



静心学堂 丛书

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The Practical and Ultimate Values of Entrepreneurs
企业家的现实价值
与终极价值



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很高兴和大家分享佛法。今天的主办方是盛和塾，主要弘扬稻盛和夫先生的经营哲学。稻盛先生的思想是以佛法为背景，了解大乘佛法，有助于深入理解他的经营哲学。

为什么要探讨“企业家的现实价值与终极价值”？这关系到对“成功”的定义，并直接影响我们的人生观和世界观。当我们觉得什么有价值，自然会追求什么。不仅人生将围绕这个目标展开，眼中的世界也会随之改变。世界包罗万象，但每个人都会根据自己的三观作出取舍，构成不同的小世界。这些小世界进一步相互影响，形成世界的共业。

当今社会的价值导向中，往往以企业规模和资产

多少来衡量一个人的成功。在各种财富排行榜上，一串串数字向世人昭示着成功的坐标。其实，数字只能说明企业的发展状况，属于现实价值，并不代表企业家的生命品质，也不具有终极价值。如果以此定义成功，显然是片面的，还会对民众产生误导。当人们把目光聚焦于这样的成功时，很容易屏蔽此外的一切，变成“眼中只看到钱”。这种价值观对个人和社会造成的危害，已是有目共睹的。

什么是真正的成功？儒家的成功观是立足于做人，从完善人格、具备君子德行，到造福社会，成为“博施于民而能济众”的圣贤。佛教的成功观是依人天乘、声闻乘、菩萨乘的不同定位，止恶行善，追求解脱，最终成就佛菩萨那样的悲智二德，并在圆满自身品质的基础上，进一步自利利他。

当然，儒家和佛教并不排斥财富，因为这也是利他的重要助缘，但不能以此作为成功的唯一标准，还要从现实价值导向终极价值。当我们具备利他心和做事的智慧，又能精进努力，自然会事业有成。这样的成功才是全面的，不仅对自己和众生、现前和未来没

有任何副作用，还能自利利他，使生命进入生生增上的良性循环。

如何取得这样的成功？如何使现实价值和终极价值相统一？



一、 文化传承与精神追求

对企业家来说
建立终极价值尤其重要
首先，产品的安全、质量等问题
直接关系到消费者乃至全社会的利益
其次，企业家的道德品质
会对员工乃至民众产生影响
因为企业家属于
大家心目中的“成功人士”
其言行有一定的导向作用

现实价值主要体现在物质层面，但这同样离不开精神追求，也离不开文化引导。可以说，正是对终极价值的认识，决定了人们追求什么样的现实价值。

1. 新教伦理与资本主义制度

现代企业体制是从西方的文化和信仰发展而来，但我们在引进过程中，只看到其中技术和商业的部分，却忽略了它的文化背景。马克斯·韦伯在《新教伦理与资本主义精神》中指出，资本主义精神是源于宗教改革后的新教伦理，正是这种精神，为经济发展注入了动力。

西方早期宗教是天主教，偏向出世，认为尘世是短暂而虚幻的，天堂才是永恒的归宿。人们必须通过修行、祈祷才能升天，工作不过是谋生手段，为生活提供基本物质条件，在道德上是中性的。换言之，只有现实价值，无关终极价值。文艺复兴后，西方出现宗教改革，在奉行新教的地区，经济迅速发展。韦伯发现：“工商界领导人、资本占有者、近代企业中的高级技术工人，尤其是受过高等技术培训和商业培训的管理人员，绝大多数是新教徒。”为什么会这样？正是源于价值观的改变，最重要的是“天职观”。

天职本是宗教用语，意指“上帝安排的任务”，但在宗教改革中，马丁·路德将此与世间的“职业”一词联系起来。韦伯认为，这就“使日常的世俗活动具有了宗教意义，并在此基础上提出了职业思想”“完成个人在现世所处地位赋予他的责任和义务，这是他的天职”“宗教生活再也不是在离开尘世的修道院里度过，而是在尘世及各种机构中度过”。也就是说，上帝安排的任务需要在世俗职业中完成。因为人们在尘世做什么是由神决定的，只要用心去做，同样是主的

荣耀，能因此获得恩宠。

这就将现实价值和终极价值统一起来。当人们本着这样的精神工作，自然不会将现实价值作为唯一目的，因为这只是导向终极价值的途径。立足这一定位，就会自觉遵循相关伦理，而不是为牟利践踏道德。改革开放后，我们在短时间内迅速借鉴西方模式发展经济，却没有认识其思想基础，也没有相应的本土文化为依托，造成企业乃至社会的种种问题。就像引进外来物种时必须全面评估，建设相关生态，否则就会造成灾难，学习制度同样如此。

2. 传统文化与做人做事

民国时期，一些有识之士曾就如何学习西方文化展开讨论，倡导“中学为体、西学为用”。遗憾的是，这一主张并未成为国人接受西学的主流。尤其在传统文化被视为封建糟粕被排斥后，人们在很长时间处于价值观的空窗期。近几十年来，人们之所以会对西方的一切全盘接受，正是价值观空缺所致。当旧已破而

新未立，何以为立身之本？问题是，这种接受还流于表面，只看到现实价值，却没有终极价值为导向。这就容易使人在追求现实价值的过程中失去约束，唯利是图，置道德甚至法律于不顾。而在现代社会，彼此的影响千丝万缕。这些年，各种伪劣产品和豆腐渣工程已造成严重的社会问题，使每个人受到不同程度的伤害。

对企业家来说，建立终极价值尤其重要。首先，产品的安全、质量等问题直接关系到消费者乃至全社会的利益；其次，企业家的道德品质会对员工乃至民众产生影响。因为企业家属于大家心目中的“成功人士”，其言行有一定的导向作用。

基于这些问题，不少企业家开始反思，并在中国传统文化中寻找养分，倡导佛商、儒商、道商等。但要知道，这不是一种包装，更不是身份的象征，而应该像新教伦理所说的那样，将终极价值和现实价值统一起来，让工作成为修行的组成部分。通过做事完善人格，通过做人更善巧地做事，并不仅仅以做事为目的。成为佛商，是要发菩提心，奉行五戒十善乃至菩

萨戒，由自利进而利他。成为儒商，则要奉行仁义礼智信、温良恭俭让的品行，成为有德君子，进而齐家、治国、平天下。

儒家和佛教都重视利他。儒家有“为天地立心，为生民立命，为往圣继绝学，为万世开太平”的四句教，佛教则有“众生无边誓愿度，烦恼无尽誓愿断，法门无量誓愿学，佛道无上誓愿成”的四弘誓愿。这些高尚的精神追求，既可以让现实价值得到升华，导向终极价值，也会为我们的工作、生活源源不断地提供精神养分。

可能有人会担心，佛教是宗教信仰，是否和自己的身份有冲突？其实学佛有两个定位：一是信仰，一是文化。说到信仰，才涉及谁能信、谁不能信。但从学习文化的角度，并不存在这些问题。正如《十九大报告》所说：“中国特色社会主义文化，源自于中华民族五千多年文明历史所孕育的中华优秀传统文化。”佛教传入中国两千多年来，早已和本土的儒家和道教一起，成为传统文化的三大源泉。如果不了解佛教，就无法全面认识和继承传统文化。习主席 2014 年访

问印度时，曾发表《携手追寻民族复兴之梦》的重要演讲，以“佛兴西方，法流东国”来形容两国深远的文化交流，其中还引用国学大家季羨林先生的话：我必须深入了解佛教，才能真正了解中国文化，因为佛教已渗透到中国文化的精神血液之中。

所以说，传承中华优秀传统文化，助力国人的心灵建设、人格建设、精神建设，是我们的责任所在。作为企业家，如果能从传统文化中汲取养分，完善生命品质，本着自利利他之心发展企业，造福社会，实为众生之幸。

3. 精神追求对生命的价值

说到究竟价值，更离不开精神追求。那么，中国人的精神是什么？中国社会的精神是什么？我们应该打造什么样的人格素养？现行教育中有没有这些内容？

我们知道，产品是企业的生命力。拥有优质产品，企业才有持续发展的基础。这个世界每天生产很多产

品，人们也在不断添置和更新产品，那什么产品和我们关系最密切？不是汽车电器，也不是几乎成为身体一部分的手机，而是我们的生命品质。这种品质并非生来如此，而是由往昔业力构成的，又由现在的身口意三业决定未来走向。所以我们不能对它听之任之，否则将没有品质保障。这就需要了解生命的组成，知道哪些是有益身心的，加以发展；哪些是有害身心的，坚决断除。

佛教中，将生命产品称为五蕴，即色、受、想、行、识五种因素的聚集。其中，色蕴属于物质部分，即我们的身体。换言之，生命包含但不仅限于身体。此外还有感受、思想、造作、认识等心理活动，共同构成了我们的生命，也决定了生命的品质。

我们对这个产品是否满意？事实上，凡夫的生命产品是以贪嗔痴为主体，势必存在各种瑕疵。所以优化生命是人生的头等大事，否则将没有出路。但这么重要的事，反而最不被重视。我们从来不去了解它，也没有对它加以管理，只是凭着感觉肆意使用。因为没有正确的三观引导，就会不断制造问题，制造情绪

垃圾，带来焦虑、抑郁等种种心理疾病。

我们会定期检查身体，也会定期养护汽车、装修房子，却没想到，生命同样需要管理和滋养。对身体、汽车、房子的保养，只能排除问题隐患，延长使用寿命，管理得再精心，也不过和我们相伴一生，免不了成住坏空的结局。但心理力量的积累不会随着死亡结束，还会作为业力，生生世世地陪伴我们。

如何打造生命产品？东方文化，尤其是佛法智慧可以为我们提供引导，因为生命之本在于心性。现在大家很关注心理学，而佛教自古就被称为心学，对心性有透彻的了解，对改善心性更有具体的方法，而且是从不同角度、针对不同根机施设的，用现在的话说，就是“八万四千法，总有一款适合你”。这些方法来自佛陀的实际体证，并在两千多年来被弟子们反复实践和验证，是人类宝贵的精神财富，也是打造优质生命产品的指南。我们一方面要通过闻思经教了解心性，从妄心到真心，从意识到潜意识，知道心的构成和发展规律；一方面要通过禅修掌握调心之道，最终明心见性。

20世纪以来，世界发展被西方文化全面主导。虽然科技发达，物质丰裕，但人自身的问题越来越多，也越来越不容易感到幸福。尤其在人工智能时代到来后，大量工作被取代，还有人担心，人工智能快速的学习能力会全面超过人类。更现实的问题是：谁在使用人工智能？当人们利用人工智能犯罪，谁来负责？如果这些先进科技的使用者心智不健康，那么工具越发达，世界将越危险，越失控。人类的出路在哪里？

在这样的大背景下，尤其要重视自我提升。只有具备合格的生命品质，我们才有能力用好各种工具，而这正是东方文化擅长的。所以未来发展要重视两点，既要学习西方科技的长处，还要继承中国传统文化的独特价值，让做事和做人同步发展。

二、现实价值与长远价值

做企业是为了利己还是利他
这个“他”包括企业的高层和员工
也包括社会大众
只有真正带着利他心去做
才能得道多助
使员工带着主人翁精神
群策群力地参与企业发展，共生共荣
反之，如果纯粹以自己为中心
是很难留住人心的

人们投资前会充分评估，把资金投向有潜力的项目，由此获得回报。人生投资也是同样，需要评估什么是真正有价值的，值得投入时间和精力。在人们关心的现实价值中，又包括眼前价值和长远价值。

1. 现实价值的不同定位

从企业来说，眼前价值是当下的利润和市场份额，长远价值是企业的永续发展。从个人来说，儒家立德、立功、立言的三不朽人生，既包含现实价值，也代表长远价值。此外，“积善之家必有余庆”是通过行善让子孙得到庇荫，“为万世开太平”是通过努力泽被

后世，更重视长远价值。

佛法怎么看待价值呢？很多人觉得佛教重在出世，不关心现实价值，这种认识是片面的。佛教有三乘，即人天乘、声闻乘、菩萨乘。其中，声闻乘倾向出世，需要放弃对名利、感情、财富的追求，奉行少欲知足的生活，勤修戒定慧，息灭贪嗔痴。在世人看来，似乎不重视现实价值。事实上，他们的价值就在于断除烦恼，完善人格。这不仅可以使自己受益，还对社会民众具有教化作用，内修外弘，兼具眼前价值和长远价值。

此外，佛教还有人天乘和菩萨乘。人天乘的要求是遵守道德，富有爱心，承担相应的家庭和社会责任，与众生和谐相处，与世间的价值观并行不悖。区别只是对道德的要求更高，并将其中的重点形成戒律，是有持有犯的硬标准。而对菩萨乘来说，不仅要成就声闻圣者那样的智慧和解脱，还要把利益众生作为不可推卸的使命。在佛教戒律中，声闻戒重在止恶，不做坏事即可，而菩萨戒包含三项内容，又称三聚净戒。一是止恶，所有坏事坚决不做；二是修善，凡提升人

格的善行积极去做；三是饶益有情，凡利益众生的事主动承担，如布施、持戒、忍辱、精进、禅定、般若六度，及由此衍生的一切利他行。

所以菩萨要多事多业。佛经中，观音菩萨以千百亿化身接引众生，“应以何身得度者，即现何身而为说法”。维摩诘居士也是这样的典型代表，他既有高超的佛法见地和修为，又是备受世人尊重的巨富，活跃于社会各个阶层，以在家身“执持正法，摄诸长幼”。所以说，佛教同样重视现世价值。虽然声闻乘重在自身解脱，但这种德行也能起到化世导俗的作用。而菩萨乘还要在此基础上主动承担，全心全意地为众生排忧解难。

2. 眼前和长远价值并行

眼前价值和长远价值的关系，是特别需要关注的。在企业家群体中，不少人只顾眼前价值，结果在做事过程中把身体累垮了，心态做坏了，家庭不安乐了，人际关系不和谐了，甚至为赚钱不择手段，触犯法律。

这样的话，即使得到一点眼前利益，也是得不偿失的，苦果现前时就悔之晚矣。

如何在追求眼前价值的同时成就长远价值？佛法认为，道德和利他可以两者统一起来，使眼前价值延伸到长远价值。首先是道德，对企业家来说，重点在于遵纪守法，讲究诚信。因为法律属于道德底线，是必须遵循的基本行为规范。而诚信则是企业发展的根本，对员工诚信，可以上下一心；对合作者诚信，可以招感善缘；对经营诚信，可以取得认同，增加用户粘性。事实上，凡能代代相传的老牌企业，都具备这一品质。

其次是利他精神。在稻盛先生的经营哲学中，要时常问问自己：做企业是为了利己还是利他？这个“他”包括企业的高层和员工，也包括社会大众。只有真正带着利他心去做，才能得道多助，使员工带着主人翁精神，群策群力地参与企业发展，共生共荣。反之，如果纯粹以自己为中心，让大家为你服务，是很难留住人心的。稻盛先生有一套阿米巴的管理方式，让人人都有经营意识，都能发挥作用，但这么做的前

提是企业主有利他精神。否则，再好的管理也未必能有效落实。

从佛法角度说，利他的心理基础是慈悲，而慈悲是福报的源泉。当我们有利他精神时，就能广结善缘，得到更多的认可、尊重和护持。现代营销学也认为：双赢是成双的，对客户和企业来说，应是客户先赢企业后赢；对员工和企业来说，应是员工先赢企业后赢。所以互联网公司很重视结缘，通过一些免费服务积聚人脉，让用户得到方便的同时，也给自己带来利益。

除了道德和利他，还要有经营的智慧。尤其在今天这个时代，社会日新月异，市场竞争激烈，作为企业家，必须具备开放的胸怀和学习能力，不断更新和提升管理机制，才能跟上时代，确保企业的健康发展。

三、现实价值与终极价值

从浩瀚的宇宙回望
会觉得生命实在微不足道
如果生命就是人死如灯灭般的有限存在
那这短短的一生算得了什么呢
和朝生暮死的蜉蝣有什么本质的区别呢
好在佛法告诉我们
心的本质就是宇宙的本质
证悟心的本质，就能通达宇宙真相
让有限的生命成就无限的意义

我们来到这个世界，不过是地球七十多亿人口之一。从更大范围看，地球只是太阳系的众多星球之一。而在银河系，还有数千亿颗太阳那样的恒星。至于整个宇宙，更存在无量无边的星系。这些发现都印证了佛陀在两千多年前所说的：宇宙中有恒河沙数世界，无法穷尽。不仅如此，它们在时间上也是无始无终的。科学家认为，宇宙由 137 亿年前的大爆炸形成，但在佛教看来，那只是宇宙历史的一个片段而已。

从浩瀚的宇宙回望，会觉得生命实在微不足道，甚至找不到活着的意义。如果生命就是这种人死如灯灭般的有限存在，那这短短的一生算得了什么呢？和朝生暮死的蜉蝣有什么本质的区别呢？好在佛法告诉

我们：心的本质就是宇宙的本质，证悟心的本质，就能通达宇宙真相，让有限的生命成就无限的意义。

1. 我们活在哪里

我们通常以为，人是活在共同的现实世界。但从佛法角度看，每个人都是活在各自的小世界。因为生命并非始于今世，而是由无始的过去流转至今，所以在我们内心有着往昔留下的种种人生经验，及由此形成的心理力量，《楞严经》称之为前尘影事。这些共同构成了我们的业力系统。

现在的 VR 眼镜可以让人置身虚拟世界，其实，业力系统就是这样的 VR 眼镜。我们带着业力来到世界，构成今生的存在，并通过这个认知模式看世界。所以我们看到的并不是世界真相，而是呈现在各自认知模式上的影像。

那世界真相究竟是什么？从本质上说就是空性，在现象上则有地狱、饿鬼、畜生、天、人、阿修罗六道。因为业力不同，眼镜不同，众生看到的世界并不

一样。人看到人的世界，动物看到动物的世界。即便同样是人，所见也因人而异。

在以往的观念中，认为世界是客观的存在，而量子力学的波粒二象性告诉我们，物质的存在其实是不确定的，在认识过程中，我们不仅是观察者，同时也是参与者。换言之，是由我们的认识系统决定自己看到什么样的世界。当然作为人类来说，我们还有属于人的共业，又能看到相同的部分，并不是截然不同的。

怎么才能认识世界？佛法认为，我们的认识有两个层面，一是理性思维，一是内心本具的般若智慧。西方哲学重视理性，但从康德就开始发现，理性是有限的，无法直达真理，认识无限。在佛法修行中，是通过闻思修体认心的本质，开发生命潜在的无限智慧。只有这样，我们才有能力认识宇宙真相，找到人生的终极价值。

2. 佛教看终极价值

什么是终极价值？基督教认为天堂是永恒的归宿，只有上帝才能拯救人类。但佛陀告诉我们，天堂也是暂时的，天福享尽，同样会流转六道。此外，佛教不认为宇宙中有决定祸福的主宰神，佛陀也没有把自己当作救世主。他以人的身份修行成佛，同时告诉我们，命运是由自己决定的，每个人都具有觉悟潜质，可以证佛所证。这为我们指出了超越现实的终极价值，也是佛陀对人类最大的贡献。

但在现行教育中，缺乏对终极价值的关怀，使人们只看到现实价值。而这些价值往往是和贪嗔痴相应的，为了追求现实价值的最大化，就可能为所欲为。这正是今天道德滑坡、生态恶化等问题的根源所在。只有认识到现实价值并不是唯一的，还有凌驾其上的终极价值，我们才会心存敬畏，从更高的角度权衡利弊。

在佛法修行中，一方面提出因果思想，让我们知道一切恶行都会带来苦果；另一方面指出生命的真

正意义，使我们不会那么执著于现实价值。可能有人担心：那我们还要不要做事业？其实，不执著不等于不努力。作为学佛者，我们不仅要努力修行，提升自我，还要带着利他心服务社会。只要定位准确，现实价值和终极价值非但没有冲突，还是相互增上的。正如《法华经》所说：“一切治生产业，皆与实相不相违背。”也就是说，我们从事的一切正当工作都与宇宙人生的最高真理相契合。

如何将现实和终极价值挂钩，把商场变成道场？首先要在认识上把世间和出世间、生死和涅槃、烦恼和菩提统一起来，认识到每个现象的当下都蕴含着道，蕴含着空性。在声闻乘修行中，必须离开世间才能出世间，断除烦恼才能成就菩提。但在菩萨乘修行中，当我们体认世间的空性本质，就可以在入世的同时保有出世超然，像莲花那样出淤泥而不染。虽然每天日理万机，却不会陷入对事的执著，心如虚空，了无痕迹。

3. 回归清净心

心有两个层面，一是念头的层面，就像云层，来来去去，变化万千；一是虚空的层面，这才是心的本来状态，而念头只是缘起的显现，是没有根的。但当我们活在念头的层面时，情绪和想法会成为整个世界。这就需要跳出念头，回归虚空般的心，再从这样的状态来审视念头，才不会被它的变化所干扰。同样，当我们立足于终极价值的高度，就不会被现实价值所捆绑。

怎么和终极价值建立连结？从菩萨乘的修行说，就是要发菩提心，其中有两个面向，一是觉醒，一是利他，这也是佛菩萨成就的心行。佛是觉者，代表全然、究竟、圆满的觉醒。与此对应的，就是迷惑。佛法认为，凡夫和佛陀的区别就在于迷悟之间。迷来自无明，看不清自己，也看不清世界真相。所以每个生命都有很多困惑，不知道我是谁，不知道生从何处死往何去。就像前面所说的，我们戴着业力的 VR 眼镜看世界，以为所见是真实的，进而执著于此，起贪起

嗔，造业烦恼。

佛陀告诉我们，每个人内心都有一盏智慧明灯。当这盏灯被点亮时，就能回归清净心，开启生命本具的无尽宝藏，正如《坛经》所说的那样：“菩提自性，本来清净，但用此心，直了成佛。”所以觉醒是佛法的核心价值，也是生命的终极价值。

早期的儒家思想中，关于心性的理论较为薄弱。《论语》主要是具体的做人做事，到宋明理学才开始重视心性，从人心讲到天理，从人道讲到天道，从人性讲到天性。凡夫的知，是由无明建立的妄知，由此制造种种烦恼和痛苦，所以阳明先生提出要“致良知”。他早年亲近过一些禅师，受到佛教心性说的影响。虽然他也批判佛教，但这主要和当时的佛教现状有关。因为禅宗盛行，佛教走向山林，给人消极避世的印象。所以阳明先生把佛教的心性说和儒家的人伦、社会责任结合起来，认为这样才符合中道。其实他对佛教的了解并不完整，没有看到菩提心教法的殊胜和积极意义。

4. 从利他到无限

除了觉醒，菩提心的另一个面向是利他，这也是将现实价值导向终极价值的途径。佛教所说的利他不只是简单做点好事，而是要成就观音菩萨那样的大慈大悲，其标准在于——对一切众生心怀慈悲，没有任何众生是不能帮助的，否则就不是菩萨的圆满慈悲。

还有我们熟悉的大行普贤菩萨，之所以称为大行，因为他的每个行为都是无限的，利益对象也是无限的。就像做企业，平常人开一两家公司就觉得不错了，但有些国际化连锁企业动辄几千甚至上万个店面。从世间法来说，这也是一种大行。即使这样，也远远不能和普贤菩萨的愿行相比。

《华严经·普贤菩萨行愿品》中，阐述了菩萨的十大愿力：一者礼敬诸佛，二者称赞如来，三者广修供养，四者忏悔业障，五者随喜功德，六者请转法轮，七者请佛住世，八者常随佛学，九者恒顺众生，十者普皆回向。其实从修行上说，这十项内容很普通，并不是那么特别。为什么被尊为愿王？因为菩萨的每个

愿行都建立于无限的所缘，都是以尽虚空遍法界的诸佛和众生为对象，即经中阐述的“十方三世”——从空间到时间都是无限的。

十大愿王包含上求佛道和下化众生，恒顺众生是其中的关键所在。正如《普贤行愿品》所说：“言恒顺众生者，谓尽法界虚空界、十方刹海所有众生，种种差别，所谓卵生、胎生、湿生、化生，或有依于地水火风而生住者，或有依空及诸卉木而生住者。种种生类，种种色身，种种形状，种种相貌，种种寿量，种种族类，种种名号，种种心性，种种知见，种种欲乐，种种意行，种种威仪，种种衣服，种种饮食，处于种种村营聚落、城邑宫殿，乃至一切天龙八部、人非人等，无足、二足、四足、多足，有色无色，有想无想，非有想非无想。如是等类，我皆于彼随顺而转，种种承事，种种供养。如敬父母，如奉师长及阿罗汉乃至如来等无有异。于诸病苦，为作良医；于失道者，示其正路；于暗夜中，为作光明；于贫穷者，令得伏藏。菩萨如是平等饶益一切众生。”可见，恒顺众生的修行要以一切众生为对象，生起平等慈悲之心。在

这无限利他的见地中，使我们的心的回归无限，体证生命的终极意义。

《行愿品》的每个愿力最后还有一段海誓山盟：虚空界尽，众生界尽，众生业尽，众生烦恼尽，我此愿力无有穷尽，念念相续，无有间断，身语意业，无有疲厌……虚空不可能有尽，众生和众生的业力、烦恼也不可能有尽，但即使这些不可能都成为可能，菩萨的愿行也是无尽的。听起来十分震撼！所以我把《普贤行愿品》称为“菩提心的无上观修，佛陀品质的临摹方法”，就是以我们的心去临摹佛陀品质。为什么可以临摹？因为心本身是无限的，只是因为我执，才有狭隘的设定和对立。通过无限的所缘，可以撤除设定，使心回归无限。

当我们建立这样的愿力和胸怀时，心会全然打开，和宇宙的无限性同频。常人之所以发不起菩提心，正是因为心很狭隘，容纳的人很有限。如果我们总是以自我为参照，以自己的感觉看世界，势必无法平等看待众生，而是有亲疏好恶之别。《普贤行愿品》的观修可以使我们的彻底打开心量，体会心的无限，再去修

事时，平等心和慈悲心就容易生起了。

总之，发菩提心是把我们的行为和终极价值挂钩。带着这样的心利他，所有善行不仅有现实价值，还能导向更高的终极价值。包括生活中的穿衣吃饭，也会得到提升。因为这一切都是在菩提心的统摄下，都会成为菩提道的资粮。作为企业家，如果我们有这样的见地和发心，就可以在成就事业的同时完善生命品质，同时让员工和客户受益，并以自己的能力和所得造福社会大众。

5. 正念的训练

除了发心，我们还要学会用心，带着正念做每件事。如果说发心是确立方向，那么用心就是让我们在前行途中走好每一步。正念的训练主要有两点，一是专注，一是了了明知。

在通讯便捷的今天，人们时时处在各种资讯的轰炸中，变得难以专注。因为散乱，就会在不知不觉中被控、被干扰。事实上，这正是很多人的现状。当心

静不下来，思维就会迟钝，工作效率和创造力因此受到影响。就像电脑硬件欠佳又开了太多窗口时，运转速度会变慢甚至宕机。禅修就是通过对专注的训练，让我们学会把心带回当下。虽然面对很多事，但每个当下只想一件事，只做一件事，就不会妄念纷飞，使能量被各种碎片消耗殆尽。

此外还要定期给内心杀毒。我们知道，电脑病毒会使系统崩溃，其实生命也是同样。凡夫内心有种种烦恼，源头就是贪嗔痴三毒。如果不加对治，身口意三业会在不知不觉中被病毒侵扰。这些病毒还有自我复制的功能，进入我们的一言一行乃至起心动念，使我们在做事和思考时带着这样那样的负面情绪。如此，又会使病毒进一步得到强化。

所以我们要认识到哪些心理会制造病毒，只有看清真相，才能主动防范。进一步，还要通过禅修开启内心的杀毒软件。当我们学会专注后，就能对心行保持觉知，知道现在有什么心理在活动。我们平时总在不知不觉中，就像一潭浑水，什么都看不清，只是凭感觉做些什么。当心静下来，不在过去，不在未来，

也不让心胡思乱想，自由游荡，而是安住当下，就能清清楚楚地感受身心的一切。这种了了明知的能力，就是内心的杀毒软件，也是开启无限智慧的关键。

今天讲到大乘佛法与企业家的精神建设，这是一个大问题，涉及方方面面。以上主要从文化传承和做人做事的层面来解读，希望大家认识到现实价值、长远价值和终极价值的关系，树立正确目标，带着利他心和正念做事。以此为基础，我们所做的一切才能成就慈悲、开启智慧，使生命品质得以提升，在成就现实价值的同时，导向长远价值和终极价值。







**THE PRACTICAL
AND ULTIMATE VALUES
OF ENTREPRENEURS**

Master Jiqun

Translated by MPI Translation Center

**Given to Seiwayyuku
at Xiamen International Seaside Hotel, 2019**

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I'm pleased to share the Buddha Dharma with you all. Today's event is organized by Seiwajyuku, an organization devoted to promoting Mr. Kazuo Inamori's management philosophy. As his philosophy is rooted in Buddhism, understanding Mahayana Buddhism greatly deepens our understanding of his management philosophy.

Why explore the "Practical and Ultimate Values of Entrepreneurs"? This is closely tied to how we define "success" and directly shapes our outlook on life and worldview. What we value naturally determines what we pursue. Our lives will center on these goals, and our perception of the

world will shift accordingly. The world is vast, yet each person makes choices based on their worldview, life outlook, and value, creating their unique small worlds. These small worlds, in turn, interact with each other, shaping the collective karma of the larger world.

In today's society, success is often measured by the size of a business and the wealth one holds. Wealth rankings showcase figures that signify the benchmarks of success. However, these figures merely reflect a business's growth—they represent practical value, not the entrepreneur's quality of life or ultimate value. Defining success this way is obviously one-sided and misleading. When people focus solely on such success, they easily overlook everything else and have eyes only for money. The harm caused by such value to individuals and society is already evident.

What is true success? In Confucianism, success is defined as becoming a virtuous person. This journey begins with perfecting one's character and embodying the virtues of a gentleman, progressing to benefiting society and

attaining the status of a sage who “generously bestows upon the people and benefits the public.” Buddhism, however, defines success through three paths—the Human and Heavenly Vehicle, the Sravaka Vehicle, and the Bodhisattva Vehicle. These paths guide practitioners toward refraining from evil and practicing good, seeking liberation, and ultimately achieving the dual virtues of compassion and wisdom like the buddhas and bodhisattvas. By perfecting one’s qualities, one can further aspire to benefit both oneself and others.

Certainly, Confucianism and Buddhism do not dismiss the value of wealth, as it can be an essential supporting condition for benefiting others. However, wealth should not be the sole standard of success; instead, we should aim to align practical value with ultimate value. When we embody an altruistic mindset, act wisely, and strive diligently, success will naturally follow. Such success is truly comprehensive—free from any negative impact on oneself and others, both in the present and future lifetimes. It also benefits both oneself and others, enabling life to

enter a virtuous cycle of continuous growth.

How can we achieve such success? How can we unify practical value with ultimate value?

I

CULTURAL INHERITANCE AND SPIRITUAL PURSUIT

Practical value is primarily embodied in the material level, yet it is inseparable from spiritual pursuits and cultural guidance. It is clear that the understanding of ultimate value determines what kind of practical value one pursues.

1. Protestant Ethics and the Capitalist System

The modern corporate system evolved from Western culture and beliefs. However, in adopting this system, we have often focused solely on its technical and commercial aspects, overlooking its cultural contexts. As Max Weber

stated in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, the spirit of capitalism is derived from the Protestant ethics after the Reformation. It is this very spirit that has fueled economic development.

In its early history, Western religion was predominantly Catholic, which emphasized detachment from worldly affairs. It viewed secular life as fleeting and illusory, believing that only heaven was the eternal destination. People could attain ascension to heaven through spiritual practice and prayer, while work was merely a means of survival, providing basic material needs for life, and is morally neutral. In other words, work had practical value but was unrelated to ultimate value. After the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation emerged in the West, and in regions that embraced Protestantism, the economy developed rapidly. Max Weber noticed that “The leaders of industry and commerce, capital owners, highly skilled technical workers in modern enterprises—especially those managers who had received advanced technical and business training—were predominantly Protestants.” Why

was this the case? It was precisely due to the shift in value, with the concept of “calling” being the most significant.

This “calling” was originally a religious term, meaning “a task assigned by God.” However, during the Reformation, Martin Luther linked this term with the concept of “profession” in the secular world. According to Weber, this connection “gave everyday secular activities religious significance, and the idea of vocation arose from this.” He further stated that “One’s calling is to fulfill the responsibilities and obligations assigned by one’s position in this world. Religious life was no longer confined to monasteries, and detached from the world, but was lived within the world and its various institutions.” In other words, the tasks assigned by God were now understood to be carried out through secular professions. Since what people do in the secular world is determined by God, as long as they work diligently, it is equally an act of glorifying the Lord and thus brings divine favor.

This approach seamlessly unifies practical and ultimate

values. When people work with this spirit, they naturally avoid treating practical value as the sole purpose, instead recognizing it as a means to achieve ultimate value. From this perspective, they consciously uphold ethical principles rather than sacrificing morality for profit. However, in China, after the reform and opening up, we rapidly adopted Western models to drive economic growth. Yet, we failed to fully grasp their ideological foundations or integrate them with our local cultural context. This oversight has led to various problems for companies and society. Just as introducing foreign species requires thorough risk assessments and supporting ecosystems to prevent disasters, adopting new systems demands the same approach.

2. Traditional Culture and the Cultivation of Morality and Conduct

During the Republic of China period (1912-1949), some insightful individuals began to discuss how to learn from Western culture, promoting the idea of “Chinese learning

as the essence, Western learning for the application.” Unfortunately, this approach didn’t become the mainstream strategy for integrating Western knowledge. Particularly after traditional culture was dismissed as feudal and rejected outright, people experienced a prolonged period of a vacuum in their value system.

In recent decades, this vacuum has driven many to fully embrace Western culture without much critical reflection. When the old has been discarded and the new is yet to be established, what can one rely on as the foundation of life? The problem is that this embrace of the West has often been superficial—focusing only on practical value without the guidance of ultimate value. As a result, many lose self-discipline in pursuing practical value, becoming profit-driven and disregarding morality or even the law. However, people in modern society are deeply interconnected and constantly influencing one another. Over the years, various counterfeit products and shoddy construction projects have created severe social issues, causing harm to everyone in different ways.

For entrepreneurs, establishing ultimate value is particularly important. First, the safety and quality of their products are directly related to the interests of consumers and society at large. Second, entrepreneurs' moral character influences their employees and even the public. Since they are regarded as "successful individuals" in the eyes of many, their words and actions have a guiding influence.

In response to these issues, many entrepreneurs have begun to reflect and turn to traditional Chinese culture for guidance, promoting Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist entrepreneurship. This shift is not about projecting an external image or acquiring a symbol of status. Instead, as the Protestant ethic suggests, it is about unifying the ultimate value with the practical value, making work an integral part of spiritual practice. The goal is not simply to work for the sake of working. Through working, one perfects their character; through being a better person, one learns to work more skillfully. For instance, to become a Buddhist entrepreneur, one must cultivate bodhicitta, and observe the Five Precepts, the Ten Good Deeds, and

even the Bodhisattva Precepts, shifting from benefiting self to benefiting others. To become a Confucian entrepreneur, one must practice the virtues of “benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness,” as well as “gentleness, kindness, respect, thrift, and humility.” In doing so, one becomes a virtuous gentleman, harmonizes the family, governs the state, and ultimately brings peace to the world.

Both Confucianism and Buddhism place great importance on altruism. Confucianism teaches the Fourfold Aspirations: “To ordain conscience for Heaven and Earth, to secure life and fortune for the people, to continue lost teachings for past sages, and to establish peace for all future generations.” And Buddhism emphasizes the Four Great Vows: “Sentient beings are countless; I vow to liberate them all. Afflictions are endless; I vow to eliminate them all. Dharma gates are boundless; I vow to master them all. The Buddha’s path is unsurpassed; I vow to attain it.” These noble spiritual pursuits not only elevate practical value toward ultimate value but also provide a

continuous source of spiritual nourishment for our work and life.

Some may worry that Buddhism, as a religious faith, might conflict with their identity. In fact, there are two ways of studying Buddhism: as a faith and as a culture. When it comes to faith, it involves who can or cannot believe. Yet, when approached as a cultural study, this question becomes irrelevant. As stated in the report at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China: “The culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics is rooted in the outstanding traditional culture of the Chinese nation, which has been nurtured over 5,000 years of civilization.” Buddhism, having flourished in China for over two thousand years, has deeply integrated with native Confucianism and Taoism, becoming one of the three main pillars of traditional culture. Without understanding Buddhism, one cannot fully grasp and inherit traditional Chinese culture.

When President Xi visited India in 2014, he delivered an

important speech titled “Joining Hands to Pursue the Dream of National Rejuvenation.” In this speech, he used the phrase “Buddhism arising in India, the Dharma flowing to China” to describe the deep cultural exchange between the two countries. He also quoted the renowned scholar Ji Xianlin, who said: “I must deeply understand Buddhism to truly comprehend Chinese culture, for Buddhism has penetrated the spiritual bloodstream of Chinese culture.”

Therefore, it is our responsibility to inherit China’s outstanding traditional culture and support the cultivation of the mind, character, and spirit of our people. As entrepreneurs, we can draw nourishment from traditional culture to enhance the quality of life and develop businesses. With a mindset of benefiting both ourselves and others, we can contribute to society’s well-being. This would truly be a blessing for all beings.

3. The Value of Spiritual Pursuit to Life

When it comes to ultimate value, we cannot separate it

from spiritual pursuit. What, then, is the spirit of the Chinese people? What is the spirit of Chinese society? What kind of character and moral cultivation should we strive to build? Does our current education system include these aspects?

We all know that products are the lifeblood of a company. High-quality products are the foundation for sustainable growth. Every day, countless products are made in this world, and people are continuously acquiring and upgrading them. But what aspect of our lives is most intimately connected to us? It is not automobiles, electronics, or even mobile phones that have almost become an extension of our bodies. Rather, it is the quality of our own lives. This quality is not something we are born with; it is shaped by our past karma and influenced by our present actions—through body, speech, and mind—which in turn decide the direction of our future lives. Therefore, we cannot leave it to chance; otherwise, its quality will not be guaranteed. To ensure this, we must understand the components of life: recognize what truly benefits the

body and mind and cultivate it; identify what harms the body and mind and resolutely eliminate it.

In Buddhism, the product of our life is the five aggregates of form, sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness. Among these, form represents the physical aspect, that is, our body. In other words, life includes but is not limited to the body. Additionally, mental activities such as feelings, thoughts, intentional mental actions, and cognition shape our lives and determine their overall quality.

Are we satisfied with this product of our life? In fact, for most people, life is often shaped by greed, aversion, and ignorance, which inevitably lead to various defilements. Therefore, this makes optimizing our lives the most important task in life; otherwise, there is no way out. Yet, this critical task is often what we neglect the most. We neither strive to understand it nor take steps to manage it. Instead, we recklessly navigate life based on our feelings. Without the guidance of the correct worldview, outlook

on life, and value, we risk repeatedly creating problems and accumulating emotional waste, leading to anxiety, depression, and other mental illnesses.

We regularly check our health, maintain our cars, and renovate our homes, yet we often overlook the importance of managing and nourishing our lives. Caring for our bodies, cars, and houses can only eliminate potential risks and extend their lifespan. But no matter how meticulously we manage them, they will only accompany us for this lifetime and inevitably follow the cycle of arising, enduring, decaying, and ceasing. However, mental strength continues to accumulate beyond death; it carries on as karma and accompanies us through lifetime after lifetime.

How do we craft the “product of life”? Eastern culture, especially the wisdom of Buddhism, can guide us because the essence of life lies in the nature of the mind. Today, many people are interested in psychology, while Buddhism has long been known as the study of the mind. It offers a thorough understanding of our mind’s nature and

practical methods to improve it. These methods are tailored to individuals with different spiritual faculties from various perspectives. In modern terms, it can be described as, “Among the 84,000 teachings, there’s always one that suits you.” These methods stem from the Buddha’s direct realization and have been repeatedly practiced and validated by his disciples for over two thousand years. They are humanity’s precious spiritual wealth and a guide to crafting a high-quality life. On the one hand, we must understand the nature of the mind through studying and reflecting on the teachings—ranging from the deluded mind to the true mind, from the conscious to the subconscious—in order to gain insight into the mind’s structure and development. On the other hand, we must master the art of calming the mind through meditation, ultimately realizing the true nature of the mind.

Since the 20th century, global development has been dominated by Western culture. Although technology is advanced and material wealth is flourishing, human

problems are growing, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find happiness. Especially with the rise of artificial intelligence, many jobs are being replaced, and some worry that AI's rapid learning abilities will entirely surpass human abilities. However, a more critical question arises: who is using AI? When people use AI to commit crimes, who will be responsible for this? If the users of these advanced technologies have unhealthy mindsets, the more developed these tools are, the more dangerous and uncontrollable the world will become. Where is the way out for humanity?

In this broader context, it is especially important to focus on self-improvement. A satisfactory quality of life is the foundation for properly using various tools—and this is exactly where Eastern culture shines. Thus, future development must focus on two aspects: learning from the strengths of Western technology while inheriting the unique value of Chinese traditional culture. By doing so, we can achieve a harmonious balance between using these tools and cultivating moral value.

II

PRACTICAL VALUE AND LONG-TERM VALUE

Before investing, people often thoroughly evaluate and direct their funds toward projects with potential, aiming to gain returns. Investing in life follows the same principle—it entails assessing what truly holds value and what is worth putting time and effort into. The practical value that people care about includes both immediate and long-term values.

1. Different Perspectives on Practical Value

From a business perspective, immediate value lies in

current profits and market share, while long-term value is achieved through sustainable business development. For individuals, the Confucian ideals of achieving the “Three Immortalities”—establishing virtues, making achievements, and leaving a legacy of words—encompasses both practical and long-term values. Additionally, as the saying goes, “A family that accumulates good deeds will enjoy lasting blessings,” highlighting how performing good deeds can bring blessings to future generations. Moreover, Confucianism aspires to “bring peace to future generations,” emphasizing long-term value through efforts to benefit posterity.

How does Buddhism view value? Many people assume that Buddhism focuses on transcending worldly concerns and disregards practical value. However, this understanding is incomplete. In fact, Buddhism encompasses three vehicles: the Human and Heavenly Vehicle, the Sravaka Vehicle, and the Bodhisattva Vehicle. Among them, the Sravaka Vehicle emphasizes renunciation, requiring one to relinquish the pursuit of fame, relationships, and

wealth. Instead, they embrace a life of simplicity and contentment, diligently cultivate the Three Trainings of precepts, concentration, and wisdom, and eliminate the Three Poisons of greed, aversion, and ignorance. To ordinary people, they seemingly do not place importance on practical value. In reality, their value lies in eliminating afflictions and perfecting their character. This not only benefits themselves but also serves as a moral and educational guide for the public. By integrating self-cultivation with spreading the Dharma, they can achieve both immediate and long-term values.

Additionally, Buddhism also includes the Human and Heavenly Vehicle and the Bodhisattva Vehicle. The Human and Heavenly Vehicle emphasizes upholding morality, cultivating compassion, fulfilling family and social responsibilities, and living harmoniously with all beings, which aligns with worldly value. What sets it apart is its higher moral standards, which are formalized into precepts to define hard points for both observance and prohibition. As for the Bodhisattva Vehicle, one must not

only achieve the wisdom and liberation of the Sravaka sages, but also embrace the responsibility to benefit all beings as an unshirkable mission.

In Buddhist precepts, the Sravaka precepts focus on refraining from evil; simply not doing bad deeds is enough. The Bodhisattva precepts, however, include the Threefold Pure Precepts: first, ceasing evil—resolutely abstaining from all bad deeds; second, cultivating goodness—actively engaging in virtuous deeds that enhance one’s character; and third, benefiting sentient beings—proactively undertaking deeds that help others, such as the Six Perfections—generosity, morality, patience, diligence, meditation, and prajna wisdom—and all altruistic deeds derived from them.

Therefore, bodhisattvas are called to perform countless altruistic deeds. In the Buddhist sutras, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva manifests in myriad forms to guide sentient beings, as it is said: “He appears in whatever form is needed to liberate those who are to be liberated.” Similarly,

Layman Vimalakirti is another prominent figure. He was not only deeply insightful in Buddhist teachings and practice but also a wealthy man, widely respected and actively engaged across all levels of society. As a layperson, he upheld the true Dharma and guided people of all ages. This shows that Buddhism places importance on worldly value as well. Although the Sravaka Vehicle focuses on personal liberation, such virtues can also transform and guide society. Building on this, the Bodhisattva Vehicle proactively takes on responsibilities, wholeheartedly working to relieve the suffering and difficulties faced by all sentient beings.

2. Integrating Short-Term Value with Long-Term Value

The relationship between short-term and long-term values requires careful consideration. Many entrepreneurs focus solely on short-term gains. In this process, many exhaust their bodies, develop negative mindsets, disrupt the peace and happiness in their families, and

create disharmony in their relationships. Some even go to any lengths to make money by breaking the law. In such cases, even if they gain some short-term benefits, they ultimately suffer long-term losses; when the bitter consequences appear, it is too late for regret.

How can we achieve long-term value while pursuing short-term gains? Buddhism teaches that morality and altruism can integrate short-term value with long-term value. The first pillar is morality. For entrepreneurs, this means abiding by the law and prioritizing trustworthiness. The law serves as the moral baseline—the basic code of conduct that must be followed. Trustworthiness, however, is the foundation of a business's growth. It fosters cohesion with employees, attracts positive connections with business partners, earns recognition and increases customer loyalty in business operations. In fact, all time-honored enterprises that have thrived for generations possess this quality.

Next is the spirit of altruism. In Mr. Inamori's management

philosophy, he emphasizes the importance of asking oneself: Is the purpose of running a business self-serving or to benefit others? Here, “others” includes the company’s executives and employees, as well as the general public. Only by running a company with a genuine, altruistic mindset can one gain greater support, inspire employees to take ownership and actively contribute to the company’s development, working together for mutual growth and shared prosperity. Conversely, if one is purely self-centered, expecting everyone to serve you, it’s difficult to win people’s hearts. Mr. Inamori’s Amoeba Management Method encourages everyone to think like a business owner and actively contribute to the organization’s success. However, the premise is that the business owner must embody the spirit of altruism. Otherwise, even the best management measures may fail to deliver meaningful results.

From the Buddhist perspective, the mental basis of altruism is compassion, which is also the source of blessings. When we embody an altruistic spirit, we naturally

build positive relationships and gain more recognition, respect, and support. Modern marketing theory also recognizes the principle of win-win outcomes: for customers and companies, customer satisfaction should come first, followed by the company's success; for employees and companies, the employee should win before the company. That is why internet companies place great importance on building relationships and accumulating networks through free services. In doing so, they provide convenience to users and also bring benefits for themselves.

In addition to morality and altruism, wisdom is essential in business operations. Especially in today's rapidly changing society and intensely competitive market, entrepreneurs must cultivate an open mindset and the willingness to learn. This involves constantly updating and improving management mechanisms to keep up with the trends and ensure the healthy development of their enterprises.

III

PRACTICAL VALUE AND ULTIMATE VALUE

When we come into this world, we are just one among more than seven billion people on Earth. From a broader perspective, Earth is just one of many planets in the solar system. In the Milky Way galaxy, there are hundreds of billions of stars like the sun. As for the entire universe, there are countless galaxies beyond measure. These discoveries confirm what the Buddha taught over two thousand years ago: the universe is filled with worlds as numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges River, countless and limitless. Moreover, they are beginningless and endless in time. Scientists believe the universe was formed by

the Big Bang 13.7 billion years ago, but from the Buddhist perspective, that is merely a single chapter in the infinite history of the cosmos.

Looking back at the vastness of the universe, we may feel the insignificance of individual existence and might even fail to find the meaning of living. If life is nothing more than a finite existence that ends at death, like a lamp extinguished, what significance does this brief lifetime hold? How is it fundamentally different from the mayfly, born in the morning and gone by evening? Fortunately, Buddhism tells us that the nature of the mind is the nature of the universe. By realizing the true nature of the mind, we can grasp the reality of the universe, transforming finite life into infinite meaning.

1. Where Do We Live?

We often assume that people live in a shared real world. However, from the Buddhist perspective, everyone lives in their small world. Life does not begin in this lifetime

but has flowed from the beginningless past to the present. Therefore, within us are various past life experiences and the mental forces shaped by them. This is what the *Surangama Sutra* calls “mental images of the past lifetimes.” Together, these elements influence our karmic system.

Now, modern VR glasses can immerse people in a virtual world. In fact, our karmic system works in much the same way. We come into this world with the karma that shapes our existence in this life, and we perceive the world through this cognitive lens. As a result, what we see is not the true nature of the world, but mental images presented within our cognitive frameworks.

So, what is the true nature of the world? Essentially, it is emptiness; however, in terms of phenomena, there are six realms: hells, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, heavenly beings, and asuras. Because of different karma or “glasses,” sentient beings perceive the world differently. Humans see the human world; animals see the animal world, and even among humans, perceptions differ from

person to person.

Traditional views see the world as an objective existence. However, the wave-particle duality in quantum mechanics tells us that the existence of matter is uncertain. In the process of cognition, we are not only observers but also participants. In other words, our cognitive system shapes the world we perceive. Nonetheless, as humans, we share a collective karma that allows us to perceive common aspects of the world, making our experiences not entirely distinct.

How can we truly understand the world? Buddhism teaches that our cognition has two levels: one is rational thinking, and the other is the inherent prajna wisdom within us. While Western philosophy values rationality, but since Kant, it has been recognized that rationality is limited and cannot reach the ultimate truth or grasp the infinite. In contrast, Buddhist practice emphasizes understanding the nature of the mind through listening, contemplation, and cultivation, thereby unlocking life's

potential for infinite wisdom. Only in this way can we perceive the truth of the universe and discover life's ultimate value.

2. Buddhism's View on Ultimate Value

What is the ultimate value? Christianity views heaven as the eternal destination and holds that only God can save humanity. However, the Buddha taught us that heaven is also temporary; when heavenly blessings are exhausted, they will once again cycle through the six realms of existence. Moreover, Buddhism does not posit a supreme deity in the universe who determines fortune and misfortune, nor does the Buddha regard himself as a savior. As a human being, he practiced and attained Buddhahood, teaching us that destiny is determined by ourselves. Everyone has the potential for enlightenment and can realize what the Buddha realized. This points us toward the ultimate value that transcends reality, which is also Buddha's greatest contribution to humanity.

However, our current education lacks emphasis on ultimate value, leading people to focus solely on practical value. The practical value often corresponds with greed, aversion, and ignorance. To maximize practical value, people may act recklessly. This is precisely the root cause of today's moral decline and ecological deterioration. Only by recognizing that practical value is not the sole value—and the ultimate value transcends it—can we cultivate a sense of awe and weigh the pros and cons from a higher perspective.

In Buddhist practice, the law of cause and effect teaches us that all evil deeds bring about suffering. At the same time, it reveals the true meaning of life, helping us loosen our attachment to practical value. Some might worry: Should we still pursue careers? In fact, non-attachment does not mean a lack of effort. As Buddhist practitioners, we should not only diligently cultivate ourselves but also serve society with an altruistic mind. With the right perspective, practical and ultimate values are not only harmonious but mutually enhancing. As the *Lotus Sutra*

says, “All means of livelihood are not contrary to the ultimate reality.” In other words, all our legitimate work aligns with the highest truth of the universe and life.

How can we connect practical value with ultimate value, transforming the business world into a place of spiritual cultivation? The key lies in integrating the mundane with the supermundane, life and death with nirvana, and afflictions with enlightenment. This involves recognizing that each phenomenon in the present moment embodies the inherent emptiness. In the Sravakayana practice, one must leave the mundane world to eliminate afflictions and attain enlightenment. However, in the Bodhisattva path, by realizing the empty nature of this mundane world, we can remain supermundane while engaging with the mundane world, like a lotus that emerges unstained from the mud. Though we handle countless affairs daily, we do not become attached to them; our mind is as vast as the void, leaving no trace.

3. Returning to the Pure Mind

The mind operates on two levels. The first is the level of thoughts, like clouds that come and go, constantly changing. The other is the level of emptiness, which is the mind's original state. Thoughts are merely manifestations arising from conditions without any roots. However, when we remain caught in our thoughts, our emotions and ideas become our entire world. Therefore, it is necessary to step out of our thoughts and return to the true mind, boundless like the void. From this state, we can observe our thoughts without being disturbed by their fluctuations. Similarly, when we align ourselves with the ultimate value, we free ourselves from the constraints of practical value.

How do we establish a connection with ultimate value? The Bodhisattva path involves generating bodhicitta, which has two aspects: one is awakening, and the other is benefiting others. These are also the mindsets realized by buddhas and bodhisattvas. The Buddha, as the

Awakened One, embodies complete, ultimate, and perfect awakening, while delusion is the opposite to this awakening. Buddhism holds that the difference between ordinary beings and buddhas is characterized by delusion and enlightenment. Delusion arises from ignorance, preventing us from clearly seeing our true selves and the true nature of the world. Therefore, every being has many delusions—not knowing who we are, where life comes from, or where death leads. As mentioned earlier, we view the world through VR glasses of karma, believing what we see is real. This fosters attachment, which in turn gives rise to greed and aversion, ultimately creating karma and afflictions.

The Buddha taught us that everyone carries a lamp of wisdom within. When this lamp is lit, we can return to the pure mind and unlock the endless treasures inherent in life. Just as the *Platform Sutra* teaches: “The self-nature of Bodhi is originally pure; simply use this mind to directly attain Buddhahood.” Therefore, awakening is the core value of Buddhism, and also the ultimate value of life.

In early Confucian thought, theories about the nature of the mind were relatively weak. The *Analects* mainly focused on practical guidance of cultivating morality and conducting oneself. It was not until the rise of Neo-Confucianism during the Song and Ming Dynasties that the nature of the mind began to receive significant attention, expanding discussions from the human mind to the universal principle, from the human way to the heavenly way, and from human nature to innate nature.

Moreover, ordinary people's deluded perceptions, stemming from ignorance, give rise to various afflictions and sufferings. Therefore, Wang Yangming introduced the concept of "realizing moral consciousness." In his early years, he was guided by some Chan masters and influenced by Buddhist teachings on mind-nature. Although he also criticized Buddhism, his criticism was mainly towards the state of the Buddhist community at the time. As Chan Buddhism flourished and people studying Buddhism retreated to the mountains and forests, it gave people the impression of a passive retreat from worldly

affairs. Therefore, Wang Yangming combined the Buddhist theory of mind-nature with Confucian ethics and social responsibility, believing that this approach aligned with the Middle Way. In fact, he did not fully grasp Buddhism because he failed to see the profound and positive significance of the teachings on bodhicitta.

4. From Benefiting Others to the Infinite

Beyond awakening, another aspect of bodhicitta is benefiting others, which is the pathway that directs practical value toward ultimate value. Altruism in Buddhism isn't just about doing some good deeds; it's about cultivating the great compassion exemplified by Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. The standard here is to harbor compassion for all sentient beings, with no exception. Otherwise, it wouldn't be the perfect compassion of a bodhisattva.

Take, for example, the Great Action of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. He is called "Great Action" because every action he takes is infinite, and those he benefits are

also infinite. It's akin to running a business: an ordinary person may feel satisfied running one or two companies, but some international chains have thousands or even tens of thousands of outlets. From a worldly perspective, this is also a kind of great action. However, even such achievement is far from comparable to the vows and deeds of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra.

In the *Ten Great Vows of Samantabhadra Chapter of the Avatamsaka Sutra*, the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra's ten great vows are expounded: The first is to venerate all buddhas; The second is to praise the Tathagatas; The third is to cultivate the giving of offerings; The fourth is to repent unwholesome karma; The fifth is to rejoice in others' virtues; The sixth is to turn the Dharma wheel; The seventh is to plead buddhas to remain in the world; The eighth is to follow buddhas' path; The ninth is to accommodate and benefit all sentient beings; The tenth is to share merits universally. From the perspective of cultivation, these ten vows are quite ordinary and not special. Why are they revered as the "King of Vows"? It is

because each of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra's vows is established upon infinite objects of focus, encompassing all buddhas and sentient beings throughout the entire Dharma Realm and the void—in the ten directions and three times—infinite across both space and time.

The Ten Great Vows include striving for Buddhahood and liberating sentient beings. Among them, accommodating and benefiting all sentient beings is the key. As the *Practices and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabha Sutra* states: “To ‘accommodate and benefit all sentient beings’ means that I will, in all realms of existence throughout the Dharma Realm and the realm of the void, across the seas of worlds in the ten directions, serve all sentient beings of various kinds—those born from eggs, wombs, moisture, or transformation; those dependent on earth, water, fire, or wind for survival; those dwelling in space or relying on plants and trees. Those living beings of various kinds—with different physical forms, shapes, appearances, lifespans, races, names, mentalities, views, desires, intentions and actions, manners, clothing, and

food; those dwelling in various villages, towns, cities, palaces, up to all the eight groups of spiritual beings¹, humans and non-humans alike; those without feet, with two feet, four feet, or many feet; those with form, without form, with thought, without thought, neither with thought nor without thought. For all these beings, I will serve and accommodate them, providing various services and offerings, respecting them as I would my parents, and honoring them as I would my teachers and elders, up to the Arhats and even the Tathagatas, without any difference. For those suffering from illnesses, I will be a good physician; for those who have lost their way, I will show the right path; in the darkness of night, I will be light; for the poor and destitute, I will reveal hidden treasures. In this way, the bodhisattva equally benefits all sentient beings.” It is evident that the practice of “accommodating and benefiting all sentient beings” involves generating equal loving-kindness and compassion to all sentient

1. These beings are usually present at convocations of Mahayana Sutras: deva, naga, yaksa, gandharva, asura, garuda, kimnara and mahoraga. They are all considered to be protectors of the Buddha Dharma.

beings. Embracing this infinite altruism enables our mind to return to the infinite, thereby realizing the ultimate value of life.

Each vow in the *Practices and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Sutra* concludes with a profound pledge: “Even if the realm of the void were to end, the realms of sentient beings were to end, the karma of sentient beings were to end, and the afflictions of sentient beings were to end, my vows would still never end, continuing thought after thought without even an instant of ceasing. And my actions of body, speech, and mind will never grow weary.” The void cannot come to an end, nor can sentient beings, their karma, or their afflictions. But even if these impossibilities were to become possible, the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra’s vows and practices remain endless. It’s truly awe-inspiring!

That’s why I regard the *Practices and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Sutra* as “the supreme contemplation of bodhicitta, the method of emulating the buddha’s

qualities”—using our mind to emulate the buddha’s virtues. Why is this emulation possible? Because the mind itself is infinite; it’s only due to self-attachment that we impose narrow preconceptions and oppositions. By focusing on infinite objects, we can dissolve these preconceptions and allow the mind to return to its infinite nature.

When we cultivate such vows and nurture broad-mindedness, our mind will fully open and resonate with the infinity of the universe. The reason most people struggle to generate bodhicitta is that their mind is narrow, only able to embrace a limited number of beings. If we constantly use ourselves as a reference point and view the world through our own feelings, we will inevitably fail to see all beings equally, instead making distinctions between closeness and distance, likes and dislikes. By contemplating the *Practices and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Sutra*, we can fully open our mind and experience its infinite nature. With this infinite mind, equality and compassion naturally arise in our actions.

In summary, generating bodhicitta connects our actions to the ultimate value. With such an altruistic mind, all good deeds not only carry practical value but also guide us toward a higher ultimate value. Even everyday activities like dressing and eating are elevated, because, guided by bodhicitta, everything becomes nourishment on the path to enlightenment. As entrepreneurs, by embodying this insight and aspiration, we can achieve business success while improving our quality of life. At the same time, we can benefit our employees and customers, and contribute to society with our abilities and achievements.

5. Mindfulness Training

Besides generating aspirations, we must also learn how to use our mind—bringing mindfulness into everything we do. If generating aspirations sets the direction, then mindfulness ensures we take each step properly on our journey forward. Mindfulness training mainly involves two aspects: concentration and clear awareness.

In today's world of instant communication, we are constantly bombarded with information, making it difficult to concentrate. This restlessness often leaves us unknowingly distracted and controlled by external stimuli, which has become the norm. When the mind is unsettled, our thinking slows down, impacting work efficiency and creativity. It is like a computer with outdated hardware running too many programs at once—it slows down or even crashes. Meditation, however, helps us bring our mind back to the present moment through concentration. Though facing many tasks, if we focus on one task at a time, our thoughts won't scatter, and our energy won't be drained by endless distractions.

In addition, we need to clear the viruses from our mind regularly. Just as computer viruses can crash a system, it is the same with life. Ordinary beings are plagued by various afflictions, all rooted in the three poisons of greed, aversion, and ignorance. Without remedy, the body, speech, and mind will unknowingly be infected by these viruses. They can also self-replicate, entering our

words, actions, and thoughts. As a result, they cause us to carry various negative emotions when we act or think. This, in turn, intensifies the viruses.

Therefore, we must recognize which mental states produce viruses. Only by seeing the truth clearly can we proactively guard against them. Furthermore, activating our inner antivirus software through meditation is essential. By cultivating concentration, we can maintain awareness of our mental activities, knowing what is happening in our mind at any moment. Usually, we are unaware of these mental activities, like a pool of muddy water where nothing is clear, and our actions are driven by fleeting feelings. However, when the mind settles—not dwelling on the past or the future, nor wandering aimlessly, but fully abiding in the present moment—we become fully aware of everything in our body and mind. This clear awareness is our inner antivirus software and the key to unlocking infinite wisdom.

Today, I talked about the connection between Mahayana

Buddhism and the spiritual development of entrepreneurs—a profound and multifaceted topic. I mainly explored it from the perspectives of cultural heritage and the cultivation of personal morality and conduct. I hope everyone can gain a deeper understanding of how practical value, long-term value, and ultimate value are connected. Through this understanding, we can set meaningful goals and act with altruism and mindfulness. With this foundation, everything we do can help us cultivate compassion, unlock wisdom, and improve our quality of life. This approach not only helps us achieve practical value but also directs us toward long-term and ultimate values.

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。

“静心学堂丛书”呈现了禅意生活、智慧人生的部分课程。我们衷心希望，更多人由此了解生命觉醒的教育，共享东方智慧给人类带来的福祉。

Mindful Peace International & Mindful Peace Academy

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.

本书由善信

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