

Daoism Faith Statement – China Taoist Association

Daoism is a religion that cares for all life. Daoism believes that *“everything with form contains Dao”*, and that every living thing has the right to develop according to its nature.

It is written in the *“Forty-nine Chapter Classic of the Supreme Emperor of Heaven”* (Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu Zhang Jing) that *“All living things, just like man, wish to live and fear to die. They are living, as are we. Do not care only for your life and ignore others. Do not kill other living things in order to satisfy your own desires.”*

The teachings also say, when you treat other living beings with kindness, you will be rewarded. Ge Hong in *“Bao Pu Zi”* (On Keeping Simplicity) said, *“Have compassion towards all things, extend kindness and love to the wider world, and do not hurt the living with your hands. This is virtue and will bring you heaven’s blessings. What you wish to accomplish will be successful, and there will be hope for you to achieve immortality.”*

Daoism’s goal is to create harmony in the universe. When we harm the lives of other species we destroy this delicate balance.

True wealth is a world full of diverse species. It is said in Tai Ping Jing (The Book of Supreme Peace), *“Wealth means that there is not a lack of anything. To the world, everything can grow and flourish, not one less. In early ancient times (shang gu shi dai), there is everything. This is the most wealthy of all times. In mid-ancient times (zhong gu shi dai), the number of species started decreasing. We can call it a time of small poverty. Today, there are fewer and fewer numbers of species. This is a time of big poverty.”*

One of Daoism’s great gifts to the world is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). TCM plays an important role in caring for our health but when it endangers the natural world it is no longer in alignment with Daoism’s spiritual principles.

Sun Si Miao in the preface of *“Qian Jin Yao Fang”* Book 1 points out: *“Since ancient times, wise doctors do not use animal parts in their prescriptions when treating people...Hurting others to benefit ourselves should not be adopted by any species, let alone humans with intelligence? To kill a life in order to seek for life will only drive you further away from life. For this reason, in my prescriptions I will not use any animals ingredients.”* Sun Si Miao also pointed out, however, that if one has to use animal ingredients, it is better to use animals that died naturally.

Daoism encourages the use of ingredients that can be found easily. There is no need to use expensive or rare ingredients from endangered species such as tiger bone or rhino horn. Daoism shows us that there are many ways to cure any one illness, and prescriptions that include animal ingredients are not necessary.

Let us respect and inherit these Daoist traditions, and develop TCM in ways that benefit both

human and non-human life. We ask all suppliers, practitioners and consumers of traditional medicines to protect and care for plants, insects and other creatures, especially endangered animals, and to refrain using them in TCM.