

T.F.S.
Three, five, and seven
3 5 7

By Ed Halpaus, Grand Lodge Education Officer.
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“Our headstrong passions shut the door of our souls against God.” Confucius

The Energy of Our Passions
By an anonymous Worshipful Brother who presented this paper when
Master of Saint Paul Lodge #3
St. Paul, Minnesota
An original paper presented in Lodge

"The universe is a vast net of energy rays. The primary ray is that which emanates from the Subtle Origin, and it is entirely positive, creative, and constructive. Each being, however, converts the energy of this primary ray into its own ray, and these lower rays can be either positive or negative, constructive or destructive."¹

At the July meeting we read the story from a small Indian volume entitled *I Am My Best Self*. It is a teaching story, like the Sufi teaching stories dispensed by the Sufi Sages in the Islamic Tradition. To recapitulate, a small boy starts out at the close of the school year to return to his nature village. He ambles aimlessly through the countryside till the night approaches. He huddles in a field cold and wet. His carefree thought gone, he wonders –

"What if there were wild animals around? What if they were hungry? What if they were looking for a meal right this very minute? What if a tiger were to find me here?"

Before he could think even one more terrified thought a tiger really did appear. You may recall the little boy mentally asks the tiger to leave and it does. The story in its simplicity illustrates the power of negative thinking and the power of positive thinking.

"Taking a deep breath, he concentrated all of his attention and energy on the tiger. Then, shutting his eyes, he wishes with all his might that the tiger would disappear."

Poof! With as little a sound as that, the tiger was gone! He was just nowhere to be seen...

This was awesome! The whole situation had changed. Chinmai now understood. It is our mind that gives us our power. As we think, our lives will be! This had to be the most important lesson he had ever learnt. He was excited that he wanted to shout it out to the world. "Hey listen! Thoughts do work."

¹ Hua Ha Ching, *The Hungry Tiger of Our Thoughts*. Walker Edition, p.72.

Tonight our inspiration comes from Chinese wisdom. The Chinese spirituality is not anthropomorphic – a word meaning shaped like a human form. God in the Sistine Chapel ceiling reaches out and touches Adam. This is an anthropomorphic image of God the Creator.

The Chinese mind is more intellectual and metaphysical; more attuned to principles and not individual personalities. The universe is a constant play of energies; passive and active, yin and yang constantly changing and interacting. The task of the sage is to adjust his response, his energy from moment to moment to this kaleidoscope of change. To the Chinese, like attracts like, negatively evokes negativity. It is a law of mutual reciprocity. What goes around comes around. "As you sew, thus shall ye reap."

But let us continue with a second quotation from a contemporary Taoist master:

"This law reveals that energy of a specific vibration frequency responds to and attracts energies of a corresponding frequency. Thus one's experience is determined by the energy one embodies. If one is in harmony with universal law, the manifestations of one's physical, emotional and mental energies will be harmonious. If one violates the laws of nature, one manifests disorder and disharmony in one's life."²

Growing up many many years ago the newspaper contained a comic strip called "Little Abner" written by Al Capp. Little Abner was a muscular hillbilly and he had a girlfriend named Daisy Mae. Another character drifting in and out of the columns was Joe Bltstfix: A forlorn character with a little black cloud over his head – always surrounded by a circle of calamities. As I recall, Lil Abner and Daisy Mae always fled in consternation when Joe appeared.

Tradition teaches harmony arrives when one submits to the laws, rules and regulations of the specific traditions; whether it be Buddhism, Judaism, Shintoism, Taoism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism. Tradition maintains these are sacred revelations from the supreme level of consciousness to the material plane. Masonry, while not a revelation, is a stream of wisdom, trickling down from the fount of divine wisdom, a stream with the power to regulate our passions. The stream is embodied in the ritual, which if followed, enacted, and remembered has the power to harmonize and transform the participants. I must add a ritual that is not altered by subservience to the modern spirit.

If one is in harmony with universal law, the manifestations of one's physical, emotional, and mental energies will be harmonious. If one violates the laws of nature, one manifests discordant disharmony in one's life.

A contemporary sage once remarked that most physical illnesses are all psychosomatic (i.e., reflections on the physical plane of psychological disequilibrium). Medical science has documented profound changes in the immunologic defenses of the human body in those exhibiting profound negativity, those who grieve for lengthy periods at the loss of a loved one, for instance. It's quite a stretch to think the devastations of inflammatory arthritis, heart disease and cancer are not solely genetic, but

² Hua Ching Ni, *Tao: The Subtle Universal Law and the Integral Way of Life*. p.iii.

triggered by emotion psychic and spiritual imbalance. I leave you to reflect and speculate on these assertions.

The Chinese approach to the material world is more akin to the scientific understanding of modern physics where the material world is in some views a focus of congealed energy. At least this layman takes away such a view after a very superficial scientific education.

The ancient Chinese and Indian sages would or could argue that thought is a form of energy. Certainly thought when it takes form as speech has the power to inflame or to sooth, to degrade or elevate. Witness the effects of Hitler's rhetoric in the 1930s.

I think the Chinese and Indian sages would argue that brotherly love is an energy, an energy to be cultivated or developed. The question then arises how does one cultivate the energy of brotherly love? How does one subdue every discordant passion?

The candidate submits to the laws, rules, and regulations of the Craft. By submitting and attendance at the Stated Meetings and degrees, the ritual shapes and nurtures the innate capacity for brotherly love, relief, and truth. These capacities actualized by authentic ritual then are manifested in Masonic charity.

Since my entry into the Craft over thirty years ago the Craft in many circles has been dominated by negative thinking. A magnificent building on 6th and Smith was abandoned in part because it lacked elevator access for the frail and elderly. Masonic councils are in some locals a sparring ground for factional disputes. Is this failure to harmonize our Masonic interactions the result of ritual weakening and devaluation; a failure of intent; or a misunderstanding of how things actually work? The Taoist Sages believe it is a failure of spiritual attunement; too much noise in the jargon of the ham radio operator.

Why do we subdue our passions? In tune with the theme of this paper, we subdue our passions in order to divert that energy, embodied in the passions, into the channel hallowed out by the practice of brotherly love, relief, and Truth, that channel leading to greater spiritual fulfillment and realization.

With this last random thought, let us merge into silence before we close the Lodge.

Words to live by: "We should employ our passions in the service of life, not spend life in the service of our passions." Richard Steele

From volumes of Sacred Law:

"A tranquil heart is life to the body, but passion is rottenness to the bones."
Proverbs 14:30 Tanakh (Old Testament)

"Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry."
Colossians 3:5 New Testament

**"Seest thou such a one as taketh for his god his own passion (or impulse)?
Couldst thou be a disposer of affairs for him?"** Qur'an 025:043 Yusuf Ali
Translation

Please remember: if you would like to participate in the latest Masonic Monday Question, please go to <http://www.lodgebuilder.org> and click on the Lodge Education forum. When you have an answer send it to masonicmonday@gmail.com the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 09/20/10 is: **Of what stone is the foundation stone of King Solomon's Temple said to be made of, and what is the symbolism of that stone?**

"The ruling passion, be it what it will, the ruling passion conquers reason still."
Alexander Pope

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"Passion, though a bad regulator, is a powerful spring." Ralph Waldo Emerson

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With "Brotherly Love",
Ed Halpaus
Grand Lodge Education Officer

**Seek to mentor a Brother Mason:
It's good for him, it's good for you, and it's good for Freemasonry!**