



Daoist Eight Virtues 道教八德

“上德不德，是为有德；下德不失德，是为无德。”

*“The highest virtue is not virtuous; therefore it truly has virtue.
The lowest virtue never loses sight of its virtue; therefore it has no true virtue.”*

-Dao De Jing chapter 38-

The Eight Columns of Daoist Virtue as a Guideline to Community Life in the Monastery:

The philosophical significance of the Eight Columns of Daoist Virtue were transmitted by Li Shi Fu to the first invited group of foreign disciples in 2008, when the Five Immortals Temple opened its doors for the first time to the Western World.

These Eight Virtues present the context for requirements of community life: the rules and precepts that are to be followed by the disciple while living in the monastery. The objective is to ensure the comprehension, respect and promotion of synergies between Western Culture and Eastern Ancient Daoist Tradition.

They are essential to create a high standard and quality of the transmitted teachings as well as to maintain harmony and balance of daily life in the monastic community.

The capability of the disciple to live according to these Eight Virtues reflects to the master the disciple's current stage. These virtues give the disciple tools to deal with day-to-day challenges, either internal (as we will put down and overcome many physical, emotional and spiritual self-imposed obstacles during this time of cultivation) or external: in relationship with others and the environment contributing in a positive way to a high quality group dynamic.

Remember that the number of foreign disciples invited each year is very restricted, therefore take responsibility to make this experience as fruitful as possible for you and your new brothers and sisters. The inability to understand these precepts and the unwillingness to follow these regulations for whatever reason might result in the expulsion from the program and the disciple being demanded to leave the program early.

I. Xiào 孝 :

Respect or Filial Piety:

As martial artist you are obliged to step in if someone is inferior or the argument is wrong.

To respect your teacher is another martial virtue.

There are two distinct ways of interaction between people that work to achieve one goal. Competition between ten people, there is one winner and 9 losers.

Cooperation turns all in the group into achievers.

All people in the temple form a symbiotic relationship with each other to achieve the highest practice of energy cultivation possible. As teachings will be provided to a group, the higher the quality of the collective, the deeper the transmission can happen. To help, respect and spur on each other during and outside martial and healing practices is a virtue. At that stage relationships between students start to disappear and true brotherhood emerges.

II. Tì 悌:

To do one's duty as a younger martial brother

Martial brotherhood is a focal point in the Chun Yang Sect . Help one another and love your brothers and sisters. Older ones are to take care of younger ones.

The primal drive to share knowledge, after acceptance from the teacher, is the will and aspiration of the student to learn. The student should recognise and trust the master as a vehicle of knowledge, doing his best to integrate in himself into what is shown to him during practice. Humility and respect is a way of honouring the time of the master who after long years of cultivation decided to share and teach from his lineage pearls of wisdom.

Paying a suggested monthly donation is a way to contribute to the temple's development and should not give you the impression that you are entitled to have a nice vacation or demand to be taught in any specific art inside or outside the program. It is up to the master to decide what they will teach during that period, although they are very sensitive to individual needs and often, if possible, attend to them.

III. Zhōng 忠:

Loyalty/ Devotion/ Honesty

Love your family and country. Love every country on earth and every environment, including the air you breathe. It is the type of love you have for everything around you, as you are so small.

IV. Xìn 信:

Belief, trust, faith

Keep your contracts and promises, even when others doubt you. Trust others unconditionally. Trust ensures good relations. This is a very rare kind of trust.

V. Lǐ 礼:

Manners and etiquette

Respect towards one another, courtesy of others like the bow or salute. If you are invited to someone's house, people are very hospitable.

VI. Yì 义:

Responsibility/Righteousness/Chivalry

Take care of your mother and father as well as your elders. As a teacher he must ensure we understand teachings. It is about giving to others, not taking. This plays an important part during meditation class. The world revolving around you is a very selfish way of living. If you draw a big circle, you are the worst person from the perspective of Daoist virtue. If you draw your circle smaller and smaller you have lots of love to give. The smaller you make yourself, the greater you can become. The common person wants to rise higher and higher, while sages become smaller and smaller. Wang Chong Yang, a Taoist sage, burnt down his house. Your ego is your backpack, so you won't fit through the door same as Jesus who was very humble and therefore great. Pure Yang is this. God is like a bright light.

VII. Lián 廉:

Incorruptible/ Honourable

Do not want material things. Do not want more than life and accept hardships. Do not want what is not yours. This lays the foundation for chǐ 耻.

VIII. Chǐ 耻

Humiliation/ Sense of shame,/Not doing what you can foresee

Daoists do not care about having a comfortable life or possessions. Over in the mountain, they have 1.5 litres of water, which is enough. They do not want a lot from nature as their internal heart is very peaceful. With very expensive pants you would not sit on the ground, so your thoughts and actions are ruled by your pants. If you own a lot of land, your thoughts are on trespassing thieves, robberies, which is destructive. If you accomplish this, your heart will feel very comfortable, peaceful. Meditation is your base.