

Two Kinds of People

By Michael Tse



There are two kinds of people. One is always complaining about anything he sees or hears. The other never complains and is always positive and gives compliments about anything he sees. They both can live a long time - but of the two - who will be happier? Of course, the one who always gives compliments and has a positive outlook will be happier. Life is short and so we should live happier lives. Then we will have a good life. If we just complain about everything, who will like to be around us? Even if we have good or long term friends, if we are like this, in the end they will either change and become like you and complain a lot, or they will leave you since they do not like being with you.

It is very true that what kind of people we have around us will determine what kind of nature we will have. Just take a look around us – an educated person likes to be around educated people and an alcoholic likes to be around other alcoholics. Even if we do not decide what kind of friends we want, in the end we will end up with the same kind of people as ourselves.

There is a story about a lady who went to Africa with her husband as he had to work there. She was not used to the place, the weather or the food and, on top of this, she could not speak their language. She did not like it and wanted to go home but her husband could not leave because of his work. She was so unhappy that she wrote a letter to her father telling him all about it. Her father replied and told her to not just look at the things that made her uncomfortable. He told her to instead look at the sky and to see the beauty around her. He wrote that there is always something nice about everything. So she listened to her father and stayed. Slowly she started to look at what the native African people did and soon she found out they made some very unusual pottery which was quite different to what she had seen at home in the west. She started to learn from them and even started

to learn their language. After awhile she grew to enjoy their culture and she learned about things that she did not know or even think about in the West. After three years, she went back home and started to teach people about African pottery and even wrote book about it which became very successful. All of this was possible because she changed her attitude and looked at things in a positive way.

Everyone's life needs to have a direction. We should not just waste it and live a life we do not want. All of us, however, need to survive and pay our bills and so we have to compromise a little. If we find our life is not what we want, but we cannot afford the life we would like, then we should keep our eyes open and wait for the opportunity to arise. But we must remember that we need to prepare ourselves for this *before* the opportunity appears and we should be patient and not keep changing our direction. For example, when I was little, after seeing Bruce Lee in his movies, he became my hero and I wanted to be a martial artist like him. So I trained myself even when I did not have a teacher. I could do 100 push-ups and 150 sit-ups because Bruce Lee 李小龍 trained like that. Any punching and kicking, I just mimicked him.

When I was fourteen the opportunity came and I was able to study Wing Chun Kung Fu with my uncle. Because I already trying to train myself, my body was already quite fit but it was not until I really practised Wing Chun that I realised that I did not need to do all those push-ups and sit-ups. I learned that I just needed to stand in a special stance for a long time then the power would build up. In the end the opportunity came to move over to England to teach Qigong and Kung Fu. Because I had already started planted some seeds, then my dreams could grow. Now I have what I want in my life because I kept following in one direction and believing in myself.

There is another story, about 330 BC in China, a young man, Sun Ben 孫臏 and his friend Peng Juan 龐涓 who both studied with Master Ghost Valley 鬼谷子. The master lived in Ghost Valley so people called him this. Sun Ben's studying was better than Peng Juan's but Peng Juan was very ambitious and jealous. At that time China was not united but was made up of separate countries but Wei 魏 was where Peng Juan from, was one of the stronger countries.

Peng Juan was talented and cunning and very soon he reached a very high military position. One thing that made him worry was Sun Ben who was more talented than him. Sun Ben was a citizen of Qi 齊 and Peng Juan knew that one day Qi and Wei would fight each other, so he invited Sun Ben to his country under the pretence that he would be made his assistant for war strategy. Sun Ben believed him and came to assist his friend. Unfortunately, Peng Juan told the King of Wei 魏王 that Sun Ben was a spy. At that time is very serious crime. Sun Ben was punished, his face was tattooed

and his knee caps were cut to cripple him. Peng Juan pretended to help Sun Ben and treated him well and tricked Sun Ben in to writing his strategy down which was very high-level knowledge and would help Peng Juan win the war. Sun Ben believed him and began to write. One day he realised that everything that had happened was all Peng Juan's plan. So Sun Ben pretended to go crazy. This way Peng Juan could not force him to write anything. One day Sun Ben was helped by one of Qi country's ambassadors to leave Wei and Peng Juan and he returned to his country.

In the end, his high level strategy helped the King of Qi win a few battles. One day the Qi army, led by Sun Ben, fought with the Wei army which being led by Peng Juan. The Qi army pretended to lose and Peng Juan was so arrogant that had begun to believe he really was better than Sun Ben. Sun Ben led Peng Juan's army in to a dense forest. Sun Ben knew that Peng Juan's army would pass a certain place in the forest and so he told someone to peel off part of the bark of a big tree so he could write something on it. He then ordered his soldiers to hide, but gave the instruction that once they saw a light on that tree, they should fire their arrows into that area. As Peng Juan was passing through the forest he saw that there was something written on one of the big trees.

Because it was dark, he held up a torch so that he could read the words written there. It said "Peng Juan died at this tree." When Peng Juan saw the writing he knew he was trapped and suddenly thousands of arrows came down like rain falling. Peng Juan and his army all died. Sun Ben became very famous and even today people still talk about this story.

When we are suffering we should take that opportunity to save our energy because as long as we are alive, there is a chance we can have a better life. I look at many people who do not know what they really want or they cannot have the life they want. So they complain and give up and very negative about anyone who is successful but this is not very good attitude.

I have a close friend that also likes martial arts. We both studied Wing Chun when we were teenagers even though I studied Wing Chun a little earlier than him. But we thought at that time we would practise Chi Sau together until we were old. However, he followed his family's wishes and became an accountant. He missed his Wing Chun training and even though I introduced my Sifu, Ip Chun葉準 (whose father was the legendary Ip Ma葉問 who taught Bruce Lee), he did not go to study. Maybe he was busy or he had some pressure from his family, but that was the fate he chose. Now though, every time we meet up, he always says I am lucky that I can do what I want.

To be honest, being rich and famous does not mean you are successful. It is about whether you are happy or not. Happiness also does not mean we have parties, play games all the time and laugh a

lot. Happiness is inside our hearts and minds. It is feeling content. Whether other people know it or not, it does not matter and this is a high level of happiness.

Today I have seen people who like to tell others how good they are, putting other people down and pointing fingers at others to show how right they are. That is wrong. For instance, some religions feel that other people who do not believe in the same religion are bad people. Some even believe that anyone not believing in their religion will go to hell. In my opinion, that is definitely not what any God wants. A wise God would want every one of us to get along together and respect each other. I am sure that this God would want people to do good deeds to show their own good heart – rather than just talking about being good. In this way their actions will allow other people to one day understand that their religion is good and because of that, maybe they will be moved to join with them. One religion should definitely not be against other religions. Same as that I believe any country should not be against or hate other country.

So if anyone needs to put down others because they are different then this is their insecurity. That is not real happiness. Real happiness has no enemies; the real enemy is us because we cannot handle others. I am really happy when a person does not need to put down others, whether other people disagree with it or not. Tolerance and giving other's space is very important for harmony.

We should find what kind of life we want as we do not know whether we will have a second chance, we may have or may not have. We should try to be happy in life even if we want better but whatever life we want we should be confident enough to accept others opposite to us without putting them down. However, there is still a right and wrong in universal law. We should still disagree with things such as killing, cheating, lying and all the things that harm others.