

MEDITATION

Lay aside all your philosophical, religious, and political opinions, and become almost like an infant, knowing **nothing**. **Nothing**, that is, except what you actually hear, see, feel, and smell. Take it that you are not going anywhere but **here**, and that there never was, is, or will be any other time than **now**. Simply be aware of what actually **is** without giving it names and without judging it, for you are now feeling out reality itself instead of ideas and opinions **about** it. There is no point in trying to suppress the babble of words and ideas that goes on in most adult brains, so if it won't stop, let it go on as it will, and listen to it as if it were the sound of traffic or the clucking of hens. Let your ears hear whatever they want to hear; let your eyes see whatever they want to see; let your mind think whatever it wants to think; let your lungs breathe in their own rhythm. Do not expect any special result, for in this wordless and idealess state, where can there be past or future, and where any notion of purpose? **STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN**...and stay there awhile.....

In the case of the body, it is best to let it go along with things. In the case of the emotions, it is best to let them follow where they will. By going along with things, you avoid becoming separated from them. By letting the emotions follow as they will, you avoid fatigue.

You and the things are the same process – the **NOW-STREAMING TAO**. The feelings that there is a difference is also that process. **THERE IS NOTHING** to do about it. There is only the stream and its myriad convolutions – waves, bubbles, spray, whirlpools, and eddies – and YOU **ARE** THAT.

Bright Dazzlement asked Nothingness, “Sir, do you exist or do you not exist?” Unable to obtain any answer, Bright Dazzlement stared intently at the other’s face and form – all was vacuity and blankness. He stared all day but could see nothing, listened but could hear no sound, stretched out his hand but grasped nothing. “Perfect!” exclaimed Bright Dazzlement. “Who can reach such perfection? I can conceive of the existence of nonexistence, but not of the nonexistence of nonexistence. Yet this man has reached the stage of the nonexistence of nonexistence. How could I ever reach such perfection?”

Contemplative TAOists sit in meditation, but not with the egoistic purpose of improving themselves; it is rather that, having understood intuitively **THAT THERE IS NO WAY TO GO EXCEPT THE WAY OF THE TAO**, they make excursion into that which things cannot escape, and **MEDITATE FOR THE JOY OF MEDITATION** – the FLOW of breath, the sound of roosters in the distance, the light on the floor, the feel of the wind, the stillness, and, alas, all those things which militant activists of both west and the east have, with their frantic purposiveness, learned to disdain. This is the **YIN** aspect of the TAOist life, and thus does not exclude – when it becomes timely – the **YANG** aspect of delighting in vigor, so that the **T’AI CHI CHUAN** discipline of bodily movement, flowing and swinging, is as much appreciated as sitting in meditation.

Alan Watts writes: “I have tried for years, as a philosopher, but in words it comes out all wrong: in black and white with no color...when you try to pin (LIFE) down you get the banality of formal nihilism, wherein the universe is seen as a **‘tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.**’ But this sense of ‘turning to ashes in one’s mouth’ is the result of trying to grasp Something which can only come to you of itself.”

WHEN YOU GET THE MESSAGE, HANG UP THE PHONE.

“But it is difficult in our logic to see that being and non-being are mutually generative and mutually supportive, for it is the great and imaginary terror of Western man that **nothingness** will be the permanent end of the universe. We do not easily grasp the point that the void is creative, and that being comes from nonbeing as sound from silence and light from space.” – Alan Watts

Contemplative **TAO**ists will happily sit with YOGIS and ZENnists for as long as is reasonable and comfortable, but when **nature** tells us that we are “**pushing the river**” we will get up and do something else, or even go to sleep, more than this is certainly spiritual pride.

To end a fight, throw in the **TAO**.

“Something happens to you when you begin to think about this planet as a single living organism. And when you begin to live in that awareness, **nothing is ever again quite the same. Nothing can be the same after that.**” -- Ken Carey

When the SAGE returns to the TAO, he returns the world to TAO.

To move closer to the **TAO** humans need to drop their projects one by one until there is **nothing** for them to do. The proper human role is to respond to the inner dynamism of things and **be a part of their flow**. Not to superimpose on them an order disturbing their pre-established harmony. The **TAO**ist world is alive and self-regulating without humans meddling with it to increase the amount of business in it.

“A catastrophe for mankind could only be avoided by enough people becoming conscious of their own darkness. The only real danger that exists is man himself. We are the origin of all coming evil. So long as we identify with our thoughts, we are their slaves.” – Carl Jung

“All that is weak, lowly, and inadequate is accepted and exalted before God; an appreciation of everything weak, imperfect, and lowly within us. This is true exorcism: to accept everything on oneself that one is ashamed of before the eyes of the world. By doing this, one pins the demons down where they can do the least harm and where they are able to transform -- and in this way casts them out.” -- Alfred Ribb, DEMONS OF THE INNER WORLD

The way of the **TAO** is the art of doing everything by doing **nothing**, or the art of doing **nothing** by doing everything. To return to your original state of being, you must become a master of **STILLNESS**. The goal of **TAO** and the **WAY** to it are one and the same, i.e. “**STILLNESS**”. **Stillness** is the **GOAL** and the **WAY**. Activity for health’s sake, never carried to the point of strain, must alternate with perfect stillness. Sitting motionless as a rock, turn next to stillness of mind. Close the gates of the senses. Fix your mind upon one object or, even better, enter a state of objectless awareness. Turn the mind in upon itself and contemplate the inner radiance. It is easy if you know the way. You must learn to live **frugally**, unstirred by longings for wealth or fame. When passion or desire arises, see it as your enemy, the disturber of your serenity, and quietly **abandon** it. Take things as they come. Be a stranger to care, to anxiety about what you think is going to happen and, above all, to regret for anything that has already happened. Grief and disappointment come from outside yourself. Lock your door on them. Be rid of them. Having done this, you will find that stillness comes easily and of itself. No effort is needed to fix a mind that has turned away from all sources of disturbance. Do not think your life will be empty then. Quite on the contrary, you will find that the greatest joy of all is just **to be** . -- John Blofield

NOTHING RITUAL by PETER CARROLL:

- 1) Lie on the floor, **DO NOTHING**, stay there.
- 2) Do not get up until and unless it is necessary.
- 3) 'NECESSARY' is a word applying to anything in your life which has to be done to further your survival. You will need to exercise natural functions. You may need to eat or drink. You may have to write business letters or travel to paid employment or meet friends and acquaintances. **DO THAT**. And as soon as the task is done, RETURN to lying on the floor and **DO NOTHING**.
- 4) If **NOTHING** is necessary, continue to lie on the floor, even if some days pass. If you are possessed by the URGE to exercise your mind or body - for instance, to paint a picture - **DO SO**. But **DO NOT MOVE** unless you or something within you deems it **ESSENTIAL**.
- 5) **NATURALLY** - and by **NOW** this should go without saying - record the results of this practice. It is possible that you may find that many of your actions are wholly unnecessary and of no discernible benefit to you.

THE MIND OF ONE WHO RETURNS TO THE SOURCE THEREBY BECOMES THE SOURCE.
YOUR OWN MIND IS DESTINED TO BECOME THE UNIVERSE ITSELF.

Man is born with a precious **jewel** in his heart, A "drop of spirit" that unites him to the WAY, the **TAO** within.

Cultivation is a matter of unveiling, of peeling off successive layers of delusion, each more subtle than the one before. A WEEDING-OUT of the superfluous stuff, a process of liberation.

IMMORTALS not only break wind or belch like other people, they **DIE!** Can it have been otherwise? It is well that things die when worn out, and no loss at all, for **LIFE** is immortal and never grows with the birth of things or diminishes with their death. A worn-out object is discarded, life having ample materials to supply the loss. Now do you see? **YOU CANNOT DIE**, because you have never lived. LIFE cannot die, because it has no beginning or end. Becoming an immortal just means ceasing to identify yourself with shadows and recognizing that the only "YOU" is **EVERLASTING LIFE**. Is there anything more, anywhere further to go than the direct intuitive perception that life holds no terrors, that death holds out to us a new and shining garment, that the "RED SLAYER" never slays because there is no one to slay and no such thing as slaying?

If one asked the **TAO**ists such questions as whether they felt they still had far to go before reaching the end of the WAY, their answers might lead one to suppose them idle creatures, pleasantly touched with madness. They would be sure to burst out laughing and protest that they had not thought of going anywhere at all, or do something unconventional such as mooring like a cow or dancing a few steps to indicate the folly of the question. They loved to refer to themselves as **idlers** or **wanderers** "**loafing about the world**", "**Wanderers of the Wastes**", and their eyes would twinkle if they found someone gullible enough to take them seriously.

The adept becomes gloriously immune from whatever grieves and pains, whatever shocks and horrors life may have in store. Though heaven frown and earth darken, neither sun nor storm, lightning nor rain can cause him to lose his WAY. Though his journey through life be full of danger and hardship, he stays safely on the middle path. To know the **ONE** (O-ne) is easy; the difficulty lies in cherishing it to the end. He who manages to do so attains eternal life. Beasts, insects, gods, devils, fire, and sword are all powerless to harm him.

When inordinate desire is banished, no errant thoughts arise. The mind is stilled. The spirit becomes radiant and its brilliance illuminates all the mysteries of the universe; then there is no limit to the marvelous powers attained. When the mind is taken up with world things, the spirit grows dull, man's essence is dissipated and the way cannot be attained. Guarding the **ONE** and keeping the mind fixed upon it demands the ultimate sincerity of purpose. The thoughts must be fixed on pure spirit – the **ONE**. Then will the mind reach out to the mysterious way and the longed-for state attained.

EVEN AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING, THAT OF TRUE MYSTICISM, THE NOTION OF A CHOICE EXISTS.

TAOists never carry frugality (nor anything else) to extremes. One of the **GREAT SECRETS** of their charm is their philosophy of “**NOT TOO MUCH OF ANYTHING**”, which teaches them to combine spritual aspiration with warm humanity. **BY MAKING NO RULES**, there are none to break and cause self-dissatisfaction. The secret is to **SENSE** (IN-TO-IT) when actions are timely and in **ACCORD** with the **WAY** or otherwise. It is a manner of learning to – to – how shall I say? Of, of, -- Now I have it – of learning **how to BE!**

The only way to get rid of an annoying sage is to offer him the Throne.

The mere presence of a **TAOist** sage is enough to ensure harmony and prosperity in an entire region. --- John Blofield, Alan Watts

Learn **tao** BY CONTEMPLATING O'S, AND WAYS OF FILLING, FULFILLING, AND EMPTYING THEM.

CONTEMPLATE THE WHOLE, HOLE, AND ITS TRANSFORMATION.

NOTHING, NOTHING you can think of, can get you into HEAVEN.

IN STILLNESS THEY RETURN.