

The Year of the Rabbit, A Year of the Heart

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Saturday, 19 February 2011 12:06



[[Master's Teachings](#)]

For ethnic Chinese people living around the world, the Lunar New Year is an important time. While many pray for blessings for the new year, wishing for good health, prosperity, good fortune, and an auspicious year, Dharma Master Cheng Yen calls our attention to our own hearts as the true origin of blessings. Below is a selection of teachings extracted from Dharma Master Cheng Yen's speeches to Tzu Chi volunteers over the Lunar New Year.

The Garden of Our Heart

At the time of the New Year, we look to the future with hope. We make new resolutions and cherish aspirations for a wonderful year. But what brings about a hopeful outcome is our own heart. When our hearts are pure, our actions will be wholesome ones bringing beneficial consequences. This is what it means to create blessings. Taking care of our hearts is therefore very important. Our heart is like a garden that we need to carefully tend to, by planting wholesome good seeds and helping them sprout and grow.

Spring Cleaning

Once a year, at New Year, we are inspired to begin anew. We make resolutions to change our habits. But we should also look within and see the many unpleasant feelings, resentments, wrong thoughts, and afflictions we have accumulated over the past year. Now is the time to clean out this spiritual garbage, like spring cleaning. But while New Year is an especially good time to do this, let us keep this inspiration fresh every day. Every day can be the start of a new year, a day to begin anew.

Spiritual Wealth

Living in this world, many people pursue wealth, but true wealth lies in the heart—a heart made rich by the Dharma. Keeping the Dharma in our hearts, we can have spiritual joy always and grow in wisdom and blessings. This spiritual wealth is the most precious kind.

Wisdom-life

In Chinese tradition, after the New Year passes, we add one year to our age. But to me, every New Year reminds me that I have one year less now left in the world. If we do not use our time wisely, we are indeed losing time with every passing year. However, if we are mindful in every moment to take in and live out the Dharma, then with every moment that passes, our wisdom-life grows. The growth of our spiritual wisdom-life is most important.

Every Moment, Touching our Buddha Nature

The time of New Year is an important one for many. People focus on the juncture at which we pass into the new year. But to me, it is the moment we pass into every new second that we should really be mindful of. If we can be mindful at every moment, taking care not to let spiritual garbage build up in our hearts and keeping our minds pure and upright, we can touch our

The Year of the Rabbit, A Year of the Heart

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

Saturday, 19 February 2011 12:06

Buddha nature. It is in fact very easy for us to be in touch with our Buddha nature. The only thing that keeps us from it is our unwholesome habits, which spring from our craving. When we mindfully keep craving, anger, and delusion from entering our hearts, we can bring forth our true nature of pure love and enlightened understanding, our Buddha nature.

A Field of Blessings Everywhere

During the New Year period, everyone prays for blessings, but it is only by doing good and creating blessings that we can hope to reap blessings. Walking on the Bodhisattva Path, we strive to create blessings not only for ourselves, but for our community also. We work for the good of the community, contributing to create a better life for ourselves and others. This is what it means to cultivate a field of blessings. But besides doing good, we also need to inspire the goodness in the hearts of others, for we hope that everywhere in the world, people can cultivate a field of blessings in their own community. This is our aspiration, and to accomplish it, we must make the most of the time we have. Time can create everything, so let us continue to work harder, to get rid of our past bad habits, embrace the new spirit of love, live each moment mindfully, and work hard to create a world full of blessings.

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks

Compiled into English by the Jing Si Abode English Editorial Team