



# Oppositional Defiant Disorder: Underlying Mechanism and Solutions



Dr. Xinghong Yang<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Infectious Diseases & Immunology, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, P.O. Box 110880, Gainesville, FL 32611-0880, Florida, United States

## Abstract

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is a behavioral condition that poses significant challenges for parents and families. While conventional approaches attribute ODD to genetic predispositions, neurobiological factors, and adverse life experiences, this study introduces a spiritual dimension grounded in Buddhist teachings. By analyzing seven specific cases, it examines the role of karmic influences and spirit attachment in the manifestation of ODD symptoms. The findings suggest that unresolved karmic debts and spiritual disturbances may play a significant role in the disorder's development. The study underscores the potential of Dharma practices, such as reciting Buddhist scriptures and addressing karmic influences, in alleviating symptoms of ODD, including rebellious behavior, emotional instability, and comorbid conditions like autism and bipolar disorder. This research highlights the importance of expanding the understanding of ODD's etiology by integrating spiritual perspectives with scientific approaches. It advocates for a holistic treatment model that combines the wisdom of Dharma with conventional therapies, offering renewed hope for individuals with ODD and their families. Finally, it is suggested to use "spirit oppression" instead of "sleep paralysis" to more accurately reflect the true nature of this phenomenon.

**Keywords:** Rebellion, Game Addiction, Karma, Spirit, Dharma, Rehabilitation

## OPEN ACCESS

### \*Correspondence:

Dr. Xinghong Yang, Department of Infectious Diseases & Immunology, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, P.O. Box 110880, Gainesville, FL 32611-0880, Florida, United States,  
E-mail: yangxh@ufl.edu;  
dr.yang.ttk@gmail.com

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## Introduction

Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) is a behavioral disorder primarily diagnosed in childhood and adolescence. It is characterized by a consistent pattern of angry or irritable mood, defiant or argumentative behavior, and vindictiveness toward authority figures, particularly parents, teachers, and peers. These behaviors go beyond the occasional rebelliousness typical of developmental stages and significantly interfere with social, educational, and family functioning [1].

The population prevalence of ODD is ~3 to 5% [2]. It is often comorbid with other conditions such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) [3], anxiety disorders and depression [4], developmental coordination disorder, autism spectrum disorder [5], language disorder, and learning problems [6]. These symptoms cause much pain to the patients and their families. Treatment often includes behavioral therapy [7], medication [8], and parent training programs [9].

Despite the numerous available options, managing ODD remains a significant challenge for parents. Families with rebellious children often find their lives in turmoil. This situation calls for a holistic approach that complements medical interventions.

## Mechanisms

The etiology of ODD remains poorly understood, though it appears to stem from a combination of biological factors and adverse life experiences [10]. No single risk factor fully explains ODD; instead, its development is attributed to the interaction between genetic predispositions and environmental influences. Furthermore, mechanisms within social relationships are recognized as playing a role in perpetuating the disorder [2]. These observations indicate that science has yet to uncover the true etiology of ODD.

In contrast to the scientific perspective, Dharma offers a unique viewpoint on the origins of ODD. The following are three Dharma dialogues in which Dharma Master Jun Hong Lu addressed questions from practitioners over the phone or on the spot. These dialogues provide valuable insights into the causes of ODD from a spiritual dimension.

### Q&A 1. The relationship between a child's ODD and aborted children [11]

**Caller:** Hello, Master! Recently, I was fortunate to come across your book *Fate, Fortune, and Feng Shui*, which led me to start reciting Buddhist scriptures. However, my three children have been extremely disobedient lately. On the fourth day of the Lunar New Year, my son somehow fell into a river but managed to climb out by himself. On the first day of school, he inexplicably fell down the stairs. While he speaks normally, he is very rebellious and refuses to communicate with us as parents. What should I do?

**Master:** Have you ever had an abortion?

**Caller:** Yes, twice. I am currently reciting Little Houses for them.

**Master:** Recite them quickly. If you don't, these spirits may affect your children, making them disobedient. He might have been pulled into the water by a spirit seeking for scapegoat. While he survived, it is likely he was still affected. You should immediately recite 21 Little Houses for his karmic creditors, followed by sets of 7 until his situation stabilizes. Additionally, recite 7 times the *Heart Sutra*, 3 times the *Great Compassion Mantra*, 49 times the *Mantra to Untie Karmic Knots*, and the *Xiao Zai Ji Xiang Shen Zhou* daily for him. This will gradually improve your relationship. Don't worry—when the Bodhisattva is present, there's nothing to fear. However, resolving problems requires personal effort and not just praying to the Bodhisattva.

**Caller:** How many Little Houses should I recite for each aborted child?

**Master:** 21 for each child. Little Houses are incredibly effective—you'll likely dream about them within a few days.

**Caller:** I have just started reciting for the aborted children, with only one Little House completed so far. Should I finish reciting for them first, or prioritize my son's creditors?

**Master:** Do both simultaneously. Otherwise, the spirits will become anxious. Work hard! You will cultivate well. After benefiting from Dharma practices, you will need to transform others. The essence of Mahayana Buddhism is to save sentient beings, and you cannot become a Bodhisattva without helping others.

### Q&A 2. Addressing adolescent ODD [12]

**Asker:** Hello, Master! A Buddhist practitioner's 14- or 15-year-old daughter used to be very well-behaved and recited scriptures and Little Houses with her mother. However, over the past two years, she has become extremely rebellious, skipping school and associating with troubled peers, picking up many bad habits. Is this caused by karmic eruptions or typical adolescent ODD?

**Master:** Parental education is crucial. First, lead by example, and second, enforce proper discipline. Recite more *Heart Sutras* for her karmic creditors to help her gain wisdom. Additionally, involve her in activities such as group cultivation sessions and volunteering, and helping at nursing homes or distributing food to the needy. Proper guidance is essential. If a child misbehaves, the parents bear direct responsibility.

**Asker:** Understood. Regarding adolescent rebellion, how should we approach it systematically?

**Master:** Don't simply attribute it to adolescence. Rebellion can occur at any age when a child is unhappy. Instead, focus on proper

ideological education and guiding them toward the right path. Often, bad influences from friends are a key factor. A good friend can lead to success, while a bad one can lead to trouble. Monitor her friendships closely.

**Asker:** Which Buddhist scriptures should we recite?

**Master:** The *Heart Sutra* and *Mantra to Untie Karmic Knots* are suitable.

### Q&A 3. How to handle disobedient children via Buddhism [13]

**Asker:** Master Lu, my child is very disobedient and refuses to listen to anything we say. What should we do?

**Master:** There are several possible reasons for a child's ODD and the solutions follow:

(1). Avoid imposing adult thinking on the child's innocent and playful nature.

(2). For general disobedience or lack of interest in studying, recite the *Heart Sutra* to seek the Bodhisattva's blessing for increasing the child's wisdom.

(3). If the child is confrontational with parents or family members, it may be due to karmic entanglements from past lives or unresolved debts, for which the *Mantra to Untie Karmic Knots* is necessary.

(4). If the child is affected by spirits (such as karmic creditors or aborted siblings), recite Little Houses to help these spirits ascend.

From these dialogues, Master Lu broadens the understanding of ODD by associating it with spiritual factors, such as karmic creditors or spirits (a respectful term for ghosts). He asserts that once these spirits ascend, the child can regain emotional stability and exhibit improved behavior.

Science identifies a complex interplay of genetic, environmental, and relational factors in ODD, while Master Lu highlights a spiritual dimension that may be overlooked in conventional approaches. To evaluate which perspective aligns more closely with the essence of ODD, seven specific cases are examined in subsequent analysis. These cases explored the efficacy of addressing spiritual factors alongside scientific explanations, potentially bridging the gap between the two perspectives.

## Results

### Case 1. Buddhism transformed my naughty child into a honey girl

My daughter used to throw tantrums, at least once or twice a day. In 2022, she was almost 6 years old. Once she lost control she would stomp her feet, roll on the floor, and shout loudly. Before going to bed at night, she often cried and fussed. She would cry for an hour no matter how I coaxed her. Sometimes, she would inexplicably cry and fuss at 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. in the night. Twice, she threw a tantrum in the street rolled on the ground and wouldn't go home.

My husband and I were at our wits' end. Every time she lost her temper, we always had a bad time too. I was so annoyed every day, and my life was going crazy.

It was not until I encountered Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door that I realized her emotional problems were the result of the spirit occupying her body. Guan Yin Bodhisattva was so compassionate that She let me dream that I would need to recite 43 Little Houses

for her karmic creditor shortly after I started to recite the Buddhist scriptures.

By paying her creditors with 3 or 5 Little Houses in a row, her temper gradually improved. After all the 43 Little Houses were paid, she seemed to be a completely different baby. She did not cry like before and she became very obedient. The atmosphere at home became harmonious naturally. My husband and I did not argue anymore.

Now, she also recites some Buddhist scriptures. Additionally, she has joined the Buddhism class for children! I am so grateful to Guan Yin Bodhisattva for blessing our family with Her great compassion. If we hadn't met the Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door, our family would still be struggling in pain!

Dharma practitioner: Y68

#### Comments:

(1). A child's misbehavior or disobedience may not be their true intention. It could be that a spirit attached to the child is controlling her, making her oppose her parents to collect karmic debts. Reasoning with or soothing such a child may be ineffective.

(2). Only when the spirit is ascended can the child reveal their true nature: obedient, well-behaved, and considerate.

#### Case 2. Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door saved my rebellious daughter with autism and bipolar depression

In 2023, my daughter behaved very unusually. In fact, around August or September 2020, Guan Yin Bodhisattva gave me a prophetic dream. The gist of it was that she might stray into a negative social circle and assume the role of a young delinquent.

Back then, I was very anxious. I made numerous vows for her, including reciting 1000 Little Houses for her karmic creditors. That year, my diligent fellow Buddhist practitioners selflessly assisted me and my daughter in reciting Little Houses and performing grand life liberation events.

Possibly due to my own heavy karmic hindrances and the pull of karmic forces, coupled with extremely poor financial conditions, I couldn't afford to support my daughter's education. Therefore, I sent her back to her hometown and arranged for her to study with her aunt. Two years passed in a blink, and it wasn't until the beginning of this year that I fulfilled the vow of reciting 1000 Little Houses for her karmic creditors. Last year, due to busy work, I neglected many aspects, and most of the vows I made were left unfulfilled.

Since my daughter entered junior high school last year, my karmic obstacles began to erupt one after another like bombs. She started associating with delinquent students, getting into fights, sneaking out, smoking, engaging in online relationships, and even having a history of attempted suicide by jumping off a building. She also started stealing money, making her an outcast wherever she went. Her head teacher repeatedly advised her to drop out. At that time, her aunt was tortured by her behavior and refused to take care of her anymore. Her grandparents, who were elderly, were unable to control her. Therefore, on May 7th this year, I went back to my hometown to bring her to the city where I work.

I originally thought that once she came to me, as long as I treated her well, she would be obedient and behave like a normal child. But little did I know, that was just the beginning of my nightmare!

After she lived with me, she basically opposed everything I said. If I said something was right, she would say it was wrong. If I went one way, she would go the other, arguing and causing scenes with me all day long. Every word I said, she would argue against. Over the past few months, she became obsessed with playing games, spending entire nights playing and shouting loudly at people in the game. She would often get so excited that she would bruise her arms by biting them, making it impossible for me to sleep at night due to the noise.

Jumping off buildings, jumping into rivers, and running away from home became routine for her. Once, she even locked my husband and me out of the house and spent two days and nights playing games inside. We had no choice but to stay in a hotel overnight. Later, because she wouldn't open the door, we called the police. Firefighters, psychological counselors, even the mayor and bureau chiefs came, but none could convince her to open the door...

My daughter often threatened to kill me. During that time, I would hide the kitchen knives before going to bed at night, just to feel safe enough to sleep.

Those painful days are truly unbearable to look back on. I spent my days in tears, feeling desolate, to the point where I almost gave up on the idea that Buddhism could save my daughter. For this, I deeply repent to Guan Yin Bodhisattva!

Just when I was almost losing my way in despair, it was several diligent fellow Buddhist practitioners around me who awakened me. One fellow practitioner suggested that the number of Little Houses I recited for her karmic creditors was insufficient and encouraged me to recite more. Together, these fellow practitioners offered nearly 100 Little Houses for my daughter's karmic creditors.

The selfless love of these fellow practitioners brought me out of my stupor in an instant. I began to reflect on myself. I realized that I was not a competent mother at all, nor did I deserve to be called a Buddhist practitioner or to call Jun Hong Lu, Master. I was truly ashamed. I soberly understood that my daughter's actions were all because of what I owed her. Even though she came to collect her debts, under the influence of karmic forces, she was not in control of herself. She was so pitiful. In this world, if I didn't save her, no one else would.

Now, the consequences of my previous actions are manifesting in my daughter. I am a person with deep sins, and I am the root cause of my daughter's current situation. Therefore, I deserve the consequences. So, I started to pull myself together, devoutly worshipping the Buddha, repenting for all the wrongs I had done in the past, hurting so many people.

In my heart, there is only one belief: I must repent for myself, and I must save my daughter. From July until now, I have vowed to recite nearly 900 Little Houses for my daughter's karmic creditors, with around 300 sheets left to complete. I have vowed to release 20,000 fish for her (already completed). For my daughter, I vowed to lead by example, to be filial to my parents-in-law and father, to love my siblings, and to diligently perform the ten meritorious deeds for the rest of my life.

1. Do not kill;
2. Do not steal;
3. Do not indulge in sexual misconduct;
4. No lying;

5. No double-tongued speech;
6. No abusive speech;
7. No irresponsible speech;
8. No greed;
9. No hatred;
10. No delusion.

Due to my failure to fulfill the responsibilities of a mother and properly guide my daughter during our separation over the past few years, I have vowed to recite the *Eighty-Eight Buddhas Great Repentance* 108 times. Once my daughter's condition improves, I will surely share my experiences and inspire others to practice Buddhism. There are many other big and small vows, but I won't list them all.

From May until now, over six months have passed, and it feels like we have crossed through several lifetimes. The change in my daughter is like night and day.

The daughter I once knew had hardly any virtues—her academic performance, self-care skills, and social behavior were all in shambles. She was lazy, messy, spent money recklessly, and frequently demanded money from me. If I refused, she would threaten to jump off buildings, commit suicide, or even brandish a knife at me. Now, she has completely transformed: she has become filial to me, buying me gifts multiple times and speaking to me in a gentler manner. A month ago, she suddenly applied for a refund for her gaming account, saying she no longer wanted to play games. Nowadays, she even makes plans with a few friends to go out and have fun on Sundays, becoming much more cheerful. Her mental state has normalized, and her academic performance has improved significantly.

My daughter's adverse conditions serve as my contributory condition. The changes in her growth have shown me the law of cause and effect: planting good seeds leads to good outcomes! Before Guan Yin Bodhisattva, I vow that in this life, I will no longer speak a single foul word, gossip about others, watch soap operas, or follow celebrity news. I will not waste any more time. Instead, I will accumulate merits and perform good deeds, refrain from evil, and engage in virtuous acts! I will tirelessly work to improve my faults, and I will strive to accumulate blessings and virtues for my daughter! Gratitude to Guan Yin Bodhisattva for the compassionate blessings! Gratitude to Master Lu for the earnest guidance!

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to my husband. Over these past few months, he has silently and without complaint supported me. During these months, I have not been working, staying at home every day to take care of my daughter, and all the expenses have fallen solely on him. For a man without blood ties, faced with my daughter's various behaviors and the considerable expenses, if it were any other man, he would have long been unable to endure. Despite my daughter not speaking to my husband or showing him any respect over these past months, he still treats her as his own daughter. Sincere gratitude to my husband!

One challenge after another, each one difficult to bear, but steadfast in faith, perseverance prevails, and drop by drop, water wears away the stone.

Dharma practitioner: C69

#### Comments:

- (1). This testimonial is a powerful example of how unwavering

faith and dedicated Buddhist practice can bring profound transformation, even in the face of severe challenges. The journey of the mother and her daughter, who struggled with autism, bipolar depression, and rebellious behavior, highlights the compassionate blessings of Guan Yin Bodhisattva and the strength of the Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door.

(2). Through persistent efforts like reciting Little Houses, performing life liberation, and making vows, the family's situation has improved dramatically. This story demonstrates that karmic obstacles, no matter how daunting, can be resolved with dedication and sincerity. The mother's commitment to reforming her own behavior, alongside her devoted support for her daughter, has led to a harmonious family environment and reaffirmed the Buddhist teachings on cause and effect.

(3). For those unfamiliar with Buddhism, it may not be evident that a child's misbehavior can be rooted in the mother's own karmic deeds. From a Dharma perspective, a mother's past wrongdoings manifest as retribution, and the child's rebellious behavior serves as a more intense form of this retribution than if the mother were to bear it directly.

(4). This story serves as an inspiration for other parents facing similar challenges, illustrating that, even when circumstances feel overwhelming, Buddha's guidance and diligent practice can open a path to healing and harmony. Gratitude to Guan Yin Bodhisattva and Master Lu for their boundless compassion and wisdom.

#### Case 3. My once rebellious daughter has now achieved impressive academic success via Dharma practices

In August 2016, I started practicing Buddhism and reciting Buddhist scriptures. Why did I embark on this path of practicing Buddhism? It all began with my daughter.

My daughter was rather mischievous and stubborn from a young age. By the time she was twelve or thirteen, her temper worsened significantly. Initially, she would argue with adults more and more, but then she became increasingly aggressive. Eventually, my husband and I started to fear her because when she lost her temper, she acted like a mad person. Academically, she was doing okay in elementary school and even got into a decent Key Middle School, but her grades started to decline rapidly. Later, she gave up on studying altogether and played games all day.

We attributed her behavior to adolescence and academic pressure. Later, through a mutual acquaintance, we found a nationally renowned youth psychology counselor. I took her for counseling. The first thing the counselor asked me was, "Have you had an abortion?" I replied that I had. The counselor told me that, in her years of experience, many troubled teenagers had mothers who had undergone abortions, though she didn't know why. At the time, I found this very mysterious. After practicing Buddhism, I understood that the aborted children harbored resentment towards their parents, causing immense suffering for their living children as a form of retribution.

Our daughter received psychological counseling for two years. It had some minor effects, but the improvement was not significant.

Following the counselor's advice, we transferred her from the Key Middle School to an international boarding school to reduce her academic pressure and help her learn to be independent. We also tried to take her out more often to relax and see the world. However, none



of this could keep pace with the worsening of her temper. At home, my husband and I had to be very cautious. If we weren't careful, she would lose her temper for hours, and nothing we did could calm her down.

My husband was so scared at that time that he didn't even dare to go to the bathroom at night. He kept a chamber pot in the room because she would play video games in the living room all night. If he went to the bathroom and she saw him, she would curse at him. There was one time I was so angry that I almost fainted and had to go stay at my mother's house for half a month before coming back. She would often kick open our bedroom door in the middle of the night and scream at us. During that time, my husband and I were constantly on edge, and our main topic of conversation was how and when we could get rid of this demon-like daughter so that we could live a few peaceful years.

I didn't know when this torment would end. My daughter could go for days without brushing her teeth or washing her face, hiding in her room to play video games, showing no interest in anything else. We didn't dare to say anything to her because she would get angry at us.

In early August 2016, I was browsing my WeChat Moment and saw a video posted by my cousin of a Dharma master reading a child's totem. Out of desperation for my daughter, I left a comment saying, "It would be great if the Dharma master could look at my daughter's totem." My cousin contacted me, learned about my daughter's situation, and suggested I recite Buddhist scriptures and Little Houses to ascend the spirits of my miscarried children, as this might be the cause of my daughter's issues. I was skeptical but hesitant about whether or not to try it.

One evening in mid-August, when my daughter threw another tantrum over a trivial matter, I told my husband that I intended to try reciting Buddhist scriptures. We couldn't continue living like this, and there was no other way out. Thus, I embarked on the path of practicing Buddhism. Every person who brings you pain is there to guide you. In hindsight, this is indeed true. If it weren't for my daughter, I might never have picked up a Buddhist scripture in my lifetime. The daughter who once made me gnash my teeth in anger is someone I now need to thank. It was because of her that I was introduced to Buddhism. Now, not only me but also my husband and our elders have started reciting Buddhist scriptures. How can I not be grateful to the person who forced me onto the path of practicing Buddhism?

Initially, when I decided to recite Buddhist scriptures, my faith was not very strong. However, after several events occurred, I gradually came to realize the miraculous nature of the Dharma.

The first event occurred about a week after I started reciting Buddhist scriptures. One evening, I suddenly smelled a subtle, elegant fragrance in our living room. The scent lingered around me. "Could this be the legendary sandalwood fragrance?" I wondered and ran to the large, enclosed room. The scent had permeated that room as well. I asked my husband to come and smell it, and he confirmed that he also detected the fragrance. I was deeply shocked. It was the first time I believed that a mysterious force might exist in this world.

The second event happened after I burned 21 Little Houses for my daughter's karmic creditors. The next morning, she came to tell me about her experience the previous night. She said that as she was

drifting off to sleep, she saw a mass of black smoke emerge from the corner of her room and rush toward her. Then she heard me shout from the other room, "XXX (my daughter's name), don't be afraid, the Bodhisattva will come to save you." I was astonished because I hadn't left my room all night, yet my daughter insisted she heard me say this from outside her room. I felt that this was a sign as if the Bodhisattva was telling us that our daughter would get better. These experiences strengthened my faith in Buddhism.

However, my daughter's improvement wasn't immediate. In early December 2016, she once again refused to go to school, the same thing had happened around the same time the previous year. No matter how we coaxed her, she just wouldn't go. My husband and I were extremely anxious. Later, we heard from fellow practitioners that having a Buddhist altar at home could help her recover more quickly. So, in a state of utter helplessness, we set up a Buddhist altar at home.

At that time, we continued to take her to see the psychologist regularly. Because she refused to go to school, my husband took her to a counseling session and then called me with devastating news. The counselor said our daughter might be like this for the rest of her life and unable to continue her education. Hearing this, I couldn't help but burst into tears. However, I refused to accept this fate. I felt I had already witnessed the miraculous power of Dharma and believed I could change her and my own destiny. This was my only hope. From then on, I began diligently reciting the Little Houses.

In July 2017, I brought her to another country. I came here to work, and she enrolled in high school. If it weren't for my Buddhist practice, I would never have dared to accept the company's offer and come to a foreign country alone with her.

By that time, I had already burned several hundred Little Houses for her karmic creditors and over a hundred for my miscarried children. We also attended the 2017 Singapore Dharma Conference together. Her condition had improved; she had fewer and less frequent outbursts, but the challenges remained significant. Considering her future prospects and hoping she could complete her education in a foreign country, we decided to take a chance.

When I first arrived in that country, I was quite busy and ended up reciting fewer Little Houses than before, which led to her condition worsening. At its worst, she reported experiencing sleep paralysis over ten times in a single night, leaving her on the verge of a breakdown. In this situation, I called my husband, "You have to recite Little Houses like crazy; otherwise, we won't make it and will have to return." Thus, my husband began fervently reciting Little Houses for our daughter.

At that time, if we went three days without offering at least seven Little Houses, she would undoubtedly experience sleep paralysis. We also released a large number of animals under slaughter on her behalf each month. It was truly nerve-wracking, and we couldn't relax for a moment. The miraculous thing was that she would have dreams indicating the need for more Little Houses. Based on these dreams, we would vow to repay a certain number of Little Houses. After fulfilling one dream's requirement, she would soon have another dream indicating new numbers—300, 200, 100... We kept burning Little Houses for her karmic creditors relentlessly.

Gradually, her tantrums became less frequent and shorter in duration. She used to often dream of being chased and tormented.

Later, her dreams gradually improved, and the frequency of sleep paralysis significantly decreased. Previously, she would often experience sleep paralysis even during a nap, but it hasn't happened for a long time now.

By diligently reciting the Little House for her karmic creditors, she has been gradually improving overall, although there are still ups and downs, and many minor issues remain.

In 2018 and 2019, during the period from the Winter Solstice to the Qingming Festival, she exhibited the same reluctance to go to school as she had in the previous two years. In 2018, this was due to severe insomnia, where she couldn't sleep at all throughout the night. The sleeping pills prescribed by the doctor could force her to sleep for a while, but they had significant side effects. She said she felt dizzy every day and couldn't attend school. Since I had to work, I had to leave her alone at home during the day. After a few days, we received an official email from the school stating that this was illegal, as leaving a minor at home alone is not allowed. Eventually, we reached an agreement with the school that she would attend school for half a day each afternoon, only taking the classes she liked. This was how she managed to barely complete her first year.

In early 2019, her condition seemed quite good at first. However, around the same time in 2018, she suddenly became depressed, stopped talking, and only played video games, refusing to go to school again. I took her to see a mental health specialist in a snowstorm. The doctor diagnosed her with mild depression and anxiety and suggested that she leave her current school to attend a day therapy program for a while.

During that period, I also felt quite pessimistic. Despite reciting so many Little House for her karmic creditors and releasing captive animals every month, why was this still happening? Later, I dreamed that there were issues with my husband's animal release and Little House recitations. Upon asking my husband, I found out that he had missed a step in the animal release process. Additionally, there were mistakes in reciting the *Great Compassion Mantra* and the *Heart Sutra*.

During that time, I prayed to the Bodhisattva every day for protection. One night in April 2019, I dreamed of Guan Yin Bodhisattva. In my dream, just as my daughter was about to be swept into a vortex, the Bodhisattva saved her. I was overjoyed and no longer afraid, knowing that we had the Bodhisattva's protection. Indeed, her condition gradually improved. Following the guidance from the Bodhisattva in my dream, I transferred her to a new school, and she slowly started to recover. This allowed her to barely complete her second year of studies.

From July 2017 to June 2019, although her mental state improved significantly, her academic performance remained a major issue. She had missed many classes over the two years. To graduate from high school, she needed to earn a total of 66 credits, but she had earned less than half of them in two years. This made it challenging not only to think about college but even to graduate from high school. The teachers subtly asked if we would consider having her repeat a semester to earn enough credits. They also suggested that after graduating from high school, she should first attend a community college (which has no admission requirements) and then apply to transfer to a regular university after two years. This indicated that, in the teachers' eyes, the chances of my daughter directly entering college were very slim.

In this situation, I made several vows to Guan Yin Bodhisattva:

1. Create 10,000 Dharma propagation images, using Master Lu's *Buddhism in Plain Terms* and various teachings, and share them on Facebook, dedicating most of the merits and virtues to my daughter.
2. Share my daughter's case and let more people know about the wonders of Dharma once she recovered.

I also vowed to recite a certain number of Little Houses for her karmic creditors and release a specified number of fish for her.

After making these vows, I dreamed that a Bodhisattva resided in her school. I knew then that the Bodhisattva would bless her studies.

Starting in September 2019, in less than a year, she miraculously accomplished what seemed impossible. In the final week before graduation, she completed her last course, earned the required 66 credits, and successfully graduated!

Additionally, to apply for college, she had to take the standard exams. Since I didn't know she needed these scores to apply to universities, she didn't have much time to prepare when I found out. I could only tell her to do her best and that Guan Yin Bodhisattva would bless her. When the scores came out, they just exceeded the minimum threshold for some universities. She couldn't believe she achieved such a score without much preparation.

The only issue was that, due to missing many classes over the previous two years, her GPA was quite low, far below the admission requirements for most universities. However, we didn't lose hope and continued releasing captive animals, reciting Little Houses, and performing good deeds. In July of this year, we finally received good news: she was accepted into a decent, accredited university. The major is popular and something she likes, and the school is close to home. This outcome was much better than I had initially expected, and I am truly grateful to the Bodhisattva. Gratitude and Namaste!

Looking back over these four years, there have been countless times when the Bodhisattva has encouraged and blessed us. When we first arrived in the new country, I encouraged her to vow to eat vegetarian for a few days each month to help her recover faster. I would light incense and persuade her to make this vow. She skeptically asked me, "If I vow to eat vegetarian, will the Bodhisattva really help me get better faster? Will our incense ash curl?" Just as she finished speaking, we turned to look at the incense on the altar, and the ash had started to curl one after another. It was the first time our incense ash had curled! She was greatly encouraged and vowed to eat vegetarian for five days each month, which later increased to 15 days and then 25 days. Although she hasn't vowed to be fully vegetarian, she now eats vegetarian with me every day at home.

Another time, when she was still not well and I was feeling very low, I secretly knelt in front of the altar, crying, and prayed to the Bodhisattva, "Bodhisattva, please save me and help me. I really can't bear this life anymore." When I looked up, I saw the incense ash curling. I knew that the Bodhisattva was truly watching over me at all times, but I also knew that my own karma could only be resolved by myself. The Bodhisattva would always bless me, and this gave me great confidence. There are many other instances, but I won't list them all.

Looking back, the psychologist once predicted that my daughter might never get better in her lifetime. In fact, I knew that her actual condition was worse than what the psychologist had seen. Without

Buddhism, she might have ended up completely or partially insane. However, through reciting Buddhist scriptures, making vows, and performing animal release, we managed to change her and our own destinies.

Since I started practicing Buddhism in August 2016, our family has collectively recited more than 3,000 Little Houses for my daughter's karmic creditors. I have also recited over 600 Little Houses for my miscarried children. Additionally, we have released more than 40,000 fish for my daughter. Now, she does her daily Buddhist practices and recites Little Houses herself. She has already recited more than 500 Little Houses on her own. Not only has she been accepted into college, but more importantly, her bad temper is gone. She no longer gets obsessed with trivial matters, and her thinking is much clearer than before. She has become a bright, loving person who helps with household chores. When I'm busy, she even cooks and waits for me to eat together. She is like a completely different person! I believe we have overcome the most difficult times, and I am confident that her future will only get better. Cultivating the mind and changing one's destiny is truly possible. I am grateful to the Bodhisattva, to my Master, and to everything.

Dharma practitioner: N70

#### Comments:

(1). From the conversation between the mother and the psychologist, it is clear that psychology is gradually aligning with the principles of Dharma. The psychologist acknowledged that abortion could cause problems for both the mother and the child, although the underlying reasons remain unclear to her. This suggests that modern medical science is drawing closer to the realm of Dharma, with only a "thin veil" separating the two. Over 2,500 years ago, the Buddha explained: "I observe this world as if it were an āmalaka fruit"—a type of oval-shaped fruit found in India. The Buddha also said, "I see 84,000 microorganisms in a single bowl of water," and He described in detail the process of fetal development and maturation within a mother's body. Science is merely confirming step by step what the Buddha taught long ago. Proving the existence of the spiritual realm and its impact on human health will likely be the next frontier. By advancing further and integrating Dharma principles, science could accelerate its progress and gain a deeper understanding of complex issues such as ODD.

(2). Sleep paralysis is a state associated with the inability to move that occurs when an individual is nearly sleeping or just waking. It could occur in healthy individuals as isolated sleep paralysis. It has also been linked with other underlying psychiatry, familial, and sleep disorders [14]. While the description of its symptoms is accurate, the underlying mechanisms remain incompletely understood, indicating gaps in medical science's current knowledge. From a Buddhist perspective, the explanation is more straightforward: sleep paralysis occurs when a spirit presses down on the individual. The presence of the spirit immobilizes the person, leaving them unable to move despite being conscious. Although spirits lack physical bodies and weight, they possess powers that surpass human strength [15]. Therefore, it is recommended to use "spirit oppression" instead of "sleep paralysis" to convey the true nature of this phenomenon rather than merely describing its symptoms.

(3). The scent of sandalwood indicates the presence of the Bodhisattva or Master Lu. Unlike spirits that cause calamities such as ODD or sleep paralysis, the arrival of the Bodhisattva or Master Lu

brings blessings. Additionally, when incense ashes curl on a Buddhist altar or oil lamp wicks form a lotus shape, it signifies the presence of the Bodhisattva, Dharma protectors, or Master Lu [15]. The recurrence or worsening of a child's problems between the Winter Solstice and the Qingming Festival is attributed to these ghost festivals. During this period, the deceased are released from the underworld and enter the human world to collect karmic debts.

An additional four cases (Case 4-7) are included in the Supplemental section.

## Discussion

In the scientific community, ODD is widely recognized as a complex behavioral condition rooted in genetic predispositions, neurobiological processes, and environmental stressors [2]. Conventional approaches, including behavioral therapy, medication, and parent training, have achieved varying degrees of success [9]. Therefore, the persistence of ODD-related challenges indicates a need for a broader and more integrative understanding of its etiology and treatment.

This study introduces a complementary spiritual framework for understanding and addressing ODD, grounded in Buddhist principles. It emphasizes the influence of karmic factors and spirit attachment as significant contributors to ODD symptoms. Master Lu's teachings offer an alternative perspective, suggesting that unresolved karmic debts and spiritual disturbances manifest as rebellious behavior, emotional instability, and defiance in children (Q&A 1,3).

The cases presented in this paper demonstrate the effectiveness of Buddhist practices in addressing spiritual factors associated with ODD. For instance, a young girl's persistent tantrums and defiance were resolved after offering 43 Little Houses to her karmic creditors (Case 1). Another girl, diagnosed with autism, bipolar depression, and ODD, experienced significant behavioral improvement within six months through her mother's consistent Dharma practices (Case 2). A previously rebellious girl achieved outstanding academic success after three years of her parents' dedicated Dharma practices (Case 3). A boy who frequently stole money overcame his habit just over six months after his mother established a Buddhist altar at home (Case 4). Another boy managed to curb reckless spending, developed self-discipline, and freed himself from internet addiction within two years due to his mother's Dharma practices (Case 5). A once-rebellious boy, plagued by internet addiction, transformed into a positive and cheerful individual through his parents' spiritual efforts (Case 6). Lastly, a girl who had been a rebellious adversary turned into a sweet and caring presence (Case 7).

These cases illustrate the potential of Dharma practices to address not only surface-level symptoms but also the root causes of ODD. Among the seven cases, four (Cases 3, 5-7) identified the karmic cause of the children's ODD as the result of the mothers' past abortions, while the remaining three cases did not disclose the specific source of their karma. Case 3 specifically corroborates a psychologist's observation linking maternal abortion to children developing ODD. Importantly, these outcomes validate Master Lu's teachings on the connection between ODD and killing karma (Q&A 1, 3).

Only upon the removal of karma can a person's true potential be fully revealed. This is vividly reflected in Case 3 and Case 4, where their academic performance improved remarkably. The Buddha once



taught that all sentient beings possess Buddha-nature, meaning every being has the potential to attain Buddhahood. However, in reality, this potential often remains unrealized because it is obscured by the five desires and six sensory distractions. Similarly, while students inherently have the potential to score 100%, academic performance in a class of 45 students varies widely. The underlying reason is the burden of karmic obstacles, which hinder individuals from realizing their full potential. In Cases 3 and 4, their previous karmic obstacles were severe and had progressed into ODD. Although their classmates' karmic obstacles were less pronounced, these obstacles were still sufficient to affect their studies and prevent them from achieving their highest potential.

From a Dharma perspective, karmic maturation allows spirits (i.e., 'karmic creditors') to attach to an individual, influencing their emotions and behavior. In cases of ODD, these influences may manifest as defiance and hostility, often directed toward authority figures. Unlike the general process, where karma is created, activated, and then allows spirits to occupy a person and cause illness, abortion bypasses the activation stage. The spirits of aborted children can directly attach to the mother or her other children, causing disturbances. These spirits, having nowhere else to go until their predestined natural lifespan ends [16], may view their siblings as suitable targets for vengeance, resulting in behavioral issues such as ODD.

Spiritual illnesses require spiritual remedies, and Dharma practices have proven to be the most effective approach. Resolving karmic debts through practices such as reciting Buddhist scriptures, making vows, and performing life liberation allows individuals to eliminate karma, help spirits ascend, and ultimately regain emotional stability and harmony. To better illustrate the ODD process, we present the following example.

If your daughter's car were hijacked by her creditor, would the car still follow your directions? It wouldn't—in fact, it might even crash into you. The car symbolizes your daughter's physical body, the person inside represents her soul, and the hijacker represents the spirit. This analogy was previously illustrated in an article [15]. As a result, the car no longer responds to your commands because it is not your daughter driving—it is the hijacker. In this way, your daughter's body becomes nothing more than a marionette, manipulated by the spirit, which is truly pitiable.

Since you share karmic debts with your daughter, her creditor is also your creditor. The spirit, seeking repayment, acts through your daughter, causing distress for your entire family. For instance, the girl who bursts into your room in the middle of the night, yelling and screaming, may look like your daughter, but the words she shouts are not hers—they are the spirit's words, intent on driving you to despair (Case 2). Similarly, when a six-year-old cries inconsolably, it is the spirit at work, causing anguish for the whole family (Case 1). A more striking example is a case we previously published about a father and son who, in a past life, committed murder and theft. As karmic retribution in this life, the child suffered from severe depression. The victim spirit attached to the child directly communicates with the mother [17].

Only by repaying the karmic debt to satisfy the spirit can the situation be resolved. Once the debts are repaid, the spirit will naturally depart, your daughter's soul will regain control of her body, and her health will recover. This explains why Dharma practices are so effective in treating ODD, as they address the underlying spiritual

mechanism of the condition.

After you become a practitioner of Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door, you may experience certain dreams. Out of compassion, the Bodhisattva allows you to have prophetic dreams that you must pay close attention to, enabling you to address problems before they materialize. Master Lu has enlightened us that once karma erupts, it is like a bomb that has already exploded—at that point, the only thing you can do is "clean up the mess" and "clear the battlefield." Therefore, it is far better to eliminate karma before it manifests. The merit of liberating one fish before karma erupts is equivalent to liberating 100 fish after it has already manifested [15]. If a prophetic dream draws the practitioner's attention and prompts corrective action, it may help avert severe consequences (Cases 2, 6).

Guan Yin Bodhisattva blesses those who practice the Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door, helping to eliminate the suffering caused by spirits. Do these spirits benefit from this process? Absolutely! As the saying goes, "Humans strive to ascend; water flows downward." Spirits reside in the Ghost Realm, which is lower than both the Beast and Human Realms [15]. When Dharma practitioners use 'Little Houses [18]' to help them ascend, these spirits may be reborn into the Beast Realm, Human Realm, or even higher realms. Naturally, most of them are willing to accept this opportunity. Once they ascend, they typically do not return (Case 6). This demonstrates the Bodhisattva's fairness, as the Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door benefits both the living and the departed.

The spiritual framework presented in this paper does not negate existing scientific theories but rather complements them. For example, familial patterns of ODD, often attributed to genetic predispositions, can also be viewed through the lens of shared karmic debts. Similarly, environmental triggers, such as adverse childhood experiences, may represent the materialization of karmic conditions rather than standalone causes. These insights suggest that integrating Dharma principles with conventional methods could offer a more holistic approach to managing ODD.

A longstanding question that has perplexed the scientific community is why ODD is frequently associated with other intractable conditions, such as ADHD [3]. This phenomenon can now be understood through a spiritual perspective. Previous findings have demonstrated that spirits can simultaneously cause multiple diseases in an individual, including necrosis, Parkinson's disease, arthritis, depression, migraines, and pharyngitis [19]. Additional evidence includes the case of an asthma patient who also suffered from heart disease, lumbar spine disease, cervical spondylosis, muscle aches, and stiffness in the hands and feet concurrently [20]. Given this, it is unsurprising that a child with ODD might also experience other conditions such as ADHD. In fact, a prior case report detailed a boy diagnosed with both autism and ADHD, whose conditions were completely healed after his mother began practicing Buddhism [15]. This underscores the potential of Dharma practices to address comorbid conditions by targeting their shared underlying causes.

The findings highlight the transformative potential of Buddhist practices in addressing ODD. By resolving spiritual disturbances, these practices pave the way for emotional healing and behavioral improvements. Moreover, the emphasis on self-cultivation and moral discipline offers a sustainable path for parents and caregivers to contribute to their children's recovery. This has demonstrated success in a bunch of intractable diseases, such as cancer [21], Alzheimer's disease [18], genetic disease [22] skin diseases [23, 24], and mouth



disease [25], respiratory diseases [26, 27], autoimmune disease [28], kidney diseases [29], and among others [15].

Importantly, these findings question the conventional understanding of ODD's etiology and existing knowledge [2]. While conventional treatments often focus on managing symptoms, they often fail to address deeper underlying causes. The integration of Dharma practices offers a promising alternative, particularly for families who have not found success with conventional methods.

While this study provides compelling evidence for the efficacy of Dharma practices, further research is needed to systematically evaluate these methods in diverse populations. Quantitative studies comparing the outcomes of Dharma practices with conventional treatments could strengthen the case for integrative approaches. Additionally, exploring intersections between Dharma teachings and emerging scientific findings on relational and environmental factors could yield new insights into the etiology of ODD.

## Conclusion

ODD is a spiritual disease that resists conventional treatment but responds effectively to Dharma practices, as its root causes stem from karma and spiritual dimensions rather than the physical realm.

This study highlights the transformative potential of Dharma practices, particularly those grounded in Buddhist principles, in addressing the underlying causes of ODD. By focusing on karmic influences and spirit attachment, these practices can complement conventional therapies, offering a holistic and integrative approach to healing. Bridging Dharma and science may provide deeper insights into ODD and open new pathways for recovery.

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## Conflict of Interest

No.

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None.

## Ethical Statement

The author did not involve any part of the experimental design, experimental treatments and result analysis of the 7 patients. All the experimental procedures and practices by the 7 presenters were done by themselves independently.

## Statement by Translator and Writer

The 7 cases and 3 Q&A dialogues from Master Lu's blog were translated from Chinese to English based on their intended meaning rather than a word-for-word approach. The remaining portions of the paper were written based on my limited understanding of Guan Yin Citta Dharma Door. If there are any inaccuracies or deviations from the true meaning of the Chinese version, or if the content does not accurately reflect Master Lu's teachings, I sincerely seek forgiveness from the Greatly Merciful and Greatly Compassionate Guan Yin Bodhisattva, all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Dharma Protectors, and Master Jun Hong Lu.

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