

Deliverance from the Privilege of Power Over Others

The Western hierarchy, like all social hierarchies, defines who has power over whom. Those with use force to assert their power over others also claim privileges to advantage them and further disadvantage those they oppress. Inequality, elitism, and exclusivity saturate Western culture. When we exercise our privileges and position, we oppress others.

On the sacred path, we learn the sacredness and equality of life on Earth. The Earth Interbeing has no hierarchy. Because of our roots in Western culture, we struggle with equality. We may understand it conceptually, but we do not know how to live equally. If we have had positions in Western culture in which we had power over others, we struggle with this ignorance more than others.

We on the path who have enjoyed and benefited from having power over others experience feeling dishonored when the needs of others receive priority over our wants. We feel deprived of the attention and recognition a leader expects to receive when the collective focuses on the greatest need rather than on what we want.

The privileged on the path reduce the harms privileges inflict by choosing not to benefit from them. Because of our position within the Western hierarchy, we have accumulated wealth, power, and professional skills obtained from our educational opportunities. On the path, we find ways to use what we have accumulated in the service to further life on Earth.

Humbleness allows us to give those with greater needs to have their needs met before our own. We harmonize with others rather than to create discord by having our way. By appreciating that others have different views of a situation from our own, we stop ourselves from asserting our view as the best one and listen to other voices.

We no longer aspire to tell others what to do. Seeking to benefit others becomes more important than seeking recognition for our achievements. We guard against assuming leadership and humbly defer to the leadership of the collective.

The humble work in ways that do not harm others but rather further the wellbeing of others. We know the purpose of furthering life on Earth has greater importance than our prestige. No longer do we perceive others as objects for us to manipulate for our benefit but rather know them as beloveds whom we want to further. We give up our power over others to empowering the ways that further life on Earth and transform ourselves.

In these and other ways, we deliver ourselves from the privilege of power over others. We overcome our resistance to living as equals among equals, a fierce struggle to break when conditioned by Western culture to believe otherwise. All the misgivings we might have in giving up exercising our privileges become the means through which we learn how to free ourselves from what keeps us chained to what harms. By doing so, we prepare ourselves to live as an equal interbeing within the Earth Interbeing.



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