



## 61 Centring and Connecting to the Spirits ZHONG FU

Sincere, truthful; connect your inner and outer lives; a heart emptied and at peace; connection to the spirit; capture, spoils, captives offered in sacrifice; major site of initiation and creative transformation, the Opened Heart.

### MYTHS FOR CHANGE: THE STORY OF THE TIME

**Charge to the Oracle:** *Articulate the Mandate then trust in it. Connect the heart with the spirit. Accept this and use the energy of Centring and Connecting.*

This figure connects two very important terms in the world of Change. *Fu* 'connection to the spirits' is part of a phonetic family that includes a variety of interrelated meanings. It is a return to and of the spirit, establishing the myriad blessings that flow from the ancestors and Heaven through the act of sacrifice: benediction, celestial favour and great prosperity. It also means capture, spoils, booty; to take prisoners as victims for sacrifice; to drive out evil spirits. It is a Founding Father, an offering to the ancestors and a contract to recognize partners, a jade talisman and a bronze sacrificial vessel. Through all these meanings it points at connection to the spirit world and the carrying wave of blessing and energy that pours forth through that connection.

*Zhong*, centring, is another term that permeates the ancient ritual world. It means moving to or being at the centre, an equal or still point between opposites. It is an arrow that hits the centre of the target, the equinoxes, the pivotal points of the year. It is the 'coming in and going out' of the souls from the centre, the heart and its inner animation, the activity of the *shen* or spirits in the heart and their harmonizing influence. It refers to the inner world: meditation and the inner Way, putting something to the trial through divination. The root is a banner placed at the centre point of the Four Sides, a hole or link to the world of the dead and the ancestors.

Centring and Connecting to the Spirits represents an access to the thought of the heart. It opens a centre where the vital



forces are rooted in the self, the inner riches of 'pigs and fishes' hidden in the Stream of Life. It is the space between Heaven and Earth where the Myriad Beings live, a mediating space that connects the inner and outer lives of all things. Thus it signifies divination and a symbol given by the spirits that is realised, proved and manifested in life. It is trust in the images that flow from the heart and the spirit that makes them true.

## THE RESPONSE

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits. 'Little pigs and fishes.'**

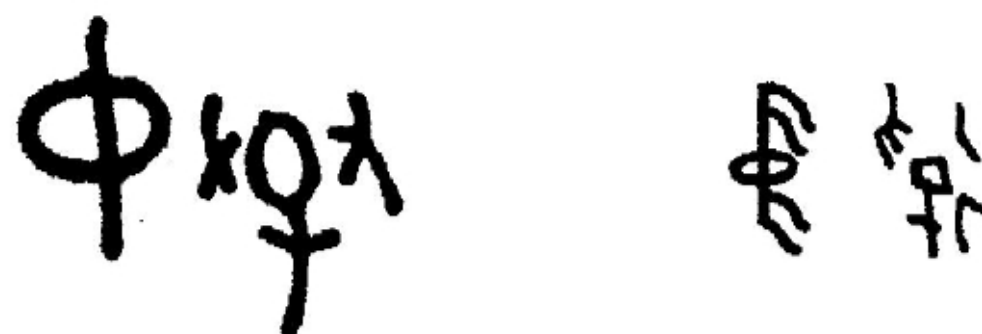
**Wise Words! The Way is open.**

**Advantageous to step into the Great Stream.**

**Advantageous Trial. Harvesting.**

**Centre, ZHONG:** inner, central, calm, stable; balanced, correct; put in the centre, mediate, between; the inner life, the heart; a stable point that lets you face the vicissitudes of life. The old character shows an arrow or banner at the centre of a target.

**Connect, FU:** accord between inner and outer; sincere, truthful, reliable, verified; have confidence; linked to and carried by the spirits; capture prisoners, take spoils; be successful; incubate, hatch. The old character shows the claws of the bird spirit or ancestor and its prey.



**ZHONG (2719/2)** shows a flag or arrow in the middle of a target, a 'centre'. **FU<sup>2</sup> (3582/39)** shows a bird's claws grasping a child, its young or captives taken by the armies.

Centring and Connecting to the Spirits describes your situation in terms of the need to bring your life into accord with the spirits. The way to deal with it is to make connecting the inner and the outer parts of your life your central concern. Be sincere, truthful and reliable. Make your inner vision and your outer circumstances coincide. Empty your heart so you can hear the inner voices. Act

through these voices with sincerity and honesty in connecting with others. This will link you to the spirits and they will carry you through. Swim in the stream of the Way and gather the pigs and fishes. This generates meaning and good fortune by releasing transformative energy. This is the right time to enter the Stream of Life with a purpose, or to embark on a significant enterprise. Put your ideas to the trial. That brings profit and insight.

#### THE SCHOLAR SPEAKS

The hexagram figure shows inner expression permeating the outer world. Above the mists is the wind. Take the situation in and provide what is needed. Articulate and trust yourself. Centring and Connecting to the Spirits means being trustworthy. Think about legal actions before getting involved and put off serious judgments. Be flexible and adaptable within so the strong can acquire the centre. Expression and penetration will link you to the spirits and let you change the way power and responsibility is assigned. Swim in the stream of the Way and gather the pigs and fishes. This is the right time to embark on significant enterprises. Ride in an empty wooden boat. Put your ideas to the trial. That brings profit and insight and connects you with Heaven above.

#### THE SHAMAN SPEAKS

**Above Wind there are the Mists. Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**This is a time when Noble One deliberates the rites that release the people from death.**

*Spirit works through those who lay out the offerings, speaks and spreads joy through the Intermediaries. These are the Intermediaries. Wind and Wood above enter subtly, penetrating, pervading and coupling, while Mists rising from below stimulate and fertilize, joyous words cheer and inspire. This is Wood over Metal: an open centre that allows inspiration to pervade and influence the world. The ideal Realising Person reflects this by deliberating the Great symbols that that can release us from the fear of death. Persist and work through inner inspiration. This is the Great Transition.*





INITIAL NINE

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**Make the sacrifice for the repose of the dead. Let the mourners go home.**

**Wise Words! The Way opens.**

**If strangers come do not feast them.**

*The purpose has not changed.* Stay alone and quiet and think about what you want to do. That will make the connection and open the Way. If you are always worrying about other people, you will have no peace. Don't take on their problems now.

*Direction:* Dispel illusions. Take things in. Be open and provide what is needed.

NINE AT SECOND

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**A calling crane hidden in the shade. Its offspring respond in harmony.**

**'I have a winged wine vessel.**

**Come to me and I will simply pour it out.'**

*This is the centre of the heart's desire.* This is the profound call of one soul to another and the call of the inner self. Respond to it. It can change your life. Don't hesitate to answer.

*Direction:* A flourishing time is coming. Increase your efforts. Strip away old ideas. Be open and provide what is needed.

SIX AT THIRD

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**'We have taken the enemy.'**

**Sometimes we drum, sometimes we stop.**

**Sometimes we weep, sometimes we sing.**

*This is not an appropriate situation.* You find an equal and a rival. Back and forth, again and again, you have something to love and fight with. This is the paradox of victory, the inner identity between winner and loser.

*Direction:* Accumulate the Small to achieve the Great. Turn conflict into creative tension. The situation is already changing.

#### SIX AT FOURTH

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**'Changes are coming': the Moon Almost Full.**

**The horse's yoke-mate disappears.**

**This is not a mistake.**

*This is breaking away and grouping with the above. You are on your own now. This is a special moment in which your usual connections disappear. Things are almost ripe. The Change is coming. Don't be afraid to act alone. Preserve your integrity. This is not a mistake. It connects you with what is above.*

*Direction:* Make your way step by step. Turn conflict into creative tension. Gather energy for a decisive new move.

#### NINE AT FIFTH

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**A connection that binds us together.**

**This is not a mistake.**

*It is appropriate to correct the situation. This connects you to others on a deep spiritual level. You can truly help people now. Put things right. Act energetically. This is not a mistake.*

*Direction:* Diminish your passionate involvement. Make the sacrifice. Something significant is returning. Be open and provide what is needed.

#### NINE ABOVE

**Centring and Connecting to the Spirits.**

**A soaring sound, wings mounting to Heaven.**

**Trial: Trap! The Way closes.**

*Why let this last? This is enthusiasm that flies above itself and carries you away. There is no real substance here. Ask yourself why you are doing this. The Way is closing. Danger. If you go on, you will fall into the hunter's net.*

*Direction:* Set limits and articulate desires. Take things in. Be open and provide what is needed.