

Hexagram 27 - Nourishing



Nourishing

Proven quality, significant.

Consider the source of what is sought and provided for nourishment.

Structure:

- Above ☶, a mountain, stillness. Below ☳, thunder and action.
- The lower trigram seeks nourishment for oneself. The upper trigram nourishes others.

Image: An open mouth. The lower jaw moves while the upper jaw remains immobile.

The sacred Earth nourishes us with food, air, water, and land. The sacred nourishes those who hunger for wisdom. We take and these Earth and sacred blessing and transform them into offering by bringing to life the ways of the sacred Earth Interbeing.¹ The spiritual path teaches us how to nourish ourselves to live the ways that benefit all.

As animals, we eat other life forms to sustain us. If Earth, life, and growers suffer to provide us with food, what we eat embodies their suffering and turns us into oppressors. We have the responsibility to acknowledge the suffering we cause others to benefit ourselves and to reciprocate the Earth Interbeing in some way for what we have taken. In this way, the simple daily act of eating food becomes a spiritual practice of balance and harmony.

When we focus our life on wealth, power over others, our appearance, and idle pleasures, our resolve to care for the well-being of all life and the Earth weakens. Feeding on worldly concerns entangles us in them and warps our beliefs, attitudes and behavior. Feeding upon media stimulates our fears, desires, and consumerism. From it we learn who and what to hate or celebrate. When we allow others to feed us poisonous views, relationships and behaviors, we turn over the direction of our lives to others.

Experiences that we cannot accept cause emotional confusion. When confused, the wise retreat from the situation to calm their inner turmoil with understanding and compassion, transforming the confusion into wisdom and new growth. Staying mindful of what we take into our lives requires a strong attention. When we turn away from what does not nourish us, we can instead feed upon wisdom that encourages compassion, and care for the Earth and all life. Studying the works of accomplished sages deepens practice. Yet we need to practice what we learn to make it our own. Just going through the motions of doing what we have been told to do leads nowhere.

¹ **The Ways of the Sacred Earth Interbeing:** We worship the sacred through our care for Creation. We interbe with Creation, relating to all with equality, respect, and care so that life continues and thrives on Earth. We know the sacred ways for Creation to continue and thrive and to overcome what keeps us apart. We know and respond to the mutual neediness of life in ways that further the harmony of Earth Interbeing. We know and care for our place as the ground upon which we preserve the balance of Earth Interbeing by reciprocating for what we take through our stewardship of the Earth Interbeing. We live within interbeing's moral boundaries and Earth limits and learn from our life lessons how to overcome what keeps us apart. We live as unique beings in the ways of the Earth Interbeing to preserve Creation's harmony and balance and to overcome what keeps us apart. We respond to whatever we experience in the ways of the Earth Interbeing and hold ourselves accountable for our actions. (12/23/24)

Once sages have mastered their self-cherishing and hostility for others, they have the ability and responsibility to bring the ways of the spirit into the world. Sages nourish and uplift others on the path to extend their benefits to all. Through nurturing others, the sage comes to fully realize its true being. The more others draw from the sage, the more the sage has to give. We can examine our own spiritual path by observing how others have benefitted from the nourishment we offer.

The inner path leads us through the world, but the world does not overwhelm those devoted to the ways of the spirit. The path teaches us how to transform whatever we experience into wisdom. If we see through the delusionary struggles between self and other, our clarity reveals how to turn difficulties into opportunities to bring to life our devotion to caring for the Earth Interbeing.

We interbe within the interconnected web of life on Earth. The moment serves as the sacred altar upon which we place our offerings. The wise carefully consider what they consume and nurture. To know someone, we need only observe on what aspects of their being they nourish.

Line 1: The line has sufficiently nourished itself on wisdom to further its spiritual path, yet it still envies those who feed on worldly concerns. The wise do not seek the external but nourish themselves inwardly, like the magic tortoise who lives on breath and goes without eating.

Line 2: Normally people provide for their own nourishment or receive nourishment from others in a proper manner from those who have the duty and privilege to provide it for them. This weak line depends upon others to nourish it from sources unrelated to it or from those that it should nourish. This unworthy behavior deviates from the line's true nature and leads to misfortune.

Line 3: The line represents the extreme of only having concern for self-benefit and rejecting the spiritual path. Those who seek nourishment from what does not nourish cause their own suffering. Nothing good comes from this path.

Line 4: The line occupies a high position and strives to let its light shine forth. It seeks wisdom from below because it knows that it lacks the discernment to attain its lofty aims alone, a blameless behavior as the effort benefits all.

Line 5: Those who reject moral laws lack a great purpose in life. Those who follow the sacred ways yield to the spirit.

Line 6: The accomplished sage line nourishes itself and provides nourishment for others. Even in adverse conditions, it exerts itself to bring the ways of the Earth Interbeing into life.