



## Open Your Mind to See With Clarity (心眼開明)

As students of Buddhism, we should always reflect, be humble, keep the mind's eye clear and open, know right from wrong, and not hesitate to do what is correct. That means we must always take care of our minds.

We must keep the word "humility" in our minds. We mentioned shame and repentance before. We must be repentant, and we must also have a sense of humility. Part of being a humble person is knowing shame. If we have shortcomings compared to others, we must earnestly make up for them. We must not act earnestly only when we think others are watching, and then slack off when no one is around. We must not do that.

Whether there are people around or not, we must be the same. The Chinese character for "humility" is made of "ear" and "heart". It means as we listen to the Dharma, we must have it in our hearts.

As I talked about yesterday, how did we listen? "We listened without understanding." We must absorb what we hear. If we heard it one day but forgot it the next, then we would be "listening without understanding." But if we can absorb the teachings as we listen, so that the Dharma becomes one with our hearts, then we will always behave properly, whether there are people around or not. Only then will our mind's eye be open and clear.

When our mind's eye is clear, we can differentiate right from wrong. If it is the right thing to do, we must do it diligently with full effort. If it is the wrong thing to do, we must not touch it at all. We must be able to differentiate right from wrong. If we do the things that we should do, then we will never have any regrets. If we willingly take these actions, we will never have complaints. This depends on our mindset. We need this to create blessings.



**A Buddhist practitioner should always reflect and be humble. With the mind's eye clear and open, one can differentiate right from wrong and thus proceed diligently on the correct path.**

I saw an old woman who used to be a commander. What a glamorous life she led in mainland China when she was young! She graduated from Tsinghua University in Beijing, and then joined the military, rising to the rank of commander. Mr. Chiang Kai-shek presided over her wedding.

After coming to Taiwan, due to the impermanence of life, many things changed beyond her control. She grew older, and when she was middle-aged, her husband passed away. At 80 years old, she was still mentally very feisty, but physically she could not manage. Her whole house was full of garbage. She was sick and old, and her house looked like a garbage dump.

Without beings asked, Tzu Chi volunteers expressed their concern for her and talked to her. They wanted to clean up the house for her. It took them almost a month to gain her trust. One day, they came up with a smart idea and said, "Madam commander, President Chiang is coming to see you tomorrow. He dispatched us to clean up your house." When she heard that, this grandmother even gave them an army salute. "Since the President is coming, it is good that you all come to help me clean."

Only then did she let people clean her house. They cleaned out four truckloads of waste and tidied up the whole house. Unusable items were disposed of, and recyclable items were put back to use. Now the house looked more like a home. Her adopted child would not listen to her and left her with a great-granddaughter who is nearly 10 years old, but had never gone to school.



Tzu Chi volunteers came up with a plan. Working with education affiliates, they arranged for her to sit in on classes to see if she could keep up. Then they filed her household registration and enrolled her in school. We took care of this old lady every day. As for the little girl, volunteers took turns to take her to school, and to teachers tutored her after her classes.

Don't actions like these help others and create blessings for society? By helping her out, everyone was happy. Everybody volunteered without being asked, and gave without expecting anything in return. From this ex-commander grandmother, what did we want in return? We only wanted her to live a peaceful life and to see her smile. We wanted to see the young girl get an education and become knowledgeable.

In learning Buddhism we want to learn the Four Immeasurable. "Great Kindness without regret, Great Compassion without complaint, Great Joy without sorrow and Equanimity in Giving without expectations." This is the spirit of Tzu Chi volunteers. So we must always maintain a sense of shame and humility in our minds.

That is why the Repentance Text contains a passage about shame. "The Eyes of Dharma are all seeing." The passage says, "**All the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and deities, are watching me with their pure divine eyes, witnessing all the evils that I have committed.**"

Think about this. In our daily living, even if we do not have a sense of shame and commit transgressions without beings seen we should believe that all around us, hidden in the great void, the eyes of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are watching. We must realize that no matter where we go, Buddhas' and Bodhisattvas' eyes are following us. It is not only the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, but also all the deities.



Their eyes have “gained purity by abstaining from desire.” Whether it is the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas or the deities, their eyes are very sharp, not like the eyes of ordinary people, obscured by a haze of confusion. That is like having cataracts in our eyes. We cannot see things clearly.

The good appears as bad, and the bad as good.

That is how our mind’s eye is blinded. That is why our sight is tainted with selfishness and evil. Deities, however, have already gained purity from “the absence of desire.” There is no desire in their heart. It is already pure. The haze of confusion has long ago evaporated. Their mind is without ignorance. “Divine eyes can see through all transgressions.” This must be very clear to us. The saying “Heaven sees the actions of all humans” means the same thing. The deities of heaven see things clearly with their divine vision. They are watching our actions. Whether overt or covert, our actions are very clear to the deities. All our transgressions are being clearly recorded. That is why there is the ancient saying, **“Human whispers are as loud as thunder in heaven. The ills committed in dark rooms, are as clear in the spirits’ eyes as if lit up by lightning.”**

When we whisper malicious words, all the heavenly beings and deities can hear our whispers as loud as thunder. Do not think that because you quietly whisper, then only one person can hear you “How could other people know?” We should not think like that. It is natural human behavior that when you say something to one person, he or she will quickly pass it on. Ordinary people are ignorant . Besides, the divine eyes of Heaven see clearly, and the minds of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are pure. The eyes and ears of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas can clearly see and hear ordinary people’s minds. Even what we only think to ourselves can be heard by all Buddhas and all the deities in heaven. The Buddha taught us the truth. We must know that our secret thought, whether we say them quietly or just keep them to ourselves, create karma as soon as they arise. The smallest



actions and words can create transgressions. As ordinary people, our thoughts and actions are known to all Buddhas and deities in heaven.

We must not think that there is nothing to fear. Ordinary people that have no fear are just like children who do not understand. No matter what you tell them, they are not afraid. No matter what you tell a naughty child, he is not afraid. We must not say that we are not afraid. We clearly witness karmic causes and effects, so we cannot be fearless. We must have fear **“Spirits in the dark and in the light record our wrongdoings and blessings with extreme accuracy.”**

When we are doing wrong or cultivating blessings, whether in the dark or in the light, in secret or openly, it is all recorded because there are spirits in the dark and in the light. Do not assume there are no spirits in the daytime. There are! Didn't I tell you a few days ago that evil spirits and Dharma protectors surround us all the time? and deities surround us all the time? I vividly remember this passage from when I expounded the Earth Treasury Sutra. I had already explained it then. It says that spirits in the dark or light record our wrongdoings or blessings with accuracy.

We often say that “with such causes and such conditions, there are such results and retributions.” This means that we reap what we sow. We pay for transgressions we commit, and we enjoy the blessings that we cultivate. We should always remember that even when we are in the dark, spirits and devils are recording our behavior, in detail, with no mistakes. We should all be mindful.

We should know that with our every thought and act we must always keep the word “humility” in mind. We must absorb the Dharma into our hearts. We must believe spirits hover above our heads. We must believe that deities, evil spirits and Dharma protectors surround us. So after we learn it, we must keep the



Dharma in our hearts. **“When the lives those who have done evil end, they are carried off by ox-head guards to the Hall of Yama, King of Hell.**

Everything we have ever done is record in detail. When our lives end, the charges, whether transgressions or blessings are already recorded in King Yama’s files. There is no way to dispute them. So we need to be aware of the mindset that we usually employ in our actions. Whether others know or not, we should ask our own hearts.

We should know that our hearts have all the knowledge we need; this is the same as our conscience. We should know our own conscience, if we have committed wrongs in the past, at the end of our lives we will see negative conditions. Those who committed serious crimes are very fearful then their lives end. And when they die, they have a horrible look on their faces. We know that when their soul part from their bodies, they are dragged away by King Yama’s frightening ox-head guards. It is quite a fearful sight. So we often say that when someone passes away with a smile, we know that they died very peacefully. Even if they made some mistakes in their life, they must have already repented openly. Repentance brings purity. In addition, many people surround them and recite the Sutras on their behalf, that is why they appear so content and happy, leaving this world with a smile. We should know that having bad affinities with others during our lives will cause us unspeakable misery when we die.

There is a clear distinction between a life of transgressions and one of blessings. So always be mindful and remember “humility.” We must keep a sense of humility in order to have a discerning mind. Only then can we clearly differentiate right from wrong. As long as we do what we are meant to do, we can cultivate blessings and benefit others every day. Our hearts will be free of worries. Our actions will rid us of worries and bring joy. In that way, we can willingly help



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others every day. It is great to do things without being asked, and to give without seeking anything in return. That is our life.

That is why we practice Buddhism, to get closer to heart of the Buddha. If we empty the Four Immeasurables of kindness, compassion, joy and giving, then there will be no mistakes. So everyone, please always be mindful.

(Source: Da Ai TV 靜思晨語 法譬如水)