



Contemplating the Six ways of ruling

The below contemplation is taken with permission from *The Six Ways of Ruling. A Resource for Leaders*, compiled by the Governance as Path Working Group, Third Shambhala Congress, 2009, Shambhala Media, Halifax. The text is from pages 36-40. The six ways of ruling aim to join heaven (vision, dreams and the view of basic goodness) and earth (taking action in the world).

Heaven

Benevolence

Benevolence is rooted in patience. Our mind is spacious. We understand that people suffer. Our patience results in gentleness, absence of aggression.

Benevolence requires the steadiness of an elephant – a sense of trusting ourselves and remembering the suffering of others. When we are acting out of aggression and speed, we can't quite trust benevolence. The wisdom ruler often encounters blame and criticism. If we feel cornered on the hallway by irritation, it seems overwhelming, and we're likely to react aggressively. Our mind becomes a little box. We begin to panic because we have no room to maneuver. At that point we don't need to be less gentle – we need to be more gentle. Gentleness is always the best whip. It is devoted to the welfare of others.

True

Benevolence is infused with being true. Being true means possessing weightiness, a quality that is unyielding and at the same time very genuine. This is conviction grounded in confidence, like the force behind a strong breeze.

Being true to the view of basic goodness gives us natural diplomacy. Having worked diligently with our own minds, we're familiar with realms of anger, jealousy and ignorance, as well as those of generosity and joy. We no longer believe that we can get what we want with negativity. We're using different strategies. By resting in big mind, we conquer small mind.

Genuine

Being true is how to arrive at genuineness. . . Being genuine also means being logical. This is not even our genuineness particularly. It is just a star in the sky that everyone can see. If we're in doubt, we need to reconnect with being benevolent and true.



Earth

Fearless

. . . We are fearless because we are beyond doubt about basic goodness. We are not afraid of the power of windhorse. This fearlessness has a gentle quality; it is rooted in unwavering compassion.

Trying to rule our World single-handedly, we are not really ruling. We may believe independence is a sign of power, but not wanting to work with others is a sign we haven't conquered self-absorption. The reality is that we can't handle our anger, can't develop patience, and we can't cultivate our wisdom without working with others.

Artful

Being artful means acting with great dignity. We continually examine the influences in our environment. If everyone in our circle flatters or agrees with us, our self-awareness will become cloudy like a faded mirror. Consideration of others is the root of being artful. With artfulness, we open up a situation with wisdom rather than close it down with our negativity. We want to draw people out, not suppress them. Instead of forcing our opinion on them, we try to create space. The questions we ask are often as important as the answers we offer. In that space, they can learn to use discernment and discipline to discover their own wisdom.

Rejoicing

When we communicate power artfully, everyone feels included. We have each person's interests in mind. We have fearlessly rejected self-absorption, so joy and celebration arise.

Celebration is an attitude. It is the ultimate appreciation of daily life. We're not just in it for ourselves; we're in it because we want to offer wisdom and compassion to others. They feel the power of our love and care.

As we overcome fear and aggression, there is less bickering, jealousy, and competition. Thus, as a group, we have strong windhorse, which makes us all-victorious.