

Eliminate Selfishness and Melt into the Fa

By a practitioner in China

(Clearwisdom.net) Teacher told us that, "From now on, whatever you do, you should consider others first so as to attain the righteous enlightenment of selflessness and altruism." ("Non-Omission in Buddha Nature" from Essentials for Further Advancement). I'd like to share my experience in terms of eliminating selfishness.

As a human being, it is most difficult to let go of fame, gain, and sentimentality. After obtaining the Fa, I realized that I should let go of the desire for material things and money. I therefore actively cultivated and eliminated these aspects in my daily life. I often run into beggars on the street. I used to be very indifferent to them and would think, "Why should I give you my money for no reason?" After I began cultivation I started to let go of my attachment to money. Later on I became exceedingly willing to give alms. It developed to such extent that every time I went out I hoped in my heart to run into several "beggars" who ask for money. Subconsciously, I also felt pleased after handing out money. After a while I realized this mentality was not right. Why did I long for doing charity? Was that compassion?

After thinking about it carefully I found the hidden selfishness, which was aimed at my own good feelings. My giving was not completely out of sympathy for them. I knew this was a "good deed," and reasoned I would get "a good reward" and accumulate de [virtue]. On one hand, I didn't understand what form a practitioner's compassion is to take. On the other hand, my conduct was selfishness, for the purpose of accumulating de. "No loss, no gain. To gain, one must lose," said Teacher in the book Zhuan Falun. The beggars must give their de in exchange for money. In my subconscious, I sometimes had the thought of exchanging money for de. I did not only think to avoid consideration for the eternity of others' lives, I intentionally wanted to take their de. This was driven by the filthy, selfish and narrow-minded mentality of wanting to accumulate de.

After realizing this I tried hard to get rid of this mentality and tried my best to reduce the chances of doing these kinds of things intentionally. After eliminating the selfishness of giving with pursuit I was uncertain about the meaning of attachment to wealth. On this issue I came to understand what Teacher said, "Sacrifice is evidenced by one's being detached from an everyday person's attachments. If a person can indeed calmly abandon everything with his heart being unmoved, he is actually at that level already. Yet cultivation practice is to upgrade yourself: You are already able to abandon the attachment, so why not also abandon the fear of attachment, itself as well? Isn't abandonment without omission a higher sacrifice? Yet if a cultivator or an everyday person who cannot even make fundamental sacrifices also discusses this principle, he is actually undermining the Fa by making an excuse for the attachment he cannot give up." ("Non-Omission" in Essentials for Further Advancement)

When I was unwilling to donate, due to the attachment to money, and yet used the excuse that "not that I cannot let go of wealth, but I cannot let him lose de," I knew in fact that I am a person "who cannot even make fundamental sacrifices also discusses this principle, he is actually undermining the Fa by making excuses for the attachments he cannot give up." ("Non-Omission") I understood the relationship between loss and gain, the root of life's pains and happiness, and the compassion of a cultivator. Now, when I see someone make a pitiful living by begging and making money off of others' kindness with no effort on his own, and I gave him money, I would yet wonder whether I did this for fear of having the attachment [to wealth].

The fear of losing de is also selfishness. Knowing the importance of de has for a cultivator, I'd rather suffer losses in my everyday life, even intentionally, for fear of losing de by gaining unfair advantages. For example, it's normal for friends and relatives to exchange gifts on holidays. I pay too much attention to not losing de, and therefore I always give gifts to others of equal or greater value. This sometimes caused awkward situations and embarrasses both parties. I even had this mentality when dealing with my parents. The selfishness of fear to lose de prevented me from better grasping the principle of "practice cultivation while conforming to everyday people as much as possible" (Zhuan Falun). This mentality exhausted me when dealing with others.

Once I collaborated with a colleague to write two articles and received remuneration. At that time I thought that I mainly contributed to only one of the articles and shouldn't take the money. At that time a colleague of mine was encountering financial difficulties. I added some money to the fee and donated it to the colleague. My thought then was that "I don't deserve this money, so I give it to others." In fact, in the "good deed" of transferring money to others, there hid my strong mentality, fear of losing de.

Such was the case in my personal cultivation. I could also discern different kinds of selfishness in doing Dafa work, safeguarding the Fa and rectifying the Fa.

After July 20, 1999, I have gone to Beijing and done some things to safeguard the Fa and clarify the truth. Back then when I stepped forward, aside for the sake of Dafa, I had selfish notions, such as "I must let go of life and death, otherwise I cannot reach Consummation, and I cannot afford to miss the opportunity of reaching Consummation." This mentality of always thinking of "self" in Dafa is also selfishness. I cannot let go of myself, which is not the right state for a Dafa particle. Regarding selfishness, Teacher said, "As a matter of fact, for cultivators in the past to say: 'I'm doing such and such,' 'I want to do such and such,' 'I want to obtain such and such,' 'I am practicing cultivation,' 'I want to become a Buddha,' or 'I wish to attain such and such,' none of these diverged from selfishness. But what I want you to be able to do is to truly, purely, and unselfishly reach Consummation with the genuinely righteous Fa and righteous Enlightenment--only then can you achieve eternal non-extinction. So I'm telling you that you have to consider others first in whatever you do." (Lecture at the Conference in Switzerland, Geneva 1998)

Teacher's Fa guides me in my cultivation process, to gradually realize various kinds of selfishness in safeguarding the Fa and clarifying the truth, such as the attachments to Consummation and establishing mighty virtues, the fear of being left behind, the competitive mentality, and others. We all know that we should let go of all those things that are treasured by everyday people. Nonetheless, isn't it also an attachment if we care too much about things that are important to cultivators? Of course, now I know clearly that there is a big gap between my xinxing [mind and heart nature] and that of a Dafa particle. Meanwhile, I have also come to realize these attachments and manifestations of selfishness that were difficult to detect for other cultivators in history, but were explicitly told by Teacher. I started to have some sense of the [true] state of a Dafa particle, as said in "Master Li Hongzhi's Lecture at the Great Lakes Conference in North America," where Teacher said, "In the past, in whatever we were doing you would think: 'How can I study the Fa well? How should I work for Dafa? How can I improve myself? How can I do better?' You always felt that you were learning Dafa, rather than that you were a part of Dafa. After this year I find that you've completely changed. You no longer think as you used to. No matter what you do for Dafa and no matter what it is you're doing, you are placing yourselves in Dafa and not thinking about 'I want to do something for Dafa' or 'I want to improve myself in this way or that way' as you did before. No matter what you do, you aren't thinking that you're doing something for Dafa, about how you should do things for Dafa, or 'how can I do things well for this Fa.'

Instead, you are placing yourselves within Dafa. Like a particle of Dafa, [you feel that] no matter what it is, you should just do it. Even though you aren't conscious of it or aren't expressing it clearly in words that is in fact how your actions already are. This is the biggest change I see in you after this year. In other words, you are completely in the Fa already."

In September I was arrested and sent to a brainwashing class. Several days later, instead of being misled to enlighten along an evil path, I managed to escape from the brainwashing class with the guidance of Teacher's great compassion. Hearing my story, fellow practitioners were all encouraged, as it strengthened our confidence in defeating the evil. I didn't behave remarkably in the brainwashing class, nor did I cultivate very well in my everyday life, but Teacher's great compassion guided me away from taking a wrong path. My insignificant self and my insignificant deeds resulted in such an outstanding and righteous outcome. I could not calm down. I feel so tiny, my honor or disgrace, loss or gain is so negligible in Dafa's whole advancement process. Nevertheless, small as I am I feel gratified that I can exert the little strength I have for the Fa-rectification process. I do not belong to only myself anymore. I am a tiny particle of the Fa. In my heart I become aware that my words and deeds in the Fa, which may bring to the loss or gain of the Fa-rectification become so solemn, sacred and important. As a Fa particle I understand even better my importance to take the righteous cultivation path. To take the righteous path is not for oneself; it is for our Dafa and for those sentient beings who came to obtain the Fa. For those practitioners who once took on evil path, the stains caused by their wrong deed are a big loss to themselves. However, have we ever thought about the loss and disgrace of Dafa caused by them in people's minds? Master said in "Dafa is Indestructible", "... some students aren't able to endure amidst the agony of the persecution, and have done what a Dafa disciple absolutely should not and cannot do. This is a disgrace to Dafa."

Teacher's Fa made me understand that if one's mindset focuses on one's own losses and gains, such as his own Consummation, mighty virtue, honor or disgrace, then that is selfishness. If one cannot view everything from the standpoint of Dafa and the Fa-rectification process, then that's not the right state that a Dafa practitioner and a Fa-rectification disciple should be in. Walk uprightly on the cultivation path, be selfless and altruistic, and melt into the Fa.

Fellow practitioners, please point out any mistakes.

Posting date: 11/2/2001

Original article date: 10/31/2001

Category: Views on Cultivation

Translated on 10/29/2001

Chinese version available at <http://minghui.ca/mh/articles/2001/10/26/18600.html>