

Good and Bad Envy

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A long time ago I realized that there are two types of envy, the good and the bad one. How can I divide envy in these two different types? OK, I will try to explain. Well...perhaps my point of view on this subject can be seen as wrong by those who don't speak Portuguese. Perhaps there is another word for my "good envy" in English. But...it's worth a try. ?

Is there anyone that you admire? Let's say you admire your father (it could be your mother or anyone else). You admire him because he is a really nice person who loves helping other people. He is very smart and very funny. He always finds some time to give attention to you, to play with you. He is a very wise person, who always knows the right thing to be said, the right advice to be given, etc. You wonder if you will be so nice, smart, wise, etc. as your father is. You would like to be like him when you grow up and have your own family.

Well, that is GOOD ENVY. You admire someone for what he/she is/does/thinks, etc. You admire this person so much that you would like to be like him/her. I am not talking about wanting to become a clone of that person. I am talking about wanting to have the qualities of that person, since you think they are right.

Now let's take a look on the other hand. I will use an extreme example, but everyone knows this kind of thing exists. Let's say there's a guy at your school/job that gets the attention of everyone. He is rich and you are not! You don't get as much attention as he does. You would like to be like him, the one

who is the center of attention. You would like to have all he has and don't care about what you have to do to get it. You don't care if what makes him so "special" are good things or not. You just want to be like him even if you have to change your behavior, the way you think, or worse, change your beliefs. What you want is, in short, to become a clone of that person!

So, for me it is obvious that this kind of thing is BAD ENVY. You don't care about yourself. You are out to erase your beliefs to believe on what that persons believe. You are out to erase your own personality to "wear" that one. You are out to destroy what makes you YOU.

So, did you get the differences? What I am trying to show here is that ENVY is not a bad thing. The way you envy someone can be good or bad. I envy my father and mother for the way they treated my sisters and me, the way they educated us, the way they loved us. But I don't have bad feelings because of this. I know who I am and don't want to erase what I know is right about my personality. I just want to be as good as they were to me. I hope to be as wise as they were when they started educating my sisters and me. So I want to add to my personality the qualities of my parents. I don't want to change mine, by erasing it and replacing with someone else's.

Think about this carefully and realize what kind of envy you are using when you see or think about someone.

May the Force be with you all the time.

Lecture on Pride

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The concepts I am going to talk about here were taught to me by my Sensei. Once during a class he was talking about the differences between Pride and Honor: what is good and what is not. I decided to post this because I think that these ideas and concepts should be considered by those who have chosen to follow the path of the Light Side. I have been thinking about posting this for a long time, but was waiting to better my English as well as waiting for the "right time".

The "right time" came yesterday when I talked to Knight Spark Vallen on the chat and she told me she was about to write a post about almost the same topic. We joined efforts and started a discussion about this on the channel. Many students joined the discussion, and we listened to many good opinions and ideas.

All Light Jedi students know that we have to learn how to control our emotions. I am not saying we have to unlearn or erase them, rather we should learn how to deal

effectively with them. It is important to pay attention to our emotions and realize why we are reacting (or about to react) in a certain way. I am not really sure about my Sensei's words but in essence they were like this: "Be cautious when you are proud of anything. Do not let this feeling become pride!"

What he was teaching us was that there is nothing wrong with being proud of something you did. Just don't stop there and let the pride control you.

Let's say you studied very hard to pass on a test and you not only passed, you aced it. You got excellent grades. There is nothing wrong with being proud of what you did. After all, you worked hard for that. But, on the other hand, when we are proud of something, it becomes easy to make a mistake and let our pride control us.

What do I mean? Well, let's go with the above example. You got those excellent grades this time, and at some point in the future, (days, weeks, months, etc) you will have another test. Some people might be tempted to rest on their laurels and think like this: "Well, I studied for the last test and I was terrific. I don't need to study for this next one. I was the best. Why, someone with grades like mine shouldn't have to worry about such an easy test!". I know many of us have felt that way at least once. What is wrong with that? Well, the next test may be harder than the last. If you are not prepared, you may fail. This doesn't apply only to written tests, of course. Many times in our lives, we will face tests and challenges. We will "pass" some with flying colors and take the risk of letting our success go to our heads. This leads to us being tempted to "take it easy", to become lazy and allow our pride and confidence to control us. As with any extreme, overconfidence can really do a lot of harm to you! The example above is only one of a million possible situations.

Another problem I see (and my Sensei had pointed out) about pride relates to

when "you think you are above the rest of the mortals". What am I trying to say? Well, let's take this next example. You are a Jedi Knight, finally, after long training, hard work and study. You have great wisdom on how to listen to the Force and

how to use it. You love the respect and admiration you get from others. You start to forget what the Jedi represent, why you wished to study the ways of the Jedi in the first place. Let's say that one day a friend, or a relative, or anyone else asks you to help him/her to clean the house. Then you think "Me? A Jedi Knight cleaning the house, sweeping, mopping the floor, cleaning tables, etc? Are you crazy? I

studied and worked hard to get all these powers and wisdom, and you think I will waste them on cleaning a house?" What do you think? How would you react in this situation? Do you think Jedi Knights are admired only for their powers and wisdom? Above getting their hands dirty with hard work? If you answered "yes", I think it's time to think about WHY you wish to become a Jedi. Do you really understand what it means to be a Light Jedi? Do you understand why we are here? In my opinion,

the first quality of a Light Jedi should be HUMILITY. There is nothing wrong with a Master/Knight/Padawan/student helping a friend to clean his/her house. It will not make you a weaker person. Instead, it will show that you are a really great person. A person who, even having great abilities and knowledge about the Force, doesn't mind on helping a friend with a simple task.

Look at some of the people history has called the greatest and most enlightened ones of the ages. Foremost examples are Jesus, Buddha and

Ghandi, but there are many other heroes and heroines in history and even here in the present that we can learn from, admire, and pattern ourselves after as role models. The primary quality that stands out in them is their humility. Each

of these people was able to do great things BECAUSE they put themselves aside in view of a greater good, a higher purpose. They showed us that the

greatest people are those willing to serve and to help others whenever and wherever there is need. Is that not the Call of the Jedi?