

HAPPINESS AND HARMONY

Joy and suffering arise at the point where you begin to discriminate between good and bad, between what you like and what you don't like. However, true happiness is more than the good feeling you get when things go your way. True happiness arises from letting go of your discriminations; it arises from the middle way, which transcends all dualities.

Happiness is something you make. Don't expect that someone else can give it to you. If you keep clinging to the idea that someone else is going to make you happy, every kind of suffering will follow.

People want their own life to go well, their family to be happy, and their nation to prosper. However, families quarrel, wars occur, and nations collapse. These kinds of things happen because people tend to act and think from a limited, incomplete perspective. If you can see all aspects of the things that confront you and can interact and function together as one with them, then all of those situations will be resolved harmoniously.

Even though you have to share a single piece of bread for a meal, it can be a happy time if you are all harmonious. Even though you have a sumptuous feast, if everyone is speaking harshly to each other, the meal won't be a pleasant experience. Where is hell? Who makes it? Even if you are very rich, and donate a lot of money and food to worthy causes, if your mind is narrow and full of greed, you won't be able to enjoy even the present moment, much less the good results of those donations. Mind is the source of everything, so saving yourself or not saving yourself depends upon how you use your mind. Whether you will be a poor person who is rich, or a rich person who is poor, all depends upon yourself. The Buddha's Pure Land does not exist in some far away realm. If you cultivate your mind, this world itself will naturally become the Pure Land.