



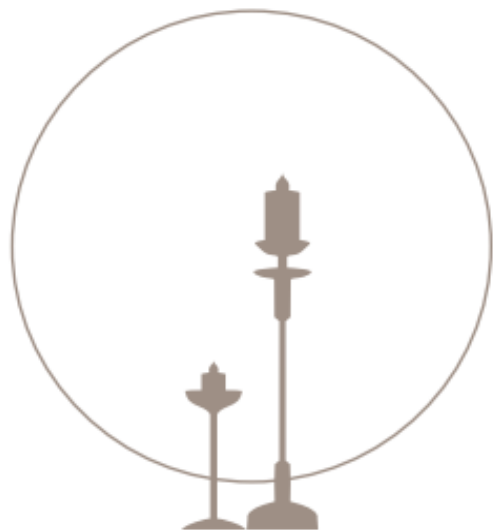
静心学堂丛书

The Mindful Peace Academy Collection

中英双语 Chinese-English Edition

心灵创造幸福

Happiness Comes from the Mind



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很高兴看到这么多人来参加关于幸福的讲座，可见这个内容很有吸引力。前些年，央视曾就此向数千个不同地区、年龄、行业者进行采访，一时间，“你幸福吗”成了热门话题。这个调查和种种出人意料的回复，从不同侧面反映了很多人对幸福的茫然。比如诺贝尔奖得主莫言的回答是“我不知道”，这个答案是作家的回避或调侃吗？他接着的解读是：“我现在压力很大，忧虑重重，能幸福么？但我要说不幸福，那也太装了吧。刚得诺贝尔奖能说不幸福吗？”

可以说，这也代表了很多人说到“幸福”时的共同感受：我们的生活条件提高了这么多，没理由说不幸福，可为什么就感受不到幸福呢？到底哪里出了问

题？在过去的穷苦年代，我们把希望寄托在物质改善，以为有钱就能幸福。甚至对不少人来说，能吃饱穿暖就是莫大的幸福。但当越来越多的人富起来之后，当我们拥有的早已超出温饱之需，幸福却和我们捉起了迷藏。

幸福在哪里？钱带来了暂时的满足，但这种愉悦如此短暂，随之而来的，还有攀比和竞争。看到别人有更多的钱，更优越的生活，满足就变成了不满足，甚至带来了嫉妒和嗔恨。而我们期待的幸福，却像天边的云彩，可望而不可即。可见，幸福远非我们曾经以为的那么简单，更不是拥有财富、改善生活之后的必然结果。

为什么我们有了那么多，还是得不到幸福？这就涉及另一些问题：幸福到底是什么？幸福是特定条件下的假相，还是代表生命本质的存在？什么阻碍了我们获得幸福？或者说，幸福的最大杀手是什么？如果幸福只是一种暂时的假相，追求幸福岂不成了水中捞月，注定是一场不可企及的幻想？

如果不解决这些问题，我们对幸福的追求，必然

是模糊而一厢情愿的。答案在哪里？事实上，它取决于我们对幸福的认识深度，而这个深度又取决于我们对生命乃至人生意义的认识。生命包括两个层面，一是物质层面，二是心灵层面。那么，生命的本质是什么？悲观主义哲学认为，生命本身充满荒谬和痛苦。如果这样的话，我们追求幸福的意义在哪里？佛法又是怎样看待生命的本质？

今天讲座的题目是“心灵创造幸福”，我想从以下几方面提供一些想法。



一、如何面对逆境

关于接纳，佛陀在《杂阿舍经》中以“两支毒箭”为我们作了开示
第一支毒箭，是被箭射中时的身苦
也代表我们遭遇的各种逆境
第二支毒箭则是由此带来的心苦
当我们被第一支毒箭射中
痛苦已经发生时，要及时止损
避免继续被第二支毒箭射中

1. 不接纳，痛苦的放大器

人生不如意事十之八九。生活中，常常有信众来倾诉他们的不幸遭遇。包括健康问题，比如自己患有疾病乃至绝症；生死问题，比如亲朋好友突然去世；家庭问题，比如儿女教育、夫妻感情等等。此外，还有人际关系、事业发展、天灾人祸带来的种种困扰。应该说，每个人或多或少都遇到过这些问题，只是方式和程度有所不同。很多人本来按部就班地生活着，一旦遭遇逆境，就方寸大乱，一蹶不振，使人生陷入烦恼，甚至使整个家庭落入痛苦的深渊。

如果客观分析，一个人或一件事的变故，未必能摧毁我们的生活。那么，究竟是什么让人如此痛苦，

如此绝望？真正的原因，往往在于当事人的不接纳，而不是逆境本身。我们总是想不通，自己怎么会遇到这样的事！于是怨天尤人，抱怨社会不公，指责老天无眼。正是这种不接纳，把原来的那点痛苦不断放大。可以说，我们的抗拒有多少，由此而来的痛苦就有多少。

为什么我们无法接纳变化？关键在于内心有一种恒常的设定。这种设定是以自我需要为中心的，觉得我的身体应该永远健康，我的家人应该不离不弃，我的朋友应该无比忠诚，我的事业应该一切顺利。我们甚至会暗暗觉得：像我这么好的人，所有天灾人祸可以发生在别人身上，但不应该发生在我身上。

有了这份恒常的设定，我们还会执著于此，进而形成依赖，不希望它有任何变化。因为变化就意味着失去依赖，意味着现有的平衡被打破。所以，一旦生活中出现不如意，就会因抗拒引发焦虑、不安、恐惧，甚至嗔恨、愤怒等破坏性的情绪。

我们希望生活健康、婚姻美满、家庭幸福、事业顺利，希望一切都在稳定的状态下，感觉那才是幸福。

但这个世界并不像我们以为的那么稳定，事实上，它时刻都处在无常变化中。如果不能正确面对逆境，人生就会充满随时可能引爆的定时炸弹。

2. 接纳，转化的智慧

为什么不同人面对同样的境界时，会有截然不同的处理方式？关键就在于是否接纳。如果我们有接纳现实的能力，即使面对逆境，也能处之泰然，积极应对，而不会对内心造成任何痛苦烦恼。如何具备这一能力？首先要从内心正视“无常”。事实上，这才是世界的真相所在，就像春夏秋冬，花开花落。

而所谓的永恒，只是我们的幻想和期待，是和世界真相不符的。三法印中，就以“诸行无常”为首。这是佛法的核心教义，也是宇宙人生的发展规律，告诉我们：从内在身心到外在世界，一切都处在刹那刹那的变化中。也就是说，这种变化从不停息，哪怕任何一个极短的瞬间，都在不停地变化。就像苹果，不是在某个特定时刻腐烂的，而是在它看似完好时就趋

于败坏了。人生也是一样，从我们出生的那天起，没有一刻不在生灭变化中，没有一刻不在走向死亡。

变是正常的，不变只是相对的。中国古代《易经》所揭示的，也是关于变化的原理。如果我们真正认识无常，就能坦然接纳生活中的一切变化，因为它本来如此。那样的话，任何逆境都不会对我们造成伤害了。

关于接纳，佛陀在《杂阿含经》中以“两支毒箭”为我们作了开示。第一支毒箭，是被箭射中时的身苦，也代表我们遭遇的各种逆境；第二支毒箭则是由此带来的心苦。当我们被第一支毒箭射中，痛苦已经发生时，要及时止损，避免继续被第二支毒箭射中。事实上，这是比之前更严重、更持久的伤害。

比如有人打骂你，不过是一时的伤害，但你对此仇恨在心或念念不忘的话，就会长久地陷入负面情绪，持续几天、几个月甚至几十年。这才是真正可怕的。反之，如果你能接纳的话，伤害就到此为止，不会进一步发展。但我们也要知道，接纳不等于认同，更不是纵容，所以事后可以根据对方的情况，以适合的方

式进行教育。其目的也是为了帮助对方，而不是自己要论输赢，争对错。

除了无常，佛教所说的因缘因果也可以帮助我们接纳逆境。对于证果的圣者来说，即使遭受极大的身苦，哪怕因此失去生命，都不会悲伤怨恨，由身苦引发心苦。因为他们知道，这种身苦是众缘和合导致的，当结果已经发生时，就要坦然接纳，否则就是在继续制造新的苦因。

佛法认为，任何事情都不是偶然的，都有它的前因后果。比如现在身体不好，可能是因为饮食不健康，生活没规律，也可能是因为缺乏运动，疏于调理，或是杀业造得太多，诸如此类，都是影响健康的因素。再如人际关系，很多时候，我们会责备身边的人，觉得都是别人不好。其实，这往往和自己的设定或处世方式有关，不会站在别人的角度考虑问题，冲突就在所难免。

学佛是帮助我们在任何一件事发生时，去寻找它的原因，然后从调整自身下手。通过因上的努力来改变结果，而不是一味责怪环境，责怪对方。此外，佛

教非常重视“忏悔”的修行，就是通过对自己的检讨，改过自新，进而影响别人。

有不少人通过学佛，使家庭和工作中的人际关系得到很大改善，夫妻相敬如宾，父子上慈下孝，同事和睦相处，这样的例子不胜枚举。为什么能有这些效果？就是在学佛之后，懂得向内观照，自我反省。当一个人发现自己的不足和缺点时，就不会一味指责他人，使关系更加对立。随着这样的改变，身边人也会发生改变，乃至整个环境都在随之改变。因为这就是正能量的传递。

当我们能如实接纳一切境界时，还有什么会让你受到伤害，让幸福打了折扣呢？

3. 让逆境成为修道助缘

其实，逆境对人生来说未必是坏事。古代有个成语叫“塞翁失马，焉知非福”，此外，《老子》也告诉我们：“祸兮福之所倚，福兮祸之所伏。”福，如果不知善用，会成为灾难的温床、堕落的资本；祸，如果

善于转化，也会成为全新的起点、励志的动力。

我们在生活中常常可以看到，有人在顺境中沉沦了，也有人在逆境中成长了。那些身陷囹圄的官员们，都曾身居高位，风光无限，结果为所欲为，沦为阶下之囚，这就是“福兮祸之所伏”的真实写照。对人生来说，顺境有时会成为麻醉剂，让人忘乎所以，而逆境反而能让我们更加清醒，对人生的思考更加深刻。

所以说，正确面对逆境，接纳逆缘，既可以避免无谓的烦恼，也有助于人生的历练和成长，更能成为修行的增上缘。反之，如果不能接纳，一味抗拒，逆境非但不会就此远离，还会让我们沉溺在痛苦中，难以自拔。

二、幸福要有福

耕耘福田，关键是建立三种心
即慈悲心、感恩心和恭敬心
这是产生福报的发电站
能源源不断地制造福报
让心灵越来越健康，生命越来越自在
我们有什么样的心
就会和什么样的境相应
可见，拥有什么样的心才是主导

1. 五福临门

就像流水要有源头、树木要有根系那样，幸福也需要有福报的基础。中国古代有句非常吉祥的话，叫“五福临门”。所谓五福，即长寿、富贵、康宁、好德和善终，包含了构成幸福的各个因素。

首先是长寿，古代医疗条件有限，人们往往会因一些并不致命的疾病早夭，能够颐养天年，安然享有人生，可谓人生重要的福报。

其次是富贵，包括富和贵两部分。富是指财富，能够生活无忧，精神富足；而贵是指地位尊贵，品行高尚，受到世人的恭敬。

第三是康宁，即身体健康，内心安宁，这点非常

重要。虽然人人都在追求幸福，但我们的追求往往偏向外在的财富和地位，而康宁是现代人普遍缺乏的。我经常说：“身心健康是人生的第一财富，修身养性是人生最有价值的投资。”如果没有健康的身心，就像一艘四处漏水的破船，无论装饰得多么华丽，也没有多少意义。如果没有健康的身体，整日缠绵病榻，生不如死，即使再富有，地位再高，有幸福可言吗？没有健康的心灵更是麻烦。现代人最大的特点，就是浮躁、混乱、不得安宁。曾经有首流行歌曲，叫“最近有点烦，有点烦，有点烦……”这个无处不在的“烦”，正是很多人的真实写照。其实，“烦恼”一词就来自佛教。烦是扰的意思，恼是乱的意思，烦恼就是扰乱内心安宁的因素。一旦陷入烦恼和负面情绪时，幸福就被自动屏蔽了。因为幸福是一种感觉，当内心被烦恼占据，幸福就没有立足之地了。哪怕你拥有别人艳羡的富贵荣华，也不会带来幸福感。因为在你心中，它们都被烦恼打上了烙印。只有当内心没有烦恼，像一片无云晴空时，幸福才会不请而至。所以，解除烦恼才能身心自在，这是幸福的重要前提。

此外，古人把好德列为五福之一，很有意义。随着道德教育的缺失，很多人对道德不以为然，甚至将道德行为视为一种吃亏。这就涉及一个问题，道德对自身有多大意义，对社会有多大意义？德是德行，从外在来说，是待人处世的原则和素养，从内在来说，是健康、正向的心理因素。所以说，践行道德就是在培养健康心理，铸造健全人格，使我们的的心灵充满正能量。另一方面，一个有道德的人，更容易得到他人的认可和尊重，使福报可持续发展。可见对人生幸福而言，不论内因还是外缘，道德都是不可或缺的。

第五是善终。佛陀有十大名号，其中之一为“善逝”，就是能预知时至，生死自在。善终正是与此相似的美好愿望，希望临命终时身无病痛，心无挂碍，能安详自在地离开人间，而不是突遇横祸或久病在床。很多人对死亡是回避而恐惧的，我们知道人必有一死，但心里总觉得是别人的事。可回避并不能阻挡死亡，恐惧也不能改变什么，事实上，这只能令我们在死亡到来时措手不及。对现代人来说，越有钱，往往越不容易善终。因为有钱就不想死，最后全身插满管子，

在各种抢救中毫无尊严地离开世间。所以，认识并超越死亡，是佛教的重要修行。佛教史上，很多修行人不仅能预知时至，而且坐脱立亡，潇洒自在，想怎么死就怎么死，为今生画上一个圆满的句号。虽然一般人做不到这样，但能不受折磨地安详离去，于人于己都是很大的福报。所以，古人也把善终作为五福之一。

由此我想到，老年人的精神生活和临终关怀正是当今中国的两大问题。我们年轻时在社会打拼，感觉事业、金钱、享乐就是一切。可退休之后，当身体机能逐渐衰退，已不能享受多少物欲之乐，又该怎么过日子？不少人晚年无所事事，既没有信仰，也没有精神生活，几乎就在混吃等死。但因为对死亡的无知，又对这个即将到来的结局充满恐惧。这在中国社会尤其突出。所以，一方面要有精神追求，一方面要正确认识死亡，接受生老病死的规律，老来才能过得充实而安然。佛教的临终关怀就是对人进行心理疏导，让人知道，今生只是生命长河的一个片段，当身体到了使用期限，带着正向心念离去，才能在生命转换时找到向上的出路。

总之，幸福是由诸多因素组成的，如果长寿而不康宁，富贵而无好德，或是最终不得好死，都算不上幸福人生。所以，追求幸福也要从这些方面着手，不仅拥有外在财富，还要身心健康，德行高尚。

2. 要有福，先培福

那么，一个人如何才能拥有这些福报？不是说你能力强，就一定有福。因为福报也有它的前因后果，所以佛教告诉我们，首先必须培植福田，主要是悲田、恩田、敬田三种。

悲田，就是慈悲普天下的劳苦大众。他们需要快乐，可是没有快乐；他们想摆脱痛苦，可是没能力摆脱痛苦。如果我们从慈悲心出发，帮助他们获得快乐，解决痛苦，就是在长养慈悲，耕耘悲田。慈善的本质是什么？并不是简单的捐献或帮助，而是慈悲大爱。当我们本着慈悲大爱来捐献或助人，才是实至名归的慈善。否则，即使捐了再多钱，做了再多事，严格地说来，只是善行而已，不能称为真正的慈善。也只有

从慈悲心出发，我们所做的一切，才会源源不断地产生福报。

恩田，就是对有恩于你的人，比如父母长辈、兄弟姐妹、亲戚朋友，包括一切众生，乃至山河大地，都怀着感恩心去回报。因为我们的生活离不开他人帮助，也离不开日月天地、山川草木。正是因为这一切的存在，我们才能自在无忧地生活。所以，我们要以感恩心面对这一切，尽己所能地回馈他人，包括关爱社会，保护环境。当我们心怀感恩时，看到一切都会非常欢喜。感恩不仅是福报的源泉，本身就是一种健康、正向、让人快乐的心理。在回馈的同时，自己当下就能受益。相反，如果不知感恩，总是带着负面心理看问题，觉得谁都欠了你，结果只能让自己痛苦。

敬田，是对有德者心生恭敬，包括我们的老师、宗教师，也包括社会上德高望重的人。我们平时在寺院看到佛像会顶礼，因为这些神圣场所本身就有加持力，当我们进入其中，身心会被摄受；另一方面，当你有一份虔诚和恭敬时，会让自己的心得到净化，变得清静而调柔。而当我们无所畏惧时，则会肆无忌惮，

使内心躁动而混乱。所以，带着恭敬心面对有德者，才能与佛菩萨和善知识感应道交，得到正能量的加持。

耕耘福田，关键是建立三种心，即慈悲心、感恩心和恭敬心。这是产生福报的发电站，能源源不断地制造福报，让心灵越来越健康，生命越来越自在。我们有什么样的心，就会和什么样的境相应，可见，拥有什么样的心才是主导。就像前面所说，慈善的根本在于慈悲大爱之心。如果没有这样的心行基础，捐献也可能产生各种副作用。所以我们要培养爱心，让世界有更多的慈悲，而不仅仅是号召一些有钱人捐钱。如果我们具足爱心，有了经济条件固然可以对人施以援手；即使没有经济条件，也会尽己所能地帮助社会、利益他人，而不是做些损人害己之事。

我曾在讲座中多次谈到成功的问题。现代社会评价成功的标准，如福布斯排行榜、胡润百富等，只是根据拥有的财富进行评估，并没有考虑做人的因素。如果一个人没有慈悲、不懂感恩，也不知恭敬为何物，即使拥有再多的财富，也是不能带来幸福的。所以，除了做事的成功，做人的成功更为重要，后者才是幸

福的关键所在。总之，幸福绝不单纯是以财富决定的，而是由综合因素组成。其中，德行是基础，身心健康是关键，外在条件是辅助。建立在这些基础上的幸福，才是完整的。



三、提高认识，智慧没有烦恼

人活在哪里
其实是活在自己的念头中
活在这种心理状态中
我们不了解自己，可又非常在乎自己
结果就会产生错误认定
把种种不是“我”的东西当作是“我”
其实，这是人生最大的误解

1. 外境、心态和认识

幸福和人生观有很大关系。西方的积极心理学，就是引导我们积极、正向地看待问题。从佛教角度来说，有什么样的认识，决定了我们会看到什么样的世界。因为我们眼中的世界，只是呈现在认识上的影像，是被个人感觉改造过的。

比如说，我们看到的世界和狗看到的世界一样不一样？肯定不一样。因为狗的认识和人不同，所以狗的见闻觉知自然也和人的不同。除了感觉以外，我们还会受到情绪的影响。比如我们对那个人有好感，看他做什么都顺眼；对那个人很讨厌，看他做什么都不顺眼。可见，拥有什么样的认识模式，对于每个生命非

常重要。

我们的认识也会影响到心态。有个故事说，一位老阿婆整天哭泣，天晴天雨都要哭。别人问她哭什么？她说：我有两个女婿，一个做雨伞，一个做瓦片。天晴时，我想着做伞的女婿没生意了，所以要哭；下雨时，我想着做瓦的女婿没法干活，所以也要哭。后来有位禅师对她说：你换个方式想，下雨就想着做伞的女婿，天晴就想着做瓦的女婿。阿婆自从调整认识之后，每天都乐呵呵的。这就说明了积极思维和消极思维的差别。

佛教既不是消极心理学，也不同于积极心理学，它给我们提供的，是一种如实、正向的思维。所谓如实，就是和事实真相相符。佛教认为，人类的很多烦恼都和认识有关，这就需要调整观念，改变认识，所谓“智慧没有烦恼”。

古代很多文人士大夫都喜欢通过诵经来调心，这也是改变认识的过程。比如《金刚经》告诉我们：“一切有为法，如梦幻泡影，如露亦如电，应作如是观。”在这个世界，从秦皇汉武到唐宗宋祖，所有这

些辉煌，不过是因缘和合的假相，会随着条件的聚合和消散而生灭。具备这样的认识后，我们对现实世界就不会看得那么重。一帆风顺时，不至得意忘形，因为它未必长久；遭受挫折时，也不会受伤太深，因为它就会过去。有了这样的认识和心态，就能在积极进取的同时，不为所累。

2. 如实认识

佛教中，将凡夫的生命状态概括为“无明”二字。什么是无明？简单地说，就像把房间的灯关掉，会一片漆黑。与此对应的则是“明”，代表智慧。佛法认为，每个人内心都有一盏智慧明灯。当这盏灯被点亮之前，生命会处在无明状态，使我们看不清自己，看不清世界。

人活在哪里？其实是活在自己的念头中，活在一种心理状态中。我们不了解自己，可又非常在乎自己，结果就会产生错误认定，把种种不是“我”的东西当作是“我”。其实，这是人生最大的误解。因为我们

看到的都是来来去去的云彩，却从来没有见过那个虚空，从来都不知道，云彩背后的，才是生命的本来面目。当我们把念头当作“我”的时候，就会被念头所纠缠，使之成为生命的主宰，就像滚滚乌云，遮蔽了整个天空。但我们要知道，念头终究是无自性的，是没有根的。如果我们对念头保持观照，保持距离，它就无法影响我们了。

西方哲学有一句重要的名言：认识你自己！我们每天都在关注自己，在乎自己，心心念念都是为了自己，难道还不认识自己吗？那么，抛开所有的想法、概念、设定，当一切念头都没有活动时，生命是什么状态？我们关注过吗？所以，禅宗修行让我们参“念佛是谁”，参“一念未生前本来面目是什么”，参“父母未生前本来面目是什么”。事实上，真正认识自己，就能明心见性了。

当我们对生命作智慧审视，不断追问“我是谁”“什么代表我的存在”，就会发现，曾经认定为“我”的一切，和我们只有暂时的关系。无论是身体、情绪，还是身份、财富，哪一样是可以永远拥有的？

但我们因为无明和贪著，很容易把身体当作是我，把情绪当作是我，把身份和财富当作是我，乃至把种种不是“我”的东西当作是“我”，进而产生贪著和依赖。问题是，所有这一切都是无常变化的。把身体当作我，就会害怕死亡，害怕这个色身的消失。把身份当作是我，一旦失去身份，就不知何以自处了。就像面具戴的时间长了，以为面具就是自己的脸，当没有面具时，反而茫茫然不知所措了。

人生的烦恼和痛苦来自哪里？无非是来自感情，来自家庭，来自财富，来自地位，来自身份，来自身体……如果我们看清这些和生命只有暂时的关系，就不会因为它的变化而焦虑、恐惧，不会受到无谓的伤害。

如何才能看清现实？佛法关于无我、空的思想，就是帮助我们纠正这些认知。佛法讲“无我”，并不是说“我”这个色身不存在；讲“空”，也不是否定一切存在的现象，而是要否定我们附加于自我和世界的错误设定。当我们不断以“无我”和“空”去审视自我、审视世界的时候，就能剥离种种外在执著，使

智慧光明得以显现，从而解除迷惑，看清真相。

当内心不再有迷惑烦恼，我们所感受到的幸福，将是生命本质的存在。它不需要依赖任何外在条件，无论在什么环境中，我们本具的智慧光明都会源源不断地散发喜悦。如果幸福是建立于外在条件上，必然是肤浅而不稳定的。因为环境会不断变化，感觉也会不断变化。真正的幸福是代表生命本质的存在，找到这样一种存在，才是幸福的宝藏。



四、多欲为苦，知足常乐

未来考量一个人能否幸福的重要条件
就是看他有没有休息能力
有休息能力，才可能有健康的身心
为什么休息的能力那么重要
其实，这是代表对心的管理能力
一个不会休息的人，心是无法自主的
只能随着外境和业风飘荡
最后在飘荡中耗尽这个宝贵人身
世间最大的浪费莫过于此

1. 欲望和幸福感

幸福是什么？通常，人们追求的幸福只是一种感觉而已，是欲望达成后的满足感。我们不妨回忆一下，凡是自己觉得不幸福的时候，一定有欲望不曾得到满足，包括物质的需求，也包括精神的需求。事实上，单纯的物质匮乏，只要不影响生存，未必会带来多少痛苦。真正让人烦恼的，是想要的却怎么也得不到，这种求不得之苦，其实远远大于匮乏带来的痛苦。

每个人的需求不同，满足的难易程度也随之不同。有些人的欲望就像闽南人喝功夫茶的茶杯那么小，只要一点水就满了。我们小时候所求不多，就容易满足，也容易觉得幸福，所以人们记忆中的幸福时刻，往往

是在儿时。一旦欲望膨胀之后，就像四大洋五大洲一样，再多的水也无法把它填满。哪怕再有钱，也觉得不如别人富有，不如别人风光。对于这样的人来说，还有什么幸福可言？

当然，通过满足欲望得来的幸福，其实是一种假相，非常短暂。比如不少人觉得，品尝美食是件幸福的事。其实这是有前提的，必须是你想吃也需要吃的时候，美食才能带来满足和幸福。如果你没有胃口，或者已经吃饱，什么样的美食也只能给你增加负担。如果必须吃了又吃，简直就苦不堪言了。还有不少人觉得，早上可以睡到自然醒很幸福，但如果让你躺在床上不许起身，幸福就变成折磨了。如果从此将卧床不起，更会让人痛不欲生。那时候，能够起来行动自如，又成了梦寐以求的幸福。

可见，欲望能够带来的，只是某种需求被缓解后产生的满足感，是在特定情况下产生的，是幸福的假相，而不是本质。这种幸福是不可靠的。

2. 追逐欲望的过患

今天的社会都在通过鼓动欲望而刺激消费。厂家在不断升级产品，商家则全方位地激发购买欲，整个社会处在占有、攀比和竞争中。我们不但想占有财富，还会不断攀比：我要比你更有钱，比你消费得起。这种攀比带来了竞争，甚至是不择手段的恶性竞争。一旦陷入这种占有、攀比和竞争的循环，人就会被裹挟其中，难以自主。

我们现在有了那么多便利的生活用品，可以从洗衣做饭的劳作中解放出来，却没能因此过得悠闲，反而活得更累。为什么？在过去的年代，我们虽然物质清贫，但相对单纯，也没有攀比带来的压力。但在今天这个全球化的时代，我们可以看到太多激发欲望的东西，这就很容易带来攀比。有了这个，还要那个；拥有之后，还要追求品牌。为了攀比，只能不断向前。我们付出的很多努力，既不是生存所需，也不是生活和生命的需要，而是攀比让自己停不下来。

另一方面，发达的资讯和各种电子产品也在侵占我们的时间。尤其是手机和移动互联网，让很多人时

时刻刻地粘著其上。在那些庞杂的信息碎片中，我们的时间碎片化了，注意力碎片化了，生命也变得破碎不堪。现在很少有人可以安安静静地和自己相处，一旦有点时间，就得在手机上看些什么，否则就无所适从。这种习惯带来的最大问题，是使我们失去了休息的能力。很多时候，哪怕身体已经很想休息了，可心还在躁动着，不得安宁。古人讲的心猿意马，就是心在不断地抓取外境。这样活着，能不累吗？能幸福吗？

我经常说，未来考量一个人能否获得幸福的重要条件，就是看他有没有休息能力。有休息能力，才可能有健康的身心，才可能获得幸福。为什么休息的能力那么重要？其实，这是代表对心的管理能力。一个不会休息的人，心是无法自主的，只能随着外境和业风飘荡，最后在飘荡中耗尽这个宝贵人身。世间最大的浪费莫过于此。

欲望使我们很忙很累。当我们的需求越来越多，同时也意味着，对外在世界会有越来越多的依赖。而依赖越多，依赖对象发生变化的几率就越大。为什么现代人普遍焦虑、恐惧、没有安全感？就是因为生命

难以独立，所以总在担心外在的种种变化，担心这些变化让自己的生活失去平衡。其实世界时刻都在变化，但只有那些我们需要、在乎并发生联系的部分，才会让我们受到影响。所以，少一分需要，就能少一分在乎和影响。

欲望还使我们的生存成本越来越高。过去的人虽然物质贫乏，但也可以养活自己乃至家庭。而现在收入提高了那么多，养家却成了很大的压力。为什么？就是因为欲望使生存成本不断提升，相应的，幸福成本也水涨船高。古人讲知足常乐，你的欲望少，就容易满足，也容易幸福。反之，就不容易满足，不容易幸福。

所以，怎么对待欲望，是获得幸福的关键。如果不能在和欲望的对垒中占据主动，就会被其所控。

五、幸福来自心灵

当内心没有烦恼时
我们很容易开心
这个开心从哪里来
很多时候和物质条件没什么关系
就像佛菩萨的举身微笑
那种发自内心、遍布全身的欢喜
并不是因为得到什么
而是来自觉醒的心

1. 心的不同层面

心既是痛苦的源泉，也是快乐的源泉。想要过得幸福，必须建设健康的心灵。我想大家应该有这样的体会，当内心贪婪、仇恨、焦虑、恐惧、嫉妒、自私等负面心理产生活动时，不仅会使心痛苦纠结，甚至会使身体产生不良反应。只要这些心理得不到解决，问题将接踵而至，永无宁日。

但这颗心同时也是快乐的源泉。当内心没有烦恼时，我们很容易开心。这个开心从哪里来？其实很多时候和物质条件并没有什么关系。就像佛菩萨的举身微笑，那种发自内心、遍布全身的欢喜，并不是因为得到什么，而是来自觉醒的心。佛法告诉

我们，每个人内心都有觉悟潜质，这个觉性会源源不断地制造快乐。

我曾在微博中说过佛教关于人生苦乐的认识。学佛者都知道，佛教说“人生是苦”。其实这个说法并不完整，而是有特定对象的。也就是说，凡夫以迷惑和烦恼为基础的生命才是痛苦的。而对于觉悟者来说，生命的本质也是自由而欢喜的。因为在迷惑烦恼的背后还有觉悟潜质，一旦开启这个层面，生命就是无限的自在，无限的宁静，无限的喜悦。

这是生命的两个层面，是由内心的两大阵营造就的。其中，健康的良性心理是我们的朋友，会让生命得到提升，给人生带来幸福快乐，给社会带来安定和谐。而那些不健康的负面心理则是我们的敌人，会不断制造痛苦和麻烦。佛法认为，人生最大的敌人就是自己。这个自己，正是指内心的烦恼。生活中一切痛苦，从对自己的折磨，到不和谐的人际关系，乃至杀盗淫妄等种种犯罪现象，都是这个敌人造成的。从根本上说，人的两面性就是佛性和魔性。开启佛性，能让我们成就圆满的智慧 and 慈悲；而放任魔性，结果只

能是堕落恶道，长劫受苦。

在座有不少是成功人士，我们会花很多精力去了解 and 关心社会，可从来没想到，真正应该学会的是了解自己，管理自己，这才是人生的头等大事。佛法就是帮助我们了解，内心有哪些正向的力量，哪些负面的心理。

2. 从自利到利他

佛菩萨是学佛修行的目标。之所以能成为目标，在于佛菩萨所成就的三种功德，一是断德，即断除一切烦恼；二是智德，即圆满无量智慧；三是悲德，即成就大慈大悲。

佛教认为，凡夫的生命都有贪嗔痴三种病毒。一切的痛苦和负面情绪，都是由这三种病毒而衍生，这就需要“勤修戒定慧，息灭贪嗔痴”。此外，还要开发生命的良性潜质，成就智慧和慈悲。因为慈悲，我们不仅要自己解脱烦恼，还看到每个生命都有贪嗔痴，都有迷惑烦恼，所以发心帮助他们。这种慈悲是广大

而没有分别的，就像观音菩萨的大慈大悲，没有一个众生是你不愿意帮助的。所以说，佛法修行不仅是帮助自己建立幸福人生，同时要帮助普天下的芸芸众生建立幸福人生。

我们通常以为的幸福，往往只是一种假相。真正的幸福，应该代表生命本质性的存在。这就必须彻底去除破坏幸福的心理，开显生命内在的良性潜质。一旦开发觉性，生命才能真正成为幸福的存在，也能源源不断地给众生带来幸福。这也是大乘佛法的修行目标。

六、结束语

我们向往幸福

首先要接纳一切顺逆境界

其次要认识到带来幸福的诸多因素

第三要提高认识，以正向的心态看待自己

第四要避免追逐欲望带来的过患

最重要的，则是看清心的不同层面

知道应该发展什么，舍弃什么

以上从五个方面探讨了心灵创造幸福的原理，从中说明，我们向往幸福，首先要具备接纳一切顺逆境界的能力，这样才不会被外境所转，保持平和与从容。其次要认识到带来幸福的诸多因素，时时耕耘福田，使福报可持续发展。第三要提高认识，以积极正向的心态看待自己，看待世界。第四要避免追逐欲望带来的过患，这是破坏幸福的大敌。最重要的，则是看清心的不同层面，知道应该发展什么，舍弃什么，进而从自利到利他，从追求个人幸福，到给予众生幸福，这才是究竟、圆满的幸福。





HAPPINESS COMES FROM THE MIND

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Seeing such a significant turnout for this lecture on happiness is truly inspiring. Clearly, the topic of happiness captivates many. Several years ago, China Central Television (CCTV) conducted a comprehensive survey, interviewing thousands from a variety of regions, age groups, and professions on their feelings about happiness. This led to “Are you happy?” emerging as a focal question. The array of responses, often unexpected, showcased people’s perplexity about happiness. For instance, Nobel Prize laureate Mo Yan’s ambiguous reply, “I don’t know,” raised questions: was it an evasion or a light-hearted remark? He elaborated, “With the

significant pressures and worries I'm currently experiencing, how can I be happy? However, to say I'm not happy would seem insincere, especially for someone who has just been awarded the Nobel Prize. Can such an individual openly declare their unhappiness?"

His response highlighted a sentiment widely shared by many when discussing happiness. Our living conditions have significantly improved, ostensibly leaving no room for unhappiness. Yet, the question arises: Why aren't we happy? Where does the problem lie? In challenging times, we pinned our hopes on material betterment, convinced that wealth would lead to happiness. For many, merely having enough to eat and clothes to wear was a significant source of joy. However, as wealth becomes more common and our possessions greatly surpass our basic needs, happiness begins to elude us, playing a game of hide-and-seek.

Where does happiness lie? Money offers us temporary satisfaction, yet this pleasure is fleeting, often marred by

comparisons and competition. When we observe others with more wealth and seemingly better lives, our satisfaction swiftly transforms into dissatisfaction, potentially breeding jealousy and resentment. The happiness we looked forward to seems close but continues to evade us, like clouds in the distant sky. Thus, attaining happiness is not as straightforward as we once believed, nor is it a guaranteed result of wealth accumulation and enhanced living conditions.

Why aren't we happy despite having so much? This prompts several questions: What exactly is happiness? Is it an illusory state dependent on specific circumstances, or an essence of life itself? Also, what stands in the way of our happiness? Put differently, what is the ultimate thief of happiness? Finally, if happiness is just a momentary illusion, is chasing after it not like trying to catch the moon's reflection on the water – a pursuit doomed from the start?

As long as these questions remain, our pursuit of

happiness is shrouded in uncertainty, resembling more a fantasy than a goal. Where do we find clarity and answers? The key lies in how deeply we understand happiness, which is contingent upon our understanding of life and its meaning. Life operates on two levels: the material and the spiritual. What, then, is the essence of life? From a pessimistic philosophical viewpoint, life is rife with absurdity and suffering. With such an understanding, the pursuit of happiness might seem futile. Yet, how does Buddhism interpret the essence of life and our pursuit of happiness?

Today, our lecture is called Happiness Comes from the Mind. I will share my thoughts from a few angles.

I

HOW TO FACE ADVERSITY

1. Denial, the Magnifier of Pain

Life invariably brings misfortunes. Many Buddhists approach me with their personal adversities, which include health issues from minor illnesses to life-threatening conditions, grief over the sudden loss of friends and family, and issues concerning family life, such as children's education and marital dynamics. Furthermore, a significant amount of stress arises from interpersonal relationships, career progression, and the aftermath of natural or human-made disasters. It can be said that everyone faces these challenges, albeit in varying forms and intensities.

Those who have enjoyed a predictable life often find themselves unprepared for such hardships, succumbing to despair and, consequently, even dragging their families into grievous suffering.

Objectively speaking, it is probably not the case that a single person or incident has the power to ruin our lives. What, then, drives us into such depths of misery and hopelessness? It often boils down to our denial of the situation, rather than the misfortune itself. We find ourselves asking, “Why did this happen to me?” and finding no satisfactory answer. This leads us to point fingers at fate or others, bemoan social injustice, or lament the lack of divine justice. It’s this refusal to accept that escalates a limited sorrow into overwhelming misery. Clearly, the extent of our denial directly correlates with the intensity of our suffering.

Why do we struggle to accept changes? At the heart of this resistance is the belief of permanence, rooted in the idea that everything should remain as it is. This belief is

centered on our own self-needs. We expect *our* bodies to never falter, *our* family members to always be present, *our* friends to always be unwaveringly loyal, and *our* careers to progress without obstacles. We may even harbor the thought: “Since I am such a good person, while others may face natural and human-made disasters, I should be spared.”

Holding onto a belief of permanence, we become attached and develop a reliance on it, resisting any change for fear of losing stability and disrupting the current balance. Consequently, when life falls short of our expectations, this resistance cultivates stress, anxiety, fear, and even destructive emotions such as anger and hatred.

We all aspire to lead lives marked by good health, a fulfilling marriage, a blissful family, and a successful career. We cling to the belief that stability in these areas means happiness. Yet, the truth is that our world is anything but stable; it is impermanent and ever-changing. When we are ill-equipped to handle adversities, life becomes a

minefield, ready to detonate at any moment.

2. Acceptance, the Wisdom of Transformation

How come people react so differently to the same situations? The answer lies in acceptance. Having the capacity to accept allows one to confront adversities with composure and address them in constructive ways, without succumbing to suffering or afflictions. How is this skill cultivated? It starts with confronting the reality of impermanence head-on, recognizing it as a fundamental truth of life, unavoidable like the changing seasons and the flowering and wilting of blooms.

The illusion of permanence is just that – an illusion and an expectation – disconnected from the world’s reality. *All conditioned things are impermanent*, the first of the three Dharma seals, lies at the heart of Buddha’s teachings. It underscores a universal law that governs everything, from our bodies and minds to the external world. Change is incessant, occurring every moment without

pause. An apple, for instance, doesn't suddenly become rotten but starts decaying while it still appears whole. Similarly, life is a series of constant changes. From our birth, there is never a moment when we are not undergoing change or moving towards our ultimate conclusion.

Change is inherent and natural, whereas stability is merely a temporary state perceived in comparison. This concept also aligns with the principles of change outlined in the *Book of Changes*, an ancient Chinese text. By truly grasping the nature of impermanence, we can accept any alteration in our lives with serenity, acknowledging that change is the natural order of things. With this insight, adversities we face lose their power to inflict damage.

In the *Samyuktagama*, the Buddha teaches acceptance using the metaphor of “two poisoned arrows.” Being wounded by the first arrow symbolizes experiencing the physical pain of adversities, while the second arrow signifies the ensuing mental suffering. Once struck by the first arrow, it's essential to mitigate further damage to

avoid the impact of the second arrow, as it is often the second arrow that leads to deeper and more lasting pain.

Consider the momentary discomfort when you're attacked or insulted by someone. Allowing this event to linger in your thoughts or letting bitterness grow can lead to prolonged negativity, lasting days, months, or years, which is truly alarming. In contrast, by accepting the incident, its emotional toll ceases to escalate. Nevertheless, acceptance should not be confused with endorsing or condoning the act. Instead, we can approach the individual later, offering guidance tailored to their condition, with the intent to aid, not to argue over who is correct.

In addition to understanding impermanence, familiarity with the Buddhist notion of causality can facilitate the acceptance of hardships. Enlightened sages, even in the face of severe physical discomfort or the prospect of death, do not succumb to bitterness or allow their physical suffering to induce mental suffering. This equanimity is rooted in their understanding that suffering is the

effect of numerous interconnected causes and conditions. A calm acceptance of these outcomes is essential to avoid generating further causes for suffering.

In the teachings of the Dharma, there are no accidents; every occurrence is a result of causes and effects. Take, for instance, poor health, which may stem from factors like an unhealthy diet, irregular living habits, insufficient exercise, neglect of one's body, or karma from causing harm to others. These elements collectively influence our well-being. Similarly, when it comes to interpersonal relationships, it's easy to place the blame outward. Yet, many relationship challenges stem from our own assumptions and the ways we deal with the world. For example, the inability to view issues from others' perspective is a sure path to conflict.

Buddhism guides us to investigate the underlying causes behind events and focus on self-improvement first. Instead of pointing fingers at situations or other people, we learn to transform outcomes by altering their causes.

Furthermore, Buddhism places significant emphasis on repentance, which involves self-reflection, committing to self-improvement, and thereby positively impacting those around us.

Many have transformed their family and work relationships through practicing Buddhism. Couples have begun to cherish and care for each other, parents have shown more love towards their children, and children have learned respect for their elders. Meanwhile, colleagues have found harmony in working together. Such transformations are numerous and owe themselves to the introspective nature of Buddhist practice. Buddhism encourages people to look inward and acknowledge their own flaws rather than attributing every problem to others. By doing so, they foster more positive interactions. As people become committed to self-improvements, they also positively influence those around them and even their surroundings, creating a ripple effect of positive energy.

When we can accept all situations as they are, what could

possibly hurt us or lessen our happiness?

3. Making Adversities the Catalyst for Cultivation

Adversity isn't always detrimental. An ancient Chinese proverb states, "When the old man lost his horse, how could one know it wouldn't be a blessing?" The *Book of Lao Tzu* echoes a similar sentiment: "Good fortune follows upon disaster, while disaster lurks within good fortune." Prosperity, if mishandled, can lead to misfortune or downfall; conversely, adversity, if properly used, can serve as a new starting point and a powerful motivator.

Life shows us examples of individuals who stumble when times are good and those who rise through challenges. Take, for instance, former high-ranking officials who, despite their once glamorous positions, ended up incarcerated due to their misconduct. This situation vividly illustrates how "disaster lurks within good fortune." Favorable conditions may dull our senses and inflate our egos, whereas adversity helps us to gain a clearer

understanding of ourselves and the world, encouraging profound reflection on life.

Therefore, properly facing adversities and accepting adverse conditions not only helps us avoid unnecessary suffering but also enriches our life experiences and fosters personal growth. Moreover, this mindset allows us to transform adversities into factors that enhance our cultivation of Buddhism. Conversely, refusing to embrace adversities does nothing to protect us from them. Instead, it leads to increased pain and prolongs our suffering.

II

HAPPINESS NEEDS BLESSINGS

1. Five Blessings Have Descended Upon the House

Just as a river depends on a source and a tree on its roots, happiness too needs blessings to flourish. In ancient China, there was a cherished saying, “Five blessings have descended upon your house.” These blessings – longevity, ample wealth and status, health and peace, virtue, and a good death – represent all the essential elements of happiness.

The first blessing is longevity. In ancient times, early death from minor illnesses was common due to scarce

medical resources. Thus, living to an old age and enjoying one's twilight years in peace was seen as a significant blessing.

Ample wealth and status form the second blessing. Wealth allows for a life devoid of financial worries, enabling spiritual fulfillment. Status, on the other hand, means achieving a prominent social position, maintaining strong moral principles, and earning the respect of others.

The third blessing involves good health and inner peace, both of which are crucial. While the search for happiness frequently directs us towards external markers of success like wealth and status, it's health and peace that are commonly missing in today's society. I often say, "The greatest assets in life are a healthy body and mind, and the best investment one can make is in self-cultivation." Without these, we are akin to a leaky ship; no matter the grandeur of its decorations, they hold little value. For someone bed-ridden and suffering from chronic illnesses, life may seem

more daunting than death. In such cases, how can wealth and titles bring us happiness?

A compromised mental state poses even greater challenges. Many people today navigate a pervasive sense of unrest and chaos. This sentiment is effectively captured in the lyrics of a Chinese pop song: “I’ve been feeling quite upset lately, quite upset indeed.” Such words mirror the extensive unease felt by many. Derived from Buddhism, the term *fan-nao* – with *fan* signifying disturbance and *nao* denoting unrest – encapsulates the factors that cloud and disrupt inner peace. Given that happiness is an emotional state, it is highly susceptible to being overshadowed by afflictions and negativity. Neither wealth nor prestige can spawn joy when tinged with such disturbances. True happiness, effortless and unforced like the cloudless sky, is attainable only when the mind is liberated from afflictions. Thus, dispelling these afflictions is crucial for attaining a state of complete tranquility and, consequently, genuine happiness.

The fact that ancient Chinese included virtue among the five blessings speaks volumes. In today's society, where moral education is often neglected, many overlook the importance of virtue, sometimes even perceiving ethical conduct as a drawback. This raises the question: what is the importance of virtue for individuals and society at large? Virtue pertains to moral integrity. Externally, virtue manifests as our ethical principles and the integrity of our interactions with others. Internally, it cultivates a positive and healthy mindset. Therefore, to practice morality is to cultivate a robust mind and personality, enriching ourselves with positivity. Additionally, an ethical person is more likely to receive other people's respect and approval, which sustains their blessings. Thus, morality is a fundamental component of a happy life, impacting both our personal well-being and our relationships with others.

The fifth blessing is good death. One of Buddha's ten epithets is *Well Gone* (Sugata), meaning he could foresee his time of passing and transcend life and death. Good death

is a similar aspiration that life can end without physical suffering and mental burdens, allowing one to leave the world peacefully and comfortably, instead of dying in a tragic accident or being bedridden from chronic diseases. Many people dread death and avoid mentioning it. We know that everyone will eventually die, but in our mind, we unconsciously exclude ourselves from this reality. However, our avoidance will not stop death, nor can our fear change anything. They only make us unprepared when death comes. The wealthier individuals become, the less likely they are to experience a good death. Wealthy people particularly resist the idea of dying, often facing an end surrounded by medical apparatus that strips away all their dignity. Therefore, understanding and transcending death is an essential Buddhist practice. Throughout Buddhist history, numerous practitioners have not only anticipated their death but also passed away gracefully at their own command, whether seated or standing, enabling a perfect closure to their earthly existence. Although achieving such an unfettered end may be challenging for most, dying without suffering

is undeniably a significant blessing for both oneself and others, a reason why a good death is counted among the five blessings by the ancient Chinese.

Spiritual life and hospice care for the elderly are two important topics in China today. We fought tooth and nail in society when we were young, believing that life is all about career, money, and pleasure. However, after retirement, how do we live when our bodies gradually deteriorate and can no longer experience pleasure from material indulgence? Many people spend their later years doing nothing. With no religious belief or spiritual life, they are pretty much sitting around waiting for death to come; due to their ignorance of death, they dread this imminent ending. This lifestyle is particularly prominent in Chinese society. Thus, to lead a fulfilling and peaceful life in our twilight years, we need to have spiritual pursuits and understand death correctly, accepting the law of birth, aging, sickness, and death. Buddhist hospice care provides spiritual guidance, making individuals aware that this life is but a fragment in the vast river of

existence. When the body has served its time, departing from it with the right thoughts is essential to finding an upward path during the transition of life.

In short, happiness comprises many factors. Our lives cannot be considered happy if we have longevity without health and peace, hold wealth and status without good virtue, or do not have a good death. Therefore, we need to focus on these aspects in our quest for happiness. While pursuing external wealth, it is equally important to focus on preserving our physical and mental well-being and embodying noble virtues.

2. Happiness Begins with Cultivating Blessings

So, how do we acquire these blessings? Simply being a capable person does not automatically lead to blessings. Since blessings also follow the principle of cause and effect, we must actively cultivate them. Buddhism teaches that to gain these blessings, we must first develop the fields of blessings, including the fields of compassion,

gratitude, and respect.

We nurture our field of compassion by showing kindness to those who suffer in the world, individuals longing for happiness yet unable to escape their suffering. With a compassionate mind, by assisting them in finding joy and alleviating their pain, we nurture our field of compassion and cultivate our loving nature. However, it is crucial that our actions are driven by genuine compassion. What truly defines charity? It should extend beyond simple donations or services to embody acts of compassion and love. True charity happens when we give or assist with a heart full of compassion and love. Without these core values, regardless of the amount of money or the magnitude of good deeds, they are simply acts of goodwill, not true charity. When our actions are rooted in compassion, anything we do will continuously foster blessings.

Our field of gratitude flourishes when we reciprocate kindness to those who have supported us – our parents,

elders, siblings, relatives, friends, all living creatures, and even the natural world of mountains, rivers, and the Earth itself. Our existence is deeply intertwined with both nature and the contributions of others, which allow us to live freely and joyfully. Acknowledging this interconnectedness with a sense of gratitude, and expressing it through actions like community service and environmental conservation, enhances our well-being. Gratitude transforms our perspective, making every aspect of life a source of happiness. Thus, cultivating gratitude not only generates blessings but also fosters a healthy, positive, and joyous outlook on life. The act of giving back brings instant gratification, whereas ingratitude, negativity, and a sense of entitlement only lead to personal misery.

Cultivating our field of respect involves showing esteem for individuals embodying virtue, including our teachers, spiritual guides, and revered members of society. In the presence of Buddha statues or within temple walls, our reverence is more than symbolic; these sacred spaces hold a transformative power over our mental and physical

state. This attitude of devotion and respect cleanses our minds, rendering them calm and soft. The absence of such respect may leave us unrestrained, fostering inner disquiet and chaos. Thus, showing reverence to the virtuous allows us to resonate and connect with Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and virtuous teachers, enabling us to absorb their positive energies and blessings.

We develop our fields of blessings by cultivating three pivotal mindsets: compassion, gratitude, and respect. These mental states act as powerhouses, continuously generating blessings, improving our mental well-being, and setting our lives free. Our experiences reflect the quality of our mindset; thus, the type of mindset we choose to nurture is crucial. As mentioned previously, the essence of true charity lies in loving-kindness and compassion. Without these qualities, charitable acts can lead to unintended consequences. Therefore, it's vital to develop our loving-kindness to foster a more compassionate world rather than simply calling for the affluent to make donations. With a heart full of compassion, we will

naturally find ways to donate our resources when possible and seek to make societal contributions even in the absence of financial abundance, instead of doing things that cause harm to ourselves or others.

I've talked about success in many of my lectures. Modern society often gauges success through metrics like Forbes rankings and the Hurun Wealth Report, which focus purely on financial assets, ignoring personal character. Yet, without qualities like compassion, gratitude, and respect, wealth alone does not bring happiness. Thus, more crucial than the pursuit of material success is the development of character, which stands as the key to the pursuit of happiness. To sum up, happiness isn't solely reliant on wealth; it encompasses various factors. Virtue serves as its foundation, physical and mental well-being forms its core, and external circumstances act as support. Only when established on such a holistic basis is our happiness complete.

III

ELEVATING VIEWS AND ERADICATING AFFLICTIONS THROUGH WISDOM

1. Circumstance, Mindset, and View

Our happiness is closely linked to our view on life. In the West, Positive Psychology encourages people to adopt a positive outlook on challenges. Similarly, Buddhism places great importance on views, as they shape the world we see. Buddhism suggests that the world before us is simply an image formed in our cognition, skewed by our personal feelings.

Take, for instance, a dog's view of the world – does it match ours? Clearly not. A dog perceives the world differently from us; naturally, what it sees, hears, and senses is different from us. While perception influences one's view of the world, emotion also plays a major role in shaping our views. When we admire someone, we tend to approve of their actions; conversely, if we hold disdain for someone, we find fault in everything they do. How we view the world, therefore, is critical for each of us.

Our perspectives greatly influence our attitudes. There's a tale of an elderly woman who wept daily, regardless of the weather. When questioned about her tears, she explained, "I have two sons-in-law. One crafts umbrellas, the other roof tiles. I worry for the umbrella maker on sunny days, fearing he has no business, and for the tile maker on rainy days, worried he can't work." A Chan master advised her to shift her mindset: to think of the umbrella maker on rainy days and the tile maker on sunny days. Once the woman adjusted her outlook, she found joy every day. This story highlights the stark

contrast between positive and negative thinking.

Buddhism is neither Negative Psychology nor Positive Psychology. It offers us a way of thinking that is truthful and positive. To be truthful is to align with the actual reality of the world. The Dharma teaches that many of our afflictions stem from our views. Therefore, it is essential to elevate our views and mindsets through wisdom. When guided by wisdom, afflictions cease to exist.

Many ancient Chinese literati cultivated their minds by chanting sutras, which is one way to change views. For instance, the *Diamond Sutra* teaches, “All conditioned phenomena are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, shadows, dew, and lightning, and should be viewed as such.” The grandeur experienced by emperors in times of great wealth is but a momentary illusion, subject to the ebb and flow of causes and conditions. Adopting this perspective helps us not to place undue importance on current events. It teaches us to remain grounded during success, aware of its fleeting nature, and resilient during

challenges, understanding they too will pass. This mindset allows us to act proactively without feeling weighed down.

2. Seeing Reality as It Is

Buddhism sums up the unenlightened life state as “ignorance.” What is ignorance? Simply put, it’s like turning off the lights in a windowless room; the room will be pitch-black. Against darkness is “light,” which represents wisdom. Buddhism believes that everyone has a light of wisdom within them. But when this light is not lit, life is in a state of ignorance, making us unable to see ourselves and the world clearly.

Where do we live? We live in our thoughts and our state of mind. We do not know much about ourselves, yet we are obsessed with ourselves. This leads us to falsely regard things that are not “me” as “me.” This is our greatest misconception about life. We have only seen the shifting clouds, never the vast sky at the back. Hence, we never

realized that life's true form is not the clouds themselves but the expanse behind them. Viewing thoughts as "me" allows them to entangle and dominate our lives like storm clouds, obscuring clarity. We need to know that thoughts are fundamentally rootless and have no intrinsic nature. If we remain mindful of our thoughts and keep a distance from them, they lose their power over us.

The maxim "Know thyself" occupies a central role in Western philosophy. Yet, despite our daily self-attention, self-care, and self-obsession, the question arises: do we truly know ourselves? Let's strip away all thoughts, concepts, and definitions and ponder: what was the state of our life before a single thought emerged? Have we ever engaged in such deep introspection? Chan practice encourages us to explore questions like "Who is actually reciting the Buddha's name?" "What was my original face before the rise of thought?" and "What was my original face before my birth?" Indeed, if we truly understand ourselves, we will be able to recognize our Buddha-nature.

When we explore life with wisdom and continuously question, “Who am I?” and “What defines my existence?” we come to realize that all we have considered as “me” only has a temporary relationship with us. Our body, emotions, identity, or wealth – which of these can we keep forever? But due to our ignorance and attachment, we automatically view our body, emotions, identity, wealth, and all sorts of other things that are not “me” as “me,” which creates attachment and dependence. The issue is that these things we regard as “me” are impermanent and constantly changing. If we think that the body is “me,” we will fear death and the loss of the physical self. If we believe that identity is “me,” we will dread losing it and be badly shaken without it. Similar to wearing a mask for so long, we mistake it for our actual face; once the mask is removed, we feel disoriented.

What are the sources of life’s afflictions and suffering? More often than not, they are linked to relationships, family, wealth, status, identity, and our bodies. When we come to the realization that our association with these

aspects is merely temporary, changes in them will no longer cause us anxiety, fear, and pointless suffering.

How can we perceive the truth with clarity? The Buddhist teachings on “no-self” and “emptiness” offer paths to correct our misconceptions. “No-self” in Buddhism doesn’t negate the presence of the physical body, just as “emptiness” doesn’t deny the existence of phenomena. These concepts aim to dismantle our erroneous beliefs about self and the universe. Through constant reflection on “no-self” and “emptiness,” we gradually discard external attachments, making way for wisdom’s light. Only then can we dispel confusion and see the truth.

Once we clear our minds of confusion and afflictions, the happiness we encounter will reflect life’s true essence. This form of happiness is independent of external factors, as our inherent light of wisdom will continue to shine and bring joy, regardless of the situation. Happiness dependent on external circumstances is inherently fleeting and unstable; as our environment changes, so will

our sense of happiness. True happiness, in contrast, embodies the essence of life itself. Indeed, in uncovering this very form of existence, we unearth the treasure of true happiness.

IV

EXCESSIVE DESIRE BRINGS SUFFERING, CONTENTMENT BRINGS JOY

1. Desires and Happiness

What is happiness? Often, the happiness people seek is merely a feeling, a sense of fulfillment that arrives when desires are satisfied. Think back to when you've felt unhappy: they were likely marked by unmet material or emotional needs. Yet, a mere lack of material goods, assuming survival isn't at stake, often doesn't cause significant suffering. The actual source of suffering stems from the inability to satisfy our desires. This frustration

of not getting what we want often inflicts much greater pain than material scarcity.

Desires differ from person to person, which means the ease with which these desires can be satisfied varies too. For some, their desires are as modest as a little teacup, quickly quenched with a bit of water. During our childhood, limited desires meant that contentment and joy were easily achieved, leading many to nostalgically recall youth as their happiest time. However, when desires swell to oceanic proportions, no quantity of fulfillment suffices. Comparison also affects our desires. If we are constantly comparing ourselves and feeling less wealthy or famous than others, how can we ever find happiness?

That said, the happiness derived from fulfilling desires is fleeting and illusory. Take, for instance, the belief that indulging in delicious food can lead to happiness. This is true only when you're hungry and yearning for it. If you're not hungry or already satisfied, even the tastiest food becomes a chore to finish. Being forced to eat when

you don't want to transforms eating into a form of suffering. Similarly, some may think that sleeping in brings joy. However, if you're made to stay in bed against your wishes, what was once pleasurable becomes a form of torment. For someone bedridden, the simple act of getting up and moving freely becomes the most coveted form of happiness.

Clearly, desires only lead to a sense of satisfaction when we alleviate our cravings. This satisfaction, however, is merely an illusory form of happiness, contingent upon particular conditions and does not capture that true happiness. Hence, happiness that stems from fulfilling desires is inherently unreliable.

2. The Peril of Pursuing Desires

Nowadays, society fuels consumption by constantly feeding into people's desires. With each new product iteration, and through aggressive marketing strategies, sellers tap into the public's purchasing impulses from

every conceivable angle. As a result, we find ourselves living in a cycle of constant buying, comparing, and striving to outdo others. It's not enough to simply have resources; the ambition often extends to surpass others by having more wealth and living more extravagantly. These comparisons foster a competitive atmosphere, sometimes leading to unethical behavior in an attempt to stay ahead. Falling into this cycle of endless buying, comparing, and competing can strip us of our independence, making us prisoners to these dynamics.

Today, our homes are filled with convenient appliances intended to ease our daily tasks. However, rather than enjoying increased leisure, we find ourselves more exhausted than ever. Why is this the case? In simpler times, with fewer material possessions, life was straightforward, and we weren't caught up in the competitive frenzy of today. The modern era, marked by globalization, presents before us countless stimuli that trigger our desires and lead to constant comparisons. Once we acquire one item, our attention quickly shifts to the next; having met

our basic needs, we aspire for luxury and status symbols. Our relentless comparisons propel us into unnecessary toil – not for survival, genuine well-being, or answering the profound questions of life, but for the sake of vanity, denying us the opportunity to ever take a break.

Additionally, modern electronic devices and the vast array of information channels consume a significant portion of our time. The allure of smartphones and the internet has become a source of addiction for many. As information becomes more fragmented, so too do our time, our attention spans, and our increasingly frazzled lives. In this era, few can enjoy quiet moments alone; most feel lost without their cell phones to fill every spare moment. The biggest problem with this habit is that it robs our ability to rest. Often, even when our bodies scream for rest, our minds remain agitated and unable to find peace. The ancient Chinese description of *a heart like a capering monkey and a mind like a galloping horse* aptly captures this state of constant distraction. How could such a lifestyle not exhaust us? How can it possibly

lead to happiness?

I often say that, in the future, the ability to rest will become a crucial indicator of a person's capacity for happiness. Naturally, the ability to rest is essential for maintaining both physical and mental health, which are fundamental to achieving happiness. But why is the ability to rest so critical to our existence? It reflects a person's control over their own mind. Those unable to rest lack mastery over their thoughts and are vulnerable to the influence of their surroundings and the flow of karma, causing them to squander their precious human life. There is truly no greater waste than this.

Desires lead to busyness and fatigue. As our desires increase, so does our dependence on external factors. The greater our dependence, the more likely we are to witness fluctuations. People today generally feel anxious, fearful, and insecure because our lives lack self-sufficiency, constantly leaving us worried about external changes and their potential to throw our balance off. Although the

world is in a constant state of change, we are only impacted by the elements that we need, care about, and are connected to. Therefore, having one fewer desire equates to one less source of attachment and disturbance.

Desires escalate our cost of living. Historically, with fewer resources, individuals managed to sustain themselves and their families. Now, despite significantly higher incomes, supporting a family has turned into a considerable burden. Why is this the case? The expansion of our desires has driven up the cost of living, and consequently, the price of happiness has surged. The wisdom of ancient Chinese teachings tells us happiness stems from contentment. A person with minimal desires finds satisfaction and happiness with ease. In contrast, someone with endless desires struggles to achieve happiness and satisfaction.

Therefore, our approach to desires is crucial for achieving happiness. Without actively addressing them, our desires will end up controlling us.

V

HAPPINESS COMES FROM THE MIND

1. Different Levels of the Mind

The mind is the source of both our suffering and our joy. To lead a happy life, it's crucial to cultivate a healthy mind. We've all felt the toll of being overwhelmed by negative emotions like greed, hatred, fear, anxiety, jealousy, and selfishness – not only do these feelings cause our minds to suffer, but our bodies also respond adversely. If we let these mental struggles linger without addressing them, they'll keep spawning problems, preventing any chance of peace.

However, the same mind that produces suffering can also give rise to profound happiness. When free from afflictions, happiness flows effortlessly. But what is the source of this happiness? It usually has little to do with material conditions. Consider the *full-body smile* of Buddhas and bodhisattvas, who radiate joy from within and throughout their entire bodies. Such happiness isn't born from external acquisitions but from an enlightened mind. The Dharma reveals that within each person lies the potential for enlightenment, and this inherent enlightened nature is capable of generating a continuous flow of happiness.

On Weibo, I've discussed the Buddhist perspective on suffering and happiness. It's commonly understood among practitioners that Buddhism characterizes life as inherently suffering. However, this statement doesn't paint the full picture; it applies specifically to the lives of ordinary beings mired in confusion and afflictions. In contrast, for the enlightened, life is also defined by freedom and joy. This is because behind our confusion and afflictions lies the potential for enlightenment. By unlocking this

potential, our lives will become infinitely free, peaceful, and joyful.

Our lives are influenced by two internal forces. Healthy and positive minds are our allies. They enhance our lives, foster happiness, and contribute to a stable and harmonious society. In contrast, unhealthy and negative minds are our adversaries. They consistently breed suffering and discord. Buddha Dharma teaches that the most formidable enemy in life is the self, specifically referring to our inner afflictions. These inner enemies are the root causes of all forms of suffering, from personal anguish to strained relationships, and even crimes such as killing, stealing, lying, and sexual misconduct. At the core, humanity grapples with two natures: the Buddha-nature and the demonic-nature. Cultivating our Buddha-nature leads us towards attaining perfect wisdom and compassion. Conversely, succumbing to our demonic-nature traps us in cycles of prolonged suffering across the lower realms.

Many of you are accomplished individuals. We frequently devote considerable effort to grasping societal dynamics and showing concern for society, yet we often overlook the most critical aspect: learning to understand and manage ourselves, which truly should be our foremost priority. The teachings of Buddha Dharma can guide us to identify the positive and negative forces within our minds.

2. From Benefiting Oneself to Benefiting Others

The aim of Buddhist practice is to embody the qualities of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This goal is founded on three key virtues exemplified by Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The first is the virtue of cessation, signifying the complete eradication of all afflictions. The second, the virtue of wisdom, represents the attainment of perfect and boundless wisdom. The third, the virtue of compassion, refers to the realization of great loving-kindness and compassion.

Buddhism identifies three “viruses” plaguing the lives of ordinary people: greed, hatred, and ignorance. These are the root causes of all suffering and negative emotions. As a remedy, Buddhism advocates for the diligent practice of the precepts, concentration, and wisdom to eliminate these afflictions. Moreover, we must unlock the wholesome potential of life and attain wisdom and compassion. Because of our compassion, our goal extends beyond personal liberation from suffering. Recognizing that every sentient being grapples with confusion and afflictions, and is plagued by greed, hatred, and ignorance, we cultivate a desire to assist them. This form of compassion is expansive and unbiased, mirroring the great loving-kindness and compassion of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, where there is not a single living being we are not willing to help. Thus, Dharma practice aims not just at building a joyful life for oneself but also at aiding all beings in achieving happiness.

What we frequently perceive as happiness is typically merely an illusion. True happiness is, in fact, the

fundamental essence of life. To realize it, we must eradicate all mindsets that undermine happiness and reveal life's innate, wholesome potential. It is through the awakening of our Buddha-nature that life can genuinely transform into a state of joy, perpetually extending happiness to all sentient beings. Achieving this state is also the ultimate aim of Mahayana Buddhist practice.

CONCLUSION

We've delved into how happiness comes from the mind from five key aspects. First, in order to pursue happiness, we must have the ability to accept all situations, both positive and negative. Only then can we remain undisturbed by external factors and preserve a state of tranquility. Second, we must identify the factors that lead to happiness and actively nurture the fields of blessings to ensure our blessings will continuously grow. Third, we must elevate our views, adopting a positive and proactive stance towards both ourselves and the world. Fourth, it's crucial to avoid the pitfalls of chasing after desires, which are formidable foes to happiness. Most importantly, understanding the various facets of the mind – knowing what to foster and what to let go – paves the way from personal

well-being to the welfare of others, from seeking individual joy to spreading happiness among all sentient beings. This represents the highest and most profound form of happiness.

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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