Ordinary Mind: Meditation Initiated Integrative Therapy (MIIT)

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Chan, known as Zen in Japanese, sees enlightenment as very significant because it is the starting point for the subsequent cultivation of attaining and sustaining a liberated minded body or embodied mind. Similarly, psychoanalysis values insight through free association, analysis, dream interpretation or other psychoanalytic tools. Traditional cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT) drives the client to realize and correct the faulty schema or belief on which he or she has been operating. Chan, psychoanalysis and CBT each has a similar moment of “insight” that carries much weight for the success of the subsequent practice. The content of the “insight”, however, differs greatly from one to the other. So does the treatment of the insight by each of the three practices in question. This chapter proposes and demonstrates that the traditional practice of ping chang xin popularly known as Ordinary Mind in Chan Buddhism can be more comprehensive and efficacious when it integrates some practical methods.
and skills of psychotherapy. It culminates in the development of a new psycho-spiritual model called Meditation-Initiated Integrative Therapy.

**Traditional Practice of Ordinary Mind**

*Historical Context*

Let us contextualize the teaching and practice of Ordinary Mind, which is shortened from Ordinary-Mind-Is-the-Way in classical Chan Buddhism. There seems to be a general consensus in Chinese Buddhist studies that Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (709-788 CE; Jap. Baso) was the Chan master who initiated monastic community practice of Ordinary-Mind-Is-the-Way.  

In fascicle 28 of *The Jingde Record of Lamp Transmissions* (*Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德传灯录) Mazu said,

> The Tao (Way) does not need to be cultivated so long as it is not defiled. What is defilement? It is anything like thinking life and death, pretentious performance and mental orientation. If one wants to attain Tao straightforwardly, Ordinary Mind is the Way. What is the Ordinary Mind? It is freedom from pretentious performance, from duality of yes and no, taking and giving, discontinuity and permanence, temporal and sacred. The Scripture says, ‘It is neither the deluded behavior nor the sacred one. It is the Bodhisattava’s behavior. Everything from walking, standing, sitting to lying down, from responding and receiving at the moment is the Way.’

Mazu’s thought of Ordinary-Mind-Is-the-Way was elaborated by Nanquannan 泉 (748-834 CE; Jap. Nansen), one of Mazu’s eminent disciples.
Naquan’s most frequently quoted elaboration on Ordinary Mind is the one when Nanquan had an encounter dialogue with his foremost disciple Zhaozhou (or Chao-Chou, 778-897; Jap. Joshu). It goes as follows:

Zhaozhou asked Naquan, “What is the Way?”
Naquan said, “Ordinary Mind is the Way”
Zhao Zhou said, “Then may I direct myself toward it or not?”
Naquan said, “To seek [it] is to deviate [from it].”
Zhao Zhou said, “If I don’t seek, how can I know about the Way?”
Naquan said, “The Way does not belong to knowing or not knowing. To know is to have a concept; to not know is to be ignorant. If you truly realize the Way of no doubt, it is just like the sky: wide open vast emptiness. How can you say “yes” or “no” to it?”

At these words, Zhao Zhou had sudden enlightenment. His mind became like the clear moon.

Apparently, the Ordinary Mind Mazu and Nanquan referred to is a non-dual, non-discriminatory state of mind like vast emptiness. It is ontological, transpersonal and spiritual. It is nor ordinary but extraordinary. It is certainly not the ordinary mind people function with in daily life of interaction. The Masters called it ping chang xin from a less transpersonal but more functional perspective in order to make the practice and its psycho-spiritual state sound accessible to average people.

To avoid the confusion between the Ordinary Mind Chan masters embody and the ordinary mind of average people without any meditation or
spiritual practice, it is useful and necessary to distinguish them by using upper case and lower case of the first letter of the two words: Ordinary Mind versus ordinary mind. In Chinese, xin 心 signifies heart or mind; ping chang 平常 is often translated as ordinary although etymologically “ping” denotes plain and “chang” lasting or everlasting. The set phrase ping chang xin consisting of the three Chinese characters 平常心 can NOT be written ideographically different as in lower-versus-upper-case in English. Only the context will help interpret the specific meaning of the term. Besides, between Ordinary Mind that is spiritual or transpersonal and ordinary mind that completely operates on sensory motor stimuli, pre-operational, operational and formal operational thinking ⁷, there must be another state in between the two if we take a thorough examination of all teachings on this subject. This intermediate state is characterized by a spontaneously and effectively functioning mind that engages and is engaged in performing daily tasks not only in relaxed monastic setting but also in social and professional life of a working person in modern society. This intermediate state is designated as mindfulness-based ordinary mind.

In comparison with the aforementioned ontological definitions of the Ordinary Mind by Mazu and Nanqun, Zhaozhou is credited with embodying the phenomenology of Ordinary Mind by rigorously and expediently
applying it to daily life situations in a monastic milieu. It is believed also applicable and adaptable to secular settings, which Chan master has been advocating in China over the past two decades. In light of contemporary studies of mindfulness and meditation, I would term many of Zhaozhou’s statements as mindfulness-based ordinary mind. Five of the 21 classical sources WU Yan-shen collected on ping chang xin refers to Chan master Zhaozhou, who has been venerated not only in China, Japan and Korea but also in the West as long as Chan/Zen Buddhism is practiced.

Since medieval China, the practice of ping chang xin has become part and parcel of the collective Chinese way of thinking, feeling and behavior. Ping chang xin has already become a household term in Chinese literature, media and daily life of people from all walks of life.

*The Psychological Characteristics of the Traditional Practice*

When Chan Buddhists practice Ordinary Mind in the traditional light, be it meditation on or off the cushion, they equally let go of random thoughts, emotions and memories that surfaced from the unconscious to consciousness. This is true, too, of the less diffuse state of ping chang xin, mindfulness-based ordinary mind (mbom). Off cushion meditation such as walking meditation is more likely a mbom practice.
The characteristic of letting-go subjugates ping chang xin practices to intentionally ignore the revealed and possibly useful message that emerged from the unconscious. If such ignoring or detachment is necessary during meditation, then it is psychologically mistaken to ignore the surfaced contents even after the practitioner comes out of the formal sitting or walking meditation. The consistent practice of letting go of even psychotherapeutically very valuable insights in order to just aim at spiritual liberation makes traditional practitioners of Chan/Zen less concerned about their cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral problems. Likewise it might lose the opportunity of examining the origin of one’s problems or disorders from the development of one’s early life especially in infancy and childhood. John Welwood\textsuperscript{10} calls this phenomenon a spiritual bypass. Welwood defines spiritual by-passing as “a wide spread tendency to use spiritual practice to bypass or avoid dealing with certain personal or emotional ‘unfinished business’” (p. 11). Put in another way, spiritual by-passing is a “tendency to avoid or prematurely transcend basic human needs, feelings, and developmental tasks” (p. 12).

To avoid possible spiritual by-pass and to encompass a wider scope of service area, Chan may need to integrate some methods and skills from
psychotherapy to renew the practice of ping chang xin with a model which I call meditation-Initiated Integrative Therapy (MIIT).

**Contemporary Integrative Practice in the West**

Chan is basically concerned with the transpersonal attainment which, if realized, would bring psychotherapy to greater satisfaction. This aspect of mutual complementarity between Chan and psychotherapy is not going to be further explored due to limited scope in this chapter. I have given considerable space to elaborate the contribution of Chan practice to psychotherapy in my other article titled “The Ordinary Mind in Chan/Zen Buddhism and Psychotherapy: What Can One Offer to the Other?” The present study concentrates on how the steep path of Ordinary Mind and mindfulness-based ordinary mind can positively maximize its function at psychological level that is needed for everyone living and working in a modern or post-modern society.

At psychotherapeutic level, Chan practitioners may just need to note silently when he or she experiences in formal meditation something unique much like the “aha” experiences in psychoanalysis. Following the “aha” insight from Chan practice (more often in a formal seated practice especially for beginners), the practitioner will then need to go through some
psychological treatment of what emerged in meditation. They even need to do home work accordingly to modify and change some of their behaviors. Before I go into details along this line with my model of meditation-initiated integrative therapy, I would like to review briefly what has been done in the contemporary movement of integrating Buddhist meditation practice with psychotherapy in the West.

Contemporary therapies featuring an integration of meditation or mindfulness practice include but are not limited to Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), Analytic Zen, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and the Japanese Naukan Therapy. Due to limited space, I choose MBSR and MBCT only to show briefly how such integrated practices may contribute to buffering the steep path of Chan.

**Mindfulness-Base Stress Reduction**

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) has been widely used either directly or in a modified way in health care profession since Jon Kabat-Zinn published his *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness*. Kabat-Zinn emphasizes upfront the basic attitudes and commitment as the foundations of
successful mindfulness practice. These attitudes include seven factors, namely, non-judging, patience, a beginner’s mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting go. They “constitute the major pillars of mindfulness practice” (p.32) that Kabat-Zinn and his colleagues teach in the stress clinic affiliated with the medical center at the University of Massachusetts.

These attitudinal factors are more or less the same as those followed in Chan Buddhist practice. What MBSR and Chan differ is among others that MBSR is apparently pivoting around breathing as its base camp--both a starting point and finish line which can be in a circular relation. The chief concern of Chan Buddhism, however, gravitates toward the ultimate liberation through the practice of cultivating and sustaining a non-differentiating mind or Ordinary Mind. Although Kabat-Zinn also mentions “choiceless awareness” that is characterized by “simply being receptive to whatever unfolds in the moment” (p. 71), MBSR touches upon it very cursorily. Even if choiceless awareness seems to be the highest or deepest state or stage of practice in MBSR, it is still watching and witnessing that retains a dualism of watching/watcher and the watched. The complete mingling of the watcher and watched like a symbolic zero in Chan Buddhism is completely missing. Instead, MBSR focuses on how the techniques of breathing from the belly (interestingly this is a Daoist
Mindfulness, as Kabat-Zinn defines, “means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonejudgmentally” (p. 4). Mindfulness can be used to respond gently and acceptingly rather than to react in a “knee-jerk” manner to negative thoughts, emotions, discomfort, pains, and illness. Healing and therapeutic effects occur this way. It is the nuanced awareness into the breathing, into the thoughts and emotions, and into the body epitomized by what is called “body scan” that is complementing Chan Buddhist practice of jump starting and often staying with the transpersonal state or stage for a soteriological purpose. For Chan Buddhists in China, today and in history alike, getting out of the cyclic wheel of birth and death to attain Enlightenment or become a Buddha is the ultimate goal and presumably the primary motivation as well. Mindfulness, for Kabat-Zinn (1994) is better treated as secular although it could be spiritual from a philosophical perspective of interconnectedness of all that is in the universe.

Mindfulness practice in MBSR boasts as a simple but powerful means to possibly improve the quality of “our relationships within the family, our
relationship to work and to the larger world and planet” (p.5). In “parenting as practice” of *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, Kabat-Zinn looked at bringing up his children as a challenging, but self-growing experience of practicing mindfulness and even attending retreat except that raising kids were not as quiet and simple. For each child, Kabat-Zinn says, it was like an eighteen years of long retreat which consists of easy and then hard periods, wonderful and then deeply painful moments. His practice consists in seeing constantly changing needs of his children as

All perfect opportunities for parents to be fully present rather than to operate in the automatic pilot mode, to relate consciously rather than mechanically, to sense the being in each child and let his or her vibrancy, vitality, and purity call forth our own (p. 249).

For Kabat-Zinn, parenting as such is an “on-the-job, moment-by-moment training” so that the parent has to “be continually mindful and present” (p. 250) rather than linger with a mechanical view or views based on the parent’s perspectives. Kabat-Zinn concludes that the practice of parenting as a meditation retreat that honors his children and family situation as his teachers “has proven its primacy and value time and time again” (p. 249). The fact that Kabat-Zinn and his wife, Myla, published in 1997 their co-authored book *Everyday Blessings: The Inner Work of Mindful Parenting* is a further concrete contribution to benefiting a full range of meditation
practitioners including working moms and dads in a challenging society today.\textsuperscript{17} Such attitude and practice can be complementary, especially to contemporary lay practitioners who may or may not be Buddhists, and to monasticism-based Chan Buddhist practice vis-à-vis the Ordinary Mind.

**Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy**

Inspired by and modeling on MBSR, Segal, Williams and Teasdale\textsuperscript{18} established a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for prevention of depression. Their clinical and research experiences together with mindfulness meditation practices make their work bear a lucid, rational and explainable tone. The lucidity and expressivity of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) provides another model of complementing the steep or subtist approach of traditional Chan practice that is highly intuitive and might fall into the snare of spiritual by-passing.

As its name suggests, MBCT is an integrative practice of mindfulness meditation and cognitive therapy. The definition of mindfulness in MBSR is applied to MBCT. So, a brief mention of cognitive therapy is necessary for understanding MBCT.

Beck and Weishaar\textsuperscript{19} defines cognitive therapy as one “based on a theory of personality which maintains that people respond to life events
through a combination of cognitive, affective, motivational, and behavioral responses” (p. 238). The purpose of cognitive therapy is to

adjust information-processing and initiate positive change of all systems by acting through the cognitive system. In a collaborative process, the therapist and patient examine the patient’s beliefs about himself or herself, other people, and the world. The patient’s maladaptive conclusions are treated as testable hypotheses. Behavioral experiments and verbal procedures are used to examine alternative interpretations and to generate contradictory evidence that supports more adaptive beliefs and leads to therapeutic change (p. 238).

Applying mindfulness to cognitive therapy, Segal et al articulate that

Intentionally (on purpose) changing the focus and style of attention is the “mental gear lever” by which processing can be switched from one cognitive mode to another. And nonjudgmental, present moment focus of mindfulness indicates that it is indeed very closely related to the being mode of mind. In other words, mindfulness provides both the means to change mental gears when disengaging from dysfunctional, “doing-related” mind states, and an alternative mental gear, or incompatible mode of mind, into which to switch (p. 77).

It is essential for patients or whoever practices MBCT and MBCR to learn to experientially switch from the “doing mode” of mind to the “being mode” state. The task of mindfulness training in MBCT is to teach individual participants “ways to become more aware of their mode of mind (‘mental gear’) at any moment, and the skills to disengage, if they choose, from unhelpful modes of mind and to engage more helpful modes” (p. 70).
The shift from the “unhelpful modes” to the “helpful modes” mostly refer to the mental gear shift from the doing mode to the being mode. The being mode and doing mode MBCT describes resemble the Ordinary Mind or mindfulness-based ordinary mind and the untrained ordinary mind respectively. What makes MBCT as well as MBSR different from the practice of Ordinary Mind is that MBCT and MBSR do not transcend, but instead pay close attention to thoughts, emotions and body sensations and respond skillfully to them. Chan is already very pragmatic as compared with other denominations and schools of Buddhism in that Chan prioritizes the now- and- here experience. In light of psychotherapy, however, Chan still appears lacking in attention to the emotional and interpersonal needs of people working and living in a society. This is much the same way as Chan is lacking in addressing different needs at developmental stages given the fact that Chan Buddhism is a medieval practice evolved from India further back.

The core teaching of the MBCT program boils down to developing the awareness and ability, at times of potential relapse, for the patient to recognize and disengage from mind states characterized by self-perpetuating patterns of ruminative, negative thought… This involves moving from a focus on content to a focus on process, away from cognitive therapy’s emphasis on changing the content of negative thinking, toward attending to the way all experience is processed (p. 75).
Specifically, the disengagement from negative mind states involves ‘distancing” or “decentering”. Decentering has been recognized in cognitive therapy too but it is usually used “as a means to an end, changing thought content, rather than an end in itself” (p.38). Decentering, according to Segal et al., is looking at thoughts in a perspective wider enough so that people will be able to see thoughts simply as thoughts rather than facts. In this way, decentering allows MBCT practitioners to step out of the ‘automatic pilot” mode of mind and “nip in the bud the escalation of self-sustaining patterns of depressive thought” (p. 53). This fundamental aspect of MBCT protects people against future depression. If such decentering did not take place, patients might be left arguing with themselves about whether their thoughts were true or not, marshaling evidence for or against a negative thought. Consequently they might simply get caught up in the thought pattern.

Characterized technically by decentering, MBCT emphasizes the importance of changing patient’s relationships to their negative thoughts and feelings rather than changing a person’s degree of belief in his or her thoughts and attitudes. If people adopt a decentered perspective detaching from their habitual patterns of thinking, then there is no need to change the content of their thoughts and feelings. It is this change from working on
contents of thoughts to the relationship to the thoughts that makes what is implicit in cognitive therapy explicit in MBCT. Persons expressed her reservation, however, on the truthfulness of such a distinction or change from Beck’s change of thoughts and believes to what MBCT claims as mere change of relationship.

The progressive eight-session MBCT training has a focus for each session. It goes from mindfulness practice by eating raisin to getting out of our habitual often unconscious tendency of reacting on “automatic pilot”, from practicing body scan in a gentle, interested and friendly way to practicing formal sitting mindfulness meditation. It also trains participants on staying present with difficult things via breathing as well as sitting with thoughts as thoughts rather than facts.

There is something about the “everydayness” of the practice of MBCT as well as MBSR that is relevant to the Chan motto ‘Ordinary Mind is the Way”. When mindfulness practice comes to everyday practice, any daily activity such as brushing your teeth, washing up, putting on your shoes, eating a meal, and doing your job can be a target of practice. What needs to be done is just bring your mindfulness to each activity either by taking a conscious breath which is popularly practiced in insight meditation or just by reflecting back which is prevalent in Chan. This level of mindfulness is
easy and doable in relation to the non-dual transpersonal state and the outcome is the functioning mindfulness-based ordinary mind but not the non-differentiating Ordinary Mind.

**Meditation-Initiated Integrative Therapy (MIIT)**

MIIT that I have developed over the past few years differs from MBSR and MBCT in three major ways. First, MBSR and MBCT seem to crush its training into an invariable mindfulness practice. MIIT develops a three-stage model for beginning, intermediate and advanced practitioner. Second, MIIT allows individual clients or group participants to recall after formal meditation and process with my assistance what came up from their unconscious to consciousness. Third, MIIT invites practitioners to bring their particular problem or issue into the process of mediation practice. That problem or issue becomes the object of meditation and insights are likely to come up at certain point from the unconscious. This involves the same mechanism as does the practice of investigating a koan in the traditional practice of Chan/Zen that hopefully will result in a breakthrough—enlightenment. Such effect may come immediately or may take several sessions or much longer time. The meditation session itself, however, can be
a relaxing and therapeutic practice regulating thoughts and emotions as well as interconnection between mind, body and spirit.

**Mechanism:**

MIIT is a psycho-spiritual practice. On the one hand it follows the mind-body regulation practice that meditation produces in order to achieve well-being characterized by harmony, serenity and, at advanced stage, liberation. On the other hand, it operates on the emergence of unconscious contents as clues or insights for post-meditation therapeutic treatment in the framework of psychoanalysis and cognitive behavior therapy.

**Procedures of Applying the Model**

MIIT normally operates according to the following procedure:

During meditation proper

1. seated meditation with instructions given to beginners

2. unconscious contents emerging in the realm of consciousness

3. seeing clues and insights to problems

In post-meditation session

4. exposure/catharsis verbally or non-verbally (e.g. expressive arts)

5. analysis, association and treatment
6. training on maladaptive thoughts and behaviors with homework

7. growth and enhanced meditation

MIIT at the beginning level normally asks participants to meditate 10-15 minutes. At intermediate and advanced stages, the meditation time will increase incrementally to 25 and 30 minutes respectively for workshops more often than for individual clients. Regardless stages, no specific posture is required. The basic instructions include

- assuming a comfortable and relaxed posture to sit in a non-interfering setting that is neither too bright nor completely dark
- observing just inhaling or exhaling of one’s breath
- just patiently bringing the attention back to observing inhaling or exhaling if attentiveness is lost
- paying peripheral attention to what is going on in thoughts, emotion and body.

Coming out the meditation session, each participant is given a piece of blank paper and oil pastels to express linguistically or artistically what they each have experienced in the silent meditation. No logic, order or grammar is needed for their expressions. Among the list of expressed items I then invite the client or a chosen volunteer in a group to pick three items she or
he thinks more significant and wants to explore. Therapeutic counseling proceeds from there.

In another design used more frequently at post-beginning levels, participants are asked to watch their mental process or mentally concentrate on a targeted issue. In watching the mental process, random thoughts, emotions and images pop up from the unconscious. In concentrating on the targeted issue with which one is having difficulties in life, she might be able to see sparking clues or ideas leading to a solution of the problem being investigated.

My clients are either individuals or attendants of small group workshops or salons. In the case of individual clients, a one-hour session might not begin with instructed meditation right away. If it appears useful and is accepted, it will be introduced at an appropriate time of the session. In group counseling, the first three steps during the meditation proper can be executed as in an individual session, but step 5 will not be guaranteed for all of the group members. The operation of individual counseling in a group may begin with a volunteer. If more volunteers request the personal service than can be handled in the limited session, then the surplus clients will have to wait for another session of the whole workshop or they will simply have to accept the fact that they are not selected.
The results presented in the present study project refer mostly to steps 4 and 5 of the MIIT model. They are post-meditation procedures of counseling and therapy of which traditional Chan practice finds no equivalents. MIIT assumes that without the follow-up psychological counseling, Chan practice itself is perhaps merely aiming at the spiritual dimension of life. To create the wholeness of personality, unfinished psychological issues must be brought to light and worked through psychoanalytically and reinforced behaviorally. The following cases serve this purpose in general.

Case One

H is from the United Kingdom and speaks good Chinese (pu tong hua or Mandarin). While she was formally sitting in meditation, a scene occurred in her mind that she verbally described this way: “An Eagle is flying up in the sky. I see it fly freely. It flies higher and higher and I (my problems as well) am on the ground getting farther and farther from it”

“How did you feel then?”, I asked H.

“I felt inspired, light and free with my stress left on the ground”.

“Where did your stress come from?”

“From too much work”.

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“Did you want and promise too much or did they assign you too much?”

(With moments of thinking) “I promised too much”.

“Are you then going to re-consider how much to take?”

(We had eye contact and she smiled) “Yes, I will reconsider it”

Case Two

Y is a school teacher, a middle aged Chinese woman. During a group meditation, she keeps recalling the part of life she lived as a kid with her maternal grandma. In the post-meditation session of counseling, I asked Y what kind of feeling she had while the scenarios of her childhood life emerged in consciousness. She said it was guilt because he felt she fell short of repaying her grandma who brought her up due to her parents’ divorce. I invited Y to meditate on this feeling with her grandma. The group atmosphere then was genuine and supportive of Y’s emotional investigation. Shortly I felt galvanized as if a mild current of electricity ran through my body. At this point I found Y was sobbing and she reached for facial tissues. I let this silent process linger on a couple of minutes so that Y would be able to achieve a better effect of externalizing her repressed emotions. Then I asked, “Would you like to communicate what is on your mind with your grandma, perhaps just what you have gone through? Or you may want to do
this later at home”. I did not pursue her immediate communication with her deceased grandma because it was a group process where someone would feel reluctant to go very deep. Also group counseling usually does not have enough time for each individual to go through a complete round.

In case one, meditation serves as means to induce unconscious content to surface into the realm of consciousness. She admired flying like an eagle because she had been overworked. Then the method of cognitive approach with a Socratic dialogue is used for counseling. Without the counseling part the client might not be able to realize where her stress comes from and how to work on reducing it and enhancing self-care.

Psychological counseling and therapy see a client’s tears as a breakthrough. Only when the client is feeling extremely authentic and vulnerable can she or he touch upon the deep-set emotional complex. In case two, when tears come to eyes, it suggests a time for possible transformation is around the corner. Traditional practice of Ordinary Mind or mbom in Chan Buddhism often appears either somewhat indifferent to emotional processes or does not explicate how to handle them. Instead, traditional Buddhist teachings emphasize calming and detaching without facing squarely emotional issues in the first place. Therefore psychological issues are suppressed and supposed to be transcended. A good chance to unravel
the emotional knot is missed and the transcendence may prove to be a spiritual by-pass. The supposedly transcended issue or problem may well come back unconsciously in the waking life as well as dreams.

**Conclusion**

Meditation-Initiated Integrative Therapy is a renewed model of practice of ping chang xin (Ordinary Mind and mbom). It consists of primary, intermediate and advanced stages. This chapter is essentially introducing the primary level of MIIT. As a psycho-spiritual practice, MIIT always contains a dimension of spiritual attainment that brings about greater satisfaction than psychotherapies. The more advanced stage MIIT is at, the deeper spiritual attainment (e.g. oneness, non-dualism, enlightenment) the practice realizes. MIIT adopts some methods and techniques from psychotherapies such as psychoanalysis and CBT in order to make the traditional Chan practice of ping chang xin more applicable at psychological level to people today who work and socialize in a modern or post-modern society. Such integrated methods and techniques are demonstrated in the post-meditation session either in the individual counseling or group setting. Individual clients or group participants get a chance to deal with their personal, interpersonal or
work-related issues or problems, old or current, with the assistance of the counselor.

References


