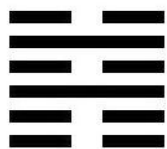


Hexagram 39 – Responding to Anger and Fear



Responding to anger and fear.

Benefit from good feelings and ways of sacredness.

No benefit from moving further into anger and fear.

Benefit from perceiving our sacredness and that of others.

Perseverance furthers.

Ideogram: foot and cold, impeded circulation. **Meaning of ideogram:** proceed haltingly; lame; slow, weak; difficult, unfortunate.

Structure: Dangerous water ☵ above, and a mountain ☶ below. A dangerous abyss lies ahead, and a steep inaccessible mountain rises from behind.

Anger and fear block us from having harmonious relationship, impeding the unfolding of our sacred path. When angrily impose our will upon others or fearfully surrender our will to others who threaten us, we center our focus upon others and not the sacred. On the sacred path, we learn how to respond to difficult situations without collapsing into fear or anger. Knowing the dangers of acting on our anger or fear leads to us wanting to stop ourselves from harming others and ourselves.

Harmful cultures encourage people to willingly harm others, life, and the Earth to gain wealth and power over others. People who live in a harmful culture have daily encounters with others who actually do threaten us individually or collectively with harm in one form or another. The culture has conditioned us to respond to harmful threats by emotionally reacting to them with anger or fear rooted in the biologic fight or flight response of prey animals.

We do not further life on Earth when we react to threatening situations with anger or fear. With anger, we identify those whom we believe responsible for endangering us and seek to impose our will upon them to punish and make them do our will. If we respond with fear, we surrender ourselves to whomever threatens us to avoid not being harmed, which forces us to follow the ways of whomever has power over us. Immersed in a harmful culture, we keep our focus on external threats and react to them based on how we perceive they affect us personally. People who go through life with anger and fear do not have a sacred path as they have the willingness to harm for self-benefit.

From experience we have learned that reacting to threats with anger or fear only causes us more difficulties, compromises our sacred path, and entangles us with the ways of the harmful culture. Just knowing the dangers of reacting to a difficult situation with anger or fear is not enough. We must act.

A deep emotional turmoil accompanies both anger and fear reactions to a perceived threat as experienced by all prey animals when faced with death. Immediately, upon awareness of our rising fear and anger, we turn to the sacred to know how to respond to the difficulties in the ways of sacredness.¹ We receive the sacred give us strength to resist anger-fear reactions by stopping

¹ **Ways of the sacred and sacredness:** We live within the reality caused by the sacred, a reality marked by the sacred ways: interdependence, change, equality, and sacredness. The ways of sacredness guide us to living sacredness to further life on Earth, the sacred purpose of all life: awakening to sacred knowing; wisdom of living sacredness; harmonious and respectful interactions; devotion to the sacred; humble submission to sacred ways and direction;

ourselves from acting on them. We overcome the danger by retreating from our fear or anger and yielding to the sacred will by not imposing our will on others or allowing others to impose their will upon us.

Because a fear/anger reaction embodies a high level of energy, we need to respond to it with a higher level of energy to override it. When we first become aware of an emotional reaction, we pour the sacred energy into our effort to pause.

Within that holy pause, we immediately take refuge in the sacred to give us the strength to keep us from reacting in fear or anger. If we have the urge to harm another being or the Earth, we renounce that urge and stand firm in not doing what the reaction screams at us to do. If a fear reaction, we resist surrendering our will to what would harm us. We pray for strength to move through the difficulties without surrendering our will to another. If necessary, we literally take a step back from the situation to calm ourselves and discern how to respond to it in the ways of sacredness before we reengage.

When calmer, we look inward to understand from a perspective of sacredness how the interaction went astray into disharmony. We examine where in the interaction we took a wrong turn, how we participated in causing the disharmony and learn from our mistakes.

If we persist in responding in these ways to anger-fear reactions as they arise, we grow enough stability to see others not as threats but as suffering in ways we have suffered. Within difficult situations, we more easily admit our ignorance in knowing how to respond and our need for sacred guidance. We have enough strength to dissipate our anger or fear with calm and patience and respond to difficulties with understanding and compassion.

Living sacredness gives us the strength to preserve our good feelings for others within difficult situations and know how to respond to their needs in caring ways. Perceiving our sacredness and that of the other strongly benefits us. Perceiving our calm strength influences the other to calm themselves, allowing us to mutually disentangle ourselves from a difficult interaction and restore our harmony. We grow the confidence that we can manage whatever difficulties we encounter through the ways of sacredness.

The capacity to pause before we act on our anger or fear marks a major milestone on the sacred path. We still have the hard work of diminishing our reactivity to the point that we can begin to see others not as threats but as partners in mutually beneficial interactions to further life on Earth. By following the sacred will and learning from our mistakes, we perseveringly and confidently respond to whatever difficulties we encounter through the ways of sacredness.

Line 1: At the beginning, when difficulties first arise, the line recognizes its lack of capacity to overcome its fear/anger reactivity. It humbly turns inward for sacred support and guidance to prepare itself to face its reactivity.

responding to the suffering of others; restoring and preserving a balanced life; manifesting the sacred purpose to further life on Earth.

Line 2: The line has the duty to overcome its fear/anger reactivity in the ways of sacredness as it obstructs its efforts to further life on Earth. The line makes the effort to do so and honors the guidance and support it receives from the sacred.

Line 3: The line manages its fear/anger reactivity within a difficult situation successfully. The line inwardly rejoices having faced a difficult situation calmly and patiently.

Line 4: The line applies what it has learned about how to subdue its reactivity in one situation to another difficult situation through the ways of sacredness, a skill of much value.

Line 5: In a dangerous situation that challenges the line's capacities to subdue its reactivity, the line receives the blessings of sacred support and guidance. From centering itself within the sacred, its sacredness illuminates the way through the danger.

Line 6: The line has liberated itself from its anger/fear reactivity, a dangerous obstacle that blocked it from furthering life on Earth. The line now sees the sacredness with difficult situations and has the capacity to calmly and gently respond to the needs of others.

Image Tradition

Responding to anger and fear. Difficulties indeed.

Facing the severe difficulties of reactive anger and fear.

Perceiving the dangers and also able to stop.

Clearly knowing, indeed.

Responding to anger and fear. Benefit from good feelings and wisdom.

Parting from anger and fear acquires the sacredness of harmony.

No benefit from responding with anger or fear.

That leads to an end of one's path.

Benefit from perceiving our sacredness and that of others.

Parting from reacting with anger or fear an achievement indeed.

Persevering in living sacredness appropriate.

Turning inward and correcting oneself.

The sacred time of overcoming reacting with anger and fear great indeed.