

# On Buddhist Meditation and Human Development

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More than 2500 years ago, Prince Siddhartha was spending 49 days practicing his deep continual meditation, and then he gained great enlightenment. Since then, his teaching of dharma has been spread over the world and has brought profits for the human.

Making mention of Buddhism is talking about the way to experience meditation, the way to gain Wisdom, the way to free us from sufferings, and the way to sublimate the human.

Wisdom born by meditation  
Without meditation, no wisdom  
One way with two directions  
To being, and non-being  
Making efforts yourselves  
To grow your wisdom  
Dhp. 282

I would like to present the benefits Buddhist meditation has brought for human life.

## 1. Daily meditation

In the hurried life, in the busy world, people have to cope with serious problems. We are always in a hurry. When the economy grows fast, it brings us more and more materials that satisfy our necessary needs at once. However, the world of material is also pushing back the world of spirits. That makes unbalance in our life. Stressed and unsafe feelings come from this unbalance. Happiness does not mean that you have enough material but also need to satisfy psychological needs. Meditation is the key to reach and maintain this balance in life. We cannot deny the importance of material world with extreme views, but what we need is the balance between the two extremes - the world of material and the world of spirit. To do this, the Buddha advised to practise meditation.

Simply we can practise meditation in our daily life by walking, standing, sitting and lying in mindfulness and self-possession also called awakening. Awakening is really to know what we are doing at the moment, to aware of each pulse of life. Awakening is the source of happiness. Without awakening, demolishment and unsafely seem appear permanently. Without awakening, people will lose themselves in reality, and that is regrettable loss. Without awakening, our activities cannot happily be performed, we cannot not enjoy our meals, we cannot sleep well either. That is to lose one's self in reality, and everything demolishes.

The greatest desire of man is to reach happiness and hold the truth. Happiness is here at the present time, at this moment here. We are happy in activities in our daily life that is current pleasure, one manner of Buddhist Meditation. A Zen Master of Vietnam, Tue Trung Thuong Si, once said:

Walking or sitting is meditating

In flaming fire appears a lotus

However, the ultimate goal of awakening is to keep our mind calm (Upeka), and is to reflect deeply on ourselves, on our thoughts and on our feelings with calm mind. Therefore, we calmly hear, see, feel everything, and mindfully deal with the external world. Mindfulness can stop stirred state, win the anger. Meditation Practice is to awake modern men, and to help them build a real happy life. Meditation Practice is best way to be able to cure mental and psychological diseases of this age and also is an effective solution to balance our material and mental life. Buddhist teaching says, 'Your mind is peaceful, the world is peaceful, too.'

We can affirm that the happy road by Buddhist meditation practice leads to freedom from suffering, based on mindfulness and self-possession. The one who has mindfulness and self-possession, calmness is happy. Calmness brings happiness. Present happiness, deciding factor of happiness in future, is the main support for man's ambition in discovery.

## **2.-Meditation in scientific creation**

In Buddhist monasteries, in order to help Zen practitioner to gain enlightenment, Zen masters used to present various methods. These methods called 'Kong an' mainly help trainees to control their mind. With the 'Kong an', trainees have to think deeply of it in order to discover something beyond the 'Kong an'. It is one of skillful ways to concentrate, as mentioned in a Zen book, 'Everything is successful when concentration is done.' So it is possible to say meditation is concentration.

In Buddhist Meditation and Modern Science, The Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso wrote. "Traditional Buddhist Meditation can help with development of scientific researches by suggesting various ways, to train mind, concerning a soft yielding brain." Mind training is mind control. Enlightenment based on mind training -a new road of spirit - is open to human being. That is mind control. We can see the evidence in the two scientists' invention, Acsimet and Newton.

Once the scientist, Acsimet was assigned to find out the weight of gold and silver concluded in a crown but he was not allowed deforming the crown. In order to solve this difficult problem, Acsimet concentrated his mind to think in every single moment, even in his every step. His high concentration was being performed while walking, standing, lying and sitting. Finally, he discovered the truth when he was dipping himself in a bath. He was so excited that he got out of the bath, with no clothes on, he ran in to the street shouting, 'Ekeura, ekeura... (found. found...). Everyone thought he was crazy because they did not know why. This was the state of non-self. The state left love and hate, anger and greed and so on... in this state no thoughts came out. Zen tradition usually mentions this state. This happened in a wink, but it was a result of long deep concentration – Thank to the long deep concentration, Ascimet found out the truth named after him.

As in Newton's discover, he saw an apple falling down to the ground while he was resting in a mock behind his house. He asked himself why the apple fell down, why it did not go up to the sky. He gave himself a quiz. Then he concentrated thinking over it. Finally, the theory of gravity was found.

Mind concentration is a method to practise meditation. When this method is well-practised, success will be gained – Mind concentration is the best way to succeed in solving problems. When doing a research on the brain of a Buddhist monk who was meditating, Doctor Andrew Newberg took an X-ray on a Tibet monk's brain after he had remained in mediation. He found out a strange thing and went to a conclusion that, 'When

their feelings to the world of spirit become strong and clear, they can realize this world more exactly than our scientific consideration.'

Zen Masters practise meditation to gain enlightenment to free themselves, scientific researchers need mind concentration like mediation to achieve their goals if they know to apply it.

### **3.-Meditaion in Cultural Art**

Buddhist meditation can arouse creation potential of the art. That is why it attracts many European and Asian artists' interest all over the world.

Meditation is a psychic skill that strengthens the insight into the nature of art and creative activities. In the history, the creative activities are not strange to the West, but they have never taken a part in the consistent tradition on meditation. Famous people such as Platon, Goethe, Schiller, Schilling, and Hopling showed their own feelings completely according to the theory of meditation. However, they personally gave their own words; they did not know that they had made a contribution to the general tradition of meditation.

Zen techniques in Buddhism have something similar to principles of art creation. Many Zen Masters are also artists. Both Zen Masters and Masters of Art had methods to train their spirit. Thank to this spirit practice, their creative potential arose. Cézanne said, 'Your success is the result of disciplines of sight, training your eyes avoids abstracting of mind and consciousness, and help you have true feelings when you face nature, so you can see the reality.' A famous Chinese poet, To Dong Pha, stated, 'In order to be able to draw a bamboo, you must become a bamboo first.' According to Zen tradition, looking at something with its own nature, or when subject and object are in one is called Harmony Rhythm of Mind. When mind and object are in one, the boundary between them does not exist any more, and then the door of creation opens.

This concept is more clearer in the picture, 'Nine-year Wall-Facing', which symbolizes a precious lesson of Maha Traditional Meditation. Wall-Facing is not the normal way to look at something; this method is to reflect on mind to see the ultimate truth – the deepest point in mind – the non-dual look. The Patriarch Dharma taught Hue Kue :

Leaving all the outer relationship  
No thoughts inside  
Mind as the wall  
Possible reaching the path

Artists have the same look, when it happens in the moment, their mind become sublimated uncannily. They reach the state with no-thoughts, non-ego. The state is called Satory by Japanese Zen Masters. Most of the perfect works was born in such a moment and they survive forever. Zen Master, Suzuki once declared, ' Man is a thinking reed, His great career is just completed when he has no thoughts or he reckon nothing. Man thinks but does not reckon. His thoughts like a heavy rain fall down from the sky. His thinking works as waves dance on the surface of oceans. His thoughts are as bright as shining stars in the dark sky. His thinking like a young bud exposures itself in the spring breeze. He is a rain, he is a sea, and he is a leaf, indeed.'

Meditation is not separated from the daily life. Meditation is always with man, it permanently flows inside man, and it sublimates man. Meditation grows life of spirit, and it develops the ability of invention, discovery and creativity to serve man's life. Hereby we have to know how to apply mediation to real daily life. To apply meditation to like means to balance life. It means that we can not neglect spirit life, and just care for material life.

Otherwise, we will go out of the orbit, and finally we will separate ourselves from the social environment.