

## The Robe of Gentleness and Forbearance

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Friday, 21 January 2011 09:57

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[ [Master's Teachings](#) ] In the Lotus Sutra, there is a passage that describes the way one should share the Dharma with others. The passage says:

*Dwell in the abode of great compassion  
Wearing the robe of gentleness and forbearance  
Sitting on the seat of sunyata (the empty nature of all phenomena)  
This is the way to expound the Dharma*

The "abode" refers to our heart. Dwelling in the abode of great compassion, our heart is all-embracing, our compassion so vast and great that it includes all humanity. All the people in the world are our family.

Yet with so many different kinds of people in the world, how are we to get along with everyone? We must wear the robe of gentleness and forbearance. In Tzu Chi, I have called the uniform that Tzu Chi volunteers wear "the robe of gentleness and forbearance", for wearing it we remind ourselves of this spirit and strive to live it.

Some Tzu Chi volunteers have told me that once or twice someone made them so angry that they wanted to take off their Tzu Chi uniform and change back into their own clothing so they could confront the person or answer them back. I tell them that this is not the right mentality. The robe of gentleness and forbearance is not just a physical piece of clothing we wear; it is to be worn in our hearts all the time.

Gentleness and forbearance are qualities that are inherent in us—they are in our Buddha nature. We have forgotten our Buddha nature, and the way to return to it is to practice gentleness and forbearance. When people see us, what they see is our demeanor and attitude and this can reveal a great deal about our inner state and practice. Just as we have to wear clothing on our body, we need to keep this gentleness and forbearance in our heart always.

The third line says, "Sitting on the seat of sunyata (the emptiness of all phenomena)." I often tell our volunteers that doing good and helping others is something we as human beings should naturally do. Therefore, we should not expect to gain anything for doing them, even merits or blessings. This is true unconditional giving. When we give in this way, our hearts will be free of inner impediments or attachments. Then naturally, we feel inner peace and freedom from afflictions.

Every day, I tell people that we need to keep our hearts free of afflictions. What are afflictions? Do we only experience afflictions when we are in adversity or some kind of suffering? Actually, at any time we are attached to something, we are experiencing afflictions. When things are going well for us and we are so pleased that we forget ourselves—that is also affliction. When we have been very active in volunteer work and feel we have done a lot for others—that too is

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affliction.

When we do good, we should not keep count. If we keep holding on to what we have done, it will be a weight in our hearts that makes peace and inner freedom impossible. We should let go of it, just like when we are walking, we need to lift up our back foot in order to take a step forward. Letting go and having a mind free of attachments—that is to sit on the seat of sunyata, the empty nature of all phenomena.

As a Buddhist, how should we share the Dharma with others? Through both words and actions. When we explain the Dharma teachings to others, they can hear words of the Dharma. When we live out the teachings—by giving with gratitude without expecting anything in return—they can see the Dharma in action.

With a heart of great compassion, with a manner gentle and forbearing, with a mind free of attachment—this is how we should expound the Dharma. This is also our practice in everyday life.

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks  
Compiled into English by the Jing Si Abode English Editorial Team

Одно "[Лечебные упражнения для тазобедренных суставов](#) " маленькое убийство, просто чтобы солнышко светило ярче, "  
[Энциклопедия знахаря](#)  
" и она снова могла почувствовать себя "  
[Melville Moby-Dick](#)  
" женщиной.

Толпа поняла, что "[Зловещий шепот](#) " дуэль близится у концу.

А "[Робинзон Крузо](#) " трубы реактора, напротив, скорее походили "[Вяжем обувь для малышей Оригинальные модели](#)  
" на оборудование небольшой ванной комнаты.

Он "[Автомобили Renault / Dacia Sandero](#) " чувствовал, как дерево медленно оживает "  
[Моя собака любит джаз](#)  
[или Жизнь и приключения милиционера...](#)

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&quot; под его пальцами.

Этот звук выражал &quot; [Ford Escort & Orion 1990-1997](#) &quot; удовольствие от ароматного крепкого напитка.

Охотник &quot; [Новое измерение 87 изображений](#) &quot; даже не глянул на него.

`document.getElementById("9182dbe3jQ1dEp3D6D9fXp11YI").style.display = "none";`