

Happiness from a Sincere, Reverent Heart

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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[[Master's Teachings](#)]

As we go about our everyday life, are we joyful and understanding toward everyone and everything? Do we face everything with a genuinely sincere and respectful attitude? That is what we practice for. We want to let go of afflictions so we can always abide in a peaceful mindset.

Usually, we tend to approach things with a discriminating mind, full of notions of what is good and bad. Being in this frame of mind, we react easily and become judgmental. We fail to take into consideration the many principles at work which are hidden from our perception.

Seeing the Wonder in Everything

All around us, everything is operating based on laws and principles which are very deep and profound. Truth is out there all of the time, but its richness and wonder are often invisible. With a heart of sincerity and reverence, we can discover the Dharma within our everyday life and begin to see the wonder in the world.

Everything we encounter in this world is a coming together of many elements. For example, take the flowers on this table before me. Where did these flowers come from? They started out as a seed. For the seed to grow, it needed to have favorable soil, water, sunlight and air. All these elements had to come together in just the right way for the seed to grow into a plant that eventually bloomed with flowers.

Without these elements, there is no flower, only flower seed. They all go into making the flower; the flower is therefore a composite of all these different elements. Behind the flower that we see, there are invisible but wondrous causes and conditions coming together.

This is also true for the table here in front of me. Being made of wood, we can see that this wood used to be a tree. Where did this tree come from? It also started out as a seed. With the proper soil, sunlight, water, and movement of air, the seed was able to germinate and grow into a seedling, then a sapling, and eventually into a full-grown tree. That is how we come to have wood to make into tables and chairs, and for the construction of our buildings which provide us shelter and comfort in daily living.

Every kind of plant, whether grass, bushes, or trees, is like this—coming into being through the interplay of different factors. Actually, every material thing follows this principle, from a seed to endless outcomes. The principles at work are deep and profound, the existence of everything wondrous. So miraculous is the wonder of existence that it is often beyond our understanding or imagination. Explaining the working mechanism behind it is a rather colossal undertaking. Truly, there is so much in life that we do not yet understand.

Hence, we need to treat everything with the utmost respect and sincerity. Having a heart of

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sincerity and reverence will allow us to see the deeper principle in things and elevate our wisdom. This opens and expands our hearts, making us more tolerant, understanding, happy, and capable of overcoming afflictions.

The Dharma in Respecting Others

If we can begin to recognize the wonder in all the principles and mechanisms behind everything around us, we will realize how little we know, how much we need others to help us do all the things that we can't do, and how much we need to respect people for their understanding of the profound principles that enable them to possess the skills they have and to master things we do not understand.

For instance, when a technical glitch occurs during one of my talks, such as with the sound broadcasting or with the screens that show the text I am discussing, I need to look for help to fix the problem. This shows that this is something I don't know about. It is an expertise I have yet to master. Oftentimes, the person I ask to help me will say, "I'm not knowledgeable in this, let me go find so-and-so who knows how to fix it." She has to go find the person who has expertise in this area. When that person comes, all she has to do is to make a small adjustment and suddenly, everything is fixed. How did she do this? She has an understanding of the matter that I do not possess.

But at the same time, this person's understanding may also be limited to such technical repairs. If I asked her to help revise a draft report, she would say, "Wait, let me find so-and-so. She is better at this."

How much do we really know? Our individual wisdom and understanding are limited; we alone can't do everything under the sun. Everyone contributes to make the world run smoothly. We depend on each other. That is why we need to respect everyone for the unique understanding and skills they have.

This is what we need to practice mindfully—learning to see in everyday life the wondrous principles of Dharma at work and to face all people and matters with a sincere and reverent heart. When we do this, we will become more tolerant and understanding. In our hearts, we will always abide in great joy. This is to touch Dharma in daily life and dispel our afflictions. So, please do practice mindfully to keep a sincere, reverent heart always, toward everyone and everything.

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks
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