

Being 80% Full and Using the 20% to Help Others

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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The Tzu Chi Foundation has launched a campaign to encourage people to eat less and set aside the rest to help others in need. On December 17, at a Year-End Ceremony of Blessings and Gratitude, staff and volunteers poured out coins from their bamboo piggy bank into a pottery jar as a donation for the international relief mission and read the slogan: “Be a vegetarian and 80% full, healthy and eco-friendly. Use the remaining 20% to help others, which will bring joy without worry.”

At the ceremony, Master Cheng Yen gave a speech, saying that by “being 80% full and using the 20% to help others”, one can be healthy and help others at the same time. Of the world’s population of seven billion, one billion do not have enough to eat. At the same time, one third of the food production in the world is going to waste, said Tseng Shi-ru, who chaired the event. “Each year Taiwan produces approximately 1,800,000 tons of leftover food, equal to the height of 1,017 Mount Everests if it were put inside one-meter-jars. With the current state of food shortages and starvation, people should only eat till they are 80% full.”

Another speaker was Dr. Lin Jun-rong, chief executive of the foundation’s Medical Mission: “According to medical research, the only way to extend one’s life span is to lose weight and reduce calories. Recently, the most common disease has become over-nutrition and being over-weight. The best cure is to be vegetarian and eat only up to 80% to keep the body healthy and be eco-friendly.”



Dr. Kao Rei-he, superintendent of the Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, said: “From the medical point of view, eating until we are 80% full is the most suitable way to meet the needs of the body.” Gu Jin-yu, a nutritionist from the hospital, said that the human body can be healthy and nutritiously balanced if our three meals include proteins, vegetables and carbohydrates, taken within the appropriate amount according to our age, weight and height. Wang Ben-rong, Principal of Tzu Chi University, also supported the concept of “Be a vegetarian and 80% full”: “by not wasting food, we can also avoid leftover food; moreover, the concept of using the remaining 20% to help others is very good and should be promoted and practiced on campus.”

Tzu Chi encourages people to reduce their food intake by 20% and avoid eating outside. By doing so, they can reduce the amount of leftover food and be healthy. Vegetarian ingredients can also reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The foundation also promotes the idea that, at year-end parties held by businesses, employer, employees and the restaurant can all do good deeds by practicing “Less food and more love.”

Practicing “Be a vegetarian and 80% full” is a good way to keep healthy and eco-friendly. Everyone can help by using the remaining 20% to help the starved people. Doing good deeds gives us joy without worry.

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