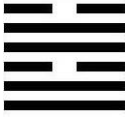


Hexagram 58 – Pleasure



Pleasure in living the ways of wholeness.

Structure:

- Doubling of trigram ☱, Dui, openly interact with others to share good feelings.
- Two strong line with one open line above. Empty without. Fulfilled within.

People not on the sacred path of wholeness look to the world for diversions, the idle pleasures that stream in from without. They lose themselves more and more, and feel overwhelmed by what they have attracted. Some escape from facing the challenges of life through addictive distractions. Others enjoy taking from others for self-benefit.

Moments of intense pleasure powerfully motivate us to seek more pleasure. When we depend upon the world for pleasure, we become an object among objects and turn our lives over to external influences. Yielding to such pleasure brings remorse and no lasting satisfaction. When our pleasure depends upon oppressing others or destroying Earth and life for self-benefit, we become monsters.

Following the ways of wholeness depends upon a self-discipline that turns us away from finding pleasure in what harms the Earth Interbeing. The wise enjoy living the ways of wholeness¹ and deepening their spiritual being. We experience the joys of this path in simple and gentle ways: the song of a bird, how the light of the rising sun falls on the trees just so, or celebrating life's abundance and diversity.

Good feelings grow strong relationships. The wise enjoy relating and sharing with others through the ways of wholeness. Joy makes it possible to come together to accomplish a great effort. Opportunities for sharing joy with others present themselves all the time, such as caring for others, gratitude, and cooperating to bring forth the ways of wholeness in the world.

We cannot comprehend the sacred, but we do sense the sacred's power and boundless love, the unknowable yet known. True joy depends on an inner adherence to the spiritual path and gently interacting with others. The sage shows its trust in the path with a joyful devotion. We attend to what the moment needs and respond in ways that benefit all, giving rise to a shared joy. A quiet, wordless, self-contained joy desires nothing from others and rests contentedly with everything.

We can measure the effectiveness of our practice by looking at our mood. Having a contented presence marks a mature practitioner. Throughout the whole process of transformation, a calm and glad mind supports both presence and confidence in the path. We transform our being by cultivating loving-kindness and compassion for others, which diminishes self-cherishing and generates more joy and appreciation for all life.

¹ **Ways of Wholeness with Earth Interbeing:** We interbe with all our sacred Earth Interbeing relations with love, respect, and care. We know the sacred within all our interactions and open to the loving path through problems and dangers. We live within Earth limits and moral bounds to sustain the sacred balance and harmony of the Earth Interbeing. We reciprocate what we have taken and share the gifts we receive. We lovingly fulfill our own responsibilities to the Earth Interbeing as whole beings, encouraging others to do the same. (Rev. 7-16-24)

Intimidation without gentleness may achieve something for the moment, but the effect quickly fades. When the wise face difficulties with a calm mind and gentleness, others lose their fears. Action inspired by devotion causes such joy that it carries all with it. When we cooperate with others to care for the Earth Interbeing, our mutual joy has the power to overcome differences and avoids the sharpening of opposition. Our delight in the path empowers us to live the ways of wholeness and deepens our devotion to the sacred.

Great joy comes from discerning the path through difficulties, empowering us to act in ways aligned with wholeness. A practice of love in action overcomes all challenges. The world can never harm those who know how to transform their self-cherishing and hostility into a caring love.

Whatever comes up, sages remain cheerful, calm, and focused. They respond with good humor and do not give up, having no doubt about the outcome of their efforts for they have prepared themselves thoroughly to live in ways that benefit all. The wise may have different ways to express sacred love, but they all joyfully make visible their love for the sacred within the world.

Line 1: The line has a self-contained joy and confidence in the path; thus, it does not have to rely on external circumstances for pleasure.

Line 2: The line's inner being accords with its behavior. The line finds pleasure in fulfilling its sacred duty to bring to life the ways of the wholeness.

Line 3: The line wants others and the world to please it and moves to change what disappoints it. If it persistently yields to wanting to change what does not bring it what it wants, the line will never have joy as it focuses only on its dissatisfaction. When we live the ways of wholeness, our joy springs from within. The sage adapts to whatever the circumstances to bring the ways of wholeness into the world in small, gentle ways that benefit all.

Line 4: The line has no joy as it cannot decisively choose between indulging the self or cultivating wholeness. It decides to turn away from self-centeredness and towards what benefits all. Once it overcomes its inner conflict, the line finds true joy in bringing the ways of wholeness to life.

Line 5: Emotional reactions overwhelm the line, which causes it to act in harmful ways. The wise guard their path and retreat from emotionally charged situations over which they cannot mindfully respond in the ways of wholeness.

Line 6: In other hexagrams, a change occurs at the top. This hexagram ends with the line wanting even more pleasure, never knowing enough.