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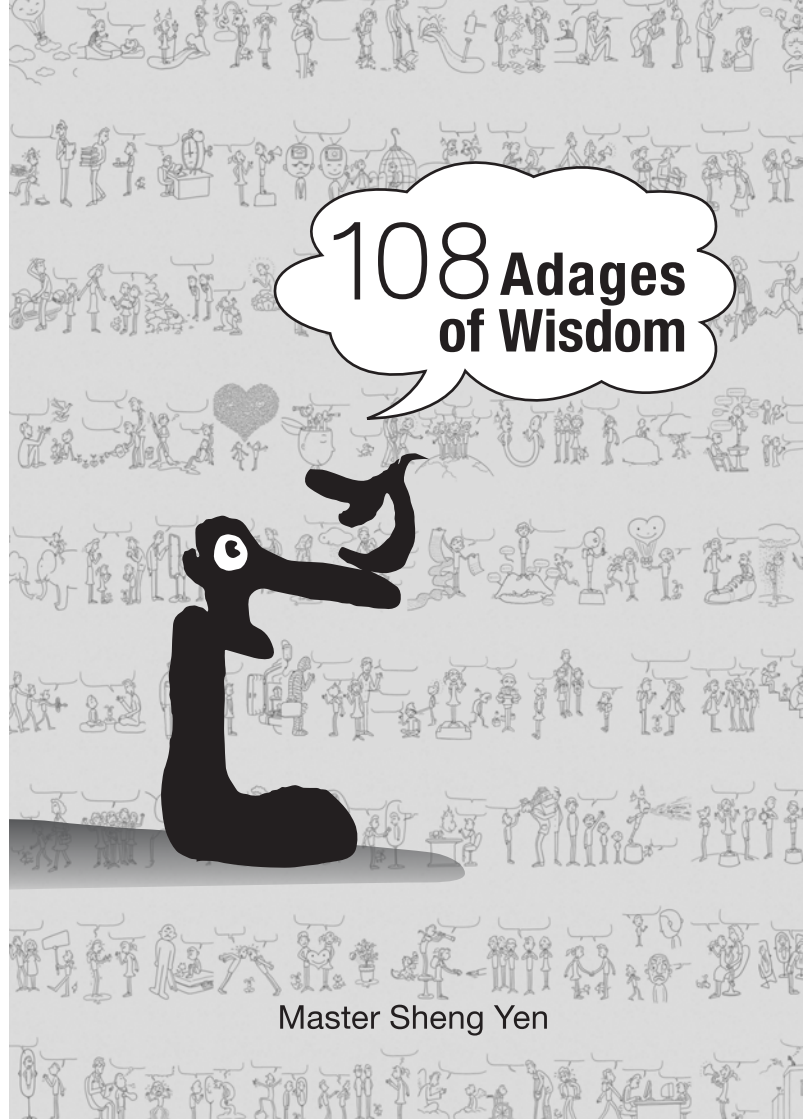


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Living Freely and Joyfully (Part I)

Master Sheng Yen



108 Adages
of Wisdom



Master Sheng Yen



Protecting The Spiritual Environment

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Perfecting Life

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慈悲沒有敵人
智慧不起煩惱

聖嚴

面對它
接受它
處理它
放下它

聖嚴

*The four steps in dealing with any problem:
face it, accept it, deal with it, let it go.*

*Compassion has no enemies;
wisdom, no vexations.*

Protecting The Spiritual Environment

Use ordinary mind to face unordinary circumstances.




What would happen if we don't treat the unordinary with an ordinary mind?




We may lose our cool!





Even if you're right, don't be harsh to others. Express correct views gently.



Let others be your mirror. If your words or actions discomfit, shock, or cause concern to others, immediately reflect on your behavior, express remorse, and improve.

Why should we be yielding when we know others are being unreasonable?

Only when we don't embarrass others will everything end well.



Thank you all for giving me room to grow.





Take care of your mind, no matter the situation. Keep inner mind calm and peaceful. This is spiritual health; this is protecting the spiritual environment.



Anger may stem from the body, perception, or many other causes. It's not necessarily an indication of poor cultivation. If you can look within, dissolve your anger, you will harm neither yourself nor others.





Unpleasant encounters, unhappy situations – we must mend our own minds, not other people's minds.



We have to respond to problems with calm. If our minds are not equanimous and harmonious, then we will likely say the wrong things and make the situation worse.

I am the only one who understands my problems.



(Adjusting your own mind)

It's none of your business!




(Adjusting another person's mind)



Things are getting worse.



Conflicts usually come from an over-assertion of personal views.



Those who are selfish, self-serving, and insatiable act this way due to feelings of insecurity.





Being selfish and self-serving may seem to be a way to protect yourself, but this is not so. One who is self-serving actually harms others and ultimately, himself.



Do not compare yourself against some standard; do not compare yourself with others. Just be diligent in the present and be prepared at any time for the future.

Why won't anyone give me a hand when I need help?

This is how you always treat people. Now you know how it feels!



Opportunities may come at any time. I have to be prepared!





People usually hide their shortcomings and avoid confronting them. Face them with openness, and then these shortcomings and other problems will actually decrease.



Do not think you know it all; do not belittle yourself.

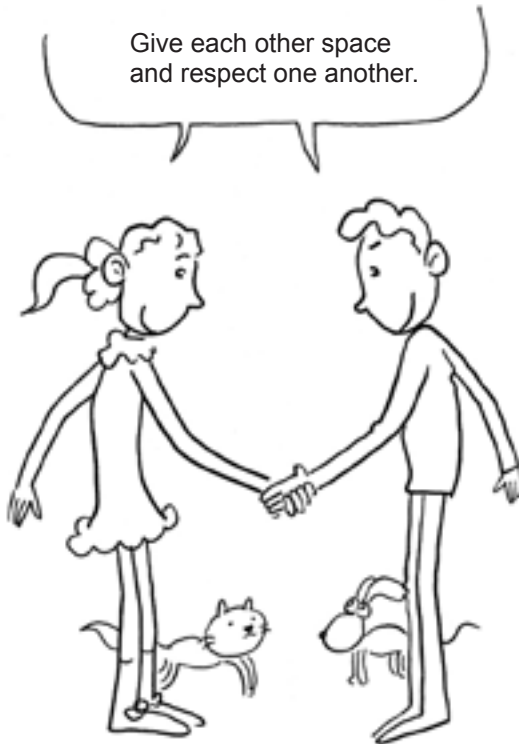
You will overcome your shortcomings one after another. Keep it up.



To feel neither superior nor inferior; the "Middle Way" is the best approach.



When we interact with others, giving them space is to give ourselves space.



When angry, learn to contemplate and illuminate the mind. Consider your thoughts and ask yourself, "Why do I want to feel angry?"

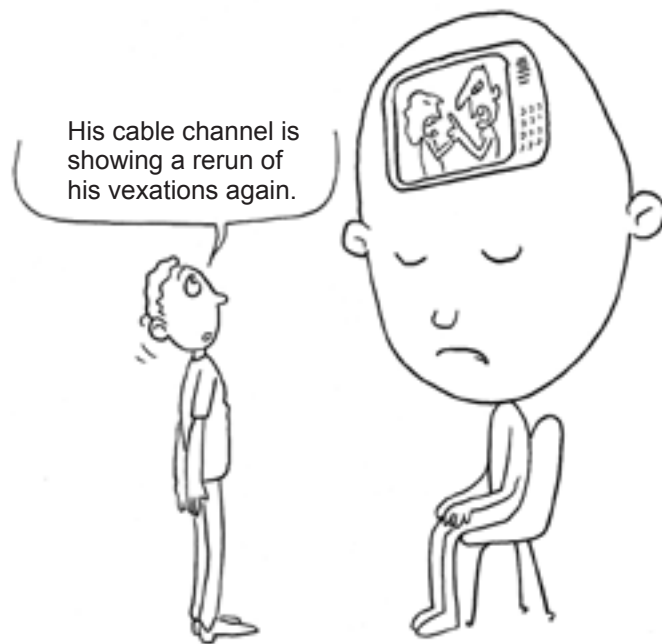




**When your mind is tied into a knot,
it is best to reflect deeply into the
place where the mind arises and
thoughts move.**



**Mind engaged – things to do.
Mind let go – nothing to do.**





**Letting go does not mean giving up.
Letting go means not thinking of the past,
not thinking of the future, a mind that lets
go. Giving up means believing in nothing,
abandoning all faith and courage.**



**If you are prepared for a setback,
then you will not fear setbacks.**

I won't be troubled
by this any more!



(Letting go)

Never mind. Nothing
matters any more.



(Giving up)

Come get me, setbacks!



She's really developed
immunity after getting
the vaccine.



Sickness need not be a source of suffering; the same is true for poverty and physical labor. But when the mind is distressed, that is true suffering.




Take your illness as an experience. Then it will not be suffering.

A suffering mind will not find happiness even in heaven.




Now you know how important our health is!





Take adversity as something interesting, you will harvest a very different crop.



Ponder for two more minutes, and opportunities may reveal themselves; as long as we have one more breath, our potential is unlimited.

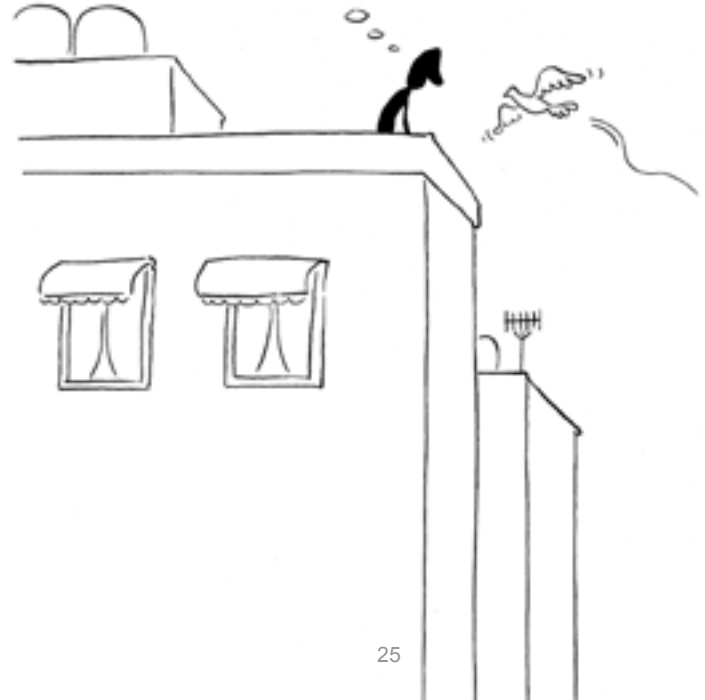
Oh, no. Where did my allowance go?



Well, whoever finds it can make use of it.



There is hope as long as I live.






If our views are correct, then we know that birth, aging, sickness, and death are natural and we will not blame others.




The world can face great danger and calamity at any time. If we are mentally prepared for anything, then when misfortune strikes we reduce the potential injury to the bare minimum.





**When vexations descend upon you,
it is best to enjoy the sensation of
breathing.**



**The most important concept in
protecting the environment is
"simplicity." Simplify your life and
that will protect the environment.**

Breathe in slowly, breathe out slowly;
breathe in the sunshine of happiness,
breathe out the clouds of vexation.



Thrift leads to no waste.

When there's less waste,
there's less burden for
the planet Earth.

This is
environmentalism.

Woof!

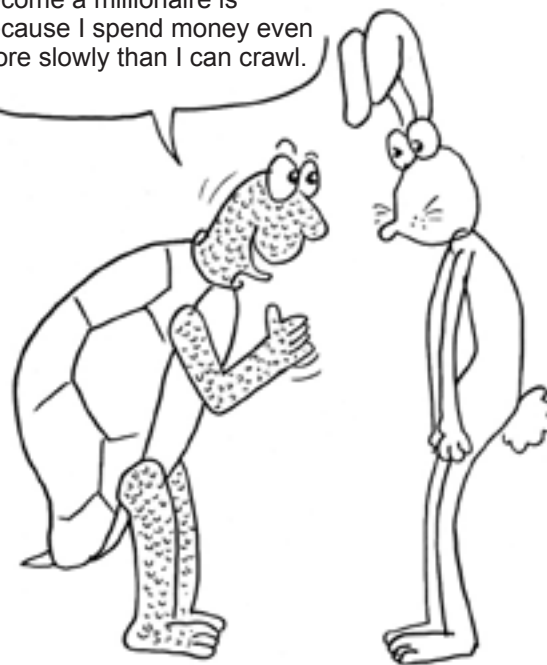



Living Freely

Look more, listen more; speak less,
act fast; spend slow.




The reason why I have
become a millionaire is
because I spend money even
more slowly than I can crawl.





**A true step on the path merits
more than a hundred shallow
words adorned with tinsel.**



**The more you come to know your
weaknesses, the faster you will grow,
with your self-confidence unwavering.**






In daily living it is better to think:
"fine if I can have it, no matter if I
can't"; thus transform suffering to
joy and live a life of serenity.




About to speak? Think for a moment.
Slow your speech a bit. It's not that
you should not speak, but rather that
you should cherish what you say and
choose your words with care.





Let the measure of your heart be great; the size of your ego, small.



If you wish to build good relationships with others, develop a broad mind, and become more tolerant and forgiving.

How can I minimize "myself"?

With regard to everything, think of not only yourself, but others, even the whole world.



Treat your good friends as soul mates, treat your bad friends as a mirror.

What about those who are neither good nor bad?

They are all little Bodhisattvas just like you.





When you change your way of thinking, what is around you will transform accordingly; nowhere in the world will you find absolute good or bad.



The way to get along with others is to communicate effectively. When communication fails, compromise, when compromise fails, tolerate and forgive.


Why is there no absolute good or absolute bad?

Something good can become bad, something bad can become good, it all depends on your attitude and effort.




I don't agree with what you say, but I respect your right to express yourself.





The great must make allowance
for the small; the small must be
understanding toward the great.



Don't measure yourself as high or
low in comparison to others. Just
work with all your heart and mind.

Be forgiving and
understanding with
each other.



I can't achieve my ideal now
doesn't mean I can't achieve
it next year. Keep going!





More praise and less criticism! Cut down the karma that comes from what you say.



If possible and permissible, seek after it; if impossible and forbidden, keep away from it.


This is the result of creating too much bad karma with spoken words.



What are the things that I can't and shouldn't acquire?



That includes everything that is beneficial to yourself but damaging to another's rights or reputation.



We love to grasp what we love and reject what we dislike; gain and loss, gain and loss – vexations are sure to come.



You have a particular role and responsibility in life; act accordingly.



Students Xiao-Ming Lin and Li-Li Wang respect their teachers in school, study hard in class, help others selflessly after school and are familial to their parents. They are hereby awarded the certificate of "little Bodhisattvas".




**Worry causes needless injury!
Mindfulness brings security.**




**Seek a peaceful mind, and you will find
a peaceful refuge; treasure others and
you will find fortune and happiness.**





Rejoice when you encounter good,
praise it, encourage it to spread, but
take care to learn with an open mind.




Finish your work quickly, but in an
orderly manner; don't become nervous
trying to compete with time itself.

You've been working so hard,
grandfather. Let me help you.




Haste makes waste.
You will waste more time
if you have to do it over.





Ordinarily people like to boast about their strengths. Our strengths should be developed, but there is no need to exaggerate them.



Big duck swims, big wake; little duck swims, little wake. No duck in the water? No wake at all.

Even the new first graders know that you have been elected Model Student. Now come down!



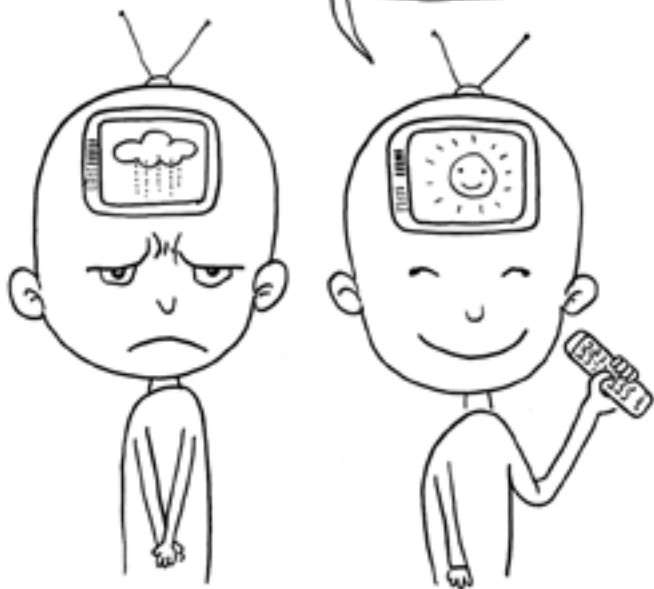
As long as you take the first step, the world will be different.



Can't move the mountain? Build a road!
Road blocked? Start climbing!
Can't climb? Shift your mind!


A good method to lighten strain and stress: lessen the mind of gain and loss; increase the mind of appreciation.

Adjusting our thoughts is like changing channels on our TV. When the program is not good, change the channel.




The rainbow usually only appears after the rain.





Disputes are best settled by tolerance.



Great possessions don't necessarily bring satisfaction; few possessions don't necessarily lead to poverty.

Since you are accommodating to me, of course I am willing to take a step back.



How come we don't always feel satisfied even when we have a lot?

Because we are never content!




An urgent task needs immediate attention? Be ready now!




Stop the litter, clutter and garbage! Always clean up and pick up what you can. These are virtuous acts.






Right now you gather what you have
planted; what you harvest tomorrow,
you plant at this moment.



An ordinary mind is a mind of utmost
freedom, utmost joy.



If you want to become popular
in the future, you have to start
forming good relationships
with people now.

So this is also the
principle of "Causes
And Consequences".



Living Joyfully



Say "Blessings to you" when you meet another. This spreads good will and brings peace and calm.





When you work with others, consider their needs. When you make a mistake, reflect upon your own conduct.



Offer friendship and a helping hand to others, and so be a beacon of harmony, happiness, peace and calm.

It's not my fault at all;
it's all someone else's fault.

Is that really true?



So good, so considerate.

The little Bodhisattva
is radiating the light
of compassion.

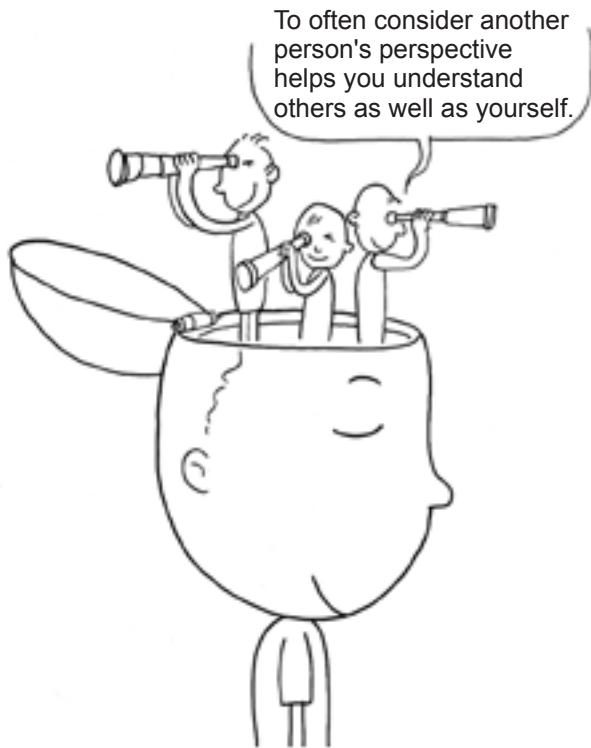





Self confidence is recognizing your strong points; growth is knowing your weaknesses; respect is understanding another's position.




Reduce others' vexations with compassion; reduce your own with wisdom.





True diligence doesn't mean placing your life at risk. It is simply unwavering persistence.

As long as I follow the plan and review the lessons daily, my performance will definitely improve.




People usually have no insight into themselves and consequently cause themselves unnecessary trouble.


One person plays so many roles. Who am I?

My mood changes all the time. Who am I?






Be clear about what is necessary for you to have. Untangle yourself from wants driven by desire.




Rather than fighting for something you cannot get, it is better to cherish and use what you already have.





Don't get carried away when the sailing is smooth; don't lose heart and give up when the boat starts to toss and turn.




Character creates wealth; giving creates savings.

With an ordinary mind one will have fewer vexations.




Giving is like a homing pigeon. As long as it has delivered the message, no matter how far it's flown, it will always return home.





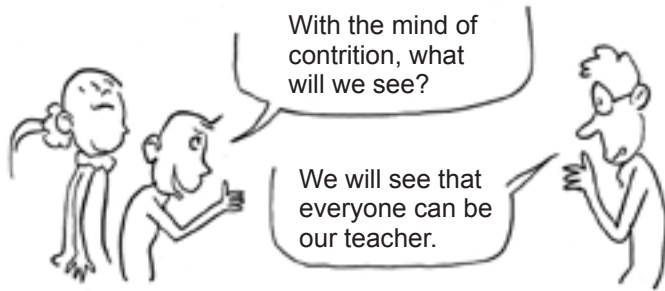
Happiness does not derive from how famous you are or how much money you have; rather it is a measure of inner peace and contentment with few desires.



Wealth is like flowing water, and giving like the digging of a well. Dig deeper and more water flows in; give more and wealth multiplies.



Look at yourself with contrition; at the world with gratitude.



Demand right-minded conduct of yourself, do not use it as an excuse to harshly criticize others.






Unable to let go of attachment to self? No wisdom. Unable to let go of attachment to others? No compassion.




If you let other people misunderstand you, it's nobody's fault but your own.

Don't you find it painful to carry your vexations everywhere you go?






Just as you would not ask others
to wear your own shoes, don't make
someone else's problems your own.




A smile and a good word are great gifts
that create virtuous affinity with all.






Reduce pointless emotions and avoid unnecessary trouble.




If you hear gossip, be calm and reflect carefully. If it's true, it calls for change. If it's false, continue to do good work. A short temper can turn gossip into a deadly weapon.

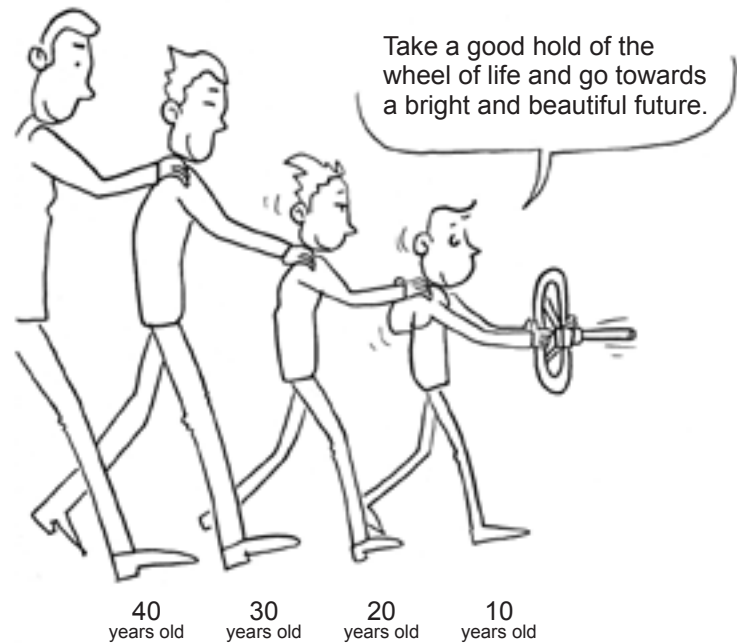




**A healthy body and mind constitute
life's greatest treasure.**



**Transform your mind and transform
your destiny.**





The good are not lonely; the benevolent, happiest; ever and always help others and thus achieve the utmost happiness for yourself.



**Let everyone speak kindly!
Let everyone do good deeds!
Let everyone's bad luck turn to good!**

You are always running around helping others, don't you ever feel tired?

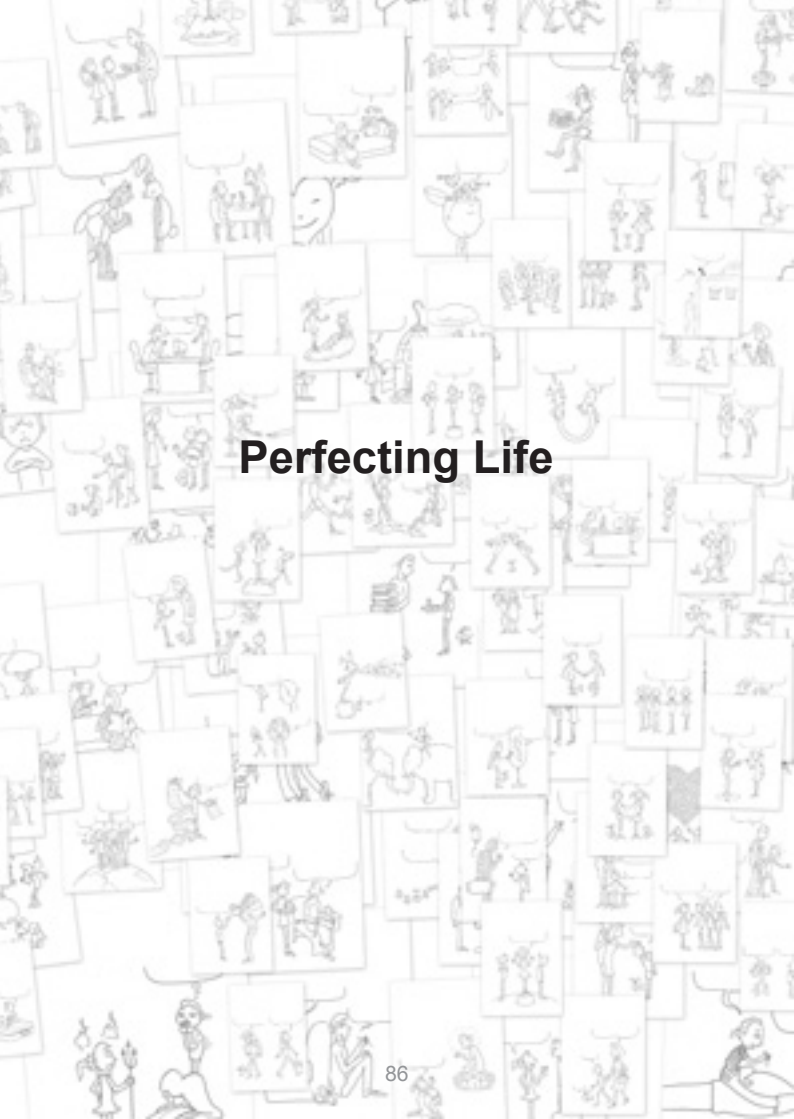


Oh right! I totally forget about being tired.



Let's share good things with good friends.





Perfecting Life

**The value of life is not in duration
but in contribution.**



Grandfather, what is a
"great contribution"?

Everything is a great
contribution if it is done not
for your self-interest but for
the benefit of others.



**The past is an illusion; the future,
a dream; the present, essential.**

**Breathing is wealth – as long as
you are alive there is hope.**

I want to become the most
skilled video game software
engineer when I grow up.

Then you must study hard so you
can go to a good university with
the best learning environment.



There is hope as
long as one lives.





Flowers blossoming and bearing fruit is a natural phenomenon. Flowers blossoming and not bearing fruit is also natural. Both accord with the workings of causes and conditions.



Wisdom is not merely understanding the sutras; it includes the skillful means to transform vexations.



Causes and conditions for flowers and fruits.



Causes and conditions for flowers but no fruits.





Vexation is bodhi, but that doesn't mean there is no vexation. Vexations exist, but don't see them as vexations.



When you recognize that you lack wisdom, your wisdom has already increased imperceptibly.

Thank you for your test that helps me grow my wisdom.

You are a teacher, not a vexation.



Now I understand. Wisdom has to grow out of a lack of wisdom.



**Compassion has no enemies; wisdom,
no vexations.**



I think of everyone as
a good friend, why are
there still people who
don't like me?

Even if people are your
friends, you should still
respect their choices.



**Do your utmost – no matter who gains
or loses.**




I have done more
than you have!




Oh, oh. How come
something good has
turned into this...







**Insight comes from wisdom;
good fortune, from merit.**



**There are really no bad people in the
world, only those who make mistakes.
There are no evil people, only those
whose thoughts have deviated from
the norm.**




You shouldn't always pray
for good luck. The more you
use up luck and blessings,
the less you'll have. Wisdom
is the opposite; the more you
use it, the more you'll have.



Sometimes I still make
mistakes if I am not careful.

It is okay as long as
you don't do it again.



Everyone has the capacity to help others. We can help others through our sincere appreciation, encouragement, consolation, and guidance.



Buddha in mind, speech, and daily life.

As long as you have the heart to do it, you can help people any time, anywhere.




You will have a good mind when you have the Buddha in your mind.


You will speak kind words when you have the Buddha on your lips.

You will do good deeds when you make the Buddha a presence in your daily life.






Compassion must be accompanied by wisdom. The kind of compassion that lacks wisdom may very easily end up harming yourself and others. Even with good intentions, such "compassion" is still prone to mistakes and harming others.




There is an order to developing aspirations. Begin small with what's close at hand. Start with good intentions, positive speech, and good deeds. These are things that everyone can do and vows that everyone can make.

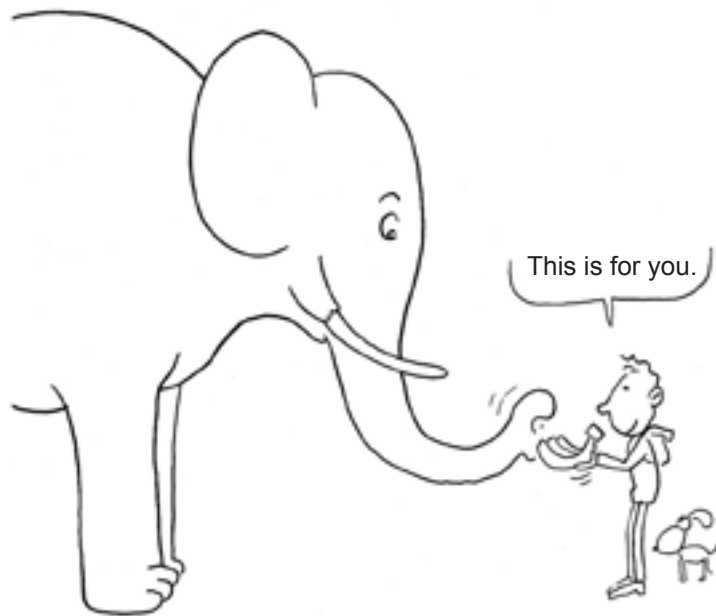





**Don't just express gratitude.
Make it a reality.**



**It doesn't matter if a good deed is big
or small. Always have good intentions
and then your mind will be at peace.**





Serve others with a mind of gratitude and reciprocity and you will be neither tired nor weary.



Every child is a little bodhisattva that helps his or her parents grow.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve.



Thank you, little Bodhisattva.

Gratitude to you both, my Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.





We can let others know of our good deeds but we should not expect rewards. We can encourage everyone to do good deeds, so that doing good things becomes the norm. We will create positive influences and lasting effects.



All the things we do for the benefit of sentient beings will eventually be completed if we have the heart to accomplish them.

An elder living alone often starves. I want to deliver meals to him everyday, would anyone like to join me in this good deed?

I will deliver on Mondays.

So will I.



To give selflessly will not only move others, but also bring you blessings from the heavens.

That's right!

Woof!



**Regret is a kind of emotional affliction.
Repentance is a practice.**

**Gentleness is a mild heart and a flexible
attitude toward others and in dealing with
situations. It is not a sign of weakness.**

How come no one told me
things will become so bad?



(Vexation)

I have discovered the
root of the problem.
I am determined to
rectify my behavior.



(Practice)

Be firm in your stand,
be gentle in your attitude.





A bodhisattva saves others from hardship and suffering; a great bodhisattva takes on hardship and suffering itself.



Death is neither a happy event nor a cause for mourning, but a call to practice our faith seriously.



Grandmother, we wish you an auspicious and wonderful journey to the Buddha's pure land.



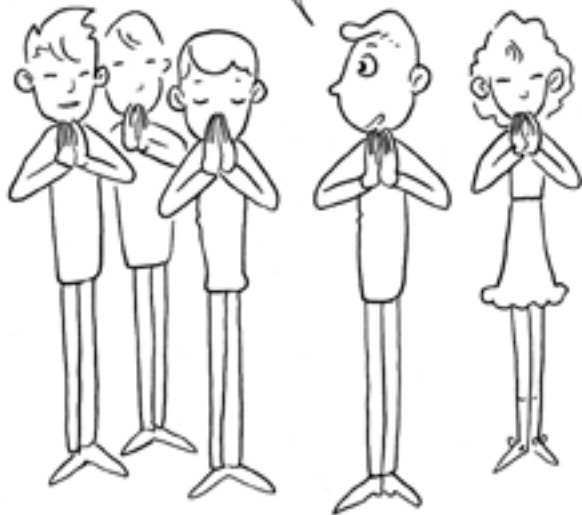


**A single spark can start a prairie fire,
a tiny bit of good intention can save
the world.**



**If everyday, everyone spoke another
kind word, did another good deed,
then all of these little beneficial acts
would turn into a great, great good.**

I really didn't expect that the
power of a little bit of good
intention would spread so fast.



It's so beautiful!



The Founder of Dharma Drum Mountain Master Sheng Yen (1930-2009)

Master Sheng Yen was one of the twentieth century's foremost Buddhist teachers, scholars and meditation masters, and was instrumental in the revival of Chinese Buddhism in modern times.

Master Sheng Yen became a novice Buddhist monk at the age of 13. After 15 years of rigorous scriptural study and meditation he entered into a solitary six-year meditation retreat to deepen his realization. He later received formal lineage transmission in both the Linji (Rinzai) and Caodong (Soto) lines of Chan (Zen) Buddhism.

Master Sheng Yen understood that advanced formal education would be required to revive Chinese monasticism and in 1969 he went to Japan to pursue graduate studies. In six years he obtained master's and doctor's degrees in Buddhist Literature from Rishso University, becoming the first monk to earn a doctorate in the history of Chinese Buddhism.

For the last thirty years of his life, he tirelessly devoted all of his energy to advancing Buddhist education, reviving the tradition of rigorous education for monks and nuns, leading intensive Chan meditation retreats worldwide, engaging in interfaith outreach, and working on behalf of world peace, youth development and the environment.

Dharma Drum Mountain World Center for Buddhist Education

Tel: 886-2-2498-7171 Fax: 886-2-2498-9029
Address: No.555, Fagu Rd., Jinshan Dist., New Taipei
City 208, Taiwan
Website: www.ddm.org.tw

Purpose of Sheng Yen Education Foundation

The foundation promotes educational initiatives that help people to know, stabilize, and purify their minds so that they can improve society. The foundation's mission is based on Master Sheng Yen's vision of "Uplifting the individual character of humanity and building a Pure Land on earth." The foundation pursues the following objectives:

1. To assemble, organize, research, categorize, classify, translate, compile, print, produce, and publish Master Sheng Yen's works, including books, publications, and audio-visual information, as well as to promote, propagate, and provide free copies of such works to people throughout the world in order to improve and enrich the individual and society, and to bring about a pure land on earth.
2. To draw upon Master Sheng Yen's vision in reviving Buddhist education, the foundation funds academic research on Buddhism, publication of Buddhist works and educational undertakings that seek to improve the well-being of humanity and society.

Master Sheng Yen believed that the realization of a pure land on earth hinges upon purifying the human mind, and that education is critical to this endeavor. The foundation hopes to play a part in providing the education that contributes to purifying society, and spreading the message of Buddhism so that peace and harmony prevail and a pure land on earth emerges.

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