier da Vinci, 1452-1519) – An Italian. He was an important and influential figure and intellectual in many fields during the period of the Renaissance. At the same time, he was an architect, an anatomist,

an artist, an engineer, a mathematician and an inventor. He had endless curiosity and creativity, and so he became an artist of the ideal type in the Renaissance period. Moreover, he was also one of the most famous artists and painters in world history. Together with Michelangelo and Raffaello Sanzio, they were came to be known as the “**Three Genius of the Renaissance**”. Leonardo da Vinci, all through his life, had followed the path of scientific logic and truthfulness in searching for the ideals of creativity and aesthetics in the arts.



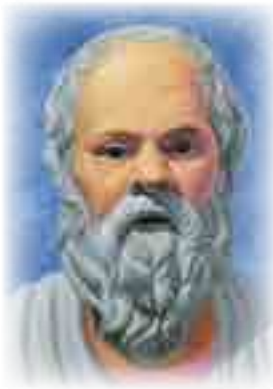
3. **Dr. Chao Co-Shi** – Holder of a B.Sc. in Nursing from the National Taiwan University, a M.Sc. in Oncology Nursing and a Ph.D. in Hospice (or “Palliative Care”) from the Case Western Reserve University, USA. She had worked as a nurse in the National Taiwan University Hospital, was a teacher and also the Head of Practical Training at the Cardinal Tien College of Nursing. She was one of the founders of the Catholic Sanipax Socio-Medical Service and its Education Foundation. She is currently teaching as a Professor in the Medical School of National Cheng Kung University.



Dr. Chao Co-Shi was born in 1948 and her hometown was in the province of Zhejiang. She has more than 37 years of nursing experiences in service. It was back in 1987 when she was extremely shocked by the suicides of eight terminal cancer patients, and had eye-witnessed the miserable scenes of patients hanging themselves to deaths, as they could not withstand the physical and mental

torments. She kept asking herself as to “what could be done to help these people?” Hence, with strong determination, she left her nursing career, and went for further studies abroad in Hospice (or “palliative care”) for those dying patients who have suffered from all sorts of torments. Expensive tuition fees and living costs had stalled her pace for a while, but with concerted efforts, she finally made it. During the course of her studies and practical training in the States for five years, she had visited over fifty hospice organizations in USA, and had six visited Britain which is the cradle of “hospice care”, in collecting numerous valuable materials and documents. After returning home to Taiwan, upon her completion of study in 1993, Dr. Chao then unveiled the page of hospice service in Taiwan which she has focused all her efforts of her entire life.

4 **Socrates** – He was the first of the “Three Greek Philosophers” in history, and together with Plato and Aristotle, they founded the philosophical foundation of Western culture and civilization. Cicero said that: “Socrates brought philosophy from heaven to the human realm.” Since he was born during the chaotic wartime period in ancient Greece, the value of morality was very low. Thus, Socrates believed that, in order to maintain the ethical elements while living under such situations, everybody must have to “know oneself”, which was also the starting point of his own philosophy.



Socrates believed that “wisdom” could be derived from “knowledge”, and could also be transmitted in the form of “knowledge”. For his persistence on the upholding of truth, Socrates was forced to commit suicide by poisoning himself. Socrates was a humorous person. Due to his utmost deep understanding of “death”, he was always in a most relaxed and cheerful mood at any time. At the last moment in facing his death, his disciples could not help but crying out loudly, but he was still giving sparkling sayings that had diluted the poignant atmosphere. One of the disciples suggested to him that should change his worn-out long gown, but he insisted not to and said: “I have been wearing this old worn clothes while alive, so would I not be able to see God if I am still wearing it?” His last words to Crito were like this: “Crito, I still owe Asclepius a cock, and so please do not forget to return it to him.” From this, we can have a glimpse of his composed and fearless attitude towards “death”.

The newly-released book on “The Meanings of Near-Death Experiences (1)” has been published. Its contents include the articles on “The Meanings of the Near-Death Experiences” from Issues 1 to 10 of the “Lake of Lotus”.

The newly-released book on “The Meanings of Near-death Experiences (2) – The Key Points at the Moment of Death and the Essential Revelations of the Tibetan Book of the Dead” has been published. Its contents include the articles on “The Meanings of the Near-Death Experiences” from Issues 11 to 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”.]



Organized by the Dudjom Buddhist
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A project funded by
Love Ideas ♥ HK

of The Li Ka Shing Foundation

Would Consciousness Still Exist After Death?
Would You Like to Know the Frontier of Scientific Research?
Don't Miss This Great Opportunity to Attend the Most Authoritative
Keynote Speeches Ever to be Given in Hong Kong History
Series of Talks on 'Science, Life and Death, Reincarnation' - (2)

**Due to Limited Seats
Available, Please Reserve
Yours A.S.A.P. !**

Our Association has held the first session on the Series of Talks on 'Science, Life and Death, Reincarnation'-(1) in 2010 which was very popular and well received, resulting in many people having difficulties in trying to get tickets. This year we are most glad and thankful to have received the sponsorship from the Love Ideas ♥ HK Campaign of The Li Ka Shing Foundation, and thus we are now able to invite three world-renowned professionals and scholars to come to Hong Kong in sharing their top-notch frontier medical and scientific research findings, by exploring the key areas on the relationship between the human brain and the "consciousness", as well as by investigating into whether or not the "consciousness" still continues to exist after death, and so on. In this way, it is hoped that these authoritative keynote speeches will enlighten us, those who are living in this modern world, to have a better understanding and analysis of the interrelationships between 'Science, Life and Death, Reincarnation'.

These authoritative keynote speeches will cover such major topics as "Near-Death Experiences, Out-of-Body Experiences and Death-bed Visions" which may scientifically point out the possibility of 'life after death'. Information concerning those various topics is now quite readily available in various media for those who are interested; yet, it is quite difficult for one to judge upon the correctness and authoritativeness of those information. It is, indeed, a rare opportunity for one to be able to listen in person to such authoritative keynote speeches on these topics that will be presented by three top-notch scientific and medical experts and authorities in their respective fields. Such an event is believed to be the first of its kind ever to be held in the history of Hong Kong; as such, it will be even rarer for the general public to be able to listen to such distinguished guests and their speeches in an open forum. Hence, we sincerely hope that you can take this great opportunity and do not miss this rare occasion.

The speeches will discuss the following issues:

- **When the function of the brain stops, is it possible that the “consciousness” still continues to be active? If so, what does it mean?**
- **While the “consciousness” remains active even when the function of the brain stops, then what is it that is being active? Is this what common people usually called it as the “Soul”?**
- **Is the Eastern folklore of “An Apparition Coming Out of a Living Person” having a similar meaning to the Western definition of the “Out-of-Body Experience” ? Is it real? And if so, what does it mean?**
- **“Death-bed Vision” are some kind of visions that dying patients may see, and normally these are the scenes when they see their passed away relatives. Are those visions of relatives simply “Apparitions”? Or whether they are just hallucinations of those dying patients?**

All these related questions and their puzzling issues will be introduced and answered by these **three experienced researchers and experts** who are of the highest caliber of international standing and authority, together with professional **simultaneous interpretations** to be available from English to both **Cantonese and Putonghua** for the audiences.

- **Can science unveil the profound mystery of “Life and Death”?**
- **What kind of evidence does the scientific community have in reference to the issue of “Life and Death”?**
- **Can scientific research on “consciousness” at the moment of “clinical death” prove the existence of “life after death”?**
- **Among the different research findings and analyses on such topics as “Near-Death Experiences”, “Out-of-Body Experiences”, and “Death-bed Visions”, do they have enough evidence for the proof?**
- **As for the various case studies on “Reincarnations” and “Past Life Memories”, can these be used as part of the scientific evidence for the proof on the existence of “life after death”?**

- **If you are interested to know more about the answers to these questions, then you should not miss this rare occasion!**

Keynote Speakers:

1. Dr. Peter B C Fenwick

BA (Cantab), MBBChir (Cantab), FRCPsych



Dr. Fenwick has a wide area of professional expertise which covers psychiatry, neuropsychiatry, neurology and neurosurgery, head, brain and spinal cord disease and injury, sleep disorder and especially epilepsy. He has had a **special interest in the relationship between brain function and the mind, and with longstanding and intensive research in this area.**

Dr. Fenwick had held many key positions in several medical and academic institutions. He had been Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at the Maudsley Hospital which he ran for 20 years, Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford and Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, London.

Currently, his is the Honorary Clinical Consultant neurophysiologist at Broadmoor Hospital, UK and Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, University of Southampton, UK. In the past ten years, he has spent several months per year in a research laboratory for the study of Magnetoencephalography in Japan. **He also involves in large hospice projects in UK, Holland and Japan. He is the Chairman of the Scientific and Medical Network, as well as the Chairman of the Research Committee, Integral Medical Foundation.**

Dr. Fenwick has longstanding research in the areas of “near-death experiences and the dying process”. He has studied over 300 cases and has strong expertise knowledge in this special area. He has published over 240 academic papers and 6 books of special topics. He is considered as the major authority in clinical research on “Near-Death Experiences” (NDEs) in the United Kingdom.

2. Dr. Pim van Lommel



Dr. van Lommel graduated from the Medical School of Utrecht University, Netherlands. In 1976, he became a cardiologist and worked in the Rijnstate Hospital for 26 years. He has extensively published many professional papers on cardiology.

Due to his work, he has come across many patients who survived a cardiac arrest informing him about their “near-death experiences”. This had taken his attention and so he became interested in the subject. In 1986, he started studying “near-death experiences” in patients who survived a cardiac arrest. He has studied over 500 cases.

In 1988, he co-founded the Merkawah Foundation, IANDS (the International Association of Near-Death Studies) in the Netherlands. In 2001, Dr. van Lommel and others published their Dutch study in the reputable medical journal **The Lancet**. In addition, he has authored chapters in several books about “near-death experiences” and also published articles about the subject. In 2007, he published his book in Dutch ‘**Eindeloos Bewustzijn**’ (**Endless Consciousness**)

in the Netherlands. This book was a bestseller, and within one year over 120,000 copies were sold. Thereafter, the book has been translated into English and French.

In the past several years, Dr. van Lommel has been invited to give talks on the topics of “near-death experiences” and the relationship between brain function and the mind all over the world. In 2005, he was granted the ‘Bruce Greyson Research Award’ on behalf of the IANDS. And in September 2006, the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, awarded him the ‘Life Time Achievement Award’ at the World Congress on Clinical and Preventive Cardiology in New Delhi, for the recognition of his great contributions.

3. Professor Erlendur Haraldsson



Professor Haraldsson studied philosophy at the University of Edinburg, England and the University of Freiburg, Germany. He furthered his study in psychology and obtained a Diploma in Psychology from the University of Munich, Germany, and a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Freiburg respectively. During the interim period, he held an internship in Clinical Psychology at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Virginia, USA.

He had been teaching at the Department of Psychology at the University of Iceland for over a quarter of a century. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Virginia, Adjunct Research

Faculty Member at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, California, USA, and Research Professor at the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene, Freiburg, Germany.

Professor Haraldsson has a wide range of research interests, including **psychic experiences** and folk-beliefs, miracle makers, **death-bed visions, apparitions**, contacts with the dead, and so on. His study on reincarnation is especially world famous, and is considered one of the pioneers of western scholars in this special field. He has been researching in places like Sri Lanka, India and Lebanon for studies of children who claimed that they could recall memories of their previous lives. The **cases studied are over 100 and more than 100 academic**

papers and five books of special topics have been published. He is a world-class authority in contemporary research study on the cases of reincarnation.

Professor Haraldsson had been in longstanding research collaborations with Professor Ian Stevenson of the Medical School, University of Virginia, USA, and with Dr. Karlis Osis, a world-class leading psychologist. The book **'At the Hour of Death'** (authored by Drs. Haraldsson and Osis) is a rare book on death-bed visions, which **has been translated into 12 languages.** Over the years, Professor Haraldsson has been invited across the world to give **over one hundred academic talks** which are highly appreciated by his fellow colleagues, as well as by the general public.

Date: 9th October, 2011 (Sunday)

Time: 2:00PM - 6:00PM

Venue: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, 1 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Fee: HK\$50; An additional fee of HK\$30 for those requiring professional simultaneous interpretations (**services available for English to be translated into Cantonese and Putonghua**)

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Payment Methods:

- 1) **Cheque Mailing:** Please fill in the application form with the total amount in a crossed cheque payable to "Dudjom Buddhist Association International Limited", and send them directly to our address at: **4/F, Federal Centre, 77 Sheung On Street, Chaiwan, Hong Kong;** OR
- 2) **Direct Deposit:** Directly deposit the total amount to the bank account of "Dudjom Buddhist Association International Limited" at Hong Kong Bank A/C No: 579-2-006529. After which, please send the deposit slip together with the filled-in application form by post to our address, or fax them to (852) 3157-1144.

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Please call us for enquiry at (852) 2558-3680, or email to info@dudjomba.org.hk

You can also download the Application Form from our website at <http://www.dudjomba.org.hk> or call us to fax you the Application Form. After you have filled in the form, please send it back to us, together with the necessary amount, by either fax or mail. Thank you very much!

The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (33)



By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Fong Wei

- How to Directly Elevate the Functions and Merits of One's Own Mind?
- How to Directly or Indirectly Enhance One's Own Wisdom?
- How to Directly Link Up With the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas?
- How to Directly or Indirectly Request Assistancess, Blessings and Protection?

Excerpt of Last Issue

For the general populace, and even up to the great Dharma practitioners, their objectives of Dharma practice should be more or less of the following types:

1. **Praying for worldly desires** – For example: to seek for oneself and one's own relatives to have "longevity, recovery from illness, success in one's career, good marriage, wealth increase, averting disasters and relief from sufferings, as well as reunion with those deceased loved ones". Also, there are those who hope to get the "ease of heart and security at the present life", etc.; or for "fame, wealth, respect" in order to study Buddhism; as well as for those who put in efforts to practice the Dharma.



2. **Rebirth in the good realms** – For example: to hope and pray for rebirth in the heavenly realm, or in the human realm, and not to fall into the evil realms (of animals, hungry ghosts and hells).

3. **Liberation from the tractions of the “cycle of karmic existence”** – to hope and pray for the **freedom** in deciding for oneself as to whether one would be reborn into the six realms (of heavens, asuras, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and hells), or whether to remain in the highest level of the “Realm of Form”, such as the “Akanistha” (the “Heaven at the End-of-Form-Realm”), which is beyond the control of the tractions. (Please refer to the explanations on the “Three Realms” in the article on the “Profound Abstruseness of Life and Death: The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences” in Issue 17 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

4. **Attainment of Buddhahood** – The recovery of one’s “Primordial Nature” and the originally possessed and boundless capabilities, which are free from any bondages and to remain in the “Dharma Realm”. (The “Nature of the Mind”, also known as the “Buddha Nature”, or the “Primordial Nature”, refers to the **original** possession of that most crystal clarity of **awareness**. Please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences” in Issues 4 & 5 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

What are the methods that one can choose in order to achieve these four types of objectives? What will

be their effects? What are the **critical key points** that one should pay attention to when judging upon and in choosing those methods of Dharma practice? Regardless of what kinds of religions, the practice methods can be broadly divided into the following types:

1. **Prayers** – Including confessions, repentance of one’s conducts, and in the making of aspirations and wishes;

2. **Recitations** – mantras, Buddhas’ Holy Names, or sutras;

3. **Visualizations** – themes include the formulae for different types of “meditation”, or even the making use of the internal functions of one’s body for coordination.

Irrespective of which types of practice methods, it must include the training of one’s “mental strength”. Otherwise, it would not be able to produce any effects. One of the important points for judging which of the practice methods are the most effective ones is the **degree of influence** that

these can have **on one’s “mental strength”**? What percentage will they constitute?

The previous five chapters have clearly explained the effects and mysteries that the sound has produced upon people (Please refer to the articles on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practices” of Issues 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 of the “Lake of Lotus”). The part on the rationale for the **“resonance” and “operations of particles”** is one of the functions on the recitation of mantras. Since the sound of mantra does not necessarily have to be words that could be



translated or understood, particularly those mantra which are meant for the following purposes:

1. linkage or condensation;
2. cutting off the linkage or condensation;
3. taming and shattering.

The previous few chapters (in particular please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”) have mentioned that the merits of having received the “relevant teachings” in the recitation of mantras are remarkable and vast. As to its abstruseness, apart from relating to its rationale on “resonance” and the “motions among the particles”, it is also very much related to the different high or low levels of the “Right Concentrations” (or “Samadhis” in Sanskrit). According to Bodhisattva Maitreya’s classification, in Volume 45 of the “Yogacaryabhūmisastra”, “Dharanis” are divided into the following kinds:

- (1) **Dharma** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that one would be able to remember the words and sentences of the various Sutras in one’s numerous lifetimes (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (2) **Meaning** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that one would be able to remember the meanings

of the Sutras in one’s numerous lifetimes (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



- (3) **Mantra** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that, through one’s “meditational power”, one would be able to experience the special effects of the “mantras”, and would thus be able to help other sentient beings to remove all kinds of calamities and illnesses (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 27 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

- (4) **Endurance** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that one would be able to know the true existence of, and the real meanings behind, the various Dharmas, as well as the ability without losing them (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 28 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

How to Directly Elevate the Functions and Merits of One’s Own Mind?

Sound is a vibration with frequency. If the airflow and muscles of one’s body are blown up to make the vocal cord vibrate, the sound so produced will have certain impact on the body, regardless of whether it has any meaning. This includes the impact on the

spiritual level. Different degrees of sound would, of course, have different degrees of impact. Therefore, among the Buddhist practice methods, sound has been included as one of the important dimensions for its Dharma practices.

So are there any differences in the recitation of “Mantras, Buddhas’ Holy Names, or the Sutras”? Which of them would have greater strength? What kind of benefits will they have? What are the effects to be produced in the practice methods of reciting “Mantras, Buddhas’ Holy Names, or the Sutras”? To what degrees and levels do these practice methods influence one’s “mental strength”? What is the highest objective that can be achieved? In the articles of [Issues No. 24 to No. 32](#) of the “Lake of the Lotus”, detailed descriptions on the respective benefits and wonderful merits that can be attained from the recitation of “Mantras, Buddhas’ Holy Names, or the Sutras” have been mentioned. In regards to the [special features on the various kinds of merits](#), their applications can be categorized as follows:

1. [Direct Enhancement of the Inner Function and Merits](#): –

If one could receive the relevant training in the [recitation of “Mantras”](#) and can do it properly, it can directly regulate the various kinds of disorders in the “frequency of vibration” through sound, enabling the smooth flow of blood and breaths to maintain one’s physical health. At the same time, proper recitation of “Mantras” under the received training can also take one’s mind directly into a deep level of serenity, [integrating and linking it](#) with the “frequency of vibration” of one’s “subconscious”.

When the disordered frequencies in the body become consistently harmonized, they will produce resonant effects with the deep serenity of one’s mind to regulate the “deficiency, disorder, stagnation” within one’s “subconscious”, thus elevating them to [“completeness, smoothness and clarity”](#).

As the [Buddha’s “Mantras”](#) is a high quality ideal type of “vibration frequency”, it can penetrate into one’s “subconscious” level to change and elevate the [“chain-like habitual karmic forces”](#) from one’s countless lifetimes, which is most unlikely to be accessed by ordinary Dharma practitioners. In other words, the [function](#) on the changing of one’s firmly fixed “behavioural programming” can be reflected upon the prominent effects that a Dharma practitioner has achieved for one’s [meritorious conducts](#), which is something that is difficult to achieve at the level of “consciousness”.

These kinds of effects in changing one’s “behavioural programming” can be obtained within one’s lifetime through the recitation of the [Buddha’s “Mantras”](#) under the relevant training received, which would otherwise require a very long period of time of several “kalpas” in order to achieve them at one’s “consciousness” level. This is, indeed, a very expeditious short-cut.

To recite the [Buddha’s “Mantras”](#) under the relevant training can even [enhance one’s “awareness” through the direct use of “vibration frequency”](#). This is a rare kind of [merit](#). So, on this level, the recitation of “Mantras” is more superior than the recitation of the “Buddhas’ Holy Names” or “the Sutras”. ([Note: A “kalpa” refers to a period of time. A “small kalpa” is equal to the time required for a universe to go through the process of “formation, persistence,](#)



disintegration, annihilation”. Twenty “small kalpas” are equivalent to one “medium kalpa”, while four “medium kalpas” are equivalent to one “great kalpa”).

How to Directly or Indirectly Enhance One's Own Wisdom?

2. Direct and Indirect Enhancement of Wisdom: –

The recitation of the Sutras and their comprehensions are of different levels in terms of their Dharma

practices. For the enhancement of one's wisdom, the reciting and the chanting of the Sutras without understanding their meanings is significantly different from that of the reciting and chanting of the Sutras while after having comprehended their meanings. Yet, in terms of the speed in enhancing one's wisdom, if one is to simply comprehend the meanings of the Sutras but without reciting and chanting them, one will compare less favourably with those who have comprehended the

meanings of the Sutras and then recite them. It is because through the continuous reciting and chanting of the different textual parts of the Sutras which will have unknowing infiltration into the “subconscious” level of one's “mind”.

For those textual parts of the Sutras that have already been infiltrated into one's “subconscious”, and if their meanings have already been comprehended, they can directly merge and integrate with one's inner

behavioural programming within the “subconscious”. Furthermore, they can even directly adjust those behavioural programming that are not matching with those prescribed rules in the Sutras. This deep level of regulatory function will directly and effectively elevate Dharma practitioners' meritorious actions. It is also through this kind of integration on the deep level of one's “subconscious” with the Sutras that gives rise to one's wisdom which corresponds to the meanings of the Sutras. This is a rare kind of merit.

However, if one is to recite and chant the Sutras

without having comprehended their meanings, even though some textual parts of the Sutras have unknowingly infiltrated into one's “subconscious” level, the “subconscious” is unable to immediately recognize the meanings, and so cannot merge or integrate them with the existing behavioural programming. Neither can they directly change the existing behavioural programming. Under such circumstances, one only has to rely upon the continuous reciting and chanting of the Sutras in

order to wait for the further recognition from one's “subconscious” to give rise to such effects. This is an indirect way of enhancing one's wisdom.

The advantage of this is that these “Sutras” can then be preserved for the future generations. There was an extreme shortage of recording tools at the time of the Lord Buddha Sakyamuni when papers, pens and ink were not yet invented. One only had to rely on the continuous recitation and chanting of the “Sutras”



in order to enhance one's memory of them, as well as to pass on these "Sutras" from one generation to another generation. This kind of practice method also enabled the storage in "the eighth consciousness of one's mind" for one's memory over countless past lifetimes, until one can finally come to a lifetime in which, through one's Dharma practice, one can truly understand the meanings of the Sutras so as to arouse the kind of **wisdom that corresponds to the meanings of the Sutras**.

After all, how to retain the precious teachings of the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni is an extremely important matter. It is also where the wisdom life and wisdom roots of all sentient beings lie. **Its merits are immeasurable**. Therefore, on this level, the recitation of the "Sutras" is more superior to that of reciting the "Buddhas' Holy Names" and that of the "Mantras".

How to Directly Link Up With the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas?

3. **Direct Connection with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas:** –

The principle of reciting the "Buddhas' Holy Names" is similar to that of reciting the "Mantras". Their major difference lies in the fact that the "Buddhas' Holy Names", after being translated into local languages or dialects, might have already changed their original "frequencies of vibration". A "Buddha's Holy Name" is usually made under the following situations: –

(1) The "Dharma Name" that was used during one's period of Dharma practice during a particular

lifetime that leads to one's "attainment of Buddhahood";

(2) The "vibration frequency" that has accelerated one's "attainment of Buddhahood". Hence the adoption of this "vibration frequency" as the "Buddha's Holy Name";

(3) The unique "vibration frequency" that has been generated from the exclusive characteristics and features most complementary to this particular Buddha after one's attaining the "Buddhahood". This "vibration frequency" is thus used as this "Buddha's Holy Name";

(4) As being prophesized with the "Buddha's Holy Name", and bestowed upon by either the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni Himself, or by one of the other Buddhas, upon the individual's "attainment of Buddhahood".



If one recites a "Buddha's Holy Name" which has not been translated into local languages or dialects, and is made under one of the above-mentioned situations of (2) to (4), its function will be very similar to that on the reciting of the "Buddha's Mantras". It is because its "frequency of vibration" is the most ideal type of **positive "vibration frequency"**, which will be helpful to the **"air-field" (or "magnetic field")** of those who recite it in accelerating the speed of their Dharma practices. More importantly, it can **link** them more quickly and **directly to this particular Buddha**.

When reciting the "Buddha's Holy Name" which has been translated in local languages or dialects, **if one can concurrently "visualize" the characteristics,**

features and merits of this Buddha to subtly inspire one's own "nature of the mind" for further uplifting and elevation, the merits so induced would still be immeasurable. However, it will be less speedy in connecting with this particular Buddha than by reciting the non-translated "Buddha's Holy Name" (with its special "vibration frequency") because it lacks the sensation of "vibration frequency".

Hence, in terms of the speed in connecting with the Buddhas, the reciting of the "Sutras" (because of their long text of words) is definitely not as fast as the reciting of the "Buddhas' Holy Names" or of the "Buddhas' Mantras", which are more concise and with special "frequency vibrations". In reciting the "Holy Names" of the many Buddhas (such as in reciting the "Sutra on the Holy Names of the Buddhas"), the merits are to make connections with different the many Buddhas of the ten directions. (Please refer to the article on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" in Issue No.29 of the "Lake of Lotus".)

In the "Sutra on the Holy Names of the Buddhas", the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni has proclaimed the Holy Names of thousands of Buddhas. If counting the compressed abbreviated names, such as "Taking refuge (Namo) to the eight hundred billions of those Designated Buddhas of the Second Kalpa who are having the same Names with the same Dharma States" and so on, then the Holy Names of all the Buddhas being mentioned are actually infinite in numbers. Hence, if all sentient beings could follow exactly what the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni

had told us to recite and chant, then the causes of connections being sown with all those Buddhas could also be infinite. In the future, these sentient beings could then be taught by such a vast number of Buddhas, and could also receive sky-like protections from countless Buddhas and related protectors, such that it will definitely and certainly keep them away from all kinds of karmic obstacles, and that they will be able to practise the Holy Dharma peacefully without disasters, difficulties and hindrances, until they will finally reach the final destination of attaining Buddhahood. In other words, the recitation and chanting of the Buddhas' Holy Names is a kind of Dharma practice with the nature of "praying, being blessed and protected". Yet, it does take a longer period of time and is a bit indirect.



How to Directly or Indirectly Request Assurances, Blessings and Protection?

4. Direct or Indirect Request for Assurances, Blessings and Protection: –

Requests for assurances, blessings and protection are the common wishes for the general Buddhist devotees. Even for those long-timers of Dharma practices, they would still have some degrees of hope in getting these benefits. Many Dharma practitioners are confused as to the difference between "benefits" and "merits". "Benefits" mean the kind of "functions", while "merits" mean the kind of "meritorious actions". Therefore, the meaning of true "merits" is to practice the Holy Dharma so as "to

transform, rectify and elevate one's inner behavioural programming, every thought and notion, such that they will all correspond to those of the Buddhist Dharma. This is, indeed, a kind of "meritorious action".

Dharma practitioners that possess these kinds of "merits" will naturally gain their respects from all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, sentient beings with good minds, such as the heavenly beings, Dharma protectors, and human beings, etc., who would render them assistances, as well as to bestow their blessings and offer their protection. In other words, as a genuine Dharma practitioner, one should "practise without request" simply because benefits will come naturally as a result of one's accumulation of meritorious actions".



However, a genuine Dharma practitioner will, out of his compassionate mind to help other sentient beings and to spread the Holy Dharma, "make request" even though it is not for his own. There are also other Dharma practitioners who have yet to reach the full state of "practising without request" on the long journey of Dharma practice, still have some degrees of hope. Yet, this kind of hope is rather different from those of the general Buddhist devotees. For instance, the scope, coverage and depth of this kind of hope will be comparatively much wider, and at a much deeper level.

There are many ways of "Dharma practices". Regardless of which one, it must be able to transform, rectify and elevate one's inner behavioural programming, every thought and notion, such that

they will all correspond to those of the Buddhist Dharma. In other words, only those actions that can become "meritorious actions" will be good enough to be called as "merits". Where there are "merits", there will naturally be "virtuous rewards". Therefore, some people call these as "virtuous merits". The kind of "merits" that the general populace think about are actually only one-sided, such as the making of some Buddhist rituals or charitable deeds, having in mind

that with these acts, they could receive assistances, blessings and protection from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This kind of thinking, which is so full of desires, is difficult to form any kind of "meritorious action". Therefore, the reward thus received will not be long-lasting, to be very superficial and one-sided, and cannot be able to go deeper into the inner level of one's mind through its "elevation and optimization".

Actually, for the recitation of the "Mantras", or the "Buddhas' Holy Names", or the "Sutras" that gives rise to these "merits" and "virtuous merits", which method will be faster in achieving the level of requesting assistances, blessings and protection? In terms of the speed in making requests, the quickest fulfilment is, of course, by reciting and chanting the "Mantras".

Because generally those who come to our assistance are mostly those Dharma protectors who are closest to us human beings. In response to the different types of "Mantras", different Dharma protectors will be called upon for their help. In order to link up with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, both the "mental concentration" and "mental strength" of the one who recites the "Mantras" must be sustainable and

lasting. This is simply because all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are at a much higher level and on a plane much farther away from all sentient beings, and the special “vibration frequency” of the “Mantras” is the key in linking up the speed of this connection.

In the universe, there are four kinds of forces that are “inconceivable”. One of them is “the inconceivable strength of the Mantras” which, if further matches with another force – “the inconceivable strength of mental concentration”, can smoothly link to the far away Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The main reason is that “mental concentration” can make full use of the special “vibration frequency” of the “Mantras” to help the reciting person to go deep into one’s own inner “Mind”, so as to release its inner



potentials. It can even quickly uplift one’s potential to one’s own new height of elevation. If the reciting person makes use of “visualization” to bring in his “wish” deep into the “subconscious” with the help of his “mental concentration” and the special “vibration frequency” of the “Mantras”, another kind of force in the universe will appear – “the inconceivable strength of aspirations”. The hopes and requests of the reciting person will be fulfilled much faster. Of course, if there is a distance between this hope and the “Buddhist meritorious actions”, the effects will be reduced correspondingly in accordance with the degrees of difference. This is because the Dharma protectors will join in as the counteracting force, while one’s own “inner conscience” will also serve as a counterbalance.

There is a big difference, in terms of the merits gained, in between making efforts to practise the Holy Dharma on the level of one’s “consciousness”

as compared to that on the level of one’s “subconscious”. The “consciousness” level belongs to a superficial level of the “mind”. To make efforts on a shallow layer of the “mind”, which is controlled by the deeper level of the “unconscious”, can only indirectly give rise to the superficial level of “merits”.

On the other hand, to make great efforts of one’s Dharma practice on the “subconscious” level are both direct and deep enough to arouse the “merits” of a much deeper layer. Hence, the effectiveness, in terms of speed, on the recitation of the “Mantras” is most superior. It is more direct and quicker when compared to the recitation of the translated “Buddhas’ Holy Names”, as well as the long and more difficult to understand “Sutras”.

Are there any differences in the skills for reciting “Mantras”,

the “Buddhas’ Holy Names”, or the “Sutras”? How long is the time required to be spent? There are human sounds that are arising from both the “consciousness” level and the “subconscious” level. Would they be useful for Dharma practices?.....(To be Continued) 🗝️

(Note: The contents on the newly released book of “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice (1)” include the articles on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice from Issues 1 to 10 of the “Lake of Lotus”, while that of “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice (2) – Seven Methods of Strengthening One’s Mind to Counteract Adversities” include the articles on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice from Issues 11 to 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

Everything Comes from the Mind (5)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Various Disciples



Excerpt of Last Chapter

The “cycle of karmic existence” is the **interactive function in terms of “Causes and Effects”** by the different “tractions” of various “causes and conditions”. In fact, all the phenomena of the “cycle of karmic existence” are true phenomena, and they all fit in well with “scientific” explanations. There are three key points in the formation of the “cycle of karmic existence”.

1. The “cycle of karmic existence” is the **continuously circulating “Law of Causes and Effect”** and which has “**no beginning and no ending**” to it. It is a kind of “**natural law**”.
2. The composition of “everything in the universe” and of the numerous kinds of “bodily structures” is due to the “**matching of causes and conditions**” together, and these make up the vessels for the “cycle of karmic existence”.





3. The “cycle of karmic existence” appears when there are appropriate causes and conditions for its existence, but the true nature of it is basically “Emptiness”.

In the “**Agamas Sutra**”, the Lord Buddha had informed us of the true principle through which we can understand that “all sentient beings are ending up with beginningless lives and deaths, which keep on transmigrating without ending, and yet they do not knowing the reasons for their sufferings”.

The meaning behind this is that: all sentient beings, from time immemorial, had countless previous lifetimes, and they keep on transmigrating with births and deaths. Yet, they never knew the reasons for their transmigrations, neither do they know how to escape from such kind of sufferings. After the Lord Buddha had attained his “**Perfect Enlightenment**” (that is, the attainment of “**Buddhahood**”), He understood

very well this phenomenon, and so He informed us about this. He hoped that all sentient beings would be able to understand this phenomenon, and would thus give rise to the thought of trying to become liberated from such kinds of bondages and start practicing on the Holy Dharma. The Lord Buddha was not just telling a story in order to cheat you to practice the Dharma. In fact, there is no such a need to do so. The Lord Buddha had only informed us of what he had understood to be the true phenomenon of the worldly existence.

The Karma of Killing

It was mentioned in the “**Ekottar-Agama Sutra**” (in Sanskrit; or “**Anguttara-Nikaya**” in Pali) that: “the Lord Buddha told all the monks to have a merciful mind, and should never kill any lives!” Why did the Lord Buddha asked all of us not to kill any living beings? It is because all those lives that you have killed must have some kind of relationships with you. Otherwise, they would not have been transformed in such a state as to be killed by you. If not have been your parents, they might have been your brothers and sisters, in their previous lives.

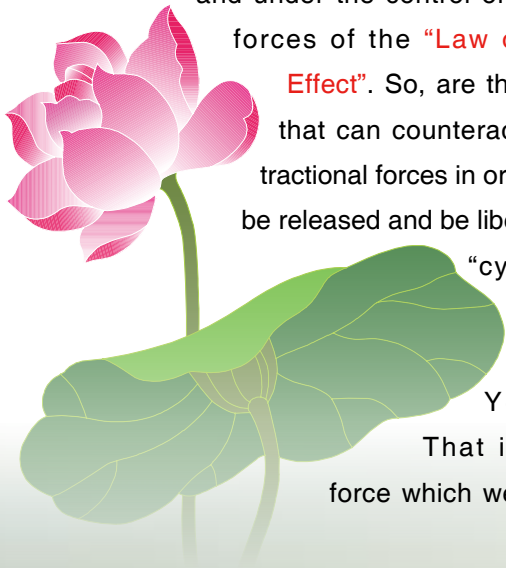
Hence, you should refrain from the killing of lives, because your act of killing would give rise to the “negative karma” which would be following after you continuously and endlessly like a flowing river, and that



you would be in continuous and endless tortures. Hence, you should not do such acts of killing any longer, not only because for yourself, but also for all other sentient beings. It was because when these sentient beings were killed by you, they would give rise to a strong emotion of “hatredness”, which would lead to other “tractional forces” that **would continue on endlessly like a flowing river**. As a result, **both parties would be in great pains**. This kind of “tractional forces” originated from the “**mental strengths**” of “hatredness” that came from those sentient beings whom you have killed earlier.

The Mental Strength

In order to explain that “**everything comes from the mind**”, we have to talk about the importance of “**mental strength**”. Since the “cycle of karmic existence” composes of strong “tractional forces”, which would subject all of us to its bondages, to be drawn into, and under the control of, the tractional forces of the “**Law of Cause and Effect**”. So, are there any forces that can counteract such kind of tractional forces in order that we can be released and be liberated from this “cycle of karmic existence”?



Yes, there is!
That is the kind of force which we called as the



“**mental strength**”. This is the only kind of force that can help you to be released and be liberated from the “cycle of karmic existence”. Hence, when you repeatedly request for “blessings”, without making use of the “main cause” within yourself in order to train your own “**mental strength**”, it is, indeed, very foolish of you to do so, simply because **only this “mental strength” would be helpful to yourself**.

The bringing about of one’s “**mental strength**” comes from the function of one’s own “**mind**”. If one can know how to arouse the strength of one’s “mind”, then it can then help to bring about the kind of





counteracting force against the “tractional forces of the cycle of karmic existence”, in order to liberate ourselves from this “cycle of karmic existence”. Since this kind of force is coming from the function of one’s own “mind”, and that is why it is called the “**mental strength**”, and is also a sign of “**everything comes from the mind**”. Furthermore, the “tractional forces of the cycle of karmic existence” are, in fact, originated from the combinations and permutations of countless “**mental strengths**”, thus constructing a grand design and blueprint of “**everything comes from the mind**”.

Different Interpretations of the “Mind” by Buddhism and Other Religions


Other religions often called the “mind” after death as the “soul” or the “spirit”, but Buddhism does not agree to, nor allow the usage of, this term. Why? What are the reasons for it? This is because “spirits” are those sentient beings who belong to “another realm” of existence. What other religions called as the “spirits” has not been defined as to whether they have been reborn or not. Hence, they would call all those which are invisible and non-materialistic as “spirits”, including **those lives that have not yet been defined as either “with forms”, or “without forms”**.



Because of this kind of unclear definition, we are not sure if these sentient beings in question are in a fixed form, or have been reborn or not. Hence, this kind of definition that has been adopted by other religions could not be used for comparison with that of Buddhism.



The “mind” that was mentioned by Buddhism is something that does not have its material structure and is thus invisible to the human eyes. It **can penetrate into all kinds of “spaces”**, and its capacity can be “**boundless and limitless**”.

Take for example, the idea of having “one thought to enclose the three thousands” means that the three thousands of the countless numbers of the entire universe can be within one’s own “mind”. Hence, it is totally “boundless and limitless”. Unless, you act like the Monkey King (in the **Classical Chinese novel of the “Journey to the West”**) who have set a limit for himself. When setting a limit for oneself, then it is already the beginning of an act of “**self-containment**”..... (To Be Continued) 

EPILOGUE

The Buddhist teachings are meticulous and profound, while its methods of practice are practical and achievable. Nevertheless, the teachings are as abstruse and comprehensive as an ocean such that it is not an easy task for one to even just trying to grasp its contents in a concise and accurate manner. Therefore, our Association aims to help reveal the abstruse meanings of the Buddhist teachings in such a way that it can be easily understood by the general public through the distribution of CDs, VCDs and DVDs, either free of charge or with a cost.

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