

Peace from Afflictions

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Our hearts are often filled with afflictions. They bring us a great deal of suffering. Our afflictions are like ropes that tie us into knots. With all these knots, our hearts cannot open, and we are very miserable. This misery comes from our own self; it is not inflicted upon us by others. It actually comes from the way we look at things.

For example, when people admonish us or even slander us, we tend to react with negative feelings. But if we can instead approach it from a perspective of learning, we can feel grateful. This gratitude can open our hearts, so that inner knots do not form.

As I often say, there is always something we can learn from others. All around us, there are good and bad examples. The "bad examples" are also our teachers, for they show us what is wrong and how not to be. If we can look at people from such a perspective, we will feel a sense of respect and gratitude toward every person.

These are very simple principles. But if we can truly practice them in our daily life, keeping a heart of learning and seeing everything from this perspective, we will be able to transcend afflictions. This simple practice alone can lead us to much spiritual growth and awakening.

From [Dharma Master Cheng Yen](#) 's Talks
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