

Preface to the Third Edition

It has now been over ten years since I began to assemble my collected notes into *A Guide to the I Ching*. A number of concepts have occurred to me since, which I have found helpful to understanding the counsel given by the *I Ching*, consequently I have thought it time to make these changes available to others.

The general format of the *Guide* remains the same, however, a *capsule* has been inserted at the beginning of each hexagram. Its purpose is to focus on the message most often indicated by the hexagram.

Also new to the *Guide* are appended essays on meditation, non-action, and on consulting the *I Ching*.

Another change is the new cover. I wish to express my thanks to Leslie Anthony Iverson for this excellent cover.

For this edition I have also had the benefit of Pierre Seronde's indispensable editorial help, for which I am most grateful.

Users of the first two editions will have noticed my frequent use of the sovereign "ourself." It may be helpful to explain that the word "self" has often been inadequate in speaking of the pluralistic parts of self defined by the *I Ching*. I have therefore used the sovereign "ourself" to mean the Superior Man (our essential self), and "ourselves" to mean the "inferiors," (bodily or emotional self) whether they are taken in combination with the "Inferior Man" (ego-self-image), or not. Seen in meditation the essential self listens to and observes the other parts of self. Sometimes it sits like a sovereign, listening to its ministers; sometimes it is like a Gandhi, walking among its people.

Readers of the previous editions of the *Guide* may have noticed that upon occasion I have quoted from the commentaries on the lines rather than from the lines themselves. I have done this only when the commentaries seemed more to the point of what the lines are trying to say. For example, in *Enthusiasm* (Hex. 16), the quote, *Boasting of aristocratic connections*, is from the Duke of Chou's commentary, rather than from King Wen's judgment, *Enthusiasm that expresses itself brings misfortune*. Many people, it appears,

mistakenly think that the commentaries on the lines were written by Richard Wilhelm. However, Wilhelm's *Introduction* makes it clear that the judgments on the lines were written by King Wen, and that the commentaries on the lines were written by his son, the Duke of Chou, prior to 1150 B.C. It seems valid to quote from either one, if doing so adds clarity.

I have included in this edition the two main attitudes which seem to be central to the counsel given, in a variety of ways, in the various hexagrams. They are: (1) a total inner independence which has, as its basis, a dependence on the Higher Power, and (2) an unwavering suspension of disbelief. These two attitudes seem to be in perfect harmony with the Cosmos, and therefore are always productive of good.

The inner independence indicated is a rocklike steadiness of purpose and disengagement in the face of all challenges. The steadiness of purpose is to be purposeless. We soon learn that by maintaining this attitude we engage the power of the Creative; the Creative either leads us to a correct solution of our given problem, by which we carry out some action, or, as it more often occurs, to a solution of the problem without our active interference. At the heart of inner independence is our dependence on the help of the Creative, or Higher Power.

The suspension of disbelief becomes a humble acceptance of whatever is going on as part of the zigzag workings of the Creative. These two attitudes combine in an unshakable modesty which exemplifies *The Receptive*. While they appear to be passive attitudes, they are not. The secret is that they perfectly arouse the powers of the Creative to work out all things correctly.

The student of the *I Ching* develops these attitudes in the context of his relationship with the Sage, who teaches through it. The development of inner independence is a lengthy process requiring us to master a number of lessons experientially. It is as if a program of experiences has been set up with the purpose of challenging opinions, concepts, and beliefs we have hitherto taken for granted. Each of these experiences unsettles us for a time, until we gain the new insight intended. This challenging goes on, it seems, interminably. Sooner or later, however, we realize that true inner independence is based on acquiring the "Cosmic point of view" that we are developing through our studies with the Sage of the *I Ching*. Soon, we cannot imagine any other method of learning.

In time we gain the impression that to consult the *I Ching* is to

have a conversation with the Higher Power. This marvellous book is not just an obscure oracle, in the ancient Greek or Roman sense. The Higher Power speaks through it plainly and definitively in reply to our inner questions of need.

The *I Ching* will respond in this manner, of course, only if our attitude is sincere. It speaks with a polite reserve to the merely curious, and unintelligibly to the skeptical. To benefit from its great ability to help, we are required only to suspend, at least momentarily, our disbelief.

Among the newer concepts I have discussed in this edition are: how to deal with ‘crescendo of awfulness’ situations; envy in others and in ourselves; our egos in the guise of the ‘white knight in shining armor’; and the ‘king-of-the-heap game.’ In all these situations our inner independence is challenged, and the question arises, “How should we react?” The *I Ching* consultations make it clear that the traditional way in which we have reacted is incorrect. To progress we must take the risk of reacting in a new way. In doing so, we develop the self-understanding and strength that underlies inner independence and an open mind. Freed of barriers, pacts, and defenses, we learn to serve the good and true without coming to harm, and without losing our dignity. We learn that by being a best friend to ourself we are able to be a true friend to others.

Frequently the *I Ching* consultations teach us to correct what the *I Ching* regards as decadent thinking. This often entails accepting new limitations which, ironically, lead to a liberation of our true self. For example, we may think it our duty to like people. We find, however, that we are not obligated to like anyone. We should, however, avoid actively disliking them. We learn how to keep neutral. If a person has made mistakes, we try to see his mistakes in a just and moderate light. If he has violated our trust, we go on our way, leaving him to find his own way. We help him only if and when he becomes sensitive and receptive. We disperse alienation and work constantly at suspending our disbelief.

Throughout the *I Ching* we find the concept of working through the power of ‘inner truth.’ Inner truth refers both to what we know, on the inner level about others, and to what they know, on this level, about us. It also refers to the higher truth that exists in every situation, whether we see it or not. Once we perceive this higher truth, it is automatically communicated to others with no effort on our part.

The power of inner truth revolves around our perception of the

events we observe. Often we note incorrect actions but dismiss them because we cannot see anything constructive to do about them. The problem with dismissing wrong actions is that we communicate a tacit endorsement of them to the perpetrators. The *I Ching* would have us be strict and disciplined to recognize wrong situations as wrong. However, we turn the matter over to the Cosmos to be corrected, and we disengage from it. Disengagement empowers the Creative to correct the problem. If we allow ourselves to become alienated, or if we intervene to correct the situation, our distrust isolates us from the help of the Creative. When our ego prescribes the remedy, or enforces solutions, what the *I Ching* calls 'lawsuits,' or 'wars' begin. These inner lawsuits and wars may continue between individuals during their entire lifetimes; they may continue between nations and peoples for generations.

The *I Ching* does not, as may be thought, lead us into a true passivity. We are, as it is put in *Contemplation* (Hex. 20) capable of correcting every wrong we see, simply by aligning our point of view with the higher truth. This requires that in every situation we correct and purify our inner attitude.

What, in short, is a correct inner attitude? It is to recognize our dependence on the Higher Power to grant us the correct perception, and to serve the Higher Power by keeping our thoughts humble and good.

It is the way of the *I Ching* to correct the world through correcting ourselves. Indeed, the more we experience the way of the *I Ching*, the more we realize that society cannot be regenerated through any other means.

Another concept related to inner independence is 'going on,' or as the British put it, to "carry on." In the 6th line of *After Completion* (Hex. 63), we are counselled not to look back with egotistical satisfaction at hazards conquered, but to keep steady on our path. The principle is also described in *Approach* (Hex. 19): we should not stop to luxuriate in good times, or despair during the bad times, but go on.

This does not mean that we rigidly focus on the future, so that within ourselves we look like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Seen in meditation we are erect and still. "Going on" means to keep detaching and returning to the path, because life is a going on. We go with it, whether we make mistakes or succeed, greeting each change with humble acceptance. The goal is to retain our humility

and constancy throughout our lifetime; thus we go on “to the very end” (see *Modesty*, Hex. 15), reacting to all constraints, accommodations, and sudden liberations with equanimity. As it is put in *Shock* (Hex. 51), although the shock and thunder reverberate a hundred miles around, the developed person does not allow one drop to spill from the sacrificial spoon. This is the high degree of character we are capable of attaining through following the way of the Sage. A humble, open-minded equanimity is the most powerfully creative attitude of all.

Carol K. Anthony

Preface to the First Edition

Since my own study of the *I Ching* has always been of the Wilhelm/Baynes translation published by the Princeton University Press, this guide is based on and meant to accompany that edition.*

The advantage of the Wilhelm/Baynes translation arises from Richard Wilhelm's great knowledge of the *I Ching*, and Cary F. Baynes's excellent translation into English. The *I Ching* has survived thousands of years because it is vital and alive. The Wilhelm/Baynes translation conveys this vitality and usefulness.

It is assumed that the reader will have familiarized himself with the manner in which the *I Ching* is to be used. This guidebook does not attempt to paraphrase the *I Ching*, but to give insight into its hexagrams and lines, to make it usable in self-development, and to solve important life problems.

I never anticipated writing this book. In fact, it was not "written," but "collected." Little by little the notes I kept over the years became a complete commentary on the *I Ching*'s 64 hexagrams and 384 lines. Because these notes were and are continuously helpful to me and my friends, I have compiled them into a book to make them available to others.

So many people have come forward to help make this book possible that its completion has never been a task, but I particularly want to thank Gwen Bell for invaluable advice relating to the publishing process. These and a number of other people are part of the creative thrust that has brought this book to you, the reader. That it may now help you mine the gold of the *I Ching* and of your own being is my greatest wish.

Carol K. Anthony

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