

以糖易金

捨的善巧

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佛教掌握普遍熟知的美國信條——追求快樂，而且對安樂提出兩項重要的前提條件。一是快樂的標的必須是真實的：究竟、不變、真誠。二是對快樂的追求是認真的，卻不落於嚴苛，是生生世世的修持，戒律嚴明的訓練，也需要樂於睿智的犧牲。

哪一種的犧牲是睿智的？佛教徒對此的回答與另一條美國原則相呼應。「睿智的犧牲是放棄次要的，來得到更好的快樂，就像如果有人給你一磅黃金，您必須先放下手中的一袋糖。」換言之，睿智的犧牲就像是獲利的交易。這是佛教傳統信仰中的古老比喻。有位佛弟子曾經說過：「我將進行一項交易，以生死換取涅槃，以五欲熾盛換取解脫自在。這是最崇高的安詳，是解脫束縛的無上安樂。」

有些事情是我們不願放棄的。我們總是希望魚與熊掌兼得。但是，生命的經驗告訴我們，我們不可能什麼都要，魚與熊掌是不可兼得的。因此，我們需要對有限時間和體力所作的投資，確立清楚的優先順序，將它們投資於最持久的報酬上。這表示心是最優先的考量。物質和社會關係是不穩定的，而且易受我們無法掌控的力量所影響，所以它們所賦予的快樂是稍縱即逝且不可靠的。但是一個修行成就者可以超越老、病、死。然而修行需要時間和精力。這也是為何尋求真正的安樂需要放棄外在的享樂。

放棄外在享樂，也讓我們不再有執著外在享樂的精神負擔。佛經中曾描述一位國王出家修行時，坐在樹下驚喜地說：「這真是太棒了！這真是太棒了！」他的同伴以為他猶在享受當國王的喜悅，但他隨後向佛陀解釋：「以前，我擁有衛兵在王宮內外、城邑內外及村莊內外站哨，即使如此，我仍陷於擔心、懷疑與恐懼中。現在，即使我獨自步行，走入森林，走到樹下或到無人之處，也不再覺得擔心、懷疑與恐懼，心如曠野的鹿兒——自在、平靜、所願皆遂。」

放棄外在享樂的第三個理由是如果執著眼、耳、鼻、舌、身五根的耽溺，它會增長妨礙內心平靜的貪、瞋、癡三毒。即使我們擁有世間的時間和精力，對五欲的追求只會讓我們離目標愈來愈遠。八正道中的「正志」是決心捨棄帶有欲樂、惡念、惱害的享樂。「欲樂」不僅包括性欲，也包含干擾內心平靜的任何感官渴望；「惡念」包含任何會對自己或他人帶來痛苦的念頭；「惱害」是指所有會遭致痛苦的行為。在這三項中，惡念和惱害一看就知道是最應捨棄的，卻不容易辦得到，但決心放棄，總是好事一樁。至於欲樂這一項，僅僅放棄的念頭就很難生起了，更不要說全部捨棄。

不肯做出放棄欲樂的決心，一部分是因為這是人性。任何人都喜歡情欲，甚至是佛陀，也曾向弟子承認，當他開始修道時，他的心並非一下子就決定斷除欲樂，也不認為斷除欲樂能帶來內心的平靜。另外一個抗拒的原因是西方文化所特有的。現代流行的心理學認為，沉溺欲樂是健康的，而壓抑是不健康、恐懼的。然

而這兩種都根源於恐懼：壓抑是恐懼表現欲望或甚至生起欲念會做出不可預知的事；沈溺是恐懼壓抑情欲則情欲會變成莫名的惡獸。這兩種選擇都對心限制太多。佛陀發現兩者的缺點，指出第三種選擇：一個無懼、善巧的方法，足以避免壓抑和沈溺的危險。

然而，爲了要瞭解佛陀的法門，必須知道「正志」和其他法門，特別是「正見」、「正定」的關係。在正統的分析中，「正志」以「正見」爲基礎，如果「正志」得到善巧的表達，佛法則可導正思惟和價值判斷讓心達到「正定」。「正見」讓我們充分瞭解欲樂及情欲，使我們在修行上不至於走偏鋒。「正定」使我們平靜、安樂，讓我們清楚看見情欲的根源，同時不會一想到拔除情欲就恐懼失掉什麼。

「正見」有兩個著重層次：一是講述生活中種種行爲所帶來的後果，二是苦及止苦的議題。第一個層次指出五欲貪求的缺失：五欲是短暫、不穩定並會帶來痛苦的。五欲貪求帶來生活中許多的苦惱，其範圍從爲了獲取並維持財富所費的精力，家庭的爭執，到國與國之間的戰爭。此層次的「正見」讓我們瞭解耽溺五欲會帶來苦，是一種過失。第二個層次——以四聖諦的角度來審視事物——讓我們在當下解決問題。它指出問題的根源不在於享樂，而在於我們的貪求，因爲貪求牽涉到執取，也就是對緣起之樂起任何執取，必將帶來痛苦，因爲一切有爲法都會改變。事實上，我們對五欲貪求的執取力量，比對其他享樂的執著都要來得強且持續。這個執取，就是我們必須拋棄的。

這該如何做呢？就是要正視它。五欲貪執一方面來自過去的習氣，一方面我們現在又願意沉溺其中，此二者都是源自無明和恐懼。佛陀曾經指出貪欲是由錯誤的認知而來：我們把常、樂、我、淨的概念投射到事物上，但實際上一切事物都是無常、痛苦、醜陋和無我的。這些錯誤認知可以指兩件事，一是我們的貪欲，二是貪欲的對象。我們認爲貪欲是吸引人的，充分代表我們的自我，能夠帶來長久的快樂；我們認爲貪欲的對象是不變的、迷人的、我們可以完全控制的，能夠帶給我們不變的滿足。事實上，二者都是不可能的。我們受限於貪執的力量，不敢正視真相，而盲目地相信我們的想像。因此，我們持續受到貪執的迷惑和欺騙。如果我們僅僅對治耽溺和壓抑，貪執仍然會在潛意識中持續自由運作。但是，當我們有意識的抵抗，它必然會浮出表面，突顯它的威脅、要求和合理化行爲。所以，即使欲樂本身並非邪惡，我們仍須有系統地捨棄它們，讓貪執的心理機制無所遁形。這就是善巧的出離可以成爲學習的工具，揭露隱藏在耽溺和壓抑的心理機制。

同時，我們必須提供策略去對治這些心理機制，在它們一出現時就予以戳破。這就是「正定」的作用所在。「正定」是善巧的享樂，可以使身體充滿非物欲的喜樂，從而抵消因放棄物質享樂所產生的失落感。換言之，正定提供更高層次的喜樂——持久且純淨——取代對低層次喜樂的執著。同時，它給我們所需要的牢固基礎，讓我們不至於因爲放下執著而東倒西歪。這種穩定性也可以加強正念和醒覺，讓我們看透貪欲的錯誤觀念和迷障。一旦心可以看透想像、認知和錯誤認知的心理機轉，以致於超越它們而獲得更多的自在，欲貪的基礎也就消失了。

在這個階段，我們可以轉而分析我們對「正定」的喜樂執著。當我們全面瞭解後，就可以捨棄所有執著的理由，如此，就會得到無法言喻的純淨自在。

問題是：如何將這種善巧的出離和善巧的耽溺轉變成日常的實踐？出家受戒的僧侶持受不淫戒，應當在放下欲貪方面不斷下功夫。但是，對許多人而言，這不是一項行得通的選擇。佛陀因此建議，在家弟子於一日夜間持八關齋戒。在一個月當中的四天，傳統是指新月、滿月、月半圓時（初一、十五、七、二十二），受八關齋戒。這八戒是按照基本的五戒，再增加不淫、過午不食、不觀歌舞、不聽伎樂、不塗香水和化妝品、不坐高廣大床。增加這些戒的目的是，合理地收攝五根。鎮日專心聽聞佛法，確立正見，修習禪坐和加強正定。雖然現代的工作制度無法依循陰曆，卻可以通權達變，在週末或假日受八關齋戒。如此，任何有意願者，可以定期放下勞心和繁瑣事物，換得機會修學梵行，這對於認真追求純淨的安樂所不可或缺的。

那不就是一樁睿智的交易嗎？v

Trading Candy for Gold Renunciation as a Skill

Excerpt from Noble Strategy

by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

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Buddhism takes a familiar American principle--the pursuit of happiness--and inserts two important qualifiers. The happiness it aims at is true: ultimate, unchanging, and undecitful. Its pursuit of that happiness is serious, not in a grim sense, but dedicated, disciplined, and willing to make intelligent sacrifices.

What sort of sacrifices are intelligent? The Buddhist answer to this question resonates with another American principle: an intelligent sacrifice is any in which you gain a greater happiness by letting go of a lesser one, in the same way you'd give up a bag of candy if offered a pound of gold in exchange. In other words, an intelligent sacrifice is like a profitable trade. This analogy is an ancient one in the Buddhist tradition. "I'll make a trade," one of the Buddha's disciples once said, "aging for the Ageless, burning for the Unbound: the highest peace, the unexcelled safety from bondage."

There's something in all of us that would rather not give things up. We'd prefer to keep the candy and get the gold. But maturity teaches us that we can't have everything, that to indulge in one pleasure often involves denying ourselves another, perhaps better, one. Thus we need to establish clear priorities for investing our limited time and energies where they'll give the most lasting returns.

That means giving top priority to the mind. Material things and social relationships are unstable and easily affected by forces beyond our control, so the happiness they

offer is fleeting and undependable. But the well-being of a well-trained mind can survive even aging, illness, and death. To train the mind, though, requires time and energy. This is one reason why the pursuit of true happiness demands that we sacrifice some of our external pleasures.

Sacrificing external pleasures also frees us of the mental burdens that holding onto them often entails. A famous story in the Canon tells of a former king who, after becoming a monk, sat down at the foot of a tree and exclaimed, "What bliss! What bliss!" His fellow monks thought he was pining for the pleasures he had enjoyed as king, but he later explained to the Buddha exactly what bliss he had in mind: "Before..... I had guards posted within and without the royal apartments, within and without the city, within and without the countryside. But even though I was thus guarded, thus protected, I dwelled in fear-agitated, distrustful, and afraid. But now, on going alone to a forest, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty dwelling, I dwell without fear, unagitated, confident, and unafraid--unconcerned, unruffled, my wants satisfied, with my mind like a wild deer." A third reason for sacrificing external pleasures is that in pursuing some pleasures--such as our addictions to eye-candy, ear-candy, nose-, tongue-, and body-candy--we foster qualities of greed, anger, and delusion that actively block the qualities needed for inner peace. Even if we had all the time and energy in the world, the pursuit of these pleasures would lead us further and further away from the goal. They are spelled out in the path factor called Right Resolve: the resolve to forego any pleasures involving sensual passion, ill will, and harmfulness. "Sensual passion" covers not only sexual desire, but also any hankering for the pleasures of the senses that disrupts the peace of the mind. "Ill will" covers any wish for suffering, either for oneself or for others. And "Harmfulness" is any activity that would bring that suffering about. Of these three categories, the last two are the easiest to see as worth abandoning. They're not always easy to abandon, perhaps, but the resolve to abandon them is obviously a good thing. The first resolve, though--to renounce sensual passion--is difficult even to make, to say nothing of following it through.

Part of our resistance to this resolve is universally human. People everywhere relish their passions. Even the Buddha admitted to his disciples that, when he set out on the path of practice, his heart didn't leap at the idea of renouncing sensual passion, didn't see it as offering peace. But an added part of our resistance to renunciation is peculiar to Western culture. Modern pop psychology teaches that the only alternative to a healthy indulgence of our sensual passions is an unhealthy, fearful repression. Yet both of these alternatives are based on fear: repression, on a fear of what the passion might do when expressed or even allowed into consciousness; indulgence, on a fear of deprivation and of the under-the-bed monster the passion might become if resisted

and driven underground. Both alternatives place serious limitations on the mind. The Buddha, aware of the drawbacks of both, had the imagination to find a third alternative: a fearless, skillful approach that avoids the dangers of either side.

To understand his approach, though, we have to see how Right Resolve relates to other parts of the Buddhist path, in particular Right View and Right Concentration. In the formal analysis of the path, Right Resolve builds on Right View; in its most skillful manifestation, it functions as the directed thought and evaluation that bring the mind to Right Concentration. Right View provides a skillful understanding of sensual pleasures and passions, so that our approach to the problem doesn't go off-target; Right Concentration provides an inner stability and bliss so that we can clearly see the roots of passion and at the same time not fear deprivation at the prospect of pulling them out.

There are two levels to Right View, focusing (1) on the results of our actions in the narrative of our lives and (2) on the issues of stress and its cessation within the mind. The first level points out the drawbacks of sensual passion: sensual pleasures are fleeting, unstable, and stressful; passion for them lies at the root of many of the ills of life, ranging from the hardships of gaining and maintaining wealth, to quarrels within families and wars between nations. This level of Right View prepares us to see the indulgence of sensual passion as a problem. The second level--viewing things in terms of the four noble truths--shows us how to solve this problem in our approach to the present moment. It points out that the root of the problem lies not in the pleasures but in the passion, for passion involves attachment, and any attachment for pleasures based on conditions leads inevitably to stress and suffering, in that all conditioned phenomena are subject to change. In fact, our attachment to sensual passion tends to be stronger and more constant than our attachments to particular pleasures. This attachment is what has to be renounced.

How is this done? By bringing it out into the open. Both sides of sensual attachment--as habitual patterns from the past and our willingness to give into them again in the present--are based on misunderstanding and fear. As the Buddha pointed out, sensual passion depends on aberrant perceptions: we project notions of constancy, ease, beauty, and self onto things that are actually inconstant, stressful, unattractive, and not-self. These misperceptions apply both to our passions and to their objects. We perceive the expression of our sensuality as something appealing, a deep expression of our self-identity offering lasting pleasure; we see the objects of our passion as enduring and alluring enough, as lying enough under our control, to provide us with a satisfaction that won't turn into its opposite. Actually, none of this is the case, and yet we blindly believe our projections because the power of our passionate attachments has us too intimidated to look them straight in the eye. Their special effects thus keep

us dazzled and deceived. As long as we deal only in indulgence and repression, attachment can continue operating freely in the dark of the sub-conscious. But when we consciously resist it, it has to come to the surface, articulating its threats, demands, and rationalizations. So even though sensual pleasures aren't evil, we have to systematically forego them as a way of drawing the agendas of attachment out into the open. This is how skillful renunciation serves as a learning tool, unearthing latent agendas that both indulgence and repression tend to keep underground.

At the same time, we need to provide the mind with strategies to withstand those agendas and to cut through them once they appear. This is where Right Concentration comes in. As a skillful form of indulgence, Right Concentration suffuses the body with a non-sensual rapture and pleasure that can help counteract any sense of deprivation in resisting sensual passions. In other words, it provides higher pleasures--more lasting and refined--as a reward for abandoning attachment to lower ones. At the same time it gives us the stable basis we need so as not to be blown away by the assaults of our thwarted attachments. This stability also steadies the mindfulness and alertness we need to see through the misperceptions and delusions that underlie sensual passion. And once the mind can see through the processes of projection, perception, and misperception to the greater sense of freedom that comes when they are transcended, the basis for sensual passion is gone.

At this stage, we can then turn to analyze our attachment to the pleasures of Right Concentration. When our understanding is complete, we abandon all need for attachment of any sort, and thus meet with the pure gold of a freedom so total that it can't be described.

The question remains: how does this strategy of skillful renunciation and skillful indulgence translate into everyday practice? People who ordain as monastics take vows of celibacy and are expected to work constantly at renouncing sensual passion, but for many people this is not a viable option. The Buddha thus recommended that his lay followers observe day-long periods of temporary renunciation. Four days out of each month--traditionally on the new-, full-, and half-moon days--they can take the eight precepts, which add the following observances to the standard five: celibacy, no food after noon, no watching of shows, no listening to music, no use of perfumes and cosmetics, and no use of luxurious seats and beds. The purpose of these added precepts is to place reasonable restraints on all five of the senses. The day is then devoted to listening to the Dhamma, to clarify Right View; and to practicing meditation, to strengthen Right Concentration. Although the modern work-week can make the lunar scheduling of these day-long retreats impractical, there are ways they can be integrated into weekends or other days off from work. In this way, anyone interested can, at regular intervals, trade the cares and complexities of everyday life

for the chance to master renunciation as a skill integral to the serious pursuit of happiness in the truest sense of the word.

And isn't that an intelligent trade?

