

Date: 07/25/2026 07/26/2026

Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

Teacher: Hao Liu

Topics:

1: Dharma Talk: Dharma arises from the mind — Transform the Mind, Transform Your Life

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Olive Oil

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Roasted Vegetables with Olive Oil

Main content:

1: Dharma Talk:

Hello everyone! Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, I am Hao Liu! Today, I would like to share the Dharma Talk topic: Dharma arises from the mind — Transform the Mind, Transform Your Life.

Many people ask,

"Can my destiny be changed?"

Some believe that life is controlled entirely by fate. Others believe that success or failure depends only on external circumstances.

The Buddha offered a different teaching.

He taught that while we inherit the results of past karma, our present thoughts, intentions, and actions create the causes for our future.

In other words, when the mind changes, our life begins to change.

The Śūraṅgama Sūtra teaches that all confusion and awakening arise from the mind. Delusion binds us, while wisdom frees us. The difference is not in the world around us, but in how the mind sees and responds.

Similarly, the Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch reminds us:

"Originally, there is not a single thing."

This famous teaching does not deny the existence of the world. Rather, it points to the truth that our original nature is pure, and that greed, anger, and ignorance are not our true essence. When these defilements are removed, our innate wisdom naturally shines forth.

The Story of the Poor Woman's Lamp

One day, a wealthy king made a magnificent offering of thousands of oil lamps to the Buddha.

Among the crowd was a poor woman who possessed almost nothing.

With the few coins she had, she bought a small amount of oil and offered a single lamp before the Buddha.

Materially, her offering was insignificant compared to the king's.

Yet her heart was filled with unwavering faith and sincere devotion.

After the ceremony, the lamps gradually burned out.

Only the poor woman's lamp continued to shine throughout the night.

The monks tried to extinguish it, but the flame would not go out.

The Buddha explained that the light endured because it was sustained by the purity of her faith and the sincerity of her intention.

The story teaches us that in Buddhism, the value of an offering is not measured by its size, but by the mind with which it is given.

A small act performed with great compassion may carry immeasurable merit.

The Story of Anāthapiṇḍika

Another inspiring example is Anāthapiṇḍika, one of the Buddha's greatest lay disciples.

He was a wealthy merchant, but what made him truly remarkable was not his wealth—it was his compassion.

He used his resources to care for the poor, support the Sangha, and create opportunities for countless people to hear the Dharma.

His most famous act of generosity was purchasing Prince Jeta's grove—at an enormous cost—to build Jetavana Monastery, one of the Buddha's principal residences during His ministry.

His generosity transformed not only the lives of others but also his own heart.

His wealth became a vehicle for wisdom rather than attachment.

The Buddha praised generosity because it purifies greed and opens the heart.

When the mind changes, even material possessions become instruments of compassion.

Transform the Mind, Transform Your Destiny

People often hope that changing jobs, moving to another city, or acquiring more possessions will automatically bring happiness.

Sometimes these changes help.

But lasting peace does not come from changing circumstances alone.

It comes from changing the mind.

When anger is transformed into patience, relationships improve.

When greed is transformed into generosity, life becomes abundant.

When fear is transformed into wisdom, confidence naturally arises.

Our destiny is not determined by a single event.

It is shaped by countless thoughts, words, and actions that we cultivate each day.

Every wholesome thought plants a wholesome seed.

Every act of kindness creates positive causes.

Every moment of mindfulness changes the direction of our lives.

Little by little, our future is transformed.

Throughout these four Dharma talks, we have reflected on one essential truth:

The Dharma arises from the mind.

The mind shapes our experience.

The mind creates our actions.

The mind influences our future.

When the mind is purified, the world appears differently.

When the mind is transformed, our destiny also changes.

The Buddha never promised a life without difficulties.

He showed us something far greater:

A mind filled with wisdom and compassion can transform every difficulty into an opportunity for awakening.

Let us begin with this very moment.

May we guard our thoughts, purify our intentions, cultivate loving-kindness, and develop wisdom in our daily lives.

As our minds become brighter, our families become more harmonious.

As our families become more harmonious, our communities become more peaceful.

As more hearts awaken, the world itself becomes a better place.

May we always remember:

When the mind changes, life changes.

When the mind is pure, the Pure Land is here.

May all beings be free from suffering, cultivate wisdom and compassion, and attain perfect enlightenment.

Namo Amitābha Buddha.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Olive Oil

In Buddhist vegetarian cuisine, food emphasizes simplicity, natural flavors, and balance. The appropriate use of healthy plant-based oils can enrich vegetarian dishes while maintaining the principles of a simple and wholesome diet. Olive oil is one such natural oil that has become an important choice in modern healthy eating because of its unique aroma and nutritional value.

Olive oil is made by pressing the fruit of the olive tree. Extra virgin olive oil, in particular, is produced with minimal processing, preserving the natural aroma and beneficial plant compounds of olives. It has a delicate fruity fragrance and smooth flavor, making it suitable for salads, roasting, light stir-frying, and preparing vegetarian sauces.

From a health perspective, olive oil is rich in monounsaturated fatty acids, especially oleic acid, and is a key component of the Mediterranean diet. It also contains natural plant compounds such as polyphenols and vitamin E. Replacing some sources of saturated fats with olive oil in moderation can help support a balanced and nutritious dietary pattern.

When preparing vegetarian meals, olive oil enhances the aroma and natural flavors of vegetables, legumes, and grains, adding richness and depth to simple dishes. For example, roasting pumpkin, cauliflower, broccoli, or root vegetables with olive oil allows the natural sweetness of the ingredients to develop while maintaining a light and pleasant taste.

From the perspective of Buddhist food culture, olive oil represents the wisdom of moderation and appreciation. A small amount of high-quality oil can help the body absorb fat-soluble nutrients while reminding us not to seek excess, but instead to appreciate the natural flavors found in simple meals.

Although olive oil is nutritious, it is still a type of fat and contains calories, so it should be used in moderation. Choosing high-quality extra virgin olive oil and avoiding prolonged high-temperature cooking can better preserve its natural flavor and nutritional qualities.

A drop of olive oil connects us with the gifts of the earth, sunlight, and nature. In Buddhist vegetarian cuisine, it is not merely a cooking ingredient, but also a reminder of a simple lifestyle, respect for nature, and gratitude for food. Cooking with a pure heart and eating with gratitude allows us to cultivate health and inner peace through everyday meals.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Roasted Vegetables with Olive Oil



Ingredients:

- 200 g broccoli florets
- 200 g cauliflower florets
- 2 carrots, cut into chunks
- 1 zucchini, sliced into thick rounds
- 1 bell pepper, cut into pieces
- 150 g cherry tomatoes
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper (optional)
- 1 teaspoon rosemary (optional)

Steps:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Wash all the vegetables and cut them into evenly sized pieces.
3. Place the vegetables in a large bowl. Add the olive oil, salt, black pepper, and herbs (if using), then toss gently until all the
4. vegetables are evenly coated.
5. Spread the vegetables in a single layer on a parchment-lined
6. baking tray, making sure they are not overcrowded so they roast evenly.
7. Roast for 25–35 minutes, turning the vegetables once halfway through, until they are tender and lightly browned around the edges.
8. Remove from the oven and, if desired, drizzle with a little extra virgin olive oil before serving.