

肯定心的真理：「厭離」與「清淨」

——摘錄自《聖道修行》

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我們很少將佛教視為感性的宗教，尤其認為原始佛教是理性的宗教，以左前腦而非心臟為中心。但如果你仔細審視佛教，你將發現從一開始佛教即是以甚深的感性為動力。

讓我們回想一下年輕的悉達多太子首次遇見老、病、死及遊方者之情形。這是佛教中最廣為人知的章節之一，因為它直接呈現太子心中的感受。太子把老、病、死看作是十足怖畏的現象，而將一切希望寄託在森林裡的禪修生活，並當成唯一的解脫之道。如同佛教大詩人馬鳴菩薩描述到太子面臨親朋好友的勸說，馬鳴菩薩以生花妙筆突顯他們的現世人生觀。儘管如此，太子瞭解到如果聽從於他們的建議，將背叛自己的心，唯有真誠面對自己的情緒，才能踏上遠離世俗社會價值的道路，走向超越生死的覺醒。

以一般的理解而言，這幾乎不是一個現世的人生觀，但它卻肯定了人生最重要的一件事：心渴求絕對清淨的安樂。這種鼓舞的力量建立在兩種情緒上，巴利文稱為 *samvega*（譯為厭離）和 *pasada*（譯為清淨）。雖然只有少數人聽過，但它們卻是佛教最基本的情緒。它們不僅僅鼓舞了太子對覺悟的追求，甚至在他成佛後亦鼓勵他的弟子每天以此修行。事實上，他如此善巧處理這些情緒的方式，成為他對今日文化的重要貢獻之一。

Samvega（厭離）是年輕的悉達多太子第一次面對老、病、死時的感受。這個詞不易翻譯成英文，因為它的含意錯綜複雜，至少涵攝三種感受。第一是來自了悟日常生活的空虛而感到極度地驚嚇、沮喪和疏離；第二是急思洗鍊盲目生活所蘊含的混亂、自滿及愚癡；第三是急切尋求脫離輪迴之道。這些都是在我們成長的過程中有過的感受，然而，我不認為有哪個英文字可以適切表達這三種意含。因此，我們最好保留 *samvega* 這個詞，而不必將它翻譯成英文。

佛教不僅提出 *samvega* 這個詞，更提供有效的處理策略。現代文化已經察覺到它的威脅性，但是處理它的方式很癩腳。當然不是只有西方文化充斥著厭離感。對於悉達多太子的發現，父王的反應代表多數文化的處理方式：他試著說服太子對快樂的標準太過於理想化，同時並試著動之以情，並以五欲讓他轉移目標。父王不僅替他安排了一個理想婚姻，更為他蓋起一座四季遊玩的宮殿；購買最好的服飾和膏脂給他；讓太子身處的宮殿充滿永不停歇的娛樂；提供優渥的薪資給僕人，讓他們極盡能事的滿足太子的每一個幻想。簡單的說，父王的策略是讓太子降低堅持，去尋求世間的快樂，而不去追求絕對而清淨的安樂。如果這位太子活在今日，他的父王會有其他工具處理他的不滿足，包括心理治療和宗教諮詢，但是基本策略依舊是一樣的：也就是分散他的注意力和麻醉他的感受，這樣一來太子就能夠適應社會並有所貢獻。

幸好，太子具有老鷹般的眼和獅子般的心，才未屈服於這種策略；更幸運的是，

可以出家修行。當時的社會允許他去尋找「厭離」這個問題的答案，回應他心中對真理的吶喊。

在悉達多太子的故事中，這個解答的第一步顯示在他離城出遊時所遇到的第四個人——遊方者。相較於他塵世生活的束縛和執著，太子看到這位禪修者的自在人生，彷彿浩瀚的天空。他覺得這樣的解脫之道，將有機會去找到生死問題的解答，過著他理想中最好的生活，就像光潤的貝殼一樣純潔。

這時太子所感受到的情緒就稱為 *pasada*（清淨）。如同 *Samvega*，*pasada* 包含著複雜的感受，意思是「清明和莊嚴的信心」——不讓厭離淪為絕望的心態。在這個例子中，太子清楚知道他的困境，同時找到出路的信心。

正如原始佛教所說的，生、老、死的困境是毫無意義的。他們並未否認這個事實，所以不要求我們欺騙自己或是假裝視而不見。如同某一位大師所說的：佛教承認苦難是存在的，而且是一項禮物，因此把苦當作四聖諦之首。苦是我們對人世一切事物最敏銳、最直接的經驗，這是其他許多傳統所嘗試否認的。

接著，原始佛法要求我們提高覺察力，直到瞭解苦的真正原因不是來自社會或外在等環境事物，而是來自個人內心的慾望；進而確認苦是可以息滅的，輪迴也是可以解脫的。同時指出解脫的道路——透過心中本有德性的開發，即可拋開貪欲，邁向涅槃。如是，困境已有實際的解脫之道，而每個人都有能力去實踐。此解脫之道，是可以開放給大家嚴格驗證的，這也說明佛陀自己對於處理厭離相關問題的把握。對於那些不樂接受別人規勸不該以厭離為修行動機的人來說，這也是正信佛教吸引人的原因之一。

事實上，佛教不僅僅對處理厭離的問題有把握，更是少數能夠以徹底實證方式處理問題的宗教之一。佛教解決生命問題的方法，必須配上義無反顧的精神——強烈的出離心——才能夠確保修行者不被舊習拖著走。因此奉勸所有的人，不分男、女、在家或出家，皆應每天思惟老、病、別離及死的事實，以培養厭離心，再透過個人的身體力行，進一步地昇華厭離為清淨。

對於厭離心強，極欲逃脫俗世糾纏，減少解脫道上障礙的人，佛教提供了一套經過長年檢驗證明可行的智慧體系和安全網——僧團：一個能提供修行人遠離世俗，不用再煩惱基本生存條件的團體。對於不能遠離世俗的人們，佛教提供了一種入世卻不為世俗干擾的生活方式，以布施、持戒及禪定來提昇心性，進而趨向解脫。由於佛教僧俗二眾之間的緊密共生關係，使得出家眾免於成為社會邊緣人或厭世者，而在家眾亦不會讓他們的修行失去活力。

因此，佛教徒對生命的態度產生厭離心——強烈地體會到生、老、病、死的輪迴毫無意義可言——進而將它昇華為清淨：這是一種對解脫之路的肯定。這條修行路包括經過久遠時間考驗的指引（法），以及延續法脈的社會團體（僧）。這些都是我們的社會迫切需要的。在我們探討佛法如何裨益現代生活時，我們必須牢記二件事：一是佛教不隨波逐流，二是佛教對於修行的傳統譬喻——修行的最終目的，是爲了要跨越苦海，邁向彼岸。v

Affirming the Truths of the Heart: The Buddhist Teachings on Samvega & Pasada

Excerpt from Noble Strategy

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We rarely think of Buddhism as an emotional religion. Early Buddhism in particular is often depicted as centered more in the upper left quadrant of the head than in the heart. But if you look closely at the tradition, you'll find that from the very beginning it has been fueled by a deeply felt emotional core.

Think back for a moment on the story of the young Prince Siddhartha and his first encounters with aging, illness, death, and a wandering forest contemplative. It's one of the most accessible chapters in the Buddhist tradition, largely because of the direct, true-to-the-heart quality of the young prince's emotions. He saw aging, illness, and death as an absolute terror, and pinned all his hopes on the contemplative forest life as his only escape. As Asvaghosa, the great Buddhist poet, depicts the story, the young prince had no lack of friends and family members to try to talk him out of those perceptions, and Asvaghosa was wise enough to show their life-affirming advice in a very appealing light. Still, the prince realized that if he were to give to their advice, he would be betraying his heart. Only by remaining true to his honest emotions was he able to embark on the path that led away from the ordinary values of his society and toward an Awakening into what lay beyond the limitations of life and death.

This is hardly a life-affirming story in the ordinary sense of the term, but it does affirm something more important than living: the truth of the heart when it aspires to a happiness that's absolutely pure. The power of this aspiration depends on two emotions, called in Pali samvega and pasada. Very few of us have heard of them, but they're the emotions most basic to the Buddhist tradition. Not only did they inspire the young prince in his quest for Awakening, but even after he became the Buddha he advised his followers to cultivate them on a daily basis. In fact, the way he handled these emotions is so distinctive that it may be one of the most important contributions his teachings have to offer to our culture today.

Samvega was what the young Prince Siddhartha felt on his first exposure to aging, illness, and death. It's a hard word to translate because it covers such a complex range -- at least three clusters of feelings at once: the oppressive sense of shock, dismay, and alienation that comes with realizing the futility and meaninglessness of life as it's normally lived; a chastening sense of our own complicity, complacency, and foolishness in having let ourselves live so blindly; and an anxious sense of urgency in trying to find a way out of the meaningless cycle. This is a cluster of feelings that we've all experienced at one time or another in the process of growing up, but I don't know of a single English term that adequately covers all three. Such a term would be

useful to have, and maybe that's reason enough for simply adopting the word samvega into our language.

But more than providing a useful term, Buddhism also offers an effective strategy for dealing with the feelings behind it -- feelings that modern culture finds threatening and handles very poorly. Ours, of course, is not the only culture threatened by feelings of samvega. In the Siddhartha story, the father's reaction to the young prince's discovery stands for the way most cultures try to deal with these feelings: He tried to convince the prince that his standards for happiness were impossibly high, at the same time trying to distract him with relationships and every sensual pleasure imaginable. Not only did he arrange an ideal marriage for the prince, but he also built him a palace for every season of the year, bought him only the best clothes and toiletries, sponsored a constant round of entertainments, and kept the servants well paid so that they could put at least a semblance of joy into their job of satisfying the prince's every whim. To put it simply, the father's strategy was to get the prince to lower his aims and to find satisfaction in a happiness that was less than absolute and far from pure. If the young prince were alive today, the father would have other tools for dealing with the prince's dissatisfaction -- including psychotherapy and religious counseling -- but the basic strategy would be the same: to distract the prince and dull his sensitivity so that he could settle down and become a well-adjusted, productive member of society. Fortunately, the prince was too eagle-eyed and lion-hearted to submit to such a strategy. And, again fortunately, he was born into a society that offered him the opportunity to find a solution to the problem of samvega that did justice to the truths of his heart.

The first step in that solution is symbolized in the Siddhartha story by the prince's reaction to the fourth person he saw on his travels outside of the palace: the wandering forest contemplative. Compared to what he called the confining, dusty path of the householder's life, the prince saw the freedom of the contemplative's life as the open air. Such a path of freedom, he felt, would allow him the opportunity to find the answers to his life-and-death questions, and to live a life in line with his highest ideals, "as pure as a polished shell." The emotion he felt at this point is termed *pasada*. Like samvega, *pasada* covers a complex set of feelings. It's usually translated as "clarity and serene confidence"-- mental states that keep samvega from turning into despair. In the prince's case, he gained a clear sense of his predicament, together with confidence that he had found the way out.

As the early Buddhist teachings freely admit, the predicament is that the cycle of birth, aging, and death is meaningless. They don't try to deny this fact and so don't ask us to be dishonest with ourselves or to close our eyes to reality. As one teacher has put it, the Buddhist recognition of the reality of suffering -- so important that suffering is

honored as the first noble truth -- is a gift. It confirms our most sensitive and direct experience of things, an experience that many other traditions try to deny.

From there, the early teachings ask us to become even more sensitive, until we see that the true cause of suffering is not out there -- in society or some outside being -- but in here, in the craving present in each individual mind. They then confirm that there is an end to suffering, a release from the cycle. And they show the way to that release, through developing noble qualities already latent in the mind to the point where they cast craving aside and open onto Deathlessness. Thus the predicament has a practical solution, a solution within the powers of every human being.

It's also a solution open to critical scrutiny and testing -- an indication of the Buddha's own confidence in his handling of the problem of samvega. This is one of the aspects of authentic Buddhism that most attracts people who are tired being told that they should try to deny the insights that inspired their sense of samvega in the first place. In fact, Buddhism is not only confident that it can handle feelings of samvega but it's one of the few religions that actively cultivates them in a thorough-going way. Its solution to the problems of life demands so much dedicated effort that only strong samvega will keep the practicing Buddhist from slipping back into his or her old ways. Hence the recommendation that all men and women, lay or ordained, should reflect daily on the facts of aging, illness, separation, and death -- to develop feelings of samvega -- and on the power of one's own actions, to take samvega one step further, to pasada.

For people whose sense of samvega is so strong that they want to abandon any social ties that interfere with the path to the end of suffering, Buddhism offers both a long-proven body of wisdom to draw on, as well as a safety net: the monastic sangha, an institution that enables them to leave lay society without having to waste time worrying about basic survival. For those who can't leave their social ties, Buddhism offers a way to live in the world without being overcome by the world, following a life of generosity, virtue, and meditation to strengthen the noble qualities of the mind that will lead to the end of suffering. The close, symbiotic relationship maintained between these two branches of the Buddhist parisa, or following, guarantees that the monastics don't turn into misfits and misanthropes, and that the laity don't lose touch with the values that will keep their practice alive.

So the Buddhist attitude toward life cultivates samvega -- a strong sense of the meaninglessness of the cycle of birth, aging, and death -- and develops it into pasada: a confident path to the Deathless. That path includes not only time-proven guidance, but also a social institution that nurtures and keeps it alive. These are all things that we and our society desperately need. As we look into the Buddha's teachings to see what they offer to the mainstream of our modern life, we should remember that one

source of Buddhism's strength is its ability to keep one foot out of the mainstream, and that the traditional metaphor for the practice is that it crosses over the stream to the further shore.

