

The Subtle Light Within: A Message for the Alchemy of Transformation Retreat

From OmNi (Hua-Ching Ni) and Mao Shing Ni
(with excerpts from OmNi's books)

Dear friends in the Tao,

Welcome to this sacred gathering, this moment suspended in time, where we meet not only with each other, but with our deeper selves. We have come together, perhaps from many places, with different stories and different paths, but guided by a similar yearning—a subtle, sincere call from within. That call is the desire to return. Return to harmony, to clarity, to truth. to return to the Tao.

We are each born with a seed of light. But over time, that light becomes dimmed—by fear, by confusion, by external demands, by the noise of modern life. To live only outwardly is to lose the thread of who you are. That thread must be picked up again and followed inward. You do not need to chase enlightenment. You need only to stop interfering with the natural light that is already within you.

“A spiritual person is one who is in touch with the original light of life... This light is the true self, the eternal being.”

The Gentle Path of Spiritual Progress, Hua Ching Ni

When you allow the light to return—through stillness, practice, sincerity—you begin to see your life in a new way. Problems do not vanish, but they are no longer center stage. You gain perspective. You begin to live not for yourself alone, but as a channel for something greater.

“A truly cultivated person becomes a lamp of light in the darkness, not only for one self but for others.”

Entering the Tao, Hua Ching Ni

It is easy to look out upon the troubles of the world—wars, environmental collapse, suffering, injustice—and to feel overwhelmed. But I ask you now, to look not away, but within. For when you discover what is within, you gain the true context for what is without.

“One must develop oneself spiritually in order to live a truly complete and meaningful life.”

Entering the Tao Hua Ching Ni

There is a subtle reality, more enduring than any circumstance, more ancient than the oldest mountain, and more intimate than your breath. It is the Tao. It is not a belief, and it is not a religion. It is the Way. It is the invisible current of life that flows through all things. And it is already flowing through you.

Many people seek to change the world by force, by opinion, or by the assertion of personal will. But all lasting transformation begins with self-cultivation. Just as the alchemist refines the crude into the pure, so must we refine our inner nature—our thoughts, our emotions, our spirit—so that we can see clearly, act wisely, and live gently.

You are not powerless in this world. You are not small. The human being, when developed properly, when cultivated and aligned, becomes an instrument of Heaven and Earth. When you awaken the subtle energy of your being, you do not merely improve your own life. You uplift the vibration of everything around you. You become a light in the storm, a calm in the chaos, a bridge between the seen and the unseen. But to do this, you must slow down.

You must listen. You must let go of the false urgencies that have been handed to you by the outer world. They do not feed your spirit. They do not bring peace.

You must return to your breath, to the silence between thoughts, to the awareness of your true origin.

Sit beneath a tree and listen. Watch the clouds move. Observe the rhythm of your heart. You are a miracle, walking in a world of miracles, and yet how easily we forget. The Tao is not separate from your daily life. It is your daily life, when lived with presence, with simplicity, with sincerity.

This retreat is called the Alchemy of Transformation. True alchemy is not turning lead into gold. It is turning confusion into clarity, fear into wisdom, scattered emotion into still virtue. It is turning unconscious life into conscious living. And this alchemy does not require anything outside of you—it only asks your participation. Your sincerity, Your willingness to look within.

As Lao Tzu once said, “Knowing others is intelligence. Knowing yourself is true wisdom; and to cultivate oneself is the root of everything else.”

You may wonder, what is the benefit of cultivating inner peace when the world is on fire? But I tell you, inner peace is not escapism, it is power. A person who has cultivated peace within is like a mountain—unmoved by the storms of opinion, undisturbed by the chaos of others. Their actions become measured, their words carry weight, their presence offers comfort. This is no small thing. This is the root of all great change.

Spiritual development is not about escaping life but embracing it in its full depth. The Tao is not elsewhere. It is in this breath, this moment, this air, this human heart.

“All true knowledge comes from spiritual realization. It is not found in books alone, but in the silent communion between Heaven, Earth, and one’s true self.”

Spiritual Messages from the Buffalo Rider.

Hua Ching Ni

We cannot truly change the world until we change our relationship with life. The world is full of urgent crises—but urgency without spiritual clarity leads to chaos. The Taoist way begins not by grasping at solutions, but by cultivating our foundation. When your root is deep, your presence becomes medicine for others.

“When one is in harmony with the subtle universal law, everything one does will be naturally correct.

Tao, The Subtle Universal Law and Integral Way of Life.

Hua Ching Ni

You do not need to force transformation. You only need to prepare the ground. The energy of life itself—what we call the Tao—will do the work of healing and reordering once the channels are cleared.

Just as the ancient alchemists transmuted the dense into the refined, so must we. We refine fear into trust, judgment into compassion, scattered energy into still awareness. The fire of transformation must be kindled gently, with sincerity and quiet strength.

“True alchemy is the purification and refinement of the self... It is not mystical but practical, not dramatic but natural.”

The Book of Changes and the Unchanging Truth commentary on
Hexagram 49

We are not isolated beings. We are a living part of nature. The same wind that moves the trees moves within your breath. The same intelligence that shapes the stars is at work in your spirit, but we have forgotten how to listen.

The Taoist path is not the path of resistance, nor is it the path of blind acceptance. It is the path of harmonization. The Tao teaches us to move with life, not against it, but to do so with full awareness and integrity. We learn to ride the wave of the world without being swept away. We become like water—soft,

yet unstoppable. Yielding, yet strong. Transparent, yet deep beyond measure.

The spiritual path is not a matter of belief, but of personal development. Each of us must walk it for ourselves. But when we walk together in sincerity, the path becomes clear. So, I ask you now, beloved travelers on this path: Will you dare to slow down? Will you dare to turn inward and meet your original self—not the self-constructed by society, but the self that was born from the stars and nurtured by the Earth? Will you cultivate your inner nature as a sacred garden, one that brings nourishment not only to yourself, but to your family, your community, and the world?

This world does not need more arguments. It needs more clarity. It does not need more ambition. It needs more sincerity. It does not need more speed. It needs more stillness. The healing of the world begins with the healing of the individual. And the healing of the individual begins with the reawakening of their spiritual awareness.

And this is how we transform the world—not by conquering it, but by harmonizing with it. Not by protest alone, but by inner clarity. Not by loudness, but by luminous being.

Now is the time to cultivate stillness. To refine your heart. To purify your thoughts. To strengthen your energy. Not for self-centered gain, but to fulfill your role as a spiritual being in a human life.

“The best contribution one can make to the world is the cultivation of one’s own life energy and spiritual clarity.”

Tao the Subtle Universal Law and Integral Way of Life.

Hua Ching NI

I hope this retreat has been a sacred vessel for your return. May the practices you have been given—Qi Gong, tai chi, meditation, I Ching, Cosmic Tour, Futasman and invocations—become doorways to your own luminous nature.

The subtle world is not far away. It is here. It is now. you need only to quiet yourself enough to perceive it. That is the alchemy. That is the Tao.

Let your presence become a prayer. Let your breath become a ceremony. Let your heart become an altar to the living Way. And remember: Everything you need to transform your life is already within you. You are not separate from the Tao. You are not separate from the light.

Thank you for your sincerity. Thank you for walking this path. May you carry this subtle light into your life, into your family, into the world.

Let us return now—Not to where we were, but to who we truly are.

Thank you,

OmNi and Mao Shing Ni

2025 College of Tao: *Alchemy of Transformation Retreat*