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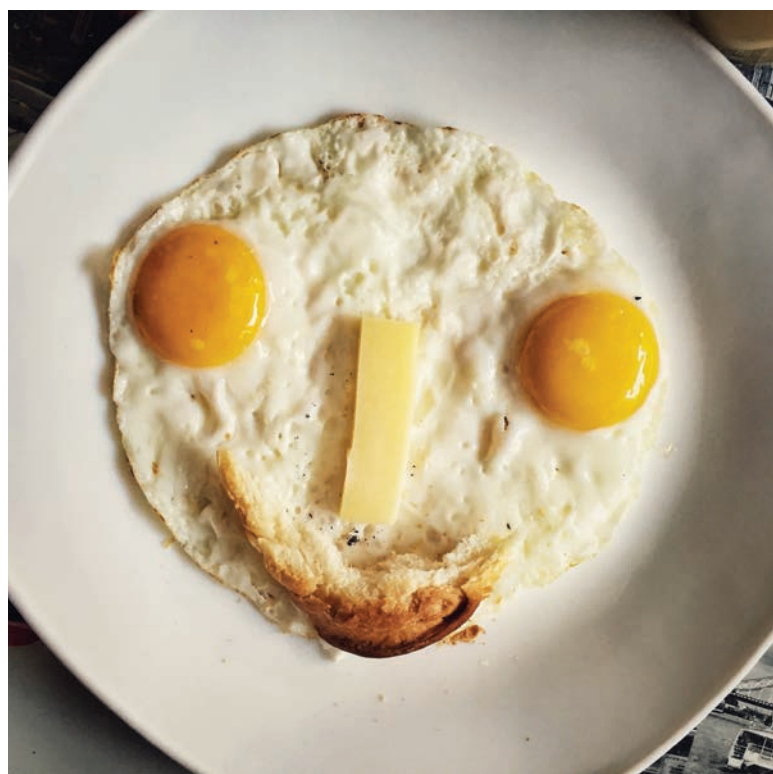
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# JOY OF LIVING

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## 編者話

# EDITOR'S NOTE

何曼盈 Tina Ho

香港一向有「美食天堂」的美譽，為本地市民及外國旅遊人士提供五花八門的美食佳餚。然而，我們能否真正品嚐到各種美食的風貌和精湛的廚藝呢？還是狼吞虎嚥地吃過便算？在進食的同時，有否嘗試過把覺知也帶入當中，從而令我們生活中「吃」的環節更豐富？

現時有很多人喜歡品嚐咖啡，在這一期刊中，我們訪問了一位台灣的咖啡師，她年輕時曾患上癌症，但透過寫食誌，見到自己進食的習性，並由吃入手，讓身體健康起來，更感受到生命的自由。在她十多歲時，遇上了一段不尋常的經歷。透過一個競選，她有幸接受了由日本咖啡專業提供的「修煉」，年紀輕輕的她，經歷了兩年禪修式的特訓，每天透過覺知能力的修煉和開展，把心與外境調整至完全相融和合，學習到真正意識各種咖啡中的每個層次。2013年，她獲台中菩薩寺的邀請，為德囑中心的同學展示了一次寶貴的「咖啡禪」，實在令我們大開眼界！今年我們中心的義工薛同學更向她拜師學藝，在雜誌裡他也分享了他這段日子的心路歷程。

畢竟學習把心敞開並不是一朝一夕的事情，當中涉及技巧和自心兩方面。正如禪修大師詠給·明就仁波切所說：「想找出對自己最有效的技巧，唯一的方法就是通過嘗試與錯誤。」仁波切更指出，「技巧本身並不重要，重要的是學到如何安住自心——跟心互動，而不是被心牽動。」因此，禪修不再只是坐在座墊上的打坐，而是要做到「將禪修運用到日常生活上，任何日常活動都可以是禪修的機會。」中國的禪師常言道：「饑來則食，困來即眠。」吃飯、睡覺都成為禪修的助緣，是我們每天的功課。

美國華盛頓州舍衛精舍修道院的創始人和住持確諱法師指出禪修的內涵，除了能夠引導我們「專注於我們當下正在做甚麼」之外，「更給我們機會從而創造悟道的因緣」，「並非只是為了稍縱即逝的一刻享樂」。她教導我們如何透過進食，產生一顆善心，如何與眾生互動，如何從中了解生命真實的狀態。這些都可以從「吃在當下」的基礎上，更全面開展我們珍貴的覺知。

「覺知幫助事情保持簡單」，這是這期封面故事的總結。我們有否覺察到當我們經歷了一些日子後，思想便變得愈來愈複雜。只要細心看一看每天吃的是什麼，以及進食的習慣，便不難見到自己是如何看待自己。我們有否真正關心自己呢？與身體最密切的關係——健康，我們又能夠真正明白多少？覺知所扮演的角色是什麼？近年香港流行了「綠色」意識，這原本是一件好事，但在某些人的內心，卻產生了「吃素與非吃素」的對立，我們可以如何回應？文中便有一個很踏實的答案，請大家細味。

Hong Kong is known for its good eating, offering tourists and locals alike a variety of fine cuisines and street food. But when we eat, how much of this good food do we really taste? Or do we usually wolf down our meals to get to the next thing on our to-do list? Are we ever aware of what we are doing as we eat? Awareness can transform eating – something we do every day – into a richer experience.

There are many coffee connoisseurs among us today. In this issue of the magazine, we interviewed an experienced barista from Taichung, Taiwan, who spoke about how a bout of cancer in her early years made her realise the importance of being aware of our food habits. In her teens, she won herself the opportunity to train with a Japanese coffee company to be a coffee blender. The two years of sensory training, akin to awareness training, opened up her mind not only to the world of coffee, but also herself. In 2013, she treated a group of Tergar students from around Asia to a session of "coffee meditation", at the invitation of Taichung's IBS temple. It was an eye-opener. For a few months starting late last year, one of Tergar's volunteers, Andrew Sit, apprenticed himself at her cafe in Taichung, and he shares his experience in this issue too.

Nurturing an open mind takes time. There are numerous techniques that can help us to recognise our awareness, and it's important to find the one that suits us. Meditation master Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche says often, the only way to find the technique that works best for us is through trial and error. "The most important thing is to learn how to rest your mind – to work with it instead of being worked by it," he says in his book, *The Joy of Living*. This is why it is important to bring meditation – the practice of recognising our awareness – into our daily life, so that every moment provides an opportunity for waking up to our innate ability. As the Chinese meditation masters of the past liked to say: "Eat when you're hungry, sleep when you're tired." We don't lack for opportunities to practise.

In this issue, the Venerable Thubten Chodron of the Washington-based Sravasti Abbey also shared her teaching on how mindful eating can lead us onto the path towards awakening. "Buddhist meditation is much more than just paying attention to what we are doing in the present moment," she says. "It is concerned with understanding the nature of the mind." Through reflection, we can be guided towards a compassionate heart and an accurate understanding of life.

Finally, the cover story also touches on the importance of being aware of the thinking and emotions behind our eating habits. Have our relationships with food and eating become more complicated over the years? What do these habits reveal about the way we see ourselves? And what do we really understand by health? In recent years, more and more people are concerned about what they eat, and many are choosing to go meat-free. For some, this has become a badge of exclusion, one more reason to build walls, rather than dismantle them. How do we navigate this mass of information about what to eat and what not to eat? Read on.

(Translated from Chinese)

# 滋味人生

撰文 陳旨均 翻譯 馮光至 攝影 林偉雄

當今各類的資訊中，充斥了健康與飲食的建議，  
有些更互相矛盾，令到進食從沒如此複雜過。  
我們是否對此想得太多了？



中秋節是最適宜相聚的節日。有甚麼比聚餐慶祝更合宜？於是我們眾人——我的芭蕾舞班同學和我——決定轉轉口味，沒有在練舞室內大搖大擺假裝跳舞，而是坐在一間泰國餐廳內，準備進食。

點菜的任務落在我身上，而我挑選的菜式豐富多樣。然而，當食物開始滿佈桌上時，我才發覺我們當中有一人是暫時吃素，另有幾位是盡量不吃煎炸食物，還有兩人在晚餐時段是不吃米飯，最後有一人是無法忍受「鮮魚的魚腥味」。原來我們所有人對食物都有偏見，包括我自己。（最近我邀請朋友到我家燒烤，但忘記告訴他們是沒有肉類的。）

我們每個人對食物和進食都有點意見，其他人看來也許覺得可笑或迂腐，有時我們自己也有同感。他們大多只是對食物有所偏好，而在能夠提供眾多選擇的社會中，並不構成問題——至少在大多數時候如此。但當我們同時擔憂健康和環境的可持續性時，情況便變得複雜，更不用說有些人是為了身體、形象等問題而掙扎著。

《紐約時報》專欄作家羅渣·柯恩（Roger Cohen）有一次在其專欄中談到美國人對無麩質飲食的著迷。他發現全球中產人士對形形色色的食物過敏已達到「近乎疫症的地步」；而「食物過敏激增」的一個特點是它與現今城市文化的自戀似乎有關聯。他指出：「現今流行『自我』文化，而有一項特殊的飲食要求就是令自己感到與眾不同的方式。」

這令我聯繫到我們的食物揭露了我們是個怎麼樣的人。我無意對各種最新流行的飲食和健康風尚進行辯論，指出它是對還是錯，又或者指出咖啡其實對我們是好還是壞；我卻有興趣知道的是：我們的食物和飲食習慣揭示我們如何看待自己。再者，它亦揭示了我們對健康有些甚麼觀念？事實上，我們對「健康」的真正理解是甚麼？

問題的重點是飲食背後的心理世界。用這樣的字眼表達，會令人想起精神病和心理失調。試試在互聯網上搜尋「飲食與心理」，你

便會發覺一堆有關飲食失調的網站和文章連結。但飲食應當是人類的基本需要，那麼一個普通人在這方面的心靈地圖應是怎麼樣呢？

## 了解問題根源

首先，我們得承認我們有點迷惘。誠然，關於食物和飲食的任何層面，我們都不愁沒有資訊，它們很容易得到：從如何烹調出最鬆軟的烙餅，到剝掉洋蔥皮的最好方法；從有關辣椒益處的最新研究，到過量進食魚類引致破壞生態平衡的辯論。然而，正因為那麼多知識只需點擊滑鼠便能得到，我們都應接不暇。被忠告不斷轟炸，而當中有很多更是互相矛盾，那麼關注健康的人應當怎麼辦呢？

有一位朋友覺得自己隨時會投降。他竭盡所能地令自己健康，但同時擔心會作出錯誤的選擇。他不斷竭力地減磅，因而勤力地做運動，並當心自己的飲食。他極度愛吃，卻努力壓抑，當屈服於慾望時便感到內疚。他的困境，在香港這個都市並不罕見，很多人覺得政府提倡的「健康飲食、運動」是他們能力以外的事，原因在於儘管他們十分關注自己的健康，甚至會因而感到不安，但他們實在沒有時間兼顧。

飲食為何會變得如此複雜？為了找出答案，我請教了我的禪修同學——臨牀心理學家林莉蓉，請她談談思維與食物之間的關係。她指出，兩者關係十分密切。「身為心理學家，我會約見有飲食失調的病人，從他們身上，我立即會看到思維與食物之間的關係。我們對食物的思想和情緒會深深影響著我們。有些人更對飲食感到害怕或內疚。以一杯可樂為例。它會令一些人思想太多——『我應否喝它？若我喝它後發胖怎麼辦？有太多糖份了！』但我們大多數人只需決定是否喝它而已。」

這樣想得太多，是否算是現代人的通病？「這難以一概而論，但我覺得可以說，很多人都喜歡分析事情卻忽略了他們的感受，又或是他們根本不知道關注自己的情緒是重要的。」

莉蓉並說：「我們每天都經驗到很多情緒，但並非任何時間都覺知到它們。我們有些人根本不意識到情緒與我們的思想和行為是息息相關的。」

這實在可惜，皆因我們的覺知是個寶藏。莉蓉本身是位禪修者，一直提倡生活要有多點覺知。「我們正念地吃東西，已帶來天淵之別。憑著覺知，我們往往會更加放鬆，更能享受和感激食物。然而更有甚者，任何形式的禪修——不管是對於我們的呼吸、走路還是這兒提到的保持飲食正念——都可以幫助我們認識自己的覺知。我們一旦變得更擅於認識它，我們便會開始善用它來觀照我們在生活中究竟發生了甚麼事。慢慢地，憑著不斷修行，我們覺知到的不止是我們的感官，還有我們的思想和情緒，進而覺知到我們根深蒂固的觀念與價值觀。」

## 當下了了分明

你可能會問：那又如何？覺知到我們的思想、情緒、價值，如何真正幫助我們面對煩惱？

在禪修練習中，初學者需要把他們的心安住在當下，又或是一個物件或知覺，然後只需容許任何要發生的事物出現。練習的目的，並非要嘗試壓抑或改變我們的思想和情緒。但假若我們並非要嘗試改變我們的不良思維或不快情緒，那禪修究竟有何益處？

我發覺其中一個益處，就是它讓我不再那麼認真對待自己的思想和情緒，我因而變得不再那麼不知所措。簡單地專注於思想與情緒可以幫助我明白到，我和它們並非二合為一。這便給予了我一點喘息空間，讓我考慮應當如何行動，不再那麼容易反應過大。

再者，在禪修時，我們採取不判斷的態度。這種心靈開放的取態，幫助我們得到一個更整全的見解，看到我們的思想和情緒是如何出現——不只是見到形成它們的主因與助緣，還有我們在過程中作出的選擇。這種洞悉可以有很大裨益。當我們看到觀念和情緒原來不是



那麼理所當然，我們便不會對它們那麼執著。在《綠野仙蹤》的故事中，當桃麗絲最後遇見那位神秘而威力強大的「奧茲國的魔法師」，發覺他其實只是一個懂得一點機器操作的中年男人而已時，他因而不再令她那麼心往神馳了。

禪修可以幫助我們駕馭自己，但這不是一蹴而就的事。我們需要耐心，以及願意對我們的經驗保持開放的心，並利用所得的經驗來利益眾生。

## 一切回歸自心

我們所做一切關於食物的行為，都提供大好機會讓我們檢視自己的經驗，原因在於進食是我們每天都要做數次的事。每一個人似乎有一個值得訴說的食物故事。

我邀請德噶禪修中心的一位同學陳妙娟訴說她的食物故事：她本是素食者，現在只間中素食。原來有一次，她與幾位佛教朋友吃晚飯，他們點菜中選擇了一些肉類食品，她因而非常憤怒。她當時是個素食者，覺得吃肉有違佛陀的慈悲教誨。她說：「我對雅諦喇嘛說出了自己的感受，他當時的說話幫助我以另一個方式看待這件事。」雅諦喇嘛是德噶香港禪修中心的住持，他告訴她，這一切可歸結為「習性」。「他對我說：『妳感到憤怒，是因為妳跟朋友有不同的習性。妳的習性是不吃肉，他們的習性是吃肉。這只是心的習性而已。』他的話我當時並未完全明白，但已啟發了我。他主要是說——那也沒甚麼大不了，只是心的習性而已。」

妙娟現在採取一個較靈活的態度，有甚麼便吃甚麼。「若我可以選擇，我便挑選當時想吃的東西。否則，我便有甚麼便吃甚麼，又或因應場合需要。」這樣，我們與食物的關係便會變得更簡單直接。

可以說，對一樣食物或一個飲食習性產生執著或嗔恨，都對我們的健康有害處，若它牽引出很多痛苦情緒便更甚。因此，若我們發

覺自己經常只顧著我們怎麼吃、何時吃、吃甚麼，便是時候開始留意我們的心思意念了。根深蒂固的情緒，例如缺乏自信或憤怒，有時會埋藏在我們的內心深處，當我們遇到難關時，它們便會被勾起。

德噶禪修中心的另一位同學阿拔（化名），他可能是因為壓力太大，再加上最初跡象並不明顯，他因而沒有察覺到他的消化系統出現問題。當他開始察覺到問題出現時，他歸咎於飲食習慣，認為某些食物導致他消化不良。他開始不吃它們，而且愈來愈留心自己吃甚麼。但身體疼痛和不適的感覺卻愈來愈嚴重，令到他開始畏懼食物，並且吃得愈來愈少。但他偶爾會很想吃某種食物，因而會完全失控地暴食。他說暴食令自己警覺到，原來他的問題不止是身體毛病。「我看過很多醫生，希望找出問題根源。但我從沒想過，又或是不肯承認，原因在於我的壓力太大了。」

復原過程是漫長的。藉著禪修訓練，他嘗試更正念地吃東西。開始時，他強逼自己減慢速度，逐口品嚐，那是個痛苦的過程。「這樣，我便會更準確地感到自己已經吃飽了，那我便可以停吃，不會吃得過量。」阿拔發現，他的飲食問題原來是由於自尊心和無助感。他說：「當我們感到生命中某些方面無法如願或難以控制時，我們便會嘗試尋找另一個方式去重奪控制權，而飲食便是其一。」

也許我們不會有很多人像阿拔的類似經驗，但我們不妨問問：我們自己的飲食習慣有多理智？

## 健康從心出發

在嘗試不過份思考食物的過程中，我們如何知道甚麼是真正對我們有益呢？讓我們回到前述那位感到迷惘的朋友吧！他因健康警告和飲食風尚充斥而遇到種種困惑。

要為自己作出正確的選擇，我們需要認識自己。換句話，我們要留意身體與心靈，它們正告訴我們自己真正的健康狀況是怎麼樣。正

念是有幫助的——尤其在現今這個瞬息萬變的世界中。

我也發覺有一點是有用的，那便是重新思索「健康」的含義。務實地看，保持健康不可能是指身心狀況仍然像年輕力壯時那樣。轉變是無法避免的。也許保持健康的真正意思是欣然接受轉變，並善用轉變。要做到這點，我們在生活中便不能像夢遊般——我們不能外表看來正過著繁忙生活，但對自己內心的真正情況一無所知。

當我向莉蓉談及都市生活的壓力時，她說她留意到我們很多人都躁動不安。「我們香港人喜歡把時間填得滿滿，令我們時時刻刻都忙碌著，好像我們不懂得如何停下來似的。但我不知道我們當中有多少人真正知道自己日復日的正在做甚麼。」她說：「我也是這樣。幸運的是，藉著我的專業與禪修訓練，我覺得我更懂得如何去處理自己的躁動不安，又或者至少更覺知它。」

藉著覺知，我們可以開始更自在地自處，並以更簡單的方式與外界接觸。食物是營養所需，而它可以令人很享受，那就讓我們好好地享受它吧！

# EAT THINK MAN WOMAN

Text Chen Zhijun

A profusion of sometimes contradictory health and diet advice has made eating more complicated today than ever before. Are we overthinking it?

The Mid-Autumn Festival is a time for get-togethers. What better way to celebrate it than by eating together? So there we were, my ballet classmates and I: for a change we weren't prancing around the studio pretending to dance, but were seated in a Thai restaurant, preparing to eat.

The job of ordering food had fallen to me and I'd picked a varied spread. Nonetheless, as food began to fill the table, we discovered that one of us was on a temporary vegetarian diet, several were trying to avoid fried food, two of us had given up on eating rice at dinner and one simply could not tolerate the "fishy taste of fish". All of us, it turned out, had a "thing" about food, including me. (I invited friends over for a BBQ recently and neglected to tell them it would be meat-free.)

We all have ideas about food and eating that may seem funny or trite to other people, sometimes even to ourselves. Most are mere food preferences that, in a society that offers access to many affordable choices, do not create a problem – most of the time. But things get more complicated when worries about health and environmental sustainability are thrown into the mix, not to mention the body-image issues that some of us struggle with.

In a column on the American fascination with the gluten-free diet, *New York Times* columnist Roger Cohen notes that forms of food intolerance have reached "near epidemic levels" among the global middle class, and one aspect of this "food-intolerance explosion" was its convergence with the narcissism of modern urban culture. "Having a special dietary requirement," he wryly points out, "is one way to feel special in the prevailing 'me' culture."

This makes me think about what our food reveals about ourselves. Without going into a debate about the rights and wrongs of the latest dietary and health fad, or about whether coffee is really good or bad for us, I'm interested to know

what our food and eating habits tell us about how we see ourselves. Further, what do they tell us about our ideas regarding health? In fact, what do we really understand by "health"?

The subject here, then, is the mental world behind eating. Putting it in these terms brings to mind psychosis and pathology: try googling "mental world of eating", and you'll find yourself taken to websites and articles about eating disorders. But what about the average person's mental map when it comes to this basic human need? What might such a map look like?

## What's really cooking

First, let's admit we're a little lost. Sure, there is no lack of easily accessible information about all aspects of food and eating: from how to cook the most fluffy pancakes to the best way to peel garlic; from the latest research on the health benefits of chillies to debate on the devastating ecological impact of our depleting fish stocks. Yet, precisely because so much knowledge is just a mouse-click away, we can't help but be overwhelmed. Bombarded by advice, much of it contradictory, what should the health-conscious do?

One friend is ready to throw in the towel. He's doing all he can to stay healthy, but worries that he's making the wrong choices. He wages a constant battle to keep his weight down, so he goes to the gym and watches what he eats. He has food cravings that he tries to suppress, and feels guilty when he does give in. His dilemma is not uncommon in urban Hong Kong, where many people feel that the "eat right and exercise" regime of government campaigns is beyond them because they haven't the time, though they care enough about their health to feel bad about it.

How did eating get so complicated? To find some answers, I asked clinical psychologist and fellow meditation student Cherry Lin for her

views about the relationship between thinking and food. The two are much related, she said. "As a psychologist, I see patients with eating disorders, so this is something I can immediately see. We can be very affected by our thoughts and emotions about food. Some even fear it or feel guilty about eating. A glass of Coke, to take an example, can trigger a lot of thinking – 'Should I drink it? What if I get fat drinking it? There's so much sugar!' Whereas, most of us would just decide to drink it or not."

Is such overthinking a modern affliction, generally? "It's hard to generalise, but I think it's true to say that many people like to analyse things but neglect how they feel, or they simply don't know that it's important to take care of their emotions," Cherry said. "We experience many emotions every day but are not always aware of them. Some are not even aware that emotions are closely connected to our thoughts and behaviour."

This is a pity, since our awareness is a wonderful resource. Being a meditation practitioner herself, Cherry is an advocate for living with more awareness. "When we eat mindfully, that already makes a huge difference. With awareness, we tend to be more relaxed, and we enjoy and appreciate the food more. But, more than that, any kind of meditation practice – whether it involves being mindful of our breathing, walking, or, in this case, eating – helps us to recognise our awareness. Once we become more adept at recognising it, we begin to use it to see what's really going on in our lives. Slowly, with practice, we become more aware of not just our senses, but also our thoughts and emotions and, further, our deeply held points of view and values."

## Clear and present

You may ask: so what? How does being aware of our thoughts and emotions and values really help us when we run into problems?

In meditation practice, beginners are asked to rest their mind in the present, or on an object or sense perception, and simply allow whatever happens to occur. The point of the exercise is not to try to suppress or change our thoughts and emotions. But if we're not trying to change our unpleasant thoughts and disagreeable emotions, then what good is meditation?

One advantage I've found is that it helps me to take my thoughts and emotions less seriously, so they are a little less overwhelming. The simple act of paying deliberate attention to thoughts and emotions helps me see I'm not really one with them. This gives me some breathing space in which to consider my actions, so I find it easier not to overreact.

Furthermore, in meditation, we adopt a non-judgmental attitude. This open-minded approach helps us to take a more holistic view of how our thinking and emotions come to be – not just the causes and conditions that shape them, but also the choices we make along the way. Such insights can be tremendously helpful. When our concepts and emotions reveal themselves to be the arbitrary creatures that they are, they have less of a hold on us. When Dorothy finally saw that the mysterious and powerful Wizard of Oz was really no more than a middle-aged man with some skill in machinery operation, he just wasn't so awe-inspiring any more.

Meditation helps us gain mastery over ourselves, but it doesn't happen overnight. It takes patience, and a willingness to be open to our experiences and to use them for benefit.

## It all comes back to ourselves

All that we do relating to food provides great opportunities for us to examine our experiences, since eating is what we do several times a day, every day. Everyone, it seems, has a food story to tell.

I asked vegetarian-turned-occasional-vegetarian Miranda Chan to share her food story. Once she went to a dinner with fellow Buddhist friends, and got really angry that they ordered meat. A vegetarian at the time, she felt eating meat would go against what the Buddha teaches

about compassion. "What Lama Yadie said then, after I told him how I felt, helped me see things differently," she said. Lama Yadie, the abbot of Tergar's meditation centre in Hong Kong, told her it all came down to "habits". "He told me, 'You got angry because you had a different habit from your friends. Your habit is to eat no meat; their habit is to eat meat. It's just a habit of mind'. His words did not fully sink in at the time, but they inspired me. What he essentially said was – it was no big deal, just a habit of mind."

Miranda now takes a more flexible attitude, and eats whatever is available. "When I have a choice, I will pick whatever I feel like eating at the moment. Otherwise, I will go with what is available or what the situation requires." In this way, our relationship with food becomes simpler and more direct.

It's fair to say that an intense attachment or aversion to a food or an eating habit, particularly when it comes with a lot of painful emotions, is bad for our health. So when we find ourselves often preoccupied by the how, when or what we eat, it's time to start paying attention to what's really going on in our minds. Deep-seated emotions of inadequacy, for example, sometimes lie buried within us, and are triggered by a stressful event.

For another fellow student at Tergar meditation centre, the signs that he might be under stress were too faint to notice at first. When Albert (not his real name) started having digestion problems, he blamed his diet. Certain foods were labelled as causes of his poor digestion. He avoided them, and grew more and more conscious about what he ate. "I went to so many doctors to try and find out what was wrong," he said. "But I never thought, or could not admit, it was because I was stressed out." The physical sensations of pain and discomfort became so intense that he started to fear food, and ate less and less. Occasionally, however, a craving for a certain food would strike and he would lose all control and binge-eat.

The binge-eating was his wake-up call that his problem was more than a physical ailment, he said. The recovery is a gradual process. With meditation training, he tries to eat more mindfully. At the start, it was a painful process of forcing himself to slow

down and taste every bite. "I would then get a more accurate sensation of being full, then I could stop and not overeat." Albert could see that his problems with eating ultimately had to do with self-esteem issues and a feeling of helplessness. "When we feel that some aspects of our lives are not as we wish and difficult to control, we will try and find a way to regain control, and our diet is one of those ways," he said.

Many of us may not have gone through what Albert did, but it's useful to ask: how sane are our own eating habits?

## A healthy start

In the process of trying not to overthink food, how will we know what's really good for us? We go back to my bewildered friend's dilemma over the profusion of health warnings and fad diets.

To make the right choices for ourselves, we need to know ourselves. That means being attentive to what our bodies and minds are telling us about the true state of our health. Mindfulness helps – especially in today's world of hyperfast change.

I find it useful, too, to reconsider what "health" means. Realistically, being healthy cannot mean staying in the same physical and mental state as we were in our prime. Change is inevitable. Perhaps being healthy really means embracing change and making the best of it. To do that, we cannot sleepwalk through life – leading busy lives on the outside but remaining oblivious to what's really going on within ourselves.

When I spoke with Cherry about the stresses of urban living, she said she has noticed a restlessness among many of us. "We Hong Kong people like to do a lot to occupy ourselves, make ourselves busy all the time, as if we don't know how to stop. But I don't know how many of us really know what we are doing from day to day," she said. "I'm like that, too. I am lucky that, with my professional and meditation training, I feel a little better equipped to deal with the restlessness, or at least am more aware of it."

With awareness, we can begin to feel more at ease with ourselves, and relate to the outside world more simply. Food is needed for nutrition, and it is enjoyable, so let us enjoy it.



# 認真地吃

撰文／插圖 薛永賢

吳諭晨是台中 BAFA 咖啡店的主人，是一位有 25 年年資的咖啡手，也是一位樂於分享的開心禪同學。早年的一場病，讓她體會到認真吃的重要性。要健康，我們可以從認識吃、認識自己開始



問：妳烹調食物十分厲害，我曾喝過妳煮的湯，印象很深刻。妳可以分享一下有什麼秘訣，或是有什麼因素構成美味的食物嗎？

答：料理要好吃，第一個要素就是烹調料理的人本身要熱愛食物。喜歡吃的人就會喜歡到處去吃東西，他對於味覺的感受會比較豐富。因為他對食物有熱情，比較有想像力，因此對於味覺的記憶也會比較深刻。要烹調的時候，只要經過一兩次技術上的修正，以很簡單的烹調技術，就可以煮出好吃的東西。就像煲湯，其實沒有什麼技巧，但是如果把一些不該放進湯裡的東西放進去，湯就會不好喝。那是在於你對於那個湯的想像跟過去味覺的累積。

第二件事情就是能量的投入。即便是有很棒的食材，但如果烹調者沒有能量的話，那他對待食物的方式，絕對不會讓食物變得好吃。比如說在煲湯的過程，需要不斷的調整火候，因為煲湯的時候不是所有材料都在同一時間放下去的，材料可能要分

三、四次放下去，剛開始放新的材料時，我們必須要把火開得比較大，可是等它沸騰以後我們要轉成比較小的火，一段時間後又要把火稍微調大。等到第一階段食材入味之後才放入第二階段的食材，並再把火調大。在這個反反覆覆，掌控大火小火之間，其實是要全心全意的投入。能量便在這個反反覆覆的心意中一點一滴的投入，人就跟食物在一起了。人對食物有沒有感情，其實取決於那個人的能量，就是他有沒有愛的能量、在意的能量、敬重的能量。人跟食物這兩種因素，對食物味道的影響最有關係。人「對」了以後，只要找到「對」的食物就可以了。「對」的食物是指符合正確的耕種農法，新鮮、當季的，煲出來的湯其實就不會太差了。

問：說起對於味覺的想像力，我們要去理解及認識不同的味道，有固定的標準和系統嗎？

答：我覺得是有的。比方說酸味，我們從舌頭的味蕾去感受酸的時候，就有不同的接收器——舌尖、舌頭兩側、舌面跟舌後根，對於酸的感受都是不一樣的。醫學跟科學證明，這幾個地方味蕾的分佈確實不同。再說，食物的酸也有分蘋果酸、檸檬酸、礦物質裡的礦物酸等不同酸的性質。這些不同的酸本來就有所謂正確的知識。當我們學習嗅味覺的時候，我覺得它應該被合理地、有系統地整理出來，甚至是可以利用儀器和實驗來驗證的，比方甜有甜度計可以測出甜的程度。這是關於嗅味覺感官系統建立的第一個部分。

另一方面，就是感受的問題。比方說我比較可以接受柑橘類的酸，所以一片檸檬跟一顆蔓越莓，我可能覺得蔓越莓比較酸。可是有的人會覺得檸檬比較酸。這純屬個人感受，它沒有對錯，也沒有系統。這跟個人的生活經驗，跟主觀認知有關係。在現代的社會，因為人太浮躁了，所以當我們談到感覺的時候，有些人會刻意去摒棄理論——「我就覺得這個比較甜，那個比較酸」——純粹憑感覺。我覺得有前後兩個步驟的——味道的認識必須先建立在一個標準及正確的價值上，之後才會有所謂的「沒有標準」。

問：很多人愛吃美味的東西，同時又覺得吃得不太健康。像一些油炸或重口味的食物，吃了下去會覺得內疚。在這個矛盾裡面，你認為該怎麼辦？

答：我可以分享我以前得過癌症的事情，那時候我二十三歲，醫生跟我說我的病情已經很嚴重了。我看第一個醫生的時候，他不願意告訴我我還有多少時間。然後我去看第二個醫生，問他我還可以活多久，他說我只剩下半年。我問他食物要怎樣注意，他說妳想吃什麼就吃什麼罷。現在說起來很輕鬆，但當時很傷心呀。那時候台灣有個生機飲食之父歐陽英老師，我的朋友幫我報名參加了他開辦的癌症病人生機斷食營。「斷食」的意思是在一段時間內什麼都不要吃，每天只喝九杯果汁來調理身體。那段時間，我開始回想過去錯誤的飲食習慣。我非常喜愛吃乳酪。我得的癌症跟子

宮有關係，看了很多書才知道，原來子宮癌跟乳癌，其實跟我們吃太多乳酪有關。我也開始注意水果怎麼清洗。還有，我很喜歡喝大骨頭熬很久的湯，可是這些東西我都不能吃。總之上了課以後，加上自己做的功課，得出來的結論是我已沒有東西可以吃了。癌症病人很需要營養，所以我的狀況很尷尬：既需要營養，又什麼都不能吃。

治病的過程我先省略，過了一段時間我的病很神奇的好了。過程中我有一個發現：當我在最低潮、不知道應該吃什麼的時候，我想起那位醫生告訴我想吃什麼就吃罷。他的意思是反正我活不久了，就不用戒口了。我那時就不管了，想吃什麼就吃什麼。在那段時間我有一個體會：到底我們在面對食物的時候，我們內在發出去的訊息，是對那個食物感到恐懼，還是感到開心？假設今天我和朋友同學一起去吃麥當勞，我喜歡吃什麼就點了，可能是點了薯條、漢堡、可樂。吃的時候就想：「好棒喔，這麼好吃！而且我感到好開心。」我把我意念專注在我的感覺上面。這跟用慾望去吃東西是不一樣的。再假設我一到了麥當勞就開始想：「糟糕！薯條會很毒，可樂很可怕，我吃完之後長胖了怎麼辦？」這兩種情況，到底哪一種對身體的傷害比較大？我是認為擔心的情緒，比那個薯條更毒。這是我第一個見解。

但是，事實上我們還有覺知。要是我們有覺知地吃東西，就不會覺得薯條好吃。台灣的速食有摩斯漢堡跟麥當勞。這兩個品牌之中我一直覺得摩斯漢堡稍為健康一點點。我就跟我的兒子說，如果要吃薯條，我們就選摩斯的薯條。有一次麥當勞的薯條賣完了，我們就去了摩斯漢堡。那時我剛好上完開心禪二階課程，我就開始一口一口慢慢地吃那個薯條，然後發現其實兩家的薯條都不好吃。薯條本來就不是一個好吃的食物。我們以為欲望已是在很深層

的，原來在更深一層還有覺知。到底我們自由不自由呢？如果我們可以更自由一點，就不會被欲望綁架。

另外，我一直很喜歡喝啤酒，有一次我決定認真的喝啤酒。我發現，認真地喝它，啤酒真的很好喝！但是，我很認真很有覺知地喝，其實也喝不多，大概半瓶就夠了。我們本來就具備了那個智慧，我們的身體其實大概知道甚麼食物適合我們。



問：妳說過患病時寫了食誌，可以談一談那是怎麼一回事嗎？

答：台灣有一位何師竹醫生，當時在研究女性情緒跟乳癌和子宮癌的關係。我參加了測試，其中一個項目就是要寫一個食物的日記，是以每小時為單位記錄自己吃了甚麼，盡可能把烹調方式及食物裡面的材料也詳細地寫上去。假設早上八點起床吃了燒餅加蛋，就在格子裡寫「八點：烤芝麻燒餅加煎蔥蛋」。為了要填這個格子，其實在吃的時候覺知也會提高了。食誌也記錄了我當時的念頭和感覺。才寫第一天我就知道我的問題在哪裡了，我吃的時候根本沒有在當下，也沒有按照合理的生理時間進食。我的念頭跟情緒都是負面的、匱乏的，其實都是自己的問題。我發現就連我喝的水量也不一樣。照理說我們身體一樣的運作，我們吃進去跟出來的量應該差不多。但我從我的食誌看出來，它是很不穩定的。

問：我看過書裡提到西藏的一些修行人也把自己的念頭記錄下來。這是一個認識自己的方法。

答：對，我很幸運，可以在一個醫療單位裡面做這件事情，這是宇宙送給我的禮物。那時候我才二十三、四歲，在那個年代大部份同年紀的人，都還沒有靈性成長的概念。我因為剛好在十四歲的時候受過味嗅覺的訓練，有了一個基礎。

問：妳可以講述十四歲時受過的訓練嗎？

答：那時候我參加一個徵選，一個日本的咖啡品牌要徵選專門配咖啡豆的配豆師。配豆師的工作是要了解各式各樣生豆的狀況，然後配出不同的配方，因為那個時候比較不流行喝單品咖啡。在日本，配豆師的工作都由男生擔任。在生物學的角度來看，雄性的嗅味覺是比雌性靈敏的，因為他們一直以來都是負責獵食。但是，那時台灣這邊的社長是女生，她想知道女生有沒有可能做配豆師這工作。一方面也可能是一個宣傳的噱頭。所以她就邀請了日本的大學，研究女生甚麼時候的嗅味覺會高於男生。後來發現，十二至十六歲來過生理期的女生，嗅味覺會特別靈敏，還有就是懷孕的婦女。這兩個時期的女生，嗅味覺會高於男生的。因為不能選孕婦，她們喝咖啡不太好，所以公司決定在台灣徵選十二到十六歲的女生。

那時有四百多人去考試，嗅覺跟味覺分開來考，第一關先考嗅覺。他們給每個考生一個試管，裡面放了一些液體，外面包著看不到裡面。因為是淘汰制，第一題答錯了就不用答第二題了。答完第一題後就只剩下我跟另外一個人了，答完第二題就剩下我一個，味覺也不用考了。嗅試的第一題是自來水，第二題是鹽水。出題的老師也是負責培訓我的老師。後來我問老師為甚麼要出這麼絕對的題目，他說他不要考生用猜的，所以不需要答很多題。他說第一題用自來水，因為聞不到氣味的時候會恐懼，我們對「沒有」比「有」更加恐懼。當我們聞不到的時候可能會無法作答、亂

答，或產生幻覺。有人寫了橘子水、甚至醬油。我非常幸運，我的啟蒙老師是一位非常有哲理的人。

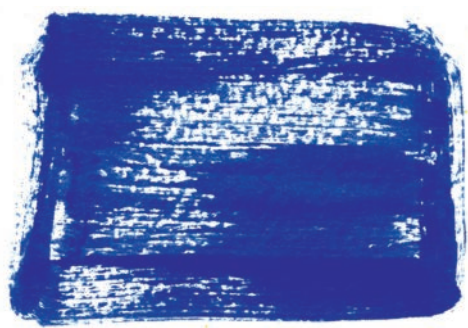
問：妳當時沒感受到聞不到的恐懼嗎？

答：我聞得到是自來水呀。我以前住的是老房子，每天刷牙的時候，都覺得水的味道很重，開始還懷疑是不是水管出了問題。後來我才知道原來我討厭的那個味道是自來水裡的氯。我對這個味道十分敏感，所以我立刻聞得出是自來水。

問：一選上就開始培訓了嗎？

答：對，我接受了兩年的訓練，第一年的訓練都是靜坐。老師是個七十幾歲的抹茶道大師。他沒有給我任何標準和指示，比如該怎麼坐、手怎麼擺等等，都沒有。只有規定說我不能躺著，也不能站著，可以坐著但不能靠背。他會帶我到不同的地方去坐，去過海邊，去過花市，去過垃圾場，去過山上，很多地方。到了他就讓我坐下，然後跟隨行的翻譯就會躲在我看不見的地方。他不會告訴我坐多久，有坐過十分鐘，也有坐過兩個小時的。其實他是要我把時間的幻覺也拿掉。因為通常我們會想知道要坐多久，但他讓我連時間的困惑都不需要了。我遇到高人了。時間到了他便會讓翻譯過來叫我，問我：「你剛剛看見甚麼？聽見甚麼？皮膚的感覺是甚麼？頭皮的感覺是甚麼？有哪些念頭產生了？情緒感覺怎麼樣？」我回答後他從來也不會再反問任何問題，也沒有任何的評論，他只是紀錄。多做幾次之後，我就開始很放心的感受，「感覺自己的感覺」這件事情就變得很享受，因為沒有壓力。

到了第二年，老師就拿咖啡的 36 味風味瓶來教學。其實到現在訓練嗅味覺官能也是用風味瓶教學，比方玫瑰的香味，就一直讓你聞，你一次聞不會，你每天聞就一定



能把那個味道記住。可是老師不喜歡這個方式，他覺得這樣用強迫記憶跟訓練警犬是一樣的。他的方法很特別，他不會告訴我那瓶是甚麼，第一次我三十六個瓶子都聞了，然後寫下答案，結果全錯！我非常沮喪，因為我那時候自以為很厲害，從幾百個人裡面被選拔出來，又經過了一年的訓練，結果竟然是三十六瓶全錯。我當場就哭了，老師卻一直笑著，說：「太可愛，太好笑了，太好了！」他的意思是，慶幸我不是機械人。接著他說，「現在妳把妳的感覺全部叫出來，然後我把每一瓶的正確答案告訴妳，妳去找出妳的答案跟標準答案之間的關係」。這個很不得了，後來我訓練伙伴都用這個方式。

比方說我訓練的第一瓶就是蜂蜜。台灣的蜂蜜是龍眼蜜的味道，可是這個風味瓶不是台灣人做的，是法國人做的。法國的蜂蜜跟台灣的不一樣。所以我就開始想像，我聞到的這個感受，其實有一種荷爾蒙的味道，像昆蟲的腺體。到底蜂蜜裡面有甚麼成份？蜂蜜是怎麼產生的？於是對於蜂蜜的產生這事情我就有了知識、有概念了。然後，我便很清楚我對它的感受是甚麼。所以這個味道以後在咖啡裡出現，我絕對可以聞得出來。因為我不是用死記的，我用自己的感受。這兩年的訓練讓我的根基很紮實。

問：要如何開始注意飲食，妳有什麼建議嗎？

答：我覺得最好一開始吃慢一點。我吃東西也

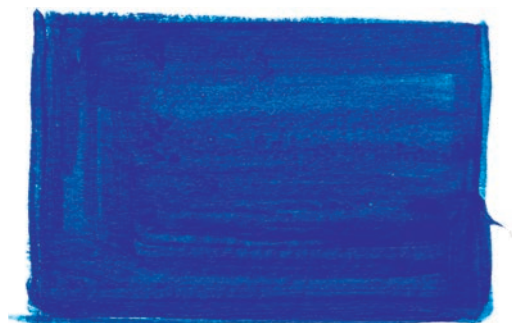
很快，因為我一直在餐飲業服務，在台灣餐飲業的休息時間都只有三十分鐘，三十分鐘要吃飽，時間其實很短。所以我從小就養成吃飯很快速的習慣。但是我現在發現，即便沒有我剛剛所說的那些學習，只要我們願意稍為吃慢一點，其實就不一樣了。從吃慢一點開始。吃慢一點也會吃得比較少，因為我們身體其實不用那麼多食物。你可以做一下測試，你吃飯大概咬幾口吞一下。可能通常都只是咬三四下而已，甚至更少，便吞下去了。而且我們會慣性用一邊的牙齒咀嚼，當你有意識到這件事，你會稍為換邊一下。我認識一位男生，他以前有一百公斤重，他花了一年的時間瘦到六十五公斤。他只做了一件事情，就是每一口都咬二十下。後來我試著做就發現到，其實咬八到十下就已經很多了，因為平常我們大概只咬三、四下。我們唾液裡面的酵素酶會把第一層的糖類分解掉，可是我們都沒有讓它來得及發揮作用，就把食物吞進肚子裡了，所以會脹氣、腸胃不好。而那個男生能夠靠這樣瘦下來，是因為他身體的消化和代謝機能都旺盛起來。他食量也變得比較少，不過由於食物適當地被分解，身體的養分是足夠的，也不會發出飢餓的訊號。



# WHEN EATING, JUST EAT

Text / Illustration Andrew Sit Translation Vanessa Yung

Wu Yuchen, the owner of the BAFA Cafe in Taichung, Taiwan, is a barista of 25 years' experience and a student of meditation. She tells how a bout of illness in her early years taught her the importance of eating with awareness



Q : You cook really well. I especially remember a tasty soup you made. Can you tell us your thoughts about what makes a delicious dish?

A : The cook has to be enthusiastic about food. Those who love to eat are always on the hunt for good food, and their palates are thus more refined. They are more imaginative and have a stronger memory of different flavours. That's why, when they cook, they need only a few trials and errors before they can whip up something delicious. For instance, it's easy to cook soup; it does not require much technique. But if you add inappropriate ingredients, the soup will not taste good. Effort and attention are also essential. Even when you have great produce, if the cook does not handle the ingredients with care, the food won't taste good. A person who knows about love, care and respect will also know how to handle food properly.

Q : Speaking of our sense of taste, is there a standard or a systematic way to understanding and learning about flavours?

A : I think so. Take sourness. Different receptors on our taste buds – at the tip, two sides and the back of our tongue – all perceive sourness differently. What's more, there are so many different types of sourness, from the sourness of an apple, a lemon to even minerals. There should be a proper way to comprehend the different types of sourness. When we train our sense of taste and smell, I think it should be measured systematically, like how a refractometer can measure sweetness. This is the first part of what constitutes a systematic understanding of smell and taste. The second part involves our feelings and perceptions. For instance, I may feel that a cranberry is more sour than a lemon. This is very personal. There is no right or wrong, nor any system to it. This has to do with our life experiences and subjective perceptions. People are less patient in this modern age, so when we feel strongly about something, we are quick to reject objective standards or theories. We may insist, "But I think this is sweeter and that is more sour!" So I think this is a two-step process: our knowledge of flavours should first be based on standard and measurable values, before we begin to rely on our so-called "instinct".

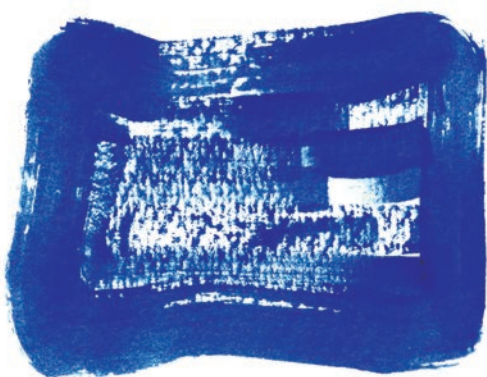
Q : Many people love delicious food, but also feel they are not eating healthily enough. So they feel guilty when they do eat something considered unhealthy. What do you think?

A : I can share my experience with cancer. I was diagnosed when I was 23. When I found out, my condition was already quite serious. The first doctor I went to wouldn't tell me how much time I had left. I went to a second doctor, who told me I likely had only half a year left to live. I remember asking him what kind of diet I should follow. He told me to eat whatever I wanted. I say this easily now, but I was devastated then. At that time, a friend enrolled me into a camp for cancer patients organised by Ouyang Ying, a naturopath known as the father of raw food in Taiwan. We fasted in the camp, and our only sustenance was nine glasses of juice every day. It was only when I started paying attention to my diet that I recognised my bad food habits. I loved cheese. I had uterine cancer and it was only after reading many books that I discovered eating a lot of cheese has a high correlation with such a cancer. I also loved pork bone soup that has boiled for a long time, and this was one more thing I needed to avoid. All in all, after attending the camp and doing my own research, I came to the conclusion there wasn't much I could eat. Cancer patients desperately need nutrition, so I was in a really awkward position because there was little I could eat.

I'll skip the details of my treatment, but, miraculously, I did recover. In the process, I had an epiphany. Whenever I felt low and

didn't know what to eat, I would remember the second doctor, who told me to eat whatever I wanted. He meant that since I didn't have much time left to live anyway, there was no point in restricting my diet. So sometimes I let myself go and ate whatever I liked. That got me thinking: when it comes to eating, do we regard our food with fear or happiness? What kind of messages are we really sending out from the depths of our hearts?

Let's say my friends and I go to McDonald's today and order whatever we want – French fries, burger and Coke. If I am made happy by the food, thinking "Oh, this is delicious, and I am happy to be eating it", my attention is focused on my enjoyment. This is different from focusing on my fear, thinking "Oh no! The fries are toxic and Coke is horrible for my health. What if I gain weight eating them?" Which of the above is worse for our health? In my opinion, negative emotions are more destructive than the fries can ever be. But don't forget, we all have awareness. If we eat with awareness, we won't find the fries tasty at all. Mos Burger and McDonald's are two fast-food chains we see in Taiwan. I had the impression that the food at Mos Burger was healthier, so between the two I would pick Mos Burger when I had a choice. Once I was with my son and we went to Mos Burger for fries because McDonald's had



sold out. At the time I had just completed the Joy of Living level two meditation course, so I resolved to eat the fries properly. I ate deliberately, paying attention to every bite, and realised that the fries at both outlets tasted equally bad [laughs]. The fact is, fries aren't tasty. We believe our cravings are lodged deep within us [making them hard to shake], but even deeper is our awareness, which is a more fundamental aspect of our nature. So, are we free to choose or are we controlled by our cravings? If we can appreciate the freedom we have, we won't be held hostage by such desires.

For example, I love beer. But when I drink beer with awareness, I don't drink much; half a bottle is enough. We all possess the innate wisdom that knows what's really good for us.

Q : You kept a food diary when you were ill. Can you tell us more about it?

A : A Taiwanese gynaecologist named Dr Ho Shih-chu was studying the correlation between emotions and breast/uterine cancer, at that time. I took part in her research, and one of my tasks was to write a food diary to record what I ate every hour. I had to try my best to note down everything, even the cooking methods and all the ingredients used. If I ate a grilled bun with egg at 8am, say, I'd write "8am: grilled sesame bun with fried egg and scallion". Having to write everything down in hourly grids made me pay attention to what was happening. In separate grids, I also had to document my thoughts and feelings. After writing in the diary for only one day, I could see what my food problems were. I was not eating in the present and I didn't eat in accordance with my body's natural functions. My thoughts and emotions were all negative. Even the amount of water I drank varied widely. There's a regularity to our bodily

functions, so the amount of food and drink we take in should be more or less the same over time. But I could see from my food diary that I wasn't doing that at all.

Q : I've read that dharma practitioners in Tibet record their thoughts as a way of understanding themselves. Your food diary seems similar.

A : Yes, I was very lucky to have been able to do this in a modern health-care setting. It was a gift from the universe. I was only 23 or 24 years old. Most people at that age have no concept of spiritual development. It helped that I had received some sensory training when I was 14.

Q : Can you tell us more about that sensory training?

A : I took part in a competition held by a Japanese coffee brand that was looking for someone to create a coffee blend for the Taiwanese market. A coffee blender must know well the different types of beans and then formulate a new, tasty blend. Single-origin coffee was not popular then. In Japan, coffee blending has always been a man's job. Biologically, men have a sense of taste and smell superior to women's, perhaps because of their traditional role as hunters. But at the time, the president of the coffee company's Taiwanese branch was a woman and she was keen to recruit a female coffee blender, which could be a great marketing gimmick. She commissioned a university in Japan to find out if a woman could ever develop a sharper sense of smell and taste than a man. The researchers found that girls between 12 and 16 years old and pregnant women could in fact beat the men in smell and taste tests. As too much caffeine is bad for pregnant women, the company decided to recruit girls aged 12 to 16.

“ When it comes to eating, do we regard our food with fear or happiness? What kind of messages are we really sending out? ... In my opinion, negative emotions are more destructive than the fries can ever be. ”

I was one of them who took part in the competition. There were about 400 candidates and we had to take a smell test, then a taste test. In the first test we were each given a test tube filled with a substance. Except for a small hole to insert a straw, the tube was all wrapped up so we could not see what was inside. It was an elimination match. One wrong answer and you were out. I and another girl were the only two candidates left after the first round; I won the competition in the second round and didn't even need to do the taste test. The substance in the first test was tap water; the second was salt water. I got both answers right.

The teacher who set the tests was also the teacher who trained me. Much later, I asked him why he set such difficult tests. He said he didn't want the candidates to guess the answer: you either know the answer or you don't. Tap water isn't easy to smell. My teacher said people become fearful when faced with an unknown [in this case, because they couldn't smell anything], and would overreact by giving a random answer or even start to imagine things. In our competition, some people actually answered orange juice and soya sauce. That was a powerful insight. I was lucky to have met my teacher.

Q : Didn't you feel the fear of not being able to smell anything?

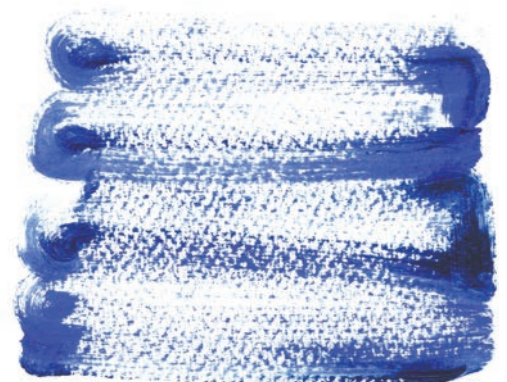
A : No, because I could tell it was tap water. I used to live in an old house, and every day when I brushed my teeth I found the taste of the water so strong that I wondered if maybe the pipes were rusting, or something. I learned later that the taste I disliked is that of chloride. I'm very sensitive to that taste; that's why I knew right away that it was tap water.

Q : Did you start your training immediately after the competition?

A : Yes. I received two years of training. The first year was spent wholly on mindfulness training. My teacher was a *chado* master in his 70s. He didn't give me many rules or instructions on how to sit, or where I should place my hand, and so on. The only rules were that I could not lie down, stand, or sit with my back supported. He took me to sit at many different places: the beach, a flower market, garbage dump, and a hilltop – you name it. He and his translator would take me to a place and leave me there. They would watch me from a location where I couldn't see them. My teacher would not tell me how long I had to sit that day – it could be 10 minutes or two hours. He wanted me

to get rid of any expectations I might have about time. By not telling me anything, he stopped me thinking about time. I'd met a true master. When it was time to go, the translator would come and fetch me, and my teacher would start asking me questions: "What did you see? What did you hear? How did your skin feel? How did your scalp feel? What thoughts did you come across? What emotions did you feel?" I gave my answers; he never questioned them or gave any comment. He simply recorded what I told him. After the first few times, I started to relax and enjoy this practice of "feeling my senses", because there was no pressure.

The second year, I started training on the 36 scent bottles that are used for studying coffee. Scent bottles are commonly used in sensory training. To learn the smell of rose, for instance, you repeatedly smell the rose





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bottle. You may not remember the scent after the first time, but you will after smelling it every day. But my teacher does not like this approach because he thinks it is no different from training a police dog. He used a different approach. The first time he showed me the bottles, he didn't tell me what they were but asked me to smell them and write down the answers, all 36 of them. I got every single one wrong! I was so upset that I burst out crying. I had been feeling good about myself – after all, I was the chosen one among hundreds of people and I went through a year of training, so I thought I knew a lot. But I got everything wrong! My teacher just laughed and said: "It's too cute, too funny! It's great!" He meant that he was glad I was no robot. Then he told me: "Now write down what you sense and feel about each bottle. I will tell you the correct answers for each bottle and you go find the relationship between your answer and the correct answer." What a wonderful way to learn. This is also how I teach others, now.

Take the first scent I studied – honey. The honey collected in Taiwan has a longan flavour, but the scent bottle for honey comes from France so the honey smells different. I let my imagination go: there's something hormonal about the scent, like something from a bug's gland. What does honey really

consist of, and how is honey made? I began to look for answers and soon I had a clear knowledge of how honey is produced, which in turn affects my feelings towards it. I got to know it so well that, now, I can always identify the scent of honey – even in a cup of coffee. I didn't rely on rote learning, but on my senses. The two-year training gave me a solid foundation.



Q : How should we pay more attention to our diet and health?

A : The best way to start is by eating more slowly. I eat very quickly because I have always worked in the food and beverage industry, and often there's only a brief, 30-minute break to eat our meal. That's how I developed the habit of eating quickly. But even if a person has not had any meditation or sensory training, it would be helpful to start by eating a little slower. When we eat

more slowly, we tend to eat less since our body actually doesn't need that much food. You can do a little test and count the number of times you chew before you swallow. Usually, we chew only three or four times, or even less, before swallowing. What's more, very often we habitually chew using only the teeth on one side of our mouth. I know one person who used to weigh 100kg, then lost 35kg in a year. All he did was chew every mouthful of food 20 times. I tried it myself, and realised that chewing even eight times is already plenty. The enzymes in our saliva help to break down the sugars in our food, but we never let that happen because we don't give it time to work. This explains problems such as bloating and upset stomachs. My friend became slimmer because his digestion and metabolism grew stronger. His appetite shrank, too, but since his food is broken down properly, his body is getting enough nutrition and no longer sends out so many hunger signals.



左一：薛永賢；左三：吳諭晨

## 後記

2014年10月我到了台中，在吳姐的咖啡店邊服務邊學習大概四個月。當時動身出發的動機有兩個：第一，我對精品咖啡很有興趣，並想以這興趣作為職業，所以必須增進咖啡的知識，於是便找到在這方面很有見地的吳姐作為老師；第二是想乘機去一個比較長期的旅行，與當地人生活在一起，當作是一個生活的體驗。當時我多少有點厭倦了香港的生活模式，想多吸收別人的想法，再選擇自己的路。

我認識的吳姐，是一個傳奇人物。她的性格特質叫人敬佩——她很愛分享，從好吃的食物，到有關自己的小故事，她從不吝嗇。而細細回味她講的故事，總有些收穫。她很有愛心，會去接納身邊的人和事，對於我這個本來認識不深的人，不但肯花時間心思去教導，也肯信任我，讓我成為咖啡店的一員。她熱愛自己的工作，對客人總是熱情有禮，而且是出於真實的關心。每當我遇上難題在抑鬱時，只要想起她這些特質，總能夠再次燃亮起我的心。她是我永遠的導師及學習對象。

我是個比較木訥的人，這對於學習也許是一個障礙，因為沒有聯想力，不會問問題。回想起來我的學習方式就是靠無形的感染和吸收。學到的不只是咖啡的知識，也可說像是氣質的交流。記得吳姐說過，人與人在生命的某一個階段彼此遇上總有其原因，是有些課題我們可以互相學習，然後一起成長。這是一種謙遜的態度，不論身份地位的以平等心對待身邊的每一個人。

因為她以身作則以及BAFA這個環境，我體驗到能夠服務別人，是自己的福氣。每次沖調一杯咖啡，或預備一份甜點給客人，也是彼此之間的交流。透過每天的練習，開始知道客人的喜好。我多去為他人著想，自己也開心了，還有一種幸福感，覺得有這樣的機會多幸運！其實用心滿足別人的需要，正是我們每天都應該做的。回到香港開始上班，總會遇上難題和壓力。但我明白一切壓力的根源都是自己的想法，是因為我太喜歡維護自我形象，喜歡逞強。我要改變的是心態，從維護自我到利益他人。跟吳姐相處和在BAFA服務在我的心裡種下了這顆種子，知道怎樣才是正確的心態，我便能從這個出發點去改善自己。我很感謝她對我的接納，也很感激上天的安排，讓我在台灣有這樣美麗的遇上。

## Postscript

In October 2014, I went to Taichung to work at Wu Jie's (Elder sister Wu) cafe to learn from her. I was there for four months. My motivation for going was twofold: first, I was very interested in specialty coffee. I wanted to turn this passion into a career, and to do so I needed to improve my knowledge of coffee. And there is no better teacher than Wu Jie. Second, I wanted to experience living elsewhere for a period of time. I was a little tired of the lifestyle in Hong Kong, and wished to explore and see how other people live before choosing my own path.

The Wu Jie I know is a remarkable person. Her personality is widely admired: she loves sharing – from good food to her own stories – and never keeps things to herself. It is always rewarding to hear her stories. She is caring, and willing to embrace everything and everyone around her. Although we were strangers at first, she took the time and effort to teach me, and trusted me as a member of her cafe. She loves her job and treats her guests with great hospitality. Whenever I encounter problems and feel depressed, I simply remind myself of her qualities and I feel my heart reignite. She will always be my mentor and role model.

I'm an introvert, which in a way poses obstacles for my learning since I lack imagination and seldom ask questions. When I look back, I see that I learned through influence and observation. What I've gained is not only knowledge about coffee, but also a sense of having shared something. I remember Wu Jie once said there is a reason why people encounter each other at a certain point of their lives. There are always lessons we can learn from one another, and then grow together. We should always adopt such a humble attitude with people, regardless of class or status.

Because of Wu Jie's example and BAFA's wonderful environment, I saw how blessed I was to be able to serve others. I treat every coffee I make and every dessert I prepare for our guests as an interaction between us. Through such daily practice, I started to understand my guests' preferences better. The more considerate I am, the happier I become. How lucky am I to be blessed with such an opportunity! Giving others what they really need is actually what we should all be doing every day. After I came back to Hong Kong and started working again, there were of course times when I felt troubled or stressed. But I am beginning to understand that the root of all pressure arises from my own thoughts, and the desire to look good in other people's eyes. I am trying now to change my attitude, from a desire to protect my ego to really caring for others. Being with Wu Jie and working at her cafe sowed a seed in my heart as to what is the right attitude, and from this I am able to continue improving myself. I am very grateful for her open heart towards me, and I thank the heavens for giving me this beautiful encounter in Taiwan.



# 生活的肥料

節錄自《世界上最快樂的人》第十四章

攝影 方慧琳

正式的禪修練習之餘，我們也可以透過日常生活更加深入認識自己的一個美好特質——我們本具的覺知。生活中的所見所聞，和各種不同的想法與覺受，都可以成為我們「以生活為道用」的一扇門，明就仁波切寫道

我最常被問到的問題之一是：「為什麼有這麼多的修持法門？到底哪一個最適合我？」如果你對周圍稍加觀察，你就不得不承認，沒有任何兩個人的個性和能力是一模一樣的。有些人擅長語言文字，可以精準地掌握口語教導，也能自在對他人解說；有些人則較為「視覺型」，對於圖解和圖片說明的接受度最高；有些人的聽覺比他人敏銳，有些人對氣味較敏感；有些人則擅長推論分析，很快就能瞭解複雜的數學公式，還有些人則擁有詩人情懷，非常善於以各種隱喻和類比，為自己和他人描述這個世界。

不同情況需要不同的方法措施，因此，若能掌握幾種可供選擇的不同方式，肯定會很有幫助。以禪修而言，最適合自己的技巧，不但依個人特定狀態而有所不同，也取決於每個人的個性和能力。比方說，在面對悲傷、嗔恨、恐懼等情緒時，施受法有時可能是最好的法門，但有時只要利用情緒本身作為「止」的修持對境可能會更有效。想找出對自己最有效的技巧，唯一的方法通常就是通過嘗試與錯誤。

技巧本身並不重要，重要的是學到如何安住自心——跟心互動，而不足被心牽動。

## 任何活動都是機會

神經元對話製造了某種看似天然生成或獨立的自我，或者某種看似天然生成或獨立的他人。若想斬斷這些積習已久的神經元對話，那麼，養成正式禪修的習慣是最有效的方法。若能抽出時間做正式禪修，你就會發展出一種具有建設性的習性：這種習性不僅能削弱舊有的神經元模式，還能有效地建立起一種新的神經元模式，使你能認出自心如何參與感知過程。

每天都要抽出時間做正式禪修，有時候真

的很困難。你可能必須花上好幾個小時為重要會議作準備，又或者你必須出席重要場合，比如婚禮或生日宴會等；有時你已經答應陪孩子、夥伴或配偶做什麼事；有時你就是覺得好累好累，一個星期工作下來，你只想整天躺在床上或看電視。

一兩天沒做了正式禪修會不會讓你變成一個壞人？不會的。那會不會把你之前投入時間做正式禪修所產生的改變逆轉回去？也不會。一兩天（或三天）沒做正式禪修就表示你得重新馴服一顆未調伏的心嗎？也不是。

正式禪修非常棒，因為一天坐個5、10或15分鐘，就會創造一個改變自己觀感的機會。不過，佛陀早期的學生都是農夫、牧人或遊牧民族，他們每天都得耕種莊稼、看顧牲畜、照顧家人，實在沒有多餘時間可以好好坐下來，盤起雙腿、擺直雙臂、眼光端正專注地正式禪修，可能連五分鐘都無法辦到。因為，一下子那裡有頭羊在咩咩叫，或一下子寶寶哭了，又或一下子可能有人衝進營帳或茅屋，通報大家說一陣急雨就快要將莊稼都毀了。

佛陀其實很清楚他們的難處。雖然許多野史外傳都把佛陀的出生和成長背景描寫成富裕王國的皇子，在富麗堂皇的宮殿中長大。但事實上，他的家世並沒有那麼顯赫。佛陀的父親其實只是16國中一位首領，為了避免自己的國家被印度吞併，必須奮力對抗強大的印度君主政體，而他的母親生下他之後，便與世長辭。青少年時，父親強迫他結婚以延續香火，但他卻選擇離開家園，追求一種比政治和軍事權謀更有意義的生命。他的繼承權也被剝奪了。

所以當我們談到佛陀時，應該要知道，他其實非常瞭解日常生活中不一定會有機會或閒暇做正式禪修。佛陀對人類最大的貢獻之一，

就是教導我們可以隨時隨地進行禪修。

事實上，佛法修持的主要目標之一，就是要將禪修運用到日常生活上，任何日常活動都可以是禪修的機會。在日常生活中，你可以看著自己的念頭，隨時將注意力安住在味道、氣味、色相或聲音的體驗上，抑或當你純然地覺知心中各種念頭、感受而生起奇妙的體驗時，就在這樣的體驗中安住幾秒鐘。

不過，對非正式禪修而言，先設定某種目標是很重要的。比方說，每天進行不超過一到兩分鐘的非正式禪修約25次，如果能記下次數的話就更好了。第三世界的僧人和牧民通常都用念珠來計數，但西方人的選擇可說是五花八門：有輕便的隨身計算器、PDA，甚至還有超市裡用的那種小小的電腦，或者你也可以簡單地用便條紙寫下來，重點是，記下所有非正式禪修的次數，以便和你所設定的目標做對照。舉例來說，假使你正在進行無所緣禪修，就計算為一次，隨後你分心了，就再重新試一次，這就算是兩次了。

用這種方式來安排禪修練習的極大利益之一，就是既方便又具機動性，你隨處都可以做修持，無論是在海邊、看電影、工作、在餐廳吃飯、搭公車或計程車，或者在學校，只要你記得自己有禪修的意圖，那就是禪修。

無論你對自己的禪修滿不滿意，真正的重點是，牢記自己有禪修的意圖。若有抗拒禪修的念頭生起時，就想一想老牛邊走邊撒尿的畫面吧！這一想，你的嘴角應該就會揚起一絲微笑，也會提醒你，修持其實就像老牛撒尿一般，是很容易、很必要，也很能放鬆自己。

當你習慣一天25次短時間禪修之後，就可以開始把目標提升為50次，然後逐漸增加到100次。重要的是，要訂一個計畫，如果沒有







訂任何計畫，你就會完全忘了修持這檔事。若每天都能這樣做幾秒鐘或幾分鐘禪修，讓自己安住或集中注意力，就會幫助你穩定自心，而當你有機會作正式禪修時，就不會覺得好像在跟陌生人吃晚飯似的。你會發現對自己的念頭、情緒和所接收的對境熟悉多了，就像可以坐下來交心直言的老朋友一樣。

非正式禪修還有幾個好處。第一，有些人正式禪修時很安定、平和，但到了辦公室就變得又緊張又憤怒。如果能把修持和日常生活結合在一起，你就可以避免墜入這樣的陷阱中。第二，這或許是更重要的一點，儘管一般人都誤以為一定要在絕對安靜的地方才可以禪修，但日常活動中的非正式禪修練習，卻能逐漸消除這種錯誤的普遍印象。

從來就沒有任何人在找到所謂毫無干擾的地方，到處都有干擾。即使到了山頂這種相對於辦公室或城市喧囂紛擾的寧靜之處，你一開始也許會覺得很輕鬆舒暢，但一等到心沉澱下來，肯定就會開始聽到一些微小的聲音，比如蟋蟀的鳴叫、風吹過樹梢的聲響、鳥兒或小動物的嬉戲聲，或者流經巖縫的潺潺流水，剎那間，你所尋找的偉大寂靜就被中斷了。

即使是關起門窗在室內禪修，你一定還是會被什麼東西所干擾，比如搔癢、背痛、吞嚥、水龍頭滴水聲、鬧鐘的滴答聲，或者樓上的腳步聲等。無論身在何處，你永遠都會遇到干擾。無論干擾以何種形式出現，無論有多煩人，非正式禪修最大的益處就是，讓我們學會如何面對這些無所不在的干擾。

## 隨時，隨地

記住前面所提到的，接下來我們來看看可以運用在日常生活中的一些修持方式，甚至連一般認為是干擾的事物都可以用來當作禪修的助緣，幫助我們安住自心。古老的典籍稱這種方法為「以生活為道用」(taking your life as the path)。

即使只是走在街道上，也可以是發展正念的大好時機。你是否常發現自己在做某件事時，比如說前往超市或到餐廳吃飯時，怎麼渾然不

覺地就到達目的地了？這就是瘋猴子發瘋撒野的典型例子，我們任由瘋猴子製造各種干擾，不僅讓自己無法充分體驗當下時刻，同時也剝奪了我們專注和訓練覺性的機會。此處所說的機會，指的是能夠有意識地把注意力放在周圍的事物上，也許是看著你所經過的建築、人行道上的行人、街道上的車水馬龍，或者行經路線上的路樹等。當你真的去注意你所見到的，這隻瘋猴子就會安靜下來，你的心會變得比較不焦躁，同時也會開始發展出一種平靜感。

你也可以將注意力放在行走時身體的感受上，比如注意雙腿的移動、雙腳接觸地面、呼吸或心跳的節奏等。即使在繁忙時刻，這個方法也很管用，是克服匆忙趕路焦慮感的有效方法，當你吧注意力放在自己身體的感受上，或者他人，或者路過的地方與其他事物時，你還是可以快步行走，只要讓自己想著：「現在我正走在街上……現在我看到了一棟建築……現在我看到一個穿著T恤和牛仔褲的人……現在我的左腳接觸到地面……現在我的右腳接觸到地面……」

如果能在這些行動中都帶著有意識的覺知，煩亂和焦慮就會逐漸消失，而你的心也會變得更平靜、更放鬆。當你到達目的地之後，也能夠以更自在、開放的心態面對下一階段的行程。

你也可以利用相同的專注力來開車，或在家中、職場中所進行的一切日常活動。只要把注意力放在視線範圍內的種種對境上就行了，或者，也可以運用聲音作為禪修助緣。甚至像烹飪或飲食這類簡單的活動，都提供了修持的大好機會，比如切菜時，你可以邊切邊把注意力放在切割的形狀或顏色上，也可以注意湯汁或醬料沸騰冒泡的聲音；吃飯的時候，便把注意力放在體驗到的氣味和口味上。

你可以任選這些情境來練習無所緣禪修，無論你在做什麼事，既無貪著也不嫌惡地讓自心單純開放地安住即可。

禪修並非「單一規格」的修持。每一個人都意味著不同性格、背景和能力的獨特組合，也由於認識到這點，佛陀教導了形形色色的法門，以幫助芸芸眾生的人生旅途和各種情境中

認出自心本性，並從貪、嗔、癡三毒中獲得真正的解脫。有些法門看起來雖然平凡無奇，卻代表著佛法修持的心要。

佛陀教法的重點在於，要我們將正式禪修的體驗，應用在日常生活中的每一層面。否則，正式禪修幫助我們培養出對空性、智慧和慈悲的直接體驗就失去了意義。因為只有在面對日常生活的種種挑戰時，才能真正測出我們內在的平靜、洞察力與慈悲的進展。

即使如此，佛陀還是要我們親自試試不同的修持方法。有一部經典中提到，佛陀鼓勵他的弟子透過修持來驗證他的教法，而不是根據表面的重要性而接受他的教法：「猶如我們以鍛燒、切割、摩擦的方法檢驗真金一般，同理，有智慧的比丘也要檢驗我的教法，要透徹檢驗我的教法，不要因為盲從而領受之。」

基於相同的精神，我也請大家親自嘗試這些教法，看看這些教法對你是否有效。有些法門可以幫助你，但有些對你可能沒有助益。有些人可能馬上就發現自己跟某個或某些技巧很相應，但也有些法門需要多加練習才會熟悉。也有某些人可能會覺得禪修對自己一點好處也沒有，這也沒關係，最重要的是，要找到能夠發展出平靜、清明、自信和安詳的修持方法，並且實際去修持。假使你可以這麼做，那麼，你不僅能夠利益自己，還可以利益周遭的每一個人，而這就是所有科學研究與內心修持的最終目標，不是嗎？我們不僅為自己，更要為後代子孫創造一個更安全、更和諧、更和善仁慈的世界。



# THE NOURISHMENT OF EVERYDAY LIFE

An excerpt from *The Joy of Living* Chapter 14

Photography Joyce Fang

Apart from the formal practice of meditation, we can also use our daily life – what we see, hear, say, feel and think – as a support for mindfulness, to help us get in touch with the innate quality of mind with which we are born but so often do not recognise – our timeless awareness. In this excerpt from his book, Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche talks about the usefulness of informal practice in day-to-day life

One of the questions I'm often asked is "Why are there so many methods, and which is the right one for me?"

If you look around, you can't help but recognise that no two people are exactly the same in terms of their temperaments and capabilities. Some people are very good with words; they easily understand verbal instructions and are comfortable explaining things verbally to others. Other people are more "visual"; they understand things best when they're explained with diagrams and pictures. Some people have a keener sense of hearing than others, while some have a better sense of smell. Some people are analytical and find it very easy to work out complicated mathematical formulas. Others are "poets at heart", extremely adept at explaining the world to themselves and others through metaphors and analogies.

Different circumstances require different measures, so it's always helpful to have a number of options at your disposal. In terms of meditation, the most appropriate technique depends as much on the particular situation as on your personal temperament and capabilities. When you're dealing with emotions like sadness, anger, or fear, for example, sometimes *tonglen* practice might be the best approach. Sometimes simply using the emotion itself as a focus for basic *shinay* practice might work better. Often the only way to find the technique that works best for you is through trial and error.

The important thing is to learn how to rest

your mind – to work with it instead of being worked by it.

## Many opportunities for practice

Establishing a formal practice is one of the most effective ways to cut through the long-established neuronal gossip that creates the perception of an independent or inherently existing "self" and independently or inherently existing "others". When you set aside time for formal practice, you develop a constructive habit that not only weakens old neuronal patterns, but effectively succeeds in establishing new patterns that enable you to recognise the participation of your own mind in how you perceive.

Sometimes it's just impossible to make time for formal practice every day. You might have to spend hours preparing for a crucial business meeting, or perhaps you might have to attend an important event, like a wedding or a birthday party. Sometimes you've promised to do something special with your children, your partner, or your spouse. Sometimes you're just so tired from everything you had to do during the week you just want to spend the day in bed or watching TV.

Will skipping a day or two of formal practice make you a bad person? No. Will it reverse whatever changes you've made when you had the time to devote to formal practice? No. Will skipping a day or two (or three) of formal practice

mean you have to start all over again working with an untamed mind? No.

Formal practice is great, because sitting for five, ten, or fifteen minutes a day creates an opportunity to begin changing your perspective. But most of the Buddha's early students were farmers, shepherds, and nomads. Between taking care of their crops or animals and looking after their families, they didn't have a lot of time to sit down nicely with their legs crossed, their arms straight, and their eyes correctly focused for even five minutes of formal practice. There was always a sheep bleating somewhere, or a baby crying, or someone rushing into their tent or hovel to say that a sudden rain was about to ruin their crops.

The Buddha understood these problems. Although the fanciful stories about his birth and upbringing describe him as the son of a wealthy king who raised him in a fabulous pleasure palace, his origins were actually a lot more humble. His father was only one of several chieftains of the sixteen republics battling to resist being swallowed up by the powerful Indian monarchy. His mother died giving birth to him; his father forced him to marry and produce an heir when he was just a teenager. He was disinherited when he ran away from home to pursue a life that might have a deeper meaning than political and military scheming.

So, when we talk about the Buddha, we're talking about a man who understood that life doesn't always afford the opportunity or leisure

“ Often the only way to find the technique that works best for you is through trial and error. The important thing is to learn how to rest your mind – to work with it instead of being worked by it. ”

to practice formally. One of his greatest gifts to humanity was the lesson that it's possible to meditate anytime, anywhere. In fact, bringing meditation into your daily life is one of the main objectives of Buddhist practice. Any daily activity can be used as an opportunity for meditation. You can watch your thoughts as you go through your day, rest your attention momentarily on experiences like taste, smell, form, or sound, or simply rest for a few seconds on the marvelous experience of simply being aware of the experiences going on in your mind.

When practicing informally, though, it's important to set some sort of goal for yourself – for example, twenty-five informal meditation sessions lasting no more than a minute or two throughout the day. It's also helpful to keep track of your sessions. Monks and nomads in the Third World often keep track using prayer beads. But people in the West have a much wider range of options – including portable calculators, PDAs, and even those little counting machines people use in grocery stores. You can also keep track of your sessions simply by writing them down on a notepad. The main thing is to count every informal meditation practice so you can track it against your goal. For example, if you're using objectless meditation, count it as one. Then you lose it, try again; and count it as two.

One of the great benefits of organising your meditation practice in this way is that it's convenient and portable. You can practice anywhere – on the beach, at the movies, on the job, in a restaurant, on the bus or subway, or

at school – as long as you remember that your intention to meditate is meditation. No matter what your opinion might be about how well you've meditated, the point is to keep track of your intentions to meditate. When you come up against resistance, just remember the story about how the old cow pees while walking along throughout the day. That should be enough to bring a smile to your face and remind you that practicing is as easy, and as necessary, as relieving yourself.

Once you're comfortable with twenty-five short sessions a day, you can push your goal up to fifty informal sessions; then gradually up to a hundred. The main thing is to make a plan. If you don't, you'll forget about practice altogether. Those few seconds or minutes out of each day during which you allow yourself to rest or focus help you to stabilize your mind; so that when you finally do get a chance to practice formally, it won't be like sitting down to dinner with a stranger. You'll find your thoughts, feelings, and perceptions much more familiar, like old friends you can sit down with and talk to honestly.

There are a couple of other benefits to informal practice. First, when you integrate practice into your daily life; you avoid the trap of being calm and peaceful during formal meditation and then turning around and being tense and angry at the office. Second, and perhaps more important, practicing informally in daily life gradually eradicates the all-too-common misconception that you have to be someplace absolutely quiet in order to meditate.

No one in history has ever found such a

place. Distractions are everywhere. Even if you climb to the top of a mountain, at first you may feel some relief in the relative silence there compared to the sounds of the city or the office. But as your mind settles, you'll undoubtedly begin to hear small sounds, like crickets chirping, the wind rustling through leaves, birds or small animals poking around, or water dripping through rocks – and suddenly the great silence you were seeking is interrupted. Even if you try meditating indoors, closing all the windows and doors, you're bound to be distracted by something – itching, back pain, the need to swallow, the sound of water dripping from a faucet, a clock ticking, or the noise of someone walking on the floor above. No matter where you go, you'll always find distractions. The greatest benefit of informal practice lies in learning how to deal with these distractions, no matter what form they take and no matter how irritating they are.

### Anytime, anywhere

With this in mind, let's take a look at some of the ways you can practice during daily life, and even use what might ordinarily seem to be distractions as supports for resting your mind. The old texts call this "taking your life as the path".

Simply walking down the street can be a great opportunity to develop mindfulness. How often do you find yourself setting out on a particular task, like heading out to the grocery store or walking to a restaurant for lunch, and find yourself at your destination without even realising







“ While formal practice can help us to develop direct experience of emptiness, wisdom and compassion, such experiences are meaningless unless we can bring them to bear on our daily lives. ”

how you got there? This is a classic example of allowing the crazy monkey to run riot, spinning out all sorts of distractions that not only keep you from experiencing the fullness of the present moment, but also rob you of the chance to focus and train your awareness.

The opportunity here is to decide consciously to bring your attention to your surroundings. Look at the buildings you pass, at other people on the sidewalk, at the traffic in the streets, at the trees that may be planted along your route. When you pay attention to what you see, the crazy monkey settles down. Your mind becomes less agitated, and you begin to develop a sense of calmness.

You can also bring your attention to the physical sensation of walking, to the feeling of your legs moving, your feet touching the ground, the rhythm of your breathing or your heartbeat. This works even if you're in a rush, and is actually a great method of combating the anxiety that generally accompanies trying to get somewhere in a hurry. You can still walk quickly while bringing your attention to either your physical sensations or the people, places, or things you pass along your way. Just allow yourself to think, *Now I'm walking down the street... Now I'm seeing a building... Now I'm seeing a person in a T-shirt and jeans... Now my left foot is touching the ground... Now my right foot is touching the ground...* When you bring conscious awareness to your activity, distractions and anxieties will gradually fade and your mind will become more peaceful and relaxed. And when you do arrive at your destination, you'll be in a much more

comfortable and open position to deal with the next stage of your journey.

You can bring the same sort of attention to driving or to day-to-day experiences in your home or your workplace, simply by bringing your attention to various objects in your visual field, or using sounds as supports. Even simple tasks like cooking and eating provide opportunities for practice. While chopping vegetables, for example, you can bring your attention to the shape or color of each piece as you chop it, or to the sounds of soup or sauce bubbling. While eating, bring your attention to the smells and tastes you experience. Alternatively, you can practice objectless meditation in any of these situations, allowing your mind to rest simply and openly as you go about any activity, without attachment or aversion.

Meditation isn't a one-size-fits-all practice. Every individual represents a unique combination of temperament, background, and abilities. Recognising this, the Buddha taught a variety of methods to help people in all walks of life and in any situation recognise the nature of their minds and true freedom from the mental poisons of ignorance, attachment, and aversion. Mundane as some of these methods may appear, they actually represent the heart of Buddhist practice.

The essence of the Buddha's teachings was that while formal practice can help us to develop direct experience of emptiness, wisdom, and compassion, such experiences are meaningless unless we can bring them to bear on every aspect of our daily lives. For it's in facing the challenges of daily life that we can really measure

our development of calmness, insight, and compassion.

Even so, the Buddha invited us to try the practices for ourselves. In one of the sutras, he urged his students to test his teachings through practice, rather than accepting them simply at face value:

*As you would burn, cut, and rub gold,  
Likewise, the wise monk examines my  
teachings.*

*Examine my teachings well,  
But don't take them on faith.*

In the same spirit, I ask you to try the teachings for yourselves to see if they work for you. Some of the practices may help you; some may not. Some of you may find a certain affinity with one or more techniques right away, while other methods require a bit more practice. Some of you may even find that meditation practice does not benefit you at all. That's okay, too. The most important thing is to find and work with a practice that produces a sense of calmness, clarity, confidence, and peace. If you can do that, you will benefit not only yourselves, but also everyone around you; and that is the goal of every scientific or spiritual practice, isn't it? To create a safer, more harmonious, and gentle world, not only for ourselves, but for generations to come.

# 可品嚐的智慧

撰文 確諄法師 翻譯 馮光至 攝影 倪鷺露

我們珍貴的覺知，不但可以幫助我們「吃」在當下，更給我們機會從而創造悟道的因緣。善用我們的心，可以協助自己在修行上的精進

有一個著名的佛教寓言，它講述一個男人滑倒了，跌落懸崖去。在危急之間他抓住了懸崖邊一條突出來的樹枝，於是他拚命地抓緊樹枝，以免下面的怪獸吃掉他，同時他也無法返回懸崖上。這時候，他看見上面的樹叢長出了一顆很美麗的草莓，他記起了草莓的味道，也想像那草莓將會是如何美味，於是，他摘下了這顆草莓來吃。

我聽說這個故事是用作闡釋正念覺知於當下，因為那個男人完全專注於品嚐草莓，而沒有理會他周遭發生的事情。但我感到疑惑：當我們的寶貴人身正命懸一線時，究竟覺知地吃下一顆美味的草莓，是如何可以幫助我們？我的老師說這故事闡釋了有情眾生的愚昧，我們因輪迴中的享樂而分心，從而沒有盡力修行來避免自己墮進輪迴之苦。若果我們如此反省，我們便不再想伸手去吃下那顆草莓了！

正念覺知於自己正在吃草莓，無論如何，都比起不加思索地吞下它，或因你的兄弟從不請你吃草莓而生氣，又或緬懷你兩年前在法國吃過的草莓更好。然而，佛教的禪修並非只是專注於我們當下正在做甚麼，它的含義要比這豐富得多。心是如何運作的？甚麼是善心和不善心？有哪些「心所」妨礙我們修行，因而要降伏？又有哪些「心所」在覺悟之道上可以幫助我們，因而要培養？佛陀提供了豐富的教誨，都是關於無常、輪迴之苦、無我、空性、菩提心等。他並沒有教導我們執著於當下，因為它是多麼美好！

那我們應當如何正念地飲食從而創造出悟道的因緣？我們可以由察覺自己吃東西時，內心充斥著怎麼樣的各種各樣思想開始。比方說，你現在吃下一顆草莓，並想著：「噢，它真美味。好吃，好吃，好吃。鮮甜美味的草

莓。」然後草莓吃完了。你想到的，你專注的，就只有草莓的味道。這樣的心會令你悟道嗎？像這樣的無記心，並不會令我們解脫。

所有佛教的宗派，在進食前都會供養，以幫助我們在進食時能產生一顆善心。當我吃美味的食物時，我會想起我給他們寫信的囚犯，又或是佛菩薩，我會把美味的食物供養他們。我因布施而心生喜樂。此舉也令我不會只專注於自己的幸福，並讓我能同時培養一份覺知，明白這個世界上有很多其他眾生，而我希望跟他們建立良好的關係。這樣吃，可減少我將自我作為中心，並幫助我培養對其他眾生的愛與慈悲。



有時候，我會專注於食物的無常變化，這可幫助我破除執著。我一旦把草莓放進口中並開始咀嚼，它便不再有吸引力了。試問你會想吃我咀嚼後吐出來的草莓嗎？然後，草莓便會被消化，在身體的另一端以糞便形式排泄出來。我可以把它擴大至所有輪迴中的享樂，它們全都是沒有恒常，不會恆久不變。這樣想並非悲觀，而是務實。與其抱持不切實際的期望而無法滿足，倒不如培養對輪迴之苦的覺知。這樣可令我們加強決心，激發我們了解實相，希望從輪迴中解脫。

另一種吃的方式，是對著我們的食物問自己：「為何我叫它作草莓？是甚麼令它成為草莓？」在我居住的舍衛精舍，我們供養文的一部分，是頌唸中國傳統佛教的「食時五觀」。第一觀是「計功多少，量彼來處」——即思量這些食物得來不易，思量一切因緣和他人的慈悲。我們可以花一兩個小時這樣觀想，這樣便永遠都吃不到午飯了！

我們每天進食，都可以思量這些食物得來的因緣。物質的因包括種子、土地、陽光、水分等等。這些是實在的物質因，變成實在的物質果，即食物。此外還有助緣，例如幫助種植農作物的人，還有收割的人、包裝的人、運送的人。我們與有情眾生的慈悲連繫著，而我們接受的一切事物，都依存著他們。以這樣的方式反省，是修道上方便的一環，可幫助我們產生菩提心，即渴望成為圓覺的佛，以報答眾生的慈悲心。

至於智慧的一環，我們則探究萬物如何由諸般因緣產生，因此並無自性。它們並沒有自身的本性，如是因才會產生如是果。萬物都依存著早於它們出現的事物，單是這點已顯示出它們並非獨立存在，它們也不可能擁有不變的自性。僅僅在食物供養中，我們便齊備了佛道的方便與智慧兩個環節。

因此，我們以正念吃草莓是有很多方法的。我們善用我們的心，以協助自己在佛道修行上的精進，而並非只是為了稍縱即逝的一刻享樂而吃。我們的生命非常短促，也非常寶貴，不宜這樣浪費。



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# WISDOM YOU CAN TASTE

Text Venerable Thubten Chodron      Photography Lulu Ngie

## Practising mindfulness while we eat helps us to live in the present moment, but our awareness is good for so much more

There's a well-known Buddhist parable about a man who slips and falls off the edge of a cliff. As he's falling, he grabs a branch of a nearby tree and holds on for dear life. He knows there are monsters below that are going to eat him, and he can't get back up the cliff. Then he sees a strawberry growing on a bush above him. The strawberry is very beautiful. He remembers what strawberries taste like and imagines how delicious this one would taste. So he picks, and eats, the strawberry.

I have heard this story used to explain what it means to be mindful of the present moment, since the man is completely focused on eating the strawberry regardless of his dire situation. I have sometimes wondered, though, how mindfulness about eating a strawberry can help us when we're hanging on to our precious human life? My teachers said this story is about the foolishness of sentient beings who get distracted by samsaric pleasure, instead of doing something of spiritual benefit that will help them avoid the suffering of many rebirths. When we think of the story that way, we don't want to reach out for the strawberry!

Being mindfully aware that you're eating a strawberry is certainly better than gobbling it down without thinking; or getting angry that your brother never shared strawberries with you; or reminiscing about strawberries you once ate in France. However, Buddhist meditation is much more than just paying attention to what we are doing in the present moment. It is concerned with understanding the nature of the mind. How does the mind work? What are virtuous and non-virtuous mental states? Which mental factors do we want to subdue because they are antithetical to spiritual progress, and which ones do we want to cultivate because they help us along the path

towards awakening? The Buddha gave a wealth of teachings about impermanence, the unsatisfactory nature of cyclic existence, selflessness, emptiness and bodhicitta. He did not teach being attached to the present moment because it's so wonderful!

How can we eat mindfully in a way that helps us create the causes for awakening? For a start, look at the whole variety of things we could be doing with our minds while we're eating. Let's say you're eating a strawberry and thinking, "Oh, it's so delicious. Yum, yum, yum. Sweet, delicious strawberry." And then the strawberry is finished. All that you thought about, all that you were focused on, was the taste of the strawberry. Is this a mind that's going to lead to awakening? No, a neutral state of mind like this will not lead us to liberation.

All Buddhist traditions do a food offering before meals, which helps us to generate a virtuous state of mind while eating. Especially when I eat something delicious, I think either of the prison inmates to whom I write or of the bodhisattvas and buddhas, and I offer the delicious taste of the food to them. I'm taking delight in being generous, and it takes me out of being focused on just my own happiness. Eating in this way reduces my self-centredness and helps me to cultivate love and compassion for others.

Sometimes I focus on the impermanence of the food, which helps me to counteract attachment. Once I've put the strawberry into my mouth and start chewing, it no longer looks appealing. Would you want to eat a strawberry that I've chewed and spit out? Then the strawberry gets digested and comes out the other end as poop. I can generalise this to all samsaric pleasures, which are impermanent and don't last. Thinking like this isn't depressing, it's realistic. Instead of building up unrealistic expectations that cannot be fulfilled, we develop an awareness of the disadvantages of samsara. This strengthens our determination to be liberated from samsara, which spurs us to understand the nature of reality.

Another way to eat is to look at what we're eating, and ask, "Why do I call this a strawberry? What makes this a strawberry?" At Sravasti Abbey, where I live, we recite the five contemplations from the Chinese Buddhist tradition as part of our

food offering prayers. The first contemplation is, "I contemplate all the causes and conditions, and the kindnesses of others, by which I have received this food." We could spend an hour or two meditating on this, and we'd never get to have lunch!

Whenever we eat, we can think of all the causes and conditions by which we've received the food. In terms of physical causes, there are the seeds, the ground, sunshine, water and so on. Those are the substantial causes, which actually turn into the result, which is the food. Then there are the co-operative conditions, such as the people who help cultivate the crops and who harvested, packaged and transported them. This connects us to the kindness of sentient beings, and to how we receive everything we have through our dependence upon them. Reflecting in this way is part of the method side of the path, which helps us to generate bodhicitta – the wish to become a fully awakened buddha, in order to repay the kindness of all sentient beings.

On the wisdom side, we investigate how things are produced by causes and conditions and therefore do not exist inherently. They do not have their own essence, and exist only because their causes existed. The mere fact that the existence of things depends on other things that came before them, shows that they cannot be independent. They can't possibly have their own inherent essence. In just this one line of the food offering, we have both the method and wisdom sides of the Buddhist path.

So we can eat a strawberry mindfully in many different ways. We can use our minds in ways that promote progress on the spiritual path, instead of eating just to enjoy something that disappears in a moment. Our lives are far too short and precious for us to spend them in that way.

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Bhiksuni Thubten Chodron is the founder and abbess of Sravasti Abbey in Washington state, USA, and is the author of several best-selling books including *Buddhism for Beginners*. Her latest book, co-authored with the Dalai Lama, is *Buddhism: One Teacher, Many Traditions*.







攝影 Photography 翔子 Bema Orser Dorje

## 開心禪與您

Joy of Living magazine 自從 2013 年發行以來，很高興與大家分享了詠給·明就仁波切的教學。開心禪的同學都知道，我們的老師明就仁波切在 2011 年 6 月中子然一身，身無長物的前往喜馬拉雅山，如同過去的瑜伽祖師們一般，進入數年浪跡四方、居無定所的閉關修行。四年多後，仁波切終於出關了！為了慶祝仁波切的歸來，我們邀請所有的開心禪同學分享大家如何把禪修與生活結合——明就仁波切哪些教法，對於你們是最有用？在日常生活裡，有哪些來自他的著作或書信中的字句令你對生命另有體會？或者是某一片語帶領你步上尋找自己的路？請大家選擇其中一些例子，告訴我們它是怎樣幫助你。我們會精選部分作品，並發表在 2016 年的期刊中。

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懇請大家慷慨的分享——讓你的分享，利益他人。

## JOL and you

Since its launch in 2013, the Joy of Living magazine has been happy to share the words and teachings of Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche with anyone who may find them useful. As students of the Joy of Living meditation course will know, Mingyur Rinpoche began an extended period of solitary retreat in the Himalayas in June 2011, in the tradition of the great meditation masters of times past, wandering from place to place with no plans or fixed agenda. After nearly four-and-a-half years, Mingyur Rinpoche has emerged from his retreat! To celebrate this wonderful news, we invite all JOL students to tell us which teaching of Mingyur Rinpoche you find useful and why. Is there a sentence or passage from any of his books or letters that especially speaks to you? How have these words guided you to discover something about yourself? Please make your choice and tell us how it has helped you. Some of your contributions will be selected for publication in an issue in 2016.

Deadline for contribution: March 1, 2016

Send us your contribution by email: [jolmagazine.hk@gmail.com](mailto:jolmagazine.hk@gmail.com)

or post it to Tergar Meditation Centre (address on Page 2).

We welcome all sharing. Please let your generosity benefit others.