

# Vermillion Brush

## Seasonal Energetics

According to Daoist calendrics, fall begins on August 8<sup>th</sup> this year. Fall corresponds to minor yin and the Metal phase, while winter corresponds to major yin and the Water phase. With the arrival of fall, we move from the high activity of summer to a time of deepening stillness, which culminates on the winter solstice. During this time, emphasis is placed on harvesting and storing. Following the cycles of the sun, our sleep patterns increase as daylight decreases. We also adjust our eating to add more cooked and warming foods in order to balance the increasing yin. It is natural to place greater emphasis on stillness practices, such as standing and seated meditation to harmonize spirit.

## Inner Cultivation

Daoist inner cultivation (*nèixiū* 內修) involves establishing a foundation (*zhújī* 築基). One important foundation is virtue (*dé* 德), an aligned (直) heart-mind (心) expressed as embodied activity (行) in the world. This includes specific virtues such as honesty (*xìn* 信), also translated as “sincerity” and “trust.” A person (人) standing by words (言). Honesty is further understood as true earth (*zhēntǔ* 真土). Honesty about our own life-practice. Beneath and within this honesty is the true earth of stillness, the foundation of Daoist practice-realization as a whole. From this stillness, spiritual discernment and clarity manifest.

## Scripture Study

Scripture study (*jīngxué* 經學) centers on deep engagement with Daoist sacred writings. “Scriptures” (*jīng* 經), or “classics,” are one of the external Three Treasures of the Daoist tradition. The fourth-to-second century BCE *Lǎozǐ* 老子 (Book of Venerable Masters), one of the most important Daoist scriptures, encourages us to cultivate trust within and beyond the merely relational. Trusting the Dao. Trusting our own practice-realization. Trusting that individuals express what they have access to in the moment.

**“I trust those who are trustworthy;  
I also trust those who are untrustworthy.”**  
*Book of Venerable Masters, ch. 49*

## News

- We just completed our third annual Daoist Studies Summer Seminar (DSSS; July 10-July 14), which focused on the *Dàodé jīng* 道德經.
- Square Inch Press 方寸書社 recently published Louis Komjathy’s long-awaited *Dàodé jīng* 道德經: *A Contextual, Contemplative, and Annotated Bilingual Translation*. This is now the standard translation in our Daoist community.
- In September we will visit the northeastern United States in search of a place for our planned Daoist retreat center.

## Fall and Winter Nodes

Autumn Begins - 8/8  
Limit of Heat - 8/23  
Pure Dew - 9/8

Autumn Equinox - 9/23  
Cold Dew - 10/8  
Frost Descends - 10/24

Winter Begins - 11/8  
Light Snow - 11/22  
Heavy Snow - 12/7

Winter Solstice - 12/21  
Slight Cold - 1/6/24  
Major Cold - 1/20/24