

Vermillion Brush

Seasonal Energetics

According to Daoist calendrics, fall begins on August 7th this year. Fall corresponds to minor yin and the Metal phase, while winter corresponds to major yin and the Water phase. With the arrival of fall, we move from the high activity of summer to a time of deepening stillness, which culminates on the winter solstice. During this time, emphasis is placed on harvesting and storing. Following the cycles of the sun, our sleep patterns increase as daylight decreases. We also adjust our eating to add more cooked and warming foods in order to balance the increasing yin. It is natural to place greater emphasis on stillness practices, such as standing and seated meditation to harmonize spirit.

Inner Cultivation

Daoist inner cultivation (*nèixiū* 內修) involves tending to life-destiny (*mìng* 命), our own physical embodiment and situatedness. This is a decree from the cosmos made manifest as embodied being-in-the-world. It relates to “fate,” including individual possibilities and propensities. Something like vocation and life-path. One dimension of this involves time and circumstance, which may or may not align with our affinities, values, and aspirations. A foundational Daoist response centers on open receptivity and trust. We trust in innate nature and in the Dao. We live beyond the ordinary and mundane.

Scripture Study

Scripture study (*jīngxué* 經學) centers on deep engagement with Daoist sacred writings. “Scriptures” (*jīng* 經), or “classics,” are one of the external Three Treasures of the Daoist tradition. The early fourth-century CE *Bàopǔzi nèipiān* 抱朴子內篇 (Inner Chapters of Master Embracing Simplicity), a key work by the *Tàiqīng* 太清 (Great Clarity) Daoist *Gé Hóng* 葛洪 (283-343), offers an alchemist axiom: We choose our own “fate.” Through Daoist practice, we determine what our lives are and will be.

“My fate is in me, not in the heavens.”
Inner Chapters of Master Embracing Simplicity, ch. 16

News

- We just completed our second annual Daoist Studies Summer Seminar (DSSS; July 11-July 15), which focused on tradition-based Daoist study-practice.
- Louis Komjathy and Kate Townsend recently published *Entering Stillness: A Guide to Daoist Practice* 入靜指南 (Square Inch Press 方寸書社, 2022).
- Louis Komjathy’s next book *Primer for Translating Daoist Literature* (Purple Cloud Press) is forthcoming.
- We have formally started looking for a physical site for our planned Daoist sanctuary and retreat center.

Fall and Winter Nodes

Autumn Begins - 8/7
Limit of Heat - 8/23
Pure Dew - 9/7

Autumn Equinox - 9/22
Cold Dew - 10/8
Frost Descends - 10/23

Winter Begins - 11/7
Light Snow - 11/22
Heavy Snow - 12/7

Winter Solstice - 12/21
Slight Cold - 1/5/23
Major Cold - 1/20/23