

VI. Let's Talk About "Xin" (Mind, Idea, Heart, and Soul)

[FOREWORD]

There is a saying, "The Body is the vessel in which to place one's xin, and sin is the master of the body." Do all of you want to govern this xin?

A. General Discussion of Xin:

- a. **A person's soul should be of the utmost purity, a person's mind should be tranquil, and neither the soul nor the mind should be disturbed or affected by outside influences or worries.**

A person's soul should be pure, for when it is pure, Truth will remain inside of it. A person should be firm with righteousness and then material enticements from the outside will not intrude into his mind.

The way for a person to reach the level of a Saint is by not allowing his mind to waver and to keep his anger from rising. If a person's mind is full of many ideas, his worries will naturally increase. If a person's mind is occupied by doubt, then his mind will naturally produce many internal disturbances. When a person's mind produces thoughts, all kinds of desires will consequently arise. When a person's goal of life wavers, then the will that he has to achieve his plans will cease.

- b. **All of you should often be "guan xin" (which in Chinese figuratively means concerned, and literally means to close one's xin), then you can be "kai xin" (which in Chinese figuratively means happy, and literally means to open one's xin).**

In other words, to "close xin" means to be concerned enough about yourself (true self) to close your mind to all evil ideas and thoughts, and never again let them appear in your mind. To "open xin" means to open up your mind to Truth and propriety, and allow all righteous ideas and thoughts to take root and be revealed. Without evil and only goodness in our xin, will we not be happy? The following is a list of the evil thoughts and ideas you should guard against and close off from your mind: greedy xin, unrestrained xin, angry xin, obstinate xin, evil xin, biased xin, proud xin, and doubting xin.

The following are the righteous thoughts and ideas you should foster by opening your mind: good xin, sincere xin, righteous xin, true xin, humble xin, respectful xin, believing xin.

- c. **The reason that a Saint wants to receive Tao is because he wants to find his “true-self.” But the reason why normal people want to receive Tao is because they want to receive God’s favor.**

If a person cannot recognize his original mind, then he cannot enlighten his mind, and if he cannot enlighten his original nature (ie. soul), then he cannot enlighten his soul. If a person cannot recognize his original mind, then it does not help him at all to learn about Tao. If a person cannot enlighten his soul, then he does not gain anything from all the cultivation methods he has learned.

- d. A person’s mind can produce these kinds of thoughts: good and bad, enlightened and confused, truthful and desireous. Thus a Saint enlightens his mind by following the righteous thoughts and expelling the evil ones.

- e. **Every of you should know that “the soul is the true-self,” and everybody is a “double-sided person.”**

One side of a person is the physical body which represents the false-self; the one which can produce feelings and awareness. The other side is the true-self; that which has Real Existence, is always enlightened (though its brightness may be covered over by the impurity of the false-self), brilliant, and full of perfect goodness.

Most people are greedy and covet things, thus they are forever trapped in the cycle birth, death, and rebirth (sometimes called the transmigration of the soul). These people also have unsettled minds which are full of vexations (or annoyances), and they like to stubbornly cling to their own erroneous ideas and thoughts. Thus all of these faults become very heavy burdens in such people’s lives.

To be a cultivator of Tao, one should assume all kinds of responsibilities, and be able to see clearly through the transitory and phenomenal world.

One should be able to calculate the deeds he can do which are within his capability and complete them, keep his mind open to let the good thoughts and ideas reveal themselves, and he should also be broad-minded.

If a person can be willing to part with wealth, business, feelings, etc., then he can be free of the burdens of life. As we all know, a very loving couple will usually grudge to part from one another. Likewise, if a person has bad temper or has some flaws in his conduct, he will still grudge to correct them, for they belong to him. People are always reluctant to give up those deeds, feats, fame, and wealth that they own.

Thus the habit of “grudging to give up” is the heavy burden of a person’s life. There is a saying, “ If a person is without any kind of burden, then he must be very relaxed and free.”

Sakyamuni Buddha said, “Give up all the desires and ideas in your mind then your mind will be peaceful and you will awaken and enlighten your mind.” Thus we can know that if a person’s mind is peaceful, all his unrestrained thoughts or conduct will cease, and at that moment he will be enlightened by his own efforts.

Hence, enlightenment can be obtained at the moment one gives up and ceases to have thought and ideas in his mind. This condition is also called **Heaven is in the mind**. In Confucianism it is said, “A person’s mind should be perfectly peaceful then he will reach the level called perfect goodness.” A person’s mind should often be in a state of tranquility and should be released from the delusions of thinking.

- f. To cultivate oneself means to follow the doctrines, and if a person can perform accordingly, he will be able to suppress and extinguish the desires and ideas in his mind. Therefore, a person will be able to enlighten his own mind if he is able to awaken to Truth, and if a person is able to have a tranquil mind, he could always act according to Truth. If a person wants to cultivate himself, he must first banish all selfish desires from his mind.**

If a person can refrain from indulging in alcoholic drink and carnal pleasure, then he will have the ability to purify his mind. As a result, a cultivator can usually reach the following two levels of cultivation: contentment, which brings composedness; and demandlessness, which produces a personality of high moral quality. Most people think that they cannot live without public esteem and profits, but a cultivator of Tao should lead a tranquil life without chasing worldly desires.

[FUTURE GOALS]

When a person awakens to Truth, he will realize the meaning of life. When he realizes the truth of righteousness and wrongfulness, he will understand that all the things he has done have always been involved with both gains and losses. When a person acts without understanding, he is called foolish. When a person realizes what he should do but just does not want to perform it, he is called remiss. If there is something beyond a person’s achievement and he does not mislead others to believe he is capable of doing it, then he owns the inward morality of his mind. If a person is able to achieve what he has claimed possible, then he owns the outward morality of his conduct.