

Religious participation and the perceived well-being of seniors in Hong Kong

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the perceived well-being of seniors in Hong Kong who engage in religious participation in Buddhism. Understanding how religion plays a role in the well-being of seniors becomes increasingly important, it can provide insight into the potential benefits that religion can have on physical and mental health, as well as overall well-being. A qualitative research method and analysis were carried out to understand the perception of seniors. The findings have shown various religious beliefs, practices and social activities contribute to the perceived well-being of seniors by offering them a higher sense of meaning and purpose in life, a vibrant social support network and reducing mental and physical distress. This study has shown that studying religious participation in relation to their perceived well-being can provide insight into the potential benefits of religion, and understand how seniors may cope with stress, loneliness and other challenges they face as they age, and how religious involvement may serve as a protective factor in their lives. Understanding religious participation among seniors in Hong Kong can provide insight into how Buddhism communities support their members and maybe be useful for developing interventions and policies to support the well-being of seniors.

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Background

Healthy ageing is becoming an increasingly important topic in many parts of the globe, due to the rapid increase in the elderly population around the world, especially in Hong Kong. In 2018, there are about 1.27 million Hong Kong residents over the age of 65, which is around 17.9% of the total population. It was estimated that in 2048, the number of elderly people above 65 years old may spike up to 2.62 million (The Golden Age foundation, 2021). The well-being of the elderly is becoming a growing concern for the population. The World Health Organisation (2002) has especially prioritised policies on improving the well-being of the elderly in the international community. Well-being is defined as the positive state experienced by individuals, comparable to health, it is a resource for daily life and is determined by physical, mental, social and environmental factors (World Health Organisation, 2021). Research from the past has repeatedly shown that religious participation is positively associated with the well-being of seniors (Diener & Ryan, 2009; Dull & Skokan, 1995; Brown & Tierney, 2009; McFadden, 1995). Older adults often have a higher level of religious commitment and participation than any other age group (McFadden, 1995). Understanding how religion plays a role in the well-being of seniors becomes increasingly important, it can provide insight into the potential benefits that religion can have on physical and mental health, as well as overall well-being.

There is much literature discussing religious participation in relation to the well-being of the elderly, however, existing papers are mostly using quantitative research methods on measuring elders' cognitive functions or subjective well-being and not much literature researches the perspective and the experience of the well-being of seniors who engages in religious participation in Asia, even if most research mainly focus on the seniors in the rural areas. (Hill et al., 2020; Kiefer et al., 2008; Kirby-Geddes & Macaskill, 2016). Virtually, there is only a little literature researched on the perceived well-being of seniors in Hong Kong in relation to religious participation. Hong Kong has a growing elderly population and understanding how religious participation influences their perceived well-being could inform the development of programs and services that promote the well-being of older adults in Hong Kong. In the western cultural context, there is often a higher elderly population in rural areas. However, according to the United Nations Population Division, Hong Kong's population is 100% urban, therefore the perspective of Hong Kong's elderly may vastly differ from European elderlies. Hong Kong has undergone significant social and economic changes in recent years, which may have impacted the religious practices and beliefs of the older population. Studying the well-being of seniors in relation to religious participation may provide a unique perspective on how religious participation impacts the well-being of seniors in the context of rapid social change and enhance cross-cultural understanding.

All major religions on Earth are similar in many ways, nevertheless, each religion still has its own beliefs, practices, values and features (Cohen & Johnson, 2017). A paper written by Boey (2003) has shown that different religious groups report different levels of well-being in Hong Kong. Different religious groups perceive death and cope with negativity in different manners can also affect well-being, especially the well-being of seniors (Cohen & Johnson, 2017). Therefore, this paper mainly focuses on the religion Buddhism. Considering Buddhism has been rooted in Hong Kong for more than a hundred years (Hong Kong religion and community development, 2017). About 1 million inhabitants in Hong Kong are Buddhist, it's one of the largest religious populations in Hong Kong (Hong Kong Year Book, 2018). Buddhism has a strong emphasis on mindfulness, compassion and self-awareness. These characteristics

may be influential in promoting well-being among seniors. Religion is a complex belief which can heavily influence major attitudes such as family planning and structure, work, politics and interpretation of daily life events. It is especially prominent in South East Asia, where Buddhism is a large part of the lifestyle and life philosophy (Zhang, 2010).

Therefore, to understand the perception of the seniors who engage in religious participation in Buddhism, the following research question is formulated:

How do the elderly in Hong Kong perceive their own well-being in relation to religious participation in Buddhism?

Structure of the thesis

The structure of this paper substantiates 6 divisions. The following section is the Theoretical framework which layout the foundations of the reviewed existing theories and concepts for this research paper, it includes the concepts of well-being and how they may relate to religious participation. A Conceptual model is then developed to show the visual representation of the theories which are applicable to this paper. Moreover, the Methodology describes the development of the qualitative research design, data collection procedures and the qualitative data analysis scheme. Furthermore, the Results show the findings deviated from the primary data and the Discussion section contributes to the analysis and interpretation of the data. Finally, the Conclusion summarizes all arguments and findings, explains the significance of the results, ties everything back to the research question, as well as, the Limitation and Future research recommendations propose future research ideas and the restraints this study encounters during the research process. The interview guide, consent forms and transcripts are shown in the Appendix at the end.

Components of perceived well-being in relation to religious participation

The positive link between well-being and religious participation is created from a sense of meaning and purpose, and from the social support system and services that religious institutions offer (Diener & Ryan, 2009; McFadden, 1995). Well-being is a broad idea which consists of multiple concepts and dimensions, and it can be difficult to include all aspects. Hence, this paper focuses on four components of perceived well-being which are suspected to be relevant to religious participation. They are the perceived physical and mental health, perceived social support, happiness and life satisfaction and personal attitude towards major life changes (Hilleras et al., 2001; Kiefer et al. 2008; McFadden, 1995). These four aspects are not only crucial to the well-being of the seniors but they are also interrelated with each other.

i) Perceived physical and mental health

The perceived well-being of seniors is strongly related to their perceived level of health, the self-assessed health is a dominant predictor of life satisfaction among seniors (Cockerham et al., 1983). It is recognized that seniors do not necessarily perceive their health by the presence of diseases but by their ability to perform necessary household chores and social activities (Kiefer et al. 2007). Therefore perceived physical and mental health is one of the targeted elements of well-being in this paper. A large amount of

literature has shown that seniors who are involved in religious participation have a lower level of depression, greater sense of purpose, and better mental and physical health outcomes (Hilleras et al., 2001, Krause & et al., 1999; McFadden, 1995; Upenieks & Liu, 2022; Zhang, 2010). Shen's (2019) paper has found that religious participation is associated with better-perceived health, and lower smoking and excessive drinking habits. Religious institutions also have a positive impact on strengthening self-control and self-regulation in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and behaviours. Buddhist are encouraged to take care of their body in proper ways. Religious activities in Buddhism such as reading scriptures, waking up early in the morning and meditating etc; these activities promote a stimulating, active and social lifestyle and help preserve the physical and cognitive health of the seniors. (Hill et al., 2020; Hosseini et al., 2019; Paonil & Sringeriyuang, 2002). Meditation is one of the central Buddhist traditions, it has been shown to have many positive effects on physical and mental health such as reducing stress and anxiety, improving mood and promoting emotional well-being (Shonin et al. 2014).

ii) Perceived social support

Wang (2016) produced a study demonstrating that having stable social relationships and social support networks positively affects subjective well-being. Perceived social support refers to the emotional experience and how the elderly feel to be understood and respected. Having a good perceived social network can provide information to help increase individuals' sense of joy and belonging, improve their self-esteem and self-confidence, and help them face stressful situations. This is important for seniors as they are a vulnerable group where they acquire more care and assistance. In addition to that, seniors often experience the loss of family and friends which exposes them to loneliness and social isolation. Having a good social support system during crucial and emergency moments often has a significant impact on the quality of life and mental health of elderlies (Lim & Putnam, 2010; McFadden, 1995; Yeh, 2004). Wall and Zarit's (1991) paper has found that there is a significant relationship between the feeling of well-being and the perception of support from local congregations in the African American community. Religious institutions are often able to provide various forms of support for seniors such as volunteer opportunities and social programs, which create a community sense of feeling for them. This can also enhance perceived well-being by creating social interactions between like-minded people, nurturing friendships and social ties (Lim & Putnam, 2010). Having compassion, and kindness and providing support for the need of others is also fundamental parts of Buddhism (Paonil & Sringeriyuang, 2002).

iii) Happiness and Life Satisfaction

Emotional well-being is evaluated through measures of life satisfaction, happiness and self-esteem. Seniors who are in a positive mood are more likely to engage in social relationships, be optimistic toward their future and be able to cope with stressful situations more successfully (Kiefer et al., 20017). There is much documentation on religious participation and life satisfaction. A Paper written by Lim and Putnam (2010) found that social network created through congregation has a large effect on life satisfaction. The social and participatory mechanism of religion has a large impact on shaping seniors' life satisfaction. It also shows that seniors who engage in religious participation have a higher sense of meaning and purpose in life. It can happen through work, volunteering or other activities which give seniors a sense of meaning and fulfilment. Mookherjee (1998) researched the perception of happiness among the elderly in the US

has found that more seniors who engage in religious participation consider themselves to be happy than the seniors who do not.

iv) Personal attitudes toward changes

Dull and Skokan (1994) mentioned in their paper that, individuals react to crises differently, and they experience a sense of loss depending on the meaning they assign to the event. Due to old age, seniors often experience life-altering events, and physical and mental distress, for instance, retirement, loss of loved ones and deterioration of health. The attitudes of how seniors perceive these life events can influence their perceived well-being (McFadden, 1995). Religion often functions as a coping resource for the elderly, seeing it helps them to manage their experience with physical illness and mental distress (Koenig, George & Siegler, 1988; McFadden, 1995; Zhang, 2010). Buddhism supports the belief that negative events are the plan of the universe and are part of the karmic relationship from infinite past lives (Dul & Skokan, 1994). This belief that actions can produce certain outcomes allows individuals to feel more comfortable. Religious communities also provide social support and a sense of belonging which can help seniors to cope with changes as well (Lim & Putnam, 2010).

To further examine the research question, two follow-up sub-questions are formulated based on the theoretical framework.

- *What kind of religious participation in Buddhism do seniors in Hong Kong identify that influence their perceived well-being?*
- *How does religious participation in Buddhism enhance the social engagement of seniors in Hong Kong?*

Conceptual model

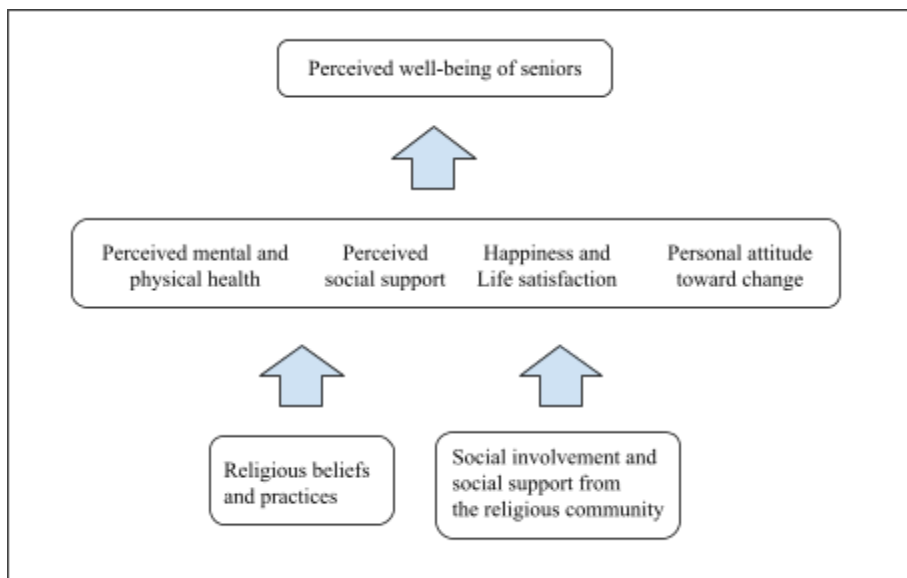


Figure 1: Conceptual model of the relations between religious participation and perceived well-being of the seniors

The conceptual model in Figure 1 is derived from the theoretical framework. It represents the relationship between religious participation and the perceived well-being of seniors. The model shows that there are two ways in which religious participation can influence the four components of perceived well-being. They are social involvement and social support from the religious community and religious beliefs and practices. The four components that this study assumed to have a direct influence on the perceived well-being of seniors are perceived mental and physical health, perceived social support, happiness and life satisfaction and personal attitude toward changes.

Methodology

Design and Sampling

A qualitative design was used to research to gain insight into the perception of the well-being of seniors who engages in religious participation in Hong Kong, therefore six in-depth interviews were conducted to understand seniors' personal experiences. The study population for this research were seniors between the age of 65 and older living in Hong Kong who are Buddhist and engaged in religious participation regularly. Potential respondents are recruited from the researcher's personal informal network since the seniors in the researcher's family engage in religious participation regularly. A snowballing strategy is adopted to reach out to one of the elderly in the family as a key informant to refer eligible respondents who meet the study criteria to participate in the research. After conducting the interview with the first referred respondent, this respondent was then asked whether he/she may identify others within the community who might have been interested and were eligible to participate in this research. One of the advantages of using this strategy is that referred participants are linked to the research by a familiar person who can explain what the research entails, reduce concerns for potential participants, and increase participation. This also allows seniors to be more comfortable participating in the research. Interviews were conducted online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was unfortunately still risky for seniors to participate in in-person interviews in Hong Kong, some respondents also prefer to do online or phone interviews instead. On top of that, it was costly and time-consuming to travel to Hong Kong to carry out the interviews in person.

Data collection

An interview guide was developed based on the conceptual framework and research question. Open questions followed by probing questions were included in order to understand participants' motivations and perceptions. Since well-being is a broad concept involving many dimensions, in this paper, four aspects of perceived well-being were investigated. These aspects are derived deductively through the literature reviews. Questions in the interview guide are formulated to understand what were their motivations and what forms of religious participation influence the seniors' perceived well-being. The interview guide was first made in English to operationalise the research question. Since the first language spoken in Hong Kong is Cantonese, the interview guide was translated into Chinese and phrased in colloquial language which is more relatable for senior participants. Interviews were conducted in Cantonese and transcribed into Chinese. Data were collected between November 2022 and December 2022. Each interview lasted between 20 - 40 minutes.

Respondent	Gender	Age	Marital stage	Profession
1	Female	74	Married	Retired secretary
2	Female	80	Single	Retired Teacher
3	Female	69	Single	Retired Psychotherapist
4	Female	70	Single	Retired Secretary
5	Female	69	Single	Retired Retailer
6	Female	69	Married	Retired Accountant

Table 1: The Background information of the Sample based on their Gender, Age, Marital status and Profession

The snowballing strategy was only able to refer female potential respondent. The sample might only be representative towards the female perspective of the seniors in Hong Kong who engages in religious participation in Hong Kong.

Data analysis scheme

In this research, a deductive strategy is used to develop themes at the beginning. Themes are derived from the topics from the conceptual framework and theoretical framework to help quickly generate ideas for codes and later validated them during the analysis. The software Atlas.Ti was used to analyse the collected data. During the analysis, the initial themes were further refined and validated and new codes are added. New codes were also developed inductively through active reading. After identifying all the codes, they were categorized into different subgroups which represent different themes. The main themes and codes will be first identified and analysed in the original language. This way the colloquial style of the language can be preserved, considering some expressions in Cantonese may hold different meanings than the literal translations and may represent certain cultural concepts (Hennink et al., 2020).

Ethical considerations

This study adheres to the five principles of the Dutch code of Conduct, they are honesty, scrupulousness, transparency, independence and responsibility (Algra et al., 2018). The research will be conducted in a fair and non-exploitative manner, and participants will be treated with respect and courtesy. All data collected will be stored securely to ensure confidentiality, only the researcher can access it. Identifiers from the interview will be removed and participants' identities will remain anonymous. A consent form (Appendix 2) will be delivered to the respondents before they participate in this research. They are free to enter and cease the interview voluntarily.

Results

Two participants reported that they are raised in a Buddhist household where they engaged in religious activities at a relatively young age. One participant started to come in contact with Buddhism after

encountering emotional and financial problems. The remaining respondents indicated that they engaged in religious participation more regularly after their retirement. Three themes emerged after data analysis and they are religious beliefs, religious practices and social engagement with the religious community.

Religious beliefs

Two main subthemes were identified from the interview by the respondents regarding what kind of beliefs in Buddhism influenced their perceived well-being. They are impermanence and the law of karma.

Impermanence (無常)

All respondents have mentioned that Buddhism has given them insight into impermanence. They reported that Buddhism has helped them become more aware of what happen around them and remain calm and peaceful when facing changes.

Now I may still have some things to worry about, but it will not be the same as before. Because I know from Buddhism that it seems that all things in the world are impermanent. There is no point in worrying too much about the future... So now I won't worry as much as before. Even if it doesn't affect your mood too much than being affected by anything. (Respondent 3)

Sometimes I do get affected, but instead of holding grudges for hours a day, then you quickly turn in words and you say, oh, why am I getting upset about these things? You talk to yourself, and you talk yourself out of the negative mindset (Respondent 4)

In this study, all respondents acknowledge that deterioration of health is one of the inevitable parts of ageing. They view ageing and death as part of the process. Respondents have expressed that thorough understanding of the concept of impermanence from chanted scriptures and mantras, they realised the meaning and explanations of life and death. They learnt to be less attached and involved in everything. The concept of impermanence allows seniors to have a calmer and more peaceful attitude to cope with life changes. Respondent 1 also expressed that Buddhism helped them to face death and health problems peacefully.

We are so peaceful physically and mentally. It is normal to have some health problems at this age. The path of old age is the path to death. You will not live longer and younger. The most important thing is not to be afraid. Knowing that everyone goes through the process of life allows you to face it peacefully with no fear. (Respondent 1)

Respondents have also used COVID-19 as an example explaining by what means has Buddhism helped them to cope with sudden changes in life. They expressed that by accepting life as impermanence, they are less bothered by the restrictions and the vulnerability they experience.

These things will happen if they are destined to happen. It's just that different countries have different methods to handle Covid. Hong Kong has chosen to control it strictly. If you were discussing this topic with the old me, I would tell you it's unacceptable, and I would lose my

temper and make trouble. Now I just feel that if something is going to happen, it will happen. It's no use complaining about things that are out of our control (Respondent 3)

The deep insight into impermanence from Buddhism teaching was mentioned to be one of the reasons why respondents decided to pursue Buddhism. Respondents commented that they feel calmer and less persistent, as they are less anguished by future events. They expressed that other people are not feeling blissful because others do not understand the concept of impermanence.

Personally, I become less persistent, and I feel much calmer. So I think this is already blissful. (Respondent 4)

Your religion is telling tells you that nothing is permanent. Everything changes. Some people feel unhappy because they don't understand that things can change. (Respondent 3)

The law of karma

One of the known beliefs in Buddhism is the law of karma. Respondents believed in reincarnation and that everything happens for a cause. Situations happen can not only based on the decisions individuals make in their current life but also on their past life. Similar to the concept of impermanence, karma offers other explanations for unfortunate events that happened in their lives.

The reason we encounter different experiences is the outcome of your actions in your previous and current lifetime. If you understand this concept, you will be less emotional while facing these incidents. (Respondent 1)

If you believe in reincarnation, what you do in this life is a prediction of your next life. If what you act is not good. When you are reincarnated, your karma may lead you to animal life or to hell (Respondent 6)

Believing in the law of karma enables respondents to practice generosity, kindness, and compassion, and provide guidance to other people in need, which they believe can shape their own destiny. In the meantime, they also enjoy giving back to the community.

If you have the ability, you will have a compassionate heart to help the poor. Even if you don't have the ability, you will still have a merciful heart. This is so natural. If you see a miserable person you will offer him/her help. Another example is if you see a blind man crossing the road, you will help him cross the road. (Respondent 1)

Religious practices

The senior participants explained a number of religious practices which in their opinion influenced their perceived well-being. Three subthemes were identified, they are meditation, attending ceremonies, and reading scriptures. All participants reported feeling peaceful and calm after participating in religious

activities. They expressed that especially after encountering inconvenience or unfortunate incidents, doing these religious activities helped them feel more relaxed.

Meditation

Almost all respondents have a regular meditating habit, and all respondents agree that meditation has positively impacted their temper and attitude. Respondents expressed that meditation makes them less irritated, less impatient and become more compassionate. This confirms the study conducted by Shonin et al. (2014) that meditation positively impacts the mental health and emotional well-being of seniors by improving mood, and reducing stress and anxiety. Respondent 3 expressed feeling blissful and lucky to have learnt meditating from Buddhism.

I do meditation, or I try at least 1 hour a day, but ideally 2 hours, like once in the morning and once in the evening or later in the afternoon. (Respondent 5)

After learning meditation. Personally, I really calmed down... My temper used to be bad and so easy to get irritated before. After starting to meditate I start to become less bitter. (Respondent 4)

I think I am very happy. There are so many things to be thankful for, let's talk about them. I have engaged in different Buddhist activities and meditation retreats in the past few years. It's really lucky that I can get in touch with this religion. (Respondent 3)

According to respondent 5, meditating requires self-discipline, and it is believed that meditating can enhance their perceived mental health.

But my mental state I think ideally if I want to progress on the path I should go to more meditation retreats. That's how you make, like, improvement by the leaps. (Respondent 5)

Reading scripture and mantras

Another religious practice mentioned in the literature review which contributes to seniors' perceived well-being is reading scriptures and mantras. Respondents reported they often read scripture and mantras when they feel negative and stressed. It appears to help reduce stress and irritation.

Even if you encounter some unhappy things or some setbacks in life. As long as you calm your heart down, put incense or listen to mantras or chant scriptures. All worries are swept away. (Respondent 2)

Respondents commented that from the scriptures and mantras, they were able to learn a lot, for instance, the concept of impermanence and the law of karma is mentioned substantially in the scriptures.

I usually sit at home and read the mantras for two hours after dinner. You will feel calm and peaceful at the same time. From the scriptures, you will be able to understand many principles of life, and many philosophies (Respondent 1)

When you grow up and start reading books and Buddhist scriptures, you start to come into more contact with the mantras and you learn a lot of things. (Respondent 4)

Most respondents also mentioned they enjoyed discussing their learning from the scriptures with their friends. This may enhance the perceived social support of seniors, since having a group of like-minded people to discuss philosophical topics create a close bond among them.

It's funny, because every time when we talk, we always end up talking about Buddhism or topics that relate to Buddhism (Respondent 5)

Going to worshipping halls/temples

Going to worshipping halls and temples was mentioned consistently by all respondents in the study. Respondent 1 commented the ceremonies and worshipping halls in Hong Kong mostly locate in the countryside which often takes a longer time to reach. Therefore, respondents were only able to devote more time to go ceremonies, after their retirement.

Now that I am getting older after retirement, my children are all grown up and started working, so now I have more time to devote myself (to go to worshipping halls). (Respondent 1)

Usually, the big temples in Hong Kong are located in the suburbs, and few of them are in the city centre. (Respondent 1)

Respondents also read scriptures and mantras during ceremonies and in the worshipping halls. Similar to other religious practices, respondents reported feeling peaceful and calm during these activities. Respondents expressed that hearing other people reading and lecturing about the scriptures was calming and comfortable.

They took me to the worshipping hall, and I felt that my mind was so peaceful, without any distracting thoughts. So I started to worship the Buddha. (Respondent 2)

At the same time, I feel very comfortable. I saw some Buddha statues. The atmosphere of the worshipping halls is very comfortable when those monks recite the mantras. I have always been liking this since I was young and I feel very good. (Respondent 1)

Social engagements with the religious community

Two subthemes were derived regarding social engagement with the religious community which contributed to the components of their perceived well-being, which are volunteering and participating in religious group activities. Respondents have expressed feeling fulfilled and joyful after participating in these activities.

Volunteering

Three respondents reported volunteering in their free time. They all seem to agree doing volunteer work is meaningful and makes them feel happy.

So when they have questions, they need a translator. I work as a translator. Sometimes I just work in the kitchen and I miss that because I really like it. Attending the retreat as a student is important, but it's just as equally important to do volunteer work. (Respondent 5)

...after you've been to retreat as a volunteer, you just get so much joy in helping others. (Respondent 4)

Buddhism has also affected me. If I feel that I can help someone, I will help. We shouldn't expect something in return. Helping people will make you happy, and making people happy makes you even happier (Respondent 6)

Participating in religious group activities

Respondents have reported participating in different religious activities contributes to their perceived well-being. These activities can be organised by religious institutions or self-organised by the respondents themselves. Respondent 5 reported participating in meditation retreats, where they participate in group meditations. These retreats offer guidance for people who are interested in purifying their minds through meditation.

But when you go to retreat, you don't think, you just do what you're told. You go in there to purify your mind... (Respondent 5)

Respondent 5 also started a women's support group to connect retired senior women who may be vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation. During Covid-19, they still gathered online through Zoom.

I started a women's support group with the intention that single women or if you're married, you don't have kids, so nobody really looks after you when you get old... once a month we meet on Zoom, and when the covid is not so severe, we would go to friend's place and have lunch and just chitchat. And there's in total seven of us. (Respondent 5)

Respondents reported they enjoy going to Buddhism classes where they discuss scriptures and mantras with other students. Speakers in class then further explained the meanings and provide guidance for them.

I will record the master's speech during classes, and then go home and listen slowly. Buddhism, like other religions, is a guiding thread. I was very interested when I heard about the scriptures, and then the master gave us a lot of respectful articles to read. (Respondent 6)

That was the first time I listened to that Buddhist basic class... But he talked about a lot of basic things, and many of them I thought it sounded good. Although I don't know what he is talking about, but I think it is suitable for daily life. (Respondent 3)

Annual ceremonies are reported to be a place where respondents meet and interact with like-minded fellows

I have met most of my friends through religious activities. (Respondent 4)

Friends who are acquainted with religion, sometimes I go to the Buddhist hall to do things together when there are Dharma meetings and chanting scriptures, etc. (Respondent 2)

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, respondent 6 reported having limited opportunities to go to these activities. However, social bonds were established before covid, thus friends with who respondents were acquainted with religion still tend to each other through phone.

Sometimes when we call on the phone, we chat and we ask about each other. About if your family is okay? Although we haven't met each other, the degree of concern has not diminished. (Respondent 6)

Discussion

After analysing the primary data, all respondents in this study reported being satisfied with their perceived well-being. Religious participation in Buddhism has a significant impact on the senior's perceived well-being in Hong Kong. When ask about their perceived well-being in relation to religious participation, they often associate it with words such as "peaceful", "calm", "blissful", "comfortable" and "happy" to describe their perceived well-being

Regarding the sub-question "*What kind of religious participation in Buddhism do seniors in Hong Kong identify that influence their perceived well-being?*" Other than meditation, the law of karma reading scriptures and mantras which are mentioned in the theoretical framework, the first and second themes also identified other beliefs and practices which contributed to the components of the perceived well-being of seniors in Hong Kong. Impermanence is one concept which was mentioned frequently throughout all interviews. Respondents reported that understanding the concept of impermanence allows them to feel peaceful and comfortable. Similar to the law of karma, it is a coping strategy to help seniors to deal with uncertain outcomes. This aligns with the study of Koenig et al. (1988), McFadden (1995) and Zhang's (2010) findings. They also understand the deterioration of health is inevitable and the concept of impermanence allows them to make peace with it. Going to worshipping halls and temples was another finding which was mentioned by respondents which greatly contribute to their perceived emotional well-being. They expressed that being in those places helped improve their moods and reduce anxiety and distress. In addition to that, findings indicated that seniors tend to engage in religious practices and discuss religious beliefs with their fellows, which creates social interactions and social support. This also helps answer the second subquestion "*How does religious participation in Buddhism enhance the social engagement of seniors in Hong Kong?*" The analysis justified that religious participation positively

contributes to the social support network of seniors in Hong Kong. Many studies indicated that perceived social support is a crucial component of the perceived well-being of seniors. The third theme identified that seniors in Hong Kong involve with social engagement in the religious community through volunteering and participating in religious activities such as Buddhist classes and attending ceremonies. They expressed feeling joyful and blissful to be able to discuss Buddhism with their fellows and give back to people in need. This is direct back to the study of Lim and Putnam (2010) where having social interaction between like-minded individuals and friendships enhances the perceived social support of seniors. Religious activities were not only provided by religious institutes by also self-organized by some of the participants. Paonil & Sringeriyuang (2002) indicated in their study that Having compassion, kindness and providing needs for others are also fundamental parts of Buddhism. This supports the finding that seniors who initiate social activities and provide care, not only can create a community to support others but also create a higher sense of meaning and purpose in life themselves. Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, Respondents have found ways through religious participation to improve their experience with the situations. Respondents in this study have also expressed that since religious participation influences their perceived well-being in such positive ways, they are continually motivated to engage in religious participation in Buddhism.

Conclusion

Throughout the gathering of qualitative data and in-depth analysis, this paper tries to answer the research question “*How do the elderly in Hong Kong perceive their own well-being in relation to religious participation in Buddhism?*” The findings have shown various religious beliefs, practices and social activities contribute to the perceived well-being of seniors by offering them a higher sense of meaning and purpose in life, a vibrant social support network and reducing mental and physical distress. This study has shown that studying religious participation in relation to their perceived well-being can provide insight into the potential benefits of religion, and understand how seniors may cope with stress, loneliness and other challenges they face as they age, and how religious involvement may serve as a protective factor in their lives. Understanding religious participation among seniors in Hong Kong can provide insight into how Buddhism communities support their members and maybe be useful for developing interventions and policies to support the well-being of seniors.

Limitation and Future research recommendation

This paper try to investigate the perceived well-being of seniors in Hong Kong in relation to religious participation. However, the sample was all women, and economically secure, which may not be representative of all seniors in Hong Kong. This study should include both males and females as well we seniors from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Since the interviews were conducted in Cantonese and due to the limitation of time and resources, there are some challenges in translating the exact wording in the transcript, and some of the translations may not be fully representative. For further research opportunities, future transcripts and information should be reviewed by professionals to ensure the trustworthiness of the paper.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

Introduction

My name is Shun Wing Chan Astrid, I am a bachelor's student from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. This research is conducted to get to know the perceptions of the well-being of the seniors who engage in religious participation in Hong Kong. During the interview, questions will be raised regarding your views towards how religious participation influences your lifestyle decisions and well-being. Everything mentioned during the interview will only be used for research purposes and not shared with any third party. Your name will remain anonymous. If it is possible, I would like to record the interview, after the analysis is completed, all records will be erased. By signing this consent form, you consent on participating in this interview.

Background information

- Age
- What kind of religion do you practice?
- Years of practising religion
- How often do you engage in religious practices?

Opening questions

- How would you describe your current well-being?
- Why do you practice religion?
- Can you tell me how and when did you get involved with your religion?

Questions about social interactions

- Can you tell me about your relationships with your family and friends?
- Can you tell me about your social circle at the moment?
- Can you tell me about religion influenced your social life throughout your lifetime?
- Can you tell me about the people you usually meet when you go visit temples or participate in spiritual gatherings?
 - How long have you been going?

Questions about physical and mental health

- What do you think about your physical and mental health at the moment?
- Do you have a diet you normally follow because of the religion you practice?
 - If yes, how long have you been following this diet?
 - Why do you follow this diet?
- What are some rituals or religious practices you follow and think are influential to your physical and mental health for the long term?

Questions about psychological health (happiness) and life changes

- Can you tell me about your current lifestyle?

- Can you tell me how has religion helped you to cope with traumatic events?
- Can you tell me how has religion helped you when you are upset/stressed?
 - If yes, why?
- Have you ever doubted your religion?

Closing question

- Can you tell me about how religion has influenced your well-being?
- If you meet someone who doesn't practise any religion, would you recommend they to engage in your religion? And why?

This is the end of the interview on your perception of well-being. Is there anything you would like to add or share?

Thank you for your time. If you wish I can send you the transcript and final research paper afterwards. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. This is my phone number and my e-mail.

- s.w.chan@student.rug.nl
- +31634263152

Consent form

Consent form

Purpose of this study

My name is Shun Wing Chan Astrid, I am a bachelor's student from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. This research is conducted to get to know the perceptions of the well-being of the seniors who engage in life course religious participation in Hong Kong.

Procedure

You are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview. This interview will last at least 15 minutes. This interview will be carried out online via any communication platform you wish. During the interview, questions will be raised regarding your views towards how religious participation influences your lifestyle decisions and well-being. If possible with your consent, the conversation will be recorded.

Data Usage

The data collected during the interview is to gain insights. This interview aims to collect your views and perceptions. You will have the opportunity to review the transcript to confirm the interview you provide, clarify any statements if necessary, as well as remove any information that you do not wish to include in the study.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

By taking part in this research, you agree to give your views and opinions. Recordings will be kept until the completion of the dissertation and can be reviewed by the interviewer and the University of Groningen's supervisor. At no time will the research release any information to anyone other than individuals or institutions working on the project without your written consent.

Freedom to withdraw

You may withdraw from this interview at any moment.

Question and concern

You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in the research. Should any concerns or questions arise after the completion of the interview, feel free to contact the researcher directly via email or phone. Our contact details are stated above.

Participant consent

I have read the consent form, and have had the nature of the study explained to me, I hereby agree with the consent and agree to participate in the research

Researcher's Signature

Participant's Signature

Transcript

Respondent 1

而家已經開始錄音嚟我想問今年幾多歲呢？

我今年74歲

咁你係信奉乜嘢宗教嘅呢？

信奉佛教囉。

你信左佛教幾多年？

我自細就開始信佛教。由我細細個童年開始。因為我係生於一個佛教家庭。記事開始就已經。

而家嚟講你幾耐會去參加一次宗教活動？

我每一年都會參加宗教活動。甘因為而家新冠呢，停左一段時間。但係我係我每日係屋企呢，我都會念經同埋拜佛，早晚都會。

呢個就係啱啱問咗你背景資料。呀咁而家我就開始問一啲，可以如果你想嘅話你可以再講你嘅觀點。你唔需要等我問。如果你而家嚟講你會你會點樣去形容你嘅幸福。你覺得自己幸吾幸福呀而家？

我覺得好好囉。我覺得信仰俾到我好多精神上既支持，同埋心靈上既安寧。無論佢信咩教都好都最好有一個宗教嘅信仰。咁係會帶畀你嘅人生道路上好多好多不可思議嘅際遇。你吾可以話係一個miracle。但係你會感覺到你會覺得如果你既信仰係好堅定既呢，你會覺得有啲逢凶化吉。呢個係我個人感受。

好點解你會信佛教嘅？

我咪話咗俾你聽囉我係出生係一個佛教既家庭。因為我嘅祖母，佢有佢係一個好虔誠嘅教徒，同埋佢早晚打坐。咁我成日見到佢打坐，同埋不停帶我去寺院拜佛。甘我自細就接觸到佛教。同埋我覺得好舒服啦，我睇到啲佛像。同埋寺院個氣氛呀啲啲出家人誦經啲啲咒音令到好舒服。我從細到我老都係咁樣既感覺非常好。

所以你就決定去繼續信奉佛教

我吾係決定啊。因為佛教令到我心靈好舒服囉。就算你遇到咩吾愉快既嘅嘢或者生活上遇到有啲咩挫折。只要你靜左個心落泥，上支香或者聽下啲咒音或者誦下經。所有煩惱都一掃而空。

啫係你細細個開始就已經有咁嘅感觸。即係你會陪你嘅祖母去佛堂呀然之...你睇住佢誦經。

係寺院吾係佛堂係去廟宇。

有咩分別？

我地係中國出世架嘛。中國個啲大既寺院有好多出家人，早晚你聽到的鐘聲啊、啲咒音啊會好舒服囉。甘黎左香港你去個啲佛堂啫係一個局限嘅area就細左啲囉。甘香港都有大既寺院，但係多數都係郊外，好遠呀好難去或者早期嘅香港交通有咁發達啦你要去一個地方好似大嶼山，好難去到囉。咁即係等於你想去都要成日甘耐，甘但係慢慢地香港社會繁榮發達左有多啲交通工具 通常香港啲大嘅寺廟都係郊區 好少會係城市中心。而家後來發展左就比較好啲

嗰陣啱啱搬來嗰陣好難去，咁點算？

即係即係係好難去㗎。嗰陣就唔可以日日。去係放假嗰陣時呀或者你住得近啲。咁你一世唔係住死一個地方，可能搬嚟搬去，有一段時間搬去郊區住。咁我去寺院咪好方便囉。我咪又可以成日去囉。但係唔係每日都可以去㗎嘛。放假嗰陣時咪會同埋啲同學去囉。我係不間斷咁同佛教接觸嘅。到我而家退休之後年紀大咗，咁細路哥又大咗去咗做嘢啦，咁我有多啲時間就好devoted成日去啦。佢呢啲寺院又有嗰啲佛學班，你又可以去上堂啊。可以學到好多嘢。更加你想知道佛經嘅道理。如果你係喜歡嘅有同佢相認嘅，你會更加努力咁想研究生死因為呢個世界所有嘢都係無常嘅。一下可以乜嘢都變晒嘅。所以呢你就要明白人嘅生命嘅來源係點樣。你慢慢地會有個疑問，咁你就想解決佢。咁點解會有生又死呢。

你會更加努力咁想研究生死因為呢個世界所有嘢都係無常嘅。一下可以乜嘢都變晒嘅。所以呢你就要明白人嘅生命嘅來源係點樣。你慢慢地會有個疑問，咁你就想解決佢。咁點解會有生又死呢乜嘢都係有人哋係好痛苦嘅事咁你想解決佢呢你就要搵到而家都係修行緊呀

你會同同學一齊去佛堂即係你會同啲同你返學嘅同學？

朋友佢哋都係退休嘅。咁佢又有興趣嘅咁咪一齊去。即係好似你哋後生啲朋友仔好想互相去上堂。係一件好好件事好開心囉。生命中有個目標，譬如我好喜歡佛學，有個目標去學習，去思考咁咪會訪名師指導你

我想問吓你現在社交嘅situation。你嘅而家同你屋企人同埋你朋友嘅關係係點樣㗎。

同我朋友嘅關係好好。同屋企人嘅關係都好好。同啲子女關係非常之好。咁你通常weekday會去見你嘅朋友就會去佛堂？

我多數唔係嘅。每年固定會有咩法會呢。咁我就會盡量去參加唔會專登啲嗰段時間去旅行。會等法會完咗先至去。咁因為而家新冠邊度都去唔到。

你覺得因為你信咗佛教你又成日去呢啲法會呀或者去同朋友一齊去寺廟呀。即係你覺得佛教對你嘅社交影響係點樣嘅？

我覺得好好囉你識到啲朋友都係好善良，大家都有目標，大家好共同努力而且佢哋都係好pure，冇其他目的都係為咗自己嘅信仰自己想了解生死呢個目的而行。開心嘅唔會成日喺屋企睇電視吃喝玩樂打麻雀。我都唔鍾意呢啲嘢嘅。咁我覺得就係好開心心靈舒服。

係咪大多數係朋友都經因為佛教認識嘅？

唔係嗱我嘅朋友之中有好多唔同宗教嘅有基督教有道教。唔需要因為呢個宗教你就要淨係識佛嘅人嗰啲人。唔係咁樣㗎嘛咁我去寺院拜佛咁嗰啲人都係信佛㗎。咁我平時嘅社交冇理由淨係同

呢啲人。我有其他嘅朋友有宗教信仰，唔會因為我係佛教徒就淨係同佛教徒做朋友咁就錯啦。咁你就唔係一個真正了解佛教嘅佛教徒。

你而家點樣睇你嘅身心健康呢

我覺得我嘅心理上非常健康。咁老啦身體多多少少都有啲毛病。老咗梗係有呢啲毛病。就算Touch Wood因為你信咗佛你個人會好peaceful好安靜咁。你嘅飲食作息都唔會咁刺激好似年輕人去wet, 佢鬍線去癲去跳舞吸大麻呢啲自殺行為。我哋唔會做呢啲嘢。我哋身心都好peaceful。咁老咗梗係有毛病。老咗就係向死亡而去㗎嘛。你唔會越活越後生。梗係越活越老。最緊要你唔好害怕。知道人必會生老病死。信仰之中得到知道必定係要行呢條路。有咗恐懼囉寧靜咁去面對。

咁我知道你係信佛教你係你有一個素食嘅習慣㗎嘛？

我素食嘅習慣就唔係因為我信佛教。我素食嘅習慣係因為我本身自己都唔鍾意食肉。我對食肉冇興趣。細個冇得選擇我都食。有一年我唔知係我媽媽定係爸爸病咗。我就直程斷咗食肉。煲湯啲湯我都唔飲喇。

點解嘅

呢啲嘢你素吾素食我都聽其自然。係唔使勉強都唔使刻意勉強。好自然咁唔想食啦。

好咁你咁我覺得呢因為你信咗佛教啦對你嘅身體心理上都有幫助？

呢個一定有嘅咁。對你生理上都有影響。因為所有宗教都勸人向善。你明白左人生無常所有嘢都唔係你嘅就唔會睇得甘緊要囉譬如你唔會話野心好大度到積聚好多財富搏咗老命賺錢去爭嘢。唔會有咁樣嘅思維。你有能力嘅話就會起一個慈悲嘅心去幫助啲貧窮嘅人。就算冇能力都會有一個憐憫之心。呢樣嘢係好自自然然嘅。如果你見到一個好慘嘅人你會富佢一把。譬如過馬路地見到一個盲人，你會幫佢過馬路。唔似現代人嗰種冷漠。如果我行過去掂佢會整污糟我隻手。或者佢會趁機賴我推跌佢。你唔會諗到呢啲咁嘅嘢。但係現代社會就係好恐怖。有啲人而家想做善事都會驚。所以咪變咗冷漠囉。佛教徒就唔會有咁嘅諗法囉。如果你嘅芯線嘅話都唔會惹到呢啲咁嘅妖魔鬼怪。

呢個係一個好嘅觀念去相信。有創傷性事件發生宗教有冇幫到你呀？

宗教嘅幫助好大囉。當你遇到你至親嘅人有咗或者突發嘅嘢。生命中有個大嘅挫折同埋whatever la。宗教可以治療同埋撫摸你嘅傷口。好緊要好緊要而且有好大嘅幫助。我諗每一個有宗教信仰嘅人。都會相信呢嘅樣嘢。

點樣幫到你呢？

因為你日子有功。對宗教有信心。你相信佢，會幫助你天主教會祈禱啦。我哋佛教就會誦經同埋睇經書，又可以靜修。好似我咁而家食完飯就會坐喺度兩個鐘頭就喺度睇經書。就會覺得好Peaceful同埋好calm。睇經文中你又會可以領悟到好多人嘅道理。好多哲學上，心靈上呀帶畀你安寧呀Peaceful呢就有咗一種恐懼囉。譬如你有病，你去面對佢你就唔會驚到話點解係我呀。你就可以好自然咁面對。梗係有因有果。又係唔知做咗啲乜嘢唔好啦，今世先至會照到咁嘅結果。好安寧去面對可以唔係點解係我點解係我唔忿氣。唔係人哋而係我。就會糾纏喺呢個問題就係。事

實已經係呢件事發生。你明白左經文聽到嗰啲師傅開示，修行嗰啲知識嗰啲知識咁你就會明白。點解我哋要面對我哋不同嘅遭遇。因為你前世或者今世所做嘅嘢得嘅果。你咪會面對佢囉唔會又喊又笑又叫囉。

我下一條問題就係當你心煩意亂壓力大嘅時候宗教係點樣幫經你呢。你講到你會誦經因為你而家做嘅因為之後結果都係有一套佛教嘅理念喺度啦。咁我想問你有冇信你信咗佛教咁多年，有冇一係懷疑過你宗教呢？

你點會懷疑你嘅宗教呢？每個人呢我唔知人咗。你唔會懷疑你嘅宗教而係當你。當有啲人未係正式好信嗰陣時，佢就會懷疑嘅。點解嗰個人做盡咁多壞事都可以享受富貴呢？咁佢一定會咁樣懷疑嘅。但係當你睇咗咁多佛經去佛堂，聽到啲學說經文之後，你就會明白點解因為所有嘢都係因果。呢個人可能前世做咗好多好事。今世得到好嘅回報所以今世享盡榮華富貴。但係如果佢享受富貴之餘有冇好好修行。咁佢下一世果報未到咋。今世就係享受咗佢上一世做咗嘅好事。點解有啲人咁窮點解有啲人咁有錢點解有啲人咁好彩可以做Professor，有啲人又要做清道夫呢梗係有好多姻緣嘍，喺佛經入邊佢就會話俾你聽。佢前世或者好多細之前就做咗好多修行，好多好事今世咪值得好好嘅回報。但係如果今世殺人放火壞事做盡。又運動又吸毒又殺人又賣淫，所有衰嘢做齊咁佢下一世。有時有啲人現世報有啲人下世報。有啲人下一世着下一世啲報應先來未。就睇你做咗幾多壞事做咗幾多好事。唔好呀唔報係時候未到 所以每個人都要為自己嘅行為負責。除非你乜嘢都唔信。你就明白左有啲嘢唔可以做到太厲害是早都有報應。即係好似有啲人飲酒食煙最後佢可能喺四呀幾歲50幾歲得到 cancer 或者爆血管。因為佢哋太放縱自己。好似有啲人鍾意賭錢將成副身家都賣曬。呢啲咪現世報囉。所以呢啲嘢呢如果有咗宗教信仰乜嘢宗教都好。你會明白呢個道理。宗教係引導一個人去下一條正確嘅路。唔好遇到啲乜嘢挫折或者失敗，就要生要死囉。受不了啊以前開跑車而家乜嘢都有唔應該咁樣。你要處之泰然。好似一個大氣候同埋全球經濟退化。個個收入都下降好多人都失業。如果兩夫妻一齊失業又有兩個細路哥，又有爸爸媽媽要養。頂唔順喇要生要死啦，要逃避責任啦。一個跳樓就一死了之，呢啲咪唔啱囉。但係如果你有咗宗教嘅信仰。咁你知道唔緊要而家乜嘢都有，去還債先啦買樓租樓住啦。租唔到樓住唔搵車囉，去坐巴士囉。自己調整呀。即係好似你Band one讀唔到入Band three如果你努力嘅話可以從Band Five調上Band one。宗教俾你嘅力量係不可思議嘅。你唔可以懷着一個心如果你信咗佢係咪有好處先。咁你咪唔係精神囉你淨係要求好嘢。可唔可以淨係比好嘢。咁咪係錯嘍囉你係要明白嗰啲道理。而你可以令到你嘅心靈安寧。遇到挫折嘅時候可以知道點樣慢慢去調節同埋解決。呢個就係信仰可以帶到比你嘅好多好處。唔係我信咗佢就求佢比我發達。

咁我哋嘅訪問就到此為止啦。仲有冇嘢想補充或者想分享嘅呢。

好多人都會信佛喇嘛，有好多嘅善念同埋善知識，係你周邊出現囉。如果你係有邪念嘅咁你咪會野埋啲妖魔鬼怪。人佢係鍾意我鍾意乜嘢呀。

一望落去望落去呢個就係大個咗你就會得到社會咁你就唔會識得分別就係咁啦。

Respondent 2

咁我係叫陳信穎，咁我就係喺荷蘭格羅寧根大學嘅本科生。研究呢就係了解香港從事宗教活動長者嘅幸福對幸福感嘅睇法咁喺採訪期間呢如果你對中採訪期間宗教點樣影響你嘅生活方式決定同埋對幸福感嘅觀點問題呀咁所以所有內容呢就會淨係愛嚟用於研究嘅啫我哋唔會返去畀其他人咁你嘅名就會保持匿名嘅就有人會知咁分析完之後呢我就會將所有記錄所以你就唔使驚

我會利用你任何嘢咁樣. 採訪之前同你講一聲呢個係我哋呢個流程嚟嘅多謝曬你幫我啦咁我而家就開始探訪問下你今年幾多歲呢咁

我今年80歲

你嘅記唔記得你由你已經擺咗佛教幾多年？

我屋企又細至大都係拜神嘅。我哋都會供奉祖先。屋企淨係拜觀音。正式讀書嗰陣都係讀天主教。我教書嘅時候教基督教。後期呢我自己出嚟轉左職之後。有試過一個時期有情緒問題。有感情嘅挫，經濟上有問題。我個人就好灰。就識到一班朋友佢哋就係拜佛嘅，佢哋就帶我上佛堂，我覺得我嘅心靈好平靜，冇雜念冇乜嘢。於是乎我就開始去拜佛啦

你細細個嗰陣時屋企，你都會有少少拜觀音呀咁樣。

係呀我屋企係全部都拜佛嘍即係有仙人有排位，會供奉佢哋。係呢我哋就只係供奉觀音。

但係你中間教書嗰陣時就係係天主教學校？

我讀書就係天主教學校，我教書嗰度就係基督教學校，但係兩方面我都有話參與嘍乜嘢。係後期因為情緒同埋感情上有挫折。所以朋友就帶我上去佛堂聽吓經，拜下神下就覺得好開心。啲唔開心嘅嘢走咗去，所以我走咗去信奉佛教。

你開始信佛嗰陣時係幾多歲？

嗰陣時係40歲島

好嘅好嘅咁你而家通常呢幾多次會即係可能每個星期也會參加一次宗教活動呢？可能去拜神呀或者去廟呀咁樣呢？

我哋唔係成日開住門俾人隨便入。我一個禮拜去一次。我哋除咗派神像之外我哋仲會拜師尊。係我哋呢個教嘅創辦人我哋都會供奉佢嘅。我哋都有啲仙人嘅位。我哋都有人日日會去上香

你點樣可以描述你而家嘅幸福感呢？係而家感覺幸唔幸福？

幸福係生活上嘅問題。去拜佛係會令我開心。去佛堂會令我個人好開朗。我係好幸福嘅而家。Aunt而家有結婚，生活可以自理經濟獨立。

頭先你講咗你點解會信佛教啦。咁同我講下當你細個嘅時候即係係你屋企你未真正相信佛教。喇但係當你係長大嘅時候會拜神呀拜觀音呀。你細個嘅時候你又有咩睇法呢？

我屋企全部都係拜神嘅。因為有老人家我屋企人同埋媽咪，多數係啲長輩莊鄉嘅時候細個嗰陣就會知道係拜趕神。細個嗰陣就會可能跟住大人上香供奉佢哋。但係就唔係好清楚係咩意思純粹係因為屋企拜神所以拜神。

你教書嘅天主教學校嘅時候你返到屋企你都會唔會拜觀音，即係你屋企人拜觀音嘅時候呢

學校有學校返到屋企我唔需要做我嘅學校做嘅嘢。我嘅學校係教數學嘅唔係教聖經堂。佢哋所講嘅嘢我淨係得個聽字。但係我嗰一次情緒有問題開始接觸佛教嘅時候。佛教令我心情開朗同埋舒服所以令我覺得呢一件係一件好嘅事。

好咁而家就會問下普通社交嘅問題即係同其他人社交活動嘅問題。你可唔可以同我講下你而家同你屋企人同朋友嘅關係？咁即係你通常如果正常出去社交嘅話呢就會係同你嘅朋友啦同埋同你淨係宗教嘅朋友係社交

多數係舊同事舊同學囉，佛堂嘅朋友同埋同道咁樣接觸同埋社交。去玩同埋去見面。

宗教有冇影響你因為宗教所以你認識咗好多啲同度嘅人呀你可以一齊去佢出去玩呀？

我唔同渠道認識嘅朋友就會分開出去社交。之前同啲舊同學同埋舊同事每個月都會有聚會。同宗教認識嘅朋友就會可能有時候佛堂有法會嘅時候，就一齊上去佛堂做事，念經啊咁樣。但係就有成日出去交際或者去玩咁樣。通常都會係佛堂聚會。

去佛堂啲啲就即係你多數就係每個星期會做法事去佛堂？

唔係法事呢就係一年做幾次。好似清明節啊宜蘭節呀。平時呢因為我哋佛堂入邊除咗供奉觀音啊同埋如來佛啊。我哋另外都仲有祖先牌呀嘛。有時候祖先牌就要上香比佢哋。好似我哋生人咁樣都要一日三餐。每日都會上三次香俾啲仙人食飯。

好嘅幾好呀即係見到你都有好多出去聚會呀交際呀。對你自己嘅身心健康覺得好唔好？

身體呢就唔係咁好啦。我有20幾年嘅糖尿病。除咗食藥之外仲要打胰島素。但係我控制唔到係咪控制得咁好。我曳唔係好聽話。我好為食。本身身體就已經唔係咁好但係最近就更加差咗啲。因為前牌中咗新冠肺炎。入咗隔離餅醫院。出咗嚟之後體質差咗好多。

但係我聽你把聲你都好好響亮行得亦都育德

我初初出院嘅時候食咗廿幾劑中藥嘢都唔係講得好好。有咩戲。而家先至補番啲戲。

聽你講嘢又好夠氣嗚。haha 你嘅心理健康呢你覺得你自己開唔開心，夠唔夠正向呀？定係你覺得你而家近排有啲因為可能因為新冠肺炎呀，或者可能因為成日留喺屋企有少少負面嘅想法呀？

會呀。因為我本身體質就已經唔係咁好。所以你一次加埋再中咗新冠肺炎之後，心靈上都覺得有啲灰心。點解我要咁辛苦呢我想走。淨係想走得來安樂囉。我會有咁樣嘅思想雖然我知道唔係正常嘅。但係會灰囉。

當你灰心或者唔開心嘅時候佛教有冇幫到你呢？

係可以唸下經囉。念經就對你覺得對你唔開心或者有壓力嘅...念經可以令我覺得平靜啲。唔會諗咁多。平靜之後幾好呀。

當你信佛教通常都會有一啲飲食習慣你會改變㗎嘛係咪？你有冇食齋呀？

我唸經需要去做法會嘅時候嗰幾日我會食11日齋.好似盂蘭節咁我都會食七日齋。或者觀音誕或者佛誕嘅時候嗰幾日都會食齋。不過平時初一十五食齋我就唔好食。

所以你淨係大事大節嘅時候先會食齋。你就會幾時開始有呢一個大時大節會食齋嘅習慣？

幫我一信咗佛上佛堂嘅時候。我就開始參加佢哋嘅法會。咁就開始呢個習慣。而家講起都已經有四十幾年㗎。

你四十幾歲開始嘅話都已經40幾年。你屋企人梗係食齋㗎啦如果觀音嗰啲？

我細個嗰陣冇。我屋企人唔會去佛堂。屋企供奉嗰啲喇唔使去食齋。我哋屋企淨係供奉同埋拜佛。

咁你覺得你嘅身體健康冇冇畀因為可能冇時食齋食得健康啲清啲會有即可能你食齋嗰段時間會可能身體比較好呀或者咩分別？

如果我食10日齋或者食一個禮拜齋嘅時候。反而會覺得我個身體比較冇咁立囉。但係呢就容易肚餓，因為齋係冇肉類。冇嘢每日要吸收乜嘢，齋就剩係得齋菜，同埋掛冇咩肉類。飯就會食多啲。肚餓食多啲嘢但係呢。唔會甘濟。

甘你壓力大或者心煩意亂嘅時候就會可能諗下經呀令到個心靜下。你嗰陣時都有講到你信佛㗎係因為你有感情挫折嗰陣時。咁你覺得佛教就係純粹幫你可以靜靜咗落嚟，定係你有啲咩特別嘅原因？

嗰陣時因為我感情上問題但係你有冇可能你而家上咗份正式地信咗佛四十幾年啦你有冇懷疑你自己嘅中間即係即係有冇覺得點解我會信呢係咪其實係咪係咪啱啱唔啱你有冇揀啱。

我哋呢啲咁嘅諗法唔舒服嘅問咗好多問題呀今日係結束問題啦咁如果你遇到有遇到一啲冇信入羊毛信奉任何宗教嘅人你會唔會佢哋去順豐你嘅宗教呢。

後面前面前希望你覺得幸福。

畀你安樂點解會安樂舒服。

入面係有啲乜嘢點解會令到你咁就當你去年經嘅時候你就係諗呢啲經文。

Respondent 3

我想問下問下你嘅背景資料啦你今年幾多歲呀

我今年69歲

咁你係信奉乜嘢宗教

佛教

咁你信咗佛教幾多年呢

可以話斷斷續續信咗20年。因為我初初接觸佛教。咁就淨係知道呢樣嘢，但係淨係最近先至開始參加法會。真係變成一個佛教徒。

可能小朋友個陣，好似另一個受訪者咁樣啦佢係可能細細個屋企已經開始信佛教㗎。即係都有少少影響，咁樣但係你細個個陣都咁樣嘅經驗呢？

冇㗎，我細個我屋企冇宗教。我嫻嫻係好虔誠嘅基督教徒。自己返學校就係天主教學校。中間亦都有接觸過佛教。唔知佛家係咩一回事。

所以係近年年嘅事先至開始信佛教

係直到開始199至200年開始，有上過呢度有啲佛學基礎班返去聽下咁就聽到。我覺得好啱聽。但係就未有深入研究，參加啲乜嘢活動。直至到最近呢幾年先至有參加活動呀呢計時有深入認識多啲呀。

而家通常幾耐會參加此宗教活動係唔係淨係去法會啲啲加埋可能喺屋企祈禱呀修練同埋修行？

如果你唔係局限去法會啲啲，我會盡量早晚都會禪修大約嘍每次 40 至 45 分鐘到啦咁就。有陣時就會自己去誦經呀，呢啲咁嘅嘢就唔會日日都一個禮拜都有好幾日做嘅。

咁法會呢？

法會呢就跟住我嘅朋友就會去法會。因為香港政府嘅條例原因要打晒三針先有得去。但係我淨係打咗兩針所以就冇得去。

呢個呢個問卷係講你嘅幸福咁啲你可唔可以你哋講下你而家嘅你覺得你自己而家幸福呀？

我覺得我自己算係好幸福。好多嘢呢就係點講呢如果係唔係話唔可以講話係即係呢幾年最多啲佛教嘅活動呀咁有禪修啦真係唔係真係好好彩囉可以接觸呢一個宗教。我睇嘢嘅角度就闊咗好多。個人就無咁執著，個人平靜咗好多。咁我覺得呢樣嘢已經係好幸福。我而家退咗休，喺個個生活上喇咁其實我自己係好自己係覺得好舒服囉而家。咁樣樣嘢嘅咁佛教俾咗我好多睇嘢嘅觀點上角度上磅咗好多。

幾好呀咁好嘅影響呀點解你會開始信奉喇覺？

就係嗰一次聽個佛學基礎班。嗰個講者佢係嗰個嗰個老師呢佢唔係一個出家人。但係佢講到好多嘅基本嘅嘢，好多都覺得好啱聽。雖然唔係好知佢講乜嘢但係覺得好啱用喺日常生活。所以我就上咗兩次嗰個基礎班想要認識多啲咁。但係都有去參加啲法會但係一直都有喺我嘅腦入邊。嗰陣時都仲未有接觸佛教係最近呢幾年係我一個朋友帶我去參加法會。慢慢就有學可以套啲嘢日上生活中。

幾好呀。你有上呢啲堂對你嘅生活有一個正面嘅影響。咁而家去問下你正常社交嘅問題啦。咁你同你屋企人你社交方面嘅問題。而家同你屋企人同埋朋友嘅關係係點樣㗎？

因為我屋企人個個都唔係信教㗎嘛咁所以我亦都唔會同佢哋講關於宗教嘅嘢因為我知道佢哋唔相信佛教。

我嘅意思係總括嚟講你同你屋企人同埋朋友嘅關係。

同屋企人嘅關係就個別呢。就係兄弟姊妹咁樣咁就會係有啲就會一定會有啲係傾得埋啲有啲有傾得咁埋。呢樣嘢一定會有啲亦都係咁就。如果你係同朋友啲啲，大家都有啲熟啲嘅朋友，都係間唔中會見吓但係因為新冠肺炎嘅原因而家我哋可能間唔中都會WhatsApp下。

咁你覺得信咗佛教之後有冇對你嘅社交有影響呀？有冇改變？

都有嘍。以前呢就真係朋友就真係可以好多好多嘍。乜嘢人都可以friend到。會好多唔同朋友嘅group嘅WhatsApp上邊。信咗佛教之後呢就同埋呢幾年啦即係發生好多嘢啦。有時覺得真係有啲大家思想上面好多嘢都好大分別，同呢啲朋友就會慢慢疏遠。之前啲人話叫我出去玩我都去但係而家就會想要安靜少少同幾個熟啲嘅朋友一齊，可以就咁見吓面傾吓計唔需要咁大班人。

你有同我講啦你都會去法會呀或者你點解會相信佛教因為你上咗啲佛教基礎班。呀咁你去上呢啲堂呀或者係呢啲法會嘅時候會唔會識到新嘅就志同道合嘅朋友咁樣嘍？咁而家你嘅朋友係因為呢啲場合認識嘅？

有嘍。咁當然個法會有咁多人。但係個法會你參加唔係去認識朋友嘍嘛。在場嘅人當然有啲人就會比較傾。咁又真係有一兩個會比較見得多啲嘅朋友。有一位朋友呢就真係因為佛教而認識亦都變咗一位好好嘅朋友。佢係信咗佛膠好多年，亦都教識咗我好多嘢。

咁都幾好嘍佛教有擴闊你嘅社交圈子。搵到一啲同你有一樣理念嘅人一齊去社交。咁我而家就會問吓你你身心健康嘅問題喇。而家身心健康有咩睇法呢？

我都覺得自己係一個好開朗嘅人嚟嘅。而家我都可能有啲事情會擔心嘅但係就唔會好似以前咁樣囉。因為我依家知道好似佛教所講世間所有事情都係無常嘅。未來嘅嘢你擔心得太多係有意思嘅。好多嘢都會影響到會唔會好似你所諗咁樣嘅方法發生嘍嘛。所以我而家就唔會好似以前咁樣擔心得咁多。即係唔會比界任何一樣影響自己嘅心情得太大。

隨遇而安。你相信嘅佛教啦有冇一啲飲食習慣。你係會遵從因為我知道我祖母去係會食齋啦佢嘅某啲日子食齋啦。咁你有冇呢？

我而家都係食齋嘅。我係舊年皈依左之後受咗五戒。開始左之後。咁我都係食菜多個食慾啲人嚟，但唔係啖啖肉啲人嚟嘅。之後呢咁我就係仲係會食慾但係漸漸地我變咗淨係想食菜唔係好想食肉。初初我開始食齋嘅時候都會會食蒜頭同埋聰。但係瘦咗五屆之後就戒晒呢啲嘢。

受五戒係咩意思咩意思呀？

我以前鍾意飲酒而家連走都唔飲得嘍啦。 秀五戒就係呢五樣嘢不殺生不偷渡不斜陰不妄語同埋唔飲酒同埋吸毒。

頭先亦都有講到你係皈依左嘅。皈依係咩意思？

衛衣嘅意思呢就係好似你入咗一個學校個學校收咗你之後入去讀書咁樣。我嘅理解就係好似你報咗名入去喇覺然之後佛教收咗你咁樣。就可以學到多啲嘢。

同出家又有分別嘅？

我哋呢啲叫做再加句詩。出家嗰啲就真係睇咗頭，倒數都會喺寺院入邊或者自己有一個地方去修練。

你覺得啲宗教嘅習俗儀式或者習慣呢對你嘅身心健康有影響呢？

其實呢我自己覺得呢學咗Meditation之後。個人真係平靜咗，唔會咁容易嘅…我以前嘅脾氣都唔係咁好容易就會撻着。要唔要會發癲呀好似呢啲咁樣。係幫我開始簽收之後呢呢樣嘢就真係少咗。有啲嘢你都係會癲嘅但係，會快啲剩返落嚟唔會癲好耐。呢樣嘢就幫助左我好多。

即係就令到你平靜啲無咁大起大落。咁你當有創傷性事件發生嘅時候宗教係點樣幫到你點樣影響你去看待呢啲事情呢？

呢件事就難啲答你因為而家我都未有好多太大創傷性嘅事情發生…都唔可以話係太過創傷性啦但係以前同一個好好嘅朋友、鬧翻咗。嗰陣時呢就真係好唔開心嘅。咁就真係一諗起就會好唔開心，但係之後遇到佛法之後，就了解到其實可能就係大家嗰個姻緣，就係去到嗰度然之後就係姻緣有咗囉。咁就好多生活上嘅嘢可以用佛法套用上。咁就係接受到如果呢啲事要發生就係咁樣啲啦。其實呢一樣嘢又唔會話係好創傷性嘅。譬如好似如果有啲人突然之間有重病嘅話，咁又可能會另一種睇法啦但係我而家未有一個咁大創傷性嘅事情發生所以我唔敢講。我會有點樣嘅反應。

燈可能你講同朋友咁樣，唔係一定話係要大嘅事先因為創傷性。真係小事都可以令到你心煩意亂或者有壓力呀你唔開心咁樣。創傷性係一個好重嘅字啦。有啲生活上嘅不如意嘅時候。瞓覺會教識你點樣去平靜面對。去用另一個角度去睇啦睇比起你信唔信佛教之前。咁你初初相信佛教嘅時候有冇懷疑過點解你嘅宗教嘅真係唔覺得有少少可能唔係唔係好 ok 啲，有啲唔係好MaKe sense嘅地方？

我未認識的細細個嗰陣時啦我就覺得佛教唔似一個宗教。但係我就話啦有接觸左之後就覺得好啱聽。所以其實完全都有話會懷疑囉。

因為新冠肺炎嘅影響你去唔到法會。咁你覺得新冠肺炎對你對佛教嘅睇法有乜嘢影響？即係你有冇覺得點解呢件事情會發生啲？亦都影響到你宗教活動參與嘅頻率。同埋有冇影響到你嘅諗法？

呢啲嘢真係唔係淨係對香港有影響而係對全球都有影響。呢啲事情如果要發生嘅話都會發生。只不過係每個國家佢哋所想要handle嘅方法都唔一樣。香港就係選擇咗要咁樣嚴厲啲去管制，如果你係以前嘅我嚟講嘅話我就會覺得有冇搞錯啊，應該就會又發脾氣又會鬧人咁樣。而家就係覺得如果啲嘢要發生嘅話就係要發生。即係呢如果啲唔受我哋控制嘅事情我哋嚟上嚟都冇用。

我想其實再問吓點解食齋係唔可以食蔥牙呢啲嘢食嘅？

佛教就係講咗如果你食素嘅話就係唔可以食呢啲食物嘅。係一個講法就會令到你好多慾望。點解唔食啲呢啲係佢嘅話你會唔會學生啦就係啦佢係印度人哋食好多嘅老公呢就係好脾氣好差啲。

睇法同埋宗教對你幸福嘅睇法嘅蔡康就到此為止呀你有冇啲嘢想再分享或者補充嘅呢都有乜呀我真係覺得係可以接觸到佛教一個好大嘅機會。

唔好咁你開心啦咁呢就好多謝你嘅時間喇咁如果你想嘅話之後可以將份即係出嚟嘅因為佢將成份採訪出去變成字啦你可以睇咗開題畀你睇啦或者最終研究論文我寫完之後你都可以 send 畀我同埋我嘅電話就係嗰份同意書上面你就可以隨時聯絡我啦咁我而家就會將個採訪暫停㗎。

Respondent 4

先問一問你嘅背景資料啦你今年幾多歲。

我今年66歲

你係信奉乜嘢宗教嘅呢

佛教

你係信封係邊一種佛教㗎？

顯宗

你從事左宗教活動幾多年？。

十歲嘅時候開始有接觸佛教。

咁你幾耐參加一次宗教活動？唔規限於淨係去法會呀，喺屋企打咗呀或者念經嗰啲都計嘅。

大概在之後就，呢三十年就每日都有嘅。之前零零碎碎咁樣。10零歲嗰陣時就好少。

你係咪同我講下你而家嘅幸福感。你覺得自己行唔幸福或者有啲乜嘢令到你覺得你好幸福呀。唔係局限淨係關於宗教

我都覺得幸福嘅。

邊方面或者有啲乜嘢令到你覺得你幸福呢？

覺得自己有宗教信仰嘅靈性上邊。係個一方面覺得有幸福。日常生活方便會有豈有樂。你可能會高有低㗎啦你嘅。宗教方面畀到你嘅你係睇得到呢一個係一個好自然嘅現象。呢個次朝頭早太陽升夜晚太陽落山，就一定係咁樣。會唔會話永遠都係咁樣唔明白

其實靈性係乜嘢㗎。你所指嘅靈性其實係指啲乜嘢呢

係你宗教上面講畀你聽啲嘢即係 冇嘢係Permanent嘅。所有嘢都好多變。有啲人覺得唔幸福就係因為唔明白點解啲嘢會

咁你話你係10歲開始有宗教開始有接觸呀。咁你話呢三十年嚟先至開始真係重視宗教活動呀。咁你之前係點樣同宗教有接觸嘅即係可能細細個或者係青春期嘅時候？

細細個嗰陣就係屋企人同埋啲朋友都係有宗教所以有接觸到

我嘅嫲嫲都係都係皈依左嘅咁我就會可能咁樣咁你哋嗰陣係咪都係點樣參加即係有人返拜祖先定係其他有其他活動呀。即係以前以前細細個嗰陣會去佛堂邊嘅。

細個嗰陣都會去佛堂嘅。唔係拜祖先嗰啲。

咁你細細個嗰陣對限佛教有啲乜嘢嘅睇法呢。

唔係好記得啲

而家再問下你現在寫返回社交生活嘅問題啦咁你可唔可以講下你而家同你屋企人同埋你朋友嘅關係呢

好好嘅

有恆常見面咁樣感。新冠肺炎有沒有影響到呢方面呢。

都有啲有影響的見面會少囉。參加宗教活動都少啲。

唔好意思我留咗問一條問題。咁點解你會選擇即係三十幾年前點解你會選擇開始佛教呢。

因為開始會有睇書囉。以前就有乜點睇書，細個嗰陣好少會睇書。大個咗開始睇書睇佛經嘅咁開始接觸到咁變咗你知道好多嘢。

領悟到啲乜嘢呢.?

即係好似返學咁樣每日都學到唔同嘅嘢。

點解會突然之間開始睇經書?

我估應該會係你你係接觸 即係你接觸到一次咁你變咗入面你睇到啲嘢定係會繼續做落去啦。

跟住呢你開始認同佢哋嘅理念或者佢哋宗教理念所以你就決定再深入研究完之後就變成佛教徒咁樣?

咁你可唔可以同我講解下你而家嘅社交圈子嘅時候會同啲乜嘢人社交呀或者你哋會去邊度呀?

呢幾年就有喇已經。朋友多數都係佛教徒。

通常你哋社交嘅時候會去邊度呢?

通常都係食飯嘍。你平時你可能係佛堂都會碰面

你成日去佛堂嘅。

差唔多每個月都會去佛堂嘅。我有啲嗰度做義工嘅。

有另一位受訪者同我講過佛堂同埋寺院係有分別嘅。

佛堂比較細寺院比較大。

你又講到你嘅好多朋友都係佛教徒好多都係驚去寺院或者參加宗教活動嘅時候認識呀？

係多數都係啲宗教活動認識嘅。

咁你而家係咁而家就問下你關於你對你自己身心健康嘅睇法啦咁你對你自己身心健康有咩睇法。

我覺得我都係健康嘅，我覺得

除咗身體上心理上呢。

心理健康。因為我有一個宗教信仰嘅度

你覺得宗教信仰邊度幫到你。

你睇嘢唔會淨係睇到你睇到嘅嘢。

唔好淨係睇到你睇到嘅嘢囉每個人嘅價值觀嘅時候可能係人哋嗰方面睇到你更加。

不如你有你自己嘅睇法。

包容係因為你知道。

嗰個人嗰個觀點角度佢出嚟都係唔同我哋未必。

明白到點解你咁樣令到你勁㗎。

明白佢哋做嘅嘢令到你個心更加舒暢因為你唔會再激氣唔係幾好呀咁因為佛教徒呢係食齋呀或者唔食嗰啲菜呀咁你有冇咁飲食習慣呢。

我係食素㗎囉你自己為咗嘅信仰而改變飲食習慣已經開始跟屋企人有可能夾唔到食好呀定係係可能你到真係間唔中食

你就唔去食囉定係都係唔食嗰啲蔥呀嗰啲嘢㗎有啲唔係你唔食㗎因為我唔係好明白但都唔會食嘅但係又唔係好似人咁樣嘅。

都差唔多㗎啦其實修行嘅人呀以前都唔會食嘅佢覺得你係搶奪咗嗰個動物佢哋嘅食物囉。

我自己就係冇食蛋。

衝呀算啦洋葱呀蒜頭呀嗰啲我都唔知點解嘅。

因為因為食呢類嘅嘢呢食嘅時候呢應該會好強。

點解嘅呢個係嗰個屋企真係有研究嗰啲人就會就會知道嘅認為呢啲呢啲食物係會令到你產生更加多一齊呢三十年呢開始就即進進就你一個樣嘅飲食習慣呀呢一個飲食習慣之後你有冇覺得有啲乜嘢其他嘅宗教儀式呀或者習慣呀你覺得都對你嘅身心健康有影響㗎。

好似可能打坐好多人.

有做到你先至會有呢啲嘢咋嘛打咗兩三次.

好嘅.

咁你覺得可唔可以同我講下宗教有冇或者係點樣幫助您應對創傷性事件或者可能有啲唔如意嘅時候你又係點樣幫到你嘅或者點樣幫唔到你嘅.

我會諗你有啲發生啲唔好嘅嘢咁你要諗返個 course 個原因點解會有呢啲人睇咗.

咁當你係可能心煩意亂呀或者壓力大嘅時候你有冇一啲更加活動你會自己可能做下打咁樣即可能啲蛤蚧

你自己可以睇書呀.

你真係覺得自己嘅話即係可以去佛堂黏在香港你自己嘅屋企都可以好似你咁樣真係擺落去畀自己

係嘅都係好事嚟嘅咁你有冇懷疑過你嘅宗教呢可能由細個開始嘅啫有一定有一直都覺得佢嘅嘅理念係唔係好明星嘅但一個唔信任何宗教人哋會唔會推薦佢哋信封呢如果你會嘅話你會點解你去定係咁呀.

會唔會好刻意囉我覺得係自己嘅行為.

會影響到佢感覺唔係好幸福嘅人哋會覺得你唔好話推薦呀但係唔知會同佢講下佛教呢啲咁樣嘅咁樣你會唔會好刻意佢講應該係佢自己去如果係識得嘅咁咁佢知道我係唔係佢想知嘅就要佢問囉咁其實關於對你旅行同理幸福感嘅睇法才.

到此為止啦你有啲嘢想補充或者再分享嘅呢我想睇返張 check 番資料你可以問我啦或者最終研究論文你嘅我都可以 send 番畀你啦問題嘅話 email 同埋好呀好呀咁我就會而家就係錄音啦.

Respondent 5

我想問下問下你嘅背景資料啦你今年幾多歲

我今年69

咁你係奉乜嘢宗教

佛教

咁你信咗佛教幾多年呢

可以話斷斷續續信咗20年。因為我初初接觸佛教。咁就淨係知道呢樣嘢，但係淨係最近先至開始參加會。真係變成一個佛教徒。

可能小朋友嗰陣，好似另一個受訪者咁樣啦佢係可能細細個屋企已經開始信佛教㗎。即係都有少少影響，咁樣但係你細個嗰都咁樣嘅經驗呢？

冇㗎，我細個我屋企冇宗教我麻麻係好虔誠嘅基督教徒。自己返學校就係天主教學校。中間亦都有接觸過佛教。唔知佛家係咩一回事。

所以係近年年嘅事先至開始信佛教

係直到開始199至200年開始，有上過呢度有啲佛學基礎班返去聽下咁就聽到。我覺得好啱聽。但係就未有深入研究，參加啲乜嘢活動。直至到最近呢幾年先至有參加活動呀呢計時有深入認識多啲呀。

而家通常幾耐會參加此宗教活動係唔係淨係去法會嗰啲加埋可能係屋企祈禱呀修練同埋修行？

如果你唔係局限去法會嗰啲，我會盡量早晚都會禪修大約嘍每次 40 至 45 分鐘到啦咁就。有陣時就會自己去誦經呀，呢啲咁嘅嘢就唔會日日都一個禮拜都有好幾日做嘅。

咁法會呢？

法會呢就跟住我嘅朋友就會去法會。因為香港政府嘅條例原因要打晒三針先有得去。但係我淨係打咗兩針所以就冇得去。

呢個呢個問卷係講你嘅幸福咁嘍你可唔可以你哋講下你而家嘅你覺得你自己而家幸福呀？

我覺得我自己算係好幸福。好多嘢呢就係點講呢如果係唔係話唔可以講話係即係呢幾年最多啲佛教嘅活動呀咁有禪修啦真係唔係真係好好彩囉可以接觸呢一個宗教。我睇嘢嘅角度就闊咗好多。個人就無咁執著，個人平靜咗好多。咁我覺得呢樣嘢已經係好幸福。我而家退咗休，喺嗰個生活上喇咁其實我自己係好自己係覺得好舒服囉而家。咁樣樣嘢嘅咁佛教俾咗我好多睇嘢嘅觀點上角度上磅咗好多。

幾好呀咁好嘅影響呀點解你會開始信奉喇覺？

就係嗰一次聽嗰個佛學基礎班。嗰個講者佢係嗰個嗰個老師呢佢唔係一個出家人。但係佢講到有好多嘅基本嘅嘢，好多都覺得好啱聽。雖然唔係好知佢講乜嘢但係覺得好啱用喺日常生活。所以我就上咗兩次嗰個基礎班想要認識多啲咁。但係都有去參加嗰啲法會但係一直都有喺我嘅腦入邊。嗰陣時都仲未有接觸佛教係最近呢幾年係我一個朋友帶我去參加法會。慢慢就有學可以套啲嘢日上生活中。

幾好呀。你有上呢啲堂對你嘅生活有一個正面嘅影響。咁而家去問下你正常社交嘅問題啦。咁你同你屋企人你社交方面嘅問題。而家同你屋企人同埋朋友嘅關係係點樣㗎？

因為我屋企人個個都唔係信教㗎嘛咁所以我亦都唔會同佢哋講關於宗教嘅嘢因為我知道佢哋唔相信佛教。

我嘅意思係總括嚟講你同你屋企人同埋朋友嘅關係。

同屋企人嘅關係就個別呢。就係兄弟姊妹咁樣咁就會係有啲就會一定會有啲係傾得埋啲有啲有傾得咁埋。呢樣嘢一定會有啲亦都係咁就。如果你係同朋友啲啲，大家都有啲熟啲嘅朋友，都係間唔中會見吓但係因為新冠肺炎嘅原因而家我哋可能間唔中都會WhatsApp下。

咁你覺得信咗佛教之後有冇對你嘅社交有影響呀？有冇改變？

都有啲。以前呢就真係朋友就真係可以好多好多嘅。乜嘢人都可以friend到。會好多唔同朋友嘅group嘅WhatsApp上邊。信咗佛教之後呢就同埋呢幾年啦即係發生好多嘢啦。有時覺得真係有啲大家思想上面好多嘢都好大分別，同呢啲朋友就會慢慢疏遠。之前啲人話叫我出去玩我都去但係而家就會想要安靜少少同幾個熟啲嘅朋友一齊，可以就咁見吓面傾吓計唔需要咁大班人。

你有同我講啦你都會去法會呀或者你點解會相信佛教因為你上咗啲佛教基礎班。呀咁你去上呢啲堂呀或者係呢啲法會嘅時候會唔會識到新嘅就志同道合嘅朋友咁樣嘍？咁而家你嘅朋友係因為呢啲場合認識嘅？

有啲。咁當然個法會有咁多人。但係個法會你參加唔係去認識朋友嘍嘛。在場嘅人當然有啲人就會比較傾。咁又真係有一兩個會比較見得多啲嘅朋友。有一位朋友呢就真係因為佛教而認識亦都變咗一位好好嘅朋友。佢係信咗佛膠好多年，亦都教識咗我好多嘢。

咁都幾好嘍佛教有擴闊你嘅社交圈子。搵到一啲同你有一樣理念嘅人一齊去社交。咁我而家就會問吓你你身心健康嘅問題喇。而家身心健康有咩睇法呢？

我都覺得自己係一個好開朗嘅人嚟嘅。而家我都可能有啲事情會擔心嘅但係就唔會好似以前咁樣囉。因為我依家知道好似佛教所講世間所有事情都係無常嘅。未來嘅嘢你擔心得太多係冇意思嘅。好多嘢都會影響到會唔會好似你所諗咁樣嘅方法發生嘍嘛。所以我而家就唔會好似以前咁樣擔心得咁多。即係唔會比界任何一樣影響自己嘅心情得太大。

隨遇而安.你相信嘅佛教啦有冇一啲飲食習慣。你係會遵從因為我知道我祖母去係會食齋啦佢嘅某啲日子食齋啦。咁你有冇呢？

我而家都係食齋嘅。我係舊年皈依左之後受咗五戒。開始咗之後。咁我都係食菜多個食慾啲人嚟，但唔係啖啖肉啲人嚟嘅。之後呢咁我就係仲係會食慾但係漸漸地我變咗淨係想食菜唔係好想食肉。初初我開始食齋嘅時候都會會食蒜頭同埋蔥。但係瘦咗五屆之後就戒晒呢啲嘢。

受五戒係咩意思咩意思呀？

我以前鍾意飲酒而家連走都唔飲得嘍啦。 秀五戒就係呢五樣嘢不殺生不偷渡不斜陰不妄語同埋唔飲酒同埋吸毒。

頭先亦都有講到你係皈依左嘅。皈依係咩意思？

衛衣嘅意思呢就係好似你入咗一個學校個學校收咗你之後入去讀書咁樣。我嘅理解就係好似你報咗名入去喇覺然後佛教收咗你咁樣。就可以學到多啲嘢。

同出家又有分別嘅？

我哋呢啲叫做再加句詩。出家嗰啲就真係睇咗頭，倒數都會喺寺院入邊或者自己有一個地方去修練

你覺得啲宗教嘅習俗儀式或者習慣呢對你嘅身心健康有影響呢？

其實呢我自己覺得呢學咗Meditation之後。個人真係平靜咗，唔會咁容易嘅…我以前嘅脾氣都唔係咁好容易就會撻着。要唔要會發癲呀好似呢啲咁樣。係幫我開始簽收之後呢呢樣嘢就真係少咗。有啲嘢你都係會癲嘅但係，會快啲剩返落嚟唔會癲好耐。呢樣嘢就幫助左我好多。

即係就令到你平靜啲無咁大起大落。咁你當有創傷性事件發生嘅時候宗教係點樣幫到你點樣影響你去看待呢啲事情呢？

呢件事就難啲答你因為而家我都未有好多太大創傷性嘅事情發生…都唔可以話係太過創傷性啦但係以前同一個好好嘅朋友、鬧翻咗。嗰陣時呢就真係好唔開心嘅。咁就真係一諗起就會好唔開心，但係之後遇到佛法之後，就了解到其實可能就係大家嗰個姻緣，就係去到嗰度然之後就係姻緣有咗囉。咁就好多生活上嘅嘢可以用佛法套用上。咁就係接受到如果呢啲事要發生就係咁樣啲啦。其實呢一樣嘢又唔會話係好創傷性嘅。譬如好似如果有啲人突然之間有重病嘅話，咁又可能會另一種睇法啦但係我而家未有一個咁大創傷性嘅事情發生所以我唔敢講。我會有點樣嘅反應。

燈可能你講同朋友咁樣，唔係一定話係要大嘅事先因為創傷性。真係小事都可以令到你心煩意亂或者有壓力呀你唔開心咁樣。創傷性係一個好重嘅字啦。有啲生活上嘅不如意嘅時候。瞓覺會教識你點樣去平靜面對。去用另一個角度去睇啦睇比起你信唔信佛教之前。咁你初初相信佛教嘅時候有冇懷疑過點解你嘅宗教嘅真係唔覺得有少少可能唔係唔係好 ok 啲，有啲唔係好MaKe sense嘅地方？

我未認識的細細個嗰陣時啦我就覺得佛教唔似一個宗教。但係我就話啦有接觸左之後就覺得好啱聽。所以其實完全都有話會懷疑囉。

因為新冠肺炎嘅影響你去唔到法會。咁你覺得新冠肺炎對你對佛教嘅睇法有乜嘢影響？即係你有冇覺得點解呢件事情會發生啲？亦都影響到你宗教活動參與嘅頻率。同埋有冇影響到你嘅諗法？

呢啲嘢真係唔係淨係對香港有影響而係對全球都有影響。呢啲事情如果要發生嘅話都會發生。只不過係每個國家佢哋所想要handle嘅方法都唔一樣。香港就係選擇咗要咁樣嚴厲啲去管制，如果你係以前嘅我嚟講嘅話我就會覺得有冇搞錯啊，應該就會又發脾氣又會鬧人咁樣。而家就係覺得如果啲嘢要發生嘅話就係要發生。即係呢如果啲唔受我哋控制嘅事情我哋嚟上嚟都有用。

我想其實再問吓點解食齋係唔可以食蔥牙呢啲嘢食嘅？

佛教就係講咗如果你食素嘅話就係唔可以食呢啲食物嘅。係一個講法就會令到你好多慾望。點解唔食啲呢啲係佢嘅話你會唔會學生啦就係啦佢係印度人哋食好多嘅老公呢就係好脾氣好差啲。

睇法同埋宗教對你幸福嘅睇法嘅蔡康就到此為止呀你有冇啲嘢想再分享或者補充嘅呢都有乜呀我真係覺得係可以接觸到佛教一個好大嘅機會。

唔好咁你開心啦咁呢就好多謝你嘅時間喇咁如果你想嘅話之後可以將份即係出嚟嘅因為佢將成份採訪出去變成字啦你可以睇咗開題畀你睇啦或者最終研究論文我寫完之後你都可以 send 畀我同埋我嘅電話就係嗰份同意書上面你就可以隨時聯絡我啦咁我而家就會將個採訪暫停㗎。

Respondent 6

So the recording started now. So now I'm just gonna ask you about some of your background information. Like, how old are you?

I just turned 70.

Okay. And what kind of religion do you practice?

Buddhism. Terabada Buddhism.

And how long have you been practicing this religion?

Oh, gosh, I didn't practice it constantly, but on and off since 1998.

Okay, but did you start it when you were you grew up in, like, a religious family that your family members?

No, I just stumble into it.

All right, okay. And how often do you practice religious practices at the moment? How often do you go to spiritual events, ceremony, or maybe just at home praying?

Well, I don't pray. Okay, well, no, let me take it back. A lot of people pray with the connotation of they want this and they want that. I don't do that. Okay, okay. Terravada Buddhism, they focus more on meditation. It's different from what the others are practicing. Theirs is more ceremonial, more chanting and thought. Wait, this and that. Terravada buddhism Is Very Simple. In Chinese, they call it yun chi fad gau . Okay. So all the teachings stems from the original teaching of Buddhism, whereas in Mahayana, they have a lot of cultural influence into the sutra and all that. So I think tervada is closer to what true Buddhism is. I'm not saying the others is not true, but there are a lot of cultural influences in the others.

You mean in a way like on lifestyle, like how you're going to eat and prayer and things like that?

Well, I think I refer more on the sutras. Yeah. And also the ceremony and what you eat and all that. Yeah. so to answer your question, I do meditation, or I try at least 1 hour a day, but ideally 2 hours, like once in the morning and once in the evening or later in the afternoon.

All right. Okay. So do you still attend ceremony or it's more like a mindset.

NO I don't. I know the others always go to the ceremony. And that's why in terrabuda Buddhism, they have rain retreat. They have much less fatwood than the Mahayana Buddhism. So it's really focusing on purifying your mind through meditation. And the teaching is when your mind is pure, that would affect your thought, your speech, and your action.

All right. Okay. Interesting. I did not know that. Thank you for explaining.

I do a lot of meditation. I do listen to Dharma talks on YouTube. Occasionally I read dharma books. Like books on Buddhism. But there are a lot of resources online now with covid. It's really turned my plan upside down. I used to go to Thailand a lot because Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, like all these countries, are more on Theravada Buddhism. But I cannot travel, unfortunately. I've been stuck in Hong Kong for three years.

Interesting. But you still may be able to. I mean, if you said it's focused on meditating, so it's more you can do this at home as well.

Yeah. At the peak of the covid, all the retreats were canceled. Meditation retreat. But now they have resumed. But I live with my mom, who's over 100 years old, so I don't want to go into this kind of places and raise the risk somehow contracted covid so I do it at home. but ideally, I used to go to meditation retreat a lot, but through the retreat where I practiced Vipassana. And if you're interested, you can go online, check on Vipassana, and start by going

Okay, interesting. All right.

Yeah. So I used to go to their retreat a lot. The basic level is ten days, and then it progressed to 20 days, 30 days, 45 days. But I'm still at the ten day because before my retirement, I didn't really devote that much time to it. It's hard to take out ten days of your schedule where you are totally out of communication. No cell phone, no computer, nothing. When you hold a job, it's difficult. Yes, of course.

And these retreats are like you go to somewhere in the countryside or another. Country

most of them are kind of in the countryside or in the forest, far away from the city center. in Hong Kong they have a center on Lantau Island?

Yeah, very far. All right. Very interesting. Now I'm going to start to introduce certain questions to understand your well being. And how would you describe your current well being? Like, how do you feel?

I think I have no Great depression, but that has nothing to do with Buddhism, because I've been locked down for three years and not being able to go anywhere. I'm just kidding. H

All right, thank you

My well being I think my well being physically, when you get to this certain age, you have certain aches here and there, but that's unavoidable. But my mental state I think ideally, if I want to progress on the path I should go to more retreat. That's how you make, like, improvement by the leaps. But under the circumstances, I can't do it, so I just have to do good with what I have with my current situation. I think mentally I'm a little bit more calm, less impatient and consciously I'm become a more compassionate person. Just before, small things would irritate me and I would get upset, but now I just kind of let things be whatever during the flow.

Yes. I think that's also very important for especially seniors to have this kind of mindset at this certain age. But it's great that you feel this way. And may I ask you why did you choose to practice this religion?

Well, somehow I stumble into it. When I first started, I didn't even know the difference between Mahayana Vijayana and Terravada. But somehow I think it's the affinity that I when I first get in contact with Buddhism, this is what I ran into. Like Tervada. I live in Happy Valley and my home is just right across from Amahayana Temple on Shangpong Road. But I think I've been in the temple less than ten times. It's just like 1 minute away from my home, but somehow is not there.

Yeah. The connection, the vibe is not there.

Yeah. Because I don't like things that are too ceremonial. I like things that are simple. And that's what Terravada Buddhism is

Yeah, simple and based on very on your mindset, not necessarily to be anywhere. You can practice pretty much everywhere if it's mostly meditating.

Yeah, if you're a mature meditator. But if you're not, it takes a lot of self discipline to meditate. Not to mention twice a day, even once a day for an hour every day. Yeah.

That's a lot of contribution. Yeah. And so you haven't practiced religion only since like, 1998, as you mentioned.

Yes.

And before that, it's more your family was not religious and you didn't really have any kind of engagement with religion before?

No.

So yeah. And now I'm going to ask some questions about your current social interactions with others. So how's your relationship with your family and friends?

It's great. I live with my mom. She's 102 years old, and I need to look after her, even though we have helpers too. But that's why I cannot travel anywhere because I would be afraid of traveling something at this age. Anything can happen at any time, so I just have to stay put. With my friends. I get to the point of minimalism. I think the older I get, as I look at the friends around me, if those are that I can talk to and I feel comfortable with, then we remain friends. What I'm trying to say is I put more emphasis on friends than rather than it has a lot of acquaintances.

Yeah, I agree. This is very useful. Not only at your age, I think in all ages it's very important to you.

A lot of people say, oh, especially Hong Kong people, they like to keep the social calendar pack. And if you ask them, oh, can you go to lunch on such and such day? Let me check my calendar. Oh, sorry, I'm engaged, but I can do it on this day from twelve to two. I'm sorry.

It's like work then actually meeting.

Yeah, but that's very Hong Kong though, because first of all, they don't like to stay home. Secondly, they like to keep busy all the time, like breakfast, lunch and dinner appointment. They dash here and there and there. It's just not my style.

I definitely understand that because especially that I moved to Europe, and when I go back to Hong Kong, I do sometimes get overwhelmed with how many people how they plan their day, and they barely have time for themselves and also just meeting people constantly. For me, it starts to get more exhausting through the years. I'm impressed how my friends can do this as well. I'm just like, I need my time.

when you are younger y are on a different agenda.

Yeah, of course. But I think it's also, like, as you said, you meditate and everything, so yeah. You value your time that nurture you. So of course you should be selective with who you hang out with or you socialize with.

Yes.

So do you think religion has influenced your social life? Did religion give you this kind of thought? That's why you think that are you going to...

It's funny in the circle friends. Somehow they're all Buddhist. If they are not Buddhist, then they become Buddhist.

Really?

Yeah. People did that close to me. That happens only after my retirement, when I work everybody was my friend.

Yes. And after the retirement, you realize, like, a lot of friends around you also start to approach, like, Buddhists, different kind of Buddhists, and become a Buddhist themselves.

Yeah. After you retire, people who are in the workforce have less interest to talk to you because they feel you have nothing to contribute. When I meet my ex colleague, I am not interested in listening to the office politics. I have done it for 40 years. I'm retired. I don't need to listen to it anymore.

Okay. Obviously, if you're retired, it's just like in the past, it's history. You don't really want to have anything to do with it anymore.

No, because there's so much more you can do and things that you didn't have the time to do when you were engaged in the workforce, so why remain in that same stage?

Yeah, I think I understand. And back to the thing that you said that your friends also start to become Buddhist is because also they are retired or just in general?

In general, actually, only one person. She went through a ceremony to become a Buddhist a couple of weeks ago.

That's beautiful.

Yeah, she still works

That's beautiful. And do you think that it's because the similar mindset, that's why you guys are friends and eventually they also become buddhist?

Yes, definitely. Because let me tell you, after my retirement, because I'm single, so I started a women support group with the intention that with the intention that single women or if you're married, you don't have kids, so nobody really look after you when you get old. We haven't done much because of covid, so once a month we meet on Zoom, and when the covid is not so severe, we would go to Lillian's place and have lunch and just chitchat. And there's seven of us.

That's really beautiful.

Yeah. So one of them became a Buddhist, but even before she became a Buddhist, she was more Buddhist than a Buddhist.

Okay, that's fun, but it's just more like a ritual that she was. Yeah, but I think it's interesting. Maybe it's like this support group that you share the same values and you care for each other and subconsciously also influences

it's funny, because every time when we talk, we always end up talking about Buddhism or topics that relate to Buddhism, because sometimes I would come up with topics right. The latest meetings, we haven't talked about death (chinese). How about if we talk about that? One time we talk about your path in Buddhism, and one time we talk about minimalism. So sometimes I generate topics rather than, like, a free flow. But if we meet in person, then everybody gets so excited because there's so few opportunities nowadays that we can have a party. So we just, like, chitchat and have a good meal.

Yeah, definitely. It's helpful for especially women who are single. I'm not sure if everyone is single in the group.

Well, no, a couple of them are married, but they have no kids.

Okay. Yeah. After retirement. And it's also always nice to have company from time to time and to talk about things. Very nice. I think this is a very beautiful thing. And so because I know, for example some of my other interviewees, when they practice Buddhism, they have certain diet that they follow?

I don't. okay. I eat anything.

You eat everything?

Yeah, I eat everything, including meat. But when I go to the market, I wouldn't point to a live chicken or live fish and say, I would have that because that will be killing in my name.

Okay.

So I don't do that. Plus, because I live with my mom, and just me and her have meals every day, and if I become a vegetarian, I feel that I'm depriving her, my company of eating with her. You understand what I'm saying? I don't eat this. Oh, I don't eat that. And then her only joy is to eat and sleep. So I don't have the heart to say, oh, I become a vegetarian, therefore this is your food and this is my food. I think the feeling of communal eating for her is very important.

Yeah.

So I wouldn't even consider at this.

Stage yeah, I can understand. And your mother, she eats everything. She's not on a diet all right?

yes

Okay. And so, as you said, you meditate. Is there other, like, some kind of practice or rituals that you do you think that can actually benefit your wellbeing or, like, your mental health and physical health?

I mentioned the retreat in Lantau. Sometimes I do volunteer work there because they always sometimes the teacher doesn't speak Cantonese. they could be from any part of the world. And sometimes the participants don't speak or understand English. So when they have questions, they need a translator. I work as a translator. Sometimes I just work in the kitchen and I miss that because I really like it. Yeah, I can. Attending the retreat as a student is important, but it's just as equally important to do volunteer work,

to be part of the community and to help out.

And to pass on this on the path of dharma.

Yes. Yeah. I think that's also very helpful. You also have some certain level of social interaction and also with translating, it also helps with your cognitive function.

Well, I don't think that in terms of that, but after you've been to retreat as a volunteer, you just get so much joy in helping others.

Yeah. I probably can believe that there is something like this in Hong Kong, but I did not know that there is like, a whole retreat in Lantau Island.

Oh, yeah. You can attend for ten days. They don't charge you for anything at all. They give you a room on board for ten days for free.

Oh, that's really interesting.

So when you come back to Hong Kong, you should register.

Yeah, maybe. I'm not sure. I'm a very active person and I can imagine it's like a very calm environment. What are the age range? How old do people participate in this retreat? Because I imagine, as you said, ten days. It's quite a long time

Ten days? Yeah. You cannot leave halfway. If you leave halfway, you would never be omitted back again. unless you have really valid reason. But you cannot say, oh, my back hurt, I don't want to do it anymore.

Yeah, only if emergency.

It's very disciplined and very straight. Yeah.

But I can imagine a certain kind of retreat. If it's called a retreat, you need certain discipline to focus on your own

Yeah. They lock up your mobile phone. You cannot even keep paper or pen. Yeah, it's very straight. But if you just follow the instructions for ten days. I have heard so many amazing stories of the participants and when I worked as translator, because then I was very close to the teacher and I listened to all the problems that the student has. At the end of the retreat, I saw so many people were transformed by the meditation. But it's really mind boggling. How the meditation work on us.

Yeah, that's powerful. Can you tell me a little bit, like, what do you do in the retreat? Like, how would, like, a normal day be?

You get up at four.

Oh my God. Okay.

Yeah. You have to be at the meditation home by 430 and you meditate until I think around 630. And then you have breakfast. Well, totally. Your meditation for 9 hours a day and there's no meal. You have breakfast and you have lunch. Because in Theravada Buddhism is very close to the practice that Buddha had 2500 years ago. Okay, so after lunch you don't eat anything. so for new students, I think they allow certain fruits. But if I go, I was only allowed to have lemon water. Okay, so from twelve until the next day well, just look at it.

just like fasting. It's actually healthy.

Yeah. So a lot of people say, oh my God, 9 hours. Oh my God, no food after twelve. They already set up a defeat for themselves. So if you just go with the flow, don't even look at other people, no eye contact. It's more like a journey inward. to see rather than because we're constantly, especially nowadays with social media and all these stimulation, we're constantly reaching out and we seldom turn our impression inward to reflect and to calm our mind. So it's like that. So in the evening, from seven to eight ish they have talked like the teacher, the founder has already passed. So all the meditation were the guidance is done by tape. So if you have questions after lunch, you can sign up for interview with the teacher. Lots of new students have lots of questions, right?

Me too. Yeah. And do you know how old when you look at the students, how old usually the students are?

They could be as young as teenager to people in their seventys eighty s? No age limit whatsoever.

But the participants, like mostly do you think they are actually seniors or more?

It's getting younger and younger now because meditation is such a big topic now in the west, right? Yeah. Everybody charged shitload of money to teach meditation. Mindfulness is a big word.

Exactly.

Especially in America. But with Vipassana, they don't charge you anything. You get all the food, the lodging, nothing. You just go in, surrender your mobile phone, surrender paper, pen, whatever device you have, and just for ten days. If you have not completed ten days, even though if you give the center \$10 million, they would not accept it, you must complete at least one 10 day course. Then you make a detonation. They would accept it. And that's how they keep them pure. Like really pure.

Their intentions are very pure as well.

Yeah.

That's really nice. Actually, I need that. You just signed up website. I'm going to ask for it haha.

It's very difficult to sign up now because when I was working as a volunteer for Ladies, we had 42 students. and male is about 20 something, but now they cut down to 14 because of covid. So they really space out the meditation cushion. I heard, because I cannot go because I don't want to leave my mom by herself for ten days with no communication. Right.

Yeah.

So I heard people are so because time is really tough and the world has turned upside down and lots of people turn to spirituality for relief, whether you're an old student or yet you haven't practiced before. So when they open for registration, I think they open two months in advance. People would sit at the computer to wait until twelve midnight and then they go into Reggie.

It's like a ticket, like going to a concert.

But I think they have centers all over the world. They have centers in like yeah.

Think I just looked it up online and I actually have one in my city as well. Oh, then yeah, maybe I should check that out.

Yeah, but you have to make sure that you have ten days free. No communication whatsoever with the outside.

Yeah, that's intense. But I think I will need that kind of cleanse haha.

I shouldn't say that to you. People with a simple, pure mind. Okay. They go into the retreat. They go to the retreat with no expectation, no fear, and they just listen to the instructions and follow the instructions to the team. Those are the people who benefit. I see them, how they transform. One time we had two psychologists who had master degree. And because day in and day out, they talk to people with such negativity and they did not know how to release the negativity. They had a rough ride, but eventually they

overcame the obstacle and hindrance. So it doesn't mean if you're well educated, you would understand it better. In fact, sometimes the way I say it even becomes a barrier.

Yeah. Because you overthink certain things.

You overthink. But when you go to retrieve, you don't think, you just do what you're told. You go in there to purify your mind. So a lot of people don't understand it and a lot of them have certain expectations. So when it gets to day 4 for it, a lot of people go nuts. It's really interesting to watch the students. Some of them really have a hard time, but some of them is due to the physical pain because they are not used to sitting for so long. But you don't have to sit cross, the Hong Kong center is more straight. I think it's the one in Toronto, there are 3 hours that all attendant must be in the meditation hall. But other than 3 hours in Hong Kong, there are about 7 people in one room. And in Toronto, you get your own room, you get your own toilet, you get your own bathroom. So it's like in a hotel. So it's more conducive for first time. But that's the kind of training you have to go through, right, to reach I like this, I don't like that. I cannot share toilet with other people. Some people are really inconsiderate. They slam the door, the bathroom door. Then if you have all these lights and display, then you're not purifying your mind, you're working against yourself. Right. So I think when the situation, when the retreat, accommodation and things like that are less ideal, it's even a better training for yourself, because in the retreat, you train your comendity so you don't get upset by things, but when things go well, you don't get overjoyed. So that's the whole point of the training. There are very many different types of meditation. I tried them all because I started in 1998. I tried this, I tried that. I went to Burma.

Also, it's after your retirement you have.

Many times in the west now, they teach a lot about anakana, which is watching your breath. Watching your breath is part of Vipassana, but after a certain time, you do that, you really get into the Vipassana. And when I did my volunteer work, I actually see this method. Different people, different temperament, different meditation techniques fit different temperament. Maybe my temperament is more strong or straightforward, so the vipassana really suits me well. But if you have a feeble mind, vipassana is not for you because it's really disciplined. I can see results, and that's why I keep doing it. I don't want to try any other things.

That's good. If you stick to one and it works and it helps, then why not? Right? It's not always about finding new things to make it work. All right, so I still have a few more questions because I think we went a little bit off track. There's just, like, three more questions left about your psychological health. And can you tell me a little bit, how does Buddhism help you to cope with traumatic events?

I don't have any trauma in my life, so I don't know.

Maybe not necessarily trauma, but also, for example, certain downfalls that make you really upset, and you may be turned to religion or I'm not sure what things happen.

No. Okay. That really helps because as I said, just to what I just said earlier, your mind become more balanced. You get less upset, I think. And you really watch your thoughts all the time. Through the thoughts I watch my language.

So it really helps. I think it helps you to be not affected by major events.

Well, I affected. Sometimes I do get affected, but instead of holding grudges for hours a day, then you quickly turn in word and you say, oh, why am I getting upset about these things? You talk to yourself, and you talk yourself out of the mindset thing.

Okay. So it's more like not that you don't get upset, but it's how you deal with this issue.

You become more aware that you're upset, and then you can switch your mood around quicker.

Interesting. All right. And have you ever doubted your religion because it ever got bumpy? And you really question, what am I doing?

I don't doubt it because I only believe Buddhism. Okay, let me first clarify. Buddha is not a god. so that's why when I first started, I say because in Buddhism, everything is boils down to karma. Right? If you do good, you will get good results. And if you do bad, then you get punished. Then most of you say in Buddhism, we believe there are many lifetimes you don't know when your bad karma will bite in. So that's explain why some good people get unfortunate things happen to them.

Yeah. My other interview, he also mentioned that with me about incarnation in the past life. So what you do good might not affect you in this life, but it might in this life in your afterlife. Yeah. Interesting. So that's actually pretty much all my questions. Okay, good. This is the end of the interview and your perception of your wellbeing, and is there anything you would like to add and share?

No.

Okay. Yes, and I'll end the interview now.

Respondent 6

我同我先生去聽佛學班，然後漸漸皈依左做咗40年嘅佛教徒

你幾耐會去參加一次宗教活動？

首先未有疫情之前有啲大嘅單啊師傅邀請我哋參加啲就大概一年四五次到。疫情嘅關係呢三年我哋就少參與到呢啲活動因為限聚令嘅原因咁就淨係新年嘅時候會去師傅度拜年。但係都唔影響我哋嘅，因為我哋嘅宗教唔同其他好似每個星期要去教堂咁樣首禮拜啊咁樣。我哋可以喺屋企修行念經打咗個仔拜懺咁樣

咁你幾耐會去一次念經？

我先生佢就每晚都會。佢真係一個虔誠嘅佛教徒，但係我呢平時要溴酸啊我哋宗教亦都唔一定要求我哋一定要做呢啲功課。好隨意嘅，如果你抽倒時間嘅話就可以做多啲。得閒嘅話我就鍾意念金剛經。通常一個禮拜唸一次，我先生就每晚都會臉嘅。但係我想講嘅係我哋嘅宗教好自由。唔會話如果你做多啲就係好嘅信徒做少啲就係唔好。

你可唔可以同我講吓？點解你會選擇相信佛教？

係我嘅先生影響到我嘅。初初接觸嗰陣時係有佛學嗰啲版。即係師傅定期一個禮拜就會講吓佛學基礎。我仲記得我嗰陣時係20八九歲。我先生幫我睇住啲小朋友，然後我去聽。我先生就知道我基礎，唔好同我講話我可以先去聽下一啲基礎班先。先再決定去唔去。反而做人嘅道理就係如果幫到人嘅話就係要幫。即係都有教我咁好似長輩父母嗰啲都好似佛陀咁樣拜佢哋。愛惜。師傅講到話你唔一定要擺一個發嘅因為你屋企人嘅父母長輩已經好似係一個佛咁樣。就係你嘅聲啲。將一啲好同埋關心佢哋嘅嘢，盡量公然喺佢哋身上。咁就已經係好似依佛廳所要你去做嘅嘢去做喇咁樣。

你可唔可以講吓你同屋企人同埋朋友嘅關係呢？

我同我屋企人同埋兄弟姊妹來往密切都好好嘅。我都揸住一個宗旨就係唔單只係自己即係嘅親戚。我哋其他人以外嘅長輩咁樣都係會時時問吓佢哋呀睇吓佢哋。覺得自己係好固執喇，因為有呢個宗教係我背後支持住。

咁你平時去法會或者去呢啲活動嘅時候，有冇認識到一啲朋友？

我以前會比較多啲，我哋仲會初一十五一齊約埋去食齋呀咁樣。因為呢個疫情嘅關係。全世界都比呢個COVID-19影響咗。我哋就會比較少啲見面同埋少啲集會，但係都唔會阻止我哋之間嘅友誼我哋會WhatsApp啦傾電話啦。見面係少咗，但係精神上嘅交流冇小道擺一樣都有。

咁你你啲朋友有冇幫到你喺COVID期間應付呢？

咁又冇，但係我哋大家都各有各忙。係有陣時通吓電話，傾偈嗰陣時會問候吓對方。或者你啲家人有冇事呀？雖然冇見到面，但係個關心程度都冇減少度。

咁你而家可唔可以講吓你身心健康嘅情況？

我好正面嘅。我平時嘅生活呢就係因為我有兩個孫仔。我每日都要去我個仔屋企睇住我兩個孫仔做功課。咁下晝呢，我就會車佢返學同埋接佢放學。星期日呢？我哋就會有家庭樂。我哋會一齊出去玩啦，同埋我次次啲孫仔會接嚟我屋企。因為我屋企又會所有平台又有花園。所以我啲時間過得好快，好快又會一個禮拜。我啲時間過得快充實又開心。所以同朋友之間嘅聚會少咗好多，但係佢哋都好明白。我啲孫仔係四歲半同埋歲半。我都有姐姐幫吓手嘅。但係要教佢哋功課啊健康啊呢啲嘅嘢都要親力親為。因為我個仔同埋新婦都做嘢好忙嘅。我新婦係醫生嚟嘅，我個仔就係律師。所以佢哋好夜先至放工，係咪有時候會返通宵。所以我同爺爺呢都好願意同埋好落力去幫助佢哋生活上你一齊。所以我唔會覺得用咗呢個群呢幾年我會好唔開心。純粹係希望可能呢個疫情快啲完咁我哋可以生活正常返。

咁你覺得上咗瞓覺之後對你哋嘅身心健康又有咩影響呢？

如果你人教日日都食晒嘅話，咁你嘅健康當然會更加好啦。因為我哋屋企又有小朋友又有老人家。有咁大班人一齊食嘢就好難唔可以話餐餐都食仔。可能只能夠一個月食兩日度啊。同埋因為我自己身體係有痛症。咁我就會有時打座等啲氣血通常啲。請坐下搜吓同埋冥想有咁多雜念。坐喺度呼吸呼吸咁樣就真係好似有咁痛。即係經絡方便。咁有時候真係頂唔住我都會去針灸嘅。咁

針灸咗之後紓緩咗冇咁痛，我也會去做物理治療話咁樣。始終年紀大咗呢呢啲係冇辦法唔俾面。身體嘅機能，真係會向下。支付，有時候都會同我哋講念經都係好。好多時候你唔會諗其他嘅嘢個人會集中啲。或者宗教上都會有幫助呢啲囉。

我都有訪問其他人嘅，咁佢哋都話佢哋會去冥想啊念經啊都對佢哋身心健康有幫助。咁你覺得喇覺有冇影響你嘅生活方式同埋生活態度？

大概影響又唔算有嘅。我細個嗰陣嗰啲款我都唔係信佛教。但係佢哋都會拜祖先咁樣。姿勢佢哋教我哋做人處事嗰方面都係好正面嘅。即係我哋嗰個年代唔會話成日嘅父母啊我哋好聽父母話嘅。最重要係接觸左佛教之後你會睇多啲經文。好多時候講嘅嘢都會講因果循環呢啲嘢。如果你相信有輪迴嘅話，你今世做嘅嘢就係你內心嘅預報嚟嘅。如果你做嘅嘢係唔好嘅話。你投胎轉世嘅時候你嘅業報可能就會帶領你去畜生度啊或者去地獄咁樣。唔係因為我哋驚佢受苦，所以唔做壞事。只係教到我哋我哋做人點解要做好人呢？就係因為有因果喺度。如果你唔信呢啲嘢淨係覺得過咗世就好似熄咗燈咁樣。咁你就會覺得唉我呢一世做乜嘢都得嚟喇。即係好似人死如燈滅咁樣。我哋會相信因果循環嘅月如果就算而家未有唔好嘅結果。但係始終你違背自己嘅良心去做咗一啲唔好嘅嘢犯法嘅嘢就已經唔係咁好。即係喇覺都會影響到我會覺得幫得到人嘅話就去幫。唔好計回到。幫到人就會好開心，令到人哋開心自己真係更加開心嘅。即係好似如果有啲老人家佢哋要去複診。我後生啲嗰陣我係真係好願意去陪佢哋。即係我未曾有孫仔Pro啊我啲子女又去緊讀大學。佢哋唔需要可去照顧佢哋，咁我去幫到其他人，我都去幫。我在你啲時間去幫人，我自己會覺得好開心。我會去長者中心做義工。帶佢哋去旅行都唔係因為淨係宗教嘅關係。係你覺得我幫到人自己都好開心。而家就可能難啲囉，因為我要溴酸。但係平時如果有時間我都好鍾意去長者中心服務。

咁喺長者中心嗰陣時你就會同佢哋傾吓計，都會令到你自己真心好舒服。

係呀，平時都會帶佢哋去旅行。去探訪好似節日嘅時候中秋節呀新年呀我都去探訪啲獨居長者。佢哋唔係要我哋義工做好多嘢嘅。好似就兩個人一早，就睇你邊段時段得閒日日可能就係放下10個老友記咁樣。但係當呢啲女友機見到我哋上去搵佢啊應節嘅時候陪佢哋傾偈呀佢哋真係會好開心。因為佢哋真係好寂寞㗎，當我自己有能力可以抽少少時間出嚟呢啲嘢我就會覺得好開心囉。我就鍾意做呢啲嘢。

當有啲唔開心或者創傷性事件嘅時候發生宗教又點樣幫你應對？

我哋佛教好多時都好興講話，好多嘢都係無常嘅。即係唔會話所有嘢都好順利。當你遇到一啲困難或者唔開心嘅時候，你要同自己講總會過去嘅。所以我就成日會揸住呢一個心去睇呢啲嘢。給唔好都好都係會過去嘅。前面都會有一啲嘢更加好嘅等緊你。你就唔需要諗住成日都要咁樣去糾纏，我係幾咁唔開心同埋幾咁激氣。或者就算好似係有一個大病咁樣，大病過後始終都會好返。你係要正向啲去面對去睇嘢囉。大不了有啲病痛要做手術，可以好得返嘅咁你咪去接受囉。去接受你個手術可能手術過後你行得返。我見唔到好多老友記都問我。我咁大年紀要唔要去做呢個手術？成日都咁同成日都糾纏住呢樣嘢。越嚟越痛啊要坐輪椅咁樣。可能我有宗教支持，我諗嘢都會正面啲囉。同埋我好鍾意同老人家傾偈，就係因為如果你哋遇到唔開心嘅嘢，唔好成日鑽牛角尖擺喺個心入邊。我係幾近不行我係幾咁慘。咁樣唔好，要向前睇，因為總會過去嘅。人生唔會成日都咁平坦。梗有高高低低。我係咁樣睇囉。

係囉，我訪問左咁多個Auntie佢哋都係有呢個咁樣嘅睇返。係啦，都有幫到佢哋。

因為我哋已經經歷咗好多。你明唔明呀？我哋係長者。我哋已經有經歷好多，知道人生唔係咁平坦。唔係千篇一律咁樣。去到咁樣嘅時候，如果你靠人哋開解你。不如你最緊要自己開解左自己先。即係你希望人哋幫你不如自己幫自己先？就係咁樣

即係你提到如果你唔開心呀，你大概時候就會同自己用呢個想法去幫自己。

即係當然你同朋友傾訴下都係好嘅。唔可以話你自己解決晒就得㗎喇。但係當你有困難嘅時候，需要人幫手嘅時候都唔應該害怕去開聲。將你嘅情況同人哋講。人哋如果我幫到你嘅話都會幫㗎喇。一定要改出嚟，朋友係好重要㗎。喺我嘅人生當中除咗家人之外朋友係好重要嘅。我自己起碼有10個八個非常之好嘅朋友。大家互相關心。

你嘅朋友有冇佛教徒呢？

有洋洋，宗教都有。我識朋友唔會因為話你係乜嘢宗教就淨係同你做朋友。因為我覺得信仰係睇你哋嘅機會。當你有機會去接觸呢樣嘢或者一個宗教嘅時候你信服佢嘅呢個宗教就係屬於你。即係好似所有宗教普通嘅基督教啊天主教啊佢哋都係導人向線嘅，都係互相幫助，好似基督教弟兄姊妹咁樣。好似我個仔同埋新婦係基督教嘅我哋都可以相處得好好。因為佢讀書接觸係咁樣真係會香港方便。我們因為係我相信呢個宗教，所以我只定我嘅子女都要相信我嘅宗教。係睇你接觸嘅機會。

宗教冇局限道理社交嘅圈子。點解呀？