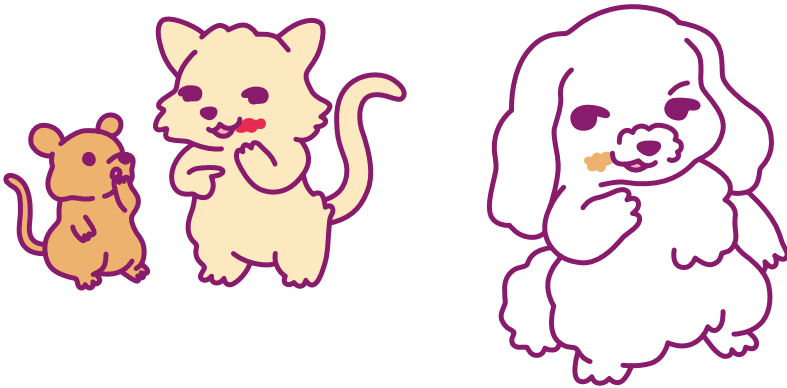


Habits of Thought

Oyasama once told a follower:
"Change your habits and temperament."

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 123

Imagine that you are a child who has gone to school with a smear of peanut butter on your face. Others look at you and snicker. You have no idea what is going on. You seem to be the only one who does not know what is funny. Suddenly you notice that one of the children who are snickering at you has ketchup smears around his lips. This is not an impossible scenario. Perhaps, we do not know ourselves as well as we think we do.



We may have certain habits of thought that we do not know we have but that others notice. On the other hand, we may have personality traits that we know we have and that we keep secret from others. Again, we may have traits that are obvious to both others and us or traits that are unknown to us or anyone else. Oyasama, however, is aware of all of those thought habits and personality traits.

Our thought habits and personality traits can distort the way our minds perceive the world. Our perception will then prevent us from accurately understanding others. If we allow ourselves to continue to be conditioned by this pattern of perception, we may end up being stubborn and bigoted. All the conditioning that our minds receive will have an increasingly negative impact on the quality of our lives as we head toward our twilight years.

We can transform the way we live, drawing on the guidance provided by Oyasama, who knows us inside out. Even just thinking about Her can help clear our minds. As we connect our minds to Her, our thought habits and personality traits can begin to change into something that enhances our individuality. Negative habits and traits may repel people; individuality can attract people.

We check our faces in the mirror before going out in the morning in order to make sure that we have no peanut butter or ketchup there; likewise, we can check whether any negative thought habits or traits are asserting themselves as we start a new day. Greeting Oyasama every day can help us ensure that our minds are well groomed.

