



静心学堂 丛书

The Mindful Peace Academy Collection

中英双语 Chinese-English Edition

正念禅修十要素

The Ten Key Elements of Mindfulness Meditation



济群法师 / 著
Master Jiqun

大千出版社



【静心学堂丛书】

文化篇

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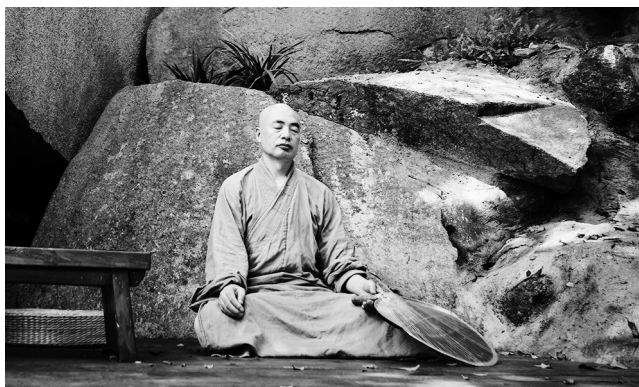
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最近，禅茶专项要制定初级茶人的认证标准，包括技法认证和心法认证。技法认证相对简明，而心法本身就很抽象，认证起来比较困难。

其中最难的是如何对心法建立清晰的标准。我想到了自检。心法能够自检，是因为心有自知之明，正如佛教界讲的“有道无道，自己知道”。修行人一般也不会刻意对自己弄虚作假。当然，自检只是心法认证的一部分，评审义工还会提问，并提供分享与交流。

在我们的整个修学系统中，八三、正念、利他三种禅修素养，是法脉传承的核心，也是海外静心使者，尤其是海外辅导员必备的素养。因此，建立正念禅修自检标准，也是海外辅导员、静心使者心法认证的共

同需求。

在三级正念禅修中，初级和中级有十个共同的要素。其中，基础要素有三个，即发心、简朴有序的生活、热忱；止禅要素有三个，即所缘、作意、专注力；观禅要素有四个，即觉知力、接纳、不评判、正见。对于我们所提供的多个正念禅修项目而言，无论修习哪个项目，十要素都是训练的抓手，也是检测的指标。

我们设置心法认证，并不是为了让大家来考张证书。参加认证是一次了解自己的机会，是学习交流的机会，更是心行成长的机会。通过认证，能了解自己修行的现状，哪些要素训练薄弱，哪些比较好，哪些有待加强。

因此，围绕心法自检与认证，大家不仅要对照十要素建立正确认识，而且要掌握每个要素的训练方法。这两天我做了些思考，今天分享给大家。

一、基础三要素

我们提倡把正念运用到生活中
但一开始就要做到每天二十四小时
都在正念中是不现实的
不妨先挑两三件简单的日常事务
在做这几件事时训练正念
待正念的力量增强
再逐步拓展到其他生活环节
最后让正念占据每个当下

1. 第一个要素：发心

对发心的认识，包括两个方面：一是认识正念的利益，明确自己为什么修正念；二是对正念的信心有多大。

正念到底有什么用，能让它风靡全球？简单地说，其价值体现在两个层面：一是现实利益，一是究竟利益。

世间人修正念，多半追求它的现实利益，比如减压、减痛，提升专注力，治疗心理疾病，开启灵感，增进身心健康——我们的正念身体扫描就有这个功效。

而佛陀设立的正念，属于八正道之一，导向究竟

利益，即解脱生死轮回，走向生命觉醒。正念的核心价值是觉知，而觉知是开启觉性的钥匙，是通往觉醒的最佳途径。可以说，正念是佛陀为众生指出的最直接、最易行的法门。修正念不仅能让自己觉醒，对于大乘学人而言，还能通过正念帮助更多人走向觉醒。至于现实利益，只是它附带的价值。

所以，当我们修正念时，要问问自己：我到底为了什么而修正念？对自己的发心做个检视。

如果是为某种现实利益，这种发心是增上善心。如果仅仅为了自己觉醒解脱，发的是出离心，是小乘解脱道的发心。如果还希望通过正念带领无量无边的众生走向觉醒解脱，发的则是菩提心，是大乘菩萨道的发心。每一次审视自己的发心，就是在明确我们正念禅修的动机、目标和方向。

认识到正念禅修的价值，还要进一步问问自己：我有没有强大的信心？

在禅修中，信心特别重要，没有信心，发心就没有力量。《瑜伽师地论》中讲，发心以“希求”为特征，是一种希望得到的心，是一种“欲”，就像世间

人想买车买房，想成家立业一样。佛法认为“欲”通三性。“通过正念让身心健康”或“通过正念走向觉醒解脱”，也是一种希求心，但它是善法欲，即善的需求。除了善法欲，还有中性和不善的欲。中性的欲不涉及善恶之分，不善的欲则与恶行相关。显然，对通过正念禅修获得善行乐果越有信心，发心的动力自然越强。

修习正念时，既要如实认识自己的发心，也要如法调整自己的发心。

2. 第二个要素：简朴有序的生活

第二个要素，是简朴有序的生活，即简单、朴素、有序、道德的生活。

很多人认为禅修是一种训练用心的技术，与日常生活能有什么关系？

佛法的修行不外乎戒、定、慧，又称“三无漏学”，是三种导向觉醒与解脱的学问。由戒生定、由定发慧，显示了戒律、禅修和开发智慧之间的关系。

其中，戒代表修行需要过一种健康的生活，即简单、朴素、有序、道德的生活。

心念是相似相续的，心念的延续来自日常的生活和行为。凡夫的特点是心随境转，生活混乱必定带来内心混乱。《阿含经》讲“戒清净则心清净”，座下生活简单、朴素，座上才容易让心清净。如果禅修时总在牵挂纠结，止不住胡思乱想，放不下爱恨情仇，坐都坐不住，还怎么修得好？

有序的生活也很重要。现代人最大的特点是生活混乱无序，大量时间都在做无意义的事，浪费生命，身不由己。因此，管理心念应当从管理生活开始，最好给自己制订作息表，建立简单有序的生活。

戒的作用是无悔。持戒会让行为没有过失，避免造成后悔，无悔就可以坦然地生活，所谓“君子坦荡荡”。

戒律清净了，生活才能清净；生活清净了，心才会更清净；心清净了，禅修自然更容易得力。所以，通过持戒，过简单、朴素、有序、道德的清净生活，是正念禅修必不可少的前提。

3. 第三个要素：热忱

热忱，即对正念禅修的热情。

我们对禅修到底有没有热情？是每天例行公事、敷衍了事，还是很有趣，法喜充满，每次禅修都是对心灵的净化？如果没有正确的方法，不善用心，禅修就会很辛苦。

当然，热忱也不是从天上掉下来的，而是有它自己的因缘因果。如何对禅修始终保有热忱？首先，需要认识禅修的意义。

如果身边有人因为坚持禅修而发生明显改变，就像基督教所说的“见证”一样，我们对禅修的热忱会受到极大的鼓舞。当然，基督教见证的是主给予的恩赐、神迹与荣耀，而我们“见证”的是践行佛法后由内而外的整体改观，它直接表现为观念、心态和生命品质的良性改变，间接体现在人际关系好转、身心疾病得到疗愈等。真实的案例就像榜样，能激发我们对禅修的信心、热忱和动力。

其次，学会正确的用心方法。

很多人刚学禅修时信心十足，欢喜踊跃。但是如果因为没有掌握用心方法，不仅会劳而无功，还可能南辕北辙，越勇猛越迷茫。禅修方法不对，迟迟没有受益，就会越修越没有信心，走不下去。禅修是在复杂的心灵迷宫找回归路，需要正确的方法，需要善知识的引领，需要明确修行所能达成的结果。

很多人误解了佛法讲的“无所得”，以为是说修行不讲结果。其实，“无所得”不是没有结果，而是有结果也能不执著结果。更重要的是，佛教的因果观，揭示的是“如是因，如是果”，如果修行方法正确，一定能得到相应的结果。这个原理对谁都适用，每个人都可以学习禅修方法，通过实践亲自体验相应的成果。另外，无所得还代表体悟空性的境界。因为体悟空性意味着超越能与所，成就无所得的智慧。

因此，我们要经常问问自己：我禅修的方法到底正确不正确？我们倡导的三级正念禅修，用心方法既简单，又容易操作，修起来并不难。只要每次都坚持使用正确的方法，就一定能得到相应的结果。

第三，持续重复训练。

学会了正确方法，就要持续进行重复训练。修行一方面要摆脱无始以来的串习，另一方面要通过禅修培养专注力和觉知力，改变轮回的用心习惯。如果说简朴有序的生活代表生活方式的改变，那么，如法修习正念则代表用心方式的改变。无论是舍弃旧串习，还是建立新习惯，都离不开持续的重复、足量的训练。每种心理的形成都是如此，培养新的用心方式也不例外：只有不断重复，才能不断熟悉；只有不断熟悉，正念的力量才能逐步增长，这样就能时时尝到禅修的乐趣、改变的欢喜。

有效禅修要讲究方式方法。一方面，要重视质量。很多人追求禅修时间越久越好，每天非得坐够多长时间不可，比如半小时、一小时、两小时，或三小时，不断加码，结果越坐越痛苦，甚至想起打坐就害怕。其实，禅修重在质量。质量有了保障，再来增加数量。尤其刚学禅修的时候，要像病人一样少吃多餐。刚开始每座少坐一会儿，五分钟、十分钟都可以，重要的是保证这五分钟、十分钟都是有质量的，而不是端坐一小时，其中五十分钟都是无用功。也不要熬到坐不

住才下座，要留有余趣。在保证质量的基础上，每天多安排几座，养成良好的习惯。最好制订一个时间表，留出固定的禅修时间，安排好每天坐几座、每次多长时间，再逐步增加时间。

另一方面，要在生活中有规划地拓展正念的实践，让正念逐步占领整个生活。我们提倡把正念运用到生活中，但一开始就要做到每天二十四小时都在正念中是不现实的。不妨先挑两三件简单的日常事务，在做这几件事时训练正念。待正念的力量增强，再逐步拓展到其他生活环节，最后让正念占据每个当下。

古代的大德们为什么能把禅修和生活打成一片？因为他们生活简单，每天所做的无非是搬柴运水、穿衣吃饭。随着修行提升，有些祖师大德才会去红尘中历境练心。今天的人普遍生活忙乱，修行环境之难，何止超过古人百倍千倍。要想保持禅修热情，不借助一定的方便善巧，确实难以做到。

二、止禅三要素

禅修必须选个所缘吗

没有行不行

这取决于禅修的阶段性目标和需要

初级正念禅修一定要有固定的所缘

到了中级，所缘可以不再固定

而高级阶段则不再需要所缘

直接体会本心，安住本心

前面三个属于正念禅修的基础元素。正式进入止观禅修后，止禅有三个要素，观禅有四个要素。

1. 第四个要素：所缘

正念禅修在初级阶段，需要选择一个所缘的对象。因为禅修必须突破昏沉和散乱，需要借助一定的所缘才能突出重围。

散乱，经常与掉举并提。虽然《百法》将其分为两种心所，但掉举也可以视为散乱的一种。二者的不同在于，散乱是指心四处游窜，东一下西一下，无法止于一处，而掉举则是指心兴奋动荡。掉，是摇摆不

定，动荡不安；举，是高高举起，无法沉静。比如想起激动的事、见到久别的人、听到开心的消息，心容易兴奋不已，浮想联翩，这就是掉举。昏沉，是指心变得昏昧不明，类似睡觉一样。当然，睡觉比昏沉严重，完全丧失觉知，而轻度昏沉还有一定的清醒。总之，昏沉就是心进入昏昧不清的状态。

在禅修中克服昏沉和散乱是有难度的，因为散乱昏沉已经是我们的习惯，我们的心每天都在不停地到处游荡。如何改变这种用心串习？《牧牛图》的办法是，先让牛不乱跑。所以要找根柱子作为锚点，绑紧牛鼻绳，起到固定作用。正念禅修中的所缘，就是所选的“柱子”，其作用是让心不要乱跑，以此训练专注力。

选择什么样的对象作为所缘，有一定的讲究。虽说我们提倡“把正念融入每个当下”，最好能随时随地把生活变成禅修，但做起来并不容易。尤其在起步阶段，对很多对境还无力招架的时候，必须选择善所缘作为锚点。所谓善所缘，就是有利于禅修、比较好用、容易让心安住的对境。它必须既不能引发强烈的

粘著，也不能引发强烈的厌恶，所以一般选择呼吸、行走等中性对象，不仅简单、日常、随时能用，而且不易执著——一般人不太会对自己的呼吸、步伐产生执著。选择这样的所缘，有助于在禅修中培养专注力。

禅修必须选个所缘吗？没有行不行？这取决于禅修的阶段性目标和需要。初级正念禅修一定要有固定的所缘，到了中级，所缘可以不再固定，而高级阶段则不再需要所缘，直接体会本心，安住本心。

所以，三级正念禅修的推进次第，是从正念禅修到无念禅修，从有所缘到无所缘，从有对境到无对境，从有锚点到无锚点。不管是禅茶，还是其他正念禅修项目，在初级正念禅修阶段，一定都要选择所缘、设立锚点。

2. 第五个要素：作意

作意是一种什么样的心理？为什么正念禅修十要素里必须有作意？

《百法》讲每一种法，都会讲到它的体和用。其

中，对“作意”的定义是“警觉为性，引心令趣自境为业”。“警觉”是它的体，让心保持警觉；“引心令趣自境为业”是讲它的用，就是把心引向指定的目标。

在日常生活中，警觉并非总是在线，比如陷入妄想时就没有警觉了。但遇到特定情况，如走在陡峭的路上，或者进入很多蛇的地方，心会本能地高度警觉，不敢胡思乱想。可见，警觉能让人把心提起来，不再散乱游荡，这样专注力容易生起。有了警觉的基础，就能特别专注地看清脚边有没有蛇，特别专注地走好脚下的每一步。如果没有作意，走路心不在焉，踩到什么都不知道。

认识到作意的特征和作用，就会明白，禅修中特别需要用好作意。

一方面，作意可以对治散乱。因为心在高度警觉的时候，就不会陷入散乱的状态。

我曾经在引导禅修时，让大家观想自己坐在二米高的柱子顶端打坐，还敢不敢打瞌睡？敢不敢打妄想？敢不敢散乱掉举？这时候你会变得高度警觉。带着高度的警觉来禅修，心就不容易落入散乱。

同时，因为有了警觉，会更容易修专注力。比如以走路为锚点，或者以呼吸为锚点时，我们把心引向这个锚点，这就是作意的作用。但人的专注力是有限的，持续专注时间久了，心慢慢会跑走，需要再次提起警觉，把心带回到锚点。心一次一次跑走，进入散乱的状态，就一次次用警觉把它带回来。止的修行就是不断做这样的训练。

因为有警觉力，有觉知力，当心跑走了，我们才有能力发现它跑了。否则，我们根本没有能力发现心跑走了。觉知力越强，心跑走的时候，能觉知到它跑了的速度就越快。如果缺少训练，可能在妄想里跑了三天三夜，你都不知道自己干什么。

可见，作意有助于摆脱散乱。

另一方面，作意有助于摆脱昏沉。因为作意里有警觉，只要提起警觉，就能走出昏沉，摆脱昏昧不清的状态。警觉跟觉知有关，它本身也是觉知的一种作用。通过作意摆脱昏沉，就可以继续把心带回所缘。

在止的修行里，所缘和作意都是不可缺少的助缘。选择一个所缘之后，需要不断地借助作意的力量，才

能摆脱散乱和昏沉，一次次把心带回所缘，以此完成专注力的训练。

可能有人会问，禅修一定要使用作意吗？

在我们的三级正念禅修中，初级阶段一定要使用作意。因为这个阶段选择的是外在的锚点，必须通过作意力才能让心专注在所缘上。

中级禅修阶段要拓展觉知，所缘境会不断变化。比如，一会儿在走路，一会儿在吃饭，过一会儿在跟人说话，面对不断变化的所缘境，需要更稳定的觉知力。这就需要在生活中训练觉知，带着觉知吃饭，带着觉知走路，带着觉知做每一件事。

觉知力的产生跟警觉力有关，所以中级禅修也需要用好作意的警觉力，才能在生活中随时随地保有觉知。没有觉知的时候，要通过警觉力把觉知提起来。心散乱掉举，被妄想带走了，就再次通过警觉力把觉知提起来。中级正念禅修同样需要使用作意，与初级不同的是，中级更强调使用警觉力助力拓展觉知，对指向固定所缘的要求可以弱一些。

高级正念禅修则要放下警觉，放下觉知，所以无

须作意，也无须设立所缘。高级禅修的目的是要体会本心，体会原本具足的、清明的心。这个清明的心一直都在，我们要做的只是单纯地体会它，认识它，认识之后不断地熟悉它。清明的心不是一个特定的对象，所以不需要用任何心；它也没有焦点，所以也不需要警觉。有警觉反而会进入意识层面。所以，到高级禅修阶段，要放下作意，放下所缘，才有能力更好地体会到这个清明、无作的心。

总之，禅修分有作和无作两种。有作的禅修必须使用作意，无作的禅修则要学会放下作意，放下用心，才能真正体会到本心。

3. 第六个要素：专注力

在我们的禅修体系中，正念禅修最主要是训练两种力量，一是专注力，一是觉知力。前面所讲的这些，是训练专注力的生活基础和用心方便。训练专注力，目的是让心安住在一个所缘上，所以止的修行有时也叫作安住修。

让心持续安住在一个所缘上，需要借助一些方法。前面讲的所缘、作意，都是训练专注力的重要助缘。除了这些，还要创造良好的心灵环境。

佛经讲，修止禅先要“呵五欲、弃五盖”。五欲，一般指色、声、香、味、触，是五根追逐的五尘境界，也可以是财、色、名、食、睡等。呵五欲，就是要减少意根带动五根，去贪著和追求外在的六尘境界。如果随顺贪著的串习，就总想找点好看的、好听的、好吃的，或者惦记财、色、名、食、睡，心就静不下来，容易引发种种散乱。

五盖，则是遮蔽清明心的五种烦恼，包括贪欲盖、嗔恚盖、昏沉睡眠盖、掉举恶作盖，还有疑盖。贪欲旺盛就顾不上修行，嗔恨令心烦躁难安，昏沉睡眠就提不起警觉，恶作掉悔令人心神不宁，疑盖不除就会不信三宝及修行法门，这些都会障碍禅修。通过“呵五欲、弃五盖”建立心灵环境的良好基础，才能更好地开展止的禅修。

既然是修止，心应该止在哪里？止的禅修分三个层面。

第一个层面，是初级禅修阶段，选择的是外在的所缘，目的是培养专注力，开启觉知力，所以心要安住在外在的所缘上。

第二个层面，是中级禅修阶段，安住于外在所缘已经不是目的，安住于觉知的心才是关键。在初级禅修中，选择锚点只是个方便，就像找个木桩把牛栓上，选哪个木桩并不重要，关键是不要让牛乱跑。正念禅修是要通过初级禅修开启觉知力，然后从认识觉知力到拓展觉知力，令心始终安住于觉知，把觉知带到生活的每一个当下，觉知始终是正念禅修的重点。中级禅修强调的是拓展觉知，所以心要安住在觉知上。

第三个层面，是高级禅修阶段，直接安住于本心，安住在生命内在原本具足的、没有造作的心，它空旷、清明。禅宗讲直指人心、见性成佛、回归本心，要回归的正是这个原本具足的、清明的心。

这三个层面的训练是层层递进的。第一层面为第二层面服务，第二层面为第三层面服务。我们需要理解，禅修是一个不断建立、放下的过程，每一次建立和放下，都是为了帮我们扫除混乱的凡夫心，进而超

越意识层面，最后回归原本清明的心。三级正念禅修涵盖三个层面的止禅，建构从正念到禅宗无念的禅修次第，是一条有浅有深、由渐入顿的禅法心路。

训练专注力是为了完成止的修行，然后从止到定。所谓定，就是心能持续安住在所缘上。大乘和小乘佛法都讲到九住心的修行。从内住、续住、安住、近住，到调顺、寂静、最极寂静，最后到专注一境、等持，描述了定力逐级加深的九个进程。我们的这套修学体系，对止禅并不要求修到第九住，只需达到第七住最极寂静，同时配合观禅的七个阶段，就能完成禅修的训练。

关于止与观的关系，各个教派看法不尽相同。比如，同属南传佛教，帕奥系统对止的要求特别高，甚至要达到四禅八定；而马哈希、阿姜查系统则没有对止禅做太高的要求。

对今天的人而言，单纯修止很不容易。因为禅定是缘起法，要把自由散漫的心限制在一个地方，必须进行专门训练。过去的出家人住在山上，生活极其简单，修止比较容易，今天的人生活混乱，想修好禅定

特别困难。所以，南传的马哈希系统，是在训练止的同时就训练观，训练专注力的同时就训练觉知力。禅宗则讲“唯论见性，不论禅定解脱”，让学人直接认识本心就行。但是，如果一点止的基础也没有，禅宗其实也修不起来。

单纯的修止，首先很不容易做到；其次，专注力是被训练出来的，凡是训练得来的东西，一定是缘聚缘散，缺少因缘就会退失。而觉知是我们每个人本来就具备的，一旦被开发，只要不断使用、不断熟悉就行，它的力量只会越来越强，不会丢失。

过去也有大德认为，对禅定要求太高，会不利于空性的开发。因为体悟空性的心，必须更加放松，更加空旷，更加没有造作。如果过分训练禅定，会让心固化在有造作的状态，再想让它回归本心，反而变得很难做到。就像古印度的很多外道，修到四禅八定，却并不能解脱。所以禅宗干脆不讲禅定，直接教人去认识本心。

我们现在倡导的三级正念禅修，是专门针对现代人施设的禅修系统。依据佛陀《大念处经》中教示的

四念处，在训练专注力的当下训练觉知力。我觉得这是佛陀教给我们的最直接、操作性最强的禅修方法，在今天的时代特别好用。

为什么正念能风靡全球？一方面在修行上，它的可操作性比较强；另一方面，它能开启我们的觉知，通过觉知又可以治疗很多身心疾病。社会上的正念更偏向技术层面，无法深入，而佛法的正念禅修，是在空性正见的指导下，开发觉知力，可以真正导向生命的觉醒与解脱。

三、观禅四要素

有了觉知，我们就能够做到三点

第一，看清楚自己的心念活动

第二，跟念头保持距离

第三，在觉知中化解念头，解脱烦恼

所以古德说，“不怕念起，只怕觉迟”

你只要觉知就行了

不需要做太多事

在止禅的基础上修习观禅，需要重视四个要素，依次是觉知力、接纳、不评判和正见。

1. 第七个要素：觉知力

觉知力要以专注力为基础，借助专注力才能开启内在的觉知力。要知道，禅修的重点是觉知力，专注力的修行是为开启觉知力服务的。

我们要认识开启觉知力在禅修中的价值——觉知是通往觉性最直接的路径。我在禅修中经常引导大家去体会觉知、清明的心，因为这个觉知的心是我们修行和解脱的重要力量，这是觉知本身具备的作用。

另一方面，只有开启觉知，才能帮我们跳出二元对立的世界。人最大的问题是什么？是看不清楚自己。为什么看不清楚？因为我们总是活在无明中，活在二元对立中，活在念头中，导致没有看清自己的能力。因为看不清楚自己，就无法跳出念头，摆脱念头，只能活在不知不觉的状态中。

觉知力的开发，就是开启我们内心反观自照的力量，这是一种来自内心、能够看清自己的力量。有了觉知，我们就能够做到三点。第一，看清楚自己的心念活动；第二，跟念头保持距离；第三，在觉知中化解念头，解脱烦恼。所以古德说：“不怕念起，只怕觉迟。”你只要觉知就行了，不需要做太多事。

过去禅宗只讲回归本心，祖师们很多非常高明的指点，也是直接指向本心。但是由于没有借助开启觉知作为过渡，很多人没有能力直接认识本心，所以禅宗只能接引少数上根利智之人。三级正念禅修为大家提供了这个过渡，先开启意识层面的觉知，再回归觉性。因为意识层面的觉知的心，每个人都可以触及。当我们对觉知有了认识，学会使用，就有能力在觉知

中跟念头保持距离，有能力化解烦恼和情绪。待得心变得越来越清明，越来越空旷，再去体会本心，就不再那么困难。

在禅修中，我经常会引导大家去认识觉知的心是什么样子。直接认识本心，是佛法的常用手法。“将心来，与汝安”“七处征心”等等，都是教人直接审视自己的心。为什么这样的审视会有用？当你审视的时候，这个审视的心是什么？就是觉知的心。审视的过程就是在开启觉知的心。当你通过觉知的心去审视的时候，念头自然就被空掉了。当念头空掉了，自然就能够体会到“觅心了不可得”。通过认识觉知来开启觉性，是非常高明、好用的禅修方法。所以，首先要把正念禅修的重点放在觉知上。

然后，再学会从觉知到放下觉知，从有所缘到没有所缘，从有作意到没有作意，从有作到无作，从有修到无修。真正的修行，其实是不需要做什么的。当你对本心有一定的熟悉、安住，修行反而是一件很轻松的事。因为你不需要做任何事情，只要安住在那里就行了。我们要体会的本心一直都在那里，不增不减，

并不需要你做任何事情。所以，觉知是通往觉性的一个方便。

从中级禅修到高级禅修，就是学会从使用觉知到放下觉知。放下觉知并不是说没有觉知了，而是去体会内心没有造作的觉知。放下的是什么觉知？是有造作的、有作意的觉知。然后要体会的是什么觉知？是没有造作的、原本具备的觉知，也就是清明的心，它更加空旷、宽广、无相、无作。这个心离每个人并不遥远，通过次第有序的禅修，达到这个目标也没有想象的那么难。

2. 第八个要素：接纳

无论是生活还是禅修，都免不了各种对境的考验，如何接纳是十分重要的修行。一般而言，面对喜欢的对境容易心生贪著，面对不喜欢的对境则会心生抵触，不接纳，就会制造二元对立，落入贪嗔痴的世界。

如何学会接纳？要通过禅修来完成。在禅修的过程中，我们一定会面对各种念头、各种影像。很多人

希望自己禅修中不要有念头，不要有妄想。如果在禅修中出现胡思乱想，他不仅无法接纳这些念头，连对自己都没有办法接纳。由于不接纳，反而产生更多的妄想。

其实，所有的念头和影像，只是心灵天空中的云彩，“神马都是浮云”。白云来了，有白云的美好；乌云来了，说不定带来一阵清凉雨，也有乌云的美好。禅修中的接纳，就是不论内心出现什么念头、什么影像，只要保持觉知就行，既不跟着走，也不起对立。

接纳的修行，需要具备佛法的知见。平常人习惯于把念头、对境看得很真实，所以心容易被带走。如果能认识到所有的念头和对境只是心灵天空中的影像，包括看到的一切、听到的一切，也都是影像，所谓“一切有为法，如梦幻泡影”，带着这样的见地，就不会把念头、对境看得太实在，面对一切所思所想、所见所闻，也都会容易接纳。

如果实在没办法接纳，连禅修都变得如坐针毡，怎么办？我们还有另外一个武器，就是八三禅修，不妨做做观察修。有的人禅修时陷入几十年未曾解开的

心结，各种情绪缠绕不休，难以放下。这时可以先运用八三禅修进行如理分别，依佛法智慧，用缘起思维进行重新认识，直至把它想通。过去很多信众分享“发生在自己身上的学佛故事”，比如小时候在原生家庭受到亲人的伤害，几十年无法释怀，学佛之后经过重新认识、重新思维，解开了心结，不仅冰释前嫌，而且和好如初。这样的案例数不胜数。可见，经过佛法智慧的再审视、再认知，当你觉得很多事情没那么大的时候，它在禅修中对你的干扰也没那么大了。

我们要学会的接纳，一方面是在认知层面接纳；一方面是安住觉知，自然能更好地接纳。因为觉知能把心从事件和情绪里抽离出来，当你习惯于让心跟各种情绪和念头保持距离，再来面对这些事件时，只要把心安住在觉知中，它对你的影响自然会变小。

所以，通过禅修学习接纳，不只是认识上的接纳，更是通过觉知来接纳，安住在觉知中面对各种事件，就能达成更好的接纳。

3. 第九个要素：不评判

不评判的修行其实很高明。现代人接受了西方教育，崇尚个性自由，凡事要有主见，面对各种事情总要先批判一通，显得自己有头脑。

佛法的修行并不完全否定评判。修行有两个层面，一个在分别心层面，是运用理性的修行；一个超越分别心层面，是运用直觉的修行。八三禅修就是教我们学会用好分别心，用好理性，通过闻思经教树立佛法正见，依正见重新审视一切现象，获得如实认识与判断的智慧。八三的修行倡导评判，需要用好理性思维，可见佛法的修行并非不用理性和评判。与张扬个性的评判不同的是，佛法的评判要依据正见进行智慧的评判，对运用理性有更高的要求。

为什么正念禅修倡导不评判？因为评判就会进入分别心的系统。需要特别注意的是，不评判也不等于就不进入分别心系统。因为不评判的原因很多，不想评判、不关注或无法评判等等，不一而足。正念禅修中讲的不评判，主要是指通过安住于觉知的心而产生

的不评判。

我们认识事物的方式有两种，一是使用分别心，一是使用觉知，这也是用心方式上的不同。佛法的修行，说简单也简单，说不简单也不简单。为什么说简单？因为修行就是要改变用心习惯；为什么说不简单？因为改变用心习惯并不容易。

如果不修行，我们的用心习惯都是向外追逐，这就会启动分别心，评判有没有价值，是好还是不好，对我有利还是不利，这些都是分别心的运作。而禅修要学会使用觉知，不论面对怎样的念头、影像，都要保有觉知。觉知的心就像一面镜子，它的特点就是能够清楚地映照当下呈现的一切，用觉知面对念头、影像，就能不进入评判。进入评判，就进入分别心系统；不进入评判，安住觉知，就进入心的觉知层面，最后就能从觉知回归本心、回归觉性。一个是不修行时向外追逐，一个是通过修行向内开启觉知，两种用心方式截然不同。

修行人是不是一定不能分别、不能评判？其实也不是。当你对空性智慧越来越熟悉，空明的心力量越

来越强大，即使分别、评判，也不影响安住于觉知。之所以要通过禅修学会不评判，是因为刚学禅修时觉知力还不够强大稳定，一旦评判就会落入分别心，觉知就会丢失。所以《信心铭》讲“至道无难，唯嫌拣择”，告诉我们体会大道并不难，只要不进入分别心的系统，就能够体会到空明不二的本心。

尤其是刚开始禅修，处于训练觉知的阶段时，要使用的是觉知，要避免的是分别。如果觉知力已经越来越强大，对清明的心越来越熟悉，我们就能做到“能善分别诸法相，于第一义而不动”“终日分别而未尝分别”，分别的同时也能安住在无分别中，这是禅修的高端境界。可见，禅修中能不能分别，并不是绝对的。很多人弄不懂佛法为什么一会儿讲分别，一会儿讲不分别，其实这是针对禅修的不同阶段、不同境界，提供对机的指引。

对于通过禅修开启觉知、使用觉知而言，在禅修中学会不评判是必不可少的重要修行。我们要做的不是单纯的不评判，而是安住在觉知中从而不再评判。因为单纯的不评判，可能是由于不会评判，可能是由

于不感兴趣而不去评判，这些另当别论。正念禅修中的不评判，重点是安住觉知，学会使用觉知而不是使用评判。

当我们不断地使用觉知、熟悉觉知、运用觉知，已经养成觉知的用心习惯之后，评判也不影响正念的修行。

4. 第十个要素：正见

正见，是对世界、对人生的正确认识。正见从何而来？来自闻思经教，来自八步三禅。这样树立的正见，才能开启真正的智慧。

在树立正见的过程中，学会缘起思维特别重要。正如现代物理学有量子力学，有广义相对论、狭义相对论等各种理论依据，佛法依据的是缘起论，告诉人们要学会用缘起看问题。可以说，缘起论代表佛法对现象世界，对宇宙人生的如实认识。

很多人学了佛法，知道了不少高深的大道理，却没有学会用缘起思维理解每个人，处理每件事，遇事

依然从自我感觉出发，带着强大的我执和好恶心来面对问题。其实，真正学佛法，就是要学会用缘起思维待人处事。当我们能够运用缘起思维，就能获得无常、无我、无自性空的正见，因为这些正见都建立在缘起正见的基础之上。

如何在禅修的过程中用好佛法正见？当面对念头和影像时，如果选择用无我的正见，就会观察“念头只是念头，不是我；影像只是影像，也不是我，念头和影像都与我无关”。凡夫的自我感觉很强，无论看问题，还是做事情，都会带着强烈的自我感觉。如果在禅修中不懂得运用佛法正见，一个念头生起，多数人想都不用想，直接就掉进去了。如果能用正见指导禅修，在觉知的过程中，就能看见身体的感觉、呼吸的变化、心念的生灭，看见它们都是缘生缘灭的；同时是无常变化的；也是无我的，所有这些念头和影像都不是我；进而了知所有的身、受、心、法，在本质上都是空的。

禅宗为什么讲“觅心了不可得”？因为心的本质就是空性。如果念头是实实在在的，观照之下怎么会

消失无踪？没有正见的观照，一个念头的力量就能铺天盖地。有些念头力量巨大，甚至能主导人生几十年。有了正见的观照，当下就能把念头照破，体会到心的本质是空性。

所以，禅修并不是要刻意去消灭念头，因为所有的念头本质就是空性，就像所有的浪花本质都是水一样。同时，禅修中也不要对念头妄加分别，陷入好念头坏念头的对立中。因为在觉得某个念头“好”的当下，其实又加了个“好”的妄想；觉得某个念头“不好”的时候，其实又加了个“不好”的妄想。意识里生起各种好与不好的设定，无形中会增加更多妄想，然后又去执著这些妄想。所以禅修所要做的，是不带任何设定，保持正见观照，然后所有的念头都会回归觉性的海洋。

禅宗讲佛性，讲明心见性，都是让我们去体会清明、空旷的心。这个心既有明的特点，又有空的特点。觉知的本质就是觉性，觉性是了了明知的，又是空旷的。这里面包含的就是如来藏的思想，一切众生皆有佛性的见地。

佛法的修行，一方面是帮助我们看清二元对立的现象世界，了知现象世界都是缘起的、虚幻的，让我们不要被卡在二元对立的世界里；另一方面是帮助我们认识本心，体悟空明不二的心。佛法的不同见地，代表对生命不同层面的认识，有的是为了帮助我们突破生命的迷雾，有的是为了帮助我们直接认识本心。刚开始禅修时，可以先从无常、无我的正见用起，先看破现象世界，跳出二元对立，认识到念头生灭变化，无我，缘生缘灭，本质是空，然后再不断地拓展觉知力，回归本心。这条修行的道路很清晰，没有想象中那么复杂。

四、结 语

正念禅修十要素
大家首先要完整、清晰
准确地认识它们
知道哪些是基础要素
哪些是核心要素
哪些用来在禅修中面对各种对境
认识之后，在正念禅修实践中
要用好这十个要素

今天讲了正念禅修十要素，大家首先要完整、清晰、准确地认识它们，知道哪些是基础要素，哪些是核心要素，哪些用来在禅修中面对各种对境。认识之后，在正念禅修实践中，要用好这十个要素。未来，我们将根据这十个要素，为初级、中级、高级禅修提供标准化的心法自检。过去被认为抽象的禅修，将变得不再抽象。另外，在禅修的基础部分，最近我也让长期从事瑜伽教学的义工，结合正念修行，参与编写正念盘坐八式和正念呼吸七式的练习，目前已经拍成音视频文件，希望能够帮助大家更好地调身、调息，为正念禅修助力。大家把正念禅修的基础打好了，加上正确的用心方法，并用好初级正念禅修十要素自检表，正念禅修自然就会变得轻松了。



THE TEN KEY ELEMENTS OF MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Master Jiqun

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**A Teaching at the Great Meditation Hall in
Amrita Retreat Center in August 2024**

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The Dhyana Tea program team is now developing certification standards for beginner-level tea practitioners. The certification consists of technical skills and mental cultivation. Assessing technical skills is relatively straightforward, but assessing mental cultivation itself is not an easy task, as it is so abstract.

For mental cultivation, the hardest part is setting clear standards, so I thought of self-assessment. Mental cultivation can be self-assessed because the mind has self-knowing clarity. As a Buddhist saying goes, “Whether one has the Way or not, one knows for oneself,” because

practitioners generally do not deliberately deceive themselves. Of course, self-assessment is only one part of mental cultivation certification. Volunteer evaluators will also ask questions and provide opportunities for sharing and exchange.

Our entire practice system centers on three meditative qualities: the Eight Steps and Three Types of Meditation (the “Eight-Three Method”), Mindfulness Meditation, and Altruistic Meditation. These qualities form the core of the Dharma lineage and are essential for all overseas Mindful Peace Ambassadors, especially for Class Facilitators. Therefore, developing self-assessment standards for Mindfulness Meditation has become a shared need in nurturing mental cultivation among overseas Class Facilitators and Mindful Peace Ambassadors.

Mindfulness Meditation consists of three levels, where the beginner and intermediate levels share ten elements. Among them, the three basic elements are aspiration, a simple and orderly life, and enthusiasm; the three

Samatha elements are an object of focus, attention, and concentration; and the four Vipassana elements are awareness, acceptance, non-judgment, and right view. Across the various Mindfulness Meditation programs we offer, these ten elements form the focus of our training and serve as key criteria for evaluation.

The mental cultivation certification is not simply about obtaining a certificate. It is an opportunity to understand ourselves, to learn from and share with others, and, more importantly, to deepen our inner cultivation. By taking part in the certification, we can clearly see the current state of our cultivation in the ten elements: where our training is weak, where it is strong, and where it can still be improved. Therefore, for the mental cultivation certification, we not only need to accurately understand the Ten Key Elements, but also learn how to practice each one. Over the past two days, I've given this some thought. Today, I'd like to share it with everyone.

I

THREE BASIC ELEMENTS

1. The First Element: Aspiration

Aspiration has two aspects. First, do we understand the benefits of mindfulness and why we practice it? Second, how confident are we in the value it brings?

What is the value of right mindfulness, and why has it become so popular worldwide? Simply put, it offers both practical and ultimate benefits.

People often practice right mindfulness because of its practical benefits, such as reducing stress and pain,

enhancing concentration, treating mental health issues, sparking creativity, and improving physical and mental health. Our mindfulness body scan also has these effects.

However, right mindfulness, as taught by the Buddha, is one factor of the Noble Eightfold Path and leads to the ultimate benefit—liberation from samsara, and to life's awakening. The core value of right mindfulness is to cultivate awareness, for awareness is the key to the awakened nature and the best way to attain awakening. We can say that right mindfulness is the most direct and accessible path to awakening that the Buddha offered to all beings. Through this practice, we can not only awaken ourselves but also, for Mahayana practitioners, help others move toward awakening. Thus, any practical benefits that come are simply by-products of the practice.

So when we cultivate right mindfulness, we should ask ourselves: Why am I practicing it? Let us examine our aspirations.

If we practice for practical benefits, our aspiration is wholesome but remains on the worldly level. If our aspiration is solely to attain our own awakening and liberation, this is the mind of renunciation—the aspiration of the Sravakayana, or the path of personal liberation. But if our aspiration is to guide countless beings toward awakening and liberation through right mindfulness, this is bodhicitta—the aspiration of the Mahayana Bodhisattva Path. Each time we examine our aspiration, we clarify the motivation, goal, and direction of our mindfulness practice.

Having recognized the value of right mindfulness, we should further ask ourselves: Do we have strong confidence in it?

In meditation, confidence is especially important. Without confidence, our aspiration has no strength. Just as the *Yogacarabhumi-Sastra* teaches, aspiration is characterized by “seeking”—a mind that earnestly seeks to attain something. It is a kind of “desire,” just like a person who

wishes to buy a car or a house, or to start a family and build a career. Actually, Buddhism teaches that desire is of three kinds: wholesome, neutral, and unwholesome. The wish to attain physical and mental well-being through right mindfulness, or to realize awakening and liberation, is also a kind of desire. Yet this is a wholesome desire—a wish for goodness. In addition to wholesome desire, there are also unwholesome and neutral forms of desire. Neutral desire does not involve good or evil, while unwholesome desire is connected with harmful actions. Clearly, the more confident we are that mindfulness practice can lead to these wholesome results, the stronger our aspiration becomes.

In practicing right mindfulness, we should understand our aspiration as it truly is and adjust it according to the Dharma.

2. The Second Element: A Simple and Orderly Life

A simple and orderly life means living with simplicity,

modesty, order, and morality.

Many people think that meditation is merely a method for training the mind, so what does it have to do with daily life?

In essence, Buddhist practice comes down to the cultivation of precepts, concentration, and wisdom—also known as the Threefold Training that transcends defilements, leading to awakening and liberation. From precepts arises concentration, and from concentration arises wisdom, revealing how they are connected. Among these, precepts show that, in our practice, we need to live a healthy life—one that is simple, modest, orderly, and moral.

Our thoughts flow continuously, each one similar to the last, shaped by our daily life and actions. For ordinary people, the mind is easily swayed by external conditions; when daily life is chaotic, the mind inevitably becomes chaotic. The *Agama Sutra* teaches, “When precepts are pure, the mind is pure.” Only when life off the cushion is

simple and plain can the mind more easily grow calm and clear on the cushion. If, during meditation, we remain caught in worries and entanglements, unable to stop wandering thoughts or let go of love and hate, unable even to sit steadily, how can we practice well?

An orderly life is also important. A defining feature of modern people is that they live in chaos and disorder. They spend much of their time on meaningless things, wasting their lives and losing control of themselves. Therefore, to manage the mind, we should begin by managing daily life. It is best to set a regular schedule and build a simple, orderly life.

Precepts allow us to be free from regret. When we observe the precepts, we keep our actions free from fault and avoid regret. Free from regret, we can live with ease—just as the saying goes, “The noble man is always broad-minded and at ease.”

When the precepts are pure, life becomes pure; when life

is pure, the mind grows pure; and when the mind is pure, meditation naturally deepens. Therefore, by observing precepts and living a simple, modest, moral and orderly life, we create an essential prerequisite for mindfulness meditation.

3. The Third Element: Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm means being genuinely passionate about mindfulness meditation.

Are we truly enthusiastic about meditation? Do we merely treat it as a routine and go through the motions, or do we genuinely enjoy it—and the Dharma joy it brings—as it purifies our mind with each session? Meditation will be very difficult without the right method and proper use of the mind.

Of course, enthusiasm does not come out of nowhere; it needs its own causes and conditions. How can we maintain our enthusiasm for meditation for a long period of

time? First, we need to understand the true meaning of meditation.

If we see someone around us maintain a consistent meditation practice and change noticeably—similar to what Christianity calls a testimony—our enthusiasm for practice naturally grows. While Christian testimony speaks of the grace, miracles, and glory given by God, Buddhist “testimony” points to the transformation arising from within through practicing the Dharma. This transformation shows up directly in improved views, mindsets, and quality of life, and indirectly in better relationships and the healing of physical and mental conditions. These real-life examples are role models that help us build confidence, enthusiasm, and motivation for meditation.

Second, we must learn the right way to use the mind.

When we first start meditating, we are often filled with confidence and joy. Yet if we do not understand the proper way to cultivate the mind, our efforts may be

in vain—or even lead us in the opposite direction. The more diligently we practice, the more confused we may feel. When we lack the right method or gain no benefit even after a long time, we find it difficult to tell how far our practice has progressed. As confidence fades, we find it harder to continue the path. Meditation is like finding our way through a complex maze of the mind—it requires the right method, the guidance of a wise teacher, and a clear understanding of what the practice can truly bring.

We often misunderstand the Buddhist teaching of “nothing to attain,” thinking that it means practice is not about results. In fact, “nothing to attain” does not mean there are no results. Rather, it means even when results arise, we do not cling to them. More importantly, Buddhism teaches the law of cause and effect—“As the cause, so is the result.” When our method is right, the corresponding result will certainly follow. This principle applies to everyone. Anyone can learn meditation and experience its results through their own practice. Moreover, “nothing to attain” also refers to the realization of emptiness, which

transcends the subject and object to attain the wisdom that is free from grasping.

Therefore, we should often ask ourselves: Is my method of meditation correct? The Three Levels of Mindfulness Meditation we advocate use a method that is simple, applicable, and easy to practice. As long as we keep using the right method every time, the right results will naturally follow.

Third, we must practice repeatedly.

Once we have learned the right method, we need to keep repeating it. On the one hand, practice helps us break free from habits built up since beginningless time; on the other, it helps us develop concentration and awareness, and transform the mental habits that keep us in samsara. If a simple, orderly lifestyle represents a change in the way we live, then cultivating mindfulness represents a change in the way we use the mind. Whether we are letting go of old habits or building new ones, both

require ongoing repetition and sufficient training. This is how every mental pattern is formed, and cultivating a new way of using the mind is no exception. Only through repeated practice can we become increasingly familiar with mindfulness, and only through such familiarity can the power of mindfulness gradually grow. In this way, we can continually experience the joy of meditation and the happiness that comes from inner transformation.

Effective meditation requires a proper method. First, we must focus on quality. Many people think the longer they meditate, the better. They insist on sitting for a fixed length of time each day—half an hour, an hour, two hours, even three—and keep increasing it. As a result, the longer they sit, the more uncomfortable they feel, and some even grow afraid of sitting. In fact, what matters most in meditation is quality. Once quality is assured, quantity can be increased.

Especially for beginners, meditation should be like a patient eating small, frequent meals. In the beginning,

each session can be short—five or ten minutes is fine. What matters is that these five or ten minutes is of good quality, rather than sitting for an hour when fifty minutes is wasted. Nor should we wait until we can no longer sit before ending the session. It is better to stop while a sense of enjoyment still remains. On the basis of quality, we can arrange more sittings each day and gradually build a good habit. It is best to make a timetable, set aside fixed times for meditation, decide how many sittings to do each day and how long each should be, and then gradually increase the length.

On the other hand, we should extend mindfulness into daily life in a planned way, allowing it to gradually fill every part of our lives. We encourage bringing mindfulness into daily life. But it is unrealistic to expect ourselves to stay mindful for twenty-four hours every day. Therefore, to start, it is better to choose two or three simple daily tasks and practice mindfulness while doing them. As the strength of mindfulness grows, we can gradually extend it to other areas of life, until, in the end,

mindfulness becomes present in every moment.

Why could the great masters of the past fully integrate meditation into their daily lives? Because their lives were simple—fetching firewood, carrying water, getting dressed, and eating their meals. As their practice deepened, some great teachers would later go out into the world to cultivate their minds with challenges. Today, however, we live much busier and more restless lives; the conditions for practice are far more challenging than in the past. To maintain enthusiasm for meditation, we truly need supportive conditions and skillful means.

II

THE THREE KEY ELEMENTS OF SAMATHA

The three elements discussed earlier are the foundational elements of mindfulness meditation. After that, we move into the practice of samatha and vipassana meditations. Samatha contains three essential elements, while vipassana contains four.

1. The Fourth Element: An Object of Focus

In the beginner stage of mindfulness meditation, we need to choose an object of focus. This focus helps the mind overcome dullness and distraction during practice.

Distraction is often mentioned together with restlessness. Although the *Treatise on the Hundred Dharmas* classifies them as two distinct mental factors, restlessness can also be seen as a form of distraction. The difference lies in this: distraction causes the mind to wander in all directions—it jumps from one thought to another without settling anywhere, while restlessness is marked by agitation and mental excitement.

Restlessness is called *diaoju* in Chinese. *Diao* means “to sway,” referring to an unsettled mind, while *ju* means “to lift,” describing a mind that is stirred up and unable to calm down. For example, when we think of something exciting, see someone we have not seen for a long time, or receive good news, our mind easily becomes excited and filled with wandering thoughts—this is restlessness.

Dullness refers to the mind that becomes dim and unclear, as if falling asleep. Of course, sleep is more severe than dullness, for in sleep, awareness is completely lost, while in mild dullness some clarity remains. In short, dullness

is when the mind loses its clarity and can no longer see things clearly.

Overcoming dullness and restlessness in meditation is challenging because they have become our habits. Our mind is used to wandering all day long. How can we change these habits? The *Ox-Herding Pictures* offer an analogy: to prevent the ox from running wild, we must tie it firmly to a post with a rope, keeping it in place. In mindfulness meditation, an object of focus serves as that “post”—an anchor that prevents the mind from wandering. This is how we cultivate concentration.

We need to choose our object of focus carefully. Although we often encourage integrating mindfulness into every moment and turning life itself into a form of meditation, this is not easy to do at any time or place. Especially in the beginning, when we can still be easily influenced by the many things we encounter, we need to select a wholesome object as an anchor. A wholesome object is one that supports meditation—something effective and conducive

to mental stability. It should not cause strong likes or dislikes. That is why we choose neutral objects such as the breath or steps. They are simple, part of daily life, always available, and not likely to cause clinging—after all, few people become attached to their breath or their steps. Choosing such an object helps the mind develop concentration in meditation.

So is it necessary to have an object of focus in meditation? Can we practice without one? This depends on the stage of practice and its need. In the beginner stage, we need a fixed object of focus. Then, in the intermediate stage, the focal object no longer needs to stay fixed. Finally, in the advanced stage, we no longer need a focal object as we directly experience the true nature of mind and abide in it.

Thus, Three-Stage Mindfulness Meditation unfolds as follows: from mindfulness meditation to no-thought meditation; from having an object of focus to being free from one; from engaging with an object to letting it go;

from relying on an anchor to being without one. Whether it is Dhyana Tea or any other forms of mindfulness practice, in the beginner stage, it is essential to choose an object of focus and find an anchor.

2. The Fifth Element: Attention

What kind of mental factor is “attention”? Why is it essential among the ten elements of mindfulness meditation?

The *Treatise on the Hundred Dharmas* explains each mental factor in terms of its feature and its function. For “attention,” its feature is alertness, and its function is to direct the mind toward its object. “Alertness” is its essence, as it helps the mind remain alert. “Directing the mind toward its object” means that this alert state guides the mind toward its intended object.

In daily life, we are not always alert. For example, when we become lost in wandering thoughts, alertness is absent. But in certain situations, such as walking along a steep

path or entering an area where snakes might appear, we instinctively become highly alert and stop letting the mind wander. This shows that alertness helps to uplift the mind, and prevents it from drifting, allowing concentration to arise easily. With alertness as the foundation, we can clearly see whether there are snakes underfoot and stay focused on each step we take. Without attention, we walk carelessly, unaware of what we might be stepping on.

When we understand the feature and function of attention, we realize that we need to make especially good use of it in meditation. There are two main purposes for this. First, attention helps to overcome distraction, because when the mind is highly alert, it does not fall into a scattered state.

I once guided a meditation where participants imagined themselves meditating atop a 200-meter-high pillar. Would you still dare to doze off, indulge in wandering thoughts, or let your mind become distracted or restless? In that moment, you would naturally become highly

alert. When we meditate with such high alertness, the mind is far less likely to fall into distraction.

At the same time, alertness also makes it easier to cultivate concentration. For example, when we take walking or breathing as an anchor, attention allows us to direct the mind toward it. Yet our capacity for concentration is limited. After maintaining focus for a while, the mind will gradually drift away. When this happens, we need to reawaken alertness and bring the mind back to the anchor. Each time the mind wanders into distraction, we use alertness to bring it back again. The practice of *samatha* is simply training the mind in this way.

With alertness and awareness, we can recognize when the mind drifts away; without them, we would not notice at all. The stronger our awareness, the more quickly we can notice when the mind begins to wander. Without training, however, we might spend days lost in delusive thoughts without even realizing what we are doing.

This shows that attention helps to free the mind from distraction.

On the other hand, attention helps free the mind from dullness. Since attention includes alertness, as soon as we become alert, we can emerge from dullness and break free from a state of mental obscurity. This is because alertness is connected to awareness; alertness is one function of awareness. Through attention, we can overcome dullness and continue bringing the mind back to the object.

In the practice of samatha, both an object of focus and attention are essential supportive conditions. Once we have chosen an object to focus on, we must continually rely on the power of attention to free the mind from distraction and dullness, bringing it back to the focal point again and again. This is how we develop concentration.

Some may ask, “Must we use attention in meditation?”

In the Three-Stage Mindfulness Meditation, beginners

must use attention, because at this stage we need to choose an external anchor and focus on it by using attention.

In the intermediate stage of meditation, we focus on expanding awareness, for the objects of focus are constantly changing. At one moment we may be walking, at another eating, and later talking with others. When facing these ever-changing objects, we need a steadier power of awareness. This means we must train awareness in daily life—eating with awareness, walking with awareness, and doing everything with awareness.

Awareness is closely related to alertness. In the intermediate stage of meditation, we must make good use of alertness that comes from attention, so that we can maintain awareness at any time and in any place. Whenever we lose awareness, we use alertness to bring it back. When our mind becomes scattered or carried away by thoughts, we rely on alertness once again to restore awareness. Just as in the beginner stage, we also need to use attention in intermediate mindfulness practice. The difference is that

in the intermediate stage of meditation, we place greater emphasis on using alertness to support and expand awareness, and we no longer need to stay with a fixed object of focus.

In the advanced mindfulness meditation, we let go of both alertness and awareness—there is no need for attention or any object of focus. The purpose at this stage is to directly experience our true mind—inherently complete and clear. This clear mind is ever present. All we need to do is simply experience it, recognize it, and gradually become familiar with it.

The clear mind is not an object, so experiencing it requires no mental effort. It also does not have a point to focus on, so alertness is not needed. In fact, bringing up alertness will take us back to the previous level of conscious cognition. Therefore, in advanced meditation, we must let go of attention and all focal points in order to experience this clear, uncontrived mind.

In short, meditation can be divided into two types: contrived and uncontrived. Contrived meditation must use attention. However, to practice uncontrived meditation, we must learn to let go of deliberate attention and all mental efforts—only then can we truly experience the original mind.

3. The Sixth Element: Concentration

In the MPI meditation framework, mindfulness practice focuses on cultivating two abilities: concentration and awareness. The five elements discussed earlier provide the foundation and skillful means for developing concentration. The purpose of training concentration is to settle the mind on a single object. That is why the practice of samatha is also called abiding meditation.

To keep the mind steadily focused on a single object, we need specific methods. The object of focus and deliberate attention, as discussed earlier, are important supports for developing concentration. In addition, it is also

important to cultivate a wholesome inner environment.

The sutras teach that to cultivate samatha, we must first curb the five sensual desires and eliminate the five hindrances. The five sensual desires generally refer to sight, sound, smell, taste, and tangible object—the sense objects pursued by the five sense faculties. The five sensual desires can also be understood as the desires for wealth, sexual pleasure, fame, food, and drowsiness.

To curb the five desires is to reduce how the mind drives the senses to crave external objects. If we habitually follow craving, the mind will constantly seek pleasing sights, sounds, tastes, or become preoccupied with wealth, sexual pleasure, fame, food, and drowsiness. As a result, our mind cannot remain calm, and distractions easily arise.

The five hindrances are five types of affliction that obscure the clarity of the mind: desire, aversion, dullness (including sleeping), restlessness (including remorse), and

doubt. Strong desire leaves no room for spiritual practice; aversion agitates the mind and makes it restless; dullness gives no rise to alertness; restlessness disturbs inner peace; and unresolved doubt leads to disbelief in the Three Jewels and the methods of practice. Clearly, all of these are major obstacles to meditation. Therefore, by curbing the five desires and eliminating the five hindrances, we establish a wholesome inner environment that allows the practice of samatha to unfold more smoothly and effectively.

Since this is samatha practice, where exactly should the mind rest? In fact, samatha meditation has three levels.

At the first level—the beginner stage, we select an external object as our focus to train concentration and unlock awareness. In this stage, our mind needs to rest on that external object.

At the second level—the intermediate stage—focusing the mind on a single point is no longer the purpose. Instead,

the key is to abide in awareness itself. In the beginner stage, we choose an anchor for the mind, but this is just a skillful means. Like tying a cow to a post, the post itself is not important—what matters is that the cow does not wander off. Mindfulness practice begins with beginner meditation, which helps us access awareness. From there, we learn to extend awareness, abide in it, and carry it into every moment of daily life. Awareness, therefore, lies at the heart of mindfulness meditation throughout the entire practice. At the intermediate stage, the focus is on extending awareness, allowing the mind to rest in awareness itself.

At the third level—the advanced stage, the goal is to abide in the original mind, the inherently complete, uncontrived mind; it is infinitely vast and clear. The Chan school directly points to the true mind, helping practitioners realize their Buddha-nature and return to the original mind—the mind that is clear and inherently complete.

These three levels follow a progressive path. The first level supports the second, and the second supports the third. We need to understand that meditation is a continual process of cultivating and letting go. And each time we cultivate and let go, we clear away the restless, deluded mind, helping us transcend consciousness, and ultimately return to the inherently clear mind. Thus, the Three-Stage Mindfulness Meditation offers a complete path of practice through three levels of samatha. It presents a progressive path of practice—from mindfulness meditation to no-thought meditation—outlining a complete journey that progresses from the beginning to the advanced stages, and from gradual cultivation to sudden awakening.

Training concentration is to cultivate samatha; and cultivating samatha is to develop samadhi. Samadhi means that the mind can settle on its chosen object very steadily. Both Mahayana and Theravada teachings talk about the nine stages of samatha: placement of the mind, continuous placement, repeated placement, close placement,

taming the mind, pacifying the mind, and fully pacifying the mind, single-pointing, and balanced placement. These nine stages describe a step-by-step deepening of samatha. In the MPI system, it is not necessary to reach the ninth stage of samatha. Attaining the seventh stage, along with the seven stages of vipassana meditation, is sufficient to complete the training in meditation.

Different Buddhist schools hold different views on the relationship between samatha and vipassana. Even within Theravada Buddhism, there are different approaches to samadhi. The Pa-Auk system sets particularly high requirements for samatha, even to the point of attaining the Four Dhyanas and Eight Samadhis, while the Mahasi Sayadaw and Ajahn Chan approaches do not impose such high requirements on samatha.

For people today, cultivating samatha is very difficult, because samadhi arises through causes and conditions—it requires intentional cultivation. Only through dedicated practice can the mind, used to wandering freely,

become settled.

In the past, monastics lived in the mountains and led very simple lives, so cultivating samatha was easier. In contrast, people today live disordered lives, making it very difficult to cultivate samadhi. Therefore, in the Mahasi system, samatha and vipassana are trained together—cultivating concentration while developing awareness. Chan Buddhism goes even further. Its teachings say: “We speak only of seeing one’s true nature, not of meditative concentration or liberation.” Yet, without any foundation in samatha, Chan practice cannot truly be carried out.

First of all, just practicing samatha is very challenging. Second, concentration is something that must be trained, and anything that comes from training arises from causes and conditions. When these conditions come together, concentration grows; when they fade, concentration weakens. Awareness, however, is something each of us already possesses. Therefore, once we unlock it, we just need to keep using it and become familiar with it—its

strength can only grow and will not fade.

Furthermore, in the past, some great masters believed that placing too much emphasis on samadhi could hinder the realization of emptiness. This is because the mind that realizes emptiness must be more relaxed, open, and free from contrivance. Excessive training in samadhi can cause the mind to become fixed in a contrived state, making it difficult to return to the original mind. Many non-Buddhist practitioners in ancient India attained the Four Dhyanas and Eight Samadhis, yet were still unable to achieve liberation. That is why Chan Buddhism sets aside samadhi and directly guides practitioners to realize their original mind.

The Three-Stage Mindfulness Meditation we advocate is tailored for modern practitioners. This method, rooted in the Four Foundations of Mindfulness taught by the Buddha in the *Satipatthana Sutta*, cultivates concentration while developing awareness. I believe this is the most direct and practical meditation method the Buddha

has taught, and it is especially effective for people today.

Why has mindfulness become so popular around the world? First, it is relatively easy to put into practice. Second, it can unlock our awareness, and awareness can treat many physical and mental conditions. However, the mindfulness practiced in society often focuses more on the technical aspects and lacks deeper insight. In contrast, Buddhist mindfulness meditation, guided by the insight of emptiness, can help us develop awareness and lead to the awakening and liberation of life itself.

III

THE FOUR KEY ELEMENTS OF VIPASSANA

Vipassana, built upon samatha, emphasizes four key elements: awareness, acceptance, non-judgment, and right view.

1. The Seventh Element: Awareness

Awareness depends on concentration as its foundation; only through concentration can it be unlocked. Therefore, we must recognize that awareness lies at the heart of meditation, and accessing it is the purpose of practicing concentration.

We need to realize the value of unlocking awareness in meditation: awareness is the most direct path to our awakened nature. Therefore, when I guide meditation, I often invite everyone to experience the mind that is clear and aware, because this aware mind is a vital power for both practice and liberation—it is the natural function of awareness itself.

Furthermore, only by unlocking awareness can we transcend the dualistic world. What is our greatest problem? It is that we cannot truly see ourselves. Why can't we see ourselves clearly? Because we live in ignorance—trapped in dualistic thinking and caught in the stream of thought—so we cannot see ourselves clearly. And because we cannot see ourselves clearly, we are unable to step out of our thoughts, and can only remain in a state of unawareness.

Developing awareness means unlocking the inner power of observing inward. With awareness, we can do three things: first, see our thoughts clearly; second, keep

distance from them; and third, with awareness, allow thoughts to dissolve naturally, freeing us from afflictions. As the ancient masters said, “Do not fear the arising of thoughts; fear only that awareness comes too late.” In meditation, our task is simply to remain aware—nothing more.

In the past, the Chan tradition only talked about returning to the original mind. Chan patriarchs gave many insightful teachings that pointed directly to the original mind. However, many people cannot directly realize it without awareness as an essential bridge. As a result, Chan teachings could guide only those with sharp faculties and deep wisdom. Yet the Three-Stage Mindfulness Meditation provides such a bridge. It begins by unlocking awareness at the level of consciousness and then leads us back to the original mind. This level of awareness is something everyone can experience. When we understand it and learn to use it, we can keep distance from thoughts, and dissolve emotions and afflictions. And as the mind becomes clearer and more open, realizing the original

mind will no longer be difficult.

When guiding meditation, I often ask practitioners to see what the mind of awareness looks like—this is a common method in Buddhist practice. For example, Chan teachings include the famous saying “Bring me your mind, and I’ll put it at ease.” And in the *Shurangama Sutra*, Ananda searches for the mind in seven locations. All these point to the same method: directly observing the original mind. Why is this kind of observation so useful? When we observe, what is the mind that is observing? It is the mind of awareness. As we observe, we are unlocking this mind of awareness; when we observe thoughts through awareness, we naturally realize they are empty in nature. Then we can experience what the Chan teaching describes as “seeking the mind, yet finding it unattainable.” Thus, we first cultivate awareness and then unlock our awakened nature; this approach is both skillful and effective. Therefore, in mindfulness practice, we should focus on cultivating awareness.

Then we learn to move from awareness to letting go of awareness, from having an object of attention to having no object of attention, from contrivance to non-contrivance, from doing to non-doing, and from contrived practice to uncontrived practice. In fact, true practice requires no deliberate effort. When we become somewhat familiar with our original mind and can abide in it, practice instead becomes easier. We need not do anything—we simply abide there. The original mind we seek to experience has always been present, neither increasing nor decreasing, and it does not require you to do anything. Thus, awareness itself is a skillful means leading toward the awakened nature.

From intermediate to advanced meditation practice, the focus shifts from using awareness to letting it go. Letting go of awareness does not mean that there is no awareness; rather, it means experiencing the awareness that is free from any fabrication or effort. What kind of awareness do we need to let go of? It is the contrived, intentional awareness. And what kind of awareness do we need to

realize? It is the uncontrived, ever-present awareness; it is the clear mind that is more open, vast, formless, and effortless. This mind is not far from any of us. When we follow a step-by-step path of meditation, reaching the goal is not as difficult as we imagine.

2. The Eighth Element: Acceptance

In both daily life and meditation, we may face various challenges; learning how to accept them is vital for our cultivation. Generally speaking, we cling to what we like and resist what we dislike. When we fail to accept, we create dualistic opposition and fall into greed, aversion, and ignorance.

How do we learn acceptance? It is cultivated through meditation. During meditation, we face various thoughts and mental images. Yet many people wish to have no delusive thoughts. When wandering thoughts arise, they find it difficult not only to accept these thoughts, but also to accept themselves. Because they fail to accept,

even more delusive thoughts arise.

In fact, all thoughts and images are but clouds drifting across the sky of the mind, just as the saying goes, “All things are but passing clouds.” When white clouds appear, they bring their own beauty; when dark clouds come, they may bring a refreshing rain—there is also beauty in them. Thus, in meditation, acceptance means staying aware of whatever thoughts or images arise, without following or resisting them.

To practice acceptance, we need the right views. Ordinary people are accustomed to taking their thoughts and the objects they encounter as real, so their minds are easily carried away. But we realize that all thoughts and the objects we encounter are simply images appearing in the sky of the mind. And everything we see and hear is only an image. Just as the *Diamond Sutra* says, “All conditioned phenomena are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, and shadows,” we stop taking our thoughts and the objects we encounter as so real. So it becomes much easier to accept

whatever arises within us and around us.

When we really can't accept something, even meditation can feel like sitting on pins and needles. What can we do then? We have another method, the Eight Steps and Three Types of Meditation. We can try to reflect on what we cannot accept with Buddhist insight. Some people, during meditation, even get caught in inner knots that have been unresolved for decades, with all kinds of emotions entangling them without end, unable to let them go. In such moments, we can use the Eight-Three Method to reflect on them in accordance with the Buddhist insight, such as the principle of dependent origination. We keep reflecting until these inner knots are gradually untied.

Many practitioners have shared their stories of studying Buddhism. For example, some were deeply hurt by their family members in childhood and suffered for decades. Through studying Buddhism, they came to understand their experiences in a new light, and untied the inner knots. Not only were past resentments dissolved, but they

reconciled and became as close as before. Such stories are countless. This shows that when we re-examine our experiences with Buddhist wisdom, and realize they're not as important as we once believed, they no longer disturb our meditation as much.

We need to learn to accept things as they are. This acceptance has two levels. The first is acceptance through understanding. The second is abiding in awareness, which allows acceptance to arise naturally. Awareness helps our mind keep distance from the things we encounter and the emotions we feel. As we become used to keeping a distance from our emotions and thoughts, it becomes easier to face them again. As long as we abide in awareness, their influences naturally fade.

Therefore, learning acceptance through meditation is not only about understanding this insight, but also about accepting things as they are through awareness. When we face different situations while abiding in awareness, we are able to accept them more easily.

3. The Ninth Element: Non-Judgment

Practicing non-judgment is actually a wise approach. Many modern people, influenced by Western education, value individuality and freedom. They feel that they should always have their own views about everything. So, when something happens, they often tend to criticize first, thinking it makes them look smart.

Buddhist practice does not completely avoid judgment. In practice, the mind works at two levels. One is the discriminative mind, which uses rational thinking. The other is the non-discriminative mind, which operates through pure intuition beyond reasoning. The Eight-Three Method teaches us to make good use of the discriminative mind—to apply rationality properly. By studying and reflecting on the teachings, we establish the right view. With the right view, we can re-examine all phenomena, and gain wisdom to see and judge things as they truly are. Therefore, the Eight-Three Method encourages us to make good use of rationality and judgment. This

shows that Buddhist practice does not avoid rationality or judgment. People make judgments to express their individuality, while Buddhist judgment is based on the right view and guided by wisdom. It places a higher demand on how we use rationality.

Why does mindfulness meditation emphasize non-judgment? Because once we judge, we enter the system of the discriminative mind. It is important to note, however, that non-judgment does not necessarily mean we have gone beyond the discriminative mind. There are many reasons for not judging—such as not wanting to judge, not paying attention, or simply being unable to judge. In mindfulness practice, non-judgment refers to the state that arises when the mind abides in awareness.

There are two ways we perceive things: one is through the discriminative mind, and the other is through awareness. These are two different ways of using the mind. Buddhist practice is simple in one way, yet not so simple in another. Why is it simple? Because practice is about changing the

habitual way we use our mind. Why is it not so simple? Because changing that habit is not easy.

Without practice, our mind tends to chase after external things. This activates the discriminative mind, judging whether something is good or bad, beneficial or harmful. However, meditation teaches us to use awareness instead. Whatever thoughts or mental images arise, we simply remain aware of them, like a clear mirror reflecting everything in the present moment. When we face our thoughts and mental images with awareness, we do not judge them. If we judge them, we will fall into the system of discriminative mind. If we do not enter judgment but abide in awareness, we enter the level of awareness within the mind. From this awareness, we can return to our true mind and awakened nature. Without practice, we keep chasing after external things; with practice, we unlock the awareness. These are two completely different ways of using the mind.

Should we never judge or compare? Not necessarily. If

we are more familiar with the wisdom of emptiness, our empty and clear mind grows stronger. In this case, even if we judge and compare, we can still abide in the awareness. Why do we emphasize not judging? Because in the early stages of meditation, awareness is not yet strong or stable. Once judgment arises, the mind slips back into discriminative mode, and awareness is lost. That is why the *Xinxin Ming (Faith in Mind)* says, “The supreme Way is not difficult; it only dislikes picking and choosing.” That is, realizing the great Way is not hard. As long as we do not enter the discriminative mind, we can naturally experience the original mind, where emptiness and clarity are non-dual.

Especially in the early stages of meditation, when we are still developing awareness, we should rely on awareness, rather than on discrimination. As our awareness grows stronger and we become more familiar with this clear mind, we can reach a more advanced stage of practice. At that stage, we can discern all phenomena while remaining unmoved in the ultimate truth, or make distinctions all day long while realizing their empty nature. In other

words, we can discriminate things while abiding in non-discriminative awareness. This represents a higher level of meditation practice. So, the use of discrimination in meditation is not fixed. Many people wonder why Buddhism sometimes teaches discrimination and at other times non-discrimination. In fact, these teachings address different stages of meditative practice, offering guidance tailored to each practitioner's faculties.

When we learn to unlock and cultivate awareness through meditation, learning not to judge is an essential part of the practice. What we cultivate is not mere non-judgement, but the ability to abide in awareness so that judgement naturally falls away. Mere non-judgement may come from other reasons, such as not knowing how to judge or simply lacking interest. That is a different matter. In mindfulness meditation, the focus is on abiding in awareness and learning to use awareness rather than judgement. When we keep practicing awareness, becoming familiar with it until it becomes our habit, then even when judgement arises, it no longer disturbs our mindfulness practice.

4. The Tenth Element: Right View

The right view is the correct understanding of the world and of life. Where does the right view come from? It arises through studying and reflecting on the teachings, as well as through practicing the Eight-Three Method. Only with the right view can we awaken true wisdom.

In developing the right view, it is especially important to see things through the principle of dependent origination. Just as modern physics is built on theories such as quantum mechanics, general relativity, special relativity, and other such theories, Buddhism teaches the principle of dependent origination—seeing that all phenomena arise from conditions. We can say that this principle embodies Buddhism's true understanding of the phenomenal world, the universe, and human life.

After studying Buddhism, many people gain profound teachings, yet fail to grasp the most fundamental right view of dependent origination when understanding

others or handling daily problems. Instead, they continue to approach problems from a self-centered perspective, driven by strong self-attachment and habitual likes and dislikes. In fact, true Buddhist practice means learning to interact with others and handle matters through the understanding of dependent origination. When we cultivate this way of thinking, we develop the right view—seeing impermanence, no-self, and that all things are empty in nature—for these insights all arise from understanding dependent origination.

How can we apply the right view during meditation? When thoughts or mental images arise, if we bring in the right view of no-self, we can observe: “A thought is just a thought—it is not the true self. An image is just an image—it is not the true self. Both thoughts and images have nothing to do with the true self.” However, ordinary people have a strong sense of self; whether in thinking or acting, they are guided by this self-centered feeling. If we do not know how to apply the right view in meditation, when a thought arises, most people follow

it unconsciously and become lost in it. But when the right view guides our meditation, we can clearly perceive bodily sensations, the flow of the breath, and the arising and passing of thoughts—seeing that all of them arise and cease through conditions. They are impermanent, constantly changing, and without a fixed self. All these thoughts and images are not the true self. Ultimately, we come to see that body, feelings, mind, and dharmas are, in their true nature, empty.

Why does Chan Buddhism say, “Seeking the mind, yet finding it unattainable”? Because the nature of mind is emptiness. If a thought were truly solid and real, how could it vanish completely when observed? Without the observation guided by the right view, even a single thought can grow overwhelming—some are so powerful that they can dominate our entire life for decades. When observation is guided by the right view, we can see through a thought the instant it arises and directly realize the empty nature of the mind.

So, meditation is not about deliberately getting rid of thoughts. Every thought is empty in nature—just as every wave is, in essence, nothing but water. We also don't need to judge our thoughts, or divide them into "good" and "bad." The moment we label a thought as "good," we've added another "good" thought; when we see a thought as "bad," we've created another "bad" one. In this way, our mind keeps producing all kinds of ideas—good and bad. Without noticing, these ideas create more delusive thoughts, and we start clinging to them. The true practice of meditation is to let go of all mental labels, and maintain observation guided by the right view. When we do this, all thoughts naturally return to the ocean of our awakened nature.

Chan Buddhism teaches Buddha-nature and emphasizes seeing one's true nature. Through this practice, we come to experience a mind that is clear and vast—a mind embodying both clarity and emptiness. The very nature of awareness is awakened nature: it knows all things clearly and completely, and is as vast as the void. This

understanding reflects the teaching of the Tathagatagarbha: all sentient beings inherently possess Buddha-nature.

Buddhist practice serves two purposes. On the one hand, it helps us see clearly the dualistic world, understanding that this world is dependently arising and illusory, so that we are no longer trapped in the dualistic opposition. On the other hand, it guides us to realize our original mind—the non-dual mind of clarity and emptiness. These different Buddhist insights reflect different levels of understanding of life. Some are meant to help us break through the fog of delusion, while others lead us directly to realize our true mind. When we start to practice meditation, we can use the right views of impermanence and no-self: seeing through the phenomenal world, and stepping beyond dualistic thinking. We come to realize that thoughts arise and cease through conditions, have no fixed self, and are empty in their very nature. As our awareness expands, we naturally return to the original mind. This path of practice is clear and not as complicated as we may imagine.

IV

CONCLUSION

Today we discussed the ten elements of mindfulness meditation. Everyone should first understand them completely, clearly, and accurately. It is important to know which are foundational elements, which are core elements, and which are applied to different situations during meditation. Once we understand them, we must apply them well in our mindfulness practice.

In the future, we will develop standardized self-assessment guides based on these ten elements for beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels of meditation. Meditation, once thought to be abstract, will no longer

seem so abstract.

In addition, for the foundational part of meditation, I have recently invited experienced yoga-teaching volunteers to integrate mindfulness practice into the Eight Mindful Exercises for Lotus Posture and Seven Mindful Exercises for Breathing. These have been produced as audio and video materials to help everyone better regulate the body and breath, thereby supporting mindfulness meditation. When we establish a solid foundation in mindfulness practice, use the right way of applying the mind, and make good use of the self-assessment checklist for the ten elements of beginner-level mindfulness meditation, mindfulness meditation will naturally become easier.

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