

業之奏鳴曲 Karma Sonata

By Phil Hirsch on Sep. 19th, 2012 in the Buddha Hall at CTTB .
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邱如伶 中譯



BODHI FIELD | 菩提田



My name is Phil Hirsch. I'm a resident volunteer here at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas; my main function is maintaining the Sound Department. What I'd like to talk about tonight is reincarnation, how the wheel of karma keeps moving and how we keep perpetuating that karma.

When I was very young, maybe around five or six years old, my parents bought some property and we went to see it. In one of the rooms I saw a piano. This was the first time in this lifetime that I'd ever seen a piano. I walked over to it, and as I put my hands on the keys, I had what I thought was a daydream. I saw my hands on the keyboard performing, superimposed over my real hands. It was as if I was transported. I was looking at the keyboard and I instantly knew how to play the piano. When the day had ended, I had written a very short song and was thrilled to be rediscovering the piano.

During this time my mother was often very angry with me. From the time when I was born until I was 8 or 10 years old, she would constantly yell at me and beat me. One day when I was about 10, I told her that she could not do that any more. She looked at me and very quickly turned around and walked away. From that day onward, she never beat me again. She yelled quite a bit, but stopped beating me.

As my life progressed, I continued to have glimpses of that past lifetime, especially with regard to music. I'm now in my seventy-first year of life. I have talked about music, played music professionally, have been a record producer and recording engineer, and have taught a method on how to improvise. Yet to this day, I still can't read or write music. It has always come to me intuitively.

I was introduced to Buddhism in 1961, and probably in part

我的名字叫做菲爾·赫煦，是聖城的常住義工，維修音響系統是我的主要職責。今晚，我所要討論的是：輪迴——業力之輪如何運轉，以及我們為何生生世世使它輪轉不息。

在幼年時期，約摸五、六歲吧，因為父母購置了房產，我們便前去參觀。在其中一個房間，我看到一架鋼琴——這是我生平第一次看到鋼琴。我走向它，當我將手放在琴鍵上，我像做了場幻夢一般：我看到我的手在彈琴，那雙我看到的手，重疊在我真正的手上面，彷彿穿越時空一樣。我看著鍵盤，毫不遲疑地知道該如何彈奏。當晚，我寫了一首極短的歌，並因為重新發現鋼琴而激動不已。

打從出生開始，母親經常對我怒氣相向，並不斷對我咆哮及毆打，一直到我八歲或十歲左右。在我十歲的某一天，我告訴她：妳不能再這樣對我。她看著我，然後迅速轉身離開。從那天以後，她不再打我，但還是常常喝斥我。

隨著生命的逐漸開展，我仍然不斷地瞥見前世的生活片段，尤其是和音樂有關的部分。我現在已經七十一歲了，我這一生所做的事都跟音樂有關：我談論音樂，做過專業的音樂表演，擔任過唱片製作人、錄音工程師，還教授即興演出的方法。至今，我依然不會讀寫樂譜；但音樂對我而言，是一種本能。

1961年，我認識了佛教。或許因為禪坐，我仍然持有過去幾世的記憶。我在一次坐禪中，出現了一個境界：我看到一棟房子，我在房子的上方俯瞰數百年前歐洲的街景。那是個雪花紛飛的夜晚，有個女人抱著孩子朝房子走來。她敲了門，門也應聲而

because of meditation, I still have memories of other lifetimes. One time when I was meditating, I had a vision. In that vision I saw a house. I was above the house, looking down onto a street scene in Europe, hundreds of years ago. It was night and snowing; there was a woman walking toward the house. As I saw this woman approaching the house, I saw she was holding a little baby. She knocked on the door and the door opened. An old man stepped out and I knew immediately that the old man was me, that the woman was my daughter and that she had just had a child out of wedlock.

In that lifetime, my major concern had been for wealth and fame as a composer and conductor, and I had achieved both. I was very upset with her, to the point that I disowned her and kicked her out of the house with her baby. I had no compassion or pity for her. She had tarnished my name and reputation.

I realized later that my mother in this lifetime had been my daughter in that lifetime. I once asked my mother if she remembered beating me when I was a child. She looked at me with tears in her eyes and said yes, "There hasn't been a day gone by that I haven't remembered those days." She then said "I don't know why I hit you so horribly!" My mother asked for my forgiveness and I gave it to her.

We talked about it a little more and I thought it was over. At the time of this conversation, I was not aware of our past karma; that came later during meditation. But after having this vision, I realized that the reason she was hitting me was because of what I had done to her and her baby in that past lifetime, and I felt absolutely horrible. I then made a vow to end my family's dysfunction: our greed, stupidity and anger.

My mother passed away a few years ago at the age of 96. From the 1970s until she passed away, we had become very close. On her deathbed two years ago, I was holding her hand when she looked up at me and said, "how can you still love me after all I did to you when you were young?" For all those years, it was still on her mind. For 96 years she had to live with that memory; I did not know how to tell her it was my fault. I was the reason that she hit me. So I made a vow to end what I considered my personal family dysfunction.

Here we are in the Dharma-ending Age where greed, anger and stupidity are the norm. It is very difficult to cultivate in the outside world where everyone agrees that anger is okay and where everyone agrees that greed is okay. Once I arrived at CTTB, about 4 years ago, the one thing that I didn't have in the outside world that I have here is good knowing advisors and wonderful sutras to read. By reading the sutras, I finally understood how to make dysfunction into function. This had eluded me all my life, even though I had been meditating.

Although the Buddha taught for many years and spoke many sutras, I found that on some levels, the sutras are really quite simple. It is the understanding that it is simple. The cultivation or practice of that understanding however can be quite difficult. How do I change anger

開。然後，一位老人走了出來。我頓時便知：那個老人是我，那個女人是我的女兒，她剛剛產下了一名私生子。

在那一世，我最在乎的是身為一名作曲家與指揮家所擁有的財富與名聲，而這兩樣我都得到了。我對女兒的行為非常反感，我不但與她斷絕父女關係，還趕走她跟襁褓中的嬰兒。我一點都不同情或憐憫她，因為她玷污了我的名譽。

後來我了解到，我今生的母親就是我那一世的女兒。有一次我問母親，是否還記得小時候她毆打我的情景？她流著淚看著我說：「我從來不曾忘記那些日子。」然後她又說：「我不知道為什麼會打你打得這麼厲害？」我母親請求我的諒解，而我也寬恕了她。

跟母親稍加淺談那件事後，我想那一切都過去了。不過在那次的對話中，我其實尚未意識到，那是過去生彼此的業力使然，這要等到之後的禪坐裡，我才明白。我明白她過去毆打我的理由，是因為過去生我對待她們母子的態度。我感到極度恐懼，然後，我發了一個願，我發願終止這個失能家庭的障礙：那就是我們的貪、瞋、癡。

我母親幾年前往生了，世壽九十六歲。從1970年代到她去世這段時間，我們的關係變得很親近。在她臨終前兩年，我握著她的手，她看著我說：「在你小時候，我對你做過那些事後，你怎麼還能如此愛我？」多年來，這件事情仍在她心中打轉。這九十六年來，她一直活在那樣的記憶裡。我不知該如何告訴她，其實那都是我的錯，她打我的起因都是因為我。所以我發願要終止我個人家庭的失調及無能。

我們處在大家視貪瞋癡為常態的末法時代，眾人認為瞋怒、貪婪很正常。想要在這樣的環境修行是很困難的。大約四年前，我來到萬佛城，這裡有善知識，有奧妙的經典可讀，這些都是外面世界所沒有的。透過閱讀經典，我終於瞭解到如何從失調無能，轉變為無障無礙。雖然我一直都打坐，但卻無法解決這個問題。

雖然佛陀講經說法很多年，我發現在某些程度上，要理解經典的道理其實是蠻簡單的。但是要修到或實踐經典上的道理卻是相當困

into non-anger? I practice patience. Patience, patience, patience. When I feel my anger come up, I take a deep breath and I practice patience. It's absolutely amazing that it only takes minutes for that anger to dissipate as I apply patience. If I find I'm getting greedy and I'm thinking too much of myself, I practice generosity. It is just so simple. When I experience an affliction, and I know it by the way I feel, I find its opposite and practice it. Fear to courage, anger to patience, greed to generosity, and stupidity to wisdom.

During the 50 year event that we have just had this past June, which was absolutely a wonderful event that turned out really well, I remembered how we were all struggling to make the event happen. During the event, there was a point where I was asked to move my sound table. I instantly got angry and said, "No, that cannot be done, I cannot move the sound table." A few people around me, Fulin was one, gently reminded me of the reality of the situation. As I was defending my space and my position, I saw how simple it would be to move the table 6 feet and give them the room they needed. While I was defending myself and getting angry, I started to feel ashamed of myself. I realized how stupid I was being. It was because of the people here and the gentle advice I was being given that I was able to subdue the anger and move the table. Moving the table took only 2 seconds, but my anger had already taken 2 or 3 minutes. The event went on wonderfully. And so there was an example of how this community and the sutras helped me to curb my anger.

At the end of the event or close to the end of the event, DM Yin came up to me. I said to her, "Here we are, we are having this big 50 year event for Master Hua. Do you really think that he would want this to happen, where we have to interrupt everything at the very end and make changes?" She gently looked up at me, smiled and said, "Let me tell you a story: One time, Master Hua wanted to put together a lecture event and he invited many people. We set up a big venue, we put the tables exactly where he wanted them and the chairs exactly where he wanted them. Then on the day of the lecture, just before it started, he told us he wanted to move everything. He wanted the table over there and the chairs over here, and I got it."

One of the beautiful things about this city, and also why it may or may not function as well as you or I would like it to, is that we are really here just to cultivate. We are here to become better human beings. I just hope that the structures don't fall apart before that happens, but I'm very thrilled and I'm very happy to be part of this community. Yes, we are supposed to be where we can recognize our shortcomings; we are supposed to do the best we can to change them; and we are supposed to become regular functioning human beings with the compassion and understanding of the connectedness of everything. Amitofo! ❀

難的。我該如何熄滅憤怒？我就修忍辱。忍耐、忍耐、再忍耐。當我覺得我快要發火時，我就深呼吸並修耐心。令人驚訝的是，只要用耐心，不出幾分鐘的時間，憤怒便消失了。當我發現我有貪念並且自私時，我就修布施，它是這麼的簡單。當我覺得痛苦，我便修對治法：以勇氣對治怯懦，以忍耐對治瞋怒，以布施對治慳貪，以智慧對治愚癡。

六月的時候，我們在籌備紀念上人西方傳法五十週年的活動，這個活動非常的殊勝。記得在活動期間，大家都很努力地趕工，想把所有的東西都準備好。有一天，有人要求我，把剛才辛辛苦苦弄好的音響桌和所有的音響設備，移到另一個地方。當時我的脾氣馬上就來了，我跟他們講：「不可以動！不能移動我的音響桌。」當時還有其他人在旁邊，福麟就溫和地提醒我事情的狀況。正當我在捍衛我的空間和立場的時候，我也發現到其實把桌子移動六英尺是有多麼的簡單，應把空間給需要的人。當我捍衛自己並發怒的當下，我開始感到慚愧。我意識到自己是多麼的愚癡。因為這些人給予我的溫和忠告，讓我能夠克制憤怒並移動桌子。移動桌子只花兩秒的時間，但是我生氣卻已超過了兩、三分鐘。整個紀念活動非常的成功，這就是這個團體與經典如何幫助我克服脾氣的一個例子。

我記得在五十週年活動尾聲的時候，我剛好碰到恒音法師，我就問她說：我們花這麼多的心血，以五十週年這個活動來紀念上人，您認為師父上人看到我們這樣朝令夕改，會怎麼想？有就是在事情快要做好的那一刻，中斷它並作改變。她很和善地跟我說：「讓我告訴你一個故事：有一次師父準備一個演講，而且也邀請了許多人。我們佈置了一個大場地，依照上人的規劃擺設桌椅。然後當天演講開始之前，他告訴我們，他想要重新移動所有東西。他想要桌子擺在那裡，椅子在這裡，我們也都照做了。」

個人認為，在聖城生活最棒的事情就是，這個地方或者不能如你所願的方式運作，但是大家都在修行！每天我們都在努力使自己變得更好。在末法時代來臨之前，我希望聖城這個架構不要倒塌。身為這個團體的一員，我非常興奮和開心。學著真認自己錯，然後努力改過，希望我自己能夠變成一個更有用，而且無緣大慈和同體大悲的人。

阿彌陀佛！ ❀