

# NEW CHAN FORUM

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*No. 29 Spring 2004*

***Dharma Adviser***

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***Price: £3.50***

## BUDDHIST ENQUIRIES Science And The Personal

In this edition we look at a number of issues and enquiries basic to the development of Buddhist thinking and feeling in the Western world. Is Buddhism science and if not how does it relate to science? Can one give a scientific account of Emptiness? What have personal feelings to do with Buddhist practice? What does one discover on retreat?

We believe that it is not enough merely to repeat the texts of Buddhist scriptures or the words of traditional teachers. To have value in the modern world they need to be related to our established modes of thinking, be they discursive and academic, experiential or literary. Only through such relating can a debate be joined and the intrinsic value of Buddhism become more clearly seen. This is an important aspect of the policy of this journal.

We respect the varying opinions and exploratory ideas of all our authors while reminding the reader that they do not necessarily express the views of the Fellowship.

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## The Four Proper Exertions

### Master Shengyen

*This is the second of four talks on the Four Proper Exertions, given by Chan Master Shengyen between October 31 and November 21, 1999, at the Chan Meditation Center, NY. Rebecca Li translated, and transcribed the talks from tape. The final text was edited by Ernest Heau, with assistance from Rebecca Li. Edited here for NCF with permission.*

How do we distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome states? We take the point of view of wholesomeness as the ten virtues, and of unwholesomeness as their opposites, the ten non-virtues. We can look at wholesomeness and unwholesomeness from the points of view of daily life, and of meditation.

One simple idea is that if you do wholesome things you won't go to jail, but if you do unwholesome things you can end up there. Yet, based on this simple distinction, it is not always clear what is wholesome and what is unwholesome because we know that some people do good things and end up in jail, and some people do evil things and remain free. Someone might steal \$1,000 and go to prison, and another may steal an election and become the president. Someone commits murder and is executed, while another massacres ten thousand and is a hero. So how useful is to say that unwholesome people go to jail, and wholesome people do not?

Since it is not always clear what is wholesome and what is unwholesome, Buddhism prescribes the ten virtues and their opposites, the ten non-virtues. The ten virtues give us a clear idea of what wholesome and unwholesome really mean, and are classified in three groups: virtues that pertain to actions, virtues that pertain to speech, and virtues that pertain to thoughts. Of these, Buddhism gives greatest emphasis to virtues of the mind, because the impulses to act or speak come from the mind. You can usually tell whether someone's actions and speech are wholesome, but is not as easy to tell whether their thoughts are so. In daily life we can usually recognize unwholesome states, but it's another matter when we meditate.

### Are You Wholesome?

Though most people would assert that they are "good", they are not always clear about what is wholesome and what is unwholesome. Once a Chinese man told me that he had no religious affiliation. He said, "Religions teach people to become good, to become wholesome. I know that." I asked him why he has no religion then. He said, "I do not need religion; I never do bad things; I never have bad thoughts. Only people who have bad thoughts and do bad things need religion." I asked him, "So you are really a good person, you really have a good heart?" He said, "Of course I have a good heart." When I questioned him further, he said, "How dare you question me? What evidence do you have that I am not a good person, that I have unwholesome thoughts?" I told him, "Well, right now, you are angry. Isn't that unwholesome?" Despite being a good person, this man could not recognize his own unwholesome thoughts.

Some people think anger is not such a bad thing, especially when they can blame others for making them angry. They will say, "You made me angry." They live in suffering and vexation without even knowing it. Some people become angry when they don't get what they want, blaming others, or saying that life is unfair. But if they do get what they want, they want more. Some are envious if others are better off, but if they find themselves better off than others, they become proud. Are these wholesome states of mind? You will probably think, "That's just normal!"

From the Buddhist perspective this is vexation and suffering. The purpose of Buddhadharma is to turn suffering into true, happiness, vexation into wisdom, anger into compassion, and greed

into a heart of giving. We use wholesome states to correct what is unwholesome and to cultivate a genuinely pure and stable mind.

Without meditation it is difficult to see clearly one's own wholesome and unwholesome states, and to know when the mind is pure or impure. But with meditation practice, your mind becomes stable, clear, and able to see its own subtleties. You will recognize and correct unwholesome states as they arise. For these reasons meditation is basic to practicing the Four Proper Exertions. The Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra says that practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness<sup>1</sup> will eventually give rise to wisdom.

## **Unwholesome States in Meditation**

Without proper training and practice, it is hard to recognize the unwholesome states that may come up when we meditate. They are restlessness, drowsiness, no confidence, laziness, no self-control, scattered mind, and erroneous views. Just about every meditator experiences them, making it very difficult to attain samadhi.

For the first few days on retreat, you may experience these problems, but with diligence your mind will gradually become more stable and relaxed; you will become less restless and less prone to drowsiness. When you are no longer restless and drowsy, your interest and enthusiasm will give you the confidence to overcome laziness. You will then find meditating very rewarding.

There is a difference between laziness and lack of self-control. When you are lazy you are passively idling and scattered, but with no self-control you are actively engaging in incorrect views, and even become liable to lose control over body and mind. But if you make an effort to become more stable and more relaxed, you will be able to overcome scattering, control your body and mind, and give rise to correct views. The right approach is simply to know that the point of practice is to stabilize body and mind, and to diminish vexations.

By becoming stable you will more clearly perceive the subtle vexations in your mind. Recognizing them, you can also stop and avoid unwholesome states. When you do that you will be able to arouse and maintain the more wholesome states. At that point you are actually practicing the Four Proper Exertions.

## **The Five Obstructions**

Laxity in practice will give rise to the five obstructions of desire, anger, sloth, restlessness, and doubt. When this happens, you won't be able to gain the faculties of faith, diligence, mindfulness, samadhi, and wisdom, which are major aids to Enlightenment.

In daily life, people desire money, fame, food, love, and living comforts. What do we desire when we meditate? Surely, they should not be the same things.

Is this what we are seeking the whole time we are meditating? "When am I going to get enlightened?" Or, "I want supernatural powers." Or, "I want to be at one with the universe." These are desires for experiences, or for just feeling very comfortable and blissful while sitting for hours. These attitudes will not get you samadhi, much less wisdom, because they are still desires. Not getting what you want to experience can lead to anger, or disgust.

The mind will become restless, the body will get hot and bothered, and the cushion will feel like a volcano. Instead of getting up from the cushion, people like this will keep struggling, looking for something they can't get, or had and lost, and creating more and more vexations for themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> The four foundations of mindfulness are (i) the physical body, (ii) sensation, (iii) mind, (iv) dharmas

After struggling like this for a period of time, you will have lost a lot of energy, and will be tired. This obstruction is sloth, or torpor, characterized by severe drowsiness. So after sleeping on the cushion for a while, like drifting in a rowboat, you recover from tiredness and begin meditating again. But then desire and anger come up again, the mind becomes restless, and the internal struggle begins all over. This is being scattered.

When one's mind is restless, it leads to the fifth obstruction, doubt. Doubt can be lack of confidence in your teacher, or doubt in the meditation method that you were taught. Another kind of doubt is in believing that your physical or health problems make your body unsuitable for meditation. With doubts like these and others, eventually you will decide to quit, and want to leave [the retreat] thinking, "Well, the others can meditate, but it's not for me."



These five obstructions block the virtuous wholesome faculties, and prevent us from eliminating our vexations, and from opening the road to wisdom and compassion. Now, to encounter the five obstructions is normal in practice, but if we diligently rely on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, we can prevent obstructions from becoming serious. When obstructions arise, just return to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. Better yet, with continuous practice of the Four Foundations, obstructions will not have a chance to come up in the first place. So these are the ways to practice the first two exertions, to stop unwholesome states that have arisen, and to prevent unwholesome states from arising.

So when obstructions arise, just return to your practice method; rely on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. Diligent, ceaseless use of the meditation methods and practicing the Four Foundations will help us stop unwholesome states, and not allow the rising of new ones.

### **The Five Mental Faculties**

Practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness will give rise to the five faculties, which consist of faith, diligence, mindfulness, samadhi, and wisdom.

Let's begin with faith. There are several reasons for having faith in something. First is to have blind faith in something because others do, or tells you to. I once asked someone why he was a Buddhist. He said, "My wife wouldn't marry me unless I became a Buddhist, so I became a Buddhist." This is blind faith, but it is not necessarily bad. This man eventually became a good practitioner.

You can also have faith in something you understand. When you learn the principles and the doctrines of belief and find them suitable, your belief is based on understanding, not just blind faith. Very often Westerners, especially intellectuals, turn to Buddhism because they understand and feel compatible with the ideas.

Another basis for faith is first-hand experience. When you put Buddhism into practice and find that it improves your life, stabilizes your mind, and helps you to help others, this builds confidence and faith in Buddhism. This is the kind of faith that is the first wholesome faculty.

We have said that the practice of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness is the path to samadhi. But samadhi by itself does not give rise to wisdom. The methods of 'Stilling the Mind' can stabilise the mind, but the Four Foundations emphasise going beyond stilling the mind, and diligently practising contemplation to arouse the wholesome faculties. Through diligence we can eliminate vexation and attain wisdom; without it, arousing the mental faculties would be very hard. When faith arises, diligence will naturally arise with it. This is because seeing the useful results of practice, one will become more confident, and one will want to work very hard to keep getting good results. This willingness to work hard is diligence.

The third wholesome mental faculty is mindfulness, which means always keeping the practice foremost in your mind. More than thirty of you took the Three Refuges with me today, but will it be two years before I see you again? If that happens, you have not given rise to mindfulness, and maybe you will have forgotten the practice. So to be mindful, remind yourself that the Dharma-the practice-is very important and very useful. If you do this ceaselessly, you will become diligent in your practice. And being diligent, you will be able to enter samadhi, and eventually give rise to wisdom.

I had a student who participated in a seven-day retreat with me, and then didn't show up for another five years. Then another five years later he showed up again, so I asked him, "How come I haven't seen you for the last five years?" And he said, "Shifu, at least I came back. Some people never do."

## **Buddhism: A Science Of The Mind?**

**Jake Lyne**

*What is the nature of Buddhist enquiry? Stephen Batchelor tells us it is "agnostic". Is it also scientific? Jake takes up these complex issues and re-opens an important debate. Eds*

Whilst psychology is the science of the mind, for most of its brief history the emphasis has been on a science of mental processes as physical phenomena; until recently consciousness, which would seem to be central to an understanding of mind, has been downplayed and regarded as of marginal philosophical interest. This has changed, as consciousness is becoming one of the great scientific and philosophical issues of our time. Philosophers now share this territory with neuroscientists, ethologists and psychologists.

I heard the phrase "Buddhism: a science of the mind" in a televised interview of the Dalai Lama.<sup>1</sup> The Dalai Lama is known for his interest and enthusiasm for science and I will be discussing some of his ideas. But is it scientific curiosity that motivates Buddhists? The answer is probably no, but it has come as a surprise to me, a Buddhist and Clinical Psychologist, to realise how close Buddhism is in spirit to the applied science/practice of clinical psychology. Perhaps it should not have been surprising, because in the widest sense mental health is a core concern of both.

Here, I plan to question whether Buddhism is a science and consider interfaces between science and Buddhism.

### **Buddhist Theory**

Science is not just a matter of hypotheses and methodologies. If Buddhism is to be considered a science then we need to find if there is a testable theory.

The heart of Buddhist theory is expressed in the Four Noble Truths: –

1. There is mental suffering
2. This suffering stems from a cause
3. There is the possibility of liberation from mental suffering
4. There are methods that can be used to achieve liberation through overcoming the cause.

Although revolutionary 2,500 years ago this does not seem revolutionary now – clinical psychologists and psychotherapists take this formulation as axiomatic. But Buddhism is a religion and as such points to wider questions: what is the nature of existence; why are we here; what are we? So we should expect there to be more to this formulation than would ordinarily be considered in a clinical context.

How is this difference in emphasis between pragmatic concerns, typical of a clinical perspective, and a more universal perspective expressed in the Four Noble Truths, revealed? The departure of Buddhism from an ordinary perspective can be explored by comparing two different meanings of the word liberation, and within Buddhism there is a specific theory about the cause of mental suffering.

### **The Cause Of Suffering: The Second Noble Truth**

My first contact with Buddhism occurred many years ago when I attended a talk by a young Japanese Zen monk. He sat in black robes on a cushion on a table and for some minutes was silent. His silence had quite an impact; then he began to speak from his heart.

He had studied in a Zen monastery for 10 years; he had had an enlightenment experience and was now a Zen master. The main point of his talk was that we spend our lives in an “as if” world in which we construct an idea of ourselves as separate and permanent. We seek to ignore our vulnerability by trying to give solidity to this sense of self. People do this in different ways, for example by seeking popularity, love, fame, wealth, power, or knowledge, by finding an identity in the symbols of consumerism, or by worrying about appearances and what others think. More or less continuous discursive thought, nearly all of it self-referential is the moment-by-moment mechanism by which this sense of self is sustained.



Self identity continues to develop and change through life reflecting social and cultural circumstances, but the inner, core sense of self, which we call me or I seems to be stable and enduring and not dependent on its particular social manifestations.

Suffering occurs when the foundations on which we build this sense of self are threatened or crumble, for example, becoming old, loss of a loved one, loss of status, coming out the worst in a conflict.

The monk seemed to be attacking consciousness of self. Given that the capacity of the human brain to model the world and model a self- or group-identity is a remarkable consequence of millions of years of selective evolutionary pressure, by implication highly adaptive, why propose that self-identity is problematic?

Self-consciousness is predicated on avoidance of pain and on seeking pleasure, satisfaction and security, for the individual or the group. These goals are not unique to our species, but with self-consciousness comes the capacity to conceptualise the future and to recognise that pain cannot be avoided, pleasure is transient, life is insecure and death is certain. So with self-consciousness comes awareness that the survival project implicit in self-concern is doomed to failure.

We are not limited to self-concern; we identify with social groups – family, country etc., and have the capacity to sacrifice ourselves for these groups. The evolutionary advantage of this to our species is obvious. However, as a species we now have the capacity to do great harm in the process of meeting the real or imagined needs of ourselves and the groups we identify with.

In evolutionary terms, the ability to generate self- and group-identity and with it self and group preoccupation may have given our species a competitive edge, but when combined with advanced and potentially destructive technology and a world population of over 6 billion people this capacity does not seem to be adaptive any more.

The essential point of the second Noble Truth is that this wonderful capacity to develop self- and group-constructs is also our downfall. It becomes the cause of mental suffering, because we have the illusion that these constructs are real, resulting in a potentially dangerous loss of perspective when they are threatened. The Buddhist perspective is that a self- or group-construct is a useful point of view with respect to function, but freedom and happiness rest on the recognition that it is only a point of view. Through the application of inner technologies for training the mind it is possible to develop a “no-self attitude”, an attitude consistent with the true nature of existence, that allows for a wider and less fearful perspective.

### **The Third Noble Truth: Two Meanings Of Liberation**

The second aspect of the Four Noble Truths that I want to address is the use of the word liberation in the Third Noble Truth. This word can be considered from two perspectives: the first is to consider liberation as relative and the second as total.

#### **Relative Liberation**

Buddhists and clinical psychologists would probably view the Third Noble Truth in much the same way as long as the word liberation is considered to be relative, i.e. that liberation is a matter of degree; some kind of improvement on a previous state. There are many parallels and some differences between the endeavours of therapy and Buddhist practice:

A therapist hopes to help a client be more liberated or feel better at the end of therapy. This goal also applies in Buddhism; a person may become more liberated as a result of engaging in Buddhist practice.

Clinical Psychologists teach patients methods and help them cultivate viewpoints that help them become more liberated. Likewise methods of Buddhist practice have been developed over at least two thousand years, many antedate Buddhism. The role of Buddhist teacher is psycho-educational and motivational, encouraging the individual to apply the methods taught. In principle this is similar to the general approach used in cognitive therapy and health psychology interventions.

So whilst the appearance and precise methods are very different, there are many similarities in the overall conceptual framework, methods and intentions of Buddhist Teachers and Clinical Psychologists, with respect to relative liberation.

This is one sense in which the Dalai Lama uses the word science - in terms of the predictable effects of various specific practices on a person's state of mind. These can be profound; there are practices specifically for producing a state of loving kindness, or for a state of inner confidence, or for meditative insight and so on.

Nevertheless, even with this limited interpretation of the word liberation there are important distinctions in emphasis, for example:

Buddhism emphasises happiness as a consequence of Buddhist practice, whereas typically the emphasis in therapy is on overcoming distress, partly because the focus of therapy is remedial;

Buddhists learn to wish for the liberation of all beings: personal liberation is not prioritised, except in so far as the liberated person is more able to help others;

An ethical framework is an explicit part of Buddhist teaching. This is summarised in five precepts: not killing, not lying, not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct, nor using



intoxicants (including alcohol) to excess. These precepts are not commandments reflecting the values of a higher power, the transgression of which is sinful. The approach is much more pragmatic, living according to the precepts will result in greater happiness for the individual and the people they come in contact with. It is also worth noting that living according to the precepts will tend to undermine self-centredness and is therefore consistent with the development of a “no-self attitude”.



Within this limited interpretation of the word liberation a sense of self is not fundamentally challenged; in fact it is utilised, the practitioner is encouraged by the rewards of practice, and Buddhist teachings emphasise these benefits for the purposes of motivating practitioners. However, the practices are designed to help the practitioner loosen their grip on self-identification.

### **Total Liberation**

Lets move on to the second meaning of the word liberation. This is where clinical psychology and Buddhism are not very similar. The second meaning is much more difficult to describe and is paradoxical, from this perspective liberation is total, not relative. We are used to hearing the word enlightenment in this context, although this term has been the source of much confusion.

Liberation from what? Remember that in the Four Noble Truths the root cause of mental suffering is attachment to an illusory sense of self. The cure for mental suffering comes with the disappearance of this illusion. What is seen when this illusion disappears cannot be communicated in words, and it is not something that can be puzzled out by the intellect, it has to be realised. The essential point is that the nature of existence can be known directly without being filtered through an illusory sense of self; this is not just a matter of philosophy or intellectual insight, but one of direct insight.

Total liberation actually means complete liberation from a self-centred perspective. It does not mean being somewhat less self-centred, that would be the partial liberation already referred to above: it means not having any shred of a self-centred perspective. But it also does not mean that existence ceases; in fact from an intellectual point of view it is paradoxical.

The difference between a Buddhist and a philosopher or neuroscientist at this point is that a philosopher might show through reasoning that the self is illusory, and a neuroscientist may develop a theoretical perspective that supports this, but without a direct realisation of what is being conceptualised, this can easily result in a nihilistic perspective. A Buddhist aims to discover that the self is illusory and is moved by the implications of such a discovery, and that is very different. There are many reports of such a realisation. The reports suggest that it is usually fairly brief, although its psychological impact, which includes a motivation towards love and kindness, tends to be life-long.

The implications of this are very important. Since the self is illusory, seeing through the illusion is a glimpse of reality, not a mystical experience. But this is most certainly not an argument for fatalism or callousness. Many Buddhist world leaders are remarkably active and productive and work to foster attitudes of peace, generosity, kindness and equality. Total liberation is not liberation from existence or responsibility; it is truer to say that it is liberation from denial of reality, or misunderstandings about reality. Our model of self in opposition to environment is discovered to be far too limiting.

But how is such a glimpse engineered? Well it cannot be, although certain conditions may make it more likely to occur. In principle those conditions include following the precepts, development of meditation practice, strong motivation, but eventually coming to a condition in which nothing is wanted. Some types of Buddhist retreats, particularly Zen or Chan (Chan is the original Chinese word for Zen) retreats <sup>2</sup> are intended to establish those conditions quite specifically and very occasionally there are retreat participants who glimpse total liberation.

What is it about retreats that might make this possible? This is a matter for speculation. On a Chan retreat a rule of silence and calming the mind through meditation probably reduces reliance on higher levels of consciousness including the concepts of self, past and future and the language centre of the brain. This allows other aspects of conscious brain function to predominate. However, this would suggest that the brain of the participant is moving to a lower level of consciousness that might be typical of a chimpanzee, without language! This is certainly not what liberation is about; instead relieving these higher-level functions from discursive, anxious self-referential awareness is probably a necessary pre-condition for the brain to function differently.

So the Third Noble Truth, that liberation from suffering is possible can be interpreted in two ways, the common sense interpretation is that people can become happier, but the more profound interpretation transcends notions of better or worse, replacing self-concern with love for all beings.

## **Are the Four Noble Truths Testable?**

This is the central theory of Buddhism, an elegant, bold and revolutionary theory of the cause of mental suffering and its cure. But is it testable?

This question can also be addressed with reference to the two meanings of liberation – relative and total. Lets start with the relative.

In a recent New Scientist article, Owen Flanagan begins by saying

“Members of my tribe, we call ourselves philosophical naturalists, treat all talk of souls and spirits as metaphorical. We think of the seat of the soul as the brain, in concert with the rest of the nervous system. The Dalai Lama speaks of a “luminous consciousness” that transcends death and which he thinks might not have brain correlates, but we believe even this must be realised neurally” <sup>3</sup>

Flanagan goes on to quote research suggesting that Buddhist practitioners have a less reactive amygdala than normal and are therefore less reactive to threat and probably less likely to get frightened or angry. Also their left prefrontal lobes (a neurological substrate for happiness and good mood) are unusually active even when not meditating.



Is this just a result of meditation, or are these dispositions also dependent on the practice of the Buddhist precepts that I mentioned above, all of which are directed at reducing self-centred concern? Questions start running immediately. We don't need to go into this here, but this limited example makes it fairly clear that Buddhist theory and practice can generate testable hypotheses pertinent to the relative meaning of the word liberation. This does not imply that Buddhism is a science, but the phenomena of Buddhism are clearly susceptible to scientific investigation.

Without taking sides between the Dalai Lama and philosophical naturalists, Flanagan's quotation raises the question of what constitutes admissible data in science. The dangers of subjectivity are well known, but when that science is about consciousness the question of what kind of subjective data are admissible is crucial. Flanagan's quotation conveys a message that in being unburdened by superstition, scientists are closer to a true understanding of consciousness than the Dalai Lama. Humility is essential here. The brain, with its profoundly subtle capabilities is not an object in isolation; it is a response to, and component of selective processes that have occurred over hundreds of millions of years. Furthermore, just as the brain cannot be isolated from the context in which it has evolved, so too, consciousness cannot be isolated and separated from its contents. That these contents can be known in any meaningful sense is a response to training, language acquisition, cultural conditioning and personal preoccupation within a lifetime. Experience, brain and environment are mutually interdependent over time and in the present moment. Given that the brain is interconnected with everything it knows, who can be so sure where the "seat of the soul" is located, or what such a phrase or even the idea of location means?

Edleman and Tononi<sup>4</sup> maintain that the brain is the biological seat of consciousness, but they limit the scope of science by saying that a scientific theory of consciousness cannot describe the

“subjective, qualitative aspects of consciousness”. It can describe the necessary and sufficient conditions for consciousness to occur, but it cannot make the leap from the biological substrate of consciousness to the experience.

However, they would not agree with the Dalai Lama, that a luminous consciousness could leave the body, a clear reference to rebirth. Reincarnation, or rebirth is usually considered to be a cornerstone of Buddhism, but perhaps this issue is less crucial than it appears. Buddhism teaches the importance of taking responsibility for future lives, in Buddhist cosmology this is a literal matter, but with a no-self attitude it does not matter too much who we attribute the future lives to. The essential point is clear, the way we behave in this life has repercussions that live beyond us.

But the real problem in deciding whether Buddhism is a science of the mind comes when we consider total liberation, rather than relative liberation. We have to take it on trust that total liberation is possible. People disagree on this, for example Sherrington:

“Each waking day is a stage dominated for good or ill, in comedy, farce or tragedy, by a *dramatis persona*, the ‘self’. And so it will be until the curtain drops...”<sup>5</sup>

versus Dogen:

“To study the way of the Buddha is to study your own self  
To study your own self is to forget yourself  
To forget yourself is to have the objective world prevail in you”

Zen Master Dogen (1200-1253)

Total liberation cannot be realised predictably, and therefore does not conform to an experimental notion of repeatability; the likelihood that you will happen to be sitting in a laboratory linked to a PET scanner at the moment of enlightenment is small. Experiences of expansiveness and oneness can arise if the Buddhist practitioner patiently and persistently applies the methods of meditation, but this is not the case for total liberation. One of the features of most of the reports is that total liberation comes to a well prepared mind “from its own side”, unpredictably, typically triggered by something unexpected, like dropping a cup, or being whacked by a Zen master!

Actually, the question posed here - Buddhism a science of the mind? - is more provocative than substantive. Buddhists do not need science to judge whether their practice has beneficial effects on their state of mind or relationships; they can discover this from their own experience. A more pertinent question is whether the insights and knowledge gained and passed on during 2,500 years of Buddhist practice has the potential to enrich a science of the mind.

Over 1500 years ago Buddhists had already developed highly sophisticated approaches to a philosophy of mind<sup>6</sup>. We are now well into the question of how far science will travel in this territory, and it seems likely that the journey will be enriched by learning from the world’s oldest traditions with respect to developing the human mind. Buddhism may have much to offer to the scientific study of consciousness, particularly given that Buddhist philosophy is flexible enough to be fully compatible with a scientific world-view.

Edelman and Tononi<sup>4</sup> end their thesis with the ethically debatable objective of working towards building a conscious brain in the laboratory: conscious robots would be a medium for testing theory, with obvious technological and commercial potential. However, reconciliation between religion and science might be essential to meaningful progress in the development of neuroscience beyond reductionist ideas of consciousness as “nothing but” neurochemical

processes. Such a reconciliation would depend on continuing exploration of the place of values in science, because religion is quintessentially about value, whereas basic science tends towards being value free, as we know to our benefit and cost – a knowledge that might one day be shared by the conscious robots of Edelman and Tononi's imaginations.

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<sup>1</sup> A theme developed in *Mind Science: an East-West dialogue*. Goleman, D. & Thurman, R.A.F. (Eds.; 1991) Wisdom Publications, Boston

<sup>2</sup> Crook, J. (Ed.; 1991) *Catching a Feather on a Fan: A Zen retreat with Master Sheng Yen*. Element, Dorset. Also (2002) *Illuminating Silence*. Watkins. London. See [www.westernchanfellowship.org](http://www.westernchanfellowship.org)

<sup>3</sup> Flanagan, O. (2003) *The Colour Of Happiness*. New Scientist Magazine, 24th May

<sup>4</sup> Edelman, G.M. and Tononi, G. (2000) *Consciousness: How Matter Becomes Imagination*. Penguin Books, London

<sup>5</sup> Sherrington, C.S. (1906) *The Integrative Action of the Nervous System*, C. Scribner's Sons, New York. Cited in Edelman and Tononi

<sup>6</sup> Thurman, R.A. (1984) *The Central Philosophy Of Tibet: A Study And Translation Of Jey Tsong Khapa's Essence Of True Eloquence*. Princeton University Press. Princeton

## Now We Have Two Haibun Prize Winners!

*When Ken Jones returned from his prize winning tour of Japan he discovered that his wife Noragh had also won a major prize for her haibun. Dry in humour as always Ken remarked that at first he felt a little like being Dennis Thatcher! So now we have two prizewinners in our midst. Congratulations to them both. Here we present Noragh's prizewinner and a recent contribution from Ken.*

### Song of Old Age

Noragh Jones

I can't go on I'm going on somehow only I'm not telling the story any more the story's telling me I don't know the ending I only know what's happening now I'm forgetting things all the time different doors are opening I don't recognise the rooms in this house they say is mine everything looks new and strange the furniture too where is my favourite chair it doesn't matter any more I can't get any proper rest I'm tired out

oh yes I know I'm going to die this month next month not long to go now but what good is it knowing that what are you supposed to do about it pray or feel sorry for yourself or be glad of the relief or look forward to a toyland eternity there must be another way the way of uncertainty maybe like that ancient Zen poem by Fumon I found on a calendar and cut out for no reason:

*magnificent! magnificent!  
no one knows the final word  
the ocean bed's aflame  
out of the void leap wooden lambs*

I like that I'm a non-knower in my story now so why am I bothering why not just embrace the emptiness delight in the void not so easy I can't stop the words coming I can't get through to the unwords and the silence anyway emptiness is all very well in dreams but not much help when us oldies are supposed to be still competing in the Help Yourself to a Full Life Stakes?

*twilight in the garden  
an old stone toad  
snapping stone insects*

ah but the kindness of strangers my neighbour keeps an eye on me she says I should have a little holiday in the sun get away from it all for a month or so wintering abroad is the thing for senior citizens these days I laugh to myself I'm on my final journey as it is what is the point of rushing about the world on your last legs and dropping dead in Malaga airport or the Promenade des Anglais this old body's had enough of everything its been eighty years of longing for everything loving and hating everything learning and forgetting everything laughing and crying at everything surely it must be time for nothing now if ever but what kind of nothing that's the question?

letting go is easy so much just drops away anyway because your mind and body let you down that's what the floating world calls it AGE LETTING YOU DOWN but the messages don't see it like that I don't know but I think the messages are telling me this is the last chapter of my story telling itself the story is trying to tell me too it's trying to get me moving out of my lonely rickety old body into Big Body I don't have to bother the messages say just let the clinging

things go get rid of the rubbish do my Autumn clear out and MAKE A SILENCE WHERE I CAN HEAR THE STORY ENDING

maybe that's what I'm trying to do these days I'm no good at it but I suppose I have to go on doing this kind of nothing to get to the end of the story mind you it's very hard to give up telling my own story and let it tell me instead that's not been my style me a working woman and star of my own destiny but no harm in giving it a chance besides I'm curious to know the end of the story that's not it I mean be there in the story till the end no choice anyway with mind and memory going to pieces and unreliable limbs letting me down with a jolt and a jar nothing for it but give myself over to the Big Storyteller in the Sky or whatever it is that keeps me going on when I can't go on?

the days pass quietly enough maybe I'm getting into some rhythm of the unknowable it's easier now I've got rid of the certainties that you think you have when you are telling your own life now I'm letting life tell me I have more time for the geraniums and the sunshiny bursts of rain and the visits of the old grey cat and above all the nothingness I still have flurries of busyness mostly these days getting rid of things emptying out the ragbag of old thoughts and feelings and making space for the serene silence

*yellowed love letters  
curling in the flames  
my watering eyes*

ah postcards from lost countries photos of forgotten people on to the fire with them they're all gone and heaven knows who they are I can't remember the faces squinting into summer suns and captured on box Brownies I stir the flames as best I can with my white cane a good job done except it dawns on me that getting rid of things is still not the nothing I'm looking for there's something else only what is it?

going inside I absent-mindedly water the geraniums in the porch I water them far too often because I forget but this evening they don't mind they're flaming in such a sunset it's too much for me I go flabby and collapse into the nearest chair smiling for nothing

*this red geranium -  
weak with reality  
I forget to be*

## The Raffia Closet

Ken Jones

Houses, roads, avenues are as fleeting, alas, as the years

-- Proust, *In Search of Past Time*

*A childhood  
in broken bricks  
and the names of streets*

cast in iron and bolted onto walls. Blocked neatly on the 1927 map. This tumble of remembered names. But the black cinder track in the walled garden is still there, among the rubbish. Miss Grundy's Preparatory School, now a wreck of peeling stucco. But where is the raffia closet, where I used to hide in that dangling forest of bright colours?

Surely No 6C was a substantial pebble-dashed semi, and not this mean place?

*Childhood home  
shrunk by time  
a dolls' house*

Is that really the bay window in which the Big Table stood? Big enough for a seven year old to conduct a furtive love affair beneath its skirts. She was the five year old daughter of the caretaker of the synagogue across the road, and very willing.

*His Mickey Mouse watch  
in its leather fob. Golden hair  
and a bright future*

It was at that table, much too big for the present house, that I was forced endlessly to copy The Song of Hiawatha in copperplate. I can still smell the thick ink on my fingers and see the owl on the nib of the Waverley pen.

*By the shores of Gitchee Gumee  
ink and tear stains  
blotch the blotter*

Older, and leaning against the heavy repro sideboard, I listen to the wireless. "Early this morning German forces crossed the Polish frontier." I trace WAR in the film of dust. The end of childhood.

At the corner, the bank is now a bookie's; there are sun beds in my sweetshop; and torn chintz curtains blow through the broken windows of my father's local, the Lord Falkland. Good Beer & a Warm Welcome. The church still stands, where I remember having to colour a map of Palestine in Sunday School, and wondering why.

*Arts and Crafts church  
Pre-Raphaelite weeds  
and art nouveau graffiti*



An alien and depressing place. And the family? My mother excised most of them from my childhood record. "Not our class". The rest were erased by early death. My would-have-been-uncles all died together on the same day -- 'Kitchener's Pals' on the Somme. My father escaped with a bullet through the wrist, but fell to a speeding motorcycle forty years later. My sister did indeed marry into gentry, but died soon after. Mother outlived two more husbands, and only her guilty son was left to follow her coffin on that drab December day ten years later.

Bricks and mortar, flesh and blood, all are gone. My childhood floats free, no more than an interesting idea, hanging thick with feeling in the raffia closet. I open the big brown envelope of papers and photos which officially identify me as that idea. No more than a lonely dream, liable for tax.

And so I flee this private nightmare that is Liverpool 7 in the winter of 2003, taking my place in the shabby bus queue. "Not our class". Coffin maker and French polisher, my great-grandfather Joseph fled here from the poverty of his native Amlwch and disappeared into a slum street whose name has vanished from the map.

*Clutching our plastic bags  
at windy bus stops  
we wait and joke*

## **Buddhism and Life**

**Fiona Nuttall, August 2003**

It is eleven o'clock at night and I have had to get out of bed to write this. I say, "have to" because I feel compelled or impelled or something. Driven anyway. The latest NCF arrived today and I looked, or more accurately, glanced through it. John was asking how we do our Buddhism in our lives. How we translate our practice into our life. Buddhism has seemed to be a series of translations or "transmogrifications" to me.

I read the theory; Zen, Dzogchen, Lam Rim, Lojong and Chan and I "sat" periodically. I went on retreat. The retreats' extended periods of sitting allowed a translation of the theory into practice. Translation: making something understandable in another format. Oh! So that was what they meant! From the retreat "sitting" changed. Now I was saddled with retrospection; an examination of the minutiae of past events. This was not Tsan, an investigation of the present mind, but a white shirt stained with red wine of longing for repetition and collars and cuffs grubby with the dust, sweat and grease of working hard to make spurious "progress".

I took my Buddhism terribly seriously. This was my "Great Game". I surrounded myself with others who were similarly driven. We would meet, eat and sit and talk about it all. We visited teachers and centres, monasteries and teachings. We chanted in various languages and prostrated in several modes. We bowed and gazed and listened and sat. Above all, we sat. Ash from hundreds of incense sticks filled censers and atmospheres.

The more I did this, the less I understood. How did any of this translate into general life in the West? I got my feet caught in the seaweed cathedrals of "practising properly" and I didn't care if I drowned. Or at least, felt that I ought not to care.

So. What constituted "doing it properly"? Several monastics suggested that devoting one's life to practice was the only option unless I wanted to wait until another lifetime appeared. There is something appealing about retiring from the world and its distractions and being in a position to concentrate fully on practice with other similarly minded beings. This has been an option to which I have given serious consideration. Scarily serious consideration.

Then I was surrounded by people going off on year-long retreats and rains retreats in far-off places where I cannot even read the script. And I wanted to go too. This despite Dogen's admonitions about travelling to far-off dusty places. My friends were shaving their heads and taking robes.

Recently, my best friend and Dharma sister took vows and robes and lost her hair. She now has a new name, no home and a new land. She is on the other side of the globe. She wears grey, gets up at three, has no privacy, lives up in the mountains and follows 238 rules every day to the best of her abilities. She is living her practice.

And me? Well, who am I? What is a Dharma sister when you have no contact? What am I? What is this label "Buddhist"? An old man asked me recently whether I told people that I was a Buddhist. I replied that I told them if they asked, but didn't offer the information on first meeting. "Hello, my name is X and I'm a Buddhist", sounds like a mixture of a 12 Step programme and "coming out". But what does it mean? How does it impinge on daily life? Could anyone tell? Can one Buddhist spot another across the aisles at Sainsbury's?

Am I still being a Buddhist if I discard some aspect of the precepts by, for example, indulging in my penchant for red wine? If I drink it mindfully, completely aware that I am actively choosing to ignore Shifu's advice about complete abstinence, is that less 'bad' than drinking it without thinking or noticing? Which has the fewer karmic implications? Is my motivation a determining factor? If I do it to keep my relationship with non-Buddhist friends intact, is that worse? Is

being a separatist prude 'better'? Ryokan drank sake with farmers regularly and exchanged poetry with painted ladies. Now I know that I am no Ryokan. I may be deluded, but I'm not that deluded! There has to be a way of being in this world of mass communications and consumerism that balances idealism with reality.

The balance is precarious and I oftentimes lose body awareness and slip gracelessly off the tightrope and into the mud. John talks about stepping off a thousand-foot pole, which is terrifying for a person of vertigo like myself, even though I know that the wings of compassion and wisdom will allow me to glide effortlessly through the landscape on a thermal. But mostly, I am neither wise, nor compassionate. Mostly I am a frightened, anxious, angry, chip carrying, ego-driven ball of desires. And it's hard to fly when you're carrying that lot. But there are times, even at work, even in the midst of relationships when I remember to put it down.

Professionally, these are the moments when that difficult person ceases to be "other" and simple open-heartedness is present, allowing an expansion that encompasses both. It can be remembering to breathe consciously before putting finger to keyboard. Or hearing the scratch of nib on paper or the taste of tea on tongue. It is giving bad news simply and directly without embellishments or embarrassment and being open to hold what emerges. It is seeing beauty in a buddlia flowering incongruously out of an abandoned chimney pot. Or the red swish of an urban fox grinning across a desolate wasteland of city decay. It is smiling towards the demented lady who asks you who you are (as if you know!), and wiping the dribble from her mouth without revulsion.

Personally it is silently singing Chenrezig's mantra as the phlebotomist struggles to get a cannula in your vein. It, "I", watching the rising tension as you wait for blood test results. Watching, rather than being controlled by the tension. It is feeling my friend's pain at the impending death of her pet companion. It is the shared experience of bliss at a friend's shrine. The orange surge of energetic warmth as the sun rises and that bright disk enters the third eye and works hormonal magic on the pineal gland. It is the blending of internal and external ecstasy as the radiance of a thousand bluebells shimmers in the mind, in the heart in the atmospheric light of the glen and from the cells of each individual petal and sepal. It is the image of elves and fairies shaking blue love dust into the shafts of sunlight to make your breath catch and your eyes to open. It is the sound of the stream without interference and the stretch of the gong-sound.

The translation here is of the ordinary into the noticed, the repressed into the uninhibited, the self into others. This world, this space, this time is what there is. Wanting it to be otherwise is fruitless. I am a woman of middle age in the first world, Northern Hemisphere. I am. This is. Not fighting it. Not wishing. Allowing. Being can be resting.

That is my Buddhism.

## **Thoughts On Silence**

*When I say silence  
I mean the sound of butterflies,  
the gentle pad of dogs feet  
over grass.  
I mean the heave of sea,  
the crack of gorse pods,  
a stone dislodged  
scuttling downhill.  
The creak of lady birds  
over leaves.  
The air sound.  
The land sound  
The sea sound.  
The earth's echo  
Boom, boom, boom.*

Martin Wood

## **Notariddle**

*it cannot be seen  
but it can be painted  
it cannot be spoken  
but it can be heard*

*though found in the fingertips  
it is not a sensation  
though found in the heart  
it is not a feeling*

*it never came  
and it never leaves  
in war it does not weep  
in peace it does not smile*

*it has no face  
but it is in all faces  
and it has as many names  
as there are words*

*gossip defeats it  
but it's tougher than grief  
it is not hiding  
and there is no riddle*

George Marsh

## The Concept of Sunyata from a Scientific Viewpoint

C. T. Song

*This is the second thoughtful contribution that CT, a close friend of Yiu Yan nang, has sent us from Hong Kong. He raises deep concerns striking at the philosophical conundrums that lie at the roots of both science and buddhism. We welcome his speculations and invite the physicists in our Fellowship to respond. Eds*

Sunyata in Buddhism means the illusory nature of all existence. It is a concept that existed long before the emergence of modern day science. Now science is catching up and its meaning can be explained in present day language which we are familiar with.

According to science, all matters in the universe are nothing but energy and information. The term energy differs here from the usual interpretation in physics and encompasses a much wider meaning. We live in a physical world of space and time. Space can be defined by three dimensions and its position by time, making the physical world a four dimensional existence. Time in physics is defined as the measure of movement of a particle however small (at the atomic level) or large (at the cosmic level) from one point in space to another. All matter has its own specific energy signature like our individual fingerprint. Even our souls have different energy signatures because we vibrate at different frequencies. Our thoughts are merely a form of electromagnetic wave. What medical science can measure with our modern instruments are only transverse waves but our brains are thought to operate also along a longitudinal wave which has zero frequency that exists in the universe where time is of no relevance. There is so much about the brain that scientists do not know.

At the sub-atomic level, there is no clear distinction between particle and energy wave. They are freely convertible. For example light is simultaneously photon and wave. Particles are never at rest and all matters are continuously in a state of change however slow or fast but the sum total of matter and energy is constant. They are inseparable like two sides of the same coin. Our world exists because of the infinite extension of this duality. Sunyata is like a theatrical stage where performances of such change take place. Since nothing physical is permanent therefore they appear illusory.

Particles are bounded by space and its position by time. Although energy wave has no space constraint but it still has time constraint as it is measured in cycles per second. All living beings with brains have an extra dimension in addition to the four above mentioned. This is known as consciousness. There are three different levels of consciousness; viz. the conscious, sub-conscious and super-conscious (or cosmic-conscious) minds. Scientists have identified the conscious mind to be associated with Beta brain wave (15-20Hz) and the sub-conscious mind with Theta brain wave (4-8Hz). Below Theta is Delta brain wave (0-4Hz) or the unconscious mind. The Alpha brain wave (7-12Hz) is a bridge between conscious and sub-conscious minds and Delta brain wave between that of sub-conscious and super-conscious minds. It can be deduced that the lower the frequency the closer we are towards our origin (cosmos).

From the above observation, it would be wrong to conclude that Sunyata is matter at the sub-atomic state although it appears to be so. Even the speed of light is still measured in time. Since Sunyata is timeless and we need to go further in our exploration.

In Buddhism, our conscious mind embodies the five senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch as detected by our physical organs (i.e. eye, ear, nose, tongue and body) plus our waking awareness of our mind. These six senses are essentially within the Beta region. The seventh level of consciousness can be classified as our subconscious mind (Theta). Super-consciousness

(the eighth level of consciousness or Alaya-vijnana) is the root and essence of all things. At this level the frequency is zero as time stands still. A timeless mind is therefore our true super-consciousness. We human beings are individual entities when we exist in our conscious and sub-conscious states because we are still shackled by time constraint. We are nothing more than a collection of experiences over time which gives us our identity. However, in our super-conscious state we all merge into one because what separates us, i.e. time, no longer is relevant. Our mind is therefore in a state of Sunyata.



So much for our consciousness which is inseparable from our physical bodies. Let us look at physical matters that comprise our perceived world. Matters exist at different energy levels as previously observed. In physics, it is known that as temperature is lowered, gases become liquids and liquids become solids. There is a limit to which it is humanly possible to lower the temperature. The temperature scale used in Cryogenics (Low Temperature Physics) is called Kelvin. The zero on this scale is the Absolute Zero. In terms of our more familiar temperature scales, it is at -273.2 degrees C or -459.7 degrees F. The Absolute Zero has never been achieved in laboratories. Energy in the form of heat is created by random motion of molecules and can be measured by a thermometer. Any motion of molecule constitutes a state of disorder. Theoretically at Absolute Zero there is no movement of molecules and therefore time, according to our definition, stands still. The Third Law of Thermodynamics states that at Absolute Zero, the entropy (a measure of disorder) of any system vanishes. In other words the system achieves its highest state of order at this temperature and matter and energy (in wave form) become indistinguishable because they both transcend the time constraint. Scientists have found that there is no real vacuum because in the so-called vacuum where no particles are supposed to exist, there exists the fundamental energy known as cosmic energy (or scalar<sup>1</sup> energy) which has zero frequency.

Sunyata therefore is a state in which there is perfect order and it is timeless. To quote the Buddhist's Heart Sutra: "...all things have no beginning and no end, they are faultless and not

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<sup>1</sup>Scalar energy is a term used by Nicola Tesla to describe a powerful energy with zero frequency. It is a standing energy or cosmic wave that exists in the universe. The electromagnetism that we know has frequencies and can be measured by our instruments. They are known as transverse waves and are dependent on time. Scalar energy on the other hand is longitudinal in nature and independent of time. It is created when two identical electromagnetic waves meet out of phase from two different vectors, cancelling out each other's frequency. This stationary energy cannot be measured by our current frequency instruments, but its effects tells us that it exists everywhere in space.

faultless, they are not imperfect and not perfect...". Since the ultimate state transcends the world of duality, it is in the world of "Absolute" or "Oneness". It can also be called the "Tao" of nature and the "Unified Field" in modern science. Our whole universe, including living beings, emerged from this scalar energy that exists in the cosmic vacuum.

To experience Sunyata while in our physical form, one practices meditation to lower one's "mental temperature" until enlightenment is reached. This is analogous to lowering the temperature of matter to Absolute Zero until perfect order is achieved. The person then becomes one with the universe. At this point, although the particles of which the physical body is composed are never at rest, the flow of thought (basically a product of time) practically stands still. True meditation according to J. Krishnamurti, an Indian philosopher and thinker, is the emptying of all consciousness. As a person's mind becomes timeless he enters a state known as Samadhi.

In looking out from that level, as the venerable Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara perceived, all forms of existence in the universe become illusory. The five Skandhas by their nature are transient. Referring to human beings, the first of the five Skandhas is our physical body (particles) and the other four relate to our consciousness (wave). They come into existence because of Pratyaya and extinguish with the dissipation of same. All forms of existence are just like the clouds in the sky that become visible at one moment and disappear the next although the water vapour is present in the atmosphere all the time. Such is the nature of Sunyata.



## Retreat Reports

*Retreat reports are an integral aspect of our journal and one much approved of by Shifu. We print them mostly anonymously and are most grateful to our practitioners for sharing themselves so generously with us. In reading these reports we learn much about the experiences of others on retreat and they often provide pointers for our own understanding*

### Homecoming

#### Retreat Report WZR May 29 – June 3 2003

I was overjoyed to be on this retreat – it felt like a real homecoming, a homecoming to my heart as well as to the Maenllwyd. I settled easily into the daily pattern. Sights, sounds and smells seemed particularly bright and fresh. Birdsong, the cries of the baby jackdaws, stream gurgling, wind blowing, calls of the sheep and their lambs – smells from the kitchen – all seemed to provide a scaffold on which I hung my mind. There really was nothing to do – and I reflected on how in my earlier days at Maenllwyd John had said “Let the Universe do it” and I hadn’t a clue of what he was on about, and here I was just kind of hanging out, experiencing it all.

I loved everything, even my job which was to manage the Chan toilets. This involved, amongst other things, sticking my head into two dark chambers of shit twice a day, which was an interesting experience. In my dreams at night I began raking shit, in my fantasies when I became sleepy on the cushion I was surrounded by shit – it occurred to me that something was stirring in my unconscious mind.

My question was “What is my Heart?”

This question had leapt into my mind on the first morning, not surprisingly as my practice for over a decade has been to ‘open the heart’.

This totally committed aspiration had arisen as a result of practice about 13 years ago when I discovered a determination within me to go beyond the mundane, the numbness and fear and open my heart to feeling, love and naturalness.

My life had fallen spectacularly apart at that point, I seemed to have been tossed into an ocean of karmic negativity. The net result was that for a few years my life became a roller-coaster of chaotic and destructive forces – it was a dark and dangerous time. I attended few retreats and at times almost lost the plot completely.

So here I was, on my first WZR in 7 years and it seemed reasonable to ask myself what the hell did I think I had been doing in the name of opening my heart.

What is the heart anyway?

I sat with this question and went completely blank, which I thought was quite a laugh considering everything I had been through.

On the second morning, during early morning meditation, I became filled with a complete and flowing love. My ex-partner, husband of 18 years and father of my children, came into my mind.

This was a love that I had never experienced for him before, so total and complete, and in that moment there was complete acceptance and forgiveness. I was deeply moved and experienced incredible sadness, but also a feeling of completion.

I felt encouraged as this question seemed to be beginning to penetrate – so my head went to work, trying to work out what my heart is!

My instinctive response to the question was to grapple with rationalisations of what was me and what seemed like not me. Thankfully, the afternoon chant and the Kundalini Yoga gave the thoughts in my head a rest and it was during these sessions that I became aware of a warm earthy feminine energy

I came to rest with the view that my heart was every thing – except me. How could my heart be me, this bundle of constructs – this ego – these cravings and desires. I felt my heart must be protected from these things that are me. I felt quite happy with this and I reflected as I poked my head into the toilet that, if the Buddha himself, or his Holiness the Dalai Lama were to walk into the toilet at that moment, I could sit with him knowing that his heart and my heart are one: all the mundane things that make up me were neatly swept out of the way. It then began to dawn on me that not ‘all’ of myself had come on retreat, I had conveniently left parts of myself elsewhere, it became apparent that ‘all’ of me was not present.

In interview John asked me if I thought that my heart was indeed all of me and I agreed that it must be, but somehow things had to be kept separate.

John suggested that there were parts of myself that I didn’t trust. This produced an immediate rush of tears and I went back to the cushion with the disgusting thought that, actually, all of me is involved here.

As the day progressed I began to see how I separate myself from the things that I love, and then fill the space with other things. I then long for the things that I love and secretly feel full of anguish because I never seem to reach them. I then cover up the whole deception with the pretence that I have everything that I want. This realisation produced an immediate rush of sorrow as I saw the struggles of my life, feelings of rejection, loneliness, despair, feelings of pointlessness, and how I create them, with a clear awareness.

John had said in interview ‘look through the eyes of the heart’ and the eyes of the heart were seeing.

I saw with awareness, felt the intense pain and then it passed away – wracking great sobs were followed by a calm and quietish mind. I seemed to be moving through and beyond. The past was gone, the future not yet here, my heart indeed is this moment.

In meditation I ‘invited’ all of me to be present – all of the chopped-off denied parts, the parts that I don’t trust and I became aware of a deep, dark, dreadful black core. What was this? How could this be my heart, this blackness was beyond words, it defied description. I was appalled. What was this?

This was the dark chamber, the inside of the toilet. Suddenly I seemed to be in the engine room of my mind, I saw how I split and chop and deny in order to protect the things I love from this blackness. I searched the depths of my mind for an explanation. None came.

I continued to ‘invite’ all of my selves, including the blackness to be present and was aware of the need to surrender all of this and let go into my heart.

It became apparent on the last morning that this was a deep sense of unworthiness, right at my centre, an old, old thing of which I had absolutely conscious knowledge . My attempts to improve my self-esteem in recent years had been built on this black foundation.

During the early morning communication exercise something began to shift. I saw my obscurations as dark clouds obscuring the sun. Now that I knew about the blackness the events of the last few years began to be understood.

It was during the morning service, as we read the Heart Sutra, that it all began to become blindingly clear.

It was as if I had never seen these words before – they spoke an absolute truth and I knew it. The Heart Sutra was telling me exactly how it is and I could not believe that I had missed it on so many other occasions. And then we recited ‘In your centre you are not stained, not impure, you neither gain nor lose’ and that was the moment, the moment that my heart opened, that my heart knew it was itself. I cannot describe it, but as that which I am, including the blackness, started to fall away and flow into the shining silence of the heart. I saw into my own suffering, and that of my children, and my parents and my sister and my ex-husband and other family members. Our family karma, passed around from one to another, which put simply was how we have tried to protect each other from our own perceived badness and how that misguided act of love was perceived by each other as rejection.

The painful paradox was so tragic. I was struck by the incredible grace by which I had experienced these things.

Later in the morning I found that my insight into suffering extended beyond myself and my family. People that I am not close to in my life came into my mind, my heart was touched by their suffering, all of our suffering.

I realised that I felt very present, very integrated, ‘self at ease’ as John had said.

During the last sit of the retreat I was aware yet again of a lovely warm, earthy, feminine energy that had pervaded my being when I danced or chanted. In my mind's eye I became aware that this energy was generated by a really lovely woman, so warm and grounded and natural. She was calm and knowing and loving.

‘Who are you?’ I asked.

‘I am you’ she replied.

‘But you are lovely’ I kept saying.

I got the impression that she had been there for a long time, I just didn't know it. I felt relieved and comforted and not on my own anymore.

At the end of the retreat and after a few days back in the world, I believe that a true healing has taken place. I feel refreshed, and newly committed to walking the path for the rest of my life. Again, I am just at the beginning, there is no time to lose. There must be a million ways to ‘deliver innumerable sentient beings’ but I believe that this sentient being had a deliverance, and by its own nature others, naturally, will too.

Words cannot convey my gratitude . Homage to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

## **Hand Brake Fallen Off**

### **A Three-Month Work Retreat In Gaia House, Summer 2003**

Another retreat. Similar pattern to previous ones, slightly excited anticipation beforehand, followed by increasing irritation at my butterfly mind together with boredom at the prospect of facing a wall for hours on end. Much of the retreat was spent in retrieving the mind from familiar repetitive reveries, and wondering why I chose to spend my leisure time in this apparently fruitless occupation!

A new pattern slowly emerged, with sittings of gradually increasing calmness and clarity, perhaps culminating in some short periods of Silent Illumination or a small insight into some aspect of my personality, followed immediately by a series of restless sittings with a pathologically busy mind. It seemed that the self felt threatened on an unconscious level as it was increasingly pushed into the back seat, with the result that at some point the little mind would reassert itself with all sorts of stories and concerns, or old forgotten songs. For instance, I was irritated for several days by a stanza from an old ELO song arising unbidden (I don't like ELO). When I paid attention to the lyrics, they were singing "insufficient data coming through"!

Then, one morning, while sitting, I just disappeared. There was just awareness using these eyes, observing the wall with a warm, soft, humorous gaze. At the end of the sitting period, I walked to the bathroom, but I wasn't there. It was purely "just walking", with no self in control. The reflection gazing back out of the mirror was again not "me"; there wasn't the familiar self looking out of the eyes. Instead there was an expression of gentle, wise, amused awareness in the eyes. This was so startling that "I" beamed back in, rather like in the Star Trek transporter room! It then took quite a while for me to realise what had happened, since the essence of the experience was that "I" was absent, hence not evaluating the experience at the time.

I had great difficulty trying to understand what had happened, or even to put it into words, since words were unable to fully encapsulate the experience. For instance, I could not say there was "seeing through my eyes", because the sense of ownership was not there at the time. There was awareness, but it was not "my" awareness. It was just bare awareness. I did, however, finally understand what teachers meant by "just seeing" or "just walking", and it was infinitely different from my previous concept of "seeing or walking with a very quiet mind". I now knew what "no mind" meant. It was like finally taking the handbrake off a car I had been driving at less than half power for my whole life.

For some days afterwards, I felt very excited by the implications of what had been experienced, and it took a long while to integrate the new understanding. The closest analogy I have found is that of the installation of a new operating system in a computer, so everything seemed the same but was slightly different. It felt as if I needed to run through all my programs to see what had changed. I noticed that I had a different relationship to the Buddhist teachings I was reading, so that some things I had previously believed or taken on faith I now knew beyond doubt. It was immediately obvious to me, for instance, that I am a construction, a fabrication. The image of a papier mache model, built over the years, came to mind.

As a result of this insight, I was a little less attached to my dramas for a while. I felt a slightly dispassionate concern and regard for myself, perhaps like a kindly great aunt. I could sometimes "sink into" that bare awareness, which felt as if I was sitting snugly in the lap of a jolly, wise, loving grandmother figure.

After a while, however, I started feeling rather despondent and depressed. It was completely clear to me that I could not "achieve" that moment by trying; indeed any striving on the part of

my ego would automatically preclude the possibility of a repetition. So I was dejected that there was nothing I could do to let go of the ego, it has to happen in its own time. Frustrating!

It is now several weeks later, and I have a clearer perspective on the whole retreat. The very transitory experience of "no mind" had followed a long period of sustained practice with all my normal difficulties. That experience happened by "grace", there was nothing I did to engineer it, but I expect conditions would not have been ripe if I hadn't had a considerable period of quiet contemplation and meditation beforehand. The experience itself probably lasted less than a minute, but it has given me a much greater understanding of the teachings, and complete Dharma confidence. I feel huge gratitude to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

## **A Retreat of Moon and Dreams**

### **Retreat Report for Koan Retreat March 2003**

This was the first time that I had been booked onto a retreat and had had not the slightest apprehension about going. Indeed I was looking forward to it famously. It was to be a respite; space away from the harried, hurried world. I knew that there would be some privation; not enough sleep, perhaps, no physical privacy, cold, rainy, and muddy. But I was also acutely aware that it would be a time and place where I could be immensely private and look inside at that which I normally keep hidden even from myself. My basic needs would be met. I would be housed and fed and have no need to fend for myself. Food would arrive without my thinking about it, at the sound of a bell, as would sleep, with the sounding of the boards and the touch of head against futon. There would be no intrusion aside from that which I might invent or create for myself. It was open time. I was ready for it and I needed it.

I had been fascinated by the idea of the Koan Retreat. Koans adapted for use by Westerners with Western minds. Ancient traditions coming down through the centuries to find a foothold in the Welsh hills; to permeate the brains and minds of rational, thinking, reading people and to percolate down into the veins and hearts of those people and do their transformative, magical work.

I wanted to know whether I could avoid the mistakes of the huatou retreat that I had attended earlier. I wanted to see whether I could hold a koan and still "fly like an eagle", to use John's phrase, through the mountainous terrain of the mind. Would John show us how to hold the white-hot iron ball of doubt in talon-like grip? Because it seemed that that was what I had failed to do with the huatou.

Actually, it wasn't like that at all. It never is the way I expect it to be. I had pain and difficulty on my stool for the first day. My tendons felt tight and I was tired. My koan had chosen me, in that it had leapt off the page and off John's lips as soon as I saw and heard it. It practically danced in front of me. No need to listen to the pithy, intellectually stimulating huatous that I might have expected to grab me. Here was an earthy, real story; a kung-an that latched onto and into me and did not leave. There was no need to pick up the koan. I was unable to put it down, not through the discomfort, nor the pain, nor the anxiety. It lurked, but not in a malevolent way, at times at the front of my conscious thought and oftentimes almost as though it sat with me; on the stool, by the fire, or at the table. It was a koan about death, but was not in the least bit morbid. It went beyond death. It was beyond time.

Death was in my thoughts. I knew that we might go to war over the course of the retreat. There was little, if anything that I could do about that and being in a still place of the heart, both geographically and situationally, at Maenllwyd seemed a sensible option and somehow

more productive than walking on a demonstration and getting fired up. The night of the fire puja was timeless. We stood and sat around the fire in the cauldron in the meadow. John chanted and invoked the spirits. The flames licked the air and smoke swirled under a white moon. We cast our messages up into the universal thought clouds and paper ash and I swear that Padmasambhava swirled amongst us as we chanted Ohm, mani, padme, hung.... We were more than the 17 of us.

My own death reared up and called for attention, rather in the manner of a petulant child. I had thought that I had dealt with that last year in hospital, but of course I had not done so. I was seized with the realisation that a lifespan is indeed short. Time. Who knows? Much? Little? None to waste at any rate.

Not feeling well one afternoon, I walked along the lane rather than tackling the hill. I felt sorry for myself and let the feelings suffuse the front of my body and I wept gently. Early spring was evident but I felt the autumn of my life creeping up on me. Walking and crying, I caught sight of a white-tailed bunny rabbit bounding across the field. So alive and so present. My tears stopped immediately. This bundle of fur was cavorting across the grass of life. It paused as though to ensure that it had been noticed and disappeared into the hedgerow. Suddenly light-headed, I sped up. The story of Dungshan and his companion and the rabbit came to mind, but I threw it away, not wanting to get caught up in discursive thought. But the word "swift" from the story hovered about and joined the koan. I walked on and watched a couple planting trees and taking soil samples. They looked slightly perturbed at being watched. Perhaps I looked a little mad, who knows? As I retraced my steps back up the lane, I saw another rabbit, this time perfectly still, in another field. I leant on the gate and watched. Neither of us moved. It was as though we were talking although not out loud. Eventually the rabbit seemed to suggest that I should beggar off and leave it in peace to get on with being or meditating or whatever it was doing. I did as I was bidden. This short interlude completely flipped my emotional state. All misery had gone.

I started having incredibly vivid dreams. I would awaken to colourful, clear sights and sounds of moving, speaking images. One in particular reminded me of another unresolved area of my life and I became acutely aware of my feelings around that.

Meditation became calmer and clearer. No need to work the koan. Just allow the koan to sit alongside and inside one, accompanied by the sensation of, rather than the word "swift". Great upswellings of love were manifesting in the Chan hall especially in the early mornings. One time, the mere fact of the floor supporting and holding us all together in that place was exquisite. The sounds of the bells and drums and voices in the chanting of the liturgy merged into these love emanations. I have never previously seen and felt compassion so tangibly there. Early morning sunrise and mist were cooing and humming gently and somehow physically supporting the practice. Active peace seems like an attempt at a description of this. Round about then, I realised that the ancestors were there. Great hordes of them as though in a chorus. Not singing, but ready to sing, focussed and prepared. I spoke to John about this, in interview. He was very supportive rather than telling me that I was hallucinating, and used an expression to describe the phenomenon; "experiential metaphor". This description was very useful. We talked about Bodhidharma wandering around Maenllwyd.

The following morning, I awoke again before the boards. It was another vivid dream. This time, the ancestors were shouting out, not to me in particular, but I heard it. Loud and clear they were urging, "Say the true doctrine". What? The instruction sat with the koan and the word "swift".

Twice, I had given a talk to retreat participants as a peer. Both times it had been extremely worrying that it would not be right, that somehow I would fail the dharma. After all, who am I

to be doing that at all? It is neither the act of talking, nor the presence of an “audience” that is a problem. I “talk” for a living and I am familiar with the process. But the subject matter is a whole different ball game. It matters greatly. And if I speak of it as “me” then I automatically put a slant on it, by imposing my life experiences or karma onto it. But the rub is that that is all that I can do. I can only speak as me. If I speak as anyone else, I lie. Any pretence is transparent. But there is somewhere, an absolute truth that is beyond defilement. Hui-neng speaks Hui-neng truth. John speaks John truth. But Hui-neng and John speak of an absolute truth that they know is beyond them. “What is the true doctrine when you are not there?” When I am not there it is the real truth.

One night we went for a moonlit walk under a complete full moon. We walked single file through the fields with John at the front of the procession and Simon bringing up the rear. They each held hand bells and sounded them at intervals. We were walking for peace. The way was uneven, but not unsafe. The sight that one’s brain registered was strange, being in black and white due to the low levels of illumination. We walked down the valley a little way and came back up the hill. The sight of the farmhouse and the Chan hall as we returned moved me. Truly, this was home. It is a place of comfort, rest and facing up to things. You might call it a nurturing self-confrontation, supported by aeons of practice and vast multitudes of those who have trodden a similar path. Prostrations to our ancestors, our teachers’ teachers and our teachers. We must bow down; for this is hallowed ground.

Stillness, calmness and clarity. But not mine. All this, despite “me”.

A final, formal interview:

It must be held firmly but gently, like an egg. Don’t mess with it and don’t scramble it. Remember to use the mountain as a pillow.

“And if you forget?”

It is forgetting to, not forgetting how.

“What then?”

Go back to the method. It does not fail.

“Anything else?”

We have some ancestors still here with us. We need to look at them and to them as well as listen.

A rabbit dug its maternity burrow outside the kitchen while we were there. The area was fenced off in order that we not disturb her. She had come to visit us. I was inordinately glad that we were trying to be mindful around her. I was glad of rabbits, of moons and dreams this retreat. I was happy to have shared that space and time with the 17 of us. The koan retreat format works very well indeed. It made me shut up enough to listen.

## **Polish Memories**

### **Small town - Northern Poland**

*Almost forgotten ,  
moss covered mounds  
in a forest  
not so easily found,  
no crosses here,  
no stones of remembrance.*

*Cries of pain echo  
the lamentations of tall trees  
falling bodies leave  
blood upon the leaves,  
lorry departing  
another load from the locked synagogue.*

*Revolver shot -  
old man  
unable to walk the path to the pit  
one final solution.*

*Synagogue museum  
respectful young Poles play  
the wild music of lost  
grey memories haunting the wintry woods.*



## **Klamerz in Kazimierz**

*Kazimierz in Krakow*

*Another synagogue museum*

*Film clips from the thirties*

*Nazi documentaries 1943*

*Restaurants gleam with light*

*Goose necks washed down with kosher wine*

*Returned to the descendants of the Auschwitz dead*

*Property owners do well today*

*Rents are high*

*The district fashionable*

*One old lady from Schindler's list survives*

*Her memories of the film.*

*A photo on the museum wall*

*Close up - big head*

*His horsewhip under the chin - old woman*

*The guilt of not being there.*

John Crook, 2003

## **From Our Postbag**

### **Letter from Simon Heale**

I have recently got back from Salt Lake city in Utah, America, where I was staying at Kanzeon Zen centre. I was there for 3 months. I am finding continued Zen practice wonderful.

I had an amazing time in the States. Shortly after arriving, the next day in fact, Genpo Roshi, the teacher there, was diagnosed with throat cancer. So it was all hands on deck to find the best medical option, visit complementary therapist/healers and generally look after him and his wife. As there are only a couple of full time residents there I was thrown in at the deep end.

On top of that, a close friend of mine, Bruce, one of the senior monks there, suddenly died. He and I were walking up in the hills and, coming down into a canyon, he had a heart attack. I helped him down the canyon towards the city to try and get him help, but after one and a half hours he finally died. It was quite a thing to watch someone I know well actually die in my arms. I have contemplated this often since then. For myself, it is clear that I cannot understand death, what it is, what happens to us when we die, what the thing we call death actually means. I consider this to be another one of Bruce's many gifts to me.

For the rest of my time there Roshi made me his Jisha or attendant. There was so much to do, firstly to organise Bruce's funeral and memorial services and to look after Roshi who was very unwell due to radiotherapy. It was good to see the way Roshi kept going during this period, his talks at this time were very powerful. I extended my stay to stay on and help and after thirty days of treatment Roshi was given the all clear much to everyone's relief. I had the chance to spend a lot of time together with Roshi and pretty much all of this time he was teaching me. I am working through koans and often he would suddenly ask to me present an answer to the koan I was on, whether we were driving, eating in restaurants or with others. Even though it was a time of much suffering for many people, I feel I learned so much by being there, in so many ways.

I am looking forward to coming back to the Maenllwyd as soon as I can. I miss doing retreat there and feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to have trained with you. One of my reasons for being in the States is to be involved in ongoing daily practice with a sangha, living/working/practising/playing together. I wish we had something similar over here. I feel that in 2004 I will make moves to become more settled in England, somewhere.

## **Trying To Practice The Dharma: Lessons Through An Accident**

### **Iris Tute, November 2003**

Early in the summer break I fell backwards and sustained a compression fracture in my lower back. The intense pain rendered me totally helpless in one instant.

From being picked up from the floor by three firemen of the French ambulance service, receiving all necessary treatments, I was totally being taken care of. From the very first moment - relax - came to my mind, just give in totally - there is nothing else I can do. Doing anything in fact was suddenly out of the question, a most unusual state of being for me. Instead I was being done to and done for.

When I realised I had not lost any use of my body and there was a good chance of it all healing in time, I felt utterly filled with gratitude. I tried to meditate, but it felt impossible in the usual sense, I had received morphine and masses of other painkillers. My mind did not function in quite the usual way but I experienced again and again a sense of 'letting go', breathing in the weak manner I could. The first most significant experience was the knowledge - it is alright - there is no where to go and nothing to do, a deep gratitude for everything. I was being dipped deeply into this vast river of pain. Seeing others around me in many states of pain and depletion and becoming acutely aware of all the endless and terrible suffering going on all the time, gripped me.

Now I am recovering, very slowly regaining strength and movement, having received much help and this is still continuing. Patience and dropping expectations of what I can do, with more humility do the little I can. We cling to expectations of being well, active and giving of our selves to others. Now some times it feels as if it is a reversal. Doing away with expectations of what I can do is not easy. I enjoy seeing, hearing, tasting, doing little and letting go.

As I regain energy and strength I am aware how immensely fortunate I am to regain what I had. How can I make the best possible use of it? I still have to walk slowly, it reminds me every day of walking meditation. I would like to keep it like that as part of my practice - no need to rush - (I am retired, nuns do not run). Will I be able to do it? Doing things mindfully; how far will I be able to remain with it when my energy returns fully?

I am very grateful for this extended experience of partial incapacity. It is a strong pointer to me. Most of my life I tended to 'run' - "where to?" I ask my self. Being able to sit again to meditate is like a most precious gift.

## **Winterhead Solitary Retreats**

Five retreatants have now sampled the delights of the new Retreat House at Winterhead Hill Farm in Somerset. The one-week long retreats went off very well and all the facilities were well tested. Three more 'hermits' will be practising here in January-February.

John will normally be in residence during your stay and interviews will usually be available if requested. The house will be closed during his absence abroad.

This is to remind all fellows, as well as others, that they will be especially welcome for retreats at Winterhead for up to eight weeks duration. You come with your own retreat plan, which is agreed with John in advance and confirmed on arrival.

All facilities are provided with warm rooms, a kitchen, lounge, sun-room and a Buddha room. Bed linen is supplied and hot showers are available - also provision for baths. Retreats are self-catering, silent, and two hours work in house or garden is requested every day. There are three acres of grounds and the Mendip Hills offer fine walking. The maximum number of retreatants is three but usually you have the place to yourself.

Supplies are easily obtained at Budgens supermarket in Cheddar or at village shops.

The cost is £15 per day excluding the day of arrival but including the day of departure.

John looks forward to hearing from you. John Crook at Winterhead Hill Farm. Shipham, Somerset, BS25 1RS. Tel/Fax 01934 842231, Johcro@compuserve.com

## Buddha's Head

I was sent a British Museum Gift Catalogue. In it there was a reproduction Buddha head.

"That's very nice." I thought.

"Very serene. It would be good to own that".

So I ordered it and it came in a cardboard box. I put the head in a prominent place and took a picture of it.

The next time I was in London I made a special trip to the British Museum to see the Head. They have got lots there but I couldn't find mine. I asked about it

"Well not everything in the catalogue comes from this museum" I was told. "Don't know where it is." Well there we are then - never mind.

A couple of years pass. I'm in London and I go to the V & A. As I'm leaving I visit the gift shop and there I find a postcard of my Buddha head. I buy six. On the back of the postcard the title says that the head is there in the V & A. "Please where is this head?" I ask at the information desk. I'm directed to a display case in a corridor and there it is

"Oh, I need a photo of this" I say to myself. So I ask an attendant if I can take a photograph and he says I can. Great. So I take a photo of the case with the Buddha head and all the other artefacts.

So now I have:

The picture in the catalogue.

The reproduction Buddha head.

My picture of my Buddha head.

A post card of the Buddha head

My photograph of the V & A Buddha head

Touchstones!!!! Bah!

Where is the essence of Buddha mind?

## **Saturday Morning Outside**

### **The University of Bath Action Research and Mindfulness Retreat**

**Closing words, Maenllwyd April 2003, John Crook**

This is our last morning together. So what abiding thought might one take away from visiting Maenllwyd? Perhaps it goes something like this. There is a strong tendency in modern philosophical thought to suppose that life is contained in texts, in language, and that all we need to do is to deconstruct and examine texts. This is completely an antithesis of Zen. Zen argues for a very intimate connection between language and silence. And unless there is silence, language can take off into what we have been calling "the secondary", so that one becomes progressively distanced from both the subject of mind and the object of mind, into a world that is somehow free-floating, nothing but cognition without contact, context without content.

The message of Zen, with its stress on clarity, silence, no words, no mind, is that all this effluvia of language is anchored in something which Buddhists call the essence of mind or the Buddha nature, which are simply words for silence. And this silence is simply the essence of suchness. One needs to be able to relax out of language into the silence of suchness, because this is where energy lies, life begins. So if you take away from Maenllwyd the awareness of the need for repetitive anchoring in silence, then the words can run, and there is no problem, because there is always the return to the safe anchorage. But if one forgets that, and takes off into increasingly abstract language, one ends up in the state which one started with, being an anxious academic. The anchorage lies in something quite non-academic, that is in simplicity, hearing, seeing, being in one's body, hearing the crows calling in the early morning, and the returning migrants tweeting in the trees. You know they come all the way from Africa, but you don't have to think about it.

So, before we have our tea, just take a walk around the yard. Be aware of the silence of the suchness of this dawn moment. The Tibetans have a lovely phrase. They say "when son and mother meet". What they mean is that the universe is always in the silence of suchness, that's the mother. And when the son, that is all of us, returns to the clear light of bliss, the clear light of silence, then the son and the mother meet.

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We welcome your contributions, whether articles, poetry, artwork, retreat reports, letters, or whatever else. However we do not promise that we shall publish your contribution, or in which issue it will appear if we do so. Owing to the workload involved, our policy is that we do not acknowledge materials received. Where possible submissions by email to **editorial@WesternChanFellowship.org** are preferred for articles, poems, etc, since this obviates the need for retyping or scanning. For artwork email submissions are also useful, but in addition non-returnable copies or originals by post may be helpful since then if required we can rescan them ourselves at higher resolution than may be appropriate for email attachments. Thank you.

The articles in this journal have been submitted by various authors and the views expressed do not necessarily represent the views of the Western Chan Fellowship.

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New Chan Forum is published and distributed  
by the Western Chan Fellowship, *WesternChanFellowship.org*  
Registered charity number 1068637,  
Correspondence address 24 Woodgate Ave, Bury, Lancs, BL9 7RU.  
Printed on recycled paper.