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Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhasa

Summary

This article contains the brief introduction to Buddhist Yogi C.M. Chen, and his book on Buddhist Meditation.

The summary of a section from the book points out nine mistakes that meditators should observe in their practice.

Buddhist Yogi C. M. CHEN Teachings

Chien-Ming Chen (commonly known as Yogi C.M. Chen) practiced meditation alone in Kalimpong, India, at the foot of the Himalaya Mountains for 28 years. For more than 30 years, Yogi Chen wrote and printed many Buddhist books both in English and Chinese. He made a vow that none of his works should be printed for sale. A meditational manual of Yogi Chen's instructions was first written in 1962 in Kalimpong, West Bengal by Venerable Sangharakshita Sthavira and Venerable Khantipalo Bhikkhu. The final draft was published as a book in 1966 by Upasaka Khoo Poh Kong of Malaysia. C.T. Shen published a reprint in 1976 to which Yogi Chen added two appendices. The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, New York, organized a team to work with Yogi Chen to revise the text. The Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) has gratefully received a gift of the text Buddhist Meditation Systematic and Practical by Yogi Chen.

From Buddhist Meditation Systematic and Practical by the Buddhist Yogi C.M.CHEN. Reprinted 1980 U.S.A. (Summary p.p. 17 – 21)

Mistakes in Meditation

1. Not having a foundation of renunciation as a firm base. People in the West complain there are so many things to give up. If we find it difficult, we should struggle in order to overcome attachments. If you do not renounce, your meditation will not be good.

2. Thinking that by meditation one can increase one's energy and strength, using them to commit evils, whereas the purpose of meditation is to wash away all evil. People like this become tense through living a wrong life, THEN think of meditation. Meditation is not meant for this.

3. People often have no wise guru, so they just read books and try to get all the information from them. In this way meditation is not regarded as religious but is taken up with concern for bodily wellbeing. With wrong aims, such meditation is without foundation.

4. People think that meditation is only a psychological matter. Care should be taken to work towards the lotus position.

5. Taking something from one system and something from another, people try to make a system from this mixture, frequently changing from one to another. Such practice will not lead to attainment in Buddhism, or of any goal outside it.

6. The mistake of seeking to gain power or super-normal powers. The real purpose of meditation is either not known or forgotten. The real purpose is the supramundane benefit of Enlightenment.

7. To think Buddhism is utter Atheism. People with this idea do not believe in any Deities who can protect them while they practice meditation and cannot help meeting demons. Certainly, the Buddha knew that millions of beings superior to us in lifespan and happiness (the devas) exist in birth-and-death (samsara), and he frequently taught them. Many deities then became protectors of the Dharma and so powerful forces such as these are available to protect the meditator.

8. Because some say, "Buddhists teach the extreme doctrine of no-soul", they reject the existence of a conditioned "soul" along with the absolute "soul" (atman). The Buddha denied the existence of the latter but a conditioned "soul" (understood as the continuity of oneself as a person) was not rejected by him.

9. Some Westerners have denied that the law of cause and effect (in Sanskrit, hetu-phala) has any place in Ch'an teachings. There is a difference between what a Ch'an Master says and the proper attitude of a worldly student. We have to be careful not to misunderstand their words. We should not take quotations out of context and distort the intended meaning.

All the above mistakes, in graduation of gross to subtle, are descriptions of negative purposes. We must examine the positive ones.

MAY ALL BEINGS BE HAPPY.