



# Meditation: the Way to Attain Nirvana

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Throughout my life, I have held various strong beliefs. For instance, I believe I am a very fortunate person; I have a family that love and spoil me. I believe in honesty and it plays a very important role in my life. I believe in helping others and that is my purpose for living. Yet, among all of my various beliefs, the one that I am most certain about is that meditation is the way to attain Nirvana. I am not the kind of person to hold strong belief unless there is hard evidence or I have experienced it directly.

Before I became a Buddhist, I had the thought that I would not like to be reborn again, I was tired of being a human being, but I did not know how to avoid rebirth. After I met my Buddhist teacher, who informed me that Chan (meditation) was one of the Buddhist methods that could lead to enlightenment I became a Buddhist and I started practicing meditation. Even before I experienced the benefits of meditation, I believed that meditation could lead to Nirvana. There were so many great Chan masters in the past who proved that meditation could lead to enlightenment. An outstanding example is Bodhidharma, the first Patriarch of the Chan (Zen) School of Buddhism. Of course the most significant and well-known master is Sakyamuni, the Buddha himself. Their accomplishments convinced me to practice vigorously in meditation and to try to reach for enlightenment.

Although I had no doubt that meditation could lead to Nirvana and I practised energetically and whole-heartedly, the course is much harder than I could ever have imagined. When I first started to meditate, I had only one reaction and realization – meditation was so difficult. I had a hard time focusing; the simple method of “counting the breath” was by no means simple. My mind kept wandering away, my body was extremely uncomfortable. I became skeptical about my belief in meditation. I kept on meditating even though I was struggling tremendously. I was tired of reincarnation and meditation was the only way out.

After I had been practicing for a while, I began to experience the benefits and positive aspects of meditation. In good sessions, my mind became very clear, my senses very vivid. Sometimes, time passed very quickly-- a fifty-minute sitting felt like only five minutes. Time and space took on a new meaning, and in time, I came to understand much more.

The inspiration that I derive from practicing motivates me to hold on to my faith. I am still convinced that meditation is the way to Nirvana. I keep on meditating and take every opportunity to participate in Chan retreats. I would like to attain Nirvana as soon as possible.

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## 和上法語：

沒有宗教意志，進入不了心靈工程的浩瀚大海；沒有宗教情操，成就不了生命改造的偉大目標。

## Haiyun HeShang's Dharma Words:

Without religious aspirations, we will not be able to undertake the noble spiritual task that lies before us; without a religious commitment, we will never manage to accomplish the transformation of our lives that we are aiming at.

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