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PSE Economics—  
From Inner Peace to Global Peace

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## Abstract

Facing the problems of a global economic crisis, imbalance of production and consumption, financial market volatility, ecological destruction, degradation of the natural environment, climate change, increasing poverty, and social injustice, mainstream economists advocating capitalism confront many challenges today.

In an attempt to address the contemporary world situation, Master Sheng Yen (1930-2009), founder of the Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM) organization, introduced the concept of Protecting the Spiritual Environment (PSE) in 1992. More than just a religious concept or movement, PSE also provides practical ideas and methods to help face the world's economic dilemmas. I therefore call this new approach to economics "PSE Economics", as it is clearly different from other economic theories and approaches.

In its discussion of PSE Economics, this paper raises several questions. What are the Buddha's teachings to address economic situations? Are the principles of PSE consistent with that of economic life that the Buddha taught? Can we resolve our economic problems and environmental crisis using PSE?

In an attempt to find answers to these questions, this paper develops the economic system guided by Protecting the Spiritual Environment, addressing the root of world economic problems: desire. The key issue in PSE Economics is determining how to deal with our desires while mainstream economics predominately ignores this issue. PSE Economics can be applied using two methods. The traditional approach applies Buddha's teachings and seeks Contentment with Fewer Desires, Right Livelihood, Altruism, and Cordiality in Sharing. The second, practical approach guided by the Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign carefully and conscientiously regulates one's consumption, production, and distribution. These actions lead the world toward Protecting the Four Environments and the Six Ethics of the Mind campaign. The principles and approaches of PSE Economics were instilled by the Master providing our contemporary world with solutions that are environmentally sustainable, socially just, and

globally peaceful. Perhaps this will open a window to a beautiful vista that is also pleasing to the eyes of mainstream economists.

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## Keywords

Protecting the Spiritual Environment; PSE Economics; Buddhist Economics; Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign; The Six Ethics of the Mind

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# 1. Introduction

In the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2012*, the United Nations points out that, “The world economy is on the brink of another major downturn. Global economic growth started to decelerate on a broad front in mid-2011 and ... is expected to continue into 2012 and 2013.”<sup>1</sup> In addition, Professor Klaus Schwab, President of World Economic Forum (WEF), made “Great Transformation – Shaping New Models” the theme for the 2012 Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> Facing the problems of a global economic crisis, imbalance of production and consumption, financial market volatility, ecological destruction, degradation of the natural environment, climate change, increasing poverty, and social injustice, mainstream economists advocating capitalism confront many challenges today.

In an attempt to address the contemporary world situation, Master Sheng Yen (1930-2009), founder of the Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM) organization, introduced the concept of Protecting the Spiritual Environment (“PSE”) in 1992.<sup>3</sup> Master Sheng Yen, or delegates of the DDM Saṅgha (monastic community), have attended numerous international conferences, including meetings organized by the World Economic Forum (WEF), World Bank, World Council for Religious Leadership (WCRL), Global Peace Initiative for Women (GPIW), the Earth Charter, as well as the World Youth Peace Summit

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<sup>1</sup> Development Policy and Analysis Division, United Nations, *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2012*: 2012/05/31, <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/index.shtml>.

<sup>2</sup> See the website of World Economic Forum: 2012/05/31, <http://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2012>.

<sup>3</sup> Master Sheng Yen founded the Three Studies Institute in 1979 and built up the saṅgha in 1980 at Nung Chan monastery, located in Beitou, Taipei, Taiwan. This Institute gradually developed into the Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM) Saṅgha. In 1989, the Master purchased the land named Dharma Drum Mountain and stated that “environmental protection should start from our mind”. “The Common Endeavor of Buddhists” was proclaimed in 1989, and DDM’s goal: “to uplift the character of humanity and build a pure land on earth” was established in 1990, with “Protecting the Spiritual Environment” becoming DDM’s core vision in 1992.

(WYPS) at the turn of 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>4</sup>

The Master explained that PSE is the embodiment of Buddhist compassion and wisdom, and can be carried out using two approaches. The first approach is more conventional, wherein interested individuals study Buddhism and practice meditation. The second is the practical, modern approach aimed at those who are either not yet interested in Buddhism or lack the time to practice meditation, but can apply the concepts in their daily lives. Anyone may use the following practical guides to accompany these concepts. They include Protecting the Four Environments<sup>5</sup> (1994), the Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign<sup>6</sup> (1999), and The Six Ethics of the Mind<sup>7</sup> (2007). He proposed these concepts over the course of many years and eventually cultivated a complete system (see Appendix 1).

More than just a religious concept or movement, PSE also provides practical ideas and methods to help face the world's economic dilemmas. I therefore call this new approach to economics "PSE Economics", as it is clearly different from other economic theories and approaches. PSE Economics deals with economic issues from the perspective of the mind. By managing our own economic issues or the world economic system based on PSE Economics, everyone can obtain the ultimate wealth of inner peace, and further extend that to attain global peace.

In its discussion of PSE Economics, this paper raises several questions. What are the Buddha's teachings to address economic situations? Are the principles of PSE consistent with that of economic life that the

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<sup>4</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Establishing Global Ethics*, Pocket Guides to Buddhist Wisdom, Spiritual Growth Series, (New York: Dharma Drum Buddhist Association, 2008), 3-4. The Master attended the UN Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders in 2000, meetings of the WEF, WCRL, GPIW, and Earth Charter in 2002, the WYPS in 2004, and the Leaders Meeting on Faith and Development held by the World Bank in 2005.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Buddha taught? Can we resolve our economic problems and environmental crisis using PSE?

In an attempt to find answers to these questions, this paper tries to construct an economic system within PSE, guided by the Master, from two perspectives: the conventional Buddhist approach and the practical, modern approach. This paper first investigates the economic system of the DDM Saṅgha and Buddhist family based on the traditional approach. Next, it will examine an economic system based on the practical approach of PSE, and its applications in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, this paper concludes with the significance PSE Economics in bringing peace to the contemporary world.

## 2. The Traditional Buddhist Approach to PSE

The traditional Buddhist approach to PSE is learning Buddhist teachings and cultivating spiritual practice. DDM provides the programs, classes, and retreats through Three-fold Education<sup>8</sup> for people who are interested in studying Buddhism and practicing meditation.<sup>9</sup> Facing the global economic situation, the perspectives of Buddhism and Chan practice may contribute perspectives on and at least micro-scale level solutions to those problems. Thus, the theory of PSE economics is based on Buddhist economics.

Since E. F. Schumacher first introduced the term “Buddhist Economics” in 1966<sup>10</sup>, more and more economists such as F. L. Pryor, Shinichi Inoue, Apichai Puntasen, Laszlo Zsolnai, Colin Ash, Harald

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> See Ven. Chang Wu, “Protecting the Spiritual Environment: Interpreting and Living the Scriptures in Our Modern World”, presented at the Buddhist-Christian Symposium organized by the Focolare’s international centre for interreligious dialogue at Castel Gandolfo, Italy, May 28 - 31, 2012.

<sup>10</sup> The essay “Buddhist Economics” was first published in *Asia: A Handbook*, edited by Guy Wint, published by Anthony Blond Ltd., London, 1966. In 1973 it was collected with other essays by Ernest Friedrich Schumacher in *Small Is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*.

Wiese, etc.; Buddhist leaders, such as Ven. P. A. Payutto, Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh, etc.; Buddhist scholars, such as David Loy, Sally King, etc., and Buddhist activist, such as Sulak Sivaraksa, etc., have joined their voices to find solutions to the economic problems of the contemporary world from Buddhist perspectives.

## 2.1 Buddhist Economics

### 2.1.1 Economic Activity

The world situation is currently affected by the economic activities of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services to meet the basic requirements of life, as well as requirements beyond that level. The basic economic problems are scarcity and choice. These problems exist because there are only a limited amount of resources available to produce an unlimited amount of goods and services to satisfy people's infinite desires. Thus, what to produce, how to produce it, and who will consume what is produced are the core issues in the economic system. Furthermore, distribution and consumption are the main elements in the system. The circular flow of economic activity is as follows:

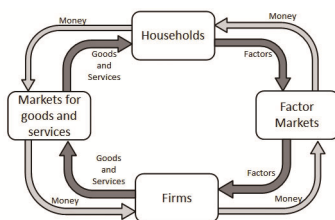


Figure 1. The Circular Flow of Economic Activity

The circular flow of economic activity shows the relationship among households, manufacturers, factor markets, and markets for goods and services, illustrating the movement of income from producers of

goods and services to consumers, and back to producers. Mainstream economics<sup>11</sup> assumes that people act rationally, and try to maximize satisfaction using limited resources. Moreover, mainstream economists offer solutions based on material concepts, and try to maximize utility or profits. On the other hand, Buddhist economics offers a spiritual approach providing “a rational, ethical, and ecological value background which promotes happiness, peace and permanence.”<sup>12</sup>

For a Buddhist, the economic aspect of life is closely connected with his or her goal in practicing Buddhism, which is to attain ultimate *nibbāna*. As a result, Buddhism offers guidelines for economic activities in order to help Buddhists accomplish this goal. These guidelines apply to both monastics and laypeople, and can be found in the Pali Canon and Mahāyāna Scriptures. Therefore, each individual can approach the truths embodied in Buddhist Economics on their own.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.1.2 Core Issue of Economics: Desire

As Ven. Payutto (2002) explains, “the engine of all economic activity is desire”.<sup>14</sup> In his earlier book, *Buddhist Economics*,<sup>15</sup> points out that there are two distinct types of “desires”: *taṇhā* (Skt.: *trṣṇā*), meaning

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<sup>11</sup> Mainstream economics refers to neoclassical economics.

<sup>12</sup> Laszlo Zsolnai, “Buddhist Economics for Business,” Business Ethics Center, Corvinus University of Budapest, (2009), 1. 2011/06/08, <http://laszlo-zsolnai.net/content/buddhist-economics-business>.

<sup>13</sup> See Puntasen, Apichai, *Buddhist Economics: Evolution, Theories and Its Application to Various Economic Subjects*, a translated version of selected chapters from the Thai original (3rd ed.), Amarin Press, Bangkok, 2004, (First published in 2001.) in 2008, p.9. 2011/05/06, <http://buddhist-economics.info/documents/puntasen.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> P. A. Payutto, “Buddhist Perspectives on Economic Concepts”, in *Mindfulness in the Marketplace: Compassionate Responses to Consumerism*, edited by Allan Hunt Badiner, (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 2002), 77.

<sup>15</sup> P. A. Payutto, *Buddhist Economics – A Middle Way for the Market Place*, 2nd ed., (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 1994).



craving, thirst, unwholesome desire; and *chanda*, meaning wholesome and sincere desire for well-being. *Taṇhā* and *chanda* both seek satisfaction, but of different kinds. *Taṇhā*, the desire for pleasure objects, is based on ignorance (Pali: *avijjā*, Skt.: *avidyā*) and will lead to economic activities motivated by greed, causing the destruction of the earth. Thus, we will see the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination (Pali: *paticcasamuppāda*, Skt.: *pratītyasamutpāda*)<sup>16</sup> within such economic activities. These Links result in the cycle of birth and death (Pali & Skt.: *saṃsāra*) and are the cause of suffering (Pali: *dukkha*, Skt.: *duḥkha*). *Taṇhā* is the eighth link of the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination and is the root of economic problems. The Twelve Links are as Figure 2:



Figure 2. Twelve Links of Dependent Origination

On the other hand, *chanda*, the desire for well-being, is based on *paññā* (Skt.: *prajñā*) which leads to effort and rightly directed action, and will be a supportive factor in liberation from the cycle of birth and

<sup>16</sup> The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination:

(1) Ignorance (Pali: *avijjā*), (2) Karma formations (Pali: *saṅkhāra*), (3) Consciousness (Pali: *viññāṇa*), (4) Name and form (Pali: *nāmarūpa*), (5) Six bases (Pali: *saḷāyatana*), (6) Sense impression (Pali: *phassa*), (7) Feeling (Pali: *vedanā*), (8) Craving (Pali: *taṇhā*), (9) Clinging (Pali: *upādāna*), (10) Process of becoming (Pali: *bhava*), (11) Rebirth (Pali: *jāti*), (12) Ageing and Death (Pali: *jarāmaraṇa*)

death. While being ignored by mainstream economics, how one deals with “desire” is the key issue of PSE Economics and Buddhist Economics.

Based on his background in Buddhist studies and on the Chan tradition, Master Sheng Yen’s teachings include Chan practice with sudden enlightenment as well as the gradual method. The Master says: “We often associate Chan with sudden enlightenment, but Chan practice does indeed progress in stages. However, one does not take each stage as an ultimate goal. Even though Chan speaks of sudden enlightenment, it also embraces the gradualism implied in the Thirty-seven Aids to Enlightenment (Pali: *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*, Skt.: *bodhipakṣa dharma*)”.<sup>17</sup> This is a system of practices that frees us from suffering; this is summarized as Threefold Trainings (Pali: *sikkhā*, Skt. *śikṣā*) of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*.<sup>18</sup>

As the teaching in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* states, “Good will is the initial determination to seek enlightenment, such that Will is the foundation of one’s practice.”<sup>19</sup> It says that *chanda* is the root of liberation from the cycle of birth and death in the practice system of the Threefold Trainings and Thirty-seven Aids to Enlightenment.<sup>20</sup> Thus, practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Pali: *satipatthana*, Skt.: *smṛtyupasthāna*), Four Proper Exertions (Pali: *sammappadhana*, Skt.: *samyakprahṇa*), and Four Roads to Spiritual

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<sup>17</sup> Chan Master Sheng Yen, *Things Pertaining to Bodhi: The Thirty-seven Aids to Enlightenment*, (Boston & London: Shambhala, 2010), 175-177.

<sup>18</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *The History of Indian Buddhism* 印度佛教史, in *The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen*, vol.01, no.01, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 41.

<sup>19</sup> *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* 大般涅槃經：「善欲即是初發道心，乃至阿耨多羅三藐三菩提之根本也，是故我說欲為根本。」 vol. 38, 12, Kasyapa Bodhisattva chapter 迦葉菩薩品, CBETA, T12, no. 374, p. 587, a28-b1. This sentence translated by Ven. Chang Jian.

<sup>20</sup> *Yogacara-bhūmi-sāstra* 瑜伽師地論, vol. 88：「流轉還滅根本故者，謂欲。由善法欲乃至能得諸漏永盡，是故此欲名還滅根本。」 CBETA, T30, no. 1579, p. 797, b9-11.

Power<sup>21</sup> (Pali: *iddhipada*, Skt.: *ṛddhipāda*) that can dispel the five hindrances (greed, anger, sloth, restlessness, and doubt) and generate the Five Roots (Pali & Skt.: *indriya*, faith, diligence, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom). Based on the Five Roots, the Five Powers (Pali & Skt.: *bala*) are generated to eradicate unwholesome mental states and give rise to wholesome states. The Master discusses the stages in cultivating the Five Roots as follows:

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness are practiced at the initial stage to cultivate samatha-vipasyana and then augmented with the Four Proper Exertions to cultivate samatha-vipasyana with diligence. The Four Steps to Magical Powers is then generated with the fruition of the Four Right Efforts. The Four Steps to Magical Powers are actually four kinds of dhyana. The cultivation of samatha-vipasyana will strengthen the confidence resulting from practice while the first root of faith is also being generated simultaneously.<sup>22</sup>

According to this progression, the Buddhist teachings guide the economic behaviors based on *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, in order to progressively reduce and then eliminate *taṇhā* and encourage the *chanda*. This is an aspect of the way taught to lead sentient beings to free themselves from the suffering of birth and death and attain the *nibbana* Buddhahood. Conversely, mainstream economists observe and analyze economic activity through the desire for material benefit and the satisfaction of unlimited desires. These kinds of actions lead to the destruction of the earth, and economic problems that are becoming more complex and more serious.

The principles of Buddhist economics regarding production,

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<sup>21</sup> The better translation of *iddhipada* is “four roads to spiritual power”, however, “four steps to magical powers” used in Master Sheng Yen’s book.

<sup>22</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Recoded Lecture of The Thirty-Seven Aids to Enlightenment* 三十七道品講記：「就是要先修「四念處」—主要是修觀、修定；然後用「四念勤」來修四念處—以精進的心既修觀慧，又修禪定；再以四正勤的功能修四種神足，即「四如意足」，四種神足就是四種定。觀會和禪定的功能產生之後，信心就會穩固，第一根的信就產生了。」 (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2011), 101. The translation of this paragraph provided by Ven. Chang Jian.

consumption, and distribution of goods and services are thus extremely different from mainstream economics. Apichai Puntasen (2004) points out that the difference between the two definitions is the maximization of utility and benefits in mainstream economics, and the achievement of peace and tranquility in Buddhist economics. In addition, Laszlo Zsolnai (2009) argues that,

Western economics represents a maximizing framework. It wants to maximize profit, desires, market, instrumental use, and self-interest and tends to build a world where “bigger is better” and “more is more”. However, Buddhist economics represents a minimizing framework where suffering, desires, violence, instrumental use, and self-interest have to be minimized. This is why “small is beautiful” and “less is more” nicely express the essence of the Buddhist approach to economic questions.<sup>23</sup>

## 2.2 An Economic System Based on the Buddha’s Guidelines

Several researchers such as Pryor (1990, 1991),<sup>24</sup> Payutto (Venerable Dhammapitaka, 1994),<sup>25</sup> Ven. Ji Hsiung (1994),<sup>26</sup> Li Jiajing (2006),<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Laszlo Zsolnai, (2009), 8.

<sup>24</sup> F. L. Pryor, “A Buddhist Economic System – In Principle: Non-attachment to worldly thing is dominant but the way of the law is held profitable”, *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, vol. 49, no.3, (1990): 339-349.

F. L., Pryor, “A Buddhist Economic System – In Principle: The rules of state policymaking of the ideal kings sought a ‘middle way’ between right and left”, *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, vol. 49, no.3, (1991): 17-32.

<sup>25</sup> P. A. Payutto, *Buddhist Economics – A Middle Way for the Market Place*, 2nd ed., (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 1994).

<sup>26</sup> Ji Hsiung Shi 釋繼雄, “The Economic Ethics at Early Buddha Age”, *Journal of Di Guan 諦觀*, vol. 78, (1994): 23-67. (in Chinese)

<sup>27</sup> Li Jiajing 李佳靜, “Economic Institution of Early Buddhist Group – *Lihe Tongjun*”, *Religious Studies*, Sichuan Province, Mailand China, no.2, (2006): 183-188. (in Chinese)

and Chang Lee Ling Li (2010),<sup>28</sup> have examined the Pali Canon and Mahāyāna Scriptures as well as analyzed the economic system based on the Buddha's guidelines for both monastics and laypeople. That economic system is described in Table 1, along with a comparison to the mainstream economic system.

Table 1. Mainstream and Buddhist Economics Systems

System Features	Mainstream Economics	Buddhist Economics
Core Principle	Capitalism	Paññā-ism <sup>29</sup>
Life Goals	Happiness based on Maximizing Desires	Ultimate <i>Nibbāna</i>
Production	Maximize Profits	Right Livelihood, Altruism
Consumption	Maximize Utility	Contentment with Fewer Desires
Distribution	Equilibrium	Cordiality in Sharing
Wealth	Capital Wealth	Material and Spiritual Wealth
Allocation of Time	Work, Leisure	Work, Meditation, Leisure
Moral Value	Legality	Precepts ( <i>sīla</i> )

The saṅgha economy is an economic system within a monastic environment where monks and nuns live a simple lifestyle with minimal possessions, fully supported by the laity. Li (2006) points out that the core principle of the monastic economy is called Cordiality in Sharing,<sup>30</sup> one of the Six Principles of Cordiality (Pali: Pali: *Cha Sārāṇīyā dhammā*).<sup>31</sup> This means that monastics should not have their

<sup>28</sup> Ling Li Chang Lee 張李麗玲, *A Study on Wealth View in Early Buddhism*, Master Thesis, Graduate Institute of Religious Studies, NanHua University, 2010. (in Chinese)

<sup>29</sup> See Apichai Puntasen, *Buddhist Economics: Evolution, Theories and Its Application to Various Economic Subjects*, (Bangkok: Amarin Press, 2004), 26.

<sup>30</sup> Li (2006) points out this term, Cordiality in Sharing (Chinese: Lihe Tongjun 利和同均), directly and other research discussed this function even though it did not use this specific term.

<sup>31</sup> MN 48, MN 104: In the *Kosambiya Sutta* in the *Sāmagāma Sutta*, it says,

“Again, a bhikkhu enjoys things in common with his virtuous companions in the holy life; without reservation, he shares with them any gain of a kind that accords with the Dhamma and has been obtained in a way that accords with the Dhamma, including

own property or wealth, and all members of the *saṅgha* share their requisites equally with all the other members, creating a harmonious community. Moreover, teachings regarding the four requisites – food, clothing, shelter, and medicine – appear throughout the Pali Canon<sup>32</sup> and Mahāyāna texts<sup>33</sup>.

Buddhist laity do not leave home to practice Buddhism in the *saṅgha*, thus, they engage in more economic activities. Laypeople can also be the producers and consumers in an economic society. Ven. Payutto (1994) and Ven. Ji Hsiung (1994) emphasize the “middle way” for economic activities, meaning right livelihood with respect to production, Cordiality in Sharing regarding income distribution, and contentment with fewer desires with respect to consumption.

Furthermore, the modern monastic lifestyle has changed greatly since ancient times and the institutions of mendicancy, homelessness etc. of the early Buddhist communities in India have undergone major changes and transformation, already in India and especially with the establishment of monastic Buddhist in China from the fourth to the sixth centuries CE.. The DDM Saṅgha has thus developed the DDM Monastic Regulations, which embody the spirit of the ancient principles, in order to adapt to living in the contemporary world (see Appendix 2). The Master also provided instructions for modern Buddhist economic life (see Appendix 3). The economic activities comprising consumption, production, and distribution will now be discussed from the perspective of Buddhist economics.

### 2.2.1 Consumption: Contentment with Fewer Desires

The consumption theory in mainstream economics can be defined as

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even what is in his bowl. This too is a principle of cordiality that creates love and respect, and conduces to cohesion, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity.”

<sup>32</sup> See Ariyavaṃsa Sutta, *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya*, *MahaSaṅgha Vinaya*, *Sarvastivada Vinaya*.

<sup>33</sup> See Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra.

the individual achieving maximum utility under budget constraints, such that unlimited desires are controlled by scarcity. However, in Buddhist economics, endless desires that feed on craving (*taṇhā*) are controlled by an appreciation of moderation and redetermined towards the objective the integral well-being of the individual, which in fact, in Buddhist terms, can be measured in terms of contentment and frugality.<sup>34</sup> Schumacher notes that “simplicity” and “nonviolence”<sup>35</sup> are the keynotes of Buddhist life. Thus, the consumer preferences of Buddhist monastics and laity are extremely different from the assumptions of mainstream economics, e.g., more is better. The *Nikaya Sutta* illustrates this point when it states,

Wisely reflecting, we take alms food, not for the purpose of fun, not for indulgence or the fascination of taste, but simply for the maintenance of the body, for the continuance of existence, for the continuance of existence, for the cessation of painful feeling, for living the higher life.<sup>36</sup>

Even the facilities in the modern monastery and the monastic lifestyle are different from that in the ancient times. For example, monastics in modern society do not beg for alms for their daily meals, rather the central kitchen of the DDM monastery provides every meal and the monastics keep Five Contemplations<sup>37</sup> at meal time. Instead of finding discarded cloth to make robes, lay volunteers prepare and sew clothing for all monastics and the monastic robes are made by factory. The attitude towards consumption, however, is the same as ancient

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<sup>34</sup> See P. A. Payutto, *Buddhist Economics: A Middle Way for the Market Place*, (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 1994), 42-43.

<sup>35</sup> E. F. Schumacher states: “The keynote of Buddhist economics, therefore, is simplicity and non-violence”, *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, (First Harper Perennial Edition Published, 2010), 60.

<sup>36</sup> See P. A. Payutto (1994), 43.

<sup>37</sup> Five Contemplations at meal time: (1) Considering how much merit has brought me this food, I reflect on where this food came from. (2) Measuring my own virtue and practice, am I worthy of receiving this offering? (3) Protecting the mind from mistakes, abandoning greed, hatred, and ignorance is essential. (4) Correctly considering this food as salutary medicine, it will prevent this body from withering away. (5) Now, I receive this food for the sake of accomplishing the Buddha path.

times. Even though the modern monastic may need more than the four requisites allowed in the ancient Buddha's Saṅgha, DDM monastics consume the necessities provided by the Saṅgha to meet the basic needs of life, and use saṅgha-provided facilities for work. In addition, the monastics should not possess personal savings, property, or too many personal belongings.<sup>38</sup>

The principles of "simplicity" and "being content with fewer desires" are also the guidelines for household consumption in modern society. Buddha says, "Expenditures should be equal to the amount of income."<sup>39</sup> The laity should be neither luxurious nor stingy. The Master published a *Manual of Buddhist Family Life* including the instructions of economic life.<sup>40</sup> In this manual, personal income and financial planning dictate expenditure amounts; however, we should eschew the extremes like becoming spendthrifts or misers.

## 2.2.2 Production: Right Livelihood, Altruism

Unlike the profit-maximization with regard to production theory in mainstream economics, production theory in Buddhist economics is focused on right livelihood and altruism, principles that are followed by both monastics and laypeople.

All monastics should rely on alms for the necessities of life and should not engage in wrong livelihoods such as priest craft, medical practitioners, providing services for rewards, and for-profit fortunetellers.<sup>41</sup> However, the DDM Saṅgha is fully supported by the

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<sup>38</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.8.; *Morning Talks by Master Sheng Yen*, September, 15, 2002, DDM Saṅgha.

<sup>39</sup> Samyukta Āgama 雜阿含經:「...是故, 善男子所有錢財能自稱量, 等入等出, 是名正命具足。」 Vol. 4, CBETA, T02, no. 99, p. 23, b11-21.

<sup>40</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *The Peaceful World 平安的人間*, The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen, vol. 08, no. 05, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 73-74.

<sup>41</sup> Ajahn Brahmapamso, VINAYA: Wrong Livelihood, *BSWA Newsletter*, July-September 1996. 2012/05/01, <http://www.budsas.org/ebud/ebud032.htm>.



laity, including money and necessities,<sup>42</sup> and monastics shall not bring any property or money with them when moving into the monastery.<sup>43</sup> Monastics have a simple lifestyle and devote themselves to the saṅgha and society without any worldly reward or expectation. Furthermore, DDM monastics must turn over all donations, offerings, or income to the saṅgha for communal management.<sup>44</sup>

For lay disciples, right livelihood and altruism were evident at the time of the Buddha as well as in modern society. Laypeople should choose a proper occupation or produce proper goods and services. They should not engage in these five types of business: business in weapons, business in human beings, business in meat, business in intoxicants, and business in poison.<sup>45</sup>

The *Manual of Buddhist Family Life* emphasizes that Buddhists should take the right path to support themselves and should avoid occupations that violate the Five Precepts. The Master encourages benefiting others by producing goods and services that are in line with right economic activities.

## 2.2.3 Distribution: Cordiality in Sharing

To engage in an economic system that entails Cordiality in Sharing in the modern world, the DDM saṅgha has established a monastic monetary fund, as most of the laity donates money instead of material goods. DDM monastics continue to uphold the precept of “do not accept money”, with the exception of a small monthly stipend for emergencies and personal matters, as the saṅgha provides all living necessities including food, clothing, medicine, office facilities,

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<sup>42</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.9.

<sup>43</sup> Master Sheng Yen, Morning Talks, 2003-01-10., DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.9.

<sup>44</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations.

<sup>45</sup> See *Vaniija Sutta: Business (Wrong Livelihood)*, AN 5.177, PTS: A III 208.

transportation, education, and so on. Above all, all offerings of money and goods to monastic members by the laity do not become personal possessions, and are turned over to the saṅgha under communal management. The money is then kept in the monastic fund.<sup>46</sup>

Regarding income distribution, a Buddhist family can have a financial plan with five items: living expenses, business capital, property investments, savings, and donations.<sup>47</sup> The Master says,

In addition to fulfilling the basic needs of a family, one should learn to give freely, and support the Three Jewels and charity once the financial status of a family is stable. According to the Saṃjyuktāgama, a layperson should learn to utilize his or her properties in three ways. One portion is to be offered to their parents. Another portion is to support the life of the family and raise their children, and help their relatives, friends and servants financially. The Last portion of property is to support the practice of religious practitioners.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, this principle will lead people to benefit others through giving and altruism that promote social welfare. Master Sheng Yen states that in addition to a proper economic system, giving is the best way to reduce the gap between rich and poor. As a consequence, wisdom then leads to less desire, and compassion leads to altruism. Acts of “donation” serve to integrate the individual and society. This aspect is particularly important in view of the fragmentation and

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<sup>46</sup> For a discussion of “precepts concerning money” also see Ven. Bhikshuni Wu Yin, *Choosing Simplicity*, (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2001): 233-238.

<sup>47</sup> Master Sheng Yen, 平安的人間(*The Peaceful World*), *The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen*, vol. 08, no. 05, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 73-74.

<sup>48</sup> Master Sheng Yen, 法鼓山的方向(*The Direction of Dharma Drum Mountain*): 「家庭經濟的基礎穩固了以後，除了家庭正常生活的所需，如果仍有餘力的話，就該用於家庭以外的福德，供養三寶及公益慈善等的事業中去了。所以《雜阿含經》中也說，居士的財產，應該分作三種用途：一是供養父母；二是養育妻子兒女，乃至周濟親屬、朋友、僕從等；三是供養沙門、婆羅門等宗教師。」 *The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen*, vol. 08, no. 06, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 366-367. This paragraph translated by Ven. Chang Jian and edited by Eric Hsieh.

alienation experienced by individuals in the post-modern world, where traditional family and social ties are loosened, and the sense of connection and belonging to the “communal” dimension of existence is no longer a given. Once compassion and wisdom are fulfilled, the next level of Cordiality in Sharing builds a harmonious society, and global peace is realized. The Master says:

The idea of Cordiality in Sharing does not carry the same meaning as the idea of communism. Communism promotes a vanguard party, and a transition stage that begins immediately upon the abolition of capitalism, which promotes private ownership. Entrepreneurs with vision and a mission in society should practice the idea of Cordiality in Sharing in order to broaden the scope of their businesses by valuing more than making money to benefit their families.<sup>49</sup>

The principles of economic activity provided by the Master are based on the Buddha’s guidelines. These guidelines elaborate on the private property system, the economics of production guided by right livelihood, and the need to live within one’s means—cutting one’s coat according to one’s cloth, in order to achieve the distribution system of Cordiality in Sharing.

Overall, the Buddhist economic system guided by Master Sheng Yen is an example of an economy that has been developed for over 30 years. This system is based on the Buddha’s ancient principles, and adapted for the contemporary world. Based on all the discussions about DDM’s economic system, we found that “contentment with fewer desires” and “altruism” is the key criteria that influence personal and collective economic behavior. The monastic regulations and precepts for all Buddhists generate these criteria, but they also rely on practice of the three trainings of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*.

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<sup>49</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Working is Good Practice* 工作好修行：「利和同均並不是共產主義齊頭式的平等，也不像資本主義是完全私有制。在現代社會中，有抱負、有遠見的企業家，不應只是為了讓自己富有而賺錢，或是為了讓後代子孫衣食無憂而經營，大企業家們應該要有利和同均的理想和理念，才能夠把事業經營出大格局。」(Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2008): 142-143. This paragraph translated by Ven. Chang Jian.

Without this practice, it will not be possible to reduce desires, or maintain the system.

### 3. The Practical Approach to PSE

PSE's practical, modern approach is for those who are not yet or not primarily interested in Buddhism or lack the time to practice meditation, but can apply the concepts in their daily life, independent from a Buddhist or an exclusively Buddhist framework. These concepts are accompanied by practical guidelines that anyone can use to achieve peace, happiness, health, and well-being.<sup>50</sup>

#### 3.1 Protecting the Spiritual Environment

The Master has created a proposition for living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign, which provides five methods to address the world's situations. The components of the Campaign were published in the booklet, *Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Buddhist View*, as follows.

Four Approaches for Cultivating Peace:

Cultivating a Peaceful Mind, Body, Family, and Activity.

Four Steps for Handling a Problem:

Face it, Accept it, Deal with it, and Let go of it.

Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires:

Need, Want, Ability, and Propriety.

Four Practices for Helping Oneself and Others:

Feeling Grateful, Feeling Thankful, Reforming Yourself, and Moving Others Through Virtue.

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<sup>50</sup> Master Sheng Yen and etc., *The Innovation of Economic and Environmental Protection*, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2009), 38-38.

Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings:  
Recognizing Blessings, Cherishing Blessings, Nurturing Blessings, and  
Sowing the Seeds of Blessings.<sup>51</sup>

This approach is mainly concerned with the two kinds of desires, *tanhā* and *chanda*. Here, the Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires embody the wisdom required to diminish *tanhā*, whereas the Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings embody the compassion required to generate the *chanda*. The Four Approaches for Cultivating Peace deals with both. This proposition allows Buddhists and non-Buddhists to easily accept and practice these concepts in daily life.

### 3.1.1 The Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires

DDM offers a pragmatic approach to minimize desire called, the Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires. The Master provides an interpretation from the book, *The Treasure Within: the Interpretation of Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra*, as follows,

Greed is the mental criteria that longs for everything with endless, lustful desires. Grasping refers to attachment in fulfilling desires other than meeting the needs of the physical body. The cravings seem to be endless due to the possessive desires of the mind. Therefore, I proposed the Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires...<sup>52</sup>

This method is a proposition for calming the mind and leading a life free from distress, which will help people make clear distinctions

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<sup>51</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Buddhist View*, (Taipei: Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2011), 38-60.

<sup>52</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *The Treasure Within: Interpretation of the Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra* 自家寶藏—如來藏經語體譯釋:「貪欲心,是貪得無厭,對於一切順境,永遠貪求追取,沒有止盡,不僅為了滿足生理的欲望,主要是追求滿足心理的貪著。所謂欲壑難填,不僅為了需要,主要是為了想要的佔有欲。因此我提出「四要」的方法…」 *The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen*, vol. 07, no.10, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 61. This Paragraph translated by Ven. Chang Jian.

regarding needs, wants, ability, and propriety.

Our needs are few,

Our wants are many

Pursue only what you can and should acquire

Never pursue what you can't and shouldn't acquire.<sup>53</sup>

These guidelines allow us to be aware of the mind's desires and to modify our economic behavior, thus making our economy significant and relevant in the contemporary world.

### 3.1.2 The Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings

Blessings are not only for material wealth, but also spiritual wealth. The Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings means “we should recognize and cherish our blessings for what we have; we should nurture and sow the seeds of blessings for what we do not have.”<sup>54</sup> A proposition for increasing blessings is as follows:

Recognizing Blessings: Being content and being happy, being at peace with minimum desires, and being delighted in the path.

Cherishing Blessings: Treasuring what we have with gratitude and repaying the kindness we receive.

Nurturing Blessings: Enjoying our blessings is not a blessing; nurturing blessings is a blessing.

Sowing the Seeds of Blessings: Through one's own growth, one can widely sow the seeds of blessings, so that all may be blessed.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Journey with Illness to the Peak* 抱疾遊高峯: 「需要的不多，想要的太多，能要該要的要，不能要不該要的絕對不要。」 *The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen*, vol.06, no.12, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 120.

<sup>54</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *The Journey in 2000* 兩千年行腳: 「對已擁有的要知福和惜福，對尚沒有的要種福和培福。」 *The Complete Works of Master Sheng Yen*, vol. 06, no.11, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 231.

<sup>55</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Buddhist View*, (Taipei: Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2011), 56-60.

If people recognize and cherish their blessings, they will not be greedy. If they wish to nurture and sow the seeds of blessings, they will do good deeds for others. In most cases, we frequently do not appreciate what we have, and do not cherish where we live. If we can apply these concepts in our daily life then we will feel contentment regardless of whether we own more or less. If we are even content with owning nothing, we will be the ones with the greatest blessings. Furthermore, if we can cherish our environmental resources, our families and friendships, then we will collectively seek a way to take better care of the earth and all sentient beings. As a result, we will be the wealthiest people in the world.

Giving is also the best way to cultivate blessings, including wealth, Dharma, and relieving the fears of others. The Master referred to this idea when he said, “those who give selflessly are blessed; those who do good deeds are happy” in *The Common Endeavor of Buddhists* (see Appendix 1).

In summary, The Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings increase *chanda* and develop altruistic thought and actions, not only garnering personal blessings, but also promoting social well-being.

### 3.1.3 The Four Approaches to Cultivating Peace

The Dharma brings teachings of compassion and wisdom to everyone it touches, enabling them to cultivate a peaceful mind, body, family, and activity. The following is a proposition to foster the human qualities:<sup>56</sup>

Cultivating a peaceful mind lies in having few desires.

Cultivating a peaceful body lies in hard work and thrift.

Cultivating a peaceful family lies in love and respect.

Cultivating peaceful activities lies in being honest and upright.

This proposition also includes approaches to achieve Contentment

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 38-42.

with Fewer Desires and altruism, which calm the mind and lead us to a peaceful body, family, and activity.

### 3.2 An Economic System Guided by PSE

The key concepts of mainstream economics, Buddhist economics, and PSE Economics are listed in Table 2, which shows that while PSE Economics and Buddhist economics are consistent, they are quite different from mainstream economics. PSE Economics attempts to first change our mind, and then change our behavior. As such, the economic activities of production, consumption, and distribution are directly influenced and lead us toward the Bodhisattva path characterized by right livelihood, altruism, Contentment with Fewer Desires, and Cordiality in Sharing.

Table 2. Economic Systems: Mainstream, Buddhist, and PSE Economics

System Elements	Mainstream Economics	Buddhist Economics	PSE Economics
Core Principle	Capitalism	Paññā-ism	Spiritual Environmentalism
Life Goals	Happiness based on Maximizing Desires	<i>Nibbāna</i>	True Happiness, Peace, Health, and Well-Being
Consumption	Maximize Utility	Contentment with Fewer Desires	Need, Want, Ability, Propriety
Production	Maximize Profits	Right Livelihood, Altruism	Recognizing, Cherishing, Nurturing, Sowing the Seeds of Blessings
Distribution	Equilibrium	Cordiality in Sharing (Giving, Altruism)	Peaceful Mind, Body, Family, Activity
Wealth	Capital Wealth	Material and Spiritual Wealth	Material and Spiritual Wealth



Allocation of Time	Work, Leisure	Work, Meditation, Leisure	Work, Volunteer, Practice, Leisure
Moral Value	Legality	Precepts ( <i>sīla</i> )	Four Kinds of Environmentalism, The Six Ethics of the Mind

### 3.2.1 Mindful Consumption

As desire is the key impetus for consumer behavior, Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh uses the term Mindful Consumption, which is crucial for self-transformation and the transformation of society.<sup>57</sup> This concept mirrors the approach to consumption under PSE Economics. To help us apply these guidelines for the Four Ways to Deal with Desires in economic activities, Master Sheng Yen clearly explains the definition of “need”:

What is “need”? It is the things that you can’t live without, such as sunlight, air, moisture, a minimum of food, clothes to fend off the cold, a house to shelter you from the wind and the rain. In our time, basic transportation, computers, and telephones have become needs too. Having these necessities is not indulgence.<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, people are constantly chasing what they need, want, and what they cannot and should not acquire. These kinds of activities will disturb people’s minds and cause social and economic problems.

The concepts that tell us “our needs are few but our wants are many; pursue only what you can and should acquire, and never pursue what you cannot and should not acquire” are very powerful for consumers to put the concept of Mindful Consumption into action. These ideas

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<sup>57</sup> Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh, “Looking Deeply at the Nutriments”, in *Mindfulness in the Marketplace: Compassionate Responses to Consumerism*, edited by Allan Hunt Badiner, (Parallax Press, 2002), 69-71.

<sup>58</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Buddhist View*, (Taipei: Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2010), 43-44.

will lead consumers to think, “Is it really a need? Or just a want? What can or should I purchase? What can’t or shouldn’t I purchase? How many can I purchase?” After carefully considering these questions, consumers should know which goods and services are most beneficial to themselves and others.

Moreover, consumers should avoid the consumption of goods and services harmful to themselves and others such as gambling, abusing drugs, purchasing destructive goods and services that harm the natural environment or are inconsistent with humanitarianism. Furthermore, the disposal of waste, the results of consumption, leads to ecological destruction. For example, throwing plastic garbage on the beach pollutes the ocean, and kills fish and birds that eat such undigestible garbage.

Mindful Consumption, based on the Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires, will lead people to cherish their natural and human resources, and provide a solution to over-consumption and ecological destruction.

### 3.2.2 Mindful Production

Economists encourage over-consumption to increase production for economic growth. Consumers not only purchase goods and services they need and want, but also what they cannot or should not have. This kind of consumer behavior leads producers in the wrong direction. Communities will eventually be developed in the high mountains and will require the need to plant cash crops, country roads for farms, leading to the destruction of soil and water conservation and causing landslides. Additionally, seaside aquaculture development can result in land subsidence and flooding disasters.

The Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings in economic activities generates *chanda* and leads producers toward Mindful Production in three directions: (1) producers will produce goods and services that will benefit others; (2) producers should not produce goods and services that may harm others; (3) producers should earn reasonable profits.

Organic farming and environmental protection products are good examples of mindful production. They seek not just profit maximization, but also cultivate blessings. This is consistent with the production principles of right livelihood and altruism in Buddhist economics.

### 3.2.3 Peaceful Distribution

As Li (2006) concludes that Cordiality in Sharing is a system of equal, harmonious, and altruistic distribution,<sup>59</sup> the Master suggests that enterprises donate their profits to churches, non-profit organizations, or to support social welfare. These actions represent the ethical level of Cordiality in Sharing, meaning “what is taken from society should be used for society.”<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, the Four Approaches for Cultivating Peace can be applied to the economic system for distribution, and called Peaceful Distribution. As The Dharma Drum Mountain Social Welfare and Charity Foundation (DDMSWCF), for example, operates on this principle.

On September 21, 1999, a massive earthquake of historic proportions shook Taiwan. The Master surveyed the damaged areas and said, “During the reconstruction period after the disaster, peace of mind is of utmost importance....”<sup>61</sup> Thus, “Peace of Mind” is the distinguishing feature of DDMSWCF<sup>62</sup>, and Peace of Mind Relief

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<sup>59</sup> Li Jiajing 李佳靜, “Economic Institutions of Early Buddhist Groups – *Lihe Tongjun*” 早期佛教僧團管理的經濟制度-利和同均, 宗教學研究 (*Religious Studies*), Sichuan Province, Mainland China, no.2, (2006): 183-188.

<sup>60</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Working is Good Practice* 工作好修行: 「取之於社會, 用之於社會。」 (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2008), 141-143.

<sup>61</sup> Muin Hu, *Sharing Dharma Drum: A White Paper on Happiness*, translated by Wenming Kuo, Belinda Shiyang Li, Luh Hsyng Nelson, Shujen Yeh, Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, (2005), 108.

<sup>62</sup> After the relief work for the 921 earth quake, DDMSWCF was established in 2001.

Stations were established in the disaster areas to provide long-term<sup>63</sup> company and care to disaster victims.

The DDMSWCF formulates its reconstruction plans in three stages, based on The Four Approaches for Cultivating Peace.

Table 3. Three Stages of reconstruction Plan

Stage	Content
First Stage	Emergency Relief: Cultivating a peaceful body
Second Stage	Home/ Campus Reconstruction: Cultivating a peaceful family and activities
Third Stage	Spiritual Reconstruction: Cultivating a peaceful mind and activities

DDM has established Peace of Mind Relief Stations in Taiwan as well as other overseas countries. DDM provided relief in Sri Lanka and Indonesia after a tsunami hit South Asia in 2004, and in response to the Myanmar floods in 2008 and Sichuan earthquake in 2008. This charity and relief works are clear examples of Peaceful Distribution.

From the economic perspective, the Four Guidelines to Dealing with the Desires, The Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings, and Four Approaches for Cultivating Peace include material and spiritual wealth, emphasizing Contentment with Fewer Desires with respect to material consumption, as well as frugality and altruism. PSE Economics proposes frugality, as advocated by European economists Bouckaert, Opdebeeck, Zsolnai, and states, “Spiritually based frugal practices may lead to rational outcomes such as reducing ecological destruction, social disintegration, and the exploitation of future generations”.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Peace of Mind Relief Stations were established after the disaster occurred, and functioned for five years, providing not only home or campus reconstruction, but also conducting spiritual reconstruction activities such as PSE camps for disaster victims.

<sup>64</sup> *Frugality: Rebalancing Material and Spiritual Values in Economic Life*, edited by Luk Bouckaert, Hendrik Opdebeeck, Laszlo Zsolnai, (Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, 2008), 23.

## 4. Conclusion: The Significance of PSE Economics in the Contemporary World

From the discussion in the two preceding sections, the proposition for PSE Economics can have a crucial impact on actualizing three important ethical concepts, as well as environmentalism: Workplace Ethics/ Protecting the Social Environment, Daily Life Ethics/ Protecting the Living Environment, and Environmental Ethics/ Protecting the Nature Environment, in the contemporary world. Successful actualization of these three ethical and environmental approaches does not solely rely on the establishment of ethical guidelines, but also involves a change of attitude and transformation of the mind. That is why Master Sheng Yen refers to this as the Ethics of the “Mind” (see Appendix 1).

### 4.1 Workplace Ethics/ Protecting the Social Environment

Workplace Ethics includes economic, business, and marketplace ethics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with Mindful Consumption, Mindful Production, and Peaceful Distribution as the focal points. Furthermore, Protecting the Social Environment focuses on workplace manners, as well as simplicity of economic activities. DDM promotes the practical application of PSE, such as Buddhist-style joint wedding ceremonies, Buddhist-style joint birthday celebrations for the elderly, Buddhist funerals, and eco-friendly interment of ashes in the Eco-friendly Memorial Garden.

### 4.2 Daily Life Ethics/ Protecting the Living Environment

The lifestyle of Buddhists can easily conform to Daily Life Ethics, meaning:

Our lives are comprised of the daily activities we do—anything from what we eat and wear, to where we live, and the places we go. In the

most basic sense, these are our breaths in daily life. The main characteristics of ethics in daily life are thriftiness, simplicity, frugality, and preferably refraining from any kind of wasteful behavior.<sup>65</sup>

Implementing these ethical principles will lead us to cherish and share our limited resources through certain activities, such as taking full advantage of the public transit system, recycling and reusing materials, reducing noise, and so forth.

## 4.3 Environmental Ethics/ Protecting the Natural Environment

Observing environmental ethics allows us to live in a natural and simple manner. This refers to the ethical principles concerning the protection and preservation of our natural environment, which helps maintain our ecosystem. Let us refer to Master Sheng Yen's words below:

The central concern of environmental ethics is the ecosystem, which includes animate and inanimate resources in our environment. Although inanimate resources such as minerals, petroleum, coal, and other deposits do not have life, they are essential for the sustenance of the whole ecosystem. Therefore, environmental ethics involves not only protecting animate beings directly but also, indirectly, maintaining the balance and sustainability of various natural resources.<sup>66</sup>

Master Sheng Yen says that we should cherish our one and only earth through our activities, such as reducing timber harvests, planting more trees, beautifying our environment, and conserving water and soil resources.

In conclusion, this paper develops the economic system guided by Protecting the Spiritual Environment, addressing the root of world

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<sup>65</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *The Six Ethics of the Mind*, (Taipei: Sheng Yen Education Foundation, 2011), 23-31. Daniel Tuzzeo edited several sentences.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 41-53.

economic problems: desire. The key issue in PSE Economics is determining how to deal with our desires while mainstream economics predominately ignores this issue. PSE Economics can be applied using two methods. The traditional approach applies Buddha's teachings and seeks Contentment with Fewer Desires, Right Livelihood, Altruism, and Cordiality in Sharing. The second, practical approach guided by the Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign carefully and conscientiously regulates one's production, consumption, and distribution. These actions lead the world toward Protecting the Four Environments and the Six Ethics of the Mind campaign. The principles and approaches of PSE Economics were instilled by the Master, and are still being implemented by his disciples at DDM headquarters, the DDM World Center for Buddhist Education, and all branches in Taiwan and overseas, providing our contemporary world with solutions that are environmentally sustainable, socially just, and globally peaceful. Perhaps this will open a window to a beautiful vista that is also pleasing to the eyes of mainstream economists.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Principles of Dharma Drum Mountain

Item	Contents	
Mission	To spread Chinese Chan Buddhism, with Protecting the Spiritual Environment at the core. To achieve the purification of the world through Threefold Education.	
The Common Ethos	Our vision	To uplift the character of humanity and build a pure land on earth.
	Our spirit	To give of ourselves for the benefit of all.
	Our direction	To return to the original intention of the Buddha and work for the purification of the world.
	Our approach	To promote comprehensive education and extend loving care to all.
Methods	Three-fold Education	Extensive Academic Education, Extensive Public Buddhist Education, Extensive Social Care Education.
Practice	Protecting the Four Environments	Protecting the Spiritual Environment, Protecting the Natural Environment, Protecting the Living Environment, Protecting the Social Environment.
	The Fivefold Spiritual Renaissance Campaign	The Four Approaches for Cultivating Peace: Mind, Body, Family, Activity. The Four Steps for Handling a Problem: Face it, Accept it, Deal with it, Let it go. The Four Guidelines for Dealing with Desires: Need, Want, Ability, Propriety. The Four Practices for Helping Oneself and Others: Feeling Grateful, Feeling Thankful, Reforming Yourself, Moving Others Through Virtue. The Four Ways to Cultivate Blessings: Recognizing blessings, cherishing blessings, nurturing blessings, sowing the seeds of blessings.
	The Six Ethics of the Mind Campaign	Family Ethics, Daily Life Ethics, School Ethics, Environmental Ethics, Ethics between Ethnic Groups.



Item	Contents	
	The Common Endeavor of Buddhists	<p>Have faith in the Buddha, follow the Dharma, respect the Saṅgha; the Three Jewels are a bright lamp shining throughout eternity.</p> <p>Uplift the character of humanity and build a pure land on earth.</p> <p>Being grateful, repaying kindness: this is first; benefit others and you benefit yourself.</p> <p>Foremost is to exert your wholehearted effort without measuring more or less.</p> <p>Kindness and compassion have no enemies, and wisdom engenders no vexations.</p> <p>The busy make the most of time; the diligent enjoy the best of health.</p> <p>In broadly sowing the fields of merit, why fear any hardship or rebuke?</p> <p>Those who give selflessly are blessed; those who do good deeds are happy.</p> <p>In every moment feel the joy of the Dharma, and abide in the bliss of meditation.</p> <p>Recite “Guanyin Bodhisattva” everywhere and chant “Amitabha Buddha” without end.</p>

## Appendix 2. Economic System of the DDM Saṅgha

Economic Activities	DDM Saṅgha
[1] Necessities	Money, Food, Clothing, Shelter, Medicine, ...
[2] Consumption	DDM monastics must not acquire personal wealth or property. <sup>67</sup> Do not acquire too much property. <sup>68</sup>
[3] Production	Money and necessities are offered by laity. <sup>69</sup>
[4] Distribution	Cordiality in Sharing: All food, clothing, bedding, and medicine are provided uniformly and equally by the saṅgha. <sup>70</sup>
[5] Wealth/Property	DDM monastics shall not bring along any property or money when they move into the monastery. <sup>71</sup> All donations or offerings must be turned over to the saṅgha under communal management. <sup>72</sup> Spiritual and material wealth.
[6] Allocation of Time	Work, Practice, Rest.
[7] Attitude	Being content: it's good to have more, it's good to have less, it's good that all are filled with joy. <sup>73</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.8.

<sup>68</sup> Master Sheng Yen, Morning Talks, September 15, 2002.

<sup>69</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.9.

<sup>70</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.8.

<sup>71</sup> Master Sheng Yen, Morning Talks, January 1, 2003; DDM Monastic Regulations.

<sup>72</sup> DDM Monastic Regulations, 3.3.3.9.

<sup>73</sup> Master Sheng Yen, *Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Buddhist View*, (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2011), 58.

### Appendix 3. Economic Life of Modern Buddhists

Economic Activities	Contents
[1] Necessities	Money, more than the four requisites.
[2] Consumption	Personal income and financial planning dictate expenditure amounts. Live within your means. <sup>74</sup>
[3] Production	Buddhists should earn a living in accordance with the concept of Right Livelihood, and avoid occupations which violate the Five Precepts. <sup>75</sup>
[4] Distribution	Provide for one's parents and those in need through donations and good deeds. <sup>76</sup>
[5] Wealth/Property	Private Property, Spiritual and Material Wealth.
[6] Allocation of Time	Work, Volunteer, Meditation, Leisure.
[7] Attitude	Keep the Five Precepts, practice the Ten Virtues, and act in the spirit of environmental protection.

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<sup>74</sup> See Master Sheng Yen, 平安的人間 (*Peaceful World*), (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2005), 73-74.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

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# 心靈環保經濟學——二十一世紀的心經濟主張

釋果光

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## 摘要：

面對全球的社會、經濟、環保、生態等情勢，聖嚴法師於 1992 年提出「心靈環保」理念，並在跨入二十一世紀之際，積極於「世界宗教暨精神領袖和平高峰會」、「世界經濟論壇」、「地球憲章」等會議中倡導之。法師所提倡的「心靈環保」，實是融合了佛法的慈悲與智慧，並從兩個層面推動；一是學佛禪修的層面，二是法鼓山理念的層面，包括「四種環保」、「心五四運動」、及「心六倫」。這是不分古今、地域、宗教、族群、生活背景的；是為了號召更多人成為「心靈環保」的工作者與實踐者，朝向「提昇人的品質，建設人間淨土」之理念推動。這不僅是宗教議題，更是解決世界經濟問題的觀念與實踐方法，筆者將此範疇命名為「心靈環保」經濟學，並就「心靈環保」經濟學之思想與實踐兩個面向探討。

「心靈環保」經濟學之思想，實則為佛教經濟思想，故先敘述由佛教經濟學至「心靈環保」經濟學之發展背景，再追溯原始佛教的經濟生活，包括「利和同均」的僧團生活、「正命」及「布施」的居士生活，由此提出「少欲」、「利他」之佛教經濟生活原則及生死還滅的佛法思想與方法。

就「心靈環保」經濟學之實踐，本文以法鼓山為例，考察法師如何以「心靈環保」為核心，佛法、禪法為基礎，透過「四它」因應時勢、「四要」降低貪欲、「四福」開展善欲、「四安」和平分配、「四感」開闊心量之生活主張，指導法鼓山僧團、在家居士們，乃至非佛教徒，過著「少欲」、「利他」之心經濟生活，以達到「快樂、平安、健康、幸福」之目標。



最後從上述的經濟思想與生活實踐，總結出「心靈環保」對當代「環保」及「倫理」的影響與意義，包含職場倫理（禮儀環保）、生活倫理（生活環保）、及自然倫理（自然環保）。「心靈環保」經濟學所提倡的觀念與心法，足以使世界朝向心靈富足、環境永續、及社會和諧的方向發展，達到真正的「快樂、平安、健康、幸福」，實踐「提昇人的品質，建設人間淨土」理念，這正是二十一世紀的契機。

### 關鍵詞：

心靈環保、心靈環保經濟學、佛教經濟學、心五四、心六倫