

On Excuses

Part II

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We think we are the smartest. That we are intelligent. That we are very awake, and actively waking up more and more all the time. We think we are so wonderful! Actually, I think we are going deeper and deeper into the darkness of the five poisons, creating negativity for ourselves, creating suffering more and more. That is so strange! You aren't angry at you, you aren't upset at you, you don't hate yourself. Do you? No, everybody says they like themselves and are trying to do what is best and smartest for themselves. Oh, really? Then why are you harming yourself? Everyone says, "I'm not harming myself!" Oh, really? You are killing, stealing, robbing, cheating, lying—read about the law of cause and effect in dharma books, and then ask yourself if you are harming yourself through your continuous creation of negativity or not. You have everything in English, so you have no excuse not to know the basic teachings on karma! They are in Spanish, Chinese, and many other languages as well.

"But I don't like to read about that stuff! I don't like to think about that stuff! It's not fun!" That's true. But, hey, wake up—reading about it is not fun, but having to experience it over and over is *really* not fun! Right now you are having to experience the results of your negativity, whether you want them or not, whether you know about them or not. You will continue to have no choice but to experience those undesired results, those sufferings, whether you read about them or not, whether you think about them or not! But if you understand your suffering and where it comes from, then you have the choice to continue on creating and experiencing it or not. If you never learn about it, you have no choice. But still we say, "I can't even read about it. I'm busy." We have so many excuses!

When you die, who is going to help you? "I don't know" is the only answer most people can give. "Maybe God." Well then, who is God? "I don't know." Really, we must hate ourselves. We must hate ourselves more than if we wanted to kill ourselves and chop ourselves into pieces, because we have the opportunity to benefit ourselves and be liberated, and we to refuse to take it.

Our opportunity to practice dharma and achieve liberation isn't just the opportunity to benefit ourselves, but to benefit others—your brother, sister, mother, father, and all sentient beings together. But it looks like we don't care about them, just as we don't care about ourselves. If we did, we would use our tools and teachings—the dharma—and practice sincerely. But we don't sincerely care about all sentient beings. At most, we only pretend to care about our own husband, our own wife, our own children, our own boyfriend or girlfriend. Maybe. Maybe we care about them. Maybe

we just care about ourselves. And what do we do for the ones we say we care about, whether it is just ourselves or includes a few select others? We feed our negativity for their sake. We make excuses for not doing what is positive. Obviously we don't really care for them sincerely! Obviously we don't care for ourselves sincerely!

"Yeah, so what?" This is the kind of attitude we have!

I think it's time to wake up from that.

"Why?"

Because this is your opportunity! You say you love yourself and want to benefit yourself; this is your chance to prove it! The dharma is your opportunity to prove that you really love and respect yourself and want what's best for you. Making excuses instead of doing the dharma—that looks like all you want to do is destroy yourself. That looks like you hate yourself, which is very strange. Doing the dharma, you are showing that you love yourself intelligently. It is how to care for yourself without any mistake, in a positive way, not deceiving or cheating yourself. It absolutely shows that you respect yourself and respect this precious human life, respect your opportunity to liberate yourself and benefit other sentient beings.

Don't take my word for it—check for yourself to see if this is true. Read the teachings of the great masters and see what they say. They have real wisdom and can be trusted, not like this funky old man. Read those teachings, not just books about how to make money, how to cheat other people, and how to lie. We don't need any books on those teachings, anyway! How to cheat others and how to cheat ourselves, we are experts on both.

[to be continued...]