

# Discernment

## 洞察力

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I would like to discuss “discernment” with you today. The word comes from the Greek “diakrínō,” which means to distinguish, decide, or judge.

Discernment means judging between two or more things, winnowing out the wheat from the chaff, and evaluating with insight two or more actions or things. It is an act of wisdom marked by insight into a person’s character or an event that goes beyond the mere facts given. Discernment is the power to distinguish one thing from another, such as truth from falsehood, virtue from vice, or a good person from a bad one.

For example, in the 1960s, when I was in high school, there were many demonstrations

今天我想和諸位一起探討「洞察力」這個概念，這個字源自希臘文的「diakrínō」，意思是辨別、決斷或判斷。

洞察是指對兩件或多件事物進行判斷，去蕪存菁，並以卓越的洞察力評估不同的選擇或事物。它是智慧的展現，反映出一個人的性格特質或者能夠洞察事件本質的才能。洞察力即是了了常明，是能夠區別真偽、善惡、君子與小人的能力。

例如，在1960年代，我讀高中的時候，就曾發生多起反越戰、反種族隔離和爭取民權的示威活動。1968年，身為民主社會學生會的高中成員，我參加匹茲堡大學將於華府特區舉辦和平遊行籌備會議，這是預定在次年春天舉行的大規模活動，我很高興能參與。

然而當我坐在台下聽大學生幹部的發言，

against the war in Vietnam, against segregation, and for civil rights. In 1968, as a high school member of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), I went to an organizing session at the University of Pittsburgh for a peace march on Washington, D.C. It would be a massive event the following spring, and I was excited to participate.

But as I sat in the audience listening to the older college students running the event, what I heard instead were discussions on how to elude “the pigs”—the police—how to throw petrol bombs into the sewer system and smash store windows, all to disrupt the pigs and gain attention. Despite my feelings against the war and the police—I had been threatened, water-hosed, and chased—all I could think about was a peace march. This planning was about waging war against a war, using violence against the violent.

So, my discernment was to abandon my friends in the SDS and only show up for a truly peaceful march the following year in D.C. Discernment is not easy. It does not come automatically but must be cultivated. It must be carefully developed with a sense of humility and clarity. There can be no discernment without the ethical, moral, or spiritual guidelines and training from which to judge or discern.

I believe this is one of the most important aspects of Instilling Goodness and Developing Virtue Schools here: to instill and develop in our young people the ability to discern, to have the moral and spiritual foundations to discern right action and judge people and things correctly. Our students learn to manifest the core virtues, cherish life, become stewards of the environment, exercise frugality, become confident, well-rounded persons, take responsibility for their own actions, and develop the skills of a good citizen.

These qualities will provide them with the foundation for proper discernment, foundational qualities that we, as teachers, can always be reminded of, strengthening our own ability to discern. Similarly, the publishing arm of DRBA helps propagate the Dharma, spreading the teachings and foundations for proper discernment. You never know where the Dharma will turn up, what life it will turn around, or how it will help someone discern their path in life.

For instance, my wife had little training in Buddhism, though she had strong moral guidance from her grandmother and parents. After college, when visiting her parents, she would

聽到的盡是——如何躲避「豬群」（當時警察的代稱）、如何將汽油彈扔進下水道、如何砸碎商店櫥窗，所有這些都是為了干擾警方並博取關注。儘管我反對戰爭和警察（我曾遭受威脅、被高壓水柱驅離、被追捕），但我期待的是「和平遊行」。眼前這些策畫，分明就是以「暴動」抗議「戰爭」，以「暴力」對抗「武力」。

於是，我最終選擇遠離這個學生會的同伴，僅參加次年在華府那場真正的和平遊行。這種立斷的能力並不容易，也非自動生成，而是需要培養的。洞察力必須以謙遜澄明之心悉心錘鍊。沒有倫理、道德或靈性上的準則為基礎，沒有相應的訓練，就不可能具備明辨力。

我認為這正是培德中學最重要的教育目標之一——幫助學子們培養明辨是非的能力，擁有正確判斷人、事的道德和精神基礎。在這裡，學生們學會實踐十種黃金美德、珍惜生命、成為環境的守護者、培養儉樸的習性、成為自信且全面發展的個體、學會對自己的行為負責，並培養優秀公民應具備的各種技能。

這些特質將為他們奠定洞察力的基礎，也是我們為人師表需要牢記的基本特質，從而強化我們自身的洞察力。同樣地，法界佛教總會（以下簡稱法總）的出版部門也幫助弘揚佛法，傳播正知正見的教法與根基。你永遠無法預期佛法會在何處顯現，如何改變人生，如何幫助人們認清自己的人生道路。

以我同修為例，她雖然從祖母和雙親身上獲得堅實的道德指引，但對佛法所知甚少。大學畢業後，她去探望父母時，總會登上安徽省的佛教聖地九華山山頭。當時，九華山山頂有一座未經修葺的佛寺。到

climb to the top of Mount Jiuhua in Anhui Province, a religious site. At that time, Mount Jiuhua had an unrestored Buddhist monastery at the top. Midway up the mountain, the main path split into two paths, one to a scenic view and the other to the old abandoned temple. At this intersection, there was an open, flat area. Nothing was there.

But one day, when she got to the divide in the path, there was a stall, like a small house, selling memorabilia, magazines, and books. The saleslady directed her to several sutras, morning ceremony books, and a bootleg copy of Master Hua's book, *The Meaning of Life*, which she has to this day, and which led her to CTTB, DRBA, and the Master. But the twist in the story is this: later, every time she climbed that mountain, the store was not there.

It had disappeared. After a few years of this, she began asking people why the stall wasn't there anymore. But they all said there wasn't a store or book stall there, nor had it ever existed. There never could have been one—it would not have been allowed.

So you never know how or where your publishing of the Dharma will end up. But in a mysterious and roundabout way, it led to my wife discovering the Master and our family discerning that bringing our children up here at CTTB was the right path.

In another vein, the monasteries and Sangha training at DRBA provide essential foundations. These foundations and the monasteries provide the means to practice and discern the Way. One must not only learn the teachings but also put them into practice, which these monasteries provide the place for.

To paraphrase the Christian *Gospel of Luke*, whoever hears the teachings and puts it into practice is like a man building a house who digs deep and builds his foundation on the rock. And when the flood rose, the stream beat vehemently against the house, but could not shake it, for it was founded on a rock. But whoever listens to the teachings and does not practice them is like a man who builds a house on earth without a foundation, against which the stream will beat vehemently, and immediately it will fall.

However, discernment is more than just spiritual guidance. It also needs practical information, regardless of whether it's important, like choosing one's path in life. Should I become a lawyer, a monk, or a mundane person? Should I use wood

了半山腰，主道分成兩條路，一條通往風景區，另一條通往荒廢的古寺。岔路口有一片開闊平坦的空地，那裡空無一物。

某日，她途經此處，卻看到一個看起來像一間小屋的攤位，裏邊販售紀念品、雜誌和書籍。女售貨員引導她請了幾本佛經、早課誦本，以及宣公上人著《人生要義》的複印本。她至今仍然珍藏這本書，因為這本書讓她找到萬佛城、法總和師父。這個故事最離奇之處是：此後她再上九華山，那個攤位再也沒出現過。

它消失了。這樣過了幾年之後，她開始問人為什麼攤子不在了？但所有人都堅稱：那裡沒有任何書攤，從來沒有，也根本不可能有。在宗教聖地，商業行為是不被許可的。

由此可知，佛法的傳播往往出人意料。正是透過這樣神秘而迂迴的方式，讓我的同修遇到師父，也讓我們全家認定把孩子送到萬佛城教養是條正道。

另一方面，法總道場和僧伽訓練提供重要的根基。這些基礎和修行處所是培養修行和擇法之所在。佛法不僅要學習，更要付諸實踐，法總各分支道場正是為此而存在。

正如基督教福音書《路加福音》所言，聽到教義並付諸實踐者，就好比一個人蓋房子，向下挖掘，把地基建在岩磐上。當洪水來襲，激流猛烈地沖擊房舍，卻不能撼動它，因為房子建在岩磐上。但凡聽聞教誨而不去實踐者，就好比一個人在平地造房子卻沒有地基，一旦受到洪水的猛烈沖擊，房屋即刻就會倒塌。（路加福音第六章46至49節）

然而，洞察力不僅需要精神指引，也需要實際資訊的支援，不論訊息重要與否。就像選擇自己的人生道路——該成為一名律師、一位比丘、還是一介凡夫？該使用木材還是混凝土作為房

or concrete for a structure? Either way, you need practical information to inform decision and discernment.

But all the training, information, and even practice are to no avail if the person themselves is not free from attachment and open to discerning the right action and rightfully judging the thing or person. The discerner must not be controlled by impulses or attachment. How do you discern the right course of action? If you're caught up in jealousy, hate, fear, or anger, will you be able to discern the right course of action? If you are fearful of losing your job but action is required of you, will that fear determine your course of action? On a small, mundane note, if you are hungry, tired, or irritated by some events but are supposed to finish a task, how do you discern the right course of action?

For there are times one needs sleep before one undertakes a task. Other times, the task must be finished on time. Sometimes, you don't know if you have performed the best action because discernment is not knowing you have done the best thing—it is the ability to separate and winnow actions.

Sometimes, you learn you did right. Other times, you do your best and live by your guidelines.

You aren't always rewarded with knowing that you followed the best path, but you can follow the right path. How? By discerning if your choice leads to the long-term, permanent happiness that is nirvana. Discerning correctly and following the right path means searching for happiness that is not ephemeral.

To paraphrase the *Gospel of Luke*, a good tree does not bring forth bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. You don't gather figs from a thorn bush, nor do you gather grapes from a bramble. A good man out of the good treasure in his heart brings forth good actions and results. So let the good and wise foundations provided for us here at CTTB and through DRBA provide us all with the good treasure and wise hearts we need so that our words and actions are true and proper, and so that all of us may learn to discern wisely and properly with a good heart and spirit. ❀

子的結構？無論哪種方式，都需要掌握實際資訊以做出決策和判斷。

但是，一個人若無法放下執著、打開心量以明辨正行，公正審度人、事，那麼所有的訓練、資訊甚至實踐都是枉然。洞察者一定不能被情緒或執著左右。試問：當你身陷嫉妒、憎恨、恐懼或憤怒時，還能做出正確判斷嗎？假若你憂心失業卻又必須採取行動，這份恐懼是否會左右你的行動？即便是日常瑣事，當你餓了、累了、被煩攪，卻必須完成某件任務，又該如何做出正確的決定？

有時，要先儲備精神（好眠）才能執行任務；有時，任務必須按時完成。你無法知道自己是否為此做出最正確的判斷——因為洞察力並不在於知道自己做得好——而是具備分辨和抉擇的能力。

有時，你知道自己做對了。有時，你恪守準則，盡力而為。並非每次的抉擇都會得到獎勵，但你清楚自己走在正道上。怎麼做到呢？透過辨別當下的選擇是否會引導自己走向如涅槃般恆常的喜樂。正確地判斷並依循正道，意味著尋找不會轉瞬即逝的恆久幸福。

正如《路加福音》所言，沒有好樹結壞果子；也沒有壞樹結好果子。荊棘中無法採到無花果，蒺藜裏也不能摘到葡萄。善人內心存著善念，自然產生善行而得到善果。（路加福音第六章43至45節）希望萬佛城和法總為我們奠定良善的根基，培養我們的善念與明慧之心，使我們的言行都能端正直心。祈願我們所有人都能以良善與了了常明之心，培養睿智的洞察力。 ❀

什麼是你的家寶？家寶即如來藏、常住真心、妙覺明性，而不是世間的有為有相的金銀財寶。—宣公上人

**What are your family treasures? The family treasures are the Treasury of the Tathagata, the everlasting true mind, and the wondrous enlightened bright nature. They are not the worldly gems and treasures which are conditioned and have form.**  
— By Venerable Master Hua