



Spiritual Care: A Buddhist Perspective

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FOUR BODHISATTVA VOWS

四弘請願

衆生無邊誓願度
煩惱無盡誓願斷
法門無量誓願學
佛道無上誓願成

Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to save them
Desires are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them
The Dharmas are boundless; I vow to master them
The Buddha way is unsurpassable; I vow to attain it

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Motivation: Why Did I Become a Chaplain?

Personal Background

- Japanese
- Engineer: 37 years **HITACHI**
- Buddhist Culture of Japan
 - People's lives
 - Syncretism with *Shinto*
 - Funeral Buddhism
 - Meditation?



Note: all pictures are from Internet



Yakushiji (藥師寺)



Ryōanji (龍安寺)



Asura (阿修羅)



Yakushi Nyorai (藥師如来)

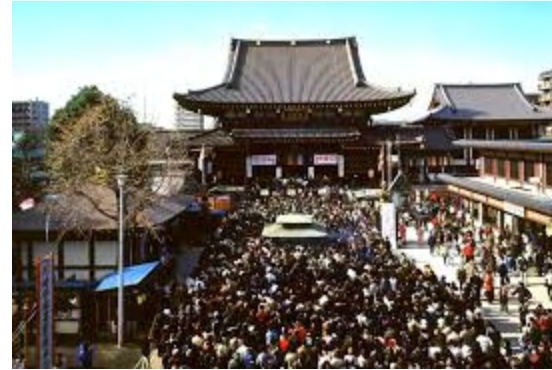


Daibutsu (大仏)

Note: all pictures are from Internet



Joyano Kane (除夜の鐘)
New Year's Eve



Hatsumode (初詣)
New Year's Day



Hakamairi (墓参り)
Visiting Semetry

Note: all pictures are from Internet

Encounter with Buddhism

- “*Story of Heike Clan*”: 13th century classic
- Studied Buddhism
- Epiphany:
 - “*One is All, All is One*”
(*Avataṃsaka Sūtra*)
- Core of Buddhist teaching
 - Wisdom
 - and
 - Loving-kindness/Compassion
- Chaplain as a second career
- Ordained as a *Tendai* priest

Tendai Buddhist School (天台宗)

- Saichō (最澄) in 806
- Center of Buddhist study and training
- Birthplace: Pure Land, Nichiren, Zen



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Core Teachings of the Buddhā: Buddhism

The Buddhā

The Buddhā: Awakened one

Siddhārtha Gautama
(4-5C BCE*)

*BCE: Before Common Era

Lumbini, Nepal

Stood up after enlightenment



Note: all pictures are from Internet

First Teaching of the Buddhā (Turning of the Wheel)

1. Four Noble Truths

- suffering
- cause of suffering
- cessation of suffering: *Nirvāna*
- eightfold path to liberation:

2. Dependent Arising

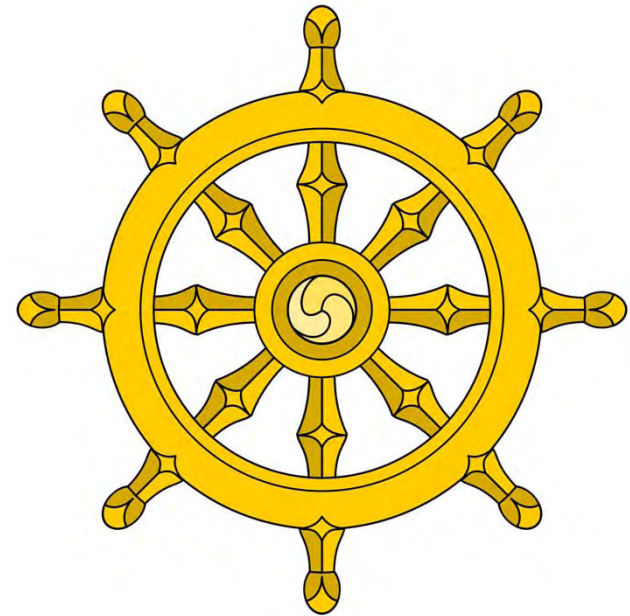
➡ no self, impermanence

3. Middle Way

not too tight, not too loose

Eightfold Noble Path

- Right View
- Right Intention
- Right Speech
- Right Conduct
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration



Quality of Buddha's Enlightenment

Wisdom: see things as they are

➡ Liberation of self

Loving-kindness (wishing others happy) and
Compassion (wishing others free from suffering)



➡ Liberation of others

These are inseparable



Mahāyāna: Bodhisattva Vehicle

Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle)

- 1 Century BCE
- Emptiness (*Śūnyatā*)
no independent, permanent self nature

dependent arising

- Interconnectedness
- Wisdom (*Prajñā*)

Non-Duality of Self and Others

Avataṃsaka Sūtra (Flower Ornament Scripture)

“All is One”

“One is All”

Indra's Net → *Interbe*

“I inter am, we inter are” Thich Nhat Hanh

Non-Duality of Self and Others (cont.)

Buddhā Nature

- The true nature of mind
the Buddha's wisdom
and loving-kindness/compassion
- A child of Buddha
potential to become a buddhā

Bodhisattva: Enlightenment Seeker

- Bodhisattva: ideal Mahāyāna practitioner

intentionally postpones one's own liberation
until all the others are freed from their sufferings



Non-separation of

- wisdom (liberation of self)

and

- loving-kindness/compassion
(liberation of others)



Buddhist Teachings that Support Spiritual Care

The Buddhā

- Stood up after enlightenment
for suffering others
- Non-separation of
 - wisdom
 - and
 - loving-kindness/compassion

Six Perfections (*Pāramitās*)

- Bodhisattva's practice
 1. Generosity (*Dāna*)
 2. Morality (*Sīla*)
 3. Perseverance (*Kṣānti*)
 4. Diligence (*Virya*)
 5. Meditation (*Dhyāna*)
 6. Wisdom (*Prajñā*)

Act of Generosity (*Dāna*)

- Three kinds of generosity/offerings:
material, religious, no-fear

➡ chaplaincy = gift of no-fear

- Three purities of generosity/offerings:
gift, giver, recipient (non-attachment)

➡ non-judgmental, non-anxious presence

Role Models of Chaplains

- Vimalakīrti:
“The bodhisattva is sick because other living beings are sick.”
- Śāntideva :
“Let me give myself away and cherish others as I love myself.”
- Saichō :
“忘己利他 (forget self and benefit others)”
“照于一隅 (light your corner of the world)”

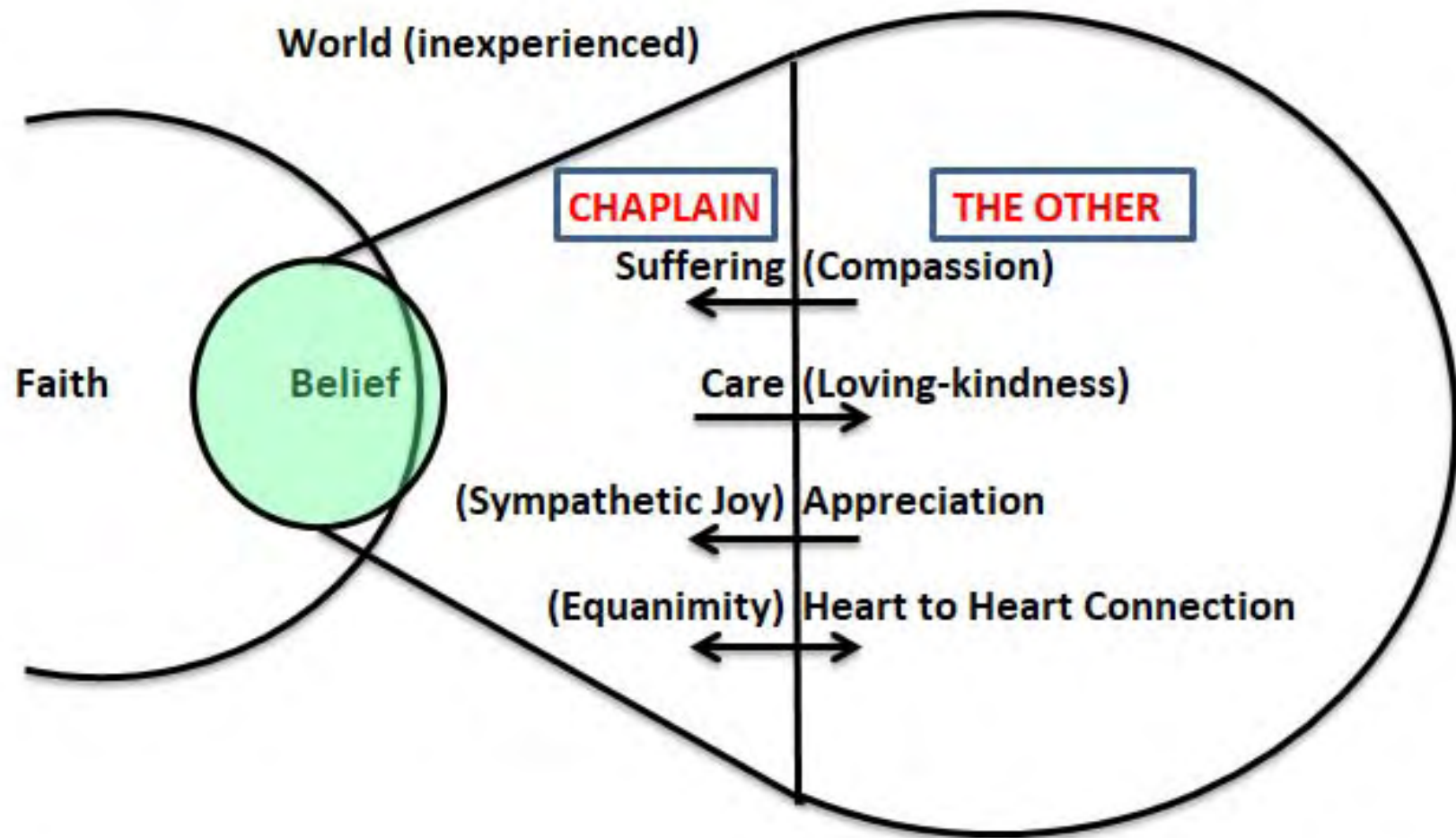


Chaplaincy as a Buddhist Path

What is Spiritual Care?

- Spirituality
Relationship with something big
- Spiritual Care
 - Be present
 - Create safe space
 - Listen and acknowledge
 - Support to find an answer
- Internal transformation (awakening) for the caregiver

Model of Spiritual Care



Basic Attitude of a Chaplain

- Here, now
 - Non-anxious, non-judgmental presence
- Be > do
- Do not fix it (no goal)
 - Support > help, heal, comfort
 - Receive > give
 - Listen > talk
- Sit at a lower level
- Willingness to learn

A Hard Question

“Why me?”

- Chaplain
mindful of
 - patient's agony
 - vulnerability of self
- Wish
parable of a drowning sailor (trust)

Witnessing Dying Patient

- Keep standing
- Pay attention (= *being Mindful*)
- Receive suffering
- Send loving-kindness and compassion
- Chant prayer

Until after the patient passes

Firm non-anxious presence

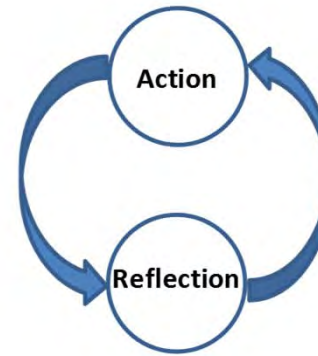
➡ Atmosphere of love and peace

Meditation on the Spot

- Mindfulness
nonjudgmental awareness
- *Four Immeasurables*
 - Loving-kindness
 - Compassion
 - Sympathetic Joy
 - Equanimity
- Loving-kindness prayer
“*May I be.. May you be.. May everyone be....*”
- *Tonglen*
giving and receiving

Three Wisdoms (*Prajñās*)

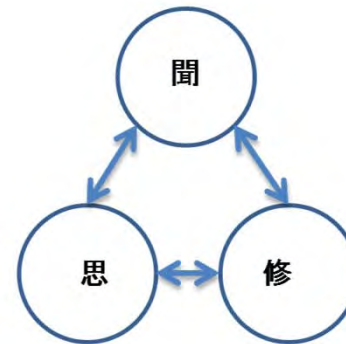
- Listen
- Contemplate
- Practice



Action-Reflection-Action

for

- Buddhist faith
- Chaplaincy



聞思修

Listen, Contemplate, Practice

ご縁 (*Go-en*): Auspicious Encounters

- Buddhism
- *One is All, All is One*
- Tendai school
- CPE, chaplaincy
- Patients, teachers, cohorts, etc.
 - “Strong Back, Soft Front”
(Rev. Joan Halifax)
 - “There is neither a novice chaplain, nor a veteran chaplain”
(Rev. JP Sabbitti, Supervisor in HI)
 - “Buddhism is for chaplains.”
(Rev. Koshin Paley)

Conclusion

- Chaplaincy is the Buddhist path for me
- Buddhist teachings guide me in chaplaincy
- Chaplaincy deepens my faith