

Mother's Day 050910

As today is Mothers Day, I would like to share a little story. In Japan, marriages have often been arranged by parents through a “matchmaker”. This is especially true for one who cannot find his or her spouse by themselves. At first, a “matchmaker” takes a picture and information of the man to the woman and the woman’s to the man. When a prospective match has been made, both parties meet each other for the first time in either a formal or informal setting to see whether they get along or not. This is call “miai.”

One day, a young man wanted to get married. So a “go-between” took his picture to several prospective candidates. These ladies all refused to consider a meeting with him after seeing his photograph.

Befuddled, the “matchmaker” at last arranged one “miai”, without showing a picture of him. He was very excited to have this first meeting with the woman. However, when she saw the man’s face, she immediately refused to meet him again.

The young man was so upset he hit his mother in her face and shouted, “How did your bear me with such an ugly face?” The mother was speechless. She had no way to explain the reason why this lovely son was born with a big scar on his face. Seeking a solution, she came to a Nichiren Temple for advice. The priest of the temple told her to bring her son the next day.

The following day, as soon as the young man bowed to the priest, the minister slapped the man’s face with his hand and said, “You hit your mother like this, didn’t you? I heard you blamed your mother that you were born with an ugly face. Who in the world would believe that a mother would wish for a child with an ugly face? The mothers are not the creators of the children. Your mother was just given an opportunity to bear you.

This is called “En”. This is your destiny and relationship with those around you. Your ugly face was not caused by her, but your karma from your previous lives caused your ugly face. You must repent your bad karma and appreciate your mother who gave you birth. You should put your hands together in gassho and respect your mother and others.”

The son apologized to his mother right away. He changed his attitude toward his family and others. Years later, he was able to marry.

When there is something wrong in our lives, we tend to blame others for the shortcomings. Was it wrong for all the prospective candidates to reject this man; style over substance? Could our culture dictate what is beautiful and what is not? Even so, we cannot blame our mothers for our features. We are born again because of our previous karma dictates. There is a lesson to be learned. Maybe this man was extremely vain? Maybe he scarred others or teased others about their ugly faces. We have to be responsible for our actions but also our destiny. Karma not fate has set up your lot in this life.

In order to change your situation, you have to repent your wrong doings, Chanting the Prayer of Repentance on the first Sunday helps. But also everyday, place your hands in gassho and bow before your mandala gohonzon or go outside and pray towards the four directions and deeply repent your sins. Chant the Odaimoku three times then say, “I sincerely repent my offenses, heartily praying that the rays of Namu-Myoho-Renge-Kyo that I chant and embrace will shine its sacred light on the true aspects of my life.” By chanting the Odaimoku, a calmness comes over you. Your face will change. Over time, this calmness will change the features of the face and make it look more attractive. Are

there examples, I am sure there are. If meth addicts can go from looking beautiful to really trashy then the opposite is surely true.