

Unit 11
Reading C

The Tao of No Stress 《无压力之道》

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Theories of Stress

1 Western medicine has accepted the correlation between stress and illness, but does not outright claim that all forms of stress create an illness or ill effect. In Western medicine, the apparent root cause of an illness is diagnosed based strictly on the symptoms of the illness. Taoism asserts that all stresses and anxieties have a physical and mental effect on the person, and that in the end all our illnesses have their source in negative mental actions or thoughts. Western skepticism can be partially justified in that stress can affect a person either negatively or positively. Since all stress stimulates the adrenal glands, stress can sometimes create the capacity for individuals to perform wondrous physical feats. In certain individuals, stress can provide motivation for great accomplishments. The majority who experience stress, however, do so in a negative way. It maybe the case that stress stimulates a positive response in people who have an increased supply of adrenal hormones. Inversely, those who react to stress in a negative manner have a decreased supply.

西医已经接受了压力与疾病之间的关联,但并不完全声称所有形式的压力都会造成疾病或不良影响。在西医中,疾病的明显根本原因是严格根据疾病的症状来诊断的。道家主张,所有的压力和焦虑都会对人产生身心影响,并且最终我们所有的疾病都源于负面的心理行为或思想。西方的怀疑态度在一定程度上是有道理的,因为压力对一个人的影响可能是负面的,也可能是正面的。由于所有的压力都会刺激肾上腺,压力有时可以使个人具备完成惊人身体壮举的能力。在某些人身上,压力可以为伟大的成就提供动力。然而,大多数经历压力的人是以消极的方式感受压力。可能的情况是,压力会在肾上腺激素供应增加的人身上激发积极反应。相反,那些对压力有负面反应的人肾上腺激素供应则会减少。

2 To the Taoist, however, this whole matter of how a person reacts to stress is purely a question of positive qi —the internal energy that all Taoists aspire to experience flowing through their body—or negative qi. In more specific terms a person is endowed with either good or poor “inherited qi” and “self-acquired qi. ” "The Taoists term these as: "before heaven qi, " the mental and physical energy received from one's parents; and “after heaven qi, " the energy a person accumulates from his or her own efforts. If a person's qi is strong and abundant, the Taoist believes that the quality, vitality, and length of his or her life will be greatly increased.

然而,对道家来说,一个人如何应对压力这个问题完全是一个关于正气(所有道家都渴望体验在体内流动的内在能量)或邪气的问题。更具体地说,一个人被赋予要么良好要么不良的“先天之气”和“后天之气”。道家将这些称为:“先天之气”,即从父母那里获得的身心能量;以及“后天之气”,即一个人通过自身努力积累的能量。如果一个人的气强大而充沛,道家相信他或她的生命质量、活力和长度将大大增加。

3 Qi is not hormonal; rather it is what affects and stimulates hormones. In a sense, qi is like a latent oxygen in the blood that can promote increased health and stamina. Ultimately, it is the energy that animates a human being, the unseen power source that mobilizes all physical and

mental functions of the body. In Chinese, qi means both vital life energy and breath, as it is the breath that either accumulates or dissipates qi. Proper breathing accumulates it; poor breathing dissipates it.

气不是荷尔蒙，而是影响和刺激荷尔蒙的东西。在某种意义上，气就像血液中潜在的氧气，可以促进健康和耐力的提升。归根结底，它是赋予人活力的能量，是调动身体所有生理和心理功能的看不见的能量源。在中文里，“气”既意味着至关重要的生命能量，也意味着呼吸，因为正是呼吸要么积累要么耗散气。正确的呼吸能积累气，不良的呼吸会耗散气。

4 Stress dissipates qi because the breathing is obstructed; thus a person's health and longevity are adversely affected. Acupuncture, developed by early Taoists, in its essence is a means whereby qi is balanced, which results in a regularizing of all the body's functions.

压力会耗散气，因为呼吸会受到阻碍；因此，一个人的健康和寿命会受到不利影响。针灸是由早期道家发展而来的，从本质上讲，它是一种平衡气的手段，从而使身体的所有功能都得到调节。

5 Western medicine is gradually making progress toward the acceptance of the validity of acupuncture and qi. The gradual acceptance is owing mostly to the incredible cures witnessed by many Western medical practitioners. Still, Western medicine is hesitant to accept Eastern explanations for the cures that come from balancing and restoring qi.

西医正逐渐朝着接受针灸和气的有效性的方向迈进。这种逐渐接受主要是由于许多西医从业者目睹了令人难以置信的治愈效果。然而，西医在接受来自平衡和恢复气的治愈效果的东方解释方面仍犹豫不决。

6 Nevertheless, both Western and Eastern health practices agree that stress is not only unwanted and injurious but also that relaxation and breathing play an important role in eliminating it. Western medicine, however, is still confused about how to eliminate stress; Eastern practice is not. 然而，西方和东方的健康实践都认为压力不仅是不受欢迎的和有害的，而且放松和呼吸在消除压力方面起着重要作用。然而，西医仍然对如何消除压力感到困惑；东方的实践则不然。

7 In recent years more studies have appeared in the West that highly recommend Asian methods for healing. The main reason for the high praise is that the studies have found that such methods not only greatly increase blood circulation but also strengthen the immune system and central equilibrium (a person's sense of balance).

近年来，西方出现了更多高度推荐亚洲治疗方法的研究。受到高度赞扬的主要原因是，这些研究发现此类方法不仅极大地促进血液循环，还能增强免疫系统和中枢平衡（一个人的平衡感）。

8 People who suffer from stress normally experience poor blood circulation and loss of balance. Any medical doctor will tell you that if you increase your blood circulation, you will alleviate numerous health problems, from arthritis to migraine headaches. When there is poor blood circulation the body's immune system cannot function properly. If the immune system malfunctions, then the body is completely open to numerous diseases, ranging from the common cold to cancer. Stress is the number one cause of poor blood circulation.

承受压力的人通常会血液循环不良且失去平衡。任何医生都会告诉你，如果你增加血液循环，

就能缓解从关节炎到偏头痛等众多健康问题。当血液循环不良时，身体的免疫系统就无法正常运作。如果免疫系统出现故障，那么身体就完全容易患上从普通感冒到癌症等众多疾病。压力是血液循环不良的首要原因。

9 Many people believe that stress can be cured simply by resting or relaxing, but this is true only of very minor types of stress. Resting, or doing nothing, is purely a short-term means to releasing minor anxieties and avoiding taking more stress in to the body. Rest is fine for relieving tension or creating a calm mind for making an important decision, but it really has nothing to do with curing stress. Rest can actually just hide stress that would be revealed if, for example, you were to undergo a treadmill stress test. Once stress is present in the body, inaction will not cure it. When left unattended, this stress will show up in your dreams, hobbies, relationships, and work.

许多人认为压力可以通过休息或放松来简单地治愈，但这只适用于非常轻微的压力类型。休息，或者什么都不做，纯粹是一种释放轻微焦虑和避免让更多压力进入身体的短期手段。休息对于缓解紧张或在做出重要决定时创造平静的心态是很好的，但它实际上与治愈压力毫无关系。休息实际上只是隐藏了压力，如果例如你进行跑步机压力测试，压力就会显现出来。一旦压力存在于身体中，不作为是无法治愈它的。如果放任不管，这种压力会在你的梦境、爱好、人际关系和工作中显现出来。

10 As explained in more detail later, stress is a self-trained response. If you want to eliminate it and its harmful effects from your life, rather than trying to suppress or avoid it, you must learn to change your response to the things that create stress. Changing your mental response requires changing your physical state or activity. 'There is no such thing as thinking your way out of stress, so if you want to change the responses in your mind, you must first make changes in your body. Altering the stress response is accomplished by incorporating the three basic physical functions of releasing, massaging, and breathing.

正如后文将更详细解释的那样，压力是一种自我训练出来的反应。如果你想从生活中消除压力及其有害影响，而不是试图压制或逃避它，你就必须学会改变对产生压力的事物的反应。改变你的心理反应需要改变你的身体状态或活动。不存在仅靠思考就能摆脱压力这种事，所以如果你想改变你头脑中的反应，你必须首先在你的身体上做出改变。通过结合释放、按摩和呼吸这三种基本的身体功能，可以改变压力反应。

The Three Paths to Eliminating Stress

11 At the heart of Taoist teachings we find three basic and important criteria for eliminating stress. The first is to acquire a mind-set that allows for the release of your self-trained responses to stressful situations. As you begin to pay attention to releasing stress, it should become clear that responses to stress are often habitual. Take, for example, people who experience degrees of road rage every time they drive. The stress will manifest itself on the road, but it often relates more to some other problem in their life than it does to their actual driving experience. In Taoism it is thought that a person is not necessarily violent simply because he hates someone else — it is because there is something in himself he hates, and his violent actions are but an external venting of his own inner turmoil. Unfortunately, habitual responses to stress, such as road rage or violence, often create further causes for stress. Identifying your self-trained responses to stress — and acquiring a mind-set that immediately recognizes and releases these responses — is the first step in becoming stress free.

在道家教义的核心，我们找到了消除压力的三个基本且重要的标准。第一个是获得一种心态，这种心态能够释放你对压力情境的自我训练出的反应。当你开始注意释放压力时，就会清楚地发现对压力的反应往往是习惯性的。例如，有些人每次开车都会经历不同程度的路怒。压力会在道路上显现出来，但它通常更多地与他们生活中的其他问题相关，而不是与他们实际的驾驶体验相关。在道家思想中，一个人不一定仅仅因为讨厌别人而变得暴力——而是因为他自身有某些他讨厌的东西，而他的暴力行为只是他内心动荡的一种外在发泄。不幸的是，对压力的习惯性反应，如路怒或暴力，往往会造成更多的压力原因。识别你对压力的自我训练出的反应，并获得一种能够立即识别并释放这些反应的心态，是实现无压力的第一步。

12 The second criterion is to learn how to pay attention to yourself in a positive manner rather than a negative manner in which you focus on only the negative effects of your experience of being stressed. This process is very simple, as it is accomplished by massaging and pressing certain areas of the body to alleviate the negative physical effects of stress. These massaging methods alter the central nervous system's impulses for reacting to stress and train it to respond in a way that eliminates stress.

第二个标准是学习如何以积极的方式关注自己，而不是以消极的方式只关注压力体验带来的负面影响。这个过程非常简单，通过按摩和按压身体的某些部位来缓解压力带来的负面身体影响即可实现。这些按摩方法改变了中枢神经系统对压力的反应冲动，并训练它以一种消除压力的方式做出反应。

13 For example, if you are one of those people who experience frequent bouts with road rage, the cure is first to release the rage, to let it go. Then pull over and utilize both the massaging and breathing techniques to release the stress. Over time this will create a self-trained positive response when you are experiencing road rage or any other stress.

例如，如果你是那些经常路怒发作的人之一，解决方法首先是释放愤怒，让它消散。然后把车停在路边，利用按摩和呼吸技巧来释放压力。随着时间的推移，当你经历路怒或任何其他压力时，这将创造出一种自我训练出的积极反应。

14 The third criterion is to learn how to breathe stress away. Breathing is the most important bodily function we have; it directly affects the circulation of the blood and our central nervous system. In Taoism spiritual cultivation nothing plays a bigger role than the discipline and practice of breathing methods. The Chinese term qi translates simultaneously as both “breath” and “vital-life energy.” Qi is the animator of life, for without it the body is lifeless. When the qi is low in the abdomen the body and mind are tranquil. When the qi is high in the chest the body and mind are agitated. Therefore, based on the Tao is concept of qi, the elimination of stress relies greatly on our ability to breathe correctly.

第三个标准是学习如何通过呼吸消除压力。呼吸是我们拥有的最重要的身体功能；它直接影响血液的循环和我们的中枢神经系统。在道家的精神修养中，没有什么比呼吸方法的训练和实践起着更大的作用。中文术语“气”同时被翻译为“呼吸”和“生命活力能量”。气是生命的赋予者，没有它，身体就没有生命。当气在腹部较低时，身心就会平静。当气在胸部较高时，身心就会躁动。因此，根据道家的气的概念，消除压力在很大程度上取决于我们正确呼吸的能力。