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JOY OF LIVING

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編者話

EDITOR'S NOTE

何曼盈 Tina Ho

這一期我們探討「簡約」。早在 20 世紀初，西方現代設計界已流行「簡約主義」。從建築物到室內裝潢及傢俬等用品，都以簡化為指導原則。除追求回歸事物的本質外，還要達到實用和美感的平衡。看看我國明代的椅桌，在 500 多年前亦已崇尚簡約。流暢簡潔明快的線條不失其內在的優雅，這都可能就是來自「久違的簡單和純粹」能「令人心境平和」。如果我們再深入探究這裏所展現的「簡約」，其內在的底蘊，一種「全然了解及接受自己，然後跟隨心的帶領」的生活態度和自信，可能才是真正「簡約」的源頭。在封面故事的「家，原來可以那麼大」一文中，作者透過一齣日劇《麵包與湯與貓咪日和》，分享了她對「生活上做到內在單純的可能性」的看法，以及「對於不能控制的外緣就單純地把心打開，順緣接受，甚至帶著好奇心去期待未知。」

這種「簡約」的生活態度，帶領着我們真實地認識自己。我們訪問了六位來自不同行業的開心禪同學，看看他們經過了習禪一段日子後，今天對自己有多了解，乃至在生活中如何恰如其份地扮演不同角色，活出生活的姿采！

能夠在期望和恐懼中突破，不能離開佛陀所開示的第二諦「集諦」，除了見到痛苦聚集的原因外，明就仁波切深刻地指出這更是「我們如何理解和詮釋自己的體驗」的意思。他以自己的生活經驗為例，以前，他認為走在石頭上腳會痛；可是，當醫生提出不同觀點時，這不同的想法便轉變了他的經驗。他明白了唯一改變的是他的觀點。當我們執迷己見時，就喪失了「飛翔的能力」，正如捕殺了美麗的蝴蝶一樣。我們要如何才能擺脫貪著？要如何才能擺脫希望和恐懼？明就仁波切給予最簡約的答案是：「放鬆身心。」

這次我們更專訪了措尼仁波切，他是明就仁波切的哥哥，在西方弘法亦有多年的經驗，我們很想知道：如何做到，不管發生甚麼事，都能培養到一份「很好」的感覺呢？仁波切講述生命中的基本幸福感。他稱它作「本質愛」，一種「很好」的感覺，是一種自然而然的開放，不用因由而感到很好。「珍惜我們擁有的。這也不表示我們必須停止改善未來的境況。當我們感到滿足，我們依然可以想要更多。但首先，我們要明白到我們此時此地擁有的已很好，而我們是快樂的。」

Simplicity is the theme of this issue of the magazine. In the 20th century, the pursuit of a pared-down aesthetic in the West gave birth to a minimalism movement in architecture and design. People longed for a return to simplicity, and began to seek a balance between how something looks and whether it is useful. In fact, in their clean, simple and elegant lines, the design of some tables and chairs from China's Ming dynasty – made half a century ago – could be said to be a precursor of this movement.

This aesthetics speaks of an approach to life that seems somewhat unattainable in today's ultra-complex world – a simple and direct way of living that, as the writer of the cover story points out, gives people a sense of ease. Dig deeper and we discover, as the writer does, that the basis for simplicity is an attitude to life that is completely open. It is a self-confident attitude that comes from fully understanding and accepting ourselves, and at the same time fully embracing life. In the cover story, "Room to Roam", the writer shares the lesson she learned from watching a Japanese drama: it is possible, after all, to be simple in one's heart and mind while dealing capably with life's many complexities. By fully embracing life, we are at ease even when the unexpected happens, and we look forward to what life brings.

This confidence must be built on how well we know ourselves. In the magazine, we spoke with six students of meditation with different work and family backgrounds, and asked them to share with us what their practice means to them, and what they have discovered about themselves through their practice.

To fully embrace life, we must be able to remain grounded as we navigate life's hopes and fears. For this, we need clear insight. Thus, also in this issue, we reproduce an excerpt from Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche's *Joyful Wisdom* on the power of perspective. Though we tend to assign the cause of our pain to circumstances or conditions, the truth is, he writes, it really lies in the way we perceive and interpret our experience. Just knowing we may have mistaken perceptions does not help us to break free of them, however. Meditation can help, and the excerpt ends with an exercise in simply resting our minds.

Meditation can also help us to recognise another aspect of our basic nature – our essence love. In the final article, we run an interview with Tsoknyi Rinpoche about how to reconnect – and remain connected – with our basic feeling of "okayness" even when dealing with life's challenges. This feeling of "happiness without reason" is our birthright, and is also the essence of an open attitude to life. "Having this 'okayness' does not mean we solve the problem, or even that we will have no problems," he says. "It means if there's a problem, I'm OK; if there's no problem, I am also OK." When we are connected with our essence love, we will find strength to solve our problems more effectively.

(Translated from the Chinese)

家，原來可以 那麼大

撰文 古緯詩 攝影 黃淑琪



香港的都市生活方式愈多姿多彩，
繁瑣的事情便愈多，生活的空間似乎就愈緊逼。
若嚮往簡約生活，並不是選擇簡約傢俱就可以達成；
就如一部電視劇的主人公那樣，
我們從簡單、開放的心開始

很多佛法老師都教導我們簡單的重要性。滇巴喇嘛(Lama Tenpa)說，人類「human being」應該多點處於「存在」(being)的面向，而非處於「做事」(doing)的面向；或是明就仁波切(Mingyur Rinpoche)的身教，和開心禪的教學，一再強調回歸本然，不要造作。措尼仁波切(Tsoknyi Rinpoche)也提醒我們快樂的竅門就是「內在簡單，外面複雜」(simple inside, complex outside)，意思是保持內心的簡單和開放，尊重複雜的外境。簡單(simplicity)並不容易，要跟隨老師的教法，譬如說把心安住坐著，靜靜地與自己一起，對大部份香港人來說比「擔泥」更困難吧？

又或者說，讓我們如實地看事情，不加鹽加醋，編作故事，那也一點不容易。甚麼是簡單？怎樣才能過簡約的生活？我竟然最近在一套日劇中看到了，令我覺得這種生活也不是不可企及的。

這套由我鍾愛的演員小林聰美主演的日劇《麵包與湯與貓咪日和》，只有短短四集，屬於「療癒系」小品。所謂「療癒系」一般是指通常以長鏡的方法來拍攝，風格簡樸、顏色淡雅、沒有太戲劇性情節的作品，是日本由來已久的類型劇種。這種小品很容易會變得流水帳，或者「無印良品」Muji般無聊；但好的作品卻有溫暖人心的作用。通常這種類型劇調子緩慢，長鏡就像我們安靜地坐在一旁觀看的視角，有平淡的生活細節，也有突發事件，好與壞、樂與悲，都沒有太偏重；如果拍得好的話，貫穿劇情的價值觀和生活取態都能立體地呈現，這也是最能療癒人心的部份。如在《麵包與湯與

貓咪日和》中，從主角身上我能看到生活上做到內在單純的可能性。

(小心！嚴重劇透！)故事開始，小林聰美飾演的秋子接到醫院的電話通知，她媽媽突然在自家經營的食堂倒下，撒手人寰了，從此就遺下自小與母親相依為命的秋子一人。過了不久，公司又將在從事編輯多年的她毫無心理準備地調去財務部，她的上司盡力斡旋也徒勞無功，秋子因此決定辭去服務多年的出版社，重新裝潢母親留下的店面，開了一家只提供她最喜歡的三文治和湯的小店，又聘請了一位善良正直，又大力又肯做的店員志麻，與她一起共同經營。在同一條商店街上看著她長大的咖啡店老闆娘每天都看著秋子，心慈口毒的她往往沒有好說話，一心希望秋子能努力一點，能做出一點成績。還好媽媽的老朋友們都很關心秋子，有空會來小店，也會約她吃飯喝酒。忙著忙著，一天有隻自來貓又來到店前，秋子把牠命名為「太郎」，收養了牠。自此，每天回家好像多了個伴，回家喊聲太郎，給牠餵食跟牠玩耍，黃昏時間抱著太郎來個小睡，就是秋子開心的生活了。

一天，秋子媽媽的朋友來探望媽媽，發現她已經去世。傷心之餘，自覺有責任把秋子的身世告訴她：原來秋子是私生子，父親是已婚的和尚。媽媽懷了她不讓父親知道，避開往昔的生活圈子，把她生下來獨自撫養。秋子知道後，在一天公休日跑到父親的道場探望。父親已經過世，她見到繼承了父親的寺廟兒子，就這樣有一搭沒一搭的跟弟弟談起來，但她並沒有說破大家的關係。

然後又有一天，太郎從打開的大窗跑掉了。秋子又變成獨自一人。

看完故事大綱，可能你會問，這劇一堆慘事，「療癒」點在哪裏呢？

母親過世後，秋子每天回家第一件事就是回到店上的家，跟太郎玩耍，給牠餵食，直到太陽下山，放下一天的辛勞，就在客廳沙發上抱著胖胖的太郎睡。有一天回家，發現窗戶打開了，小小家中不見太郎身影。鏡頭中秋子看看窗外，然後鏡頭影著長街，安安靜靜的。在畫外音中，秋子跟她的老師通信，說起貓貓不見了。有時，秋子回家時在門口會突然呆一呆，或是長鏡中看到地上太郎留下的小籐球。她沒有發狂的找，也不見得太悲傷。在一集之後，她跟志麻提起：「太郎或許有自己的新生活了」，帶著點點不捨，但事情就這樣發生了，就順其自然吧。對我這個貓人來說，我當然想像得到那種痛心和失落。作為一個佛弟子，我更應知道無常的道理。這樣子靜靜地接受——接受日常生活中不能控制的改變，更接受自己的情緒——很熟悉是嗎？是的，這就像老師的教導。秋子真像一位修行人，她能自自然然地就能與這一切共處，原來不是不可能的啊。

咖啡店老闆娘在秋子決定開店後，就覺得自己有責任代替她媽媽成為她的人生導師，教導她做人和做店的道理。譬如說小店不應只賣湯和麵包，營業時間要延長一點，開店初期需要勉強自己努力一點，甚至在秋子店外發現會引起皮膚敏感的櫻草，每天都要秋子拔掉它……但秋子有自己的想法，溫柔但堅定地行自己的路。縱然咖啡店老闆娘每日嘮叨，母親



的熟客都想小店回到原狀，她毫不動搖地只做自己有信心的麵包和湯，預備的食材售完後就完成一天的工作，在天色昏暗之前回到家中陪太郎玩，做自己喜歡的料理，獨自小酌。面對天天都有不同意見的老闆娘，她笑笑應過，微微低頭鞠躬。一天她和志麻說起：「老闆娘人真好，還替我們查櫻草的圖鑒，她幫我們注意到很多事情呢！」作為觀眾，我也覺得她那未免太正面了！老闆娘有心讓秋子過不去吧？但在

劇中老闆娘並沒有為秋子帶來任何困擾，原因其實很簡單——她了解自己、清楚目標，也知道老闆娘的用心，有自信的人心比較開放，不會只圍繞自己轉圈圈，比較不容易編造故事；那甚至不是濫好人，因為秋子並沒有煩厭或者要忍耐的感覺，她只是不去編造自己版本的故事而已。如果我是秋子，早就思前想後，把老闆娘的行為連成一個自私的孤獨老人不甘寂寞找人麻煩的故事了——這就是我們的習性。

這劇令人心境平和，是因為看到了久違的簡單和純粹。日子仿佛重覆，有時大家都以為無事的平凡日子中卻忽然波濤洶湧，這也是我們過的日子。然而秋子讓我看到一種可能，就是全然了解及接受自己，然後跟隨心的帶領；對於不能控制的外緣就單純地把心打開，順緣接受，甚至帶著好奇心去期待未知。片中秋子的老師跟秋子這樣說：「人往往因為不期而遇或是有新的事情突然發生，才會向著沒想過的方

向前進，活着才會這麼有趣！」這種開放的心就是簡單和純粹的重點了。

戲中另一個重點是煮和吃，除了在店中的烹飪工作外，每晚回到家中，秋子自己會為自己煮晚飯，通常有一個煎炸或燒烤的主菜，配上漬物和清酒。這些片段拍得很美麗，柔和的燈光下，長鏡頭中她一口一口專心慢慢地吃，配著小杯清酒；偶爾太郎會喵喵的叫食，秋子就會分一點魚給牠。像輕輕鬆鬆的禪食（不是正襟危坐那種），沒有手機也沒有電視。看著，覺得其實這種享受算不得奢侈，不用特別去做點甚麼，只要我們放下手上的事，這種輕鬆享受就能輕易獲得，但實際上很難。為甚麼我食飯要找伴，看電視、看手機找娛樂？我想我有種跟自己獨處的焦慮，覺得浪費時間，或可以說是種輕蔑——不值得為自己花時間吧。秋子呢，在劇中盡見她悠閒地跟自己相處，沒有從自己身邊逃離。這種簡單令人覺得像遊子回家似的安心。

在措尼仁波切的書《大圓滿生活》(Fearless Simplicity, 或可譯作「無畏的簡單」)中，仁波切認為能在複雜的世界中無畏地生活，竅門就是保持內在的簡單。這種內在的簡單保持內心的開放，這種開放讓我們有一種自信和安全感，當我們不需要再花力氣去餵養絮聒不停的我，自然就能生起一種主動的慈悲，即餘力也願意去關心我們以外的眾生。因此，對著外在複雜的狀態，我們就有意願去尊重和了解，甚至隨順在迷惑中眾生的狀態。

那甚麼是內在的簡單呢？明就仁波切在《帶自己回家》中曾提到：「當我們開始如實地看事物，而不以我們的認為來看它們，放下預設的概念、想法和附帶的價值，只是看。」簡單意味開放，因為已經沒有「我喜歡、我不喜歡」等的概念、也沒有被一堆的故事編作所捆綁，心自然就自在了。

大家不是都有這個經驗嗎？某天跟同事打招呼她不太理睬我，第一個反應會覺得奇怪，就開始思索是不是自己犯了些甚麼錯或者得罪了她；午膳時找她一起吃，她推說不想去，那就更確定了她一定是生我的氣啦！偶然看看她，她臉黑黑也不望向我這一邊；問她事情她也沒

精打彩的，就開始愈來愈確定她是因為自己昨日一句說話開罪了她，自己跟著也開始生氣了：「小器精，不就一句話嘛，我一直怎樣對妳妳忘了嗎……」接連一整天一再一再搜集證據確實自己被人生氣，也愈想愈多自己對她的大恩大德。直至下班，她走過我身旁，告訴我她今天生理期，還好一天過去了，她今天實在痛得要命不知怎樣渡過的……一下子我整個人就解放了，原來她只是不舒服——忘了她因為身體不適過了很難撐的一天，我卻是因為自己「老作」故事過了很忙很生氣的一天呢！問題在於，絮聒不停的自我一直要證明自己很重要，所有的事情都與我相關。我也很脆弱的，恐懼自己不被認同／希望自己被認同、恐懼自己被討厭／希望自己被愛。這情況下，心就會把毫無關聯的事情都跟自己連繫起來，給它們符合自己邏輯的故事線。因此就不能「如實」地看事情了。

早陣子有個學生跟男朋友分手，傷心地找我談。我了解她的痛苦，嘗試跟她分享佛法和自己的經驗。理智上她明白，情緒上卻不願意接受，還是想我替她想辦法復合。我們嘗試假設不同的選擇，發現在不太可行。最後，她很失望，說：「我只是想跟他復合，這個最卑微的願望為甚麼都不能成全呢？」不好意思，那一下我實在按捺不住，噗哧笑了出來。我跟她說：「阿小朋友，你四肢健全，生得漂亮，快將大學畢業，有疼惜你的父母和哥哥，又有好的兼職賺外快，人緣好，同學都喜歡你，甚麼『最卑微的願望』呢？你已經擁有全世界，這不是最卑微的願望，是錦上添花啦！」這位女生不預期我有這個反高潮的反應，她呆了一呆，也笑了。

我們對已經擁有的視作理所當然，當我們遇到失去、重病或挫折的時候，會覺得這不是正常的狀態，想要快點回歸「正常」；也彷彿大家都有幸福的生活，只有我正受苦，但實際並不是這樣的。我四十多歲了，半生過得算是遂順。但年紀愈長愈了解到外境永遠不由我主觀意志改變，除了接受還是接受；然而我更了解到每當生命中遇到重大危機時，往往就是我更能夠開闊生命的時機。所以這種接受不是消

極的態度，也可以是種開放好奇的心態。我常想，新年的時候恭祝別人「萬事如意」，最好外境都如自己的心意，這是種頗為自大的心態。Forest Gump 在《阿甘正傳》說：「生命如一盒朱古力，你永遠不知道你下一顆抽到甚麼。」故此，就算不捨，秋子也會想太郎有自己的新生活，也接受自己此刻的生活。我想這就是單純與開放的態度，別害怕，可能很快會有下顆朱古力，或者軟糖，或者再有一隻貓，或一隻狗，或什麼也沒有。

就算苦，也會因為無常，很快會過去。其實，回過頭去看一看從童年到現在的我們，不是每一件事情都終於成為過去嗎？所以，也不必執著同一件事、或沉澱在同一情緒，因為凡事一直都在變。我們的心正常運作也不能常常很苦，心是跳躍的，在苦極時我們也能笑，在笑中也可以感到悲哀，或者累了，然後會去睡。正如秋子所說：

「悲傷時哭泣，開心時喜悅，總希望與人靠在一起，但有時又會忽然希望單獨一人。在太陽落下寧靜的時光來臨時，就連這些心情都跨越，睡意突然來襲，不管單獨一個人或是兩個人在一起。我現在就過著這樣的生活，和母親在一起時沒察覺。現在與一隻貓或許就是過著這樣的生活。」

《麵包與湯與貓咪日和》美麗的地方在於秋子的簡單，編劇和導演沒有硬繃繃說道理，有時候我回想起秋子一人獨自吃晚餐時，我會嘗試把 iPad 和電話都收起，試著跟隨她自在的節奏專心吃飯；或者走路時回想起她在小路輕鬆地走的步伐，我會自然慢下腳步。這種才是比 Muji 更真實的簡約生活吧？

ROOM TO ROAM

Text Connie Koo Translation Chen Zhijun Photography Ki Wong



Life in a bustling urban centre of the 21st century can be complex and overwhelming, particularly in a densely populated city like Hong Kong. If you long to bring some simplicity into your life, choosing some minimalist furniture for your home may not be the best answer. Why not start by taking an open attitude to life, like a character in a certain television drama?

Many Buddhist teachers emphasise the importance of simplicity. According to Lama Tenpa, most of us are usually "human doings" rather than "human beings". Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche teaches us to "do nothing" in our meditation practice, resting our mind "as it is". He shows us this quality of simplicity through the example of his life and in his Joy of Living meditation programme. Similarly, Tsoknyi Rinpoche reminds us that the doorway to happiness is to be "simple inside, complex outside", by which he means keeping our innermost being simple and open while still respecting the complexities of the outside world.

But being simple isn't so simple. For most Hong Kong people, simply resting our mind as it is, just sitting by ourselves, is probably harder than performing manual labour. How easy is it for us to accept reality as it is, and not make a drama out of life's ups and downs? Can we keep life simple? If so, how? To my surprise, I found some answers in a Japanese television series.

Bread, Soup and Cat Weather is a four-episode drama starring one of my favourite actors, Satomi Kobayashi. It's a quiet, unassuming work in the "chicken soup for the soul" category. If poorly handled, such dramas can be boring – as plain in their own way as products from Muji stores. The plot is slow-moving, with few dramatic ups and downs, and the long, lingering shots make the audience feel as if they are watching real life quietly unfold. When it is done well, however, this contemplative artistic treatment offers a window into a set of often heart-warming values and attitudes to life. In *Bread, Soup and Cat Weather*, the protagonist's approach to life opened my eyes to the possibility of being "simple inside".

(Spoiler alert!) The story begins with Akiko (played by Kobayashi) receiving a phone call from the hospital, informing her that her mother has died after collapsing in the small restaurant she ran. Meanwhile, at work, Akiko is told she will be transferred to the finance department after working as an editor for years. Unhappy with the change, she quits her long-time job at the publishing house and decides to turn her mother's restaurant into a café selling sandwiches and soup. She hires the kind, honest and hard-working Yuki,

and the two of them run the business together. On the same street, there is a coffee shop run by a woman who has known Akiko since she was a child. On Akiko's return, the woman takes it upon herself to guide her, turning up from time to time to nag at Akiko's lack of ambition. One by one, Akiko's mother's friends visit the shop, giving Akiko quiet support over food and drinks. One day a cat comes to the shop. Akiko adopts him and names him Taro. Life falls into a happy routine: apart from work, Akiko spends time at home taking care of Taro, playing with him and napping with him in the evening.

Then another friend of her mother's comes visiting, not knowing that her old friend has passed away. Saddened by the news, the woman tells Akiko the truth about her birth: she was born out of wedlock, and her father was a married monk. Her mother hid the news about her pregnancy from the monk, and left him to raise Akiko by herself. After this revelation, Akiko visits her father's temple. She finds out that her father has died, and the temple has passed into the hands of her father's son – Akiko's half-brother – whom she meets and speaks with. She does not, however, reveal her identity.

Then one day, Taro runs out of an open window and never comes back, and Akiko is alone again.

At the end of the drama, you may ask: where's the "chicken soup" in this series of unhappy events?

After her mother's death, Akiko found a companion in Taro. After work each day, the first thing she did after getting home was to play with Taro and feed him. Many an evening was spent sleeping beside him on the couch. After Taro went missing, we see a lengthy shot of Akiko looking out the window at the quiet street outside. In the voice-over, we hear her telling her former teacher in a letter that the cat had disappeared. Sometimes, coming home, Akiko pauses for a moment at the doorway. Sometimes her eyes linger on the bamboo ball that Taro used to play with. She doesn't try particularly hard to find him; nor does she seem overly upset at his leaving. In one episode, she tells Yuki: "Perhaps Taro has

found a new life for himself." She feels some regret, but shows grace in the way she accepts Taro's decision to leave.

Being a cat lover, I can only imagine the pain of such a loss. As a Buddhist, I am of course familiar with the teachings on impermanence. Akiko's quiet acceptance, not only of life's inevitable changes, but also of her own emotions, reminds me of those teachings. In her own way, Akiko is a practitioner.

After Akiko took over her mother's shop, her neighbour the café owner saw it as her duty to teach Akiko how to run the business, and how to live her life. She pushed Akiko to expand her menu beyond soup and sandwiches and to extend her opening hours. When she found primroses growing outside Akiko's café, which could trigger allergies, she told Akiko to get rid of the plants. To all this, Akiko listened, then gently but firmly stood her ground. Despite her nagging, and some grumbling from her mother's old customers about the changes she had made to the shop, Akiko kept faith with the bread and soup that were her specialty. Listening to these different opinions, Akiko always smiled and bowed her head. One day she told Yuki: "The lady boss at the cafe is so nice. She even took the trouble to find out about the primroses. It's good of her to watch out for us."

Isn't Akiko's positive thinking too much? That woman wasn't watching out for Akiko; she was trying to make trouble! Yet Akiko was not bothered, and simply appreciated her neighbour's intentions to help her. A self-confident person can afford to be open-minded about others. Akiko was not pretending to be kind because that was the right thing to do; she simply accepted other people's behaviour without needing to make up stories about them. If I were her, I thought, I would have easily attributed the neighbour's behaviour to evil intentions or put it down as the loony acts of a lonely old woman.

Watching the show gave me a sense of ease, because I saw in it what many of us long for: a simple and direct way of living. Some days, life seems to repeat itself in a routine. At other times, a perfectly ordinary day may bring

“ Watching the show gave me a sense of ease, because I saw in it what many of us long for: a simple and direct way of living ”

unexpected turbulence; such is life. In Akiko, I saw the possibility of fully embracing life. Her understanding and acceptance of herself leaves her free to direct her own life, yet when the unexpected happens, outside of her control, she is open to the changes and even looks forward to what life brings. In one episode, Akiko's teacher said to her that the unexpected in life is often what makes us strike out in a new direction. "And that's what makes life interesting!" she said. Having an open heart and mind is the essence of living simply.

Food and eating is another highlight of the series. Apart from the scenes of food preparation at her shop, we see Akiko cooking for herself at home. Dinner is usually a main dish of deep-fried or grilled food, paired with pickles and washed down with sake. The scenes are beautifully lit and shot. Akiko eats leisurely, sipping her sake, and feeds Taro the occasional morsel when he asks for it. Her eating is almost meditative, uninterrupted by mobile phone or television. These simple pleasures seem elusive in real life. So many of us – me included – seek company for meals. Alone, we eat with our eyes glued to the entertainment on the TV or the phone. Do I behave this way because I dislike my own company, or regard the time spent with myself as wasted time? Watching Akiko enjoy her time alone, so simply and casually, I felt a sense of homecoming.

In his book *Fearless Simplicity*, Tsoknyi Rinpoche says the trick to living fearlessly in a complex world is to remain simple at heart. Such simplicity depends on an openness that brings a sense of self-confidence and ease. When we don't try to feed or maintain our ego, we naturally develop an energetic compassion for others around us. Even in the midst of complex situations and relationships, we are willing to respect and

understand others, even to accept their confused states of mind.

In his most recent book, *Turning Confusion into Clarity*, Mingyur Rinpoche speaks of the possibility of seeing beyond concepts. "[W]e start seeing things as they are, not as we think they are. We drop the preconceptions and ideas and imbued values, and just see." Being simple means being open. By letting go of our preconceived notions and concepts, such as our likes and dislikes, and of the need to make up stories about ourselves and others, we begin to liberate our minds.

Perhaps you have had this experience: you greet a colleague in the morning and she seems to ignore you. Puzzled, you try to recall if you have offended her unintentionally. At lunch time, she declines your invitation to eat together, confirming your suspicions that she is angry with you. Throughout the day, whenever you meet, she is sullen and uncommunicative. You're sure by now that it was something you said yesterday that angered her, and you begin to get angry yourself. "Hmph, so petty," you grumble to yourself. "It was such a small matter, and I've always been so nice to her, too!" You find more evidence of her pique as the day passes, and the feeling of being wronged grows more intense. Finally, at the end of the workday, she comes by to tell you she has been in pain with period cramps the whole day, and is really glad the day is over. When she said that, I felt a rush of relief – freed at last from the story I had been making up for myself. While she was feeling ill and struggling to get through the day, I know now, I was working myself up into a rage. The problem is, my ego is always working hard to prove that the world revolves around me, and that everything that happens has to do with me. Like others, I fear rejection and crave

acceptance and love. I see the world through the lens of this need, and I make up plausible stories to justify my feelings. It's difficult to see the world as it really is.

Some time ago, a student came to me to talk about the break-up of her relationship. I felt her pain, and shared with her my experience and some Buddhist teachings. Her rational mind understood why relationships end, but her emotional self could not accept her own break-up. She wanted ideas on how she and her partner could get back together. We discussed different options, and concluded that nothing would work. Disappointed, she said: "All I want is for us to get back together, why can't this humble wish be granted?" I could not help laughing. I said: "Dear child, you are healthy, pretty and about to graduate from university. You have parents and an elder brother who dote on you, and a good part-time job that earns you pocket money. You are popular and have many friends. 'Humble wish'? You already have the world at your feet! With your 'humble wish', don't you think perhaps you're asking a lot?" My response was an anticlimax that stopped her in her tracks, and she laughed.

We tend to take what we have for granted, and regard a personal loss, disappointment or illness as something "abnormal", a situation we should escape as soon as possible to get back to "normal". We believe we're the only ones suffering, while other people seem to lead perfect, happy lives. This is not true, of course. I'm in my 40s, and my life so far has been fairly smooth. The older I get, however, the more I understand that many things in life are outside my control – a fact I have to accept. Increasingly, too, I understand that when a crisis comes, it's often an opportunity for me to live life more deeply and richly. So this acceptance is not pessimistic, but energetic and



full of curiosity. It's customary to wish others well during the Lunar New Year. One popular greeting can be translated as "May life bring you all that you want/desire/will". It sounds nice; yet, must everything we meet in life be to our liking? This seems a somewhat arrogant attitude.

As *Forest Gump's* mother told him in the movie: "Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're going to get." Akiko understands this. Even though she misses Taro, she accepts that his departure signals a new life for him, and one for herself. To me, that's the essence of a simple and open attitude to life: there's nothing to be afraid of, because very soon, there'll

be the next chocolate, or candy, or a cat or a dog, or nothing.

Even pain passes, because everything changes. Looking back on the years, isn't it clear that everything eventually passes? So there's no need to be stuck on something that happened, or hang on to an emotion. Everything changes – including suffering. Our hearts are beating, after all. Even in the darkest moments we can smile, and we feel sadness even in laughter. When we're tired, we go to sleep.

As Akiko said: "We cry when we're sad, and feel good when we're happy. We always wish to be with people, yet sometimes want to be alone.

When at dusk the day grows silent, the moods change, and sleepiness descends, whether you're alone or with someone else. This is my life. I didn't notice it when I was living with my mother, but with a cat, that's how I live now."

The beauty of *Bread, Soup and Cat Weather* lies in Akiko's simplicity, and the writer's and director's restraint lies in not preaching. Sometimes when I eat dinner by myself, I think of Akiko, and put away my iPad and phone to enjoy a leisurely dinner. When walking, I remember her relaxed gait and I, too, slow down. Perhaps this kind of simplicity is more real than any of the "simple" things one can buy from Muji.

認識 自己

採訪 何家銳／何曼盈 攝影 倪鷺露

能夠任何時候都與自己快樂地相處，
說得上是一件人生大事。
習禪，就是一個了解自己、
與自己做朋友的過程。
不論禪修的年份長或短，
練習的時間多或少，
最重要的還是有練習的意願。
六位開心禪的同學分享他們習禪的啟發，
以及他們透過禪修對自己的瞥見

GETTING TO KNOW ME

Interview Kerry Ho / Tina Ho Photography Lulu Ngie

How well do we really know ourselves?

Meditation masters of the past and present tell us that meditation –
a practice that uses the mind to observe the mind –
will lead us to a true understanding of our nature.

We invite six students of the Joy of Living meditation practices to tell
us their inspiration for practice, what their practice means to them,
and what they've discovered about themselves

鄭子邦 Cheng Tsz Bong — 公司負責人 Chief executive

參加了開心禪後，明白禪修並不只是靜坐在禪堂裡，而是在生活當中。老師的身教對我很有意義，因為透過看到他的做到，知道他的方法及閉關是真實的，讓我更有信心，再加上一些科學的證明，令人感到更實在及了解它的原理。以前我在生活及工作上要處理很多大小事情，當覺得煩惱、心累而睡得不好時，我會去做運動、去游泳紓壓，可能那一刻我好像放鬆了，後來發現原來心裡那些無形的東西和情緒還在；現在我學會了禪修，發現雖然那些問題還在，但我可以給自己多一個方法讓自己放鬆。由自己做好，再去幫助身邊更多的人，內外便更一致。另一方面，當情緒及煩惱來臨，我學會了不再去注入，懂得自然地去覺察自己。從前當我想打遊戲機時我就會去打遊戲機，現在會察覺到原來自己想打遊戲機的動機是想減壓，當中存在着煩惱或壓力。我覺得現今的人，需要學禪修，因為它除了幫助我們的身體健康，內在得到平靜之外，更讓我們可覺察自己，不會在生活中只是白忙而不自知。

After taking part in the Joy of Living class, I realise we can practise meditation not only in the meditation hall, but also in daily life. Mingyur Rinpoche's example is inspiring, and increases my confidence that his methods truly work. The scientific proof of the benefits of meditation also helps me to understand how they work. In the past, when I feel stressed out, I would exercise – go swimming, for example – to relieve the stress. But the sense of relief is temporary, and the problems that troubled me are still there. Through meditation, I have found a way to relax with these problems and emotions. First I work with myself, then I can help more people around me. When emotions and troubles come, I know I have a choice not to be one with them. Instead, I watch them. I enjoy gaming. After learning meditation, I discovered that the urge to play games sometimes comes from a motivation to de-stress. Unknowingly, I was trying to cope with some problems. I think people today need to learn meditation, because it is not only good for our health and inner peace, but it can also help us to live with more awareness so that we are not busy for busy's sake.

**王詠思 Wincy Wong** — 行政經理 Administrative manager

自從 2011 年我參加開心禪以來，感到生活的質素改善了不少，尤其是在家庭和工作方面。接觸禪修之前，我常常是三魂不見了七魄。其實只需跟隨明就仁波切的指引，每當情緒、念頭、恐懼等出現，便覺知著，不作判斷，它們便消融了。我感到身心有着與飲咖啡和做按摩完全不同的輕鬆，是無條件的。同時，自信心增大了，面對事情的角度也不同了，正如仁波切所說：有着一種不是來自自大或驕傲的自信。內心充滿着難以形容的感恩。

Since joining the Joy of Living meditation course in 2011, my quality of life has really improved, especially at home and at work. Before learning meditation, I was so easily distracted. All I need to do now is to follow Mingyur Rinpoche's teachings, to simply be aware of any thoughts and emotions, such as fear, that appear in our minds, without judgment. In time, they will disappear. Meditation makes me feel a sense of ease that is unconditional, that is different from the feeling of being relaxed drinking coffee or getting a massage. At the same time, I feel more confident of myself, and am able to see things from different perspectives. As the Rinpoche said, this trust in ourselves is not rooted in our arrogance or pride. I am more grateful than words can describe.

勞御軒 Nicky Lo —— 學生 Student

當初我想找一個可改善自己在大學時讀書的方法。以往每次溫習的時候，大約十分鐘後，就開始感到沉悶、浮躁、難以記住看過的內容，常不能集中及專注，但學了開心禪後，當我感到浮躁，念頭跳來跳去時，我便懂得怎樣讓心平靜下來。溫習前，我做一段約二十分鐘的禪修才去溫習，發覺這樣大大改善了以往不能集中的問題，更容易記得溫習過的內容。在情緒方面，自己之前可能會受環境或一些對話的影響，然後再帶著情緒去對待身邊的家人或兄弟，現在懂得以禪修給自己多一個空間、退一步去處理即時情緒帶來的反應，有助改善家庭內彼此的關係，使得相處更融洽。而對禪修初學者最大的鼓勵，是在老師的教導中，不論短短幾分鐘或很長的禪修練習，同樣都是一個很好的禪修練習。所以我希望將開心禪這個很好的方法，分享給更多的年青人，這樣可幫助他們面對和處理日常生活遇到不同的問題，如誘惑、情緒時，也能平靜下來才作出不同的決定。

I wanted to improve the way I study at the university. I had problems focusing: every time I sat down to study, I found myself feeling bored and frustrated after just 10 minutes, and I found it hard to remember what I read. After learning meditation, I know how to calm my mind down when many thoughts come. Now before I hit the books, I spend 20 minutes meditating, which helps me to focus better. Meditation is also good for managing emotions. When emotions come because of something that happened, meditation helps to give me some space, so that I can take a step back and handle my own reactions better. In this way, when I interact with the people around me, including my family, I don't take it out on them. Our relationships improve as a result. The biggest encouragement for a beginner is our teacher's advice that our meditation practice does not have to be very long to benefit us. I hope a good course like the Joy of Living can help many more young people, who are dealing with all kinds of temptations and emotions, to cope with life's problems. They can make better decisions for themselves when their minds are calmer.

**陳靜珊 Rita Chan** —— 行政人員 Management staff

開心禪讓我學會不再跟著自己瘋猴子一般的念頭走來走去，懂得單純地覺察它們，看著它們而不跟隨。它對我最大的幫助是在我的工作及家庭裡，以往我很情緒化、易怒，若當同事或家人處理一些工作不夠迅速時，我會不停地追趕他們；或者我已說明怎樣做一件事情，若他們還不懂得做時，我會很煩躁。但學了開心禪後，我可以正面接受不同的存在，以及願意從他人的處境去思考及覺察他們的說話，認識到每個人其實都想做好他們，以及每個人遇到不同的情況。對自己最大的得益，是透過禪修，我可看到自己，從內在去觀察自己。

The Joy of Living meditation course gives me a choice not to follow my "crazy monkey" thoughts. Now I can simply be aware of them, but not go along with them. Meditation benefits me the most in my work and family life. I am an emotional person, and in the past, I would get angry easily. When I felt a colleague or family member was too slow in getting things done, for example, I would get impatient. Or, when they could not do what I wanted them to do, even after I had clearly explained things, I would get really frustrated. But after learning meditation, I am better able to accept differences, and am more willing to consider other people's feelings and perspectives. I listen more. I begin to recognise that everyone really just wants to do their best, and that everyone's situation is different. The best thing is: through meditation, I begin to see myself.

王世康 Dennis Wong — 旅遊從業員 Travel agent

自 2009 年跟隨明就仁波切學習以來，影響我最深的莫過於慈悲的禪修，我感受到每個人都想離苦得樂，只是方法上有些不同。記得仁波切有次在法會中染上感冒，縱使身體因感冒而非常疲乏，他仍在法會中一如既往很用心地主法，偶爾還會送上令人捧腹的笑話，其他人根本無法看到他的不適，從仁波切的身教上我學懂什麼叫慈悲，他的一切完全是慈悲的展現。因此，我也常常在生活中本着慈悲的心來對待不同的人，縱使在工作或生活中偶爾會碰到傷害，我仍願意給予對方慈悲，因為他們和我一樣都希望得到快樂。

I became a student of Mingyur Rinpoche's in 2009. Since then, the teaching that has most influenced me is the meditation on compassion. It made me understand that everyone just wants to be happy, to be free of suffering. Our methods may be different, but we all have the same wish. I remember one time, Rinpoche was feeling ill during a puja. Even so, he did his best to carry out his duties and was his usual humorous self. Others didn't even notice that he was not feeling well. He showed me what compassion is. So I, too, learn to live my life with an open heart, and try to treat everyone with compassion. Whether at work or in my personal life, I try to be compassionate with everyone, even those who I feel have hurt me, because at heart, they just want to be happy, just as I do.

**鄭瑞蘭 Kenny Cheng** — 財務總監 Financial controller

持續練習禪修，讓我更能面對和接受義工、家庭或工作的處境，並且更放鬆自己，尤其在工作中，以往多是用指令的方式；現在多了覺察自己，便懂得與同事多了些互動和讓他們明白我做原因。透過老師的教導及自己的實踐，我有了很大的改變。帶著覺察，見到日常生活裡每個當下，發現自己是可以選擇，例如當有情緒的出現，自己可以選擇發脾氣，還是用另一種方法去處理。當我認真去覺察自己，深深明白到每個人也是一樣，大家都希望擁有快樂及快樂的因，遠離痛苦及痛苦的因。

The consistent practice of meditation helps me to face up to and accept all that happens at home and at work, as well as in my volunteer service. I've become more relaxed. Especially at work. In the past, I used to order people around. After bringing more awareness to my life, I interact better with my co-workers and have got better at explaining what I do. Mingyur Rinpoche's teaching and example have greatly changed me. With awareness, I begin to see every moment of my daily life more clearly. I find I have a choice: when emotions come, I can choose to let them erupt, or I can choose to handle things in a different way. When I begin to pay attention to my mind, I begin to appreciate and understand that everyone of us is the same, in that we all wish to have happiness and the causes of happiness, and we all want to be free of suffering and the causes of suffering.

自編、自導、自演

節錄自《你是幸運的》第三章

插圖 黎清妍

持續地觀察自心，我們會漸漸認出觀點的力量，詠給·明就仁波切寫道。
正如佛陀在第二諦中指出，「自心」會編造體驗，而這就是痛苦的成因

幾年前，我走在印度街上，那裡有許多鋪著石子的馬路。有一天，我趕著出門來不及穿鞋，我很快就後悔了。因為赤腳走在石子路上，實在不太舒服。這件事發生不久後，我遇到一位印度醫生，跟他提起了這件事。

「這樣很好啊！」他說。

我問他：「為什麼呢？」他解釋，根據許多古代醫學研究，在腳底施壓會刺激身體器官和身體的運作，促進全身健康。對腳底反射療法有點認識的人就知道它的好處，但我從來不知道。醫生解釋了之後，我比以前更常打赤腳。意外的是我不但沒有覺得不舒服，反而開始覺得踩在石子上很舒服。

為什麼呢？石頭沒有改變。我的腳也沒有改變。我走路的姿勢也沒有改變。我發現，唯一改變的是我的觀點。以前，我認為走在石頭上腳會痛；可是，當醫生提出不同觀點時，這不同的想法轉變了我的經驗。

我將改變觀點的基本方法，運用在童年時代困擾我的念頭和情緒，但我並沒有真正運用在種種身體不適的情況。當我發覺自己是如此根深蒂固的執著身體是「我」的時候，我大吃一驚。

這對我是一堂重要的課，影響了我對困難和不舒服的看法，如果一開始我並不覺得不舒服，或向它屈服，或以一般方式處理，例如每次離開房間都刻意記得穿上涼鞋，那麼我就無法領會習性微細的一面。

在那之後，我更珍惜痛苦和不舒服，因為每次體驗都是邁向更深刻領悟的種子，更認識自心的機會，並觀察我對自己的看法，甚至是我所不知道的周遭環境。

我並不是建議各位一碰到問題、生氣和不舒服，就戴上佛法偵測帽，然後開始在心裡盤算：「這時候要用什麼觀點呢？為什麼我不懂呢？噢！原來如此。我現在要換個新方法。」這樣只是暗地裡想擺脫不安的情況，最後反而

會加深習氣——把困難看成需要降服的敵人，或需要安撫的老闆。

禪修的真正步驟是：單純的保持原狀，然後直接看著它。用這種方法面對體驗，自然就會跟它保持一點間隙，更能宏觀整體情況。如果「心」能夠觀察「體驗」，理論上，「心」就大於「體驗」。認出「心」與「體驗」是分開的那個剎那，你可能瞥見自心的宏偉，就像我父親和其他老師開示，你會了解：每一剎那的體驗，只不過是無垠海洋的其中一個浪花，生起並消退，從未離開無限的廣大境。

這個瞥見，也是幫助我們了解「第二諦」的基礎。第二諦「集諦」通常譯為痛苦的「根源」或「原因」。我們一般習慣認為外境是痛苦的原因。根據第二諦的教導，痛苦的因並不是建立在事件或環境上，而是我們如何理解和詮釋自己的體驗。

我最近聽到一個故事，有一位台灣女士跟朋友走在路上，走著走著，她的襪子在鞋子裡揪成一團，她覺得很難受。「停一下！」她大吼。「我要整理一下襪子，真痛啊！」她正要去腳底按摩師，諷刺的是，到了那裡，她跟按摩師說：「用力一點！你的服務一定要物超所值。」

我覺得這位女士很有趣。不久前她覺得腳被襪子卡的不舒服，半小時之後，她卻要求按摩師在腳底加重力道。同樣的情形，因為不同的詮釋和期望，反應居然如此極端。這些詮釋是從哪裡來的呢？為什麼如此強烈的影響我們呢？

概念的盒子

在生活中，我們主要依賴自己的能力去辨別事物。有些辨別很直接，像是左和右、高和矮、喧嘩和安靜、手和腳、日和夜。有些事物需要

更多的辨別力，像是這顆水果是不是過熟，還是不夠熟？這個價格合不合理，還是另一家更便宜？有些事情要更深思熟慮，我就發現，為人父母的都會質疑自己對孩子的管教，會不會太嚴厲還是太放縱？另外也有人為了跟伴侶發火或拌嘴而擔憂：我今天心情不好，或壓根兒就是彼此意見不合，所以我就放任自己的言行嗎？我也聽過有人在職場碰到類似情形，他們向別人諮詢，像是：我對他（她）的批評會不會太無情了？我會不會工作太認真而抽不出時間給自己和家人？

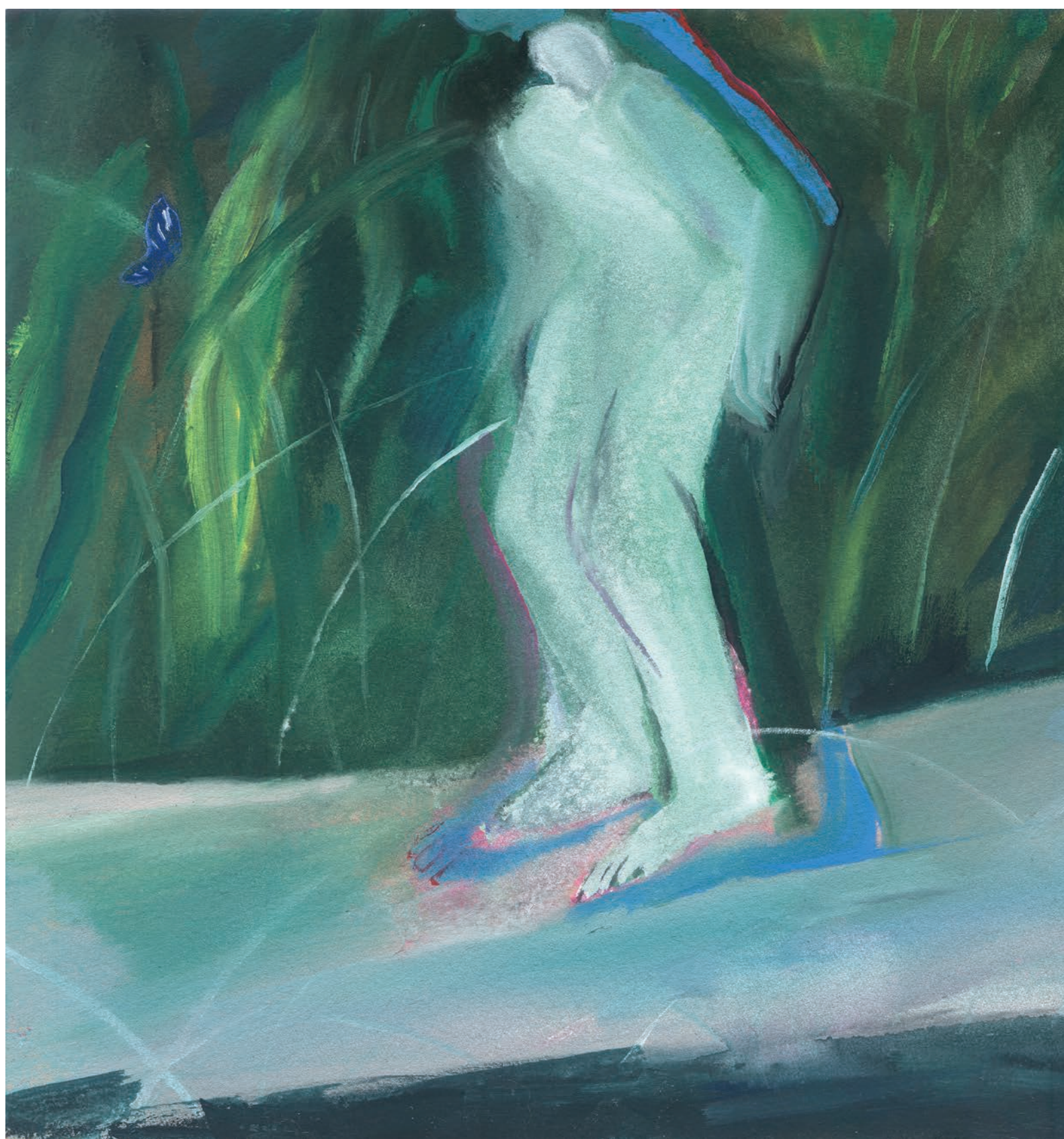
重要的是請切記：所有的分別基本上都是相對的——念頭、批評和感覺都是從比較而來。有右邊才有所謂的左邊；有夜晚才有所謂的白天；有溫暖才有所謂的寒冷。這堂簡短的課，就是佛法經常提到的「相對實相」(relative reality)：以不同的對比去界定體驗。

許多科學家跟我談到，辨別力逐漸發展為生存工具，它的好處是能分辨植物和水果中，哪些有毒？哪些有營養？辨別力也幫助我們區分哪些東西可以吃，哪些東西可能會吃掉我們。

人類產生辨別力的過程很複雜，我們可以從生物學和心理學的名詞來了解。

光是從生物學的觀點來看，任何感知的行為都需要三個基本要素。首先是感知的器官，像是眼睛、耳朵、鼻子、舌頭和皮膚；再來是感知的對境，例如花朵；第三個是處理並反應感知器官接收到訊息的能力。感知器官、腦部，以及二者之間的聯繫，主要由神經元(neurons)組成。人腦由上億個神經元組成，其中許多構成與學習和情緒有關的架構。各個架構之間的互動非常複雜。

假設我們看到一朵「紅色」玫瑰花，這朵花就是對境，科學術語稱為「刺激」(stimulus)，看著玫瑰花時，眼裡的細胞會先注意到它是由上圓下尖的紅色物質組成，並連在一根綠色、細長、略圓且有深色尖銳突



起物的東西上。這個影像是從視神經（optic nerve）將眼睛接受的視覺訊息傳送到視覺腦皮層（visual cortex），它位於腦部，負責組織視覺感官接收到的刺激。在接受到視覺的刺激之後，視覺腦皮層傳送「即時訊息」到腦部的「丘腦」（thalamus），即靠近腦部正中央的一群細胞。來自感官的信息在此處進行「解碼」後，再送往腦部其他區域。

一旦視覺腦皮層的信息送到丘腦，接著就被送往許多的地方。其中一套送到邊緣系統（limbic system），它在腦部的表層，主要負責辨別痛苦與快樂，決定情緒的反應，並提供學習和記憶的基礎。

腦部邊緣系統有兩個重要構造，主要是解讀這些信息和記憶。其中一個構造是腦杏仁核（amygdala），這是一群小杏仁狀的神經元，決定體驗的情緒。舉例來說，如果你被「深色尖銳的東西」刺到，你很可能對「由一群紅色物質組成的東西」產生「壞的」或「討厭的」感覺。另一個構造是海馬迴（hippocampus），有點像是空間和短期記憶的儲藏室。它提供體驗的背景和意義，幫助我們的記憶，比如說，我們第一次是在何時何地看到了玫瑰。

同時，匯集在丘腦臥室的私密對話，被傳送到「腦新皮質」（neocortex），它位於腦部最外層，神經科學家普遍認為這個部位主要是執行分析的功能，讓我們開始學習命名、辨別形狀和形成概念，就像我們把「一群紅色物質組成的東西」命名為玫瑰。雖然描述了這麼長篇大論，但由數千個細胞組成的器官，與腦內各種神經元架構的溝通，比一彈指時間還要短。腦幾乎是立即反應並刺激化學物質的釋放，例如皮質醇、腎上腺素、多巴胺和腦內啡等，讓它們在體內流動，加速或減緩心跳，轉換情緒。同時，感知器官、腦部構造、身體重要器官和體內的腺等等的一連串連結，是即時通訊的網狀系統，用簡單的方式製造內在的紅玫瑰「圖像」。

換句話說，我們並沒有真正看到玫瑰，而是產生了「玫瑰」的概念。這個概念通常受到許多因素的影響，包括一開始經驗到「玫瑰」時的周遭環境、儲存在腦部不同部位的記憶和

預期，以及根據日後不同的體驗做修正，還有，最重要的是區分出體驗者（我）與體驗的對境（玫瑰）。

我們把實體的「我」，本能的與外境分開。舉例而言，像是玫瑰在我們內心的影響，是由各種神經元構造與其他身體系統的互動所產生。小時候，這個影像可能很模糊，然而，隨著我們長大，內化的「我」與「不是我」的區別更為明顯了。同樣的情況，也發生在「愉快」和「不愉快」，「想要」和「不想要」。我們也會區隔出「模糊」地帶，因為我們還沒有決定要如何與體驗做連結。這就像有些人會把檔案、文件照片和其他物品歸納到不同的盒子，同樣的，我們也會將體驗歸納在概念的「盒子」裡。

我跟受過各種科學訓練的一些人談到這個議題，他們盒子出現的方式、時間和原因眾說紛紜。不過，在現代思想學說中，似乎有一些共識：當嬰兒脫離母胎開始獨自生活，並面對完全無法預知的內外環境時，「我」的盒子就形成了。

捕殺蝴蝶

早在西方科學發展的幾世紀之前，佛陀就已經知道痛苦來自於心，即所謂的「觀察者的眼睛」。雖然佛陀闡述的字眼與現代的生物學家、神經學家與心理學家不同，但是，洞見是相似的。

根據佛陀開示「第二諦」集諦的早期文字記載，堵噶（藏文：dukkha），也就是痛苦，是由基本的心理狀態引起，在巴利文是坦哈（tanha），也就是渴望的意思。將早期的巴利文文字記錄翻譯成梵文的弟子們解釋，痛苦的原因就是渴望，也就是梵文的崔虛那（trishna）。當佛法傳到西藏，則被譯為藏文的緊巴（dzinpa），也就是貪執。

每一種文字都有不同的表達方式，這三個名詞都傳達了對恆常和穩定的基本渴望，或從另一個角度來說，都企圖否定和忽視「無常」。這些渴望最基本的根源，就是佛陀典籍中經常提到的「無明」，也就是習慣誤將「自己」、

「他人」、「主體」、「對境」、「好」、「壞」和其他相對特性，當成是獨立和本來就存在。簡單的說，「無明」就是把瓶子上的辣椒醬標籤，當做是辣椒醬。

認為人、事、物本來就是堅實的這種觀點，來自於兩種強度相當的慾望。首先是一般所說的「貪欲」（desire），就是渴望獲得或保有讓我們愉悅的一切事物。第二是「嗔恨」（aversion），這是貪欲的想法，就是躲避或除掉我們界定為不愉悅的事物。

無明、貪慾和嗔恨三者（傳統說法叫貪、嗔、痴），就是佛典中提到的「三毒」，根植在心中的習氣，把我們的習氣，把我們的心遮蔽或「毒害」。這三毒個別和合作產生其他數不清的心態和情緒，例如傲慢、完美主義、自卑或厭惡自己。當同事得到我們自認應得的晉升時，我們嫉妒；面對生病或年老的父母，我們感到哽咽和絕望。有些佛教教法提到這些心態和情緒就是「煩惱」和「障礙」，因為它們限制了我們詮釋體驗的方式，接著抑制了思考、感覺和行動的潛能。我們一旦形成「我」和「不是我」的觀念之後，接著就把體驗連結上「我的東西」和「不是我的東西」、「我擁有的事物」和「我沒有的事物」、「我想要的事物」和「我不想要的事物」。

為什麼不就此停止這種分別心呢？為什麼不就此放下三毒和它們所產生的事物呢？當然，如果這麼簡單的話，這句話說完之前，我們全都成佛了。

根據佛陀的開示和佛教大師的釋論，三毒和三毒引起的其他內心與情緒的習性，並不是痛苦的原因。痛苦其實是源自於你對它們的「執著」，這種說法最接近藏文緊巴（dzinpa）的基本含義。就像之前提到的，緊巴經常被解釋為「貪執」（grasping），也有人譯成「固著」（fixation），我認為「固著」比較接近緊巴深層的含義。「緊巴」是企圖將不斷變動的時間和地點固定下來。

「那就像在捕殺蝴蝶嘛！」聽到這裡，我有一位學生嚷了起來。

我問她，這是什麼意思呢？她說，有些人把捉蝴蝶當做嗜好，他們弄死蝴蝶，然後釘在

玻璃或塑膠的展示盒當做收藏來欣賞，或跟朋友炫耀，這純粹是一種消遣。

「這麼美麗、細緻的生命，」她憂傷的說。「應該是在空中飛舞。如果不能飛，那就不是蝴蝶了，不是嗎？」

她是對的。當我們執迷己見時，就喪失了飛翔的能力。

魔鏡！魔鏡！

幾年前我在美國時，有一位年長的女士來看我，那次會面證實了一件事：強烈的執著一套信念和觀念，會導致劇烈的痛苦。當時她一坐下來就哭了。過了一會兒，她情緒緩和了。然後，她說：「我不要變老。每次照鏡子，我就看到臉上的皺紋，我討厭皺紋，我恨死皺紋了。有一天，我把鏡子砸破了，只好再買了一面新的鏡子。我後來照鏡子又看到臉上的皺紋，我真給弄瘋了。我既生氣又沮喪，不知道該怎麼辦。」

我對於她爆發的情緒有點吃驚。我的祖母也有很多皺紋，但我覺得反而增添了她的美麗。祖母很和藹溫柔，充滿智慧，而且永遠面帶微笑。我沒有跟這位女士提起祖母。因為我知道有人深受痛苦時，最好別對他說：「這只是你的想法而已。如果你改變想法，感覺就會不同。」從前我在焦慮和恐懼的時候，如果我的老師對我說這樣的話，我不覺得那對我有幫助，反而會助長我的寂寞和徬徨。在遭遇困難的當下，需要的是了解，自己所經歷的困境，一切眾生也都會經歷：眾生根深蒂固地渴望要生存、活著、成功，以及片刻的寧靜。

我很感激父親和老師們陪我一路走過學習歷程。他們鼓勵我：只要看著當下經歷的一切——單純的看著來來去去的念頭、情緒、批評和感官知覺。這個方法非常實際的將行者帶入佛陀卓越的「四聖諦」教法。佛陀大可跳過第二諦集諦，從第一個苦諦直接就跳到第三個滅諦，但他開示了第二諦，為的是幫助我們了解此生各種難題的原因和狀況。第二諦強調不只有我們單獨在面對困境，所有眾生也同樣執著「我是誰、我是什麼，我想要什麼或需要什

麼、我不想要什麼或不需要什麼」的想法。

我應用老師教我的方法，開始跟因為皺紋而受苦的這位女士談「無常」。我告訴她，這是每個人都會面臨的基本狀態。如果接受的話，就會了解這一生明顯和細微的改變，都是有利益的。

「當你執著自己過去的樣子，還有年輕時能做的事，」我告訴她，「你就看不見變老的好處。想想看，哪些事情是年輕時不能做，而現在能做的。想想人生閱歷帶給你的一切。你可能還記得……」我補充說：「年輕的時候，你等不及要變老，你羨慕有智慧、經驗豐富、受到敬重的人所享有的機會。如果你只執著粗略的改變，就看不到細微改變的好處。我年輕的時候，就急著要長大，因為長大就可以做我想做的事，也可以更穩定。」

這次會面的一年後，我再度經過美國，那位女士又來見我。這一次，她很放鬆，面帶微笑。她坐下來之後，接著說，上一次的會面後，她沒有再砸破鏡子。「上次的談話之後，我就明白了。」她解釋：「時間不是敵人，年老不是敵人，我的執著才是敵人。以前照鏡子時，我從鏡中看到是別人對我的眼光——一個老女人，沒有魅力也沒有價值。我也開始用那種心態過日子，果然別人也把我當成一個又老又沒用的人，於是，這變成一種惡性循環。」

「但是，當我開始回憶這些年的體驗，我竟然開始對我的皺紋感到驕傲。每一條紋路都像是一枚榮譽徽章，表揚我度過難關、通過考試。我開始觀察跟我年紀相仿的人，我心想：『我們有許多的人生閱歷，未來還有更多大大小小的改變等著我們呢！』這並不是說，我每天早上跳下床時，都在期待改變。我的年紀已經不太適合跳躍了。」她大笑。「但是，我發現自己更能覺察自己的生命和當下，因為那就是我的全部，不是嗎？當下。這個當下正在發生的事情，遠超過我的想像。」

她的故事打動了我。她只得到了一點點的指導，就能面對「自我概念」的執著。其實，「自我概念」就是不安的主因，跟人類的體驗息息相關。她面對問題並從中學習，往後，她更加珍惜生命。

這就是「第二諦」的精要教導。了知一切事物必然會改變，於是在每個當下就能更清明、更自信，並在其中放鬆，不去抗拒或受其擺佈。體驗和覺受不能掌控我們。我們不需要把它們當做「敵人」般的搏鬥或逃避。我們有潛力觀察自己的體驗，並且認出：「這是當下正在發生的事情，下一個瞬間會有另一個體驗，再下一個瞬間，又有不同的體驗。」

我認為「抗拒每個當下的改變」，是我所知道的現代用語中，最能解釋什麼是「固著」的說法，這也是佛陀和後世的老師們所說的各種痛苦和不安的原因。

執著和渴望的情緒生起之後，我們會在瞬間不自覺的對無常的現象做出反應，我在心理學領域的朋友，稱此反應為「防衛機制」。以「貪著」和「貪婪」兩種情緒為例，字面並沒有真正表達出這些情緒機制的深刻含義。我認為最好的解釋是，這些情緒更代表一種「患得患失」的心理，是想在期望與恐懼之間找到平衡點：想改變又害怕改變，想維持現狀。有時候我們不由自主的被推往其中一個方向，有時候卡在兩個極端之間而不知如何是好。

在公開講學和個別談話中，我最常被問到的問題是：「我要如何能擺脫貪著？我要如何擺脫希望和恐懼？」最簡單的答案是：「放鬆身心。」

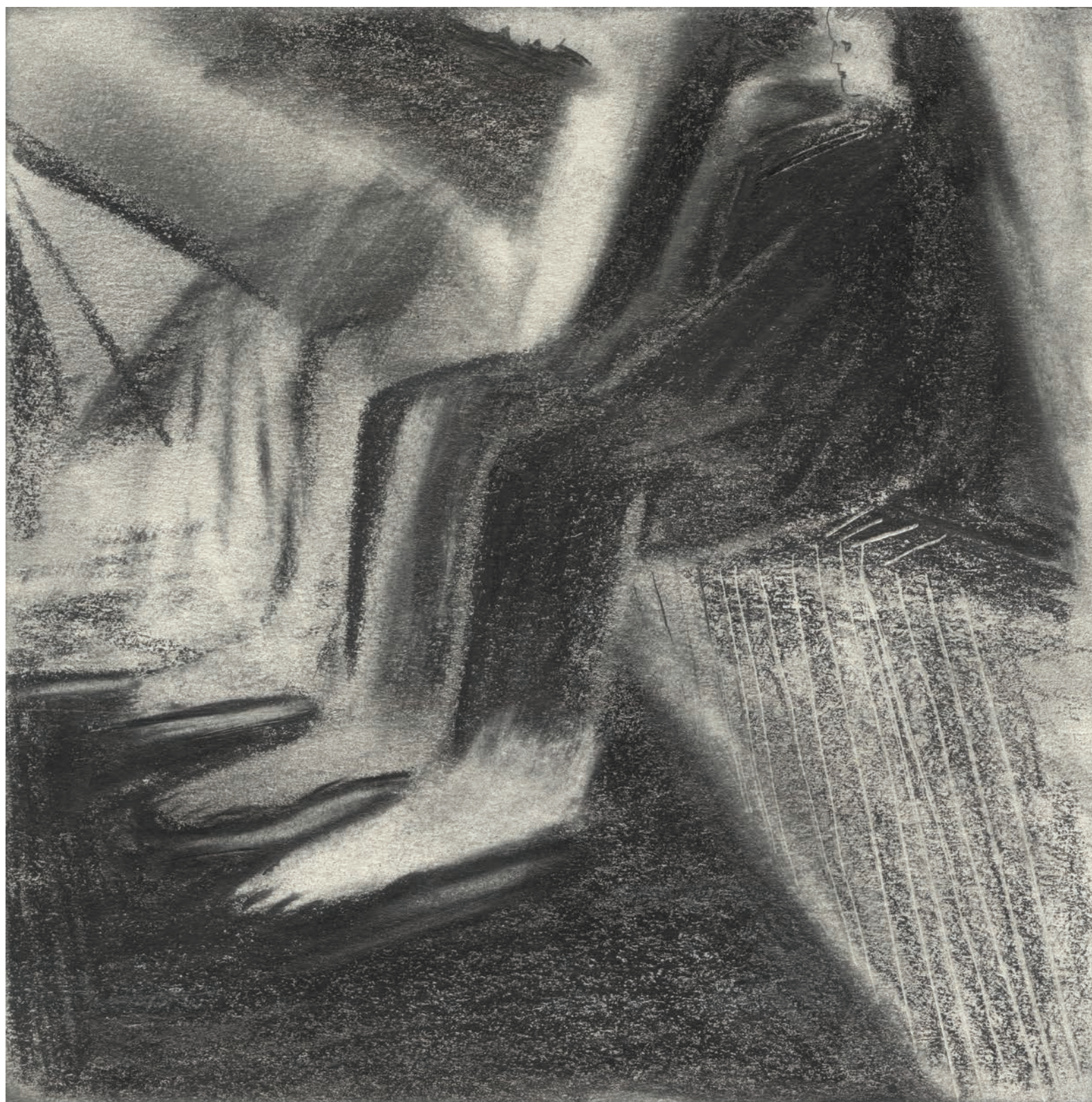
當我們想要擺脫一種感覺，我們其實在強化它。如果把對境、感覺、感官知覺或其他各種體驗當做敵人，它們就會變得更強壯：我們同時在抗拒它、也在向它屈服。我們該怎麼做呢？佛陀提出的方法是：單純的看著我們所有的念頭和感覺，直觀我在生氣、我在嫉妒、我感到疲倦、我感到害怕。

直觀的時候，我們逐漸就注意到，念頭和感覺已經不像它們原本出現時，那樣的固定和堅實。無常也有好處，它告訴我們一切事物都會改變，包括我們的希望和恐懼。

A DRAMA OF OUR OWN MAKING

An excerpt from *Joyful Wisdom*, Chapter 3

Illustration Firenze Lai



Though we tend to assign the cause of our pain to circumstances or conditions, the truth is, it really lies in the way we perceive and interpret our experience as it unfolds, Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche writes

Several years ago I was walking down a street in India, where many of the roads are still paved with stones. I'd set out in a hurry without putting on my sandals – a decision I soon regretted, because the sensation of walking barefoot down a stony road was, to say the least, uncomfortable. Not long afterwards I happened to mention this experience to an Indian doctor.

"Oh, very good!" he replied.

When I asked what he meant, he explained that, according to several ancient medical systems, applying pressure to various points along the soles of the feet stimulated activity in various organs and systems, thus promoting overall health. People who have some familiarity with foot reflexology are aware of the potential benefits associated with the practice, but for me, it was a novel idea. After listening to the doctor's explanation I started going barefoot more often. To my surprise, instead of discomfort I began to feel pleasure in the sensation of stones underfoot.

Why? The stones hadn't changed. My feet hadn't changed. The physical act of walking hadn't changed.

As I thought about it, I realized that the only aspect of the experience that had changed was my perspective. Previously I'd simply assumed that walking on stones would be painful. When the doctor offered a different way of looking at the situation, that alternate possibility opened the way for a transformation of experience.

Although I'd used the same basic principle of shifting my perspective in working with the thoughts and emotions that had troubled me as a child, I hadn't really applied it to very many situations involving physical discomfort. It came as something of a shock to realize how deeply I'd associated my physical body with the idea of "me".

But there was an even more important lesson to be gained from this incident, one that has influenced the way I look at any troubling or uncomfortable situation. If I hadn't felt the discomfort in the first place or if I'd surrendered to it or tried to resolve it in an ordinary way – for instance, by making an effort to remember to put on my sandals every time I left my room – I wouldn't have seen that subtle layer of conditioning.

Since then, I've begun to develop a greater appreciation for those moments in which I experience pain or discomfort. Each one is a seed of deeper understanding, an opportunity to get to know my mind a little bit better, and to observe ideas about myself and the world around me that I didn't even know I had.

I don't mean to suggest that whenever I face a problem or feel irritation or discomfort I put on some sort of Buddhist detective cap and start rummaging through my mind asking, "Hmm, what's the perspective here... What am I not seeing? Oh, there it is! Now let me substitute a new one." That's just a sneaky attempt to get rid of an uncomfortable situation, which ends up reinforcing the habit of seeing challenges as enemies to be conquered or "bosses" to be pacified.

The actual process involves simply staying with the situation and looking at it directly. Approaching experience in this way allows a bit of space to spontaneously open up around it, allowing us to see it in a larger context. If there's a mind that can look at an experience, logically it follows that that mind is larger than the experience itself. In that split second of recognition, it becomes possible to catch a glimpse of the mind's infinite grandeur: to see it, as my father and other teachers described, as an endless ocean in which

each moment of experience is nothing more than one among a series of waves – now rising, now falling – never separate from a limitless expanse.

This glimpse also provides a working basis for comprehending the Second Noble Truth, often translated as the "origin" or "cause" of suffering. Our normal tendency is to assign the cause of suffering to circumstances or conditions. According to the Second Noble Truth, however, the cause of suffering lies not in events or circumstances, but in the way we perceive and interpret our experience as it unfolds.

Our conceptual boxes

As we go about our lives, we depend for the most part on our capacity to make distinctions. Some of them seem very direct and simple: right and left, tall and short, loud and quiet, feet and hands, night and day. Some require a bit more discernment. Is this piece of fruit overripe or not ripe enough? Is this a reasonable price for something or could I find the same thing cheaper at another store? Some require even deeper consideration – an experience I find especially common among parents who wonder whether they're being too harsh or too lenient in disciplining their children, and also among people concerned about angry exchanges or differences of opinion in relationships with their spouses or partners: Did we say what we said or do what we did because we were having a bad day or out of a more deep-seated disagreement? I've also heard questions of a similar sort from those seeking counsel regarding people and events in their workplace. Am I judging this person unsympathetically? Am I working too hard and not taking enough time for myself or my family?

The important thing to bear in mind is that all distinctions are fundamentally relative – ideas, judgments, and sensations are based on comparison.

Left makes sense only in relation to right, night makes sense only in comparison to day, and warm makes sense only in comparison to cold. That's a short course in what is often referred to

in Buddhist teachings as relative reality: a level of experience defined by distinctions.

As I understand through discussions with various scientists, the capacity to make distinctions evolved as a survival tool. There is, inarguably, an advantage to distinguishing, say, between plants or fruits that are poisonous and sources of food that are nourishing. Likewise, it would be quite useful to distinguish between something to eat and something that might eat us!

Human beings respond in complicated ways to this distinction-making process, which may be understood in both biological and psychological terms.

From a strictly biological point of view, any act of perception requires three essential elements: organs of sensation – like the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the skin; an object of sensation – such as, say, a flower; and the capacity to process and respond to the signals we receive from our sense organs. The sense organs, the areas of the brain, and the links that connect them are made up primarily of cells known as neurons. The human brain is made up of billions of neurons, many of which are organized to form structures related to learning, memory, and emotion. The interaction between these structures can be very complicated.

Let's say you're looking at a flower: a red rose, to be specific. That's the object – or what, in scientific terms, is referred to as a stimulus. Now when you look at the rose, the cells in your eye first notice this thing made up of a bunch of red things that are sort of round at the top and sort of pointed at the bottom, where they connect with a long green thing that may have green roundish things poking out of it along with some darker, pointy things. The image is transmitted through a group of cells that constitute a kind of fiber or cord that make up the optic nerve, which sends visual information from the eye to the visual cortex, an area in the brain dedicated to organizing stimuli received through the sense of sight.

Upon receiving this visual stimulus, the visual cortex sends an "instant message" to the area of the brain known as the thalamus, a group of cells located near the very center of the brain,

where many of the messages from the senses are "decoded" before being sent to other areas of the brain. Interestingly, the word thalamus is an ancient Greek term meaning "bedroom" – a place where private conversations are often known to occur.

Once the messages from the visual cortex are passed to the thalamus, they're sent in several directions. One set is sent to the limbic system, a layer of the brain primarily responsible for distinguishing between pain and pleasure, determining emotional responses, and providing a foundation for learning and memory. Two important structures in this area of the brain play particularly significant roles in interpreting these messages and the memories we make of them. One is the amygdala, a small, almond-shaped group of neurons that determine the emotional content of experience. If you were pricked by one of those "dark, pointy things", for example, you may likely respond to that "red thing made up of a bunch of red things" as "bad" or "unpleasant". The other is the hippocampus, which is a kind of storehouse for the spatial and temporal elements of memory. It provides the context or meaning for experience, enabling us to remember, for example, where and when we saw a rose for the first time.

Simultaneously the intimate conversation gathered in the bedroom of the thalamus is passed on to the neocortex, the outermost layer of the brain widely understood by neuroscientists as an area devoted primarily to analytical functions. This is the area of the brain in which we begin to learn how to name things, discern patterns, and formulate concepts – where we define "the red thing made up of a bunch of red things" as a rose. It's also the area that modulates the memories and emotional responses generated in the limbic region, tamping down some and heightening others.

Though lengthy to describe, all of this communication between the thousands of cells that make up our sense organs and the various neuronal structures in the brain occurs in a fraction of a second, less time than it takes to snap our fingers. And the brain responds almost immediately, prompting the release of chemicals like cortisol, adrenaline, dopamine, and endorphins to course through our bodies to slow or speed our heart rate

and shift our mood. At the same time, a series of links is established among sense organs, brain-structures, vital organs, and glands – a kind of instant messaging network that, put very simply, creates an internal "map" of a red rose.

In other words, we're not really seeing the rose itself, but rather a concept of it. This concept is often conditioned by a broad range of factors, including the circumstances surrounding our initial experience, the memories and expectations stored in various parts of the brain, modifications that may occur through later experience – and, perhaps most importantly, the distinction between the experiencer (me) and what is experienced (the rose).

The distinction of "me" as an entity inherently separate from, for example, a rose, is itself an internal image that emerges from the interactions among various neuronal structures and other bodily systems. This image may be quite vague very early in life. As we mature, however, our internalized sense of "me" as something distinct from "not me" becomes more vivid, as do distinctions such as "pleasant" and "unpleasant", and "desirable" and "undesirable". We also distinguish a sort of "neutral" zone, in which we haven't decided how we relate to our experience. Just as some people organize files, papers, photographs, and other things by putting them in different boxes, we arrange our experiences in conceptual "boxes".

From my discussions with people trained in various scientific disciplines, it's clear there are some differences of opinion as to how, when, and why these boxes emerge. There does seem to be some agreement among modern schools of thought, however, that the "me" box begins to develop at birth, when an infant is separated from the body of his or her mother and begins to experience life as an individual being.

Killing butterflies

Centuries before the development of Western science, the Buddha arrived at an understanding that suffering originates in the mind – in the "eye", so to speak, "of the beholder". Though the terms



he used may differ from those of modern-day biologists, neuroscientists, and psychologists, the insights he offered are remarkably similar.

According to the early written presentations of the Buddha's teachings on the Second Noble Truth, *dukkha* arises from a basic mental condition referred to in Pali as *tanha*, or "craving". The students who translated the early Pali transcripts into Sanskrit defined the cause as *trishna*, or "thirst". When the teachings were brought to Tibet, the cause was translated as *dzinpa*, or "grasping".

In their own ways, each of these three terms reflects a fundamental yearning for permanence or stability – or, looked at in another way, an attempt to deny or ignore impermanence. The most basic of these yearnings is the tendency, often described in Buddhist texts as ignorance, to mistake "self", "other", "subject", "object", "good", "bad", and other relative distinctions as independently, inherently existing. On a very simple level, ignorance could be described as thinking that the label on a bottle of hot sauce is the hot sauce.

From the conception of people, places, and things as inherently solid and real arise two similarly powerful urges. The first, commonly referred to as desire, is a craving to acquire or keep whatever we determine as pleasant. The second, known as aversion, is a pull in the opposite direction, to avoid or eliminate things we define as unpleasant.

Collectively, ignorance, desire, and aversion are referred to in Buddhist writings as the "Three Poisons", habits of relating to experience that are so deeply rooted that they cloud or "poison" the mind. Individually and in combination, they give rise to innumerable other attitudes and emotions – for example, pride, perfectionism, low self-esteem, or self-hatred; the jealousy we feel when a coworker gets a promotion we think we deserve; or the lump of grief and hopelessness that overwhelm us when dealing with an ill or aging parent. Accordingly, some Buddhist teachings refer to these attitudes and emotions as "afflictions" or "obscurations", because they limit the ways in which we interpret our experience,

which, in turn, inhibits our potential to think, feel, and act. Once we develop a sense of "me" and "not me", we begin to relate to our experience in terms of "mine" and "not mine"; "what I have" and "what I don't have"; and "what I want" and "what I don't want".

Imagine, for example, that you're driving down the road in your own, worn-out old car, and pass a fancy new car – a Mercedes or a Rolls-Royce – that's just been dented in an accident. You might feel a little sorry for the owner, but you wouldn't necessarily feel any attachment to the car. A few months later, finding yourself in a position to trade in your old car, you visit a used auto lot – and there's a Mercedes or Rolls-Royce available at an incredible price! It's actually the same car you saw dented in an accident a few months earlier, but as soon as you sign the contract, it doesn't matter. The car is yours now – and as you drive it home, a pebble cracks the windshield. Tragedy! My car is ruined. I'm going to have to pay to get it fixed.

It's the same car dented in an accident a few months earlier, and you may not have felt much about it one way or another as you drove by. But now it's your car, and if the windshield is cracked, you experience anger, frustration, and maybe a little fear.

So why not just stop? Why not just let go of the poisons and their "offspring"?

If it were that easy, of course, we'd all be buddhas before we reached the end of this sentence!

According to the Buddha's teachings and commentaries by other masters, the Three Poisons and all the other mental and emotional habits that arise from them are not in themselves the causes of suffering. Rather, suffering arises from attachment to them, which is the closest you can get to the essential meaning of the Tibetan word *dzinpa*. As mentioned earlier, this word is often interpreted as "grasping", but I've also heard it translated as "fixation", which I think captures more closely the deeper significance of the term. *Dzinpa* is an attempt to fix in time and place that which is constantly moving and changing.

"That's like killing butterflies!" a student of mine recently exclaimed.

When I asked her what she meant, she described how some people make a hobby of capturing butterflies, killing them, and pinning their bodies in glass or plastic display cases for the sheer pleasure of looking at their collection or showing them off to their friends.

"Such beautiful, delicate creatures," she said sadly. "They're meant to fly. If they don't fly, they're not really butterflies anymore, are they?"

In a way, she was right. When we become fixed in our perceptions, we lose our ability to fly.

Mirror, mirror

The intensity of suffering caused by strong attachment to a set of beliefs or perceptions was vividly demonstrated to me through an encounter with an elderly woman who came to visit me in the United States a few years back. As soon as she sat down, she started to cry.

"It's okay," I told her. "When you've calmed down, you can tell me what's wrong."

We waited a few moments while she composed herself. Finally she said, "I don't want to be old. When I look in the mirror, I see all these wrinkles and I hate them. I hate them so much, the other day I broke my mirror. So of course I had to go out and buy another one. But when I look in it, all I can see are the wrinkles and it drives me crazy. I get so angry and depressed I don't know what to do."

I have to admit, I was a little surprised by her outburst. My grandmother had had a lot of wrinkles, but I thought they made her face all the more beautiful – so soft and gentle, full of wisdom, and always smiling.

I didn't say this directly, of course. When someone is experiencing pain, probably the worst thing we can do is say something like, "Well, that's just your perception. Change your perception and your experience will change". If one of my teachers had said anything like that to me when I was bound up in my own anxiety and fear, I don't think it would have made any sense to me and I might have ended up feeling more alone and bewildered than I already felt. What I needed during my own

struggles was an understanding that I was facing a dilemma that all people – all living creatures, in one way or another – experience: a profound and penetrating desire to survive, to live and to flourish, and maybe to experience some moments of peace.

I'm grateful to my father and my other teachers for taking me through this process. They urged me to just look at what I was experiencing – and to comprehend through simply looking that thoughts, emotions, judgments, and sensations come and go. In doing so, they brought home in a very practical way the brilliance of the Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths. He could have skipped the Second Noble Truth altogether – going from the first, the Truth of Suffering, to the third, the Truth of Cessation.

Instead, he offered an explanation that would help us to face and work with the causes and conditions that create whatever hardships we experience in this life. At the same time, the Second Noble Truth emphasizes that we are not alone in facing challenges. In one way or another, attachment to our perceptions of who or what we are, what we want or need, and what we don't want or need, is common to all living creatures.

Following the example of my teachers, I began talking to the woman so pained by her wrinkles about impermanence and how it is the basic condition we all face. If we can accept it, then we can actually see that there are some benefits to the changes, overt and subtle, we undergo throughout the course of life.

"When you fixate on what you were like and what you were capable of doing when you were young," I told her, "you won't be able to see some of the advantages to growing old. Think about the things that you can do now that you couldn't do when you were young. Think of the perspective your experience has brought you. You might also remember," I added, "points in your life when you were young and you couldn't wait to be older, to enjoy the opportunities that a wiser, more experienced, and respected person enjoys. If you fixate only on the gross levels of change, you won't see the benefits of the subtler changes. When I was younger, I couldn't wait to get old. I'd be free

to do what I want and be more stable. Nobody could tell me what to do."

A year later, when I was passing through the United States again, she came for another visit. This time, she was relaxed and smiling, and after she sat down, she announced that she hadn't broken any mirrors since our last meeting.

"I realized after our talk," she explained, "that time wasn't my enemy; age wasn't my enemy. My own fixation was my enemy. When I looked in the mirror, all I saw was what I thought other people were seeing – an old woman, unattractive and useless. And I started acting that way too, so of course people started treating me as old and useless. It became a vicious cycle.

"But when I started thinking about the experience I'd gained over the years, I actually started feeling a little proud of my wrinkles. Each one was like a badge of honor, a crisis survived, a test passed. I started looking at other people my age, thinking, 'Yes, we've all gone through a lot. And there's more to come, little changes and big ones'. I won't say I jump out of bed every morning looking forward to the changes. I'm a little old for jumping," she laughed. "But I find myself paying more attention to my life, to the moment, you might say. Because that's all I have, isn't it? The moment. And there's a lot more going on in this one moment than I ever thought."

I was impressed. With very little guidance, this woman had come to terms with the attachment to an idea of herself, the principal cause of the discomfort that underlies so much of human experience. She'd faced it and learned from it, and in so doing gained a deeper appreciation of her life.

That is the essential lesson of the Second Noble Truth. Acknowledging that all conditions are bound to change, we can approach each moment with a bit more clarity and confidence, relaxing into it rather than resisting it or being overwhelmed by it. We don't have to be bossed around by our experiences. Neither do we have to fight or flee from them as "enemies". We have the potential to look at our experiences and recognize, "This is what's happening now, at this moment. The next moment will bring another experience, and the

moment after that will bring another."

Resistance to these moment-by-moment changes is one of the best ways I know to explain in modern terms the fixation which the Buddha and later teachers describe as the cause of the broad range of suffering and discomfort encompassed by the term *dukkha*.

Grasping, fixation, or thirst – however you want to define it – is, in many cases, an instantaneous, often unconscious response to the basic condition of impermanence: what some of my friends who work in the field of psychology might call a "defense mechanism".

Words like "attachment" and "grasping" don't really capture the complexity of the underlying nature of this mechanism, which may best be described as a kind of balancing act between hope and fear: hope that things will either change or stay the same and fear of the same things. Sometimes we're propelled in one direction or another and sometimes we're caught between these two extremes and don't know what to think.

One of the questions I'm asked most frequently in public teachings and private interviews is, "How can I get rid of attachment? How can I get rid of hope and fear?"

The simple answer is, "By not trying".

Why?

Because when we try to get rid of something, we're really just reinforcing hope and fear. If we treat some condition, feeling, sensation, or any other type of experience as an enemy, we only make it stronger: We're resisting and succumbing to it at the same time. The middle way proposed by the Buddha begins by simply looking at whatever it is we're thinking or feeling: I'm angry. I'm jealous. I'm tired. I'm afraid.

As we look, gradually we'll come to notice that thoughts and feelings aren't as fixed or solid as they originally appeared. Impermanence has its advantages. All things change – even our hopes and fears.



鏡子練習

想要觀察瞬間變化的體驗需要練習。下次你經過浴室的鏡子時，站在一個看不見到自己的角度。看著鏡中反射出的影像，牆上的瓷磚、擺設的毛巾等等。然後照鏡子注視鏡中的自己。花一點時間去觀察思維，當你看到鏡中不同的影像時，內心有任何不同的反應嗎？你對於「環境」與「自己」有不同的反應嗎？你可以稍晚或隔天在同一面鏡子前，重複同樣的練習。你是否注意到周遭環境有任何改變？你是否注意到自己有任何改變？你也許發現了一些不同之處。瓷磚已經洗刷過了，或比之前更臟；毛巾或其他物品的擺設稍有不同；最後，當你看著自己時，你也許會注意到一些不同。

這個練習不用持續太久，大約三十秒就夠了。只要去注意內心對這些變化的各種反應，比如「今天比較乾淨」或「我看起來很疲倦」或「我看起來很老」或「我看起來很胖」。無論生起什麼念頭或情緒，都可以幫助你洞察你的偏執和貪著的本質。不要批評或分析你的反應，只是看著它們。這個練習的重點是：甚至最簡單的感官知覺，在開始認知事物的時候，都是帶著概念和情緒的面紗去認識它。

如果我們持續地觀察，就會逐漸更容易區別赤裸裸的感知，以及伴隨著心理和情感因素的感知。然而，認出這些因素的本質，並不是就必須摒棄和去除它。佛陀在第二諦中指出，「自心」會編造體驗，這就是痛苦的成因，他接著帶我們進入第三諦——滅諦。

A MIRROR EXERCISE

Observing minute changes in our experience does take some practice. The next time you pass a bathroom mirror, stand in a way that you don't see your face. Look at the other things reflected there: the tiles on the wall, for example, or the arrangement of towels. Then look at your face. Take a moment to notice any differences in the mental and emotional responses you might experience to what you see in the mirror. Do you notice any differences in the way you respond to the "background" and your reactions to your own face?

If you can, repeat this exercise in front of the same mirror later in the day or perhaps the next day. Do you notice any changes in the background? Do you notice any changes in your own face? Chances are you'll notice some differences. The tiles may have been scrubbed or they may be a little bit more soiled. The towels or other elements of the room may be slightly rearranged. When at last you look at your face, you may notice small differences, as well.

Don't continue this exercise for very long – maybe thirty seconds or so. Just notice any sort of mental or emotional reaction to these changes: "The place looks tidier today", or "I look tired", or "I look old", or "I look fat". Whatever thoughts or emotions come up will provide insight into the particular nature of your own biases and attachments. Don't judge them or try to analyze them. Just look at them. The point of the exercise is to begin to recognize that even the simplest act of sensory perception is invariably accompanied by a veil of thoughts and emotions through which you interpret it.

If we continue looking, we'll gradually find it easier to distinguish between bare perceptions and the mental and emotional factors that accompany them. Recognizing these factors doesn't mean we have to reject or eliminate them, however. In pointing out the role of the mind in shaping our experience, the Second Noble Truth – which represents the second stage of the Buddha's diagnostic approach to the problem of suffering – prepares us for the "prognosis" of the Third.

凡事「很好」

專訪措尼仁波切

翻譯 馮光至 攝影 林偉雄

過去二十多年，措尼仁波切周遊列國，
秉承藏傳佛教傳統，開示心靈的深層本質。
在他的著作《醒了就好》中，他使用了「本質愛」一詞，
描述所有眾生生命本質中的基本幸福感；
此教誨鼓勵了很多學生去探究他們的生命核心，並與之連繫。
本雜誌趁他勾留香港，跟他訪談。

問：在生命中，我們會遇到各種各樣的情況，當中很多是意料之外，又或是我們不喜歡的，但我們卻不得不處理它們。我們如何做到，不管發生甚麼事，都覺得無問題自己可以應付？

答：首先，我們要接受或找到自身生命中的基本幸福感。我稱它作「本質愛」，一種「很好」的感覺。這種感覺是與生俱來的，因此兒童擁有它：一種無憂無慮的感覺，一種自然而然的開放，不用因由而感到很好。但隨著我們長大，我們受了教育，需要承擔責任，便出現了恐懼，因為恐懼可有效地令我們承擔責任。大人對我們說：「你必須努力讀書。若不努力讀書，你便可能找不到工作，並可能最終流落街頭。」又或：「若你不負責任，事情便會出錯。」這樣的信息一次又一次重複，而經過千千百百次的重複後，它便變成了心靈的習性。這種基本恐懼便掩蓋了我們的本質愛。因此我們不再感到「很好」，而是覺得事情不好，我們並且害怕會有壞事出現。這種恐懼本來是有用的——例如當我們要努力讀書時。但它現在不再有用。因此，當恐懼不再有價值時，我們需要覺察到它；並透過覺知（即正念）或洞察，把那份恐

懼「打開」。我們會由於那份沒有價值的恐懼而反應過敏，但很多人都察覺不到，因而過分認真。這樣，我們會變得很不快樂，因為一切都給恐懼操縱著。若你習禪，當這種恐懼出現時，你便會立即察覺到它。不單如此，你還可以告訴自己：「噢，我反應過敏了。」這樣，你對這份恐懼便有一份了解，一份覺知。這個過程令我們得以把這份恐懼「打開」，剩下的只是有益的恐懼，而這對維持生命是重要而有用的。但當我們對這份恐懼反應過敏，它便會變成障礙。

這份了解便成為了基礎所在，而認知到這個基礎是首要而重要的。接著，我們需要懂得如何遊樂。生命無疑充滿考驗，但每個困難都是改善自己的機會。假若沒有考驗，便不會有改善，這便表示你的生命永遠停滯不前。每個困難都有解決方法，而方法可以是內在或外在的。有些困難，解決方法就是接受。若我們不願意接受，我們便會進退兩難；而我們進退兩難時，便會不知所措，無法恰當地扮演生命中的種種角色。

因此這兒有兩個步驟。首先，我們要與本

質愛連繫，明白到恐懼必須是有價值的，而並非不必要的。然後，我們在萬象中遊樂：我們歡迎萬象，每個困難都是很好的。

問：這聽來像跳舞。我們一旦找到平衡，我們便能起舞。

答：不錯。正常的恐懼是生存的基本機制，危險來臨時，我們要麼迎戰，要麼逃走，否則我們便會不知所措，進退維谷。極度恐懼則會導致困難出現，而解決方法是我們看到自己的習性。每次出現反應，我們便察覺到：「噢，我反應過敏了」，然後我們去探究它，我們提醒自己。現象是基本的，而每個現象都有因，也會導致反應。當我們以同一個方式反應很多很多次，反應本身便變成了第二重的因，並會被其他事物所激發。我們與其把注意力集中於因，倒不如調節反應，而佛法可有效幫助我們。

初因出現時，我們的即時反應是自然產生的。舉個例子，你去打仗，心靈受到創傷，此創傷便成為了一個因。在戰場發生的一些事，在你心靈中留下烙印，並會因某些緣出現而受到激發。我們害怕那些激發心靈創傷的緣，因而開始歸咎於那些緣。最

初的事件發生在伊拉克，但現在你去看一齣戰爭片，你想起了發生過甚麼事。你的處境不同了，但經過一段時間後，假若你不斷想著「戲院是不好的」，那它便會成為了第二重的因。現在，你每次看一齣戰爭片，便會經歷一次心靈創傷。我們的感覺並不知道初因與激發事件的分別。我們的理智了解箇中分別，但當心靈創傷令我們透不過氣，理智便無能為力。因此，佛法幫助我們處理我們的反應。每次心靈創傷被激發，我們便覺知到這份經驗。我們心存正念，我們以愛擁抱創傷，我們對創傷慈悲，因為創傷需要愛與了解，它需要我們去感受它。因此，每次有反應出現，我們學習不要反應過敏。慢慢地，原有的心靈創傷便會萎縮。

問：有時候，若有些我不喜歡的情緒出現，我便會嘗試做其他事來分散自己的注意，例如看電視。

答：若你有勇氣去面對自己的情緒，它下次出現時，便不再不可知。若你看電視，這份情緒依然不可知，而不可知的東西是可怕的。若你嘗試了解它，它便會變得沒那麼可怕。例如：如果你犯了一個錯誤，它導致你的父親非常憤怒。你或者選擇避開他，但這不是解決的辦法。如果你有膽量面對他，也許第一次他會大罵你，但最終你會解決到問題。

問：若事情變得太困難，我們往往會走開，我們想與它切割。其實有時可否選擇逃避？

答：這要視乎情況有多危險。假若非常危險的話，那麼，你不得不暫時走開，與之切割。但不要任何事都這樣做。否則，你便會把自己隔離了。這種逃避問題的方式，是你無法貫徹始終的。因此，最佳方法是面對它。這並不表示我們要沉醉其中，對情緒上的習性尤其不能如此。所謂面對它，是指你覺知它，感受它。你要與它同在，直

到它「打開」。只要你不反應過敏，那個情緒便會打開。當我們不再反應過敏，我們便能讓那份感覺有機會和時間去打開；而一旦它打開，一切都會轉變。問題在於我們沒有給予事物機會，讓它們改變。就像在爭論中，若你不斷說話，另一方就沒機會說話。即使那個人想道歉，你也不讓他有機會道歉！停下來一會，讓那個人有機會表達他自己吧。若我們爭論，兩個人都在說話；但最終我明白我必須放鬆，與你同在，而並非逃避。換句話，我要聆聽。這不表示我同意你，但我聆聽。經過十分鐘或不管需時多久，你會說完你想說的話，然後你的心靈便會打開。但我要受苦十分鐘，而我必須有勇氣才能這樣受苦。當恐懼來到，讓我們覺知恐懼吧，讓我們與恐懼同在吧。慢慢地，恐懼便會打開，它便會枯竭耗盡。

問：在甚麼情況下，這份「很好」的感覺會對我們有幫助？

答：我們遇到困難時，感到「很好」並非表示我們解決了困難，更不表示我們不再有困難。它的意思是：假若有困難，我覺得很好；而假若沒困難，我也覺得很好。假若事情艱難，很好；而假若事情不艱難，也很好。我們一旦擁有本質愛，誤會便很難出現。誤會可能會在溝通中出現，但假若我們擁有本質愛，便不會有任何困難。生命就是生命——當中有難料之事，有希望與恐懼，有幸有不幸。這是我們無法控制的。而有時我們會犯錯——這些事也會發生。但當它們發生，還是很好的。當我們遇到一些困難，我們的一部分——比方說百分之六十吧——會處理它；但我們的其餘部分——百分之三十或四十吧——依然感到很好。這樣，我們處理困難時便容易得多。這並非說，只要我們擁有本質愛，困難便不會出現。這只是魔法，而本質愛並不擁有這樣的魔法。但本質愛給予你力量去解決困難。假若你強壯，任何困難都

沒那麼容易傷害你，而你也更有力量去快捷和有效地解決困難。我們也應當學習欣賞我們所擁有的；因為若我們不滿足於現狀，便無法開創未來。

問：生命有時像例行公事——同樣的一份工作，同樣的一輛車，同樣的一堆困難。你提到欣賞生命。但我們要如何提醒自己生命是歷久常新的？

答：我們可以從兩方面去考慮——身體和心靈。首先是身體。試幻想你前去高山的偏遠地區，那兒沒有淋浴，沒有廁所，天氣寒冷，而且你要赤腳。你在那兒住了兩星期，然後返回香港，而這裏吃得很好，有熱水淋浴，有溫暖睡牀。你的身體感激這一切，你感到很快樂。但這種身體上的感激可能不會持續很久，因為它會變得平常。這時候，你需要智慧。你需要一顆明智的心去明白：「哇，基本生活真棒。只要走數步，我便能享用一個運作正常的廁所。」你不斷提醒自己這些善緣。你身體的感覺並不會告訴你這些，但你的心靈可以提醒你。若我們想立即感覺好一點，我們每次感到不滿足時，便可以買一張更好的牀、更好的屋。當我們得到另一個層面的滿足，我們的身體會感到好一點；但過了一陣子——兩個月，或一年——感覺便會改變。你也知道，這是永無止境的。佛陀教導，我們要學習知足。這並不表示我們必須將就，物慾不能多，意思其實是珍惜我們擁有的。這也不表示我們必須停止改善未來的境況。當我們感到滿足，我們依然可以想要更多。但首先，我們明白到我們此時此地擁有的已很好，而我們是快樂的。我們需要智慧去教導我們的心靈。

措尼仁波切於11月底至12月初將會到香港弘法，活動包括仁波切的新書《愛與微細身》發佈會，主題為「微細身」的公眾講座，以及為期三天的「立斷」(trekcho)閉關

WORKING WITH 'OKAYNESS'

An interview with Tsoknyi Rinpoche

For more than 20 years, Tsoknyi Rinpoche has taught tirelessly around the world on the innermost nature of mind in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. His teaching about "essence love" – a term he uses in his book *Open Heart, Open Mind* to refer to the feeling of basic well-being in all of us – has encouraged many students to explore and connect with their innermost being. The *Joy of Living* magazine spoke to him on one of his trips to Hong Kong.

Q: In life, we meet with all kinds of situations, many of which are unexpected or unpleasant. Yet we must deal with them. How can we cultivate a feeling that "It's OK", whatever may come?

A: First, we have to acknowledge or find the basic well-being that is within us. I call it "essence love", a feeling of "okayness". This is a feeling we are born with. Young children have it: a carefree feeling, a spontaneous openness, a feeling of being OK without reason. But as we grow older, we get an education and become responsible, and with that comes fear. Fear is effective in making us responsible. We're told, "You must study. If you don't study, you might not get a job and might end up on the streets"; or "If you are not responsible, things will go wrong". This message is repeated again and again. Over hundreds and thousands of repetitions, this becomes our habit of mind. This fundamental fear covers up our essence love. So instead of "okayness", we feel things are not OK, and we fear something bad will happen. This fear was useful before – for example, when we were studying. But it's not useful now. Yet it continues to play an important role in our lives. So we need to be aware of the fear that is no longer relevant, and "open up" that fear through awareness, or mindfulness, and through insight. We learn to see, "Oh, I am reacting". And we learn that the source of our reaction is this irrelevant fear. Many people are not aware of this, and they take the whole experience very seriously. Then life becomes very miserable; we're always fear-oriented.

As a meditation practitioner, as soon as this fear happens, you're aware of it. Not only that, but you can teach yourself to see, "Oh, I am overreacting". In this way, you gain understanding plus awareness of the fear. Through this process we "open up" the fear, so that what remains is healthy fear, which is important: healthy fear is useful to maintain life. But when we overreact to the fear, it becomes an obstacle.

This understanding is the ground. So, first, it is important to know the ground. The second part is, we need to know how to play. Of course life is challenging, but every difficulty represents a beginning for improvement. If there's no challenge, there's no improvement; this means you stay in the same old condition. Every difficulty has a solution. The solution can be external or internal. For some problems, the solution is acceptance. Once we accept, there's the solution. When people don't want to accept, they're stuck. And when we're stuck, we become frozen and can't play our roles in life properly. So there are two steps. First, we connect with essence love and understand that fear is useful only when it's the relevant, healthy sort. Then we play with phenomena; we welcome them. Every difficulty is OK.

Q: This sounds like dancing. Once we have balance, we can dance.

A: Yes. Healthy fear is a basic mechanism for survival. That's how our brains act. When danger comes to us, we either fight or flee, or we are frozen because we don't know what to

do. Extreme fear is the problem. The solution is for us to see that we have a habitual pattern. Every time a reaction comes, we are aware: "Oh, I am reacting", and we look into it. So we teach ourselves. There are basic phenomena, and there's cause and reaction. If we react many, many times in the same way, then the reaction itself becomes a secondary cause, and can be triggered by other things. Buddhism plays an important role in helping us to work with the reaction, instead of focusing on the cause.

A reaction to the initial cause is automatic. For example, you go to a war and you become traumatised. The trauma becomes a cause. Some things that happened there were imprinted in you, and can be triggered again by external conditions. So we are afraid of the conditions that will trigger the trauma of the original event, and gradually we start to blame those conditions. The original event happened in Iraq. But now you go to see a war movie and it reminds you of what happened. You're in a different situation, but, over time, if you repeatedly think "the cinema is no good", then that becomes a secondary cause. Now every time you watch a war movie, you re-experience the trauma. Our feelings do not know the difference between the original cause and the trigger. The mind understands the difference, but the mind does not have the power to resist when trauma overwhelms us. So Buddhist teachings help us to work on the reaction. Every time the trauma is triggered, we are aware of the experience, we are mindful. We hold the trauma lovingly, we're

kind to the trauma, because trauma needs love and understanding. So every time the reaction comes, we learn not to overreact. Slowly, the original trauma shrinks.

Q: Sometimes when I have emotions that I don't like, I will try to distract myself by doing something, like watching TV.

A: If you have the guts to face your emotion, the next time it comes, then it's no longer an unknown. If you watch TV, the emotion remains an unknown, and the unknown is scary. If you get to know it, it is less scary. For example, if you make a mistake that makes your father very angry, you may choose to avoid him. But that is not a solution. If you have the guts to face him, maybe he will scold you at first, but eventually, you will resolve the problem.

Q: When some things become too difficult, we have a tendency to disengage. We want to cut ourselves off. Is it OK, too, to refuse to engage?

A: It depends on how dangerous the situation is. If it is very dangerous, then, yes, you have to run away and disconnect yourself for a while. But don't do this for everything. Otherwise, you will isolate yourself. It's a form of running away from the problem, which in the end you cannot do. So the best option is to face the problem. This doesn't mean indulging it, especially if it's an emotional habit. Facing the problem means you have to be aware of it and feel it. You have to stay with it until it opens up, which happens when you don't react to it. When we stop reacting, we give the feeling the chance and the time to open up. Once that happens, everything changes. The problem is we do not allow the feeling to change. As in an argument, when you keep talking, the other person has no chance to talk. You don't even give the person a chance to say sorry! Stop for a while and allow that person to express himself. If we

argue, both are talking; but finally I realise I have to relax and be with you, not run away. That means I listen. I am not agreeing with you, but I listen. After 10 minutes (there's no way you will continue talking indefinitely, because of impermanence), you will finish what you want to say. Then you open up. But I suffer for 10 minutes, and I have to have the guts to suffer that. When fear comes, be aware of the fear, and be with the fear. Slowly, the fear will open up, and it will be exhausted.

Q: In what situations can this feeling of "okayness" be helpful?

A: There's a feeling of "speediness", of having not enough time, inside us. Then we overreact. The problem is not the actual speed; the "speediness" is the "extra speed" we feel inside. Having this "okayness" does not mean we solve the problem, or even that we will have no problems. It means if there's a problem, I'm OK; if there's no problem, I am also OK. When things are difficult, it's OK; when things are not difficult, that's OK too. Once we have essence love, there will be little opportunity for misunderstanding. Misunderstandings can happen in communication, but if we have essence love, then there is no difficulty at all. Life is life – there's uncertainty, hope and fear, fortune and misfortune. It's out of our control. And sometimes we make mistakes – these things happen. And when they happen, it's OK. When we meet with some difficulty, part of us, say 60 per cent, will be handling it, but the rest of us, 30 and 40 per cent, is still OK. With this feeling of "okayness", we will handle the problem much better.

It's not as if problems will not come when you have essence love. That would be magic. Essence love doesn't have this magic. But essence love gives you strength to solve problems. When you are strong, any difficulty that comes will hurt you less, and you have the strength to solve the problem faster and more effectively. We should also learn to

appreciate what we have now. When we are not satisfied now, we are not inspired about the future.

Q: Life feels like a routine sometimes – same job, same car, same problems. You talked about appreciating life. How do we remind ourselves that life is fresh?

A: We look at this in two ways – bodily and mentally. First, the body. Imagine you go to a remote area high in the mountains – there's no shower, no toilet; it's cold and you are barefoot. You spend two weeks there, then come back to Hong Kong, where there's good food, hot shower, a warm bed. Your body appreciates this, and you are so happy. But this bodily appreciation may not last very long; it gets old and becomes normal. At this point, you need wisdom. You need an intelligent mind to know, "Wow, basic survival is so great. Just a few steps away I have a toilet that runs properly". In your mind, you remind yourself that these are good conditions. Your feelings in the body are not telling you this, but your mind can remind you of it. If we want to feel better immediately, we get a better bed, a better house, each time we become dissatisfied. When we reach the next level, the body feels better, but after a while – two months, one year – the feelings change. There's no end, you know. In the Buddha's teaching, we learn to be content. It doesn't mean always making do with less; it means appreciating what we have. It doesn't mean you should stop looking for something better in the future. When we are contented, we can still look for more. But first we recognise that what we have, here and now, is so good, and we are happy. We need wisdom to teach our heart.

Tsoknyi Rinpoche will give a series of teachings in Hong Kong from the end of November to early December this year, including a public talk on subtle body and a three-day retreat on trekcho

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GETTING TO KNOW OUR TRUE NATURE:
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JOY OF LIVING
MEDITATION PRACTICE

攝影 雅子 Photography by Bema Orser Dorje

9.19 | 一 |

地點——保良局賽馬會大棠渡假村
時間——上午9:30-12:30

由禪修大師詠給·明就仁波切親自指導，
此工作坊是一個難得的機會，
讓禪修初學者體驗禪修，認識本具的覺知，
學會在城市生活的步伐中，仍然保持身心的放鬆。
任何宗教背景的人士，都一律歡迎。

Sept 19 | Mon |

Venue: Po Leung Kuk Jockey Club Tai Tong Holiday Camp
Time: 9:30am-12:30pm

Open to those who are new to meditation, this workshop is a rare opportunity to learn from a great master of our time.
The Joy of Living is a path of meditation created by Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche that welcomes people of all religious backgrounds.
Through meditation, we discover the gift of our timeless awareness, and learn how a sense of ease is possible even amid the pace and pressures of urban living.

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