



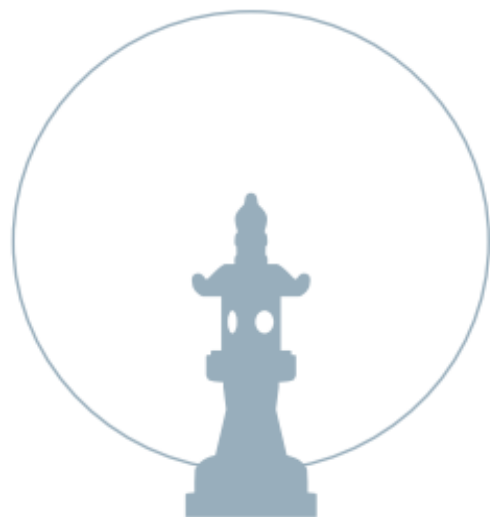
静心学堂丛书

The Mindful Peace Academy Collection

中英双语 Chinese-English Edition

东方智慧 在当今世界的价值

The Value of Eastern Wisdom in Today's World



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著

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身处今天这个时代，很不容易。物质和科技文明给生活带来便利的同时，也带来污染、暖化等生态问题，及焦虑、抑郁等心理疾病。与此同时，频繁的国际冲突更是令世界动荡不安。这种一日千里的变化，使人对未来充满不确定感。以前我们会觉得，再过一百年、五百年，世界还是那样，但现在的情况完全不同。我们很难想象，再过十年，世界会是怎样。

一、西方与东方

对中国人来说
我们有共同的血统
但更重要的
是传承东方文化的道统
由此，才能造就良好的心态
高尚的精神、美好的人格

西方文明是向外建立依赖，寻找幸福。当世界相对稳定时，这种依赖似乎还靠得住。只要努力，幸福也可以企及。但当外在世界充满变数时，就会感觉，自己依赖的一切越来越脆弱，幸福也越来越渺茫。在这样的大背景下，唯有认识自己，让自己变得强大，才能减少对外界的依赖，减少由此带来的影响。

如何认识并提升自己？

正是儒释道文化的长项。对中国人来说，我们有共同的血统，但更重要的，是传承东方文化的道统。由此，才能造就良好的心态、高尚的精神、美好的人格。这在当今世界尤为重要。如果没有学过佛法，可能有人会觉得这些话是口号。但通过修行就会认识到，

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这并不是口号，而是我们一直以来所做的努力，并且要尽未来际地做下去。

二、儒学与佛学

当我们从修学受益
看到传承东方智慧的意义
就要发起愿心
以帮助众生为己任
因为大家都是贪嗔痴的重病患者
都有自我拯救的需要

学佛，正是引导我们认识自己，改善生命品质。这种人生目标和价值取向，和中国本土文化是一脉相承的。佛教传入中国已有两千多年，远远超过它在印度本土的流传时间。为什么国人对佛教的接受度那么高？原因就在于，它和儒家思想既有相通之处，又可弥补它的不足。

儒家强调学以成人，从自身来说，要修身养性，成为有德君子，乃至成贤成圣；从外在来说，则要齐家、治国、平天下，成为对社会大众有用的人。这两点，和佛法所说的自利利他、自觉觉他完全吻合。

学佛，首先要开启智慧，造就佛菩萨品质，这是属于自利自觉的层面。进一步，还要发菩提心，利益

一切众生，这是属于利他觉他的层面。之所以能让这个说法落地，而不是流于口号，因为佛法是人生的大智慧，将生命发展规律剖析得清清楚楚，还有一套切实可行的修行方法。就像我们现在立足于正念、利他两张表格来检验修行，其中，正念是迈向解脱的关键，利他是成就慈悲的关键。这是佛法修行造就的两大品质。而单纯的儒家思想，因为缺少心性思想和因果理论，很难实现这个目标。

当我们从修学受益，看到传承东方智慧的意义，就要发起愿心，以帮助众生为己任。包括中国人、海外华人，乃至外国人，因为大家都是贪嗔痴的重病患者，都被无明和烦恼所困扰，都有自我拯救的需要，寻找光明的需要，觉醒解脱的需要。但西方文化强调理性，缺少心性理论，也没有禅修实践。自上世纪以来，陆续有西方人开始学习南传、藏传、禅宗，尤其是近几十年，佛教在西方的传播已有相当影响。

三、觉醒是人类最大的价值

如果认识不到生命内在的无限价值
仅仅就有限的生命来说
无论多么富有
也是微不足道的
更何况，一切都在无常变化中
而且变得越来越快，越来越难以把控

曾有媒体评出世界十大奢侈品，第一就是生命的觉醒。问题在于：怎么觉醒？如果没有佛法智慧，所谓的觉醒，就只是一个说法，是可遇而不可求的奢侈品。值得庆幸的是，对自身的认识，对烦恼的解决，正是佛法的长处所在。所以我们身为华人是很有福报的，更重要的是，还有善根福德因缘来传承这样一套修学模式，真正走上菩提大道。

虽然现在的学佛人不少，但多数不得要领。一方面，面对混乱的内心，要舍凡夫心，走出迷惑；一方面，面对浩瀚的佛法，要作出选择，有效修学。如果没有清晰的引导，就会障碍重重，甚至走上歧路。通过多年探讨，我们已经铺设了明确的路线、流程、方

法，以及对结果的检测标准，只要按部就班地次第操作即可。

每个生命都由不同模块组成，其中有轮回的心理，还有与解脱、慈悲相应的心理。不论造就佛菩萨品质，还是沦为魔鬼般的生命，都是有规律的。而凡夫最大的问题是看不清自己，唯有通过学佛，才能了解内心有哪些元素，知道舍弃什么，选择什么。

对今天的人来说，这种选择的意义尤为重大。随着人工智能的普及，生而为人的独特价值究竟体现在哪里？如果看不到这一点，人类将越来越迷茫，越来越看不到方向。现在物质条件好的人很多，但并不等于能过得幸福。你们有没有看过太空的照片？在无垠的太空，地球以每秒几百公里的速度飞速遨游，不知将我们带向哪里。在太阳系，地球是微不足道的砂砾；在银河系，太阳又是微不足道的砂砾。如果认识不到生命内在的无限价值，仅仅就有限的生命来说，无论多么富有，也是微不足道的。更何况，一切都在无常变化中，而且变得越来越快，越来越难以把控。

四、从自利到利他

烦恼和菩提在一念之间
佛和魔也在一念之间
所谓一念成佛，一念成魔
当一个人得到正向引导
就可能成为善人，成为贤人
甚至成佛作祖

所以我们要深刻认识到，传承东方智慧对自身及人类的意义。在今天这个世界，任何地区发生的任何事，都会产生连锁反应，不同程度地影响到每个人。尤其在这几年，相信大家都能深切感受到这种唇齿相依的关系。如果人心越来越浮躁，戾气越来越重，身处其间的我们，怎么能过得好呢？

所以我们要发菩提心，不仅是为了世界，也是为了自己。从佛法角度说，所有生命本质上是相通的，彼此影响。我们通过修学，看到迷惑带来的困扰，看到生命的希望，找到解决的方法，就要去点亮更多人的心灯。

烦恼和菩提在一念之间，佛和魔也在一念之间，

所谓一念成佛，一念成魔。当一个人得到正向引导，就可能成为善人，成为贤人，甚至成佛作祖。反之，则会成为魔鬼，祸害自己，祸害世界。

五、打造静心学堂 点亮更多心灯

我们希望，未来在各个洲
各个国家乃至各个城市
都能打造静心学堂
大家可以定期到这里聚一聚
否则，修学往往缺乏凝聚力和向心力

如何帮助更多人点亮心灯？过去几十年，我们在弘法过程中探索了很多经验，希望大家参与其中，让智慧文化走进千家万户。海外华人很多，尤其这几年，出国者越来越多。当他们离开祖国后，内心往往是漂泊的，没有安全感。

中国人的根在哪里？就在文化遗产。我们要为海外华人打造心灵家园，当然也包括外国人。因为人类面对的终极问题是一样的，而禅的智慧正是可以满足这个需要。承载这种智慧的禅意空间，同样是没有边界的。就像我们现在打造的别院，什么人来都喜欢，不存在文化隔阂。现代人最大的问题，是心无依托。虽然有丰富的物质生活，却没有相应的精神内涵。禅

意空间打造的，则是富有精神内涵的物质生活。我们希望，未来在各个洲、各个国家乃至各个城市，都能打造静心学堂，空间可大可小。我们也会推动一些义工参与支持和服务。

有了场所，大家可以定期到这里聚一聚，否则，修学往往缺乏凝聚力和向心力。早期我到海外弘法时，看到很多老一辈华人，每逢周末就来寺院吃素、念经、拜佛、闻法。对于新出去的华人，本身未必有信仰，所以环境上要减少宗教性，并以多样化的方式，充分满足他们的身心需求。现在国内的很多寺院，还是以求求拜拜为主，受众局限于中老年，多少有些跟不上时代需求。而走进别院的，有不少是社会主流群体，年轻化，且有文化，有事业，有追求。

现代人的主要问题，一是对未来有很多困惑，二是内心有各种负面情绪。如果在海外把静心学堂打造起来，相信会吸引很多人。当然环境只是助缘，关键要有内容，比如智慧人生课程，以及我们现在倡导的静心慢生活，包括正念、茶道、素食、断舍离、八段锦、按导养生等项目。未来，我们还会编一些儒学方

面的课程。在佛法智慧统摄下来读儒家书籍，也会很有力量。

这样的组合，可以让静心学堂成为中华文化对外传播的平台，成为海外华人的精神家园。大家可以定期到这里吃吃素，体验体验茶道。佛法之所以能在日本流行，就是以茶道为载体。上至王公贵族，下到平民百姓，都热衷于茶道传递的文化内涵，从而使禅的智慧走进千家万户，为民众安顿身心服务。

六、让传统文化走入家庭

怎么把智慧文化带进家庭
我们要鼓励有条件的人
在家中打造安心茶室
既作为自己的修学空间
也作为承载东方智慧的平台

所以我们要有的环境，帮助大家学习传统文化，调整生活方式。在立足于静心学堂的同时，还要让智慧文化走入家庭。在今天，很多人是活在自己的手机中，和家人极度缺乏交流。中国文化强调修身、齐家、治国、平天下。其中，又以修身和齐家为本。但多数人根本不知道怎么修身，从饮食、作息到心行都在伤身。至于齐家，以前的家庭会三代甚至四代同堂，但现在很多家庭两个人都搞不到一起，从夫妻关系、孩子教育到老人安养，可谓问题重重。

为什么会这样？就是没有通过文化传承，建立共同的信念和家庭规范。儒家讲学以成人，告诉我们，父子、夫妻、兄弟姐妹都有相应的责任、义务和相处

规则。了解这些定位，就能知道自己在家庭中该做什么，不该做什么。在中国传统文化中，儒释道是统一的。王维、白居易、刘禹锡、苏东坡、王安石等著名文豪，既是儒士，又是虔诚的佛教徒。有人说，如果没有佛法智慧，中国人会活得很累。因为儒家思想偏于功利，而佛法的菩提心教法和空性智慧，让人积极入世的同时，又告诉你这一切如梦如幻，不必执著。有了这样的见地，才能在面对一切境界时豁达、超然、不为所动。

怎么把智慧文化带进家庭？我们要鼓励有条件的人在家中打造安心茶室，既作为自己的修学空间，也作为承载东方智慧的平台。很多家庭聚会无非是吃吃喝喝、打打麻将，有了安心茶室，就可以组织有质量的聚会。每个礼拜把亲戚朋友叫在一起，喝茶，吃吃素，学学按导，打打八段锦，然后读读书，修修正念。我们现在已经有很多项目，未来还会把优秀传统文化陆续形成课程，大家可以根据自己的需要和长处来选择。落实这些内容之后，家中的气场就会随之改变。

七、走进社团，造福社会

人心是有吸引力法则的
当你真正生起强烈的愿心、慈悲心
当法在你身上展现力量
让你的精神面貌彻底改变
周边人就会对你刮目相看
资源也会随之而来

此外，我们还要走进社团。海外有很多华人社团，平时就是靠吃吃喝喝来建立感情和连接，这种关系是没什么质量的。我们可以让静心慢生活为社团赋能，比如我的智慧人生系列讲座，如财富观、幸福等主题，你们学了之后，可以结合自己的理解和受益举办读书会，或是到社团宣讲，把智慧文化送出去，服务海外华人，而且纯粹就是公益，就是利他。

你们有条件做是最好，如果没条件，也可以请国内各专项的大咖去举办讲座和活动。比如这段时间传茶道，下段时间传素食，再下段时间宣讲断舍离、健康养生等。我们在国内准备了很多相关课程，包括禅诗解读、青少年教育、老年人关怀等，都可以根据需

要选择。很多海外华人关心子女的教育，希望在他们的成长过程中植入东方智慧，从小建立对中华传统文化的感情，以此陶冶情操。

未来我们会研发更多的课程，培养更多的专家达人，支持大家把这些项目做起来。通过这些方式，让每个静心学堂在当地产生影响，让大家知道，可以来此体验中国文化、东方智慧。以活动为接引，把人气和氛围做起来，引导有条件的人逐步修学。但在缺乏氛围的情况下，不一定要急于开班，否则可能会给大家增加压力。

当一部分人真正在法上深入，有了更大受益之后，他们才会觉得，这件事是人生最重要的，不管对自己还是世界都是最有意义的。当资源不足、福报不够时，我们要发广大心，精进修学。人心是有吸引力法则的，当你真正生起强烈的愿心、慈悲心，当法在你身上展现力量，让你的精神面貌彻底改变，周边人就会对你刮目相看，资源也会随之而来。反之，如果你自己学得有一搭没一搭，怎么可能把资源吸引过来？

八、自觉独立，各擅其美

我们会无偿地把东方智慧形成产品
但前提是你们有能力接受
如果没能力接受
服务也会给你们带来困扰
大家有心帮忙，但你们营养不足时
是帮不起来的

我们也会创造条件，鼓励更多人为东方智慧在海外的传播创造条件，给予支持。但总体以你们为主，你们才是真正的甲方，所有的服务都是乙方。我们会无偿地把东方智慧形成产品，但前提是你们有能力接受。如果没能力接受，服务也会给你们带来困扰。大家有心帮忙，但你们营养不足时，是帮不起来的。

我们做的就是课程和模式，实践证明，这一套是行之有效的。目前虽然有修学互助群，但重点还是落实到每个班，每个人。有条件的就以班级为重心多点发展，自己做读书会，或自己搞出一个静心学堂。有的甚至一个人就能打出一片天地，不一定要捆绑在一起。当然，能捆绑在一起会更有力量，但因缘不具足

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的话，也可根据自己的资源去创业，前提是在一定的规则下。因缘要自己去创造，当点亮的灯越来越多时，我们就会更有力量。

九、结 说

万事开头难。起初做什么都不容易，自己对法的信心不足，周边也没有力量，而且末法时代的环境特别不利于修行。但我们要知道，不修学是没有出路的，只会无明、迷惑中沉沦。只有通过修学摆脱迷惑，走向觉醒，才是生命的唯一出路，而且是没有退路的。其他人做的只能是创造条件，真正修行还要靠自己努力。





文以载道，译复如是

Words Convey the Way,
Likewise for Translation

2015年冬为编译组义工开示

我们的编译工作已经开展两年多了，这也是我们的重要项目。从历史上看，译经推动了佛教在各地的传播。如果没有对经律论三藏的翻译，佛教就只能停留在印度，无法传播到中国乃至世界各地，让一代又一代人于法受益。

佛教自西汉传入中国，至隋唐走向鼎盛。在此期间，始终大量翻译佛经。在长达千年的过程中，先后有两百多位译师参与其中，并为此建有不少译场，形成了一套完整的译经流程。而译场的教育，也成为佛教教育史上极为重要的组成部分。因为译经不仅是把佛典从梵文翻译过来，完成语言的转换，还要由来自印度等地的高僧大德对这些经论进行诠释，让学人了解其中内涵。可以说，对任何一部经典的弘扬，乃至建宗立派，都是从译经开始的。

一、汉传佛教的译经传统

佛经是法的载体
是修行的地图
所以，从经典的结集、翻译
到抄写、刻印
都需要慎之又慎
以免失之毫厘，谬以千里

1. 从格义到回归

在古代，译经是一项浩大的工程，需要耗费大量的人力、物力、财力，许多时候都是在帝王的护持下，由政府组织翻译。比如被后世尊为四大翻译家之一的鸠摩罗什，就是在三千人的庞大译场的配合下，完成了一系列重要经论的翻译。包括在汉传佛教地区流传广泛的《金刚般若波罗蜜经》《妙法莲华经》《大智度论》等，为般若思想在汉地的弘扬开启了一个新时代。

早在东晋时期，般若经典就已传入中国。当时正是盛行老庄、崇尚谈玄之际，而般若思想阐述的空性见恰与老庄谈空谈无为的特点有相似处，故一经传入，就受到文人士大夫的追捧。但在罗什大师之前，国人

对般若思想的理解各出异义，且多有附会。因为当时的大德们为了让更多人接受佛法，采用格义的方式解读佛经，就是以老庄的概念翻译佛语。好处是让大家迅速对佛教产生亲近感，但弊端是这种表达显然不能完全对应。

在此过程中，一些大德很快发现了这种做法的问题，认为格义“迂而乖本”，有违佛经本意。之所以出现这种情况，和早期来华的译师们不谙中文也有很大关系。因为翻译是要完成语言的转换，而语言是思想的载体。如果这种转换完成得不到位，它所承载的思想，就无法完整、准确地呈现出来。所以早期的一些佛经，不仅读诵起来不那么顺畅，理解起来也颇有障碍。

而罗什大师熟谙梵汉，确保了语言转换的准确性。更重要的是，大师博通三藏，佛学造诣极深，保证了在诠释、弘扬过程中的纯正性。他在主持译经的同时，边译边讲，成就了一批以四圣十哲为首的杰出弟子。其中，尤以僧肇大师最为出色，被称为“秦人解空第一”。他所撰写的《肇论》，是中国哲学史上的重要论

著。自此之后，国人对般若思想的解读才逐渐回归佛法本身。

由此可见，译经的水准不仅影响到佛法弘扬，更影响到学人对法的修证。因为经典就是修行的地图，如果地图有误，会把我们导向哪里呢？正因为如此，后来的译场逐渐形成了一套极为严密的流程，且参与者都是举国范围内精心遴选而来，集一时英彦，共襄盛举。

2. 意译和直译

在罗什、真谛、玄奘、不空四大翻译家中，罗什和玄奘更为人熟知，并分别代表了两种不同的译经风格，即意译和直译。

所谓意译，是在准确传达法义的前提下，注重行文的优美流畅，在语言表达上相对自由。如罗什大师所译的《维摩经》《法华经》《大智度论》等，不仅在教界广为流传，为佛弟子所依止；也因其出色的文学性，为文人士大夫所推崇。所谓直译，则是在完成语

言转换的同时，保持原文的表现形式，在语言表达上更为忠实。

以《般若经》为例，这是中国佛教史上地位至尊的经典。罗什大师曾翻译过三十卷《摩诃般若波罗蜜经》，龙树菩萨所造的《大智度论》，就是对这部经典的诠释。据罗什大师说，如果将《大智度论》完整翻译出来，将多达千卷。但考虑到中国人好简的特点，罗什大师仅对第一卷做了完整翻译，其他则以略译，共一百卷。事实上，龙树菩萨对《般若经》第一卷的解释就有三十卷之多。按这个量推算，对三十卷《般若经》的解读，确实接近千卷了。

同样是般若系经典，玄奘三藏翻译的《大般若经》就有六百卷之巨，是汉传佛教史上分量最重的一部经典。在准备翻译此经时，他同样面临了是否略译的抉择。《三藏法师传》记载，玄奘三藏于“至五年春正月一日，起首翻《大般若经》。经梵本总有二十万颂，文既广大，学徒每请删略，法师将顺众意，如罗什所翻，除繁去重。作此念已，于夜梦中即有极怖畏事以相警诫，或见乘危履险，或见猛兽搏人，流汗战栗，

方得免脱。觉已惊惧，向诸众说，还依广翻。夜中乃见诸佛菩萨眉间放光，照触己身，心意怡适。法师又自见手执花灯供养诸佛，或升高座为众说法，多人围绕，赞叹恭敬。或梦见有人奉己名果，觉而喜庆”。因为这些不同梦境的昭示，所以他“不敢更删，一如梵本”。但玄奘三藏在印度得到的梵本就有三种，所以在翻译之日，“文有疑错，即按三本以定之。殷勤省覆，方乃著文，审慎之心古来无比”。

这两种不同风格，至今仍是翻译中的主流，可谓各有所长。因为翻译的标准，无非是“信、达、雅”。其中信是首位，不论意译还是直译，都要忠实传达原意。在这个基础上，达到什么样的“雅”，就是仁者见仁，没有一定之规了。

3. 翻译的流程

佛经是法的载体，是修行的地图，所以，从经典的结集、翻译到抄写、刻印，都需要慎之又慎，以免失之毫厘，谬以千里。从南北朝起，政府开始参与佛

经翻译，不仅拨款资助，还专门成立译场。这些译场往往规模庞大，不仅汇集天下名僧，还有数百至数千学人参与，各司其职，分工合作。

其流程主要分为十个部分。一是译主，即主持译经的核心人物，须通晓经意和华梵双语，也是最后拍板的责任人。二是证义，审核已译的文字与梵文经意是否有出入。三是证文，审核所译经本的原文是否有误，因早期佛经是辗转传抄，或有笔误，这就需要根据法义进行抉择，确保原本无误。四是书字，以中文记录梵文读音。五是笔受，以中文记录所译内容。六是缀文，对译文的语法进行调整，以符合中文表达习惯。七是参译，与原文校勘，并将译文回证，看中文翻回梵文时和原文是否相符。八是刊定，因梵文的表达方式容易使国人觉得过分重复，在确保不影响经义的前提下，适当删减冗长或重复的字句。九是润文，以一些必要的连接词，让文句更顺畅。十是梵呗，以诵经的音调读诵译文，检查其是否琅琅上口。

经过这样一系列的流程，不仅保障了译文的准确性，也兼顾了表达的流畅性，值得借鉴。比如“参

译”，我们现在将中文译为英文后，也可再将英文回译为中文，并和原文进行比较，不失为很好的检验方式。如果和原文在意思上有出入，就可以提醒我们审查，英译的本身是否存在歧义，是否容易让人误解。

此外，古代译经还有“五不翻”之规。因为每个概念都有其文化背景，以及这个背景下相应的内涵。如果在译经过程中找不到对应的汉语，可直接使用音译。主要有五种情况：一是多义不翻，如薄伽梵、阿罗汉等，有多重含义。二是秘密不翻，如经中的陀罗尼神咒，中文没有恰当的词句可以表达。三是尊重不翻，如般若，“智慧”一词不足以显示其尊贵和甚深内涵。四是顺古不翻，如“阿耨多罗三藐三菩提”，古时译经大德特别保留原音，以彰显法之殊胜。五是此方所无不翻，如庵摩罗果，是印度当地的药果，其他地区没有。当然，这些原则未必和我们现在所译的内容有直接关系，但增进了解，或许能为我们提供更多的思考角度。

二、参与编译就是参与弘法

学佛不只是为了调节一下心态
让我们把世俗生活过得更安稳些
而是为了找到生命的真正出路
为了实现人身的最大价值
这不仅对我们自己
同时对人类具有重要意义

1. 佛教在西方

佛法从印度传入各地，形成了南传佛教、汉传佛教和藏传佛教，又称巴利语系、汉语系和藏语系。而在今天，这一来自东方的古老智慧，正被越来越多的西方人所认识。尤其是南传和藏传，在世界范围内已有较大影响。原因固然有多方面的，但离不开文化交流，离不开佛典翻译。

在上世纪初，一些西方人先后在南传佛教地区修学，并将佛教的义理和禅修方法介绍到欧美，引起广泛关注。出生于德国的向智尊者就是其中的杰出代表。尊者 1936 年在斯里兰卡出家，学习佛法和巴利文。此后，他陆续将部分巴利经典译为德文，并自学英文。

1958年，尊者和友人共同创立了佛教出版社。在他担任社长的30年间，出版了大量佛教书籍，为南传佛教在西方的弘扬作出了杰出贡献。

而藏传佛教则是因为一批高僧前往欧美弘法而产生了影响。他们初到西方时，也曾被语言问题所困扰，举步维艰。在学习并掌握英文后，他们开始在欧美举办讲座、出版书籍，接引了很多四众弟子。尤其是近年活跃起来的弘法者们，因为有长期在西方生活的背景，不存在语言障碍，弘法方式也更为多元。

相比之下，汉传佛教虽然传入了西方，如佛光山、法鼓山等道场，也做了大量努力，但主要还局限于华人圈。其中既有语言的因素，也有生存环境的影响。因为世界各国都有大量华人，有汉文化的土壤，不对西方人弘法，一样可以有弘法空间，不存在必须突破的困境。缺乏交流，自然也就缺乏受众。

如何扩大交流范围，改变这一局面？语言是第一位的。所以说，编译义工大有可为，关键是我们要有传播佛法、自觉觉他的使命感。

2. 以弘法为己任

之所以要以弘法为己任，不是因为我们信仰佛教，就希望佛教徒多多益善，而是因为这个世界真的需要佛法，需要这种智慧的引导。从十六世纪以来，西方文明日渐强盛，成为整个世界的主流文化。但工业、科技、商业的飞速发展，在给人类物质生活带来极大方便的同时，也引发了各种社会问题，包括生态环境的恶化，心灵问题的困扰，精神疾病的增长，等等。

人类的未来在哪里？梁漱溟曾经写过《这个世界会好吗》，我觉得，如果没有智慧文化进行强大的干预，人类将不可避免地走向堕落和毁灭。这绝不是危言耸听，事实上，那些频频发生的天灾人祸，就是一次又一次敲响的警钟。而更多难以估量的危险正潜藏在我们身边，如核武器等。如果这些设施落入心态不健康的人手中，将给人类带来怎样的灭顶之灾？所以，这个世界在越来越强盛的同时，也变得越来越脆弱，越来越危机四伏了。

另一方面，随着物质生活的提高，很多人在解决

生存问题后，开始思考生命的价值，活着为什么？思考什么是幸福，成功的意义在哪里？思考我是谁，生从何来，死往何去？还有《我们误解了这个世界》这本书中关注的种种问题，是普世性而不是个别的。只要你不愿像动物一样活着，终将面对这些追问和探寻。当我们有了这样的思考，却没有究竟的智慧为引导，是找不到出路的。一些艺术家、哲学家就是因为找不到让自己信服的答案，而陷入痛苦的深渊，最后走上绝路，或自甘堕落。

问题的答案在哪里？其实就在佛法中。因为一切问题无非是心的问题，当我们真正了解心的本质，也就认识了生命，认识了世界。佛法是心学，佛陀对心的了解不是来自推理，也不是来自玄想，而是通过实证看到的。我们按照佛法的指引，同样可以证得，可以成就佛陀那样的智慧。事实上，这些智慧是我们本自具足的，通过修行就能开显出来。

所以说，佛法是这个世界的希望所在。学佛不只是为了调节一下心态，让我们把世俗生活过得更安稳些，而是为了找到生命的真正出路，为了实现人身的

最大价值。这不仅对我们自己，同时对人类具有重要意义。我们要认识到编译工作的意义所在，要对这项义工行充满信心。

三、如何做好编译工作

契理就是要准确把握佛法义理
这是传播的基本前提
不论直译还是意译
都必须建立在准确理解的基础上
区别只是在于
意译在表达上可以有一定的自由性

学佛要目标明确，方法正确，才能有所收获，做事也是同样。如何有效开展编译工作？我觉得有三个方面，一是以组织建设为基础，二是以专业技能为关键，三是让做事成为修行，这是可持续发展的保障。

1. 以组织建设为基础

首先要根据编译流程建立团队。我们一方面可以参照相关的组织建设，比如编译部下设若干组，每个组形成不同团队，共同完成某个环节的工作。另一方面，可以参照译经史上的流程及现代人的翻译经验，再结合我们自身的工作需求加以借鉴。在设置流程和

架构团队后，还需要在实践中不断检验，根据实际的工作效果进行调整。直到这个流程是最合理的，根据流程构成的团队也是最有效的。

其次是编译员的成长流程。我们吸收一名义工进入编译组之后，如何使他在这个岗位得到成长？我们有关于做事的六步成长，也有关于专业方面的六步成长。我们所做的流程设计，应该和六步成长有机结合起来。这样的话，每个人都能明确自己在现有岗位的责任，以及未来的努力方向。

第三是从发现人才、吸收人才、培养人才到合理使用人才，要有畅通的渠道，并形成相应的选拔标准和操作规范。随着两套模式的不断优化，学员将不断增长，编译组的人才也会随之涌现。在这样的大背景下，我们需要建立一套有效的渠道，及时发现人才，吸收到团队中，进而加以培养，使他们尽快走上轨道。因为佛教的英文翻译有一定专业性，需要经过特定培训，然后一步步升级。就像从学员成为辅助员、实习辅导员、辅导员，有一套由下而上的成长机制。

当然，每个人的情况不同，要因人制宜。比如有

的学员外语水平普通，但佛法学得扎实；有的学员外语水平很高，但佛学基础薄弱。此外，有的学员擅长专业，就让他专心翻译，不要安排太多事务；有的学员擅长协调，就让他牵头组织，不必承担太多专业工作。这就需要团队负责人了解这些义工各自的特点，合理安排，真正做到人尽其才，发挥所长。否则，不但事情做起来很累，还可能因为安排不当，使对方难以胜任，甚至生起退心。

2. 以专业技能为关键

随着全球化的到来，英文的普及率越来越高，不少人都擅长一门以上的外语，或从事相关的专业工作。但我们要做的是佛教英文翻译，相对来说，还是有一定的难度。主要在于三点，一是对这方面接触得少，相关经验不足；二是佛学基础不够，如果理解得不透彻，甚至存在偏差，那么英文再好也是没用的；三是不知道如何把握翻译的度，找到那个恰如其分的点。

佛法在传播过程中，始终本着契理契机的原则。

契理就是要准确把握佛法义理，这是传播的基本前提。不论直译还是意译，都必须建立在准确理解的基础上。区别只是在于，意译在表达上可以有一定的自由性。事实上，这对译者有更高的要求，因为他要清楚自由的度在哪里，才能锦上添花，而不是画蛇添足。关于这个问题，《历代三宝记》有这样一段记载：“昔竺法护出《正法华·受决品》云：天见人，人见天。什译经至此乃言曰：此语与西域义乃同，但在言过质。睿应声曰：将非人天交接，两得相见乎？什大喜曰：实然。”可见，意译的关键就在于得其意。而对于直译来说，其实也不同于逐字译。因为英文的很多语法和中文不同，同样是需要调整的。

在“八步骤”的第三步讲到理解，要求做到“完整、准确、透彻”。翻译也是同样，这就需要对所译内容反复闻思，了然于胸。我经常说，当辅导员是成长最快的，因为他有了更多的承担，促使他必须学好。事实上，做翻译同样是很好的成长机会。如果理解不到位的话，就无法准确翻译。这就必须老老实实在地学习并掌握，而不是“大概知道说的是什么”。

此外还要契机。因为我们翻译的英文是给外国人读的，所以要了解他们的表达习惯。希望大家有针对性地阅读一些英文原著，尤其是那些文采和哲理兼具的作品。因为同一个内容可以有不同的表达，而这种不同，正取决于各自的功力。在提高英文水准的同时，我们还要熟悉佛教的专业术语。近年来，与佛教有关的英文书籍不断面世，有以英文撰写的，也有翻译成英文的。其中有些在世界范围内产生了广泛影响，如一行禅师的著作等。这些都可以学习借鉴，但也不必读很多，找一两本作为范文，读懂读透。对于那些已有通用译法的佛教术语，我们要遵守规则，不必另辟蹊径。当然，我的书籍中专业术语并不是很多，但内容是很佛教的，这点需要深入领会。

总之，在准确阐述义理、行文生动流畅的基础上，始终要牢记，这些是给外国人读的。我平时对外弘法的时候，也要考虑听众是谁，他们对什么样的内容感兴趣，讲到什么程度是他们最容易听懂，也最容易产生共鸣的。只有这样，才能引起他们对佛法的希求，而不是我自己在那里自娱自乐地说着。翻译也不例外，

我们不是为了做点什么而做，而是希望通过这个渠道，让更多的人 and 佛法结缘。

3. 让做事成为修行

我们首先是参与修学的学员，然后是践行服务模式的义工，最后才是编译工作的参与者。这些定位是要牢记的。

大家平时在社会上都很忙，百忙之中挤出时间，投入弘法利生的事业中，传承和传播佛法，可谓意义重大。但同时也要认识到，我们还在修行的路上，还有这样那样的问题，所以在做事过程中不免带着世俗的习气。如果不能及时察觉并加以对治的话，不知不觉就会引发我执和贪嗔痴。事情虽然做了一些，但心行并没有因此改善，甚至引发一些不良情绪，那就太划不来了。

如何在参与编译义工的过程中得到成长？也要贯穿两套模式的修行，把“八步骤三种禅修”用进去。在翻译一本书、一篇文章时，扎扎实实地把相关内容

学好，学透。我们承担的义工行，要求我们一定要学好，这是帮助我们完成智慧的修行。我们在做的过程中，要带着利益一切众生的愿力，心里想着众生而不是自己，想着通过我的努力，引领更多的人从迷惑走向觉醒。这样做的话，翻译的同时，就在一次又一次地修习菩提心，修习慈悲心和利他心。

基础工作做好之后，我们还要去开拓英文市场，这是一个前景无量的事。现在社会上各行各业都有竞争，就弘法没有竞争。而且，传播佛法是世界的希望所在。没有这样一种智慧文化的引领，人类很难走出现有的困境。因为这些困境的根源就在于人心，如果我们走不出生命的困境，世界就没有光明的前景。希望大家共同努力，为改变世界的共业，改善人类的未来，尽自己的一份力量。





THE VALUE OF EASTERN WISDOM IN TODAY'S WORLD

Master Jiqun

Translated by MPI Translation Center

**Discourse for Oceania Students
in the Summer of 2023**

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Living in this era is quite challenging. While material and technological advancements have made life more convenient, they have also brought environmental issues such as pollution and global warming, as well as psychological disorders like anxiety and depression. Moreover, frequent international conflicts contribute to an unsettled world. The rapid pace of change makes the future increasingly uncertain. We used to think the world would remain the same for hundreds of years, but the current situation is completely different. It is hard to even imagine what the world will be like in just ten years.

I

THE WEST AND THE EAST

Western civilization relies on external achievements to find happiness. When the world is relatively stable, this dependency seems reliable. With effort, happiness can be within reach. However, when the external world is full of uncertainties, everything one depends on becomes increasingly fragile, and happiness seems more elusive. In this context, only by understanding oneself and becoming stronger can we reduce our dependence on the outside world and minimize the impact it entails.

How do we understand and improve ourselves?

It is precisely the strength of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. As Chinese, we share a common ancestry, but more importantly, we inherit the traditions of Eastern culture. This inheritance allows us to develop a positive mindset, a noble spirit, and an admirable personality. This is particularly significant today. Without exposure to Buddhist teachings, some might dismiss these as mere concepts. However, through dedicated practice, it becomes evident that these are not just words but represent the continuous qualities we have striven for and must persistently pursue in the endless future.

II

CONFUCIANISM AND BUDDHISM

Practicing Buddhism involves understanding ourselves and improving the quality of our lives. This life goal and value orientation are in line with Chinese native culture. Buddhism, having been introduced to China for over two thousand years, has a longer transmission period in China than in its birthplace, India. Why is Buddhism so well-received in China? The reason is that Buddhism not only shares commonalities with Confucian thought but also supplements the areas where Confucian philosophy might be lacking.

Confucianism emphasizes learning to become a virtuous person. From a personal standpoint, it requires

self-cultivation and nurturing one's character to become a person of virtue and even to achieve the status of a sage. From an external perspective, it focuses on harmonizing one's family relations, governing the country, and bringing peace to the world, aiming to benefit society. These two aspects align entirely with the Buddhist aspirations of benefiting oneself and others and awakening oneself and others.

Buddhism emphasizes attaining wisdom and embodying the qualities of buddha and bodhisattvas, focusing on both self-benefit and self-enlightenment. It also stresses the cultivation of bodhicitta¹ to benefit all beings, highlighting the importance of benefiting and enlightening others. The reason why these teachings can be applied effectively and not just remain as words is because the Dharma encompasses the profound wisdom of life. It offers clear insights into the way life develops and

1. In Buddhism, bodhicitta is a spontaneous wish to attain enlightenment motivated by great compassion for all sentient beings, accompanied by a falling away of the attachment to the illusion of an inherently existing self.

continues. Furthermore, it presents a practical approach for cultivation, just as the two forms we are currently utilizing to self-evaluate our practice: one for mindfulness, essential for liberation, and the other for altruism, crucial for developing compassion. These are the two main qualities to achieve in Buddhist practice. However, Confucian thought faces challenges to achieving such goals due to its lack of focus on the nature of the mind and theories of causality.

As we benefit from learning and practicing Buddhism and see the importance of preserving and passing down Eastern wisdom, we should further vow to help all beings. This includes native Chinese, overseas Chinese, and even foreigners because everyone, regardless of cultural background, is equally plagued by greed, hatred, and ignorance and troubled by delusion and afflictions. All need self-redemption and illumination, yearning for enlightenment and liberation. Yet, Western culture, focusing on rationality, often lacks insight into the nature of the mind and does not include meditation practices in its tradition.

It was in the last century that a growing number of Westerners began to learn Theravada, Tibetan, and Chan (Zen) Buddhism. Especially in recent decades, the spread of Buddhism has established a considerable influence in the West.

III

ENLIGHTENMENT AS HUMANITY'S GREATEST VALUE

A media outlet once listed the world's top ten luxuries, placing the awakening of life at the top. The question is: how to become awakened? Without the wisdom of Buddhism, awakening or enlightenment is just a concept, an unattainable luxury. Fortunately, understanding oneself and resolving afflictions are precisely the strengths of Buddhist teachings. Therefore, as Chinese, we are fortunate to have more access to Buddhism. More importantly, we have the virtuous roots and merits, causes and conditions for such a systematic Buddhist program to succeed through us, allowing us to truly set forth on the journey

toward enlightenment.

Many people nowadays also participate in Buddhist practices but seldom truly understand its essence. When facing a chaotic mind, one must abandon the mundane mind and step out of confusion; meanwhile, when confronted with the vast teachings of Buddhism, one must identify and choose an effective approach. Without clear guidance, obstacles will abound, and one might even stray onto the wrong path. Through extensive exploration, we have developed clear pathways, workflows, methods, and criteria for assessing the effectiveness. Following these systematically guarantees steady and proper progression.

Life includes diverse elements, such as the mental factors related to samsara and those linked with liberation and compassion. Developing the qualities of the Buddha and bodhisattvas, or ending up a life like a demon, both follow distinct patterns. The primary obstacle for many is insufficient self-awareness. Hence, delving into Buddhism is essential, for it helps us comprehend and discern different

mental factors, aiding in identifying what should be let go of and what should be adopted.

For people today, this choice is especially of great significance. With the rise of artificial intelligence, what is the unique value of human life? Neglecting this can lead humanity to feel increasingly adrift, losing sight of the direction with each passing moment. Many people now live in material comfort, but that doesn't guarantee them happiness. Have you seen photos of space? Earth, amidst its vastness, travels rapidly without a known destination. In the solar system, Earth is but a speck; in the galaxy, the sun is equally inconsequential. Without recognizing the infinite value of life, regardless of wealth, our existence is insignificant in the face of a limited life span. Moreover, everything is subject to impermanence, with changes becoming faster and increasingly difficult to control.

IV

FROM SELF-BENEFIT TO BENEFITING OTHERS

Hence, it is crucial to deeply understand the significance of inheriting Eastern wisdom for both ourselves and humanity. In today's world, even the slightest events elsewhere would create ripple effects, impacting everyone to various degrees. This interdependence has been particularly noticeable in recent years. As people grow increasingly restless and aggressive, we must question how we can live well in such an environment.

Therefore, we should cultivate the bodhicitta for both the world and ourselves. From the Buddhist perspective,

all lives are fundamentally interconnected and mutually influence each other. Through learning and practice, we recognize the troubles caused by delusion, see the hope in life, and find solutions. We should then use our learning to illuminate more people's hearts.

Enlightenment and affliction, Buddha and demon, all hinge on a single thought – the concept of “becoming a Buddha or a demon in an instant.” When a person receives positive guidance, they can become a kind person, a sage, or even attain Buddhahood. Conversely, without such guidance, one might become a demon, bringing harm to oneself and the world.

V

CREATING A MINDFUL PEACE ACADEMY, ILLUMINATING MORE HEARTS

How can we help more people illuminate their hearts? Over the past few decades, we've gained a wealth of experience in spreading the Dharma and hope everyone can participate in it, allowing the culture of wisdom to reach countless homes. With increasingly more people moving abroad in recent years, there has been a significant rise in the number of overseas Chinese. When they leave their homeland, they often feel unsettled and lack a sense of security.

Where are the roots of Chinese people? They lie in the cultural heritage. Our goal is to establish a spiritual home for overseas Chinese, which naturally extends to foreigners, as well. As the ultimate problems faced by humanity are the same, the wisdom of Chan, which addresses these common problems, can naturally satisfy everyone's needs. Similarly, Chan-inspired spaces, like our retreat centers, are also boundaryless. Like the Amrita Retreat Center we have created, everyone likes it regardless of cultural differences. The primary challenge for modern people is the lack of spiritual support. Although their material life is abundant, there is no corresponding spiritual substance. The Chan-inspired spaces we create embody a materially sufficient life yet rich in spiritual essence. We aspire to build Mindful Peace Academies of varying sizes in various cities, countries, and continents. We also plan to encourage volunteers to participate in and support this process.

With such spaces, people can gather regularly, fostering a sense of community and cohesion that is often missing in solitary practice. During my early days of spreading the

Dharma overseas, I observed many elderly Chinese people visiting temples every weekend for vegetarian meals, chanting, worshiping, and listening to teachings. For newer emigrants who may not be religious, we should minimize religious aspects and diversify activities to meet their physical and mental needs. Nowadays, many temples in China still primarily focus on rituals, catering mainly to the older population, somewhat failing to keep pace with the times. In contrast, those visiting our retreat centers are often from mainstream social groups who are younger, more culturally engaged, career-oriented, and aspirational.

The main problems of modern people are twofold: first, they are often confused about the future, and second, they are plagued by various negative emotions. When Mindful Peace Academies are established overseas, I believe they will attract many people. Of course, the environment is just a contributing factor; the key is the content, such as courses on Wisdom Living and the mindful and slow-paced lifestyle we currently promote. They

include mindfulness, tea meditation, vegetarianism, Danshari (minimalist decluttering), Qigong Baduanjin, acupuncture massage, etc. In the future, we will also develop courses on Confucianism. Reading Confucian classics under the umbrella of Buddhist wisdom can be very powerful.

Such a combination enables the Mindful Peace Academies to serve as a platform for spreading Chinese culture internationally and a spiritual home for overseas Chinese. Everyone can regularly visit to enjoy vegetarian cuisine and experience tea meditation. The reason Buddhism became popular in Japan was through the vehicle of tea ceremonies. From royalty and nobles to ordinary citizens, all are captivated by the cultural richness expressed in the tea ceremony, thereby bringing the wisdom of Chan into countless homes and serving the public by providing peace of mind and body.

VI

BRINGING TRADITIONAL CULTURE INTO FAMILIES

Therefore, we need a suitable environment to help everyone learn traditional culture and adjust their lifestyles. While such a foundation is established through the Mindful Peace Academies, we must also bring the culture of wisdom into families. Currently, excessive smartphone usage leads to poor family communication. Chinese culture emphasizes sequential life goals, progressing from self-cultivation and family harmony to governance of the country and peace in the world. Among these, self-cultivation and family harmony are fundamental. However, most people are unaware of how to engage in

self-cultivation, harming their bodies through unhealthy diets, daily routines, and mindsets. As for harmonizing the family, while families in the past often had three or even four generations living under one roof, many families now struggle to even bring two people together, facing numerous issues in marital relationships, child education, and elderly care.

What is the reason behind this? It is because there is no cultural inheritance upon which common beliefs and family norms can be established. Confucianism teaches us about becoming a refined person, informing us that fathers and sons, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters all have corresponding responsibilities, duties, and codes of conduct. Understanding these rules allows us to know what to do and what not to do within the family. In traditional Chinese culture, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are unified. Famous literati like Wang Wei, Bai Juyi, Liu Yuxi, Su Dongpo, and Wang Anshi were both Confucians and devoted Buddhists. It is said that without the wisdom of Buddhism, life for Chinese people would

be very exhausting, for Confucian philosophy tends toward utilitarianism. The teachings of the bodhicitta and the wisdom of emptiness in Buddhism, on the other hand, allow active engagement in the world while imparting the idea that all phenomena are akin to dreams or illusions and should not be held onto. With such insights, one can remain open-minded, transcendent, and unaffected when facing all situations.

How do we integrate such a culture of wisdom into families? We encourage those who are equipped to create a mindful tea room at home. This not only serves as a personal practicing space but also as a platform to pass down Eastern wisdom. Typically, family gatherings focus on eating, drinking, and playing mahjong. A tea room, however, offers a space for more meaningful gatherings, such as hosting weekly events with relatives and friends featuring tea, vegetarian meals, acupressure massage, Qi-gong Baduanjin, reading sessions, and mindfulness practices. Many such initiatives are already underway, and we plan to continue further to blend traditional culture into

various courses tailored to individual needs and strengths. As these practices are adopted, they will naturally transform the ambiance and energy at home.

VII

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES, BENEFITING SOCIETY

Moreover, we should engage with other community groups. There are many Chinese associations overseas, typically building relationships through eating and drinking, which lack quality. We can empower these community groups with the concept of a mindful, slow-paced lifestyle. For instance, my series of lectures on Wisdom Living covers topics like perspectives on wealth and happiness. After attending these sessions, we can combine our understanding and insights to host book clubs or deliver talks within these associations, disseminating the culture of wisdom and serving the overseas Chinese community. Moreover, this should be purely for public welfare and

altruistic purposes.

If you have the resources, it's ideal to do this yourself; if not, you can invite experts in various fields from within the country to hold lectures and activities for you. For example, one time could be dedicated to teaching tea culture, another to promoting vegetarianism, and then moving on to topics like Danshari (minimalist decluttering) and health and regimen. We have already prepared many related courses, including the interpretation of Chan poetry, youth education, and elderly care, all of which you can choose based on your needs. Noteworthy, many overseas Chinese are concerned about their children's education and hope to instill Eastern wisdom in their upbringing so that the children can foster an early appreciation for Chinese traditional culture, thereby nurturing their sentiments and overall characters.

In the future, we plan to develop more courses and train additional experts to facilitate the launch of these projects. These strategies will enable each Mindful Peace Academy

to make a local impact by offering a space for people to experience Chinese culture and Eastern wisdom. Such activities serve as an entry point, creating popularity and atmosphere and guiding interested individuals towards gradual learning and cultivation. However, we should also notice that, without the right atmosphere, there's no urgency to commence the dedicated classes, as this might create undue pressure for us.

When individuals deeply engage with Buddhist teachings and reap significant benefits, they'll recognize its utmost importance in life and its profound impact on both themselves and the world. When resources are insufficient and merits are lacking, we must cultivate a vast mind and diligently pursue our studies. Our mind follows the law of attraction: when you truly develop a strong aspiration and compassion, when the Dharma displays its power through you, your transformation becomes evident to those around you. And resources will naturally gather, too. In contrast, if your approach to learning is inconsistent and lacks commitment, it is unlikely to attract resources.

VIII

BE SELF-AWARE AND INDEPENDENT, EMBRACE YOUR UNIQUENESS

We aim to create favorable conditions and offer support to encourage more individuals to spread Eastern wisdom overseas. As the promisee, you are the key party to take the initiative, while as the promisor, our role is to provide Eastern wisdom as a priceless product, yet success depends on your ability to receive and integrate it. If you are not ready yet, our services might become a burden. Even though many are eager to lend a hand, efforts may fail if there is a lack of fuel in you.

Our focus on developing systematic courses and replicable

models has proven effective throughout the practice. Although there are Learning Support Teams at the back end, the emphasis is still placed on each class and individual. With favorable conditions, each class, as a unit, is encouraged to develop its book club and eventually expand it into a standalone Mindful Peace Academy. Some individuals can already make a lot of differences by themselves, so collaborating with others is optional. Of course, collective efforts can be more impactful; if circumstances don't allow it, you can initiate your projects, provided they follow the specific guidelines. Either way, you must actively nurture the causes and conditions. As more hearts are illuminated, the collective strength will also intensify.

IX

CONCLUSION

Starting is always the most challenging part of any journey. Initially, nothing comes easy; your faith in the Dharma may be weak, and there's little support around you, especially in the Degenerate Age of Dharma, which is particularly unfavorable for practicing. However, It must be understood that without learning and practicing, there is no way out of this chaos of ignorance and confusion. Only through the study and cultivation of Buddhism can you break free from delusion and move towards awakening; this is life's only way out, and there is no turning back. Others can only help by creating favorable conditions; the genuine pursuit of cultivation still relies on your own efforts.

————— Appendix: —————

WORDS CONVEY THE WAY,
LIKEWISE FOR TRANSLATION

Discourse given by Master Jiqun
to the volunteer translation team
in the winter of 2015

The translation work at our Bodhi Academy has been ongoing for more than two years now, and it remains as one of our key projects. Historically speaking, scripture translation has facilitated the spread of Buddhism in various regions. Without the translation of the Tripitaka¹, Buddhism would have been confined to India,

1. The Tripitaka (Sanskrit for “three baskets”) in Buddhism are the traditional divisions of the Buddhist scriptures. These three baskets are Sutra: This basket contains the discourses or sermons of the Buddha; Vinaya Pitaka: This basket comprises the rules of discipline for the monastic community; Abhidhamma Pitaka: This basket contains the philosophical and doctrinal analyses and interpretations of the Buddha’s teachings.

unable to spread to China or other parts of the world, thereby denying the opportunity for countless generations to benefit from the Dharma.

Buddhism spread to China during the Western Han dynasty and reached its zenith during the Sui and Tang dynasties. Throughout this period, there was a continuous effort to translate Buddhist scriptures. Over a thousand years, more than two hundred translators were involved in this massive undertaking, establishing numerous translation centers and a complete set of translation procedures. Moreover, the education provided in these translation centers also played a significant part in the history of Buddhist education. Translating the scriptures was not merely about converting Buddhist texts from Sanskrit to Chinese; it also involved their interpretation by accomplished monks from India and other places, helping students to grasp their essence. It can be said that the propagation of any scripture, as well as the establishment of any school or sect, all began with translation work.

I

TRANSLATION OF BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES IN CHINESE BUDDHIST TRADITION

1. From *Geyi* (“Matching Concepts”) to the Return

In ancient times, translating scriptures was a massive undertaking, requiring significant staffing, material supplies, and financial resources. Hence, many translation projects were patronized by emperors and organized by the government. An instance of this is Master Kumarajiva, who is also revered as one of the four great translators in China. Assisted by a massive team of three thousand individuals, he successfully translated a collection of crucial scriptures,

including renowned Chinese Buddhist texts such as the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Lotus Sutra*, and the *Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra*. This marked the beginning of a new era for the dissemination of Prajnaparamita teachings in China.

Prajnaparamita scriptures were introduced into China as early as the Eastern Jin Dynasty. At that time, the prevailing trend was to engage with Taoism and its metaphysical discourses. The philosophy of Prajnaparamita, with its exposition on the nature of emptiness, shared similarities with Taoist discussions on emptiness and *Wuwei* (inaction). Therefore, once introduced, it quickly gained popularity among literati and scholar-officials. However, before Master Kumarajiva, the Prajnaparamita philosophy was interpreted differently or even conflictingly through a lot of forced association with local concepts. To make Buddhism more accessible, the revered monks of the time used *Geyi*, a concept-matching approach, to translate Buddhist terms with Taoist concepts. While this approach helped Buddhism gain immediate acceptance,

it often failed to convey the original meanings accurately.

Such shortcomings were soon recognized by several revered monks, who considered *Geyi* to be “circuitous and deviating from the original meaning,” noting that it contradicted the original Buddhist teachings. Noteworthy, this situation arose partly because early translators were not proficient in Chinese. Translation involves converting language, which is the carrier of thought. If this conversion is not done properly, the conveyed thoughts cannot be presented completely and accurately. Therefore, some early Buddhist scriptures were not only difficult to recite smoothly but also posed obstacles to understanding.

Master Kumarajiva, on the other hand, being proficient in both Sanskrit and Chinese, ensured accuracy in translation. More importantly, as a master with extensive knowledge of the Tripitaka and profound achievements in Buddhist studies, he guaranteed authenticity in the elucidation and propagation of the Dharma. While overseeing the translation work, he simultaneously lectured,

nurturing a group of outstanding disciples led by the “Four Sages and Ten Great Thinkers.” Among them, Master Sengzhao was especially notable, acclaimed as “the foremost interpreter of emptiness in the Yao Qin Dynasty.” His work, *Zhao Lun*, is a significant treatise in the history of Chinese philosophy. From then on, the interpretation of Prajnaparamita teachings gradually returned to the essence of Buddhism.

In light of this, we may conclude that the quality of scripture translation affects not only the propagation of Buddhism as a whole but also practitioners’ individual understanding and realization of the Dharma. Scriptures serve as a roadmap for spiritual practice; if the map is inaccurate, where might it lead us? For this reason, later translation projects developed a set of rigorous procedures and carefully selected their participants from across the nation, gathering the best and brightest of the time to jointly contribute to a grand endeavor.

2. Free Translation and Literal Translation

Among the four great translators – Kumarajiva, Paramartha, Xuanzang, and Amoghavajra – Kumarajiva and Xuanzang are more widely recognized, representing two distinct styles of scripture translation: free translation and literal translation.

Free translation emphasizes the beauty and fluency of the language on the basis of the accurate conveyance of the original meaning. It allows a relatively free linguistic expression. For example, Master Kumarajiva's translations of the *Vimalakirti Sutra*, *Lotus Sutra*, and *Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra* are not only widely circulated and relied upon in the Buddhist community but also highly revered for their literary excellence by literati and scholar-officials. Literal translation, on the other hand, preserves the original form of the text when converting the languages, and is more faithful to the linguistic expressions.

Take the *Prajnaparamita Sutras* as an example, this

compilation of scriptures occupies a supreme position in the history of Chinese Buddhism. Master Kumarajiva once translated the *The Perfection of Wisdom in 25,000 Lines* into thirty fascicles, and the *Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra* authored by Bodhisattva Nagarjuna is a commentary of this sutra. According to Master Kumarajiva, a complete translation of the *Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra* would amount to a thousand fascicles. However, considering the Chinese preference for conciseness, Master Kumarajiva only translated the first fascicle in its full length, and the rest were abridged to a total of one hundred fascicles. In fact, as Bodhisattva Nagarjuna's commentary of just the first fascicle of the original work is as extensive as thirty fascicles, by this account, the comments on the thirty-fascicle sutra would indeed come close to a thousand fascicles.

Another Prajnaparamita scripture, the *The Great Prajnaparamita Sutra* translated by Master Xuanzang consists of a colossal six-hundred fascicles, making it one of the "heaviest" classics in the history of Chinese

Buddhism. While preparing its translation, Master Xuanzang also faced the decision of whether to abridge it. According to the *Biography of Tripitaka Master Xuanzang*, “On the first day in Lunar January of the fifth year¹, he began the translation of the *The Great Prajnaparamita Sutra*. The original Sanskrit version contains two hundred thousand verses. Given its extensive content, the disciples often pleaded for an abbreviated version. The master, intending to go along with the majority’s wish, like Kumarajiva did, was ready to remove the redundant and cumbersome parts. Having this thought, he experienced extremely terrifying dreams at night as warnings. He dreamed of walking through dangerous paths or being attacked by fierce animals, sweating and trembling until he escaped. Awakened in fear and sharing this with the disciples, he decided to translate the text in its entirety. That night, he dreamed of Buddhas and bodhisattvas whose foreheads emitted light, bathing and soothing him. The master also saw himself holding a flower lamp

1. The fifth year of Master Xuanzang’s translation project after he returned to Chang’an.

to worship the Buddhas, and in another image, he ascended to a high seat, preaching the Dharma in front of a crowd who surrounded him with praise and respect. Or he dreamed of receiving fruits from people. Having seen these, he woke up in joy.” Due to the revelations in these dreams, he “dared not to abridge and translated exactly as the Sanskrit version.” However, there were three different Sanskrit versions that he obtained from India, so when translating, “if there were doubts or mistakes in the text, he would compare the three versions to resolve them. His meticulous and diligent approach to translation was unparalleled in history.”

These two styles, each with its own merits, remain mainstream even in today’s translation practices. Central to a good translation are “faithfulness, expressiveness, and elegance.” Among these, faithfulness is paramount; regardless of whether the approach is sense-for-sense or word-for-word, fidelity to the original meaning is crucial. On this basis, the level of “elegance” achieved is subjective, varying from one translator to another, with no absolute rules.

3. The Procedures of Translation

Buddhist scriptures are carriers of the Dharma and maps for spiritual practice. Therefore, from the collection and translation to the transcription and printing of scriptures, utmost caution is required to avoid the slightest error that could lead to great deviations. Starting from the Southern and Northern Dynasties, the government began to participate in the translation of Buddhist scriptures, not only through funding but also by establishing specialized translation centers. These centers were often operated on a large scale. They brought together renowned monks from all over the country, along with hundreds and thousands of disciples, each contributing through a specific role in a collaborative effort.

The translation process consisted of ten main stages:

(1) Translation Master: The central figure overseeing the translation process, proficient in both the meaning of the scripture and bilingual in Chinese and Sanskrit. He was

ultimately responsible for making decisions.

(2) Verification of Meaning: Ensuring that the translated text accurately reflected the intended meaning of the Sanskrit original.

(3) Verification of Text: Checking for any errors in the original Sanskrit text, considering the possibility of transmission errors in early Buddhist scriptures, and making choices based on doctrinal principles to ensure accuracy.

(4) Transliteration: Recording the pronunciation of Sanskrit words in Chinese characters.

(5) Transcription: Recording the translated content in Chinese.

(6) Adjustment of Language: Adjusting the grammar of the translation to conform to Chinese expression habits.

(7) Comparison: Cross-referencing the translation with

the original text and verifying whether the Chinese translation aligned with the Sanskrit original through back-translation.

(8) Editing: Due to the tendency of Sanskrit expression to appear excessively repetitive to Chinese readers, selectively removing redundant or repetitive phrases while ensuring no compromise to the meaning of the scripture.

(9) Polishing: Introducing necessary connecting words to improve the fluency of the text.

(10) Chanting: Reciting the translated text with the intonation used in chanting scriptures to ensure its smoothness and suitability for recitation.

Through such a meticulous procedure, the translators not only ensured accuracy but also considered fluency, making it a practice worth emulating. Taking the “Comparison” as an example, we can reverse translate the English text into Chinese and compare it with the original

Chinese text, which serves as an effective verification. Discrepancies between the reverse translation and the original remind us to review whether the English translation has potential ambiguities or is prone to misleading readers.

Additionally, ancient translation of scriptures adhered to the “Five guidelines for not-translating a term.” Each term carries its unique cultural background and corresponding connotations. When an equivalent term in Chinese was difficult to find during translation, transliteration was employed. The five scenarios were as follows:

(1) No translation for polysemous terms: Terms such as Bhagavan and Arhat with multiple meanings were not translated.

(2) No translation for occult terms: For example, there are no appropriate Chinese expressions to translate the dhārāni mantras in the scriptures.

(3) No translation out of reverence: Taking “Prajna” as an example, it cannot fully convey the noble and profound connotation with the single term “wisdom”.

(4) Follow ancient tradition and not translate: For instance, the term “Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi” was particularly preserved as its original pronunciation when translated by an honored ancient translator to emphasize the sublime nature of the Dharma.

(5) No translation due to lack of local equivalent: For example, “Amalaka” is the name of an Indian medicinal fruit that can not be found elsewhere.

While these guidelines may not directly relate to our current translations, understanding them may provide us with additional perspectives for contemplation.

II

PARTICIPATING IN TRANSLATION IS ENGAGING IN THE PROPAGATION OF THE DHARMA

1. Buddhism in the West

Buddhism spread from India to various regions, giving rise to Theravada Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism, also known as the Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan traditions. Today, this ancient Eastern wisdom is being recognized by an increasing number of Westerners. Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism, especially, have made a significant global impact. The reasons are multifaceted, but they are inseparable from cultural exchanges and the

translation of Buddhist scriptures.

In the early 20th century, some Westerners studied in Theravada Buddhist regions and introduced Buddhist doctrines and meditation methods to Europe and America, sparking widespread interest. The venerable Nyanaloka Mahathera, born in Germany, is a notable example. The venerable was ordained in Sri Lanka in 1936 and studied Buddhism and Pali. Subsequently, he translated some Pali scriptures into German and taught himself English. In 1958, he co-founded a Buddhist publishing house with friends. During his 30-year tenure as president, a large number of Buddhist books were published, making outstanding contributions to the propagation of Theravada Buddhism in the West.

On the other hand, Tibetan Buddhism expanded its influence as a group of eminent monks traveled to Europe and America to spread the Buddha Dharma. Initially, they encountered language barriers and struggled to move forward. Over time, they mastered English and started

conducting lectures and publishing books in Western countries, attracting many followers as the four groups of disciples. Some Dharma propagators have been active in recent years; since they have long-term residency in the West and possess no language barrier, their method of spreading Dharma has become even more diverse.

In contrast, while organizations like Fo Guang Shan and Dharma Drum Mountain have facilitated the spread of Chinese Buddhism to the West, its influence remains primarily within Chinese communities. This is due to language barriers and different living environments. Considering the large number of Chinese people around the world and the rich foundation of Chinese culture, ample opportunities for propagating Dharma exist without necessarily targeting Westerners. This situation does not pose a need for a breakthrough. However, lack of propagation naturally leads to a lack of Western audiences.

How can we broaden the interaction and change this situation? Language is the primary factor. Therefore,

translation volunteers have much to contribute and the key is that we possess a sense of mission to spread the Dharma and to enlighten oneself and others.

2. Taking Dharma Propagation as Our Mission

Our dedication to propagating the Dharma is not simply because we are Buddhist and wish to attract more followers. In fact, it is because the world truly needs Buddhism and the guidance of this wisdom. Since the 16th century, Western civilization has increasingly flourished, becoming the dominant culture worldwide. Although the rapid development of industry, technology, and commerce has significantly enhanced human material life, it has also given rise to various social issues. These include the deterioration of the ecological environment, mental distress and an increase in mental illnesses, and so on.

Where lies the future of humanity? Liang Shuming once wrote *Has Man a Future?* I believe that without a powerful intervention of the wisdom culture, humanity will

inevitably descend into decay and destruction. It is not alarmist; in fact, frequent natural disasters and human calamities are warning bells. More hidden dangers, like nuclear weapons, are lurking around us. What kind of catastrophic disaster would it bring to humanity if such devices fell into the hands of those with unhealthy mindsets? Thus, as the world grows more powerful, it also becomes more fragile and fraught with crises.

On the other hand, with the improvement of material living standards, many individuals, after addressing survival issues, begin to contemplate the value of life and the purpose of living. They question the nature of happiness and the meaning of worldly success and ponder over existential inquiries such as who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed after death. Those issues addressed in the book *We Have Misunderstood The World* are also universal rather than individual. Anyone unwilling to live like an animal will inevitably face these questions and seek answers. However, when facing these questions and inquiries, we find no way forward without

the guidance of the ultimate wisdom. Failing to find convincing answers, some artists and philosophers even fall into a deep abyss of agony, leading them to the point of no return or into a state of voluntary degradation.

Where can we find the answers to these questions? Indeed, they lie in the Dharma, because all issues are essentially matters of the mind. When we truly understand the nature of the mind, we understand life and the world. Buddha Dharma is a study of the mind, and the Buddha's understanding of the mind does not arise from reasoning or mystic speculation but from direct experience. Following the guidance of the Dharma, we can also realize and attain the Buddha's wisdom. In fact, this wisdom is inherently within us, only needing to be revealed through cultivation.

Therefore, Buddha Dharma is the hope of this world. Practicing Buddhism isn't just about adjusting our mindset for a more stable secular life but finding the true path in life and realizing life's greatest value. It is significant not

only for ourselves but also for humanity. We must recognize the importance of our translation work and confidently approach this volunteer activity.

III

HOW TO EXCEL IN TRANSLATION WORK

In practicing Buddhism, having clear goals and employing correct methods are essential for success. This also applies to any volunteer practice. So, how can we ensure effectiveness in our translation work? I believe three main elements are crucial: first, establish a solid organizational foundation; second, focus on developing professional skills; and third, approach your work as a form of cultivation practice. These elements are essential for achieving sustainable progress.

1. Establishing a Solid Organizational Foundation

First of all, we need to establish a team based on the translation process. On the one hand, we can refer to the organizational structure of the Bodhi Academy by setting up several groups within the translation department, with each group forming different teams to complete specific tasks. On the other hand, we can draw upon the historical translation processes and contemporary translation experiences as references. Once the team and processes are in place, it is still necessary to continuously evaluate practices and adjust them accordingly, until the process is the most appropriate and the teams formed according to that process are the most effective.

Next is the growth process for translators. How can we support the growth of volunteers after we recruit them into the translation team? The Bodhi Academy has a Six-Step Development Process for task-related growth and professional development. By aligning our process with these six steps, we ensure each individual clearly

understands their current responsibilities and the direction of their efforts in the future.

The third aspect involves establishing smooth channels for discovering, attracting, nurturing, and appropriately utilizing talents, along with forming corresponding selection criteria and operational standards. With the continuous optimization of the two modes (Three-level study and service-oriented volunteer practice), the number of our students will continue to grow, and talents for the translation team will also emerge accordingly. In this context, we must develop a robust system for identifying and integrating talents into our team, and then provide support to ensure they are on the right track quickly. Translating Buddhist texts needs a certain level of expertise, which requires specialized training for gradual advancement. This process is akin to the growth path where students evolve to assistant counselors, then to intern counselors, and finally to full counselors, in a bottom-up approach.

Given the diversity of everyone's situation, we need to

tailor our approach. For example, some students may have a solid knowledge of Buddha Dharma but average foreign language skills; others may have excellent foreign language skills but a weak foundation in Buddhism. Additionally, students who excel in translation should focus on their expertise without being overloaded with additional responsibilities. Similarly, those skilled in coordination should focus on organizational duties, avoiding excessive translation tasks. This requires team leaders to recognize the unique strengths of each volunteer and assign roles accordingly to maximize efficiency. Otherwise, not only will the tasks become burdensome, but improper arrangements may even cause volunteers to become disheartened and consider quitting.

2. Focusing on Professional Skills as the Key

With the advent of globalization, the prevalence of English continues to grow, and many people are proficient in more than one foreign language or engaged in related professional work. Despite this, translating Buddhist

texts into English remains relatively challenging. The difficulties lie in three main areas. The first is the limited exposure and experience in this specific field. The second is the lack of a solid foundation in Buddhism. If the understanding is not thorough or even biased, proficiency in English alone is insufficient. The third is how to strike the balance in translation and achieve an accurate and appropriate representation.

In the dissemination of Buddhism, the principle of understanding both the doctrine and the audience's mentality is paramount. Being in line with Dharma means accurately grasping the meaning and principles of Buddha Dharma, which is the fundamental premise of propagation. Whether through literal or free translation, it must be based on an accurate understanding. The difference is that free translation allows for a certain degree of flexibility in expression. In reality, this places higher demands on the translator, as they need to be clear about the extent of this freedom to enhance the translation rather than overcomplicate it. The *Records of the Three Treasures*

Throughout the Successive Dynasties contains the following record: “In Dharmaraksa’s translation of the *Lotus Sutra*, there is one sentence in the chapter Announcement of the Future Destiny of the Five Hundred Monks as ‘Deities see humans, humans see deities’ (in Chinese, ‘天见人, 人见天’). When Kumarajiva saw this during retranslation, he commented: ‘This phrase agrees with the meaning of the Sanskrit sutra, but the expression is overly straightforward.’ Monk Rui immediately responded: ‘Could it be translated as humans and deities interact, thus enabling them to see each other?’ (in Chinese, ‘人天交接, 两得相见’) Kumarajiva joyfully agreed: ‘Indeed, it is so.’” This shows that the key to free translation is capturing the essence. As for literal translation, it is also not necessarily the same as word-for-word translation. Since English and Chinese grammar differ a lot, adjustments are still necessary.

In the “Eight Steps,” the third step discusses understanding, which must be “complete, accurate, and thorough.” This principle is equally crucial in translation, demanding

repeated contemplation and full comprehension of the content. I often say that being a counselor in our program is the fastest way to grow because it involves more responsibilities, which compels them to learn well. Similarly, translation offers an opportunity for significant growth. Without a solid understanding, accurate translation is impossible. One is required to study earnestly to master the materials, not just “kind of knowing the content.”

Additionally, it's essential to consider the audience's mentality and cultural background. Since the English translations are intended for foreign readers, understanding their customary mode of expression is important. I encourage everyone to purposefully read some English originals, especially those with rich literary quality and philosophical depth. The same content can be expressed differently, depending on individual skill levels. While improving English proficiency, we must also familiarize ourselves with Buddhist terminology. In recent years, many English books related to Buddhism have been published, either originally written in English or translated. Some of them

have had a significant impact globally, such as the works of Master Thich Nhat Hanh. We can learn from them, but there's no need to read extensively. Instead, find one or two exemplary books and read them thoroughly. For those Buddhist terms that already have standard translations, we should follow the established conventions and not try to reinvent the wheel. Even though there is not a lot of jargon in my books, the content is deeply rooted in Buddhist principles. It demands deep understanding.

In summary, while accurately conveying the meaning and maintaining fluency, it is essential to remember that the contents are targeted to foreign readers. When I propagate Dharma to the general public, I also consider who the audience is, what content they are interested in, and to what extent they can easily understand and resonate. Only by doing so can I spark their interest in the Dharma, instead of me talking in a self-entertaining manner. Translation is no exception; we do not do it for the sake of doing some activity, but rather, we hope to use this medium to connect more people with the Dharma.

3. Make Doing Things a Form of Practice

We are first and foremost students engaged in study and practice, then volunteers participating in a service-oriented practice mode, and finally participants in the translation work. These priorities must be kept in mind.

Everyone is busy in this fast-paced society, yet it is profoundly meaningful to find time from our hectic schedules to spread Dharma for the benefit of all beings. Meanwhile, it is important to remember that we are all on the path of cultivation, facing various challenges along the way. This becomes apparent when our secular preferences surface when engaging in volunteer work. Without timely recognition and correction of these habits, they can unknowingly foster ego attachment and the negative traits of greed, anger, and ignorance. Even though the tasks have been accomplished, if they don't contribute to mindset growth or, worse, trigger unhealthy emotions, such efforts are not worthwhile.

How to ensure our growth while participating in volunteer translation? It's essential to integrate the two modes and the "Eight Steps and Three Types of Meditation." When translating a book or an article, we should strive to understand the content thoroughly. Our volunteer tasks demand dedicated learning, thus contributing to our practice of wisdom. As we engage in our tasks, we should carry the aspiration to benefit all sentient beings, focusing on others rather than ourselves, and aiming to lead more individuals from confusion to awakening through our efforts. By this endeavor, as we translate, we are nurturing the bodhicitta, cultivating compassion, and practicing altruism again and again.

After establishing this solid foundation, we should also venture into the English-speaking market, which holds boundless prospects. Competition exists in every sector of our society, except in the propagation of the Dharma. Moreover, spreading the teachings of Buddhism is the hope of the world. Without the guidance of such a culture of wisdom, it is difficult for humanity to escape its

current predicaments. Since the root of these problems lies within the human mind, the world will not have a bright future if we cannot find our way out of life's afflictions. Let us all work together and contribute our efforts to changing the world's collective karma and improving the future of humanity.

国际静心协会、静心学堂简介

国际静心协会（简称 MPI）是 2021 年成立于瑞士苏黎世的非盈利组织，旨在向全球传播佛法智慧和禅意生活。

静心学堂为“国际静心协会”旗下的核心公益品牌，致力于传承生命觉醒教育，为现代人提供安顿身心、安身立命之道。我们推广的静心学堂课程体系，为汉传佛教济群长老以四十年修学所证，对当代佛教教育作出的探索，包括禅意生活、智慧人生和觉醒之道。同时，我们将在世界各地营造具有禅意的空间、彼此增上的氛围，为大众修学保驾护航。

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Mindful Peace International (MPI), established in 2021 in Zurich, Switzerland, is a non-profit organization dedicated to spreading Buddhist wisdom and promoting a Chan-inspired life globally.

The Mindful Peace Academy serves as the core public welfare brand under Mindful Peace International. We are dedicated to passing on education about life awakening and offering modern individuals ways towards physical and mental well-being, thereby helping them ground themselves and discover their life's mission. The curriculum we promote at the Mindful Peace Academy has been authenticated through forty years of study and practice by Master Jiqun, an eminent elder of Han Buddhism. It represents an exploration of contemporary Buddhist education, encompassing teachings on the Chan-inspired Life, the Wisdom for Living, and the Path to Awakening. Moreover, we are committed to creating Chan-inspired spaces and fostering mutually enriching environments worldwide to safeguard the public's learning journey.

The *Mindful Peace Academy Collection* showcases a selection of courses on the Chan-inspired Life and the Wisdom for Living. We sincerely hope that through these courses, more individuals will engage with life awakening education and share in the blessings that Eastern wisdom brings to humanity.

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