

Learning about **Hope** From studying the Chinese Language

Musings of an Ontological Coach

SWIPE



Understanding Hope

In Chinese, hope is mainly associated with the character 望 (Wang).

望 means to look far and see the horizon.

This Chinese character depicts a person of authority, standing with eyes open wide, looking towards the moon (signifying the attempt to look far and beyond the horizon).

Interestingly, the top left hand corner of the character means death. A familiar phrase comes to mind: Without vision, people perish.



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Having Hope - 盼望

盼望 - two characters commonly used to describe someone feeling hopeful and looking forward with great anticipation.

盼 means having a very clear vision and distinctions (able to slice open ambiguities).

This means that when a person is looking forward and feeling hopeful, the person sees a particular future with clarity. The ability to see this vision fuels this emotion of hope. It also creates a positive energy for this person to take action towards reaching this outcome.

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Losing Hope - 失望

失望 - A combination of these two characters means losing hope. They are used often to describe the emotion of disappointment.

失 means to lose.

This means when a person experienced disappointment, the person loses the ability to see beyond the horizon. In a mood of disappointment, a person's ability to see possibilities is greatly reduced.

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Feeling Hopeless - 绝望

绝望 - A combination of these two characters means feeling utterly hopeless and in despair.

绝 means having a strong piece of rope that is braided together getting sliced up into three. If “a threefold cord is not easily broken”, this character conveys the feeling of despair when the strong cord is sliced up three times and broken.

This means a person in despair is often in an overwhelmed state and without hope.

Sometimes, this emotion is needed to learn what it means to surrender and move on.

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Practicing Hope

1. Practice movements that require your body to channel energy within the body in an upward trajectory. This is a somatic practice.

What that looks like is to create lightness in the body. This basically means having fun and practicing play while in movement. Jumping on a trampoline, playing leisure team sports, doing skipping, rock climbing etc, are possible activities.

Simply, go do more fun activities with friends that require you to move around.



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Practicing Hope

2. Do not be obsessed with being happy.

Being happy makes you stay put. Hope demands you to change and move forward. Hope makes you believe a better future is possible. It is a demanding emotion.

Encountering hope is like encountering the person who, despite every disappointment we have experienced with ourselves and with the world, gives us a reason to carry on.



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Practicing Hope

3. Practice surrendering

望 - This character contains the character 亡 which means death. Some of kind of death must be experienced in the practice of hope. In death, we experience loss, sadness and disappointment. The road towards Hope requires us to first move from disappointment to acceptance. That requires surrendering and doing sense-making and meaning-making work. These are two important components of practicing hope.

As we make meaning of our loss and see a vision of a better future, hope is generated.



ONE MORE

09/09

Intepreting Emotions using the Chinese Language

There are just so much we can learn about emotions from different languages.

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