

Precious Bowl and Precious Vase Connectivity

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Good evening everyone! This is today's Dharma Espresso on Precious Bowl and Precious Vase Connectivity.

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I finished the talk about Hand Letting Go and Hand Comforting, when someone kept asking me: "Could you please summarize about the Precious Bowl and Precious Vase connectivity? How do I cultivate the Precious Vase since you have not taught it yet?"

My answer was: "Please be patient, I will teach you some day. However, please keep this in mind".

Our method of cultivation utilizes the superpowers of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; we are not cultivating alone; instead, we cultivate with the assembly of Avamtasaka, the assembly of Kwan Yin, and countless Bodhisattvas. Hence, whenever you feel sad and lonely, just close your eyes and visualize you are surrounded by countless Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Sometimes I do the same when I feel lonely, abandoned, lacking love, understanding, and companionship. Such visualization is crucial.

However, mere visualization is not good enough. All Bodhisattvas have superpowers after they get enlightened. They then zip their supreme powers or wisdom into images of the siddhams, called Mandala Dharma. When their omnipotent powers are zipped inside a precious object that we cultivate, it is called Karma Mandala.

What do we cultivate? We cultivate both the Mandala Dharma (or siddhams) and the Karma Mandala (or precious objects that contain the superpowers of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas). Why I wrap your precious object with the incense smoke while chanting the mantra is to get the transmission from the Buddhas and Kwan Yin Bodhisattva and make it become your own. Therefore, it is crucial that your objects get the incense smoke and the transmission.

The Precious Bowl is a wonderful practice because it sucks into it all our habitual energy or habits. Habits are routines of behavior that we repeat regularly without thinking of them. Since they become automatic, they stay below our conscious level and go unnoticed. They are greed, anger, ignorance, expectations, desires, etc. that lie in the subconscious and are irrational. They don't go on the so-called high road. They follow the low road, the road of irrationality that leads to unexpected insanity.

Everybody experiences this irrational road. I usually call it "the serpent in the cave" that is always present and never listens to us (since it is irrational).

Cultivating the Precious Bowl transforms the energy in the subconscious. After practicing it for a while, you will be surprised to see that your bad habits automatically disappear and good habits are formed. Your heart will feel more compassionate, your words become kinder and gentler, your brain gets clearer, and you are more focused and transcendent. You are sure to get those experiences if you cultivate the Precious Bowl. It will transform your bad habits.

You may think I am superstitious. No, I am not. Superstition happens only when you believe in anything that satisfies your ego. Superstition means you believe in an Almighty God who will solve all your problems and you don't have to do anything. Superstitious people always hope to get something for themselves.

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We are dealing with awakening, not superstition. The goal of our cultivation is to transform bad habits. It is awakening because we not only dedicate time, energy, and effort to cultivate but we also experience the changes in our thinking and our views. Our mind becomes more and more open. In general, superstition means believing in the irrational (not rational) which certainly has nothing to do with transrational thinking. To believe in the transrational reality is to believe in compassion, forgiveness, and the ability to transform ourselves. Superstition is to believe in anything that relates to desire satisfaction. One example of superstition is to gain one or two million dollars if we chant a certain mantra.

With awakening, the more we cultivate, the less we have bad habits and craziness. Hence, when we cultivate the Precious Bowl, we transform our bad habits.

How about the Precious Vase?

Precious Vase is a deeper practice. It helps remove all the seeds that create bad habits. When a seed is planted, it needs water and nutrients from the soil but cannot tolerate the light. It will perish if there is any light. Being covered under the soil, it will germinate and from the sprout, a tree will slowly develop. This is a special process. The seeds are covered in our subconscious and the growth from those seeds are called habits. The Precious Vase destroys the bad seeds, while the Precious Bowl sucks in the bad habits grown from those seeds and slowly transforms them into good habits. But where do the good habits come from? They grow from good seeds. That is why we cultivate the Precious Vase. While cultivating the Precious Vase we plant good seeds. How do we plant good seeds? And how do we get good seeds? A string of beads called Precious Beads and the siddhams represent good seeds. The string of Precious Beads is similar to the one we use to count the prayers.

Hence, right after the Six Hands practice, which requires focusing on the hand, visualizing a specific siddham, and chanting the mantra, we need to cultivate the Precious Bowl to start transforming our old habits.

If you do not have a Precious Bowl, please get one now to practice. Do not wait until you finish the Six Hands practice. Transforming old habits is crucial. While practicing, you'll notice that with anything we do, we need to put a lot of effort and cannot be lazy if we want to be successful.

So, here is my answer for now:

- The Precious Bowl transforms all the bad habits (habitual energy)
- The Precious Vase transforms all the seeds that develop those habits.

Thank you for listening. Have a peaceful night.

Dharma Master Heng Chang

(Translated and transcribed by Compassionate Service Society)