目 录 / Table of Contents

印心语录 *Mind-Seal Sayings*

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Mind-Seal Sayings

禅宗最忌似是而非，然却是必经的过程。一为文人禅：偏于文字般若，喜打机锋，或托诸诗歌，或偏于空寂，或故示奇特，自以为高，此以见闻觉知测佛，非禅也。	What the Chan school most warns against is what seems right but is not, yet this is an unavoidable stage. The first is literati Chan: it leans toward textual prajñā, delights in clever repartee, sometimes expresses itself through poetry, sometimes inclines toward empty quiescence, or deliberately displays eccentricity, imagining itself lofty. It measures the Buddha by what is seen, heard, felt, and known; this is not Chan.
二为枯寂禅：死守空定，自以为究竟，即智隍一流，贪著寂静，厌恶尘劳，此以法见自缚，非禅也。	The second is Chan of sterile quietude: rigidly clinging to empty samādhi and taking it for the ultimate, as in the case of Zhihuang and those like him; attached to stillness and averse to the toil and dust of the world. This is binding oneself through attachment to views about the Dharma; it is not Chan.
三为香堂禅：守定死法，坐于香堂上，执定一句话头，不得活用，十年廿年，了无消息，或懊丧退转，入于昏沉，或枯干乏味，落于断灭，乃至偏执成颠，非禅也。	The third is incense-hall Chan: rigidly adhering to a fixed routine of sitting in the meditation hall, fixating on a single huatou and unable to use it flexibly. Ten or twenty years may pass without a sign of progress; one may become discouraged and regress into dullness, or find the practice barren and lifeless and fall into annihilationist emptiness, even growing deranged through one-sided attachment. This is not Chan.
四为狂放禅：求自在不可得，误解一切无碍义，故示放纵，以为解脱，于本来面目，全未证到，非禅也。须知此等人于禅宗虽属外道，亦自有其意境在，较诸惘然者略胜一筹，但总是夙世习气，以外入故，名为禅客，住在客位，未见主人也。	The fourth is wild and uninhibited Chan: unable to attain freedom, one misunderstands the meaning of unobstructedness in all things and therefore deliberately indulges oneself, taking this for liberation. Yet one has not at all realized the Original Face; this is not Chan. Know that although such people are heterodox from the standpoint of the Chan school, they do have a realm of their own, and are somewhat superior to those who remain utterly bewildered. Still, this is altogether habitual tendency from former lives, entered from without. They are called Chan guests: they remain in the guest's seat and have not seen the host.

宗下工夫，知见正为第一义。是在师之引导，先使参今日大事，究为何事。名相之学，不可不略知，而不宜深入。下手因地宜正，绵绵密密，如归家觅路相似，只是向前走，不到家不止，不计路程，自然段段有个光景。	Right view comes first in Chan practice. Under a teacher's guidance, one must first investigate what the great matter before them really is. One cannot entirely avoid a rudimentary knowledge of terminology and doctrinal classifications, but one should not delve deeply into them. The causal ground at the outset must be correct. Keep practicing steadily and attentively, as though seeking the road home: simply keep walking forward, never stopping until you arrive home. Do not calculate the distance; naturally, each stretch of the way will have its own scenery.
但须知尚未到家，莫中途快活。虽然，家在何处，觅路便又不见。禅是心行的事业，不是口讲的虚文，莫执取公案语录，妄参我见。只万缘放下，于一念未起前，看是什么，究竟本来面目是怎样的，先把一切念打杀打净，纤尘不立，自然得个消息去。	But know that you have not yet arrived home; do not become complacent halfway. Yet when one asks where home is, the path one has been seeking is no longer to be seen. Chan is the work of putting mind into practice, not empty talk. Do not cling to koans and recorded sayings, rashly investigating from the standpoint of your own views. Simply let go of all conditions. Before a single thought arises, look into what it is; investigate what the Original Face ultimately is like. First slay and clear away every thought, so that not even a speck of dust remains; then you will naturally receive some news.
此事要有天马行空的魄力，绝顶聪明的天资，深入险地的机警，细心检讨的毅力，如亲丧而无法安殓的迫切。又得一气呵成，如饭之一锅煮熟，更遇明师，随时督饬，方有成就。否则半熟夹生，势必非驴非马，此因缘之难也。	This matter requires the bold spirit of a heavenly steed soaring through space, exceptional innate intelligence, alertness in venturing deep into dangerous ground, perseverance in careful self-examination, and the urgency of having a close relative die without any means to arrange the burial. One must also bring it to completion in a single sustained effort, like cooking a whole pot of rice through, and encounter an enlightened teacher who can supervise and urge one at every moment. Only then can there be accomplishment. Otherwise, one will be only half-cooked, with the practice left in an uncertain state. Such is the difficulty of these causes and conditions.
功夫不得不做，但切忌用呆功夫，未见性人，口口说空，正是处处著有。真空不是口说，要实地证到，一落言诠，即又不是。古人无功之用，正是用这个无功之功，无用之用，只著不得半点，此意非外人所知。凡思有所表弘者，与世俗好出风头何异，皆心未死透者也。	The work must be done, but one must never employ deadened effort. Those who have not seen their true nature yet continually speak of emptiness are precisely attached to existence everywhere. True emptiness is not something to be talked about; it must be realized directly. Once it falls into

	verbal formulation, it is no longer it. The ancients' function without contrivance is precisely this function of non-contrivance, this use of non-use: one cannot attach even the slightest bit to it. Outsiders do not understand this meaning. Whoever thinks of publicizing or promoting something is no different from worldly people who delight in showing off; such people have not yet thoroughly died to self.
生死心切者，求了生死之心切也。生死果何物乎？乃念念贪著之果位也。是以要常常凛觉督察，平日要证验，当考问自己，是否还有名心利心法心的贪恋存在。	To be deeply troubled by birth and death is to feel an urgent need to transcend them. What, then, is birth and death? It is the outcome of clinging from one thought to the next. Therefore, one must constantly remain vigilant and examine oneself. In ordinary life, test and verify yourself: does attachment to reputation, gain, or dharmas still remain?
如果还怕骂（即是喜恭维），怕失面子（即是贪虚荣），怕生活艰苦（即是求利心未死），怕不成佛（即是不明空），怕落空（正是落有），怕种种碍（即是未达无碍慧），此都是根本未明者也。此一怕字，即明立我执。	If you still fear criticism—which means that you enjoy flattery; fear losing face—which means that you crave vanity; fear the hardships of life—which means that the desire for gain has not died; fear not becoming a Buddha—which means that you do not understand emptiness; fear falling into emptiness—which is precisely falling into existence; or fear various obstacles—which means that you have not attained the wisdom of nonobstruction—then these all show that the root has not yet been understood. This single word "fear" clearly establishes attachment to self.
越是贫困的人，利心越难淡，越是地位高的人，名心越难破，越是功夫深的人，法心越难除。此生死心之转辗缘助，由习而成为气，不先拔根，终是大难，正如十担麻油树上摊，直无从下手处也。	The poorer a person is, the harder it is to weaken the desire for gain. The higher a person's status, the harder it is to break attachment to reputation. The deeper a person's practice, the harder it is to eliminate attachment to dharmas. These conditions reinforce the patterns of mind that sustain birth and death. Repetition turns them into entrenched habits. Unless its root is first pulled out, it will remain a great difficulty—like ten loads of sesame oil spread over a tree, with simply no place to begin.
禅宗功夫，难在不可取，又不可舍。本在眼前，无从下手，是不可取。若说即此就是，便是颟顸，所以又不可	The difficulty of Chan practice lies in this: it cannot be grasped, yet it cannot be discarded. It is originally before one's very eyes, but there is

舍。古人云：如一人与万人敌，觌面即不放松，但此又莫落了对待去。此不是对待的事，须反照即得。	nowhere to begin; thus it cannot be grasped. But if one says, “This itself is it,” that is mere muddleheadedness; thus it cannot be discarded either. The ancients said, “It is like one person facing ten thousand enemies: at close quarters, do not relax even for an instant.” Yet do not fall into dualistic opposition here. This is not a matter of opposition; turn the light back upon yourself, and you will attain it.
宗下功夫，全是自己的事。说不出，又如何教得来，画不出，又如何表得来，原不是一世的事业。但一说此话，人却畏难退缩，又自贱了也。	The work of the Chan school is entirely one’s own affair. It cannot be spoken—so how can it be taught? It cannot be drawn—so how can it be represented? It was never the work of merely one lifetime. But when this is said, people become intimidated by its difficulty, retreat, and belittle themselves.
且问自己对于此道，意境是近不近？便不是一佛二佛所种的善根。肯上路者，决无不到家之日。	Ask yourself how close your mind is to this Way. If you feel close to it, your wholesome roots were planted before more than just one or two Buddhas. Whoever is willing to set out on the road will surely arrive home one day.
不于无量千万佛所种诸善根，何得有此认识，既认识已，不经千万亿次之打扫，一世再世，又如何而能圆满，又岂可以中途自满。悟证有彻时，力量无止境，对人宜虚心，律己莫因循。一曝十寒，终无有益。	If one had not planted wholesome roots with immeasurable thousands and millions of Buddhas, how could one have such recognition? Once one has recognized it, how could one attain fulfillment without cleaning and clearing it away hundreds of millions of times, life after life? How, then, could one be self-satisfied halfway along? Awakening and realization can become thorough, and the strength of practice can still deepen indefinitely. Be humble toward others, and do not be lax in disciplining yourself. A day of effort followed by ten days of neglect yields no lasting benefit.
越是不肯走冤枉路吃苦用功的人，功夫越做不上。以做不上，越想得便宜，越想外求有所得，以求无所得，乃以耳为目。自既惘然，又不得不择师，试问又如何择法？于是无法不求，无师不拜，忙了半世，反把自己脚根下事耽误了。及至老了，气力不充，再无勇气，又一世矣！	The more unwilling one is to take a roundabout road, endure hardship, and apply oneself, the less one can accomplish in practice. Unable to accomplish it, one increasingly seeks an easy advantage and looks outward for something to gain. Seeking yet gaining nothing, one takes the ears for the eyes. Already bewildered, one then has no choice but to seek a teacher; but how can one discern the proper Dharma? Thus one seeks every teaching and bows to every teacher. After being

	busy for half a lifetime, one has instead neglected the matter beneath one's own feet. When old age arrives and strength is insufficient, courage is gone, and another lifetime has passed!
此事本要打净了意识，才有少分相应，你却反去意识上会，岂非更远！你听说有个本来面目，于是竭力去求个面目，不知是没面目的面目，你又如何能眼见得。须知这个本来的就是面目，既是本来的，却又去求他作甚。但不经一番苦闷的参究，走过许多冤枉路，却又见不到这本来的。	In this matter, one must first thoroughly clear away consciousness before there can be even a slight correspondence. Yet you turn instead to consciousness to understand it—is that not even farther away? You hear of an Original Face and then exert yourself to seek a face, not knowing that it is a face without a face. How, then, could you ever see it with your eyes? Know that this original nature itself is the face. Since it is original, why seek it further? Yet without undergoing a period of painful and vexing investigation, without traveling many roundabout roads, one will not see this original nature.
心目中先把禅宗当作一件奇特事，根本即已大错，断无成就之日，纵使证到了家，亦是极寻常的事。但众生习性，由来已久，名心未死，好高骛远之劣见，一时难除，就不肯承当这寻常的。平时既轻慢这寻常的，自然要忽略过去，当面错过若干次，不能一把擒住，看是什么，总是不痛切生死之故。	To regard the Chan school from the outset as something extraordinary is already a fundamental error; there will be no day of accomplishment. Even if one realizes one's way home, it is an utterly ordinary matter. But sentient beings' dispositions have endured for a long time: attachment to reputation has not died, and the inferior view of aspiring to what is lofty and distant is difficult to remove at once. Thus one refuses to undertake this ordinary matter. Since one ordinarily scorns what is ordinary, one naturally passes it by in neglect, missing it right before one's face countless times. One cannot seize it directly and see what it is. This is always because one has not taken birth and death painfully and urgently to heart.
宗门下手功夫，只要先识知自心。做到如实知自心，是专一门的向上事业，实是至痛至切的功夫。如是渐入无功用地的功用，行者应将功夫活做才得。	In beginning the work of the Chan school, one need only first recognize one's own mind. To come to know one's own mind as it truly is is the single-minded work of advancing upward; it is indeed the most painful and urgent practice. As one gradually enters the ground of non-contrivance, the practitioner must make the practice alive and flexible.
轻慢了佛法，是狂妄汉；不靠佛法，欲求修证，是自大汉；依赖了佛法，求有所得，又是个永无出息的不了汉，这三种人，都不能成就。惟有过量大人，得超然之	To slight the Buddhadharma is the way of a madly arrogant person. To seek cultivation and realization without relying on the Buddhadharma is the way of

境，不同凡见者，左右不被法缚，得法益而无法害，是真佛子。	a self-important person. To depend on the Buddhadharma while seeking something to gain is the way of an incapable person who will never amount to anything. None of these three kinds of people can attain accomplishment. Only those of exceptional greatness, who attain a transcendent realm and differ from ordinary views, are not bound by dharmas on either side. They receive the benefit of the Dharma without suffering harm from dharmas; they are true children of the Buddha.
你只看自奉过厚的人或自甘偏苦的人，都不是真上路的，一个是被身缚，一个是被见缚，都是自性烦恼，更何暇向最上门转去。	Consider those who lavish excessive care on themselves, or those who willingly subject themselves to undue hardship: neither is truly on the path. The one is bound by the body; the other is bound by views. Both are afflictions of one's own making. How could they have leisure to turn toward the supreme gate?
宗门功夫，用了还要放得，所难者，几时是应放手时。以功夫不用则不实，不放则不活，不实则见不切，不活则力不圆。放早了就滑了去，一搁就可十年。世人本有贪懒习性，一知半解，自谓已是。此病最毒，古人不肯轻许要伊自肯者，即防此病也。	In the work of the Chan school, having applied the effort, one must also be able to let it go. The difficulty lies in knowing when it is time to release one's hold. Without applying effort, it is not genuine; without letting go, it is not alive. If it is not genuine, one's realization is not incisive; if it is not alive, one's strength is not complete. Let go too early, and it slips away; set it aside, and ten years may pass. Worldly people inherently tend toward greed and laziness. With only partial understanding, they proclaim themselves complete. This sickness is the most poisonous. The ancients were unwilling to grant approval lightly and required a person to acknowledge it for themselves, precisely to guard against this sickness.
禅宗功夫往往容易谈得，难于见到，又容易见到，难于践到。不真见到者，所谈必恍恍惚惚，不真践到者，所见必轻浮不实。及真到家时，试问还有什么可说的。	Chan practice is often easy to discuss but difficult to see; and it is easy to see but difficult to put into practice. Those who have not truly seen it will necessarily speak vaguely and indistinctly. Those who have not truly put it into practice will find that what they see is superficial and insubstantial. When one has truly arrived home, then tell me: what is there left to say?
语言是口上的文字，文字是纸上语言。一篇废纸，一段废话，究有何益？根本全不在此，世人偏要在废物上会，多所诤论，抑又何苦！所以无论何种高明的道理，	Language is writing spoken aloud; writing is language on paper. What benefit is there in a sheet of wastepaper or a string of empty words? The root

乃至佛说经论，取之便成魔说，都是粪。不明此义者，只说我狂，又奈之何哉。	of the matter lies entirely elsewhere, yet people insist on trying to understand through such waste and engage in endless disputes. Why undergo such suffering? Therefore, no matter how lofty a principle may be, even if it is a sūtra or treatise spoken by the Buddha, once one grasps it, it becomes the speech of Māra—it is all dung. Those who do not understand this meaning merely call me mad; what can be done about it?
此事下手须辣，对自己原谅不得半点，念念在生死怖窟中，废寝忘食，魂梦系之。古人悟前如丧考妣，我以为尚不痛切，要如父母已丧，停在床上，无一文钱在手，没法安排，但非急急想法不可；又急病求医药，凶岁觅米粮，不得即死。如是惶急，方有些切近处也。	One must begin this matter fiercely, allowing oneself not the slightest indulgence. Thought after thought, remain in the terrifying pit of birth and death; forget sleep and food, with one's very soul and dreams bound to it. The ancients, before awakening, were like people mourning deceased parents. I consider even this insufficiently urgent. It should be as if one's parents have died and their bodies lie upon the bed, while one has not a penny in hand and no means to arrange matters—yet one must urgently find a way. It should also be like seeking medicine for an acute illness, or seeking rice and grain in a year of famine: if it is not obtained, one dies. Only with such alarm and urgency does one come somewhat close to the point.
非聪明人不能办此事，而聪明人每在道理上深求，即又不能办此事矣，以坏在计度思量也。一落法见，即又非是。但无一切心去，何用一切法乎？然执取无心，便又立法。且道如何得无心去，如木石之无知耶？则成个木石；谓用尔聪明耶？则又不是聪明的事。惟大智人，为能掊击尔智，昭然自见。	One who is not intelligent cannot undertake this matter. Yet intelligent people often seek deeply in principles and arguments, and thereby cannot undertake it either, because they are ruined by calculation and discursive thought. Once one clings to views about the Dharma, it is no longer right. But if one abandons every mental attitude, what use is there for any dharma? Still, to cling to no-mind is again to establish a dharma. Tell me, then: how does one attain no-mind? Like the unknowing of wood and stone? Then one becomes wood or stone. By using your intelligence? Then it is no longer a matter of intelligence. Only a person of great wisdom can strike down that intelligence and see clearly for oneself.
了达不污染义，还得亲见不污染之相，斯不污染，但又已污染了也。非但此也，将辗转污染，而惘惘荡荡去也。	To understand the meaning of nondefilement, one must still personally see the characteristic of nondefilement; only then is there nondefilement. Yet this has already become defilement. Nor does it

	stop there: it will continue to generate defilement upon defilement, and one will drift about in confusion and emptiness.
向外驰求，即根本大错，虽学百年，亦无成也。但著意于向内，内即外也，以求即相对，相对则又立心取法，转又不见。总之有求即错，而不求又当奈何?	To race outward in pursuit is a fundamental error; even if one studies for a hundred years, there will be no accomplishment. But if one deliberately turns inward, then inward is outward as well. Seeking sets up a division. Once that division is in place, one posits a mind and grasps at dharmas, losing sight of what one sought. In short, seeking is mistaken—but if one does not seek, what then is to be done?
非具大魄力者，不足以当此大事，不可有依赖性。昔大慧禅师云：禅岂有传授耶？佛祖自证自悟之谓何！乃弃之，遍历诸方，成一代宗师。至于遍参知识，求为印证是否者，恐落天然外道也。本来自疑自悟，非人可代。	Without great courage, one is not equal to this great matter; one must not be dependent. Long ago Chan Master Dahui said, “Can Chan be transmitted? What does it mean that Buddhas and patriarchs realized and awakened by themselves?” He therefore left and traveled everywhere, becoming a great master of his age. As for visiting teachers everywhere to seek confirmation of whether one is right, this may fall into the naturalist heterodox path. Originally, one doubts for oneself and awakens for oneself; no one else can do it in one’s place.
罗　罗尊者，仗为佛之子，不求精进，待佛为度。佛知其意，一日佛食次，问尊者曰：我已饱否？答言：佛自食，云何问人饱否？佛言：则我自成佛，非关汝事。尊者言下大悟，遂成密行第一。初学人无一遵循，原是苦事，若为师者一味教伊求法，下手即已推入火坑矣，不知几时才得出也。	Venerable Rāhula, relying on being the Buddha’s son, did not seek diligent practice but waited for the Buddha to liberate him. Knowing his intention, the Buddha one day, after eating, asked him, “Am I full?” He replied, “The Buddha ate by himself. Why ask whether someone else is full?” The Buddha said, “Then I became a Buddha by myself; it has nothing to do with you.” At these words, the Venerable One experienced great awakening and subsequently became foremost in secret practice. For beginners, having no model to follow is indeed painful. If a teacher merely instructs them to seek the Dharma, he has, from the very outset, pushed them into a pit of fire; who knows when they will be able to get out?
平时于一切人事酬应，与绝不相干处，都是我用功之地。处处是烦恼，却处处是菩提。见性人即上阵杀敌，亦见性也。如不忘自己名姓斯得。	In my ordinary responses to all people and affairs, and in places wholly unrelated to them, all are places for my practice. Everywhere there are afflictions, yet everywhere there is bodhi. Even

	when one who has seen one's nature goes into battle and kills enemies, it is still seeing one's nature—provided one does not forget one's own name and surname.
有一毫恐怖，即是极大挂碍，即是修道人的耻辱。贵在时时察知，莫作等闲观也。用功时无非摄心，但不可有一带尾，病根即从带尾上变化发生，当谨记。	The slightest fear is an enormous hindrance and a disgrace to one who cultivates the Way. What is important is to recognize it at every moment and not regard it lightly. Practice is nothing other than gathering in the mind, but there must not be the slightest trailing residue. The root of illness transforms and arises precisely from such residue; remember this carefully.
如一善念起后如何，一恶念起后如何，一凛觉后如何，于寂然无念时又如何，觉后一刀两段，不得再拖尾。若再有所计，不归入这本位去，觉亦为病，此便是带尾，不就此截断，又带下去了。此是生死种子，尝体会得么？	What happens after a wholesome thought arises? What happens after an unwholesome thought arises? What happens after a sudden awakening? And what happens when one is serene and without thoughts? After awakening, cut it cleanly in two with a single stroke; do not drag along any further tail. If further calculations arise and one does not return to this original ground, then even awakening becomes an illness. This is what is meant by trailing residue. If it is not cut off here, it will be carried on again. These are seeds of birth and death. Have you ever truly experienced this?
方向只是一路，变化却有万千，变化尽管万千，我却还是一路。且道如何是一路？登太华之巅，俯视一切，无不周遍矣，但脚下踏住这一块，还是不见。必也腾空再上，方无遗漏处。悟此即明无住之大用。	The direction is only one road, though its transformations are myriad. However myriad the transformations may be, I still remain on one road. Tell me, what is this one road? Climb to the summit of Mount Taihua and look down upon everything: nothing is not encompassed. Yet if you stand firmly on this very spot beneath your feet, you still do not see it. Only by soaring into the air and ascending further can there be no place left out. To awaken to this is to understand the great functioning of non-abiding.
且问而今却在何处立著，便知往后的处所。业力道力，只此一念而已。一念昧，即是业力，一念空，即是道力，此胜彼负，此进彼退，同是此一转耳。	Ask what you are clinging to right now, and you will know where you will be later. Karmic force and the force of the Way are nothing more than this single thought. When a thought is obscured, it is karmic force; when a thought is empty, it is the force of the Way. When this prevails, that yields; when this advances, that retreats. It all comes down to this single turn of mind.

今以道力扫荡业力，一念即已扫荡净尽，业力既尽，道亦不有，二者本同虚妄，本无难易之别。凡夫妄立难易之见，因循保留，是以业力日熟，道力日生，将本觉圆明之如来藏，搅乱于色相之中，枉受诸苦，真是苦贱之像。	Now use the force of the Way to sweep away karmic force: in a single thought it has already been swept clean. Once karmic force is exhausted, the Way too is absent. Both are fundamentally equally delusive; originally there is no distinction of difficulty and ease. Ordinary beings mistakenly establish views of difficulty and ease, following along and preserving them. Thus karmic force ripens day by day and the force of the Way arises day by day; they stir up the Tathāgata-garbha, originally awakened and perfectly luminous, amid forms and appearances, vainly undergoing every kind of suffering. This is truly a pitiful and base condition.
大丈夫意气不凡，特具超尘出世之志，开金刚眼，洞见生死之本空，亟谋彻了，原非等闲事业。但如何是道力，却颟顸不得，笼统不得。	A true person possesses extraordinary spirit and a special resolve to transcend the dust of the world and leave the mundane behind. Opening the vajra eye, one sees through to the fundamental emptiness of birth and death and urgently seeks complete resolution. This is no ordinary undertaking. But what is the force of the Way? One must not be muddled about it or speak of it vaguely.
于千忙百乱中，若无事人去；于静默无事时，若春冰虎尾。初见道时，即于提起时练放下，于放下时练提起，久久无所谓提起放下，连提起放下的东西，毕竟不可得，才是真放下。	Amid a thousand urgent tasks and a hundred confusions, proceed as though you had nothing to do; in quiet stillness, when there is nothing to do, be as precarious as treading on a tiger’s tail or on spring ice. When first seeing the Way, practice letting go when taking up, and practice taking up when letting go. After a long time, there is no longer any so-called taking up or letting go; when even that which takes up and lets go is ultimately unobtainable, that is true letting go.
断欲易，断爱难，断法爱更难，非真到无我时法爱不断也。此是佛位，圣人其犹病诸！欲断法爱，先从不求名闻下手。本净禅师云：修道人第一莫向道，以向道即取于法，遂立法见，见即成爱，非道也。故曰无心是道，更无欠缺，恒沙妙用，尽从此出。莫怕落空，只怕不空，果能真空，大机大用自备也。	To cut off desire is easy; to cut off attachment is difficult; to cut off attachment to the Dharma is more difficult still. Unless one has truly reached selflessness, attachment to the Dharma will not cease. This belongs to the Buddha’s stage; even sages are still troubled by it. To sever attachment to the Dharma, begin by not seeking fame and gain. Chan Master Benjing said: “The first thing a cultivator of the Way must not do is turn toward the Way. To turn toward the Way is to grasp at dharmas, thereby establishing dharma-views.

	Views become attachment, and that is not the Way.” Thus it is said that no-mind is the Way, lacking nothing further. The wondrous functions as numerous as the sands of the Ganges all issue from this. Do not fear falling into emptiness; fear only not being empty. If one can truly be empty, great capacity and great functioning are naturally complete.
有属因缘有，空属本来空，参本来二字，是剑客的剑，不能离手。	What exists through causes and conditions exists; emptiness is originally empty. Investigate the two words “originally empty”: they are the sword in a swordsman’s hand and must not be let go.
三藏十二部教义，与禅法密法净法，及诸古德语录，乃至一切法用，都是我日用之品；如柜内衣，厨中饭，室中器具，案上文房四宝，不过备我所需，有没有，全不相干，有了亦不过方便而已。	The doctrines of the Three Baskets and Twelve Divisions of the teachings, Chan practices, esoteric practices, Pure Land practices, the recorded sayings of ancient worthies, and even all Dharma functions are all articles of my daily use. They are like clothes in a cabinet, food in a kitchen, utensils in a room, or the four treasures of the study upon a desk: they merely provide what I need. Whether they are present or absent is of no consequence; if they are present, they are only expedient means.
实是主人要紧，倘物物齐备而无人享受，又与灵供冥器何别！即灵供冥器，亦得以灵为主，诸多死物，毕竟无用。故曰莫著佛求，然亦不废一切，常礼如是事，亦只借用而已。不明此义者，便是本末倒置，不达因果。	What truly matters is the master. If every object is fully prepared but no one enjoys them, how are they different from offerings and funerary objects for spirits? Even offerings and funerary objects must take the spirit as primary; all those lifeless things are ultimately useless. Therefore it is said: do not cling to seeking the Buddha. Yet this does not mean discarding everything; one continues to make the customary offerings and observances, merely using them as borrowed means. Those who do not understand this principle invert root and branch and fail to comprehend cause and effect.
在家人修道，较比丘得力且二十倍，此语惟大慧杲禅师能说。欲修最上乘，尘劳为资粮，冤家一齐到，庄严此道场。我初作此语，人不敢信。故人于不幸时，莫辜负了这倒霉，就此著力，便证菩提。	For lay practitioners, cultivating the Way is twenty times more effective than for bhikshus. Only Chan Master Dahui Gao could have said such a thing. To cultivate the supreme vehicle, take worldly toil as provisions; when adversaries all arrive together, they adorn this place of practice. When I first said this, people did not dare believe it. Therefore, in times of misfortune, do not waste your bad

	fortune. Apply effort right there, and you will realize bodhi.
不是有心，不是无心，亦无有无之量，是为直心，处处行直心，便是道场。	It is neither intentional mind nor non-intentional mind, nor is there any measure of being or nonbeing. This is called the direct mind. To enact the direct mind everywhere is itself the place of practice.
用此功夫，并无别法，莫求真，莫求玄妙，但只息下一切心看，看心息下时，无心可心，无念可念时，是什么光景？即此超然无著现量之景，便是你安身立命处也。这一点，切莫看得寻常。	There is no other method for this practice. Do not seek the true, do not seek the mysterious and wondrous; simply let every mental activity cease and look. When the mind has ceased, and there is no mind that can be made into an object of mind, no thought that can be made into an object of thought—what is that state like? This very scene of transcendent, unattached direct presence is where you settle yourself and establish your life. Do not take this point lightly.
能常常如是否？能千忙百乱中，一凛即如是否？这叫做什么，肯承当得否？一切定力慧力戒力，八万四千功德，恒沙妙用，全由此一点中启发，莫看轻了他。刹那别境现前，便又忘失了，贵在擒拿得住。	Can you remain like this constantly? Amid a thousand urgent tasks and a hundred confusions, can you be like this at a sudden moment of alertness? What is this called, and can you assume responsibility for it? All the powers of samādhi, wisdom, and precepts; the eighty-four thousand merits and virtues; and wondrous functions as numerous as the sands of the Ganges are all opened forth from this one point. Do not underestimate it. The moment a different state appears, you forget and lose it again. What is precious is being able to hold fast to it.
但一著意，又落能所比量，心又不息下，又非是也。是以功夫有两头难，一是下手必专一而咬定实在难，一则末后勿忘而活泼化解难。自必千练百练，使其纯熟而不死执。	But as soon as one deliberately attends to it, one again falls into the duality of subject and object and into comparative measurement; the mind no longer ceases, and that is not it either. Thus practice has two difficult ends. First, at the outset one must be single-minded and hold firmly to what is real—this is difficult. Second, at the end one must not forget it, while remaining lively and dissolving freely—this too is difficult. One must practice it a thousand times, a hundred times, until it becomes fully mature without becoming rigidly attached.
须知原本如是，不是我硬做成如是，所以极现成寻常的，却不可看轻他。然亦是极奇特，不易得到的，却不可执取他。不是一件物品，有得失成败的。然只坏在容	You must know that it is originally just so; it is not something I forcibly make to be so. Therefore, although it is utterly present and ordinary, you

易忘失，难以纯熟，难以老实，难以灵活，无他妙法，无他道理也。	must not take it lightly. Yet it is also exceedingly extraordinary and not easily attained, so you must not grasp at it. It is not an object that has gain and loss, success and failure. The only problem is that it is easily forgotten and lost, difficult to make mature, difficult to be honest about, and difficult to use flexibly. There is no other wondrous method and no other principle.
当慈悲于人，勿慈悲于己。对己不可原谅，不可放松，常见自己过，但亦勿太紧也。众生如失线风筝，随风而流，不知落向何处，只缘著有，所以如此。修道人又怕著空，不知怕即不曾空得，因此死得不透。故不到大死时，不得翻身活转来。其时法见未净，又恐执于勿著，又堕入坑中，翻身不得也。	Show compassion to others and be rigorous with yourself. Do not excuse yourself or relax your efforts; constantly see your own faults, yet do not become too tense. Sentient beings are like kites whose strings have broken: carried by the wind, they do not know where they will fall. This is because they cling to existence. Cultivators of the Way, moreover, fear clinging to emptiness; not knowing that such fear means they have never truly become empty, they therefore have not undergone the full ‘great death’ of Chan practice. Thus, unless one reaches a great death, one cannot turn oneself around and come alive again. At that point, if dharma-views have not been purified, one may fear attachment and become attached to not clinging, thereby falling into another pit from which one cannot turn around.
做官宦的人，时时把个功名心放在顶门上，做商贾的人，时时把个发财心放在顶门上，原属可笑。但今日之事，亦要如彼时时把个生死可怖心放在顶门上，方有少分相应处。但生死不是一怖即了事，莫在恐怖上打主意。	Officials constantly keep the thought of rank and fame foremost in their minds; merchants constantly keep the thought of making a fortune foremost in their minds. This is naturally laughable. Yet in the matter at hand, one must likewise keep the terrifying matter of birth and death constantly foremost in mind before there can be even a small degree of accord. But birth and death are not settled merely by one moment of fear. Do not make fear itself your main concern.
当先了达生死者毕竟是什么？如何而有生死，如何而出生死，再进而明白本无生死。以无生死，遂亦无涅　，渐渐脱卸净尽，自成佛道。	First, thoroughly understand what birth and death ultimately are; how birth and death arise; and how one transcends birth and death. Then proceed to understand that birth and death are originally nonexistent. Because there is no birth and death, there is consequently no nirvāṇa either. Gradually shedding everything until it is completely exhausted, one naturally accomplishes the Buddha Way.

无法可说，是有二义：一者、此非言说可表，以心行处，当体寂灭，更叫说个什么？心尚不有，口何能表，笔何能动，以法本缘起为幻也。	“There is no Dharma to be spoken” has two meanings. First, this cannot be expressed in words. It is the sphere in which mind functions, and in its very substance it is quiescent and extinguished—what further is there to say? Since mind itself is not present, how can the mouth express it or the pen move? For dharmas are fundamentally dependently arisen illusions.
二者、假有言说，亦得对人而施，如行路至何种程度，前进不能再进，于是请问为说；今路亦未走，前途究竟如何，全然不知，既无可问者，又叫说个什么？近来学人问法日少，为无所疑耶？抑毋庸问耶？不可知也。至初学者请示法要，所问不是太稚，亦多无用，引之入道，忽又滑去，真无可如何也。以彼不识货，不肯痛切，悠悠一世矣。	Second, even if there is provisionally speech, it must be given according to the person. If, while walking a road, one has reached a certain point and cannot advance further, then one asks and is given instruction. But if one has not even begun the road and knows absolutely nothing of what lies ahead, there is nothing one can ask; what then is there to say? Recently, students ask about the Dharma less and less. Is it because they have no doubts, or because there is no need to ask? This cannot be known. When beginners request the essential points of the Dharma, their questions are either too childish or largely useless. One leads them into the Way, and suddenly they slip away again; truly, there is nothing to be done. They do not recognize what is valuable and are unwilling to apply themselves earnestly, drifting through an entire lifetime.
宗下种种装模作样，如棒喝，举拂子，作女人拜，又说庭前柏树、麻三斤，以及呈诗说偈等等，都是应一时之机，非卖弄玄虚也。	The various affected poses in the Chan school—such as blows and shouts, raising a whisk, bowing like a woman, speaking of the cypress tree in the courtyard or three jin of flax, and presenting poems or speaking verses—are all responses to the needs of that particular moment. They are not displays of mysterious profundity.
倘对面无此机缘而作此语此态者，岂不成为笑话？凡诸大德，只老老实实，不肯随便打出，合机即予印示一语二语，使之通体舒适，如解其缚，如饮醍醐，不是学样可得。	If one used such words and gestures face-to-face with someone who lacked the corresponding potential, would it not become a joke? All great teachers are simply honest and straightforward; they do not casually strike out. When the occasion accords, they offer a brief word of confirmation, causing the whole person to feel at ease, as if unbound or as if drinking clarified butter. This cannot be attained by imitating appearances.
我人修者为心密，但只归入心地，证得此寂灭轻安之境，起诸无住自在之用，此即归宗，正不必多取诸法门	In our esoteric practice of the mind, we return to the mind-ground, realize the ease of quiescent

也。然亦非绝对不可学也，时未至也。	cessation, and learn to respond freely without abiding anywhere. This is returning to the source. There is truly no need to take up many Dharma gates. Yet it is not that they absolutely cannot be studied; the time has simply not yet arrived.
禅者，无法法也，若故立以为法者，与教又有何别？一句话头，乃不得已之引法，稍稍偏重，即落于教。六祖时南北二宗之分即在此。本来一切现成，既现成矣，即一切用不著。	Chan is a dharma of no dharmas. If one deliberately establishes it as a dharma, how is it any different from the teachings? A single huatou is an expedient method of guidance adopted only because there is no alternative; if one places even slightly too much emphasis upon it, one falls into the teachings. This was precisely the difference between the Southern and Northern schools in the time of the Sixth Patriarch. Originally, everything is fully present; since it is fully present, nothing at all is needed.
乃众生一切现成而不见，亦不会用，乃逼令自悟自觉，费许多事。后人执以为非此不可，自误误人，岂不可笑。是以语录等书，非得见性后，方许参阅，有诗句土白等看不懂者，即弃之，不作强解。且其中未必个个是彻，语病正多，他人衣帽原不合我体，至婢学夫人，尤不必耳。修道本以除习，今缚上加缚，有背印心之旨矣。	Yet sentient beings have everything fully present but do not see it and do not know how to use it. Thus they are compelled to awaken and realize for themselves, which entails much trouble. Later generations cling to the notion that they cannot do without these methods, misleading themselves and misleading others. Is that not laughable? Therefore books such as the recorded sayings may be consulted only after one has seen one’s nature. If there are poetic lines or colloquial expressions one cannot understand, discard them rather than force an interpretation. Moreover, not everyone in them necessarily attained thorough realization; there are many defects of expression. Other people’s clothes and hats were never suited to my body, and there is even less need to imitate a lady’s manner like a maidservant. Cultivating the Way is originally for removing habitual tendencies; now one adds bonds upon bonds, which goes against the intent of Mind-Seal.
修心密开悟者，各有其因缘也，法不居功，亦不受过，是在行者。惟数十年来，世人已不知学佛为何事，心法为何物，为欲打开此僵局，使修道者先明入佛归宗之正因，引之识本而已。	Those who awaken through cultivating heart esotericism each have their own causes and conditions. The Dharma claims no merit and accepts no blame; it depends on the practitioner. Yet for several decades, people in the world have no longer known what learning the Buddha is for, or what the mind Dharma is. The purpose is only to break open this deadlock: first enabling cultivators

	to understand the correct cause for entering the Buddha's path and returning to the source, and guiding them to recognize the original ground.
密法为世尊最后度生之一法，非具大福德善根者，无此因缘也。如人仗有利器，妄充力士，虽自身无力，却可与人斗力角胜，此即因缘也。故得之易，守之难，尤不可有丝毫自足骄慢之心。又凡与心密有缘者，皆夙世宗下苦行之士，今虽为之引开，亦容易启其夙世之旧习气，不可不知。	Esoteric Buddhism was one of the World-Honored One's final methods for liberating sentient beings. Those without great blessings, merit, and wholesome roots have no such causes and conditions. It is like someone who, relying on a sharp weapon, falsely passes himself off as a strongman: though he himself lacks strength, he can still contend with others and prevail. This, too, is causes and conditions. Therefore, it is easy to obtain but difficult to preserve, and one must especially not harbor the slightest sense of self-satisfaction or arrogance. Furthermore, all who have an affinity with heart esotericism were ascetic practitioners in the Chan school in past lives. Although they are now guided and opened up through it, their old habitual tendencies from past lives may also easily be stirred up. This must be understood.
佛法没些子，虽只一些，却千难万难。且道难在何处？若认错了，却又万难千难。须知借有法法，证无心心，寂灭轻安，敢云究竟？	The Buddha-Dharma is no small matter. Though it is but this one thing, it is exceedingly difficult. Tell me, where does the difficulty lie? If one recognizes it wrongly, it becomes difficult beyond measure. One must know how to use provisional methods to realize the mind of no-mind. Even if one attains the ease of quiescent cessation, how could one dare call it ultimate?
初学人宜令先究心之相貌，何者是心，要伊自悟自觉，逼之愈严，则根基愈坚。更令其觅心之起点，再令其观无心时之相貌，切勿轻许，非十二分认透不可。但必令先坐心中心法至少五百座，则印证有力，否则仍是虚浮耳。	Beginners should first be made to investigate the features of the mind: What is mind? They must awaken to it and recognize it for themselves. The more strictly they are pressed, the firmer their foundation becomes. They should further be instructed to seek the point at which the mind arises, and then to observe what it is like when there is no mind. Do not grant approval lightly; they must understand it completely. Yet they must first practice the Heart-of-Heart Dharma for at least five hundred meditation sessions. Only then will verification carry weight; otherwise, it will still be superficial.

如其人天性薄者，平居不知孝友者，纵使天资聪颖，极肯用功，此生必不能成就。即使能显法身，亦绝难起用。般若一开，业力随之而至，必吃苦磨练，不发大悲心度众生者，决难成就。此择人之难也。	If a person's innate disposition is shallow, and in ordinary life they do not know filial piety and fraternal respect, then even if they are highly intelligent and exceedingly diligent, they will certainly fail to accomplish the practice in this lifetime. Even if they can manifest the dharmakāya, it will still be extremely difficult for them to give expression to it in their actions. Once prajñā opens, karmic force will arrive with it, and they must undergo bitter hardships and tempering. Without arousing great compassion to liberate sentient beings, they will certainly find accomplishment difficult. This is the difficulty of selecting people.
修行人第一考其天性，第二观其福相，第三察其性灵，第四看其环境与因缘，方可决其成就之大小。外此者，不过种善根而已，今生希望极微。然忏悔痛改而肯补过者，尚须作有相功德以为辅，否则难胜其业力也。	In assessing a practitioner, first examine their innate disposition; second, observe the signs of their blessings; third, discern their spiritual capacity; fourth, consider their environment and causes and conditions. Only then can one determine the extent of their possible accomplishment. Apart from this, they merely plant wholesome roots, and there is very little hope in this lifetime. Yet those who repent deeply, reform thoroughly, and are willing to make amends must still undertake meritorious deeds with form as support; otherwise, they will find it difficult to overcome their karmic force.
有人云自感孤寂，不知孤则有之，寂则未也，能修到寂，便自不孤。倘真见寂静寂灭之相，则无处不怡然自得。宇宙一切，皆备于我，又何孤寂之有！	Some say that they feel lonely and desolate. They do not know that loneliness may indeed be present, but quiescence is not. If one can cultivate oneself to quiescence, one will naturally no longer be lonely. If one truly sees the aspect of tranquil quiescence and cessation, one will be content and at ease everywhere. The whole universe is complete within oneself; what loneliness or desolation could there be?
修道人虽已见性，习气未除，但与未见性人不同，以有办法也。然他人不测，每不信其见性而非难之；若自己见而未彻，亦往往疑及根本，以其力未充，遂云所证非是。此大误也。	Although practitioners who cultivate the Way may already have seen their nature, their habitual tendencies have not yet been eliminated. Still, they differ from those who have not seen their nature, because they have a method. Yet others cannot fathom this and often do not believe that they have seen their nature, criticizing them instead. If they themselves have seen it but not thoroughly, they too often come to doubt the very foundation,

	because their strength is not yet sufficient, and thus say that what they have realized is not right. This is a grave error.
初接人，先当知其落处，即知其病在何处。抓其痒处，打开其胶执，启发其新机，引入于究竟。不可有胜心，量力打一下，勿过重，难在恰当，这便是机用。	When first receiving someone, one must first know where they stand, and thus know where their ailment lies. Address what troubles them, open up their rigid attachments, inspire fresh potential in them, and lead them toward the ultimate. One must not harbor a sense of superiority. Administer a blow according to their capacity, and do not make it too heavy. The difficulty lies in hitting the mark precisely; this is the function of responding to a person's potential.
虽然，在今日环境之下，参禅是极不容易的事，即使一切条件具足圆满，而师资又安在？何况寿命无常，断不许你十年参证，三十年打成一片。吾师大愚阿阇黎以心中心密法传世后，人始得有容易归元之法。	Even so, under present-day conditions, investigating Chan is extremely difficult. Even if every condition were fully present, where are the qualified teacher and student? Moreover, life is impermanent; it certainly will not grant you ten years to investigate and realize, or thirty years to bring practice into an unbroken whole. After my teacher, Acharya Dayu, transmitted the Heart-of-Heart Esoteric Dharma to the world, people finally had an easier method for returning to the origin.
心中心密法，修满千座，必能证得三摩地，开启般若，见自本性，精进者至多三年有成。此法只要肯坐得住，即是有缘。并且要夙世参过禅，有般若根器者，格外相应。是以修此法时，与禅宗尤若契合，故世人以禅密称之。	With the Heart-of-Heart Esoteric Dharma, after completing one thousand meditation sessions, one will certainly realize samādhi, open prajñā, and see one's own intrinsic nature. The diligent may attain accomplishment in no more than three years. So long as one is willing to sit steadily, one has the necessary affinity for this Dharma. Those who investigated Chan in past lives and possess the capacity for prajñā are especially suited to it. Thus, when practicing this Dharma, it accords particularly well with the Chan school; for this reason, people call it Chan-Esoteric Buddhism.
但名称奇特可笑，须知二门各有立场，修法亦异。禅宗在无可下手处下手，末世业重者，无福消受，不易证入，纵使有所开悟，以不胜夙业故，必至狂荡不羁，为世厌恶。只有心中心密半仗佛力，稳稳当当。	But this name is strange and laughable. One must know that the two gates each have their own standpoint, and their methods of practice also differ. The Chan school begins where there is nowhere to begin. Those in the Dharma-ending age, burdened with heavy karma, lack the blessings to receive it and do not easily gain entry and realization. Even if they experience some

	awakening, because they cannot withstand their past karma, they will inevitably become wild and unrestrained, disliked by the world. Only the Heart-of-Heart Esoteric Dharma partly relies on the Buddha's power and proceeds steadily and securely.
至少一气修满五六百座，徐徐引开般若，使其自悟本来，见自本性，得自受用可矣，正不必学那禅门棒喝一套。是以本道场系承愚师之命，专传密印，不挂禅门招牌。	At the very least, one should practice continuously until completing five or six hundred meditation sessions, gradually opening prajñā so that one awakens for oneself to what is original, sees one's own intrinsic nature, and gains personal benefit. There is no need at all to imitate the Chan school's repertoire of blows and shouts. Therefore, acting on my teacher's instructions, this practice center transmits only the esoteric Mind-Seal and does not hang out the Chan school's signboard.
且余既未明教，亦不通宗，何敢以奇特言句惑人，只老实守住本分，来学者以心中心密，或其他密咒接引之，使因地正，知见正，自得证悟，如是而已。以前所谈，因学人来问作答，非谈禅宗也。	Moreover, I do not understand the doctrinal teachings clearly, nor am I conversant with the school traditions. How could I dare bewilder people with strange and striking words? I merely honestly keep to my proper role, guiding those who come to learn by means of the Heart-of-Heart Esoteric Dharma, or other esoteric mantras, so that their causal ground is correct and their views are correct, and they may naturally attain realization and awakening. That is all. What was discussed previously was in answer to students' questions; it was not a discussion of the Chan school.
禅无可谈，谈即不是，宗无可说，说即已离，当直向言语道断心行灭处体会，会得后，又莫执取了法见，以自误也。总之，一切言句，尽是戏论，说此一大套，正是我的罪过。	There is nothing to discuss about Chan; the moment you discuss it, you have missed it. There is nothing to say about the school; to speak of it is already to depart from it. One should directly experience the place where the path of words is cut off and mental activity ceases. Having understood it, do not then cling to a Dharma-view and mislead yourself. In short, all words and phrases are merely frivolous discourse. To have said this whole long account is precisely my own fault.