

Poems from a Dharma Life

Dr. Yutang Lin

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Seal of "With clarity of mind all good fortune will naturally gather"

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Rest in Peace

*From Nature you came,
To Nature you return;
Become one with the Universe,
So we are with you always!*

Comments:

While scattering cremated ashes in the air, on the ground or into water one may use this stanza to pacify the deceased. Simply comply with causal conditions, and then life and death is the same. Return to the limitless oneness of Dharmadhatu, and then the living and the deceased are in union.

Written on September 8, 2005
El Cerrito, California

Responding in Harmony

*Having premeditated responses is already in tangles.
Free from grudges, only then is clarity and evenness.
Accommodate to situations to avoid futile exertions.
Out of empathy to suffering respond in compassion.*

Comments:

As soon as there is intention to respond in certain ways one is already in tangles, being deluded without self-awareness to such delusion. No longer blaming circumstances or others, only then will mind be clear and even. No matter how one's situation has changed never fall into complaining so as to avoid waste of time and energy. Having compassion for sentient beings' constant and incessant suffering, one's responses are all out of merciful sympathy.

Written in Chinese and translated on December 4,
2005

El Cerrito, California

All-knowing

*All-knowing, who could attain?
Views only cause self-disturbing.
Rest in not knowing everything,
Attain liberation beyond knowing.*

Comments:

Human knowledge being limited, individual understanding is even more fragmentary. Head-full of opinions increases worries, wishing to know all is just being ignorant. It is only normal not to fully comprehend, at ease with what is known and live by. Mind free from abiding seems ignorant, free from entanglements of views is enlightenment.

Written in Chinese and translated on January 10,
2006
El Cerrito, California

Teaching to Enliven

*Interactions based on grasping to appearances
are entrapped in entanglements.*

*The more bustling the deeper the involvement
that prevents easy movements.*

*Free from intentions at the sight of situations,
fogs will disperse by themselves.*

*Advices and examples of letting grasping go are
meant to help enliven beings.*

Comment:

Worldly people's interactions are based on grasping to appearances; thus entanglements are ever deeper with more involvements. Such activities seem very much alive on the surface; indeed, limitations to their options are ever growing. If one could be free from intentions at the sight of situations, the illusive and deluding worldly affairs will flow on by themselves. Offering advices and examples of letting grasping go upon awakening, the compassionate expectation is the resurrection from illusion of all beings.

Written in Chinese and translated on February 14,
2006

El Cerrito, California

Ways of Expression

*What's right and what's wrong, put it aside for now,
Pushing forward with sharp words stirs conflicts up,
Ways of expression are of myriad sorts, you see, only
Being humble and considerate will enhance
harmony.*

Comments:

Who's right and who's wrong cannot be clearly
figured out,
Attitudes of arrogance and oppression provoke
agitations,
Only after grasping's gone can one see thousands
of paths,
Warm words and smiling faces are welcomed
everywhere!

Written in Chinese and translated on February 21,
2006
El Cerrito, California

Root of Realizing Impermanence

Root of realizing impermanence is renunciation of grasping.

In the absence of artificial maneuvers it is originally at ease.

Looking ahead and reflecting back are both mental diseases.

Responding spontaneously one realizes harmony in oneness.

Comment:

A disciple asked, "Wherein lies the root of impermanence? It is not easy to grasp it."

When impermanence is keenly and genuinely realized there is no longer anything that matters. To practice on impermanence so as to gain realization of impermanence, the root lies in renunciation of one's grasping at all levels. Recollecting the past or worrying ahead is an extra activity that brings on incessant self-disturbances. A practitioner flows through situations without intentions and responds spontaneously; thus, realization of the original harmony of all phenomena might gradually be attained.

Written in Chinese and translated on March 6, 2006
El Cerrito, California

Minding Others' Business

Intending to mind others' business, one's grasping is deep indeed.

Whatever others do will be criticized, causing others resentments.

To practice Dharma one should learn to check on oneself at first:

Which among my intentions and behaviors is agreeable to Bodhi?

Comment:

Practicing Dharma is not for self-interests; rather it is for all beings to attain Bodhi. Criticizing others at their every move, not realizing that this reflects deep grasping of one's own. Benefiting others has not yet become apparent, and yet their feelings of loathsomeness have already been rooted. Why not cultivate oneself first by constantly striving to achieve concord with Bodhi? Paths of enlightenment are originally open and widespread; in the absence of intentions all match naturally.

Written in Chinese and translated on March 14, 2006

El Cerrito, California

Not to Criticize

For anyone to do something, it is difficult to have it perfectly done.

Picking on this and complaining about that, what to do to satisfy?

Accommodating in accordance with situations to pacify both sides.

Without presumptions in mind would make it easier to be tolerant.

Comment:

Holding presumptions yields much complain at all turns of events. Complains readily poured, how could compliance be easy to achieve? Comprehending that matters are difficult to be perfect, one accommodates to appease all involved. Free from presumptions one accepts and is in peace with whatever that arrived.

Written in Chinese on March 27, 2006

Translated on March 28, 2006

El Cerrito, California

Tranquil Relaxation

*Without falling into wordy interpretations
carrying on in simple and solid manner.*

*For long years let things unfold by themselves in
the absence of personal intention.*

*Bitter cold of winter and comforting warmth of
spring had been experienced much.*

*Nowadays activities and inactivity in daily life are
imbued with tranquil relaxation.*

Written in Chinese and translated on May 4, 2006
El Cerrito, California



Seal of Dharmadhatu Mind

<http://www.originalpurity.org/gurulin/b5files/a0/a0184.html>

Learning to Forget

*Upon death all would disperse like fading fogs,
Nevertheless past events kept recurring in mind.
Incessant comparisons incur self-torture painful.
One rather clean mind by learning to forget soon.*

Comment:

What to grasp and what to compare, 'tis mostly up to people themselves. Worldly situations are like buildings in mirage, clinging to them amounts to self-torture in vain. Remaining days are not many, why suffer by continuing like this? Learn to forget about making comparisons soon, and Bodhi aspiration will sprout from a clear mind.

Written in Chinese and translated on July 15, 2006
El Cerrito, California

No Complaints

*When had complaints inspired people profoundly?
Only added self-disturbance and blurred the sight.
Reflect on one's grasping to open up one's views,
Seek and traverse other paths to nurture potentials.*

Comment:

Complaining about others, how would that help the matters? Only added commotions and wasted mind and energy in vain. Reflect on one's grasping to find out where the stagnation lies. Open up one's views even to the extent of abiding beyond views. Bypass wrestling and develop alternative routes. Thus wisdom gradually matures and skillful means come alive and accommodating.

Written in Chinese and translated on August 2,
2006

El Cerrito, California

Mind as Cemetery

*Worldly discussions and considerations
Receive no response on cemetery ground.
Sounds of wind or birds do not cease in silence,
But come gradually in the rhythm of nature.
Let minds of practitioners be like cemeteries,
Not stirred by worldly commotions, nor floating
on dusty winds.
Let purity emerge and expand naturally, and let,
In plain and solid daily behaviors, wisdom and
compassion reveal!*

Written in Chinese and translated on August 12,
2006
El Cerrito, California



<http://www.originalpurity.org/gurulin/b5files/a0/a0090.html>

Forgiven and Forgotten

Forgiving, not because one regards oneself as superior to others,

But because one realizes that, as a tiny bit, there is nothing to be arrogant for.

Unwilling to forgive is right in the tight grip of the shackle of self-grasping.

Forgiven thoroughly, almost forgotten, no longer matters.

Written in Chinese and translated on September 8, 2006

El Cerrito, California



Seal of Zhi Jie

<http://www.originalpurity.org/gurulin/b5files/a0/a0186.html>

Love in not Helping

Guarding protectively all the time will yield only weak sprouts.

Showering prizes makes it difficult to appreciate the generosity.

Let go without extending a helping hand yet with love profound.

Responding to all equally according to situations is real salvation.

Comments:

To love someone is to help the person become independently capable. Protecting all the time will disable the person's ability to be independent. Granting too much awards will prevent the person from experiencing the hardships encountered during the process of gaining achievements, and consequently unable to appreciate how valuable the fruits are. Therefore, to love someone one should let go without extending a helping hand so that the person may learn to stand up again after fallen. The great compassion of Buddha lies in the great wisdom of responding to all sentient beings equally in accordance with causal conditions of the given situations.

Written in Chinese on November 3, 2006

Translated on November 18, 2006

El Cerrito, California

My Bodhicitta Vows

(May be Used for Dedication of Merits)

Dr. Yutang Lin

1. May virtuous gurus remain with us and those departed return soon!
2. May perverse views and violence soon become extinct, and Dharma spread without hindrance!
3. May all beings proceed diligently on the path toward Buddhahood and achieve the goal before death!
4. May the Great Compassion flourish in all beings and never regress until they reach perfect Buddhahood!
5. May the Great Wisdom thrive in all beings and never regress until they reach perfect Buddhahood!

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