



# Making Good Use of the Three Doors of Action

**Master Jen-Chun**

*Let your body show integrity,  
be clear in your speech;  
let your intention be kind and unwavering.  
Be humble, quiet, even, and steadfast;  
studiously learn in movement and in stillness.*

*Body, speech, and mind are commonly known as the three doors of action.*

How do we make use of our body, speech, and mind so that they function as the true body, speech, and mind? My verse is intended to answer that question.

Let your body show integrity. Now that you are a student and practitioner of the Buddhadharma, the most important guideline to correct bodily action is to act rightly and honorably; not to put on a show when in the presence of others and then slip into laxity when you are alone. Otherwise your bodily action will lack integrity. And what is true integrity? Integrity means that you behave in the same way whether or not others are observing you. It means your action flows from your own inner standards, not from the desire to win esteem from others.

Be clear in your speech. Ordinary people can speak logically and coherently, but logic and coherence are not enough. The mark of true speech is to speak meaningful, inspiring words. It is not easy for ordinary people to speak clearly. Why? Because their wisdom is limited. When speaking of exceptional matters, they may not explain them clearly, and they may not inspire others.

***What is the value of language?*** If you have true wisdom, a profound and correct comprehension of the Dharma, your words will be very clear and possess an exceptional power to move people. At the right moment one word from you can rescue others from the brink of death and bring them back to life. Thus, the content of speech is clear and powerful. Your speech is like a brilliant light. Normally, people's minds can be hazy and confused. If you use speech accurately to clear away the haze and brighten their minds, this is the value of speech.

Let your intention be kind and unwavering. No one can see another person's intentions, for they are private and hidden. But you can know your own intentions. How do you cultivate, practice, and maintain your intentions? The guideline is "be kind and unwavering." What is kindness? To be kind is to be pure, unselfish, decent, and tender-hearted. This means that in all affairs, you always consider others first. Sometimes you are ready to undergo suffering in order to enable others to live better than yourself. This is the meaning of kindness.

***If you have this kind intention,*** your mind will have a profound sense of morality. In due time, you will naturally bring your sense of moral obligation to fruition and fulfill your mission as a disciple of the Buddha.

To be "unwavering" means that your mind is consistently healthy. If your mind does not have a special stabilizing power, then under difficult circumstances you will become unsettled. You will be spun around by circumstances and cannot maintain inner poise. If you have truly achieved some degree of success in practicing the Buddha Dharma, your mind will naturally be relaxed. In dealing with difficult people, or when facing obstructive conditions, your behavior will be pure, honest, simple and kind. You will not be sarcastic and heartless. You will persist in your aim without concern over gain or loss. Such concerns will not disturb you at all.

THE ABOVE IS AN EXCERPT FROM A SERIES OF LECTURES BY  
MASTER JEN-CHUN ON  
**"THE BASIC CONCEPTS A BUDDHIST MUST HAVE."**  
THESE WERE THE PRELIMINARY  
LECTURES TO THE STUDY OF  
MASTER YIN-SHUN'S  
**'THE WAY TO BUDDHAHOOD'.**

