

Together Action Is Not Empty Speech

Not for Me

Zen Master Dae Kwan

In Hong Kong, we have an annual 1,000-People Meditation Event. It started about six years ago, when Hong Kong began to go through some turbulent times and people's minds were unsettled. Venerable Chang Lin, together with *Buddhist Compassion Magazine* and the Centre for Spiritual Progress to Great Awakening, joined together and created this event. The intention was to help people with no meditation experience to start practicing, calm their minds, and see how meditation could transform their lives.

Venerable Chang Lin invited several Buddhist temples, including Su Bong Zen Monastery, Plum Village, and the Tergar Meditation Centre. Each temple would share some practices and guide participants to take a pause, go back to their breathing, and experience meditation together. And to encourage participants to continue their practice at home, each participant was given a set of sitting cushions as a souvenir.

The first year's response was overwhelming. To join the event, people needed to buy their tickets online, and all tickets were sold out in the first three hours. With such an encouraging response, 1,000-People Meditation soon became an annual event. Later on, two more temples joined—Awareness Spiritual Growth Centre and Tung Lin Kok Yuen.

It is a three-day event, and was held in different venues for the first four years. For the past two years the event has been held through Zoom because of COVID. The response was very good, with more than ten thousand cumulative viewers.

It is wonderful that temples of different traditions join hands and do together action. More than a hundred vol-

unteers offered their hard work and loving support. The following are some sharings from our students who have supported this event as volunteers.

Don't Check, Just Do It! That Is the Miracle

Francis Lau

I had the precious opportunity of joining the 1,000-People Meditation in the recent years, and the experience was invaluable.

Organized through the collaboration of different Buddhist temples of various traditions, the annual event attracted more than a thousand participants every year. In the first year, Su Bong Zen Monastery was responsible for the venue. It had to organize all volunteers coming from different backgrounds, and to place a thousand cushions within an hour and a half. All the cushions were to be placed neatly in straight lines and rows in a space the size of twelve standard basketball fields. All the sudden changes and challenges encountered were totally a test to our practice on the cushion.

There was one episode to share: One morning, the admission time was supposed to be 10:00 a.m. At 9:00, while I was feeling relieved that the last row of cushions had just been perfectly set, suddenly there was an announcement onstage. There was a space problem with the stage, and all thousand cushions needed to be moved backward by about ten feet. All the volunteers' jaws dropped. How could that be possible? There were only thirty minutes left, and everyone was exhausted! It seemed to be an impossible task, unless some miracle happened.

And a miracle did happen! All the volunteers put down their work and gathered together. We all stood behind the last row of cushions, ready for instructions coming from the sunim onstage. Through the loudspeaker, Sunim gave us the rhythm. More than a hundred volunteers bent down, took up the cushions and, "1, 2, 3, step back," then "1, 2, 3, step back," and "1, 2, 3, step back . . ." It was just like planting rice seedlings! Within twenty minutes, all thousand cushions were moved to their new positions, smoothly and neatly. It was a truly touching moment. Everyone was overjoyed with the miracle!

Coming from different temples and all walks of life, the volunteers were just strangers with

Photo: Su Bong Zen Monastery Archive

