



## 9. *Nurturance by the Small*

Nurturance by the small is developmental. Dense clouds do not rain, proceeding from one's own western province.

### EXPLANATION

*Nurturance by the small* is making the small one's nourishment. As for the qualities of the hexagram, above is *wind* ☴, submissive, below is *heaven* ☰, strong: Being strong, yet acting submissively, the submissiveness subdues the strength, and strength cannot act on its own. Therefore it is called *nurturance by the small*, which also means being held back by the small.

This hexagram represents nurturing the great by the small; it follows on the previous hexagram *army*. The path of the army is using yang to repel yin, for which it is important to first nourish the yang. When one is able to nourish the yang, then one keeps to oneself by the small, full but not overflowing, firm but not aggressive, having yet appearing not to have, full yet seeming empty. The heart grows daily humbler, while the virtue grows daily higher. One can thereby gradually get to the realm of sages. This is why nurturance by the small is developmental.

However, though nurturance by the small is developmental, if the smallness is excessive, this is doing things weakly, so that the path of firmness recedes from its proper place, the will is not robust, and one becomes feeble and ineffective: With the nurturance small, the development is small, so that the action is not far-reaching, and the great Tao is therefore hard to attain. This is like "dense clouds not raining, proceeding from one's own western province." Yin energy coalesces as clouds, yang energy arrives as rain: As long as clouds do not rain, the yin energy is prevalent while the yang energy is weak, and the living potential is on the verge of cessation; that which is near, in oneself, is not even taken care of, so how could one seek that which is afar, in the other? When one small empty voidness enters into quietism, how can one restore one's celestial original state? So one must know the process of nurturance by the small.

- **First yang:** Returning by the path—how could that be blameworthy? It bodes well.

## EXPLANATION

Being strong yet remaining humble, concealing one's light and nurturing it in obscurity, embracing the Tao and keeping settled, not injuring inner reality by outward artificiality, is to be able to return by way of the path. Being able to return by the path, though the nurturance is small, one can gain its nourishment, and strong energy grows day by day; not only is it blameless, it brings good fortune. This is the nurturance of being great yet being humble and appearing small.

- **2 yang:** Leading back bodes well.

## EXPLANATION

Strength acting with flexibility, being sharp yet fond of learning, unashamed to humble oneself to inquire, associating with superior people, benefiting each other, understanding what is good and returning to the origin, is "leading back." The nurturance of leading back is outwardly increasing in emptiness while inwardly increasing in fulfillment; small, yet gaining good results. This is the nurturance of being great yet knowing the small.

- **3 yang:** The wheels are detached from the cart; husband and wife look away from each other.

## EXPLANATION

When strength acts on its own and one is self-centered and inconsiderate of others, this turns away from harmony and loses balance, sure to end in ruination of strength. This is like the wheels being detached from a cart, so the cart cannot move. It is also like husband and wife averting their eyes from each other, so the family cannot flourish. This is the nurturance of being great and not knowing the small.

- **4 yin:** If there is truthfulness, blood goes and fear leaves, and there is no fault.

## EXPLANATION

If one has no ability and is in the midst of those with ability, one will surely err with the result of sustaining bloody injury. But to be weak and yet find what is right, having confidence in one's own pure yang alone, is most injurious. Still, if one can borrow others' positive energy, be cautious and diligent, refine oneself and control the mind, then one can escape the harm of what originally would be harmful, and can wind up without fault where originally there would be fault. This is the nurturance of being small yet knowing the great.



- **5 yang:** There is truthfulness in companionship; prosperity is shared with the neighbor.

## EXPLANATION

The strength of yang proceeds docilely into the center of balance; truth is in the center, yin and yang are merged, the gold elixir crystallizes. This is having truthfulness in companionship. With truthfulness in companionship, the basis is stable, the country is peaceful, the basis of life is firm; one should hasten to transmute the nature of the temperament to return it to the essence of real knowledge. This is like sharing prosperity with the neighbor. This is the nurturance of being small yet containing the great.

- **Top yang:** It has rained and settled. Esteeming virtue, putting the wife on top, though she be chaste there is danger. The moon is almost full; it bodes ill for the superior person to go on an expedition.

## EXPLANATION

Firmness is in the position of flexibility at the end of nurturance by the small. This is like when it has rained and settled. Rain is that whereby extreme dryness is ended; once it has rained, the yang energy is settled and does not rise too high. Once it is settled, the yang energy is harmonious and there is no need for rain. The reason cultivation of the Tao uses yin is just to control the vehemence of artificial yang. Once artificial yang has ceased, real yang should advance. The end of nurturance by the small is precisely the time for nurturance by the great; if one winds up small and cannot be great, yin then injures yang. This is like esteeming virtue and putting the wife on top, so the woman controls the authority. It is also like the moon nearing full, after which the light will gradually wane. If noble people who cultivate the Tao only know the small and do not know the great, they may thereby maintain quietude in solitary tranquility, without action or striving, but if they try to thereby fulfill their nature and reach their destiny, to travel the Path to its further reaches, they will only call misfortune upon themselves. This is the nurturance of ending up small and not knowing the great.

As we observe nurturance as represented in the six lines, though nurturance by the small basically is developmental, it is all a matter of how a person is small. If the smallness is appropriate, then one can nurture greatness by smallness and bring about good results. If the smallness is inappropriate, then one will damage greatness by smallness and bring on calamity. Students should first thoroughly investigate the process within smallness.



## 9. *Small Nurturance*

wind above,  
heaven below

Wind blowing up in the sky is small nurturance; thus do superior people beautify cultured qualities.

Small nurturance is smallness of development. Above is *wind* ☴, below is *heaven* ☰; this is wind blowing up in the sky. When wind blows on the earth, by its circulation of air to myriad beings its nurturance is extensive; when it blows up in the sky, it can only relieve heat, so its nurturance is small. This is the image of *small nurturance*.

What superior people see in this is that the science of fulfilling nature and comprehending life is the great work of appropriating yin and yang, taking over evolution, reversing the process of life and death, taking charge of the pivotal mechanism; it cannot be carried out by those who have not received mental transmission of the science, but if great nurturance is impossible, then small nurturance is still called for, whereby to beautify cultured qualities.

Beautification means adornment; culture means the pattern of manners and conduct. Even though manners and conduct are not the great matter of cultivation of spiritual virtue, nevertheless those who cultivate spiritual virtue should not slight manners and conduct. Examples of cultured qualities are being equanimous and agreeable in dealing with people, being respectful and serious in performing service, being thorough and precise in activity, being careful and prudent in speech.

Concealing one's strength and acting with flexibility, observing what has gone before and being mindful of consequences, being serene and unhurried, one will naturally not act in any way that is impetuous or causes loss of character. This is like the wind blowing in the sky, relieving the heat. When one cultivates one's character to the point where irascibility and impetuosity vanish, then one is capable of small nurturance and also capable of great nurturance.