

Hexagram 41 – Diminishing



Diminishing.

Aligned with the ways of Earth Interbeing.

Sacred source. Favorable.

Without fault in persevering in this way.

Benefit from moving toward furthering life on Earth.

To make the offering, use diminishing to increase.

Ideogram: Hand and ceremonial vessel, the offering of a sacrifice.

Self-sacrifice as an act of sacred devotion opens us to doing the holy within the world. Diminishing ourselves brings us into greater balance with the Earth Interbeing and accords with the ways to further life on Earth.¹

A sacrifice only has meaning if we experience a loss of something we hold precious. As we deepen our knowing of our sacredness, our understanding grows that all that we are and possess comes from the sacred. What we have does not belong to us but needs to flow through the Earth Interbeing. By giving, we relinquish our claim to what we offer. The wise avoid the distinction between *mine* and *thine*.

When we sacrifice imposing our will on others and situations to have power over them, we sacrifice our will to the sacred knowing how to further life on Earth. If we fail to do this and stubbornly hold onto our ignorant belief that we know best what to do, we doom ourselves.

When we offer what we have more than enough to meet our basic needs, we surrender our fears of an uncertain future to further life on Earth. The interconnectedness of the Earth Interbeing could have it no other way. Great possessions harm the petty because, instead of extending their blessing to others, those who self-cherish hoard the sacred abundance of the Earth for themselves. They make charitable contributions for others to know of their generosity.

Self-centeredness fiercely resists self-sacrifice. If we do not feel a resistance when we sacrifice, then we likely do not highly value what we offer. Making a sacrifice can cause so much emotional turmoil that our most harmful behavior or view seems safer than sacrificing them for the uncertain changes a self-sacrifice entails. On the sacred path, we forbear and move through the emotional turmoil to do the harder but right thing to do. We know the need to offer a bit too much then too little. Every offering becomes a self-sacrifice.

Gradually, we increase our confidence in the sacred and the path to further life on Earth. We humbly recover our balance with the sacred and the Earth Interbeing. As we deepen knowing our sacredness and equality with all life, we overcome what separates us from the sacred and unite with the Earth Interbeing.

Line 1: Upon completing its personal affairs, the line hastens to further life on Earth through offering itself to the work. It deliberates how much of itself to self-sacrifice. We cannot sacrifice everything without harming ourselves, but neither can we offer too little as that would have no meaning.

¹ **Ways to further life on Earth (work in progress):** honor the sacred, humbleness, humble surrender to sacred knowing, wisely responding to further life on Earth, firm discipline to avoid harming the Earth Interbeing, harmonious interactions, equitable sharing, and staying balanced with the Earth Interbeing.

Line 2: The line sacrifices its urge to respond to the selfish bidding of another for help, which would entangle it in harmful ways and sacrifice its dignity. Instead, it remains in place and offers itself as an example of noble nonaction. In this way, it increases others without diminishing itself. Those who throw themselves away to do the what the self-centered want them to do diminish themselves without providing lasting benefit to anyone.

Line 3: The line distances itself from a harmful culture. The line chooses the solitary path to unite with the sacred and the Earth Interbeing.

Line 4: The line sacrifices its faults to recover its balance with Earth Interbeing. By overcoming its separation from the sacred and the Earth Interbeing, it joyfully receives the sacred knowing of the unique work it can do to further life on Earth.

Line 5: The line has successfully diminished its harmful ways and learned how to humbly interbe. It now does its sacred work to further life on Earth. Sacred blessings shield the line in its holy work.

Line 6: As the line has overcome all that has separated itself from the sacred and the Earth Interbeing, it no longer needs to self-sacrifice. Whatever it does supremely furthers life on Earth. It disperses its blessings to others without diminishing what it has.