

## ***V. Let's Talk About the Work of Cultivating According Tao***

### **[FOREWORD]**

Now each of you is a part of this cultivation sanctuary, and you are all called cultivators. Thus being cultivators, what do you cultivate according to?

<Everyone is silent>

If all of you, having cultivated for such a long time, do not understand even this, then really you have spent time and worked in vain. So none of you understand. Is there anyone who would like to listen to Teacher's explanation and to understand?

<Everyone answers, "Yes, we would.">

Therefore, Teacher will begin telling you right now.

### **1. The Outline of Cultivation**

To cultivate yourself involves cultivation your body, mind, and soul. The best way to cultivate your body is to exercise caution in speech and conduct. The best way to cultivate your mind is to have few desires. The best way to cultivate your soul is to expel sin from oneself.

### **2. The Articles of Cultivation**

#### **A. To Cultivate One's Body:**

A person's biggest blemish is that he never knows he has made mistakes and has faults. A person's greatest disgrace is that he never knows what shame is. When a person always sees others' faults and never sees his own, he will never discover his own ignorance, and when he always talks about others' faults and never admits his own, he will only make himself lost to the Truth. Thus the wisest person can tell what is the correct or wrong way to act, and the most enlightened person can see his own faults and mistakes clearly and thoroughly. Occasionally, a Saint will make a mistake but the reason that a Saint can be called a Saint is because he is courageous enough to admit his mistakes and correct them. The reason why a normal person can't be a Saint is because he always believes that all of his words and actions are right and good. When such a person is admonished, he will feel hatred toward his admonisher and he will only thus cause his own failure. Also even his wisdom will be overshadowed by his ignorance if he never realizes what kind of faults he possesses (or makes). If a

person gets lost (strays into the wrong) in his life and does not want to return (to the correct path), then he will get more confused about his life's goal. If a person always thinks it is right to criticize others, he will only cause troubles and misfortune to fall upon himself. If a person criticizes all of his encounters in life, then he will bring disasters upon himself.

If a person likes to favor himself more than others, then he will cause others to think ill of them. If a person likes to make slanderous remarks and is disloyal, then he will always be confused and never know the real Truth.

If a person neglects (or disrespects) the one who is respectable, then he will cause misfortune go fall upon himself. If a person does not act according to Truth, then he will cause his life to be disordered.

Thus all of you should realize that when you are talking, your words should not be stern. When you are acting, it should not be beyond the proper limits. If you talk too much, it will cause others to dislike you. If you speak without thinking, you will bring insult upon yourself. You should maintain harmonious words and a peaceful manner while you are speaking. You should be experienced and cautious when you deal with business. You should talk gently and slowly while you are making a speech, then you will naturally be capable of adapting yourself to the Truth.

Be at ease and not rushed in your actions, then your attitude will naturally be dignified. Do not expect others to act according to your ideas, and do not blame others seriously. You should conceal from view some of your good points; this can make you achieve a greater level of cultivation. You should even help others to conceal their shortcomings, as this will make your mind broader. If you can only remember others' good point, then everybody will want to be your friend. But if you only remember other's shortcomings, then your foes will be many.

So in order for a cultivator of the Way (Tao) to cultivate his body, he should heed and perform all of the above.

## **B. To Cultivate One's Mind:**

The first task one should perform before he wishes to properly govern his mind is to expel his material desires. One should understand that one must refrain from abandoning oneself to material desires, bliss, and complacency. If one allows his mind to descend to the level of material desires, then that will cause chaos to evolve in his mind. If one's mind is attracted by materialism, then one will cause himself to struggle for fame and wealth. The more one's selfish desires expand, the narrower one's mind will become. The more one produces selfish desires, the more difficult it will be for one to become a Saint. Thus it is essential for one's soul to be pure, but it is

difficult because the mind always disturbs it. It is necessary for a person's mind to be quiet, but it is hard because material desires are always pulling at it. Thus it is all too easy for one's mind to give in to fantasy and to have greedy desires; this is called annoyance. In turn this will only cause one's body to suffer bitterness and one's mind to spin with worries. Furthermore, your soul will be in a tumultuous state, it will be obliged to wander in the cycle of life and death, and it will always be sunk in the sea of bitterness (phenomenal world).

People usually struggle for fame and wealth, and even sometimes risk their lives for these things. The superior person never acts in this way, and the inferior person always acts in this way. If one does not dispute with others about profits and advantages, then his annoyances and worries will be expelled. Thus a person should dispel all material desires from his mind, and then his mind will naturally be quiet. When his mind is quiet and clear, then his soul will be pure, and it will naturally cease to produce the six material desires (ie, that of the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, body, and awareness) and extinguish the three poisons (ie. greed, anger, and evil thoughts).

There are also three essentials in cultivating one's mind; to see clearly that accumulating wealth is all in vain, to realize that affection, feelings, and material things are just temporary like rising smoke which vanishes quickly in the air, and to awake to the transitory nature of life and death.

### **C. To Cultivate One's Soul:**

To cultivate one's soul requires one to be remorseful, to perform meritorious deeds, and to cultivate virtue in order to compensate for those sins and karma one has accumulated (including those of this lifetime and previous lifetimes). A person's merits and virtues are the only luggage he may bring back to Heaven, also these are the gifts to present to God, and the essential elements required for being a Saint.

It does not matter which Saints one is taking about, they all have many merits and virtues. They speak virtuous words to help the people of the world. Therefore, if a person wants to have merits and virtues, then the best way to benefit the world and help people is to act according to the Truth, to do some good deeds in society and build merits in the cultivation sanctuary, and to benefit all sentient beings. Also it is true that a person's benevolent deeds easily influence others, and a person's righteous deeds easily move others. Thus a virtuous person can courageously perform the virtue of benevolence according to righteousness. This is just what the virtuous person should actively practice.

## **[FUTURE GOALS]**

A person should not complain, be regretful, or get frustrated when he fails. In so acting he will have the courage to struggle forward again.

When successful, a person should be humble, be willing to make concessions, and be yielding at the proper time. For such actions, he will obtain the good result that every one will respect and follow him.