

恕 (SHU)

如字心字 合之為恕 故恕者 我之心亦如人之心 人之心亦如我之心
恕己恕人 兼恕萬物 此恕字之解釋也

The character SHU (Altruism or Forgiveness) encompasses two other characters, one meaning 'resemblance' and the other 'heart.' So SHU implies that what your heart likes or dislikes, other people's hearts probably also like or dislike.

These are the explanation of SHU: One should FORGIVE others for something as easily as one FORGIVES himself; further, it applies to all circumstances.

論語曰 己所不欲 勿施於人

大學曰 所惡於上 無以使下 所惡於下 無以事上 所惡於前 無以先後

所惡於後 無以從前 所惡於右 無以交於左 所惡於左 無以交於右

此數語 無非發明推己及人之恕字也

Confucius said, "Do not do to others what you would not wish done to yourself."

The book of Great Learning said, "Do not do to your subordinate what you would not wish your superior to do to you; do not do to your superior what you would not wish your subordinate to do to you"

These few words are exemplification of the spirit of SHU, teaching us to be considerate towards others.

俗云 上半夜想自己 下半夜想別人 又云 做事要將心比心

It is commonly said, "During the first part of the night, the time of rest, our minds are clear and we should think of ourselves and be introspective. During the rest of the night, as we become calmer and our mind becomes even clearer, we should think of others. In this way, we hopefully can forgive their faults." It is also said, "When we deal with others, we need to regard their hearts (feelings, desires, needs) as if they were our own."

蓋人同此心 心同此理

譬如金錢 我心所欲得之者 他人亦欲得之

譬如恥辱 我心所不願受者 他人亦不願受

人能處處將心比心 而恕字之義得矣

Hence, people's hearts resemble each other and possess like reasoning. For instance, my desire for money is mirrored in other people's desire. Or, as I do not wish to be insulted, they, too, have the same wish. Once you understand that your feelings, desires, and needs are the same as others', you will understand the meaning of SHU.

當今之世 父不恕子 而以暴虐施之
子不恕父 而以忤逆對之
兄不恕弟 而無友愛之情
弟不恕兄 而有爭鬥之事
友朋如此 族戚亦如此 一鄉如此 一國亦如此
利己損人 弱肉強食 安得而不亂乎

Nowadays, if a father doesn't forgive his son, abuse could result.
If a son doesn't forgive his father, a disobedient confrontation could result.
If an elder brother doesn't forgive his younger brother, brotherly love could vanish.
If a younger brother doesn't forgive his elder brother, a fight could ensue.
When friends don't forgive each other, the enmity could spread to their relatives. When non-forgiveness is between towns, it will spread out to the whole country.
Non-forgiveness can lead people to take advantage of others with the strong preying on the weak. If so, how can we not have a chaotic situation!?!

吾今倡道 以忠恕二字為首 因今之人 萬難感化 而吾寬恕一番 苦心開導
必有省悟之日 即或不能省悟 而爾自爾 我自我 無足怪也 此亦恕字之道也

Now I introduce this TAO (way of life) with the two initial characters of ZHONG and SHU. As people today are very difficult to teach, nevertheless, I forgive them and guide them from wrongdoing from the bottom of my heart. There shall come a day for their enlightenment.

Even though they may not be introspective and realize their faults, there is nothing we can blame on each other because, after all, they are still what they are and I am still what I am. This is also a way of SHU.

若我教中 師不恕弟 則責備求全 而道不廣 弟不恕師 則忘恩背義 而道難成

For example, if one of my followers is a teacher, who doesn't forgive a student and condemns him for not meeting the expectations, the teacher's path of TAO could be narrowed. If a student doesn't forgive his teacher, it is a case of ingratitude, which could cause the student to miss the path of TAO.

故師果能恕 弟必醒之 弟果能恕 師必喜之

Therefore, the forgiveness of a teacher could awaken a student to enable him to realize the truth. Likewise, the forgiveness of a student could bring delight to the teacher.

吾願世之為師者 以恕為心 其弟不敬而自敬
世之為弟者 以恕為心 其師不傳而自傳

I hope that all teachers, with a forgiving heart, disabuse students' disrespectful manners so to change them to respect. Students with a forgiving heart would allow the teacher's knowledge to be passed down to them in its entirety.

無師無弟 一致將其不恕之心 改之為恕
以淺義言之 則待己待人 秉乎大公
以深義言之 則又無人無我 渾無色相也

Regardless, teacher or student, everyone has to change their non-forgiving heart to a forgiving one. To say it more simply, SHU means being impartial to yourself or someone else. More deeply, it seeks to eliminate the idea of being 'self' or 'other', to a state of 'Non-objectivity' which means not letting a person or object have such influence on you that you are 'absorbed' by that person or object.

我教集合萬聖精微 恕卻前日之非 但求今日之是 恕之之道至矣

Our Religion, collecting and distilling the essence from various religions, uses SHU to forgive its believers' past wrongdoing in the hope that from now on they will be righteous. Then, the way of SHU is successful.

吾願此後男女 概以恕字為心 由小而推至於大 貫徹萬類 無有間隔

I hope that hereafter people will all have a forgiving heart and apply the forgiveness from small to large matters, and apply it to all without any exception.

夫天生萬物 惟人最靈

人既為萬物之代表 待物能恕 則氣化相感 萬物接踵而隨之

天地亦隨而清明之 坦然蕩然 化濁亂世界以為清平世界 天地萬物不遭斯劫矣

Under the nourishment of nature, mankind are distinctive intelligent beings. If mankind, which represents all living things, acts in the spirit of forgiveness, all else will thus be influenced to follow the same attitude.

Thus, the world can become cleaner and brighter. Within this purified atmosphere, this disorderly world would be altered so that it is peaceful and orderly, with disasters eliminated for all!