

The Relationship Between Ourselves and Our World How to Raise a Child Who is a Contributor to Life

There is an old story of two monks. One is the novice monk and the other the master. The novice asks the master, "What is the difference between you and me?" The master replies, "You see yourself as being in the world, while I see the world as being in me." This is the fundamental difference between a materialistic view of the world and the spiritual view. In the materialistic view we are just insignificant two-legged creatures, one of billions on this planet, at the mercy of vast forces beyond our control. Our constant concern is how to protect ourselves from the fickle vagaries of fate. From the spiritual point of view, it is a vastly different picture. We are one with all that is. Our life and experiences flow from the thoughts we hold constantly in our mind. We are the creators of our life, the molders of our universe. We are connected to a limitless, unseen world filled with infinite possibilities. There are no shortages; instead, there is infinite abundance. When our minds are clear, we understand that we are the channels through which the endless abundance, love, and life that exist in the unseen world of the True Image flow into the everyday world of our existence.

As Dr. Taniguchi explains in the Holy Sutra, Nectarean Shower of Holy Doctrines:

Christ said: "The kingdom of God is within you." Truly, I say to you: "Within you" means your true nature, the real man. Since your true nature is God-man, the kingdom of God is only "within you."

Within the life of a man exists all. The word "all" encompasses the entire universe and is also the world of the Buddha. When you are in accord with the great law of true existence -- God's Will -- all contradictions, confrontations and conflicts cannot help but vanish like the morning dew vanishes under the rising sun. Thus we must propagate as quickly as possible the Truth that the world of God is the only real existence. We must manifest the world of grand harmony where there is no resentment, grudge, confrontation, or conflict.

The wealth and power hidden in the great universe are truly unlimited. One must not have the miserly thought of having to share limited resources or wealth. In the great universe everyone can draw in abundance from the supply of unlimited resources and create a wonderful life for themselves. In order to do this, you must recognize the infinite abundance of God's world, for if you are focused only on the material world, you cannot help but think that you are consigned to sharing its limited wealth.

When your mind expands to grasp this point of view, you suddenly realize it is not very important what is happening out there but absolutely critical what is happening in you, that is, in your mind. This is so because we weave the very fabric of our lives from the threads of our thoughts. By paying careful attention to our thoughts, and directing them along the path where we are divinely guided, we begin to experience wonderful results. Our faith allows us to be more generous, more loving, more joyful, more patient . . . because we are no longer in

competition with others but, rather, we are unfolding the wondrous, bright, shining reality of our True Image.

From this perspective, life is no longer a struggle to seize our meager share from the limited resources we see around us. It is no longer a world where every materialistic advance leaves us feeling empty and hoping we will be happy the next time. Instead, we nourish our soul by reading words of Truth, practicing Shinsokan Meditation to visualize God, and most importantly, performing deeds of love and gratitude for our fellow human beings. In this way we feel the love of God flowing through us to others, and our hearts are filled with joy.

When we model this behavior for our children, then they learn that giving is receiving. When we give of our time, talents, and resources to others, we are at the same time rewarded with the joy of the giver. Never do we feel as competent, as happy, as powerful, as when we are able to do something of benefit to another. As humans, we are built with the inner wiring to want to serve others in a meaningful and appreciated way. As Dr. Taniguchi teaches us, the world is a reflection of our minds. When we give generously of our time, talents, and resources to those around us, we receive generously in return, though perhaps not from the same people we have helped. Those who are the most prosperous and wealthy in spiritual terms are those who have found the best ways to give to the greatest number.

To give without expectation of return is the purest and most God-like form of giving. We see this especially in the love of parents for their children and their willingness to do whatever is needed by their children. When we can extend this sense of giving to all people, we will have achieved a divine consciousness. This becomes possible for us when we begin drawing from the limitless well of God's abundance.

There is an old adage: our children do what we do, not necessarily what we say. When we discover the unseen world of the True Image and begin drawing its infinite plenty into this everyday world, our children, too, will follow our example. This is the greatest gift we can give: the knowledge that we are all children of God, that there is no fear, worry, or illness -- only abundance, joy, harmony, peace, and freedom of spirit. As Rev. Seicho Taniguchi has said, "We believe, 'I am a child of God.' Therefore there is only the brilliant, shining perfection of God wherever I go, wherever I live, whatever I see. Such a conviction will make you a true master of all things."