

Confucius Teachings On Building A Happy Life (19)

- a foundation for Mahayana Buddhism practice

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2/15-2/23 2005

The Grand Etiquette Shown by Students

Hello my friends, good afternoon to you all! As we mentioned this morning that "When an elder is calling for someone, I will get that person for him. If that person is not around, I will put myself at the service of this elder." the

This action is very important and can be widely applied to the etiquette of receiving guests. Let's take a look at the family today; do children know how to receive guests now? For example, a child was playing computer when his aunt came by; what would he do? He would bellow, "Mom, aunty is here!" Is this the right manner? When he has formed this habit, he will become very negligent and frivolous because entertainment is his primary concern while respecting the elders becomes secondary. His respectful mind would gradually disappear over time. So, we must teach children. Those who have taught your children how to receive guests, please raise your hand. Well, this will have a very far-reaching influence on them. If children do not learn this manner well, they may face embarrassment in school or at work in the future.

We once taught children how to receive guests by asking them to take turns to practicing it. Not only do we have to explain this phrase to the students, we must also lead them to truly practice it. And not only once or twice, we must have them practice it repeatedly, because practice makes perfect. One day when the students were taught the etiquette of receiving guests in the morning, it was a perfect arrangement that an aunty* came during lunchtime. (*A Chinese way to address a female elder of one's parent's generation.) Before the aunty walked into the classroom, all the students who were having their meals quickly stopped eating. What were they trying to do? They strived to be the first to receive the guest. So, when they can actually practice what they have learned, they will find joy in learning. When this aunty approached the classroom entrance, six students lined up in rows and greeted her with a bow and said in unison, "Hello guest!" The aunty was afraid to enter the classroom as she felt overwhelmingly flattered because she had never been received with such grand etiquette. She added, "If the future generations are so well-mannered, we will be gratified."

We also taught the students how to arrange the guests' slippers. How do you arrange the guests' slippers? The slippers must be placed where the guests can immediately wear them when needed. So, my friends, every etiquette's actions are actually training the students to be considerate of others. Children's benevolence will then be established bit by bit in every detail of life. That's why when arranging slippers, we must think ahead of how the guests can easily put them on later. After the aunty came in, they said, "Please be seated, aunty! I will get you a glass of water." After the aunty took the seat, they said, "Aunty, please have a drink, I will go get my mother." This is the etiquette of receiving guests, which children must be

taught at home.

Next, at school, when students see the teacher of the class next door walk in, what will children nowadays do? They might stand still at their position, calling aloud, "Teacher, the next door teacher is looking for you." This is also not conforming to the courteous attitude. So, we must also teach students that they must first tell the guest, "Teacher, please wait! Let me go get my teacher now." After reporting to their teacher, they should bring their teacher to the visiting teacher. This is "completing a task from the beginning to the end." In fact, a child's patience and calmness would be developed and nurtured in the process of practicing etiquette.

How to Receive Guests Properly in the Workplace

Let's see: in a company, when someone came to look for his friend or the supervisor, what would most people do when facing such a situation? For example, the guest is looking for the manager who may be in a meeting, can you say to him, "The manager is in there." Is this correct? If this guest knocked on the door and found that they are having a meeting, what would happen? It will be very awkward and embarrassing. As they were halfway through the meeting, they would not know whether they should continue or end the meeting to receive the guest. This is discourtesy. What if the supervisor was to investigate who had received the guest? If this happened repeatedly, that employee might not be able to keep his job due to his incompetence and messing up things. When encountering such a situation, one should first invite the guest to take a seat then get a glass of water for him. After giving the water, he should say, "Please wait, I will go check with my manager to see if he is available." After seeing the manager is having a meeting, he should ask for the manager's instructions. If the meeting still needs another 10 or 20 minutes, he should go back to tell the guest and let him mentally prepare. When we can always abide by etiquette, we would let people feel very comfortable.

This etiquette of receiving guests is not only applicable at home, in schools, and enterprises, it is even needed in government offices. And whom are mostly received in government organizations? Many of them are very important men from all over the world or their own country. If the civil servants working in government units do not comply with the etiquette, the country's bad reputation may be spread abroad, and it would also make their own people lose confidence in the government. So, etiquette is indeed very important. That is why Confucius said, "If you do not learn etiquette, you will not have a foothold in society." This means it will be difficult for you to fit in with society and groups. Therefore, this phrase can be interpreted as the etiquette of receiving guests.

The Respectful Way of Addressing Elders

Let's read the next phrase, "When I address an elder, I should not call him by his given name. In front of elders, I must not show off. If I meet an elder I know on the street, I will promptly clasp my hands and greet him with a bow. If he does not speak to me, I will step back and respectfully stand aside. Should I be riding a horse or riding in a carriage and spot an elder I know walking, I will get off to greet him and wait until the elder disappears from my sight."

When addressing an elder, don't call his name directly; this is actually a gesture of respect. I remember when I was younger calling to my two older sisters, I always addressed them respectfully as "big sister" and "second sister." Sometimes, a friend or a classmate would ask me, "What are your sisters' names?" When I told them my sisters' names, I felt very uncomfortable as if I had been a bit disrespectful of them. So, do not underestimate this way of addressing people; the more you call your siblings "sister" or "brother," the closer your bonds will become. It is through this polite form of address that people become more and more intimate. For instance, if we were to directly address our spouse by their full name, the atmosphere would become indifferent or even become strained after awhile. So, when addressing elders, we should also call them "uncle" or "aunt." When we enter society, we can also address our supervisors in the same manner, such as "Manager Chen," or "Chairman Chen." When we address others like this, they will feel comfortable, we will not offend them as well.

Children today must implement this manner at home and in school. Among colleagues, just like us teachers, we must not directly address a teacher with his/her given name in front of students because that is not respectful. What is the best way to address teachers? We should address them by their last name, such as Teacher Chen, Teacher Tsai. This is also demonstrating to children the right way to address others. Though we adults can address each other in an intimate way, children have to learn a humble and respectful manner from an early age; as teachers, we must pay attention to these details. This is about "When I address an elder, I should not call him by his given name."

Nowadays, the trend of Westerners calling parents by their given name is gradually affecting eastern society. Many people think that the grass is greener in the West, so they ask their children to call them by their given names after reading some Western books. After being called that way for a few years, they realized it is wrong only after learning *Dizigui* in Haikou from my classes. But it was difficult to rectify their children since they had been talking to parents on an equal footing. Designations are meant to form the attitude of differentiating seniority and social ranks. This etiquette must not be abolished.

Don't Show Off in Front of Elders, Be Humble Instead

Let's see the next phrase, "In front of elders, I must not show off." We mentioned in the morning when children want to improve their skills and talents, we must guide them to understand the purpose of acquiring talents. What is the objective of learning so many talents? My friends, why did you let your children learn so many talents? This attitude is very important because your objective will lead your children towards this direction in the future.

I had a sixth-grader who took four subjects of tutoring classes. I thought that she definitely did not need so many tutoring classes as long as she paid close attention in school. So, I had a talk with her. I said, "Taking tutoring classes in four subjects is too many. Why don't you take two tutoring classes first?" She said, "Teacher, I cannot! All the students on my street are taking four subjects." You see, what was the child's objective in taking tutoring classes? She thought, "Other people are doing that, I must not lose out to them." Similarly, what is the purpose to have children learn so many arts and talents nowadays? Since others have learned to play piano or dance, I can't miss out on that. If they learned those talents purely for the reason of comparing themselves with others and seeking personal glory, whatever talents they acquired would have minimal advantage, and their learning would not

be solid due to their intermixed studies. Not only would they derive no benefits, they might also be tainted with illusory glory as they often want to show off after learning it. So, parents' attitude is absolutely vital!

We also mentioned in the morning, if they learned arts, we should guide them to set an aspiration. After learning this, it must benefit the people. As the saying goes, "Our society and country are one entity where everyone should help each other." Everyone should contribute their abilities and talents to benefit the group. We helped them to see many artists in the past, such as the composer Mr. Li Shutong* (*He was an artist, musician, dramatist, calligrapher and seal cutter. Later he became a Buddhist monk, 1880-1942) whose songs still have a positive influence on people's temperament. So, if they want to learn music, they should emulate Mr. Li in setting a lofty aspiration. As Confucius said, "There is nothing better than music to transform prevailing customs and reform society." Therefore, one must aspire to use music to improve the social value and vibe. When we guide them to set an aspiration, I believe their learning would surely be different from others'. When acquiring the talents purely for bragging, this child will surely run into bottlenecks that he could not break through. It is because he likes to compare himself with others that he worries about personal gains and losses. Consequently, he will become seriously emotional and will be unable to make further progress. But when he has an aspiration, he will keep encouraging himself to move forward. So, aspiration has already determined the key to success or failure.

Zhu Bolu's Maxims for Managing the Family states that the purpose of studying is to become saints and sages. People today study for what reason? For making money! Therefore, people find studying so painful and frustrating when they do not perform well in their examinations. They have set the wrong objectives! Likewise, what do many people who study arts set their aspirations on? Since they have wrongly targeted their goal, it is impossible for them to keep improving their skills. We must grasp the foundation of learning talents. What was Mr. Fan Zhong Yan's* purpose in studying? (*A famous statesman of the Song Dynasty, his spirit of "Be the first to worry about world affairs and the last to enjoy happiness" has influenced the Chinese for over 1,000 years.) He wanted to grasp an opportunity to serve the people. Comparing his mindset with those who study solely for seeking fame, would they achieve the same result in learning? Definitely not! As education lies in "making a cautious start," we must also adhere to proper concepts when guiding children in talents and skills.

Educating children to not "show off their talents" is to develop their humble attitude. According to *The Book of Changes* (**I-Ching*), "All six divination-symbols of the 'humility hexagram' connote auspiciousness." *The Book of Documents* also says, "Complacence incurs loss while humility brings benefits." In all the 64 hexagrams in *The Book of Changes*, each hexagram has a mixture of fortune and misfortune except the "humility hexagram," where all the six divination-symbols signify auspiciousness. So, a child practicing humility can receive benefits in every aspect. *Liao Fan's Four Lessons** imparts four very important philosophies for life (*A book written by Yuan Liaofan, about AD 1550, Ming Dynasty, explaining that destiny can be changed by proper cultivation and humility) in its fourth chapter it describes the benefits of humility. Mr. Yuan Liao Fan had participated in the Imperial Examinations several times. Every time before the examination, he would observe the examinees. He would find some of the examinees were particularly humble, they treated people with utmost respect and humility. Some of these examinees were very young, but he felt that they would surely pass the examination. As a result, it always turned out to be as he predicted, those humble ones all pass the exam.

So, we must always remind children from an early age to uphold humility. Because even if we have a great talent today, was it developed by ourselves? No! It was developed by many people's care and support throughout our growing years. Therefore, the more talented we are, the more we should be grateful to so many people who have contributed to our achievement. Having such a mindset, arrogance will naturally not arise in us. This is about the teaching of "In front of elders, I must not show off."

Bowing Instills a Mind of Respect

Let's see the next phrase, "If I meet an elder I know in the street, I will promptly clasp my hands and greet him with a bow. If he does not speak to me, I will step back and respectfully stand aside." When we meet an elder on the street, we must proactively approach him and greet him. I once heard my mother say that some of her former students who met her on the street avoid her immediately without greeting her. My friends, what was the cause of this situation? Of course, there could be many reasons. For example, we teachers may not be close enough to the students, so they shun us. The reason might also be that this child did not have the habit of greeting adults since young. When a child is not used to greeting adults, he will not be able to understand how to deal with personal interrelations. We must tell children when meeting elders, they must greet them with a bow. This is the etiquette of greeting people.

My friends, is it easy to bow? Is it easy? Nowadays when I ask you to give someone a 90-degree bow, many of you might not be used to it. There is a kindergarten in Shenzhen where the students were trained to bow for almost one to two months. The children are still bowing because the teachers want children to internalize this mind of respect. There is one child whose mother has three sisters and his father has four siblings. He is the only child in the extended family because all his uncles and aunts have no children. He is the only child! So many people are taking care of him. My friends, is it easy to raise this child? Not easy! (*The audience replied.) How do you all know? Yes, because there are his paternal and maternal grandparents, plus many adults all spoil him! Once, his paternal grandfather said to all the child's elders, "Seeing my grandson is the same as seeing me: whatever he says represents what I say and whoever hits him is hitting me." If this situation continues, what will happen to this child? He may become insufferably arrogant. If elders do not know how to educate children, indeed, loving them is actually harming them. So, let's take a look, why is it not easy to educate children today? It is because they are doted on!

His parents happened to have the opportunity to learn *Dizigui*, they felt that the situation was not right and that they should bring him home and raise him by themselves. Once during mealtime, as there were too few dishes on the table, this child pushed his legs against the table to move backward and said, "There are too few dishes, I do not want to eat." Is this attitude correct? Not at all! But it is very normal because everyone has been spoiling him so much that he has already become a "little emperor." How many dishes will be served to an emperor during meals? One hundred dishes! (*The audience replied.) You know it so well! So, he refused to eat when the dishes were too few. After his mother brought him home, one morning his mother cooked very nutritious porridge for him, but he said to his mother, "I only eat noodles and do not eat porridge." His mother was not angry at him because she understood that "Three-feet of ice is not formed by one day's chill." Since it had become his habit, she had to rectify him with patience now. She said, "Ah, you don't want to eat? Okay, that is fine!" At 9:00 am, he told his mother that he was very hungry. His mother brought out

the bowl of porridge again, but he still refused to eat. Many children today are very stubborn. What should you do? Do not confront the tough with toughness; you must endure him with patience. So, she took the porridge away. At 9:30 am, he was so starving that he gulped down the whole bowl of porridge. After eating, he said, "Actually, it's quite delicious!" See, he did not know the hardships of others, so he did not cherish what he had.

Later, this child was sent to kindergarten, the parents were very serious in collaborating with the teachers. They taught their son to bow. When they met the teacher, the mother asked her son to bow, but the child, a little boy, just stood there. His mother started bowing to the teacher and said, "You just have to bow like me." After the mother made about ten bows, the child still remained motionless. Due to her working time, the mother hurried to leave. When she reached the community gate, she felt that it was not right because there must be a cautious start to education. If she failed to teach her son at the beginning, it would become increasingly difficult to educate him in the future. So, she gave her husband a call, and her husband quickly rushed to the kindergarten. Both of them walked towards their child and his father said, "Now, daddy teaches you how to bow to the teacher." Then his father kept bowing for uncounted times and this child suddenly burst into tears. His father's sincerity had melted the child's extremely stubborn heart. The child finally gave the teacher a bow on the spot. When he could make that bow, it would not be difficult for him to do so in the future. In order to have children properly educated, the coordination between teachers and parents is indeed extremely important.

Luckily, this mother had very high sensitivity towards education. This child had been spoiled by so many adults, causing him to treat people with disrespect, so the mother had to subdue her son's arrogance in the hope that he would show respect to others. Every time when they exited the community gate, she would ask her son to greet the security guard, but each time this child was unwilling to offer his greeting. One time, his mother stood next to the security guard and said to her son, "If you don't bow today, we will not go home." This child still refused to bow, so she said to her son, "From the country's leader to all the working people, everyone has made a contribution to society and deserves our respect. Being so young, you have to be taken care of by your parents, and there are many people serving you as well, so you should take the initiative to thank and greet this uncle." She disciplined her son in front of the security officer. When this child was able to imprint this principle in his mind and could give elders a bow, I believe the respectful attitude he established would benefit him endlessly for life.

Proper Handshake Etiquette

For the etiquette of meeting elders, we can make a bow. What about between adults of the same generation? What method do people generally use now? Yes, handshaking! Actually, a handshake is a Western etiquette and Chinese would usually make a bow. Of course, when we meet an elder, we must proactively greet him with a bow. For example, we must not keep walking slowly and leisurely when seeing your grandfather from afar as it is disrespectful to do so. Thus, when meeting an elder, we can give them a respectful bow. And for those of our generation, we will naturally bow to each other. If you watched the current Korean drama called *The Merchants of Joseon*, how would you feel when seeing them bowing so respectfully every time they meet each other? Feeling very comfortable! Even if they met people whom they dislike, they would also contain their emotion and give them a deep bow.

However, a handshake is used to greet people on many occasions nowadays. My friends, what should we pay attention to when shaking hands? For example, to be more conforming to etiquette, who should extend their hand first? We must consider the order of seniority when shaking hands. Between the elders and the younger ones, who should first extend their hands? The younger one should extend his hand only after the elder has extended his hand. Otherwise, the younger one can just give a bow if the elder did not extend his hand. What about between superiors and subordinates? The subordinates should wait for the superiors to extend their hands. For example, you went to visit a company and saw their chairman, you extended your hand before the chairman did so. You would embarrass yourself if the chairman did not respond to you due to not knowing who you are. So, when meeting others' superiors, we must wait for him to reach out his hand first. We must not invert this order, or there will be an embarrassing situation. Between men and women, who should extend their hand first? Ladies. (*The audience replied.) Wow, you are all very experienced! Correct! Ladies should give a hand first. Otherwise, if men were to give their hand first and the other party did not want to shake hands with you, it would be very embarrassing. This is the order!

Secondly, we must pay attention to the issue of "attitude" when shaking hands. What actions and attitude should we pay attention to when shaking hands? Let's give an actual drill practice. Is there anyone who would like to be a volunteer? This friend, can you come up to demonstrate handshaking with me? Yes, you please. To use baseball as a metaphor, there will be many curveballs in life, you must respond naturally when encountering them. When we meet a friend whom we want to shake hands with, we must first pay attention to our eyes, our eyes must be looking at the other party. For example, I am shaking hands with him now while looking elsewhere. How would the other party feel? Why is he so insincere? This situation is often seen at parties where we meet many friends. When we shake hands with one person, our eyes may be looking at another person. This action is very insincere since our mind is not with the person we are shaking hands with. So, our eyes must rest on the other party's eyes. Let's demonstrate one more time. Nice to meet you!

Other than the eyes, we must also pay attention to our hands. We must not exert too much strength when shaking hands, otherwise people's hand would feel very painful. For example, I am squeezing his hand very hard, "Nice to meet you." He has greater tolerance! Hahaha... So, when shaking hands we should also mind our hand's strength. Next, the grasping position must also be correct. For instance, many people do not apply strength when shaking hands, just like this: nice to meet you. Have you ever seen such kind of handshaking before? Just like a bad occupational habit, they merely touch the other party's hand, which is also insincere. We should grasp the others' hand at about this position. Right, this is good. Furthermore, we must pay attention to the length of the time of our handshaking. It must not be too long. If you were to shake like this, the other party would be wondering when you want to release his hand. This is especially so when we men meet pretty ladies, we must not make a mistake in this respect. When we are always mindful of these aspects, others would be happy to shake hands with us. Alright, thank you very much! Let's give him a round of applause. In shaking hands, we must always make people feel very comfortable.

The Etiquettes of Introductions and Business Cards

After handshaking, there must be mutual introductions. The order of introduction is coincidentally the reverse order of handshaking. For example, the elder should first extend his hand and then the younger ones follow. When it comes to introducing each other, the

younger ones, subordinates, and men should first be introduced to the elders, superiors, and ladies respectively. It happens to be the opposite order to handshaking. Actually, even though this is an etiquette, it follows natural logic and sense. Let's imagine when you are going to introduce your classmate to your father, would you hold your father's hand and say, "Dad, let's go there and get to know my classmate?" How does this make you feel? Very strange, right? So, propriety is actually a natural order. How can you bring an elder to someone who may be much shorter than him? Wouldn't that be very odd? The chapter of *The Record of Music in The Book of Rites* mentions, "Propriety reflects the natural law and order of heaven and earth." It is the law and order of nature. This is what we must pay attention to when it comes to making introductions.

In the process of introduction, it is also very possible that others will hand you a business card. We must also pay attention to giving and receiving business cards. How do you hand business cards to others? Don't take out the holder containing your business cards and give them to people one by one, with only one hand. If you do so, how will others feel? You are not very respectful to them. When a person disrespects others, he is actually not respecting himself. As an old adage describes, this is "inviting humiliation to oneself." Disrespecting others is indeed bringing disgrace to ourselves. The business card represents you, how can you hand over the cards so casually? You should take out only one card at a time and use both hands to present it to others. When you hand over the cards, which side of the card should be facing them? The side where he can immediately read your name when he receives the card. If you reverse it, he must turn the card around in order to read it. This detail reveals your constant consideration of others.

When you receive the card, you must take a look at it first. As *Dizigui* teaches us, "When I address an elder, I should not call him by his given name." This is not only applicable to the elders but also to the interactions with others. If he is a general manager or a supervisor, we can show our respect by addressing them with their designated titles. They will be delighted to hear that, so we must first look at their surnames carefully. For instance, if his surname is Chen, you can say, "Hello, Mr. Chen." If you do not pay attention to his surname when receiving the card, and check it during conversation after sitting down, that would be completely embarrassing and odd.

After taking the card, where should you place it? You should take out your wallet and put it inside. Many people would place it directly on the dining table. If the soup were to drip on the card during the meal, the other party would be displeased when seeing his card being spoiled. Would he do business with you or collaborate with you? He would have a negative impression of you because you have treated his business card so disrespectfully. When we are courteous at all times, we leave a favorable impression on others and will build a bridge of friendship with them. So, we cannot overlook the etiquette of meeting. From the beginning, we have mentioned about the etiquette of receiving guests, now let's talk about the etiquette during the meeting.

How to Greet Elders

"If I meet an elder I know on the street, I will promptly clasp my hands and greet him with a bow. If he does not speak to me, I will step back and respectfully stand aside." Let's say, we approached the elder and greeted him, if he had nothing to say to us, we could then leave after him. This is "If the elder does not speak to me, I will step back and respectfully stand

aside." When I was in college, I rarely had the opportunity to go home. I went home only a few times in a semester. When I entered the house and saw my parents, this is "meeting elders," I would call, "Dad! Mom!" When going home, many college students would only interact with their parents for a short while, as if "dipping food in soy sauce." They were even busier than when in school. What were they busy with? They went to hang out with a lot of friends. Is there such a situation? You see, parents have been eagerly waiting for us to return home and they might have a lot of words to say to us, yet we have all neglected our parents' and elders' feelings. I have done this before as well, so we must confess and repent sincerely.

We should quickly go over to talk to our parents after greeting them and putting down our luggage, because they might not know your current situation and have much worries for you. At this time, you can take a seat and accompany your mother to read or have a cup of tea, this time must not be skipped. Many people say, "My mother doesn't have much to say to me." That is because you took off right after greeting her, she has not managed to put her thoughts into words. Actually, when you really sit down quietly to accompany your parents, their inspiration will come and they will naturally have a lot of words to say to you. So, we also must be patient when talking to elders. After accompanying them for a while, if they really have nothing to say, we can then respectfully remove ourselves.

I remember when I first returned from Haikou, where I taught traditional Chinese culture, I went to see my paternal grandfather that afternoon and came back to my parents' house at night. Since I had not really chatted with my parents for over four months, I immediately let go of all matters and had a chat with my parents first. Our conversation lasted two to three hours. During the conversation, I reported to them in detail about my life and work so that they could rest assured in everything I did in Haikou. I remember the first time I reported to my father, he was in tears three times. Because he heard me saying that many of the children in Haikou and Shenzhen went home to prostrate to their parents after learning *Dizigui*, he could not help but be moved to tears. Later, the first time I called them after I went back to continue my teaching in Haikou, my father said to me, "Just focus on your job, do not worry about anything back home, I will take good care of everything." Look, my father even rendered me peace of mind, hoping that I would work without any worries.

I remember telling him that there was a student in Haikou whose teacher had been seriously teaching them *Dizigui*. When he returned home for Chinese New Year, he wanted to prostrate to his parents to express his gratitude for their care throughout the year. The child carried two cups of tea and was about to walk out from the kitchen, he felt his heart pounding and was a bit short of courage. Before he walked out, some guests happened to come visit them, this made him even more hesitant to proceed. With some guests there, he felt more and more uncomfortable to do it. But he plucked up his courage and thought, "Since my teacher has taught us to do so, I must do it conscientiously." He opened the door and walked straight towards his parents and suddenly knelt down. All the relatives were chit-chatting but lapsed into total silence as soon as the child fell to his knees. I wonder what power it was, everyone acted tacitly and stopped talking. Then this child said, "Thank you dad, thank you mom for the kindness in nurturing and educating me throughout the years, in this beginning of the year, I wish you good health and longevity." He then made three prostrations to his parents. As a result, everyone there was deeply moved. Look, this child was also influencing the adults.

When this child returned to school, he wrote an article. He said that he was very nervous when he wanted to thank his parents, but as soon as he went down on his knees, he suddenly

felt his mind become very clear. So, taking the first step is more difficult but as long as you can bravely take the first move, you will do better in the future.

How to Act When You See an Elder You Know on the Street

The next phrase is, "Should I be riding a horse or riding in a carriage, and spot an elder I know walking, I will get off to greet him and wait until the elder disappears from my sight." This describes the ancient etiquette of riding on a horse or carriage. When we meet an elder while riding a horse, we should immediately dismount. Because when you were sitting on a horse and saw your grandfather walking, if you were to greet him from a higher position like this, "Hello grandpa!" it would be very disrespectful! So, you must quickly get off. Or, if you were riding in a carriage, you must also get out to give him a respectful bow. To apply this principle extensively, for instance, you are busy typing on the computer and an elder comes, what should you do first? You should stop typing and greet the elder first. We should not lose our respectful mind at any time, in any place.

But if you were driving on the highway and suddenly saw your uncle driving next to you, what should you do? Could you roll down the car window and greet him loudly, "Hello uncle!" There would be safety concerns. So, we must be flexible when learning and applying etiquette. We must not learn it rigidly.

Let's continue and read the next phrase, "When an elder is standing, I must not sit. After the elder has sat down, I will sit only when I am told to do so. Before an elder, I will speak softly. But if my voice is too low to be heard, it is inappropriate. When meeting an elder, I must walk briskly towards him; when leaving I must not exit in haste. When answering questions, I must look at the person without averting my eyes."

Oh, we have not finished talking about the previous phrase. "Should I be riding a horse or riding a carriage and spot an elder I know walking, I will get off to greet him and wait until the elder disappears from my sight." What occasion can this phrase be applied to? The etiquette of sending off guests. When we send off the elders and guests, we must wait till they have disappeared from our sight before we leave. To explain this phrase, I would let the students practice it: one person would become the host while another person took the role of a guest. They walked to the doorway and bid farewell to the guest. When the host closed the door immediately, all the other students would burst into laughter. Then we opened the door and asked the guest how he would feel if people were to send him off in this manner. He said, "As if he wanted me to leave quickly which made me not want to come again." So, when sending off guests, we must also let them feel comfortable and well respected.

Apart from practicing, we also discussed it with them directly, "My children, in your opinion, what is a more appropriate way to send off guests?" Many of the students started to think and said, "Send the guest to the elevator and wait until the door of the elevator closes, then we go back home." How would the guests feel when being sent off this way? Very heartwarming! What if there is no elevator? We can send them to the stairway.

Indeed, the ancient people always sent off the elders and teachers until the elder or teacher had disappeared from their sight. They waited for their teachers or elders to turn the corner, disappearing from their sight; only then would they leave. When I went to Australia to attend the lessons, I practiced this right after learning it. After our teacher had finished giving

lectures at night, we all sent him off together. I would stand there waiting, until the teacher had entered his room, I then left. My classmates felt this was very strange and wondered why I kept standing there. I told them that I must see the elder disappear from my sight before leaving. As a matter of fact, when I was doing that, my inner joy was indescribable. Because in the process of sending off the teacher, what would constantly emerge in our mind? “Had we not encountered our teacher this life, our wisdom would not have manifested and our afflictions would have been endless. Because of our teacher's teachings and guidance, we can then have so much achievement in life.” That's why in the process of sending off the teacher, I was immersed in gratitude and cherished this teacher-student affinity. The ancient people had very deep affection when getting along with each other. Because of this warm affection, they were able to write so many touching poems. We will stop here for today. Thank you everyone!