

弟子規

Dì Zi Guī

THE DISCIPLINE OF BEING

A DISCIPLE OF THE SAGE

總敘 Preface

Zōng Xū

1 弟子規 聖人訓 首孝悌 次謹信
Dì Zi Guī Shèng Rén Xùn Shǒu Xiào Tì Cì Jǐn Xìn

The “Discipline of Being a Disciple of the Sage” are the teachings given by sages.

Of them all, filial piety and proper behaviour in relation to elders come first, followed by mindful reverence in daily living, and trustworthiness.

2 泛愛眾 而親仁 有餘力 則學文
Fàn Ài Zhòng Ēr Qīn Rén Yǒu Yú Lì Zé Xué Wén

Cherish all beings, but only stay close to the benevolent.

Whatever time and energy you have left should be devoted to studying and learning the way of the sages.

入則孝 Start with Filial Piety at Home

Rù Zé Xiào

3 父母呼 應勿緩 父母命 行勿懶
Fù Mǔ Hū Yīng Wù Huǎn Fù Mǔ Mìng Xíng Wù Lǎn

When your parents call, respond, do not delay.

When they give an instruction, act, do not be lazy.

4 父母教 須敬聽 父母責 須順承
Fù Mǔ Jiào Xū Jìng Tīng Fù Mǔ Zé Xū Shùn Chéng

When parents teach you something, listen respectfully.

When they reproach you, accept obediently.

5 冬則溫 夏則清 晨則省 昏則定
Dōng Zé Wēn Xià Zé Qīng Chén Zé Xǐng Hūn Zé Dìng

In the winter, keep your parents warm; in the summer, keep them cool.

Greet them in the morning, put their minds at ease at night.

6 出必告 反必面 居有常 業無變
Chū Bì Gào Fǎn Bì Miàn Jū Yǒu Cháng Yè Wú Biàn

If you are going out, inform them. On returning, go and see them in person.

Maintain a regular lifestyle, do not change your routine and vocation at will.

7 事雖小 勿擅為 苟擅為 子道虧
Shì Suī Xiǎo Wù Shàn Wéi Gǒu Shàn Wéi Zǐ Dào Kuī

On any matter, however trivial it may be, do not act arbitrarily.

Doing so will tarnish your standards of filial piety.

8 物雖小 勿私藏 苟私藏 親心傷
Wù Suī Xiǎo Wù Sī Cáng Gǒu Sī Cáng Qīn Xīn Shāng

A common item, however small it may be, do not hoard it.

Doing so will upset your parents.

9 親所好 力為具 親所惡 謹為去
Qīn Suǒ Hào Lì Wéi Jù Qīn Suǒ Wù Jǐn Wéi Qù

Whatever your parents like [and is not harmful], earnestly obtain for them.

Whatever they dislike, carefully dispose of.

10 身有傷 貽親憂 德有傷 貽親羞
Shēn Yǒu Shāng Yí Qīn Yōu Dé Yǒu Shāng Yí Qīn Xiū

If your body is injured, it will worry your parents.

If your moral conduct is flawed, they will feel ashamed.

11 親愛我 孝何難 親憎我 孝方賢
Qīn Ài Wǒ Xiào Hé Nán Qīn Zēng Wǒ Xiào Fāng Xián

When your parents love you, it is not difficult to be filial.

When they detest you, to be filial still is truly virtuous.

12 親有過 諫使更 怡吾色 柔吾聲
Qīn Yǒu Guò Jiàn Shǐ Gēng Yí Wú Sè Róu Wú Shēng

When your parents are doing something wrong, urge them to change.

Do so with a pleasant expression and a gentle voice.

13 諫不入 悅復諫 號泣隨 撻無怨
Jiàn Bú Rù Yuè Fù Jiàn Hào Qì Suí Tǎ Wú Yuàn

If they resist, wait until they are in a happier mood before urging them again.

Follow this by wailing and weeping; even if they end up hitting you, do not resent them.

14 親有疾 藥先嘗 晝夜侍 不離床
Qīn Yǒu Jí Yào Xiān Cháng Zhòu Yè Shì Bù Lí Chuáng

When your parents are ill, check their medicine first before offering it to them.

Take care of them day and night without leaving their bedside.

15 喪三年 常悲咽 居處變 酒肉絕
Sāng Sān Nián Cháng Bēi Yē Jū Chù Biàn Jiǔ Ròu Jué

In the three years after your parents’ passing, regularly feel sorrow, reflecting upon their kindness.

Your lifestyle should change accordingly, and refrain from indulgence in meat and alcohol.

16 喪盡禮 祭盡誠 事死者 如事生
Sāng Jìn Lǐ Jì Jìn Chéng Shì Sǐ Zhě Rú Shì Shēng

Mourn your parents with utmost decorum, and commemorate them with utmost sincerity.

During these rites, serve them as if they were still alive.

出 則 悌
Chū Zé Tì

Behave Properly as a Junior
Away from Home

17 兄 道 友 弟 道 恭 兄 弟 睦 孝 在 中
Xiōng Dào Yǒu Dì Dào Gōng Xiōng Dì Mù Xiào Zài Zhōng

Older siblings should take care and encourage the juniors, younger siblings should respect the seniors.

To have harmony among siblings is, in essence, fulfilling filial piety.

18 財 物 輕 怨 何 生 言 語 忍 忿 自 泯
Cái Wù Qīng Yuàn Hé Shēng Yán Yǔ Rěn Fèn Zì Mǐn

When siblings do not perceive material possessions as important, how can resentment arise among them?

When your speech is kept in check, anger naturally subsides.

19 或 飲 食 或 坐 走 長 者 先 幼 者 後
Huò Yǐn Shí Huò Zuò Zǒu Zhǎng Zhě Xiān Yǒu Zhě Hòu

Whether drinking, eating, sitting or walking, elders before juniors.

20 長 呼 人 即 代 叫 人 不 在 己 即 到
Zhǎng Hū Rén Jí Dài Jiào Rén Bú Zài Jǐ Jí Dào

When an elder calls for someone, get the person for him right away.

If the person is not present, attend to the elder yourself.

21 稱 尊 長 勿 呼 名 對 尊 長 勿 見 能
Chēng Zūn Zhǎng Wù Hū Míng Duì Zūn Zhǎng Wù Xiān Néng

When addressing elders, do not call them by their given names.

In front of them, do not show off.

22 路 遇 長 疾 趨 揖 長 無 言 退 恭 立
Lù Yù Zhǎng Jí Qū Yī Zhǎng Wú Yán Tuì Gōng Lì

When meeting an elder on the street, promptly approach, bow and politely greet them.

If they do not speak to you, respectfully stand aside.

23 騎 下 馬 乘 下 車 過 猶 待 百 步 餘
Qí Xià Mǎ Chéng Xià Chē Guò Yóu Dài Bǎi Bù Yú

Dismount if you are on a horse, get out if you are in a carriage.

Wait until the elder passes beyond one hundred steps before moving on.

24 長 者 立 幼 勿 坐 長 者 坐 命 乃 坐
Zhǎng Zhě Lì Yǒu Wù Zuò Zhǎng Zhě Zuò Mìng Nǎi Zuò

When elders are standing, do not take your seat.

Wait until they sit down, and sit down only when told.

25 尊 長 前 聲 要 低 低 不 聞 卻 非 宜
Zūn Zhǎng Qián Shēng Yào Dī Dī Bù Wén Què Fēi Yí

Before elders, speak softly.

But to speak so softly that they cannot hear you is also inappropriate.

26 進 必 趨 退 必 遲 問 起 對 視 勿 移
Jìn Bì Qū Tuì Bì Chí Wèn Qǐ Duì Shì Wù Yí

When going to an elder, approach briskly; when departing, withdraw steadily.

When you are asked a question, rise and face them to answer, maintaining eye contact.

27 事 諸 父 如 事 父 事 諸 兄 如 事 兄
Shì Zhū Fù Rú Shì Fù Shì Zhū Xiōng Rú Shì Xiōng

Serve all elders as if serving your parents.

Treat your older peers as if they are your siblings.

謹 Be Mindfully Reverent

Jin

- 28 朝起早 夜眠遲 老易至 惜此時
Zhāo Qǐ Zǎo Yè Mián Chí Lǎo Yì Zhì Xī Cǐ Shí
In the morning, rise early; at night, go to sleep late.
Old age arrives readily, value the present moment.
- 29 晨必盥 兼漱口 便溺回 輒淨手
Chén Bì Guǎn Jiān Shù Kǒu Biàn Niào Huí Zhé Jìng Shǒu
In the morning, wash your hands and rinse your mouth.
After using the bathroom, always clean your hands.
- 30 冠必正 紐必結 襪與履 俱緊切
Guān Bì Zhèng Niǔ Bì Jié Wǎ Yǔ Lǚ Jù Jǐn Qiè
Hats should be worn straight, and buttons should be done up.
Socks and shoes should be worn snugly.
- 31 置冠服 有定位 勿亂頓 致污穢
Zhì Guān Fú Yǒu Dìng Wèi Wù Luàn Dùn Zhì Wū Huì
Store hats and clothes in a set location.
Do not leave them around in a disorderly manner as this will dirty them.
- 32 衣貴潔 不貴華 上循分 下稱家
Yī Guì Jié Bù Guì Huá Shàng Xún Fèn Xià Chèn Jiā
For clothing, value cleanliness, not extravagance.
Dress appropriately based on the occasion and your status, and within your family's means.
- 33 對飲食 勿揀擇 食適可 勿過則
Duì Yǐn Shí Wù Jiǎn Zé Shí Shì Kě Wù Guò Zé
With food, do not be fussy.
Eat just enough, do not overeat.
- 34 年方少 勿飲酒 飲酒醉 最為醜
Nián Fāng Shǎo Wù Yǐn Jiǔ Yǐn Jiǔ Zuì Zuì Wéi Chǒu
When you are still young, do not drink alcohol.
Being drunk is most ugly.
- 35 步從容 立端正 揖深圓 拜恭敬
Bù Cóng Róng Lì Duān Zhèng Yī Shēn Yuán Bǎi Gōng Jìng
Walk with composure and stand upright.
Greet others with deep bows and pay obeisance reverently.
- 36 勿踐闕 勿跛倚 勿箕踞 勿搖髀
Wù Jiàn Yuè Wù Bǒ Yǐ Wù Jī Jù Wù Yáo Bì
Do not step on doorsills and do not lean on one leg when standing.
Do not sit with legs apart or sprawled out, and do not fidget.
- 37 緩揭簾 勿有聲 寬轉彎 勿觸棱
Huǎn Jiē Liǎn Wù Yǒu Shēng Kuān Zhuǎn Wān Wù Chù Léng
Open and close doors and windows quietly.
Give yourself space when turning and bending, so you do not bump into edges or knock things over.
- 38 執虛器 如執盈 入虛室 如有人
Zhí Xū Qì Rú Zhí Yíng Rù Xū Shì Rú Yǒu Rén
Hold empty containers as if they are full.
Enter empty rooms as if there is someone inside.
- 39 事勿忙 忙多錯 勿畏難 勿輕略
Shì Wù Máng Máng Duō Cuō Wù Wèi Nán Wù Qīng Lüè
Avoid doing things hastily, as it will lead to many mistakes.
Do not be daunted by difficult tasks and do not make light of simple ones.
- 40 鬥鬪場 絕勿近 邪僻事 絕勿問
Dòu Nào Chǎng Jué Wù Jìn Xié Pì Shì Jué Wù Wèn
Avoid places of contention and disturbances.
Do not be curious about deviant things.
- 41 將入門 問孰存 將上堂 聲必揚
Jiāng Rù Mén Wèn Shú Cún Jiāng Shàng Táng Shēng Bì Yáng
Before entering a room, ask if anyone is inside.
When entering a common space, make your presence known verbally.
- 42 人問誰 對以名 吾與我不分明
Rén Wèn Shuí Duì Yǐ Míng Wú Yǔ Wǒ Bù Fēn Míng
When people ask who it is, answer with your name.
Replying "me" or "I" is not clear.
- 43 用人物 須明求 倘不問 即為偷
Yòng Rén Wù Xū Míng Qiú Tǎng Bù Wèn Jì Wéi Tōu
Before using other people's things, seek clear permission;
If you do not ask, it is stealing.
- 44 借人物 及時還 後有急 借不難
Jiè Rén Wù Jí Shí Huán Hòu Yǒu Jí Jiè Bù Nán
When borrowing things from others, return them promptly.
Then in time of urgency, borrowing again will not be an issue.

信 Be Trustworthy

Xìn

45 凡出言 信為先 詐與妄 奚可焉
Fán Chū Yán Xìn Wéi Xiān Zhà Yǔ Wàng Xī Kě Yān

Whatever you say, honesty comes first.

Deceit and fabrication, how are these acceptable?

46 話說多 不如少 惟其是 勿佞巧
Huà Shuō Duō Bù Rú Shǎo Wéi Qí Shì Wù Nìng Qiǎo

Why talk more when you can talk less?

Speak plainly and factually, do not be glib or try to be clever.

47 奸巧語 穢污詞 市井氣 切戒之
Jiān Qiǎo Yǔ Huì Wū Cí Shì Jǐng Qì Qiè Jiè Zhī

Deceptive and manipulative words, foul language and

uncouth manners; be sure to guard against them.

48 見未真 勿輕言 知未的 勿輕傳
Jiàn Wèi Zhēn Wù Qīng Yán Zhī Wèi Dí Wù Qīng Chuán

Until you understand the truth of the matter, do not speak of it as if you know.

When you are unsure about what has actually happened, do not spread rumors.

49 事非宜 勿輕諾 苟輕諾 進退錯
Shì Fēi Yí Wù Qīng Nuò Gǒu Qīng Nuò Jìn Tuì Cuò

If asked to participate in anything inappropriate, do not agree to it.

If you do, you will find yourself in a dilemma.

50 凡道字 重且舒 勿急疾 勿模糊
Fán Dào Zì Zhòng Qiě Shū Wù Jí Jí Wù Mō Hū

The way you speak should be articulate and fluid.

Do not babble and do not mumble.

51 彼說長 此說短 不關己 莫閒管
Bǐ Shuō Cháng Cǐ Shuō Duǎn Bù Guān Jǐ Mò Xián Guǎn

Some talk about others' strengths, while some talk about others' shortcomings.

If it does not concern you, do not get involved.

52 見人善 即思齊 縱去遠 以漸躋
Jiàn Rén Shàn Jí Sī Qí Zòng Qù Yuǎn Yǐ Jiàn Jī

When you notice someone's virtues, think about emulating them.

It may appear you lag far behind, but you can certainly catch up eventually with consistent effort.

53 見人惡 即內省 有則改 無加警
Jiàn Rén È Jí Nèi Xǐng Yǒu Zé Gǎi Wú Jiā Jǐng

When you notice someone's wrongdoings, immediately self-reflect.

If you have done the same, change your ways. If not, exercise vigilance in not committing them.

54 唯德學 唯才藝 不如人 當自礪
Wéi Dé Xué Wéi Cái Yì Bù Rú Rén Dāng Zì Lì

When your moral conduct, knowledge, talent and skills

are not as good as others, you should encourage yourself to hone these attributes.

55 若衣服 若飲食 不如人 勿生感
Ruò Yī Fú Ruò Yǐn Shí Bù Rú Rén Wù Shēng Gǎn

If what you wear, eat and drink

is not as good as others, do not feel sad.

56 聞過怒 聞譽樂 損友來 益友卻
Wén Guò Nù Wén Yù Lè Sǔn Yǒu Lái Yì Yǒu Què

If criticism angers you and praise pleases you,

bad company will come and wholesome friends will depart.

57 聞譽恐 聞過欣 直諒士 漸相親
Wén Yù Kǒng Wén Guò Xīn Zhí Liǎng Shì Jiàn Xiāng Qīn

If praise makes you uneasy and criticism heartens you,

upright and honest men of honour will gradually draw close.

58 無心非 名為錯 有心非 名為惡
Wú Xīn Fēi Míng Wéi Cuò Yǒu Xīn Fēi Míng Wéi È

An unintentional error is called making a mistake.

A deliberate transgression is called committing non-virtue.

59 過能改 歸於無 倘揜飾 增一辜
Guò Néng Gǎi Guī Yú Wú Tǎng Yǎn Shì Zēng Yì Gū

When you rectify a mistake, the mistake no longer exists.

But if it is covered up, it is an additional transgression.

泛愛眾 Cherish All Beings

Fàn Ài Zhōng

- 60 凡是人皆須愛 天同覆地同載
Fán Shì Rén Jiē Xū Ài Tiān Tóng Fù Dì Tóng Zài
All human beings should be cherished equally,
because we are sheltered by Heaven and borne by
Earth alike.
- 61 行高者名自高 人所重非貌高
Xíng Gāo Zhě Míng Zì Gāo Rén Suǒ Zhòng Fēi Mào Gāo
A person with noble conduct will naturally be highly
regarded.
What people really value are not lofty appearances.
- 62 才大者望自大 人所服非言大
Cái Dà Zhě Wàng Zì Dà Rén Suǒ Fú Fēi Yán Dà
A person with great ability will naturally gain
prestige.
Admiration from others does not come from
bragging.
- 63 己有能勿自私 人所能勿輕訾
Jǐ Yǒu Néng Wù Zì Sī Rén Suǒ Néng Wù Qīng Zǐ
If you have ability, do not be selfish, use it for the
greater good.
Other people's abilities should not be belittled and
bad-mouthed.
- 64 勿諂富勿驕貧 勿厭故勿喜新
Wù Chǎn Fù Wù Jiāo Pín Wù Yàn Gù Wù Xǐ Xīn
Do not adulate the rich, or despise the poor.
Do not grow weary of old friends, or get overly
excited by new ones.
- 65 人不閒勿事攪 人不安勿話擾
Rén Bù Xián Wù Shì Jiǎo Rén Bù Ān Wù Huà Rǎo
When someone is occupied, do not bother them
with other matters.
When someone's mind is not at peace, do not
agitate them more by talking.
- 66 人有短切莫揭 人有私切莫說
Rén Yǒu Duǎn Qiè Mò Jiē Rén Yǒu Sī Qiè Mò Shuō
People's shortcomings should not be exposed.
Their private affairs should not be talked about.
- 67 道人善即是善 人知之愈思勉
Dào Rén Shàn Jí Shì Shàn Rén Zhī Zhī Yù Sī Miǎn
Extolling someone's virtues is in itself an act of virtue,
because when others know about them, they will be
encouraged to emulate.
- 68 揚人惡即是惡 疾之甚禍且作
Yáng Rén È Jí Shì È Jí Zhī Shèn Huò Qiě Zuò
Publicising someone's non-virtues is in itself an act of
non-virtue.
It is greatly despised by others, and misfortune will
arise from that.
- 69 善相勸德皆建 過不規道兩虧
Shàn Xiāng Quàn Dé Jiē Jiàn Guò Bù Guī Dào Liǎng Kuī
To encourage each other to be more virtuous will
improve the moral conduct of both.
To be aware of but not rectify each other's
shortcomings will compromise the moral standards
of both.
- 70 凡取與貴分曉 與宜多取宜少
Fán Qǔ Yǔ Guì Fēn Xiǎo Yǔ Yí Duō Qǔ Yí Shǎo
What and how much we receive and give, should be
distinguished clearly.
Better to give more and receive less.
- 71 將加人先問己 己不欲即速已
Jiāng Jiā Rén Xiān Wèn Jǐ Jǐ Bù Yù Jí Sù Yǐ
Before treating others in a certain way, first ask if it is
something you would do to yourself.
If it is not something you desire, then stop
immediately.
- 72 恩欲報怨欲忘 報怨短報恩長
Ēn Yù Bào Yuàn Yù Wàng Bào Yuàn Duǎn Bào Ēn Cháng
If you have been bestowed kindness, strive to repay
it; if you have been wronged, strive to forget about
it.
Resolve grievances speedily, do not waste time
holding onto grudges, and dedicate more time to
repaying kindness.
- 73 待婢僕身貴端 雖貴端慈而寬
Dài Bī Pú Shēn Guì Duān Suī Guì Duān Cí Ēr Kuān
Towards subordinates, you – as someone of higher
status – should act with dignity and inspire respect.
While being dignified and proper is important, you
should also be kind and magnanimous.
- 74 勢服人心不然 理服人方無言
Shì Fú Rén Xīn Bù Rán Lǐ Fú Rén Fāng Wú Yán
Using power to overcome others will not win
people's hearts.
Only by applying principles and sound reasoning to
convince them, will they accept without complaint.

親仁 Be Close to the Benevolent

Qīn Rén

75 同是人類不齊 流俗眾仁者希
Tóng Shì Rén Lèi Bù Qí Liú Sù Zhòng Rén Zhě Xī

We are all human, but we vary in character.

Most are mundane and rare are the benevolent.

76 果仁者人多畏 言不諱色不媚
Guǒ Rén Zhě Rén Duō Wèi Yán Bù Huì Sè Bù Mèi

A truly benevolent person is held in awe by others.

He does not mince his words, and does not fawn on others.

77 能親仁無限好 德日進過日少
Néng Qīn Rén Wú Xiàn Hǎo Dé Rì Jìn Guō Rì Shǎo

To be able to get close to the benevolent is boundlessly good.

Your moral character will improve day-by-day, and your shortcomings will lessen day-by-day.

78 不親仁無限害 小人進百事壞
Bù Qīn Rén Wú Xiàn Hài Xiǎo Rén Jìn Bǎi Shì Huài

Not staying close to the benevolent does endless harm.

People of non-virtue will get close and everything you do will turn bad.

餘力學文

Yú Lì Xué Wén

Devote Remaining Time and Energy
to Studying and Learning
the Way of the Sages

79 不力行但學文 長浮華成何人
Bù Lì Xíng Dàn Xué Wén Zhǎng Fú Huá Chéng Hé Rén

If you do not put into practice what you have learnt, but continue to study intellectually,

it will only make you shallow and pompous; what kind of person will you become?

80 但力行不學文 任己見昧理真
Dàn Lì Xíng Bù Xué Wén Rèn Jǐ Jiàn Mèi Lǐ Zhēn

Yet if you do things without the correct understanding that comes from proper study,

you will become fixated with your own views, ignorant of principles and blinded from the truth.

81 讀書法有三到 心眼口信皆要
Dú Shū Fǎ Yǒu Sān Dào Xīn Yǎn Kǒu Xìn Jiē Yào

The method to study is the threefold focus of the mind, eyes, and mouth; you need to use them all intently.

82 方讀此勿慕彼 此未終彼勿起
Fāng Dú Cǐ Wù Mù Bǐ Cǐ Wèi Zhōng Bǐ Wù Qǐ

When studying one subject, do not think about another.

When one area of study is incomplete, do not start another.

83 寬為限緊用功 工夫到滯塞通
Kuān Wéi Xiàn Jǐn Yòng Gōng Gōng Fū Dào Zhì Sè Tōng

Give yourself enough time to study, then exert intense effort.

When the result of your effort and skill come into fruition, doubts and mental barriers will be cleared.

84 心有疑隨札記 就人問求確義
Xīn Yǒu Yí Suí Zhā Jì Jiù Rén Wèn Qiú Quē Yì

If you have a question, make a note of it.

Go to someone who knows and request an accurate explanation.

85 房室清牆壁淨 几案潔筆硯正
Fáng Shì Qīng Qiáng Bì Jìng Jǐ Àn Jié Bǐ Yàn Zhèng

Keep your room clear and tidy, your walls uncluttered,

your desk clean, and your stationery neatly placed.

86 墨磨偏心不端 字不敬心先病
Mò Mó Piān Xīn Bù Duān Zì Bù Jìng Xīn Xiān Bìng

Ink that is ground unevenly indicates your mind is not poised.

Writing that appears sloppy reflects the disrespect in your mind.

87 列典籍有定處 讀看畢還原處
Liè Diǎn Jí Yǒu Dìng Chù Dú Kàn Bì Huán Yuán Chù

Organise your texts and keep them in proper places.

After studying, return them to where they belong.

88 雖有急卷束齊 有缺壞就補之
Suī Yǒu Jí Juǎn Shù Qí Yǒu Quē Huài Jiù Bǔ Zhī

Even when in a hurry, scrolls should be rolled up neatly.

Any missing or damaged pages are to be replaced or repaired.

89 非聖書屏勿視 蔽聰明壞心志
Fēi Shèng Shū Bǐng Wù Shì Bì Cōng Míng Huài Xīn Zhì

Books not of the sages should not even be looked at.

They will cloud your intelligence and undermine your aspirations.

90 勿自暴勿自棄 聖與賢可馴致
Wù Zì Bào Wù Zì Qì Shèng Yǔ Xián Kě Xùn Zhì

Do not belittle yourself or give up on yourself,

because the standards of the sage and virtuous are certainly attainable with time.