

EPIISODE 1

“Walking in this Mundane World at Ease”

“This practice is on how to train the six sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. If we can restrain and discipline our six senses, our emotions will be pacified effortlessly.”

Question 1:

A person depicted in a short film relieved his anxieties by shouting aloud on the seashore. Grand Master, “Is this a good way to manage our emotions?”

The Grand Master’s Dharma Talk in Response:

The man in the film gave vent to his stress by shouting. This is not true relief. If you do not solve the problem at its root, it will come back again... and never end.

The right solution is to uproot the problem. In Buddha Dharma, the fundamental way is to moderate our body and mind suitably. If we know how to harmonize our body and mind, to pacify our mind, we are on the way to attaining a virtuous and saintly state. There is a well-known verse in Buddha’s teaching: “The fool adjusts the body, the wise one adjusts the mind.” Those who adjust the body only, and not the mind, are ordinary people. Those who adjust the mind, and not the body, are wise and virtuous people.

Once upon a time, Shakyamuni Buddha took walking meditation outside the monastery. He saw a practitioner on the riverbank who looked restless. He asked him several questions: “Is anything bothering you? When did you become an ordained monk? And... How long have you been practicing?”

The monk replied “I have been ordained for more than twenty years and I feel ashamed. Although I have been practicing for so long, my mind is not pacified, I still feel restless. World Honored One, please teach me how to ease my mind.”

While they were talking, a turtle crawled up on the riverbank. A fox, hunting for food at the same time, went after this turtle. As soon as the turtle detected the fox, it immediately withdrew its head, tail, and then its four feet. The fox sniffed the rigid dome-shaped shell and left.

The Buddha used this scene as an analogy, “Look! This turtle protected its own life by withdrawing its head, tail and feet. It is the same in our practice. We have many deluded and wandering thoughts. We have feelings of gain and loss. We are unaware of the right direction. Our mind may feel restless and desolate. Focus on the cultivation of the six sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. Restrain and discipline the six senses and our mind will be pacified effortlessly. “

Question 2:

Is this way of managing your emotions consistent with Buddhist Chan practices?

The Grand Master's Dharma Talk in Response:

When our minds are vexed, our bodies act blindly without forethought. In Buddhism, to attain deep meditation (Dhyana), there are three principles: To uphold the pure precepts, to deeply believe in causality and to realize our original mind.

First: To uphold the pure precepts. If everyone upholds the precepts and purifies the karma of body, speech, and mind, their spoken words will be thoughtful and wise. Simultaneously, there will be no improper bodily karma.

Second: To deeply believe in causality. Understanding the principle of cause and effect eliminates wrongdoings.

Third: To realize our original mind. If we acknowledge everyone has the Buddha mind, we will peacefully dwell in this awareness. This means you will no longer cling to circumstances and body and mind will be at rest.

What is the original mind? It is a clear mind, a focused mind, a pure mind. Our original mind, our peaceful mind, our awakened mind, is like a mirror. It is still water, always both calm and reflective.

Question 3:

In our ordinary life, how do we avoid being affected by external circumstances?

The Grand Master's Dharma Talk in Response:

“Walking is Chan! Sitting is Chan!” Whether we walk, stand, sit or even lay down, the mind must not be scattered. Maintain awareness at every moment.

Be the master of your mind. Wherever you are, your mind should be centered there, fully engaged. When you are working, the mind is working. When you are chanting the sutra, the mind is chanting the sutra. When you are meditating, the mind is meditating. There can be no second thoughts; only the single focused mind can accomplish this. When your mind is centered you will know that “Walking is Chan” and “Sitting is Chan”. With a centered mind you can accomplish anything: students can complete their studies. Workers can succeed in their careers. Practitioners who focus on pure practice can attain enlightenment.