**Just How Responsible Are We For Our Problems?**

The Buddhist concept oneness of life and its environment teaches us that everything in our lives comes from the inside out to manifest in the world. That sounds fine when life is going well but we tend not to believe this when we come up against a problem with another person. Then we don’t see our circumstances the same way.

Many times, we fall into blaming the other person. We become a victim in the situation. After all we can see the problems the other person is causing but don’t see how we are contributing to the situation. No one ever believes that their suffering is their own fault.

One of the hardest realizations in this Buddhism is that if we are involved in anything, that we have made causes to have it manifest in our lives. Many simply don’t want that responsibility. Whether we know it or not, or believe it or not, the law of the simultaneity of cause and effect is going to operate in our lives. Every thought, action or word is creating a cause which will manifest when the time is right in the future

Every situation has both an internal and external cause. The internal cause is our karma, the situation is the external effect. For example if you have a class of clear water with sediment in the bottom and stir it, the stirring brings up the sediment. If no sediment were there nothing would happen when the water is stirred. The sediment is the internal cause, our suffering, the effect is the current situation which is causing the suffering, the sick child, the tyrannical husband, the bankruptcy.

People don’t notice the sediment in their own lives but accuse the other of creating the problem. If you hadn’t …. But if there was no internal cause the outer action wouldn’t cause suffering.

People say, “I would never have wanted to manifest anything like this, so how can you say I did. I don’t remember anything”. We have to remember that we have lived many, many lifetimes and that not everything manifests all at once but only when the time is right. We also carry karma from one lifetime to another. So we probably won’t remember. But we must understand the principle if we want to resolve a difficult situation – we have made past causes which are manifesting in the current situation.

People try to deal with the effect of the causes they have made – which is to change what the other person is doing. But that won’t work. As long as you complain about the other person, looking to solve the problem outside of yourself, nothing will change. You can’t change someone else’s karma. You can only change your own. You have to recognize that your own bad karma to suffer in such a situation is the cause of your unhappiness and pray for it to be changed.

We strengthen our faith and practice to change our destiny. When you change your karma resulting in your current suffering , the situation will change of itself.

**How do we Chant About This?**

The Gosho states,

“Even a small offense will destine one to the evil paths if one doesn’t repent of it. But even a great slander can be eradicated if one repents of it.”

So how do we chant about this? First we must sit in front of the Gohonzon and take full responsibility for the situation. Resolve to make the changes necessary to overcome any offenses and slanders you may have committed in this or other lifetimes.

Then chant for the wisdom to know what to do. Once you see the path, take action, to overcome whatever you discover. Don’t worry about what the other person is doing. When you change, the situation will change from the inside out.

You might also chant for the growth and happiness of the person with whom you are in conflict, or about whom you are having negative feelings.

You could chant to respect their differences and unique abilities.

**An Experience**

One thirty-three year old member was married to a man who had become an alcoholic. Life was extraordinarily difficult. He was deeply depressed and didn’t want to live. Fairly frequently he tried to take his own life, and his wife had to deal with the crises and pick up the pieces.

After this had gone on for a period of months, he told his wife one day that he wanted her to change. She was completely taken aback. She almost said to him, “How can you say this to me after everything you have put me through?” She had been viewing the situation as being his problem.

But she was a practicing Buddhist and knew about the concept of oneness of self and environment. So she swallowed her words and went to the Gohonzon instead. There she chanted with determination to know the truth of herself. After seriously chanting about this for a period of time, she came to understand through self-reflection that she had been harboring arrogant feelings towards her husband and his family. Before the Gohonzon, she resolved to take action and change this in herself.

The shift was amazing. Her husband became loving, started doing things for her and most important of all, stopped drinking. Today they have a happy marriage.

**Summary:**

Today we discussed the principle of oneness of self and the environment. If you are suffering because of a problem, it is your karma to suffer because of it. If you chant to change the other person, that is dealing with the effect not the cause of the problem. You cannot change another person’s karma, only your own.

Every problem has an internal cause as well as an external cause which work together to bring about the effect. If you chant to change your karma to suffer, the internal cause, and take action to resolve the cause, the situation will change of itself.

If you are suffering because of the problem, you are the person to resolve it.

You need to chant about what you need to change to gain the wisdom to know what to do. You can chant for the happiness of the other person as well. Sometimes there are hidden causes for another person’s behavior which we cannot know. Chanting for their happiness will come to address those causes.

Here are some related URL’s that you might like.

1. Difficult Family Karma? How to change It <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-ZD>
2. Are You Trying to Avoid a difficult Problem? <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-Xw>
3. 3. Difficult Problem? 5 steps to Nailing It https://wp.me/p3V1J9-UZ