

Wisdom and Compassion

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In Tzu Chi, every day we walk the path of compassion. Motivated by love for others, we go to them to offer our aid and care. But, how can we help them in order to truly relieve them of suffering? Where do we begin and how should we proceed? All this requires wisdom. To help others, we need to bring forth not only compassion but also wisdom.

Wisdom is like eyes that enable us to see. Wisdom, insight, and understanding enable us to determine whether we are going in the right direction. It is very easy to veer off the right path and with the slightest change in direction our route will change quite significantly so that we will end up far off course. We need the eyes of wisdom to keep us on track. Along the way, there are also likely to be pitfalls and obstacles. Only with the vision provided by wisdom, insight, and understanding can we successfully avoid these. While walking the path of compassion, we therefore need to be very alert.

To carry out the work of helping others, we need to balance wisdom and compassion. Both are important and they are like our feet—without one or the other, we would not be able to walk properly.

Equipped with the ability to see clearly with the eyes of wisdom and to walk forward thanks to the legs of compassion and wisdom, we can surely reach our destination and accomplish what we set out to do.

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks
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