

萬佛聖城2024年底禪七側記

2024 Year-end Chan Session at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

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三週禪七

(2024年12月22日- 2025年1月12日)

「起……」

佛七圓滿次日晚間，萬佛聖城的冬季三週禪七起七了。男女眾照例分開坐禪，男眾在如來寺打坐；女眾自2023年起，坐禪都改在地藏殿舉行。地藏殿主殿是尼眾禪堂，北殿是女大眾禪堂。

三週禪七圓滿後，一位沙彌表示，十多年前，初到聖城常住。當年禪七期間，看到資深比丘們可以坐一整個早上紋風不動。大眾一天十多支香，他們只有早、午、晚三支香，而且都

Three-week Chan Session (Dec 22, 2024 - Jan 12, 2025)

“Start...”

On the evening following the conclusion of the Amitabha Session, CTTB's three-week Winter Chan Session began. Men and women sat in separate meditation halls, with the men meditating in Tathagata Monastery and the women, since 2023, meditating in the Earth Treasury Hall. The main hall of the Earth Treasury Hall serves as the nuns' meditation hall, while the northern hall is for female lay practitioners.

After the completion of the three-week Chan Session, a novice monk shared his experience. He recalled that over ten years ago, when he first came to reside at the City, during a Chan Session, he saw senior monks sitting motionless for

是連坐，令他生起見賢思齊之心。往後每年禪七，總是在止靜前做足拉伸運動，開始雙盤打坐後，咬緊牙關忍痛，不聞開靜引磬聲，絕不放腿。多年下來，逐漸能夠連香不下座。如今也能像僧眾一樣，只要沒有職事，就能從早上4時開始打坐，直到上午10時50分下座用齋，感受到久坐的禪悅。

初次參加三週禪七的程偉華居士，只有2024年感恩節期間的禪三體驗。第一週最主要的感受是雙腿麻木、疼痛、腰背僵硬。第二周，身體的痛苦依舊，但已學會試著與疼痛和平共處，偶爾感受片刻安寧。第三週，身體仍然疲憊，但內心的抗拒明顯減少。真正體會到「活在當下」的意義，專注於呼吸，放下對過去與未來的憂慮。他明白「了生脫死」的修行之路雖然艱辛，但每一步都值得努力，因為它指引著我們認識自我、放下執著。

第二次參加三週禪七的法大學生劉親法記得，有幾支香，他雙盤疼到最後咬著牙、面目扭曲、全身打哆嗦，也堅決不放腿，疼到哭著問自己疼的是誰？就是不肯向痛低頭，直到法師敲磬為止。也有一次在坐前，下定決心可以坐斷腿也不放腿，願意拿這個五蘊假身假腿，去換個真身、真心。這次的體驗，讓他認為參禪打坐，的確是個直指人心，明心見性、善巧方便的不二法門！劉親法鼓勵大家，在2025年都能學會雙跏趺坐。宣公上人說過，雙跏趺坐是金塔，結跏趺坐有說不完無量無邊的功德在裏面，所有如來開悟成佛都是結跏趺坐成的。

楊書雨居士則說，見到法師們及道友們非常精進，一連坐幾支香，乃至放香時也還在經行用功，深感激勵，於是也儘量做到事來則應，事去

an entire morning. While the group practiced over ten incense periods a day, these monks only practiced three continuous incense sessions in the morning, noon, and evening, which inspired him to emulate their diligence. Every year since then, he prepared by doing extensive stretching exercises before each sitting period. When he began sitting in the full lotus position, he gritted his teeth through the pain, not moving until the bell rang. Over the years, he gradually became able to sit through consecutive incense periods without moving. Now, like the monks, he can sit from 4 a.m. until 10:50 a.m. before breaking for the midday meal, experiencing the joy of prolonged meditation.

Lay practitioner Cheng Weihua participated in the three-week Chan Session for the first time, having only experienced the three-day Thanksgiving Chan Session in 2024. During the first week, he mainly felt numbness and pain in his legs and stiffness in his back. In the second week, the physical discomfort persisted, but he learned to coexist with the pain, occasionally finding moments of peace. By the third week, although his body was still tired, his inner resistance had significantly decreased. He truly understood the meaning of “living in the moment,” focusing on his breath and letting go of worries about the past and future. He realized that the path of practice to transcend life and death is arduous but worthwhile, as it guides us to understand ourselves and let go of attachments.

Dharma Realm Buddhist University student Liu Qinfa, participating in the three-week Chan Session for the second time, recalled times when the pain from sitting in the full lotus position made him grit his teeth, contort his face, and shiver, yet he refused to release his legs until the proctor hit the hand bell. On one occasion, he resolved to sit through the pain, willing to sacrifice his body to attain true mindfulness and true nature. This experience made him believe that Chan meditation is a direct and skillful method for realizing one's true nature and achieving enlightenment. Liu Qinfa encouraged everyone to learn the full lotus position by 2025. Venerable Master Hua had said that the full lotus position is like a golden pagoda, with boundless merit, as all the Buddhas attained enlightenment in this posture.

Lay practitioner Simon Yang felt inspired seeing the diligence of the monks and fellow practitioners, who continued

則靜，辦事時即辦事，辦完即參究打坐。通過這次禪七對《圓覺經》的一段經文有更深刻的體會：「居一切時不起妄念，於諸妄心亦不息滅，住妄想境不加了知，於無了知不辨真實。」他認為修行如能不斷鍊心，做到動中靜中都於一切法得成於忍，總有一天能根塵脫落，圓滿菩提，歸無所得。

在女眾方面，每晚都播放宣公上人的百日禪開示，並有五分鐘問答時間。一位比丘尼指出，關於練習長坐，若干比丘尼共同的經驗是，通常在連坐3小時要邁入第4小時的時候最困難。這一關但能突破，繼續坐到6小時，乃至10小時，都容易得多。

一位居士訓練班學員提問道：白天工作忙碌，哪有時間練習長坐？比丘尼的答覆是：住在道場，可以練習坐單。每次提前半小時起床，例如，剛開始兩點半起床打坐。適應之後，改為兩點起床打坐，然後是一點半、一點鐘開始打坐。這樣持續提前在夜間打坐，即可練習長坐。

在女居士方面，今年禪七，有三位「坐霸」。她們一早雙盤，就霸著坐墊不放，往往直到午齋才下座，下午和晚間也都是連坐。其中一位是越南裔的何秋居士，她是電腦程式設計師。初次參加禪七時，以忍痛方式打坐，心中默念〈楞嚴咒〉前29句。參加禪七次數多了，逐漸培養出長坐的功夫。如今每天工作都採雙盤姿勢，一天至少盤坐八小時以上。她對於想練習打坐的人建議：多多參加禪七。

另一位是來自德州的葉果領，她從1989年第一次參加萬佛聖城佛七和禪七，陸續至今已30多年。不過，前20年參加禪七時，每支香都要起來行香。她平日功課是念佛、拜佛；曾有8年之久完全不看新聞，每天就是專心念佛、拜佛。即使在工作中，內心照樣佛號不斷，久而久之，功夫成片。其後，在練習長坐時，由於念佛已經成片，沒有妄想雜念，打坐進步很快，從一小時到兩小時、三小時……直到

practicing even during rest periods. He tried to respond to situations with equanimity and continued meditating after completing tasks. Through this Chan Session, he gained a deeper understanding of a passage from the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*: “At all times, do not give rise to deluded thoughts; do not extinguish deluded minds, abide in the state of delusion without having the intention to understand it, and in not understanding it, do not distinguish reality.” He believes that continuous mind training, achieving patience in movement and stillness, will eventually lead to the shedding of sensory dust, complete enlightenment and returning to nothingness.

For the women, Venerable Master Hua’s one hundred-day Chan teachings were played every night, followed by a five-minute Q&A session. A bhikshuni noted that in the practice of long sitting, several nuns have shared similar experiences: Typically, the most challenging part is transitioning into the fourth hour after sitting for three consecutive hours. However, once this barrier is overcome, continuing to sit for six hours or even up to ten hours, becomes much easier.

A student of the Laypeople Training Program asked how to find time for long sits amidst one’s busy daily work. A bhikshuni suggested that since she lives in a monastery, she can practice night meditation by waking up earlier in an increment of thirty minutes, gradually advancing the wake-up time from 2:30 am to 2:00 am, 1:30 am, 1:00 am... This continuous early night meditation helps practice long sits.

Among the female lay practitioners, three stood out as “sitting champions,” sitting on their meditation cushions all morning and only breaking for lunch. They continued this way in the afternoon and evening. One of them, Thu Ha, a Vietnamese computer programmer, initially endured the pain of meditation by silently reciting the first 29 lines of the Śūraṅgama Mantra. Through frequent Chan sessions, she developed the ability to sit for long periods and now sits in full lotus position while working so she sits at least eight hours a day. She advised those interested in meditation to participate in more Chan sessions.

Another participant, Yeh Guoling from Texas, has been attending Amitabha and Chan sessions at CTTB for

六小時。葉果領笑說：「很輕鬆，一點都不痛。」2011年起，她來萬佛聖城參加禪七，就可以長坐不起了。如今很多事情了然於心，種種執著自然放下。無論做事或做功課，都能感覺功夫不斷進步。她看過古德的一段話，大意是：參禪打坐要上路，最好從念佛下手。她自己的經驗正是如此。

第三位是明居士，孩子都已獨立生活，她自己也從工作崗位退休，重拾打坐的愛好。她年輕時一開始學打坐，氣機自然發動，即使在寒冬，也能坐到全身發熱，大汗淋漓。感覺前生已經打坐多時，因此這輩子打坐很快就上路，不必經過痛苦的煎熬，就能體會打坐的種種殊勝。只是原先家庭、工作兩頭忙，沒能多花時間打坐。這次來參加禪七，目的是「看看能不能明心見性，早日開悟」。

宣公上人說：「人怎樣才能開悟呢？開悟好像開鎖一樣。你一定要有一把鑰匙，才能把門鎖打開。那麼這把鑰匙放在哪裏？就在你自己的身邊。怎樣去找呢？你現在參禪打坐、念佛持咒，就是在找鑰匙。什麼時候能找到呢？如果精進，很快就找到。如果懈怠，就永遠找不到。這種道理非常簡單。」❀

over thirty years since 1989. For the first twenty years, she would get up to walk after each incense period of the Chan session. Her daily practice includes Buddha recitation and bowing, and she avoided the news entirely for eight years, focusing solely on her practice. Even during work, the recitation of the Buddha's name continued in her mind, and over time, her practice became continuous. Later, while practicing prolonged meditation, because her Buddha recitation had become continuous and free from distracting thoughts, her meditation progress was swift, advancing from one hour to two hours, three hours, and eventually up to six hours. Yeh Guoling smiled and said, "It's very easy, not painful at all." By 2011, she could sit without getting up during Chan sessions at CTTB. She felt that many things became clear in her mind, and she was able to naturally let of various attachments. Her skills of practice continuously improve whether she is working or practicing. She cited an ancient sage's saying that the best way to embark on Chan meditation is through Buddha recitation, a method she found effective.

A third practitioner, Ming, resumed her love for meditation after her children became independent and she retired. As a young woman learning to meditate, she experienced spontaneous energy movements, even in the cold winter, leading to a feeling of warmth and intense perspiration. She felt she had practiced meditation in a past life, which allowed her to progress quickly without much pain in this life, and she could experience the various superior states of meditation. However, her busy family and work life previously limited her meditation time. She joined this Chan session to see if she could achieve enlightenment sooner.

Venerable Master Hua said, "How can one attain enlightenment? It's like unlocking a lock; you need a key. The key is right beside you. How do you find it? By meditating, reciting the Buddha's name, and chanting mantras, you're searching for the key. When will you find it? If you're diligent, you'll find it quickly. If you're lazy, you'll never find it. The principle is very simple." ❀



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