

與上人結緣

My Dharma Connection with the Master

比丘尼恒耐2024年8月9日講於萬佛聖城佛殿

陳蔚天 英譯

A Dharma Talk by Dharma Master Heng Nai at the Buddha Hall of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas on August 9, 2024

English Translated by Tyan Chen



位於洛杉磯六街的舊金輪寺

Old Gold Wheel Monastery
on 6th street, Los Angeles.

我生長在一個道教家庭，祖父篤信道教。初中二年級時，有位同學的外婆篤信一貫道，因為家中有老師講道，她帶我去聽。祖父知道後，告訴我不要再去了，說那不是正道。

到了高中，母親準備帶我們來美國，請我表姐介紹學校並安排我住校，而我三姨是我的監護人。當時因為我喜歡音樂，就受洗成為基督徒。來到美國後，心情時常低落，運氣也不順，後來聽說金輪寺——法總洛杉磯分會，有看風水的課程，所以我們母女三人就去上課。

I grew up in a Taoist family, with my grandfather being a devout practitioner of Taoism. In my second year of junior high, a classmate's grandmother, who was devoted to Yiguandao, invited me to attend a lecture at her home, where a teacher was giving a talk. When my grandfather found out, he told me never to go again, saying that it was not the proper path.

In high school, my mother was preparing to bring us to the United States. She asked my cousin to help arrange a school for me where I could live on campus, while my third aunt became my legal guardian. At that time, I was deeply passionate about music and had recently converted to Christianity.

After arriving in the U.S., however, I often felt despondent and unfortunate. It wasn't long before I discovered that Gold Wheel Monastery, the Los Angeles branch of the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association, was hosting a feng shui course. Encouraged by this



上人（左三）在金輪寺 Venerable Master Hua (third from the left) at Gold Wheel Monastery.

與上人結緣

1976年，恒實法師與恒朝法師開始三步一拜。我們金輪寺的居士在胡果相居士安排下，輪流為他們供齋。記得有一次與他們一起用餐時，恒實法師因止語，寫條子問我們：「有沒有聽過《大方廣佛華嚴經》？」我們都回答沒有。

不久之後，他們在金輪寺開始講《大方廣佛華嚴經》。聽講的多是恒澤法師、恒文法師，以及我母親和女兒；我因為要上班，只能在週末參加。

1977年3月9日，聽胡果相居士說，要皈依度輪法師的人——以前師父是用「度輪法師」，後來才改「宣化上人」——要皈依，趕快報名參加。

我們母女三人心裏都覺得應該皈依，因此很感恩胡果相居士的提醒，因為當時我們對皈依的真義並不了解。那天在金輪寺，由上人親自為我們皈依。我和母親都覺得很幸運，只有妹妹說自己是「糊裏糊塗」地皈依上人的，所以她到現在仍未吃長素。

我的女兒是胎裏素，一歲多時，

opportunity, my mother, sister, and I decided to attend the class together.

Forming a Connection with the Venerable Master

In 1976, Dharma Masters Heng Sure and Heng Chau began their Three-Steps-One-Bow pilgrimage. Through the arrangements of Helen Woo, we laypeople at Gold Wheel Monastery took turns providing their meals. I remember once, while dining with them, since Dharma Master Heng Sure was observing silence, he wrote us a note asking, "Have you ever heard of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*?" We all answered, "No." Shortly afterward, they began giving lectures on the *Avatamsaka Sutra* at Gold Wheel Monastery. Among the regular attendees were Dharma Masters Heng Tsai and Heng Wen, as well as my mother and daughter. Because of my work commitments, I was only able to attend on weekends.

On March 9, 1977, Helen Woo informed me that those wishing to take refuge with Dharma Master Dulun—later known as Venerable Master Hsuan Hua—needed to register promptly for the upcoming ceremony.

All three of us—my mother, my daughter, and I—felt we should take refuge, so we were deeply grateful for Helen Woo's reminder, as at the time we didn't truly understand the meaning of taking refuge. That day, at Gold Wheel Monastery, the Venerable Master personally transmitted the three refuges and five precepts to us. My mother and I both felt fortunate, while my younger sister said she had "taken refuge without quite knowing what it was about." To this day, she still hasn't become a lifelong vegetarian.

由我母親替她報名皈依上人。她五歲時，上人叫我把她帶到萬佛城的育良小學讀書。校長告訴我，她在半年內就背會了〈楞嚴咒〉。我很慚愧，背了三十多年還沒能完全背熟。

盂蘭盆奇緣

盂蘭盆法會即將來臨，我想跟大家分享一個發生在我身上的故事。有一天傍晚，我的公公——也就是我先生的父親——突然肩膀疼痛。隔天，我帶他去金輪寺找中醫何果琳醫師治療。治療的時候，我看到上人在他背後走來走去，我當時以為上人是在散步。

到了盂蘭盆法會前一天，我公公問我：「佛教是怎麼祭祀祖先的？」他是基督徒，我告訴他：「明天是盂蘭盆法會，您可以把往生親人的名字給我，我帶去金輪寺替他們設牌位超度。」於是他寫了他三哥的名字。

奇妙的是，盂蘭盆法會的隔天，他的手臂就痊癒了。過了不久，我到金輪寺，上人問我：「妳公公的手臂好了嗎？」我回答：「盂蘭盆法會的隔天就好了。」上人便告訴我，那天他在我公公背後走來走去，是在超度他的三哥。後來我問公公，他三哥是什麼病往生的？他說：「是肩膀痛，打針之後死的。」世間的事情，真是不可思議。

我國民小學的同學謝素蓮對我很好，每逢有好吃的東西，她一定會留給我，還帶我去她家一起吃。小學畢業後，她便到一家鞭炮工廠工作。有一天，工廠失火，就把她燒死。

1987年，萬佛城即將舉行第一

My daughter was a vegetarian from birth. When she was just over one year old, my mother registered her to take refuge with the Master. When she was five, the Master told me to bring her to Instilling Goodness Elementary School at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. The principal later revealed to me that she had memorized the Shurangama Mantra within just six months. I felt deeply ashamed, after more than thirty years, I still hadn't fully memorized it.

A Ullambana Encounter

With the Ullambana Dharma Assembly approaching, I would like to share a story that happened to me. One evening, my father-in-law, my husband's father, was suddenly struck by intense pain in his shoulder. The following day, I accompanied him to Gold Wheel Monastery to consult Dr. He Guolin, a Chinese medicine physician. As my father-in-law received treatment, I noticed the Master walking back and forth behind him. At that moment, I assumed the Master was just taking a leisurely walk.

The day before the Ullambana Dharma Assembly, my father-in-law asked me, "What is the Buddhist practice of making offerings to ancestors?" Coming from a Christian background, he was unfamiliar with the Buddhist tradition, so I explained, "Tomorrow is the Ullambana Dharma Assembly. If you give me the names of any deceased relatives, I can bring them to Gold Wheel Monastery and set up memorial plaques so they can be transferred merit." He then wrote down the name of his third elder brother.

Strangely enough, the very next day after the Ullambana Dharma Assembly, my father-in-law's arm was completely healed. Not long after, I went to Gold Wheel Monastery and the Master asked me, "Has your father-in-law's arm recovered?" I replied, "It was fine the day after the Ullambana Dharma Assembly." The Master then told me that the reason he had been walking back and forth behind my father-in-law that day was because he was performing a deliverance for his third elder brother. Later, I asked my father-in-law what illness his brother had died of, and he said, "He had shoulder pain, and died after receiving an injection." The ways of this world are truly beyond comprehension.

Xie Sulian, my elementary school classmate, was a kind-hearted person. She always saved me a portion of her tasty treats and even invited me to her home to share meals together. After we graduated from elementary school, she began working at a firecracker factory.

次水陸空法會。她在夢中向我訴說自己很苦。我醒來後，正好遇到從台灣來的居士，她建議我為謝素蓮立牌位超度。法會結束後，她又在夢中告訴我，她已經得度了。

恒賢法師與梵文

恒賢法師，我常聽上人笑稱她為「stupid博士」，後來才發現她其實精通八種語言，還是梵文博士。我在法界大學曾上過一學期的梵文課，真的非常難學，所以沒有繼續。但如今恒賢法師圓寂，我才覺得梵文的重要，希望自己能繼續學習，並攻讀碩士班，完成母親辛苦一生培育我和妹妹的心願。

恒賢法師外表看起來似乎不聰明，但佛教有句話：「大智若愚」，真正有大智慧的人，表面上看起來好像很笨拙的樣子。她非常慈悲，我常生病，她總來關心我、詢問是否需要幫忙，我真的很感恩她。

去年，恒月師（我母親）在浴室跌倒，被送到醫院開刀。出發前，恒賢法師提醒我：「妳還有什麼證件沒帶嗎？要準備好喔。」沒想到我一著急，反而把所有需要用的證件全都忘了帶。當時我心裏一沉，以為肯定不能進醫院探望母親了。幸好網路發達，醫院能直接從電腦查詢我的信息，他們說所有資料已經存在系統中，所以我還是順利看到了恒月師。

我在法界大學上了十多年的課，才拿到學士文憑。因為我身體不是很好，常常一有風吹啊什麼的，就軟弱無力，沒辦法去上課。每次只能修一個或兩個學分，所以花了十多年才完成學業。

不過我很感恩，因為在法界大學這十多年裏，我學到了很多。除了深入三藏之外，學校還開設了園藝課、中醫課、梵文課等等，我收穫良多。

Tragically, one day a fire broke out at the factory, claiming her life in the blaze.

In 1987, as the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas was about to hold its first Water, Land, and Air Dharma Assembly, she appeared in my dream, telling me she was suffering greatly. When I awoke, I happened to meet a laywoman visiting from Taiwan. She suggested that I set up a plaque for Sulian so she could be transferred merit. After the Dharma Assembly ended, Sulian appeared in my dream again—this time telling me that she had attained liberation.

Dharma Master Heng Hsien and Sanskrit

I had often heard the Venerable Master humorously refer to Dharma Master Heng Hsien as a “stupid Ph.D.” Only later did I learn that she was fluent in eight languages and held a doctorate in Sanskrit. I attempted a semester of Sanskrit at Dharma Realm Buddhist University but found it incredibly challenging and ultimately did not continue. Now that Dharma Master Hsien has passed away, I’ve come to realize how important Sanskrit is. I hope to resume my studies, pursue a master’s degree, and fulfill my mother’s lifelong wish of seeing my sister and me well educated.

At first glance, Dharma Master Hsien might not have seemed especially bright, but as a Buddhist saying goes, “Great wisdom often appears like foolishness.” Those who truly possess wisdom may look simple or clumsy on the surface. She was also very compassionate. Since I often fell ill, she would always check in on me, asking if I needed any help. I was deeply grateful for her care.

Last year, my mother, Dharma Master Heng Yue, fell in the bathroom and required surgery at the hospital. Before I left to visit her, Dharma Master Hsien reminded me, “Do you have all the necessary documents? Double-check before you go.” Ironically, in my rush I forgot every single important document. My heart sank at the thought that I might not be able to see my mother in the hospital. Fortunately, modern technology came to the rescue, the hospital staff told me that all my information was already in their system. Thanks to that, I was able to visit my mother without any trouble.

It took me more than ten years to complete my bachelor’s degree at Dharma Realm Buddhist University. My health was fragile, sometimes even a gust of wind would leave me so weak I couldn’t attend class. I could only manage one or two credits at a

曾經我一直納悶，為什麼我會一吹到風就不舒服、容易倒？後來上中醫課時，醫生說：「蘆薈是中藥裏最寒的東西。」我才恍然大悟——原來福居樓旁邊雖然有人種了蘆薈，但人家不用，我覺得可惜就全拿來吃了。結果，哎呀！我的天啊，我血崩，然後沒有力氣。幸好，這裏有義診的醫生給我開藥並針灸治療。經過十多年調理，我現在才有一點力氣，能夠來講法。

廚房與出家

我想出家，上人要求我一定要在廚房做三年，之後再講出家。剛到萬佛城時，上人原本安排我到小學教中文。我只上了七天，因為學生非常不聽話，是怎樣呢？他們上課在用電腦，我說：「上課時間到了！請把電腦收起來。」他們根本不理我。我只好去跟校長反映，校長說：「那妳明天就不用來了。」這件事讓我明白，做老師的人要知道，我們用的方法不一定適合學生。其他老師都教得好好的。

隔天，我就開始到廚房工作。上人的作法就是，越不會的事情，他越要你做。雲法師看到我時，我跟她說我不會煮飯，她就問：「妳媽媽很會煮飯，為什麼妳不會？」因為在家裏，都是媽媽做好好的，我和妹妹只要吃就好——媽媽能做，我們能吃，配合很好啊。所以我們在家裏太享福了。

上人要求我出家前做三年廚房，啊！我差點退菩提心。你知道為什麼？我一看到廚房的

time, so it took me over a decade to finally finish.

Still, I'm grateful. Over the years, I've gained valuable knowledge in horticulture, Chinese medicine, Sanskrit, and many other interesting subjects, alongside in-depth studies of the Tripitaka.

For the longest time, I couldn't figure out why I felt weak and lightheaded whenever a breeze touched me. It wasn't until a Chinese medicine class that the doctor explained, "Aloe vera is considered the coldest of all herbs in Chinese medicine."

Suddenly it all made sense, someone had planted aloe by TOB Building but never used it. Feeling it was a pity to waste it, I ate it all. The result? I suffered severe hemorrhaging and had no strength whatsoever. Thankfully, volunteer doctors here treated me with herbal medicine and acupuncture. After more than ten years of recuperation, I finally have enough energy to be here and share the Dharma with you.

The Kitchen Duties and Leaving Home

I wanted to leave the home life, but the Master told me I first had to work in the kitchen for three years before we could even talk about it.

When I first arrived at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, however, the Master initially assigned me to teach Chinese at the elementary school. I only lasted seven days in the classroom, the students were unbelievably unruly. For instance, when they were using computers during class, I firmly told them, "Class has begun! Please put your computers away." They completely ignored me. Frustrated, I reported the situation to the principal, who simply replied, "Then you don't need to come back tomorrow."

That experience taught me something important: as a teacher, you have to recognize that your method might not be the right fit for the student. After all, other teachers managed to teach them just fine.

The next day, I began my duties in the kitchen. The Master's way was that the less experience you had with something, the more he would make you do it. When Dharma Master Yun saw me, I admitted that I didn't know much about cooking. She said, "Your mother is such a good cook, why can't you cook too?" The truth was, at home my mother did all the cooking while my sister and I simply enjoyed the meals. She was an excellent cook, and we happily reaped the benefits, it was the perfect arrangement! Life at home had been far too easy for us.

When the Master required me to work in the kitchen for three years before leaving the home life, I nearly lost my Bodhi resolve. Do you know why? The first time I saw the kitchen knives, I thought, "Oh my goodness, why are they so huge?" I had never even handled a small knife before. I felt like saying, "Quick, oil the soles of my feet and so I

菜刀啊，哇！天哪！怎麼那麼大？連小刀都沒用過的我，真想說：「趕快腳底抹油，逃！」結果上人在戒壇旁、樹下等我，我忘了當時是要拿什麼東西，上人跟我說：「果能，妳要回去『還俗』了？」我回答：「沒有，師父，我回去辦點事情，馬上就來。」回去後看到女兒，就被綁住了，一段時間沒再來。

後來緣到了，我在外面就是混不好、走投無路，就去跟上人說：「師父啊，我能不能到萬佛城常住？」上人說：「可以啊，但妳要在廚房做滿三年，要出家再講。」我非常感恩上人給我這樣好的安排。

希望將來要出家的人，要很誠心，誠心就會有很大的感應。阿彌陀佛！✿

can slip away!”

One time, the Master was waiting for me under a tree near the Ordination Platform. I can't remember what I was going there to get, but he asked me, "Guo Neng, are you going back to return to worldly life?" I replied, "No, Shifu, I'm just going back to take care of something, I'll be right back." But once I returned home and saw my daughter, I got entangled and ended up not coming back for quite a while.

Later, when the conditions for me to enter the monastic life matured, I was struggling in lay life—nothing was working out, and I felt I had nowhere else to turn. So I went to the Master and asked, "Shifu, may I come to live at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas long-term?" He replied, "Of course! But you must first complete three full years in the kitchen before we can talk about it." I am deeply grateful to the Master for making such a wise and compassionate arrangement for me.

I hope that those who wish to leave the home life in the future will do so with utmost sincerity, for sincerity brings forth powerful responses. Amitabha! ✿

與佛像對話的人

One Who Speaks to Buddha Statues

魏果時居士2024年9月25日講於萬佛聖城佛殿

早里奈 英譯

A Talk by Joey Wei at the Buddha Hall of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas on September 25, 2024

English Translated by Zao Linai



上人在為居士加持佛像。

The Venerable Master was blessing a Buddha statue for a layperson.
