



Becoming Wise

80 Practical Words of Wisdom Essential to Inner Growth,
Peace and Happiness in Everyday Life

Reverend Ming-An Chen

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Essential to Inner Growth, Peace
and Happiness in Everyday Life

Selected quotes by

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About the Author

Reverend Ming-An Chen (Dharma name *Hui-Ming*) is a disciple and Dharma heir of Venerable Master Shen-Kai, founder of Buddhahood Lineage World Humanity Vehicle Buddhism (Jen Chen Buddhism).

Born in 1954 to an impoverished family in Taiwan, Reverend Chen had to drop out of school at age 10 to herd cattle and help support his family, despite excelling at school. At 17, the compassionate vows he made in his past lives sprouted, compelling him to search for an enlightened monastic teacher to fulfil his wish of becoming a monk. Unfortunately, his search was in vain. At 27, he established the Loving-Kindness Charity to help the poor and needy.

At 29, Reverend Chen met Venerable Master Shen-Kai for the first time at the Venerable's monastery. As if they had known each other from previous lives, the Venerable's first words to him were, "You have finally arrived!" Reverend Chen stayed at the monastery for three days. While watching roses bloom and wilt in the garden, he profoundly understood the essence of the Buddhadharma. At that moment, he was instantly awakened and the boundary between time and space vanished entirely.

Upon leaving the monastery, Reverend Chen shaved his head and proceeded to seek his parents' permission to become a monk. However, his parents strongly objected and he realised his wish to monkhood was impossible. Instead, he decided to devote his time and efforts to support his Teacher in spreading Humanity Vehicle Buddhism, and lead fellow practitioners in their cultivation. He served as President of the *Laity Bodhisattva Committee* for 10 years, and currently holds the honoured title of Permanent President of *Cheng-Chuan Bodhisattva Association*.

Despite old age and illness, Venerable Master Shen-Kai was very concerned about the wisdom life of sentient beings. Before he passed away in August 1996 in USA, he phoned Reverend Chen in Taiwan and specifically instructed him to continue the lineage and to spread the Prajña-Dharma, citing "No one but you can take over this duty."

Since then, Reverend Chen has braved all kinds of difficulties and obstacles in following his Teacher's wishes. Always dedicated to the cultivation and enlightenment of sentient beings, he has been tirelessly carrying on the lineage and legacy of his Teacher in the practice of the Bodhisattva Way and transmission of the Great Dharma. For the past 40 years, he has been preaching the Buddha's teachings ceaselessly and wholeheartedly, guiding people to cultivate and awaken

to their innate Buddha-nature.

His profound wisdom is much sought after and he travels widely to impart Prajña teachings in America, Australia, Singapore and Taiwan. Through his talks and Question & Answer sessions, Reverend Chen explains the profound Buddhadharma with ease and simplicity by putting them into the context of everyday life, making his teachings easy to comprehend and relate to. Reverend Chen's strong and confident words never fail to captivate his audience. His words of wisdom fall freely like Dharma rain, deeply awakening people to its very essence and enlightening their minds with the blossoming of wisdom. Thus, people are given the right views and understanding to apply the Buddhadharma in their daily lives, so as to progress diligently on their path of cultivation.

Reverend Chen sets himself to be a role model. He lives simply and unassumingly, completely at ease in all roles that he plays in life: be it farming in the fields, cooking in the kitchen, teaching on stage or giving advice. He hopes to inspire more people to strengthen their inner stillness and to purify their mind by developing the ability to maintain self-awareness through constant observation of the mind, thereby attaining greater ease and wisdom to meet life's challenges.

Foreword

Practising the Bodhisattva Way in this human world

Humanity Vehicle Buddhism (Jen Chen Buddhism 人乘佛教) places human beings at its core. It aims to purify the mind back to its original pristine awareness. With strengthened ability to maintain self-awareness, we eradicate our self-serving temperaments and habits, develop virtue and morality in conduct and speech, guide each other through wisdom and compassion, cultivate to attain Bodhisattvahood, and practise the Bodhisattva Way in this human world for the enlightenment and liberation of sentient beings; thus creating a blissful and harmonious world for all. This is Humanity Vehicle (人乘).

In order to spread the Buddhadharma in this human world, Venerable Master Shen-Kai initiated the promotion of Humanity Vehicle Buddhism, one of five vehicles of teachings expounded by Śākyamuni Buddha. Thus, it can be said that Venerable Master Shen-Kai was the first person in history to promote Humanity Vehicle Buddhism.

What is meant by attaining Buddhahood through Humanity Vehicle (人乘入佛)? It means that since you have encountered the Buddhadharma in this human

world and have attained Bodhisattvahood, then you have to attain Buddhahood in this human world by your compassionate vows to return lifetime after lifetime.

Why do you vow to return lifetime after lifetime? Because it is in this human world that you acquire the Buddhadharma and practise the Bodhisattva Way, therefore, sentient beings in this human world must have supported and made offerings to you. As all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have compassionate vows to guide all sentient beings to awakening, isn't this world full of sentient beings who await your guidance?

Since your causal conditions are fulfilled in this human world, you should earnestly guide sentient beings here. In particular, the Buddhist scripture states that Maitreya Bodhisattva will attain Buddhahood in this human world. Let us come together to build a pure land here to welcome the birth of the next Buddha, Maitreya Bodhisattva, when this human world becomes a Pure Land. If you know how to purify your mind now, your mind is now a pure land. If you are cultivating, you are already practising the Bodhisattva Way.

Reverend Ming-An Chen

Buddhahood Lineage

World Humanity Vehicle Buddhism

(Jen Chen Buddhism)

In his lifetime, Śākyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism taught a total of five vehicles of teachings:

1. Humanity Vehicle (pronounced Jen Chen 人乘 in Mandarin)
2. Deva Vehicle
3. Śrāvaka Vehicle
4. Pratyekabuddha Vehicle
5. Bodhisattva Vehicle

‘Vehicle’ is used as an analogy to a mode of transport – like a car, ship or airplane which delivers people from one place to another. Humanity Vehicle Buddhism (Jen Chen Buddhism) is the teachings of wisdom that Śākyamuni Buddha preached to humanity.

The word ‘Buddha’ means ‘pristine awareness, fully awakened, fully enlightened’. The Lotus Sutra states, “*In the Buddha lands of the ten directions, there is only one vehicle of teaching. There is no second or third, unless you are speaking of the expedient teachings of the Buddha.*” Śākyamuni Buddha expounded five vehicles of teachings to cater for sentient beings’ different causal conditions and levels of understanding. Ultimately, there is only one vehicle – the vehicle that

leads to supreme enlightenment: Buddhahood Vehicle.

As such, the Buddhahood Lineage was established in hope that we may emulate the Buddha in his cultivation, enhance our self-awareness, attain our innate Buddha-nature and practise Humanity Vehicle Buddhism. By observing the Five Precepts¹ and performing the Ten Virtuous Deeds², we lay foundations which ensure our rebirth in human form lifetime after lifetime, so that we may continually practise the Bodhisattva Way and eventually attain Buddhahood. Thus, Buddhahood Lineage World Humanity Vehicle Buddhism (Jen Chen Buddhism) promotes the original teachings of Śākyamuni Buddha. We pay homage to Śākyamuni Buddha and practise the Way of Bodhisattvas.

The objective of Buddhahood Lineage is to promote Humanity Vehicle Buddhism, purify the human mind, unfold the wisdom of humanity, and establish a far-reaching culture of bliss that transforms our impure world into a blissful pure land.

*Dharma Translation Council
Jen Chen Buddhism
(Humanity Vehicle Buddhism)*

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承担

最大的敌人就是自己，犯错不敢承担。



Shoulder Responsibility

You are your greatest enemy when you lack courage to take responsibility for your mistakes.



要忍耐生活上的承担。



Endure while undertaking life's responsibilities.

3 

一个公司的老板，一个工厂的老板，他敢把工作跟责任交代给你，他是用整个工厂在冒险，你去做人家的工，领人家的薪水，孑然一身，只是付出心力、劳力而已，但是老板他看到你有能力、有忍耐力，他希望栽培你成为一个人材，以后作为公司的干部，他会尝试把公司很多的事情、责任都交代给你，如果你的内在没有那份的承担力，你会觉得压力很大，其实这是在训练你。

3 

The boss of a company or factory has taken a risk by entrusting the job, along with its responsibilities, to you. As a paid employee, you merely put in your mental energy and physical efforts. When the boss recognizes your ability, endurance and fortitude, he will try assigning you more responsibilities in hopes of nurturing you into a talent, capable of undertaking a management position in future. If you do not have the capacity to shoulder these responsibilities, you will feel enormous stress; when in fact, this is your training.



错误与无知

一切的错误与无知，都是智慧及知识的不足。



Mistakes & Ignorance

All mistakes and ignorance are due to lack of wisdom and knowledge.

5

为什么一错再错

错误是结果，不是问题。

很多人都是看到错误了，才在错误里面找问题。我告诉你：错误是一种结果，不是问题。这是一个很深很深的人生见解。

你要去想：这个错误已经产生，是一个结果，我当初面对这一件事情，是用什么思想跟什么心态来做出这个决定，当初面对这件事情，是思想出问题，还是决定出问题，变成今天错误的结果。能够这样，叫做智慧。

如果你是在这个结果里找问题，找得到吗？不是你对就是我错，在那边找来找去、推来推去而已啦！如果你在结果找问题，我保证你一定会再犯同样的错。

5

Why is the Same Mistake Repeated

A mistake is the *outcome*, not the *problem*.

Many people try to find the problem only after a mistake is made. Let me tell you: a mistake is the *outcome*, not the *problem*. This is a very profound understanding of life.

You must reflect – a mistake has been made, this mistake is the outcome. When first faced with this matter, what mindset and mentality did I apply to make this decision? Was it my mindset or was it the decision that was wrong, resulting in today's mistake? The ability to do so is *Wisdom*.

If you try to find the problem from the outcome, can you find it? It will just be a case of finding who was at fault and pushing the blame around! If you look for the problem from the outcome, I assure you the same mistake will be made again.



有价值的错

如果一个有修行的人就会检讨：我错在什么地方。我能够自观内省，我能够把错的原因找出来，那这个错是有价值的，这个错是具备以后成功的最基本条件，那这个错不算错，因为错让你找出原因，因为错让你成长嘛！那这个错不是也很成功吗？



A Valuable Mistake

A person who is cultivating will reflect: “Where have I gone wrong?” With introspection, he can find the cause of his mistake. This mistake is thus valuable as it encompasses the most basic foundation for future success. This mistake is therefore not considered a mistake because it allows him to discover its cause and enables him to mature! Isn’t this mistake a success as well?



彻底失败的原因

有的人彻底的失败，是因为不知道错了，又没办法找出原因，所以变成因为错而堕落，因为错而没有自信心，那这个人向错误承认自己彻底失败了，这才是最糟糕！



The Reason for Complete Failure

Some people fail completely because they do not realise they have made a mistake and are unable to find the cause of their mistake. Therefore, because of the mistake, they become depraved; because of the mistake, they lack confidence. They thus concede total defeat to the mistake. This is most terrible!



失败与成功

成功的人，是找出方法；
失败的人，是找出理由。



Failure & Success

A successful person finds solutions.
A failure finds excuses.



一个人遇到了挫折，遇到了失败，没有自观内省的能力，那这个人肯定向失败承认自己彻底失败了！

而一个真正成功的人，是在失败挫折当中，能够自观内省，来检查那些失败的前因后果，然后他变得比以前更成熟。因为这些失败、这些挫折，没有在他的内心里面留下伤痕，反而更有经验，反而更勇敢。是不是应该要这样？大部分的人都认为做不到，所以成功的人才很少。



A person who faces setbacks and failures, but lacks the ability to self-reflect, has definitely conceded total defeat to her failures.

A truly successful person is able to self-reflect amidst failures and setbacks. She examines the causes and consequences of her failures and becomes more mature than before. As these setbacks and failures leave no scars in her heart and mind, she instead becomes more experienced and courageous. Shouldn't this be the case? Most people think it is not possible, that is why few succeed.

10 

一个内在提升很好的人，他是在挫折、失败当中来成熟自己，来变成自己一种很好的思想跟理念。他不会犯同样的错误，因为有过一次的失败，他比以前更成熟，他比以前更有理性，这样才叫做一个成功的人。

10 

A person with an elevated inner state of being matures through setbacks and failures. He transforms such experiences into positive mindset and concepts. He does not repeat the same mistakes because having failed once, he is more mature and rational than before. This is a successful person.

11 

我今天在很得意的时候，我比以前更冷静来控制自己；我在失败的时候，我也很冷静地在观察自己，这样你就成功了，不管有没有修行，不管是在家出家，都是要这样。

11 

When all is well, I am calmer than before in exercising self-control. When I fail, I also calmly observe myself. In this way, you have succeeded. This should be the way regardless of whether one is cultivating, or are a monastic or lay person.

12 

成长

思想要成长，决定的事才能增长。自己无法要求自我超越，自己才是最大的失败。

12 

Growth

Our thinking must mature for our decisions to be better. When we fail to demand to surpass ourselves, we become our greatest failure.

13 

心灵要成长，心地空间才能宽广。自己无法要求自我放下，如何幸福快乐？

13 

You must grow spiritually for your heart and mind to expand. If you cannot demand yourself to let go, how can you be blissful and happy?

14 

我们要不断地去成长，不断地去累积，对我们有益身心、有益生活、有益思想上强化的道理、佛法，我们都要去吸收。

14 

We must continuously develop ourselves and absorb teachings and Buddhadharma that benefit our body, mind and way of life, as well as enrich and strengthen our mindset.

15 

学习

不管男众、女众，都要多多学习，来磨练自己的心境，女众要学男众的事，男众要学女众的事。修行不可以脱离了生活、实际。

15 

Learning

Irrespective of gender, we should all aspire to learn extensively to refine our state of mind. Women should learn tasks usually performed by men; men should learn tasks usually performed by women. Cultivation cannot be separated from the realities of life.

16 

进步

没有智慧，也要有常识，所以要不断的修习进步。

16 

Improvement

Even without wisdom, we must still have common knowledge and skills. Therefore, we must continuously learn and improve.

17 

你要有智慧, 要从自观内省开始修。

17 

If you want to have wisdom, begin by cultivating introspective awareness.

18 

不能因为别人的赞叹跟自己的满意，而忽略了自己自观内省的能力。要勇于承担、勇于改进，不能沉醉于人家的赞叹跟拥戴之中，这样只会停在那种状况，不能进步。

18 

Do not, because of praise from others and self-satisfaction, neglect to be introspective. We must be brave to shoulder responsibilities and have the courage to improve ourselves. Do not indulge in praise and support by others, for we will remain stagnant with no progress.

19 

思想与观念

自己要养成一种好的思想、正确的观念、好的习气，来改造自己，成就未来，这样学佛修行，才会得到最大的利益，即使未逢善知识，自己也不会堕落。

19 

Mindset & Concepts

We must cultivate good mindset, right concepts and good habits to transform ourselves to attain a better future. We will reap the most benefits by learning and practising Buddhism this way. Even if we have yet to encounter a wise teacher, we will not fall into a decadent life.

20 

无形资产

学习更好的智慧跟思想概念，就是你们的无形资产，作为你们人生的中心，在人海丛林当中，可以定点，找出方向。

20 

Intangible Assets

Learning better wisdom and mindset are your intangible assets. It centers your life – amidst a sea of people, it provides an anchor, enabling you to find a direction.

21 

生命与人生

生命是因为有智慧而可贵，
生命是因为懂得学习而有意义。

21 

Life

Life is valuable because one has wisdom.

Life is meaningful because one knows to learn and improve.

22 

我们的生命是随着日子在消逝，所以时间就是我们的生命。我们时时刻刻要利用我们学佛修行的智慧在生活当中去体悟、去进步、去珍惜自己的生命，来做出有意义的事，不然你永远就是物质名利和情缠的奴隶。

22 

Our life fades with the passage of time. Therefore, time is life. We must, at every moment, apply the wisdom gained from our learning and practising of the Buddhadharma in our daily lives, to have realisations, to improve, and to cherish our lives to do meaningful things. Otherwise, we will forever be slaves to materialism, fame, fortune and emotional attachments.

23 

人生开始没有，结束没有，这段中间所拥有的，我们要好好去利用，让它更有意义，更有价值，包括我们的生命。

23 

Life starts with nothing and ends with nothing. We must make good use of what we possess in between – enhance its meaning and value, including life itself.

24 

不要浑浑噩噩的就过了一生，把自己必经之路规划好、计划好，沿这条路，一路走过去，你就会过得比较自在，比较不会受到那种善恶境界的落差，而影响到你的人生品质，影响到你的生命价值。

24 

Do not wander through life muddle-headedly. Plan well for the path you must embark on and proceed accordingly. You will live with more ease and be less affected by the disparity of positive and negative situations and experiences which affects your quality and value of life.

25 

人生两条路三种平等

人生只有两条路：死路和解脱路。

人生有三种平等：生死平等，因果平等，佛性
俱足平等。

由此看来，如果大家是很聪明、很有根器的，
就知道人生应该要往哪个方向了。

25 

Two Paths & Three Equalities

There are only two paths in life: the path to death and
the path to liberation.

There are three types of equalities in life: the equality
of birth and death, the equality of cause and effect,
and the equality of being complete with Buddha-nature.

Therefore, if you are smart and have good capacity
for enlightenment, you will know which direction to
take in life.

26 

物质与情缠的牵制

只拥有物质跟世间的情缠，而没有解脱的思想，只会造成你一生的痛苦，你的人生是堕落的、是被束缚牵制的。因为你享受了物质，养成自己不好的习惯，也把你的福报损坏掉；情缠爱染舍不掉，心业就一世比一世还重。

26 

**Controlled by Material &
Emotional Attachments**

To solely acquire material possessions and develop emotional attachments to worldly affairs without a mindset towards liberation will only result in a life of suffering. It is a decadent way of life that is bounded and controlled by your attachments. Indulgence in material pleasures leads to breeding of bad habits and diminished blessings; the inability to let go of emotional attachments and desires compounds our mental karma, lifetime after lifetime.

27 

太过于享受，会靡烂自己的身心。

27 

Over-indulgence is decadent to the mind and body.

28 

拥有越多，你是越被它套牢！因为物质一直在延伸，你的生命只要没了，外在的都是别人的，但是你会想不开哦，你会想不开而离开这个人间。

28 

The more you possess, the more you are shackled by your possessions. Despite your growing material possessions, once your life ends, it all belongs to others. If you are unable to come to terms with this, you will leave this world with regret and unease.

29 

金钱存在银行，只是一个数字而已。一切的物质财产，实际上是与共业（天灾地变、兵灾、不肖子孙）共享而已，刹那间就化为乌有。

29 

Money saved in the bank is nothing more than a number. All material wealth coexists with communal karma (such as natural disasters, fires, wars, and unfilial offspring). It can vanish in an instant.

30 

过分的关心，也是情缠。看到很可怜、贫穷的，作为我们的借镜：这都是因宿世未布施、行善所致。可怜之人，宿世必有可恶之处，而导致今世的凄惨。

30 

Excessive care and concern is also a form of emotional attachment. When we see someone pitiful or poor, we should reflect upon it – it is due to lack of giving and doing virtuous deeds in previous lives. Those who are pitiful must have had an unwholesome cause from their previous lives, resulting in their current plight.

31 


因果

这一生当中所受的一切，皆源於过去所做的：过去的因，现在的果。当自己在受这个果或是因缘时，自己所反应出来的，又将是新的因。

31 

Cause and Effect

All that we experience in this life stems from what we have done in the past: past cause, present effect. How we react to the effect or condition while bearing it will again produce new causes.

32 

处理事情以事理不以人情

学佛修行的人，处理事情，必须要以事理——事必须要以理去理，这叫事理——为之重点及原则，不可以人情。用人情去处理事情，到最后一定会产生得失，一方得，另一方就是失。

32 

Exercise Rationality, Not Feelings

A Buddhist practitioner must use rationality and objectivity when handling matters, not personal favours or relationships. This is an important principle. When handling matters based on personal favours, the outcome surely results in gains and losses: one party gains, the other loses.

33 

自限与无限

心生自限，无心就无限。

33 

Self-Limitation vs. Boundlessness

One is limited by one's thinking mind.
When there is no mind, one is boundless.

34 

夫妻、朋友之间，若是两人的思想立场太过于执着，而闹得不可开交，叫做划地自限。

34 

If both parties in a marriage or friendship are overly attached to their own viewpoints and irreconcilable conflict ensues, this is called setting self-imposed boundaries to limit oneself.

35 

做事

不论在哪里做事，只要尽心尽力地把它做好，其他的一切都要随缘，不要因自己的我见，而与对方起对立。我们可以提议，但如果对方不接受，要学习放下，才会解脱自在。

35 

Doing Tasks

Regardless of where you are carrying out tasks, just put in your very best effort and leave the rest to run its natural course. Do not get into conflict with others because of your own opinions. We can make suggestions, but if the other party is not receptive, learn to let go. Only then will you be liberated and at ease.

36 

家庭

家庭的定义：不是只拥有一座房子，几个小孩，一个先生、太太而已，而是住在里面的人，要共同来维护，增进彼此间的和谐与幸福。

而在这个过程中，就有必要舍弃自己不好的个性、习气，要尽量包容对方，及对方的家人。

36 

Family

The meaning of family is not limited to having a house, a spouse and children. It is about family members working together to safeguard and enhance the harmony and happiness among each other.

In the process, it is critical that we forgo the undesirable aspects of our personality and habitual tendencies. We must do our best to accommodate the other party, as well as their families.

37 

把佛法落实于生活中

很多人把修行变成一种意识型态，以为诵经、念佛、打坐就是在修行，这是错误的观念，你只是把它当作是消灾解厄、修福的一种工具而已。

真正的学佛修行，是要落实在自己的生活遭遇当中，在生活中面对人事物的遭遇，都能自我把持一种清凉自在，或是平等的心态，能这样的话，你已经入经藏了。

37 

**Applying Buddhadharma¹
in our Daily Lives**

Many people perceive cultivation as an ideology. They think cultivation is reciting sutras, chanting the Buddha's name and meditation. This is the wrong concept as you are merely using it as a tool to avoid misfortunes and accumulate blessings.

The true spirit of learning and practising Buddhism is to apply the teachings amidst the encounters of our daily lives. It is being able to maintain our cool, ease and equanimity through our daily encounters with people, matters and things. If you can achieve this, you have understood and realised the Dharma.

¹**Buddhadharma:** The teachings and practices of the Buddha.

38 

在日常生活当中，每个人的生活方式、因缘、遭遇都不一样，在都不一样的当中，要如何借用你所懂的佛法，来用到你的日常当中？

就是要时时刻刻在心中，都要有佛法的存在。

38 

In the midst of daily life, everyone's lifestyle, causal conditions and encounters are different. Amidst such differences, how do we apply the Buddhadharma we have learnt in our everyday life?

It is to have the Buddhadharma present in our mind at all times.

39 

在生活上，我们要用佛法的实践，利益自己的身心，若没有用身心去实践，那你也没办法来修证佛法。

39 

In daily life, we must apply Buddhadharma to benefit our body and mind. Without putting it into practice through our body and mind, we have no way of realising the Buddhadharma.

40 

要把佛法用在生活中，就是心中要时时刻刻都有佛法的存在。

40 

To apply Buddhadharma in our life, we must have Buddhadharma present in our mind at every moment.

41 

面对生活、人群，你看到的就是善恶及得失，如果你没办法调伏自己的内心，不能把所懂的佛法，用在日常生活中，在生活的过程当中，就会因人与人之间的善恶得失，而产生了不如意。所有的痛苦及烦恼，都是如此而来的。

41 

In life and through the people we meet, we see good, bad, gains and losses. If we are unable to manage our inner state and do not apply Buddhadharma in our daily lives, we will be dissatisfied and unhappy by the good, bad, gains and losses from our interactions with people. This is how distresses and vexations come about.

42 

不管多深的佛法，甚至是解脱的佛法，如果你不能用在自己的生活，在你的知识和智慧上没有这种概念，那么那些佛法对你一点用都没有。

所以说出世的佛法，不离世间法；出世的觉，不离世间觉。

42 

Regardless of how profound the Buddhadharma is, even the Buddhadharma of Liberation, if you do not practise it in your daily life and have no such concept in your knowledge and intelligence, then these teachings are of no use to you at all.

It is thus said, “*Supra-mundane Buddhadharma is not separate from the way of the mundane world; neither is supra-mundane awareness separate from the awareness of all life experiences.*”

43 

功夫

修行要靠自己下功夫，各人用功深浅不同，所以各人开智慧解脱的时间、因缘也不同。解脱无前后，但看用心的功夫而已。

43 

Effort

Cultivation and practice require consistent effort. As the diligence of individuals vary, so do the time and causal conditions to unfold wisdom and attain liberation. There is no orderly sequence of attaining liberation among individuals, it only depends on the diligent effort they put into their practice.

44 

修行要下长久功夫，要下定决心，修个长久功夫，那底子就很坚实。

修行不是一朝一夕的功夫，在道理上可以了解了，但是实际的体验还没出来。所以要去行，在‘行’中去取‘证’。

44 

Cultivation and practice require longstanding effort. With unwavering determination and persistent effort, we can build a solid foundation.

Cultivation and practice cannot be fulfilled in a day. We may understand the teachings in theory but have yet to really experience it, thus we have to practise; attain enlightenment amidst our practice.

45 

看到别人的成功，要想到别人当时所用的苦功。

45 

When seeing others succeed, you must think of the hard work they have put in.

46 

向内心下功夫

不管你做任何行业，你的内在要面对这些法义，你要如法的向内心下功夫，这才是根本。

外在的，只是你生活上必需要做的功课。但是你内在的功课，是胜于外在的功课。不要外在做得很好，到最后生死没解脱，只是福报一堆，死得好冤枉。

46 

Cultivating your Inner Mind

Irrespective of what you do for a living, internally, you must consistently cultivate your inner state according to the Dharma. This is fundamental.

While external forms of practice are necessary in daily life, internal cultivation is more important. To only excel outwardly; accumulating lots of blessings, without eventually liberating yourself from the cycle of birth and death, is indeed pitiful!

47 

修行就是要向内心下功夫，没有向内自觉觉照，只有表面上的形上学，是没有用的。

47 

In cultivation, you must diligently observe your inner mind with pristine awareness. Only learning and practising on the surface, without going inwardly to maintain your self-awareness, is of no use.

48 

学佛修行，是要彻底从内心里面下功夫，没有挂虑，没有任何东西可以把你绑住、黏住，这样你还有什么痛苦烦恼？没有嘛！

48 

In learning to be Buddha, you must thoroughly put in effort to observe your inner mind with pristine awareness. Without worries and anything to bind you or attach to, what distresses or vexations will you have? None!

49 

一个有自觉能力的人，他不是向外去追求，而是向内在去充实。因为真正的幸福，是在你的内心，你们感觉很好，就很快乐；你们感觉不好，就不快乐，所以在内心。

49 

One who has self-awareness does not chase after external pursuits. He enriches himself from within because true happiness is in your inner mind. When you feel good, you are happy. When you don't feel good, you are unhappy. Therefore, happiness is in the inner mind.

50 

自我调伏

一个懂得修行的人，会自我觉照，自我检讨，能力是愈来愈强的，他会调伏自己的心态，降低自己，把头低一点。

50 

Self-Tame

A person who knows how to cultivate has self-awareness illuminating his inner mind and is introspective. His ability grows stronger over time. He is able to adjust his mental attitude, tame his ego and be humble.

51 

学佛修行，最大的利益就是：自己要有办法调伏自己，让自己能够放得下，能够看得开、想得破，这样才是真正的幸福快乐。

51 

In learning to be Buddha, the greatest benefit is this: the ability to tame and manage oneself so one is able to let go, come to acceptance, and view things with clarity. This is true happiness and bliss.

52 

不要随着外在的善恶得失因缘，而来产生内在的烦恼及痛苦。若因外在的苦，外在的境界相，或是善恶得失好坏的示现，而来产生自己精神趣味上的好坏喜恶，这样学佛，就没有在调伏自己的内心，对自己的身心并不受益！

52 

Do not follow external conditions of good, bad, gains and losses, and arise vexations and distresses. If you arise likes, dislikes, good or bad in your mind due to external suffering and circumstances, or due to manifestations of good, bad, gains and losses, then you did not tame your inner mind despite learning Buddhism. This is not beneficial to your body and mind!

53 

你如何能够自己来调伏自己、把握自己的内心，时时刻刻把持在一种能够开放、能够解放，让自己的内心有更大的空间，那你就快乐了！你就自在了！

53 

If you are able to regulate yourself and master your inner mind, constantly maintain an open and liberated state that allows your inner state to expand – then you will be happy and at ease!

54 

把所知道佛法的思想，用来调伏自己的心，尽量不要去想，自然就没有念头，内心的妄念，自然就越来越少了。你的身心延伸出来的行为，就越来越冷静、端庄。这样叫做自然庄严。

因为一个没有妄念、欲念的人，他自然身心就庄严，一个妄念、欲念习气很重的人，他怎么庄严都庄严不起来。

54 

Use the ideologies of Buddhadharma that you know to manage your mind. Try your best to minimise needless thinking and naturally, there will be no thoughts. Over time, wandering thoughts will naturally diminish. Gradually, the behaviour effected from your mind and body will be calm and decorous – this is being naturally dignified.

A person without illusory thoughts and desires will naturally have a dignified mind and body. One who has strong habitual tendencies of desires and wandering thoughts will never be dignified, no matter how he tries.

55 

突破

学佛修行，在生活当中，就要慢慢去要求自己，来突破自己现有的常识。平常如果不这样子要求突破，等到有一天遭遇到事情状况了，再去要求自己达到这种的境界及程度，当然做不到。

55 

Breakthrough

In learning to be Buddha, we must gradually demand more of ourselves to break through our present common knowledge in our daily lives. If we do not regularly demand such breakthroughs, it will be impossible to achieve the level of proficiency required in our cultivation to overcome challenges when we encounter adverse situations and conditions.

56 

你就是因为‘知道’了常识，你就被‘定死’了。你被它‘定死’，而又无法调伏自己，所以时常在自己的常识压制之下，产生妄念、烦恼、痛苦，而使自己无法超越自己，所以要突破常识。无思，就当下突破一切常识、痛苦、业障。

56 

It is because we ‘know’ common knowledge that we become ‘fixated’ on what we know. Being ‘fixated’ and yet unable to manage our inner state, we often end up being inhibited or stifled by what we know. This brings about unnecessary thinking, vexations and distresses that prevent us from surpassing ourselves. Therefore, we need to break through our common knowledge. A pristine mind with no thinking instantly transcends all common knowledge, distresses and karmic hindrances.

57 

今天所有的烦恼，是因为你有这个‘相’的存在，由相而入‘名’。

57 

All our worries and distresses are due to the existence of ‘forms’ in our mind, through which we create ‘labels’.

58 

要把自己修得好，就要达到冤亲平等，无差别的因缘；所有一切的因缘，都是境界。对于顺逆境，如意、失意，这些都是境界、名相和常识，要能突破这些常识、名相。

58 

In order to cultivate well, you must be able to achieve equality in your heart and mind towards loved ones and foes, without differences in causal conditions. All causal conditions are phenomena. Whether conditions are going smoothly or adversely, favourably or unfavourably, these are merely phenomena, labels, forms and common knowledge. You must break through all labels, forms and common knowledge.

59 

为什么很多人遭遇到的很多困难、痛苦，
甚至已经学佛修行了，都没有办法突破？
就是因为受限在常识及名相之下。

59 

Why are so many people, even those who are already learning and practising Buddhism, unable to surpass themselves when encountering many difficulties and sufferings?

It is because they are constrained by common knowledge, labels and forms.

60 

突破心境

唯有自觉自知，才能自悟，才能不断突破现有的心境。

60 

Surpass your State of Mind

Only through self-awareness and self-realisation can we achieve self-awakening and continuously surpass our prevailing state of mind.

61 

超越常识与名相

我们的思想，是由吸收知识而来，知识又是由文字而来，文字又是由世间的善恶及一切相而所定名，叫做文字。

所以不管怎么使用‘知识’，都是在善恶、得失、是非当中去判断；不管怎么作选择，都是在‘相’里面。

61 

**Transcending Common Knowledge,
Label & Form**

Our mindset comes from the knowledge we acquire; knowledge is derived from words; words are coined based on all the good and bad, including all forms, in the world.

Therefore, regardless of how we utilise ‘knowledge’, it is based on judgements made amidst all good and bad, gains and losses, rights and wrongs. No matter what choices we make, they are all within the boundaries of ‘form’.

我们今天修行，要解决这些痛苦烦恼，就要超越‘名’及‘相’，所以：

常识之下，压制着勇气与决心，是凡夫。勇气与决心能超越常识，才能异于常人。

因为有一个‘我’的存在，所以才会怕‘死’！所以要先没有这个‘我’，才有办法超越这个‘生死’。要先没有这个‘我’的时候，这个‘常识’，一定要先超越这个‘我’，所以这个勇气及决心，一定要先超越这个常识。

In our cultivation, to resolve our sufferings and worries, we have to transcend ‘labels’ and ‘forms’. Ordinary beings have their courage and determination inhibited by their common knowledge. To be extraordinary, your courage and determination must transcend common knowledge.

We are afraid of death because of the notion of ‘I’. Therefore, we can only transcend birth and death when there is no ‘I’. To be free from ‘I’, our common knowledge must first transcend ‘I’. Thus, our courage and determination must first transcend common knowledge.

62 

地藏菩萨的愿

地藏菩萨的愿，是发在常识之上，超越常识。

62 

**The Vows of
Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva**

The vows of Kṣitigarbha (Di-Zang) Bodhisattva were made beyond common knowledge; it transcends common knowledge.

63 

勇气与决心

我们要点点滴滴在生活当中，遇到小小的障碍，就要以勇气及决心来突破现有的障碍，以养成我们时刻有那个勇气及佛法，来面对我们的生活。

63 

Courage & Determination

In the face of minor obstacles that we encounter in every aspect of our daily lives, we must exercise courage and determination to break through the prevailing obstacles. In doing so, we develop constant courage and Buddhadharma within us to face everything in life.

64 

所谓的障碍：就是以自己的知识、常识，无法解决的就叫障碍。

面对这个障碍，你的勇气及决心，要超越这个障碍，才有办法突破。突破那个障碍之后，就变成你人生过程中，最宝贵的一种经验，那个叫做智慧，佛教叫做体验。

64 

An obstacle is something you are unable to resolve with your current intellect and common knowledge.

You can only have breakthroughs if your courage and determination surpasses the obstacle. Once you have broken through this obstacle, it becomes a most valuable experience in your life. This is known as wisdom. In Buddhism, it is known as realisation through experience.

65 

勇气不怕大山在前，
只怕心中无路无方向。

65 

Courage does not fear mountains of obstacles.
It fears the lack of direction and path within one's
heart and mind.

66 

一个人最大的勇气，不是指面对死亡，而是对自己的错误，勇于坦然面对，勇于改过，而不是逃避、掩饰。

66 

A person's greatest courage is not in facing death. It is in calmly facing up to our mistakes and correcting them, instead of avoiding and concealing them.

67 

诸佛菩萨在因地修行的时候，绝对也有做错过，但是他们就是知道错了，勇于认错，勇于改过，勇于承担。

67 

Prior to attaining enlightenment, all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have definitely committed wrongs in their past lives. However, upon realising their mistakes, they were brave to admit, make amends and take responsibility for them.

68 

菩萨逆修

把习气变成根器，叫菩萨逆修。

68 

Inverse Cultivation of Bodhisattvas

Transforming habitual tendencies into capacity for enlightenment and liberation is the Bodhisattvas' way of inverse cultivation.

69 

借假修真

修行若能念念自觉，便能借假修真，把我们的思考变成领悟，把我们的业障生命变成慧命，所以要珍惜这短暂的生命，好好地借假修真。

69 

Realise the Truth from Illusions

In cultivation, if we can observe every thought with self-awareness, we are able to realise the underlying truth from illusory thoughts in our mind. We can transform our contemplations into realisations; our karmic life into wisdom life. Hence, we should cherish and make full use of this short lifetime to realise the truth from our illusions.

70 

净化

要透过佛法的修持，来净化我们的心识作用。

70 

Purify

We must, through cultivating the Buddhadharma, purify the mental activities of our mind-consciousness.

71 

用功与落实

在用功当中，把基础打好；
在落实当中，去体验证悟。

71 

Diligence & Application

In the midst of diligent practice, establish a strong foundation.
In the midst of application, attain realisation through experience.

72 

开悟与解脱

在思想内心里面开悟，在生活中解脱，这就是最好的佛法！

72 

Enlightenment & Liberation

Be enlightened in our mindset and be liberated in our daily lives – this is the best Buddhadharma!

73 

成佛

未来你要成佛，现在你就必须要掌握你自己的自性佛。

73 

Buddhahood

If you aspire to attain Buddhahood in future, you must first master your own Buddha-nature at present.

74 

佛性与法性

有情的叫做佛性，无情的叫做法性。

74 

Buddha-Nature & Dharma-Nature

The nature of sentient beings is called
Buddha-nature (Buddhata).

The nature of non-sentient objects is called
Dharma-nature (Dharmata).

75 

知识

今天你听到，所学去的最上乘的佛法，都还是知识，在你还未证悟以前，都叫做知识。

75 

Knowledge

The ultimate Buddhadharma you hear and learn today is just knowledge. Before you attain enlightenment, it remains as knowledge.

76 

经典

我们看经典，是从经典中找智慧来解脱自己，
不是在经典中找利益。

76 

Buddhist Scriptures

Reading Buddhist scriptures is for seeking wisdom to
liberate ourselves; it is not for seeking self-interest and
gains.

77 

道场

内在没有建立一个清净的‘道场’，就是外在拥有一个大道场，或是拥有很多的信徒，也是没有用的。因为自己的内在都掌握不住，外在又能把持多久！

77 

Place of Cultivation

Without establishing a pure ‘inner place of cultivation’, it is useless to have a huge external place of worship or many devotees. Without mastering your own inner state, how long can the external facade be sustained?

78 

统理大众

要先统理自己的内在众生，才能统理外在的大众。

78 

Managing the Masses

To manage the broad masses of external sentient beings, you must first manage your own inner sentient being².

² **Inner sentient being:** Continuum of thoughts and emotions.

79 

度众

度众无条件，度众生无立场，随缘度众，随缘得失，保持平常心，一视同仁，修行才能自在无挂碍。

79 

Guiding the Masses

In guiding the masses, be unconditional, unbiased and adaptable. Regard gains and losses with equanimity. Maintain a neutral mind and treat everyone equally. In this way, one can be at ease and worry-free in cultivation.

80 

消业

若有向自己内心自觉修持，心业就渐渐消除，如此便是最好的佛前点灯消业障，而不是依靠外在的形式。

80 

Eliminating Karma

If you constantly observe your inner mind with pristine awareness, your mental karma will gradually be eliminated. This is the best way of lamp lighting before the Buddha to eliminate karmic hindrances, instead of only relying on external forms of practice.

Blessings for your contribution
“The gift of Dharma excels all gifts.”

*In wisdom and blessings may you grow
Peace and happiness your life bestow
Afflictions overcome and soon disappear
Brightness and bliss shall prevail
Blessed you will be with bright descendants
Indeed, you will be filled with
boundless benedictions.*

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*One is limited by one's thinking mind.
When there is no mind, one is boundless.*

This collection of excerpts selected from talks by Reverend Ming-An Chen, illuminates the mindsets and attitudes necessary to grow as a person and Buddhist practitioner. In his characteristically clear and straightforward manner, Reverend Chen encourages us to demand more of ourselves, view things with clarity and let go of our attachments. In doing so, we uncover the wisdom already within us to face everything in life.