

Outline

Dizigui - the guidelines for being a good person are exhorted by ancient sages.

Being filial and fraternal is the first rule, followed by being cautious and trustworthy.

Love all broadly, and become close to the benevolent ones.

Practicing all of the above, I can then expand my horizons to study the literary arts in my spare time.

1. Being Filial to Parents at Home

When my parents call me, I must answer right away.

When my parents ask me to do something, I must do it promptly.

When my parents instruct me, I must listen respectfully.

When my parents reprimand me, I must accept obediently.

I should make sure that my parents are warm in the winter and cool in the summer. I will greet my parents in the morning and make sure they rest comfortably at night.

I must tell my parents when going out and must see them in person when returning home. I will maintain a daily routine and persist with my aspiration.

Even though a matter might be trivial, I must not do it; for I will undermine the duty of being a good person if I do.

Even though something might be small, I must not hide it secretly; for my parents' hearts will grieve if I do.

I will make best efforts to satisfy what my parents like and what they expect from me, and I will cautiously avoid what they detest.

When my body is injured, my parents will be worried; if my virtues are compromised, my parents will feel ashamed.

When my parents love me, it is not difficult to be filial; when they do not love me, my filial piety is then sacred.

When my parents do wrong, I will urge them to change. I will make my expression pleasant and soften my voice.

If they do not accept my advice, I will wait until they are in a happier mood to exhort them again. Followed by crying to help them understand I will not hold a grudge against them, even if they end up whipping me.

When my parents are ill, I will taste the medicine first before serving it to them. I will take care of them day and night without leaving their bedside.

During the three years of mourning, I will often commemorate with sorrow. My residence will be different from before, becoming free from meat and wine.

I will observe proper rituals for their funerals and conduct memorial services with utmost sincerity; and I will serve my late parents as if they were still alive.

2. Practicing Fraternity Outside the Home

The older children should be loving and the younger ones should be respectful; when siblings get along harmoniously, filial piety already exists in their actions.

When I do not value wealth much, how can there be resentment? When I hold back hurtful comments, anger will naturally dissipate.

Whether drinking, eating, sitting, or walking, I should let the older ones go first, then the younger ones follow behind.

When an elder is calling for someone, I will get that person for him. If that person is not around, I will put myself at the service of this elder.

When I address an elder, I should not call him by his given name. In front of elders, I must not show off.

If I meet an elder I know on the street, I will promptly clasp my hands and greet him with a bow. If he does not speak to me, I will step back and respectfully stand aside.

Should I be riding a horse or riding in a carriage, and spot an elder I know walking, I will get off to greet him and wait until the elder disappears from my sight.

When an elder is standing, I will not sit. After an elder has sat 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 to be heard, it is inappropriate.

When meeting an elder, I must walk briskly towards him; when leaving, I must exit slowly. When answering questions, I must look at the person without averting my eyes.

I will serve others' parents as if I am serving my own parents, I will treat all peers as if they are my own siblings.

3. Being Cautious

I will rise early in the morning and sleep late at night. Old age arrives readily, I must cherish 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 must wear my hat straight and make sure to button my clothes; my socks and shoes should also be worn neatly and correctly.

I will always place my hat and clothes away in proper places; I will not carelessly throw them around, for that will get them dirty.

When it comes to clothes I will value tidiness, not fanciness. I will wear clothes according to my social status and suit my family's condition.

When it comes to eating and drinking, I will not be picky; I will only eat the right amount and will not overeat."

While still young, I will not drink alcohol; being drunk is most ugly.

I will always walk with a dignified poise and stand with an upright stance; and I will always give a deep bow to show my reverent salute.

Do not step on door sills or lean on one leg; do not sit with legs apart and do not rock legs while sitting down.

I will lift up curtains slowly without making noise, and I will always make wide turns so as not to bump into anything.

I will hold empty containers carefully as if they were full and enter an empty room as if someone is there.

I must avoid doing things in a hurry, as acting in haste will lead to many mistakes; I must neither be afraid of difficulty nor be perfunctory.

I must stay away from rowdy places, and I must not ask about things that are heretical or unusual.

Before passing through a door, ask who is there; before entering a hall, I must make my voice heard.

When people ask who it is, I will answer with my name; "me" and "I" do not make anything clear.

When using other people's things, I must clearly ask; if I don't ask, then it is stealing.

When borrowing things from people, return them quickly; in the future if I have an urgent need, there will be no trouble borrowing it again.

4. Trustworthiness

When I speak, credibility is foremost; deceitful words and lies must not be tolerated.

It is better to speak less than talk too much; speak only the truth, do not be fawning and glib.

Cunning words and foul language, such vulgar manners must be prohibited.

When I am unsure of what I am seeing, I will not rashly speak of it; when I am still unsure of what I know, I will not hastily spread it.

I must not readily agree to do something inappropriate; if I do, I will put myself into a dilemma.

Whenever I speak, I must say it gracefully with sincerity, neither hasten nor blur.

When hearing gossip here and there, I will not get involved if it does not concern me.

Upon seeing the good points of others, I should strive to be as good as them; even if I am far behind them, I am getting closer gradually.

Upon seeing others' wrongs, I must introspect myself right away. If I have the same faults, I will correct them; and I will be vigilant if not.

In virtue and learning, in ability and skill, if I am not as good as others, I will encourage myself to be better.

As for clothing and attire, or food and drink, if I am not as good as others, I will not feel inferior.

Becoming angry upon hearing my faults and happy upon hearing praise will cause harmful friends to come and beneficial friends to leave;

becoming fearful upon hearing praise and happy upon hearing my faults will make upright and forgiving people gradually come closer to me.

Doing wrong unintentionally is called making a mistake, while doing wrong intentionally is called committing an evil.

If I correct my faults, the faults will no longer exist; if I try to cover them up, I will be doubly wrong.

5. Love All Broadly

All who are human, I must love. We are all sheltered by the same sky and we all live on the same planet Earth.

People with high conduct naturally have high reputations; what people value is their virtues, not their good looks.

People with great talents naturally have great fame; what convinces people is their capability, not their big talk.

If I have talents, I must serve others without being selfish.
If others have talents, I must not lightly denigrate them.

I must neither fawn on the rich nor despise the poor, and neither should I detest the old nor favor the new.

When people are busy, don't bother them with matters; when people's minds are not at ease, don't bother them with words.

When people have shortcomings, I should never expose them; when people have secrets, I should never reveal them.

Praising others' good deeds is a good deed in itself; people will be encouraged to do better when they hear about it.

Publicizing others' wrongs is in itself evil; they will resent more and be driven to act even worse.

When we exhort each other to do good, both of our virtues are established; when we do not dissuade each other from doing bad, both of our morals will be undermined.

Regarding taking or giving, the most important thing is to know the difference between the two; it is better to give more and take less.

When I am about to do something to others, I will ask myself if I would like others to do it to me; if not, I will stop immediately.

I must repay the kindness of others and let go of resentment towards others; I will hold grudges less and repay kindness more.

Treating maids and servants, I should act nobly and decorously; even so, I still look after them kindly and generously.

Using force to make people submit will not make their hearts agree; using reason to make people submit, there can be then no complaint.

6. Become Close to the Benevolent Ones

We all are human, but our types differ; the ordinary are many, benevolent people are rare.

A truly benevolent person is held in awe by others; he will neither be afraid to speak the truth nor fawn on others.

If I can be close to benevolent people, I will benefit immensely; my virtues will grow daily and my wrongs will lessen day by day.

Not becoming close to benevolent ones is infinitely harmful; petty minded people will come, and everything will turn bad.

7. Studying Literature and Arts in Spare Time after Practicing All the Above

If I do not actively practice virtues but only study, all I attain is superficial vanity, what kind of person will I become?

If I only practice diligently but do not study, I will only do things based on my own opinion and deviate from the truth.

The way to study requires heart, eyes, and mouth coming together; having faith in our studying is also equally important.

Having started reading one book, I will not yearn for another; when the first book has not been finished, I will not start another.

Set a loose schedule, but apply tight efforts; when my efforts reach a certain level, obstacles will dissolve.

When I have a question, jot it down right away, so I can ask someone for its true meaning.

I will keep my room neat, the walls clean, the desk tidy, and the pen and inkwell straight.

If the ink stick is unevenly ground, it indicates that my mind is not upright; if I do not write neatly with respect, it shows that my mind has fallen ill.

Books should be set in a fixed place; I will return them to their original place after reading.

Despite something urgent, I will still place the books properly; if a book is damaged, I will repair it immediately.

If it is not sages' teachings, I will discard the book and not even look at it, for it will cloud my intellect and corrupt my mind and aspirations.

I should neither be harsh nor give up on myself, for the state of saints and sages can gradually be attained.