

The Encounter Between Master and Disciple is a Predestined Affinity of Many Lifetimes

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A true spiritual practitioner will inevitably meet their master sooner or later.

When the karmic bond from many lifetimes ripens, the master and disciple meet each other, and the disciple's heart is always inexplicably stirred.

It could be sorrow, joy, relief, or sentimental...emotions that are beyond words.

Usually, it's the master who seeks out the disciple. Sometimes it seems like the disciple comes looking for the master, but the master naturally knows this in their heart. When the master recognizes the disciple just at first glance, the disciple is, however, completely unaware.

The master will enlighten you in a special way, guiding you to come to them on your own. What

follows is a difficult running-in period, which often takes two or three years.

If it is your true master, they might reprimand you, manipulate you, snub you, praise you, pamper you, or let you be, and through a continuous cycle of intense warmth and cold indifference, you find yourself as if in the cloud or in the mist, on peak of mountain or bottom of valley, in heaven or on earth, unable to grasp what's next. For without being beaten, you won't awaken; without being forsaken, you won't feel comfort; without being hurt, you won't understand; without being afflicted, you won't behave; without having pain, you won't stop; without being suppressed, you won't submit. It's truly a mix of love and hate, enduring all kinds of "torments"...

Thereafter, you'll attempt to escape unceasingly, but helplessly, you return obediently, because you realize you are simply inseparable from your master—you must rely on them. You'll even become anxious to know how the master will teach you a lesson next.

A master is like a blazing fire. If you are too close, you'll be burned all over, but if you stay too far, you'll feel cold. It is incredibly difficult to maintain a proper distance. This is how the master intensifies conditioned effort to lead the disciple to enter the effortless state of the middle path.

As a disciple, you constantly express your devotion, but time and again, it ends in failure, as the master simply takes no notice of your declarations. All you can do is humbly surrender your mind. Eventually, you will realize that you deeply yearn to see your master, and the joy in your heart when their name is mentioned is indescribable. Sometimes, when you meet your master, you become unusually nervous. It is because your benefactor-master is like a clear mirror, radiating from within a kind of purity, awareness, and wisdom, reflecting the disciple's deep-rooted karmic hindrances.

In the presence of the master, the disciple feels an overwhelming sense of shame, as if there is no place to hide. Your heart is full of words, but you find it difficult to speak your mind. This back-and-forth process of refinement continues until the coarse habits of the disciple are worn away. Only then, you are then able to establish complete inner "trust" and "faith" in your master, and it is at this point that the communication between master and disciple reflects a transmission of lineage-based qualities.

Only then, you will have the ability to perceive and comprehend the endless compassion in your master's words, smiles, and conversations. You'll be able to sense the hardships and bitterness your master has endured along the way in spreading the Dharma for the benefit of all beings. You'll be able to understand the meaning behind the food in your master's bowl, the tea in their cup, the tears in their smile...Being a disciple is difficult, but being a master is even more challenging.

A virtuous master is a great benefactor who continues the transmission of wisdom, guiding us beyond the cycle of life and death, leading us toward liberation and the other shore of light. The grace of the master is as deep as the ocean, and it would be hard to repay even if one were to be shattered into pieces. Without the compassion of the benefactor-master, the disciple would be lost on the crossroads of life, wandering indefinitely. The disciple vows to repay the debt of gratitude to the benefactor-master throughout lifetimes to come.

Under the guidance of your benefactor-master, you notice that your gaze becomes softer, and you are always able to discover the good and kindness in others. Your words becomes gentler for fear of hurting the hearts of others. Your heart softens, even toward those who have hurt you the most, and you develop boundless compassion, finding justifications for their actions.

When you quietly reflect on your master, every words and deeds, every gesture, their voice, their smile, their serene nature, and joyful demeanor come to mind. At times, they appear as innocent as a child; at other times, as compassionate as Buddha and Bodhisattva; sometimes as dignified as a venerable elder, and sometimes as warm and soothing as spring breeze. The master exudes a natural charm at every moment and in every places.

The master is like a magnet, and the disciple is like a piece of unrefined raw iron, irresistibly drawn to the master and unable to escape. You are completely captivated by them, and willingly surrendering to your master. With pure body, speech and mind, you provide for your benefactor-master.

Those virtuous qualities, like rays of light, permeate your inner heart: openness, acceptance, tolerance, compassion, clarity, awareness, wisdom, serenity, calmness, even a familial tenderness and a warrior's wrath—all flow like refreshing sweet Dharma rain, cleansing your soul over time. The same qualities within you are awakened, and you long to be just like your master.

Everything an enlightened person does is a skillful manifestation in harmony with the circumstances, aimed at benefiting all sentient beings. Their actions are free from any faults, naturally flowing from their luminous and awakened mind. Gradually, you find that you become more broad-minded, the capacity of your heart expands, your body and mind becomes softer, and you're able to bear more responsibility. You are returning to your true nature.

All of this stems from the heart-to-heart transmission between master and disciple, which requires no words. The disciple regards the benefactor-master as a Buddha, and the Dharma practice associated between the master and the disciple brings immeasurable merit and benefit. You received the most intimate lineage transmission, gaining access to the living essence of the so-called "Dharma". However, this is only possible when the virtues are fulfilled and karmic bond ripens.

There are as many methods of spiritual practices as there are imperfections in the world. In front of your master, hide nothing. Present yourself without reservation, no matter what shortcomings you have. Trust in your master, who will heal you with greatest compassion.

The more attached you are to something, the more the Divine will test you on it, forcing you to let go. This is the compassion of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and the gift of the Divine to you.

It all depends on whether you understand it and whether you can endure it. Cultivate right at your weakest point—where you fall is where you must rise again, standing firm and steady.

(Source of Article: Sohu Culture; Author: Huang Yaoshi)