

# Confucius Teachings On Building A Happy Life (4)

## - a foundation for Mahayana Buddhism practice

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### **Put Each Rule We Learned Into Practice**

Hello my friends! Good afternoon everybody. This morning we mentioned that one's attitude to learning at the very beginning is crucial and the foremost element of learning is to set aspirations. Only with firm aspirations can we have the infinite drive for continuous progress. Secondly, it is vital to apply what we have learned. We now want to learn Chinese traditional culture and sages' teachings, there is no need to worry if it is too late or not. In fact, what is most important is that we put each teaching into practice as we learn it. Many people say, "After I have learned it properly myself, I then teach my children" or "I will help others after I have practiced well myself". Can we afford to wait until we have learned well? No, too late! Now, if we put each teaching into practice as we learn it, this attitude alone will absolutely move and influence our children and students. Many of our teachers previously had little exposure or familiarity with Chinese traditional culture, they also had the attitude of learning together with their students. As a result, their students are delighted and moved, because we have exemplified a studious attitude to them.

There is a preschool where children were taught to have good manners. They were told to bow to the teacher and classmates before leaving the table and say, "Everybody, please take your time and enjoy your meal." Afterwards, they take their own bowl and chopsticks to the kitchen, and wash them clean by themselves. Each of these children has already cultivated this into habit. Their teachers also do the same. Whenever the teachers finish their meals, they also bow and say, "Everybody, please take your time and enjoy your meal." Every child will have an understanding smile on their face. My friends, why? These children must be thinking in their hearts: Our teachers are just like us, they have to follow the same rules and have good manners as well. When we lead children by example, and practice what we preach, the results will be extremely good.

One time, one child was still eating while every teacher and classmate at his table had finished. He stood up after finishing eating, facing directly at the tables and chairs, bowed deeply and said, "Everybody please take your time and enjoy your meal." All of the teachers, upon seeing this, couldn't help but laugh. We can feel that this child has a very honest attitude towards learning, because he put each rule he learned into practice. A person should first learn to be honest and then learn to be adaptable. Only then will their learning be fruitful. If, for example, he

learns adaptability first and puts three out of five of what he was taught into practice; his brain, though very quick-thinking and flexible, his learning, very likely, would not have a solid foundation. In the end, he may be hurt by his own smart aleck attitude.

## The Sequence of Learning Sages' Teachings

In addition to implementing what we have learned, we must also understand the importance of following the correct sequence of learning. There is a line in *Three-Character Classic* which states, "A pupil must have a proper start to learning." It means that there must be a proper sequence of learning. "After learning the basics from the book of *Xiao Xue*, can he then learn *The Four Books*." This is to instruct us to first learn well the basics from the book of *Xiao Xue* and then move on to study *The Four Books* and *Five Classics*. *Xiao Xue* is a book compiled by Zhu Xi ([A renowned scholar of the Song dynasty, 1130-1200](#)). It is about nurturing a righteous mind from a child's primordial state. This book teaches children how to be filial to their parents, how to respect elders, as well as the etiquette of doing their daily chores and interacting with others. My friends, who have read this book, can you raise your hands? Wow, quite a few! This book is nearly 1,000 years old. Its history is certainly quite long. Much of our living conditions and social environment has changed compared to that year.

But, why is it still so important for us to learn *Xiao Xue*? Because children, starting from a young age, should first establish a solid foundation of how to interact with others and tackle daily tasks. With this solid foundation, they will not merely be reading the words when studying other classics, but would apply the teachings into daily life, particularly when interacting with others. So this foundation must be established and firmly rooted. This book was written quite long before our time. I once read it and could only understand 60 to 70 percent, because there were many unfamiliar phrases. After translating *Xiao Xue* into modern language, I also translated *Dizigui* and was very touched by this book's content. I highly praised it. *Dizigui* was written in the Qing Dynasty, it is only a few hundred years before our time, relatively recent. The author, Li Yuxiu of the Qing Dynasty, compiled *Dizigui* based on the guidelines and core contents of *Xiao Xue*. Every single line in *Dizigui* corresponds with and can be applied, to our daily lives. Furthermore, it encompasses all the main points in *Xiao Xue*.

Li Yuxiu, when compiling this book, also followed very important teachings from *The Analects*. ([\\*A collection of sayings attributed to Confucius, compiled by his disciples.](#)) "*Dizigui*, the guidelines for being a good person is exhorted by the ancient sages. Being filial and fraternal is the foremost rule, followed by being cautious and trustworthy; love all equally, and learn from the benevolent ones. Having practiced all of the above, one can then expand one's horizons to study literary arts." Based upon Confucius teachings, Li Yuxiu concluded with seven outlines, and compiled the book *Dizigui*. Therefore, to learn *Dizigui* well is to set a solid foundation of *Xiao Xue*. If the foundation is not firm, and they jump straight into learning the *Four Books and Five Classics* ([\\*The authoritative books of Confucianism, written before 300 BC. The Four books are Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean, Analects, and Mencius, The five Classics are Classic of Poetry, Book of Documents, Book of Rites, Book of Changes \(I Ching\), and Spring and Autumn Annals.](#)), they will become increasingly out of touch with reality.

## A Huge Killer for Seeking Wisdom

Some children read many classic texts, but may use them to argue with their parents. There was a child, around six years old. On one occasion, his mother was disciplining him. He answered back to her, "Mother, do you have the five virtues of Confucius: gentleness, kindness, respectfulness, thriftiness, and concession?" if you cannot achieve them yourself, you have no right to criticize me." His mother's heart dropped, and she thought to herself, "This child already dares to use the classic texts to argue with me now, what would happen if he reads more of them?"

I have an elderly relative. She once visited us with her granddaughter who calls me uncle. My parents were both home that day. She said to the little girl as soon as sitting down, "Come, let's recite a few words you have learned in English to your elders." This little girl recited very fluently. I believe that it was not her first time putting on a performance in front of others. Therefore, she was very comfortable. Her grandmother started the questions, "How do you say apple in English?" The little girl replied, "Apple." Grandma continued, "What about umbrella?" The little girl answered, "Umbrella". This Q&A show went on smoothly for several rounds. Suddenly, the little girl countered by asking her grandma a question, "Grandma, how do you say book in English?" Her grandmother replied, "How do I know?" The girl said, "Grandma, how come you are so dumb!"

If children do not learn how to interact with people properly and tackle daily tasks, the more knowledge they acquire and the more books they read, the more arrogant they will become. Arrogance is a huge killer of seeking wisdom. Once arrogance emerges, it is very unlikely for one to succeed in developing wisdom. This is why in *The Book of Rites*, it states: One must not let arrogance grow. This is a very important reminder from our ancient sages.

Over the course of his lifetime, Lin Zexu (\*A scholarly official of the Qing dynasty best known for his role in the First Opium War of 1842-49.) had summarized Ten Futilities. If a person makes these ten mistakes, then his entire life will become meaningless. First: If one is unfilial to one's parents, it is futile to pray for divine blessings. If a person is not filial to their own parents, would it work to pray for deities' blessings? No! It is futile. Second: If one is not in harmony with one's siblings, it is futile to make friends. If a person is not accommodating, often has conflicts with siblings at home, would he be able to find a true friend in the outside world? Impossible! Among these Ten Futilities, two of them are very important reminders in regard to the attitude of our seeking wisdom. "If one is arrogant, it is futile to have erudition." and "If one's behavior is not righteous, it is futile to study." You see, if an individual is arrogant, then the higher his education is, the more arrogant he will become, and the more easily he will disdain people and cause harm to others. If his speech and conduct go against the sages' teachings, and he does not resonate with what he studied, he will not benefit from his learning. Therefore, when we see these wise words from philosophers and sages of China's past millenia, we must cherish their teachings and use them to stay alert in our own speech & conduct. Not only prevent ourselves from making mistakes but try our best to help our children as well. This is the sequence of learning.

## **The Learning Method: Delve Deeply Into One Subject of Dao and Persevere with It**

Next, in our learning process, we must grasp this method; that is, 'delve deeply into one subject and persevere with it'. Which subject is this? This subject is 'Dao De/Tao Te', the teachings of Chinese sages. These two characters alone encapsulate the entire guiding principle of the ancient Chinese sages' teachings over the past few thousand years. Once a person grasps the guiding principle, it becomes easy to maneuver the rest. Dear friends, what is 'Dao'? What is 'De'? Let us turn to page two, there is a sentence at the bottom. Let us read this sentence together, "The laws of nature that transcend time and space are called 'Dao'". Next sentence, "Teaching humankind how to follow the laws of nature and not transgress the laws is called 'De'".

Hence, 'Dao' is the laws of nature that transcend time and space, it is what Chinese people call 'the great ethical path'. The five-ethical-relationship (\*[Superior-subordinate](#), [parents-children](#), [husband-wife](#), [elderly-young](#), [among friends](#)) that the ancient Chinese sages taught are known as 'Dao'. When everything in the universe follows its own trajectory of moving, there will be no conflict. Not only human beings have their ethical path, planets have their proper orbits too. Would it be alright if the planets did not follow their rightful orbits? Certainly not. If Pluto said, "I do not want to follow this orbit anymore. I will change it tomorrow." Once it changed its path, it would lead to collisions with other planets. Planets are like this, so are people. Only if we follow the rules of five-ethical-relationships properly, will we then live in harmony; if we don't follow them, there will be contradictions and conflicts.

## **Which Relationship Is the Most Important Relationship Among All Relationships?**

My dear friends, do we see conflicts amongst the five relationships nowadays? Many conflicts. We can see a lot from the news. Let us take a look, How can we not cross the line of the five-ethical-relationships, and how do we manage them earnestly. My friends, which of these relationships do you think is the most important? All are important. However, The *Doctrine of the Mean* states: The Dao of becoming a virtuous man starts from the ethical relationship of husband-wife. So, the spousal relationship is far-influential. But, why is the spousal relationship most important? It is because husband and wife live closely in the same room. If they live in harmony, children who are brought up in such an environment will naturally be close to their parents. This good example will also foster a harmonious relationship between siblings. The way that a husband and wife treat each other indeed has a silent instilling influence on children.

Once the relationship between husband-wife is harmonious, their children will also have harmonious relationships among siblings. When a child is close to his parents, he will recognize and be grateful for his parents' toil and efforts. In turn, his gratitude will be naturally applied to others. As a result, when he encounters leaders and elders who care for and give him useful training, such a grateful child will naturally give rise to the sense of 'righteousness between superiors and subordinates', his loyalty will naturally be developed. There is a famous ancient Chinese saying, "Loyal subordinates come from families with filial children." This sentence makes great sense. Nowadays, job hopping is especially common. Many people do it only for

their own profit; they do not consider their leaders' effort in nurturing their abilities over the years. Some of them even hop to a competitor, competing with their previous company. There should be 'righteousness between superiors and subordinates'!

If siblings get along well, helping and looking after one another, they will naturally reveal fraternal love to their classmates and coworkers, hence building good friendships with others. Therefore, once the relationship of husband-wife is harmonious, all of the five-ethical-relationships will become proper and harmonious. Teaching how to handle the husband-wife relationship is a very important knowledge. My friends, have you ever learned how to handle spousal relationships? Has it ever been taught in your textbooks? No. Why is such an important subject not formally taught? All of the questions that we answered in our examinations have not had much impact on our lives, but we studied them for a long time. In contrast, we have never learned about something that has a big impact on our lives. When it comes to a husband-wife relationship, we should keep this phrase in mind 'make a cautious start'. Even before marriage, we should keep our eyes wide open and choose the right partner. Of course, while you are choosing others, others are also choosing you. Always busy meeting new people won't find you a good spouse; this approach is too tiring. The best approach is called: Having the moon surrounded by stars. As long as you brighten your own aura, 'stars' will naturally gather around you. Then you will have many choices. This is the wisest way of finding a spouse. Husband-wife should have a cautious start. Long before marriage, they must clearly discern if this person is suitable to be a lifelong partner. This is not something to be taken casually.

### **The Proper Sequence for Romantic Relationship**

Where do young men and women nowadays learn about romantic relationships? Often, from love songs. But what portrayal do most love songs give concerning romantic relationships? Misery, like a matter of life and death. Right? It seems as if a person cannot be called a young fellow if he suffers no misery. They feel that 'it is a wasted youth if a youngster is not frivolous'. Can we really regard this as 'love'? As soon as I noticed this trend, I was very cautious when teaching the 5th and 6th grade. I immediately gave them a 'vaccine injection' so that they could form a correct attitude towards romantic relationships and avoid being misled by those love songs. I told them that it takes a process for people to build a relationship. This process must start from being acquainted with one another, then get to know each other afterwards, which is mutual understanding. Following that, cherishing for the affinity of each other should be developed, and finally, should they fall in love and get married.

Is marriage the end of all? Many people say, "Marriage is the grave of love". This is totally a misleading concept. If the relationship is handled properly, it will get better and better, like fine aged-wine. That's why marriages need to be managed. What is true love? I often give an example. True love is an old man in his 70s holding the hand of his over 70 year old wife, taking a walk in the park. The wife says to the husband, "My dear, it is the 15th day of the month tomorrow, we should be on vegetarian diets again." ([\\*Many Buddhists and Taoists practice vegetarian diet by starting from the first day and 15th day of each lunar calendar month.](#)) You see,

genuine love can truly be seen in old couples who cherish each other. The 'fire-like' love certainly does not have the same energy, and it is easily subject to change. So we must teach our children, there is a proper sequence for romantic relationships. If, for example, a man had just met you today, and he immediately said to you, "I love you so much", what must this be? Surely he is trying to trick you. This does not follow the natural order, it is surely false. Or if he told you, "In this lifetime, I will not marry anybody but you." You should quickly raise your awareness. What is he doing? He does not even know what kind of person you are, and he knows nothing of your attitude towards other people or daily life, yet he is saying that he likes you very much, what is this called? It is cunning sweet talk.

From acquaintance to knowing, we should keep very calm during this stage. For example, if you are interested in someone, you should then observe him carefully. Pay attention to how he interacts with his colleagues and friends. Such observations will be more objective, and help you truly understand his attitude in dealing with people and matters. If he treats all of his classmates and friends very lovingly and is caring towards others, then it is guaranteed that if he truly cherishes you and loves you, he will definitely contribute much effort and put his heart and soul into it. So when getting to know each other you must be objective, be rational, and should not go on private dates alone right away, this is very dangerous. My friends, young people nowadays do not know this point and often get themselves into very dangerous situations. There is a saying, "United by misunderstanding, parting after understanding." This is because their understanding is superficial, not objective. That's why getting to know each other is vital; we must stay observant and composed.

Now, let us look at the phase of cherishing each other: A man and a woman should cherish the opportunity of getting to know each other, and fall in love afterwards, then walk the aisle together. However, there is a crucial element in this process. That is, the two must establish a common understanding before marriage. Many people are very courageous and say, "It doesn't matter that his views are different, I can change him!" Is this courageous? There are quite a few people like this! I would say to them as a poem goes, "If we lay drunk on the battlefield sands, do not laugh, my friend! Since old times, how many have survived to return home when the battle ends?" If you intend to change someone, the probability of success is very slim. It is because at the age of twenties and thirties, the habits and character of a person have been set. Unless one wants to change himself, it will be very hard for anyone to change him. So we should go with the flow, not try to force or beg for anything. Only if we find our other half who shares the same outlook and aspirations with us, will the marriage not be full of hardship.

#### **Four Angles to Judge Whether A Love Is True or Not**

Now, let us look at the phase of falling in love. How do we love others? How do we distinguish whether the interactions among people are real love? You see, nowadays many people use the word 'love' to threaten others. They said, "I love you so much, you should do this and that for me." When a person does not understand what love really is, it is very likely that he will misuse 'love' to control others and cause them distress. Let's take a look at the traditional Chinese character of 'love', '愛'. In the middle of the character, there is 'heart', 心, it is embraced by the

word 'to feel', 受. Therefore, love is to feel with one's heart. To feel what? To feel the needs of others. So when a person can always feel your needs and knows how to care for you, you will feel very warm from within. It will certainly not be as miserable as those love songs describe. So firstly, the 'feel of love' is warm. We must learn to distinguish if someone's love is real. If it is not, we must make a quick decision, do not be deluded and persist with it.

Secondly, the 'words of love' are righteous, rather than full of cunning sweet talk. If someone talks sweet and flatters you today, they could do the same to others tomorrow. In fact, a man who does not utter much sweet talk is most reliable. because he does not waste energy and intentions on sweet-talk. What do those big sweet talkers put all of their energy towards? They put their energy on deliberating those flattery words. A woman once shared her story of meeting her husband for the first time. The first sentence her husband said to her was "Your teeth are not good". Then he continued, "Your digestive system is not good either. Because of your bad teeth, you cannot chew your food properly, so your stomach and intestines have a heavy workload." Later, she thought, this person is so honest. He did not try to sweet talk me at all, even pointed out my flaws on the first date. She felt that this kind of man was very reliable, and ended up marrying him. Looking back at this story, she was very wise indeed. She knew that men who speak straightforwardly are reliable. So the 'words of love' should be righteous.

Thirdly, the 'heart of love' is pure and selfless. A person who truly cares for and loves others should hold the same attitude towards his parents, wife, children, friends, even strangers. In many cases today, when one wants to end the relationship, the other becomes furious and even brings harm upon them. This kind of heart is not selfless; it is the desire of control and possession. They are using the disguise of love to trick people. We must learn how to differentiate, that is called desire. It is controlling and possessive, definitely not real love. They have polluted the true meaning of this word of 'love'.

The fourth, the 'action of love' is to facilitate others to do good deeds. There is a teacher at our center; her husband has a younger sister who lives and studies in Hawaii. One time, his sister was experiencing some financial hardship, and this husband told her, "We have saved a bit of money over the past 2 or 3 years, now my sister is going through some hardship, I want to transfer all of our savings from the past few years over to her." My friends, if your husband said that to you, what would your response be? How come nobody answers? This teacher immediately responded to her husband, "I am very touched that you look after your younger sister so selflessly. I believe that your parents would be very comforted. I support your decision. I will go to transfer the money for you tomorrow." You see, this wife even was willing to fulfill this selfless act for her husband. So, what is the 'action of love'? It is to complete the good wishes of others, to help fulfill their kindness and proper deeds. The next day when she was about to wire the money, a friend of hers happened to find out and was very touched. This friend said, "You don't need to make the trip, I will wire the money for you." She was very familiar with the bank. After transferring the money, she said to the teacher, "I have already wired the money. Don't worry, just pay me back whenever you can." You see, one person's kind actions will move the people around them.

From these four angles (\*feel, words, heart, action of love), we will be able to tell if a person knows how to truly love others. One of our friends in the audience once suggested, “Teacher Tsai, there should be one more criteria added. They should also enjoy studying the sages’ teachings.” I said, “This is a very good point.” Because where do we learn the right attitude for interacting with people? It does not suddenly appear out of nowhere. We can only form the right attitude by learning the sages’ teachings.

### **The Key To A Successful Marriage, Establishing A Common Understanding**

After we have chosen the right partner, we should next learn to manage the marriage and establish a common understanding. The foremost responsibility of a family is to educate children properly. As the saying goes, “Nothing is more important than educating children.” Let’s think about it, if a couple with high social status and wealth, their children do nothing all day but loaf around, would they have good lives in their old age? Very unlikely. It is not only ordinary families who should educate their children properly, even the Emperors in the millenia of Chinese history recognized the importance of educating the next generation properly. So, after becoming an Emperor, what was the first thing they did? Choose the heir to the throne. Every Emperor would hope for his dynasty to enjoy long standing peace and stability. Only when the crown prince was upright and behaved properly, could their entire kingdom be governed properly. So those Emperors would invite the best teachers in the country to teach their children.

Only if the husband-wife have this common understanding, will they cooperate well. Among the five ethical relationships, the husband-wife relationship is defined as ‘Husband and wife have different duties’. ‘Husband-wife’ is Dao, ‘having different duties’ is De. Different in what way? They differ in their responsibilities. In ancient times, men were the breadwinners and women were the homemakers. Because there are two major aspects of life for each family. The first one is material life, and the second is spiritual life. As the breadwinner, the husband dealt with finances and the family’s material needs. As a homemaker, the wife was responsible for the family’s spiritual aspect as well as educating their children properly. But nowadays, in a lot of households, both the husband and wife go to work. Who is left in charge of the children’s education? Grandparents, nannies, teachers, au pairs... Nowadays there is a new phrase ‘substitute parents’, such as teachers we just mentioned. Many parents send their children to after school classes straight away. What other ‘substitute parents’ are there? Nowadays many children are raised by their grandparents. There is another ‘substitute parents’ that many parents hire nowadays: television, i-pad, and computers as well.

Dear friends, when we earn a lot of money, will we always be able to keep it with us? We must understand, our wealth has five owners. Flood is after it. Fire is after it. Corrupt officials, thieves and robbers, all after it. These four are not powerful enough. The last one is most powerful, that is prodigal offspring who spend your hard-earned money like water. For example, if you keep earning money, but the prodigal children keep spending it, it is unlikely that you will be able to keep your wealth. When we all use ‘substitute parents’ to teach our children, we will end up with unsensible children who do not know how to live life right. It is very likely that you will have to



worry about them for the rest of your life and probably suffer from depression. This is very dangerous.

#### **Four Different Types of 'Substitute Parents'**

What if we leave children to the 'after school classes'? I once did an in-depth observation on the behavior of my students when I was teaching at a primary school. I found out that the top ten students in each class I taught, about half of them had after school tutoring, and half did not. Those who had tutoring paid less attention to what I said in class, because they felt like they had learned it all in the tutoring classes. They would even brag to the classmates next to them, "I have learned all this". So would they pay attention in class? This is a very serious problem! The vital element of studying is being focused. When a student treats learning without respect, the sign of failure has already been revealed. They would not pay attention to what they have learned. What if he has not learned what the teacher is teaching today? They would think, my tutor will teach it anyway.

I also noticed that those students kept reading a few pieces of paper before every exam. What papers were those? The study sheets organized by their tutors. Who was studying for them? The tutors. Before exams, the students did their best to memorize the notes on those papers. But after the exams, they instantly said, "I am free!" I believe, 2 or 3 days later, they would completely forget all they had crammed. As for the rest of the top 10 students, who did not have tutors, worked in pairs. "I have highlighted important areas of my studying, let me ask you to see if you know it, and later you ask me what you have highlighted, okay?" They honestly and diligently figured out the important areas to study by themselves. In doing so, they were also developing the skills of acquiring knowledge and wisdom. Many people think that spending money will bring a desirable outcome, they do not carefully evaluate if their children truly learn and benefit from it. So after school classes are the first case that we must contemplate.

Secondly, nannies. Many nannies cannot even speak properly. Consequently, the language skills of the next generation are going downhill. My friends, a child's language skills are the foundation of all other subjects. If he cannot grasp them properly, he will find it difficult to learn other subjects. The problem is not just about language, but also about nannies' attitude towards children. Do they treat children the same way as a parent would? Surely not. A nanny treats the children that she looks after as her boss, or even an emperor. Before going out, many children with nannies will sit on a chair, spread out their feet, and wait for their nannies to put on their socks and shoes for them. Their life skills become very poor. If their parents ever encounter setbacks in business, these children might starve to death. As an old saying goes, "Wealth and high status do not last." So, we must consider, if one day we no longer have much money, do our children have the ability to live independently? We should have vision far into the future. A news report once revealed the behavior of children who have nannies at home. When a teacher asked these children to sweep the floor, they negotiated, "Teacher, I'll give you money if you do it for me." What were their values? Any problem can be solved with money. This shows that nannies cannot raise children the same way as parents do.

The third situation: Being raised by grandparents. Many elders were relatively rational when they were parents. However, as grandparents, seeing their grandchildren so lovely, they spoil them. My mother, when she was educating my sisters and me, really had principles. I remember that I once made an unreasonable request to her. My mother just picked up a book and ignored me. I started to roll around on the floor, throwing a tantrum to get what I wanted. After a while, I was too tired to keep rolling around and realized that my mother would not be affected by my tantrums and threats. So I calmed down, stood up, and walked away quietly. See, this incident left a strong impression in my memory. We must have principles when educating children, we should never give them whatever they want because it will completely spoil them. You see, my mother was so good at educating me. However, looking after her grandchildren, she started to spoil them. She often said to me, "Don't be so mean to your nephew!" I did not respond at that time. After about half a year, she said to me, "You were right to be firm with them." Because at that point, my nephews had shown no fear or respect to her. So, children raised by grandparents will be spoiled, it is not effective. Therefore, children are best raised by parents.

Now, raising children with TV and computers, it is even worse. Most of what children learn from them is greed, resentment, ignorance, and arrogance. The language of many children nowadays is overbearing and rude. They may not necessarily learn it from their parents, but from TV and computers. Moreover, TV and computers have a hypnotic effect. Have you ever noticed that people who are watching TV seem like they are separated from the world? They cannot even hear people next to them calling them? Why is this? It is because the radiation and magnetic waves emitted from a television and computer produce the same effect on your brain as if your brain has been isolated in a room for 96 hours. So, the more we watch TV or stay on computers, the less we are able to think. Why do many luxury companies pay a huge amount of money to advertise their products on the media? It is because people, when watching the TV, lose the ability to reason. When seeing an advertisement for a skin care product claiming to have immediate beautifying effects on one's face, many women instantly go out to buy it. The media has a long lasting effect on children's brain development; this is already scientifically proven.

### **The Core Attitude of Managing A Family**

Now we understand that our children's education should rely on parents. Only in doing so can we reap desirable outcomes, because we only have one chance and cannot rewind the process of their education. Now, if we invite you to educate your children by yourselves, can you do it? Some people will say, "Teacher Tsai, even though I agree with everything you said, there are some things that are beyond our control once we enter into society." Let us analyze one issue, that is, the financial issue. Most people think that unless both parents go to work, the whole family will starve. You see, we always make presumptions. My friends, during my grandfather's time, only the husband would work for money, and there were often 6,7, even 8 children. Did they starve to death? No. Nowadays, many families have both parents working to raise one child and still worry about starving. What is the problem? The problem is that we have not grasped the core attitude of managing a family, being thrifty. A Chinese idiom goes, "Thriftiness is the root of managing a family" As long as we are thrifty, do not spend lavishly, the amount of

money earned by one parent is actually enough to raise a family. When there is only one parent earning money, the whole family leads a hard working and thrifty life, what kind of attitude will a child develop? A very hardworking and thrifty attitude. You have put your children in an invincible position, and they will not become slaves to materialism. The next class, we shall take a look at the financial aspect of a family life.