



Khun Yai's Teachings

WISDOM FROM AN ENLIGHTENED MIND

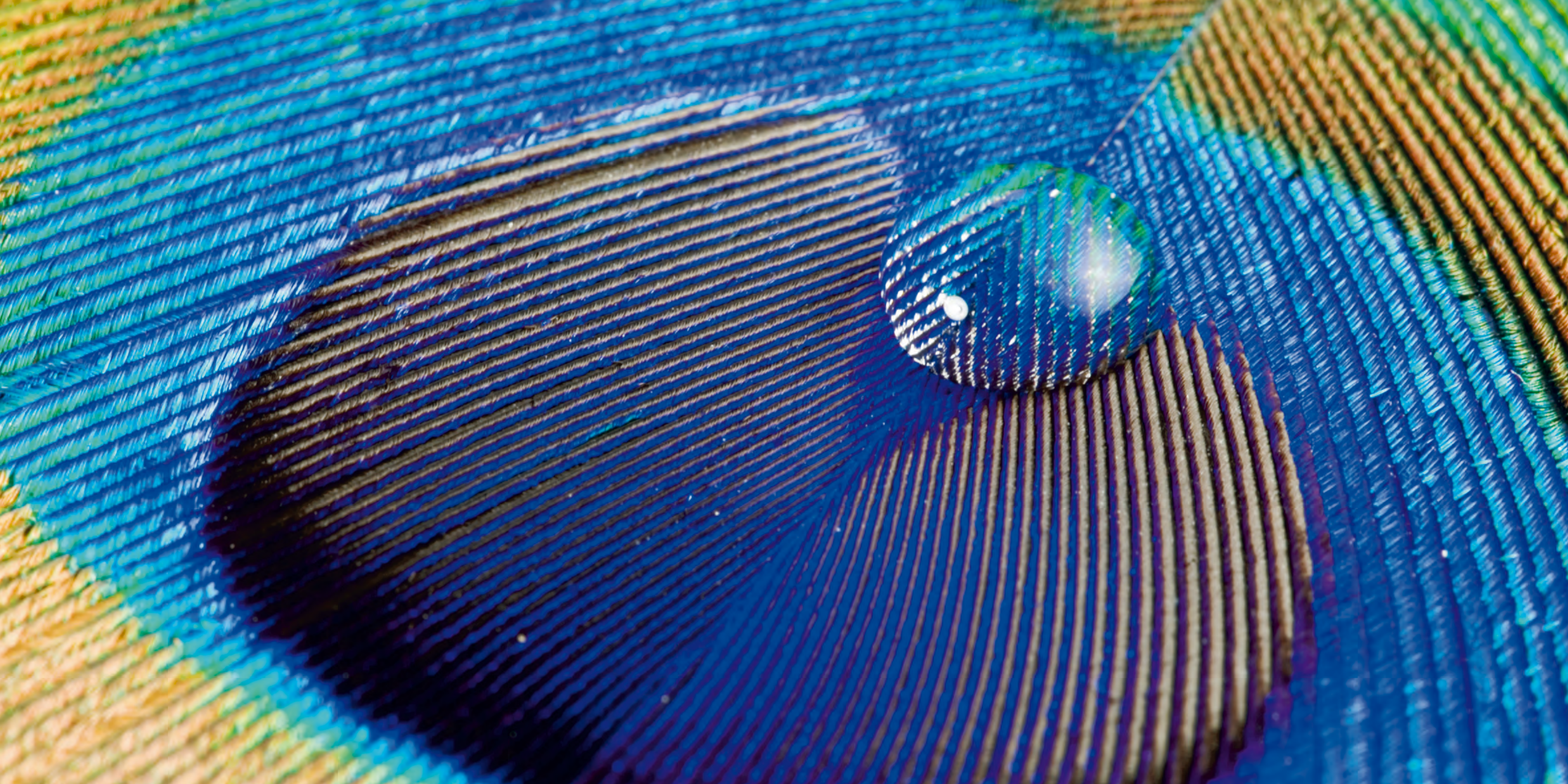
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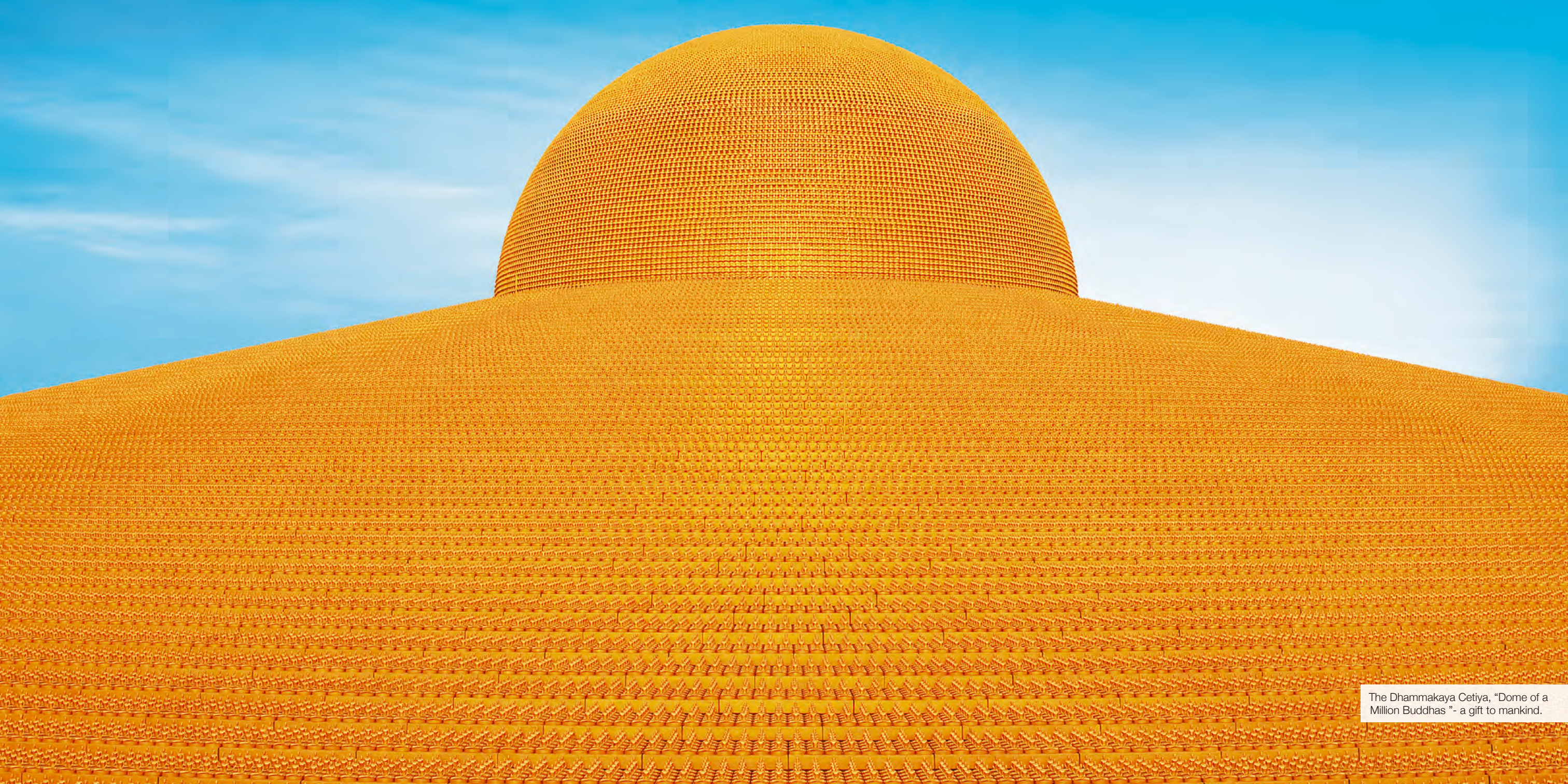




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WISDOM FROM AN ENLIGHTENED MIND





The Dhammakaya Cetiya, “Dome of a Million Buddhas”- a gift to mankind.



Thousands of Buddhists gather at the Dhammakaya Meditation Hall every Sunday to practice meditation and perform merits.



Grand procession at Khun Yai's cremation ceremony. Khun Yai's body is contained in a gold-lined coffin carried by a gorgeous peacock float.



Hundreds of thousands of laypeople and monks from around the world at Khun Yai's cremation ceremony.



AN AMAZING WOMAN

With two bare hands and a mere savings of 3,200 Baht (equivalent to US\$160 at that time), Khun Yai managed to build the Dhammakaya Temple of Thailand, the biggest Buddhist temple in the world, where thousands of Buddhist monks live a virtuous life and preach goodness to all of mankind.

There are numerous stories about Khun Yai's extraordinary mental powers and her abilities to recall her own past lives as well as the past lives of others. Despite her lack of education and her inability to read or write, Khun Yai's insights and wisdoms have inspired millions of people around the world.

Khun Yai is not only a builder of a great temple but she is also a builder of great people. The foundation for the orderly monastic practices and the good mannerism for laypeople laid out by Khun Yai have brought respect to Buddhist monks as well as the Buddhist religion.

Khun Yai was loved and revered by many. At her Cremation Ceremony in 2001, 100,000 Buddhist monks from 30,000 temples all over Thailand, senior monks from twenty different countries, and hundreds of thousands of others from around the world came to pay their final respect to Khun Yai. This was the biggest assembly of monks in Buddhist history.

This book is a collection of Khun Yai's teachings packed with practical and inspiring life lessons. Follow these teachings and you will be certain to have a better life, in both the material sense and the spiritual sense.

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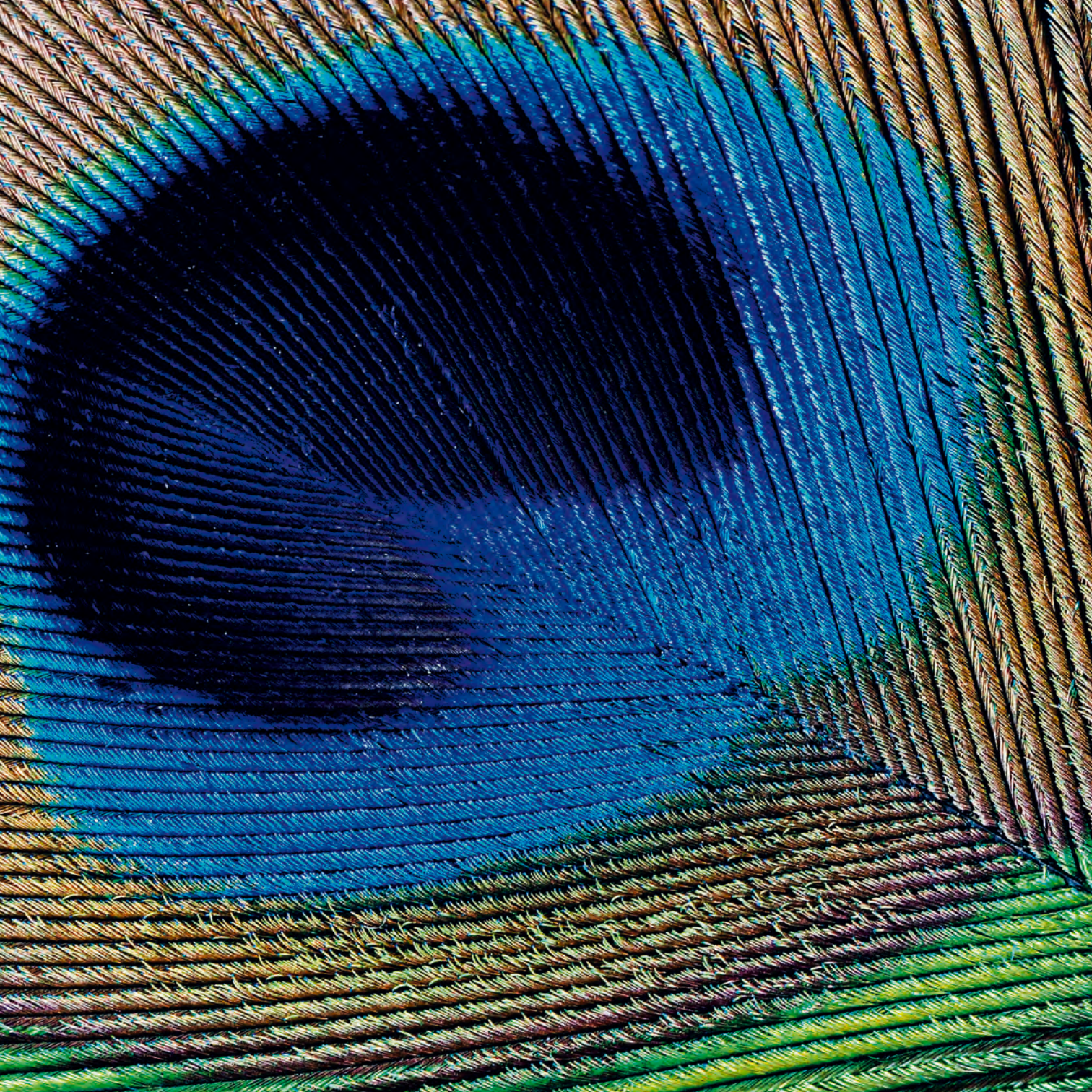


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The Dhammakaya Tradition

Founded by the Great Abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen, Phramongkolthepmuni (background picture), the Dhammakaya Knowledge was passed on to Khun Yai Chand Khonnokyoong (center), who in turn imparted the Knowledge to Luang Por Dhammajayo (left) and Luang Por Dattajeevo (right), the current Abbot and Vice-Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple, Thailand.



KHUN YAI'S STORY

1885-1959



The Great Master Phra-mongkolthepmuni, Abbot of Wat Paknam, founder of the Dhammakaya Tradition.

1909-2000



Khun Yai Chand Khon-nokyoong, founder of the Dhammakaya Temple (Wat Phra Dhammakaya).

1936



Khun Yai met Tongsuk Samdaengpan, her first meditation teacher who was a student of the Great Master.

1938



Khun Yai was ordained as a Buddhist nun at Wat Paknam and began studying advanced meditation with the Great Master.

1963



Khun Yai met Chaiyaboon Suddhipol, the future Ven. Dhammajayo Bhikkhu, Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple.

1966



Padej Pongsawat, the future Ven. Dattajeevo Bhikkhu, Vice Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple, began studying meditation with Khun Yai.

1967



Dhammaprasit House, the first meditation center, was built inside Wat Paknam compound.

1969



Chaiyaboon was ordained into the monk-hood at Wat Paknam and was named Ven. Dhammajayo Bhikkhu. He is now Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple.

1969



Lady Prayad donated 78-acre plot of land in Pathumthani to Khun Yai and Dhammajayo Bhikkhu.

1970



Buddhajak Center (now the Dhammakaya Temple) established on this land. Many more developments followed.

1982



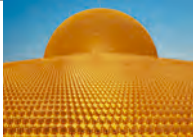
Main Chapel completed, surrounded by beautiful landscapes.

1985



Temple ground expanded to 1,000 acres with capacity to hold 1,000,000 people.

2000



The Great Dhammakaya Cetiya completed. 1,000,000 Buddha images enshrined here.

2002



At Khun Yai's Cremation Ceremony hundreds of thousands of monks and laypeople attended.

2003



Khun Yai's Memorial Hall erected. Her golden statue enshrined here.

2009



Construction of Khun Yai's Centennial Building began. The Building will become Dhammakaya Foundation Headquarters and world center for Buddhism.



Merit is the only possession we can take with us after we die. In the end, what is left of this world is only merit and demerit.

“Khun Yai” Chand Khonnokyoong was born on January 20, 1909, in Nakorn Chaisri, a rural municipality of Thailand. She was the fifth of nine children in the family. Her father, Ploy, and mother, Pan, were rice farmers.

The word “Khun Yai” means “grandmother” in Thai. It is a respectful way to call a woman of advancing age. Khun Yai’s given name was Chand, which means “moon”. Her last name was Khonnokyoong, which means “peacock-feather”.

The farmer’s life had trained Chand to be industrious. She would get up before sunrise to tend to the rice field with her water buffalo and would return home at sunset. In those times, Thai families seldom send their daughters to school. Because of this, Chand never learned how to read or write.

Chand's father was a good family man but he was addicted to alcohol. He was gentle when sober, but unpleasant when drunk. One day, he became so drunk that he fell asleep under the house while the family slept inside (a village house is usually built on stilts to protect from wild animals and flooding). He was mumbling and snoring so loudly that it bothered the family. In disgust, her mother called him a "sparrow" (a Thai expression for a worthless person) that leached off of her. This remark wounded his pride. He angrily asked all the children if they heard their mother insult him. The children stayed quiet. Innocently, Chand said that she did not think her mother had insulted him. This infuriated her father, thinking she was taking her mother's side. In anger, he cursed Chand to deafness for 500 lifetimes.

Many Thai folks believe that the parents' words are sacred and potent. Chand worried that her father's curse would come true for her. She wished to ask for her father's forgiveness so the curse could be lifted. Unfortunately, she never had the opportunity to do so until he died.

On the day her father passed away, Chand was out working in the rice field. When she came home after a long day, she saw everybody crying for her father. It is a Thai tradition to ask a dying person for forgiveness for any wrongs done to the person. Everybody had already asked for his forgiveness, except for Chand.

His death profoundly affected Chand's life. Most Thai people believe in rebirth. She worried that she would be reborn deaf as a result of her father's curse. Now that her father had passed away, the only place to find him was in the afterlife realm.

When Chand was 18 years old, she heard about the supernormal meditative powers of the Great Abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen (Phramongkol-thepmuni, 1885-1959) who taught an advanced form of meditation known as the Dhammakaya Knowledge. Through this Knowledge, an adept meditator could use his inner transcendental body to traverse to the afterlife realms. Some of the Great Abbot's disciples were known to have this ability. Chand wished that one day she would have the opportunity to meet the Great Abbot and learn this Knowledge from him.

Chand left home in 1935 when she was 26 years old to look for the Great Abbot at Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen in Thonburi, a neighboring city of Bangkok. She learned that a woman by the name of Madam Liab was a regular benefactor of Wat Paknam. She applied for a job with Madam Liab to become her domestic help. She did this to gain access to the inner circle of Wat Paknam and the Great Abbot so that one day she could become a disciple there. Madam Liab agreed to hire Chand. As time went by, Chand's hardworking nature and truthfulness gained her the complete trust and confidence of Madam Liab.

During this same time a meditation master from Wat Paknam by the name of Tongsuk Samdaengpan, a leading disciple of the Great Abbot, was teaching meditation at Madam Liab's home. At Chand's request, Madam Liab agreed to let her join the meditation class.

Chand practiced meditation with Tongsuk Samdaengpan, for two years. She eventually attained the Dhammakaya, a state of absorption in meditation where the mind becomes one and the same with the inner Body of Enlightenment, having penetrative insight into the reality of life and the world. This is a state where mental consciousness is at its highest.

Having achieved this high level of meditative attainment, Chand asked Tongsuk to show her how to traverse to the afterlife realms so that she could find her father. With Tongsuk's help, Chand finally located her deceased father who, due to his bad drinking habits, had fallen into one of the hell realms. Through her Dhammakaya Body, Chand was able to communicate with her father and asked for his forgiveness, which he granted. And through the power of the Dhammakaya, Chand helped him to recall the merits from his good deeds in earlier lifetimes so these merits could relieve him from this retribution. Her father's retribution was indeed neutralized by the power of his merit and he was freed from the hell realm.

Upon attaining the Dhammakaya, Chand knew that Dhamma was to become her life destiny. She decided to renounce the worldly life to become a nun. Chand finally met the Great Abbot in 1938. She asked to become his disciple and to be ordained as a nun. The Great Abbot happily obliged.

While at Wat Paknam, Chand was admitted to join the super-advanced meditation workshop where only the most accomplished meditators were allowed. Chand devoted herself entirely to meditation without concerns for anything else even though sometimes she was mistreated by peers who looked down upon her. She meditated twelve hours each day, six uninterrupted hours in the morning and six uninterrupted hours in the evening. Her meditation skills became so profound that she soon became one of the Great Abbot's most outstanding disciples. The Great Abbot called her "Second to None".

In 1954, the Great Abbot called a meeting among his students from both inside and outside the temple to speak of his passing which was to take place in five years. He told his students to spread the Dhammakaya Knowledge to the world. Five years later, his prophecy came true. The Great Abbot passed away on February 3, 1959.

After the Great Abbot's passing, Chand continued to teach meditation at her residence at Wat Paknam. People referred to her as "Teacher Chand". She was called "Khun Yai" (grandmother) by her younger students, and everybody called her "Khun Yai" after that. The number of students grew steadily until it exceeded the capacity of her residency. Among these students were two promising young men, Chaiboon Suddhipol and Padej Pongsawat, who later became two great Buddhist monks who led the Dhammakaya Temple to its pinnacle of success as we know today.

In 1967, a larger wooden building was constructed inside the Wat Paknam compound to serve as a meditation center. It was named the "Dhammaprasit House".

Young Chaiboon Suddhipol and Padej Pongsawat played key roles in all of Khun Yai's projects. Khun Yai was 54 years old when she met Chaiboon Suddhipol in October 1963 while he was a freshman at Kasetsart University. Chaiboon was 19 at the time. Padej joined Khun Yai soon after through the introduction of Chaiboon. Both of them studied meditation with Khun Yai and were the supporters and driving force behind many of Khun Yai's success.

Chaiyaboon achieved a high level of success in the Dhammakaya meditation practice, and Khun Yai assigned him to teach meditation to others. Chaiyaboon came to realize that his real purpose in life was to become a Buddhist monk. Khun Yai was pleased to hear of his intention but advised him to finish college before entering monkhood.

Chaiyaboon graduated from Kasetsart University in April 1969, with a Bachelor's degree in economics, and was ordained at Wat Paknam on August 27th of the same year. His monastic name was Dhammajayo Bhikkhu (currently Phrathepyanmahamuni, Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple), also known as Luang Por Dhammajayo. Luang Por Dhammajayo went on to become a legendary monk and spiritual leader who successfully propagates the Dhammakaya Knowledge to the world.

Padej, another key disciple of Khun Yai, was also a graduate of Kasetsart University. Padej had a compelling personality and natural leadership qualities. Padej, too, had found Dhamma to be his shining light and decided to become a monk for life. He was ordained on December 19, 1970, at Wat Paknam. His monastic name was Dattajeevo Bhikkhu (currently Phra bhavanaviriyakhun, Vice Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple), also known as Luang Por Dhattajeevo. Today, Luang Por Dattajeevo is a world-renown Buddhist scholar who has written and published scores of books on Buddhism.

After the ordination of Luang Por Dhammajayo, Khun Yai felt the time was right for them to build a Buddhist temple where true monks could be developed and the Dhammakaya Knowledge could be propagated to benefit mankind. This was a grand vision indeed, but could it be achieved? To fulfill this vision, a great deal of financial resources would be needed. Unfortunately, all that Khun Yai had was her own savings of a mere 3,200 Baht (US\$160 in 1970).

But Khun Yai was a perpetual optimist who was driven by merit and merit power. She strongly believed that the virtue of good deeds performed by her and her team members would attract sufficient “celestial treasures” to make this mission possible.

Khun Yai and Dhammajayo Bhikkhu envisioned that their future temple would be built on a sizeable piece of land not too far from Bangkok, with a river or creek flowing through it. The team set out to look for such a land. They found a track of land in Pathumtani, ten miles from the Bangkok International Airport. This land was owned by Lady Prayad Prattayaponsa-Visudhadhipodi, an aristocratic lady. The team was not certain that Lady Prayad would be willing to sell part of the land she owned, but proceeded to arrange for a meeting with her. The day that Khun Yai's team met with Lady Prayad also happened to coincide with Lady Prayad's birthday. It was a lucky day for Khun Yai and the team. Not only was Lady Prayad willing to part with the land, but she was in fact willing to donate the entire 78.4 acres of her land to the future temple. This was nothing less than a miracle. Needless to say, everyone was overjoyed.

The Dhammakaya Temple was formally established on Magha Puja Day, February 20, 1970. It was originally called Buddhajak Meditation Center. The Main Chapel was completed in 1982. The property was later expanded to 1,000 acres in 1985. The Great Dhammakaya Cetiya, the world's largest Buddhist monument where 300,000 Buddha images are enshrined on the exterior dome, was completed in the year 2000. The Grand Opening Ceremony of the Cetiya took place on Saturday, April 22, 2000. Khun Yai was 91 years old when the great Cetiya was completed. She lived to see that big day. The Great Dhammakaya Cetiya is indeed a gift to mankind. The compounds surrounding the Ceitya are now the gathering grounds for Buddhists around the world. Over one million Buddhists gather at the Cetiya during important Buddhist events.

The Dhammakaya's mission statement is "World Peace through Inner Peace". Its goal is to "change the world, one person at a time".

The Dhammakaya Temple, Khun Yai's brainchild, is now the center of Buddhism for all Buddhists around the world.

Khun Yai passed away on the morning of Sunday, September 10, 2000. At her Cremation Ceremony in 2002, 100,000 Buddhist monks from 30,000 temples all over Thailand, many senior monks from twenty different countries, and hundreds of thousands of others from around the world came to pay their final respect to Khun Yai. This is the biggest gathering of Buddhists in history.

Like the story in a fairy tale:
A tiny little farmer girl, completely illiterate, took a journey on a spiritual quest, found a Great Master, learned the great Knowledge from the Master, went on to build a great temple, produced many true monks and virtuous people, and brought goodness to mankind.

Khun Yai's legacy lives on.



SELF

1. EXAMINE YOURSELF

Before bedtime each night, take a few minutes to meditate upon your day.

Reflect on everything you have done throughout the day, from the time you wake up, to the time you go to bed (i.e., waking, eating, working, meditating, keeping the precepts¹, giving alms).

Reflect on how much merit you have accumulated and how many bad deeds you have committed today. Resolve to relinquish all the negative actions that lead to bad Kamma². Don't even let one particle of your demerit linger with you overnight.

Contemplate on giving up. Give up wrongdoings. Give up bad actions. Give up everything evil. Give up the slackness in your meditation.

Contemplate on improving. Improve on doing more good deeds. Make the effort to improve yourself and build up good kamma every day. Think of this life as your final existence and your last opportunity to capture all the merits.

September 31, 1976

¹**Precepts** (*sila*) are the guiding principles that form the framework of Buddhist ethical conduct and the baseline of one's virtue.

²**Kamma** (*Skt. Karma*) is action or deed of body, speech and mind. Every willed action brings future consequences, including future rebirths; the consequences of past deeds largely determine one's general life situation.

2. CONTEMPLATE WITH DHAMMA

When facing a difficult situation, look at it from the viewpoint of Dhamma³. Don't be victimized by the influence of defilements.

Reflect on Dhamma at all times. Wisdom gained from meditation will lead you to the right knowledge and awareness.

Time flies by quickly. Days, weeks and months go by, and all of a sudden a year is gone. Ask what you have done for yourself. Are you conducting your life in a way that fulfills your goals? What should you strive for? What should you refrain from? Are you doing the things appropriate for who you are? Always be mindful. Don't become deluded in yourself.

³**Dhamma** (*Skt. Dharma*): the truth; the natural condition of things or beings; the law of their existence; the ethical code of righteousness; the whole body of religious doctrines as a system; the Teachings of Buddha; the eternal truth that Buddha realized, his verbal expression of that truth, and the phenomena or elements that comprise reality.

Note: Khun Yai frequently used the term "Dhamma" to refer to the practice of meditation.

3. SAVE YOURSELF FIRST

We are like a small, helpless baby bird vulnerable to dangers. Save yourself from danger before thinking and worrying about saving others.

After I left home, I never looked back. I only returned once to attend my mother's funeral. When I got home, I gave all my property and possessions away. I gave my 15-rai (approx. 6 acres) rice field to my younger sister because she took care of our mother, and my 20-rai (approx. 8 acres) rice field to my younger brother, a monk, for his future welfare.

May 6, 1981

4. RELY ON YOURSELF

I said to myself: "In all of the world, material or spiritual, you cannot depend on others. You need to depend on yourself. Never rely on others."

May 23, 1981

5. HOW TO RELIEVE SUFFERING

When you feel despair, chant a lot, and meditate a lot. No one can help you as well as you can help yourself.

February, 27 1982

6. TEACH YOURSELF

We must learn how to teach ourselves. I never had to be taught by anyone, yet I knew how to do everything on my own.

I didn't know how to read or write, but I observed and I learned how to teach myself.

Take cleaning, for example. No one had to teach me. My father didn't teach me. My mother didn't teach me. I taught myself.

Since I was a little girl living in Nakorn Chaisri, after each meal I would collect all the pots and pans and dishes and clean them. I would clean them until they were completely spotless, inside and out.

When cleaning the stairs of the house, I would scrub the top surface as well as underneath the stairs. My older siblings would ask me why I had to clean underneath as well. I would say, "I don't know, I like doing it this way. I just feel like making everything clean." I taught myself to make everything clean, inside and out.

Even as a grown up, if I saw a dirty spot I would clean it as soon as I could. It is a habit I keep till this day.

It was the same way when I was living with Madam Liab. When I cleaned the tables and chairs, I would clean both the top surface and the bottom surface. I didn't want even a speck of dust to remain on them.

I'm a stickler for cleanliness. I won't let anything escape me without making it clean. When I see something dirty, I make a note of it in my mind to come back and clean it. Once, I saw mildew at a corner of the staircase. I marked it in my mind and came back to clean it along with everything else until the whole area was sparkling clean. I did this in its entirety until there was nothing left to be cleaned.

To others, this is a reflection of my character and makes everyone trust me.

The same thing happened when I lived with Tongsuk at Wat⁴ Paknam. I organized everything and cleaned every object in sight until the whole house was spotless.

When I was permitted into the super-advanced meditation elite class (known as the "meditation factory"), I was given the oldest bed that was infested with bedbugs. The mosquito net was old, dirty and worn out. I did not complain. To be given an opportunity to meditate here was good enough for me.

⁴ ***Wat*** is the Thai word for a Buddhist temple.

It stung when the bedbugs bit me, but I would not kill them. I would catch them and put them in a spittoon covered with a piece of paper so they could not get away. When morning came, I would release these bedbugs elsewhere.

I cleaned until everything around me became spotless. My bed was clean. Even my old mosquito net was utterly clean.

I have been like this since I was a little girl. I love cleanliness and orderliness. I know where everything should or should not be. I taught myself everything.

I know when to do what. I know how to manage my time and how to handle my tasks. When I was at Wat Paknam I taught myself orderliness and discipline.

After I attained meditation skills to recall past lives, I traversed into my past to find out why I became the person I am. Through meditation, I found that the reason I was capable of self teaching was because I had meditated a great deal in my previous existences. The merits gained from my meditation in the past lives have given rise to the knowledge and wisdom that enabled me to teach myself.

You, too, should meditate as much as you can to develop the ability to teach yourself.

November 6, 1980



7. LOOK WITHIN YOURSELF

I look at myself. I look through myself. I understand “me” clearly.

I look into my physical self to find my human nature until I thoroughly understand it. Then I look deeper into my spiritual self, to find my transcendental nature, until I understand this too.

Once I understood myself, I understood others and everything else. This is the way of Dhamma. It sounds strange but it is true and it is profound.

Try to understand ourselves truly, and we will understand everything and everyone else clearly, because this world is about us. Look inside us and we will see the world clearly.

But the ways of the world are not like this--we tend to look at others and try to understand them instead of ourselves. When we fail to understand them we get frustrated. By looking so hard at others, we forget to look at ourselves. Acting this way will never help us truly understand.

As for me, I look to myself to understand “me” first. Then I will understand others.

May 5, 1980

8. DO IT FOR YOURSELF

When Luang Por Wat Paknam was guiding the super-advanced meditation group, he asked every meditator, one by one, what his/her purpose was for performing this super-advanced meditation. Some said they did it for Buddhism; others said they did it for Luang Por. Everyone gave the same types of answers.

When it was my turn to answer, I said, “I am doing it for myself.”

This was the answer that pleased Luang Por the most. He said, “This is the way to go! You guys are here to do it for yourselves, not for anyone else. No one can do it for others. You do it because you want to free yourself from suffering...to free yourself from the enslavement of the ‘Mara⁵’.”

September 20, 1982

⁵**Mara** refers to evil, both as a concept and as a personification. In Buddhist cosmology, Mara is a supra-natural being responsible for hindering people from performing meritorious deeds. Mara can also mean obstacles for doing good deeds.

9. DHAMMA IS YOUR REFUGE

I see all the way through. I see clearly that, out of everything in this world and beyond--physical, natural, and spiritual--no one can help me but me.

Who else can relieve my suffering? No one can, except me.

That's why I try to help myself all of the time. I find ways to help myself. I rely on myself. I rely on my Dhamma. I managed to survive everything because I have Dhamma as my refuge.

May 5, 1980

10. LOVE YOURSELF

Build virtue. When your merit is as big as a mountain, your obstacles will have no effect on you. Your goodness will be seen by others.

Remember these words: “build virtue; accumulate merit.”

If you do this, you will be known as someone who values yourself, someone who strives to be a better person. Accumulate as much merit as you can. One day your merit will be whole, and all the success and happiness will be yours.

November 17, 1982

11. CREATE BLESSINGS FOR YOURSELF

If life is to be prosperous, one must create “blessings⁶” for oneself.

Think of ways to bring auspicious things into your life. Try to think of only good and positive thoughts that are auspicious. This will help cultivate your mind in a positive direction. If your mind is wholesome, your speech will become auspicious. Everything you do will also become auspicious.

November 7, 1980

12. IMPROVE YOURSELF

We must take the viewpoint that this is our last life on earth and our last opportunity to make a spiritual improvements.

Now is our final life. Let us improve ourselves in the best way. Let us accumulate as much merit as we can. Let our merit be as big as a mountain. If we want to build great merit we must meditate a great deal, and also make wishes or resolutions that are all-encompassing.

⁶**Blessings** (*mangala*): prosperity; auspiciousness; good omen; anything that is conducive to success.

13. RELY ON MERIT

In the end, only we can help ourselves. We can't count on others. We must rely on our own merit and our own determination.

If we constantly focus our minds to the centers of our bodies, all truths will reveal themselves and our knowledge will be far-reaching and unlimited. But if we let our minds wander from the center of our bodies, our knowledge will be constrained and limited.

September 3, 1988

14. FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS

I do things for my own benefit and for the benefit of others. We should do something worthwhile for ourselves. After having done something worthwhile for ourselves, we should also do something worthwhile for the mass. Then we can say that this life is worthwhile.

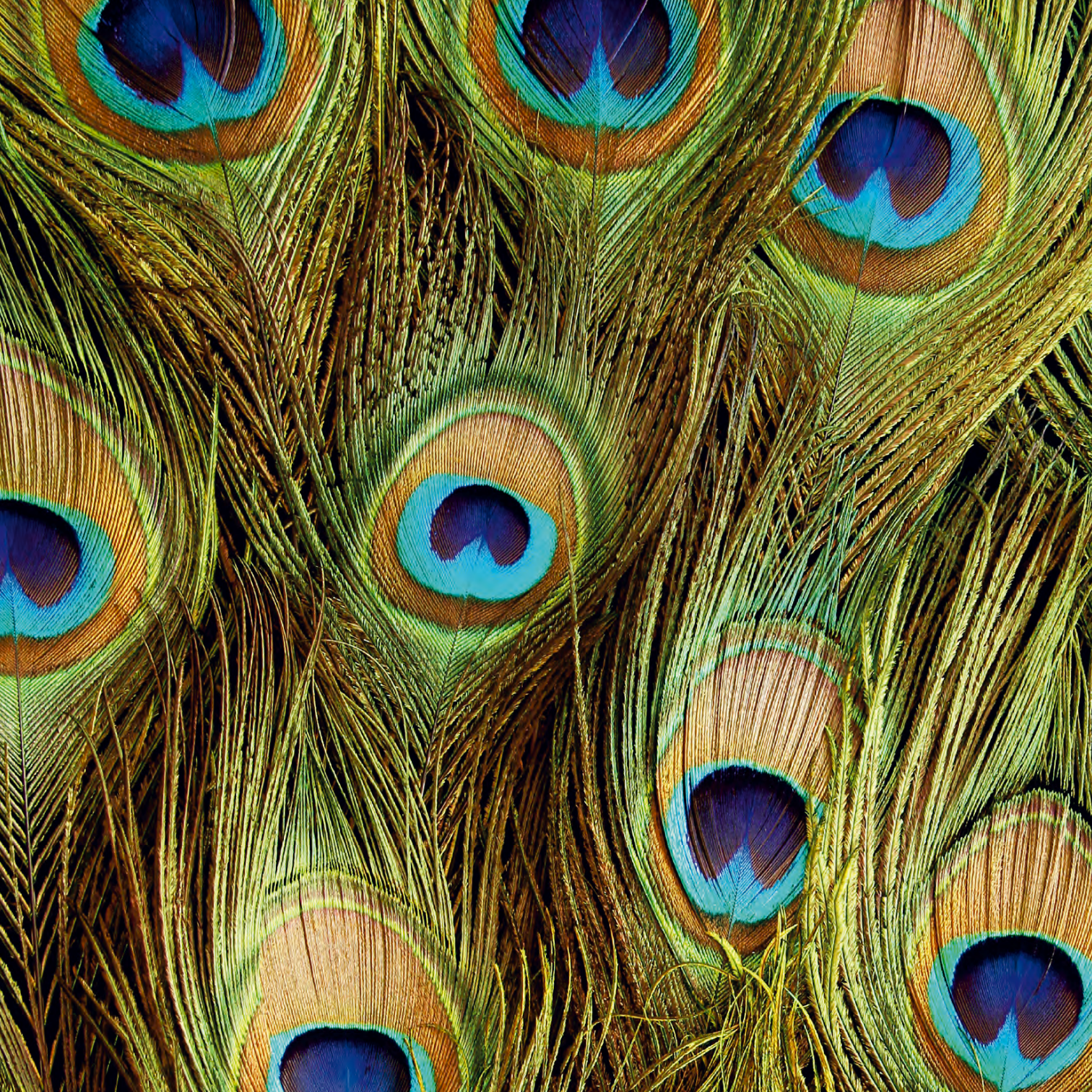
March 4, 1980

15. IT'S THE PRESENT THAT COUNTS

A boy came to me once and asked: "What was I, who was I in my past life?"

I told him: "Put aside curiosities about your past lives. What matters is your life here and now. What have you done for yourself in this life that will save you?"

March 10, 1991



NON-RECKLESSNESS

16. BORN ALONE, DIE ALONE

We were born alone and we will die alone.

There is no need to worry about others if we can't even save ourselves. If we can't save ourselves, and don't have a firm grip on our own refuge, then maybe we are not good enough to save others. We, ourselves, may be vulnerable to Mara.

Now that we have found Buddhism, now that we have found the most important and beneficial knowledge, what are we still waiting for? Why are we not reaping the benefits? Are we going to wait until we are too old?

We don't know when our final moment may arrive. If we die unexpectedly, do we want to find ourselves in a hell realm? Doesn't it bother you to think that your time in this life may be for naught? Don't you feel sorry for the wasted time, and the wasted life?

The purpose of our life is to pursue 'Perfections'⁷ (*parami*). Preserve and protect our merit. Only merit will carry us through in the end. Transcendental merit (merit gained from meditation) is very important. How much do you expect of life when you have accumulated so little transcendental merit?

If we are born into this world and allow our life to be wasted, why bother to be born at all? Chattering, fooling around, frivolous pursuits, what do we gain from such activities? Are we winning or losing in our quest for Perfections?

You must protect your merit. If you don't protect it, pay no attention to it, or don't reflect on it regularly, your merit will become weak and stop flowing. But if you constantly reflect on it, your merit will keep flowing.

Ask yourself what you want for your future. Do you wish to become lost amidst the deceptions of pleasurable sight, sound, smell, taste and touch?

Reflect upon this carefully. A wrong path, once chosen, is hard to deviate from.

February 9, 1975

⁷**Perfections** (*parami*): 'Perfectured Virtues'; transcendental virtues. In Buddhism, Perfections are transcendental virtues cultivated as a way of purification, purifying karma and helping the aspirant to live an unobstructed life, while reaching the goal of enlightenment.

17. STRIVE TO BUILD MAXIMUM MERIT

Dhamma is something deep and profound. It is not easy for ordinary people to attain or even comprehend in a short amount of time.

You know that it is difficult to be born as a human. One has to overcome innumerable odds before one gets to become a human. Now that you are a human and have found Buddhism, you should make your life worthwhile. Build as much parami (Perfections) as possible until your virtue is whole enough to help you find your way out of suffering.

Being born human is a great blessing indeed. It doesn't matter whether you are born into a rich or poor family, a fortunate or unfortunate condition, you should accept it and carry on. There is nothing anyone can do to change this.

You have become the way you are because of what you have done in the past. It is your kamma⁸. If you want to improve your conditions, you have to commit to doing more good deeds.

⁸Under the **Law of Kamma**, by which all creatures must live, a person bears the consequences of his own actions. Bad actions cause bad consequences and good actions bear good consequences.

Everyone who is born will eventually die. We all have to die, but no one knows when his/her time will come. Because of this, we must do all we can to accumulate as much merit as possible. Merit is the only possession we can take with us after we die.

We are the way we are because of what we have done. Learn to endure it. Do the best you can for yourself. Do the best you can in everything. Good things will eventually come to you. You will die regardless of whether you do it or not. It is better to do it and to do it well.

Don't be lazy with your meditation. Meditate as much as you can to cultivate good mindfulness. If your mindfulness is weak, you will be vulnerable to evil thoughts that give rise to bad kamma. But if you maintain good mindfulness, virtue will be with you instead, leaving no room for negative kamma to enter.

January 31, 1975

18. DON'T BE RECKLESS ABOUT YOUR AGE

We are already old. Don't think that you are still young. Reflect on aging.

If you get carried away with thinking that you are still young and do things that you are not supposed to do, you may misstep into an unhappy realm. Try to accumulate more transcendental merit than worldly merit. It is the transcendental merit that releases you from defilements⁹.

February 16, 1975

⁹**Defilements** (*kilesa*), mental impurities consisting of greed, anger and delusion; hindrances or poisons that cause beings to perform intentional deeds (kamma) and suffer rebirth.

19. ALREADY OLD

Bear in mind that you are getting older every day. Don't take your youth for granted. I have been telling myself that I am old ever since I was a young woman, and it has motivated me to hurry up and pursue Perfections.

March 24, 1981

20. PREPARING FOR IT

I made a resolution that no matter how serious my illness may be, I want the doctor to conceal nothing from me, but tell me everything as it is, so I can be prepared.

March 24, 1981

21. HURRY ON

You are young. You are strong. Row your boat as hard as you can. Hurry and continue to row on. Don't be bothered if others slow down. For us, we must make the best of our own life.

This is our last life, our last existence. When we depart, we must take only the good things with us. Grab the victory flag. Never go backwards. Keep rowing forward.

I say this is our last life because before this life we may have been deficient and inconsistent in our practice of good deeds. But in this life we must try harder and be more determined. We can no longer give in.

We must also make resolutions that encompass everything that is good. We will wish that we encounter only good things, maintain celibacy in every lifetime until we reach Nibbana¹⁰, and never cross paths with bad people--people who lack morality and truthfulness.

In the end, what is left of this world is only merit and demerit. Humans are "puppets" played by merit and demerit.

September 5, 1979

¹⁰**Nibbana** (Skt, Nirvana), is the state of ultimate happiness, the happy condition of enlightenment, the highest spiritual attainment. This is not the sense-based happiness of everyday life; nor is it the concept of happiness as interpreted by Western culture. It is an enduring, transcendental happiness integral to the calmness attained through enlightenment. Once a person has attained Nibbana, he has reached the end of the cycle of rebirths--the final and total release from cyclic existence--never again to be subject to rebirth. Nibbana is a supramundane state that cannot be expressed by words and is beyond space and time. This is the state of perfect enlightenment realized by Buddhas and Arhants. Those who have gained this realization no longer accumulate karmic consequences and will no longer be reborn into samsara, the cycle of existence, when they die.



22. WE ARE PUPPETS

I reflect on death, realizing that time waits for no one. That’s why I made ‘Kathina’¹¹ offerings, robe offerings to monks, while I still could. Any day could be my last. I don’t know when I will pass away, so I rushed to make more merit, realizing that merit is the only thing I can take with me when I die. We can’t take anything with us when we die, except merit and demerit.

We are like puppets; merit and demerit are our puppet masters. When we do good deeds, merit pulls us up. When we do bad deeds, demerit pushes us down.

October 28, 1991

¹¹**Kathina:** Annual robe offering made to the temples whose member monks observe the Buddhist Lent.

23. DON’T LET TIME PASS BY USELESSLY

Our life is getting shorter and shorter. Hurry and do more good deeds. Don’t let time pass by you for naught. It’s a pity to be wasting time. Time wasted is life wasted.

September 8, 1982

24. TIME WAITS FOR NO ONE

Lazy people are feeble-minded. They don’t know how to think.

The moment you wake up, you should realize that days are going by, months are going by, years are going by, and time waits for no one.

If you want to do something good, do it now and do it well.

Do only good things. When you make merit, you take merits with you as your blessing. When you commit wrongdoings, you carry demerits with you as your curse.

May 10, 1992

25. PRICELESS TREASURE

At this moment I’m still healthy; let me tell you what is on my mind. Remember my words.

I’m giving you an invaluable treasure. Please take good care of the treasure that I’m giving to you. You will be able to look after your spiritual well-being in the future. I have only virtuous intentions for everyone. I want to give “ultimate benefits” to others.

May you always be on the moral path, determined to make merit while you are young and strong, and to pursue it to the best of your ability.

After we finish building our Temple, I will offer the Temple (Buddhajak Center¹²) to the Buddhas¹³ in Nibbana. All of us will benefit from this transcendental merit. Maintain this great merit by keeping our Temple pure and clean. Let Luang Por (Dhammajayo) know everything, positive or negative, according to the truth.

Honor your pure intentions, your good morality, and your genuine truthfulness; in the same manner I have honored mine.

May 5, 1979

¹²**Buddhajak Center** is the former name of the Dhammakaya Temple.

26. DON’T WAIT

We don’t know when our final day will come. Start going to the temple now while you still can. Don’t wait until someone has to carry you into the temple (for your own funeral).

Days and nights pass by quickly. With each sunset our life becomes one day shorter. Capitalize on each day that you are still alive by accumulating as much merit as you can. In times of trouble, reflect on your merit. Know how to build up merit and know how to maintain merit. Use your merit wisely as you would use your money.

January 11, 1991

¹³**Buddha:** an ‘awaken one’ who is fully enlightened and who has realized Nibbana without the benefit of a Buddha’s teaching in the lifetime in which he attains it. Those who attained enlightenment by following the Buddha’s teachings are called Arahants or Arahats. The name Buddha is a generic term, not a proper name, meaning ‘awakened’, thus ‘enlightened’. Buddhas appear at vast intervals of time. There are countless numbers of past, present and future Buddhas.

27. COME TO THE TEMPLE NOW

Khun Yai encouraged those who came to the temple for the first time to visit the temple often. Whether it's early or late in life, we all end up in the temple one way or another. Whether you are the beloved child or the beloved parent, death brings us all to the temple in the end (for our own funeral). So don't wait until you are too old and too weak to go on your own.

Life does not end with death. Those who are accustomed with doing good deeds, who can recall their good deeds at the time of death, will find their way to a heavenly realm. Those who are accustomed to doing bad deeds, whose minds are attached to their bad deeds at the time of death, will end up in a hell realm. For those who performed neither good nor bad deeds, after death their spirit will neither be in a heavenly realm nor a hell realm, but will roam about in this world.

June 10, 1991

28. BE PREPARED

A kind-hearted 80 year old woman with five children once came to Khun Yai and asked for her advice. Her youngest son was a source of disappointment to her because he never listened to her.

Khun Yai replied, "Why be disappointed? He is an adult now and old enough to walk his own path. When I lived in Nakorn Chaisri, I used to have a cat. The cat gave birth to five kittens and I raised them too. But once these kittens got older, they all left me. I realized then that cats and dogs, just like people, are born under the Law of Kamma. They must live their own life as their own kamma dictates. All little birds must leave the nest eventually.

Sister, you yourself are old. It is time you thought of yourself more and prepared for your own spiritual future. Make merit. Merits and demerits are the only things you can take with you to the next life."

February 24, 1991



29. BE CONTENT

Let us be neither blindly ambitious nor greedy. Instead, let us learn modesty and contentment. Greed can turn an honest man into a fraudulent one. I dislike a dishonest person.

When you are greedy for unwholesome things, in the end you will possess only misery. Strive to keep your minds pure and clean. If you have accumulated enough merit, then your desires will be met without the need for ruthlessness. And if you desire only to possess more virtue, that would be excellent indeed!

Learn to live a simple life and make use of your possessions prudently.

November 24, 1979

30. BE MODEST

I'm not the ambitious type. I don't want to be popular nor famous like others. This has been a characteristic of mine for a long time.

When I lived at Wat Paknam and practiced high-level Dhammakaya¹⁴ meditation with Luang Por Wat Paknam, I was very quiet. In the meditation hall, I rarely spoke, but when I did, others listened. I did not meddle in other people's affairs, but when it came to Luang Por's teachings, I was not afraid to point out people's mistakes. Otherwise, I spoke only when I was asked questions by Luang Por, and my answers were short and to the point.

The important thing was to fulfill my duties. I sought neither fame nor recognition as others around me did. Fame without merit is a structure built on a crumbling foundation.

October 22, 1980

¹⁴**Dhammakaya:** Body of Enlightenment; Body of Truth. Dhammakaya meditation is a profound meditation technique taught by Luang Por Wat Paknam. Khun Yai carried on the Dhammakaya meditation tradition and passed it on to her student Luang Por Dhammajayo, current Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple.

31. BUILD MORE VIRTUES

We are born to pursue virtue. I have been doing good deeds and building up my virtue little by little, regularly and consistently, quietly and humbly, without the need for recognition. After a while, the efforts of these good deeds pay off, and their results are evident to everyone.

When you have built up enough virtue, nothing can stop it from manifesting itself. It gives me a great deal of satisfaction to see these accomplishments.

Some people expect their good deeds to pay off right away. They complain when they fail to see the results of their good deeds, even when they have only just begun to practice.

When I reflect upon the good deeds I have performed, and all of the time and effort I spent pursuing Perfections, I feel proud of my accomplishments. I don't have any inferior feelings in my mind.

May 5, 1980

32. ALL THINGS MUST BE BASED UPON VIRTUE

Those ignorant ones, who have no virtue yet desire fame, power and prestige, are doomed to fail in the end. The louder they boast, the faster they will fail. All things must be based upon virtue.

October 12, 1980

33. NO DESIRE FOR OTHERS' POSSESSIONS

I built the Temple. My life is based on merit. From it, I have a place to live and food to eat. There is no desire in me to steal other's wealth. If someone causes me harm, let that be his/her own burden; I have no desire to hurt anyone's feelings.

34. ASSOCIATING WITH PEOPLE

We should know what type of people to associate with. There are some people we can welcome into our homes, while others should be kept at a distance. It is important to recognize which is which.

If we know certain people display bad behavior, then it's best to avoid them entirely, lest we begin to emulate them. Even if we recognize and disagree with their bad behavior at first, if we continue to associate with them, in time, we begin to think they are not so bad after all and end up losing our own morals.

A heroin addict started out as drug free, but through peer pressure, gradually became addicted to the drug. Think of bad behavior as contagious germs. We don't know when we catch them. Slowly they invade us without our awareness. Before we know it, it is already too late.

February 8, 1981

35. SEEING THROUGH PEOPLE

There is a parable about a fox that was raised as a lion. It is the fox's nature to eat excrement. But one fox was taken and raised like a lion. He was fed the finest meat and he behaved as regally as a lion would. But when he came across excrement, his true nature came to fore, and he ate it. A fox is still a fox.

We need to look into the true nature of a person to know who he really is.

June 1, 1981

36. BE A TEAM PLAYER

I care for my community. We should learn how to be a good team player and get along with everyone. Arrogance only leads to isolation. If we have the attitude that we are better than others, at our time of distress, no one will be around to offer help.

October 28, 1992

37. HUMAN RELATIONS

We should learn how to get along with others. If someone does not talk to us, then we need to be the one to begin talking first. Soon we will have a pleasant conversation. We should reject the attitude of snobbery and arrogance. Instead, strive to relate well with every type of person. You never know, a day might come when you will need their help.

May 5, 1995

38. HATE NO ONE

I have hatred for no one. I am afraid if I do, I too, will be hated in my next life. My mind always considers the consequences in the far future rather than merely the immediate present. Besides, I would rather have love than hatred for people.

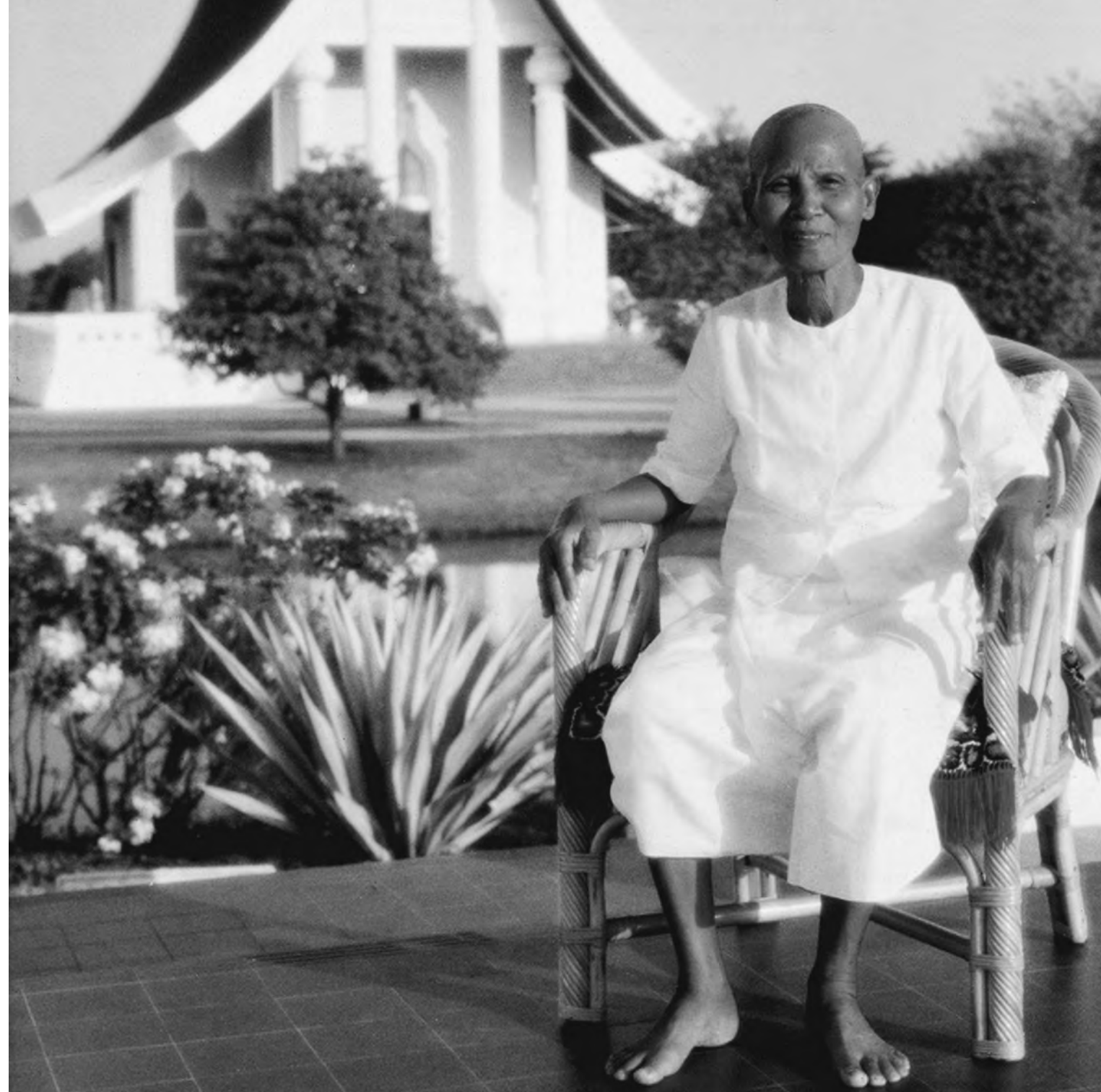
January 1, 1991

39. SILENCE IS GOLDEN

I seem to possess a special intuition. Although I never went to school, I have a good sense about people. I see through them, but I prefer to keep it to myself. If I'm not adept with people, I would not have been able to build this Temple.

Talk is cheap; silence is golden.

February 15, 1992



40. RECEIVING GUESTS

Receiving guests who inquire for your help is not easy. We must learn the proper way to do it. Although we must cater to them, we must also maintain our moral nature, especially our Dhamma.

Some guests visit us to recount their tales of woe or their family troubles, but these stories only distract our own minds from Dhamma, or from the center of our bodies. As practitioners of Dhamma, we should try to guide our guests to the wisdom of Dhamma as well.

Like a tug of war, we may allow ourselves to be drawn into our guests' misery and away from Dhamma, or we can draw them to Dhamma and away from their problems. It takes skills in good speech and great awareness to move a person towards Dhamma.

There are many types of guests. Before we can host any of them properly, we must first understand ourselves thoroughly. Understanding ourselves first will help us understand others, and this in turn will help us understand their problems. The most essential thing, however, is to maintain our minds in Dhamma and to be filled with compassion.

Look inside ourselves. Look back to our past lives (through meditation) and recall all the merit we have made; recall how we have pursued Perfections. Then look at ourselves in the present life to see how much purity we have cultivated inside ourselves. Realize whether we are in the position to save this person. If not, we must let it go.

Don't let yourself become a casualty while trying to help others.

Look to the future, and think where you want to be. What is your goal? When hosting guests who ask for help, we should look back into the past, look intensely at the present, and look forward into the future. Most importantly, we must meditate constantly, to strengthen our minds and resist distractions.

There is an old saying, "Chanting is a balm; meditation is a pill." Suffering is like a disease; if we use both kinds of cures, the disease will heal faster. If we can convince the person with serious problems to begin chanting and meditating, then he can acquire merit to help himself.

December 10, 1980



DHAMMA (MEDITATION)

41. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A SECRET

Luang Por Wat Paknam's meditative attainment was utterly complete and profound. I have witnessed it. A secret as tiny as a strand of hair could not be hidden from him. He could see everything clearly. So, whatever you do, do it virtuously. Nothing can be concealed, because there are no secrets in this world.

I experienced this phenomenon after meditating for two straight weeks following Luang Por Wat Paknam's directions. After the meditation, my expanded consciousness allowed me to answer all questions about all subjects. This is due to the profound knowledge taught by Luang Por.

December 21, 1976

42. SUPER-ADVANCED MEDITATION

Because I have the purity of body, mind and speech, I have adhered to morality and truthfulness, and I have an utmost love for meditation, I was allowed straight into the super-advanced meditation program with Luang Por Wat Paknam. Normally, one has to go through several intensive assessments before being allowed into this elite program. But as for me, I was admitted to the elite program immediately upon my arrival.

November 5, 1979

43. I TRULY LOVE MEDITATION

I meditate all the time. During World War II, I meditated six hours during the day, and six more hours during the night. The method must be extremely refined and exact.

Although the first advanced meditation group already began before I arrived, I arrived in time for the super-advanced meditation program that Luang Por later initiated. Because of this, and because of my extreme love and devotion for meditation, my meditation skill became very profound.

November 5, 1979

44. SUCCESS THROUGH LOVE OF MEDITATION

I noticed that Dr. Piya, Dr. Kwan, and Dr. Charoen all possessed different skills, and each of them is specialized in his own particular field. Dr. Piya is proficient in dentistry; Dr. Kwan is skillful in traditional Chinese medicine, while Dr. Charoen is an expert in ophthalmology.

For one to be good at something, one must first have love for that particular thing. If you love what you do, you will do it well. For me, I love meditation more than anything. That's why my meditation skills are so precise and so profound.

November 12, 1977

45. THERE IS NO SECRET IN THIS WORLD

My meditation skills are so precise and so profound that they have allowed my consciousness to expand beyond the ordinary. I am aware of everything; no secret is kept from me. It befits the saying, "there is no secret in this world."

For those who possess the super-advanced meditation skills, nothing is hidden from their view. It is hidden only from those whose minds are defiled.

I know everything that takes place with people. It only depends on whether I want to talk about it or not.

November 5, 1979

46. DHAMMA SO SUBTLE & PROFOUND

My meditation skills are so subtle and profound that, even while I am eating my meals, I can see animals eating animals. When I look inside me, inside my intestines, I see human eating human, because the meats of the animals that I am eating belong to humans just like us, but the forms they took were those of a pig, a duck or a chicken. Whatever forms of animals they took were conditioned by the karmic retributions applicable to them.

November 5, 1979

47. THOSE WHO DON'T REALLY KNOW

I am familiar with the meditation know-how of Luang Por Wat Paknam in every detail, because I have practiced with Luang Por continuously and I have never left or done anything else. I have practiced his Dhammakaya meditation before, during and after the World War, until now...

Those who go around bragging about the meditation techniques of Luang Por don't really know what they are talking about. All they want is to be famous.

I have this genuine knowledge, but because of my position, it is not wise for me to talk about it. Most people are not refined enough (mentally) to comprehend it.

October 12, 1980

48. KNOWLEDGE BEYOND DESCRIPTION

I have continuously performed virtuous deeds for many decades. I practiced super-advanced meditation directly with Luang Por Wat Paknam endlessly. I absorbed the knowledge from him first-hand. The knowledge imparted by Luang Por to me was vast and extensive.

When the 200 rai plot [80 acres] of land was first donated to Buddhajak Center, I thought to myself, even a land this vast was not big enough to contain everything that I knew--only a mere pinch of it. But I could not mention it, because people will not understand. Only those who have meditative experience would be in the position to understand.

October 12, 1980

49. ABILITY TO WITHSTAND

The strength of my meditative attainment can withstand a hundred wars. This is something no one understands. For me, I know what is what. I have meditated immensely, and have relied on my inner Dhamma, that it gives me the strength to endure and the ability to survive.



50. HOLD ON TIGHTLY

How does one get left behind?

When Luangpi Chitchai Mahachito was not busy with his responsibilities during the temple’s construction, he spent a lot of time meditating. He had a “dream”. In his dream, he saw a vehicle traveling at high speed over the ocean, and on this vehicle were many people holding on tightly. But it ran so rapidly that anyone who was not holding on tight enough fell off. This fast vehicle was me. I pursued Perfections. Everything I did, I did earnestly. That was why I moved ahead with high speed.

Buddhajak Center is like a mountain. Some people saw the mountain and were afraid to climb. Those who do climb may get distracted along the way and fall from the path. Those who are afraid to climb are those who see the stringent rules of the temple and do not wish to comply.

Hold on tightly to the vehicle! Do not fall off! Meditate as much as you can. Maintain your mind and your body with merit. Meditate with the mantra “samma arahang¹⁵”. One day you will have your attainment.

I endured a great deal and was supremely patient. It was patience that made the Buddhajak Center. Through it, ten virtuous monks were ordained.

March 21, 1980

¹⁵**Samma-Arahang** means “the Buddha who has properly attained enlightenment”. This mantra is used during meditation to help focus the mind.

51. NO NEED TO BE CODDLED

Don’t feel injured. We need to understand that Luang Por [Dhammajayo] is very busy with his duties and does not always have time to coddle us. I myself don’t like to be coddled. Some folks like to compete for recognition and personal attention from Luang Por. This nonsensical competition impedes them from advancement in their meditation.

November 17, 1982

52. MEDITATIVE POWER

When it comes to meditation, I have practiced thoroughly and became so proficient that I can comprehend everything, knowing what and where everything is.

When it comes time to meditate, I drop everything and during that time there is only meditation on my mind and absolutely nothing else. However, when duty calls me back to deal with the mundane part of life, I must retreat from the transcendental, step by step, body by body¹⁶, from the Arahāt body to the physical human body.

Once that is accomplished, I can then deal with mundane issues. When my worldly affairs are dealt with, I then return once again to my meditation and leave all earthly problems behind. Unfortunately, we all have to tend to our worldly needs. We have to “battle” with the mundane as well as the supramundane.

¹⁶ In the Dhammakaya Tradition, each person possesses 18 bodies. The 18 bodies comprise of the physical body, refined physical body, celestial body, refined celestial body, Rupa Brahma body, refined Rupa Brahma body, Arupa Brahma body, refined Arupa Brahma body, Gotrubhu Dhammakaya, refined Gotrabhu Dhammakaya, Sotapanna Dhammakaya, refined Sotapanna Dhammakaya, Sakadagami

Between these two worlds, I know how to divide my time. When I meditate, I focus my mind to the center of my body, from the physical human body to the transcendental human body all the way through to the Arahāt body--18 bodies in total. Once I attained the Arahāt body, the mind encompassed all knowledge. It is a state called “knowing and seeing in all directions”.

Meditation is like setting sail in the ocean. When you are deep into sea with no shoreline in sight, you can look at your compass and steer yourself in the right direction. Likewise, when you meditate, set your direction by telling yourself what you want to accomplish during the meditation session.

Organize your time by clearly separating meditation time from your other tasks. That way you will not be distracted during meditation by thinking of home or work, or this or that. The purpose of meditation is to bring your racing mind to a standstill state.

March 1, 1981

Dhammakaya, refined Sakadagami Dhammakaya, Anagami Dhammakaya, refined Anagami Dhammakaya, Arahāt Dhammakaya, and refined Arahāt Dhammakaya. The Arahāt Dhammakaya body is the purest body of enlightenment and is attained when one achieves the highest level of Dhammakaya meditation.

53. RELINQUISH ALL ELSE

Merely meditating and reciting the mantra “samma arahang” will create merit. It’s not easy to attain Dhammakaya when the mind wants to dart here and there around the entire world. We have to rein the mind back to the center of our body, two fingers’ breadth above the navel. Then relinquish everything else. When the mind comes to a standstill, it will glow radiantly. Keep the mind steady and think of the bright Buddha image at the center of the body.

54. “STOP” SO YOU WILL SUCCEED

To “stop¹⁷”: all success springs from this one action. I mean success both in the spiritual and in the earthly sense.

In the material world, if we want to go somewhere quickly we have to travel in a fast vehicle such as a car or a plane. But in the world of Dhamma it is the opposite; we have to “stop”. If we don’t stop, we won’t get there. The more we stop, the faster we go.

¹⁷“**Stop**” in the sense of stopping the mind from wandering, or stop doing bad deeds.

Recall the story of Angulimala which Luang Por recounted. Angulimala believed that if he collected the fingers of 1,000 people, he would become the ruler of the world. He saw the Lord Buddha and ran after him with the intent to cut off his finger—the last finger to complete his 1,000. He called out, “Stop, Monk, stop!” The Lord Buddha answered him, “I have stopped already. It is you who has not stopped.”

“Stop” is the key to success. “Stop” here means stopping your mind from wandering, bringing it to a peaceful stillness. If you cannot, you will not be able to reach the Dhammakaya within you. All Dhamma (Truth) resides within us. You have to stop your mind to reach it. This is why meditation is so important.

The Tipitaka¹⁸ has 84,000 sections. They can be summed up into three practices: purifying the body, purifying the mind, and purifying speech. These three can be further summed up in just one word: “Stop”. Once the mind is still, it, along with the body and speech, will become purified. And this in turn will bring us much merit.

Follow my advice and learn to divide your time. When you meditate, think of nothing else but meditation. Focus only on advancing on your journey.

March 1, 1981

¹⁸**The Tipitaka** (Skt, *Tripitaka*), Buddhist scripture -- Tipitaka means The Three Baskets. They consist of the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Pitaka) – rules and regulations of the Order of monks and nuns; the Basket of Discourses (Sutta Pitaka) -- discourses concerning social, moral, philosophical and spiritual significance; and the Basket of Ultimate Things (Abhidhamma Pitaka) – dealing with psychological and philosophical aspects of the Doctrine, the four ultimate things, i.e., mind (citta), mental properties (ceta-sika), matter (rupa) and Nirvana.



55. ONLY SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT CAN HELP US

In the entire universe, there is only one refuge from suffering for us, and that is meditative attainment. Hold on to it. Even if you see only a brief flash of it, that is sufficient to bring about enough merit to cover the sky.

When I meditate, my mind penetrates deep to the center of the body, all the way through to Nibanna [the perfect state of bliss], and there it rests. Released from all impurities, my mind is able to see whatever I wish to see.

However, I am drawn back to the physical world by people and things which occupy me here. Then the mind regains its impurities and clings to sensations.

Those who are married must feel this pull; even wanting to be married means that you have worldly attachments, which are a kind of defilement, and you lose a desire for spiritual attainment.

If you truly seek spiritual attainment you need not think of others. Think of yourself, because no one else can save you but you.

Buddhism encompasses these three things: the Teachings, the Practice, and the Attainment, nothing more, nothing less.

March 11, 1981

56. TO SUCCESSFULLY PURSUE PERFECTIONS, ONE NEED TO EMBRACE MEDITATION

We were born to pursue virtues. Strive to perform good deeds. If you wish to successfully pursue Perfections, you need to “attach” yourself to mental development, not to people. This will benefit not only yourself but the people around you. Count on your mindfulness to remind you that if you allow yourself to be attached to people, you will not prevail in your pursuit of Perfections and will run into trouble.

Be endeared to the practice of meditation. Let meditation be a refuge for you. You will be able to overcome false views and earn new merit that stays with you every day. Remember this and take it to practice. I am an old woman and only getting older, but as long as I am able, I will keep teaching this to you. Heed my advice and you will do well.

December 15, 1980

57. LIKE HITTING THE GROUND WITH YOUR FIST

Skill in meditation is something you must build from the ground up. Everything starts from the ground up: houses are built from their foundations, and birds which fly high overhead must take off from the ground.

As you first begin your meditation, do not compare your progress to the progress of others, nor should you assume that you will not make any progress at all. Keep those ideas out of your head! Think that every time you repeat the mantra “Samma Arahang” in your mind, your merit becomes greater with each repetition. And every time you meditate you gain new merit. It’s as assured as hitting the ground with your fist—you never miss.

As you progress along the path of Dhamma, guard yourself from carelessness and doubt. Pay no attention to those who direct their anger or impatience at you. Remember that you are following the path of the Lord Buddha and that, in itself, is gratifying. Have no doubt that you will succeed, and indeed success will come to you.

January 17, 1975

58. THE MOST IMPORTANT DUTY

Our perseverance in meditation should grow stronger every single day of our lives. Before I attained Dhamma¹⁹, I kept myself mentally focused at all times, whether I was sitting, walking or doing anything else. Soon my mind would become still and I achieved my attainment. Attaining Dhamma is our most important task.

December 2, 1982

¹⁹**Attaining Dhamma:** meditative attainment; a state of absorption in meditation where the mind achieves super insight and knowledge; seeing one's inner body of enlightenment.

59. MEDITATION IS ESSENTIAL

The practice of meditation is the most important thing in life, and attaining Dhamma is the ultimate life goal. Even as you walk, drive, or perform other everyday tasks, you need to contemplate on Dhamma at all times. Before I attained Dhamma, I meditated diligently until my mind could leave the physical body, sinking deeper and deeper into meditation until it finally disengaged from my physical surroundings completely and became purified and powerful with knowledge.

I was able to progress because I was determined to do so. Meditation is the most important thing in life. If we do not seek true happiness in this lifetime, then we will not find it even in the next life. Resolve to find true happiness in this life!

When I was younger I meditated six hours during the day and six more hours in the evening. Now that I am 84 years old, I cannot sit for long periods of time anymore, so I meditate while laying down. As young people, you don't know what it is like to be sore and to have backaches. When you are my age you will understand.

May 10, 1992

60. I CHERISH MEDITATION

During the time I attended Luang Por's super advanced meditation workshop at Wat Paknam, I never left the temple and was there for the entire duration. Some people went home to see their family. Some went elsewhere. But I cared too much for meditation to leave. This is why I advanced so much quicker.

November 5, 1979

61. THOSE WHO KNOW DON'T BRAG

Braggarts are too busy competing with each other. Those who truly know don't show off; that is why they will ultimately win.

August 17, 1991

62. SEEING THROUGH

I came up with the idea to build this temple and it has been a constant challenge from the beginning. Nonetheless, I finished whatever I started and I never gave up. I resolved every challenge that came my way through meditation, even if at times it seemed almost insurmountable.

I see through everything; it's up to me whether or not I want to talk about it. That is the reason I say there is no secret on earth. The fact is that we have not paid any attention to it, but once we do, we will find out the truth.

February 10, 1982

63. SILENCE MAY SEEM LIKE DEFEAT, BUT IN FACT IT IS VICTORY

Addressing a disciple:

When someone has a conflict with me, whether he is a disciple or a senior person, and he loses his temper, I will keep my composure and stay silent. I let the person speak until he eventually wears himself out and has nothing more to say. The entire time he is expressing his anger; I will contemplate my inner Dhamma and remain silent. My silence ultimately turns into victory.

January 11, 1991

64. MEDITATION HELPS

Addressing an engineer:

If you run into a mental block in regards to your work, find a tranquil place to sit down and meditate. Put your mind along with thoughts about your work at the center of the body. Clarity will eventually come to you and you will know how to arrange and organize your work. Meditation will give rise to wisdom.

I use this approach to solve problems. Whenever I encounter a problem with the temple's refectory, I would go back to my quarters, meditate a while, and a solution would come to me.

August 9, 1991

65. BE CAUTIOUS BEFORE SPEAKING

Addressing a businessman:

Whenever you have problems in dealing with other people, go find a peaceful place to close your eyes and calm your mind. Then the solutions will become clear.

It's important that you compose yourself before speaking out. If you think you may say something that will jeopardize yourself, then it is best not to say anything at that moment; meditate first to appease yourself, and then return to the issue later.

Don't say anything that may come back to bite you. Speak only what is beneficial. Life is too short. While you are still alive, capitalize on your opportunity to do good deeds and accumulate merits.

October 9, 1991



MERIT & DEMERIT

66. POWER THROUGH MERIT

Whatever we set out to accomplish in life, we must examine our personal condition as well as the condition of our merit--the “spiritual capital” that we have built. We should attempt things that are within our current ability and we will accomplish.

Don’t exceed your limit. If you desire greatness, achieve your greatness through merit, not through unwholesome actions or defilements²⁰. Achievements of greatness through the power of merit are genuine achievements, but greatness achieved through defilements will eventually collapse.

²⁰**Defilements** (*kilesa*): mental impurities consisting of greed, anger, and delusion; hindrances or poisons that cause beings to perform undesirable deeds.

Look at Devadatta²¹ as an example. He achieved only a little success but became disillusioned with himself and wanted to be famous. He did so without looking at whether he had built up enough foundation of goodness to deserve it. This resulted in his demise.

It is like building a house on a flimsy foundation. If you build the house bigger than the foundation can support, the result is predictable, the house will collapse.

If you wonder how I have accomplished all that I have, I will tell you that it is due to the great amount of merits I have accumulated and is also due to my insurmountable patience. The reason I became famous with so many followers is due to the virtues that I have made and built up in the past.

January 12, 1975

²¹**Devadatta** was a cousin and disciple of the Buddha who created a schism in the monastic order. Due to jealousy and thirst for power, he attempted to murder the Buddha. Devadatta became a symbol of a bad monk.

67. ONE DROP AT A TIME FILLS UP A JAR

Together, each tiny drop of water can fill up a big jar. Likewise, each act of good deed will fill up your “jar” of virtue. But with no good deed done at all, your “jar” of virtue is empty.

Never be lazy or preoccupied with what others are doing. In the end, your fate will be determined by no one else but yourself. So fight as hard as you can. The more merit you make, the more you gain; and the less you make, the less you receive. Take every new day as a new opportunity to make merit.

January 12, 1975

68. WITH MERIT, YOU WILL SUCCEED IN EVERYTHING

My biggest fear in life is that I will not make enough merit. With great merit behind you, anything you wish can be attained and all you touch will become successful. No one can obstruct you if you have enough merit to support yourself. Having a good base of merit is a great blessing indeed.

August 31, 1976

69. BORN TO PURSUE PERFECTIONS

I don’t wish to be in heaven²² for too long. I prefer to be reborn into the human realm quickly so I can continue to pursue Perfections.

January 3, 1977

70. FRUIT OF MERIT

Merit from our past lives, whether large or small, will bear fruit in the present life and will express itself in full. If you made 10 units of merit in the past, you will receive all the 10 units in the present. If you made 100 units, you will also receive all of the 100 units. The merit made in this present lifetime will yield results only 10 – 20% now. But it will fully bear fruits in the future. Our future lifetime will be wonderful with the merit we made in the present.

Thus, we should learn to be content. If we have 100 units of merit, but we use 1,000, we will collapse in due time. On the contrary, if we have 1,000 units of merit, and we use only 100, the merit will bear more fruits sooner. Once you earn more, keep your heart humble and calm. Don’t expect more than what you have earned.

August 16, 1979

²²There are many levels of heaven which offer a temporary respite from rebirth in the human realm, however only Nibbana offers a permanent state of bliss. Unlike heaven, the human realm is the only place where merit can be acquired and Perfections achieved.

71. ONLY THOSE WITH A PURE HEART WILL BE WITH ME

A person with a pure heart and a clear mind, one whose focus is on gaining merit, is the only kind of person I want to have in my company. Those with defiled minds are like oil to my water--we repel each other.

November 20, 1979

72. RECALLING MERIT

If you think that being in my company will somehow bring you merit, you are mistaken. Only those who actively build merit, who can recall their own merit, will gain it. Merit is your only refuge.

73. BUILDING MERIT ALL THE WAY TO VICTORY

As you walk more and more along a virtuous path, you will develop the ability to recognize other people who share the same path with you. Moreover, you will be able to distinguish those who walk a less virtuous path because they are in a realm that is less pure.

If you have not achieved that enlightened state of mind in this lifetime even though you have given your best, do not give up. Look for your victory in the next life. Keep building more and more merit than before. Continue to improve yourself. Strengthen the purity of your mind, your body, and your speech. Eventually, victory will become yours.

November 25, 1979



74. MORE DETERMINATION, MORE MERIT

Support one another in achieving merit! While you are still young, use that youthful energy to support the work of Buddhism. Make a wish for your good work to bring you good merit.

The more determination in your heart, the more merit you will gain; the less determination, the less merit.

In my next lifetime, I will have the ability to look at a person and be able to recall his past existence²³, know his name in that existence, and where he came from. I am too occupied to do it in this lifetime, as I still have to deal with defilements. In my next lifetime, however, it will be second nature to me; I will have an enhanced ability to see through everything. When my time comes to be reborn as a human, I will invite all of you to come with me again to continue pursuing virtues. Wherever I go, whether to Heaven or Nibbana, or to be reborn again in this earthly realm in order to build more virtues, I will invite you to come with me.

October 28, 1980

75. DON'T GIVE UP

You can give up on anything, but never give up on building merit.

February 11, 1981

²³Practitioners of meditation who have reached a very high level of attainment can look into the past lives of themselves and others to study the Law of Kamma.

76. WHAT YOU DO, YOU GET

Those of you who take residence at the temple have given up your worldly attachments for the opportunity to be here. Since you have already given up so much, you should make your sacrifice worthwhile by dedicating yourselves fully to doing good deeds.

Chores and tasks are everyone's responsibilities. We should help one another. Never ignore your duty, or put it off for others to do. The task you perform is the merit you gain, not anyone else's. The task others perform is the merit they gain, not anyone else's either. You will take this merit with you to your future existence.

Everything you do in this temple, you do for Buddhism. The work done in this temple belongs to the Lord Buddha. Every chore here, light or heavy, brings you merit. So if there is work to do, help each other finish it so you can find more free time to practice meditation, to read, or to broaden your knowledge so you can become an educated person and be able to relate with others intellectually.

March 1, 1981

77. GIVE YOUR UTMOST IN DOING GOOD DEEDS

You come to the temple because you have one thing in mind: to build virtues and to gain merit, creating benefits for yourself. You have already committed the time and effort to be at the temple, so while you are here you should reap the maximum benefit. Give your utmost in doing good deeds.

August 20, 1982

78. CALL UPON MERIT FOR HELP

All good work takes good planning. When I built the Buddhachakka Center, I had to plan everything very carefully. I knew building an alms house (refectory) at the Buddhajak Center was possible by example of the Most Venerable Luang Por Wat Paknam, who had built a large alms house capable of feeding many monks at his temple. His accomplishment brought him a lot of joy and a lot of merit. Even after his death, it still continues to give him plenty of merit.

I resolved that when I build a temple, I too would create a similar alms house, and to my joy, I was able to do so.

I was not the only one who had attempted to build such an alms house. Others, like Khun Yai Thongsuk, who was an excellent teacher and was more proficient in giving sermons than even many educated monks, tried to establish one but she found it too difficult.

When I set about my task, I thought of my merits. When I meditated, I called upon my merits to come help me. And I finally succeeded through the support of my merits.

Every success in life is the result of the merits we possess. One who possesses greater merits will rule over one who possesses less. Everything relies on merit. So we should set about making more and more of it as we possibly can. I think about my merits and how it governs my life, and without it I cannot be happy.

Everything around me is complete because I reflect on my merits, and when I meditate I reach out for good resources and good people to come help me complete the mission. When you meditate, you too, should reflect on your merits.

March 1, 1981

79. COME REAP YOUR MERIT

Invite your friends to come and reap merit at the temple. I feel pity for them, fearing that they may find themselves erroneously treading into an unhappy realm. Persuade them to perform merit so that they will have the opportunity to rise to Heaven or Nibbana.

March 26, 1981

80. SUCCEED THROUGH MERIT

Whatever you set out to accomplish, keep your merits in mind. If you possess merit, merit will help you succeed in the things that you do. Merit is your refuge. Center your mind in it and everything will fall in place.

April 4, 1981

81. MERIT SPHERE

Reap as much merit as you can. If you fail to do so, in the next life when we meet again, I will recall who did not want to make merit when given the opportunity and now he ends up having very little of it to help him keep up with others.

At the moment, you may fail to realize that your current benefits are resulting from your previously accumulated merits. Transcendental matters cannot be seen by earthly eyes. But once you leave this world, you will be able to see the size of your “merit sphere²⁴”—the more merit accumulated, the larger the size of your merit sphere.

April 5, 1981

82. IN THE FRONT ROW

Make merit now, even if you are “in the back row” when doing so. In the next life, your merit will bring you to the front row. It’s up to you where you want to be. Do you want to be in the front or in the back?

April 8, 1981

²⁴**Merit sphere:** Each person possesses a sphere of merit within; the more merit accumulated the larger the merit sphere.

83. MAKE MERIT AND USE MERIT IN THE RIGHT WAY

In order to establish the Buddhajak Center, I had to fight all of the time. Initially it was with the boat thieves. Even now, there is always something to resolve. But through it all, I kept my heart pure by thinking of the merits I have made in the past, the merit I am making in the present, and the merits I plan to make in the future. It gives me the strength to fight for my goals.

This is “using” my merit wisely. In the entire world, no one can help me but me. How do I help myself? By creating virtue and eliminating evil within me.

May 24, 1981

84. ACCUMULATE MERIT

Each time you come to the temple, you gain a little more merit. It's like putting money in your piggy bank. If you do not come you will not gain.

August 29, 1981



85. PURIFIED MIND

As I converse with various people, I keep my mind always in its purified state, always centered in merit and in Dhamma. No greed, anger, nor delusions are allowed to defile me.

In the purified state, I can see through to the heart of a person’s suffering and its causes. With compassion, I offer them insight into their suffering and in doing so, I gain merit. What they do with that knowledge is now up to them. Their kamma is no one else’s but their own.

December 11, 1981

86. EVEN IN ILLNESS

Even when ill, I stay committed to making merit. I never stop. Once, while I was ill, I meditated and saw the Dhammakaya within me to be incredibly clear and bright. I beheld Him for a long time, and when I opened my eyes, even the midday sunlight looked dark to me. The practice of meditation is the most important thing. Remember this, and meditate as much as you can.

November 20, 1982

87. STAY IN MERIT

When I find myself confronted with a serious situation, I keep my mind concentrated on Dhamma, concentrated in the virtue and in the merit that I have accumulated in my past lives to help me overcome my troubles.

With merit, all obstacles can be conquered. No matter what happens, I am never frightened or nervous because I trust that my merit will help me. For instance, when the temple kitchen lacked supplies, I would center my mind in merit and reach out for my “spiritual treasure” to fulfill my need.

The word “lack” should not be in your vocabulary as long as you have merit to help. If I ever complain, it is to remind people when things need to get done, but my mind always remains firmly in merit.

April 4, 1979

88. MERIT POWER

Everything is determined by merit power. If we had nothing else but merit to our name, we would still achieve success.

In this life, my mind is fixed on the quest for virtue and merit. The one thing which concerns me is that my merit will be less than other people’s. This is the reason why I am so focused. I do not want to be the one to get left behind. I want to be in the forefront of virtue building.

November 5, 1979

89. USING MERIT CORRECTLY

The act of charity returns to us in good fortune. The act of mental cultivation brings us deliverance. Meditate frequently.

Before merit can be generated, there is a great deal of effort involved. Merit making can be complete only when the following elements are present: faith, a good “field of merit²⁵”, an act of good deed, and the right combination of everything else. Since merit²⁶ is not so easy to come by, do not waste an opportunity to acquire it. Preserve your merit and know how to use your merit the right way. Merit is your vehicle to success and happiness.

December 1979

90. LET MERIT BE YOUR REFUGE

Merit is my refuge. I love merit above all else because it is the one thing that can save me. Human beings still carry defilements. Sometimes a person can be good, and sometimes he can be bad. But merit is the one thing I can always rely on for goodness.

January 26, 1991

²⁵**Field of merit** means the recipient of our alms whereas a virtuous recipient is compared to a fertile field which yields abundant proceeds.

91. DON’T NEGLECT MERIT-MAKING

It is difficult to be born as a human being. Now that you are born a human being, do not waste your opportunity to make merit. If you have a little, then donate a little. If you have a lot, then donate more. Make a donation according to your ability, but don’t allow yourself to get into trouble for overdoing it. Whatever your financial situation is, don’t neglect the act of charity.

For me, I perform merits regardless of what happens. I may be illiterate, yet I managed to build this temple, and I was able to preside at a major Kathina Ceremony. The merit I have accumulated has allowed me to do extraordinary things that are beyond an ordinary person’s ability. But with as much merit as I have already made, I still want to do more. I want to participate in the Kathina Ceremonies and all other meritorious activities. I want to acquire all forms of merit, mundane and transcendental.

November 7, 1980

²⁶**Merit** is something that can be accumulated as well as used up. When someone is enjoying his good fortune, he is using up his “old” merit. A wise person should not let his merit run out by acquiring more “new” merit whenever he can.

92. ACQUIRE BOTH MUNDANE & TRANSCENDENTAL MERITS

Addressing someone who wanted only to meditate and not participate in any mundane chores:

I acquire all forms of merit, mundane and transcendental. Mundane merit²⁷ helps me in self-development, while transcendental merit gives me the ability to teach myself. But once we attain the Dhammakaya²⁸ (reaching a clear-seeing state), we will have the wisdom to accomplish our mundane tasks more easily.

²⁷**Mundane merit** is gained through performance of good deeds, such as sweeping the temple, helping the poor, making charitable contributions. **Transcendental merit** is acquired through mental cultivation and the practice of meditation.

93. REAP WHAT YOU SOW

We cannot escape the consequences of our actions. We can escape neither the effect of our merit (good kamma) nor our demerit (bad kamma). Both our merit and demerit are imbedded to the center of our body. It is the kamma that stays with us. There is no way to rid ourselves of it. We reap what we sow; when we do good deeds, these good deeds turn into merits which bring success and happiness to our lives.

August 23, 1979

94. CARRYING MERIT & DEMERIT

Whatever action (kamma) we commit, we carry the result of that action with us, good or bad. If our action is good, we carry merit. If our action is bad, we carry demerit.

You alone carry the burden you create for yourself. If others speak or act unkindly towards you, don't get angry and retaliate back. Forgive them and put an end to the cycle of hostility between you now.

May 10, 1992

²⁸**Attaining the Dhammakaya:** a state of absorption in meditation where the mind achieves super insight and knowledge, having penetrative insight into the reality of life and the world; seeing one's inner Body of Enlightenment.

95. TAKE THE LONG TERM VIEW

I am someone who takes the long term view (seeing beyond this life). Nothing can be taken with us after death except our merit and demerit. Accumulate as much merit as you can.

Our life does not end here. Never mind what others might say. Ignore them; there is no use for argument. Let them realize the truth when their own death comes.

October 1, 1992

96. ONE WHO ATTRACTS

Build up your merit as much as you can. Build a mountain of merit! It doesn't matter what other people do; for us, we just keep on doing good deeds even if no one finds out about it. One who is virtuous will eventually be noticed and will attract the company of others.

November 17, 1982



97. DO ONLY GOOD DEEDS

Build only good kamma. End all evils in this lifetime, so only good kamma will be ours in future lifetimes.

We are still subject to rebirth because of the defilements we carry, but from now on, avoid all bad actions and embrace only good ones so our rebirth will be a positive one.

February 14, 1982

98. TAKING CARE OF THE TEMPLE

For those who help clean temple grounds, no matter which level of Heaven they ascend to after death, whether it is Catummaharajika, Tavatimsa, Yama, or Tusita²⁹, their celestial abode will be brightly illuminated, and their complexion will be more radiant than other heavenly beings.

Not many people volunteer to clean the temple, and not many celestial beings have this glowing complexion. If you have the energy, you should do it so the merit will be yours. Accumulate merit at every opportunity that comes your way.

January 29, 1983

²⁹Catummaharajika, Tavatimsa, Yama, and Tusita are the levels of Heaven arranged in order from first, second, third and fourth.

99. ONE WITH GREATER MERIT RULES

Those who possess greater merit have influence over those who possess less. People with little merit can hardly take care of themselves. They need to rely on the virtue of those who possess greater merit for support spiritually. With little merit, they are incapable of rising to a heavenly realm on their own. People with greater merit can help them by showing them how to do good deeds and acquire more merits.

There are only a few people whose merit power is so great that they are able to help those who have already fallen into an unfortunate realm. Through the power of my merit, I was able to save my deceased father from the hell realm. But before I was in the position to do so, I had to meditate and purify my mind until all of my inner transcendental bodies became crystal clear. Achieving this state of purity, I was able to enter the lower world. I even searched for my deceased farm animals to spread merit to them.

November 22, 1981

100. OLD MERIT, NEW MERIT

I have pity for both the rich and the poor. Rich people are well off because they have “old” merit from their past lives to support them. However, if they don’t produce “new” merit in their present life, the old merit can be used up. With no new merit to sustain them in subsequent lives, they will be reborn poor and will face much adversity in their future existences.

The reason poor people are the way they are is because they have not built up enough old merit. If we don’t encourage them to accumulate new merit, then they will be even more unfortunate in the next life.

I feel compassion for both types of people. We must invite people we know, both rich and poor, to make merit so that they will have spiritual wealth to take with them to future existences.

101. TO HELP OTHERS, ONE MUST HAVE ENOUGH MERIT

I feel sorry for people and I want to rescue them. But to be able to save others, you must have enough merit as a foundation. That is why I work so hard to accrue merit for myself at every opportunity.

102. MERIT COMES TO YOU EVERYDAY

A person who takes part in building a temple receives great merit because he has provided a facility for others to do good deeds. As long as the temple remains standing, and the buildings are in good repair, that person will reap merit from it every day.

May 16, 1991

103. WISHES COME THROUGH

I made the following resolution while leading a robe-offering ceremony to monks on the occasion of the Magha Puja Day³⁰ in which I was the ceremonial leader:

Bring your mind to the center of the body and ask that tree-sprites, air-sprites, earth-sprites, celestial beings from the six heavens, Brahmas from the sixteen Brahma Spheres and the four Higher Brahma Spheres, and beings from throughout the vast universes, to acknowledge and rejoice in the merit that I am making in offering this saffron robe.

Let everyone share in my merit. Let Luang Por Dhammajayo, Luang Por Dattajeevo, and every monk at the temple, share in my merit. May everyone receive merit with an open heart, and the more open your heart, the more merit you will receive. Those who fully open their heart to receive this merit will receive it in full; those whose heart is only partially open will receive it partially--like water spilling away from a container.

February 11, 1991

³⁰**Magha Puja:** a Buddhist holy day commemorating the Buddha's delivery of a landmark sermon to 1,250 enlightened disciple monks.

104. MERIT IS NEVER WASTED

While inviting people to attend the Robe Offering Ceremony on Magha Puja Day of 1990, I delivered the following address:

You can take merit with you. Even if you have only a little to make an offering, do it anyways. Little by little, your merit builds up, like putting coins into a piggy bank.

If you were a billionaire, but you never made any merit, then after death you will become empty-handed. Merit is the only thing you carry with you through the lifetimes. Merit is never a waste.

As for your worldly possessions, they no longer belong to you once you leave this world. Someone else will be using them, or they will fall back into the earth.

November 13, 1989



105. DUE TO MERIT

I invite others to perform charitable acts because I love merit. Merit is the virtue that will free me from suffering. I need merit because I know I have to be reborn again, and merit will benefit me in the future.

People are born poor because they fail to practice charity in their past lives. By inviting them to practice charitable acts, they will earn merit and we, too, will also benefit from their merit.

We make merit as a team. Nobody will be left out. And when we are reborn, all of us will come together again as a virtuous community. We will be free from bad people. Surrounding ourselves with virtuous people ensures that we will not get into trouble.

November 17, 1989

106. HELP FROM MERIT

A layperson asked if she ran into obstacles and was far away from me, what she should do to get help from me (through my power of virtue).

I advised her to recall the virtues from the good deeds she has done and the charitable acts she has made, and ask the merits from these acts of good deeds to help her overcome these obstacles.

Your merits can help you. If you keep company with immoral people, these people can't help you. Merit will guide us towards kind people who will come to our assistance.

May 13, 1989

107. YOUTH IS NOT A FACTOR IF YOU HAVE MERIT

A layperson asked me for advice on how to handle a situation where he had to supervise an office where many people working under him were older and have worked there longer than he had.

I replied that there is no need to worry. It doesn't matter if you have fewer years of seniority than they do; it only matters that you have more merit. It is merit, not age that is a factor. We are the results of our merit. If we have more merit, we become the leader. Merit is the determining factor.

September 23, 1991

108. SHORT LIFE, LONG LIFE

A guest asked me to tell her why her husband had died young.

I replied that he died early because of his kamma. In his past life, he committed numerous acts of killing and cruelty to animals. He had to face his karmic retribution which caused him to die young. Someone who lives long, such as in my case, is due to abstention from killing or causing suffering to other beings in the past life. But remember, everyone must die sooner or later. There are no exceptions to this rule.

January 20, 1991

109. BUILD UP MERIT

A layperson expressed the desire to go on a meditation retreat, but was concerned about her grown son being left alone.

When a man and a woman are in love, the world becomes a colorful place filled with sweet beauty. But once a first child is born, everyday is a quarrel! If you don't want a heavy burden, then don't have any children. But if you have them, then you must accept full responsibility. You can't desert them.

As for me, I have no one with which to concern myself with, except my merit. In each of us, we carry merit and demerit, and we must do all we can to increase the merit.

I'm a fighter. I never back down from problems until I find the solution. But when you are asked to help someone, first take a good look at yourself and determine if you are really capable of helping this person. If his problems are beyond your abilities to solve, then accept that and practice equanimity. You cannot help someone who will not listen; it is up to his own kamma. As for ourselves, we have to make the best with what is given to us.

February 9, 1991

110. MERIT & DEMERIT ARE THE ONLY THINGS WE CAN TAKE WITH US

Addressing the former governor of Sri Saket Province, Thailand, when he visited the temple:

When you enter the temple, even a dignitary should leave his rank and title outside because these are earthly mantles. They are not things you can take with you when you die. They are merely masks, and once removed, you are no different from anyone else. Nothing in life is significant except merit and demerit. They are the only things which matter.

November 13, 1989



CELIBACY

111. PURSUING PERFECTIONS UNTIL YOU PREVAIL

Addressing a group of Upasaka (male temple attendants) getting ready to be ordained:

When you have decided to enter the temple in order to pursue Perfections to the fullest, you must never waver from this goal. I wish all of you will prevail. Whether you will or not, depends on you.

What you need to take precautions from is the opposite sex. This is very important. Do not give way to sympathy. Let wisdom and equanimity be your guide. Giving way to sympathy can lead to your defeat.

I have seen many examples of this, so I caution you to watch out for your inclinations. Don't allow a situation that may lead to intimacy. Once intimacy happens it is difficult to undo. The best thing to do is to not allow any chance for intimacy. If you close the bridge, then the person cannot encroach.

This is the biggest weakness that plagues virtue seekers. It is an obstacle that inhibits the path to Perfections. For such little gain, one can lose so much. This is one of the major reasons that cause virtue seekers to get sidetracked from their path to Perfections. It is better to prevent it now rather than having to cure it later.

Not getting involved with love affairs is the best policy. This will allow you to succeed in your pursuit of Perfections smoothly. You will possess great virtue and purity, having clear-seeing ability for knowledge, and be able to overcome everything.

January 5, 1975

112. AN EASY LIFE

Why do people want to be married? Living on your own is an easy life, full of freedom. Flying like a little bird, you can go anywhere you want.

November 6, 1981

113. THE PURER YOU ARE THE MORE MERIT YOU GAIN

In order for one to attain the crystal clear vision of the enlightened mind, one must practice chastity and be pure in body, speech, and mind.

The mind must not be clouded with worries, sadness, or any other turbulent emotions. Don't be concerned about anyone or anything. Think only of merit and how to salvage yourself. You have no need for pampering.

Rely only on merit. Keep on purifying the mind and performing good deeds, and no merit will pass you by. In this way, the merit you gain will be utterly pure and free of defilements.

114. ELEVATE YOUR MIND

Elevate your mind and you will see that sensual desires will cause suffering and may even vulgarize you. When you are fully occupied with the worldly life, it's difficult to recognize this. Make the resolution to release all sensual desires so that you become ever more purified.

I have looked into my past lives, into the mundane and into the sublime, and I see that I have been this way for a long time. Throughout my childhood in this lifetime, I never had those kinds of thoughts in my mind, and I never desired to fall in love with anyone. I had some suitors, but I brushed them off. Then I entered the temple. I saw that I had been pure in this way, and I made the resolution that I wanted to remain this way for all my future lifetimes as well.

Make a resolution every day to elevate your mind above sensual desires. Resolve also for other worthy things. The more centered your mind is the more effective your resolutions will become. The more resolutions you make the more merit you gain, and the more of your wishes will come true.

December 3, 1980

115. BEAUTY THAT IS NOT

In all my years, I have yet to see a truly beautiful woman. For all their efforts to beautify themselves from head to toe, to my eyes I see no beauty in them at all. What I see is harm and suffering. It is quite unfortunate for them to be attached to vanity.

Obsession with beauty can make you fall from your Path. So I make resolutions constantly to be free from sensuality.

November 5, 1979

116. OBVIOUSLY NO GOOD

It is obvious to me that if we allow ourselves to become attached to sensual desires we have allowed ourselves to be enslaved by Mara. Then we have subjected ourselves to undue punishments. I won't allow that to happen to me. If we give up along the way, we might as well have given up from the very beginning.

Those consumed with sensual desires will not succeed in their pursuit of Perfections.

June 24, 1980

117. NO NONSENSE SPOKEN

Nonsensical subjects such as matters dealing with sensual desires will never pass my lips. I would be embarrassed to talk about them. When I was young, I was even more embarrassed, but now as an old woman, I feel more liberty to talk about it.

June 24, 1980



RESOLUTIONS

118. EFFECTIVE WAY TO MAKE RESOLUTIONS

Luang Por Wat Paknam taught me that the most effective way to make fruitful resolutions was to make them while monks were bestowing their blessings. When they begin a blessing chant, from the first word, “Yadha...,” focus your mind to the center of the body and visualize a clear Buddha image. Then begin making your resolutions.

Luang Por explained that this will make our resolutions become a part of their blessings, which will be heard all the way to Nibbana. So make your resolutions with care. Each time you do it, it will get easier and easier until it becomes second nature to you.

January 26, 1975

119. REJECT SLOVENLINESS

We know that the most important aspect of life is the practice of meditation. But that doesn’t mean we can neglect our other duties.

Cleanliness is important, and whoever makes a mess should take care of it. I will scold anyone who neglects their responsibility for tidiness.

I make the resolution that actions which bring discomfort to others or to me will never be a part of me, mentally, verbally or physically.

October 1, 1976

120. MAKE ALL-ENCOMPASSING RESOLUTIONS

I always teach that this is our last life; make wise resolutions that will encompass everything that is good.

Resolve to have a healthy body free of illness, complete with the thirty-two faculties; to be born a human being of a male gender who is pure; not to be attracted to the opposite sex, and not to find pleasure in the sight, sound, taste, touch, scent, and sentiment of the opposite sex.

Before we die, may we achieve self-awareness; build up great merit and Perfections in every lifetime; meet only virtuous people, and be receptive and amenable to good advice.

When planting a tree, make a resolution for this tree to flourish and produce a pleasant shade; anyone who sits beneath it to see enlightened wisdoms; to be protected by the divine; and to be a resting place for birds.

At bed time, make a resolution to take sanctuary within our inner Buddha; may the Buddha give us protection and free us from danger.

July 17, 1977



121. KHUN YAI’S RESOLUTIONS

When I was sweeping and trimming the grass at Luang Por (Dhammajayo’s) residence, I made the following resolution:

Wherever I walk, may I have a safe path before me. May my home be clean and well-tended by capable hands.

March 25, 1980

122. TEACHING WITH TRUTHFULNESS

Nowadays, I see so many people setting themselves up to be meditation masters. This saddens me because I am not sure what they can actually teach. When we teach about stopping the mind, they contend why we need to do that. I would say to them, “If we don’t stop the mind from wandering, how else could we attain the enlightening state?”

I made the resolution that in my future rebirths, if ever I become a teacher, let me teach truthfully in speech, in body, and in mind. From the very moment of birth, let me be well versed in the Five Precepts, the Eight Precepts, the Ten Precepts, the Two Hundred Twenty-Seven Precepts, and the knowledge of the entire 84,000 Articles of the Buddhist Doctrine.

Now that I am old, I want to see more peace and harmony around me. Please practice meditation as often as you can so you can help build the Buddhajak Center to become a truly sacred place of merit.

March 1, 1981

123. VIRTUE OF RESOLUTIONS

As we make merit, we must also make resolutions.

Make a resolution for us to be in the company of Buddhist monks in every lifetime and to not commit any bad actions.

Making resolutions is part of the Ten Perfections. The Ten Perfections consist of Generosity, Morality, Renunciation, Wisdom, Patience, Perseverance, Truthfulness, Resolution, Loving-kindness, and Equanimity.

Each time we make a resolution we gain merit. I already made a “profit” spiritually for being born in this life.

124. GRAB THE FLAG OF VICTORY

We are extremely fortunate to be born a human being. We are born to pursue virtue, to build spiritual benefits. So take this opportunity to accumulate only good things for yourselves, and cast away all evil things. In this way, we can build up spiritual assets to take care of our future existences, to enable us to move forward towards higher states, and to never fall into hardships.

I have observed the Five Precepts since I was 26 years old and continue to do so until now, at age 71. Prior to that time, I practiced every precept except one (killing), because I had a weakness of swatting mosquitoes.

At age 26, I was able to teach myself that mosquitoes were much smaller than me and yet I took advantage of them by killing them. I had been killing mosquitoes for 26 years but I have not reduced its population at all. Having this realization, I decided to adopt the Five Precepts in full from then on. By age 28, I was able to adhere to the Eight Precepts in full to this day.

I have already profited in this lifetime, and I have only good things to take with me. My life will continue to be better. I will not fall behind. I have already grabbed the flag of victory. I will only carry with me all that is good.

So make the following resolutions:

“Let the word “dissolute” and “failure” never fall upon me. Let me find only virtuosity and success in every lifetime until I reach Nibbana.”

November 12, 1979

125. PERFECT AND COMPLETE

This is the last flawed life for me. In my future existence, don’t let even a tiny flaw or deficiency come upon me. May I find everything perfect and complete. Let me be ready to build the utmost virtues, perfectly and completely.

June 24, 1980

126. THE HARM OF KILLING

In the news these days, I see so many killings. Killing begets more killing. The killers and the killed are bound by endless cycles of vengeance from one existence to the next. You kill him then he kills you, taking turn in the never ending wheel of kamma.

I see the harm of killing in this way: if we kill them, we commit a negative kamma which cuts down our own virtue; if they kill us, they take away our chance to perform virtues and build merit.

I make the resolution to never kill anyone so that I will never be killed in any lifetime until I ultimately reach Nibbana. If someone wishes to harm me, let the thought of harming me quickly disappear from him.

December 3, 1980

127. CONQUER MARA WITH GOODNESS

Throughout my life I have done nothing but good deeds. I will keep doing so to further the purity of my body, speech and mind. This goodness will help me overcome the influence of Mara.

I always make the following resolutions:

Do not let Mara conceal the truth from me and prevent me from having the super-knowledge and insight. Let me know everything according to the truths. Let me be free from Mara’s influence which causes me to do wrongful deeds. Let me never know the word “defeat”, and to not ever be defeated by Mara in all of my lifetimes. Let me be victorious over Mara in every lifetime until I attain Nibbana.

After making resolutions, I looked at the purity of my body, speech and mind, and I looked at my inner merit sphere and my inner Dhamma sphere, and I saw all of them to be utterly bright and luminous. This made me happy. I looked at all the “programs” (past actions) that I have created for myself in the past and I saw no badness, only goodness and purity throughout. When I saw how I built virtues in the past, I knew I will no doubt grab the flag of victory. All I have to do is to stay on course and maintain this path of goodness for this lifetime. In my subsequent lifetimes, everything will be complete and perfect. I will not run into anything that is bad because I have made resolutions to encompass everything that is good, fully and firmly.

I will surely prevail. I will certainly defeat Mara because I have accumulated so much virtue.

March 24, 1980

128. MAKE RESOLUTIONS EVEN WHEN MAKING SMALL MERITS

Even when you make small merits, make resolutions to never run into fools³¹ (immoral people), but to surround yourself with only the virtuous.

129. TO SEE CRYSTAL CLEAR DHAMMA

Every time you make merit, I encourage you to make the following resolutions:

Into every era that I am born, may I be spared the company of “fools” and be free from karmic retributions; may I see crystal clear Dhamma and have an enlightened mind in every lifetime; may I possess unlimited wealth, enabling me to make abundant merit; may I have my own land; may I be in a position to build a temple; may I have opportunities to take part in Kathina and robe offering ceremonies; may I be born with good health and a strong body that is free of illness to live a long life, and to leave this world happy at the time of death.

³¹**“Fools”** (pala): spiritually defective persons. A fool is someone wicked, weak, or feeble in a moral sense. His discretion is faulty, not knowing right from wrong, good from bad. A fool is one who gives bad influence. You can’t tell a fool by his looks. He could be well-educated and be from a good family. You can tell him by his action or behavior. The opposite of a “fool” is a “wise”.

130. PURE IN BODY, SPEECH, AND MIND

May I be one with the purity of body, speech, and mind. May I have plenty of merit. May I have the merit that enables me to teach myself, teaching myself to perform only good deeds.

May I attain the abilities to recall my past lives and the past lives of others so I can learn from past mistakes and be able to teach myself and others correctly.

May I practice celibacy in every life, never returning to a life of marriage.

May I not be attracted to the sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and temperament of the opposite sex.

May I be content with a life of celibacy throughout all lifetimes until I defeat Mara.

May I be born complete with the thirty-two faculties, free from disease and illnesses, having a body that is healthy and strong throughout the duration of my quest for Perfections.

April 4, 1979



131. HAVING CAPABLE PERSONNEL

May I be surrounded with good and capable personnel. Even if they are few, may they all be ones who are wise, virtuous and capable, able to complete tasks with excellence. And may I have the ability to fully provide for them so that they can live with comfort.

June 24, 1980

132. ACCUMULATE MERIT UNTIL YOU TRIUMPH

In merit-making, we have to do it continuously until we reach our final destination. If not, we may stumble into difficulties from time to time.

We should make resolutions that we shall never fall into hard times. When I saw people who suffered from hardships, I knew they failed to perform their merits continuously in the past. When merit fails to bear fruit continuously, a person's conditions decline.

So resolve to never encounter hardships.

November 20, 1982

133. THOSE WHO FOLLOW ME

I always make this resolution:

May those who follow me be ones endowed with purity in body, speech and mind, not ones who seek recognition and fame; may they be ones who seek solitude; be content, honest and truthful; and be ones who practice meditation a great deal.

134. A PLACE WITH FRESH AIR

Nowadays I see that people live in high rises and other congested places. It seems like a prison with so little freedom.

It leads me to make this resolution: May I live in a place with fresh air; clean, open, and with good ambience, without the need for air conditioners or fans.

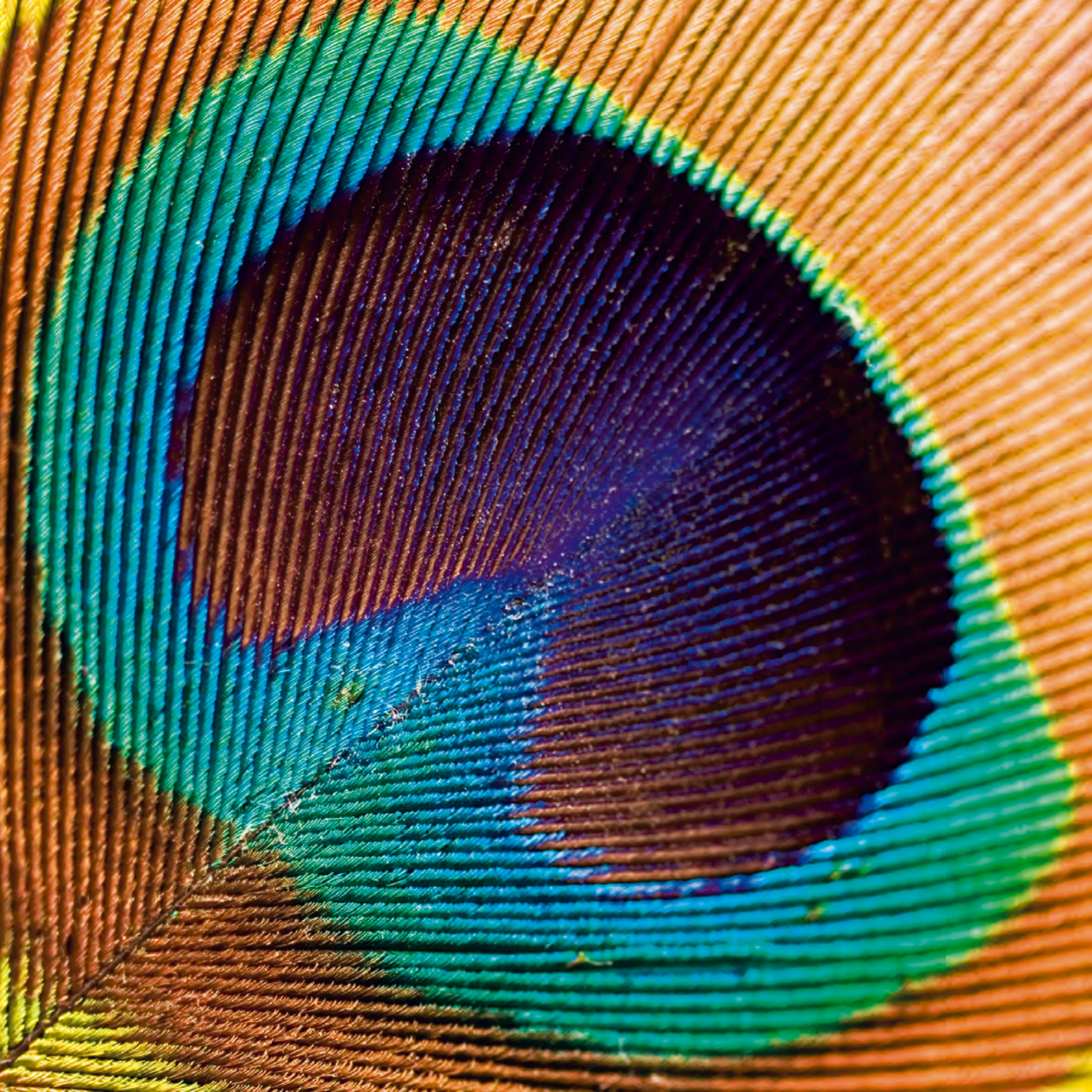
December 3, 1980

135. KEEPING NIBBANA IN MIND

Making resolutions is important. As we sit in the meditation hall, we should follow Luang Por's resolutions and make some of our own.

Whatever you resolve for yourself, be sure to think of Nibbana. When the mind turns toward Nibbana, it will remind us to perform only good deeds and avoid deeds which bring about ruin. If we think about Nibbana every day, then the mind becomes more uplifted day by day, and we will be on the right path. Therefore, make your resolutions to keep Nibbana always in your heart.

March 4, 1980



PERSEVERANCE,
FORTITUDE,
& DEVOTION

136. ENDURE

Have fortitude and tolerance. Do not create any more bad kamma for yourself, or you will keep running into hardships.

137. IMPROVE

We have sacrificed many things in order to pursue Perfections and to perform good deeds. So keep your tolerance, and be patient with the naysayers.

Always strive to improve yourself. Examine yourself and make improvements where you see flaws. The self improvements you make in this lifetime will benefit you in your future lifetimes. If you cannot correct your shortcomings in this lifetime, you will have to keep correcting them again in future lifetimes.

Putting improvements off to the next life is not the right attitude. Change for the better now.

September 20, 1982

138. HAVING A STRONG WILL

Whatever you do, do it with a strong will. Look at me for example. I have no education and hold no degree, but I am strong-willed, and I managed to establish this temple. I pursued my goal with determination and perseverance.

Then I see others, some with a bachelor's degree, master's degree, or even doctorates, who could not accomplish what they set out to do. I can tell that they lack determination and perseverance. They are the type who give up too easily when they run into the smallest of obstacles.

As uneducated as I am, what I have is a strong will, and this strong will leads me to success. As I look into the future, I see that if we lack the will in this life, we will never achieve success in future lives. So whatever you do in this life, make sure you do it earnestly.

June 6, 1983

139. THE SPEED OF THE CAPTAIN IS THE SPEED OF THE CREW

Whatever you do, do it seriously without any laxity. A leader who does things nonchalantly will have subordinates who are also nonchalant. If a leader has a non-caring attitude towards his possessions, his subordinates will be no different. The attitude of the leader is the attitude of the followers. Like attracts like.

Work attentively and competently, and you will have followers who are the same way.

140. BORN TO FIGHT

We are born to fight. Fight with kindness. Whether we fight or not, we will all die one way or another, so we might as well fight. Fight until you are too ill to do so. In my efforts to build this temple, I worked night and day to finish my goal. I worked so hard until my body became malnourished.

As long as there is strength in us, we must press forward. Take action. Cast away laziness. Rest only when you have no more strength.

October 1, 1979

141. FIGHT TILL THE END

Whether I achieve victory or not, I will fight until the very end. I will never give up. I don't care if others give in or run away. I will continue the course. I will keep practicing and improving upon my Dhammakaya meditation.

November 5, 1979

142. NEVER BE DISCOURAGED

Never be disheartened. Do what you have to do now to complete your tasks. Don't wait until you are too old to do it.

I am a diligent person. I do every little thing at the temple and I rest very little. Some of you do only a little and rest too much.

April 19, 1992

143. NEVER GIVE IN

I never give in to obstacles. I always strive ahead with determination. I will try every which way to accomplish my goals.

One day I fell ill and could not even move my legs, but my will was strong. I was not willing to give in. I tried to move my legs but they seemed to have been paralyzed and were not responding at all. I wiggled my toes little by little, until I was finally able to move my legs and walk again.

September 15, 1980



144. WHATEVER YOU DO,
DO IT SERIOUSLY

Since I arrived at the temple, many people looked down at me and mistreated me, but I did not allow myself to be affected by them. Instead, I focused my attention on meditation and on finding the right answers for Luang Por (Wat Paknam).

I reached a high level of success because whatever I did, I did it with seriousness and intensity. I considered it a waste of time to engage in jealousy and competition. Those who deem themselves superior are often engaged in petty competition and struggles. As for me, I don't waste my time with petty politics. I'd rather spend it on meditation.

September 17, 1980

145. NOT RESPONDING IN KIND

When I find myself in a stressful situation, I keep my mind in Dhamma. The more I stay with Dhamma, the more radiant my mind becomes and the more subtle knowledge I gain.

I feel no anger towards those who are angry with me. Instead I look beyond the surface to find the causes that bring about these negative behaviors. People scorned me even before I entered the temple. After I was ordained and admitted in the super advanced meditation group, I received all sorts of mistreatments from others. I was labeled a low class person, a servant, an uneducated person, one who was infected with tuberculosis, etc. I was given the worst quarters to stay in. When food was served, it was “dumped” onto my plate with disdain.

To this day, I have been tormented by Mara every step of the way. But this is the final lifetime that Mara can harass me. I know its bag of tricks and I know how to defeat it now.



146. TRIUMPH THROUGH MERIT

On the outside it may appear that I have surrendered to my foes. But on the inside my conviction remains as strong and unwavering as ever. Instead of using words, I fight with Dhamma.

I may appear to be defeated on the outside, but on the inside I have advanced deeply into my meditative attainment. I will eventually be victorious due to my own merit power.

May 5, 1980

147. FINAL LIFETIME

I reflected on my situation and I perceived that, in one of my past lifetimes, I must have committed certain unwholesome acts that resulted in negative retributions for me. That was why I had to endure so many obstacles in this life.

Now that I know this is my final lifetime, I devote my life to the practice of good deeds with all my heart. I realize that time goes by quickly; to free myself from the grip of Mara, I can no longer wait nor waste any more time. With whatever time I still have left, I need to perform as many good deeds as I can.

When we realize that we have made a mistake and have committed something wrongful, we should give ourselves a chance to start over. Learn from mistakes and stop being reckless. Proceed to do more good deeds.

Everyone makes mistakes. This is natural. “Even with four legs an animal stumbles; even with a bright mind a wise man falls,” so goes the saying. Mistakes can be made, but we should not be disheartened and throw in the towel. Get up, get going, and get on the right course. Never give in to Mara.

Our time is short. We must seize every opportunity to perform good deeds. If we can prevail in this life, we will prevail in future lives. This present lifetime is vital. Realizing this, we must exercise extra patience, extra care, extra wisdom, and extra purity.

Don’t carry any unwholesome baggage with you. Carry only goodness. Strive to overcome the badness from this moment on until your final breath. You have already come this far. Don’t give in. Don’t let this lifetime go to waste. You are born to defeat Mara, not the other way around.

August 20, 1982

148. ONE LAST LIFETIME

Endure for one more lifetime. After this, things will be different.

The truth will reveal itself after its job is done. When the dust settles, we will know who is who and what is what.

I come with no inferiority complex, only purity. I am brave and confident because I know that everything that I do, I do with pureness in my heart.

149. KEEP UP WITH ME

If you are concerned that you cannot keep up with me, then hurry up and practice purity. Be sure to have patience and perseverance.

May 5, 1980

150. BATTLE IN SILENCE

Pursuing virtue is not such an easy task. You have to fight, you have to endure, and you have to battle in silence.

I build virtue. I fight silently. I rely on my merit for help. And I win because of merit.

September 10, 1991

151. FIGHTING SPIRIT

To pursue Perfections, one must possess a fighting spirit and the ability to endure.

November 17, 1991

152. NON-DEFIANCE

I was a student of Luang Por Wat Paknam for almost my entire life, and I never disobeyed him. Even if he scolded me, I did not once lose my patience. I only wanted to perform good deeds. I doubt very few people could have been as patient as I was.

November 10, 1990



HUMILITY

153. DON'T LOSE SELF-CONTROL

Keep arrogance out of your heart, even if you think you know better than others. Be humble and patient.

Your teachers and elders have only good intentions for you. Remember what I say here. Make resolutions to not lose yourself on this point, or you will miss the opportunities to gain the knowledge and know-how that allow you to complete your Path.

November 10, 1990

154. STAY HUMBLE

Some people have the tendency to show superiority over others when given an assignment by the Master. This is a bad attitude. For me, I always keep my humility.

November 10, 1990

155. COMPROMISE FOR THE SAKE OF MERIT

I am the compromising type. I keep my ego in line and I maintain my humility at all times.

We should learn to compromise and get along with everyone, and allow everyone to benefit from the virtues that we are pursuing together. If we are working together to make merit, then there should be a give-and-take attitude between everyone just for the sake of harmony and for the sake of merit. When patience and conciliation are observed, the task becomes easier and the merit benefits everyone.

October 22, 1976

156. WILLING TO ACCEPT HARDSHIP

I pursue Perfections with the goal to attain Nibbana after I have vanquished all Mara. As long as Mara still remains I will not allow myself to enter Nibbana.

My mind is focused on merit. This is my final life that Mara can affect me. In this life, I am willing to lower my ego and accept hardship. It is not easy to find someone who can do this.

As for people who come to the Buddhajak Center, some come with respect but some come with an intention to find faults. Even so, I always expressed my gesture of respect to them first by giving them a “wai”³² (joining palms together in a prayer gesture). I am a clumsy old lady; by giving a “wai” to someone much younger always brings that person’s guard down. So, instead of looking for faults, the person would “wai” me back showing his/her respect in return. By lowering my ego, I have transformed an act of ill-will to an act of goodwill for that person.

February 20, 1977

³²**Wai:** gesture of respect to someone more senior or superior, expressed through joining both palms together in a gesture of prayer.

157. BANISH PRIDE

From my heart I have banished pride and ill-will, and I urge all of the monks and attendees at this temple to do the same. But if someone is hostile against our community or has the desire to cause disharmony among our people, I will not fail to stand up against them.

May 31, 1981

158. TRUST

To my elders I pay the deepest respect by showing my humility, honesty, and truthfulness. I have no fear of the repercussion for doing virtuous acts. In doing so, I have earned their highest trust.

May 5, 1980



CLEANLINESS



159. LOVE OF CLEANLINESS

My love of cleanliness has been a part of me for as long as I can remember. I have fought for a long time to keep cleanliness wherever I go. Cleanliness has become a symbol of this temple. It has contributed to the faith, confidence, and respect of the people who come here. They see this place as a sanctuary and as a serene place to practice meditation. Please do not abandon the way of cleanliness that I have worked so hard to maintain.

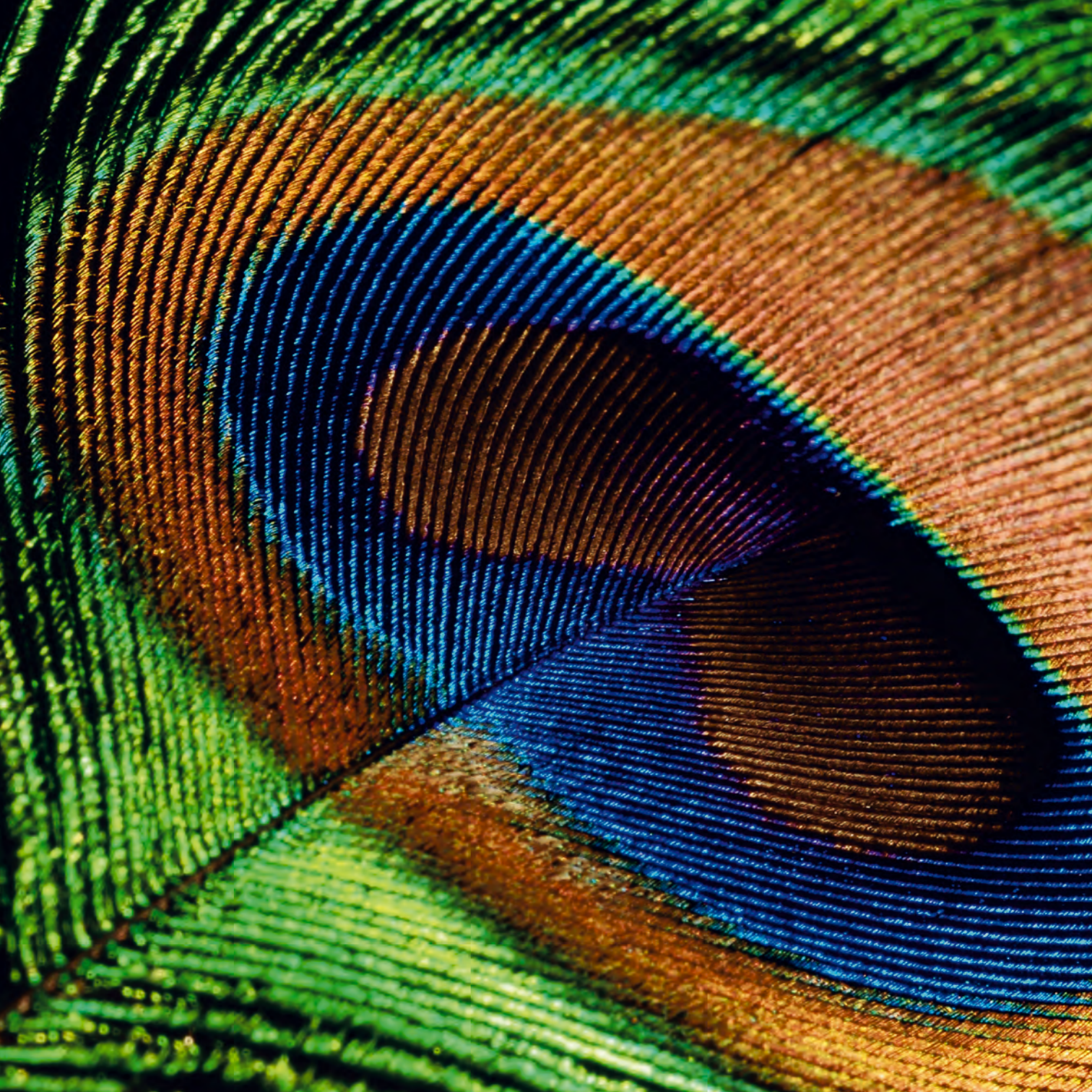
October 25, 1981

160. TO BE ADMIRERD BY HUMANS AND ANGELS

Upon seeing some brooms lying around haphazardly, I would order them to be put back neatly.

We must learn how to keep everything neat and tidy. After we finish using something we should put that thing back in its own proper place. Maintain cleanliness and tidiness. Keeping this habit will help you find orderliness in everything that you do in every lifetime.

April 19, 1992



DISCIPLINE

161. OBSERVE REGULATIONS

Where there is civilization, there is decline. Where there are the wise, there are also fools. With so many people attending the temple, let's work together to observe the regulations for the common good.

May 24, 1981

162. ABIDE BY THE RULES

Abide by the rules and regulations of the places where we find ourselves.

When I first arrived at Wat Paknam, I made the effort to learn all the rules and regulations of the temple and abide by them with full respect. That was why I enjoyed very good welfare. I respected Luang Por Wat Paknam's every rule while I was at the meditation workshop and did so even after he died. Now at the Buddhajak Center, I maintain the same self-discipline and I encourage you to do the same.

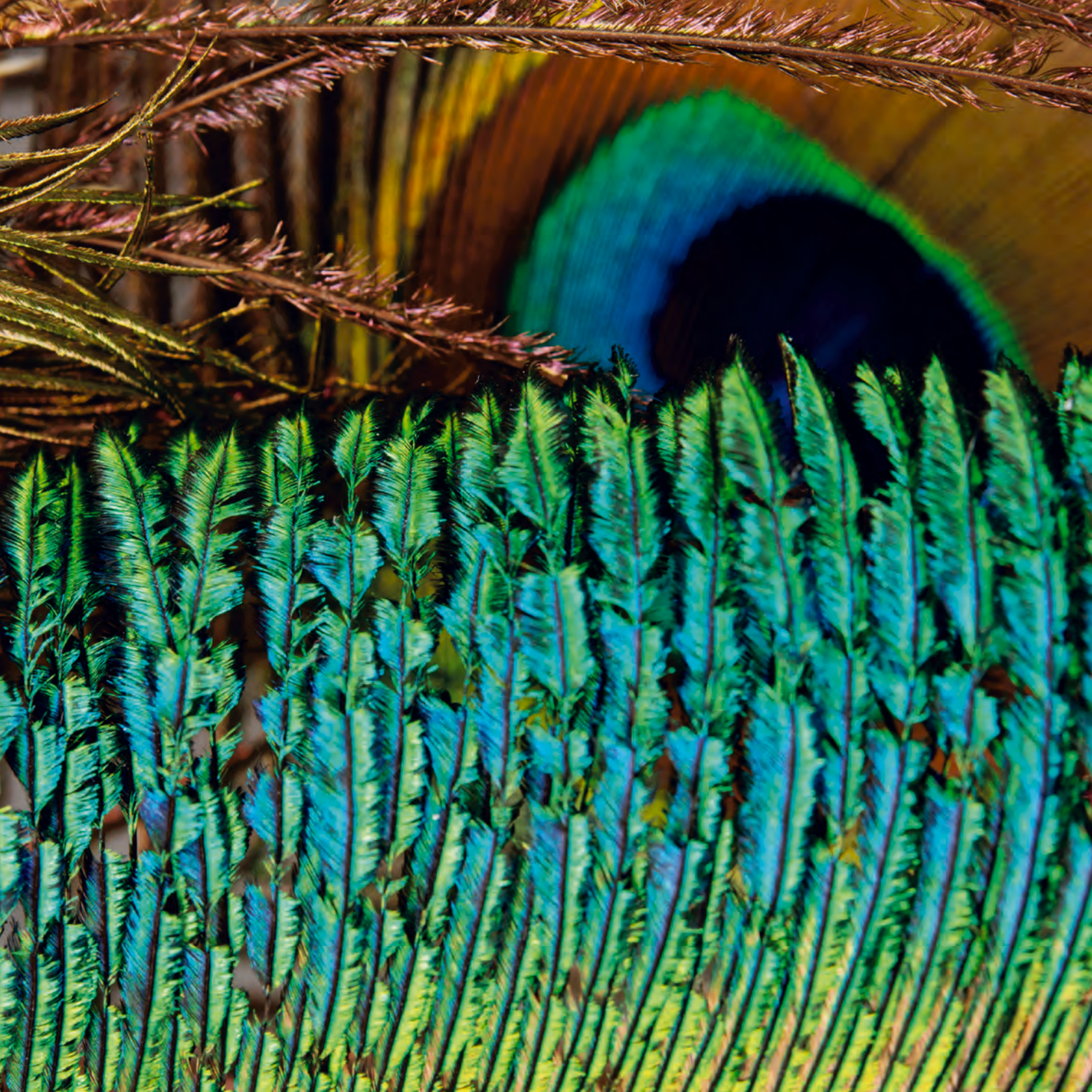
Set yourself as a good example; others will follow. We should all share the responsibility. This way, everyone will share the benefits and the happiness.

June 7, 1980

163. NO VIOLATION

When I first joined the meditation class, I was faced with many obstacles. Some people were hostile against me out of spite or jealousy. But they could not find fault with me because I never violated any rules or regulations.

June 7, 1980



USING ASSETS

164. POSSESSIONS WELL PROTECTED

Wherever I go, I respect my own property as well as the property of others. Treat other's property as if they are your own. In this way, your properties in future lifetimes will always be well looked after by yourself and others.

June 7, 1981

165. USE YOUR RESOURCES WISELY

Whatever resources we have, use them wisely and do not be wasteful. Whether it is water, electricity, or money, use it wisely, lest we end up being deprived of them. Even a small amount of water should not be wasted.

166. RESPECT THE VALUE OF MONEY

We must appreciate the value of money. Don't live or act beyond your means. Don't spend money frivolously. Know how to save. Be cognizant of the fact that money is not so easy to come by. Think how hard it is to make each dollar that you spend.

I reach out to our supporters, through both physical and spiritual means (through meditation), to come up with enough income to support our staff and attendants so that everyone here can live comfortably and be able to pursue perfected virtues without difficulties. It gives me great joy and a peace of mind to be able to do this.

But if the staff and attendants fail to utilize our resources in a worthwhile manner, then no matter how much income we generate, it will never be enough. And we will end up working our life away looking for money.

Follow my example. See how I use money in the most worthwhile way. Learn how to spend minimum money for maximum benefit.

June 24, 1980

167. AVOID WASTAGE

When managing a construction project, pay attention to expenses and leakage. Don't let things slip through the cracks. Every bit of money we have comes from donations. People have worked hard to earn this money. Whether it is a few dollars or a few pennies that people donate, it is our duty to spend it in the most prudent way. Before donors part with their hard-earned money, they make one hopeful resolution after another for that money to bring them meritorious outcomes. If you spend their donations carelessly, beware that you may end up causing more demerit than merit.

168. LOOK AFTER WHAT YOU CREATE

If you build something, can you also take care of what you have built? Having the ability to create something is not enough unless you can look after it too. If not, you might as well not build it.

I built this temple and I also have the ability to look after it.

February 15, 1992

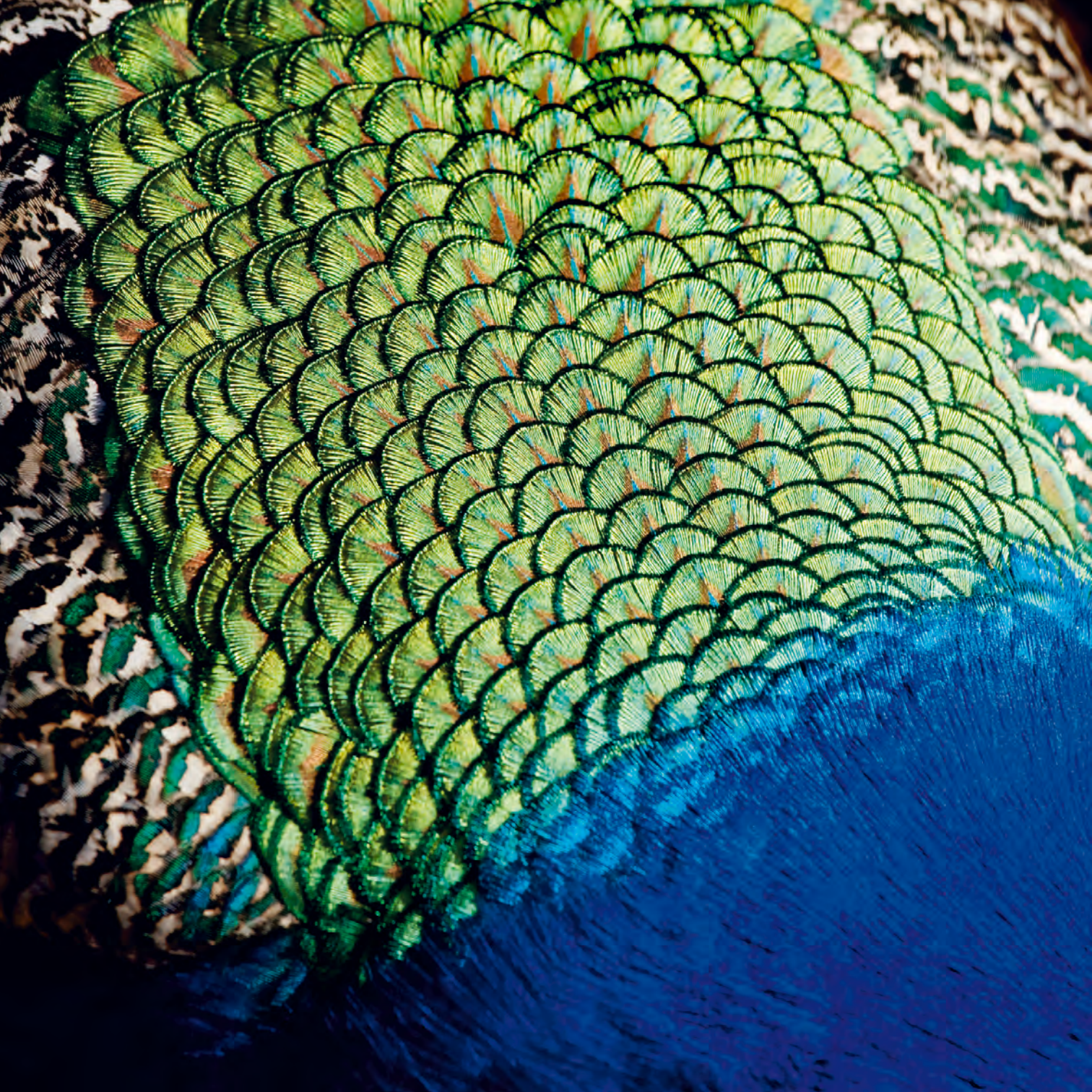
169. DESTITUTE OF GAMBLING

Addressing a gambling addict whose relative brought him to the temple:

Gambling is bad. No matter how much money you win, it will not last. Your entire family will be consumed by your addiction. Even a billion dollars will not last long in the hands of a gambler. A gambler's mind is consumed with the greed for more. Money won from gambling is impure. You may win at the beginning but your greed will cause you to lose more in the end.

No matter how much money a gambler has, he will become destitute in the end. There is not a chance for wealth in gambling.

August 18, 1991



MISCELLANEOUS

170. A PLACE OF MERIT

When I came to live at the Buddhajak Center, I set my mind to this one goal: to make this place clean and pure, a meritorious place of virtue where people come to practice meditation and achieve purity.

171. AT THE COST OF MY LIFE

I devoted my flesh and blood to establish the Buddhajak Center without the consideration for my own health, so much so that right before it was completed, I became severely ill. This time, I nearly died. I had to take refuge in merit at all times in order to survive. I lived; but if this happened to another old person, I am sure that person would have already ended up in a coffin. I'm well now, but only as much as an old person can be well.

February 26, 1983

172. DON'T DELVE ON THE NEGATIVE

If you make a bad mistake, don't let your thoughts run away with you in a negative direction or it will open doors for Mara to step in and make things worse. The more negative your imagination, the more harm you will bring to yourself. It is better for your mind to take refuge at the center of your body.

When people commit a bad mistake or face adversity, they tend to become negative and think of the worst. They become discouraged, disheartened, depressed, and demoralized. These negative emotions give the opportunity for Mara to come in with its malicious "program" that causes everything bad to come to fruition. In other words, your negative thoughts cause negative effects.

So when bad situations happen, keep your mind at the center of your body. Eventually, the negative energy will go away and you will be able to remedy the situations.

September 20, 1976

173. MAKE THE BEST OF THE PRESENT

I am someone who is not easily upset or affected. I teach myself at all times that it does not matter whether we are born rich or poor, smart or dumb, or even illiterate. What is important is now that we have been born into this life, it is wise for us to do maximum good deeds so that all good things will come to us in our future lives. Do good now to reap more good in the future. The past is gone. I never think of the past. I only think of the present and I do my best in the present.

Before, when I was a farmer, I had many friends. But since I entered the temple, my mind was only on Dhamma and I never missed my friends.

At the meditation workshop, whenever Luang Por Wat Paknam gave me an assignment, the only thought I had was to fulfill that assignment to the best of my ability. As a result, I was able to answer every one of Luang Por's queries. My meditation skills became very profound and I advanced more quickly than others in the class.

When I lived at the Dhammaprasit House, my only focus was on making the place clean and pure, to be a good place for performing virtues.

When living at the Buddhajak Center, I never got nostalgic for the Dhammaprasit house. I set out with the only focus on my mind, that is, to make the Buddhajak Center a clean and pure place, the best place to build virtues.

I devote myself to the tasks in the present, focus my attention to the job at hand, and contemplate on doing the best for that job now. I allow nothing to distract me so that I can fulfill my tasks in the best possible way. Doing so will enable me to find only good things in my future lives.

September 1, 1977

174. HELP THEM BY INVITING THEM TO THE TEMPLE

To help someone reach Heaven, first invite that person to come to the temple.

When I lived at Wat Paknam, I received invitations frequently to dine at various homes. Luang Por Wat Paknam gave me this thought: “Eating my food, you are only indebted to one person, me. Isn’t that enough? Why do you need to eat at other people’s houses too?” I knew what he meant. From then on, I stopped eating at other people’s houses.

I reminded monks who were invited to dine out: “Now that you have ordained, instead of going to other people’s houses for a meal, why not invite people to come to the temple instead? If you dine out at their homes, then they will find no need to come to the temple to offer food.”

January 10, 1981

175. PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

I wish nothing but prosperity for you. Although you may be impressed by tales of other places, remember that we have put down our roots here at the Buddhajak Center.

February 8, 1981

176. PLAN YOUR LIFE

Plan well for your life. I planned everything through. Even as a simple farmer, foresight served me well. In the rice field and in the home, my skill at planning ahead helped my family to pay off our debt and we were able to save some money. After I saw that my family was doing well, I made plans to enter the temple and to seek out my late father’s afterlife whereabouts. This story was recounted in the book, The Path to Happiness.

I lived for a time with Madam Liab and used my skills to help run her household. While living there I met Thongsuk Samdangpan and learned meditation from her.

Once I attained Dhammakaya, I wanted to join the temple immediately but I knew Madam Liab would not let me. So instead, I asked her for a leave to visit my family. With the help of Thongsuk, I was admitted to the temple, shaved my head, and became a nun.

Once I joined the temple, I detached myself from the outside world completely, concentrating only on mastering the Dhammakaya Knowledge. That is why my meditation skills are so profound.

March 1, 1981

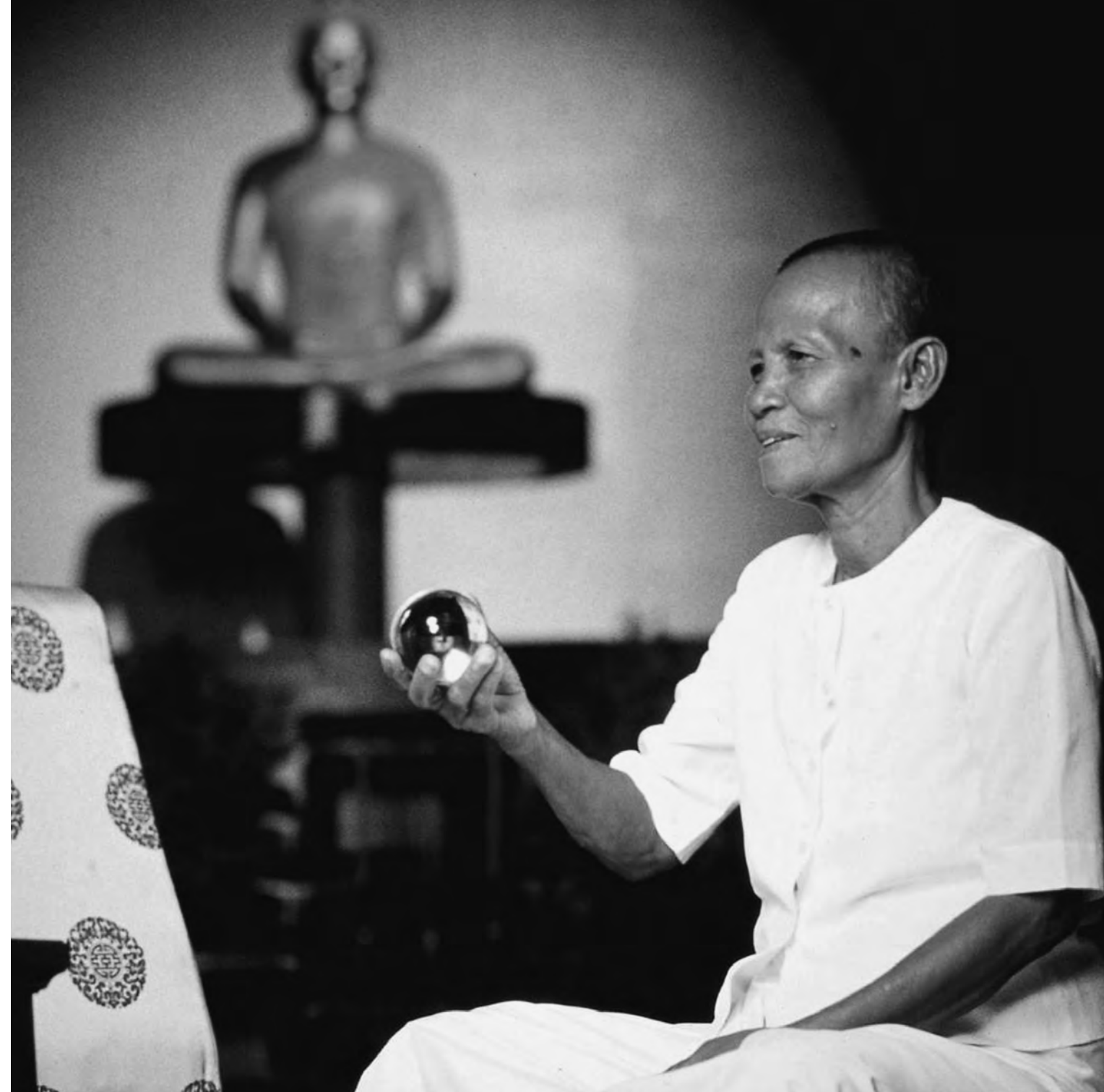
177. LEAVING HOME

When I was a young girl about 11 or 12 years old, my father came home drunk one day. He was so drunk that he fell asleep on the ground outside the house while the rest of the family slept inside. In disgust, my mother called him a “sparrow” (a Thai expression for a worthless person) that leached off her wealth.

My father angrily asked all the children if we heard her abuse him. Innocently, I said that I did not think she had insulted him. He became so enraged that he cursed me to deafness for 500 lifetimes. I was very frightened of his curse!

On the day he died, I was out in the rice field. By the time I returned home, he had already passed away, so I missed my opportunity to ask him for forgiveness. I thought surely his curse would come true. I became determined to somehow find him in the afterlife to ask for his forgiveness. When I learned about Luang Por Wat Paknam, I knew there was a way. So as soon as I was sure my family could support themselves, I left home.

June 7, 1981



178. ONLY MERIT IN MIND

If you come to the temple for the sole purpose of gaining merit, then you are on the right path and you will never fall into misfortune. On the other hand, if you come here to seek fame or popularity or to flirt, you will end up not making it.

In understanding myself, I am able to understand all others. My eyes are wide open to my own nature and can look into what I have done in my past, what I am doing in my present, and what I will become in my future, all the way to Nibbana. I know everything now, including my path to end suffering. However, I still have to be reborn so that I can eradicate the rest of the defilements that are still with me. I observe quietude and have become a good role model in this regard. The monks here also enjoy the tranquility.

June 21, 1981

179. A MIND FREE OF NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Someone asked me if I have any suffering nowadays. I told him I did not, because I only allow good things to come into my mind and never let any negative thoughts enter. From the moment I wake up, my mind is filled with only good thoughts. I have accumulated so much virtue and maintain only goodness in my mind.

If a bad situation occurs, I confront it for the greater good but I will not let it linger in my mind. If I do complain about someone or something, it is only for the betterment. But once it is over, I move on and never let it linger. Then when I meditate, my mind is completely free from these thoughts, concentrating only on meditative attainment. That is why I am able to find happiness.

October 28, 1982

180. BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Learn to do things right. Learn to be clean and tidy. People will see your behavior and set you as a good example. There will always be new people coming to the temple. I cannot always be present to teach or to show them how to do things. After I am gone you can be their example. Practice good behavior and teach others to do the same.

July 18, 1981

181. GIVE UP BAD HABITS

Break your bad habits in this life and you will not have them in the next life. If in the next life you still retain the same undesirable behavior, it will be because you did not heed this advice.

July 18, 1981

182. USE KIND SPEECH

Addressing volunteers at the temple:

Kind words are better than harsh speech. Kind words engender respect and cooperation from the person you are speaking to, rather than fear. If people fear you, they will not want to help you in the future. Then your work will be slow, and since they did not help you they will miss the opportunity to gain merit. Disagreements should be addressed civilly and sensitively and people will be willing to learn from you. Then we will accomplish our work and they will also gain merit.

November 11, 1980

183. DESIRE GIVES RISE TO SUFFERING

Desire is the source of suffering. Whether it is the desire for wealth, beauty, or fame, they all lead to unhappiness. Because I have no desire for these things, I have no suffering.



184. PROTECT YOUR MIND

It is the natural condition of the world to have both the good and the bad. Sometimes we are joyous and happy; sometimes we are sad and worried. This is a part of life.

However the world may be, just let it be. Don't worry, be happy. It is better to preserve the quality of our mind. Thinking about negative things and the problems of others can only affect your mind. You can lose anything but don't lose the quality of your mind.

February 17, 1982

185. AWAKENING

When I was small, I walked behind my mother and I thought to myself: "Please don't let me suffer when I get old."

Do people ever realize that the reason they suffer is because they are inundated with demerit? Will they ever come to this awakening?

February 25, 1982

186. DON'T LOOK DOWN ON ANYONE

Never look down upon anyone, whether he is a beggar, poor, middle class, or a millionaire. When I lived in Nakorn Chaisri, whenever a beggar came to me for rice, I gave him rice; whenever a beggar came to me for grain, I gave him grain.

September 10, 1982

187. RIGHT BALANCE

Like preparing food, everything should be arranged in the right proportion. Apply the right balance in everything you do. Too much or too little is not good. The Middle Way is the way to go.



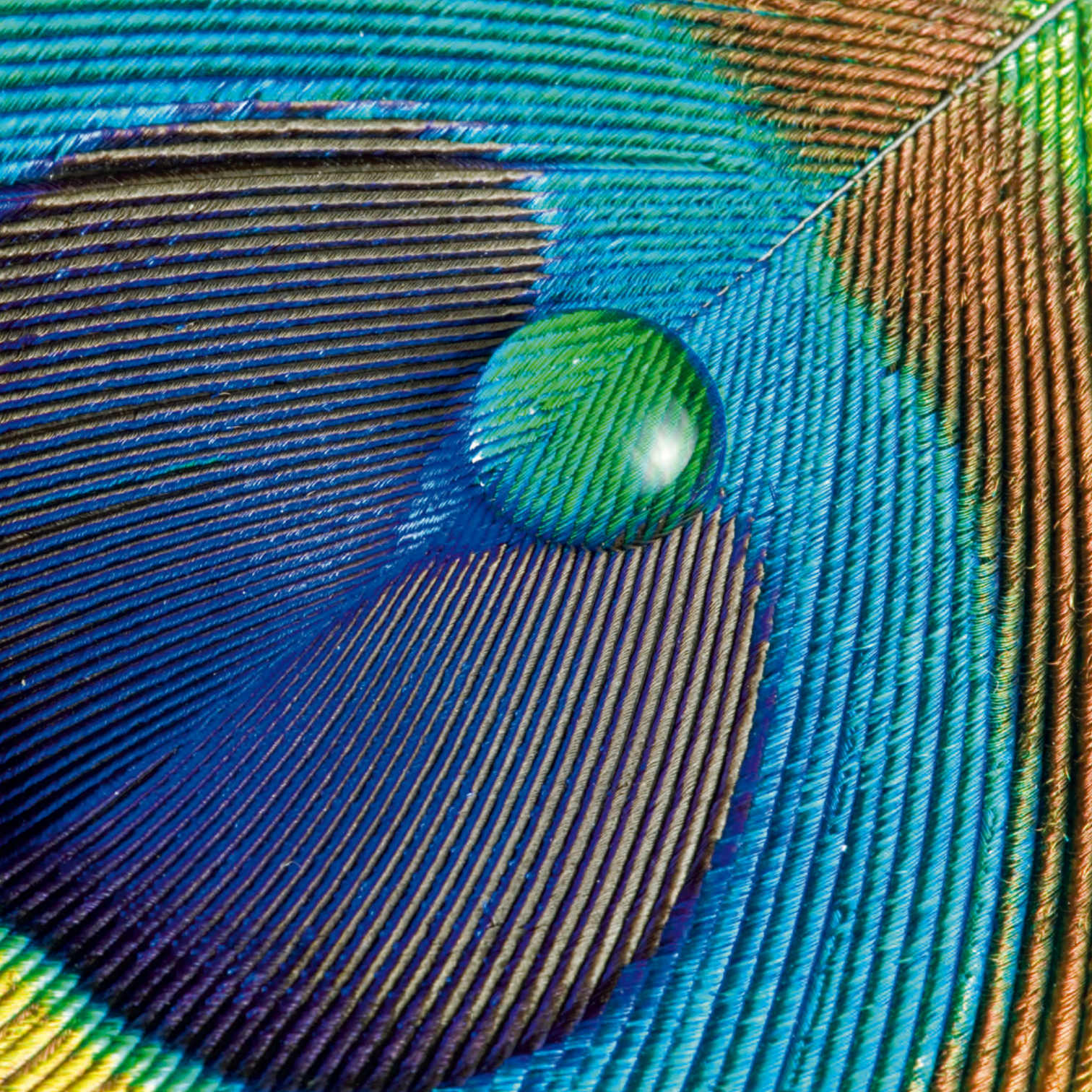
188. HUMANS ARE THE MOST BLESSED

Human beings are the most capable creatures. Even big, bulky metal can be made to float on water. To be born human is the highest blessing indeed. No creatures can be more capable or well-blessed than a human.

October 1, 1982







HOW TO MEDITATE



How To Meditate

The Dhammakaya meditation method was initiated in Thailand 60 years ago by Phra Mongkoltepmuni, famously known as Luang Pu Wat Paknam.

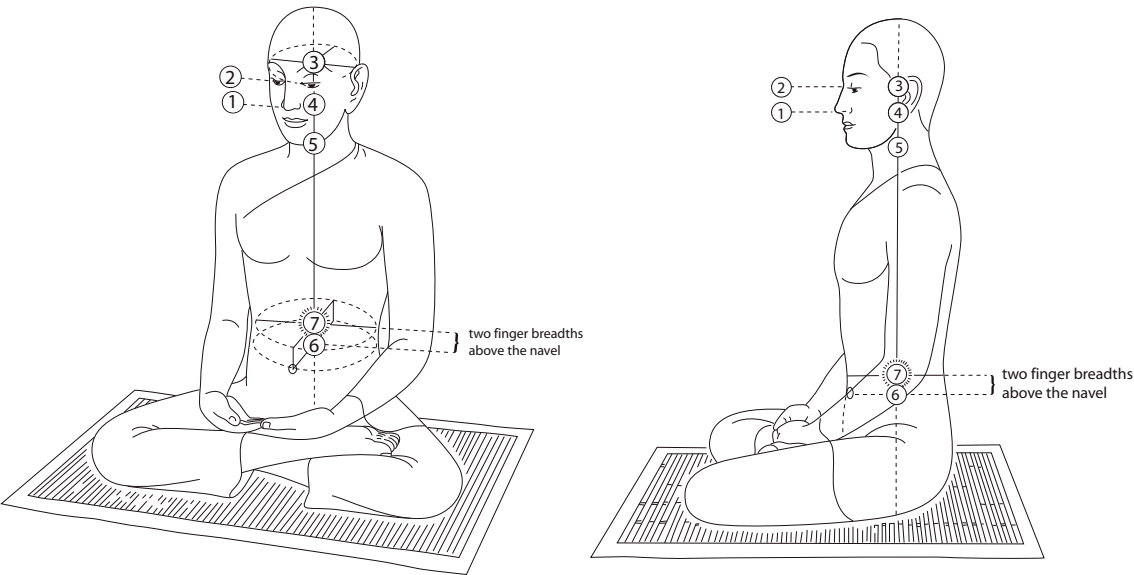
It is one of the most popular meditation techniques practiced by Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world. The method is simple, easy, and effective. Everyone can learn how to do it and can achieve inner peace and happiness that you may never know existed.

“Dhammakaya” is a Pali word which means “body of enlightenment”. The term appears in many places in the Buddhist scriptures of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana (Tibetan) schools. The uniqueness of the Dhammakaya meditation is that it teaches about the center of the body as the natural home of the human mind as well as the inner gateway to enlightenment. The more still the mind is at its natural home, the deeper the happiness one experiences.

Dhammakaya meditation also has a moral impact on the mind. A person who meditates regularly will become more gentle, kinder, and more peaceful.

**Step-by-step instructions**

- 1.** The sitting posture, which has been found to be the most conducive for meditation, is the half-lotus position. Sit upright with your back straight, cross-legged with your right leg over the left one. You can sit on a cushion or pillow to make your position more comfortable. Nothing should impede your breathing or circulation. Your hands should rest palms-up on your lap, and the tip of your right index finger should touch your left thumb. Feel as if you were one with the ground on which you sit. Feel that you could sit happily for as long as you like.
- 2.** Softly close your eyes as if you were falling asleep. Relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles in your face, then relax your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.
- 3.** Close your eyes gently but not completely. Stop thinking about any worldly things. Feel as if you were sitting alone; around you is nothing and no one. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind.



Before starting, it is necessary to acquaint yourself with the various resting points or bases of the mind inside the body.

- The first base is at the rim of the nostril, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.
- The second base is at the corner of the eye, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.
- The third base is at the center of the head.
- The fourth base is at the roof of the mouth.
- The fifth base is at the upper center of the throat.
- The sixth base is at a point in the middle of your abdomen, the meeting point of an imaginary line between the navel through the back and the line between the two sides.
- The seventh base of the mind is two fingers' breadth above the navel. This base is the most important point in the body. It is the very center of the body and the point where the mind can come to a standstill.

4. Feel that your body is an empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at a point near the seventh base of the mind at the center of the body. Whatever experience arises in the mind, simply observe without attempting to interfere with it. This way, your mind will become gradually purer and inner experience will unfold.
5. If you find that you cannot dissuade the mind from wandering, then your mind needs an inner object as a focus for attention. Gently imagine that a bright, clear, crystal ball, about the size of the tip of your little finger, is located inside at the center of the body. Maybe, you cannot imagine anything, but later, you'll be able to see a crystal ball with increasing clarity. Allow your mind to come to rest at the center of the crystal ball. Use the subtlest of effort and you'll find that the crystal ball becomes brighter and clearer.
6. If you find that your mind still wanders from the crystal ball, you can bring the mind back to a standstill by repeating the mantra, "Samma-arahang" silently, as if the sound of the mantra is coming from the center of the crystal ball. Repeat the mantra over and over again without counting.

7. Don't entertain thoughts in your mind. Don't analyze what's going on in the meditation. Allow the mind to come to a standstill. That is all that you need to do. If you find that you cannot imagine anything, repeat the mantra "Samma-arahang", silently and continuously in the mind. If you are not sure about the location of the center of the body, just know that anywhere in the area of your abdomen will do. Don't be disappointed if you find your mind wandering. It is only natural for beginners. Make effort continuously, keep your mind bright, clear and pure, and in the end, you will achieve success.
8. Keep repeating the mantra. Eventually the sound of the mantra will fade away. At that point a new bright, clear, crystal sphere will arise on its own accord. This stage is called "pathama magga" (primary path). At this stage the shining crystal sphere is connected firmly to the mind, and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience a great happiness that you have never known before. With a perfectly still mind focused at the center of the crystal sphere, it will give way to a succession of increasingly purer transcendental inner bodies, until it reaches the "body of enlightenment" known as the "Dhammakaya". This is the highest meditative attainment which enables the practitioner to achieve super knowledge and supreme happiness.



GLOSSARY

Attaining Dhamma: meditative attainment; a state of absorption in meditation where the mind achieves super insight and knowledge; knowing and seeing according to the truths.

Attaining the Dhammakaya: a state of absorption in meditation where the mind achieves super insight and knowledge, having penetrative insight into the reality of life and the world; seeing and becoming one with one's own inner Body of Enlightenment.

Blessings (mangala): prosperity; auspiciousness; good omen; anything that is conducive to success.

Buddha: an 'awaken one' who is fully enlightened and who has realized Nibbana without the benefit of a Buddha's teaching in the lifetime in which he attains it. Those who attained enlightenment by following the Buddha's teachings are called Arahants or Arahats. The name Buddha is a generic term, not a proper name, meaning 'awakened', thus 'enlightened'. Buddhas appear at vast intervals of time. There are countless numbers of past, present and future Buddhas.

Buddhajak Center: former name of the Dhammakaya Temple.

Chand: Khun Yai's first name; a Thai word which means "the moon".

Dhammakaya: Body of Enlightenment; Body of Truth. Dhammakaya meditation is a profound meditation technique taught by Luang Por Wat Paknam. Khun Yai carried on the Dhammakaya meditation tradition and passed it on to her student, Luang Por Dhammajayo, current Abbot of the Dhammakaya Temple.

Dhammakaya Tradition (vijja Dhammakaya): In the Dhammakaya Tradition (also referred to as Dhammakaya Knowledge), it has been established that each individual person possesses 18 bodies. The 18 bodies comprise of the physical body, refined physical body, celestial body, refined celestial body, Rupa Brahma body, refined Rupa Brahma body, Arupa Brahma body, refined Arupa Brahma body, Gotrubhu Dhammakaya, refined Gotrabhu Dhammakaya, Sotapanna Dhammakaya, refined Sotapanna Dhammakaya, Sakadagami Dhammakaya, refined Sakadagami Dhammakaya, Anagami Dhammakaya, refined Anagami Dhammakaya, Arahats Dhammakaya, and refined Arahats Dhammakaya. The Arahats Dhammakaya body is the purest body of enlightenment and is attained when one achieves the highest level of Dhammakaya meditation.

Defilements (kilesa): mental impurities consisting of greed, anger, and delusion; hindrances or poisons that cause beings to perform undesirable deeds.

Devadatta: a cousin and disciple of the Buddha who created a schism in the monastic order. Due to jealousy and thirst for power, he attempted to murder the Buddha. Devadatta became a symbol of a bad monk.

Dhamma (Skt., Dharma): the truth; the natural condition of things or beings; the law of their existence; the ethical code of righteousness; the whole body of religious doctrines as a system; the Teachings of Buddha; the eternal truth that Buddha realized, his verbal expression of that truth, and the phenomena or elements that comprise reality. Note: Khun Yai frequently used the term "Dhamma" to refer to the practice of meditation.

Field of merit: recipient of alms; a virtuous recipient is compared to a fertile field which yields abundant production; monks and virtuous people are examples of good fields of merit.

“Fools” (pala): spiritually defective people. A fool is someone wicked, weak, or feeble in a moral sense. His discretion is faulty, not knowing right from wrong, good from bad. A fool is one who gives bad influence. You can’t tell a fool by his looks. He could be well-educated and be from a good family. You can tell him by his action or behavior. The opposite of a “fool” is a “wise”.

Heaven: celestial realm; in Buddhism there are six levels of heaven which offer a temporary respite from rebirth in the human realm; however only Nibbana offers a permanent state of bliss. Unlike heaven, the human realm is the only place where merit can be acquired and Perfections achieved.

Kamma (Skt, Karma): action or deed of body, speech and mind. Every willed action brings future consequences, including future rebirths; the consequences of past deeds largely determine one’s general life situation. Under the Law of Kamma, by which all creatures must live, a person bears the consequences of his own actions. Bad actions cause bad consequences and good actions bear good consequences.

Kathina: wooden frame which monks in ancient India used to sew their clothes on. The clothes thus prepared came to be known as Kathina clothes or Kathina robes. The event in which the robes are offered to the monks is known as the Kathina Ceremony or Robe Offering Ceremony. To perform the ceremony it is required that at least five monks are present to represent the Sangha, the community of monks, during the Buddhist Lent period. The ceremony can only take place within a month after Buddhist Lent.

Khonnokyoong: Khun Yai’s adopted last name; a Thai word which means “peacock feather”.

Khun Yai: a Thai word that literarily means “grandmother”. It is an affectionate and respectful way of addressing a woman of advancing age in the Thai culture.

Magha Puja: Buddhist religious day in commemoration of the Great Assembly of Disciples. Magha Puja Day, full moon day of the 3rd lunar month (February/March) marks the day 1,250 Arahants from different places came to pay homage to the Lord Buddha, each on his own initiative and without prior notification. The fact that these Arahants were individually ordained by the Lord Buddha himself came to the assembly on their own free will and without notice, and the event took place on the full moon day of Magha, the third lunar month, made this occasion unique and remarkable. This is a big day in Buddhism. Some call it the Dhamma Day.

Mara: evil, both as a concept and as a personification. In Buddhist cosmology, Mara is a supra-natural being responsible for hindering people from performing meritorious deeds. Mara can also mean obstacles for doing good deeds.

Merit: result of good deeds; merit is something that can be accumulated as well as used up. When someone is enjoying his good fortune, he is using up his “old” merit. A wise person should not let his merit run out by acquiring more “new” merit whenever he can.

Merit sphere: each person possesses a sphere of merit within; the more merit accumulated the larger the merit sphere.

Mundane merit: merit gained through performance of good deeds, such as sweeping the temple, helping the poor, making charitable contributions.

Nibbana (Skt, Nirvana): the state of ultimate happiness, the happy condition of enlightenment, the highest spiritual attainment. This is not the sense-based happiness of everyday life; nor is it the concept of happiness as interpreted by Western culture. It is an enduring, transcendental happiness integral to the calmness attained through enlightenment. Once a person has attained Nibbana, he has reached the end of the cycle of rebirths--the final and total release from cyclic existence--never again to be subject to rebirth. Nibbana is a supramundane state that cannot be expressed by words and is beyond space and time. This is the state of perfect enlightenment realized by Buddhas and Arhants. Those who have gained this realization no longer accumulate karmic consequences and will no longer be reborn into samsara, the cycle of existence, when they die.

Perfections (parami): perfected virtues; transcendental virtues. In Buddhism, Perfections are transcendental virtues cultivated as a way of purification, purifying kamma and helping the aspirant to live an unobstructed life, while reaching the goal of enlightenment.

Precepts (sila): moral principles that form the framework of Buddhist ethical conduct and the baseline of one's virtue.

Samma-Arahant (samma arahant): a Pali word which means "the Buddha who has properly attained enlightenment". This mantra is used during meditation to help focus the mind.

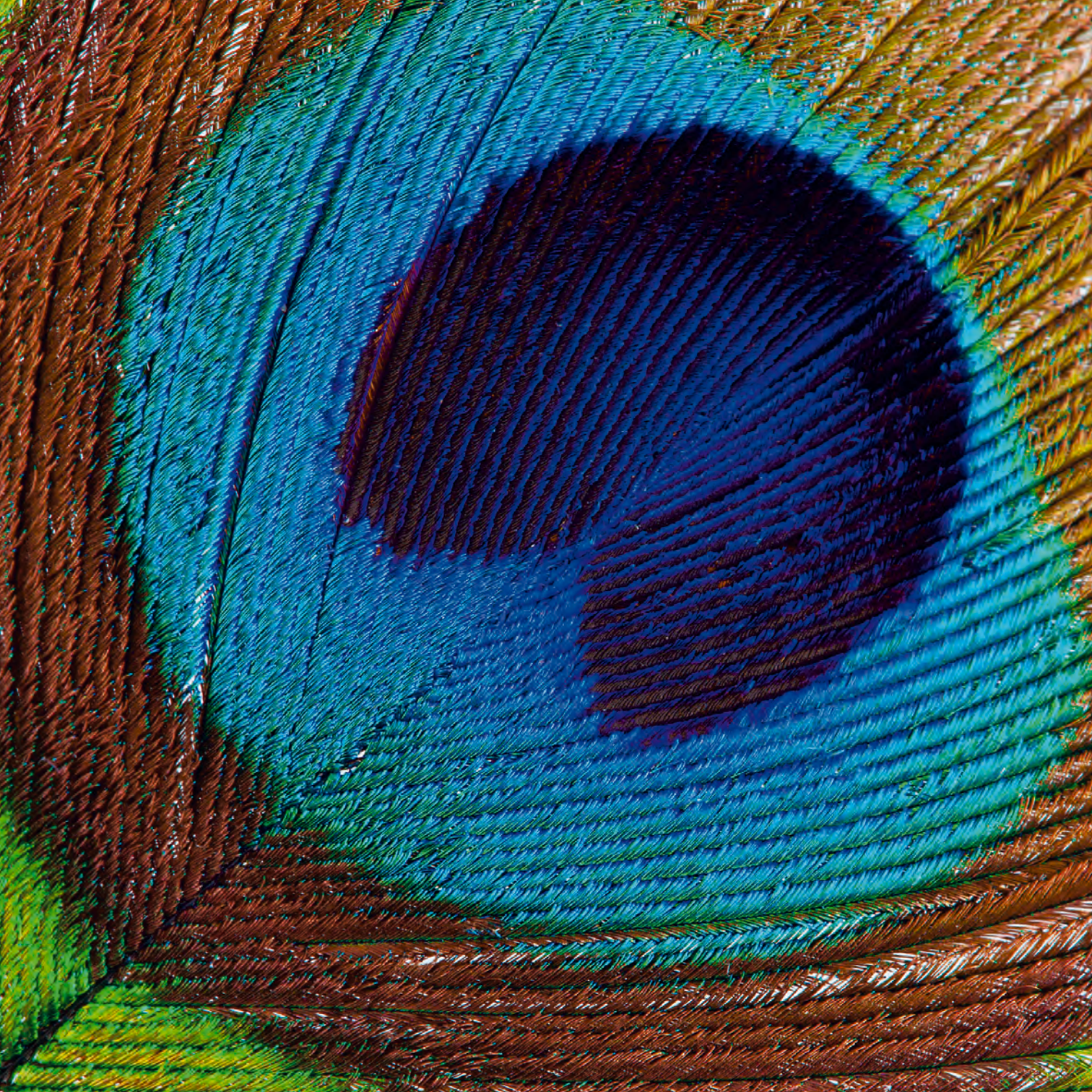
"Stop": stop in this sense means stopping the mind from wandering, or stop doing bad deeds. The key to success in meditation is to stop the mind from wandering.

The Tipitaka (Skt, Tripitaka): Buddhist scripture; Tipitaka means the Three Baskets. They consist of the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Pitaka) – rules and regulations of the Order of monks and nuns; the Basket of Discourses (Sutta Pitaka) -- discourses concerning social, moral, philosophical and spiritual significance; and the Basket of Ultimate Things (Abhidhamma Pitaka) – dealing with psychological and philosophical aspects of the Doctrine, the four ultimate things, i.e., mind (citta), mental properties (cetasika), matter (rupa) and Nirvana.

Transcendental merit: merit acquired through mental cultivation and the practice of meditation.

Wai: gesture of respect to someone more senior or superior, expressed through joining both palms together in a gesture of prayer.

Wat: Thai word for a Buddhist temple.



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