



Undergraduate assignment feedback form
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How do We Naturally Influence Those Around us to be a Good Person

character count:1438

Respected provost and Miss Wu, my name is Xue Chunyuan. What I want to report today is How do we naturally influence those around us to be a good person. In my presentation, I will first explain the original text, and then expand and explain its meaning. Finally, I'll share some of my own experiences practicing this phrase in my own life.

This is my outline.

1. Introduction
2. The texts analysis
3. Self-reflection
4. Conclusion

1. Introduction

First is a simple introduction to the content of this report. Today's report of the classic sentences from the *Tai Shang Gan Ying Pian* 太上感應篇. The original sentence is, '正己化人.'¹ Although only four short words, but there are many meanings, and to our moral cultivation has a very important help. Let's take a look at the original text first.

Structurally, the sentence '正己化人' can be divided into two parts: '正己' and '化人'. Their translations are 'correcting ourselves' and 'naturally influencing others'. We will first explain them from these two aspects.

¹ *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編(He Yu publishing house 和裕出版社, 2012), p.272.

2. The texts analysis

The first is 'correcting ourselves 正己'. It is explained in the book *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編 that the meaning of the Chinese character Zheng 正 is correct and unchangeable.² The Chinese character Ji 己 here means ourselves. Therefore, the Chinese character Zheng in this case it's a verb so the two words together mean what we just said, 'correct ourselves.' But how to correct ourselves? What is right? What is the right standard? From the original text of *Tai Shang Gan Ying Pian* 太上感應篇, in fact, what is right and cannot be changed is the '忠孝友悌'³ mentioned in the last sentence. It means loyalty, filial piety and brotherhood. In fact, it is not difficult to see that we should do our duty as a person. The other side revises not only virtue but also our behavior. That specific should according to what as a standard, is according to the classics and their own contrast. As mentioned in *the Analects of Confucius*, 'Do not look at what does not conform to etiquette, do not listen to what does not conform to etiquette, do not speak what does not conform to etiquette, do not do what does not conform to etiquette. 非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動。'⁴ In The teachings of Confucius, it is necessary to conform to etiquette. Because the classics are correct no matter what time and space, we need to revise our behavior and virtue according to the classics, because the classic are a record of what the saints say and do, and that's what we're aiming for.

The second is 'naturally influencing others 化人'. It is explained in the book *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編 that the meaning of the Chinese character Hua 化 is

² *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編, p.272.

³ *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編, p.196, p.257.

⁴ Zhu Xi 朱熹, *The Variorum of the Four Books* 四書章句集注(Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1983), p.132.

naturally.⁵ The Chinese character Ren 人 here means others. So when they're put together it's going to mean what we just said 'naturally influencing others 化人'. Therefore, here it all comes together and the sentence becomes a causal relationship. As we modify our own behavior and virtues, we let others naturally be influenced by us and modify our own behavior and virtues. This seems to be an incredible thing. In many cases, when we ask others, they may not be willing to change. Why can changing ourselves affect others? The key to it is clearly explained in the *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* induction compilation. It says in the original, 'People will respect him. 人皆敬之'⁶ And the reason is that we can correct ourselves. To correct oneself is to correct things. People have conscience, and when they see people doing good things and doing the right thing, they are more or less respectful. This little touch of the heart is the key to change, and appropriate inspiration can awaken people's sincerity and kindness.

However, if we do it ourselves and we demand it of others, a little blame, the other party will not be willing to accept education, and must argue with us. *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* says that, 'Isn't this destroying his good heart instead? 不亦反摧絕其善心乎?'⁷ This is also as *Liao Fan Si Xun* 了凡四訓 reminds us, 'Do not overpower others with your merits, do not demand others with your good deeds, and do not embarrass others with your many abilities. 勿以己之長而蓋人，勿以己之善而形人，勿以己之多能而困人。'⁸ Cause when we feel that we are better than others in the heart of the psychological arrogance has been produced and it wasn't Zheng by then. Neither our hearts nor our actions correspond to the teachings and scriptures of the saints. Other people would have been moved by the place naturally disappeared, and then only our arrogant mentality and harsh sentences. That the other side also cannot

⁵ *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編, p.272.

⁶ *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編, p.272.

⁷ *Gan Ying Pian Hui Bian* 感應篇彙編, p.272.

⁸ Yuan Liaofan 袁了凡, *Liao Fan Si Xun* 了凡四訓(Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1983), p.148.

naturally see can imitate the place, how can say can change? Therefore, modifying one's own behavior will naturally cause others to change with it. These two things seem to be two, but they are actually one. And that's why Confucius said that, 'If one day you restrain yourself and return to etiquette, the whole world will return to benevolence.一日克己復禮，天下歸仁焉。'⁹

Here is an example of Guang Sima 司馬光. Sima Guang is a person who is very loyal and kind and upright. His virtues spread far and wide. He lived in Luoyang, and the local customs changed because of him. People began to put their own reputation and integrity first, and ashamed to talk about profits and every man has a sense of shame. When young people want to do a thing, they will tell each other not to do bad things. They were all afraid that Sima Guang would know. And the reason is not because Sima Guang knew there would be severe punishment or criticism. But because the young men would be ashamed to let he know what they had done wrong. So people don't want to do bad things. From this, we can see that a person's real correction of his own behavior can really move people around in the invisible. To move others so that they can do good cannot be achieved by criticism, demands or punishment. If we want people to do it from the heart, we have to do it ourselves.

3. Self-reflection

The above is my explanation of this sentence, and I would like to share some of my own experience in implementing this sentence. I reflect that I am a person who is easily proud. Most of the time I will work hard to improve myself, but I will also use these principles to judge and measure others. Most of the time, I do not express these measures, but I know in my heart that I admire people, but I also tend to look down on others, tend to ignore their advantages and magnify their disadvantages. This makes it difficult for me to accept other people's suggestions, because I sometimes think they

⁹ Zhu Xi 朱熹, *The Variorum of the Four Books* 四書章句集注, p.131.

are not good enough. Similarly, when I was doing somethings, I was also prone to command and demand others. But until one time, I saw a classmate whose quilt was really well made, and whenever I went to his room, his quilt was so neat and clean. I was really impressed, and I thought I would do the same. But I also wonder if I didn't know to make the bed before? He seems to have never told me to make a good quilt words, why I will go to learn it? That's when I suddenly realized why correcting my own behavior can affect the people around me. Really feel that feeling of being enlightened, ashamed and spontaneously wanting to follow suit. Since then, I have been telling myself that I am really far worse than the sages and those who have done well, so that I can no longer be proud of myself. Similarly, I would be making a big, big mistake if my pride hurt those around me and made them unwilling to do good. So I keep reminding myself that everyone is here to help me improve. I can't ask anyone or anyone. All I can do is work hard to improve myself.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, if we really want to change the people around us, the only thing we can do is to improve ourselves. Every problem we find is our own problem, and every good deed we find is an example to learn from. Learning with such a mindset will naturally influence the people around us. Only by correcting ourselves can we naturally influence others. This is all for my report for today. All suggestions are welcome. Thank you for listening.

Bibliography

Books (Chinese)

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