

JOY OF LIVING

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陳旨均 Chen Zhijun

那天和一位朋友吃午飯時，他告訴我他被檢測出得了 HIV 病毒。我不知道他原本是否有打算說這件事，但是在坦白之際，他猶豫了。中斷了的句子懸在半空，等著他接下去。我看到他的嘴巴微微地顫抖。

朋友得知病情後，因憂鬱緊隨而患了抑鬱症。這個情緒旋渦肯定不好受。我們不需要豐富的想像力也可以理解這點，因為我們都記得害怕、恐慌或悲傷的滋味。

為甚麼強烈的情緒讓我們感到這般無助？其實這跟我們的記憶有關。簡單地說，我們繁忙的大腦不停地在「詮釋」著我們從五官接收到的訊息，然後觸發各種身心反應，讓我們應付對境。情緒就是其中的一種反應；它掩蓋我們身心的那一刻，也同時為我們塑造一個似是不可動搖的「現實」。

我們大腦如何「詮釋」訊息的自然功能是否如實或扭曲地反映我們的環境，和我們的思維習慣大有關聯。令人鼓舞的是，研究證明，只要我們的經驗改變了，大腦的運作也能跟著改變。把大腦「重新接線」，我們便可以把那些以前看似不可動搖的「現實」改變。

禪修就是一種能幫助我們大腦「重新接線」的練習。這期的封面故事試圖了解「禪修為甚麼有用」，而雜誌裡與美籍醫生兼僧人巴利·噶辛的訪談卻告訴我們「禪修如何有用」。他分享了一些能實際幫助我們面對負面情緒的練習。

到底是甚麼導致我們不快樂？禪修大師詠給·明就仁波切發現問題的真正重點在於大部分人並不瞭解何謂真正的「快樂」。在一篇節錄自他的書的文章裡，仁波切說明了制約因素怎麼將我們鎖在一個痛苦的循環中，好比一隻「貓或狗追著自己的尾巴跑」。

你對對日常生活裡的挑戰都不會陌生。我得知朋友病情的那一個下午，亦和另一位朋友碰面，聆聽她敘說她和舊男友之間的一些事。她說著說著，突然間停了下來，說道：「唉，真是無聊。」我們都笑了——我倆都不喜好把傷心事掛在嘴邊。畢竟，這些事並不稀奇；相反的，它們都是些千篇一律、平凡不過的事情。你和你的家人相處不愉，一是平時不多話，一是三天一大吵；其他的家庭也有他們的難處。也許你正因情人移情別戀而痛苦著；又或者你苦惱著不知道自己該要甚麼。隨便挑個項目，它就是你和成千上萬的人的共同點。

人生遇到的問題都是平淡無奇的——精彩的是我們如何面對它們。要直視自己內心的掙扎，我們需要不平凡的勇氣。你如果有野心接受這個挑戰，直視、接受和轉化你的情緒，你的人生將一點也不無聊。

那天的午飯，我的朋友拿出了坦白的勇氣；我被他那微微顫抖的嘴巴感動了。這個掙扎是人生大事，懦弱不得。美國詩人瑪麗·奧利弗 (Mary Oliver) 的創作動力來自她熱愛的大自然。長時間與天地萬物的相處使她不疑生命的莊嚴。「人和老虎，老虎和百合花——它們是多麼的不同，但又是如此的相似啊！我們都不是這樣嗎——在夏天的陽光下站起來，面向海，用盡我們身體和心智上的靈巧把生命變好，然後靜靜地回歸草堆裡，這死亡的青雲……人生若不是尼亞加拉，就甚麼都不是了。」

其實「情緒」就只是「情緒」，它不是「我的憤怒」，它不是「我的恐懼」，它不是「我的壓力」，它只是「壓力」、只是「恐懼」、只是「憤怒」。它並不屬於「我的」。

Earlier this year, a friend told me he had tested positive for HIV. We were having lunch. I don't know if he had planned to talk about it, but I saw him waver, his mouth trembling as he struggled to find the words.

Learning about his illness plunged him into depression, he said. The maelstrom of emotions that tore through him then I can only imagine. But I don't have to reach far to remember how distressing it feels to be racked with fear, panic or grief. And neither do you.

Why do powerful emotions have such a hold on us? It turns out that the act of remembering has a lot to do with it. Put very simply, the mind works tirelessly to interpret what our senses perceive, and to trigger responses that we recognise as emotions, among other things. This rush of feelings can seem, for that moment, like our *entire* reality (it isn't, of course).

How we interpret these perceptions depends to a large extent on our mental habits, which are shaped by our experience. Exciting recent research shows that new experiences can help to "rewire" our brain, which will alter the way we interpret perceptions – literally transforming our reality as we understand it.

One way of rewiring brain circuitry is through meditation. While the cover story gets behind why meditation works, our interview with monk and physician Dr Barry Kerzin discusses how it works. There are ways of training the mind to help us deal with destructive emotions, he says.

But why do humans appear to be programmed for unhappiness in the first place? The meditation master Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche found that a fundamental problem was that "most people don't have a very clear idea of what happiness is, and consequently find themselves creating conditions that lead them back to the dissatisfaction they so desperately seek to eliminate".

The everyday challenges of life are new to none of us. The same day I heard about my friend's illness, I spent some time in the afternoon listening to another friend relate her entanglements with a former boyfriend. Mid-way through her narration, she stopped and said, "Oh, how boring." We both smiled, because she is not one to rabbit on about heartache, and neither am I. After all, what is there to say? You don't get along with your father/mother/brother/sister? Join the club. Your lover left you for another? That's you and, oh, 10 million others. Perhaps you don't even know what you want from life – a far more common predicament than you might think.

The problems in your life may be prosaic and utterly boring. But your response to them needn't be. A willingness to brave the storm inside takes uncommon courage. If you take up the challenge of facing up to your feelings – accepting, then transforming them – your life won't be remotely boring.

That day at lunch, it wasn't easy for my friend to talk about his illness; his trembling mouth told me this much. But such struggle is the work of life, and isn't for the fainthearted. American poet Mary Oliver, a lifelong observer and lover of nature, speaks often about the majesty of life. "Humans or tigers, tigers or tiger lilies – note their differences and still how alike they are! Don't we all, a few summers, stand here, and face the sea and, with whatever physical and intellectual deftness we can muster, improve our state – and then, silently, fall back into the grass, death's green cloud?... Life is Niagara, or nothing."

Emotions are separate from us. "My anger" isn't really mine, and neither is "my fear". Don't mistake emotions for being actually "me".

想像中的 情緒世界

文字 Michael Clugston 翻譯自英文版本 戴林焱 攝影 吳世傑



簡略了解大腦的運作， 有助於我們明白強烈的情緒如何影響我們的身心， 進而使我們知道無須任由它擺佈

負面情緒經常以我們最意料不到的方式突然出現，讓我們措手不及。舉個例子：有一位翻譯工作者，剛結束了一天的工作，拖著疲憊的身軀回到家，便在家裏與她的母親發生爭執。這聽起來很平常，但是她們爭吵的內容竟然是關於慈悲心！

這位翻譯工作者在當天負責翻譯了由詠給·明就仁波切主講關於慈悲心的一個演講，她的母親很自然地想知道仁波切的演講內容。

但另一方面，她筋疲力竭的女兒由於說了一天的話而只想安靜地休息。一不經意，母女兩人就開始鬧意見，而且爭論還愈演愈烈。不過，當她們意識到其實這為所愛之人而爭吵的動力也是源於我們內在的慈悲的時候，糾紛就平息了。因為這個時候她們就可以「使用慈悲」更具體的表達她們內在真實的感受。

雪樂喇嘛敘述這段生活插曲的時候說道：「在日常生活中，我們難以一直處於充滿愛心、富有慈悲心的狀態中，這對於大多數人是不可能做到的。若想生活變好，我們不必要求自己突然變好，永不再產生負面情緒，而是當負面情緒出現的時候，我們必須要覺察到它的出現，這樣才可以選擇不陷進憤怒之中。畢竟仁波切的教導是很人性化的。」

靈活的大腦

大多數人都知道用一些簡單的方法來處理負面情緒，例如強迫自己微笑或深呼吸去驅除憂鬱的負能量。建立良好的人際關係或養寵物，可以獲得不同程度的快樂，這是由於大腦中產生了多巴胺及血清素，它能夠振奮精神。但是，還有一種更根本而簡單的方法，就是熟悉我們大腦的運作、思想及情緒——禪修。這可能聽起來沒什麼了不起，但這種方法其實是目前主流精神學的核心，也是2,600年前與佛陀的證悟同出一轍的可行的方法。練習禪修，或稱正念，能將我們的腦「重新接線」。因此，即使當負面的情緒沒有完全消失時，它們也不會再主宰我們。

「我們知道修持慈悲心是能夠影響大腦運作的，他就像大腦的養料，可以在分子層面中促進正念的生長。」香港中文大學臨床心理學家梁耀堅教授說道。「你所用心栽培之物，你所悉心照料之心，都會有助於你培養平衡的情緒。」

我們是生活在一個充滿奇跡的年代，尤其是對情緒和大腦的研究方面。二十年前，如果你提出僅通過思維的力量就可以改變大腦回路這樣的觀點，大多數西方的臨床心理學家會質疑你是否精神正常。近年因為這個領域的學識突破，這些觀點，甚至一些看似更離譜的，都已經成為主流科學。這場知識革命認可了大腦的「神經可塑性」，確定了我們有根本改變思維的能力。

令人費解的是，很多人卻不懂得運用他們那敏銳靈活的大腦，來弱化通過思想和身體而產生的激烈負面情緒波動。激烈負面情緒帶來的後果，可破壞人際關係，令事業失敗，甚至引起對自身及他人的暴力羈絆。它們是無助於健康，更可導致我們精神緊張、血壓上升或引起其它疾病。

儘管科學家們最初是跟隨宗教修行人，例如佛教僧侶們，學習禪修訓練，但禪修本身並不是一種宗教。它是植根在腦科學的一個實用工具，並有著二十多年的學術研究和MRI腦部掃描科學的支援。這是對每個人都可行的方法——只要他想除去憤怒、焦慮、嫉妒、悲傷和所有其它煩惱帶來的痛苦，便可透過學習禪修而學會如何面對那些總是駕馭他們思想和情感。

禪修練習本身不是藥到病除的處方，但它能讓我們看到激烈的情緒並不是像開始時那麼可怕。

原來都是我們想出來的

香港中文大學校園座落在沙田一片廣闊的高山上，俯瞰波光粼粼的吐露港。性格爽朗的梁耀堅教授安坐在逸夫書院通亮的辦公室裏，分享

著他為甚麼將佛學視為一種心理學。

四月的這一天，陽光明媚，人的心情也都愉悅起來——直到梁教授開始描述他的一些恐慌症精神病患者的經歷。

「當恐慌症患者病發時，他們突然間有一種無法抵抗的恐懼感，」這位曾在加拿大培訓的心理學家說。「這就像有一隻老虎正在追逐你，他們的心跳加快，呼吸加速，內臟和肌肉緊縮得像拳頭，對他們來說真的太恐怖了。起初他們以為自己是心臟病發作，但當醫生告訴他們情況並非如此，他們就很害怕是不是自己瘋了。」

「事實上並沒有老虎，亦不是心臟病發作，他們也沒有發瘋。只是這些人的大腦回路，包括杏仁核或藍斑核（簡稱：藍斑），發出了錯誤的警報。藍斑是大腦底部的一小塊區域，有參與身體回應壓力和恐慌的功能。」

梁教授解釋說，有些人有過度敏感的藍斑，當血液裏的二氧化碳含量提升了少許時，它會引發出錯誤警報。這種身體反應其實是一般人在跑上一段樓梯後亦可能有的正常情況。但對藍斑過度敏感的人便變得不再正常。藍斑向患者全身發送大量去甲腎上腺素，這是一種類似腎上腺素的荷爾蒙。這種震動使大腦感覺到有一種嚴重危及生命的災難即將發生。患者通常需要多天的時間才從震驚和驚恐中恢復過來。

梁教授的三階段治療法是讓患者從接受他們自己的問題開始，瞭解如何造成誤警，通過冷靜觀察來練習以正念為基礎的方法，以取代本能的反應。有時他會將二氧化碳導入到患者血液中，模擬恐慌症發作，這樣他們可以看到「誤警」是如何發生。

在治療之前，患者可能的反應是：「哦，不！不要再一次發作。」在治療後，比較自知的患者的反應可能是：「哦，你看，我開始有那種恐慌的感覺了。這些『誤警』倒是種有趣的現象。我知道它會很快過去，不會持續很長時間，現在，我明白原因了。」結果，病人的心跳和血壓都沒有激增。

在人類演化過程中，我們學會在有生命危

機之時做出「攻擊或是逃避」的適應性反應而得以生存。如今劍齒虎的年代已經過去，通過禪修練習，能讓大腦產生新的大腦回路，重新認識對生活適當的反應。

同樣的方法也適用於沒有恐慌症的人。筆者在去年夏天的幾個月裏，每天僅僅靜坐不超過 10-12 分鐘後，就感受到了它的益處。通常和家人爭吵時，我就感覺到一種熟悉的憤怒衝動進到大腦裏的常到之地。但這一次，我意識到這個情緒，能夠看著它，正如在我眼前的舞臺上的一名演員。我告訴自己，它將會過去。它真的過去了，並沒有激起我的勃然大怒。解脫的感覺是美妙的。

但自那以後，我變得懶惰，經常忘記禪修，這會讓舊的心理習慣捲土重來。梁教授說：「如果想正念修持得以成功，就把它變成早晚洗臉刷牙那樣的習慣，這樣你就可以自然而然的禪修。」

不僅僅是有破壞性的負面情緒，同樣樂觀情緒也將受益於意識訓練。例如被稱讚會帶來一種「有黏度」的愉悅感，導致自我膨脹。透過禪修，我們學習並認識到這種「粘性感覺」也只是我們頭腦的一個功能而已。

新的思考方式

美國威斯康辛大學（麥迪遜）的理查·大衛森教授是近幾十年來推動正念革命的一位先驅，他在這領域的研究成為了美國《時代》及《國家地理》等雜誌的封面故事，同時也刊登了佛教僧侶連接功能性磁共振成像掃描設備的圖像。大衛森博士已有超過 30 年的禪修經驗，他在今年早些時候到訪香港，在德噶香港禪修中心主辦的一場公開演講中說道：「禪修在我的理解裏，需要從詞的根本意思開始說起。在梵文中，禪修的定義之一是『使熟悉』。通過禪修，我們能夠安住及觀察覺性，而更加熟悉自心本性。」

他說禪修帶來的益處比人們期望的還要快。他在最近的一項研究中發現，一些從來沒

有禪修經驗的人，在練習了兩周，每天 30 分鐘，共僅僅七小時的慈悲禪修訓練後，並對「他們在慈悲禪修前和後的大腦掃描圖進行比對，發現大腦回路裏（涉及情感的部分）有了鮮明的變化。這結果意味著我們通過一個簡單的方法，並不需要花費大量的時間，便可以真正改變我們的大腦。這種改變，我認為將會促進我們身心健康。」

他在他的暢銷書《情緒大腦的秘密檔案》（台灣遠流出版社 2013 年 6 月出版）中寫道：「正念修持在精神的河床中開創出了新的通道，它令我們在處於緊張狀態或挫折中時，不會觸動焦慮、恐懼等感覺，也不會聽天由命而投降。」

在慈悲的修持中，修行人集中關注「人」，對「人」發送各種各樣的正念資訊，如「願你祥和及喜樂」。類似這樣的練習創造了新的電子「河床」——樹突和突觸。它們在大腦中攜帶電子信號，當這些通道隨時間越來越強大時，它們就創造了佛教徒稱之為心靈開啟，一個存在於我們情緒和思維背後的空間。

梁教授稱之為佛陀發現的元意識，並說：「這是一種不造作的自我觀照，不曾被條件反射、情緒、信仰、自戀和所有世俗事務所粉飾過。」

但是如果你認為正念訓練似乎是個辛苦的事情，雪樂喇嘛提醒我們：「放輕鬆，一切就會變得不一樣；禪修練習不應該是吃力的。如果做法是『我必須要覺察！我一定要意識到！』，就像手裏緊握著東西，會感覺非常疲累。但是如果東西只是擱在你的手上，那麼就變得輕鬆了。不需要太努力，覺知就像是有東西輕輕的擱放在你手上那樣。」

「在一般的情況下，我們都急於下判斷。當我們走在大街上，我們『討厭』所有的噪音。可是，一旦你有了覺知，就能安住在覺性當中，讓你的心保持開放。不匆忙下判斷，因此而減少負面結果。禪修轉化了你的內心，讓你能夠認識到憤怒來自哪裡。一旦你學會看見它，你就可以選擇不生氣。」

像江河一樣寬宏大量

美國心理學之父威廉·詹姆斯，1905 年在哈佛大學公開演講時，他注意到來自斯里蘭卡的一個僧人聽眾。詹姆斯對他說：「你來講吧，你比我更勝任講授心理學。」詹姆斯對觀眾解釋道：「這種心理學，25 年後每個人都會研究它。」那一天終於到來了，雖然開花的時間比他預測的四分之一世紀要長。

梁教授不是佛教徒，他說：「現代認知行為療法與佛教所說的正念修持法在本質上是相同的。」他指的是在過去的二十年中許多被廣泛使用的基於正念的治療方法，比如正念減輕壓力（mindfulness-based stress reduction）和辯證行為治療（dialectical behavioural therapy）。

梁教授說：「佛教最終的目的是『覺知』——如何清理你的意識狀態，讓它不再被恐懼、憤怒、悲傷和享樂衝動所扭曲。就是這樣，如果你每天都這麼做，你的大腦就會發生變化。」

禪修大師釋一行把這轉變比喻做一條寬闊的河流。在《生活是最好的修行》一書中，他說：「當我們的心胸變得更寬闊時，我們更有能力接受並擁抱負面情緒，以便轉化這些感受。假設你將滿手的鹽巴倒入一杯水中，現在你不能喝這杯水，因為太鹹了。但是如果你將滿手的鹽巴倒入河中，由於河流如此廣闊，它並不會因此受到影響，我們大家仍能繼續喝這河水。」

他說，我們的心像江河一樣寬宏大量，「不只對我們自己，也能為我們周遭的人轉化痛苦，並帶來喜樂」。

I THINK, THEREFORE I FEEL

Text Michael Clugston Photography Ng Sai-kit



Knowing how our brains work can help explain the hold powerful emotions have on us, and why, therefore, they are not the tyrants they seem to be

Negative emotions can ambush us in the oddest ways. Take the case of an interpreter who returned home tired from work one day, and got into an argument with her mother at home. That may not sound so unusual – except that they were fighting over compassion, of all things!

The woman had spent the day interpreting for the Buddhist teacher Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, helping him give a talk on the theme of compassion. Her mother, naturally, wanted to know what the Rinpoche had said.

Her exhausted daughter, on the other hand, had been talking all day and just wanted some peace and quiet. The argument grew nasty before they both realised the irony of the situation: quarrelling with loved ones over a message of loving-kindness. They finally calmed down and made peace.

Lama Sherab, a teacher at Tergar Meditation Centre Hong Kong, related that story, adding: "In practice, we can't all stay in a loving, compassionate mood all the time. That's impossible for most people, and the Rinpoche's teaching is always very human. So we're not asked to suddenly be good and never express negative emotion. But we have to just be aware of it, at the start, when it begins. Then we can choose not to fall into the anger."

Most of us know some easy ways to deal with negative emotions. Forcing yourself to smile, or breathe deeply, can banish the blues by throwing the brain off its negative track. Good relationships or pets can raise the levels of happiness – producing infusions of dopamine and serotonin, lifting spirits.

But there's an even more fundamental approach: simply familiarising ourselves with our minds and emotions, with some understanding of how our brains work. That may not sound too impressive, but it's a highly practical approach that is at the heart of mainstream psychotherapy and the insight of the Buddha 2,500 years ago. Mindfulness meditation techniques "rewire" our minds so that, while negative emotions don't disappear entirely, they no longer dominate us.

"We know that loving-kindness meditation

actually triggers brain effects; it's like fertiliser in our brain, and facilitates growth at the molecular level," says Freedom Leung, a clinical psychologist and professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "What you plant there, how you take care of the new growth, will affect the sort of emotional balance you develop."

We live in an age of miracles, as far as emotions and the human brain are concerned. Just two decades ago, most Western psychologists would have questioned your sanity for suggesting we could rewire our brain circuits just with the power of our thoughts. Yet this and many more wonders are now mainstream science, thanks to a revolution in the field that has recognised the brain's "plasticity" – or ability to change its inner connections, like plastic.

The puzzling thing is that more people don't apply their amazingly flexible brains to weakening the power of negative emotions that surge through their minds and bodies, leaving trails of ruined relationships, lost jobs and even violence to themselves and others. Not to mention those unhealthy spikes in heartbeat and blood pressure.

Though science first adapted its mindfulness training from the techniques of religious practitioners, including Buddhist monks, there's nothing religious about meditation itself. It's a practical tool rooted in hard-core brain science, buttressed by many studies and MRI brain scans for over two decades. It is a resource available for anyone who wants to take the sting out of anger, anxiety, jealousy, sadness and all those other troublesome, subjective sensations that love to grab the reins of our minds.

Mindfulness practice is not a cure; rather, it shows us that strong emotions are not the tyrants they at first appear to be, giving us the confidence to free ourselves from their control.

It's all in our mind

Chinese University's vast campus sprawls over a high hill overlooking the sparkling waters of

the Tolo Channel, in Sha Tin. In his bright office in Shaw College sits Freedom Leung, a cheerful, Canadian-trained professor of psychology with an interest in Buddhism as psychology.

On this sunny day in April there isn't a negative emotion in sight – until Leung starts describing the nerve-shattering effects of panic disorder experienced by some of his patients.

"When the attack comes, all of a sudden there's an overwhelming sensation of fear," says Leung. "It's a fear like having a tiger chasing you. The patient's heartbeat races, the breath comes fast, their insides and muscles tense up like fists. It's really horrible for them. At first they assume it's a heart attack; but then when the doctor tells them that's not the case, they're terrified they're going crazy.

"But there's no tiger, no heart attack, and they're not going crazy. In some people the cause is just a false alarm in their brain circuitry, such as in their amygdala or locus coeruleus (LC)." The LC is a small region in the brain's base that is involved with bodily responses to stress and panic.

Leung explains that some people have over-sensitive LCs, which set off false alarms when the carbon dioxide level in their blood rises a bit. It's normally a benign condition that you might feel after running up a flight of stairs. But in these people it's anything but benign: the LC floods the patient's brain with norepinephrine, a hormone similar to adrenaline. That jolts the brain into sensing an acute, life-threatening catastrophe at hand; it can take days to recover from the shock and terror.

Leung's three-step therapy begins with the patient's acceptance of their own problem, understanding how the false alarm is caused, and practising mindfulness-based techniques that replace the instinctive reaction with calm observation. Leung sometimes introduces carbon dioxide into their blood to simulate a panic attack, so the patients can watch the false alarm as it plays out.

Before therapy, a patient might react to an attack with: "Oh no! Not another attack."

“ Buddhism really comes down to 'awareness' – how to clean up your state of awareness so it's not distorted by fear, anger, sadness and hedonic impulses. ”

Professor Freedom Leung

After therapy, the more self-aware patient's reaction might be: "Oh, look, I'm getting that feeling of panic now; aren't these false alarms an interesting phenomenon? I know it will pass shortly. It never lasts that long now that I understand the cause."

As a result, there's no spike in the patient's heartbeat; no surge in blood pressure. New brain circuits, created by mindfulness practice, now draw the brain's energy flows away from the old fight-or-flight adaptive response that kept us alive in the days of sabre-toothed tigers.

The same approach works for those of us who don't suffer from such devastating disorders. This writer felt its help last summer, after only a few months of meditating no more than 10-12 minutes per day. An old family quarrel broke out, triggering a familiar onrush of anger down the well-trodden paths in my brain. But this time I was aware of the emotion, and was able to watch it approach like an actor on a stage before my eyes. I told myself it would pass, and it did, without provoking an outburst from me. The sense of liberation was wonderful.

But since then I've become lazy, frequently missing practice for several days in a row, which invites a relapse to old mental habits. "If you want mindfulness practice to be successful, turn it into something like washing your face or brushing your teeth every morning or before you go to bed," says Leung. "You do it automatically."

And it isn't just negative emotions that can be destructive; upbeat emotions, too, will benefit from awareness training. Praise, for example, can

create a "sticky" sense of pleasure that pumps up our egos. In meditation, we learn to recognise this "stickiness" as simply a function of our mind.

New ways of thinking

One pioneer behind the mindfulness revolution of recent decades is Dr Richard Davidson of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, whose research in the field has prompted cover stories in *Time* and *National Geographic* magazines, with images of Buddhist monks wired up to fMRI scanners. A meditator himself for over 30 years, Davidson visited Hong Kong earlier this year, and told a public audience in Chai Wan that "meditation for me actually goes back to the root of the word. In Sanskrit, one of the definitions of meditation is 'familiarisation' – a practice whereby we can be more familiar with the nature of our mind by resting in awareness; by observing our awareness."

Benefits can occur more rapidly than many people might expect, he said. In a recent study, "we taught compassion meditation to people who have never meditated before, and they practised just 30 minutes a day for two weeks – so a total of just seven hours".

"We took brain scans before and after, and what we find is really remarkable. After just two weeks of practising, there are robust changes in the brain, in the circuits [involving emotion]. So it suggests that we can, in a simple, easy way that doesn't require a lot of time, we can actually

change our brains in ways that, I think, will promote well-being."

"Mindfulness meditation carves new channels in the streambeds of the mind," he wrote in his best-selling book *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*. "The result is that what had been a stressful experience or setback no longer triggers a feeling of anxiety, fear, or fatalistic capitulation."

In compassion meditation, the meditator focuses on people and sends them a variety of positive mental messages such as "May you be peaceful and happy". Such practice creates new electronic "streambeds" – dendrites and synapses – that carry electronic signals in the brain. As these passages strengthen over time, they create what Buddhists call an expansiveness of mind; a space that exists in the background of our emotions and thoughts.

Freedom Leung calls this the meta-awareness that the Buddha discovered. "It is a kind of self-contemplation without distortions; without being coloured by reflexes, by emotions, beliefs, self-obsessions and everything that went before in human history," he said.

But if you think mindfulness training seems like hard work, Lama Sherab reminds us that being relaxed makes all the difference. Mindfulness should not be a struggle, he says. "Like grasping something in your hand. If you do that you'll get very tired, 'I have to be aware! I must be aware'. But if something's just resting on your hand, it's easy to carry it; there's no effort. Awareness is like something resting there lightly on your hand."



"Normally we rush to judgment, as when we're walking in the street and we 'hate' all that noise. But when you're just aware, you're resting in awareness and your heart is open. Your judgment doesn't come in so quickly, so there's less negativity. Meditation transforms you inside, so that you are able to recognise where anger comes from. And once you learn to see it, you can choose not to be angry."

As embracing as a river

The father of American psychology, William James, was giving a public lecture at Harvard in 1905, when he noticed a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka in the audience. James said to him: "Take

my chair. You are better equipped to lecture on psychology than I." Turning to the audience, James explained: "This is the psychology that everyone will study 25 years from now." That day has finally arrived, although it took longer than the quarter-century he predicted.

Freedom Leung, who is not a Buddhist, says: "Buddhist thinking on mindfulness meditation is essentially the same as modern cognitive-behavioural therapy." He is referring to a host of widely used mindfulness-based therapies developed over the past two decades, such as mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT).

"Buddhism really comes down to 'awareness' – how to clean up your state of awareness so it's not distorted by fear, anger, sadness and hedonic

impulses," Leung said. "And that's it. If you do it every day, there will be changes in your brain."

The Zen Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh likens this transformation to an expansiveness of heart and mind. In a collection of his teachings that has been published in Chinese, he says: "When we open up our hearts and minds, we will be more able to accept, embrace and transform negative emotions. Say if you put a handful of salt in a glass of water, the water will become too salty to drink. But if you throw this salt in a river, the water will remain unaffected and we can all continue to drink from the river." When our hearts and minds become as expansive as a river, he says, we bring joy to not only ourselves but also those around us.

我們為何不快樂

摘錄自《世界上最快樂的人》第八章

攝影 Kay P





我在廿幾個國家巡迴講學近十年之久，見識過許多怪異和奇妙的事，也聽過很多怪異或奇妙的故事；有些是人們在我公開授課時提出的，有些則是在私人諮詢時發生的。不過，最讓我感到驚訝的是，物質生活充裕的人所經歷的痛苦程度，竟然跟物質生活貧乏的人相差無幾。

有好幾年時間，我在公開授課和私人談話中，都會主動提出一些深入的問題以瞭解狀況。這些交談使我體會到，當外在或物質發展的速度超前於內在知識的發展時，人們承受著強烈的心理矛盾衝擊，卻苦無解決煩惱的方法；而豐富的物質享受也相對地帶來了各種外在的干擾源，使我們跟內在世界失去了聯繫。

舉例來說，想一想有多少人總是拚命地在尋求刺激感？他們多麼期待去光顧新開幕的餐廳、開始一段新的人際關係，或者更換不同的工作。這些嶄新的人、事、物確實提供了短暫的刺激，但是過了一陣子之後，這些興奮感就只會逐漸沉寂，什麼新鮮感、新朋友，或者新任務又開始變得平凡無奇了，最初的快樂也就這樣憑空消失了。

因此，他們又開始嘗試新花招，比如說到海邊玩，這也能讓人感到爽快、滿意好一陣子；陽光溫暖，海水也棒極了，還可以交到一大群新朋友，也許還有刺激的新活動可以玩，像是水上摩托車或拖曳傘等。但是過沒多久，海灘活動又開始變無聊了；同樣的話題反覆不休，粗粗的砂子黏在皮膚上，陽光一下子太強，一下子卻又被烏雲遮住，一下子又嫌海水太冷了，看來，又是該換新花招的時候了；你開始想要試試不同的海灘，或許可以到別的國家看看，我們的心於是開始自創咒語：「我要去大溪地（Tahiti）……大溪地……大溪地……」

然而，這些解決方法的缺點是，它們本質上都是短暫的。一切現象都是因緣和合所生的結果，所以不可避免地都會有所改變；當產生並維持快樂的基本因素改變時，大部分人不是怪罪外在因素（他人、地方、氣候等），要不就是責備自己（「我當時應該把話說好聽一點或放聰明點」，或者「早知道去別的地方不就好了」）。然而，由於這只不過是反映了我們失去自信，或者對原以為會帶來快樂的事物失去信心罷了，因此，怨天尤

人其實只會讓我們更難找到真正的快樂。

真正的問題重點在於，大部分人並不瞭解何謂真正的「快樂」，他們發現自己創造的情境，最後反而讓自己跌回原本亟欲消除的不滿足之中。因此，我們最好能更仔細觀察一下所謂的「快樂」、「痛苦」，及其形成的原因。

我們的性格特質

從科學的角度來看，情緒分為短暫事件和長期持續的狀態。短暫的情緒事件包括：在家裡用鐵鎚敲釘子修理東西時，卻不小心敲到大拇指，那瞬間生起的怒氣；或者有人真心讚美我們時，我們心中倏然高漲的驕傲感等。以科學術語來說，這些相對短暫的事件通常稱之為「暫時的情緒狀態」。

長期持續且遍布在不同情境的情緒，比如說，我們對某個孩子的關愛，或者對往事揮之不去的怨恨，這些都被稱為「性格特質」（traits），或「性情特質」（temperamental qualities），也是大部分人認為某個人「性格」的一種指標。例如，假使某人臉上經常掛著微笑、積極活躍，而且總是對他人說好話，那麼我們通常就會說，這是個很「討人歡喜」的人。反之，若某個人老是皺著眉頭、慌慌張張、一直窩在辦公桌前埋頭苦幹，而且常常為了小事發脾氣，那麼我們就會說他是個「緊張兮兮」的人。

「暫時的情緒狀態」和「性格特質」的差異很明顯，就算沒有科學知識的人也都知道。

暫時的情緒狀態是神經元之間快速的突發性對話，而性格特質則比較像是神經元之間忠誠穩定的關係。這些長期而持續關係的起源非常多，有些可能是源自於基因，有些可能是嚴重創傷所造成，還有一些則可能是長期或重複的經驗所發展出來的結果，例如我們在兒童和青少年時期所受到的生活訓練等。

無論我們的性格特質來源為何，性格特質具有一種制約作用，會影響我們如何界定自己的生活，也影響我們回應日常生活經驗的方式。比方說，性格上傾向畏懼或沮喪的人，通常比較會以

驚惶不安的態度來面對情境；有自信的人則會以從容不迫、胸有成竹的態度來面對一切。

慣性的反應

生物學和神經科學說明了當我們體驗到愉悅或不悅的情緒時，腦部到底發生了什麼樣的反應；佛學則不僅能讓我們更精確地明白這些經驗，也提供方法幫助我們改變念頭、情緒和所接收的對境，讓我們可以在基本的生物細胞層次上，變成更快樂、更平和，且更慈愛的人類。

無論是主觀地以佛陀所教導的正念來觀察，或者客觀地透過現代科學實驗室的先進科技來觀察，我們所說的「心」，其實是兩種基本活動交互影響下的展現：一是本然的認知力（bare recognition，事物正在發生的那個單純的覺性）；二是制約因素（conditioning factors），這個過程不僅描述我們所感知到的事物，也決定了我們的反應。換句話說，所有的心智活動都是由「本然的感知」與「長期的神經元連結」交相作用而逐步形成。

我的老師薩傑仁波切曾對我再三諄諄教誨，如果我想要快樂，就得學會去辨識並處理那些會引起衝動或性格慣性反應的制約因素。他教導的重點是，任何阻礙我們，使我們無法不帶評論地如實看待事物的因素，即可說是衝動性的。

比如說，如果有人現在正對著我們大吼大叫，我們很少會花點時間去區分什麼是本來的直接感官認知：「哦，這個人提高了音量，正在說這個、說那個」，什麼又是情緒化反應：「這個人真是個混蛋！」相反地，我們傾向於將直接的認知和情緒反應混在一起：「這個人正在對我大吼大叫，因為他是個大混蛋！」

但是，我們如果能夠退一步，客觀地看看當下的情況，很可能就會發現，對著我們大吼大叫的這個人所惱火的事，或許跟我們毫不相干；也許他才剛被長官刮鬍子，生怕自己被炒魷魚；也許他剛剛得知某個親友生了重病，又或者他跟朋友或伴侶吵了架而沒睡好。

不幸的是，制約因素的影響力太強烈了，以

至於我們很少會想到，我們其實可以退一步海闊天空。而且，由於我們的理解是如此有限，因此通常會以偏概全，錯認所有事實。

我們的見識如此短淺有限，也沒有通盤瞭解事實真相，如何能做出適當的反應呢？

三種「毒」

在佛教名相中，制約因素通常稱之為「煩惱」，有時候也稱之為「毒」。許多佛教心理學典籍都對煩惱做了廣泛研究，且一致公認有三種主要煩惱，它們就是形成其他煩惱，讓我們無法看清事物真實面貌的根本原因。這三種煩惱是：愚痴、貪著和瞋念。

愚痴：愚痴即是無法體認自心無限的潛能、明性和力量，就像透過有色眼鏡來看這個世界一樣，無論你看到什麼，都已經被鏡片的顏色所偽裝或曲解而失真了。就根本層面來看，愚痴將覺性基本的開放體驗曲解為一種固有的二元對立「自」與「他」。

因此，愚痴可說是一種雙重問題，一旦我們認定自己是單一且獨立存在的「自我」，設定了這樣的神經元習性之後，我們必然會將「非自我」的一切視為「他」。「他」可以是任何事物：桌子、香蕉、他人，甚至是這個「自我」正在想或正在感受的事物，因而我們所經驗的一切都變成了陌生人。

一旦習慣了分別「自」與「他」，我們就會把自己囚禁在二元對立的感知方式中，在「自我」與「外在世界」之間畫出概念性的分界線；這個「外界」看起來是多麼廣闊，讓我們禁不住覺得自己是多麼渺小、有限，又脆弱啊！我們開始把他人和物質視為快樂或不快樂的可能來源，生活因而變成一種爭鬥拚搏，必須在他人捷足先登之前，搶先得到所需的一切以獲得快樂。

梵文中，這樣的爭鬥拚搏稱之為「娑婆」或「輪迴」（samsara），字面上的意思就是「車輪」或「循環」。所謂的「輪迴」，特別指的是痛苦的輪迴或循環，是一種不斷重蹈覆轍的習性；我們

一再依循相同的經驗，卻期望得到不同的結果。如果你看過貓或狗追著自己的尾巴跑，那你就懂得輪迴的意義了。雖然看貓或狗追著自己的尾巴跑好像很有趣，但是，當你自己的心這麼做的時候，可是一點也不好玩。

貪著：由「他」中分離出來的「自我」感知，其實是一種生物機制，是神經元之間已然建構的對話模式，持續對其他神經元系統發出訊號：「我們每一個人都是個別、獨立存在的生物，我們需要某些東西才能維持生存。」由於我們生活在肉體中，因此氧氣、食物和水等確實是不可或缺的。此外，有人曾與我談及關於嬰兒存活的研究，報告顯示，為了生存，我們需要一定程度身體方面的滋養，例如我們需要被觸摸，需要有人跟我們說說話，也需要有人認同我們的存在。

然而，當我們將「生物必需要素」概括至與「基本生存無關的事物」時，問題就來了。佛教名相中，這種概括性稱之為「貪著」或「欲望」（desire），而這跟愚痴一樣，都具有神經元的生物基礎。

舉例來說，假使吃巧克力的時候感到愉悅，我們就會建立起一種神經元連結，這種連結讓我們將巧克力與生理的愉悅感劃上等號。但這並不表示巧克力本身是好東西或壞東西，巧克力本身就具有製造生理愉悅感的化學成分，真正產生問題的是我們神經元對巧克力的貪著。

貪著在很多方面跟上癮沒兩樣，是對外物或經驗的一種強迫性依賴，以便製造出一種「完滿」的假相。不幸的是，就如同所有上癮症狀一樣，貪著會隨著日久月深而愈演愈烈，縱使得到了夢寐以求的人、事、物，但我們所經歷的「滿足感」是不會長久的；無論是今天、這個月或今年，讓我們快樂的任何「人、事、物」也都注定會改變——「改變」是相對實相中唯一不變的事實。

佛陀將貪著比喻為飲用海洋中的鹹水，喝得愈多，就愈口渴。同樣的道理，當我們的心被貪著所制約時，無論擁有多少，我們永遠都無法真正感到滿足。我們失去了區別什麼是「快樂的直接體驗」，什麼又是「暫時讓我們快樂的對境」的

「真正的問題重點在於，
大部分人並不瞭解何謂真正的「快樂」，
他們發現自己創造的情境，最後反而讓自己跌回
原本亟欲消除的不滿足之中。」

能力。所以，我們不僅變得愈來愈依賴外境，也強化了「依賴外境給予我們快樂」的這種神經元模式的制約。

瞋念：每個強烈的貪念都會引發相對強度的恐懼，因為唯恐得不到所求，或害怕失去所得。以佛教的語言來說，這樣的恐懼就稱之為「瞋念」，它是一種抗拒，拒絕接受相對真理的無常本質所導致的必然變化。

恆常且獨立存在的自我概念驅使我們拚命抵抗不可避免的改變，以確保「自我」可以處於安全牢靠的狀態。一旦我們達到自覺完滿的某種狀況時，又希望一切都維持不變。我們愈是貪著那些讓我們感到完滿的事物，就愈害怕失去，假如有一天真的失去了，痛苦就來得愈加猛烈。

瞋念有如一種自我應驗（self-fulfilling prophecy）。由於「自身不夠圓滿，必須依賴外境才能獲得快樂」的觀念，使得我們為求取快樂而做的所有努力注定要失敗，而讓「自身不夠圓滿」的看法成真。

想一想自己在喜愛的人面前的行徑就知道了：你是不是盡其所能地讓那個人認為你很優雅、高貴且自信？或者有時候你突然就像個傻子似的，結結巴巴說不出話來？如果這個人跟別人有說有笑，你是否感到受傷且嫉妒，而且還不經意或明顯地流露出你的痛苦與嫉妒？你對這個人的貪著是否強烈到某種程度，讓他（她）感受到你那不顧一切的瘋狂，因而開始避著你？

瞋念會強化你那自認受限、脆弱，以及不完滿的神經元模式。

純粹就情緒性層面而言，瞋念通常會以憤怒，甚至仇恨的狀態顯露出來。你沒有認出自己所感受到的痛苦，其實是奠基於心理建構的意象，反而「理所當然地」責怪他人、外在事物或情境造成了你的痛苦。

煩惱或契機？

我們很容易就會把煩惱視為性格上的缺陷，然而，這卻是對自己的一種貶抑。我們感受情緒的能力、區別痛苦和快樂的能力，以及體驗「直覺」的能力，一直在求生功能上扮演著關鍵性角色，它讓我們可以立即適應周遭世界的微細變化，並有意識地整理歸納這些適應經驗，以便能夠隨意喚出運用或傳遞給下一代。

如此非比尋常的敏感性也強化了佛陀最基本的教導之一，那就是讓我們再次去思考人身有多麼珍貴，它給了我們高度的自由與種種機會，這樣的人身是多麼難得，卻又多麼容易失去啊。

不論你相信人類的生命是宇宙的意外，還是業力的作用（a karmic lesson），或者是某種神聖造物主的傑作，你只要停下來想一想，與同住在這個星球上的其他生物相比，人類在比例上僅僅占了極少數，你就不難明白生為人類的機率真的是微乎其微。再加上現代科學向我們揭示了人腦

不可思議的精密與敏感度，更提醒我們何其幸運生而為人，具備了能夠感受覺知周遭事物的特有能力。

從佛教徒的觀點來看，人類情緒習性的慣性本質代表了一種有趣的挑戰心理，不需要顯微鏡就可觀察到這種心理習性。對大部分人而言，只要回想上一段感情就夠了，一開始他們總是會想：「這次鐵定跟上次不同。」然而，幾星期、幾個月，或者幾年之後，他們就會恨不得去撞牆，想道：「唉呀，真是糟糕！這跟我上一段感情有什麼兩樣？！」

或者，你也可以觀察一下自己的職場生涯。剛開始一個新工作的時候，你想道：「這次我一定不要再一直加班，最後還被批評不夠努力。」然而三、四個月過後，你發現自己又開始取消邀約，或臨時打電話給朋友說：「今天晚上我沒辦法跟你去吃晚飯了，還有一大堆工作，我得加班。」

先不管動機好壞，你會發現自己不斷重複相同的模式，卻期待結果有所不同。

慶幸的是，我們愈熟悉如何檢驗自心，就愈瞭解如何解決自己的問題，也愈容易認出所經驗的一切，無論是貪著、瞋恨、壓力、焦慮、恐懼或渴望，都只是自心的造作罷了。

WHY ARE WE UNHAPPY?

An excerpt from *The Joy of Living* Chapter 8
Photography Kay P

After almost ten years of teaching in more than twenty countries around the world, I've seen a lot of strange and wonderful things, and heard a lot of strange and wonderful stories from people who have spoken up at public teachings or come to me for private counseling. What's surprised me most, though, was to see that people living in places where material comforts were widely available appeared to experience a depth of suffering similar to what I'd seen among those who lived in places that weren't quite so materially developed.

I began to see that when the pace of external or material progress exceeded the development of inner knowledge, people seemed to suffer deep emotional conflicts without any internal method of dealing with them. An abundance of material items provides such a variety of external distractions that people lose the connection to their inner lives.

Just think, for example, about the number of people who desperately look for a sense of excitement by going to a new restaurant, starting a new relationship, or moving to a different job. For a while the newness does seem to provide some sense of stimulation. But eventually the excitement dies down; the new sensations, new friends, or new responsibilities become commonplace. Whatever happiness they originally felt dissolves.

So they try a new strategy, like going to the beach. And for a while that seems satisfying, too. The sun feels warm, the water feels great, and there's a whole new crowd of people to meet, and maybe new and exciting activities to try, like jet skiing or parasailing. But after a while, even the beach gets boring. The same old conversations are repeated over and over, the sand feels gritty on your skin, the sun is too strong or hides behind clouds, and the ocean gets cold. So it's time to move on, try a different beach, maybe in a different country. The mind produces its own sort of mantra: "I want to go to Tahiti...Tahiti...Tahiti..."

The trouble with all of these solutions is that they are, by nature, temporary. All phenomena are the results of the coming together of causes and conditions, and therefore inevitably undergo some type of change. When the underlying causes that produced and perpetuated an experience of

happiness change, most people end up blaming either external conditions (other people, a place, the weather, etc.) or themselves ("I should have said something nicer or smarter," "I should have gone somewhere else"). However, because it reflects a loss of confidence in oneself, or in the things we're taught to believe should bring us happiness, blame only makes the search for happiness more difficult.

The more problematic issue is that most people don't have a very clear idea of what happiness is, and consequently find themselves creating conditions that lead them back to the dissatisfaction they so desperately seek to eliminate. That being the case, it would be a good idea to look at happiness, unhappiness, and their underlying causes a bit more closely.

States and traits

From a scientific perspective, emotions are viewed in terms of short-term events and longer-lasting conditions. Short-term emotions might include the sudden burst of anger we experience when we're fixing something around the house and accidentally hit our thumb with a hammer, or the swell of pride we feel when someone pays us a genuine compliment. In scientific terms, these relatively short-term events are often referred to as states.

Emotions that continue over time and across a variety of situations, such as the love someone feels for a child or a lingering resentment over something that happened in the past, are referred to as traits or temperamental qualities, which most of us regard as indicators of a person's character. For example, we tend to say that a person who is usually smiling and energetic and always has nice things to say to other people is a "cheerful" person, while we tend to think of someone who frowns a lot, runs around in a hurry, hunches over his desk, and loses his temper over little things as a "tense" person.

The difference between states and traits is fairly obvious, even to someone who doesn't have a science degree. Emotional states are fairly quick

bursts of neuronal gossip. Traits, on the other hand, are more like the neuronal equivalent of committed relationships. The origins of these long-lasting connections may vary. Some may have a genetic basis, others may be caused by serious trauma, and still others may simply have developed as a result of sustained or repeated experiences – the life training we receive as children and young adults.

Whatever their origin, emotional traits have a conditioning effect on the way people characterize and respond to their everyday experiences. Someone predisposed to fear or depression, for example, is more likely to approach situations with a sense of trepidation, whereas someone disposed toward confidence will approach the same situation with much more poise and assurance.

Biology and neuroscience tell us what's going on in our brains when we experience pleasant or unpleasant emotions. Buddhism helps us not only to describe such experiences more explicitly to ourselves, but also provides us with the means to go about changing our thoughts, feelings, and perceptions so that on a basic, cellular level we can become happier, more peaceful, and more loving human beings.

Whether looked at subjectively through mindful observation taught by the Buddha, or objectively, through the technology available in modern laboratories, what we call the mind emerges as a constantly shifting collision of two basic events: bare recognition (the simple awareness that something is happening) and conditioning factors (the processes that not only describe what we perceive, but also determine our responses). All mental activity, in other words, evolves from the combined activity of bare perception and long-term neuronal associations.

One of the lessons repeated again and again by my teacher Saljay Rinpoche was that if I wanted to be happy, I had to learn to recognize and work with the conditioning factors that produce compulsive or trait-bound reactions. The essence of his teaching was that any factor can be understood as compulsive to the degree that it obscures our ability to see things as they are, without judgment. If someone is yelling at us, for example, we rarely take the time to distinguish between the bare recognition



"Oh, this person is raising his voice and saying such and such words" and the emotional response "This person is a jerk." Instead, we tend to combine bare perception and our emotional response into a single package: "This person is screaming at me because he's a jerk."

But if we could step back to look at the situation more objectively, we might see that people who yell at us are upset over something that may have nothing to do with us. Maybe they just got criticized by someone higher up and are afraid of getting fired. Maybe they just found out that someone close to them is very sick. Or maybe they had an argument with a friend or a partner and didn't sleep well afterward. Sadly, the influence of conditioning is so strong that we rarely remember that we can step back. And because our understanding is limited, we mistake the little part we do see for the whole truth.

How can we respond appropriately when our vision is so limited, when we don't have all the facts?

The three 'poisons'

The conditioning factors are often referred to in Buddhist terms as "mental afflictions," or sometimes "poisons." Although the texts of Buddhist psychology examine a wide range of conditioning factors, all of them agree in identifying three primary afflictions that form the basis of all other factors that inhibit our ability to see things as they really are: ignorance, attachment, and aversion.

IGNORANCE: Ignorance is a fundamental inability to recognize the infinite potential, clarity, and power of our own minds, as if we were looking at the world through colored glass: Whatever we see is disguised or distorted by the colors of the glass. On the most essential level, ignorance distorts the basically open experience of awareness into dualistic distinctions between inherently existing categories of "self" and "other."

Ignorance is thus a twofold problem. Once

we establish the neuronal habit of identifying ourselves as a single, independently existing "self," we inevitably start to see whatever is not "self" as "other." "Other" can be anything: a table, a banana, another person, or even something this "self" is thinking or feeling. Everything we experience becomes, in a sense, a stranger. And as we become accustomed to distinguishing between "self" and "other," we lock ourselves into a dualistic mode of perception, drawing conceptual boundaries between our "self" and the rest of the world "out there," a world that seems so vast that we almost can't help but begin to think of ourselves as very small, limited, and vulnerable. We begin looking at other people, material objects, and so on as potential sources of happiness and unhappiness, and life becomes a struggle to get that we need in order to be happy before somebody else grabs it.

This struggle is known in Sanskrit as *samsara*, which literally means "wheel" or "circle." Specifically, *samsara* refers to the wheel or circle of unhappiness, a habit of running around in circles, chasing after the same experiences again and again, each time expecting a different result. If you've ever watched a dog or a cat chasing its own tail, you've seen the essence of *samsara*. And even though it might be funny to watch an animal chase its tail, it's not so funny when your own mind does the same thing.

ATTACHMENT: The perception of "self" as separate from "others" is, as discussed earlier, an essentially biological mechanism – an established pattern of neuronal gossip that consistently signals other parts of the nervous system that each of us is a distinct, independently existing creature that needs certain things in order to perpetuate its existence. Because we live in physical bodies, some of these things we need, such as oxygen, food, and water, are truly indispensable. In addition, studies of infant survival that people have discussed with me have shown that surviving requires a certain amount of physical nurturing. We need to be touched; we need to be spoken to; we need the simple fact of our existence to be acknowledged.

Problems begin, however, when we generalize

biologically essential things into areas that have nothing to do with basic survival. In Buddhist terms, this generalization is known as "attachment" or "desire" – which, like ignorance, can be seen as having a purely neurological basis.

When we experience something like chocolate, for example, as pleasant, we establish a neuronal connection that equates chocolate with the physical sensation of enjoyment. This is not to say that chocolate in itself is a good or bad thing. There are lots of chemicals in chocolate that create a physical sensation of pleasure. It's our neuronal attachment to chocolate that creates problems.

Attachment is in many ways comparable to addiction, a compulsive dependency on external objects or experiences to manufacture an illusion of wholeness. Unfortunately, like other addictions, attachment becomes more intense over time. Whatever satisfaction we might experience when we attain something or someone we desire doesn't last. Whatever or whoever made us happy today, this month, or this year is bound to change. Change is the only constant of relative reality.

The Buddha compared attachment to drinking salt water from an ocean. The more we drink, the thirstier we get. Likewise, when our mind is conditioned by attachment, however much we have, we never really experience contentment. We lose the ability to distinguish between the bare experience of happiness and whatever objects temporarily make us happy. As a result, we not only become dependent on the object, but we also reinforce the neuronal patterns that condition us to rely on an external source to give us happiness.

AVERSION: Every strong attachment generates an equally powerful fear that we'll either fail to get what we want or lose whatever we've already gained. This fear, in the language of Buddhism, is known as aversion: a resistance to the inevitable changes that occur as a consequence of the impermanent nature of relative reality.

The notion of a lasting, independently existing self urges us to expend enormous effort in resisting the inevitability of change, making sure that this "self" remains safe and secure. When we've

“ The more problematic issue is that most people don't have a very clear idea of what happiness is, and consequently find themselves creating conditions that lead them back to the dissatisfaction they so desperately seek to eliminate. ”

achieved some condition that makes us feel whole and complete, we want everything to stay exactly as it is. The deeper our attachment to whatever provides us with this sense of completeness, the greater our fear of losing it, and the more brutal our pain if we do lose it.

In many ways, aversion is a self-fulfilling prophecy, compelling us to act in ways that practically guarantee that our efforts to attain whatever we think will bring us lasting peace, stability, and contentment will fail. Just think for a moment about how you act around someone to whom you feel a strong attraction. Do you behave like the suave, sophisticated, and self-confident person you'd like the other person to see, or do you suddenly become a tongue-tied goon? If this person talks and laughs with someone else, do you feel hurt or jealous, and betray your pain and jealousy in small or obvious ways? Do you become so fiercely attached to the other person to such a degree that he or she senses your desperation and begins to avoid you?

Aversion reinforces neuronal patterns that generate a mental construct of yourself as limited, weak, and incomplete.

On a purely emotional level, aversion tends to manifest as anger and even hatred. Instead of recognizing that whatever unhappiness you feel is based on a mentally constructed image, you find it only "natural" to blame other people, external objects, or situations for your pain.

Different pattern, different result

It's easy to think of mental afflictions as defects of character. But that would be a devaluation of ourselves. Our capacity for emotions, for distinguishing between pain and pleasure, and for experiencing "gut responses" has played and continues to play a critical survival function, enabling us almost instantaneously to adapt to subtle changes in the world around us, and to formulate those adaptations consciously so that we can recall them at will and pass them along to succeeding generations.

Such extraordinary sensitivity reinforces one of the most basic lessons taught by the Buddha, which was to consider how precious this human life is, with all its freedoms and opportunities; how difficult it is to obtain such a life; and how easy it is to lose it.

It doesn't matter whether you believe that human life is cosmic accident, a karmic lesson, or the work of a divine creator. If you simply pause to consider the huge variety and number of creatures that share the planet with us, compared with the relatively small percentage of human beings, you have to conclude that the chances of being born as a human being are extremely rare. And in demonstrating the extraordinary complexity and sensitivity of the human brain, modern science reminds us how fortunate we are to have been born human, with the very human capacity to feel

and to sense the feeling of those around us.

From a Buddhist standpoint, the automatic nature of human emotional tendencies represents an interesting challenge. It doesn't require a microscope to observe psychological habits; most people don't have to look any further than their last relationship. They begin by thinking, *This time it's going to be different*. A few weeks, months, or years later, they smack their heads, thinking, *Oh no, this is exactly the same type of relationship I was involved in before*.

Or you can look at your professional life. You start a new job thinking, *This time I'm not going to end up spending hours and hours working late, only to get criticized for not doing enough*. Yet three or four months into the job, you find yourself canceling appointments or calling friends to say, "I can't make dinner tonight. I have too much work to do."

Despite your best intentions, you find yourself repeating the same patterns while expecting a different result.

Fortunately, the more familiar we become with examining our mind, the closer we come to finding a solution to whatever problem we might be facing, and the more easily we recognize that whatever we experience – attachment, aversion, stress, anxiety, fear, or longing – is simply a fabrication of our own minds.

過山車的日子

攝影 何家銳

經歷著愛情、工作或生活裡種種的挑戰時，我們對自己心情的起與落究竟知多少？看著情緒，我們又看到了甚麼？三位德噶香港禪修中心的同學探討自心的情緒世界

何家銳

這是一段回憶。2012年12月8日。因為一宗突發的事故，那晚你決定了分開。心的感受原來是有時差的——兩天後，我才緩緩意識到分手的滋味……

我感覺害怕了——害怕一切的改變，害怕那永遠失去的滋味。怕是一種讓我不知所措、不可把握的不安感。我遠遠地抗拒它。越是怕，心也變得愈狹窄，彷彿這個世界只有你和我，你就是我的一切。失去你，我就像一下子墜到沉鬱的深谷內。

已記不得聽了多少朋友的看法和開解。我心裡有一份衝動想得到你的明白，想讓你「知道我的心」。現在我發覺，那衝動只不過來自我對自己的憐愛。當局者迷，這句話我現在才明白。

分開以後，我好像一個被懲罰的人。後來我才發現，一直懲罰著自己的人，原來是我，一個想困著自己來贖罪的我。

曾經失去了理智，做了許多對你的生活和朋友帶來困擾的事情。這一切，原來只會讓關係更破損和帶來自責。

我從來不知道低頭工作的時候，眼淚會不知不覺的自動流下。情緒的起伏好像天氣，一時好像天朗氣清，能沒事般地工作，一時卻像烏雲密佈，只想把自己藏在角落裡。午餐時候都沒有食慾，拖著身體走到中環IFC的平台，聽著歌，看著海安慰著自我。自己就像一個吸毒的人，每天都忍受著痛苦，沒有一刻不是想著你，沒有一刻願意放過自己。那安慰感和自責感不斷在我內心拉扯著，形成互相翻騰的對立關係。

不論工作時或在夜裡，只有跟朋友傾訴時，才能覺到好一點；可是，過一會，又再次跌宕在那憂鬱中。

心好痛。那種痛，是身體和情緒混在一起後，身心融合的反應。它強烈地來到我的胸口。看著這個痛，我清楚地看到了我的心，看到了愛，看到了當下。

2013年3月24日。我把自己看得很清楚。徹底清楚地看到那顆心，實在感受到心坎中那份愛。為甚麼我會願意？原來心的本質就是愛。只有它曾經被感動，便會願意默默地付出、沒條件地付出，這就是愛。分開後，我從不休止地看著自己的心。看著那很混亂的情緒，那很

自責的錯失，那很委屈的努力，那飄忽的思路；那反反覆覆的情感，那起伏跌宕的心情，那忐忑不安的回憶與寂寞的思念。我才深深明白，這全是一個過程。

心失去了時間的觀念。我在思惟，每個人只要把兩眼合上，呼出了最後一口氣，我們還會失去甚麼嗎？

轉念之間，心頓然變得寬闊了。我已不再計較任何結果，不固執去問一切為何。就讓感動的愛，成為一次學習的經歷。隨意沿著人生的路途，遇上甚麼便欣賞甚麼，當感情投入時，便快樂地一起渡過，自在的活著。我願意了。得到了自己的釋放，我終於釋懷了。

5月4日。愛情，就是一份糾結。當我知道我是一直愛著你，才發現原來我還是愛著自己。愛，很簡單。它是一份願意付出的能量，不會消失，不會散落。散落的，只是感覺；淡然的，亦只是感情。我要學會愛自己，才能學會愛別人；當我學懂愛別人，也就是學會了放下。我願意放下那一個「我」。

ROLLER-COASTER DAYS

Photography Kerry Ho

Problems with work, relationship and in other areas of life can easily send our happiness index tumbling. But when we examine our emotions, what do we really see? Here, three students of meditation look into their mind and record what they find

Kerry Ho

This is a recollection. December 8, 2012. Because of an incident, that night, you decided to break up with me. And I found out that our emotions sometimes suffer a time lag – it was only two days later that the pain really hit.

Thinking back, I felt fear – everything seemed to be changing, and I was afraid of losing you forever. There was fear of uncertainty, as if a rug had been pulled from underneath me. I resisted the fear. But the more afraid I was of fear, the narrower my mind became, until there seemed to be only you and me in this world, as if you were my everything. Losing you meant falling into an abyss of depression.

I had an impulsive desire for you to understand my heart. Now I realise that the desire came from self-pity. If I did not understand what "losing my mind" really felt like, I do now.

I was like a person who lived only to be punished by you. Later I realised that the person who was punishing me was myself, in a vain attempt to seek redemption through imprisonment.

I lost my reason and did many things that disrupted your life and your friends'. But, of course,

doing so only ruined the relationship further, and worsened the guilt.

I could never have imagined that tears would stream down uncontrollably when I was at work. My mood changed like the weather: sometimes I was able to work as if nothing had happened; other times, I wished I could hide myself away in a corner. During lunch hours, I had no appetite. I dragged myself to the patio in IFC, listening to music and watching the sea, to comfort myself. Like a drug addict, not a moment went by without thinking of you, not a moment went by without punishing myself. The sense of relief and the sense of guilt were in a constant battle in my mind.

I was hurting so bad it felt like physical pain, the feeling was concentrated in my chest. But when I look at this pain, I could see love. And I could see I was living in the present.

March 24, 2013. I could finally see myself. I was able to see my heart and really experienced the love in there. Why was I so willing to give? It is the nature of the heart to be touched by another, and to love.

Since the break-up, I never stopped looking at my mind, looking at the messy emotions, the sense of guilt, the grief, and the shifting thoughts.

I came to understand that everything, including the rising and falling moods, the upsetting memories, the solitary nostalgia, was only a kind of a process.

It was as if time stood still. I started to wonder, when we close our eyes and breathe our last, what else could we possibly lose?

My heart widened at that moment of revelation. I no longer wanted to worry about the outcome, no longer cared to find out the cause. I just wanted this love that had deeply touched me to be a part of a learning process, learning to appreciate everything I come across along the journey of life. When there are passions, then enjoy the happy times together and live freely. I was willing to let things be. I finally felt free.

May 4. Love is a kind of entanglement. When I thought I had always loved you, I discovered it was myself whom I loved. Love is simple. It is an energy, a willingness to give. It won't disappear. It can't be dispersed. What may fade are the feelings. I need to learn to love myself. Only then will I be able to love another; when I know how to love another, it will also be the time to learn how to let go.

I am willing to let "me" go.

Translated from the Chinese: Jackie Lou Jia

單美玲

工作上難免有過失。對於自我要求很高的自己，當有過失出現時，很容易產生情緒，當外圍發生變化，老是想著要如何處理，但這些都是在「心隨境轉」的漩渦中。何時看得清楚？何時看見自己？

隨著禪修的練習，慢慢地看到有一位相隨很久的老朋友——恐懼。恐懼讓我植根於過去，害怕未來、害怕未知、害怕被遺棄、害怕被拒絕、害怕擁有的不夠、害怕無法成為甚麼、害怕很多很多……。所有的恐懼只會不斷地將自己困在相同的舊模式裡面，讓自己一再地做出同樣的選擇。恐懼也讓自己走不出「舒適區」，甚至也走不出習以為常的「不舒適區」，躲在熟悉的環境，只會愈來愈狹窄，愈來愈固執。

假如一直被恐懼所引導的話，幾乎不可能會到達或得到生命中更高的願景。生命要能開闊，一定要走得出去，打開自己的心，讓自己看到了可能性——恐懼是自己想出來的！

小寶

與往常一樣，我總是想得太多。參加台灣單車環島之旅前，我已經知道它將是一項自我挑戰的決定。我想考驗自己的耐力與定力，但是習慣了計劃的我，又很擔心自己不能完成這趟旅程。此時，我告訴自己：只要保持開放的心和

勇往直前便足夠了。

抵達台北的第二日，我們去了近郊的菁桐觀光。九日的單車之旅隔天就開始了。第一段是 82 公里的新店到新竹的路程。從台北市出發，這裡的馬路上穿梭著很多貨車，跟我在香港的練習道完全是不一樣。這令我感到有點緊張。

踏上 10-20 公里之後，我們到了一段看似沒有盡頭的上坡路。在沒有預告的情況下踏上坡路讓我變得更緊張，畢竟自己並不是單車高手。

心情真是難以預測。次日雖然心情特別平靜，但到了第三天，一早起床就覺得很疲倦，心情不好。從鹿港到嘉義是 83 公里的路程。騎車時腦海裏浮現了很多念頭與回憶片段。想到了一位患病的朋友和一些與自己關係破裂的人，此時我的淚水開始掉下。

我意識到自己強烈的情緒，但找不到任何的理由去解釋它們。也許是因為疲勞，也許是因為在一群不太熟悉的隊友中而有點拘謹，我感到很孤單。

過兩天心情稍微平復了下來。但是到了第五日，就開始又為騎行路程擔憂了，因為次日是行程中最艱難的一段路——從四重溪到知本（102 公里），有一段連續不斷的上坡路。

當天，我看出我的情緒有點波動。領隊提醒我們，任何時候一旦我們覺得身體不適便要馬上停下來，可以在小巴上稍作休息才繼續行程。我告訴自己要放鬆，並不斷鼓勵自己：「我一定可以的。」騎車從平地線到海拔 100 米是比較輕鬆的，但下一段路程要去到海拔 500 米

以上便會非常吃力。我心裡開始期待今天晚上的溫泉酒店，但我從未想過要放棄。

隔天，我以為經過昨天的上坡考驗，今天的路線應該會是輕而易舉。相反地，我感覺我要很費勁地踏我的自行車。今天的路線是旅程中最棒的一段——平坦的路面及鄉間旖旎的風景。我開始專注呼吸以及努力享受着沿途的自然風光。

最後一天從羅東到新店的行程，我們碰上了下雨及寒冷的天氣。我失望地得知仍有 12 公里的上坡路。儘管已經累積了一點騎上坡路的經驗和技巧，但我仍然不喜歡爬坡。這次，我騎得特別慢，把專注力放在呼吸上和聆聽著隨身收聽的音樂，我發覺對上坡路的恐懼感比之前減少了。我愈是意識到我的想法和情緒，就愈知道自己的擔心是不必要的。

隨著對自心更熟悉，我對自己更有信心了。今天天氣真是非常冷，當駛到下坡路段時，我的雙手緊緊握著車掣，小心翼翼地向下行，所有的手指都已感覺麻木。最後這一程路，伴着我的感覺僅是冰冷和麻木。

此次旅程是一個難得的機會，讓我能夠看清自己的情緒。它有時會看似很真實，讓我感到窒息。但是當我呼吸慢而深長，我便能感受到當下。當我保持身心安寧時，顧慮自然也減少了，至少不會受情緒所控制。我知道恐懼是自己製造的，當後退一步，就會發現它並不是真實的，也不需要擔憂。

翻譯自英文版本：戴林焱

Simple Sin

We all make mistakes at work. I have high expectations of myself, so when mistakes happen, I easily become emotional. When external conditions change, my focus is always on what to do to find a solution. But if my mind is constantly driven by the outside environment, how can I see clearly?

With the practice of meditation, I begin to recognise a long-time friend of mine – fear. Fear roots me in the past and makes me afraid of the future. I fear uncertainty, abandonment and rejection; I fear not having enough, or that my life won't amount to anything. These fears have trapped me in a tired pattern, so that I make the same choices over and over again. They stop me from walking out of my comfort zone, or my familiar "uncomfortable zone", and make me want to hide in a familiar surrounding where I become more and more narrow-minded and stubborn.

If I allow myself to be led by fear, my life won't be the best it can be. If we wish to enrich our lives, we need to open our hearts and allow ourselves to see the possibility of change. The fear, I see now, is only in my imagination.

Translated from the Chinese: Mabel Sieh

Siu Bo

I had agreed to join a round-the-island cycling trip in Taiwan knowing it would be a challenge for me. I wanted to test my endurance and calmness, but the chronic planner in me was really worried that I would not last the trip. This time, I told myself to just go for it.

The day after we arrived in Taipei, we spent some time sightseeing in Jingtong, just outside Taipei. The next day, we started our nine-day bike trip by riding out of Taipei for the 82km journey from Xindian to Hsinchu. The roads in the city were busy with many lorries, very different from the practice tracks in Hong Kong, and I grew tense. After 10-20km, we came to an uphill stretch that seemed never-ending. I had not expected it and became even more tense.

Our moods are really unpredictable. I felt good the next day but on the third day, I woke up exhausted and was in a bad mood. My mind was filled with thoughts and memories as I rode. I thought about a sick friend and my broken relationship with some people, and I found my tears falling. I was aware of my strong emotions but could find no reason to explain them. Perhaps it was exhaustion, or perhaps I felt strange being with a group of people I barely knew. I felt alone and isolated.

My mood lifted for the next two days, but on the fifth night I started to worry about the ride ahead – a stretch of non-stop uphill road tomorrow from Sichongxi to Zhiben that would be the toughest part of the journey.

On the day, I was watching out for my mood swings. We'd been told that we could stop anytime we felt unwell and continue the journey in a van. I told myself to relax, and kept telling myself, "you can do it". Going from flat ground to 100m above sea level was easy, but the next stretch, to 500m above sea level, was tough. My mind was on the hot spa hotel at the end of ride today.

After the slope ordeal, I thought the next day's ride would be a piece of cake. But it was the opposite, and I struggled.

The last day of the bike trip, an 81km ride from Lotung to Xindian, turned out to be rainy and cold. This time I rode it super slow and focused on my breath and the music from my MP3, and I found the uphill road to be less scary than the previous climb. The more I was aware of my thoughts and emotions, the more I knew I was worrying needlessly. As I grew more familiar with my state of mind, I became more confident about my riding. The weather was really cold. Going downhill with my hands gripping the brakes, my fingers felt numb. In fact, my whole body felt cold and numb.

I got a good opportunity to see my emotions during this trip. Some of them appeared very solid and hit me with suffocating force. Only when I breathed slowly and deeply could I feel my own presence of mind. When I was resting in the present moment, I would worry less and was able to prevent the emotions from controlling me. I knew that my fears were self-created; when I took a step back, I would find that they were not that solid or negative.

不悲傷的自由

翻譯自英文版本 戴林焱 攝影 樓佳



當你感覺到有一絲憤怒的情緒生起時，如果可以選擇不憤怒豈不是很好嗎？

美籍醫生兼僧人巴利·噶辛（Barry Kerzin）認為，只要你願意學習，你絕對有能力辦得到。今年年初，噶辛醫生為香港人帶來一系列的講座，其中包括在德噶香港禪修中心主講的「腦袋裡的情緒世界」。明年二月，他將再次親臨香港，在香港大學當客座教授期間，也會在德噶禪修中心授課。在這期的雜誌採訪中，他談到如何轉化負面情緒的實踐步驟，以及我們如何能夠在壓力的打壓下尋找快樂。

問：我們都明白生活中有跌宕起伏，在不快樂時我們甚至善於分析當中的原因。儘管如此，為什麼每當面對強烈情緒時我們還是感到那麼無助？

答：我們要訓練我們的心如何面對情緒。這需要時間，但這是個可行之法。我們一旦開始培養一個向內觀照的習慣，我們便開始學習怎樣操縱我們的情緒。對於自身的想法及感受的運作，我們愈是能保持著正念及覺知，在它們生起的時候便察覺到它們，我們能轉化它們的機會便愈大。前提是我們當時還沒有被它們淹沒。當我們能夠提早察覺負面情緒，我們便能夠把它們轉化成正面情緒。一旦負面情緒爆發並將我們淹沒，我們便無能為力了。我們只能等待，讓它過去。這是第一件事。

其次，有一種非常棒的方法——詠給·明就仁波切也曾經這麼教導過——可以幫助我們。這便是將我們的情緒體現成浮雲。浮雲在藍天中，我們只是觀察著它，不去下判斷，不去改變它，不去攻擊它，也不去愛它。只是需要觀察它。隨著我們的觀察，慢慢地，浮雲在天空中飄過，最終它消失了。

拿憤怒做個例子。當我們開始感到生氣時，

我們可以觀想憤怒的情緒便是浮雲，然後看著它。我們不需要做出任何反應，僅僅是看著它。這樣做會有一系列的變化。首先在我們自己和那片代表憤怒的雲之間產生了距離。一旦有了距離感，我們便不再或不容易再把我們自己等同於憤怒，其帶來的幫助非常巨大。我們雖然仍然會憤怒，但它帶給我們的影響卻要少了，因為我們和遠在天上的雲不再合二為一。這是一個可以經常使用的禪修的技巧，即使情緒始終存在，但至少可以減少它對我們的影響。

如果我們想更加深入，便需要花費一些時間。我們能夠開始意識到「我」，我的自我「巴利」和「我的情緒」——它們三者都不是真實的，實際上它們都是我的心創造出來的。「巴利」是什麼？我心裡的所有的想法和感覺是甚麼？我的心又是甚麼？憤怒是我心裡的一部份，但它到底是甚麼？它像是那麼堅不可摧，令人想揮刀斬之，可是我們仔細看看便會發現它並不存在。我們一旦開始這樣想，便可以逐漸阻止憤怒的產生，從減少到完全阻止。但是我們要注意——我們不是在壓抑憤怒。如果只是壓抑，我們只會把它暫時埋藏，日後定會爆發。

憤怒往往是出於恐懼，當有人想傷害我們，

我們立即便做出憤怒的反應。當我們沒有自我，也就沒有如此反應的主體，也不再生氣。這是一個思想突破，需要培養。這並不是簡單快捷的方法，需要時間及毅力，但卻是行之有效的方法。

以上兩種方法可以令我們如何慢慢減少負面情緒帶來的影響——先減少它們，最終可以完全除淨，這是完全可能的。我們身邊便有活生生的楷模，他們可以做到，例如明就仁波切。而即便是普通人，或不是佛教徒，也有成功的案例，例如德蘭修女。她是多麼無私，本著慈悲心，總是在為他人付出。當然，她的自我並沒有根除，但卻因為她的慈悲而大大減少。我猜她極少生起任何負面情緒。

問：我們經常感受到情緒，甚至知道自己在鬧情緒。究竟知道自己鬧情緒和覺知到情緒有什麼不一樣呢？

答：其區別就在於在禪修過程中，我們視情緒如浮雲，察覺到我們和雲之間是有距離或空間的。然而，當我們情緒化時，我們則深陷其中。我們完全被情緒淹沒，甚至感覺我們便是我們的情緒。這時候，我們分不清自己和情緒本身的區別，並失去控制。當我們意識到情緒，也就是說，我們能夠

將自己從情緒中抽離出來，它便不能夠輕易地牽絆我們了。我們只是簡單的觀察它，不需要做任何事情。當我們覺察到情緒時，便可以變得更安定，更平穩；而當我們情緒化時，則會失去平衡。在體驗的層面上，這存在著巨大的差異。當我們意識到我們的情緒，我們便對它有辦法，能夠保持鎮定、站得住腳。

問：我們都知道，抑制情緒是沒有任何幫助的。轉化情緒與抑制情緒的區別是什麼？

答：這是一個很重要的問題。先前我們已經提到，抑制情緒是不可行的，因為它還是存在的，只需要一點點火花便可以引爆它。所以修行並不是抑制情緒。那我們如何把它轉化成正面的情緒呢？如何能夠做到在不抑制它的前提下，做到實際轉化？這便是修佛之道。

簡而言之，我們尋找負面情緒的對立面，並嘗試練習這些正面的特質。這個解決問題的方案我們可稱之為「解藥」。舉例來說：憤怒的對立面是慈愛、慈悲、耐心及寬容。我們便嘗試去練習這些特質；這些特質便是解藥。我們重複地練習著。正如我之前提到的，當情緒沒有完全爆發，當它還只是剛剛發生，我們的練習會更加有效。

例如：當我們剛剛生起嫉妒，我們便練習隨喜；我們認同別人的成功而感到開心，而不是覺得成功的人不是我，或者他人不及我，或者他人根本不配。相反，我們應該為他人感到高興。因為隨喜是嫉妒的解藥；我們服了解藥，心也便舒坦了。如此這般，我們便能夠實際轉化即將發生的情緒。這樣的練習能幫助我們溶化負面情緒。這並不是抑制——兩者有很大的差別。

問：現代生活的壓力大，尤其是大都市的人們。

有沒有一些方法能夠幫助生活在快節奏城市的人們去面對情緒？

答：有的。在每一天的開始，用五分鐘設定一天的目標，這能帶來很大的不同。我們用清晨的五分鐘禪修，在禪修之前，我們確定動機，面向慈悲心，不僅僅是愛著我們愛的人，而是每個人。保持著這個修持動機，然後做一個非常簡短的回向，將我們修持的功德回向給所有人，包括我們自己，祈願所有人健康喜樂及開悟，這將是一天很好的開始。當然，我們一轉頭肯定會忘了這個承諾，一開始工作，一旦忙碌，便會將它忘記得一乾二淨。儘管如此，它仍會時不時讓我們想起：「噢，對了，我做這件事的原因，是為了讓所有人都能有所啟發，為了讓所有人都能獲得快樂！」這方法是很有作用。

其次，我們的期望過高。忙碌的生活，高強度的壓力，很多人都承受著很高的期望——不單是我們對自己的期望，也包括別人，比如家人、老闆、配偶等對我們的期望。當期望設定得太高，我們便只能不停地向前衝，而目標卻遙不可及，就像實驗室的白老鼠。這樣下去，我們真會讓壓力逼瘋。所以我們必須意識到給自己設定的期望是什麼。如果我們察覺期望過高，那便把它降低 10% 或 20%。

問：這種方式和我們在學校教導的和工作中有所不同。每一年我們都被要求提升目標、提高產能等等。

答：這種一直要我們提升期望的做法是適得其反的。這樣做使得人們承受過大的壓力而導致工作效率降低，疲憊不堪和不快樂。我們被逼換工作，或者身體和精神上都會生病。如果我們能夠降低我們的期望一點，有時當我們達成了目標，品嚐到成功的滋味而感到鼓舞，很開心。每當達成一個目

標，我們便可以設定另一個目標，那麼便不會感到有挫敗感，亦不會感到永遠不能達成目標而無法入睡。因為我們不會覺得時間緊迫，不停地與時間賽跑。我們可以放鬆。這是一個更加有益和健康的方法，我們仍然高效地工作並更慈悲地對待自己。

我們很多人都過於嚴苛對待自己，過於嚴格要求自己。這樣會造成反面的效果，帶來更多恐懼、更多焦慮、更多憂慮，令我們的工作效率減低，快樂指數亦隨之下降。

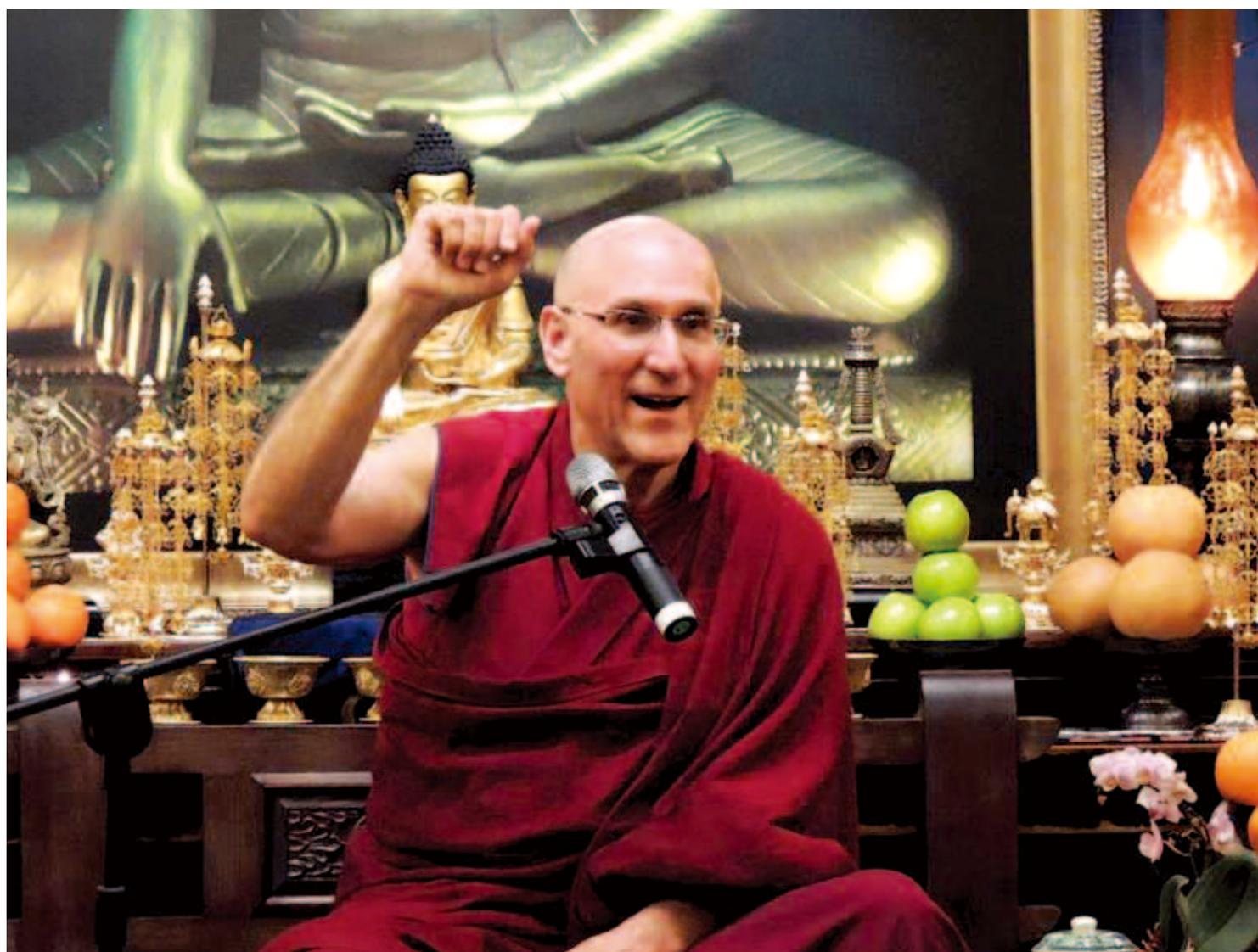
問：健康與喜樂是大家都關注的話題，尤其是在老齡化的社會。能否給大家一些建議，如何才能令到我們有快樂及健康的人生？

答：簡單的兩個字——「利他」。用一顆熱忱的心去關懷他人。很多時候，我們並不知道如何去做，但至少如果我們去關心和希望去幫助他人，便不會感到難過。我們把想著「我、我、我」的注意力轉移至他人身上。會帶給我們一種很好、很舒暢的感覺。我們的世界會變寬闊。自然而然地，一個深呼吸，我們變輕鬆了。

當我們有技巧和能力幫助別人時，那麼我們便可勇往直前地去做。儘管做不到，只要我們用心去關心他人，便能已經幫助自己將視野擴張，從只看到自己而轉移至看到他人。這便真的可以打開你的心。我認為這是生活中非常重要的一部分，不僅為生，也為死。這是慈愛與慈悲的最佳展現方式之一。

FREE TO FEEL FINE

Photography Catherine Ng



The next time you feel the stirrings of anger, wouldn't it be nice if you could choose not to get angry? Buddhist monk and medical doctor Barry Kerzin says you can do it – with some practice. Dr Kerzin was in Hong Kong earlier this year to give a series of talks on the mental world of emotions, including one at the Tergar Meditation Centre. He will return to Hong Kong for the month of February 2014, joining the University of Hong Kong as a visiting professor. During that time, he will also give some talks at Tergar. In this interview with *Joy of Living* magazine, he talks about the practical steps involved in transforming our destructive emotions, and how we can lead a less stressful, happier life.

Q: Even though we understand that life has its ups and downs, and may even be good at analysing the reasons for our unhappiness when we feel glum, why do so many of us still feel helpless in the face of strong emotions?

A: Training our mind means controlling our emotions. It takes time, but it works. When we start cultivating an attitude of going inside, looking in, of being mindful and aware of what's happening inside of us, then we are on the road to controlling our emotions. The more we start recognising our emotions, thoughts and feelings early, as they are just arising, the more we can change them. This is before the emotions have overwhelmed us. When we can recognise them early, we have the chance of transforming them into something positive. Once these emotions are full-blown and we're overwhelmed, we can't change them. We just have to wait them out and let them pass. That's the first thing.

The second thing is a lovely meditation I think Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche also teaches, which is to see our emotion embodied as a cloud. We just observe the cloud that represents our emotion, as moving across the blue sky. We don't judge it, we don't change it, and we don't fight it. We don't get caught up in it. We simply observe it. Slowly, as we observe it, the cloud will drift across the sky and then vanish.

Let's look at when we get angry. We imagine that the anger is a cloud and we watch it float across the sky. By just observing, several things happen. First we automatically create some distance between ourselves and that cloud, which is our angry emotion. By creating some space, we no longer identify with the anger. The anger no longer is our self. That helps tremendously to let go of our anger, provided we recognise it at an early stage. We still have the anger, but it has less of an impact. It no longer controls us. This is one meditation technique that we can use, allowing emotions to still arise, but reducing their power.

When we are ready to go deeper – and this takes time – we can begin to realise that "me", my ego "Barry", and my emotions – all of them are not real. They're actually made up by my mind. What is "Barry"? What are these feelings and thoughts that make up my mind? What is my mind? Anger is one of those emotions that make up my mind. What is anger? Sometimes it feels so strong that I could cut it with a knife, yet there is actually nothing there if we look closely. Once we begin to think this way, we start to prevent the anger from arising. First we reduce it, and eventually we prevent anger from arising. We must be careful here: we are not suppressing anger. That does not eliminate or change anger. Rather, suppressing anger just pushes it down for it to smoulder, and erupt sometime later.

Anger arises out of fear. When someone hurts us, we automatically respond by getting angry. But when we realise we have no ego, that there is no one to get hurt or react, then there is no one to get upset. This is revolutionary. But it takes time to cultivate. There is no simple, quick path. It takes time and perseverance, but it is amazingly effective.

These are the two ways we can slowly reduce the influence and power of our destructive emotions. Gradually we will reduce them, and eventually eliminate them. It is possible. We have living examples of people who have done that. There is Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, for one. Even people in other traditions, even non-Buddhists, have been successful up to a point in achieving this selflessness. Mother Teresa was so selfless through her incredible compassion, always giving. Of course this is most likely not elimination of the ego, rather a diminution of the ego due to intense, sustained compassion. I suspect these emotions rarely arose in her.

Q: We feel emotions all the time, and we know we are being emotional. What's the difference between being emotional and being aware of our emotions?

A: Here the difference is in the meditation of recognising the emotion as a cloud, creating distance or space between the emotion and ourselves. When we're emotional, we're usually caught up in it. It overwhelms us. We identify totally with the intense emotion as if it were actually me. Thus we can't separate ourselves from our emotions. We've lost control. When we're aware of the emotion, it means we have started to separate ourselves from the emotion. Then it has less power over us. We simply observe it. We don't have to do anything with it. We're more balanced and centred when we're aware of our emotion. When we are caught up in the emotion, we are thrown off balance. On an experiential level, there is a huge difference. When we are aware of our emotion, we can work with it. We can keep cool. We can maintain a reasonably steady balance.

Q: We're told that suppressing our emotions is not helpful. What's the difference between derailing them and suppressing them?

A: This is a very important question. Earlier we briefly mentioned this. We all know that suppressing or pushing down our emotions doesn't work, because the emotions are still there. With a little spark they explode once again. So the path is not to suppress our emotions. Then how can we derail them and turn them into positive emotions? How can we keep from suppressing them and actually derail them? That is precisely the Buddhist path.

In a nutshell, we discover the actual opposite of the destructive emotion and then we try to practise and nurture that positive quality. In this way, the solution is called the antidote. For example, with anger, its opposite is tolerance. It is love, compassion, patience and tolerance. So these are the antidotes. We practise again and again these antidotes. And as I've said before, when the emotions are not full-blown, when they are just beginning to happen, that is when we can be most effective.

“ When we're harsh on ourselves... rather than creating well-being, it creates more fear, anxiety, doubt and worry. Then our productivity really suffers. ”

For example, when we notice we're starting to become jealous, we practise rejoicing, the antidote to jealousy. Rejoicing is feeling happy at the other person's success. Jealousy is the opposite. It is the feeling that it should have been me, or sometimes feeling the other person is no good or doesn't deserve the success or new possession. So cultivating the antidote, we feel happy. In that way, we can actually derail the insipient, about-to-happen emotion before it is full-blown. Practising in that way, the destructive emotion vanishes. It has not been suppressed. It is actually gone. This is very different from suppressing the emotion.

Q: We live a high-stress life, particularly those of us in a city. Are there ways of working with our emotions that are particularly helpful to those of us living a fast-paced urban life?

A: At the beginning of our day, it is important, even for only five minutes, to set our direction for the day. This makes a big difference. We can take five minutes to meditate in the morning. Before meditation, we set our motivation towards compassion, not just to those we love but also to everyone. Set that motivation, do our meditation, then do a very short dedication after our meditation for the well-being and enlightenment of everyone, including ourselves. This gives a direction and sets a tone for the rest of the day. Soon we'll forget that. We'll go to work, we'll get busy and we'll forget our initial tone and direction completely. Still, sometimes during the day we will remember a little bit, "Oh, why am I doing this activity now?" And we'll remember, "Oh, yes, I am doing this activity

for everyone's enlightenment, so that everyone can be happy". This is quite helpful.

Secondly, we have big expectations. In a high-pressure, busy life, these expectations are often very high, both those we set for ourselves and those set for us by others. Expectations placed upon us often come from our family when we were young, our boss when we are grown up, and our spouse or partner. When the expectations are set too high, we just keep running and running and running, like a mouse on a rotating wheel. We can never meet them. So we go nuts with stress and freak out. Once we are aware of our expectations, if they are high, we can reduce them by 10 or 20 per cent.

Q: This is different from what we've been taught in school or at work. We're often asked to raise our targets, for productivity and so on, every year.

A: This approach of always raising our expectations may be counter-productive. It makes people too stressed-out and therefore less productive. We burn out, and become less happy. We change jobs. Or get sick both physically and mentally. If we can reduce our expectations even a little bit, we will sometimes meet our goals. Then we have a taste of success. It builds our confidence and we feel more inspired. It makes us happy. We can then set another reasonable goal. When we meet that one, then another if we want. In that way we don't feel like failures, like we're never able to meet our goals. We no longer lie awake in bed without sleeping. We no longer feel we do not have enough time, that we must keep running. We relax. This becomes a healthier way

to live. We can still be very productive, but at the same time we are more gentle with ourselves.

When we're harsh on ourselves, as so many of us can be, it has the opposite effect. Rather than creating well-being, it creates more fear, anxiety, doubt and worry. Then our productivity really suffers. And of course our level of happiness goes down.

Q: Health and well-being are a big concern for many people, especially in an ageing society. What's the best advice you can give to people who want to live a happy, healthy life?

A: Simply two words – "help others". Have a warm heart, and nurture concern for others. Many times we don't know what to do. But at least if we have concern for others, and the wish to help, we won't feel so bad. We take the focus away from "me, me, me" and shift it to others. This feels good. It feels like a relief. Our world opens. There is a feeling of wide-open vastness. We automatically take a big breath, a sigh of relief.

When we can actually help, when we know the skilful means and know how to be effective, then we go ahead and act to help the other person. But merely having the concern for others' welfare takes us away from our own narrow focus, thinking only about "me, me and me". The focus widens and becomes "you, you and you". It opens the heart. This is essential in order to fully enjoy our lives and to prepare for our death. One of the best ways to live is with love and compassion.

「我」的位置 MY PLACE IN LIFE

文字 Text 陳旨均 Chen Zhijun 插圖 Illustration 倪鷺露 Lulu Ngie

一個人的身心如果失去平衡，不僅自己的生活會不健康，連周圍的人也會被影響。面對繁忙的生活，要學會如何不「煩」忙地在平衡點上起舞，首先請你問問自己：「你生活的重心擺在哪裡？」

Finding balance in life is necessary yet difficult – or so we think. The multiple demands of work and family can be exhausting, but we don't have to lurch from day to day in a race against time to meet them. Set aside your to-do list for now and consider this: to find your feet, perhaps you first need to learn where to place the centre of gravity of your life



一位優秀的舞者明白，若要保持身體平衡、舞姿動人，就要深切地感受自身和地心引力的關係。經驗告訴她，注意力如果單單擺在自己的肢體動作，會令她容易失足；但是，一旦她留心到身體與空間的交流，這表演就能活過來了。這就是為甚麼舞蹈老師常對初學者說——要把腰背挺直，想像自己的頭頂連著一條線，輕輕地把你往上拉。舞者和環境是分不開的。沒有了空間，就沒有舞蹈這回事。

同樣地，在生活裡尋找平衡，只是苦思著「我的平衡」是最好的方法嗎？我們慣常的思考模式把「自己」與「他人」劃清界線，思想角度都是從「自我」出發，考慮「我」要如何應付各種人與事對「我」的要求。我們何不向舞台上的「平衡專家」偷個師，把注意力稍微轉移，放在「我與他人的關係」上呢？角度一變，我們的問題便會立刻不同——「我要如何應付你？」很自然地就變成了「有甚麼關係需要關心？」

A good dancer knows about balance. To make her performance come alive, she pays attention to not just how her body should move, but also how it should interact with gravity and the space around her. Experience tells her that to focus solely on reproducing the steps of the choreography is to dance badly. It's no surprise that a beginner in dance is often told to imagine a line attached to her head pulling her upwards, giving her a "lift" that will extend her back and breathe air into her spine. After all, a dancer cannot be separated from the space in which she moves. If there is no space, there can be no dance.

Similarly, in life, we don't live disconnected from our environment. Yet why do we persist in trying to find balance in life by focusing on "I" – how "my" time and attention can be spread among the many demands that "other people" make on "me"? Instead of thinking from a point of view that neatly divides "subject" from "object", what if we pay more attention to how we relate with others, much like the way a dancer puts her mind on her interaction with the space around her? Thinking this way, we learn to ask, "what relationship requires my attention now?"

用舊的思考模式，我們苦惱著要怎麼把自己「分開用」。因為生活忙碌，時間有限，就很容易把自己弄累。「事情太多，時間太少，可是只有一個我」正是壓力的來源。人一旦疲累，觀察能力便會急速下降。不知道如何作出明智的選擇，失衡是必然的。其實，自我中心的思想可以說是智慧的絆腳石。生活裡的每一個事情的發生，都是許多人、事與條件的結合。一個人的所見所聞都只是這個「真相」的一部份，難免是短淺的。我們可以選擇堅持我們的想法，或過於認真地對待自己當時所扮演的角色，但這樣做不會改變所有事情「發生」的本質。把自我擴大，我們的想像也只能是我們的想像；自我膨脹會讓我們更難看清事實真相。

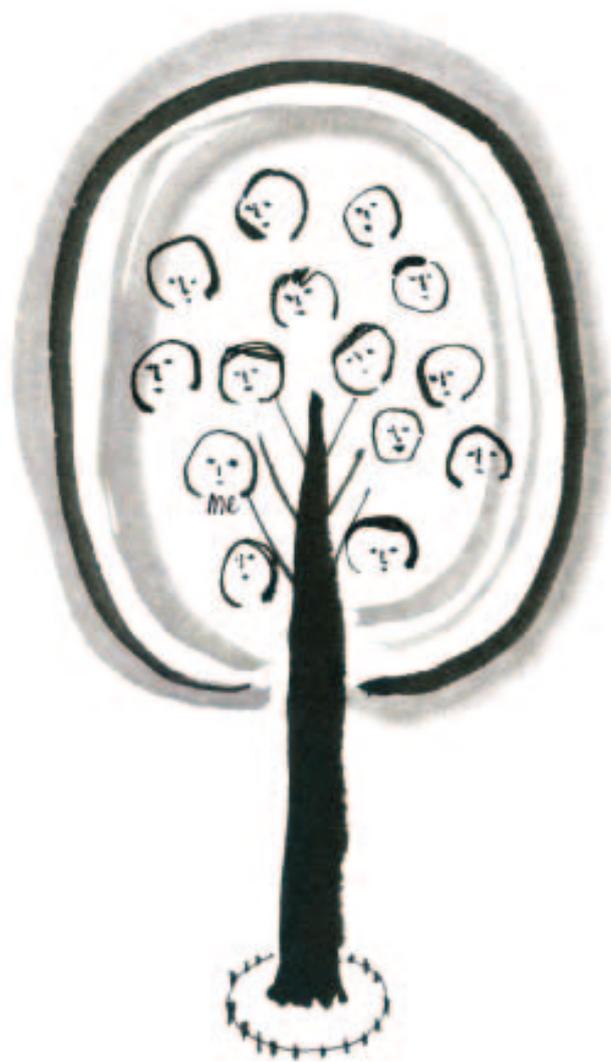
相反，把重心放在「關係」上卻有助於我們看清「需要」。如果我們帶著覺知，就會更加容易衡量甚麼是我們需要做的，甚麼是無謂的。你將學會問自己：「真的需要嗎？」

The problem with dualistic thinking is it often leaves us feeling torn by too many demands. "Too much to do, too little time, but there's only one me!" is a commonly heard complaint for those of us struggling to find balance in life. This adds stress to our already busy lives. Fatigue compromises our ability to choose wisely. Without sound judgment, balance will remain elusive.

In fact, dualistic thinking not only creates boundaries where none exists, but it also tends to inflate the ego, and an inflated ego easily misleads us into believing that what we see is the entire reality of our lives. An unthinking acceptance of our point of view as the only point of view blinds us to what's really going on. If we don't step back and see the bigger picture, what we see will be a badly distorted version of reality.

Placing the emphasis on "relationship" helps us to see more clearly the nature of that relationship, particularly if we do so with the awareness that we learn to recognise through meditation. We learn to make better judgment about what we need to do, and what we don't. In short, we learn to prioritise.





改變了思想，你的時間不會因此變多，你的責任也不會因此變少，但是你的觀察能力強了，你關心別人的素質高了，你的環境變好了。要找到平衡，我們需要了解人與人息息相關的聯繫。禪修大師詠給·明就仁波切在《世界上最快樂的人》一書中提及悲心時，用了一個美麗的比喻來描述這個關係。「悲心，其實就是認出每個人和每件事都是其他人和其他事物的投影反射 (reflection)。古老的《華嚴經》中描述，宇宙是印度神因陀羅 (Indra) 的意志力所創造的一張無邊的網，在這張無邊的網中，每一個連結點都掛著一顆精雕細琢，且具有無數切面的寶石，而每一顆寶石的每一個琢面上都映現著其他寶石的所有琢磨面。由於這張網本身、寶石的數量。以及寶石的琢磨面都無量無邊，所以投影反射也無量無邊；如果這張無邊際網中的任何一顆寶石有所改變，其他所有的寶石也會跟著改變。」你的平衡，分不開你的環境的平衡。

Changing our mindset this way won't give us more time or make our responsibilities grow less. But we will become more perceptive, the quality of our attention will improve and our environment will be made better. To find balance, we need to appreciate the fact of our interdependence. In his book *The Joy of Living*, the meditation master Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche used a beautiful metaphor to illustrate the understanding that all lives are connected. "Compassion is essentially the recognition that everyone and everything is a reflection of everyone and everything else," he writes. "An ancient text called the *Avatamsaka Sutra* describes the universe as an infinite net brought into existence through the will of the Hindu god Indra. At every connection in this infinite net hangs a magnificently polished and infinitely faceted jewel, which reflects in each of its facets all the facets of every other jewel in the net. Since the net itself, and the number of jewels, and the facets of every jewel are infinite, the number of reflections is infinite as well. When any jewel in this infinite net is altered in any way, all of the other jewels in the net change, too." Our balance is inextricably linked to that of our environment.

JOY OF LIVING

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