



after animals with great affection and care. These animals naturally develop trust and friendship with these people, and so, of course, won't attack them.

Our main problem is our strong selfish mind. This makes it difficult for us to even admit that our achievements in life are not due entirely to our own efforts, but due to the kind support and help that we receive from others. Our selfish minds make us forget all the kindness that we have received from others like our parents. When we forget this, we don't realise the contribution they have made to our lives, to the point where we feel that they should do more and more for us in order to receive our thanks and gratitude.

If, as children, we hold this kind of attitude, then no matter how much help we have received from our parents, we never realise just what they have done for us, and we are always expecting more. Even when our parents have grown old and have no source of income we still expect them to support us financially.

This kind of attitude makes it very difficult to develop a good parent-child relationship, which is important for having more happiness and satisfaction in life, for both parents and children. Our ability to live a happy life depends on our relationships with others, so we need to think of how to improve our relationships. This depends on both parties. Parents need to have more understanding of their children's situation, likewise the children need to practise overcoming or reducing the self-centred mind and realising that the parents are not in a position to always be perfect, to always do the right thing or always fulfill our demands. Even if there is a time when they refuse to help out, or they say something bad, it is important that we don't see them as completely negative and unhelpful. We can do this by remembering all the good things and the great support they have given us.

In terms of spiritual practice there is no more beneficial practice than serving people, especially those that have been particularly kind to you. For example, looking after an elderly parent. Think about what you can do to repay all the kindness and all the support they have given over the years.

The last two lines:

Hereafter let's always accept other's favours  
Both graciously and with most humble respect.

refer to a situation where we receive harm and abuse from others to whom we have shown a great deal of love and support. This is happening because, in the past, we have responded like this towards people that have been kind to us. Now that we realise this, we need to make a commitment to always show respect and humility to those that have been helpful and kind to us, even if they are violent or abusive towards us.

We will finish the teaching here and, as usual, we will chant the Buddha's mantra seven times. As we chant the mantra we should sit in a meditation posture, making sure that the body is relaxed and the mind is drawn inside. We should direct our mental focus to the sound of the mantra.

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*Transcribed from the tapes by Jenny Brooks*

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