



SECRETS TO EFFORTLESS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

The Supreme Master Ching Hai

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The Supreme Master Ching Hai International
Association Publishing Company



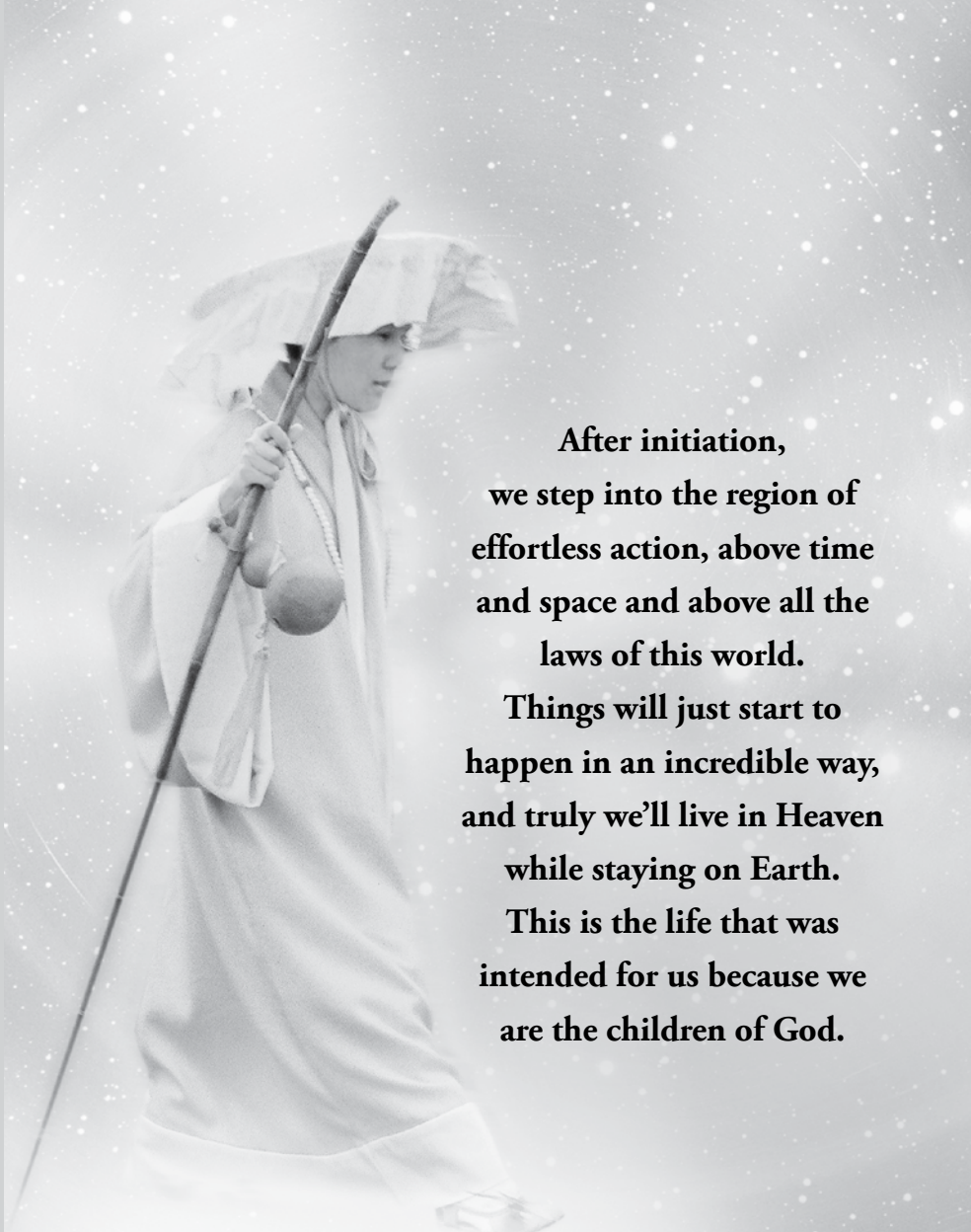
DEAREST BELOVED,

New Year comes,
I greet you with afresh enthusiasm and expectation for
the beginning of a great new spiritual awakening.

May your days be filled with wonders and happiness,
love and wisdom.

May the blessing of God be your most treasured
prosperity in the new chapter of Life.

(Master's New Year's Wishes to All in 2003)



**After initiation,
we step into the region of
effortless action, above time
and space and above all the
laws of this world.**

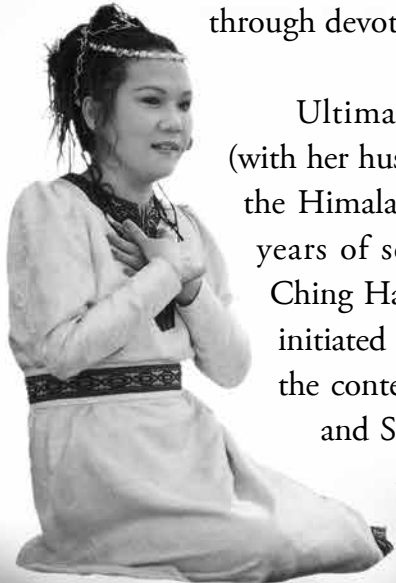
**Things will just start to
happen in an incredible way,
and truly we'll live in Heaven
while staying on Earth.**

**This is the life that was
intended for us because we
are the children of God.**

Brief Biography of Supreme Master Ching Hai

Supreme Master Ching Hai was born in central Au Lac and moved to England during Her youth, eventually settling in Germany, where She helped refugees and immigrants as a Red Cross interpreter. She later married a German physician, lived as a householder and all the while pursued Her lifelong quest for spiritual enlightenment through devotional prayer and study.

Ultimately, She left Her marriage (with her husband's blessing) and went to the Himalayas to seek the Truth. After years of searching, Supreme Master Ching Hai found a living Master, was initiated into the Quan Yin Method - the contemplation of the inner Light and Sound, our true essence - and attained full enlightenment.



Since that time, in response to the sincere requests of Truth seekers, She has circled the globe teaching meditation and engaging in humanitarian work with refugees, disaster victims and the needy, supporting Herself and Her spiritual group through creative work and the publication of Her lectures, music and poetry. Her unceasing efforts to enhance the spiritual and physical well-being of humankind have earned Her recognition from numerous governments and organizations.

Like most of us, Supreme Master Ching Hai was not enlightened from birth, but for years lived a worldly life. However, since Her enlightenment She has come to know the Heavenly Realms firsthand and is ready to guide Her fellow human beings to true God Realization, offering free initiation into the Quan Yin Method to all. As one of Her book titles states, if you are ready, She has “come to take you Home.”

Foreword

Quan Yin Method practitioners are the luckiest people in the world! Not only have we learned a priceless technique that enables us to attain eternal liberation in one lifetime, but we have acquired it from a true living Master. However the way back to our Heavenly Home is full of obstacles and temptations. So we may often ask ourselves: “How can I safely and smoothly fulfill my destiny?” But there is no need to worry: Our merciful Master offers us many helpful tips derived from Her personal experience that serve as practical and effective tools to assist us along the spiritual path. If we keep these guidelines in mind and apply them in our daily practice, we will gain tremendous help in overcoming Maya’s temptations and other worldly problems until we finally arrive safely Home.

There are secrets to success in all types of mundane affairs, and the same is true of spiritual endeavors. When we learn these secrets, we will spend less time and energy in our practice and attain the same results more quickly. The wish to facilitate these efforts and remind ourselves of the many pearls of wisdom uttered by Master over the years, has resulted in this collection. As Master says, “I have searched high and low, and I know there is nothing better than what I have taught you.”

Thank you, Master, for giving us such invaluable spiritual treasures.



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In speaking of God or the Supreme Spirit, Master instructs us to use original non-sexist terms to avoid the argument about whether God is a She or a He.

She + He = Hes (as in Bless)

Her + Him = Hirm (as in Firm)

Hers + His = Hiers (as in Dear)

Example: When God wishes, Hes makes things happen according to Hiers will to suit Hirmself.

As a creator of artistic designs as well as a spiritual teacher, Supreme Master Ching Hai loves all expressions of inner beauty. It is for this reason that She refers to Vietnam as "Au Lac" and Taiwan as "Formosa." Au Lac is the ancient name of Vietnam and means "happiness." And the name Formosa reflects more completely the beauty of the island and its people. Master feels that using these names brings spiritual elevation and luck to the land and its inhabitants.



Ten
Secrets
on the
Journey
of the
Soul

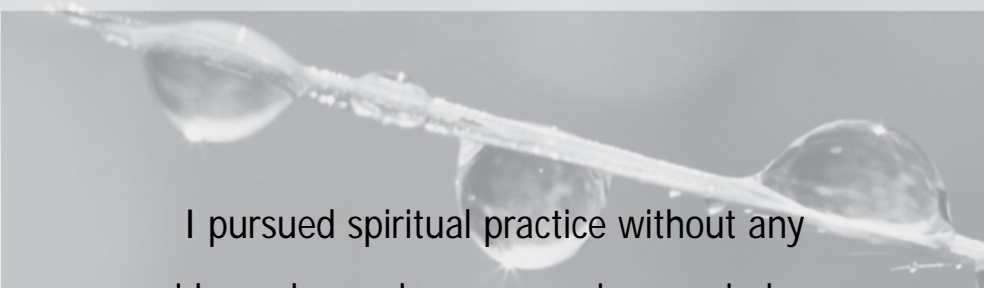


Focus on the Truth

How Master Attained the Ultimate Truth



When a Master comes to Earth, not only are the disciples uplifted and shown wisdom, but the whole race of humankind is purified and uplifted to a certain higher level of consciousness.

A close-up photograph of a thin, light-colored stem with several clear, spherical water droplets of varying sizes attached to it. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

I pursued spiritual practice without any ideas, demands or person in my mind ...

Even if you asked me to die
for the Truth at that time,
I would have done it
as I was not attached to anything
in the world.



✿ All I Had Was Pure Sincerity ✿

As I recall, there was no secret behind my attainment of the Truth. All I had then was pure sincerity. I pursued spiritual practice without any ideas, demands or person in my mind. I was naturally like that. Even if you asked me to die for the Truth at that time, I would have done it as I wasn't attached to anything in the world. Whether I had food or not I persisted in my spiritual practice. I never complained, nor was I distracted from the Truth by food.

I remember, when I was in India, I offered all my money to the so-called masters that I met so I was left without a penny. I never anticipated that I might sometimes yearn to have some biscuits,

candy or ice cream. I had a better appetite at that time and ate a lot each day. Since I had no money then, every day I dreamt crazily about having some biscuits, but I couldn't get any. Only when I occasionally went out with people would I swallow anything I was offered like a hungry ghost. Even then, those things didn't distract me from my aspiration for the Truth. That's the only quality of mine that I can remember, and that's why God loved me, and let me have a taste of what the "Truth" is like.

Therefore, I want to impart this secret way to you. Should we want to attain the Truth quickly, apart from securing an experienced master, we also need to have a sincere aspiration for the Truth; then it's enough. God doesn't require us to offer money, or to be a pure vegan. We observe a vegan diet to reduce our obstacles, and to refrain



from incurring blood debts. However, God never imposes harsh demands of any kind on us.

For instance, when we go to school, the teachers never demand that we go to bed late, get up early, or learn this or that. They don't make harsh demands on us, but as students, we know that we can't study well unless we get up early and go to bed late. Also, when we're studying, we refrain from indulging in pleasures. Didn't we have a tough time when we were students? We sacrificed everything, and pleasures were very rare. Only occasionally would we go to dances or parties; we couldn't go every day. It wasn't because our professors or teachers forbade us, but we knew we must not be lazy and that this was the way to successful learning. If we were sluggish, we'd have to stay another year, or fail the exams.

✿ Focus on the Truth ✿

We spiritual practitioners also have to follow some secret guidelines; for instance, being a vegan to keep our body, speech and mind pure. Free from the annoyance of subtle guilty feelings, our conscience will be at peace. We also have to take good care of the family and observe monogamy. Why? Because if there is turbulence and bad feelings within the family we can hardly continue with our spiritual practice. Our minds will be distracted, and we can't focus on spiritual cultivation. The precepts are there to help us, to give us more time to concentrate, just like when we're studying in school.



Another example is that we should refrain from watching bad movies and reading erotic publications. This is meant to prevent us from getting stimulated, and then forgetting our inner Self and our aspiration for the Truth. Keeping the precepts alone will not take us to Godhood. No! no! no! Let me cite another example: A student never goes dancing or indulges in pleasures, but can he graduate without studying? He can't! These are only helpful ways. In the same sense, you won't reach Godhood by merely keeping the precepts, being a vegan or chanting the scriptures. At the most, you can only acquire some knowledge and know more about ethics. Attaining Godhood requires an entirely different lesson of training yourself to discover and dig out your treasure from within.

✿ Total Surrender ✿

So when you've reached Godhood, perhaps I won't comment anymore about what you should do, but not now. Now you still have to follow the rules and train yourself to be disciplined. Otherwise, you'll be distracted and won't be able to concentrate on the ultimate goal. As a new spiritual practitioner, you had better keep the precepts strictly to build up your faith in the Truth. Therefore, don't ask me, "Why are You so strict?" I'm not strict! I just offer you the secret ways of spiritual practice. If we're too casual in spiritual practice, it will be difficult for us to learn the supreme techniques; so new practitioners should follow the teacher's instructions. It's very difficult to follow the Master's instructions. You all think that you can do it, but you may fail when a test comes.



It's written in an Indian scripture: The Muslim commandment says that not only should you not consume alcohol, but even your clothes and your prayer rug must not be placed near alcohol. However, there's another saying that goes, "If your Enlightened Master tells you to soak all your clothes in alcohol, you must comply." This means that you must do whatever the teacher tells you, and this is really difficult! There's an ancient Chinese saying that states, "Upon entering a temple, you should offer your actions, speech and thoughts to the Dragon God Dharma Guards," which means total surrender. When you're totally free of your own ideas, ego and human prejudices and thoughts, you've reached the state of total renunciation. However, it's very difficult; from my observation, very few people have passed this test.

✿ **Your Heart Has to Be as Pure as a Child's** ✿

When I was in India, I once met a world-renowned master. I was coughing very severely, perhaps because I was allergic to dust. When I was there, I swept the floor every day. I observed that no one else was willing to do the job, and the staircase was filthy and heavily covered with dust. Even the screens on the windows were very dusty, so I cleaned them thoroughly. Perhaps I didn't take good care of myself when sweeping the dust so it went into my lungs and made me cough for several months. I coughed until I felt like my lungs were going to explode and I couldn't stand it anymore, as if I would die very soon. Day and night I coughed and could neither sleep nor meditate. Then, the master there summoned me. I believed in him very much then; I believed in



every master. (Master laughs.) Strangely, I had extraordinary faith. Whenever people said that someone was an Enlightened Master, I would believe it without testing him. That was how I treated all the masters I met.

At that time, I happened to believe in this master. He summoned me when he noticed that I was coughing very severely. I thought he would give me a secret remedy to stop my coughing, perhaps by using some miraculous power. When I went in, he asked me to drink a cup of liquid. After I drank it, they checked the bottle. Then, both he and his attendant turned green. They were shocked. Oh, no! It was massage oil! I drank a large cupful of it. It was good enough that I didn't die from it. I must have had very strong life power. Both of them were pale and frightened, but they didn't let me know it; I found out later.

After that, they came every day to ask me: "Are you feeling OK?" I said, "Why? I'm all right." (Master laughs.) However, I felt really awful when I drank that medicine; I felt so bad that I wanted to vomit, but I didn't dare. How could I throw up the medicine given by a master? I regurgitated and swallowed it again several times until I swallowed it all. Phew! It was really terrible! It was sticky, spicy, bitter and oily. Good grief! I had never drunk any medicine that tasted so bad. Only later did I find out that they had given me the wrong thing. Yet I still didn't doubt him and stayed on for quite a while. Other ordinary people might have said, "He can't be an Enlightened Master! If he is, why did he give you the wrong medicine and almost kill you?" But no suspicion was aroused in me!



Most probably because I was so simple at heart and so dumb, God became more merciful toward me and let me realize the Truth sooner. I have very few secret ways. All I have are these very simple, easy ways, and I've told you all of them. Should you want to attain the Truth, your heart has to be as pure as a child's; be pure and simple in doing everything then you'll soon attain the Truth. If you're complicated, dispute too much, debate too much, think too much about right and wrong, and take victory and defeat too seriously, don't blame me if you're very slow in attaining the Truth; your frustrations are self-created.

✿ **A Temporary Paradise** ✿

There's nothing really serious about the world. Sooner or later we'll all die, and our graves will be covered by plants in no time. So, before we enter our graves, we should try our best to live more happily, do what we love to do, and do it wholeheartedly; serve the world, take care of ourselves, take care of the family; enjoy all the beautiful things that the world provides for us. Sometimes ugly things are also a kind of lesson and have their beautiful aspects. When we observe things through more enlightened eyes, we discern beauty in everything. Have you noticed how pretty frogs are? They're very cute, aren't they? We can see the lovely side in everything. Sometimes ugly things also have their lovely aspects and are educational.



Therefore, let's do our best to treat this world as a temporary paradise, and treat all the people around us as Gods and enlightened beings. Although they don't recognize themselves as such, we should still respect them and treat them as we would ourselves; be strict but also forgiving; be loving but also detached. Then we'll be more relaxed in our actions, speech and thoughts and we'll naturally attain the Truth by practicing in this way.

Don't rush, don't be nervous, and don't force yourselves. It doesn't matter what level we've arrived at as it differs among individuals. By and by, everyone will understand. I can only promise you that you won't have to come back to suffer in this world, won't go to hell, won't become animals, and will definitely ascend. However, the level that you reach depends on your confidence and sincerity in your quest for the Truth. You can't



hold me responsible; I can only guide and teach you. It's up to you to go slower or faster, and keep yourself going in the right direction or the wrong one.¹

¹ Spoken by Supreme Master Ching Hai, Hsihu Group Meditation, Formosa, April 9, 1991 (Originally in Chinese)

Total Faith in the Master



When we meditate we should be sincere, so sincere that it's as if we're meditating for the last time, or as if we're to die the next day, or in five minutes. If we have this attitude in our heart when meditating we'll have achievement.

I completely placed myself –
my thoughts, words and actions –
and my life –
past, present and future –
in the hands of my Master.
So I felt safe, like a baby.



✿ **My Only Secret Is My Naivety!** ✿

I can't speak about the secret of my spiritual practice. The fact is that I have no secret. Perhaps the only secret is my naivety! God looks after naive people. Because they're as helpless as a baby, everyone wants to protect them. When we see an abandoned and helpless baby, we quickly pick him up even if we're not his parents. Seeing him cry, we pat him. Seeing that he's hungry, we quickly feed him. This is because a baby is too innocent and clumsy. Therefore, everyone wants to look after him.

Perhaps my secret is just "naivety." When we're very naive, God takes care of us. Then we're always by His side, because He will not leave us. We're just too naive. We'll die if He leaves us.

We look after a baby who is too little, innocent and unable to do anything, and are constantly by his side, protecting him twenty-four hours a day. If we're like babies, then we're together with God always, and everything is done by the "grown-up."

I rely on God's power to transmit the Truth to you. Everything I do is done by God, not by this layperson. It's safer, because the layperson may make mistakes, but God will not. As the saying goes, "The wise person looks like a fool." If we're foolish to that degree, God can't ignore us. He will do everything, and we won't err.



✿ My Master Knows All ✿

When I was a disciple and was misunderstood or framed by fellow practitioners, I would just ignore them. I thought, “My Master knows all. He’ll handle it.” I had great faith and didn’t complain or try to explain myself. I completely placed myself - my thoughts, words and actions - and my life - past, present and future - in the hands of my Master. So I felt safe, like a baby, without having to do anything on my own initiative. Perhaps this is my secret. At that time I felt very safe without having to take responsibility. Therefore, I was very relaxed, with no sorrow or worries, “because my Master knows all. He’s the greatest.” I felt like that in my heart.



I’ve never felt sorrow until now. Previously things were perfect when, as a student, I left everything to my Master’s arrangements. There



was nothing to complain about because I knew in my heart that He would take care of me. This is the only secret I have: total faith. If you don't have faith in me, then have faith in the highest God, the highest Buddha. He can see all the actions of us sentient beings and will take care of everything. He really will! ²

² Spoken by Supreme Master Ching Hai, Six-day Retreat, Hsiu, Formosa, February 13-18, 1989 (Originally in Chinese)



When the Enlightened Master sees us, She immediately knows where we need reparation, and how to do it, in a stern or gentle way. Therefore, if we follow a Master for spiritual practice, we should respect Her instructions and completely offer our actions, speech and thoughts to Her. If our commitment is half-given, then don't blame the Master when we fail to achieve something. The Master gives us half when we ask for half, and gives us all when we ask for all.