

Guarding Our Heart and Mind

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[[Master's Teachings](#)]

In our daily life, we need to guard our heart and mind. Why? Because our thoughts are like wild beasts, whenever we're not careful, unwholesome thoughts will appear in our mind, creating perils for us. The unwholesome thoughts of greed, anger, and ignorance are like a torrent of impurities rushing into our heart and mind. So, in our cultivation, what we need to do is be very prudent and guard our heart and mind carefully from the intrusion of unwholesome thoughts. To cultivate is to build an embankment in our heart.

An embankment prevents water from flooding the land. If the water come and the embankment gives way, a disaster will happen. Similarly, when our mind gives rise to greed, anger, and ignorance, our inner-embankment will be easily breached or destroyed. Powerful waves of unwholesome thoughts will surge up and cause us to make mistakes, and treat people unkindly.

What can we do about this? We can endeavor to be sincere, cautious, and prudent.

To clear away the unwholesome thoughts from our mind, we need sincerity. When we're sincere and honest, we won't have ill intentions toward people. In return, people won't give us troubles or a hard time. When people don't give us troubles, we won't act in offensive or harmful ways toward them. Human interactions are mutual. When we're being polite and courteous to people, people will also treat us the same way. This is how human interaction works.

In handling our daily affairs, we need to be cautious and prudent because when we're not careful, we tend to make mistakes. This is why we need to remember the precepts all the time, for it's when we forget them that mistakes are made. When our heart and mind are not with the precepts, we're letting the torrent of greed, anger, and ignorance breach our inner-embankment and get inside our heart and mind. Only by being sincere, cautious, and prudent can we prevent this from happening.

I hope everyone can cultivate and build an inner-embankment of sincerity, cautiousness, and prudence to protect against the torrent of greed, anger, and ignorance.

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks
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