

什麼是「空」？

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「空」是一種認知的形式，一種看待經驗的方式。它不是增減生理和心理的活動經驗。你只是觀察心念和五官感覺的實相，不加任何想像。

這就稱為「空」，因為它毫無一般人將經驗合理化的預設立場，以各種故事和世俗觀點來解釋我們是誰及定義我們所居住的世間。雖然這些故事和觀點有其功用，但佛陀發現它們所產生的抽象疑問，我們的本來面目和外在本質到底為何，讓我們無法體驗當下的各種事務如何互相影響。因此，它們阻礙我們認識並解決「苦」。

舉例來說，你在禪修時，生起對母親的「憤怒」。「心」立刻確認這是「我的」憤怒，或「我是」在生氣。接著，心對純然的感受加油添醋，不是費力思索你與母親的關係，就是推敲如何為自己的憤怒辯護。佛陀認為，這些故事和看法會帶來許多痛苦。當你愈投入其中，你愈看不到痛苦的真正原因：「我」和「我的」這些標籤將讓你陷入情緒不定之中。結果，你無法根除苦因而滅苦。

但是，假如你能觀空，不對憤怒起反應，只把它看作一連串的心理活動，你將發現根本沒有必要去執著憤怒。一旦你精通「空觀」，就會發現這不僅僅適用於「憤怒」等情緒，亦適用於經驗中的最微細活動。這就是「萬法皆空」。當你瞭解到這點，就能夠知道「我」和「我的」這些標籤是不適當也無用的，只會帶來煩惱與苦。因此，你可以丟掉它們。當你完全放掉這些標籤之後，就會發現更深沉的經驗、完全解脫的經驗。

若要精通空觀，必須具備紮實的持戒、修定及慧觀。少了這些，我們的心就會不斷虛構故事與世界觀。以此看來，空的教法似乎是另一個新故事與世界觀。就你與母親的關係來說，似乎根本沒有母親和你。從你的世界觀來說，似乎不是將世界視為不存在，就是將「空」視為廣大無分別的境界，我們來自空，也終將回到空。

這些詮釋不僅誤解了「空」的意義，也讓我們的心變得偏頗。假如你生活中的世界及人並不確實存在，那麼你的所有行動及反應也都是零，你就會開始懷疑持戒是否具有任何意義。反之，若你視「空」為我們終將回歸的存有基地，那麼既然我們遲早都會回歸於空，我們還有必要去修定和慧嗎？就算我們需要訓練自己的心，讓自己回歸於空，我們要怎麼做才能不離開空而不會繼續受苦呢？如此，修行似乎不具任何意義與效用。若一直質問經驗背後是否另有他物，就只會讓心糾纏在這些瑣事上，不能安住當下。

故事和世界觀的確有其功用。佛陀運用它們來教導眾生，但是他從未使用「空」這個字。佛陀講述人生故事，說明無明會帶來痛苦，但智慧卻能夠讓人離苦得樂。佛陀開示輪迴的基本法則：惡業會遭致痛苦，善業會帶來快樂；同時，善巧的身、語、意業能讓你自輪迴中解脫。佛法旨在幫助眾生了知當下一念心的認知和動機；換言之，即是讓心進入空性之中。一旦如此，眾生就可以運用空的教法來達

到他們的目的：不再執著一切觀點、故事、假設，心中沒有貪、瞋、癡；因此，空無苦痛和煩惱。當你真正做到時，那才是「空」的本義。V

What is Emptiness?

Excerpt from Noble Strategy

by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

Chinese Translation by Cheng Chen-huang

Emptiness is a mode of perception, a way of looking at experience. It adds nothing to and takes nothing away from the raw data of physical and mental events. You look at events in the mind and the senses with no thought of whether there's anything lying behind them.

This mode is called emptiness because it's empty of the pre-suppositions we usually add to experience to make sense of it: the stories and world-views we fashion to explain who we are and to define the world we live in. Although these stories and views have their uses, the Buddha found that some of the more abstract questions they raise--of our true identity and the reality of the world outside--pull attention away from a direct experience of how events influence one another in the immediate present. Thus they get in the way when we try to understand and solve the problem of suffering.

Say for instance, that you're meditating, and a feeling of anger toward your mother appears. Immediately, the mind's reaction is to identify the anger as "my" anger, or to say that "I'm" angry. It then elaborates on the feeling, either working it into the story of your relationship to your mother, or to your general views about when and where anger toward one's mother can be justified. The problem with all this, from the Buddha's perspective, is that these stories and views entail a lot of suffering. The more you get involved in them, the more you get distracted from seeing the actual cause of the suffering: the labels of "I" and "mine" that set the whole process in motion. As a result, you can't find the way to unravel that cause and bring the suffering to an end.

If, however, you can adopt the emptiness mode--by not acting on or reacting to the anger, but simply watching it as a series of events, in and of themselves--you can see that the anger is empty of anything worth identifying with or possessing. As you master the emptiness mode more consistently, you see that this truth holds not only for such gross emotions as anger, but also for even the most subtle events in the realm of experience. This is the sense in which all things are empty. When you see this, you realize that labels of "I" and "mine" are inappropriate, unnecessary, and cause nothing but stress and pain. You can then drop them. When you drop them totally, you discover a mode of experience that lies deeper still, one that's totally free.

To master the emptiness mode of perception requires training in firm virtue, concentration, and discernment. Without this training, the mind tends to stay in the mode that keeps creating stories and world views. And from the perspective of that mode, the teaching of emptiness sounds simply like another story or world view with new ground rules. In terms of the story of your relationship with your mother, it seems to be saying that there's really no mother, no you. In terms of your views about the world, it seems to be saying either that the world doesn't really exist, or else that emptiness is the great undifferentiated ground of being from which we all came to which someday we'll all return.

These interpretations not only miss the meaning of emptiness but also keep the mind from getting into the proper mode. If the world and the people in the story of your life don't really exist, then all the actions and reactions in that story seem like a mathematics of zeros, and you wonder why there's any point in practicing virtue at all. If, on the other hand, you see emptiness as the ground of being to which we're all going to return, then what need is there to train the mind in concentration and discernment, since we're all going to get there anyway? And even if we need training to get back to our ground of being, what's to keep us from coming out of it and suffering all over again? So in all these scenarios, the whole idea of training the mind seems futile and pointless. By focusing on the question of whether or not there really is something behind experience, they entangle the mind in issues that keep it from getting into the present mode.

Now, stories and world views do serve a purpose. The Buddha employed them when teaching people, but he never used the word emptiness when speaking in these modes. He recounted the stories of people's lives to show how suffering comes from the unskillful perceptions behind their actions, and how freedom from suffering can come from being more perceptive. And he described the basic principles that underlie the round of rebirth to show how bad intentional actions lead to pain within that round, good ones lead to pleasure, while really skillful actions can take you beyond the round altogether. In all these cases, these teachings were aimed at getting people to focus on the quality of the perceptions and intentions in their minds in the present--in other words, to get them into the emptiness mode. Once there, they can use the teachings on emptiness for their intended purpose: to loosen all attachments to views, stories, and assumptions, leaving the mind empty of all greed, anger, and delusion, and thus empty of suffering and stress. And when you come right down to it, that's the emptiness that really counts.