

Date: 10/05/2024 10/06/2024

Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

Topics:

1: Dharma talk: Bodhisattvas dread the cause, Mundane beings dread the retribution.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Snow Peas

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Stir-fried Lotus Root with Snow Peas

Main content:

1: Dharma talk: Bodhisattvas dread the cause, Mundane beings dread the retribution.

Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, everyone! The saying "Bodhisattvas dread the cause, mundane beings dread the retribution" reflects a key distinction between the perspectives of enlightened beings (Bodhisattvas) and ordinary people (mundane beings) concerning karma.

Bodhisattvas Dread the Cause

Bodhisattvas, who are beings on the path to enlightenment, understand the profound workings of karma—that every action, thought, and intention creates consequences. They "dread the cause" because they are deeply aware that unwholesome actions lead to suffering not only for themselves but for all beings. Therefore, they exercise great mindfulness and compassion, striving to avoid harmful actions (causes) that would result in negative karma. Their concern lies in preventing suffering at its root by cultivating positive intentions and actions.

In addition to this the Bodhisattvas, who have committed themselves to the path of awakening for the benefit of all beings, deeply understand the law of karma—where every action has consequences. They "dread the cause" because they are mindful of the seeds they plant through their thoughts, words, and actions. Knowing that unwholesome causes inevitably lead to future suffering, Bodhisattvas make a conscious effort to avoid negative actions at their root. They focus on cultivating wholesome, compassionate actions that lead to positive outcomes, not just for themselves, but for the world around them. By being vigilant about the "causes" they set in motion, they prevent suffering from arising in the future.

Mundane Beings Dread the Retribution

Mundane beings, those who are not yet awakened and caught in the cycles of samsara, tend to be more reactive than proactive. They typically become concerned about karma only when they experience its consequences—when "retribution" arrives in the form of suffering, misfortune, or difficulties. Rather than considering the causes of their suffering, they dread the negative retribution and often seek ways to avoid or escape it, without addressing the underlying actions that led to the situation. This short-term view focuses on avoiding pain in the present but does not necessarily lead to the deep understanding needed to change the patterns of karma.

Mundane beings, on the other hand, are less aware of the intricate connections between actions and their outcomes. Often, they do not consider the long-term consequences of their actions. Instead, they fear "retribution"—the results of their past actions—only when suffering or difficulties arise in their lives. This reactive mindset focuses on avoiding immediate discomfort or misfortune without recognizing the importance of addressing the underlying causes of suffering through mindful and ethical conduct.

This saying highlights the difference in awareness and practice between those who aspire to enlightenment and those who remain caught in samsara (the cycle of birth and death). Bodhisattvas focus on cultivating good causes—generosity, kindness, wisdom—while mundane beings often remain preoccupied with avoiding or mitigating the consequences of negative karma after it has already manifested. The teaching encourages practitioners to shift their attention from merely fearing retribution to diligently avoiding harmful causes, thus breaking the cycle of suffering.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Snow Peas

In the context of a Buddhist diet, snow peas symbolize simplicity and mindfulness. They are often used in traditional monastic meals for their seasonal freshness and are considered a "pure" food, meaning they are gentle on the digestive system and free of heavy processing. Snow peas grow quickly, making them an ideal crop for those following a mindful, sustainable approach to agriculture.

Health Benefits of Snow Peas

Snow peas are an excellent addition to a Buddhist vegetarian diet, valued for their light, crisp texture and nutrient density. These peas are known for their health-promoting properties:

Rich in Vitamins: Snow peas are packed with vitamins, especially vitamin C, which supports immune health, and vitamin K, which is essential for bone health and blood clotting.

Folate Content: Folate, important for cell division and growth, is also present in snow peas, contributing to overall wellness, especially during periods of rapid growth or recovery.

Additionally, snow peas are part of a balanced vegetarian diet that nourishes the body without causing harm to living beings, aligning with Buddhist values of compassion. Their light, unprocessed nature reflects the Buddhist principle of moderation and mindful eating, helping to maintain both physical and spiritual health.

By incorporating snow peas into their meals, practitioners enjoy a nutritious food that fosters harmony with nature and upholds the virtues of non-harming and mindfulness.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Stir-fried Lotus Root with Snow Peas



Ingredients:

1 medium lotus root (about 200g), peeled and thinly sliced
150g snow peas, trimmed
1 small carrot, thinly sliced (optional for color)
1 tsp fresh ginger, minced
2 tbsp sesame oil (or vegetable oil)
1 tbsp soy sauce (or tamari for gluten-free)
1 tbsp rice vinegar
1 tsp sesame seeds (optional, for garnish)
Salt and pepper to taste

Steps:**1. Prep the Vegetables:**

Peel and thinly slice the lotus root into 1/8-inch thick rounds.

Trim the snow peas and slice the carrot thinly (if using).

Soak the lotus root slices in water with a splash of vinegar or lemon juice for about 5-10 minutes to prevent discoloration.

2. Blanch the Lotus Root:

Bring a pot of water to a boil and briefly blanch the lotus root slices for about 2 minutes. This helps them retain their crunch and removes any bitterness. Drain and set aside.

3. Stir-fry the Vegetables:

Heat the sesame oil in a large pan or wok over medium heat.

Add the ginger, sautéing for 1-2 minutes until fragrant.

Add the blanched lotus root, snow peas, and carrots (if using). Stir-fry for 3-4 minutes, keeping the vegetables crisp and colorful.

4. Season and Finish:

Add the soy sauce and rice vinegar to the stir-fry and toss to coat the vegetables evenly.

Stir-fry for another 1-2 minutes, seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

5. Serve:

Remove from heat and garnish with sesame seeds if desired.