



THE LOTUS BUD

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Dear Sangha,

In this edition of The Lotus Bud we explore the link between love and non-self as themes in Buddhism and Thay's teachings. There is a sense in which when we are mindful we lose ourselves in the moment and are just 'are' without self-consciousness. And this mindfulness along with an awareness of interbeing are the conditions for the development of love, which itself requires us to give away our self-centredness. Love and non-self walk hand in hand. 🙏

Non-self is love

When you realize that the true nature of the self is non-self you know that your happiness and suffering depend on the happiness and suffering of others. That insight helps you not to do wrong things that will bring suffering to yourself and to other people. If you try to help your father to suffer less, you have a chance to suffer less. If you are able to help your son suffer less, then you, as a father, will suffer less. Thanks to the realisation that there is no separate self, you realise that happiness and suffering are not individual matters. You see the nature of interconnectedness and you know that to protect yourself you have to protect the human beings around you.

That is the goal of the practice—to realise non-self and interconnectedness. This is not just an idea or something you understand intellectually. You have to apply it to your daily life. Therefore you need concentration to maintain this

insight of non-self so it can guide you in every moment. Nowadays, scientists are able to see the nature of non-self in the brain, in the body, in everything. But what they have found doesn't help them, because they cannot apply that insight to their daily lives. So they continue to suffer. That is why in Buddhism we speak of concentration. If you have the insight of non-self, if you have the insight of impermanence, you should make that insight into a concentration that you keep alive throughout the day. Then what you say, what you think, and what you do will then be in the light of that wisdom and you will avoid making mistakes and creating suffering. 🙏

Love is the capacity to take care, to protect, to nourish. If you are not capable of generating that kind of energy toward yourself—if you are not capable of taking care of yourself, of nourishing yourself, of protecting yourself—it is very difficult to take

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Image by P. Appaiah

care of another person. In Buddhist teaching it is clear that to love oneself is the foundation of the love of other people. Love is a practice. Love is truly a practice.

To go home to the present moment, to take care of oneself, to get in touch with the wonders of life that are really available—that is already love. Love is to be kind to yourself, to be compassionate to yourself, to generate images of joy, and to look at everyone with eyes of equanimity and nondiscrimination.

That is something to be cultivated. Non-self can be achieved. It can be touched slowly. The truth can be cultivated. When you discover something, in the beginning you discover only part of it. If you continue, you have a chance to discover more. And finally you discover the whole thing. When you love, if your love is true, you begin to see that the other person is a part of you and you are a part of her or him. In that realisation there is already non-self. If you think that your happiness is different from their happiness, you have not seen anything of non-self, and happiness cannot be obtained. 🙏

So as you progress on the path of insight into non-self, the happiness brought to you by love will increase. When people love each other, the distinction, the limits, the frontier between them begins to dissolve, and they become one with the person they love. There's no longer any jealousy or anger, because if they are angry at the other person, they are angry

at themselves. That is why non-self is not a theory, a doctrine, or an ideology, but a realisation that can bring about a lot of happiness.

This insight of no-self, this insight of togetherness, is very crucial for our

survival and for the survival of our planet. It should not be just a notion that we can read in books; this insight should be something that animates our daily life. 🙏

Thich Nhat Hanh

www.shambalasun.com

Studying the self

“To study the Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things of the universe.”

- Zen teacher Dogen

Study The Way

To Study the way means a personal study of yourself. The Way is always personal and unique. There's frame works, but it's applied to each person's unique situation. Each of us does our own personal work. To be on the way is to be studying this thing called self.

Forgetting The Self

When we study the self, what we do is see the self. By seeing the self, we see it's tricks, it's games and illusions.

Our identity shifts away from being the self, to an integrated state, containing also what's there when there is no self. In that way, we no longer remember the self, we no longer place importance on the self. Things still happen, we still are, we breathe, we live, but there is no constant remembering of the I/Me/My. There is a living in the moment, and this living is in touch with reality. It's presence. It's consciousness, it's forgetting the self.

Universal Enlightenment

When we are living in this place, of the forgotten self, we see all things as they are, we see the ten thousand things. In this place we there is no projection. Rather we *see* things, we interact, we “embrace the touching point” of the present moment. And this place is Enlightenment. No ideas or concepts. Ideas and concepts extinguished, all that's left is reality; we live.

www.themiddleway.net

I'm in no hurry - I'm on my way to a hospice.

I arrived at the address and honked the horn. After waiting a few minutes I honked again. Since this was going to be my last ride of my shift I thought about just driving away, but instead I put the car in park and walked up to the door and knocked.. 'Just a minute', answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor.

After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 90's stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940's movie. By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets..

'Would you carry my bag out to the car?' she said.

When we got in the cab, she gave me an address and then asked, 'Could you drive through downtown?'

'It's not the shortest way,' I answered quickly..

'Oh, I don't mind,' she said. 'I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice. 🍵'

I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. 'I don't have any

family left,' she continued in a soft voice..' The doctor says I don't have very long.' I quietly reached over and shut off the meter. 🍵

'What route would you like me to take?' I asked.

For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. We drove through the neighbourhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had me pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl.

As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, 'I'm tired. Let's go now'. We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico.

'How much do I owe you?' She asked, reaching into her purse.

'Nothing,' I said

'You have to make a living,' she answered.

'There are other passengers,' I responded.

Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly.

'You gave an old woman a little moment of joy,' she said. 'Thank you.'

I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments.

But great moments often catch us unaware-beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one.

Edited version of an account written by a New York Taxi driver and found at:

<http://kindnessblog.com/2013/10/12/im-in-no-hurry-im-on-my-way-to-a-hospice/> 🍵



Image by briandeadly

WHO WE ARE

The Communities of Mindful Living are inspired by the Buddhist teachings of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh (pictured).



We aspire to live fully in each moment for the peace and happiness of ourselves and all beings. We meet regularly to observe the art of mindful living and to foster a supportive community of practitioners. 🧘

Contacts

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We would love to hear from you. We want the The Lotus Bud to be a place for sharing our experiences and building the Sangha; so why not write a short piece about your experiences with mindfulness ?

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Reading bell

As you read this magazine you have an opportunity to go back to the present moment.

You will notice a bell: 🧘 throughout the magazine.

When you come to each bell, you may like to stop reading, clear your mind and return to your breath before continuing.

Our main activities

Wednesday Mindfulness Meditation
Sydney, Inner West

We welcome all to come join us for meditation practice. We meet at 7:30 pm each Wednesday at the Buddhist Library, Church St, Camperdown, Sydney.

Meditation and monthly Mindfulness Days at Canley Heights

Southwest Sydney - 7.30pm
Friday Night Meditation and Monthly Mindfulness Days.
49 Ferngrove Rd Canley Heights.

Mindfulness Days at Nhap Luu (Entering the Stream)

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