

凡事多為別人著想

Always Think for the Others First

周瑞芬2013年12月7日 講於萬佛聖城大殿
A Talk Given by Priscilla Yeh on December 7, 2013 at Buddha Hall of CTTB



FOCUS ON EDUCATION | 教育專欄

諸佛、菩薩、宣公上人、各位法師、各位善知識，阿彌陀佛！最近讀到兩則故事，讓我深深體會到為什麼應該凡事多為別人著想？第一個故事「輸與贏（真正的高手）」，是關於左宗棠下圍棋的故事。

左宗棠很喜歡下圍棋，而且是個高手，他的屬僚皆非他的對手。有一次在出征的路上，他穿上便服出巡，看見一個小茅屋，橫樑上掛著「天下第一棋手」的匾額。左宗棠入內與茅屋主人連下三盤。主人三盤皆輸，左宗棠笑著說：「你可以把那匾額卸下來了！」隨後自信滿滿、興高采烈地走了。

過沒多久，左宗棠班師回朝，路過此處，又好奇地找到這間小茅屋。赫然看見「天下第一棋手」之匾額仍未拆下，左宗棠又入內，與此主人下了三盤。這次，左宗棠三盤皆輸。大感訝異，問茅屋主人何故？主人答：「上回您有任務在身，要率兵打仗，我不能挫您的銳氣。現今，您已得勝歸來，我自然當仁不讓。」

這位「天下第一棋手」是真正的高手，他能勝，而不勝，有讓人的胸襟；能贏，而不必贏，有善體人意的用心。他是一個很好的「凡事多為別人著想」的典範。

To the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the Venerable Master, all the Dharma Masters, and all the good and knowing advisors, Amitofo! From the couple stories I have come across recently, it dawned on me why it is so important to always think for others first. The title of the first story is 'Winning and Losing – the real champ'. It's a story about the Go game of the famous Qing dynasty general Zuo Zhong Tang.

To the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the Venerable Master, all the Dharma Masters, and all the good and knowing advisors, Amitofo! From the couple stories I have come across recently, it dawned on me why it is so important to always think for others first. The title of the first story is 'Winning and Losing – the real champ'. It's a story about the Go game of the famous Qing dynasty general Zuo Zhong Tang.

General Zuo loved the Go game and he was so good at the game that almost no one around him can beat him with the game. One day, on his way to a battle, he strolled around in plain clothes. He saw a plaque saying "The Best Go Player in the World" hanging on the beam of a small hut. He entered the small hut, and played three rounds of the go game with the owner of the small hut. The host lost all three games, so General Zuo said to him with a smile, 'You should remove that plaque now!' Then he left for the battle with great confidence.

Not long after that, when the victorious General Zuo was leading his troops back home, with curiosity, he looked for the small hut. To his amazement, "The Best Go Player in the World" plaque was still displayed prominently up there on the beam. General Zuo entered the small hut, and played another three rounds of the Go game with the owner.





一般人聽到「凡事多為別人著想」這句話時，最直覺的反應是：「那我呢？誰會為我想？」其實，我們都是一體的，大家都好，自己才會好。例如前面左宗棠下圍棋的故事，如果那位「天下第一棋手」無法做到「能勝，而不勝，有讓人的胸襟」；沒有考慮到如果左宗棠真的因為輸了棋、挫了銳氣而打了敗仗，說不定對這位贏了棋的「天下第一棋手」也不利。再者，如果每個人都「凡事多為別人著想」，每個人的我見、我執也因此減到最低限度，每個人自然變得自在多了，天下太平才有希望。

〈普門品〉告訴我們觀世音菩薩度人時，是依據這個人應以什麼身得度，觀世音菩薩就現什麼身而為說法，這就意味著觀世音菩薩總是先為被度的人著想，應該是我們最好的典範。

道理懂了以後，要落實在日常生活中的每一刻才有用。大家也許可以想想看，在每天的生活中可以從那裏著手學習「凡事多為別人著想」？假如你是學校的義務老師，當你覺得學生不用心時，你是像觀世音菩薩一樣慈悲，知道這學生一定有什麼事讓她分心，和她談一談？與其有「你怎麼連這麼簡單的都不會！」之類的話脫口而出，傷了學生的自尊心，久而久學生會開始自暴自棄。這絕不是我們辦教育的目的。

學佛人都清楚除了要去去除自己的煩惱，很重要的事是盡可能不要使別人起煩惱。所以，避免製造更多惡業最好的方法，就是凡事多為別人著想，處處結善緣。也就是說，我們所有的起心動念、言語造作都

However, this time, General Zuo lost all three games. This surprised the General very much, and he asked his host, "Why?" The host answered, "Last time, since you were on your way to the battle, I cannot dampen your spirit. However, now that you have won the battle, I can show you my real stuff."

This "Best Go Player in the World" is a real champ, because he has an empathetic heart and the magnanimity of yielding to the others' needs. He is a very good example of always thinking for the others first.

When people hear the phrase of 'always think for the others first', the most direct reaction is probably, "What about me? Who is going to think for me?" First of all, if we know that we are all one, only when everyone else is all right, then we will be all right. As illustrated in the first story above, if 'The Best Go Player' does not have the magnanimity to yield to the needs of the general, he might setback General Zuo's spirit and hence causes the General to lose the battle. If the General lose the battle, it might have very bad consequence on all the country men. Furthermore, if every person practices always thinking for the others first, then our ego will diminish drastically, hence everyone will become much more carefree and at ease, and then the world peace will have a chance to become reality.

The *Universal Door of Guanyin Bodhisattva Chapter* told us that when liberating living beings, Guanyin Bodhisattva appears as what that living being could be liberated by. This is a very good example that Guanyin Bodhisattva always thinks for the living being he is trying to liberated first.

Only knowing the concept is never very useful until we can apply the concept in our daily life. Maybe we can all think of ways to put the concept of 'Always think for the others first' into action in our daily lives. For example, if you are a volunteer teacher, and when you find a student not paying attention to her work. Will you be as compassionate as like Guanyin Bodhisattva, and understand that there might be something on this student's mind right now which distracts her from her school work? Will you try to have a nice talk with the student to see if there is something you can do to help? Or will you make some comments like 'How come you

插畫選自——碧瀾《清心》

Illustration selected from "Pure Mind" of BiLan

必須非常謹慎，確保帶的是正向能量，不會使別人起煩惱。但我們習性難改，每當不如意時，顧不了是否使別人起煩惱，常常傷人的話就像脫韁之馬，接二連三地說個不完，怎麼能結善緣？怎麼能不造業呢？

如何改習性呢？我們可以借用一個很有效的方法。這個方法是美國知名牧師威爾·鮑溫想出來的。2006年，鮑溫牧師發起了一項「不抱怨」運動，邀請每位參加者戴上一個特製的紫色手環，只要一發現自己抱怨，就將手環換到另一隻手上，直到這個手環能持續戴在同一隻手上二十一天，完成連續二十一天不抱怨、不批評、不講閒話的目標為止。

不到七年，全球就有106個國家、超過一千萬人熱烈響應鮑溫牧師的「不抱怨」運動。很多人發現，持續二十一天沒有抱怨，結果真的有好運降臨，例如：與他人的關係變和諧了、健康狀況改善了、事業比較順了、整個人變得比較樂觀了等等。

練習不說會使別人起煩惱的話也是一樣。必須隨時觀注，每次開口前先想一想，這句話出去是否會傷到對方？例如父母罵孩子，都自認為是為了孩子好，是為了孩子著想。但如果聲音很大或用詞尖銳，孩子是感受不到父母的關愛，是聽不進去的，反而很生氣、起煩惱！所以在話出口前，想想是否能換個方式或語氣？如果習氣來了，沒想就已脫口而出了，那就得立刻把手上的紫手環換到另一隻手上。看看一天要換多少次，又需要多久才能持續戴在同一隻手上二十一天。

相信到那一天，您一定已變成一位「凡事多為別人著想」的人了。到那天，你會深深體驗到當真能「凡事多為別人著想」時，我們自己也已提升成一個與那位「天下第一棋手」一樣的真正高手了，和觀世音菩薩一樣，充滿了慈悲心。阿彌陀佛！

cannot even get something so simple correctly?' which will definitely hurt the student's self-esteem? On the receiving end of such negative comments regularly will make the student eventually give up on herself, and this is certainly not what our education is trying to achieve.

As Buddhists, we all know that not only we want to get rid of our own afflictions, just as important is trying our best not to create affliction for others. The best way to avoid creating more bad karma is always think for the others first, and create good affinities. That implies we need to be very careful with our thoughts and actions, making sure that they are all positives so that they will not create afflictions for others. The problem is that it is very difficult for us to change our habits. Whenever things are not going our ways, we tend to let our unhappiness pour out with strings of hurting words without noticing how these words are creating afflictions for others. How can we have good affinities and not creating bad karma this way?

Now the question is how do we change our habits? We can borrow a very effective practice developed by a famous Christian minister by the name of Will Bowen. In 2006, Mr. Bowen started a 'Complaint Free' movement. He invited every participant to wear a special purple bracelet on one of the wrists. Whenever the participant found himself/herself complaining, the purple bracelet needs to be moved to the other wrist until the bracelet has stayed on the same wrist consecutively for 21 days. That means the participant has succeeded going for 21 days without complaining, judging or gossiping.

In less than 7 years, there are 106 countries around the world with over 10 million people participating in Mr. Bowen's 'Complaint Free' movement. Most people discover that going without complaining for 21 consecutive days does seem to do a lot of good for us. Examples are: improved interpersonal relationship, better health, more harmony in the work place, and have a much more positive outlook, etc.

Learning not to say anything which will create affliction for others will be very similar with not complaining. We must pay full attention whenever we open our mouth. For example, when parents scold their children, they believe whatever they are saying is for the benefit of the children, and they are thinking for the children. However, whenever the voice is raised or the words are harsh, the children really cannot feel the loving care their parents meant to deliver. Not only they do not want to hear what the parents have to say, they usually become very angry and afflicted. Therefore, it is very important for the parents to contemplate before they open their mouth whether there is a better way to deliver the message with a gentler tone. If we let our habit run our life and speak without thinking first, and say something creating affliction for others, then we need to faithfully move our purple bracelet to the other wrist. Let's keep track of the times we need to move the bracelet from one wrist to the other in a day, and see how long it will take to have the bracelet stay on the same wrist for 21 consecutive days.

It will be pretty certain that by that time, you will have become a person who always think for the others first. You will be like that 'Best Chinese Go Player in the World', and become a real champ. You will be full of compassion just like Guan Yin Bodhisattva. Amitofo!