

Patience

When impatient, we feel weaker than what opposes us because we must wait for the other to act or the circumstances to change on their own. We feel compelled to assert our control over the situation. Ignorance underlies reactivity. Impatience reflects our ignorance because we do not understand the complexities and dangers of a situation but we think we do. We believe that our actions will reassert our control. No good comes out of reactivity as it acts out our willingness to harm others and the Earth for self-benefit.

If we have a sufficient level of attention, we can know the urgency for us to do something right now as a reaction. We can then pause. Within the pause we turn to compassion.

Patience has the power to feel at ease with whatever arises in experience. Those who can remain mindfully present in difficult situations can tolerate the feelings of reactivity and not act compulsively to release the discomfort. We have the confidence that we can respond to the situation in valued ways that benefit all.¹

Our compassionate nature provides that confidence. When compassionate, we know our suffering and that of others, which opens our willingness for patience. We know our ignorance of all the causal factors that gave rise to a difficult experience, which we want to discern before we act.

When someone targets their reactivity towards us, we may catch their contagious anxious feelings and become reactive ourselves. However, with sufficient levels of attention, we can pause and compassionately recognize and relieve their suffering. Then, together we can investigate and act upon the causes of the suffering.

Nonaction also requires our patience. The Yi Ching often counsels us to not act in response to a difficult situation but to rather let the situation unfold on its own without our interference. Most people do not like to wait. When circumstances force the weak to wait, they become anxious or resentful and meet everything critically and irritably. A burdened patience does not reflect the patience of the wise. Those who rashly use force against a challenge do not further life on Earth. We fail when we do not fully consider the situation, our limitations, and values before we act. The wise do not act when confused or anxious. They have the courage to remain in place even when pressed to act.

We can strengthen our patience. Within our daily lives, when we experience anxiety, we pause and experience these feelings fully within our breath and without acting on them. Between tasks, we can pause and deeply breathe our feelings a few times. Most of us avoid uncomfortable anxious feelings. We routinely cover them up with distractions or reactivity. Yet the more deeply we come to feel our anxious feelings within a loving presence, the more we can tolerate them and know they do us no harm. Instead, we may come to view anxiety as a warning of violating our sacred values. Also, breath meditation increases our levels of attention, which gives us the capacities to hold impatience within a loving awareness without acting on it.

¹ **Ways of the sacred path to further life on Earth (work in progress):** Joyfully surrendering to the sacred and sacredness of all, humbly yielding in gratitude for all we experience, awakening to a sacred knowing of how to lovingly further life on Earth, discerning how to live in balance with the Earth Interbeing, disciplining ourselves to remove the ways we separate ourselves from the sacred and sacredness, compassionately responding to suffering, harmoniously interacting with all life, communing with all life the blessings of the sacred Earth.

Patience has the power to shed our reactivity, projections, blaming, and all the other ways we oppose what arises in experience. Patience empowers our compassion to do what we need to do to release the suffering within experience.

The collapse of Western culture requires of us ever greater patience to support and strengthen our compassion. Reactivity will only make the suffering of the collapse worse. When we dismantle the ways we harm the Earth Interbeing and free ourselves from complicit entanglements with Western culture, we will have the patience to find the ways to further life on Earth.

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