

Wu Wei: Actionless Action or Non-Ado, the Mysterious Power or Mystical Virtue

1) The greatest carver does the least carving (Waley): Chapter 28
A great tailor does little cutting (Wu)

This he (the Sage) does by not striving; and because he does not strive, none can contend with him (Waley): Chapter 66
Just because he (the Sage) strives with nobody, nobody can ever strive with him (Wu)

The Sage's way is to act without striving (Waley): Chapter 81
The Way of the Sage is to do his duty, not to strive with anyone (Wu)

Not to Strive but nonetheless to conquer (Waley): Chapter 73
To conquer without striving (Wu)

2) Those that tamper with it, harm it
Those that grab it, lose it (Waley): Chapters 29, 64
To tamper with it is to spoil it, and to grasp it is to lose it (Wu)

The best charioteers do no rush ahead,
The best fighters do not make displays of wrath (Waley): Chapter 68
A good soldier is never aggressive;
A good fighter is never angry (Wu)

Can you, when concentrating your breath, make it soft like that of a child? (Waley): Chapter 10
In gathering your vital energy to attain suppleness, have you reached the state of a new-born babe? (Wu)

Rear them, but not lay claim on them
Control them, but never lean upon them
Be chief among them, but not manage them (Waley): Chapters 10, 51
Rear them without claiming them for your own!
Do your work without setting any store by it!
Be a leader, not a butcher! (Wu)

3) What is most full seems empty;
Yet its use will never fail (Waley): Chapter 45
The greatest fullness seems empty, but yet its use is endless (Wu)

4) The Sage arrives without going,
Sees all without looking,
Does nothing, yet achieves everything (Waley): Chapter 47
The Sage knows without traveling,
Sees without looking,
And achieves without Ado (Wu)

5) By this very inactivity, everything is activated (Waley): Chapter 48
No-Ado, and yet nothing is left undone (Wu)

6) And so teaches things untaught
Turning all men back to the things they have left behind,
That the 10,000 creatures may be restored to their Self-so (Waley): Chapter 64
Deep and far reaching is Mystical Virtue!
It leads all things to return, till they come back to Great Harmony (Wu)