

Overwhelmed? How to Develop Inner Stability.

Many people describe feeling flung about by their feelings. Usually they are talking about despair, suffering, anxiety and depression. These can take over when faced with an obstacle or being unusually stressed by life events. These feelings are not something we can ignore, as we are faced with them many days. But you can learn how to navigate them, not let them take you off course.

In Nichiren's Writings these feelings are called the Eight Winds. This is what he says about them.

“Worthy persons deserve to be called so because they are not carried away by the eight winds: prosperity, decline, disgrace, honor, praise, censure, suffering and pleasure. They are neither elated by prosperity or grieved by decline. The heavenly gods will surely protect one who is unbending before the eight winds. But if you nurse an unreasonable grudge against your lord, they will not protect you, not for all your prayers.” Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, P, 749

Happiness comes when we learn not to be thrown off balance by outer events. Then we can remain confident and optimistic in the face of everyday reality. This persistence even in the face of defeat keeps us strong and allows us to be victorious in the end.

How Can You Develop Inner Stability?

There are no short cuts. We need to develop perseverance in the following areas.

Go to the Gohonzon First:

When something threatens to throw you off balance. Go to the Gohonzon first. The Gohonzon is a rock to stand on, when you learn to stand on that rock, and have seen how things work out for the best one time after another, you will develop absolute confidence that it will happen this time too. When you chant earnestly about something, you will receive answers that are far better than the ones you have mentally chased round and round about on your own.

Be Consistent in Practice:

When attacked by the eight winds you need to gear into your practice. Sometimes all you can do is keep chanting your way through the feelings no matter what. In this way you will raise your life condition out of the lower worlds and into the higher ones. Although it may be hard to chant at the beginning, eventually you will find your life condition has risen above the turmoil. The support derived from strong practice is what allows us to persist in the face of obstacles and frustrations.

Get Encouragement.

Listen to experiences and talk to people who have practiced a long time. And don't expect your situation to change overnight. Understand that things change when the time is right.

Study Buddhist Teachings:

Study helps to stabilize our lives and bring out deep wisdom. President Ikeda's book *Faith into Action* is a wonderful book and he has something to say in short paragraphs about most situations. Going back to the basics with *Winning Life* can remind you about how things work in the world. His yellow daily guidance book, *For Today and Tomorrow*, has very helpful guidance on many topics including on developing your unique life path. Study, in addition to wholehearted practice, allows us to train our deluded minds to view life from a Buddha's perspective

Develop a Strong Mind of Faith

Strong faith will develop when you consistently and wholeheartedly practice both for yourself and others and study the writings available to you. Strong faith allows us to bring out inner wisdom so we can bring out the full positive potential in all things and situations. It allows us to take advantage of change and move forward to victory.

Change Your Self-Talk.

Don't immerse yourself in the negativity. According to modern understanding of how the mind works, our feelings follow our thoughts. You can control how you think and then your emotions will follow suit.

According to the concept of 3000 realms in a single moment of life, thoughts or feelings take form just as they are. So we want to keep our thoughts positive to create causes for a positive future. When you start to think negative thoughts remind yourself that you have had challenges before, and they always work out. Then refocus on what you want.

Find a Support System in the Group.

A support system might mean people to chant with, and people who can answer questions and talk about how they have handled experiences with their practice. Find an advanced practitioner and get guidance.

Remind Yourself of the Promises

“Though one might point at the earth and miss it, though one might bind up the sky, through the tides might cease to ebb and flow and the sun rise in the west, it could never come about that the prayers of the practitioner of the Lotus Sutra would go unanswered.” WND, 345

“This sutra, the Lotus Sutra, can fulfill their desires, as a clear cool pond can satisfy all those who are thirsty. They will enjoy peace and security in their present existence and good circumstances in future existences.” WND, 412

You Can Do It

When you do these things consistently you will develop a sense of self-assurance and confidence that you can overcome any obstacle. When you base your life on the rock of the Gohonzon, you will develop a strong inner core. Then nothing will disturb your sense of well-being contentment and joy.

Summary:

Today we discussed what you can do to stabilize when emotionally overwhelmed by the eight winds.

1. Go to the Gohonzon first
2. Consistency in practice to raise your life condition
3. Get encouragement
4. Study Buddhist teachings
5. Develop a strong mind of faith
6. Change your self-talk from negative to positive
7. Find a support system in the group
8. Read the promises

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Comments:

I love hearing from you. If you have an idea for a topic you'd like to hear about, let me know. I'm also interested in hearing what you think, so keep your thoughts coming. See you in two weeks.