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Proposing a Psychological View Based on Confucius: An Existential Perspective

Confucius, Mediator Tiger and Mom

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FOREWORD

The title *Tiger and Mom* derives from Amy Chua's *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom* (2011), with which the *Wall Street Journal* (January 8, 2011) created a sensation by comparing its perception of a Chinese tigress' strategies with the liberal American approach for successful childrearing. Where there is a Tiger mom, there ought to be a Tiger cub. In fact, all cubs, human and animal, are thrust into life with an implicit will to live and the wherewithal to be themselves. It is the cub I am addressing as Tiger. Mom is the first nurturer, which by nature sets the cub on the right existential track. What follows is enculturation, the nurture of which is a balancing act. In short order, the Tiger becomes mom for the next generation of cubs.

The desire for children to succeed has been ingrained in the Chinese way of life for at least two thousand years. This statement can easily be challenged by many cultural Chinese practices, such as the place of women in society, which are not defensible but are not the subject of this paper. The current discussion centers on the ideal Confucian views on (1) what success is for the cub and (2) what mother brings to the dyad of their relationship. The difference between how the ideal is understood and realized can be the subject of another study.

The Confucian ideal can take on relevance and validity today in its exposition through Western existential psychology. This claim I explored in *The Caveat for Being Human*. Both schools regard the Being's immediate presence and experiencing as central to its Dasein (living presence). Both regard the function of psychological faculties as serving the Being's thrust to actualize. Both determine that there is need to stake on Being so as to avoid such unnatural states as alienation and anxiety. Both agree on the strategic importance of the Dasein's being authentic, especially towards his own nature.

In reshaping given nature into a second, actualized nature, both schools devolve to the one basic attitude and technique of 誠-*cheng*-authenticity (*truth* in existential psychology). Discovering this universal given as Erikson's basic trust in the primal mom+Tiger dyad, we find that the vast majority of the living are not only born with this *cheng*, but also receive it in primary care. 誠-*cheng*-authenticity is the basic law of everything in nature that works as we would expect, but dwells also in communal bonding and established customs, institutions and mores. In order for this primal *cheng* to unfold as designed, we must look to its first nurture—in the mother-Tiger dyad.

Mother is foundational as she is at the beginning of the child's coming into existence. With her *cheng* to Tiger assuring his own *cheng* to himself, a mother truly has a crucial role in Tiger's success as a Being. Just by being a mother her *cheng* is invaluable and priceless—though she does not receive recognition in this way. The implicit principle of 誠-*cheng*-authenticity underlies good practices in child psychology, development psychology, motherhood, lifespan psychology and can be culled for use as intervention to raise Tiger to fulfill his potentia. The use of 誠-*cheng*-authenticity as method and goal to get at the truth of situations, is clearly a major focus of psychotherapy.

"Tiger and Mom" explores the formative period of the Tiger spirit as he unknowingly finds himself in nature's parent-child dyad that prepares him to come into his own.

Notes: For a general introduction and notes on the fusion existential vocabulary adopted for convenience, please read pp. 3-7. Some foreign words and acronyms are much more efficient in capturing certain ideas. I have adopted them because they name some major topics more clearly.

Please pardon my using the controversial *he/him* for the child in the mom-Tiger dyad and referring to mom as *she/her*. Actually, mom represents parental or primary nurturers, while Tiger represents every person's inner integrity that should endure through life. English makes available two pronouns that we can use to distinguish between the roles of parent and Tiger; hence, parent is *she/her* and Tiger is *he/him*.

1. AT HOME IN THE MOM-TIGER DYAD

The May 21, 2012, *Time Magazine* article, “The Man Who Remade Motherhood,” highlights the work of Dr. Bill Sears (*The Baby Book* 1992) as a catalyst in transforming the practice of raising babies to his attachment theory (breast-feeding, co-sleeping, “baby-wearing”). The headline on the magazine cover bemusedly points out the consequent daily conscience call for the frazzled conscientious, “Are you mom enough?” After reviewing a half century of trends, author Kate Pickert concedes that “babies who are cuddled feel secure. [Dr. Sears] surely deserves credit for promoting breast-feeding and the idea that the bond between mother and baby is critical” (p.37). I would conjecture that Confucius couldn’t agree with this more. Although the time-honored Chinese “institution” celebrated in “filial piety” is a generational bond, at its heart is mother nurturing a tender baby with a tiger will to exist. By nature, because of the time required, this dyad holds itself intact until the child is developmentally ready to be on his/her own. According to Confucius’ own autobiographical sketch, that marker occurs around age 15.

Confucius’ particular contribution to family practice is his mediation from an existential perspective. Briefly, this perspective takes each individual seriously as a Being-Becoming, an acorn becoming a great oak through personal choice of pathways, equipped with the psychological tools for the journey. Confucius nests the collective and individual psyches like layered Russian dolls, from largest to smallest: world, nation, family, individual, heart, will, mind, cognition. The first four are external and impinge on the subjective reality of the other four. Central to this spectrum is the heart, which is served by will and mind-cognition, and which, in turn, is the basis upon which we serve family and world. In other words, the whole world can turn on one heart. How this can happen is by setting the heart upright in everyone. This nurture begins with the personalized mom-Tiger (mother-child) dyad--the natural and spontaneous dynamics in the dyad being the key to Tiger’s continual healthful growth.

While relatively simple to summarize, mom’s job is astounding. She nurtures with not only sustenance and re-assurance, but also the preparatory readiness for Tiger to step into the community, hold the reins of history and attain the full power of his person. Motherhood means fostering growth of full psychic range from cub to Tiger, as well as lifespan orientation towards self-actualization. Confucius’ DZ-mediation is the reminder that the content of the dyad is 誠-*cheng* –*authenticity*, the foundation, the path as well as the fruition of actualization. The content of this nurture we can extrapolate from Confucius’ teachings, as well as from what little we know about his life.

Even by today’s standards, we would classify Confucius as a disadvantaged child. He was very likely illegitimate—“conceived in the wilds,” orphaned at three when his father died, grew up in harsh circumstances—took odd jobs to help with the household, but his young, single mother definitely saw him through. His 36-character autobiographical sketch captures, with implied satisfaction, his existential maturation through the decades, beginning with his emergence from the foundational dyad at age 15. All his later growth would depend on this first stage. In other words, all later stages are anticipated in the first stage; that is, the mom-Tiger dyad lays the groundwork for readiness and flexibility in his later growth.

Individuals possess structural and functional characteristics which are: universal, common to some but not all others, and unique.... An integrated understanding of the contribution of these three components of personality involves the idea that humans are relatively plastic across life, a **plasticity** which derives from the evolution of delayed development. (Lerner, 1988)

Confucius' lifespan stages, methodically captured in his autobiography, bear a strong resemblance to Eric Erikson's Life Cycle Chart. Both deal with incremental points of integration of psyche:

- By 15—all the skills of life and learning to equip for life (physical, brain maturity); self-regulating
- By 30—establish in his own power (social establishment)
- By 40—delusion-free, base for emotional intelligence (assessment of worldly situation—no delusion)
- By 50—Mandate of Heaven (assessment of self-in-existence)
- By 60—working with world's agenda (integration of self with world)
- By 70—oneness with universe (identification with agenda of universe) (Analects 2:04)

Erik Erikson (1959, Identity and the Life Cycle)

AGE	TASK	STAGE MARKER	INTEGRATION	DISINTEGRATION
0-1	Trust vs mistrust	HOPE, FAITH	Hope and drive	Sensory distortion/ withdrawal
2-3	Autonomy vs shame and doubt	WILL, DETERMINATION	Will power and self-control	Impulsivity/compulsion
3-6	Initiative vs. guilt	PURPOSE, COURAGE	Purpose and direction	Ruthlessness/inhibitor
7-12	Industry vs inferiority	COMPETENCE	Competence and method	Narrow virtuosity/inertia
12-18	Ego-identity vs. role confusion	FIDELITY, LOYALTY	Fidelity and devotion	Fanaticism/repudiation
20's	Intimacy vs isolation	LOVE	Love and affiliation	Promiscuity/exclusivity
20-50	Generativity vs self-absorption	CARE	Care and production	Overextension/rejectivity
50+	Integrity vs despair (mankind or "my kind")	WISDOM	Wisdom and renunciation	Presumption/disdain

Confucius' age 15 marker corresponds with Erikson's elaboration of the first five stages, from age 0 to 18. Both take into consideration the role of will, the development toward competence, and the states of being that make for integrity of self and integrity in human relations. For later senior stages, Confucius elaborates with greater clarity the integration of the subjective self, concurring on similar "wisdom and renunciation" for the last stages.

MOTHERHOOD: FOSTERING FULL PSYCHIC GROWTH FROM CUB TO TIGER

If we were to follow these lifespan perspectives, then the dyadic mother needs to nurture the child towards the incremental integration at these stage markers. She holds a precious little-old-man/lady-to-be as an adorable infant totally dependent upon her.

[O]nly with life-span data is it possible to assess the real implications of early life patterns and the full impact of early enriching or depriving factors in development. Scientific evaluation of the relevance of childhood phenomena should no longer be carried out in isolation of other life stages. Rather, each stage of life must be viewed in the perspective of an entire life. (Perimutter, 1988)

Though she would rather sing sweet songs, she might occasionally (especially in the freshness of the first-born) reflect on her role as an honor bestowed to guide a fellow human towards actualization.

In “[r]ecognizing the life-long capacity for change (and adaptation)” (Hetherington, 1988), the dyadic mom 's role is to prepare Tiger by 15 with all the skills, attitudes, flexibility, agenda, grasp of personal power, will, etc. The child will henceforth totally self-regulate and not be enemy to himself.

Lerner (1984) had suggested that the goal of intervention should be to increase the person’s ability for self-regulation so that the individual can both change his or her behavior to fit varying contexts and select or alter contexts to fit his or her needs....(Hetherington, 13)

In Confucius' version of "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" (Erikson’s disintegration likewise drops failures off the chart), he sets the expiration date at age 40 (Analects) when an untutored human being becomes so cemented in his ways as to be irredeemable. In other words, there is hope until then, even if the first integration does not happen in young adulthood.

Virtually unstudied at this time is the idea of optimum periods for change after the childhood years.... A more justifiable position is that the life span is dotted with a great number and variety of times that are optimal for introducing interventions or planned efforts by individuals on their own behalf (Sherrord & Brim, 1986).... Life-span development theory directs that the current emphasis of most intervention programs on the early years can be balanced with explicit consideration of interventions directed to later stages of life. (Brim 1988, pp.280-1) (Perimutter, 1988)

Half of the job is done by mom before the child is conceived. What mom brings to the dyad happens just by her being herself in the dyad. Therefore her own upbringing is exceedingly important. Whatever a mother brings, the dyad will consist of these four dynamics: (1) from just being mom to Tiger, both archetypal and personal, (2) what mom gets with Tiger—both the archetypal child and the individual, (3) what mom provides for Tiger, and (4) what mom does consciously to raise Tiger.

From Mom to Tiger Maternal Imprint	What Mom Finds In Tiger	What Mom Provides For Tiger	What Mom Does With Tiger
Unconditional love and nurture Responsiveness Responsibility Total care Primal 誠-cheng-trust	Unconditional trust Total dependence Total receptiveness Absolute need <i>Tabula rasa</i> , in terms of cultural and social conditioning Incremental readiness and responsiveness	Protection First boundaries First school Lifespan readiness and aspiration Primal 誠-cheng - authenticity for self-regulation Not to be enemies to themselves in life Natural spontaneity Use selves well By-products: health and happiness	Setting QV-psychic apparatus into motion Tempering Daimon Induction into Mitwelt (protocol of being with others) 誠-cheng - authenticity & QV self-regulation
Mom’s own character and personality and	Inborn personality traits and	Primary Mitwelt engagement	Check-ins and time-outs

disposition	disposition		
Mom's values, choices and preferences	Archetypal roles	Psychosocial womb	Psychosocial home
Mom's aspiration, strengths and limitations	Tiger's integrity and aspiration, acorn-oak momentum	Respect for fellow being	Nurture and support

This chart reflects the universal dynamics in the natural mom/Tiger dyad. Confucius' mediation brings in the existential reminder of the human acorn-oak agenda and the appropriate adjustment of the QV-psychoic tools to serve the journey. This means that all efforts at knowing should further the understanding of, as well as, the contribution of, the role of the human in the universe. Confucius suggests that this knowing can happen—by maintaining our fidelity towards the connection by which we come to life, i.e., by not severing the awareness. This kind of 誠-*cheng-fidelity-authenticity* we experience viscerally in the natural, spontaneous mom-Tiger dyad. If we can all apply it in everyday affairs, on all levels, the world can possibly turn on one heart.

2. FROM MOM TO TIGER (AGE 0-15): THE MATERNAL IMPRINT

The formation of the dyad, especially upon the birth of the first child, must come as an existential shock. Despite diligent infant-care and parental training, mom dives into a role larger than herself that can be shocking with its urgency and immediacy and yet surprising with the eagerness and personal capacity it engenders in her. This is the self meeting the archetype of mother, and growing into another dimension of Being. First-time mothers can certainly report—if they could find time--on the effects on their personality from this mix of boundless love and daily grind. They could, of course, reject the burden of the archetype (i.e., throw out bathtub with baby) and not welcome any part of this life venture. It is, however, far more natural to be the caregiver in the mom-Tiger dyad and easier (than not) to conform with cultural expectations. Motherhood thus settles in without much contemplation of its existential significance, driven by the Tiger's daily growth, changes and demands. In this initial phase of life, Tiger receives the Dasein of mother's complete presence. Even though all the other factors that make up the person that is the mother—i.e., heredity, culture, character and personal traits, as well as immediate circumstances—would, at ensuing stages, more visibly impact Tiger, this introduction to life seals the maternal imprint.

Studies on mothers became a special field about 25 years ago. "From the start Bowlby (1969/1982; 1973) looked at the reciprocal behaviors of attachment and caregiving (infant's motivation to be cared for and mother's motivation to give care)." (Mayseless, 2006) Attachment studies took off, but mother's profiles had to wait. Motivated by the caregiving motive, "without expectation to be reciprocated and for the 'sole' purpose that they (babies) will be healthy, happy, and fulfilled..." Israeli psychologist Ofra Mayseless (2006) collected qualitative studies of caregivers through interviews. The Parental Development Interview (PDI) and The Internal Working Model (IWM) were particularly useful

to document what goes on in the young mother's mind in switching between the universal and the personal, as well as what is passed down in the generational dyad.

In an ambitious cross-cultural study on parenting, developmental psychologist Bornstein confirmed that across the globe, "mother is still unique, the role of mother universal, and motherhood unequivocally principal to the development of the individual" (Bornstein, 1991).

Upon becoming mothers, then, girls step into this available inner resource of unconditional love and nurture, responsiveness, responsibility and devotion to complete care. At the same time, they bring their total Dasein consisting of their own development: character, personality, disposition; values, choices, preference; aspiration, strengths, limitations; personal history and cultural imprint. When a mother's own upbringing supports her new role, the dyadic course is healthy and happy. But when personal obstacles conflicts with the maternal role, there needs intervention, as the first stage of life needs mothers ready to nurture and able to coach.

1. Mom's readiness to nurture

The readiness to nurture means, among other daily changes, mother's readiness to respond to the infant's readiness for task integration. The higher a mom's own training, the better Tiger will attain in his capacity for growth.

Higher levels of maternal education are linked to a parenting environment high in positive parenting and low in harsh parenting, which in turn leads to higher levels of maternal scaffolding behavior that is contingent on the child's ability and task performance. (Carr & Pike, 2011)

The communication between Tiger and mom, a mutual growth process in adapting to each other's needs, is dependent upon mom's ability to respond.

Infant ability to perceive and process communicative messages in the social environment meets corresponding counterparts in caretaker ability to adjust interventions to infant behavioral/emotional state and to the actual stage of integrative development. Resulting parent infant interchanges bear the character of a primary didactic system which is partly based on co-evolution of corresponding biological premises. (Papousek & Papousek, 1991)

Studies confirm that the quality of mothers' own upbringing influences the environment they provide for Tiger. .

Mothers who reported harsh parenting as children, negative attitudes about life, and unrealistic developmental expectations had negative attitudes about their own child. These attitudes were related to provision of lower quality home environments (Daggett *et al.*, 2000)

Such harsh parenting also influences specific scaffolding behaviors these moms provide (Carr & Pike, 2011).

2. Mom and Tiger entraining for Tiger's self-regulation:

The infant Tiger begins his self-regulation in the dyad when mom responds to his needs in an appropriate fashion.

[T]emperament moderated the relations of synchrony and self-control, and closer associations were found between mutual synchrony and self-control for difficult infants. Shorter lags to maternal synchrony at 3 months were independently related to self-control. The mutual regulation of affect in infancy, as moderated by temperament, is proposed as an important contributor to the emergence of self-regulation. (Feldman et al., 1999)

Dependent upon mom's personality, Tiger begins to build his own mediating system in coping with changes.

[T]he characteristics of the mediating system in a person (the specific categories built up, the specific contents of the categories, the affective tones bound to the categories' contents and the coping strategies) will depend to some extent on the character of the environment that the individual encounters in the developmental learning process. (Magnusson & Allen, 1982)

Studies in Tiger's readiness for environmental stimulus shows that not only must Tiger be ready, but that "optimal development also presupposes the occurrence of the appropriate environmental stimulation" (Magnusson & Allen, 1982). Referring to the mother's active role to respond to these moments of growth opportunities, studies also show that the changes affect both Tiger and mom.

It was stressed throughout this chapter that person-environment interaction is a continuous and reciprocal (bidirectional) process in which the environment influences the person and at the same time the person influences the environment. Thus, interaction is a dynamic process that should be conceived of as a continuous spiral in which both the person and the environment are being changed as a consequence of the interaction. (Magnuson & Allen, 1982)

3. Mom continues to learn

The around-the-clock care mom gives to Tiger is a bi-directional dyad in which mom also experiences the opportunities to grow as a person, beginning with shifting her center to one shared with Tiger in the dyad. Through becoming better parents we become better people. Mufid James Hannush (2002), author of *Becoming Good Parents: An Existential Journey*, addresses parenting as

ultimately an existential and ethical human endeavor. A good parental theory offers a prescription for living (existing) morally, not only for the sake of the children and their parents, but also out of care and concern for the welfare of future generations. (Hannush, 2002)

and confirms the actuality of the bidirectionality in the dyad for parents

as we learn to become good and loving human beings by becoming good and loving parents, and we become better parents when we become better persons." (Hannush, 2002)

While research continues to shed light on the rapid and complex inner development in infants, enabling strategic parenting intervention for their optimal growth, the fact of the matter is that, without stressing mom further, she is as good as she can get for the occasion to welcome Tiger to life *provided she devotes herself to being a mother*. As both Erikson and Confucius observed, the basic trust that is mom in the dyad is the foundation of being. While infants who undergo disintegration of trust might suffer

developmental delay--though they may manage to heal through altered circumstances--, those who do not suffer disintegration have a foundational attitude towards life and are able to bond with existence as a whole.

In the Confucian DZ-premise, this quality of primal 誠-*cheng-authenticity* is a universal law that underlies the nature of all living things. It is resident as the original integrity of the organism; it is also the mover in the journey of Being-becoming for all organisms that come to life and grow to maturity. Bornstein, in *Cultural Approaches to Parenting* (1991), in which developmental psychologists examine “cultural approaches to parenting, using cross-cultural developmental research “to describe and explain behavior, test hypotheses...,” makes this comment,

The] comparisons cause us to rethink the origins and ontogeny of development. Without it, our understanding of the basics of human nature...is at best shortsighted, ethnocentric and suspect.... [O]ur psychology would simply be incorrect. (Bornstein, 1991)

Bornstein bridges our discussion of the ontogenesis of human development to the law of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* inherent in our given agenda to “accord with our nature.” By extension, it is the law that underlies the constancy in the universe and the reliability of properties in the material world. Through birth, we are connected to the laws of the universe; the realization of this intimacy should preclude any sense of alienation from it.

誠-*cheng-authenticity* underlies human bonds and is the substance with which we conduct the pathways of virtues. As mother, therefore, half of the job has been accomplished with the establishment of basic trust. Based on this trust, Tiger learns to regard his own nature, in addition to his primary caregivers, with the respect that comes with 誠-*cheng-authenticity*. He will comfortably comply with all of his mother’s best intentions for him.

Tiger’s sense of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* at birth is absolute due to his complete helplessness. Unless he is abused or severely ignored, he will, by and large, completely internalize this trust. Mom, however, might need some alerts to help her reciprocate this complete trust from Tiger. Her compensation is the immediacy and joy of the responsivity she will find with Tiger, a principal part of the ennobling task she has been entrusted with to lead another on his existential journey.

3. What Mom Finds in Tiger

Post-partum, mom finds her life dramatically changed. What to do is not a puzzle. The continuing immediacy of Tiger’s physical comforts and growth spurts can be reasonably anticipated. But what to do with the inner human being can be an enigma. Or, how is there a human being in that swathed bundle?

Inside the swath is a bundle of unconditional trust, total dependence, total receptiveness, and absolute need—all requiring mom’s full reciprocity. Inside the swath is also a pattern of inborn personality traits and disposition, genetic inheritance and an individualized set of abilities and talents. Above all, swathed also is a shoot of existential self-assertion, with the integrity and aspiration of the acorn-oak momentum, starting as *tabula rasa* (in terms of cultural and social conditioning) but becoming incrementally ready and responsive.

Developmental psychologist Alison Gopnik concludes that in some ways, babies may be smarter, more thoughtful and more conscious than adults. They are engaged in socialization in their own manner apparently much earlier than we expect.

The first thing is that kids are much, much smarter than you think. They’re figuring out everything that is going on around them. (Gropnik, 2011)

In an attempt to understand what goes on in socialization and integrating their findings with

those of Piaget with those of traditional psychoanalytic, behaviorist, and other theorists, the authors consider human development to be a function of a dynamic polarity between heredity and environment, between biology and culture, at all age periods. Drs. Chess and Thomas also consider human functioning, be it adaptive or pathological, to manifest itself according to an on-going, complex, dynamic process related to the goodness of fit between an individual's innate capabilities and the expectations and requirements of his/her external world and familial socio-cultural environment. (Thomas and Chess, 1980)

Both these studies allude to an innate thrust outward, in the first case, for information, and, in the second, for “fit” between the outer world and some inner sensing point.

Because the attention on lifespan development studies has not yet garnered the same momentum as that of the 0-15 age bracket, it probably would be disquieting to ask a new mom to imagine a prospective “little old man/lady” at her bosom. (I am always mindful of my aunt saying, “Old people are lovable, too. They are just not cute.”) But this destiny is ingrained in his birth to attain.

Confucius does not make a case for lifespan development, but observing himself like a psychologist, he does suggest what has taken a span of six stages in 70 years to mature in his psyche (Analects 2:04). The stages appear to occur in a fixed order—that is, he has had to come to each integration before moving onto the next. For the success in advancement, he would attribute to two principles espoused in the cognitive psychology of Jean Piaget (1896-1980): (1) his own readiness and (2) discovery on his own. Constructing a model synthesizing Confucius and Piaget to study lifespan development might be productive.

The difference between them is that Confucius does imply the presence of an inner respondent to experience. That respondent appears to be the existential drive towards Being-becoming or actualization. At 50 he reconciles with “knowing” the stipulations of existence. At 60 he reconciles with the world as it is (Everything is harmonious to my ears). At 70 he reconciles with existence itself.

All this speculation is, of course, irrelevant to the new mom. But the strategic situation she holds together for Tiger—to nurture or deprive him of the maternal imprint of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* for life--should impress her.

3. What Mom Provides for Tiger

In the American rite of passage of the “Terrible Two’s,” we find Tiger’s will and mom’s will, with the daimon of both, busily dueling as Tiger begins his self-actualization.

A great deal is going on at this juncture. The main issue is socialization, now that Tiger is afoot. The Parent Development Theory (PDT) identifies

six primary characteristics of the dyad: “bonding, discipline, education, general welfare and protection, responsivity, and sensitivity....[and suggest that][i]n the end, parent behavior is often an important guidepost for children’s behavior. ... [The results of this research reveal that] five of the six PDT parent role characteristics are significantly related to children’s social skills... (Mowder and Harari, 2006)

Mom is slated to take charge and prevail, but from the center of the dyad rather than her own center.

Whatever mom is cognizant of, she and Tiger are in the universal dyad of mutuality in which each needs the other in their respective existential agendas of self-actualization. Whereas by now, mom has had the opportunity to make a conscious choice to know about “accordance with nature,” Tiger is nothing more than the process itself unfolding, the scenarios of Tiger growth spurts revealing his gradual awakening towards socialization. Mom strives to meet the daily demands of 24-hour vigilance, resourcefulness and understanding, while she is both intuitively and consciously responsive and accommodating with nurture and scaffolding.

Psychological studies reveal how complex a process mom caters to in order to guide Tiger towards the acorn-oak actualization path. Research findings can help her to put together a checklist of competencies for on-the-job training. Of course, the more intervention mom gets, the better directed her task. The problem is that Tiger’s presence tends to be all-consuming, and capitalizing on an immediate opportunity for socialization cannot always be as straightforward as hanging a picture. At that strategic moment, the cognitive approach may not be available; sometimes the best thing mom can do is to wing it with blind confidence on the sum total of her own presence.

Mom winging her way can be scrutinized for the elements of her presence in the dyad, such as her personality traits or her responsivity, in order to understand what she is doing, and where needed, to come up with appropriate strategies. In existential literature and in Confucius’ DZ-thesis, the process to improve can be clarified through the insights on self-actualization.

Mom as she is in the dyad

Mom’s personality has an impact on the dyad and on Tiger:

Factor analyses of the personality inventory replicated extraction of the 5-factor model of personality (Openness, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness). Maternal personality in the normal range, a theoretically important but empirically neglected factor in everyday parenting, has meaning in studies of parenting, child development, and family process. (Bornstein et al., 2011)

Her willingness to monitor Tiger speaks to her responsivity, sensitivity and flexibility.

Such willingness to monitor the child’s actions and interests and to respond appropriately is an important component of maternal sensitivity and flexibility, a characteristic clinicians have identified as especially important during the toddler period (cf. Gross, 1983; Mahler et al., 1975; Slade & Bergman, in press). In addition to influencing compliance, variability in maternal responsiveness may have important implications for the development of a range of social and cognitive competencies. (Rocissano et al., 1987) (Bornstein et al., 2011)

Of the entire constellation in mom’s presence in the dyad, possibly the most critical is her responsiveness to Tiger.

The importance of consistent responsiveness, defined by an affective-emotional construct, was evident even when a broader constellation of parenting behaviors was considered. (Landry et al., 2001)

Maternal responsiveness has long-range positive impact on the child's development.

Maternal responsiveness occupies a theoretically central position in developmental science and possesses meaningful predictive validity over diverse domains of children's development. (Bornstein et al., 2011)

Responsivity

to children's wishes are expected to foster reciprocity between the mother and child (Baumrind, 1978; Rocissano, Slade, & Lynch, 1985) and to have an impact on a child's internalization of social values (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Our results suggest that when this reciprocity is removed, children's willingness to respond positively ultimately decreases and this internalization process may be disrupted. (Boornstein et al., 2011)

Studies on adolescents also confirm the effectiveness of responsive parenting.

The life skills scores of those adolescents reared by *authoritative* and *indulgent* parents were significantly higher than those scores of the adolescents reared by other parenting styles. Although this relationship cannot be claimed as causal, it does appear that positive life skills development is related to having been reared by a parenting style high in *responsiveness*. (Slicker & Picklesimer, 2001)

In addition, Mom's patient training of Tiger to delay gratification has long-term results.

those who delayed longer as preschoolers were rated by their parents in adolescence as significantly more attentive and able to concentrate, competent, planful, and intelligent. (Sethi et al., 2000) (Bornstein et al., 2011)

She also provides scaffolding for his learning.

neo-Vygotskian hypothesis that cognitive development proceeds through a process of scaffolding. social interaction in which a parent or other expert partner "takes responsibility for the task initially, structuring it so that the child is able to participate in increasingly complex ways, letting the child undertake more and more of the task autonomously and eventually handing over responsibility to the child" (Meadows, p. 22).

Mom's education is also an important factor in predicting Tiger's future success.

The literature on achievement consistently has shown that parent education is important in predicting children's achievement (Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn, & Duncan, 1994; Haveman & Wolfe, 1995; Smith, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997). The mechanisms for understanding this influence, however, have not been well studied. (Davis-Kean, 2004)

Tiger's compliance: Self-regulation

Research can track and help with intervention to get Tiger to do his part "nicely"; that is, he begins his self-regulation, which gradually develops into self-control, with mom setting and maintaining the standards of behavior. (Berger, 2011)

Research into the mom-Tiger relationship shows how intimate and how crucial the dyad is, especially for Tiger. For instance, in attachment formation, the principle of monotropy has been established that, in the mom-Tiger dyad,

[a]ttachment relationships are defined by exclusivity. Infants are biologically prepared to orient to the human face and quickly learn to seek their mothers' faces (Johnson, 1999; Slater & Kirby, 1998), and parents are programmed to focus on the well-being, safety, and signals of a specific child (Leckman et al., 2004). (Feldman and Eidelman, 2004)

One research study shows that, at least for 5-year-olds, Tiger thrives in mom's presence.

With mother present, 5-year-olds (but not 3- or 4-year-olds) were significantly more active than with mother absent. (Routh et al, 1974)

Mom also serves as a model for Tiger to imitate

Characteristics of the mother, other than reinforcement of imitation, were positively associated with the child's imitation, particularly the amount of variation and the enthusiasm in the mother's modeling. (Waxler and Yarrow, 1975)

The lifelong self-actualization process starts with self-regulation.

Preschool children's self-regulatory skills, particularly the ability to forego immediate gratification for the sake of delayed but more valued outcomes, have been shown to have a powerful role in the development of later social-emotional and cognitive competence (e.g., Shoda, Mischel, & Peake, 1990).

Specifically, those who delayed longer as preschoolers were rated by their parents in adolescence as significantly more attentive and able to concentrate, competent, planful, and intelligent. (Sethi et al, 2000)

Mom does not cease in monitoring different methods of Tiger's discipline to achieve the desired internalization for longterm use.

Finally, the parent-child relation is conceptualized so as to fit the facts of both everyday interaction and longterm effects especially on the child. (Hoffman, 1975)

Mom's affective responses are central to Tiger's development of emotions.

Kochanska, building on Hoffman's earlier work, argues that children's ability to experience discomfort, guilt, and anxiety associated with actual or anticipated wrongdoing is a necessary but insufficient condition for the emergence of conscience (a self-regulatory component is needed, too), and she sees parental affective responses as central for the development of the relevant emotions. (Maccoby, 1992)

The ability to self-regulate can be undermined by mom's failure to provide early secure attachment for Tiger.

[T]he needs for early secure attachment that, when deficient or disrupted, can result in a **narcissistic disorder**....Early abandonment by maternal figures, either physical or emotional, are at the root of these disorders. Physical abandonment might be parental death, a long hospitalization, and so on, whereas emotional abandonment implies a maternal figure who is emotionally unavailable to her child, is critical and unaccepting of the child's true self, or both. (Asper, 1993)

A Mother's Place

All through history, women worldwide have been taught that motherhood is inferior to careers or that motherhood is an existential trap that precludes a woman's full actualization and denies her equal space as a person. Women have indeed suffered the *weltanschauung* of male dominance, and the resulting self-flagellation for inferiority has no doubt unapologetically compensated through passive aggressiveness or through not activating the full power of motherhood. To refocus this perspective with an existential lens, male and female together, as one identity, perform the task for the continuity of species. Mother's role is complementary to that of the father and her stature equal, even though she is recognized through Tiger rather than for herself. Moreover, her existential advantage in motherhood defines her entire pathway for attaining the power of self. The mother has only to practice 誠-*cheng-authenticity* toward Tiger to fully effect 誠-*cheng-authenticity* in her self-actualizing agenda to "accord with her own nature" (and shine with the luminescence of womanhood). This does not preclude a woman's pursuit of other ventures in life.

Motherhood, as compared to a worldly career, requires more flexibility, preparedness, skills, and a greater range of personal qualities and presence.

It is also a more demanding job, has more accountability perils and longer-range goals, and requires time, finesse, perseverance and presence. While the world does not afford it glamour, equality or

comparable remuneration, mom does embrace her “second nature” through her association with her child, a fellow human being, by intensifying the natural state of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* through any number of ways that Tiger needs for his nurturance. The following psychic states through which mom demonstrates 誠-*cheng-authenticity* towards Tiger are Confucius’ cardinal virtues:

慈 *ci-compassion*—A mom special—all encompassing, yielding, forgiving, smiling, womb-like embrace characteristic of maternal love

恆 *heng-enduring*—mom’s job description, constancy and perseverance, around the clock, lifetime devotion

樂 *le-joy*—deep state of joy that touches the core of being

愛 *ai-love*

忠 *zhong-loyalty*

孝 *xiao-filiality*—the natural bond between parent and child

仁 *ren-love of humanity*

信 *xing-trust*

義 *yi-obligation with love*

和 *he-harmony, peace*

In service to Tiger, a conscientious mom would activate her QV-psychological faculties of cognition, volition, emotions and conation with selfless devotion, thus deepening the quality of her own state of 誠-*cheng-authenticity*.

Q-知-*zhi-cognition*: Mom knows or will learn what’s best for Tiger

R-定-*ding-volition*: Mom is completely willing and compliant in Tiger’s service

S-靜-*jing-emotions*: Any of mom’s emotions are variations on love for Tiger

T-安-*an-fit*, —most abiding fit between experience and the innermost authentic self

U-慮-*lu-deliberation*—mom figuring out the best Tiger strategies

V-得-*de-attainment*—Mom probably scores more

Mom fulfills every one of these virtuous states of being just by allowing herself to fill with the state of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* towards Tiger. Through the purity and intensity of mom’s 誠-*cheng-authenticity*, motherhood could be synonymous with *virtue*. Tiger can place his gratitude for all the days of his life on one altar, which includes the complementary father. Hence the special recognition given to the primal dyad of filial piety.

Classic Moms

We do not know much about the mother of either Confucius or Mencius, other than that they did not seek any other role or identity. Being mother was their vocation and legacy, and as history would have it, Chinese civilization is heavily indebted to them as mothers. Each valued the tiger in her son and enabled him to accord with his nature—to become himself. While we do not have any eyewitness accounts of their personalities or their activities, we can easily vouch for the competence of the role they fulfilled.

5. WHAT MOM DOES WITH TIGER: THE MOM SCHOOL

The gist of a story, told by now for two thousand years, of the mother of the sage Mencius (372-289 BCE) taking the initiative in her son's socialization by moving thrice, sounds quite contemporary.

Mencius' father died when he was young; consequently, his mother had to bear the full responsibility of his upbringing. As a boy, he was quick to imitate. At first, his residence was near a cemetery and he would imitate the way the workers dug graves. Next, he lived near a marketplace where he would imitate the way peddlers sold their wares. His mother finally decided that she should select a better neighborhood so that the son could have the right environment to mold his future.

Being a woman of refinement, she wanted her son to be a scholar and to become a civic leader. With this hope in mind, therefore, she chose a residence near the educational institutions and entered her son in one of the primary schools. (L. Hong 1965)

From this story we find that Mencius' mother, if not a "tiger mom," was conscientious and wise—and well-educated, probably as well as today's attachment mom.

The literature on achievement consistently has shown that parent education is important in predicting children's achievement (Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn, & Duncan, 1994; Haveman & Wolfe, 1995; Smith, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997).

As Mencius, like all children, would emulate others and absorb the environmental culture, she would situate him in a place and among children of his age that would best benefit him in development. At home she was determined to supervise his preparation for his future and to encourage the development of the integrity of his sense of self, and by extension, prepare him for successful stages of maturation.

Nor was her initiative a one-way street. One study shows

more capable children tended to elicit higher levels of maternal involvement and the provision of more appropriate play materials during the 6- to 12-month period, whereas higher levels of maternal involvement tended to produce more capable children during the 12- to 24-month period. (Bradley, Caldwell and Elardo, 1979)

Another study shows that a mother's long-term attitude influences Tiger's compliance.

Mothers in the long-term-goal condition behaved more nurturantly prior to the task and used more reasoning and character attributions than did mothers in the short-term condition. ... Children in the long-term condition were more compliant and less negativistic than children in the short-term condition. (Kuczynski, 1984)

After the initial stage of establishing (1) basic trust, marked by the integration of hope and drive in Tiger, mom now follows through with Erikson's Stages 2-5, where the integration markers are (2) autonomy--will power and self-control, (3) initiative--purpose and direction, (4) industry--competence and method, and (5) ego-identity--fidelity and loyalty. Confucius' incorporating Erikson's five into one—with the comment that, "At fifteen, I set my will on learning"—reveals their consensus that the most critical aspect of growth through adolescence is the development of the will.

By late adolescence, Tiger has internalized mom's patient guidance towards his self-regulation, discernible in his ability to make informed decisions, direct his will and take responsibility for himself. He is ready to extend beyond the mom-Tiger microcosm to participate in the Mitwelt (community)-Tiger

dyad to depend on Mitwelt's nurture for biological survival as well as for its womb for its civilizing acculturation. He receives the conscious awareness of his existential journey from Mitwelt in partaking in the collective awareness brought forth in his era. While Tiger's own journey is for himself, his advancement contributes to the advancement of the Mitwelt. Moreover, the way to his personal goal is through the practice of 誠-*cheng-authenticity*, which is worked through the Mitwelt, with which he develops a cohesive relationship. The Mitwelt, in other words, is conceived of as a totality (with many varieties of Tiger). All the separate Tiger wills can theoretically join in as one will—at least with the desire to make the world a better place.

The elements of integration-- basic trust, autonomy, initiative, and ego-identity--that enable Tiger's being able *to set his own will on learning* are no doubt infused by mom. In a dyad integral for 15 years, mom has been preparing him in four areas: (1) a lifespan perspective, (2) the development of will, (3) the practice of 誠-*cheng-authenticity*, and (4) the management of his daimonic resource. In Confucius' DZ-thesis, these four essential points are focused on Tiger's entrée into Mitwelt, which Confucius regards not as a reality of life that we cannot escape, but rather as our existential community with, by, and through whom we pursue our own existential acorn-oak journey.

(1) Lifespan perspective

Delivering the lifespan perspective explicitly to a child ("Thou shalt be a wise old man") may or may not make an impression, but cultivating long-range attitudes, without the need for rationales, will develop implicit attitudes to serve Tiger throughout life. In being presented with situations in early life, Tiger develops his own constructs of reality to draw upon throughout life.

[Tiger] was constructing what he was seeing. He was not just passively experiencing reality, but rather was actively building it. (Wegner, 1977)

Thus, from the Mitwelt projections on human growth and development, through his family Tiger observes what it means to be an adult, to be a contributing member of society, to be in lifelong accord with one's own self-actualizing drive, and to be an elder with integrity and wisdom. As traditional Chinese customs accord veneration to senescence, Tiger will have implicit expectations of himself in assuming his role as elder. The elder will be honored for the person he has come to be, for his active contributions throughout his life, and for his presence as the sum total of the range of developmental possibilities. (The elder doesn't have to stress to make a final statement, as life will have given him enough challenges. His own direction through his days and the institution of filial piety will honor him accordingly.)

In addition to implicit attitudes, mom will actively supervise Tiger's development of his given psychic faculties into a humanized Tiger. The resources at home being insufficient, mom draws on the Mitwelt. Such is the exemplary story told of the moves initiated by the mother of the sage Mencius. As Confucius's fascinating autobiography suggests, his own psychic maturation through his seven decades follows the Q-V psychic progression as a sequential series of stages. Although each of the Q-V faculties is active at all times throughout life, the full development of each depends on the maturation of one previous to it. Thus, Confucius' full attainment (no separation of self from the universe) at 70 is dependent on his integrating, at age 60, the Mitwelt within the scheme of the universe. This attainment, in turn, is dependent on his integration, at age 50, of the mandate of Heaven for himself, as a human being, to self-actualize into a second nature. Prior to this, his attainment at age 40 to cut through

delusion, reveals the clarity in his Eigenwelt (subject self), which would otherwise have been stymied by emotional entanglements and daimonic drives serving non-actualizing pursuits.

Prior to directing emotions and daimon to more appropriate channels, Confucius, at 30, was fully established as a person in his own right in Mitwelt, the result of the employment of the arc of will to guide his destiny. This will is strong, attributable to early dyadic supervision; and the information that guides the will comes from education at home and through the Mitwelt. Thus, by age 15, when body and brain come to maturity, Confucius is also ready for his own decision to “set his will on learning.” (Pinto, 2011)

By setting the QV-apparatus into motion, the dyadic mom directs Tiger’s ability to control his own self-actualization by first extending the boundaries of knowledge (Zone Q). She then assists him in strengthening his will (Zone R), for that is his essential tool to advancing through the stages of life. In the meantime, she also assists his continual practice of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* and management of his daimonic resource, both of which would throw him off track in Zones S and T if not properly utilized. The process of coming to Tiger’s second nature is akin to that of any number of pursuits in life, such as the training and practice to become a musician.

(2) The development of will

The dyadic mom cannot control Zone Q-knowledge, nor is she qualified, but she can save the day (life) through strengthening the will. Again, we do not have anecdotes on Confucius’ mom, but Mencius clearly demonstrates that his life is an extension of his mother’s broad supervision, specifically of her awareness of the critical role of will and the diligence of her own will power to press Mencius towards his own actualization.

She began by placing Mencius in an environment where the context would provide intelligent choices to set his will.

Young Mencius returned home one day and was questioned by his mother about his lesson in school. When he was unable to answer, she was greatly disappointed. In order to impress upon him the importance of learning, he took a knife and cut into shreds the cloth that she was weaving. Greatly surprised, Mencius asked the mother why she did it. With an unmistakable air of seriousness, she replied: “When you failed to learn what the teacher had taught you in school, you were like that cloth—useless and a waste of time!”

Mencius felt ashamed. He was so impressed by this incident that he decided to devote the necessary time and energy to study in order to comply with his mother’s wishes. From then on, he continued to make steady progress in school. As he grew older, he studied under [Zisi], the grandson of Confucius, and finally became the most capable and noted student of the Confucian School.

As his mother had hoped, Mencius was then ready to assume his civic duty and try to serve his country....(L. Hong, 1965)

No doubt about it. Mencius attained not only success, but super stature, second only to Confucius, with their combined platforms of fame and success serving the purpose of assisting humanity towards actualization.

Contemporary research supports the essential role played by the dyad and can help our appreciation for mom’s presence and responsiveness in building the conscience and will that underpinned Mencius’ development. A study done on conscience-building highlights the important role played by mom’s flexibility in timing and tailoring her response to her toddler’s temperament.

The moderation model was supported for predicting conscience at Time 2 ($n = 99$, age 4), and, to a lesser extent, at Time 3 ($n = 90$, age 5). For children fearful as toddlers, maternal gentle discipline, presumably capitalizing on the optimal level of anxious arousal, promoted conscience at Time 2 (age 4). For children fearless as toddlers, perhaps insufficiently aroused by gentle discipline, alternative socialization mechanisms, presumably capitalizing on mother-child positive orientation (secure attachment, maternal responsiveness), promoted conscience at Times 2 and 3 (ages 4 & 5). Developmental interplay of temperament and socialization in emerging morality is discussed. (Kochanska, 1997)

Research also suggests that Tiger would be more compliant when mom's presence in the dyad is oriented towards him.

Supportive behavior occurred more when emotions were child oriented. In addition, as depressive symptoms increased, mothers reported fewer child-oriented concerns, fewer child-oriented positive emotions, and more parent-oriented negative emotions. They also displayed less supportive behavior. Findings suggest that support for children's immediate intentions may be regulated by parents' concerns, immediate emotions, and depressive symptoms. (Dix *et al.*, 2004)

Mom finds her intuitive determination to set up the scaffolding of Tiger's will supported by both Confucius' DZ-thesis as well as by Rollo May's analysis of will. Both schools agree that Tiger's essential human experience of identity is determined by the will that makes his choices and carries them out. In fact, the two schools trace a similar path of the will, from its inception to final realization in the power of one's own person. (Pinto, 2012)

The DZ-thesis establishes the path of will in these steps: beginning with 格物 *gewu-investigation of things* and 致知 *zhizhi-extension of knowledge* → 誠意 *chengyi-intention/meaning* → 志 *zhi—will* → 定 *ding, "to set,"* → 勇 *yong—courage* → 立 *—to stand or establish* → 權 *-cuan-power of person*.

May's arc of will, based on the chapter on will in his book *Love and Will* (1969) suggests more intimate interfacing among these elements.

Cognition → wish → want → intentionality → meaning (commitment) → will → direction for action → attention → conation → courage → push by and enlistment of the daimonic → power as potentiality to push for the future → power of person.

The existential will begins with the existential wish towards self-actualization, and is directed through intention and attention, and powered by courage to fruition of the self in accordance with the existential mandate. The full accordance with nature yields the full power of the self that is palpable in an individual's presence.

A contemporary study on parenting as an existential journey, based on Rollo May's work, describes the process of parenting that nurtures a child's ability to harness courage.

Children's preverbal or bodily trust in their solidarity with their parents is the soil out of which courage is cultivated. From this vital sense of solidarity, children are empowered to take a stand or stand up against even their own parents in acts of self-assertion. From this basic feeling of at-oneness with their parents, children acquire the courage to be and become themselves. Children can move forward, make choices, and take action on their own when they carry with them the assuring presence of that sense of solidarity that they have with their parents. This feeling of communion is the source of their autonomy and freedom. Children who lack this fundamental feeling of connectedness with their parents feel less anchored in the world. They are likely to be either more cowardly or, in compensation, more reckless. They are more prone to experiencing feelings of abandonment, loneliness, and vulnerability. Nourished by a sense of solidarity, children learn to stand firm, or take a firm stand, without becoming unyieldingly stubborn. Their tenaciousness is grounded in a sense of stability and security. Their solidarity is sound. Their steadfastness has been described by some psychologists as a kind of "hardiness." Secured by a basic faith in themselves,

they confront the fearsome with hope and resilience. Anchored in solidarity, their solid sense of self persists in spite of the tension-producing trials and tribulations of everyday living. They remain centered despite the threat of decentering experiences. This is what May means by courage: “[A]ll living beings...require...centeredness...every existing person has the character of self-affirmation, the need to preserve his [or her] centeredness. The particular name we give this self-affirmation in human beings is ‘courage’” (May, 1983, p.27). (Hannush, 2002)

The assumption of power

This topic needs a great deal more attention to separate its general connotation of exertion of power over others from its recognition as Tiger’s full realization of his existential nature. An example of the existential nature of power is probably best provided by Confucius’ autobiographical description of his life journey to “get control” over internal, as well as the external, aspects of existence, i.e., the Eigenwelt or subjective self and the mutuality of its dependence on the Mitwelt.

In not assuming his existential potential, Tiger would not only fly in the face of the existential mandate that is the basis for his life; he would also diminish his being. A study on power, published by the American Management Association, describes the expression of power.

All power resides in conscious choice. This final attribute is the most important one. It involves the focus of power. The actual choice that you make is secondary: of primary importance is that power is actualized only in the conscious act of choosing. (pp5-7)

When personal power is not assumed, Tiger finds himself in ambivalent states of mind that affect life situations such as in applying for a job.

Power Lost: overemphasizing credentials, unclear wants, the fallback, confluence, self-intimidation, responding too quickly, fear of the unknown, fear of rejection, needing guarantees, using qualifiers (justifying myself) (pp.24-44)

Instead of shying away from personal power, it is important for Tiger to realize that power is personal and serves him in streamlining his choices towards attaining his existential goals.

Power is a means to an end, not an end in itself, and it is solely a function of the individual. Resistance is an expression of power, in that not getting what you don’t want is every bit as important and beneficial to you as is getting what you do want.... Getting what you want and avoiding what you do not want are both positive conditions. (Karp 1985, p.65)

(3) The practice of 誠-*cheng*-authenticity for self-regulation

The practice of 誠-*cheng*-authenticity is at the crux of all of Confucius’ teachings. Starting as an existential state in the mom-Tiger dyad, it ultimately is the tool, as well as the goal, for all our endeavors. It can use a great deal more study to detect its prevalence, or lack of, in every aspect of psyche, and, by extension, in every aspect of human endeavor.

In a nutshell, we could say that Confucius’ mediation for optimal human existence is through the reminder to activate 誠-*cheng*-authenticity. A brief description of its need in the psyche can show that 誠-*cheng*-authenticity is really the attitude we desire and the state of being we are at home with, and if we can always remember its ultimate function in serving the mandate “to accord with our nature,” we would be on the express path to actualization.

Zone Q-Cognition—The pursuit of knowledge is our authentic relationship to the universe, especially as the knowledge pertains to our place in and relationship to the universe. The object is to determine what is true and real—an aspect of 誠-*cheng-authenticity*.

Zone R-Volition—Volition is the activation of 誠-*cheng-authenticity* towards a goal, as are intention and attention.

Zone S-Affects—Emotions are generally an authentic expression in themselves, but the 誠-*cheng-authenticity* of emotions can be enhanced in the positive pathways and discouraged in the negative ones. For instance, the “institutionalizing” of filial piety develops from the natural and spontaneous love in the primal mom-Tiger dyad, which Tiger could conceivably neglect as he clamors to individuate. Although we could blame parents for wanting “payback” time for the emphasis on parents in filial piety, 誠-*cheng-authenticity* shows us that there is a debt towards the existential role of parents, as we realize when we become parents ourselves.

For negative emotions, we activate the 誠-*cheng-authenticity* of getting at the truth of situations to uncover Tiger’s authentic existential quest now stunted or thwarted by any combination of factors. In psychotherapy 誠-*cheng-authenticity* is the focus in unravelling to the truth of the client’s ultimate motives. The existential therapist’s attempt to reconnect the client with the roots of Being is the ultimate goal.

Zone T--誠-*cheng-authenticity* with the root of Being offers the greatest challenge as well as the most effective remedy to living well. Again, the mom-Tiger dyad is essential training for Tiger to maintain his original 誠-*cheng-authenticity* towards himself and what he desires. This 誠-*cheng-authenticity* is determined by his essential existential nature rather than by what he thinks he is or wants as influenced by short-lived societal trends or short-sighted personal gains. Mom’s intervention, later to be continued by Tiger himself, is to encourage (1) Tiger’s confidence in his own, authentic voice, (2) Tiger’s 誠-*cheng-authenticity* to the truth of himself. This second aspect, if not monitored, leads to all the defense mechanisms, which, being unconscious lies to himself, sabotage his psychic well-being as well as his endeavors. This subject is also at the heart of the therapy hour.

(4) Managing and tempering the daimon

The daimon is easily detectable in everyone through magnified emotions or charged drives. Such states as agony, ecstasy or enthusiasm are charged by daimonic energy. The energy is readily available and tends to overpower the psyche. It often lingers when not desired (anger) or leaves without notice (inspiration). Depending on its manifestation, it is as welcome as it is dreaded. Whereas it is a major topic of existential psychology, the Confucius DZ-thesis does not have a name for it, although it is alluded to in passages on harmonizing emotions as well as those on using 誠-*cheng-authenticity* to handle behavior. The latter-day sage Mencius, articulating Confucius in greater detail, does name it as a “flood-like 氣-*qi*-energy,” referring to his own management of it.

Upon being asked about his strong points, Mencius answers that he “has an insight into words and is also “good at cultivating his flood-like 氣-[qi].” (IIA *Gongsunniu*, 2) (Lau, 1984)

He acknowledges that this 氣-*qi* –energy is hard to explain.

[I]n the highest degree, [it is] vast and unyielding. Cultivate it for its direct (purpose), and it will bring no harm. It is a *qi* to partner with 義-*yi*-moral obligation and 道-*Dao*-the Way. Without these, it is famished. It is born for gathering 義-*yi*-moral obligation, not for it to be appropriated otherwise. (IIA *Gongsunniu*, 2) (Lau, 1984)

However, in controlling it with the will it can be harnessed and aligned with productive intentions and enjoyed in its passion (such as art and music).

The will is commander over the 氣-*[qi]*-energy while the 氣-*[qi]*-energy is that which fills the body. Where the will arrives there the 氣-*[qi]*-energy halts. Hence it is said, “Take hold of your will and do not abuse your 氣-*[qi]*-energy.

The will, when blocked, moves the 氣-*[qi]*-energy; on the other hand, the 氣-*[qi]*-energy, when blocked, also moves the will. Now stumbling and hurrying affect the 氣-*[qi]*-energy, yet in fact palpitations of the heart are produced. (Lau, 1984)

The power behind will is the daimonic courage that charges the pursuit of the intention. If we do not summon the daimon for any other purpose, the existential quest itself is the one area where we could use a special invocation to charge our existence with greater intensity and meaning.

In the “Child Development Scientists Address National Summit on America’s Children,” California Representative to the U.S. Congress Nancy Pelosi stated that “Kids need

To experience, regulate and manage emotions....

Relate to others in close and secure interpersonal relationships....

Explore and learn from environment....

Also, Cognitive skills, critical social, emotional, and motivation competencies for school (APA online, 2007)

We must first acknowledge the mom-Tiger dyad for setting the foundation for Tiger, just as Paul Tough, in his *New York Times* article (September 14, 2011) on a public school in New York, traces the source to parents,

If your premise is that your students are lacking in deep traits like grit and gratitude and self-control, you’re implicitly criticizing the parenting they’ve received....

6. PAYBACK TIME: FROM TIGER TO MOM

The Chinese ideogram of 孝-*xiao*-filial piety is composed of two parts. The top part is the script for “old,” while the bottom part is the image of the prancing child. Together they signify the intergenerational relationship with the senior partner hovering over the younger or the younger holding the aged person up. The arrangement of the elder on top and the child at bottom, in light of the traditional line of script being written from top to bottom on a page also represents, therefore, the passage of generations from parent to child. Considering the rich nurture and lively interaction in the primal dyad between mom and Tiger, it is no wonder that this ideogram captures as well the joy—and the inherent bi-directional relationship and obligations—and parents want to savor these.

Filial piety, therefore, was recognized as a distinctly human state of being. After all, Confucius had said that even some animals can in some way provide food for another. If a man shows no reverence

towards his parents, where is the difference in his being human? (Analects 2:07) With the recognition of reverence and gratitude as uniquely human capacities came the institutionalized celebration of children's debt to parents--probably because parents give more willingly to nurturing than a child would spontaneously give back in gratitude.

The Analects contains at least twenty passages on filial piety. Almost all extol it as a dyadic relationship in which children are raised morally upright. On the parents' part, they give gladly and freely and don't need reminders to do so. The child, however, has to learn not to take the gifts of the womb for granted, but to recognize the parents' oversight, love and sometimes unpleasant discipline as the highest form of aspiration for the child's authentic self. As the child's capacity for gratitude for parental nurture can easily be evoked and nurtured, based on the bond of basic trust, filial piety was institutionalized principally to perpetuate the child's part. Possibly addressing adult children who leave their childhoods behind, Confucius even calculates that mourning for a parental death should last at least three years in light of the child's first three years of needing to cling to the parental bosom. (Analects 17:21)

In the preface of his book, *Inspiring Deeds of Dutiful Children*, the author describe what is expected of the parents' role to earn such reverential filial devotion.

In general practice, filial piety is required from children toward all the members of the parental generation and above; while guidance and discipline are given by parents to their children's generation and below. Parents, generally, are not only mindful of the children's welfare and advancement, but also endeavor to set good examples for them. (L. Hong, 1968)

Even though parents can be corrected when necessary, well before the twentieth century, filial piety was regarded as a one-way acknowledgment of gratitude and reverence towards parents. For example, the child star who played the role of the nine-year old Pu Yi in Bertelucci's *The Last Emperor* (1987) spelled his name Tijger. Named at a time before the trend to find unique English names or create novel spelling to indicate the unique child, it turned out that deference to filial piety sealed Tijger's name. His grandfather, who gave the child his English name, had first mispronounced the *g* as a *j*. As naming was a somber occasion and grandfather a reverential figure, the *j* was recorded formally.

With the influence of Western individualism, the institution of filial piety has been relegated to an anachronism, although its spirit has survived, and the nuclear, as well as the extended, Chinese family has become possibly stronger for maintaining the authenticity in relationships that tradition had tried to enforce.

Repaying parents

Gratitude towards parents is expressed in two broad categories. The first one is in kind. The children would maintain lifelong relationships with parents, in a state of gratitude, as well as to provide for physical and all other needs for parents in their dotage.

The second category is to internalize parental nurture and live up to their expectations, i.e., through lifelong self-integration and growth. There should be no chasm between mom's expectations and Tiger's maturation if mom has read Tiger right and has helped Tiger to develop in line with his true

nature. Confucius remarks, "Observe what a man has in mind to do when his father is living, and then observe what he does when his father is dead. If, for three years, he makes no changes to his father's ways, he can be said to be a good son." (Analects 1:11)

Parental expectations ought not to be at odds with Mitwelt (society's) expectations. In relinquishing parents and becoming author of his own life, Tiger is expected to find his place in Mitwelt and to continue to develop higher levels of functioning. The expectations of Tiger as he emerges from the primal dyad have been the object of several studies in college and workplace readiness:

APA's *A Reference for Professionals: Developing Adolescents*. lists these expectations:

Higher-level thinking and cognitive competence: logical analysis, introspection, mature decision-making, etc.

Moral development: sense of values and ethical behavior

Identity formation: a realistic and coherent sense of identity

Emotional intelligence

Protective factors and resilience (APA, 2002)

A study published in *The Family Psychologist* (1994) reports on the creation of an index called Adolescent Planful Competence that predicts success later in life. It includes three components: dependability, intellectual (or intelligent) involvement, and self-confidence. (Nurse, 1994)

A publication (2008) sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation lists a number of competencies expected for college and the workplace. Among these are high expectations, goal-setting skills, self-management and learning and motivational strategies, positive mental health, resilience and flexibility for college readiness; for the workplace, a strong work ethic, "including conscientiousness, reliability, professionalism, honesty, punctuality/ timeliness, and good attendance" For social development, conflict resolution, acting appropriately for the context, cross-cultural competence, communication skills, a strong moral character (ethical principles, values, integrity and a social conscience. For cognitive development, critical thinking and reasoning skills, problem-solving skills and lifelong learning skills. (Lippman *et al.*, 2008)

There is no reason to think that Confucius, at fifteen and ready to "set his own will on learning," should not be ready with the competencies listed in these reports, even while he is still waiting for the opportunity to challenge himself in their demonstration.

In addition, the mom-Tiger dyad has prepared him for the longer lifespan view and the even-longer perspective of generations. Moreover, through the existential mandate to "accord with nature," he develops an existential bond with the Mitwelt to work in unison as a team. Through the Mitwelt and beyond, the primal dyad acquires further significance as the microcosmic dyad through which he learns that "The universe is mom to us through mom. Upon emergence from home, we are now the universe's offspring and agent. We reciprocate with responsiveness, compliance, cooperation, respect and realization of expectations--in gratitude."

The balance sheet of the universe

Should we debate on intergenerational gratitude?

Tiger now becomes mom.

Confucius, Mediator: Tiger and Mom, p. 25

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