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Lake of Lotus

Bimonthly

蓮花海

Issue No. 37

Hong Kong January 2012

Taiwan February 2012

How to Develop "Heart-to-Heart
Unspoken Consensus"
With the Patients For Having
No Regrets for Both Parties?

How Can We Cope With
Grief and Bereavement
At the Loss of Loved Ones?

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One of the Shortcuts in Dharma
Practices with Inconceivable Merits

The Wonderful Combinations of
"Visualization" and "Sounds"

學會十四週年
暨
期刊六週年
紀念特輯

HK \$10
香港

NT \$80
台灣

ISSN 1816-8019 01

ISSN 1816-8019 02



9 1771816 801006

4 1712070 144657

西藏日喀則江孜縣之白居寺



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The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (37)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
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**How to Develop “Heart-to-Heart Unspoken Consensus” With
the Patients For Having No Regrets for Both Parties?**

**How Can We Cope With Grief and Bereavement At the Loss
of Loved Ones?**

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 previous chapters (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 29-30 of the “Lake of Lotus”), as well as on the issue of “Analyzing and Adopting” by the dying persons (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 31 of the “Lake of Lotus”) have been clearly explained.

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 the 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”**.

There are at least two parts to the issue of “Analyzing and Adopting” in the third step. The first part of “Analyzing and Adopting” is to be **directed by a dying patient**, while the second part of “Analyzing and Adopting”, which is to be **directed by the caregivers, kin and kith and professional counselors**, have already been discussed in the previous two chapters (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 32 and 33 of the “Lake of Lotus”). The fourth step on “Leading Out and Guiding In” has already been discussed in the next before last chapter (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 34 of the “Lake of Lotus”). Now, we are discussing on the fifth step on **“Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus”** (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 35 and 36 of the “Lake of Lotus” for some parts that we have already discussed).

The Key Points of “Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus”

When a person comes across a major crisis, some expectations will certainly arise from oneself. Besides some vague wishes, it is crucial that some pragmatic needs should be satisfied which would be more significant to them. For instances, when a person gets cancer, the most needed would be someone who cares about him, understands him, accepts him, makes company with him and assists him to go through the proper treatments.

Therefore, a care-taker must stand by the side of the patient and understand what is the patient’s



need and most wanted thing. At the same time of understanding, the care-taker would best be able to develop a relationship on the issue of **“Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus”** with the patient.

There are a few key points in the development of such kind of a relationship:

- (1) **On the same camp of companionship** – comprising of
 - a) **Listen** to the patient **empathically**,... (please refer back to Issue 35 of “Lake of Lotus”);
 - b) **Express the empathic feelings** as personal experience to the patient, ... (please refer back to Issue 35 of “Lake of Lotus”);
 - c) **Pass on the message** of accepting, understanding and tribute **with genuineness**. ... (please refer back to Issue 36 of “Lake of Lotus”);
- (2) **Unspoken Consensus from Heart to Heart** – comprising of
 - a) **Develop Unspoken Consensus** – under reasonable circumstances, carry out more welcome behaviors to the patient,

- b) **Express Unspoken Consensus** – with the attitude to express feelings that the patient recognizes and considers as of same direction,
- c) **Coordinate Unspoken Consensus** – when deviation appears, employ proper approach to coordinate mutual thoughts to shorten the distance and seek for building of common ground for unspoken consensus.

How to Develop “Heart-to-Heart Unspoken Consensus” With the Patients For Having No Regrets for Both Parties!

- (2) The **heart-to-heart “unspoken consensus”** is comprising of -
- a) **Development of unspoken consensus** – under reasonable circumstances, carry out more “deeds” which are behaviors being preferred by the patients.

As the relatives, friends, or carers, up to the attending physician of the patient, if **some kind of an “unspoken consensus of mutual trust”** can be developed with the patient, in the aspect of benefits of all relevant parties, it is most perfect and without

regret. Establishment of this kind of “unspoken consensus” is based upon **the depth of mutual understanding and acceptance, as well as the depth of love and tolerance on both parties.** In such a fashion, it will be decided as to whether this kind of “unspoken consensus” could be established, as well as to how well is the foundation of such establishment. The deeper this “unspoken consensus” is, the more flawless the outcome will be so derived.

There is a kind of commonly seen pain and regret, which often occurs to someone who has experienced the death of a loved one, either as a relative or a friend. When a relative or friend passes away, the most disturbing and long-lasting problem is their non-stop recollection of the past: “Do I owe the dead anything?” The portion where they believe they are in debt to the dying would be kept on replaying itself unceasingly. When they see the replay of the relevant scenarios, sufferings would thus be generated.

Hence, in numerous occasions for the counsels of grief and bereavement, it has been found out that the closest relatives or friends of the patient often have a kind of **“guilty feeling”** at the death of the patient. They have a question in mind, “Why couldn’t I do it better?” Thus as the kin and kith, carers, up to the attending physician of the patient, in order to have no regrets at a later day, the best way is to establish such kind of a **heart-to-heart “unspoken consensus”** during the process of caring for the patient. During the establishment of such kind of an “unspoken

consensus”, it is very important to pay attention as to whether it is in a “**balanced state of having equal weighting between rationality and emotion, as well as in having an equilibrium between excessive demand and feasibility in reality**”. If the “unspoken consensus” so established is mishandled, this kind of “unspoken consensus” would easily be lost in even deeper regrets, resulting in more severe sufferings.

The relation between physician and patient is equally important. The establishment of the “unspoken consensus” could adequately resolve mutual conflicts. The following case can be taken as a reference.

Case 43

There was a physician in Taiwan who specialized in obstetrics and gynecology with thirty years of experiences. He had witnessed the joy when a life was born. Later on, he changed to become a gynecological oncologist and took care of many females who suffered from cancer. He witnessed a lot of souls who suffered in great pains over a long period of time, and their final endings.

His medical team endeavored to take care of each patient with profound and empathic love, hoping to satisfy the needs of each and every patient, such that even though they were in the lethal pains, they could still feel the support and care out of their love. His hard toiling resulted in a state that “he had forgotten about himself and his beloved family”. After he took up the task of caring for terminal sickness, his daily life was impacted tremendously.

He had described his regrets as follows: “One day when I woke up, how come there was an old woman lying by my side. Without much notice during those fleeting days, this lady grew old from her blossom age. And I had not been mindfully participated in such a process and just found out incidentally. I was **so full of remorse**.”

Someone asked me whether my daily life was disturbed by providing care to terminal patients. That was really very disturbing. Once my wife brought it up to me, “Why do you make yourself so busy? Why can’t you do as **according to the limitations of your own ability?**” That was a Saturday and the following day, the Sunday morning I brought her over to have a round in the patient ward. I said, “You come with me and have a look on my day-to-day life.” When she watched **those seriously-ill patients, one after another, with expressions on their faces showing how badly they needed me**, she never made any further complaints ever since.

Usually I got up at around 5:00 AM and started working. Dinner was generally taken at 9:00 PM. Getting up at 5:00 AM to work have been my habits for a few decades.”

What an admirable physician. In fact, how to establish an “unspoken consensus of mutual trust” with the patients? Are there any regrets? This benevolent physician cited a case. He endeavored to take care of a patient of ovarian cancer which lasted for a period of seven years. When she had to carry out abdominal tapping, it would take about one



to two hours. In order that she could have the best medical care, this physician, together with his other younger doctors, did the tapping in person. Other physicians usually left her alone after inserting tubing for drainage. However, in this way, the tapping might not be thorough enough, and thus the patient felt that she had not been “fully taken care of”. Therefore, they did it in person for every 10 c.c., and then 20 c.c. of drainage. After a couple of days, several thousand c.c. of fluids had been drained. She deeply appreciated this act and thus a kind of mutual trust was established.

However, she proposed a request to her physician later on, “Please help me to have euthanasia.” The physician certainly did not accept her request. Thereafter, this patient kept having a bit of the sulks and temper. It appeared that their relationship downturned drastically. The patient was in bad emotions until she passed away. The physician and his team were very regretful, and had a feeling of failure and frustration.

After all, most human beings are kind-hearted. When a person offers the genuine passion, there

would be a moment when the recipient is being touched upon. The efficacy of “unspoken consensus of mutual trust” would eventually be revealed. As a matter of fact, at her final moment, the patient had asked a ward-mate of her to leave a message for this physician after her passing away. Having no reciprocation to the physician, anyhow she wanted to express her utmost appreciation to him for his long-time whole-hearted care.

At an instant, the regret and frustration of the physician and his team were removed, and instead they felt a sense of spiritual comfort and fulfillment. The “unspoken consensus of mutual trust” so established between the physician and the patient had not been damaged due to the denial of the patient’s request. This also showed the right way of establishing an “unspoken consensus”. Under reasonable circumstances, one must carry out as many deeds of behavior as possible that are preferred by the patient. For instance, heart-felt care but not “blind deference” of what she likes, such as “euthanasia”.

The physician so expressed his feelings: “I certainly know that! I certainly know when she vented out her temper, it wasn’t her genuine passion. Anyway, she asked a representative in telling me the story and we both wept in the outpatient clinic. I wrote down the accounts of this appreciation and this is the feeling of achievement”.

Therefore, when setting up this sort of “unspoken consensus”, it is important for one to examine if it is in the “balance between rationality and emotion, as well as excessive demand and feasibility in reality”. If the established “unspoken consensus” is not properly managed, it would easily be fallen into greater regrets, resulting in greater sufferings.

How Can We Cope With Grief and Bereavement At the Loss of Loved Ones?

When facing death, everyone involved would inevitably **become grieved**. However, **at the same time, there are emotional issues that one must address. Don't let them to become a long-term psychological burden and obstruction**. This physician mentioned that he often found his subordinate younger doctors to be weeping at wall corners. He wished to make a swap with them. He said, "We didn't do anything wrong, and we will be good to the patients. But, we still grieved, and it is still hard for us to let go. This is the kind of passions of human beings in this mundane world."

As a matter of fact, how does this physician handle his grieving emotions? He said, "regardless of being grieved or not, or of any negative emotions, we often say that we can't alter the **stimulations**, we can't alter the **cognitions**, but then we can alter the **responses to them**. Under similar circumstances, someone can be more optimistic while others may not be so. The **key point is the perspective that you have taken**, and it is **an issue of choice**. It is of the same scenario, yet how we make a choice will make all the difference. It can be explained from the **spiritual aspect**, as well as from the **physiological aspect**".

Upon rational analysis, on top of continuously addressing to himself that "I have done nothing wrong", this physician also reminds himself, analytically in a rational way, that: "I should have taken what kind of perspectives in **looking at** the current grieving emotions, and should have given what kind of responses in **handling** the current grieving emotions."

After all, grieving is grieving. In order to have a hierarchical and deeper level of analysis on grief and bereavement, one must first have to have **a cool and calm emotional level of thinking**. Thus this physician said: "It is mentioned in the **'Tuesdays with Morrie'** by Morrie Schwartz that when emotions arise, he doesn't want to talk about the next life or this life. **When you feel like crying, then just go ahead to cry out aloud**. After that, clean up the tears and keep on living through the next day."

After crying, and the venting out of the negative emotions, such that the quality on the **cool and calm emotional level of thinking** is not obstructed, we can then have the space to catch a breath, so to speak, and have the moment to analyze the grief and bereavement in a rational manner. As such, the grief and bereavement can then **be confronted and to be taken care of properly, or even be able to turn the grief and bereavement into strength**.

Thus this physician said: "**The first thing to do is to be relaxed**, including the **doing of exercises** for the regulations of both the body and the mind. Once the physical health has improved a bit, one's mood would then start to pick up towards the virtuous cycle more easily, such that the person can be ensured to be in good spirit everyday.

The second thing to do is **to enable oneself to develop one's own spirituality** (it is termed as "the nature of mind" in Buddhism), which is to **have a correct cognition and understanding on the life-forms of one's ultimate life existence**. With such a close distance to observe the births and deaths of human lives, it truly allows me to have a phenomenal growth. It allows me to come to understand the **limitations of life, and recognize that lives are uncontrollable**, such that people in general feel that it is so **helpless and**





uncontrollable over their own lives. I would think that this kind of knowledge will be helpful for us in judging what should be persisted seriously and what should not, as well as what is valuable and what is not, in our everyday life experiences.

Many physicians come to work without bringing along their own passions in life, not to mention about spirituality, which is a real pity. I clearly understand what I would not be able to do in this life of mine. I would not chase after those kinds of things that I am not supposed to possess in a meaningless, ineffective and unreasonable manner. Even though some people are quite clear and certain about their directions of life, yet they are still very arrogant. I am rather humble. When I reach this moment in life, I realize that there are things that I just can't get, after having pursued them for my entire life, and so I will never force myself to get them anymore. Therefore, I am happy and would not cry over meaningless greediness.

What is the highest value in one's life? The first question to ask is what is the "core value". I think it is "growth", especially "spiritual growth". Hence, I want to pursue after "growth" unceasingly. In the aspect of my career prospect, this job allows me to continue to grow, while the others do not, and so this is a better one for me. This is to be judged upon by one's own "core value".

"Spirituality" is also the same. I would remind the younger doctors to pay attention to their "spiritual development" everyday, in both their rightful positions, and in their working environments. What is the most important thing when caring for the patients? It is "empathy". With the devotion of one's passions, some

physicians go after "spiritual development" day by day, and to take care of terminal cancer patients with "empathy". Physicians should share their experiences in their blogs: "for the sake of sharing happiness with others will result in more happiness for ourselves, and the pouring out of our feelings of sufferings will result in less sufferings".

I like rational analyses, and the consequences allow me to have more positive perspectives towards life. "Equilibrium between spirituality and rationality" is the best method in confronting sorrows.

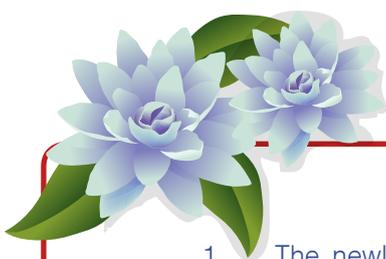
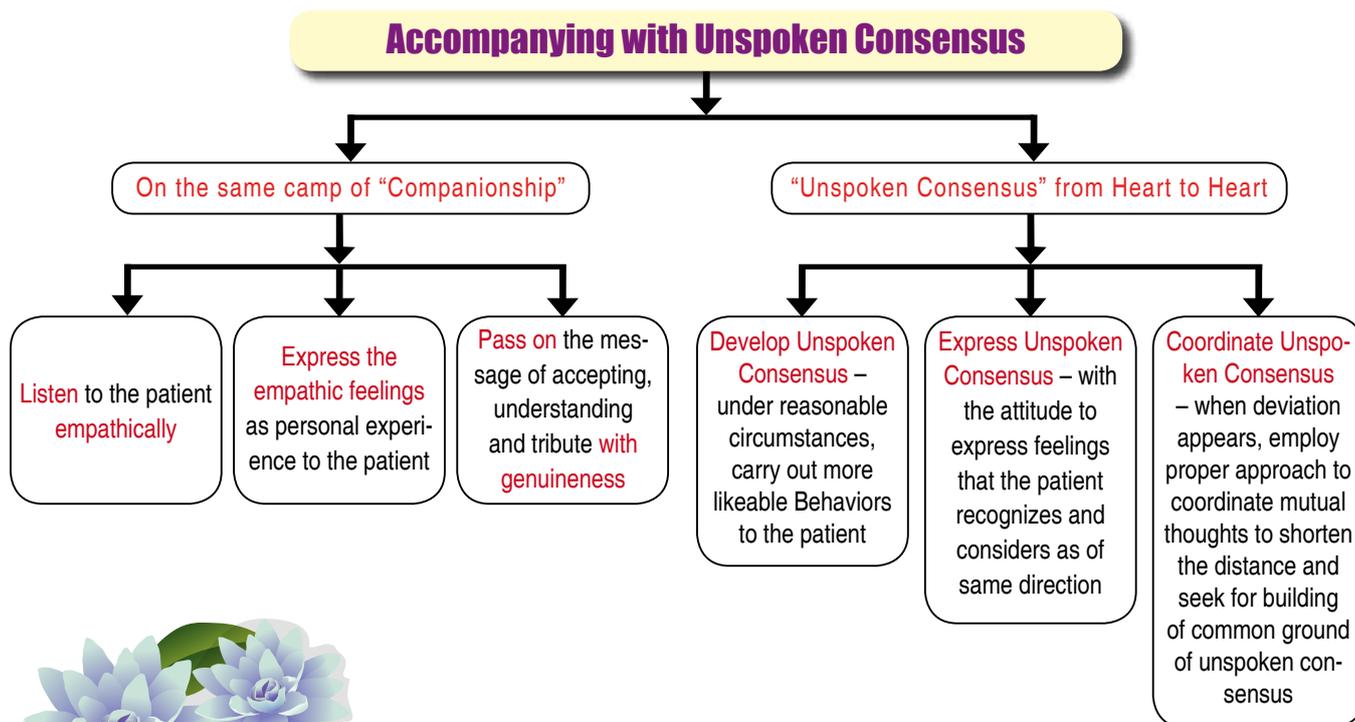
The third issue to tackle is to "develop a workable objective so that oneself can be filled with hopes". In the process of one's works, it is very important to create or explore on the "sense of achievement". One must have to have this "sense of achievement" in order to continue on working with persistence. This "sense of achievement" could be tangible in nature. For instance, after a mother had passed away, her daughter (who had taken care of her for eight years) still remembered to send in three baskets of fruits to me, the younger doctor and also the senior physician, when all of her mother's funeral affairs were settled. To us, this represents the kind of deepest "appreciation", as well as the greatest "sense of achievement" that one can achieve. That is to say, what we have done will naturally be remembered by the recipients. Hence, after I have received the basket of fruits, I jotted down the word "appreciation" in my own notebook.

By "setting up achievable objectives", my patients could be able to lead a more meaningful living, even when their suffering lives are coming to the end. For example, this mother who had set an objective of "appreciation" (in offering the baskets of fruits) before

her death helped to hearten our group of exhausted physicians, so that we could continue, **full of hopes**, to strive and work for the extension of our patients' lives and the improvement of their quality of living. This mother's "last wish before death" was to "urge all physicians to endeavor in persisting with their important works". **With hopes, life will definitely be full of meanings, and definitely will be able to overcome sorrows!**"

Through the unremitting efforts of this group of physicians, both the physicians and the patients have developed a kind of **heart-to-heart unspoken**

consensus which cannot be described in words. They mutually encourage each other, during periods of pains and grief, and they walked through the dark zones of life together in a heart-to-heart fashion. From the very beginning, all through the whole process, to the very end, they are so full of hopes about **the meaning of life**. This is, indeed, their most glorious **heart-to-heart "unspoken consensus"**. This is sufficient to go through or overcome all kinds of sorrows. We should all **pay our honorable salutations** to this group of dedicated doctors and make our whole-hearted **prayers** for them.....(To be Continued)



Remarks:

1. 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"**.
2. 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 Meaning of the Near-Death Experiences"** from Issues 11 to 20 of the **"Lake of Lotus"**.
3. The newly-released book on **"The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (3) – The Various Ways of Realization and Rescue of Dying Kith and Kin"** has been published. Its contents include the articles on **"The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences"** from Issues 21 to 30 of the **"Lake of Lotus"**.



The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (37)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Fong Wei

**The "Core Mantras" – One of the Shortcuts in Dharma Practices with Inconceivable Merits
The Wonderful Combinations of "Visualization" and "Sounds"**

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").



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,

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;



particularly those mantras 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 “Yogacaryabhūmiśāstra”, “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”).



The “Core Mantras” - One of the Shortcuts in Dharma Practices with Inconceivable Merits

Every individual possesses a combination of different levels. The movements of the internal “molecules” to “bio-energy” in each combination would produce different frequencies of vibration,

thus constituting a unique life for each individual. Accordingly, the **core** of each individual's life has a **basic sound** of its own. This is the "Seed Syllable (**Bijas**)" of the mantra sounds in "Vajrayana" practices.

What is the use of the "core basic sound"? How useful it is to sentient beings in elevating their lives and in practising the Holy Dharma? The "core basic sound" represents the pure and natural sound of its original nature of each individual sentient being. From the physical structure to the spiritual dimension, their inter-dependence and co-existence are inseparable from the relationships on the movements of the "molecules" and "bio-energy". Thus, the "vibration frequency" so generated will be that kind of "**frequency of vibration**" that controls and affects the physical and mental conditions of that particular sentient being. When this kind of "frequency of vibration" expands to become sounds, this can be used to elevate both the physical and spiritual states of that particular sentient being.

This kind of "frequency of vibration" will always affect this particular sentient being, and will only stop until this sentient being has finally attained Buddhahood, and has thus entered into the completely silent and tranquil state of the "**Nirvana without residue**". This "Nirvana without residue" means that a particular sentient being no longer has any materialistic structure, hence the name "without residue". It thus represents that there is **no** more materialistic **residues** to which a sentient being can **rely** upon so as to make its independent existence.

When a sentient being transcends and comes

out from the barriers of one's own materialistic structure without any restraints, its spiritual state will purely reside in its "**original pure awareness**" and re-enter into the Dharma Realm with its pervasive existence everywhere. This state is known as "Nirvana". At this point, the "frequency of vibration" will no longer exist. [The "**Dharma Realm**" – this merging and fusion together in entering into the Dharmakaya (Truth Body) refers to the realm in which all the Buddhas exist in the form of Dharmakaya (Truth Body). As the "intrinsic nature" possesses enormous powers and abilities, it can be manifested in **three different states**, namely: (i) **Dharmakaya (Truth Body)**: without any form or shape, and non-materialistic in nature. It is pervasive and exists everywhere throughout the universe. It cannot be detected by any instruments, nor can the human power of observation and discernment detect its existence; (ii) **Sambhogakaya (Complete Enjoyment Body)**: it exists in the form of "Light". If a Buddha manifests in this "Complete Enjoyment Body", its intensity of light would be that of one thousand suns, and such manifestation is thus known as "the Buddha of Sambhogakaya". Since the light intensity is so strong that only those **Eighth-stage Bodhisattvas** or above can visualize only a fraction of this. (The "Eighth-stage" is an indicator on the attainment of the different "levels of realization", such that its "mental strength" can penetrate beyond the "visible light" spectrum of lights); (iii) **Nirmanakaya (Emanation Body)**: it exists in materialistic forms, and can be manifested and reborn as various kinds of sentient beings of different realms. Please refer to the articles on the "Meaning of the Near-Death Experiences" in Issues No. 4 and 5 of the "Lake of

Lotus” for detailed descriptions on the “Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya”, or please refer to the DVD on “The Essence of Authentic Practices in Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism (7)”.]

If one would want to **invoke** this particular Buddha for His returning from the state of “Nirvana” into this secular world for the salvation of all sentient beings, the sentient beings can thus recite the “**core basic sound**” of this particular Buddha, that is the “**Core Mantra**” of this particular Buddha. This will induce His “original awareness” to come forth for His return from the state of “Nirvana”. Once this Buddha has returned from the “Nirvana” state, the unique “vibration frequency” of this particular Buddha will appear again.

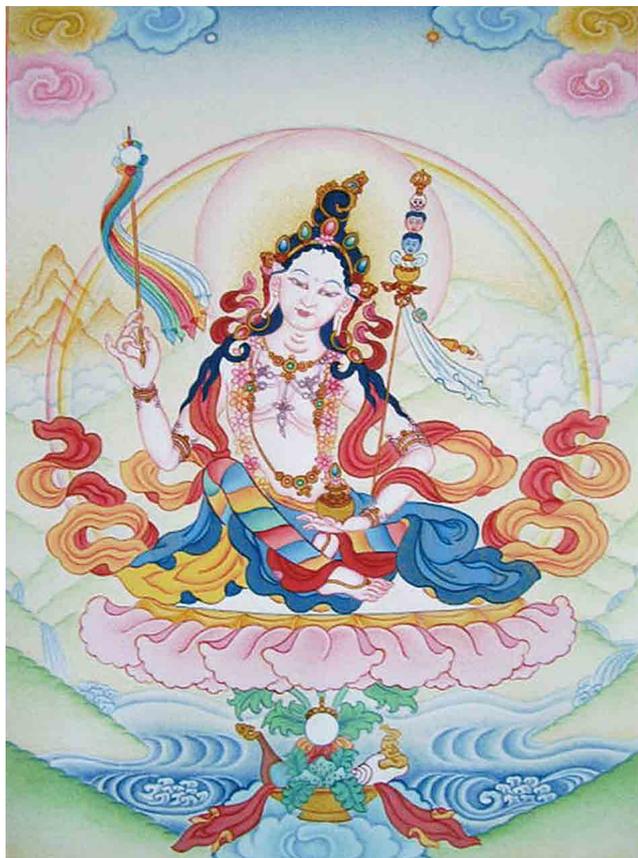
Therefore, numerous Buddhas, though ubiquitous and existing everywhere throughout the universe, are full of selfless compassion. Yet, if the sentient beings do not make any invocation of the Buddhas, they are still unable to get any assistance from the Buddhas. In making any invocation, one must have to recite the “**core basic sound**” of this particular Buddha, that is, His own “**Core Mantra**”, with a focused and sincere mind, in order that it is strong enough to use one’s “**mental strength**” to **directly and speedily** connect with that particular Buddha who is within the “Nirvana” state. This is also one kind of manifestation of “Everything comes from the Mind”.

Therefore, in the search of one’s own “core basic sound”, as well as that of the Buddhas, **the merits can be said to be immeasurable**. They are summarized as follows:

1. **Changing one’s “Karmic Forces”** – Every sentient being is involved in the entanglements with countless sentient beings, due to their attachments to the passions of gratitude and resentment, thus forming their respective

different “karmic retributions”. (“**Karmic forces**” are “**tractional forces**”. **The web of “karmic forces”**: Due to both virtuous and wicked deeds amassed through **countless past lifetimes**, the linkages of the mental strengths of both oneself and others are crisscrossing and inter-penetrating upon each other, thus forming an intricate network of tractional forces. This is known as the “karmic network”. Please refer to the DVD on the “Inconceivable Law of Karma” published by the Dudjom Buddhist Association). In order to keep oneself in a safe condition and to **reduce** the impacts of one’s “karmic retributions”, one must first have to strengthen one’s own “**mental strength**”. There are many ways to strengthen one’s “**mental strength**”, and one of the most direct and fastest ways is to find out one’s own “core basic sound”. The question is how to find these “**core basic sounds**”?

2. **Enhancing one’s “Nature of the Mind”** – To strengthen one’s own “**mental strength**” does not mean that one will be able to purify the contaminations of one’s mind. For example, if the “visualization” programming of some Dharma practitioners is erroneous or incorrect, then even if their own “**mental strengths**” have been enhanced through the training of the “visualization” programming in bringing out even “supernatural powers” on special and peculiar functions, this does not necessarily mean that one can elevate one’s “karmic retributions” towards the good and wholesome direction. On the contrary,



with the enhancement of one's "mental strength", the degree of contaminations within one's mind will increase, due to errors in the "visualization" programming, and one's "karmic retributions" will be **doubly worsened** as a result. The case study on the "Vajrabhairava in Hell" is an obvious example in which a Dharma practitioner, through his practice of successfully visualizing the yidam "Yamantaka", was most unfortunately later to be reborn in the Hell Realm due to his poor mind-training and broken samayas. However, through the direct access of one's own "core basic sound" to the inner "intrinsic nature" in making a direct connection with one's "**original pure awareness**", such kind of invoking power is great and direct enough to **enhance one's "nature of the mind"**, whereby steering one's "karmic retributions" towards the good and wholesome direction. Therefore, to strengthen one's own "**mental strength**" by the using of one's own "core basic sound" is **more direct and excellent than many other methods**. The

question is how to find these "**core basic sounds**"?

3. **Clearing of one's Mind so as to see one's own Nature** – The result of enhancing one's "nature of the mind" will make one's "**original pure awareness**" to be revealed. It is because the **direct perception** of the "core basic sounds" will make Dharma practitioners to have inconceivable experiences, as similar to those "people who have gone through the near-death experiences". These Dharma practitioners, who don't have to be reborn from death, and regardless of whether they are walking, standing, sitting or lying, will see the brightness of light in an instant. They would also feel the state of boundless compassionate love, all-knowing and limitless great abilities of the "**original pure awareness**". Though the time in maintaining this situation may be very short, due to the inadequate level for the enhancement of one's "mind", it is nonetheless sufficient enough to let Dharma practitioners to have quantum jump of progress, to be known as "**the clearing of one's mind so as to see one's own Nature**".

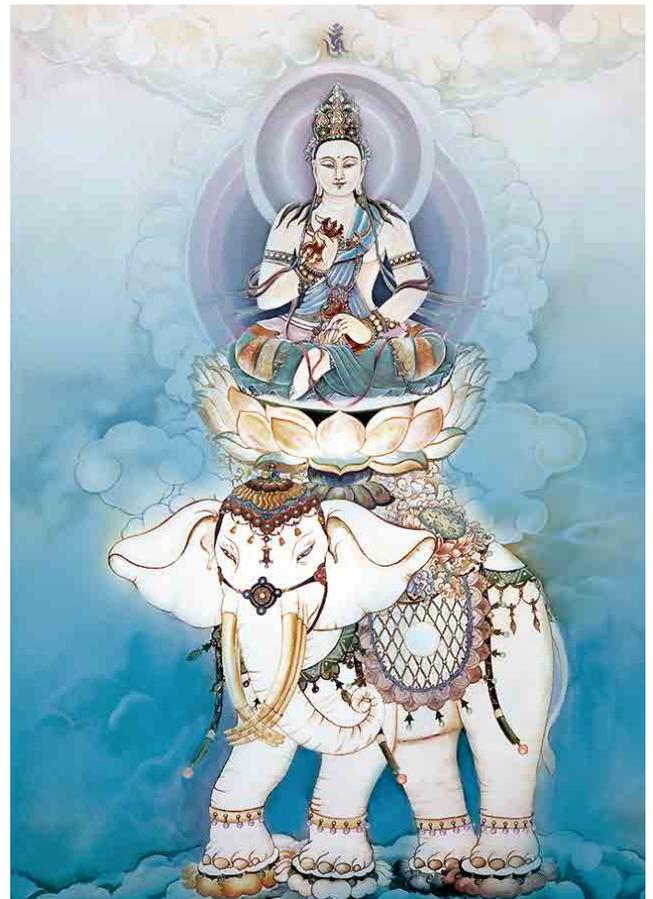




However, this “clearing of one’s mind so as to see one’s own Nature” is not equivalent to the “attainment of Buddhahood”. It can only be said as “the first encounter of one’s original awareness”. One still needs to go through ten major stages (with 52 minor stages among them) in one’s Dharma practices, known as the “Ten Grounds” (“*Bhūmis*” in Sanskrit). Even though one cannot attain “Buddhahood” immediately, this can help to upgrade the realm in which one will be reborn in the future. Therefore, the merits for the Dharma practice method on the “direct perception of one’s awareness” of one’s “core basic sound” are immeasurable. The question is how to find these “core basic sounds”?

4. Liberation from the Tractional Forces of the “Cycle of Karmic Existence” – The result on the further enhancement of the “nature of one’s mind” can directly restore one’s originally-possessed potentials. When this kind of “potentials” is elevated to a certain level, they are not only able to reduce one’s “karmic retributions”, but can also be

sufficient enough for one to be liberated from the tractional forces of the “cycle of karmic existence”. In other words, when one has already possessed the powers and abilities of the “Eighth-Stage Bodhisattva” or above, one can then be reborn to higher tiers of the Heavenly Realms at one’s own will without directly subjected to the constraints of the tractional forces of one’s own “karmic retributions”. [The attainments in practising the Holy Dharma can be divided into ten levels. The eighth level is called the “**Eighth Ground: the Unshakable**” which refers to one’s practical experience of entering into the state of “emptiness” in an extremely steady condition, such that the kind of “realization experiences” as a result of one’s Dharma practices have developed to be very stable and will not be lost. When a person has attained such a high level of practice, then if one is to be reborn again, one would never to be reborn into the “evil paths”, and can



thus continuously to be a Dharma practitioner without any more retrogressions. The power of one's Dharma practice will enable one to see a small fraction of the light of the "Sambhogakaya Buddha" (whose brightness is equivalent to the brightness of one thousand suns). As for one's behaviours, even when one is subjected to the furious attacks of various kinds of afflictions ("Kleśa" in Sanskrit), this would not affect one's Dharma practice nor would one be withdrawn from one's Dharma practices]. In order to further elevate the "nature of one's mind", some Dharma practitioners would have to undergo thousand and ten thousand times of rebirths with Dharma practices, in experiencing all kinds of testings, trials and tribulations before they can attain a **micro-fraction** of progress. When comparing to the **Dharma practice method** on the "**direct perception of one's awareness**" of one's "core basic sound", it can be said to be of a great tremendous difference in terms of the speed. The question is how to find these "**core basic sounds**"?

5. **Attainment of Buddhahood** – When the "nature of one's mind" is elevated to reach its fullest of 100%, one can then completely restore 100% of one's "**original pure awareness**" in becoming a "Buddha" (**the Fully Enlightened/ Awakened One**). This can be done by the **Dharma practice method** on the "**direct perception of one's awareness**" of one's "core basic sound". The question is how to find these "**core basic sounds**"?

The Wonderful Combinations of "Visualization" and "Sounds"

The origin of the sound of the human body comes from one's "consciousness" and the "subconscious". The **positive activation of one's "consciousness"** can affect one's "subconscious" in such a way as to elevate it to an excellent condition. Therefore, in practising the Holy Dharma, if one could activate one's positive "consciousness" and extend its influences to the "subconscious", then Dharma practitioners can obtain their own unique "**core basic sounds**" through the **automatic regulatory functions** of one's "subconscious" at a deep level. In this way, one can obtain **the sound of one's unique "Seed Syllable (Bijas)"** that can enable oneself to achieve **success quickly** in one's Dharma practice.

To get one's own unique "core basic sound", one must have the following several conditions:

1. **A Correct "Visualization" Programming** – one needs to know which of the programme contents and functions of one's "visualization" can be used in order to activate one's **positive "consciousness"**;
2. **The Right Skills with "Mind-Training"** – one needs to know the use of certain **skills, including how to pronounce, how to use the bodily supports**, so as to co-ordinate **with one's "mind-training"** in order to guide one's **positive "consciousness"** to penetrate and fuse into the deeper levels of one's "subconscious";

3. **The Arousal of the Automatic Regulatory Functions** – one needs to know which of the conditions that need to be co-ordinated with in order to arouse the **automatic regulatory functions** of one's "subconscious", such that the different "vibration frequencies" of the various parts of one's body will be regulated to become the kind of "vibration frequencies" that are **"consistent", inter-connected** and can be linked to one another;
4. **The Removal of Obstacles** – one needs to know which of the methods to be used to remove what kinds of barriers and obstacles, in order to cleanse one's **internal and external** magnetic fields;
5. **Perseverance with Meritorious Observations** – one needs to know how to persevere in practising the above four conditions in a sustained manner, and be able to observe the variations of sounds for appropriate adjustments to be made.

The above conditions will all have to depend upon whether one could find a "Guru" who is well-experienced in these different aspects. **The "Guru" must be able to explain the above principles, while guiding oneself through the various practices and trainings** in order to achieve any hope of success. Otherwise, one would only end up **in wandering around the outskirts of one's Dharma practice**. It is because if one cannot master the refined details of the **"core basic sound"**, it will mean that one will not

be able to enter into the **core of one's "potentials and awareness"**.

Especially on the part of "visualization", as it is a function of one's "mental strength" that can be used to channel one's "energy" to where it should be needed. As to how it is to be channelled, to where it should be channelled, and so on, all these will have to rely upon a "Guru" who is well-experienced in these different aspects. **The "Guru" must have to be able to explain the above principles, while guiding oneself through the various practices and trainings** in order to achieve any hope of success.

The "Vajrayana" practices attach great importance to how much confidence that the disciples have placed upon their "Gurus". It is because if the disciples' confidence is not great enough, then the practice of the teachings itself will no longer be able to produce the functional effects of one's "mental strength". Furthermore, "Vajrayana" practices very much emphasize on the binding on "secrecy" (**that's why it is known as the "esoteric school"**), simply because if the practices were made too open to the public, they will easily be misled and distorted, resulting in the direct loss of those good and effective teachings, or their being used for commercial purposes, etc. Hence, all these teachings and skills **will only be transmitted to qualified disciples who have the affinity**. As such, they will not be explained here.



One should make use of the wonderful combinations of one's "visualization" and "sounds" to find out and use the **appropriate** sounds in **an active mode** for assisting one's Dharma practices by the mastering of the refined details of the **"core basic sounds"** in order to assist one's entry into the **core of one's "potentials and awareness"**. Such kind of combinations are inter-dependent and complementary. The virtues and effects thus generated from their wonderful interplay are far beyond the imagination of sentient beings.....
...(To be Continued)

Notes:

1. The newly released book on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (1)" has already been published. The content includes the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues No. 1 to 10 of the "Lake of Lotus".
2. The newly released book on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (2) - **Seven Methods of Strengthening One's Mind to Counteract Adversities**" has already been published. The content includes the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues No. 11 to 20 of the "Lake of Lotus".
3. The newly released book on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (3) - **One of the Pivotal Points in Practising the Holy Dharma: The Mysteries and Usage of the Mantras and Sounds**" has already been published. The content includes the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues No. 21 to 30 of the "Lake of Lotus".

The Essence of Teachings:

Everything Comes from the Mind (9)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Various Disciples



Excerpt of Last Chapter

The “Avatamsaka Sutra” mentions that “everything comes from the mind”. So, 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, the kind of force we called “mental strength” is the only kind of force that can counteract the “tractional forces of the cycle of karmic existence”, and can thus help us to be released and be “liberated from reincarnations”.

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”, and also form the “Law of Cause and Effect”.

For what scientists to be recognized as the “Law of Cause and Effect”, the so-called “Cause” is one’s “Observation”. The “energies” coming from one’s “sight” and “mental strength” will bring about changes in the **observed** electron. This is a mutual “interactions of tractional forces”, and this is the “Cause”.

Then, what is the “Effect”? The “thing” that is being observed by you will **manifest itself in a certain shape**; or else the “thing” that is being observed by you, due to the energy that was added by one’s “mental strength”, will change its original “speed”, “form”, and “direction”, and all these are the “Effects”. Thus, this is recognized by the scientists as the “**Law of Cause and Effect**”. (Please refer to the article on “Everything Comes From the Mind” in Issue 36 of the “Lake of Lotus”.)

“Only when something is put under observation, it will then exist. If there is no observation, the matter will not exist”.

**(“Nothing exists until it is observed.”
by John A. Wheeler)**

The Buddhist Explanation on "The Law of Cause and Effect"

The “Buddhist teachings” explain this “**Law of Cause and Effect**” as the function of the “Mind”. Yet, scientists do not know how to explain it, and they only know that the “Mind” would have something to do with it. In fact, the “tractional forces of the cycle of karmic existence” are caused by the “Mind”. Hence, the “**Sutra of Meditation on the Buddha of Infinite Life**” mentioned that: one must have “**Firm Belief in the Cause and Effect**”. One can see that even scientists have already discovered this “Law of Cause and Effect”. The Lord Buddha had already told us about this more than two thousand and five hundred years ago. However, most of us just considered this as superstitious, and so did not believe in it. If one does not believe in this, it will be a major obstacle to one’s own “Dharma practice”. In fact, one must have to “firmly believe in the cause and effect” before one can become successful in one’s own “Dharma practice”.

The Lord Buddha has explained that the “**Law of Cause and Effect**” exists not only in the “material world”; it is also manifested in the “Minds” of all sentient beings. This is why it is mentioned that “**all Dharmas cannot depart from the Law of**

Cause and Effect". Hence, you might think that you have already understood the "View of Emptiness" (the "View of Emptiness" as the correct viewpoint on "Emptiness", please refer to the DVD on "Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness", published by the Dudjom Buddhist Association), yet in fact you have misunderstood the meaning of "Emptiness" to be meant as "there is nothing"; since you might have thought that even the Sixth Patriarch of the Zen School had mentioned that "originally there was not a thing", and so there is no need to be careful of the "Law of Cause and Effect". As such, you would care less about this "Law of Cause and Effect". If you think in such a way, then you would be completely wrong! It is because you have not yet reached that stage, and you are not the Buddha (the "Enlightened One"). Basically, you have not reached the stage of being able to get away from this kind of tractional forces, and you just talk about this **theoretically**. It is just not possible if you simply try to discuss something theoretically, in the hope that it can produce some energy to counteract the huge tractional forces coming from the "Law of Cause and Effect". This is just impossible!

Previously, there was a great Dharma practitioner who thought that he could "Dispense With the Law of Cause and Effect". He thought that



he would have nothing to fear about so long as he could practice well. He thought that so long as he could be in deep "mediation", then everything would become "empty", and so there was no need to be fearful of anything. With this in mind, he had given wrong teachings to other people, resulting in his becoming a "wild fox" for five hundred years, as an Effect of his own Cause. Thus, if one uses a wrong view or behaviour to prove that there is no such Cause and Effect, and teaches others on the view that the "Law of Cause and Effect Could be Dispensed With", it would have very serious consequences, and would get oneself and others into problems. Hence, one should try one's best in not having misunderstood the "Buddhist teachings", nor in disregarding the "Law of Cause and Effect". Otherwise, one would die and befallen in a most unworthy manner. This is because the "Law of Cause and Effect" will still continue to exist even though one tries to deny, or disagree with, its existence!..... (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.

Though we have limited resources and capabilities, we still humbly wish, with a sincerity of heart, to publish this bimonthly journal of the "Lake of Lotus", in order that the essence of the Buddhist teachings can be spread and popularized. We earnestly hope that the readers will help with your meritorious deeds by supporting this publication of the "Lake of Lotus", through subscriptions and donations, as well as in our various projects in the preaching of Buddhism, so as to sow the seed of meritorious cause in benefiting all our motherly sentient beings.

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