目 录 / Table of Contents

修法的过程和体会 *The Process and Experiences of Practice*

传法过程中的一些感想 *Reflections on the Process of Transmitting the Dharma*

谈谈心中心法，入手处和禅宗等法门比较起来，有什么不同的特色么？ *What Distinguishes the Heart-of-Heart Dharma's Entry Point from Chan and Other Dharma Gates?*

爆炸，一念断处了了灵知是否是佛性 *Explosion: Is the Clear, Numinous Knowing at the Point Where Thought Ceases Buddha-Nature?*

请问您认为学佛的关键是什么？ *What Do You Consider the Key to Buddhist Practice?*

修法的过程和体会

The Process and Experiences of Practice

问：为了纪念元音老人，更好地弘扬佛法，广东博罗元音古寺发起制作光碟。您是元音老人指定的传法老师，我们想请您谈谈亲近老人的因缘，还有您修法的过程和体会，以及传法的一些感想。	Question: To commemorate Master Yuanyin and better propagate the Buddhadharma, Yuanyin Ancient Temple in Boluo, Guangdong, has initiated the production of this video disc. You are a Dharma teacher designated by Master Yuanyin to transmit the Dharma. We would like to ask you to speak about the causes and conditions through which you came to study with the Master, the course of your practice and the insights you gained, and some of your reflections on transmitting the Dharma.
答：这是三个问题。一个是得法因缘，一个是修行感受，还有一个是传法情况。这三个问题都是关于我的，我觉得在《元音老人与心中心法》光碟里应该突出老人和心中心法。我就简单回答两句吧：	Answer: These are three questions: the causes and conditions through which I received the Dharma, my experience of practice, and the circumstances of transmitting the Dharma. All three concern me personally, but I think that this video disc, Master Yuanyin and the Heart-of-Heart Dharma, should emphasize the Master and the Heart-of-Heart Dharma. So I will simply answer in a few words:
一句是关于老人的：“我并非没有跟别的善知识学过法，我的参学经历证明，师尊元音老人是诸善知识中难得一遇的大善知识。今生能值遇元音老人，我深信，这应该是不于一佛二佛三四五佛而种善根，应是已于无量千万佛所种诸善根。”	One concerns the Master: “It is not that I have not studied the Dharma with other spiritual friends. My experience of seeking instruction has shown me that my venerable teacher, Master Yuanyin, is a great spiritual friend of a kind rarely encountered. To encounter Master Yuanyin in this lifetime, I firmly believe, means that I must have planted wholesome roots not merely in the presence of one, two, three, four, or five Buddhas, but in the presence of immeasurable millions of Buddhas.”
还有一句是关于法门的：“我并非没学过别的法门，我的修行经历证明，心中心法那作用于心的力度，心中心法那潜移默化、密密转移、不知不觉人格变了，这些方面的效果，实在是其它法门所不能及的。	The other concerns the dharma gate: “It is not that I have not studied other dharma gates. My experience of practice has shown me how powerfully the Heart-of-Heart Dharma works on the mind. Its subtle, gradual, continuous influence changes one’s character without one’s even noticing. In these respects, its effects truly cannot be matched by other dharma gates.
这是实际情况，就说这么多。这是我个人的感受，当然可能有人不同意我的说法，各人有各人的因缘嘛。然	“That is the actual situation; I will say no more. This is my personal experience. Of course, some may disagree with what I say; each person has their own

而，由于我与心中心法对机，我自己的感受就是这样的。”	causes and conditions. Yet because the Heart-of-Heart Dharma is suited to my capacity, this is how I myself experience it.”
这因缘，是生生世世学法的延续。就像你吧，你信佛，假如前生你没学过佛，今生你学佛可能性是不大的。这也是一种延续。愿力是通未来际的，这本是菩萨戒里的话，菩萨戒总是说“尽未来际受持”。生生世世修行，是释迦牟尼佛佛法的特点，咱们的学法因缘就是今生与心中心法有缘。	These causes and conditions are a continuation of learning the Dharma life after life. Take you, for example: you have faith in Buddhism. If you had not studied Buddhism in a previous life, it would be unlikely that you would study Buddhism in this life. This too is a continuation. The power of vows extends throughout the future; this is originally a phrase from the bodhisattva precepts, which always speak of “upholding them throughout all future time.” Practicing life after life is a feature of the Buddhadharma of Śākyamuni Buddha. The causes and conditions for our learning the Dharma are that, in this life, we have an affinity with the Heart-of-Heart Dharma.
其实，并不是单单局限于与某一法门有缘，而是与佛法有缘。你今生来，要用到什么法门断烦恼，就和这个法门有缘了。比方说，现在很多人断烦恼要用到心中心法，这样的人多了，看起来就是心密弘扬了。	In fact, it is not simply a matter of being limited to an affinity with one particular dharma gate; rather, it is an affinity with the Buddhadharma. In this life, whichever dharma gate you need to use to cut off afflictions is the dharma gate with which you have an affinity. For example, many people now need to use the Heart-of-Heart Dharma to cut off afflictions. When there are many such people, it appears that heart esotericism is being propagated.
这就是你第三个问题：弘扬下去。假如说当度者已度，断烦恼问题解决了，心密的弘不弘扬还重要吗？还是个重要问题吗？佛法的重心并不是世间法。	This brings us to your third question: carrying on its propagation. Suppose those who should be liberated have already been liberated, and the problem of cutting off afflictions has been resolved. Would it still matter whether heart esotericism were propagated? Would that still be an important question? The focus of the Buddhadharma is not worldly dharmas.
世间法，比如你要搞一个事业，我就要宣传我的事业，我的事业才能兴旺发达。如果把心密弘扬当成这个，乃至于把别的法门、乃至于把佛法当成这个，那不是佛的意思啊！佛是随众生心应所知量，随众生解脱缘熟，佛就出世。众生解脱缘不具备时，即使佛出世你也不会跟他学啊。	Worldly dharmas are like this: if you want to establish an enterprise, you must promote your enterprise so that it can flourish and prosper. If one treats propagating heart esotericism in this way—or even treats other dharma gates, or the Buddhadharma itself, in this way—that is not the Buddha’s intention. The Buddha responds to sentient beings’ minds according to their capacities for understanding; when sentient beings’

	conditions for liberation are mature, the Buddha appears in the world. When sentient beings lack the conditions for liberation, even if the Buddha appears in the world, you will not study with him.

传法过程中的一些感想

Reflections on the Process of Transmitting the Dharma

问：您是老人指定的传法老师， 还是请您说说您在传法过程中的一些感想。	Question: You are a Dharma teacher appointed by the Elder to transmit the teaching. Would you please share some of your reflections on the process of transmitting the Dharma?
答：说到传法，可以打个比方，佛法中有个词叫“法食”，把修行方法比成食物，贪嗔痴慢疑就是饿了，你吃了食物就不饿了，这是打比方说的。	Answer: Speaking of transmitting the Dharma, let me use an analogy. In Buddhism there is a term, “Dharma food.” It compares methods of practice to food, and greed, anger, ignorance, pride, and doubt to hunger. Once you eat food, you are no longer hungry. This is only an analogy.
那我就用这个比方说心中心法，把心中心法比成食物，他只要知道饿，只要他肯活着、不想让饿死的话，我一定给他吃，绝不吝啬、绝不懒惰！这是半句，还有半句：如果他不知道饿，提也提不醒，那我拿他也没办法。这，起个假名吧，是名弘法。	So let me use this analogy for the Heart-of-Heart Dharma. If we compare the Heart-of-Heart Dharma to food, then as long as someone knows they are hungry, and as long as they are willing to live and do not wish to starve to death, I will certainly give them food. I will never be miserly or lazy. That is only half of it. The other half is this: if they do not know they are hungry and no amount of prompting makes them realize it, then there is nothing I can do for them. Let us provisionally call this spreading the Dharma.
这里有两个偏颇，一头是懒虫、自了汉；另一头，把佛法当成世间事业。这个不体现在外相上，我说的都是内心，内心不作自了汉、内心不把佛法当世间事业，不在外相。外相就是住山也可以，搞得轰轰烈烈跟住山一样，更行。	There are two extremes here. At one end are lazy people and those concerned only with their own liberation; at the other, those who treat the Buddhadharma as a worldly undertaking. This does not concern outward appearances. I am speaking entirely of the mind: inwardly, do not become one who seeks only personal liberation, and inwardly, do not regard the Buddhadharma as a worldly undertaking. It is not a matter of outward appearance. Outwardly, one may live in the mountains. Better still, one may be fully engaged in vigorous activities while remaining inwardly as untroubled as if living in the mountains.

当然，轰轰烈烈，相上是有的，如果没有，就没处下手。但心里不能有。百丈禅师曾说，“幸为福田衣下僧，乾坤赢得一闲人。有缘即住无缘去，一任清风送白云”。他可是著名的大忙人呀，一日不作，一日不食。	Of course, vigorous activity does have an outward form. Without such form, there is nowhere to begin. But inwardly, you must not hold on to it. Chan Master Baizhang once said: “How fortunate to be a monk in the robe that is a field of blessings! Heaven and earth have gained one person at leisure. Where there are conditions, I remain; where there are no conditions, I depart, leaving it to the clear breeze to send off the white clouds.” Yet he was famously busy: “A day without work is a day without food.”
可他说他是个闲人！这是心里没东西，不把弘法当成世间事业。外相虽然很热闹，用教下的话说，就是法缘很殊胜，这都好，但你心里可不能跟它跑。	Yet he said that he was a person of leisure! This means that his mind clings to nothing; he did not treat spreading the Dharma as a worldly undertaking. Though outwardly things may be very lively—using the language of the doctrinal schools, one might say that the Dharma affinities are especially favorable—that is all well and good. But in your mind, you must not be carried along by it.
比如读一本经，六祖大师说：别让经读了你，是你读经，你转经，你可别被经所转。要“终日吃饭没咬着一粒米，终日穿衣没挂着一丝纱”才行。假如你心里一粘着，甭说干，就是你不干，也是妄想执着。	For example, when reading a sūtra, the Sixth Patriarch said: Do not let the sūtra read you. You read the sūtra; you turn the sūtra. Do not be turned by the sūtra. One must “eat all day without biting a single grain of rice, and wear clothes all day without a single thread catching on one’s body.” If your mind clings to anything, then—even if you do not act—you still have deluded thoughts and attachments.
因为你梗在心里化不掉，所以干与不干，都是妄想执着。用禅宗的一个词说：哟，闲家具！他说那妄想执着是闲家具。不在干与不干，有执着不一定非得干了才是执着，不干也会有执着呀。	Because it is lodged in your mind and cannot be dissolved, whether you act or do not act, it is all deluded thought and attachment. To use a term from the Chan school: ah, idle trappings! He called those deluded thoughts and attachments idle trappings. It is not a matter of acting or not acting. Attachment does not arise only when one acts; one may have attachment even without acting.
佛法是真正作用于心的。说到这儿就岔到另一个话题：南泉斩猫。你学不得那个斩，你能学南泉的心态。修行是修心，心外无法，心外要是有法那是外道见解。都知道心外无法，遇事就心外取法。	The Buddhadharma truly works upon the mind. This leads us to another topic: Nanquan killing the cat. You must not imitate the killing; what you can learn is Nanquan’s state of mind. Practice is the cultivation of mind. Outside the mind there is no dharma; to posit a dharma outside the mind is a heterodox view. Everyone knows that there is no

	dharma outside the mind, yet when something happens, they seek dharma outside the mind.
南泉禅师没有杀心，说南泉禅师斩猫不如说度猫来得准确。南泉斩猫，猫得解脱；你要斩猫，跟猫结仇，你不能学他斩，应该学他毫无挂碍的心态。另一个例子：归宗斩蛇。	Chan Master Nanquan had no mind of killing. It would be more accurate to say that Nanquan liberated the cat than that he killed it. When Nanquan killed the cat, the cat attained liberation. If you kill a cat, you form an enmity with it. You cannot imitate his killing; you should learn from his state of mind, utterly free of hindrance. Another example is Guizong killing a snake.
归宗说：“哎，这一个你且置——你别学我斩蛇，你且置，我问你，在什么地方看见我斩蛇？”——这个问题最重要了，问题在这！其实，南泉不曾斩猫。	Guizong said: “Ah, set this matter aside for the moment—do not imitate me in killing the snake. Set it aside for the moment. I ask you: where did you see me kill the snake?” This question is the most important one. This is where the issue lies! Ultimately, Nanquan did not kill a cat.
真有猫吗？凡所有相都是虚妄，那猫相不虚妄么？你不到那个境界你就执着它了。这一执着，另一个虚妄就来了，就是你受报、以后被这个猫斩。	Was there really a cat? All appearances are illusory; is the appearance of a cat not illusory as well? If you have not reached that state, you become attached to it. Once you become attached, another illusion arises: you undergo karmic retribution and are later killed by that cat.
这也是虚妄，虽然都是虚妄，但因果是铁的，这两虚妄必然联系在一块儿，把虚妄比梦，世间因果是梦里铁的定律。梦醒了，这些虚妄还有没有？说“有”是戏论，说“没有”也是戏论。	This too is illusory. Although all is illusory, cause and effect are ironclad. These two illusions are necessarily linked together. If we compare illusion to a dream, worldly cause and effect is an ironclad law within the dream. Once you awaken from the dream, do these illusions still exist? To say “they exist” is conceptual elaboration; to say “they do not exist” is also conceptual elaboration.
你还不能说没有，为什么呢，你醒了，你能说没有做过那个梦吗？你下结论说“没有”就不对了，因为清清楚楚记得梦境，它怎么会是没有呢？它“有”吗？说有也不对，那毕竟是梦啊！所以说，说有说无都是戏论。到这儿，才是真实的梦醒，这才是真实的，不是学点理论，耍耍嘴皮子就完了的。	You still cannot say that they do not exist. Why? Having awakened, can you say that you never had that dream? If you conclude that there was “nothing,” you are wrong, because you remember the dreamscape with perfect clarity. How could it be nothing? Does it exist? To say that it does is also wrong, for it was, after all, a dream! Thus, to speak of existence or nonexistence is conceptual elaboration. Only here is there a genuine awakening from the dream; only this is real. It is not a matter of merely learning a little theory and playing with words.

说到弘法，应该是这样的：一是不攀缘，还有第二句，不拒绝任何人求法，就两句，是名弘法。	As for spreading the Dharma, it should be like this: first, do not chase after opportunities to spread the Dharma; second, do not refuse anyone who seeks the Dharma. These two statements sum up what may provisionally be called spreading the Dharma.

谈谈心中心法，入手处和禅宗等法门比较起来，有什么不同的特色么？

What Distinguishes the Heart-of-Heart Dharma's Entry Point from Chan and Other Dharma Gates?

问：元音老人曾说心中心法是“以禅为体，以密为用，以净土为归”。您能谈谈心中心法，入手处和禅宗等法门比较起来，有什么不同的特色么？	Question: Master Yuanyin once said that the Heart-of-Heart Dharma “takes Chan as its essence, Esoteric Buddhism as its function, and the Pure Land as its ultimate destination.” Could you discuss the distinctive features of the Heart-of-Heart Dharma's point of entry, in comparison with such dharma gates as the Chan school?
答：明显不同。禅宗的修行方法是参话头。心中心法并不参话头，正行是观照，助行是六印一咒打坐。就是观照，也不等于参话头。因为参话头是提起，观照是放下，刚好不是提起，是放下，放下你当前的妄念，不理它了。这是方便，下手方便不同，都是不让妄念主宰你，都是要不跟妄念跑。	Answer: The difference is obvious. The Chan school's method of practice is to investigate a huatou. The Heart-of-Heart Dharma does not investigate a huatou. Its primary practice is contemplation, and its auxiliary practice is seated meditation with the six mudrās and one mantra. Contemplation is not the same as investigating a huatou. Investigating a huatou means taking something up, whereas contemplation means letting go. It is precisely not taking something up, but letting go—letting go of your present deluded thoughts and no longer attending to them. This is an expedient means. The methods of entry differ, but both prevent deluded thoughts from ruling you, and both require that you not follow deluded thoughts.
“不跟妄念跑”不仅是禅宗，也不仅是现在，古人、古禅师和教下的大祖师都这么讲。圭峰宗密禅师就是一例，他不仅是禅宗祖师，还是教下华严宗祖师。他就说，“妄念若起，都不随之。即临命终时，自然业不能系。	“Not following deluded thoughts” is not exclusive to the Chan school, nor is it only a teaching of the present day. The ancients, ancient Chan masters, and great patriarchs of the doctrinal schools all taught this way. Chan Master Guifeng Zongmi is one example. He was not only a patriarch of the Chan school, but also a patriarch of the Huayan

	school among the doctrinal schools. He said, “If deluded thoughts arise, do not follow them. Then, when the time of death comes, karma will naturally be unable to bind you.”
”，这就是老人所说的不跟妄念跑啊。并且他说的跟老人用词也一样：老人说“一念不生、了了分明的灵知之性”，圭峰宗密禅师说：“以空寂为自体，勿认色身；以灵知为自心，勿认妄念。”。	This is exactly what the Elder meant by not following deluded thoughts. Moreover, his wording is the same as the Elder’s: the Elder spoke of “the nature of numinous knowing in which not a single thought arises, yet there is clear and distinct awareness,” while Chan Master Guifeng Zongmi said: “Take empty quiescence as your own essence; do not mistake the physical body for yourself. Take numinous knowing as your own mind; do not mistake deluded thoughts for it.”
要能做到不跟妄念跑，按圭峰宗密禅师说，是这么一个结论，若到这个程度，就“自然业不能系”了。——业力束缚不住他了，跳出轮回了，那就是成道了，就是解脱了。还被业力所系，那是轮回。	According to Chan Master Guifeng Zongmi, if one can refrain from following deluded thoughts to this degree, “karma will naturally be unable to bind one.” That is, karmic force can no longer bind that person; one has escaped saṃsāra. That is realizing the Way; that is liberation. To remain bound by karmic force is saṃsāra.
圭峰禅师接着说：“虽有中阴，所向自由，天上人间随意寄托。”虽然还没了生死，但是已经解脱了，业力拿他没办法，他不在轮回里。这是下手方便，心中心下手方便虽然有不同，但就下手方便不同，其它的都跟禅宗是相同的。	Chan Master Guifeng then continued: “Though there is an intermediate state, one is free to go wherever one wishes, taking one’s abode at will in heaven or among humans.” Although one has not yet transcended birth and death, one is already liberated. Karma can do nothing to such a person, who is no longer within saṃsāra. This is the expedient method of entry. Although the Heart-of-Heart Dharma differs in its expedient method of entry, that is the only difference; in all other respects it is the same as the Chan school.
“以禅为体”是相同处，“以密为用”是不同处，“以净土为归”具有了普遍性。如果没有“以净土为归”这样一句话呀，心密的门槛太高，不便于接纳大众。有“以净土为归”，心密门槛不高了，这才便于面向大众，上中下三根都可以来学心密了。	“Taking Chan as its essence” is the point of sameness. “Taking Esoteric Buddhism as its function” is the point of difference. “Taking the Pure Land as its ultimate destination” gives it universal scope. Without the phrase “taking the Pure Land as its ultimate destination,” heart esotericism would set too high a threshold and would not readily accommodate the general public. With “taking the Pure Land as its ultimate destination,” the threshold of heart esotericism is no longer high. It can then address the general public, and

	practitioners of all three capacities—superior, middling, and lesser—can study heart esotericism.
心密不有三句话吗：以般若为宗，以总持为法，以净土为归。	Does not heart esotericism have these three statements? It takes prajñā as its principle, dhāraṇī as its method, and the Pure Land as its ultimate destination.
第一句，以般若为宗。	The first statement: prajñā as its principle.
这就是你刚才提的那个问题：以禅为体，要从这个角度看，六印一咒不修也能打开本来。以般若为宗，闻法即悟，这是最上根的人，这种人确实是很少，我没见过。	This relates to the question you just raised. If Chan is taken as the essence, then from this perspective one can open up one's original nature without even practicing the six mudrās and one mantra. Taking prajñā as its principle means awakening upon hearing the Dharma. This is for those of the very highest capacity. Such people are indeed very rare; I have never seen one.
我当年问老人“有没有见过这么利索的人？”老人说：“你见过没？”我说：“法都不用修，‘理属顿悟，乘悟并销’，乘着打开那一刹那，无量劫来的妄想执着习气都消尽了？我没见过这样的人”。老人说：“你没见过啊？我也没见过！”——这样的人太少了。	I once asked the Elder, “Have you ever seen anyone who awakens so directly?” The Elder said, “Have you?” I said, “Without needing to practice any Dharma at all—‘principle is realized through sudden awakening; with that awakening, delusions are all dissolved’—at the very instant of opening up, could all the deluded thoughts, attachments, and habitual tendencies accumulated over immeasurable kalpas be exhausted? I have never seen such a person.” The Elder said, “You have not seen one? Neither have I!” Such people are exceedingly rare.
第二句，以总持为法。	The second statement: dhāraṇī as its method.
有第一句的宗旨在，然后用总持这种方法接引。总持意为：总一切法，持无量义。持咒修密的方法是总持法，以此为法，而不是参话头，这就跟禅宗不一样了。这是入手不同，刚才说和禅宗同与不同时都讲了。	With the guiding principle of the first statement in place, one then uses the method of dhāraṇī to guide people. Dhāraṇī means encompassing all dharmas and retaining immeasurable meanings. The method of mantra recitation and Esoteric Buddhist practice is a dhāraṇī method. It takes this as its method, rather than investigating a huatou; herein it differs from the Chan school. This is a difference in the point of entry. What is the same as and different from the Chan school has just been explained.
第三句，以净土为归。这里有三种：	The third statement: the Pure Land as its ultimate destination. Here there are three kinds:

1、以般若为宗不是以净土为归吗？这么利索的人也是以净土为归——常寂光净土。有人说我不生净土了，这话有毛病，从这头落到那一头了。谁说那是不生净土？那才是真生净土! 常寂光净土没有来去，没有生灭。	1. Does the approach that takes prajñā as its principle not also take the Pure Land as its ultimate destination? Those who awaken so directly likewise take the Pure Land as their ultimate destination—the Land of Eternal Quiescent Light. Some say, “I will not be reborn in the Pure Land.” There is a problem with this statement: they have fallen from one extreme into the other. Who says that this is not rebirth in the Pure Land? This is true rebirth in the Pure Land! The Land of Eternal Quiescent Light has neither coming nor going, neither arising nor ceasing.
没有在这儿灭在那生，没有这些相。他真一生就是上品啊！常寂光就是无量光、无量寿，就是阿弥陀佛的法身，亲见阿弥陀佛的法身，怎么没有生净土呢！	There is no ceasing here and being born there; it has none of these appearances. Such rebirth is indeed of the highest grade! Eternal Quiescent Light is immeasurable light and immeasurable life; it is the dharmakāya of Amitābha Buddha. If one directly sees Amitābha Buddha’s dharmakāya, how could that not be rebirth in the Pure Land?
2、以总持为法也包括往生净土。念佛是净土宗往生西方极乐世界的方法，各宗也都有自己往生西方极乐世界的方便。比如东密和藏密都有莲花部，莲花部是以阿弥陀佛为部主的，修莲花部的法，就可以往生西方极乐世界。	2. Taking dhāraṇī as its method also includes rebirth in the Pure Land. Buddha-recitation is the Pure Land school’s method for rebirth in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. Each school likewise has its own expedient means for rebirth in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. For example, both Japanese Esoteric Buddhism and Tibetan Esoteric Buddhism have a Lotus Family. The Lotus Family takes Amitābha Buddha as its presiding Buddha; by practicing the methods of the Lotus Family, one can be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.
再比如天台宗现在是“教宗天台，行在弥陀”，他虽然也是念佛生西，但讲教以天台宗的教义为宗旨。净土宗也是教下，但是教宗净土，而不是教宗天台。所以，如同莲花部是藏密和东密里往生西方极乐世界的方法一样，在这儿，以总持为法就是心密往生净土的方法。	For another example, the Tiantai school nowadays follows the principle, “Its teachings are founded on Tiantai; its practice rests in Amitābha.” Although it too practices Buddha-recitation for rebirth in the West, its doctrinal teaching takes the Tiantai school’s teachings as its guiding principle. The Pure Land school is likewise among the doctrinal schools, but its teachings take the Pure Land as their guiding principle rather than Tiantai. Thus, just as the Lotus Family is the method in Tibetan and Japanese Esoteric Buddhism for rebirth in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, here taking dhāraṇī

	as its method is heart esotericism's method for rebirth in the Pure Land.
3、对于非要有来有去才行，说“本无来去，本无生灭”根本就不可能懂的人，就光说第三句以净土为归，前两句不说了，那也可以生凡圣同居土。	3. For those who insist that there must be coming and going, and for whom statements such as “originally there is no coming or going, originally there is no arising or ceasing” are simply impossible to understand, one may speak only of the third statement, taking the Pure Land as the ultimate destination, without mentioning the first two. They can then be reborn in the Land of the Common Residence of Ordinary Beings and Sages.
生凡圣同居土也一样行，也还能再跟阿弥陀佛、观世音菩萨、大势至菩萨、莲池海会佛菩萨继续学法。还可以见到弥勒菩萨，因为生西后见八大菩萨，其中就有弥勒菩萨。对于这种根性的心密行人这么说话，就三句。	Rebirth in the Land of the Common Residence of Ordinary Beings and Sages is equally viable. One can continue studying the Dharma there with Amitābha Buddha, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva, and the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the Lotus Pool Assembly. One can also see Maitreya Bodhisattva, for after rebirth in the West one sees the eight great bodhisattvas, among whom is Maitreya Bodhisattva. This is how one speaks to Heart-of-Heart Dharma practitioners of this capacity: in three statements.
第一句：以往生净土为目的。这是第一句，先突出目的，最重要，方法是次要的，后面两句都是方法：“以念佛为正行、以六印一咒一千座为助行”。这是心密往生西方极乐世界很有把握的一种方法。	The first statement is: take rebirth in the Pure Land as the goal. This is the first statement because the goal must be emphasized first; it is most important, whereas the methods are secondary. The next two statements are both methods: “take Buddha-recitation as the primary practice and one thousand sessions of the six mudrās and one mantra as the auxiliary practice.” This is a very reliable method in heart esotericism for rebirth in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.
以念佛为正行，别去牵扯什么保任哪、见性啊、打开啊、开悟啊、证道啊，别弄这些了。“以往生净土为目的，以念佛为正行，以千座六印一咒为助行”。	Take Buddha-recitation as the primary practice. Do not get entangled in such matters as safeguarding realization, seeing one's nature, opening up, awakening, or realizing the Way; do not concern yourself with these. “Take rebirth in the Pure Land as the goal, Buddha-recitation as the primary practice, and one thousand sessions of the six mudrās and one mantra as the auxiliary practice.”
有这个助行在，也是不离心，不在你心外，你心里感觉往生很有把握，别人说了是不算的，是你心里有把握才算数。别听我在这儿说理论了，你自己去做吧。以千座	With this auxiliary practice, one does not depart from mind; it is not outside your mind. In your own mind, you feel assured of rebirth. What others say

六印一咒为助行，以念佛为正行。那个把握你自己知道，别人说了都不算，如人饮水，冷暖自知。	does not count; only your own inner assurance counts. Do not merely listen to me expound theory here—go and do it yourself. Take one thousand sessions of the six mudrās and one mantra as the auxiliary practice, and Buddha-recitation as the primary practice. You yourself know that assurance; what others say does not count. It is like drinking water: only the drinker knows whether it is cold or warm.
所以心密是行门，只要你肯干，肯行。不是信门，非信不行，不信不行。心密当然也要信，不能疑及根本。但是他最主要是行。	Therefore, heart esotericism is a path of practice: what matters is your willingness to do the work. It is not a path of faith in which one cannot proceed without belief. Of course, heart esotericism also requires faith; one must not doubt its foundation. But its chief emphasis is practice.
汉传心密的源头，谁传的法呀？你就明白了：大行普贤菩萨！那就是重在行啊、重在真修行，并不是说教就完了。不是那回事儿，重在这儿。就是连怀疑都不怕！不怕你这个疑，你只要肯行，你那个疑会消失于无形之间。	Who transmitted the Dharma at the source of Chinese heart esotericism? Once you understand this, you will know: Samantabhadra Bodhisattva of Great Conduct! Its emphasis is therefore on practice, on genuine cultivation; it is not a matter of merely expounding teachings and being done with it. That is not the case. The emphasis lies here. It does not even fear doubt! It does not fear your doubts. As long as you are willing to practice, those doubts will vanish imperceptibly.
不知不觉，“咦？我什么时候不怀疑了？”连你自己都不知道啊。这个潜移默化的力度，是别的、我修过的别的法门所不能及的。别的法门，有的人越修越疑。现在有些知识分子的特点是多疑啊。	Before you know it, you may say, “Eh? When did I stop doubting?” Even you yourself will not know. The power of this gradual and imperceptible transformation is beyond that of other dharma gates I have practiced. With other dharma gates, some people become more doubtful the more they practice. A characteristic of some intellectuals today is excessive doubt.
所以心密有点适合知识分子就是这个道理。不怕你疑，要是不肯修，那没辙，拿他没办法。只要肯修，他那个疑不用他从理论上除，根本不用从理论上除，不知不觉他自己就通达了。	This is why heart esotericism is somewhat suited to intellectuals. It does not fear your doubts. But if you are unwilling to practice, there is no remedy; nothing can be done for you. As long as you are willing to practice, your doubts need not be removed through theory at all; there is fundamentally no need to eliminate them theoretically. Before you know it, you yourself will attain thorough understanding.

是怎么想通的？没想就通了！从这一点解释，作用于第八识，第八识是潜意识，因为秘密作用于第八识，第八识变成大圆镜智了，当然所有的贪　痴慢疑都没有根了，也就是说“身、边、邪、取、戒禁取”这些邪见已经不存在了，但是遇事可能还有贪　痴慢疑须要除掉，这就是除习气。	How does one come to understand? One understands without having thought it through! Explained from this point of view, the practice works upon the eighth consciousness. The eighth consciousness is the subconscious. Because it works imperceptibly upon the eighth consciousness, the eighth consciousness becomes great perfect mirror wisdom. Naturally, greed, anger, ignorance, pride, and doubt then have no root. In other words, such wrong views as the view of a self in the body, extreme views, heterodox views, attachment to views, and attachment to precepts and prohibitions no longer exist. Yet when encountering circumstances, greed, anger, ignorance, pride, and doubt may still arise and need to be removed. This is the removal of habitual tendencies.
在你没有打开之前，邪见没除掉之前，不叫除习气。除习气是指的打开本来以后的话，打开本来以前那是随业力。	Before you have opened up, before wrong views have been eliminated, this is not called removing habitual tendencies. Removing habitual tendencies refers to after one has opened up one’s original nature. Before opening up one’s original nature, one is carried along by karmic force.
当然，疑及根本几乎是不可能的，我们的疑都是信疑参半，疑及根本他就不会学佛了。打破了疑才可以。你要不打破，还在怀疑里，这也很痛苦，在那儿一天有、两天无，一天这个对了、两天那个不对了，弄得烦恼重重。	Of course, doubting the foundation is almost impossible. Our doubts are all a mixture of faith and doubt; if one doubted the foundation, one would not study Buddhism at all. One must break through doubt. If you do not break through it and remain caught in doubt, that is also very painful: one day you think it exists, the next you think it does not; one day you think it is right, the next you think it is wrong. This leaves one burdened with afflictions.
这是你没打破的时候，其实正好做功夫。就是说，三句话做功夫，第一句，以般若为宗，行了，一步到位了，就不用说了。这很少，都没见过，连老人也没见过。咱就说第二句，以总持为法，肯打坐，肯以观照为正行。	When you have not yet broken through, that is precisely the time to practice. That is, practice according to the three statements. If the first statement, taking prajñā as its principle, is sufficient, then one arrives in a single step and there is no need to say more. But this is very rare; we have never seen such a person—not even the Elder has. So let us speak of the second statement: take dhāraṇī as the method; be willing to meditate and to take contemplation as the primary practice.

再不行就第三句：以净土为归，就是：以生西为目的，以念佛为正行，以千座六印一咒为助行。关键是你肯干不肯干？只要肯干，与其你那怀疑来回折腾，还不如这样挑一个干干好。挑一个干，这就是行门。	If even that is not possible, then use the third statement: take the Pure Land as the ultimate destination—that is, take rebirth in the West as the goal, Buddha-recitation as the primary practice, and one thousand sessions of the six mudrās and one mantra as the auxiliary practice. The crucial question is whether you are willing to do it. So long as you are willing to act, rather than being tossed back and forth by your doubts, it is better to choose one practice and carry it out well. Choosing one and doing it is the path of practice.
行门，理论上当然也要懂，懂了以后就不管他了，这叫“行起解绝”：起了修行，把你那理解断绝了。有些人在理解思维里，反复弄，越弄越烦恼，那刚好弄颠倒了。心密是行门，你要实际去修行。	On this path of practice, of course one must also understand the theory. But once one understands it, one no longer concerns oneself with it. This is called “when practice begins, understanding ceases”: once cultivation has begun, cut off that conceptual understanding. Some people keep turning things over and over in their conceptual thinking; the more they do so, the more afflicted they become. That is precisely getting it backward. Heart esotericism is a path of practice; you must actually practice it.
我还认为，受过心密灌顶的，相当一部分人走第三句的路最合适。问谁？问自己，你生西的把握别人不知道，别再听这个说说怀疑，那个说说又怀疑，你这怀疑一辈子，到临终的时候手忙脚乱，这一生又空过了。	I also believe that, for a considerable number of those who have received empowerment in heart esotericism, the third approach is the most suitable. Whom should you ask? Ask yourself. Others do not know how certain you are of rebirth in the Western Pure Land. Do not let this person’s remarks make you doubt, and then that person’s remarks make you doubt again. If you go on doubting your whole life, then at the moment of death you will be flustered and at a loss, and this life will have been wasted again.
你自己最有把握，甭问别人，有人说你不能生西你都不买帐，他咋知道我的境界呀！这就行了，真有成效了。	You yourself are the most certain; do not ask others. Even if someone says that you cannot be reborn in the Western Pure Land, you will not accept it: “How could he know my state?” That will do. Then there will truly be results.
把自己建立在别人的嘴上，那是哄自己的呀，到最后你自己都又会乱了，疑心一起，连疑你自己，带疑那个人，都疑进去了。不好啊那样，还是你自己有把握好。所以说到把握，那是你自己知道的事。实践证明确实是这样，确实有这种现象。这是说，把握在自心。	To base your assurance on other people’s words is merely to deceive yourself. In the end, you will again become confused. Once doubt arises, you will doubt yourself and that other person as well; you will doubt everything. That is not good. It is

	better for you yourself to be certain. Thus, when we speak of certainty, it is something you yourself know. Practice has indeed shown this to be so; such cases truly do occur. That is to say, certainty lies in one's own mind.

爆炸，一念断处了了灵知是否是佛性

Explosion: Is the Clear, Numinous Knowing at the Point Where Thought Ceases Buddha-Nature?

问：请问元音老人是不是说过修到爆炸即可见佛性，以及要认取一念断处之了了灵知就是佛性。有人对这些话不理解。	Question: Did Master Yuanyin say that one can see the Buddha-nature once one's practice reaches the point of an explosion, and that one should recognize the clear, numinous knowing at the point where a thought ceases as Buddha-nature? Some people do not understand these statements.
答：书里是有，但你别光看前头不看后头，除非把老人后头那段话掐下来不要了。当年我也执这个相，老人眼一瞪，这么大的，还不止一次：“有什么爆炸不爆炸的！”这才肯去仔细读那些书，再往后看，噢！原来不可得，不可执着呀！	Answer: The books do say this, but do not read only the beginning and not what follows—unless you intend to cut off and discard what the Master says afterward. I, too, was once attached to this appearance. The Master would glare with his eyes wide open and say—not just once—“What is all this talk of explosion or no explosion?” Only then was I willing to read those books carefully and continue further on. Ah! It turns out that nothing can be obtained and nothing should be clung to!
只要你起念，那肯定是有相了，那就不是一念不生，也就不再了了分明了，就成了世间有相法了。那是唯证乃知的呀。	As soon as you give rise to a thought, there is certainly an appearance; then it is not the state in which not a single thought arises, nor is it clear and distinct knowing. It becomes a worldly dharma characterized by appearances. This can be known only through realization.
“噢，明白了，这么回事儿呀！”就你这一明白，跟爆炸有什么区别？有的人来得猛，他不仅仅是就这么一明白，“噼啪”一下爆炸了，那也跟这突然间明白没差别，不都是朗然现前吗？所谓朗然现前，你总理解是有个东西现前，其实说有个东西、没个东西，都是戏论。	“Oh, I understand—it is like this!” What difference is there between that very moment of understanding and an explosion? For some people it comes with force: it is not merely such an understanding, but with a “crack,” an explosion. Yet this is no different from suddenly understanding—is it not, in both cases, radiant clarity manifesting before one? By “radiant clarity manifesting before one,” you always understand that there is something appearing before you. But to say that there is a thing or that

	there is no thing—both are mere conceptual elaboration.
那是乌云散了，青天露了呀，不是在外头你修了个青天，不是原来没来现在来了，是你自己的妄想执着那时候不现行了。“哎呀，原来如此啊！原来就这样的呀！”这叫但去妄，不求真。	It is like dark clouds dispersing and blue sky being revealed. It is not that, outside yourself, you have cultivated a blue sky; it is not that what was formerly absent has now arrived. Rather, at that time your own deluded thoughts and attachments are no longer active. “Ah, so that is how it is! It was like this all along!” This is called merely casting off delusion, without seeking the true.
为啥不用求，因为它当下现成，这才是真的！你要是抓一个有相，就成了个形象了，就不是老人的意思了。这时候老人就该瞪眼呵斥了：“有什么爆炸不爆炸的”！正是说的这个。	Why is there no need to seek it? Because it is complete and present right here and now—this alone is genuine. If you grasp at an appearance, it becomes an image, and that is no longer what the Master meant. At that point, the Master would glare and rebuke you: “What is all this talk of explosion or no explosion?” This is precisely what he meant.
还有另一个，老人常呵斥的：“有什么灵知不灵知的”！因为那个所谓的灵知，在你那里变成语言概念了。应该是当下现前才是啊。	There is another thing the Master often rebuked people for: “What is all this talk of numinous knowing or no numinous knowing?” This is because that so-called numinous knowing has become, for you, a verbal concept. What it should be is what is immediately and directly present.
圭峰宗密禅师当年用的也是“灵知”，古人都用过，老人也拿来用用，有什么不可以呀！不止是圭峰宗密禅师，别的大德也用过，那是亲证的境界。	Chan Master Guifeng Zongmi also used the term “numinous knowing” in his day. The ancients all used it, and the Master used it as well—what is wrong with that? It was not only Chan Master Guifeng Zongmi; other great masters used it too. It refers to the realm of direct realization.
恐你在文字上作文章，老人自己就扫掉了——“灵知也不可得”！接着往下读，肯定有这话。	Fearing that you might make something out of the words themselves, the Master swept it away himself: “Numinous knowing, too, cannot be obtained!” Read on, and you will certainly find these words.
要不然的话，那不是有法可立了吗？这不仅是老人的意思，这是佛的意思，历代各宗各派祖师大德的意思，也是老人的意思，这才对呀。要不然，还是佛法吗？那不误解了么？一误解，不一定是佛法了，那成了有建立、有诽谤了。离开建立和诽谤才可以呀。	Otherwise, would that not establish a dharma? This is not merely the Master’s meaning; it is the Buddha’s meaning, the meaning of the patriarchs and great masters of every school and tradition throughout the ages, and also the Master’s meaning. This is what is correct. Otherwise, would it still be Buddhadharma? Would that not be a

	misunderstanding? Once it is misunderstood, it may no longer be Buddhadharma; it becomes conceptual assertion and denial. One must leave behind both assertion and denial.
所以有的人批评这个“灵知”，你去批评古禅师吧，都是他们说的。其实他批评的是他误解后的灵知，他误解了以后去批评。要是误解以前，那根本容不得批评。那是真性朗然现前了，批评什么呀。也容不得你赞叹，连赞叹也容不得，批评赞叹都容不得，灵知不在你批评和赞叹里，它不在这儿，不在建立和诽谤里。	Therefore, when some people criticize this “numinous knowing,” they should go criticize the ancient Chan masters—it was all said by them. In fact, what they criticize is numinous knowing as they have misunderstood it; they first misunderstand it and then criticize it. Before it is misunderstood, there is simply no room for criticism. When true nature manifests in radiant clarity, what is there to criticize? Nor is there room to praise it—not even praise is admissible. Neither criticism nor praise is admissible. Numinous knowing is not within your criticism or praise; it is not there, not within conceptual assertion or denial.

请问您认为学佛的关键是什么？

What Do You Consider the Key to Buddhist Practice?

问：请问您认为学佛的关键是什么？能不能用简要的一句话概括一下？	Question: What do you consider to be the key to Buddhist practice? Can you summarize it in one brief sentence?
答：我认为只三个字就能回答学佛的根本：“初发心”。根本就是你的初发心，这才是根本。心外无法呀，心外取法是外道。初发心若真的很纯正，那么，初发心即成正觉！	Answer: I think the foundation of Buddhist practice can be expressed in just three Chinese characters: “initial aspiration.” The foundation is your initial aspiration; that is the true foundation. Outside the mind, there is no dharma. To seek dharmas outside the mind is a non-Buddhist path. If one’s initial aspiration is truly pure and right, then at the very arousing of that aspiration, one attains perfect enlightenment!