



Ultimate Guide to a Happy Life

Modernized Version by Asian Culture Alliance



ASIAN CULTURE ALLIANCE

333 S. 6th St. Las Vegas, NV 89101 702-522-0368

Our Mission: Guiding our children's future through Art, Culture & Education

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(Modernized Version)

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CHAPTER 1

AT HOME, BE DUTIFUL TO MY PARENTS

When my parents call me, I will answer them right away. When they ask me to do something, I will do it quickly.

When my parents instruct me, I will listen respectfully. When my parents reproach me, I will obey and accept their scolding. I will try hard to change and improve myself, to start anew.

In the winter, I will keep my parents warm; in the summer, I will keep my parents cool. I will always greet my parents in the morning to show them that I care. At night I will always make sure my parents rest well.

Before going out, I must tell my parents where I am going, for parents are always concerned about their children. After returning home, I must go and see my parents to let them know I am back, so they do not worry about me. When I am mature and self-supporting I will maintain a permanent place to stay and lead a routine life that brings honor to my family.

A matter might be trivial, but if it is wrong to do it or unfair to another person, I must not do it thinking it will bear little or no consequence. If I do, I am not being a dutiful child because my parents would not want to see me doing things that are irrational or illegal.

Even though an object might be small, I will not keep it a secret from my parents. If I do, I will hurt my parents' feelings. If whatever pleases my parents is fair and reasonable, I will try my best to attain it for them. If something displeases my parents, I will protect them from it.



When my body is hurt, my parents will be worried. If my virtues are compromised, my parents will feel ashamed.

When I have loving parents, it is not difficult to be dutiful to them. But if I can be dutiful to parents who are displeased with me and punishing me, only then will I meet the standards of the saints and sages for being a dutiful child.

When my parents do wrong, I will urge them to change. I will do it with a kind facial expression and a warm gentle voice.

If they do not accept my advice, I will wait until they are in a happier mood before I attempt to dissuade them again, followed by crying, if necessary, to make them understand. If they end up punishing me I will not hold a grudge against them.

When my parents are ill, I will take care of them night and day and stay by their bedside.

During the mourning period after my parents have passed away, I will remember them with gratitude and feel sad often for not being able to repay them for their kindness in raising me. During this period, I will arrange my home to reflect my grief and sorrow. I will also avoid festivities and indulgence in food, drugs and alcoholic drinks.

I will observe proper etiquette in arranging my parents' funerals. I will hold the memorial ceremony and commemorate my parents' anniversaries with utmost sincerity. I will serve my departed parents as if they were still alive.

CHAPTER 2

STANDARDS FOR A YOUNGER BROTHER



WHEN AWAY FROM HOME

If I am the older child, I will befriend the younger ones. If I am the younger sibling, I will respect and love the older ones. Only when I can maintain harmonious relationships with my siblings am I being dutiful to my parents.

When I value my familial ties more than property and belongings, no resentment will come between me and my siblings. When I am careful with words and hold back hurtful comments, my feelings of anger will naturally go away. Whether I am drinking, eating, walking, or sitting, I will let the elder siblings go first; the younger ones should follow.

When an elder sibling is asking for someone, I will get that person for him right away. If I cannot find that person, I will immediately report back, and put myself at the elder's service instead.

When I address an elder, I should not call him by his first name. In front of an elder, I will never show off. If I meet an elder I know on the street, I will promptly greet them. If he does not speak to me, I will step back and respectfully stand aside.

Should I be riding on a bus or a train and see an elder in need of a seat, I will pay respect to the elder by offering them my seat. If I meet an elder as we are entering a building, I will hold the door for them and allow them to proceed ahead of me by standing aside and waiting for them to enter first. When an elder is standing, I will not sit. After an elder sit down, I will sit only when I am told to do so. Before an elder, I will speak softly. But if my voice is too low and hard to hear, it is not appropriate. When meeting an elder, I will walk briskly towards him; when leaving, I will not exit in haste. When answering a question, I will look at the person who is asking me the question. I will serve my uncles as if I am serving my parents. I will treat my cousins as if they are my own siblings.



CHAPTER 3

BE CAUTIOUS IN MY DAILY LIFE

I will get up each morning before my parents; at night, I will go to bed only after my parents have gone to sleep. When I realize that time is passing me by and cannot be turned back, and that I am getting older year by year, I will especially treasure the present moment.

When I get up in the morning, I will wash my face and brush my teeth. After using the toilet, I will always wash my hands.

I will take care of my clothing. My clothing, socks and shoes should also be worn neatly and correctly. I will always place my clothes away in their proper places. I will not carelessly throw my clothes around or play in my nicer clothes, for that will get them dirty and cause them to be damaged. It is more important that my clothes are clean, rather than extravagant. I will wear only what is suitable for the occasion. At home, I will wear clothes according to my family traditions and customs. When it comes to eating and drinking, I will not pick and choose my food. I will only eat the right amount; I will not over-eat. I am still young, I must not drink alcohol. When I am drunk, my behavior will turn ugly.

I will always walk composed, with light and even steps. I will always stand up straight and tall. My hand-shakes will be firm without squeezing the person's hand that I am greeting to cause them discomfort. I will always pay my respect with reverence.

I will not step on doorsills or stand leaning on one leg. I will not sit with my legs apart or sprawled out. I will not rock the lower part of my body while standing or sitting down.



I will always lift the curtain slowly and quietly. I must leave myself ample space when I turn so I will not bump into furniture or into a corner. I will hold empty containers carefully as if they were full. I will enter empty rooms as if they were occupied.

I will avoid doing things in a hurry, as doing things in haste will lead to many mistakes. I should not be afraid of difficult tasks, and I will not become careless when a job is too easy.

I will keep away from rowdy places. I will not ask about things that are abnormal or unusual about another person or make fun of them because of their appearance.

When I am about to enter a main entrance, I must first ask if someone is inside. Before entering a room, I must first make myself heard, so that those inside know someone is approaching.

If someone asks who I am, I must give my name. To answer 'It is me' or 'Me' is not sufficient.

Before borrowing things from others, I must ask for permission. If I do not ask, it is stealing.

When borrowing things from others, I will return them promptly. Later, if I have an urgent need, I will not have a problem borrowing from them again.

CHAPTER 4

BE TRUSTWORTHY



When I speak, honesty is important. Deceitful words and lies must not be tolerated.

Rather than talking too much, it is better to speak less and listen more. I will speak only the truth, I will not twist the facts.

Cunning words, foul language, and philistine habits must be avoided at all costs.

What I have not seen with my own eyes, I will not readily tell to others. What I do not know for sure, I will not easily pass on to others.

If I am asked to do something that is inappropriate or bad, I must not agree to it. If I do, I will be doubly wrong.

I must speak clearly and to the point. I must not talk too fast or mumble.

Some like to talk about the good points of others, while some like to talk about the faults of others. If it is none of my business, I will not get involved.

When I see others do good deeds, I must think about following their example. Even though my own achievements are still far behind those of others, I know that each successive good deed makes me a better person.

When I see others do wrong, I must immediately reflect upon myself. If I have made the same mistake, I will correct it. If not, I will take extra care to not make the same mistake.

When my morals, conduct, knowledge, and skills seem not as good as those of others, I will encourage myself to be better.



If the clothes I wear, and the food I eat and drink are not as good as that of others, I should not be concerned because over time my ability to provide more will improve.

If criticism makes me angry and compliments make me happy, bad company will come my way and good friends will shy away.

If I am uneasy about compliments and appreciative of criticism, then sincere, understanding, and virtuous people will gradually come close to me.

If any mistake I make is inadvertent, it is merely a mistake. If it is done on purpose, however, it is an evil act.

If I correct my mistake and do not repeat it, I no longer own the mistake. If I try to cover it up, I will be doubly wrong.

CHAPTER 5

LOVE ALL EQUALLY

Human beings, regardless of nationality, race, or religion – everyone – should be loved equally. We are all sheltered by the same sky and we all live on the same planet Earth.

A person of high ideals and morals is highly respected. What people of character value is not based on outside appearance it is my character by which they judge me.

A person's outstanding abilities will naturally endow him with a good reputation. Admiration from others does not come from boasting or praising oneself.



If I am a very capable person, I should use my capabilities for the benefit of others. Other people's competence should never be slandered.

I will not flatter the rich, or despise the poor. I will not ignore old friends, only taking delight in new ones.

When a person is busy, I will not bother him with matters. When a person's mind is not at ease, I will not bother him with words.

If a person has a shortcoming, I will not expose it. If a person has a secret, I will not tell others.

When people are being praised and approved of, they will be encouraged to try even harder.

Spreading rumors about the wrongdoings of others is a wrong doing in itself. When the harm done has reached the extreme, misfortunes will surely follow.

When I encourage another to do good both of our virtues are built up. If I do not tell another of his faults, we are both wrong.

Whether I take or give, it is better to give more and take less.

What I ask others to do, I must first ask myself if I would be willing to do. If it is not something I would be willing to do, I will not ask others to do it.

I must repay the kindness of others and let go of my resentments. I will spend less time holding grudges and more time paying back the kindness of others.

When I am directing maids and servants, I will act honorably and properly. I will also treat them kindly and generously.



If I use my influence to make others submissive, their hearts will not be with me. If I can convince them with sound reasoning, they will have nothing to object to.

CHAPTER 6

BE CLOSE TO AND LEARN FROM PEOPLE OF VIRTUE AND COMPASSION

We are all human, but we are not the same. Most of us are ordinary; only a very few have great virtues and high moral principles.

A truly virtuous person is greatly respected by others. He will not be afraid to speak the truth and he will not fawn on others.

If I can be close to and learn from people of great virtue and compassion, I will benefit immensely. My virtues will grow daily and my wrongdoings will lessen day by day.

If I choose not to be close to and learn from people of great virtue, I will suffer a great loss. People without virtue will get close to me and nothing I attempt will succeed.

CHAPTER 7

I SHOULD STUDY FURTHER, LEARN LITERATURE AND ART TO IMPROVE MY CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE



If I do not actively practice what I have learned, but continue to study on the surface, even though my knowledge is increasing, it is only superficial. What kind of person will I be?

If I do apply my knowledge diligently, but stop studying, I will only do things based on my own opinion, thinking it is correct. In fact, what I know is not the truth.

There are methods to study correctly. They involve concentration in three areas: my mind, my eyes, and my mouth. To believe or not believe in what I read is equally important.

I will give myself lots of time to study, and I will study hard. If I devote enough time and effort, I will thoroughly understand. If I have a question, I will make a note of it. I will ask the person who has the knowledge for the right answer.

I will keep my room neat, my walls uncluttered and clean, my desk tidy and my toys, books and clothing properly placed.

My books should be classified, placed on the bookshelves in their proper places. After I finish reading a book, I will put it back where it belongs. Even if I am in a hurry, I still must neatly roll up and bind any loose pages I have been reading. All missing or damaged pages ought to be immediately repaired.

Neither be harsh on myself, nor give up on myself. To be a person of high ideals, moral standards and virtue is something we can all attain in time.

