

Hexagram 9 – Restraining the Small



Restraining the small.

Growing.

Shrouding clouds, not raining,

Coming from dry lands.

Structure: The sacred ☰ below, understanding ☷ above.

The lesson of the hexagram focuses on persistently accepting experience without acting to change it. On our solitary sacred path, we overcome our strong will to achieve what we want by humbly not reacting to experience as it presents itself. Allowing the sacred experience to unfold in its own way through our nonaction weakens our self-centeredness.

By submitting to the sacred will by responding to experience through noble nonaction, we grow a humble heart. Noble because nonaction requires us to refrain from acting on our impulses to try to change what we experience. We restrain acting upon our wanting to self-benefit or self-righteously reacting to an imagined threat to our self-centered view we have of ourselves. Practicing restraint opens to experiencing our life unfolding in sacred ways on its own. The steady and difficult work of accepting and yielding to sacred experience gradually resolves our inner confusion and turmoil. What started as a difficult discipline becomes transformational wisdom.

Instead of using our power to impose our will upon others and situations to have our way, especially when we most urgently want to have our way, we do not act. Through this practice of nonaction, we step by step gently accumulate the power to manifest within the world the sacred ways.¹

Through the hard and gradual work of restraining our ambition and doubts by sacrificing our ego, we prepare ourselves to respond to the sacred calling. Refraining from acting generates a transformative tension. When the sacred time comes, the sacred sparks our transformation into interbeings. As humble beings who know our sacredness and that of all beings, we come to have the sacred knowing of the work we uniquely can do to further life on Earth and joyfully submit to that knowing.

The winds change and now the sacred blessing of knowing what we can do to further life on Earth falls on us like a long awaited rain.

Line 1: The line wants to impose its will upon what it experiences but refrains from acting. It bears its impatience. The line humbly yields to the sacred will and the sacred ways.

Line 2: The line feels drawn by the sacred to refrain from imposing its self-centered will on experience.

¹ **Ways and values of the sacred path to further life on Earth (work in progress):** Love, patience, humble surrender to sacred knowing, discernment of how to best further life on Earth, firm discipline to avoid harming the Earth Interbeing, harmonious interactions, equitable sharing, and a balanced wellbeing.

Line 3: The line wants to advance its self-centered ambitions. The impediments to doing so seem slight but become difficult and dangerous as the line advances. Rather than recognize the obstruction as a warning of its ignorance and weakness, the line blames others for its impasse.

Line 4: The line restrains itself from imposing its will upon experience, the path of danger. Instead, it knows the sacredness of experience and responds to it with awe and respect for the sacred moving through its life.

Line 5: The line harmonizes with the sacred ways and becomes an interbeing. It unites with other life as an equal among equals. Through mutual care and aid, all beings have what they need.

Line 6: The line has decreased its self-centered harmful views and ways to the degree that it has nothing left to decrease. It desists from further efforts to do so as that would take it back into self-centeredness. The line already abides with the sacred Earth Interbeing and quietly becomes part of the sacred unfolding of the Earth Interbeing.