

Lao Tse

Treatise on Virtue

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**Edited and translated from Russian
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**Correction of the English translation
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1. Most people are characterized by spiritual myopia. This is because small souls look only at the small, which is close, and do not notice the Great!

But even small souls can learn to see the Main and distinguish the significant from the unimportant. Tao, infinitely great, is not only in the distance, It also is always in close proximity to everyone!

2. Most people tend to see other's shortcomings and not notice their dignities.

But the dignities of others do not cause any inconvenience, they, on the contrary, are convenient for those living nearby!

Only after losing their beloved ones with the death of their bodies or with a long forced separation — people understand how they could love and appreciate them!

Do not put off love, respect, reverence and gratitude — to a time when there will be no one close to whom we could give it!

Loving and respecting each other, we help grow our best qualities. And then the weeds of vices will occupy in the soul less space.

Harmony of relations between people favors harmony in the whole universe.

3. Anyone who sees in others only their shortcomings and thinks all the time and talks only about it — will never be beloved!

The mind of a person, inclined to see only the bad, is not prone to calm and generates anxiety around itself.

Negatively colored thinking prevents living in harmony both for the individual and everyone who surrounds that one.

4. If you can help a friend to see his or her problem or vice, then it should be done for the benefit of him\herself and for all other people who suffer from the same issue. But you need to do this when your friend is ready to hear your words and when it will not diminish the love and harmony between you both.

How wise it is: to create harmony and love and to cultivate virtues in people!

One, who has acquired many virtues and intelligence, will want to get rid of one's own shortcomings! And then it is easy to help him or her!

One, who does not have good intentions in one's mind and does not feel love in one's own spiritual heart, — this one will not accept help, but will repel the good that comes to him or her.

Learn to live — spreading around the fragrance of love and tenderness, peace and care! Then Tao and Te will naturally enter your life!

5. Respect the intentions of your friends!

Anyone who, even if only in one's own mind, opposes — by one's disagreement — the plans of another, carries on the invisible battle against that other. It breaks the harmony and wastes the forces — of oneself and of friend and companion.

As the wind cannot blow in opposite directions at the same time, so intentions, directed to the opposite objectives, extinguish the strength of both partners.

Action cannot be done correctly and fruitfully — if there are contradictions between those who want to act together.

Not having mastered the skill of living and working harmoniously among people, — one cannot enter the world of Te, Who have no contradictions in Their thoughts and deeds.

Between the Perfects, there is only Unity and harmony in understanding the Will of Tao for all existing in general and for each being separately!

**6. Do not try to subordinate another to your will!
And do not become a slave of another's will!**

Observance of this balance allows you to feel freedom!

It also leads to the realization of the law of non-harming other beings and helps in learning to perceive the Will of Tao.

People can connect to each other with strong attachments. So, sexual passion or other similar strong emotions — like chains — put their owners into slavery of false unilaterality. This also deprives harmony in those whom such people, as they believe, love.

True love does not make those, who love, and those, who are beloved, the slaves of each other!

True love is tender and caring! It inspires and makes beautiful both those, who love, and those, who are beloved!

True love does not impose restrictions on those whom we love. And it does not do the same to the loving one — to be captured by one's own affection.

Truly, this is how Tao loves all beings! And therefore, they are free for growth and development!

Many people live, wasting their lives in vain.

But those who have found peace — collect the *treasures of life in love*, which leads the soul to Immortality!

7. Sadness, despondency, resentment, fear — weaken a person. These states waste senselessly the energy of the organism that, among other things, destroys health and leads to illness.

Love — heals all wounds of the soul and builds bridges over the abyss of despair, frustration, anguish.

Happy are those who go through life, feeling a firm foundation, consisting of Love and Peace of Tao! No problems and troubles of the material world will shake them on the Path to Tao! All problems for them are just pointers to their own mistakes, the correction of which facilitates the advancement along the Path.

As a weary traveler, climbing a mountain, discards unnecessary load and goes on easily and freely, so we, when we leave our grievances, fears, sorrows, and anger forever, — will feel great relief and freedom! The lightness, which the soul will find then, becomes similar to the weightlessness and

transparency of the non-incarnate Immortals, Who are not burdened with anything in this world and act freely by the Power of Te from Great Tao.

But the speech about gaining the Power will be addressed only to those who have reached absolute purity of the soul!

8. Anger or fury seem to many people as manifestations of power.

But, even if the soul is strong in rage, anger, hatred, and violence — then this force acts in the direction leading away from the Purity and Peace of Tao. This power draws them into the abyss of the abode of the owners of evil vices, from which it will be very difficult to get out.

Sometimes many earthly lives are spent by the soul for understanding this. Brute force makes a person like a blind man. Such one sees only oneself and one's own "rightness", feels only oneself as the "law" regarding others. By this, he or she isolates oneself from life in accordance with the law of calm and harmony, which is laid down by Tao — as the basis of the true existence of all existing!

The payment for misconduct of this law is heavy. This one is carried away from the main Purpose of human existence so quickly that one does not even notice this fall into the darkness of lower worlds, in which one will remain both during the life in this body, and after its death, and with a new birth in the world of matter — until such an existence will not make this one rush to the Light!

However, all mistakes are for the benefit of a soul, if one notices them and seeks to correct oneself!

9. Do not be sad, having defeat. And you should not rejoice by defeating. The waves of life are like

waves of the ocean: they lift up and down. All of them have a reason: to give life experience and teach how to find and maintain love, purity, subtlety, and peace. As a result, it becomes possible to learn the Great Calm of the Ocean of Tao, Which reigns from the Depths of the universe.

10. What does it mean: to take care of others? The one, who knows this, truly can be called the wise man!

If one learns to act towards others in the way, in which they would like to be treated, — this is only a small beginning in the cognition of caring. But it is completely right to help others, as it would be for their benefit — in the understanding of Tao and Te.

It is not always pleasant for a person that brings healing to the soul. Medicines for diseases sometimes are bitter.

So, how should one bring up disciples — that one who preaches the knowledge of Tao and Te?

If only to praise their progress — then crowds will gather around such a preacher. But the fruits of his labor will be harmful. Souls with vicious properties will grow up — and it will be like a huge garden, the fruits in which are poisonous.

If, on the contrary, to scold and reproach them without measure, then the preacher will remain alone. And then the lifeless desert around such a preacher will not become fertile.

Only by encouraging virtues and by eradicating vices in disciples, it is possible to lead them along the Path to cognition of Tao!

But where there is no one who is worthy of learning, there the knowledge of the Path will not be preserved, no matter how hard you try.

11. One, who has undertaken to teach others and speaks the right words, but does not fulfill in one's own life what he or she has said, — this one depreciates the teaching.

If this one lives, driven by one's own desires and passions, but speaks about a benefit of non-attachment, also about love and peace, — then who will believe this speaker?

It would be better if one with defects is silent and eliminates these problems in oneself! You cannot talk about love — not loving, about beauty — not knowing the real beauty, about the necessity of goodness — without showing kindness and compassion, about tenderness — remaining rude and haughty, about calm of mind and inner silence — continuing to remain a slave of intrusive thoughts and having a restless mind.

12. If to say the words about Truth not in due time — these words will not be heard. Such words will then fall like dry autumn leaves from a tree, instead of rooting and producing shoots, as in seeds thrown on damp fertile soil.

Only by observing the calm of mind — one can learn to feel the time when it is reasonable to speak or act.

The Calm of Tao, acquired by the ascetic, allows achieving blamelessness in what has been said. Then words or silence, action or its absence — are only the manifestations of Will of Tao.

The Will of the Great *United We* then coincide with the thinking, vision, and understanding of such a Zealot. And the Will of *United We* is manifested in any of His or Her actions — as the display of Perfec-

tion of the Wise, Who has learned the *Oneness* with Tao.

13. If someone has acted with you rudely, unfairly — this is not at all an occasion to react in offence against the injustice or to respond in rudeness to rudeness. A good attitude towards everyone is your input into the great Peace that you create for yourself and for everyone!

One, who knows how to extinguish the flame of enmity, ignited by others, as well as one, who brings peace and love to the world, are worthy of respect. The role of these persons in the world is good, even if he or she extinguishes hostility only between several people but not between states.

One, who brings peace to the world, receives a great reward: Love and Peace of Tao will grow in his or her spiritual heart!

Great is the joy of One Who has cognized the Calm of Tao within oneself and is giving It to all beings!

14. If to look extensively at the vice of revengefulness, you can see that a person commits revenge — even just by answering in annoyance, resentment, anger, screaming, contempt or condemnation — to the person who caused him or her anxiety.

Even if you cut the air by the sword, some disturbance is created. But one who has found peace — does not create any concern in the space of the universe!

How wonderful is one who never takes revenge on the offender! Soon this one becomes invulnerable — and no one can offend him or her! Because how can be offended the one who has become unable to take offence?

Even a word that can hurt the soul — you meet with calm and love! And then you will see how you become invulnerable to hatred!

15. Nothing serious can happen with a person who has not deserved of it and does not serve towards his or her benefit.

Injustice is just an illusion.

The action of the laws of Tao provides the best for each course of events in which this person is involved.

One, who wants to never lose the Unity with Tao, can learn to see the expediency of grief and the benefit of loss.

16. Let us leave aside — those who keep in mind the evil committed towards them! They remain in their past, and for them there is no future! Black clouds of their own anger and enmity return back in their lives the situations of betrayal, resentment, hatred, violence, and enmity! Circle after circle, the situations, in which those people acted wrong, are repeated in their lives!

How simple, looking from the position of Tao, to see the preference of someone who is invariably friendly to everyone!

17. Many would like to become unreachable for evil, but they do not know how.

The answer is this: you need to defeat the evil in yourself! Then the evil from outside will no longer touch you!

It may seem that such well-being does not exist in this world. But the one who chose the path of love in life, will not consider as evil — any such event coming into his or her life. Because it is only a lesson to be learned.

One, who firmly has chosen Te as his or her Helmsman and Tao — as the Aim, such one will no longer be captured and enslaved by the problems of things and events in the material world!

The fact is that the attainer of Truth takes in calm and patience also what he or she cannot transform into goodness.

In doing so, a person grows in wisdom, comprehending the laws of life and spiritual evolution.

You could start this from transformation of your attitude towards events and changing yourself — as a soul — into love! And then Love of Te and Tao will gradually fill the whole world inside and around — in Calm and Bliss!

18. One, who is able to forgive others completely, without a shadow of dislike, — this one easily leaves the vicious circle of resentments and other evil!

It is better to learn not to be angry, not to be offended, not to have unkind thoughts and never wish anything bad to anyone!

So simple is the law of causes and consequences: everything that we do to others returns, in time, to us: good returns good, evil returns problems and sufferings.

Therefore always is happy a sage, who does only good and wishes only good for everyone!

19. You should not get carried away finding faults in others, especially while your own imperfection clouds your eyes.

Tao for each one realizes one's own "book of life" — in the events this one perceives and in which one participates, as well as in the people whom one meets on one's way.

One, led by Te, can understand one's past and present, and also learns how to build the future. It is like the whole universe gives one instructions for this! One only has to learn to understand the "language of life", in which Te give people advice on how and what to do.

One, who is wise doing so, soon learns to see Faces of Te and hear Te Who explain and direct.

Everything that one sees and perceives is predestined for teaching him or her wisdom. In everything you can see are the lessons of Tao!

20. Only by dissolving the boundaries of the individual self, man comprehends the whole-extensionality of the Light of Te, Who shines for all beings, and also the Power of Tao, Which generates everything in the Creation.

This is a great step — when one realizes that there is a *Great One*, and one empirically begins to interact with this *Whole One*, as a drop of water in the ocean interacts with the ocean.

Every thought, emotion, action are visible in the transparent Ocean of Te. Mentioned emotions, intentions, and deeds affect the environment — and return back to the person, like an echo.

Only the capsule of self does not allow man to see this clearly. All creatures live in such capsules until they grow up, evolving, acquiring wisdom and strength in human bodies — to then remove these capsules and enter the world of *United We!*

21. Anyone, who successfully realizes this, lives, transforming oneself and the world around — by every action and thought, by every message of good and quiet!

Thus transforming oneself, one fulfills human predestination. One flows into the Ocean of Tao, like the Great River, and dissolves in the Infinite Tao! Now He or She becomes One of Te, Who Create in the Creation, proceeding from Tao and not losing the Oneness with Tao!