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Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

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Topics:

1: Dharma Talk: The Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha Chapter 3 - Supreme Enlightenment

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Tea Tree Mushroom

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1: Dharma Talk: The Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha Chapter 3 - Supreme Enlightenment

Hello everyone! Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, I am Hao Liu! Today, I would like to share the Dharma Talk topic: The Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha Chapter 3 – Supreme Enlightenment. Siddhartha's resolve became even stronger and his mind even more tranquil. He entered deep states of meditation, attaining the state of non-thought. Enlightenment was just on the horizon, about to appear before his eyes. In a deep state of meditation, Siddhartha was able to perceive the experiences of all his previous lives. He came to know where he had been born, what he had been called, and what he had done before. A history of millions of births and deaths became clearly known to him. Siddhartha realized that all beings had undergone many births and deaths over limitless time, sometimes as parents, sometimes as children, sometimes as teachers, and sometimes as students, all beings interconnected by causes and conditions. It is only because our vision is clouded by our present circumstances that we fail to see that all beings have once been our family. Such people are bound by fame, gain, and desire and lose all concern for others. As he meditated upon the truth of equality between friend and foe, the prince's heart filled with compassion.

Siddhartha now saw all phenomena clearly in his mind, and truly understood all things. He saw that birth and death were one and the same, that there was no need for attachment. The prince's mind and life expanded, uniting with the universe. For so long the prince had felt that affliction was an incomprehensible force. Why did afflictions arise? As the origins of afflictions clearly surfaced in the prince's mind, he was finally able to feel joy. The prince examined his thoughts, and then he knew: he had attained unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment. There could be no mistake. He had let go of time and place, he had let go of all things, and was finally able to see with no discrimination. He now knew all things clearly. No longer was he asleep, he felt awake. He was enlightened. This was liberation.

He was no longer the prince. He had become the Buddha, the awakened one. After attaining enlightenment, the Buddha also acquired the five eyes²⁰ and six supernatural powers. ²¹ As he looked upon the world, he understood that all beings drift within the six realms of existence,²² floating in the great sea of birth and death. Beings in all six realms of existence immerse themselves in hollow,

insubstantial lives. Some are pure, others impure; some are good, others bad. When these beings pass away they are reborn in accordance with their karma among the six realms of existence. The Buddha came to understand the Dharma, the truth of the universe. After carefully observing the world he knew that all things arise through causes and conditions, and that aging, illness, and death were no different. The Buddha inclined his mind to understanding the causes and conditions of suffering, and recognized that suffering arose from a twelve step cycle he would later call the "twelve links of dependent origination." Why do beings undergo aging, illness, and death? The Buddha saw that these arise with birth as a condition. It is because they are born that they must die. Why is there birth? Birth is an effect of the collective wholesome and unwholesome actions of the past. Birth is not the miraculous work of some divine being. Birth is not special, separate, and independent from other things, it arises just like everything else due to causes. It is just as when a segment of bamboo is damaged it affects the other segments. These causes which lead to birth are called "becoming;" and they are the result of "clinging:"

Clinging is the fuel that ignites the fire of becoming, and where does this fuel come from? Craving is like a spark that sets the plains ablaze. Where does craving come from? Craving arises from feeling. One who feels pain wants relief, just as one who feels thirst or hunger wishes for sustenance-this is the craving that arises from feeling. Where does feeling come from? Feeling arises from contact. "Contact" refers to the contact between our senses and the outside world. Thus, contact arises from our six sense organs, our eyes, ears, noses, tongues, bodies, and minds. Where do these six sense organs come from? They originate from "name and form:"²³ Name and form are like sprouts, and the six sense organs are like stems and leaves: stems and leaves gradually grow from sprouts. Where do name and form come from? They come from consciousness, for consciousness is like the seed that produces the sprout of name and form. However, sometimes consciousness grows from name and form, and other times name and form grow from consciousness.

In the same way that one can ride a raft on a river to move forward, while one must drag a raft across land to proceed, at times consciousness may give rise to name and form and at others name and form may give rise to consciousness as both go onward together. Consciousness springs from name and form, and name and form grows from the six senses. This is "mental formation:" But what is the cause of mental formation? Its cause is ignorance, the fundamental cause of birth and death. From ignorance to mental formations, from mental formations to consciousness, from consciousness to name and form, from name and form to the six sense organs, from the six sense organs to contact, from contact to feeling, from feeling to craving, from craving to clinging, from clinging to becoming. From becoming comes birth, from birth comes aging and death. In this way all beings travel the cycle of birth and death and endure suffering. All beings and all phenomena originate from causes and conditions. After persevering through immense hardship, the Buddha finally realized this sublime and subtle truth.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Tea Tree Mushroom

Tea Tree Mushrooms are not only a delicious and versatile ingredient in many dishes but also fit well within a Buddhist diet, which often emphasizes simplicity, plant-based foods, and nourishing meals for both body and mind. In Buddhist cuisine, the focus is on maintaining balance, promoting health, and adhering to principles such as non-violence and mindfulness.

Health Benefits of Tea Tree Mushrooms in a Buddhist Diet

Rich in Nutrients:

Protein: Tea Tree mushrooms are an excellent plant-based source of protein, which is essential for muscle repair, immune function, and overall body health.

Vitamins: These mushrooms contain important vitamins like B-vitamins (B1, B2, B3, and B5), which support energy production and metabolism.

Minerals: Tea Tree mushrooms provide essential minerals, including potassium, magnesium, and phosphorus, which are important for heart health, bone strength, and fluid balance.

Low in Calories and Fat:

Like many mushrooms, Tea Tree mushrooms are low in calories and fat, making them ideal for those seeking a lighter, healthier meal while still feeling satisfied.

This is important for maintaining a healthy body, which is in line with Buddhist practices of moderation and balance.

Boosts Immunity:

Mushrooms, including Tea Tree varieties, contain beta-glucans, compounds that are known to enhance immune function. They can help the body fight infections and support overall vitality, which is key in maintaining well-being on a Buddhist diet.

These mushrooms are also rich in antioxidants, which help neutralize free radicals and reduce inflammation in the body.

Supports Digestion:

Tea Tree mushrooms have a good amount of fiber, which aids in digestion and helps maintain a healthy gut. This contributes to overall vitality and energy levels, aligning with the Buddhist principle of health as a holistic, interconnected system.

The fiber helps promote regular bowel movements, which is crucial for detoxification and physical balance.

Promoting Qi Flow (Traditional Chinese Medicine perspective):

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), foods like mushrooms are thought to help promote the flow of Qi (life force energy) in the body. Tea Tree mushrooms, as a medicinal food, can be seen as nourishing to the "spleen" and "stomach," organs thought to be critical for digestion and energy production.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Tea Tree Mushroom Fried Snow Peas



Ingredients:

100g dried tea tree mushrooms

150g snow peas, trimmed

1 tbsp vegetable oil (or sesame oil for extra flavor)

1 tbsp light soy sauce

1 tsp oyster sauce (optional)

Salt, to taste

1/4 cup water or vegetable broth

Steps:

1. Rehydrate the Mushrooms:

Soak dried tea tree mushrooms in warm water for 30–45 minutes until soft.

Drain and rinse thoroughly to remove any grit. Trim off any tough stems.

2. Blanch the Snow Peas (optional for brighter color and better texture):

Boil water, add snow peas, blanch for 30 seconds, then transfer to an ice bath.

3. Stir-Fry:

Heat oil in a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat.

Stir-fry for 10–15 seconds until fragrant.

Add rehydrated tea tree mushrooms and stir-fry for 2–3 minutes.

Add snow peas, soy sauce, oyster sauce (if using), and water/broth.

Stir-fry for another 2 minutes until everything is well coated and peas are tender-crisp.

4. Taste and Adjust:

Add a pinch of salt if needed, or a splash more soy sauce for depth.

5. Serve:

Plate and serve hot with steamed rice or as part of a multi-dish meal.