

Dizigui 37 English

Praise Others' Good, Do Not Publicize Others' Bad

Hello, my friends. Let's look at the next phrase, "Praising others' good deeds is a good deed in itself, people will be encouraged to do better when they hear about it." This phrase implies that, when people hear about the many deeds and demeanor of good people, everyone will give rise to the intention of emulating them because "Primordially, humans have an inherent good nature." I believe that in the past few days, some of you must have been "encouraged to do even better." There must be some of you who have learned from these good examples! Because I can see there is Dharma joy* on your faces. (*The kind of joy which springs from your inner heart, not stimulated externally.) This joy is definitely not gained from reading the classics but from implementing the teachings in life. That is why praising others' good deeds is very good because it can enable more people to receive benefits. Due to my implementation of this teaching in *Dizigui*, Uncle Lu's name has now spread throughout China. This is called, "Praising others' good deeds is a good deed in itself, people will be encouraged to do better when they hear about it." As such, we must seriously imprint these good demeanors in our mind and share with others anytime, so people can have a role model to emulate or even find some good methods for their own problems.

Next, "Publicizing others' wrongs is in itself evil, people will resent more and be driven to act even worse." When we publicize others' faults, the other party may feel very uncomfortable if he comes to know about it. As the classic reads, "The bad-talk is like something carved into the bones of the inflicted one." And the inflicted one will always think of taking revenge on you. This is "acting on impulse," and it is inadvisable. So, we must not "publicize others' wrongs" as we may end up making enemies. Ten friends are not considered many, but one enemy will make you discomposed. We should brace a benevolent heart lest we have conflicts with others. If we don't praise the goodness of others but spread around a minor fault of theirs, then not only have we cut down our own blessings, but the greater offense is that our act will affect the atmosphere of the group and society. If everyone does not talk about the goodness of others but only promotes others' wrongdoings, we are bound to cause major social problems and endless disputes among people. Therefore, we must consider that a person's speech and behavior are influencing the entire social ethos. One does not just create a bad affinity with the individual he affronts but may offend the whole society. So, we must be especially prudent with our speech.

Mutual Exhortation and Dissuasion

Next, "When we exhort each other to do good, both our virtues are established. When we do not dissuade each other from doing bad, both our morals will be undermined." As we mentioned earlier, prior to exhorting each other to do good, we must first distinguish between good and bad as well as true and false goodness. There are many methods to judge good and bad taught in *Liaofan's Four Lessons*. Only when our judgment is correct can we exhort others. Otherwise, you may not necessarily benefit others if you cannot clearly discern rights from wrongs yourself. Ancient people, when faced with others' kind-intentioned advice, or when they heard of others' good words and acts, what kind of attitude did they adopt to accept it? Confucius praised Yan Yuan* thus, (*Yan Yuan or Yan Hui 521-481 BC had the greatest achievement in virtues among Confucius' disciples) "After obtaining a virtuous teaching, he will embrace it firmly and will never lose it." In other words, as long as Yan Yuan heard one single goodness, he would immediately imprint it to his heart and would strive to practice it. As long as talking about virtuous students, Confucius would always mention, "There is Yan Hui (another name of Yan Yuan), he is keen to learn." Confucius was very pleased with Yan Yuan because

his learning was very solid. As long as the teachings had been imparted by his teacher, he would never forget to put them into practice. When we have such an attitude to acquire virtuous teachings, we can naturally establish our virtues.

In ancient times, all officials were addressed as “parent-like officers.” Why were they called “parent-like officers”? For example, a county magistrate who interacts very closely with all the people in his county and is responsible for the education policy of the whole county; he has the obligation to educate the people in his county well. With the attitude of “loving his people as much as loving his own children,” he was thus addressed as “parent-like officer.” Of course, the local leaders must implement the teaching of “exhorting each other to do good so that both parties’ virtues can be established.” This will allow the whole social ethos to become better and better. Do our current officials have this kind of attitude? They do! We must “conceal badness and spread goodness.” But, why is the proportion not as high as in the past? They cannot be blamed because it is all our fault, we did not tell them about *Dizigui*. As the society flaming with utilitarianism now, people tend to be interest-oriented and neglect righteousness. As long as one can have the opportunity to learn *Dizigui*, his sense of responsibility as a “parent-like officer” will be awakened.

How Can a Name Influence a Life?

In the Sui Dynasty (581-618), there was a scholar named Xin Gongyi (it means righteousness in Chinese language). This given name is not very common. My friends, wasn’t this name given by his father good? By giving him this name, it was absolutely impossible for his son to commit evil and break the law because people were calling him Gongyi (righteousness) every day. His entire body must be full of awe-inspiring righteous energy. Similarly, I have to be courteous since my father has given me this name. Xin Gongyi was a governor of Min State, which is now in Gansu Province. According to the local custom, one would be abandoned and left to fend for himself once he caught an infectious disease. Gongyi viewed this as an extremely serious problem since both filial piety and righteousness were completely lost. He took the initiative to bring those abandoned sick people back to his yamen* and took care of them. (*government office in feudal China) Furthermore, he had many doctors come to treat them. When these sick people regained their health, Gongyi immediately asked their families to bring them home. He would then say to the family members, “I’ve been staying with your father for so long, and I’m still fine.” The children would feel deeply ashamed. Gongyi had awakened people’s sense of shame with his virtue. Those people quickly took their family member home and attended to them. He had completely changed the ethos of neglecting filial piety and righteousness. The local people called him “a loving mother” and treated him like their own mothers.

Not only had this “loving mother” helped their family members regain health, but what else had he also saved? Everyone’s conscience. Without conscience, one would be a walking corpse even if he is still alive. As such, the ancient people would rather die than violate moral righteousness. We have cited many examples in these past few days’ lessons. For instance, we quoted a child named Yu Gun who was unwilling to abandon his older brother. So, he stayed while all villagers had left. He took care of his brother alone! As the idiom goes, “A good hearted person will be blessed by Heaven,” his brother regained his health later. This is indeed an example of, “Utmost sincerity can move a heart of stone.” Thus, when we exhort each other to do good, both our virtues can then be established.

“When we do not dissuade each other from doing bad, both our morals will be undermined.” If we do not dissuade others from doing bad when we can, we have not fulfilled our duty as a friend, a spouse, or as a child. In regards to when to exhort others, we should catch the right time and opportunity as well as employ the correct method and attitude when we give advice. Since we have studied this in depth before, I will skip it here. When we are able to “never expose others’ shortcomings and never reveal others’ secrets,” further to “praise others’ good deeds to encourage them to do better,” then a harmonious atmosphere will be formed. If a group can be very harmonious, this group is bound to be prosperous. So, we must place harmony as priority when we associate with a group. Then we can seize the opportunity to exhort others when the timing is right. As the saying goes, “Praise others’ goodness in public, exhort their wrongs in private.” This is to take care of others’ self-esteem. Let’s look at the next verse and recite it together once, “Regarding taking and giving, the most important thing is to know the difference between the two. It is better to give more and take less. When I am about to do something unto others, I will ask myself if I would like others to do it unto me; if not, I will stop it immediately. I must repay the kindness of others and let go of resentment towards others. I will hold grudges less and repay kindness more.”

Do Not Be Afraid Of Ceding

“Regarding taking and giving, the most important thing is to know the difference between the two.” What is “taking and giving”? For instance, when our family distributes something, we should consider the situation to determine everyone’s share. If some members are financially more distressed, we should give more to them and take less for ourselves. When people have this kind of conceding attitude, family members will always be mutually considerate and courteous ceding, and will not have disputes over all matters. When a family is so harmonious, the whole clan is bound to thrive. However, once having the habit of contention... As we mentioned in an earlier class, “Within the family interactions, the contention and lawsuit is prohibited.” If family members were to take legal action for unfair wealth distribution, they may not have a good ending, and it will leave a bad example for future generations. At that time, even if your family’s wealth is counted in the millions, it will eventually be squandered. So, try to concede if we can. The Zhou Dynasty, because Taibo and Zhongyong had intentionally let their younger brother inherit the throne, was able to create 800 years of prosperity and enabled the people of the whole country to emulate the spirit of their filiality and fraternity.

Generally speaking, people are afraid of ceding. Because, they think they will have nothing left if they do so. We should not be short sighted. As a matter of fact, when you concede, you have established your virtue and brought harmony to your family. Besides, your blessings will also be accrued because of your conceding action. When you have so much blessings, you will naturally be rewarded in the future. “The way of Heaven is impartial, it often favors the kind-hearted people.” This is an eternal truth. So, we should not deal with matters in accordance with our afflictions. Instead, we should act by the law of nature and the innate nature of all beings. So, “Regarding taking or giving, the most important thing is to know the difference between the two. It is better to give more and take less. When I am about to do something unto others, I will ask myself if I would like others to do it unto me; if not, I will stop it immediately.” When we don’t want others to criticize, insult, and hurt us, we should not treat people likewise. Since the sense of justice and rationality is the same with everybody, we should not hurt, criticize, and blame others either. We should understand and feel others’ sentiment with this kind of empathy.

Do Unto Others

Emperor Qian Long of Qing Dynasty had a couplet which reads, “May all parents-in-law take thirty percent of their love for their daughter to love their daughters-in-law; may all the sons in the world use the seventy percent’s obedience to their wives to obey their parents.” This couplet is very philosophical. It gives us a great reflection! Let’s look at the first line, “May all parents-in-law...” Through the ages, there is one kind of conflict that is more difficult to solve, it is called “the disputes between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law.” This conflict arises because they did not learn *Dizigui*. “When I am about to do something unto others, I will ask myself if I would like others to do it unto me.” Since daughters-in-law are someone else’s daughters, if we can use thirty percent’s love for our daughters to treat our daughters-in-law, then we will definitely not have conflicts with our daughters-in-law. Actually, people are very strange! For example, a mother is very angry with her lazy husband because he neither does the housework nor helps with chores. Is she angry? Yes, she is very mad. Yet, she would tell her son, “You just need to study well. No need to worry about anything!” Isn’t she raising a man who will drive another woman nuts, is she? “When I am about to do something unto others, I will ask myself if I would like others to do it unto me.” Why do people treat their daughters-in-law more harshly? Because she had been through this. Probably, her mother-in-law did not treat her well either. “Don’t do to others what you don’t wish to be done upon you.” If we used to be poor, we should care even more for the poor.

“May all the sons in the world use the seventy percent’s obedience to their wives to obey their parents.” Generally speaking, whose words would weigh the most after a man gets married? His wife. (Audience reply.) This attitude is subject to discussion! We tend to act on impulse when we deal with matters related to our close ones. As a result, we will not be able to see the pros and cons of matters. If one is estranged from his parents after obeying his wife’s words, the sign of his failure has already been revealed; his children will certainly not be able to learn filial piety. No matter how hard he works in his life, all his efforts may be futile in the end. So, do not manage your life with your emotions because you will often become too prejudiced. What must you use? Rationality.

What Is Genuine Love and Rationality?

Nowadays people often talk about IQ, EQ, CQ, and HQ. What did they do to the simple things? They complicated them. They would not obtain the copyrights if they don’t do so. Many principles are indeed one, but people have complicated it into so many that we do not know which one we should follow. What is EQ as written by Daniel Goleman? What is EQ? It is called Emotional Quotient, right? What about IQ? Intelligence Quotient. How do we differentiate between these two? The ability to say sweet words is called EQ, right? Then what is called IQ? Showing high intelligence is called IQ. Are they two different things? Let’s say a man says, “I’m very rational, I want to work hard to earn money. So, I don’t have much time to spend with my son because I need to work in the office overnight.” Is he rational? Is he? He pats his chest and says, “I’m working hard for my family.” It may sound very rational. But, how can it be so? Rationality is something that allows one’s life to develop in whole. If you say someone is full of love, he loves his son so dearly that he does not let his son do any house chores, is this called EQ? “To love someone improperly is actually to harm him.” When there is no rationality in your love, it is called “abuse of love”. What would you become when your rationality does not include love? You will become affectionless. Many entrepreneurs are very successful in their careers, but where have their wives and children gone to? They are still in the dark, no idea why their wife says bye-bye and leaves them. Because the wife thinks it is impossible to communicate with him.

So, what is “love”? What is “rationality”? A person with genuine love will definitely have true rationality. And a person with true rationality will surely have genuine love. When “love” and “rationality” are not duality, they are then genuine love and true rationality. Genuinely, it is clear that there is only one true heart (including love and rationality), but it has been interpreted into so many that we got totally confused, not knowing which way to go. No matter how busy Uncle Lu is, he will insist on having meals with his family on Sundays. Does he have EQ or IQ? Both. (Audience replies.) Right! He has genuine love and true rationality for his wife and children, he can then resolve all difficulties to manage his family. Only by learning the principles and attitudes of self-conducting from the saints and sages, can we then live our life with genuine love, proper righteousness, and true rationality. My friends, do you think I am good at EQ, or IQ? No need to struggle! Just follow what Dharma (sage teachings) teaches instead of following what people say. Just learn honestly the sages’ teachings in *Dizigui* and *The Four Books...* etc., do not drill into the terminology, otherwise you will be lost in it and may not be able to get out. “When I am about to do something unto others, I will ask myself if I would like others to do it unto me; if not, I will stop it immediately.” With this rationality to feel others’ sentiment, we will not exert something forcefully to someone.

Stay Mindful Of Others’ Kindness

Let’s look at the next verse, “I must repay the kindness of others and let go of resentment towards others.” In fact, when one can constantly be mindful of the kindness of his parents, teachers, elders, and all people, his spiritual life will certainly be very fulfilling. The foundation of one’s happiness lies in love and gratitude. When one knows how to love and give, he will appreciate his own value and realize that it is more blessed to give than to receive. That is why we see many volunteers brimming with joy every day. Look! Ms. Teresa Hsu Chih is already 106 years old. I once met her in person in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. She was really like a baby when she laughed, and her mind was utterly pure. “I must repay the kindness of others and let go of the resentment towards others.” She is always thinking how she can help others; this is living in a loving world.

When one can constantly be mindful of others’ kindness, he is living in the state of repaying kindness. When one repays the kindness of others, he will feel very fulfilled in his heart. It is very fulfilling! I have traveled to so many places over the past year and have finally gained a sense of comfort. I feel myself being very fortunate in this life, being able to follow in the footsteps of Teacher Yang, Uncle Lu, as well as our revered teacher, Master Chin Kung, to learn the teachings of ancient saints and sages. I am such a lucky person, so I hope to do something to make them happy. In over one year, I seemed to be very busy, but my whole mental state is getting better and better. Living amidst gratitude is really different. When I look back, I feel that there is still such a sense of fulfillment.

How To Repay The Kindness Of Our Elders?

I remember Teacher Yang once gave me a red envelope, on it she wrote, “You’ve worked so hard, Teacher Tsai.” After seeing it, I burst into tears on the spot because being so fortunate in this life to embark on the path of propagating sage teachings, it is all attributed to Teacher Yang’s help. Despite not being by my side, she has been giving me support and care in every aspect. Had she not conclusively left me in Haikou, I would not have this opportunity to forge myself. Moreover, Teacher Yang regards promoting saints’ and sages’ teachings as her own duty, so she has mapped out a strategy. She has envisaged the early-stage development and planned it well. I only need to do my teachings. For future arrangements, she has also put the best interests of us younger generation into consideration. Since we can learn alongside

these good mentors, we must never forget their kindness. To repay the kindness of these elders, what is the best way? Respectfully practice based on the teachings. If I am giving a present to Uncle Lu, for instance, he may not need it, the most important thing is that we can follow his advice to practice Dao and establish our virtues, this can then bring him the greatest comfort. So, we must always bear in mind the kindness of our parents, teachers, elders, as well as the saints and sages of thousands of years.

Every time I read *The Stories of Morality Education*, I could not help but cry uncontrollably as if they had lit up my mind. The day I read about Zu Ti, who took all his relatives and friends to seek refuge together, he took care of hundreds of people and was traveling by foot since he let the elders ride on carriages and horses. His actions had made the elders in his village say, "We are so old and can still encounter such a virtuous man, he is like our reincarnated parents. So, we will have no regrets even if we die." I was deeply moved when I read this part. What is most lacking in our society now? It is love and care. When we are willing to follow in the footsteps of these sages, I believe we are also able to perform a good show like Zu Ti did. Since the saints and sages have illuminated our minds, we must strive to emulate them.

How To Transform Bad Affinities?

"I must repay the kindness of others and let go of the resentment towards others." It is inevitable for people to have conflicts, but we have also mentioned that "Wicked men must have something pitiful." They come into conflicts with others because they have never learned how to conduct themselves. We should first introspect ourselves! If we are not in the wrong, we should further tolerate them. We should not take the faults of others to heart every day. If we do, where are we keeping others' dirtiest things? In our cleanest minds. This is very silly! So, when we are willing to forgive others, we are actually forgiving ourselves. When you take the faults of others to heart every day, you will surely feel uncomfortable. So, we must "not recollect past resentments and not despise wicked people." To the past conflicts, do not take them to heart! When we harbor resentment, can the other party feel it? Can they feel it? Yes, they can. You see, when you have grievance, will it show in your eyes and your expression? Certainly! "Inner sincerity will reflect in your outward appearance." When you are insincere, of course it will appear outwardly as well. When you cannot let go of grudges, the relationship between two of you will become increasingly estranged. This is bad! After all, you may have to interact with the other party frequently, or you will still see him often in the office. Hence, when two people cannot accommodate each other, they are likely to affect the harmony of a family or a group. Aren't you asking for trouble?

An elder of mine, who is very talented, was asked to undertake many tasks in the company. Due to his excellent performance, he has received many awards. This had provoked jealousy among other colleagues. This elder said, "It is an honor to arouse jealousy in others because, only when you are capable can you make others jealous of you. So, there is no need to get angry." He continued and said, "One of them particularly criticized me seriously, but I did not take it to heart. Later, he had to do one project, yet nobody helped him. I happened to have that skill, so I took the initiative to help him. When I offered my help, how did he feel? He was deeply ashamed of his past deeds." Afterwards, they became good friends. "It is better to resolve an enmity than entwine it." After befriending him, this elder of mine came to realize that the reason one often criticizes others is because he has indignation in his heart. Why did his colleague have indignation in his heart? Perhaps his growing up years or his current family has made his mind unable to settle down. He has a lot of pains inside which are not properly dealt with! As this elder of mine was broad minded, did not fuss about trifles, he further took the

initiative to help this colleague. This righteous friendship has resolved the bottlenecks in his life. In addition, this elder has guided him to rectify his thinking and perspectives in life.

Regardless of what affinities that have brought us together, as long as our mind remains impartial and compassionate, I believe any bad affinity will be transformed into good ones. So, we must “treat our resented ones and loved ones equally.” Only when we can truly “treat our resented ones and loved ones equally,” can people be convinced deeply from the bottom of their hearts. Let’s take a look at this idiom, which ones is placed in front? The resented ones! “Treat our resented ones and loved ones equally.” So, we must broaden our mind. “I must repay the kindness of others and let go of resentment towards others.” In fact, once we can transform one single thought, our attachments will become wisdom right away. So, we must learn how to transform our mindset. Thanks to those who have hurt us as they have strengthened our mentality. Thanks to those who have deceived us for they have deepened our insight.

Live In Gratitude, Turn Afflictions Into Wisdom

Thanks to those who have made us stumble as they have intensified our ability. Thanks to those who have abandoned us for they have taught us to be independent. Whom can you rely on until the end of your life? Impossible! This “rely” does not mean physical reliance. We must develop our spiritual mentality because the best thing we can rely on in life is our genuine wisdom. So, thanks to those who have reprimanded us because they have increased our concentration and wisdom. So, “When my parents instruct me, I must listen respectfully. When my parents reprimand me, I must accept submissively.” Not only parents, but anyone who scolds us, if we can be all ears to listen respectfully, our virtues and wisdom have improved at that very moment.

Therefore, when one transforms a single thought, all his afflictions may turn into wisdom. When you are able to transform your mind, how will those people who have hurt, deceived, and made you stumble feel? They will be very surprised and further admire you. Amazed by your cultivation, they will be eager to know from whom you learned it? Then, *Dizigui* can once again be introduced. We must bring glory to the saints and sages. We must bear the adversity! If we lower our level to be the same as others, causing them to lose confidence in *Dizigui* and say, “What kind of *Dizigui* are you learning?!” That would be troublesome! So, “let go of resentment towards others.”

“I will hold grudges less and repay kindness more.” “Hold grudges less’ does not mean that you really bear a grudge but quickly turn that thought around. “Repay kindness more” does not only refer to more time but eternally. How can we finish repaying the kindness of parents, teachers, and elders? To repay these kindnesses, we must hold fast to the attitude of “devoting ourselves until we draw our last breath.” When I utter this verse, did you feel your mind suddenly emit light? As I told you before, my heart had illuminated twice in my high school days. The first time was when I heard the sentence written by Mr. Fan Zhongyan in *The Reminisce of Yue Yang Tower*, “Be the first to worry about world affairs and the last to enjoy happiness.” The light in my heart suddenly flashed for about five to ten seconds, but I continued to doze off again because I had not opened my mind to Wen Yan Wen (the ancient Chinese literary style). When I read the verse of Kong Ming’s* *Petition for Northern Expedition*, (*A statesman and strategist during the Three Kingdoms Period, 220-280) “Never cease to devote oneself wholeheartedly until one’s last breath.” I suddenly emitted light again. However, the light must be able to last, so we should not let the sages’ teachings slip again. I would not let it slip again! When I missed it, I felt very uncomfortable, for it took over ten years for me to encounter it again. I remember when we were teenagers, very often, “for creating new poetries,

we distress ourselves purposely.” We immersed ourselves in many painful feelings. For not understanding the truth, we also sang those love songs very painfully. As no one was there to guide us, we had wasted such good youth.

Act Nobly and Decorously Towards All

There are causes and conditions in everything, I must have a very deep affinity with those ancient sages. I told my friends, “If there were past lives, I must have been the soldier who had served meals to Kong Ming. Because I felt heartache seeing Kong Ming ate less day by day. In the movie, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, when I saw that Kong Ming could not hold the pen firmly, and he did not eat the meals served by his soldier, I broke down in tears when I saw that scene. Since the saints and sages had performed these good shows with their sincerity, we must earnestly emulate them. Hence, I will repay kindness more. It is because of these kindnesses, we are able to steer our life into such a promising direction. Without them, we would not be the same. Holding on to this attitude, we will then spare no effort to fulfill our duties, so those who have bestowed kindness upon us will be happy to see our personal development in life. Let’s read the next verse, “Treating maids and servants, I should act nobly and decorously; even so, I still look after them kindly and generously. Using force to make people submit will not make their hearts agree. Only using reason to make people submit, can there be no complaint.”

“Treating maids and servants, I should act nobly and decorously.” The “maids and servants” here has their extensive meaning. For instance, the employees hired by our family are considered to fall under this range. Since they serve us by means of labor, we should also respect their effort equally. So, when we have hired employees in the family, we should also educate children to treat them as their family elders. We must not let children become snobs from an early age, or else their impartial and respectful mind will not possibly be established. We must be prudent! Even if he is a chauffeur, children should still address him “uncle.” In this way, children will then not lose a respectful mind.

How To Be Considerate and Caring

It is a rare affinity to be able to stay under one roof, we should be more considerate and take care of each other. For example, during the Chinese New Year, most of daughters-in-law, sons, and grandchildren will go back to parents’ home. The daughters-in-law are usually very busy with their lives because many of them are working women. They are so busy and tired with their work, finally New Year comes, but how do they feel during the family reunion? Even more tired! The workload is even heavier than that at work! As mother-in-law, we must be able to empathize with the toil of the daughters-in-law. We should not say that it is the job of a daughter-in-law, she ought to do it. We must assess the situation before delegating work to her. It is now very convenient to order a New Year’s Eve dinner. If the daughter-in-law has been really busy and tired, we can order some dishes so that everyone can get together for a reunion meal. Then, a happy and relaxing reunion for everyone can be achieved. The daughter-in-law will feel that her mother-in-law is really thoughtful of her. When you love her, she will love you too! As the saying goes, “Those who love others will always be loved; those who respect others will always be respected.”

As a matter of fact, is it difficult to get along with others? How would it be so complex?! It is just us who get ourselves into a blind alley. Of course, when the mother-in-law did something thoughtful to the daughter-in-law, what should the daughter-in-law do? She should respond with some sweet and appreciative words. For instance, when you walk out of the

house, it happens that everyone is there, you can say to everyone, "My mother-in-law is superb. She helped me with this and that..." How will the mother-in-law feel when she hears this? She will be elated! This is called "Utter sweet and appreciative words." When everyone can utter sweet and appreciative words, everyone will be happy and help each other. We will stop here today. Thank you everyone.