



Continuation of Tao Classes During COVID-19 Pandemic

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In light of the recent COVID-19 outbreak, many of our normal day-to-day and week-to-week activities have been disrupted. Things we used to take for granted – simple things like visiting the supermarket or even the doctor – have taken on a whole new level of challenge for us. We used to work together and play together and learn together. Now we are forced to do many of the things we used to do as groups remotely via our computer. Many of us are working via telecommuting through a VPN while our children employ distance learning through on-line classes for their school or college courses and, in this way, our lives go on.

One of these classes is the weekly English Tao class. But, although this class, hosted by Derek Lin, started out mostly as an in-person class in El Monte (The Great Tao Foundation of America) to discuss content and interpretations of the Tao Te Ching, it quickly changed into a vast on-line presence that had people joining in from around the globe. So, even while there was a roomful of people in the classroom at the temple all learning about The Tao, there were also dozens of people watching remotely, as well, eager to share in this experience.



在新冠肺炎爆發中 屹立不搖的道場課程

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由於近期新冠肺炎的爆發，許多日常活動因此停止。我們習以為常的瑣事，例如逛超市或甚至看醫生，現在都變成全新的挑戰。我們之前一起工作、一起玩耍、一起學習，現在卻必須分散各地，以電腦遠距的方式進行這些原本慣以群聚的活動。我們之中有很多人現在以虛擬私人網路（VPN）遠端辦公，我們的小孩也遠距學習學校或大學的線上課程，透過這種方式，我們的生活才得以持續。

其中一個繼續運行的班程，就是每週一堂的英文道學班。雖然這個由 Derek Lin 主持的班，一開始通常是學員們到艾爾蒙地（El Monte）的基礎忠恕美國全真道院參班，談論《道德經》的內容及各自的見解為主，但是很快就變成一個人數眾多的線上課程，參與的學員遍及了世界各地。所以，當教室裡有滿屋子的學員在學習道學知識的同時，也有許多學員透過網路在遠端參班，渴望一起分享體驗的心得。

The class typically began with a presentation from Bill Bunting who presented his portion of the class from the Tao Shrine in his home in Indiana, and then Derek would follow up with his presentation. Sometime later, additional segments were added such as Carmen's Corner and the insightful presentations from Master Ed, a long-time attendee of Derek's classes who now has a Tao Shrine in his martial arts studio in Valencia, CA.

The classes expanded over the years to include additional discussions of other books written by Mr. Derek Lin, including such books as *The Tao of Success*, *The Tao of Daily Life*, *The Tao of Happiness*, and *the Tao of Joy Every Day*. These discussions contained not only breakdowns of the common philosophies of the Tao, but also common misinterpretations and misconceptions often assigned to the ancient text due to a lack of understanding of the original dialect and context of the original manuscript.

These classes are open to anyone who wishes to join in the learning and listen to and watch Derek and others present their experiences, interpretations and life stories relating to the Tao. Amazing as it sounds, even though there is little by way of coordination between the presenters, there always seems to be a common thread to the lessons. This sort of thing happens nearly every week whenever more than one person presents during the class and is attributed to the common unity often felt by Tao members: Everyone always seems to find themselves on the same page, so to speak.

Then, roughly a year ago, Derek lost the use of the classroom at the El Monte temple. But, like most of us who recently lost the ability to go to our offices or schools to work or study due to the COVID-19 pandemic and had to work from home, these classes continued uninterrupted by focusing exclusively on the on-line presence and have been held virtually every Sunday morning now since that event.

These on-line classes are a great way to keep these learning events going. Keeping everyone current in what is happening and in sharing their understanding of The Tao so that each of us may maintain that feeling of togetherness we all feel from our attempt to learn with our brothers and sisters to attain a deeper understanding of the world around us.

As Derek says: "Let's take a deep dive into Tao Te Ching."

這個班通常由 Bill Bunting 的專題揭開序幕，他在印第安納州的家庭中堂線上講述。緊接著的是 Derek 的專題。不一會兒，課程的其他部分，例如：Carmen 的時段分享她修道心路歷程及 Ed 師傅有深度的課程，會接續進行。Ed 師傅是 Derek 課堂上長期的學員，他現在在加州瓦倫西亞（洛杉磯附近）的武術教室裡有一間家庭中堂。

這個班經過多年的運作，也討論了 Derek Lin 的其他著作，包含：《成功之道（The Tao of Success）》、《道在生活（The Tao of Daily Life）》、《莊子之道（The Tao of Happiness）》、《天天快樂之道（Tao of Joy Every Day）》等。討論的內容不侷限於一般哲學分類中的道，也討論了古聖先賢經典中文言文的錯誤詮釋及誤解，這些都是對原稿中的原始方言及前後文的理解不足所致。

這些課程開放給任何想要加入一起學習，及聆聽 Derek 和其他講師講述他們與道相關的經驗、理解及生命故事的人。令人讚嘆的是，講師們並沒有經過事前的溝通協調，這些專題卻似乎都圍繞著相同的理念。每次若當週有一位以上的講師講課，這樣的情形就會發生，而會有這樣的現象，是道親們擁有道心的展現：可以這麼說，每個人總會發現自己不知不覺中與他人有了共識。

然而，大約一年前，位於艾爾蒙地（El Monte）中堂的教室無法繼續供 Derek 使用。不過，就像大部分的人最近因為新冠肺炎無法去公司上班或去學校上學，而必須在家工作或上課一樣，自從這件事發生以來，這個班改為僅以線上方式上課，不間斷地在每週日早上透過虛擬方式順利開班。

這些線上課程讓我們在艱困的環境中能夠不停下學習的腳步，讓所有參與的學員持續關注世界上正在發生的事情，並分享他們對於道的理解，藉此加深凝聚力，讓每位想要與其他道親一同學習的學員，能對於我們生活的這個世界有更深刻的感受。

就像 Derek 所說的：「讓我們一起深入探究《道德經》無垠的大海裡吧。」