



華嚴法音  
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Dharma

## Eliminate the 'DNA' of Vexation Free Yourself from Secondary Affliction

Translated by HYBC-NA translation team

Being ill is merely a manifestation of vexation. As illness bears down on you, just accept it and let go of it. Our body suffers when we are sick, but why must we let the mind join in the suffering too? Being sick physically is like a battle lost, but letting the mind suffer as well is just like having the whole navy go down with a battleship. Is this wise? We need to contain the damage done to ourselves, and not let it spread out and infect other areas of our lives.

Very often when we are sad, we hold back our tears in front of others. This might, seemingly, be a display of strong emotional control. However, as soon as we are alone, we break down completely. Actually such a display of emotional control in the presence of others is rooted in our moral habits and beliefs. True inner strength lies in our ability to exercise self-control so that our suffering is short-lived, not widely disseminated or exaggerated. Our ability to do so is through the process of mind-cultivation. In other words, mind-cultivation process will free us from secondary affliction.

Adverse events cause primary affliction. If we are unable to contain the primary affliction, it will expand into other aspects of our life and cause a secondary affliction. Most of us are more than capable of handling the initial distress; it's the secondary affliction that hurts us most. Physiological and psychological damages (such as irritation, anxiety and depression) are what we called secondary afflictions.

Life goes on in spite of our successes, failures, satisfaction or dissatisfaction. We were born without vexation. It's our ever-expanding desires that cause vexation. What's more, vexation comes from our inability to handle adversity and our tendency to exaggerate the adversity we do experience. That is to say our vexation is self-inflicted. We compile our own 'sutra of vexation' so to speak. The natures and causes of vexation may vary according to culture and social background, but the main key to mind-cultivation is to rid oneself of the 'DNA' or root cause of vexation. We need to refuse to take on or exaggerate vexation. When the going gets tough, the tough gets going. Having the courage to take on the incredible stress bearing down on us and not yielding to external situations is a form of "awakening", and the ability to contain our experience is a kind of wisdom.