

A teacher's advice on how to be clear.

Imagine you've just spent several years teaching a group of students your life's work. It's your last day, you're halfway out the door and one asks: could you just sum up everything you said before you go? "Wonderful," you say, and begin.

You already know how to be clear. There is no need to ask me. I know so little. But I love you. And you asked. So, even though I know little, here is my advice:

1. Until you know how to be clear, rely on those who do.
2. Until you are clear about everything, listen to those who are.
3. Don't just learn how, but actually do what is needed to become clear.
4. Find places that make it easier to be clear and spend your time there.
5. Distractions make it harder to be clear. Avoid distractions.
6. Find people who make it easier to be clear and spend your time with them.
7. There will always be more to do. Don't try to do everything.
8. Whatever you are doing, strive for clarity.
9. Whatever you have learned about clarity, apply it to everything you do.
10. If you devote yourself wholeheartedly to being clear, you will feel the benefits immediately.
11. If you are true in your efforts to be clear, you will get what you need.
12. If you are not clear, then even getting what you want will be unsatisfying. So don't try.
13. Don't get caught in self-importance, but listen with a peaceful mind.
14. If you're told something helps, but it makes you less clear, stop doing it.
15. Profit and respect won't make you clearer. Don't pursue them.
16. Praise and fame make you less clear. Ignore them.
17. Even happy moments and good times with friends don't make you clearer. Don't hold on to them.
18. When you die, life on earth carries on. Think of more than just your life.
19. When you die, you will have to leave everything behind. Don't try to hold on to anything.
20. When someone is not clear, be loving. Don't make it worse.
21. Hate no one. Cling to no one.
22. When someone is clear, don't be jealous. Be inspired.
23. When someone is not clear, don't point it out. Tend to your own lack of clarity.
24. When you are clear, don't focus on how clear you are. Seek to be inspired by everyone you meet.
25. Be as loving as a child. To everyone.

26. Be loving in how you think, speak and act.
27. It's easier to be clear in what you say if you only say what is needed.
28. Doing things you don't need to do makes it harder to do the things you need to do.
29. Doing things you don't need to doesn't help with anything.
30. Not getting what you want is a sign you weren't clear when you started. So start by being clear now.
31. You have no idea how bad the consequences of acting without clarity can be. So always be clear about what you're doing.
32. All the tension you feel comes from being unclear. No one else is to blame.
33. All the clarity you have comes from the example of others. Everyone deserves gratitude.
34. You can't help anyone get clearer if you are not clear. So get clear.
35. Clarity is more helpful than money. Don't prioritise money at the expense of clarity.
36. Buying ourselves nice things doesn't help. Invest in giving.
37. Beauty and happiness come from being clear and loving.
38. The world is full of drama. Don't respond with anger, but with patience.
39. Your own drama is a symptom of not investing enough effort in being clear. Try harder.
40. Following distractions is a waste of your life. Improve your concentration.
41. If you don't understand how things work, you will never be clear about anything. Get clear about how things work.
42. Don't try to solve the dramas that arise when you are not clear. Abandon the drama and invest everything in being clear. If you learn how to be clear, drama comes to an end.

These are not things I think are true. This is what I know in my heart. Please get clearer. It will make you and everyone you know happier. Please take what I have said to heart.

**This advice is based on the Buddhist teacher Atisha's final teaching to his student Jangchub Ö. Written by Charles Davies, this version is not intended as a definitive or reliable translation. It is intended to be as useful and simple as possible.*