



60. Discipline

Discipline is developmental, but painful discipline is not to be held to.

EXPLANATION

Discipline means having limits that are not to be exceeded. As to the qualities of the hexagram, above is *water* ☵, a pitfall, and below is *lake* ☱, joyous. Being capable of joy in danger, warding off danger by joyfulness, it is therefore called *discipline*.

This hexagram represents practicing obedience in unfavorable circumstances, adaptably keeping to the Tao; it follows on the previous hexagram *joy*. In *joy*, joyfulness reaches outside; one can delight in the Tao and practice the Tao. But if one can only be joyful in favorable circumstances and not in unfavorable circumstances, joy is not real, and ultimately it will be hard to get out of difficulty and danger, so one will not find joy.

Therefore those who practice reality and delight in the Tao do not let difficulty disturb their minds, and do not let peril and trouble affect their will; the situation may be dangerous, but their minds are not endangered, the times may be perilous but the Tao is not imperiled. Pleased with heaven and aware of the aim of life, they are at peace wherever they are: They use danger to nourish joy, and use joy to guard against danger. The situation may be up to others, but creation of destiny is up to oneself. Yin and yang cannot restrict such people, the created universe cannot bind them; whether in adversity or comfort, they do not lose their bearings. This is why discipline is developmental.

However, even though discipline can develop you, if you do not know how to adapt to changes, and cling fast to one discipline, that will become restrictive and stifling; this is called painful discipline. When discipline gets to the point of inflicting suffering, it brings on danger itself even where there was no danger; you will only suffer toil and servility, which is harmful and has no benefit. Not only does this not constitute discipline, it loses the appropriate measure. This is not joy in the midst of danger; it is enjoying the act of courting danger. Therefore it is not to be held to.

When superior people practice the Tao and establish virtue, they don't act in any way that is not just; their every step is orderly and regulated, their every word is timely and reasonable. In substance they are always calm, like a lake without waves; in function they act like water, which conforms to its environment. Their calmness does not reach the point of losing mindfulness, and their activity does not reach the point of straying from essence. There is a consistency about their movement and stillness, adjusted appropriately according to events, not restricted to a single pattern. When the time comes to stop, they stop; encountering danger, they deal with it. When the time comes to go on, they go on; getting

out of danger, they do not bring on danger. Going along with the time, they deal with everything unminding, and therefore can get beyond yin and yang, not being constrained by yin and yang.

This is because heaven and earth can coerce what has form, but not what is formless; can coerce the minding, but not the unminding. Discipline is not according to mind but according to time; this is called discipline according to the time, having discipline yet according with the time. It is like the sections of bamboo; each section has a boundary, each section has a passage. In this way, how could one fail to develop?

- **First yang:** Not leaving home, there is no blame.

EXPLANATION

In the beginning of discipline, firmly remaining upright, first becoming able to distinguish right and wrong and then after that acting—this is discipline not leaving home. “Not leaving home” means if one can be careful in the beginning one will naturally be blameless in the end. This is the discipline of the strong who are able to be upright.

- **2 yang:** Not going outside bodes ill.

EXPLANATION

When firmness is led by weakness, one can only discipline inside and cannot discipline outside, and wind up living alone as quietists. This is called the discipline of not going outside. Not going outside, one may be disciplined, but one is ineffective. This bodes ill even when there is no adversity. This is the fixated firmness.

- **3 yin:** If one is not disciplined, one will lament.
It is no fault of others.

EXPLANATION

Imbalanced and disoriented, striving for externals and losing the inner, craving happiness without knowing it requires discipline, one will instead bring about unhappiness. This wound of lament is self-inflicted, and no fault of others. This is being weak and not knowing enough to have discipline.

- **4 yin:** Peaceful discipline is developmental.

EXPLANATION

When receptive flexibility is correctly oriented, one borrows strength to eliminate weakness, so that even one incapable of discipline becomes capable of discipline. This is called peaceful discipline. When discipline reaches peace, it becomes spontaneous and does not come by forced effort. This is the discipline of the weak who are assisted by others.



60. Regulation

water above,
lake below

There is water over a lake, regulated. Thus superior people determine measures and discuss virtuous actions.

Regulation means having limits. Above is *water* ☵, below is *lake* ☱; there is water over a lake. There is a limit to which a lake can hold water; if there is too much water, the lake overflows. This is the image of *regulation*.

What superior people see in this is that establishment of virtue is the basis of everything that people should do or not do, and they should not act arbitrarily. This is called regulation. However, there is a way of changing adaptively according to the situation; if one holds to one regulation to the end, one's practice will not be successful, but will instead damage one's character. Therefore regulations must be distinguished, so superior people determine measures to discuss virtuous actions.

The three hundred sixty-five days of a year is one of four ways of measurement; the yearly cycle is also divided into four seasons, eight divisions, and seventy-two periods, each with its boundaries. These are "measures." People are born with certain measures of earthly and celestial energies of the five elements, so they have the virtues of the five elements; when they act without losing those virtues, that is virtuous action.

Superior people determine the measures of waxing and waning of the earthly and celestial five elements and discuss the virtuous actions of benevolence, justice, courtesy, knowledge, and truthfulness; this is to cause people to be benevolent when it is appropriate to be benevolent, to be just when it is appropriate to be just, to be courteous when it is appropriate to be courteous, to be knowing when it is appropriate to be knowing, and to be truthful when it is appropriate to be truthful. They also discuss how the five virtues are one energy, how the earthly and the celestial work together, without bias or partiality.

This is because they want people to embody the virtues of heaven and earth as their own qualities and the processes of the four seasons as their own conduct. The science of nature and life is a process of work that is entirely a matter of the measure of evolution; if you conform to the appropriate measure, you can cultivate celestial qualities—this is virtuous action. If you lose the proper measure, you turn away from celestial qualities—this is the demise of virtue. Actions that destroy virtue are actions

without regulation, taking the false to be real, taking what is wrong to be right. Even if you can hold fast to one regulation, this still is sticking to voidness or clinging to form, and ultimately is of no benefit to nature and life. The intention of superior people in determining this and discussing this so as to enlighten people and fulfill their work was profound indeed.