

## **Can I Change Someone Else by Chanting?**

**Can I Change someone else by chanting? I have received this question over and over. Today I want to address this topic as it has come up several times in the last month.**

**We have a Buddhist concept – oneness of life and it's environment. We can't read it in just word and mind. We have to understand how to apply this concept to everyday life.**

**According to the Dictionary of Buddhism, "Life" constitutes a subjective self that experiences the effects of its past actions and "its environment" an objective realm in which the individual's good and bad karma find expression.**

**Each living being has its own unique environment. The effects of karma appear in oneself and in one's objective environment because self and environment are two integral aspects of an individual."**

**What is this saying? This means that everything, and I mean everything in our circumstances, comes from within us to manifest in our world. That includes all of our problems as well as all the wonderful things that happen to us. We can suffer for any number of reasons, our parents don't treat us well, our children are creating problems, we have no money, we're suffering from an illness, we don't get along with other people and so on and so on. All of these issues arise from within us to manifest in the outer world, our environment.**

**We have all made many causes in past lives which, according to the simultaneity of cause and effect will manifest in the future when the time is right. Whatever problem you are experiencing now are the results or effect of a past cause or causes, which are manifesting now when the time is right.**

**This concept is not there to cast blame or make you feel as though you are a bad person. On the contrary, understanding that causes arise from within us gives us great power to change our circumstances for the better and to create better causes from this time forward.**

**If you are only chanting about the effect, the other persons behavior, you are only looking at half of the equation. You are not looking at the most important part, that you must change your destiny to suffer in circumstances such as these. When you change your destiny the other person will change of**

**themselves. By transforming our own heart and mind, we can transform even the most negative environment into a positive one.**

**So, Can I change someone else by chanting? You won't change them by just chanting about their behavior. You also have to change your own destiny to suffer in such a situation.**

**Satori Izumi, an well known leader in Japan, known for his effective guidance, tells the following story. "One day President Toda was giving individual guidance at his office in Ichigaya Tokyo. A woman complained, 'My mother-in-law is perverse, malicious and will not change her ways no matter how often I ask her' She called the older woman all, the names she could think of. 'As young as you are, you are still unable to correct your own disposition,' the president said to her. 'How then can you expect your aged mother-in-law to change hers?' He went on to give her detailed guidance. Finally, the woman realized that the fundamental source of the problem was not her mother-in-law, but she herself. When she returned home, she found that her mother-in-law's attitude toward her had undergone a profound change for the better."**

**In order to do this you'll have to strengthen your practice. If you are feeling as though you are overwhelmed by your circumstances then you need to chant earnestly to strengthen yourself. This may mean a commitment to chant much longer than usual over a period of time. You can also chant for courage if you need to confront a situation or a person in your environment.**

**It can be hard to do but we need to squarely face that our own bad karma is the cause of our unhappiness and pray for it to be changed. Wholeheartedly chant to the Gohonzon, repenting whatever offenses and slanders you have committed in any lifetime. Then you need to make a determination, take action and do something to overcome them. You will know what to do if you chant about it. If you do this, there is no destiny or karma which can't be changed for the better.**

**When we chant the gohonzon has great power to change us, not to change someone else. We can always chant for the problem to change but we also have to change our own destiny to suffer in a situation such as this.**

**The beauty of this is that we can stop beating our heads against a wall trying to get someone else to change. It gives us the power to shift any circumstance into something positive.**

**Summary:**

**Today we discussed the concept of oneness of self and environment, that each of us experiences the effects of our past actions and that our environment is the objective realm where our karmic effects find expression.**

**That only chanting about the other person's behavior is only half of the equation. You must chant to change your destiny to suffer in a situation such as this.**

**Comments: As always I'm interested in what you think about different topics. I hope that all of you would feel free to answer someone else if you feel you can be helpful.**