

# Zen Sage Zen Warrior

Applications Of Zen From Sage To Samurai To Jedi



by A.E.Abedi

A look at zen and how it has been used for the training of sages and samurai. Correlations between Taoist teachings and the Force (& Jedi) are also covered showing that George Lucas borrowed liberally from eastern philosophies.

Analysis of several chapters from the Tao Te Ching show that it is indeed the world's oldest zen poem and that it provided advice for warriors. A commentary on Bodhidharma's "The Transmission Of The Lamp" with his 'Method Of Entering The Tao' is also covered as he is considered to be both the father of Eastern Zen AND Martial Arts.

All in all this book provides you with an overview of how Zen was, and still is, being used in all aspects of life from sage to warrior as it's just a method.

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## Chapter 1

### **An Introduction to Zen**

#### **The Many Views of Zen**

We have all heard the story of the 5 blind men and the elephant. It goes something like this; When encountering an elephant for the first time one blind man touched his leg and declared that an elephant was like a tree trunk. Another blind man grabbed the elephant's trunk and declared that an elephant was like a snake. The third his tail and thought an elephant was a rope. The fourth his ears and decided he was like a bird and the fifth his belly and decided he was like a cow. Each blind man had a different understanding and perspective of an elephant depending on his perspective.

Since zen is an experience and not a philosophy (though philosophy certainly seems to be a part of it) a person can develop a different understanding of zen based on their experience. So this section examines zen from many perspectives to make it as easy to comprehend as possible while trying not to fit it within any particular category permanently.

#### **Zen As A Philosophy Of The Mind**

Sometimes I choose to describe Zen as a philosophy

I call zen "a philosophy" in the original sense of the word as 'the love of wisdom' and a philosopher being 'a lover of wisdom'. True Wisdom, of course, is indefinable or as Socrates put it, "The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing". By these definitions Zen certainly does seem to qualify as a philosophy.

Wisdom in zen is learning to live in a way that is most conducive to a peaceful state of mind that is accepting of all the good and bad that happens in life which you can rarely do anything about. Zen is not about knowledge or know "the truth of existence" or having any sorts of answers to these sorts of questions.

Alan Watts writes in the first paragraph of his book "The Way of Zen":

***"Zen Buddhism is a way and a view of life which does not belong to any of the formal categories of modern Western thought. It is not religion or philosophy; it is not a psychology or a type of science. It is an example of what is known in India and China as a 'way of liberation', and is similar in this respect to Taoism, Vedanta, and Yoga. "***

Siddhartha (AKA The Buddha) taught a 'path of liberation' in other words, if you follow these certain principles you will achieve this goal i.e. "enlightenment" or "nirvana". It's like saying if you hold a baseball bat in a certain way then you will achieve a certain distance for that ball providing you hit the ball thrown at you in a certain way. A slow moving strike of the bat gets you a ball that moves away from you (in the direction of your hit) at a low velocity while hitting the ball harder will get you a higher velocity hit, maybe even a home run if struck just right. The point is that you know that certain actions, when done precisely, will achieve certain specific goals.

In the same way, what Siddhartha was simply teaching (which later came to be called "Buddhism") was just a set of rules that included moral and ethical principles with philosophical insights to help a 'seeker after truth' to focus their minds and find the peace of mind that they were seeking. The ethical and moral rules were for mental balance and not meant to be followed like they were commandments from any God. It was simply advice from a teacher to his students.

Thus;

Zen isn't a religion

*Buddhism has neither creed, code, nor cult. There is nothing that is binding upon the Buddhist, nothing they are supposed to believe in. There is no authoritative code, and there is no positive doctrines that the believer has to ascend to. It's true that Buddhists do observe certain precepts of moral and ethical behavior, however they don't regard the observation of them as following a divine will. It's simply a pledge you take to yourself. And, furthermore, Buddhism has no particular cult. That is to say, there are no specific sacraments or forms or worship that are binding upon all Buddhists. You might then say that Buddhism is a form of philosophy, but again this would not be quite correct because what we understand by philosophy in the west is the elaboration of certain ideas, certain theories about the nature of the universe, the nature of man or the nature of knowledge. And Buddhism is not particularly concerned with elaborating ideas.*

***The nearest thing in our culture to Buddhism, although it isn't exactly the same, is probably psychotherapy. And the reason is that what constitutes the essence of Buddhism is not beliefs, not ideas, not even practices, but a way of experiencing***" Allan Watts – Buddha and Buddhism<sup>1</sup>

Where I differ from Alan Watts and why:

While "philosophy" is not Alan Watt's chosen word for the zen path. when he tries to connect it to a modern example, I think it is an appropriate name for zen for our time as having a philosophy to deal with life in an effective and, dare I say, BALANCED manner... requires a personal philosophy. It's all about how we, as a culture, "see" it, i.e. our "philosophy" about it. Psychotherapy as a modern science has lost all the credibility that it had in Alan Watts time and no there is no cultural position, at the moment for philosophers, so let *finding and teaching paths of liberation* be the new way of describing philosophy. At least for this book.

In Alan Watts time psychology was at the cutting edge of mental science. Hypnosis was entering its modern form. Carl Jung's ideas had spread. A man named Timothy Leary and used an unknown drug called LSD to prove that he could use it to have rehabilitation success rates for prisoners that, until that time, were simply unheard of (and probably still are). In any case, Timothy Leary spent a decade in jail for having a pinch of marijuana on him (which is now legal in several States) and LSD was banned making further research on it illegal.

As psychology was brought to a halt from Big Government on drug research and it's effect on human psychology, another front for psychotherapy opened up which also emerged with unheard of success rates called Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), which led to the modern popularity Hypnosis. Turns out this is something most people can learn in a weekend (the Ancient Greeks had dream temples based on a self-hypnosis concept that was unregulated whatsoever) and one can become pretty good at hypnosis and NLP in just a few months. The techniques work irrespective of theories in textbooks one has about a patients neurosis. Thus making it unprofitable - to the extreme - for big companies. Fortunately, NLP has been around for so long that many people in the psychology profession use it though not in psychiatry as their trade is in drugs and like how everything looks like a nail to a hammer, all the solutions of a psychiatrist's involves drugs.

Here is an extract from a more mainstream source of information;

Article:

1A lecture from 1960

***Why Psychiatry Holds Enormous Power in Society Despite Losing Scientific Credibility It helps to be funded by Big Pharma.<sup>2</sup>***

*While Big Pharma financial backing is one reason psychiatry is able to retain its clout, this is not the only reason. More insidiously, psychiatry retains influence because of the needs of the larger power structure that rules us. And perhaps most troubling, psychiatry retains influence because of us—and our increasing fears that have resulted in our expanding needs for coercion.*

*But before discussing these three reasons, some documentation of psychiatry's lost scientific credibility in several critical areas.*

*Psychiatry's Lost Scientific Credibility*

*DSM Invalidity. In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic bible, the DSM, was slammed by the pillars of the psychiatry establishment. Thomas Insel, director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the highest U.S. governmental mental health official, offered a harsh rebuke of the DSM, announcing that the DSM's diagnostic categories lack validity, and he stated that "NIMH will be re-orienting its research away from DSM categories." Also in 2013, Allen Frances, the former chair of the DSM-4 taskforce, published his book, *Saving Normal: An Insider's Revolt against Out-of-Control Psychiatric Diagnosis, DSM-5, Big Pharma, and the Medicalization of Ordinary Life*.*

*Psychiatric Treatments May Cause Increased Suicide. The FDA—despite protests by the psychiatric establishment—has issued "black box warnings" about the potential for increased suicidality for patients under the age of 25 who use antidepressants. In 2014, AlterNet reported about a University of Copenhagen study comparing Danish individuals who committed suicide to matched controls between the years 1996 and 2009. The researchers found that taking psychiatric medications in a prior year was linked to a 5.8 times increase in suicide; contact with a psychiatric outpatient clinic was associated with an 8.2 times increase; visiting a psychiatric emergency room was linked to a 27.9 times increase; and admission to a psychiatric hospital was linked to a 44.3 times increase in suicide.*

*While correlation by itself does not necessarily mean causation, an accompanying editorial in the same journal where the article was published pointed out that associations with the features detailed in this particular study indicate a good*

<sup>2</sup> Alternet January 6 2015

<http://www.alternet.org/why-psychiatry-holds-enormous-power-society-despite-losing-scientific-credibility>

*possibility of a causal relationship. Among the reasons why psychiatric treatment could well cause increased suicide, besides the adverse effects of medication, is the stigma and trauma of treatment, as the editorial authors state: "It is therefore entirely plausible that the stigma and trauma inherent in (particularly involuntary) psychiatric treatment might, in already vulnerable individuals, contribute to some suicides."*

*Corruption of Psychiatry by Big Pharma. Big Pharma heavily funds university psychiatry departments, sponsors conferences and continuing education for psychiatrists, advertises in their professional journals, and pays well-known clinicians and researchers to be speakers and consultants. I documented in 2007 and updated in 2012 how virtually every way the public and doctors get information about mental health has been corrupted by drug company dollars. In 2008, congressional investigations of psychiatry revealed that major psychiatric institutions such as the American Psychiatric Association and several "thought leader" psychiatrists, including Harvard psychiatrist Joseph Biederman, were on the take from drug companies, creating obvious conflicts of interest and further damaging psychiatry's credibility.*

For all the above reasons, and others, I differ with Alan Watts on calling Zen 'like psychotherapy'. Philosophy seems to have no positive or negative connotations in our culture, in our time, as it simply doesn't exist on a basic educational level so no one has had a chance to destroy it yet. So philosophy is the best word for our time, I think.

## **How Zen Differs From Traditional Views Of Philosophy**

Since this is a path of mental liberation it is meant to be experienced and only talked about enough so that it CAN be experienced.

A philosophy, while originally meaning the love of wisdom (which is an infinite search for knowledge, i.e. with no end in sight if Socrates wisdom is anything to judge by), it is now about beliefs that are wrapped around something the "philosopher" has taken to be an inarguable fact (to students of philosophy who generally exist as a tiny minority in college populations).

Descartes, for example, began his philosophy with the assumption that *"I think therefore I am"*<sup>3</sup> and goes on from there piling one assumption upon the other. Clearly Descartes hadn't heard of meditation in his time. Millions of people have

3 Meditations on First Philosophy by Rene Descartes (1641)



learnt how to stop their endless mind chatter and silence the mind since Descartes time. Add the science of meditation to the facts available to us and Descartes philosophy falls apart like a game of Jenga where the foundation stick, holding everything together has been pulled out thus making the entire structure fall.

Philosophy rests on assumptions and is often subject to such problems. To begin with Descartes stops thinking when asleep and consequently ceases to exist every night. So his philosophy had many holes in it but for people of his time, all high on coffee and conversation as their main past times, this must have been acceptable. Zen also rests on assumptions but the end point isn't a theory of the universe or of existence but one of experience.

Since the experience of Zen is the same, even if a different set of assumptions are used to get you to that experience, it is still the same thing. In fact, Zen can be said to have a fluid philosophy in that how it is taught differs greatly from teacher to teacher and time to time.

Zen is about letting go of thoughts and often includes meditation practice of no-mind and no-thoughts. Descartes wouldn't exist in Zen, or at least his philosophy wouldn't or couldn't exist. Yet I can put zen practice into words and thus have formed my own philosophy of how to explain zen (or 'dharma' in meditation, i.e. it's originally a meditation technique extended to all aspects of life). In other words, just because Zen doesn't fit the format of philosophy doesn't mean it can't be talked about and explained in a philosophical manner that gets the meaning across.

### **The Difference Between Spirituality In The East VS The West**

In the east, particularly Ancient China, spirituality is about a mental attitude that is maintained. While in the west, spirituality has this otherworldly tinge around it. A Saint in the west is "Holy", a "Man/Woman of God", "Untouchable by the Devil" etc. A Saint in Ancient China of the Taoist or Zen path are often represented by smiling and laughing individuals who are even portrayed being clumsy or drunk. In the west the idea of "holy" separates the individual from ordinary acts and he is often portrayed with a halo around his head with everyone around him in awe or being clumsy or caught up in the world. This idea of holy doesn't seem to have existed in Ancient China beyond a form of ancestor worship common to ancient tribal peoples, i.e. one respected and revered ones lineage, both personal lineage and cultural lineage. If you compare and contrast these two concept of holiness you realize that one is "holy" while the other is just human.

That is the basic point to be understood here, Taoist "spirituality", which has been carried on by zen, is distinctly human in every way. While the west reveres its

spiritual leaders as holy men or women, in the east they are revered as accomplished human beings who have learned to flow with life. In the west the spiritual people are above the people. In the east the “spiritual” people are more human than anyone else. They lack the basic inhibition trained into people as youths so they live instinctively rather than through a belief system.

I have been putting spiritual in the parenthesis like this “spiritual”, because the differences between east and western conceptions of spirituality is so large that I feel uncomfortable using the same word as it doesn’t convey the meaning of the words in it’s context.

### **Zen Can’t Be Described Thus, ‘Those who know do not speak’**

Many People will recite as if by rote that, “One who knows does not talk. One who talks does not know.” suggesting that a true zen practitioner says nothing.

I would like to point out to those individuals that this quote that they think describes all of zen is chapter number 56 of the 81 chapter Tao Te Ching... so the source document contradicts them on this claim. Also, the rest of the stanza goes something like this:

*1. One who knows does not talk. One who talks does not know. Therefore the sage keeps his mouth shut and his sense-gates closed.*

In other words, what this ancient zen POEM is describing, what seems to be, a meditation technique and probably is one of the source documents for the “vow of silence” practice that some monks are famous for. A look at the rest of the chapter suggests that the writer is describing a meditation technique based on the idea of ‘words can cloud your experience’ and what a person can gain from this practice and what sort of results one can observe for such a person;

*2. "He will blunt his own sharpness, His own tangles adjust; He will dim his own radiance, And be one with his dust."*

*3. This is called profound identification.*

*4. Thus he is inaccessible to love and also inaccessible to enmity. He is inaccessible to profit and inaccessible to loss. He is also inaccessible to favor and inaccessible to disgrace. Thus he becomes world-honored.*

Another translator (Legge) puts it as:

*He who knows (the Tao) does not (care to) speak (about it); he who is (ever ready to) speak about it does not know it.*

Yet another, more poetic, translation of the same chapter of the poem;

*He (who knows it) will keep his mouth shut and close the portals (of his nostrils). He will blunt his sharp points and unravel the complications of things; he will attemper his brightness, and bring himself into agreement with the obscurity (of others). This is called 'the Mysterious Agreement.'*

*(Such an one) cannot be treated familiarly or distantly; he is beyond all consideration of profit or injury; of nobility or meanness:--he is the noblest man under heaven.*

Clearly the point of chapter 56 out of 81 of the world's oldest zen poem isn't that one can't speak about zen but more along the lines of, *'one shouldn't be talking as much as practicing it'*.

### **“Zen Is So Mysterious”**

Other people will say that zen is so mysterious that you have to talk in it in the negative, i.e. describe what it's not like rather than what it is like because there are no words to describe the experience. Problem of just talking in the negative is that you are still using words and words convey a conception so you are providing a person with mental impressions you have just chosen to accept these descriptions as the right way to give a person mental impressions about zen.

You can talk about zen by describing it just like just like you can describe the taste of strawberries by saying sweet and tangy. You still can't convey the accurate experience of eating a strawberry but you can provide mental impressions (words/descriptions) that indicate the right direction to look in, like a finger pointing towards the moon.

Words lack the ability to convey the experience of eating and tasting a strawberry. In the same way you can never understand zen by words alone because it must be experienced.

*“Were language adequate, it would take but a day to fully set forth the Tao [The Path Of Zen]. Not being adequate, it takes time to explain material existences. Tao is something beyond material existences. It cannot be conveyed either by words or by silence”* Chang Tzu

### **The Concept Of The Self (Or Lack Of It) In Zen**

In ancient India a concept developed called Maya which means illusion, i.e. since the world is considered to be impermanent (constantly changing) and you can interpret the world in any way with your mind, it is considered to be an illusion.

For example a tree can be seen just as a separate plant or as something which connects with the earth and sky and the animals around it; (i.e. a tree can be seen as an object OR as a pattern of the environment which will disappear when the pattern changes such as a change in the weather patterns which can change patterns of growth from green regions to desert and back again as it does in changing ice ages).

Thus a common though ancient perspective on attachment was formed that if you hold onto your psychological and mental foundations, your images to reality, you are holding onto something that will dissolve away... eventually. SO you are holding on to something which is inherently unstable, whether it be life which comes and goes with birth and death or the features of the landscape around you.

Even mountains grow or shift and/or erode over time, though generally too slowly to notice unless man changes its nature, by say, cutting all the trees then a safe mountain can become a mudslide hazard and fall apart etc.

This understanding of the fluidity of life and living life, not as a Utopia but an ever changing pattern, is at the root of the ancient psychological position of learning to be 'detached' from the world (the practice of non-attachment).

Siddhartha (AKA The Buddha) essentially agreed with this philosophical position of ancient Indian philosophy but took it one step further by saying that not only is the world an illusion but so is the self (the part of us that we refer to when we say "I").

To put it in other words, you are not the person you were a year ago and you can probably see the ways in which you have changed or grown in the last year or 10 years or 30 years. You probably see the world in a different way than you did a year ago or 10 years ago or 30 years ago. Since you see the world differently you have a different image of yourself as well in relation to the world. You, at the very least, DEFINE (see) yourself differently than you did a year or 5 or 10 or 20 or 30 years ago.

What you are capable of, what you are, what you like most... all of these definitions tend to change for **every** person given enough time or given changes in circumstances of life.

The ancient philosophers noticed that as soon as you 'imagined' an event happening to you or your role in any situation, you first have to PLACE yourself IN it;

i.e. you have to imagine your role or character, then you decide what to do or how to feel. Now, this tends to happen very fast for most events as your story and behaviour has already been established over time.

In other words, every time you imagine yourself or a situation that you are in, you are, in a sense, recreating yourself (which is what a Zen practitioner means when they say "death & rebirth").

In the Scientific American MIND magazine an interview with neuroscientist Eric Kandel also proves the same concept of Siddhartha's which is now a fundamental part of Mahayana Buddhism or simply 'Zen Buddhism'.

**Here is how Eric Kandel defines the memory you have of your "self":**

Scientific American Mind magazine in an interview with the Nobel laureate Neuroscientist Eric Kandel<sup>4</sup>:

*Mind: We tend to think of memory as a kind of library that holds a record of events and facts that can be retrieved as needed. Is this an accurate metaphor?*

*Kandel: No, memory is not like that at all. **Human memory reinvents itself all the time.** Every time you remember something, you modify it a little bit, in part dependent on the context in which you recall it. That is because the brain's storage is not as exact as written text. It is always a mixture of many facades of the past event: images, pictures, feelings, words, facts and fiction—a "re-collection" in the true sense.*

Modern neuro-science agrees with the Zen Buddhist idea of an impermanent self. As Eric Kandel points out that, "Every time you remember something, you modify it a little bit, in part dependent on the context in which you recall it." In other words you recreate your image of yourself to fit the new situation. If the self was something permanent and real, then your image of yourself would always remain the same. The fact that you can consciously or unconsciously change your image of yourself and react to situations in a new way - or just create a new you - proves that the self is something you make up as part of living in society.

<sup>4</sup> In Search of Memory: An Interview with Nobel Laureate Eric Kandel By Steve Mirsky, May 24, 2006

**What does this mean?** This means that you are not limited to being any particular 'self' or person. If you feel like you have low self-esteem you can change that self. If you feel like you are not comfortable in social situations, you can change that image too. Any limiting image you have of yourself can be changed as you create your 'self' or how you want to be.

This is how Alan Watts described the illusory self from a zen perspective which was illuminating for me and may it be for you too;

*"The ability of a pattern to contain elements that represent its former states is what we call memory. In engineering language we would call it feedback, because feedback is the system whereby any system of energy is enabled to record the results of its own action so that based upon that record it can adapt, and as it were, make plans for the future. It can in other words, correct its action. So because human beings have memory, the capacity of the pattern of the nervous system to record its former states, the human being can make predictions about the future and in general control its activity.*

*But from this extraordinary marvelous ability there arises a confusing by-product. And that is this feeling that here is a constant entity, like the screen of a television. In other words, because a certain element of permanence runs through these changing patterns, this permanent behavior of the pattern, or permanently repeating behavior of the pattern, gives the impression of some substantial mind stuff or mind entity underlying the pattern and upon which the pattern is recorded. It's the same sort of illusion that arises when, for example, I take a flashlight and rotate it in the dark, and you see a continuous circle of light. It appears that the light leaves a track behind it because the moving light leaves a memory upon the retina of the eye, and that is what gives us the illusion of seeing a constant circle of light.*

*And so a similar illusion arises from the repetitive pattern of the nervous system, and gives us the impression that there is this constant thing, the experiencer, who lasts, and endures like a substance from the past, through the present, and into the future."* Alan Watts – Lecture on Mahayana Buddhism

## **Zen Is Iconoclastic To The Extreme**

Iconoclastic means a person who likes to break idols. A zenist likes to break mental idols.

Since everything has it's being in a mental conception (a belief or a label to categorize experience is what gives an object it's meaning), there is nothing zen

can't go beyond. Nothing in the material world is meant to last and ideas are from the material world so they aren't meant to last as well.

In *Religion of the Samurai*<sup>5</sup>, Kaiten Nukariya writes;

*The Scripture is no more nor less than the finger pointing to the moon of Buddhahood. When we recognize the moon and enjoy its benign beauty, the finger is of no use. As the finger has no brightness whatever, so the Scripture has no holiness whatever. The Scripture is religious currency representing spiritual wealth. It does not matter whether money be gold, or sea-shells, or cows. It is a mere substitute.*

And;

*Zen is completely free from the fetters of old dogmas, dead creeds, and conventions of stereotyped past, that check the development of a religious faith and prevent the discovery of a new truth. Zen needs no Inquisition. It never compelled nor will compel the compromise of a Galileo or a Descartes. No excommunication of a Spinoza or the burning of a Bruno is possible for Zen.*

*On a certain occasion Yoh Shan (Yaku-san) did not preach the doctrine for a long while, and was requested to give a sermon by his assistant teacher, saying: "Would your reverence preach the Dharma to your pupils, who long thirst after your merciful instruction?" "Then ring the bell," replied Yoh Shan. The bell rang, and all the monks assembled in the Hall eager to bear the sermon. Yoh Shan went up to the pulpit and descended immediately without saying a word. "You, reverend sir," asked the assistant, "promised to deliver a sermon a little while ago. Why do you not preach?" "Sutras are taught by the Sutra teachers," said the master; "Çastras are taught by the Çastra teachers. No wonder that I say nothing." This little episode will show you that Zen is no fixed doctrine embodied in a Sutra or a Çastra, but a conviction or realization within us. To quote another example, an officer offered to Tüing Shan (To-zan) plenty of alms, and requested him to recite the sacred Canon. Tüing Shan, rising from his chair, made a bow respectfully to the officer, who did the same to the teacher. Then Tüing Shan went round the chair, taking the officer with him, and making a bow again to the officer, asked: "Do you see what I mean?" "No, sir," replied the other. "I have been reciting the sacred Canon, why do you not see?" Thus Zen does not regard Scriptures in black and white as its Canon, for it takes to-days and tomorrows of this actual life as its inspired pages.*

5 The Religion of the Samurai, by Kaiten Nukariya, [1913] - Chapter 3: The Universe If The Scripture Of Zen - See Taoist-Books.com for full book download.

### What Is Nirvana?

Nirvana is a very revealing word. It simply means to *extinguish* or to *blow out*. In other words, it's to let go of yourself and experience the world directly without ego or any story to explain the world whatsoever, thus having 'blown out' the structure that was holding your world view together, setting you free of ignorant beliefs.

Put another way, Nirvana is to live without an ego or even a personality as it has extinguished. You live directly from the mind. You live "at cause" with the world, you being the one being "caused" to do things, as described in the yoga sutras, "*for those beings who are merged in unitive consciousness, the world is the cause*". How can it be any other way? When your personality and attachment to desires and results is gone you can't help but pick up stuff from the outside to fill the void. You live like the description in the Tao Te Ching managing your *affairs without doing anything*<sup>6</sup>, as you have no desire for or against managing your affairs.

### What is "Enlightenment"?

Enlightenment has been described as a mental trick that takes you from being a frustrated member of the rat race to just a person living life. Bodhidharma simply defines enlightenment as '*awareness, supreme awareness*'.

Other's will describe it as '*being aware of and living from your Original Mind*', for example zen scholar D.T. Suzuki uses the word "Reason" as the proper translation for the 'tao' in his translation of the Tao Te Ching indicating he thinks Tao refers to the zen state. Suzuki also described enlightenment as "*the same as ordinary every living except you are two inches off the ground*". He's referring to the mental weight of one's worries or beliefs being released. It's like discovering you were walking around in lead shoes and you feel lighter after taking off the lead shoes and walking around.

In zen, enlightenment can come to anyone at any time. As one writer explains it's about attaining enlightenment or awareness of the Original mind or "*mushin*":

*In the attainment of this state of mind (mushin), some are quicker than others. There are some who attain to a state of mushin all at once by just listening to a discourse on the Dharma, while there are others who attain to it only after going through all the grades of Bodhisattvaship<sup>7</sup> such as the ten stages of faith, the ten*

6Chapter 2 verse 3 of the Tao Te Ching as translated by J. Legge in 1891

7In this context it just means an *apprenticeship*



*stages of abiding, the ten stages of discipline, and the ten stages of turning-over. More or less time may be required in the attainment of mushin, but once attained it puts an end to all discipline, to all realization and yet there is really nothing attained. It is truth and not falsehood. Whether this mushin is attained in one thought or attained after going through the ten stages its practical working is the same and there is no question of the one being deeper or shallower than the other. Only the one has passed through long ages of hard discipline.*

Basically it says that no matter how much you meditate or don't meditate, 'when you get it, then you get it'. Since zen is a state of mind which is natural, it simply has to be understood to be practiced and thus the smart ones will get enlightened fast and the slow witted will get it slowly or never. But once zen is attained, it is the same for everyone in it's basic understanding and experience.

One ancient master describes the enlightened philosopher in this manner:

*Knowest thou that leisurely philosopher who has gone beyond learning and is not exerting himself in anything?*

*He neither endeavours to avoid idle thoughts nor seeks after the Truth;*

*[For he knows that] ignorance in reality is the Buddha-nature,*

*[And that] this empty visionary body is no less than the Dharma-body.<sup>8</sup>*

### What is reincarnation?

In zen, death & rebirth (reincarnation) is seen as a psychological phenomenon following from the illusion of the self.

An ancient Zen Scholar, Hui-Neng's Tan Ching, Writes;

*What is Paramita? This is a Sanskrit term of the Western country. In Yang it means "the other shore reached". When the meaning (artha in Sanskrit) is understood, one is detached from birth and death. When the objective world (visaya) is clung to, there is the rise of birth and death; it is like the waves rising from the water; this is called "this shore". When you are detached from the objective world, there is no birth and death for you; it is like the water constantly running its course: this is "reaching the other shore". Hence Paramita.<sup>9</sup>*

8 Yoka Daishi's "Song Of Enlightenment" - Manual of Zen Buddhism by Suzuki

9 Hui Neng's Tan Ching - Manual Of Zen Buddhism by Suzuki

The idea being expressed here: When you cling to the world you have to create to create a self to deal with each new situation, thus you experience 'death and rebirth' (of the ego). When you let go and dwell in the zen state your consciousness stays steady and thus you don't experience birth and death (of the ego).

For example: When you try and do good deeds you are trying to create a new self. By working on being better and better, you are destroying an old way of being (the old 'self') and you are creating a new one. Your 'self', i.e. how you define or imagine yourself to be, is going through death and rebirth.

## Chapter 2

### **Applications Of Zen From Sage To Samurai**

#### **The Path Of The Samurai<sup>10</sup> and The Path Of The Sage<sup>11</sup> - Side By Side Using The 10 Oxherding Pictures**

As I began my study of Zen in earnest I realized that zen by itself is just a technique. Whether one makes it spiritual or a means to help a warrior, it is a life path/culture choice and not something that comes prepackaged in Zen.

In other words, it's one's own cultural conceptions that dictate the best path and means for training a new student to zen. In the ancient Chinese system the path of the Sage was taught. One had to purify their mind-body with meditation and culturally accepted forms of asceticism. In Japan they had a feudal system and it was the Samurai that first adopted zen. Since the Samurais ruled Japan in the early days their religion of zen eventually reached every level of the Japanese culture making Japanese Zen the path of the warrior as their training system was about hardening the person for battle and learning to let go and flow in fighting as only zen can teach a person.

The following is the training format used to train people in Zen. The first one was made Japan and was used by warriors (Samurai) and the second was created by Chinese monks and was used by people pursuing that path (I call it the path of the Sage, far eastern style).

While both paths claimed that one could reach enlightenment immediately upon hearing the explanation of zen or slowly or never, their approaches are distinct from one another. The Samurai method involves learning to attain spontaneity and has thus emerged in all art forms in Japan that are Japanese by tradition. The Sage method also has that goal but in addition to this has additional training to "purify" the mind that is deemed necessary before one properly experiences zen. It's only the

10The Religion of the Samurai - A Study of Zen Philosophy and Discipline in China and Japan By Kaiten Nukariya [1913]

11Manual Of Zen Buddhism - Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki

Samurai and the ancient Japanese culture with its offshoots that embody the warrior path of zen in its totality (which may have been adopted by the ninjas and other martial arts schools as well since zen is important for keeping your cool while fighting like it could be used to keep your cool as a professional athlete).

**Key:** The Cow or Ox represents the mind. The Person is you or the one seeking to learn about the mind and experience zen (which is a mental experience). You can imagine the cow/ox as a bicycle or a car and get an idea of the learning process these series of images seek to explain.

1

**Path of the Samurai - 1:**

*The first picture, called 'the Searching of the Cow,' represents the cowherd wandering in the wilderness with a vague hope of finding his lost cow that is running wild out of his sight. The reader will notice that the cow is likened to the mind of the student and the cowherd to the student himself.*



*"I do not see my cow,  
But trees and grass,  
And hear the empty cries  
Of cicadas."*

The person is unaware of his or her mind except as a word or something they have been told they "possess".

One is embedded in communal life, following societies norms of what's right and wrong. Including what one should hope for, think or dream about i.e. following what they are told without any thought except where allowed by society itself. The person reacts to life instinctively like an animal in its natural habitat.

*"To be conscious of the original mind, the original nature-  
Just this is the great disease of Zen!"  
Zenrin*

**Example - If the mind were a bike or a car:** This is the time when you know nothing about riding a bike or driving a car.

## Path of the Sage - 1;

### 1. Undisciplined



*With his horns fiercely projected in the air the beast snorts,  
Madly running over the mountain paths, farther and farther he goes astray!  
A dark cloud is spread across the entrance of the valley,  
And who knows how much of the fine fresh herb is trampled under his wild hoofs!*

The Sage path sees the mind in its natural SOCIETAL state as dangerous. The mind roams around causing problems (trampling the grass).

**Path of the Samurai - 2;**

*The second picture, called 'the Finding of the Cow's Tracks,' represents the cowherd tracing the cow with the sure hope of restoring her, having found her tracks on the ground.*



*"The grove is deep, and so  
Is my desire.  
How glad I am, O lo!  
I see her tracks."*

Here one begins to learn about the mind (themselves). You figure out what you mind is composed of by what you react to in fear, pain or pleasure. You learn that all senses feed the mind with information. You know you can think logically about stuff and thus logic is an aspect of the mind. In other words, one learns about their mind by learning what sorts of behaviours, thoughts and actions count as mental activity. These are the footprints of the mind

**The mind is:**

*Like a sword that cuts, but cannot cut itself;  
Like an eye that sees, but cannot see itself.  
Zenrin*

**If the mind were a bike or a car;** Now you begin to learn how the bike or car operates without actually beginning to learn how to operate one yourself. You learn about riding a bike and driving a car intellectually (mentally) first.

*You cannot get it by taking thought;  
You cannot seek it by not taking thought.*

Zenrin

**Path of the Sage 2;**

**2. Discipline Begun**



*I am in possession of a straw rope, and I pass it through his nose,  
For once he makes a frantic attempt to run away, but he is severely whipped and  
whipped;  
The beast resists the training with all the power there is in a nature wild and  
ungoverned,  
But the rustic oxherd never relaxes his pulling tether and ever-ready whip.*

Discipline is the rope you have which which you can begin to control the mind. You learn how to discipline the mind.

*To save life it must be destroyed.  
When utterly destroyed, one dwells for the first time in peace.  
One word settles heaven and earth;  
One sword levels the whole world.  
Zenrin*

**3**

**Path of the Samurai - 3;**

*The third picture, called 'the Finding out of the Cow,' represents the cowherd slowly  
approaching the cow from a distance.*



*"Her loud and wild mooing  
Has led me here;  
I see her from afar,  
Like a dark shadow."*

The more you study the philosophy of the mind or engage in discussions about the mind and it's attributes, the clearer becomes your understanding of it.

Being able to see your cow means you are beginning to get an idea of what your mind is. In other words, the mind is getting to know itself.

Note: A Samurai is already well trained in physical activities so has a good level of concentration already established (this often includes relaxation and at least one meditation technique) so training the mind - exclusively - isn't their focus.

**If the mind were a bike or car;** Here you begin to learn how to ride a bike or drive a car by practicing regularly.

**Path of the Sage -3;**

### **3. In Harness**





*Gradually getting into harness the beast is now content to be led by the nose,  
Crossing the stream, walking along the mountain path, he follows every step of the  
leader;*

*The leader holds the rope tightly in his hand never letting it go,  
All day long he is on the alert almost unconscious of what fatigue is.*

The discipline is bearing fruit and the mind is becoming “domesticated” or “purified” of lazy/bad habits and habitual instinctual behavior. As you can see the head of the ox/cow is turning white signifying that the mind is getting trained and is at about 1/15 trained after much discipline. The mind being trained or ‘purified’ means that the mind is beginning to cause less damage to themselves and to others, i.e. the stuff called bad in normal religions is beginning to get cleansed away (such as greed, envy or jealousy... stuff that ‘clouds the mind’ or is like ‘dust on a mirror’).

4

**Path of the Samurai - 4;**

*The fourth 'picture, called 'the Catching of the Cow,' represents the cowherd catching hold of the cow, who struggles to break loose from him.*



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*"Alas! it's hard to keep  
The cow I caught.  
She tries to run and leap  
And snap the cord."*

You seek to take control of the mind. You understand you have to silence it but it keeps chattering on. You discover trying to grab ahold of the mind with the mind is like a snake eating its tail (a catch-22 situation). It's like how difficult it is to quiet the mind when you first learn how to meditate. In fact, learning to meditate and fight while not letting the mind get in the way of fighting (sparring/practice) was probably the technique being employed. A basic meditation technique, called zazen, would also be a part of the Samurai's practice here.

**If the mind were a bike of a car;** Now you are beginning to get the hang to riding the bike or driving the car.

#### **Path of the Sage - 4;**

#### **4. Faced Round**



*After long days of training the result begins to tell and the beast is faced round,  
A nature so wild and ungoverned is finally broken, he has become gentler;  
But the tender has not yet given him his full confidence,  
He still keeps his straw rope with which the ox is now tied to a tree.*

After much training a turning point is reached and the mind begins to become compliant to your wishes and begins to bend to the disciplinary practices as it is supposed to. The cow is half white which means that the mind has been half 'purified' with intensive training in meditation.

5

**Path of the Samurai -5;**

*The fifth picture, called 'the Taming of the Cow,' represents the cowherd pacifying the cow, giving her grass and water.*



*"I'm glad the cow so wild  
Is tamed and mild.  
She follows me, as if  
She were my shadow."*

You have begun to gain control of your mind. You can sit in meditation for a while. You can change bad habits into good habits. You can flow when working (or fighting if a Samurai) or doing any activity to some extent. You move smoother and your reflexes are faster. You have a mind that you have some control over.

**If the mind were a ike or a car;** You have become a fairly good bicycle rider or car driver by now. You drive easily and freely wherever you want to go.

**Path of the Sage - 5;**

**5. Tamed**



*Under the green willow tree and by the ancient mountain stream,  
The ox is set at liberty to pursue his own pleasures;  
At the eventide when a grey mist descends on the pasture,  
The boy wends his homeward way with the animal quietly following.*

After much discipline the mind is so ingrained in its habits that it's almost tame and follows you around, i.e. it wants to follow the discipline as it's become domesticated to the path of the Sage. The cow is  $\frac{2}{3}$  white signifying the mind is 75% 'purified'. There is still more meditative training to do.

6

**Path of the Samurai - 6;**

*The sixth picture, called 'the Going Home Riding on the Cow,' represents the cowherd playing on a flute, riding on the cow.*



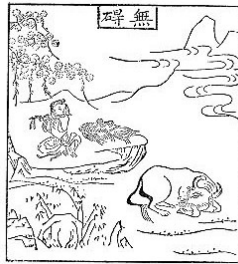
*"Slowly the clouds return  
To their own hill,  
Floating along the skies  
So calm and still.*

You have a complete grasp of zen philosophy and practice. You have attained “the flow”. You can do your meditation easily and it feels as if no time passes because you’re enjoying it. You can fight (or engage in your profession) without thinking, having become an expert. You can change your mind, in accord with circumstance, instantly. Habits are easy to change.

**If the mind were a bike or a car;** You are now so good at your bike and/or car that you can do tricks. You now have real skill.

**Path of the Sage - 6;**

**6. Unimpeded**



*On the verdant field the beast contentedly lies idling his time away,  
No whip is needed now, nor any kind of restraint;  
The boy too sits leisurely under the pine tree,  
Playing a tune of peace, overflowing with joy.*

The mind is now completely trained/domesticated to your specifications. You want to discipline yourself with meditation all day? You can do that and not feel any different. The Ox has almost become completely white signifying it's almost completely trained now and under your control. Just a little more meditative training to go.

**If the mind were a bike or a car;** You are now so good at your bike and/or car that you can do tricks. You now have skill.

**7**

**Path of the Samurai - 7;**

*The seventh picture, called 'the Forgetting of the Cow and the Remembering of the Man,' represents the cowherd looking at the beautiful scenery surrounding his cottage.*



*"The cow goes out by day  
And comes by night.  
I care for her in no way,  
But all is right."*

One has mastered zen in daily life and can now do all the daily activities and chores that is normal to everyday life as if one were on vacation or if the the mind has no attachments (non-attachment is mastered). You just do what needs to be done.

**If the mind were a bike or a car;** You can do really good tricks on your bike or in your car. The bike has become an extension of your body as if you and the bike were one.

*I obtained not the least thing from unexcelled, complete awakening, and for this very reason it is called "unexcelled, complete awakening". - The Buddha in the Vajracchedika*

**Path of the Sage - 7;**

## **7. Laissez Faire**



*The spring stream in the evening sun flows languidly along the willow-lined bank,  
In the hazy atmosphere the meadow grass is seen growing thick;  
When hungry he grazes, when thirsty he quaffs, as time sweetly slides,  
While the boy on the rock dozes for hours not noticing anything that goes on about  
him.*

The mind has been mastered by fully training it in harsh discipline & much meditation over many years. There is nothing wild left in the mind (signified by the bull/ox having gone completely white). The mind is completely tamed or cleansed of impurities, 'like a mirror shining bright'.

*The body is the Bodhi Tree;  
The mind like a bright mirror standing.  
Take care to wipe it all the time,  
And allow no dust to cling.*  
Shen-hsiu

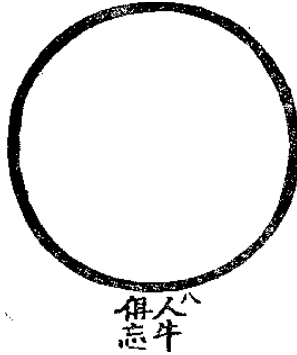
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**Comparison:** The sage also lets go and flows with life and lives its activities without any thought as the Samurai but have been through allot more specific mental and emotional training around feelings of empathy, compassion and "harmlessness" and thus the zen is experienced as some jacked up state of ecstasy or a combination of peace and contentment that has been ingrained in the mind with hard training so it can remain completely unmoved if that's what the person chooses while radiating love/compassion (as that's what the mind has been trained to do as is proper to The path Of The Sage).

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### The Path of the Samurai- 8;

*The eighth picture, called 'the Forgetting of the Cow and of the Man,' represents a large empty circle.*



*"There's no cowherd nor cow  
Within the pen;  
No moon of truth nor clouds  
Of doubt in men."*

You attain the supreme flow of zen where both you and your mind don't exist. You just live in the world as if it were an extension of you.

Here you see beyond the categories and labels created by your mind to explain things. Everything just is.

Rather than using the mind to control the mind one just lets go. Without the mind to create a conception of the self, the self no longer exists. Without the mind creating labels to structure observation (the impressions from the senses) there is no external world. The external world has no meaning, it's an illusion.

**If the mind were a bike or a car;** You and the car don't even exist. Well, the analogy breaks down here but the idea is that you transcend both yourself and the world, mentally, i.e. it's a meditation technique result called dhyana in Yoga and Zen in Japanese.

*There never was a Bodhi Tree.  
Nor bright mirror standing.  
Fundamentally, not one thing exists,  
So where is the dust to cling?*



Hui-neng

**Path of the Sage -8;**

**8. All Forgotten**



*The beast all in white now is surrounded by the white clouds,  
The man is perfectly at his ease and care-free, so is his companion;  
The white clouds penetrated by the moon-light cast their white shadows below,  
The white clouds and the bright moon-light-each following its course of movement.*

Exactly the same level as the Samurai but with a different training program, i.e. you attain the supreme flow of zen where both you and your mind don't exist. You just live in the world as if it were an extension of you.

One has completed the mental training of the sage. The emotions that have been ingrained into your mind-body are compassion and discipline in a focused meditative state that is now a permanent living reality allowing the sage to completely emerge in the flow of life or to completely withdraw from it. It doesn't matter. No more training is needed.

9

**Path of the Samurai - 9;**

*The ninth picture, called 'the Returning to the Root and Source,' represents a beautiful landscape full of lovely trees in full blossom.*



*"There is no dyer of hills,  
Yet they are green;  
So flowers smile, and titter rills  
At their own wills."*

You consciousness is irrevocable changed by the meditative experience but as come down from your state of meditative ecstasy you discover that nothing has changed. the world is the same as it was before. There is no deep meaning to life or events. No gods or goddesses or angels. Everything just is as it is.

**If the mind were a bike or a car;** You discover the bike/car exist. Despite disappearing they have returned. You drive/ride when you need to.

*The blue mountains are of themselves blue mountains;  
The white clouds are of themselves white clouds  
Zenrin*

**Path of the Sage - 9;**

### **9. The Solitary Moon**



*Nowhere is the beast, and the oxherd is master of his time,  
He is a solitary cloud wafting lightly along the mountain peaks;  
Clapping his hands he sings joyfully in the moon-light,  
But remember a last wall is still left barring his homeward walk.*

One has purified the mind with discipline till one is nothing but a sage. One lives in a state of ecstasy and joy as has been trained into him by years of training like an olympic athlete but for meditation.

*Sitting quietly, doing nothing,  
Spring comes, and the grass grows by itself.*  
Zenrin

10

**Path of the Samurai - 10;**

*The tenth picture, called 'the Going into the City with Open Hands,' represents a smiling monk, gourd in hand, talking with a man who looks like a pedlar.*



昭和三十二年夏  
空齋居士  
畫  
十入  
手  
歸

*"The cares for body make  
That body pine;  
Let go of cares and thoughts,  
O child of mine!"*

As human beings we tend to be communal in nature and the full experience of learning comes when we cease to become the student and become the teacher. IN other words we complete a natural human cycle of learning a skill and passing it on to the next generation. Once a person learns zen one teaches zen. That is the path.

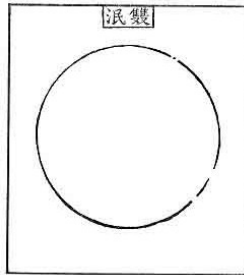
The Samurai is a part of his community and thus the zen that developed in the Japanese culture is about learning and then teaching or giving back to the community. So even their professionals, who follow the teachings of zen, will teach zen to their students so they get the true “flow” of their craft and their own individual flavor or doing things can be seen in their work. Once a person learns zen one teaches zen. That is the path.

We have come full circle in this simpler and more natural path of learning about zen, how to dissociate from the world and the labels we impose on it to returning back to the world.

**If the mind were a car or bike;** Now you teach what you have learned.

### **Path of the Sage -10;**

#### **10. Both Vanished**



*Both the man and the animal have disappeared, no traces are left,  
The bright moon-light is empty and shadowless with all the ten-thousand objects in  
it;  
If anyone should ask the meaning of this,  
Behold the lilies of the field and its fresh sweet-scented verdure.*

One is now completely emerged in the zen state 24/7 but life goes on as before.

*“We eat, excrete, sleep, and get up;  
This is our world.  
All we have to do after that-  
Is to die.”  
Ikkyu*

People don't even know there is a sage amongst their midst as the sage lives from his or her original mind which is basically just human nature.

*“Entering the forest he moves not the grass;  
Entering the water he makes not a ripple.”*

Zenrin

**If the mind were a car or bike;** Both bike/car and person no longer exist. The analogy no longer works.

*When a monk asks, “What is the buddha?” the master may raise his fist; when he is asked, “What is the ultimate idea of Buddhism?” he may exclaim even before the questioner finishes his sentence<sup>12</sup>, “A blossoming branch of the plum,” or “The cypress-tree in the court-yard.” The point is that the Answering mind does not “stop” anywhere, but responds straightaway without giving any thought to the felicity of an answer.<sup>13</sup>*

**The zen master:**

*Neither avoids false thoughts nor seeks the true,  
For ignorance is in reality the Buddha Nature,  
An this illusory, changeful, empty body is the Dharmakaya<sup>14</sup>*

Cheng-tao Ke

*I obtained not the least thing from unexcelled, complete awakening, and for this very reason it is called “unexcelled, complete awakening”. - The Buddha in the Vajracchedika*

12 Seeking to interrupt over intellectualization

13 The Way of Zen by Alan Watts pg 139

14 Dharmakaya means to transcend the senses & become a Buddha i.e. the poet is saying that the body itself IS transcendence and the Buddha.

## Chapter 3

### **Commentary On Bodhidharma's *The Transmission of The Lamp***

The following is a translation of an entire sermon of Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen & Martial Arts in China, called "Transmission Of The Lamp". This particular translation is by Zen scholar D.T.Suzuki found in his work, 'A Manual of Zen Buddhism'. I thought I was extremely fortunate to find this translation as it makes it clear that Zen & The Tao were connected even in Bodhidharma's work, as far as the ancient scholars and translators are concerned.

The translation is in ***italicized bold text*** and my commentary is in normal text.

#### **Bodhidharma On The Twofold Entrance To The Tao**<sup>15</sup>

i.e. Bodhidharma on how to attain the zen state

***There are many ways to enter the Path, but briefly Speaking they are of two sorts only. The one is "Entrance by Reason" and the other "Entrance by Conduct".***<sup>16</sup>

This opening sentence makes it clear that this is a method that requires intellectual understanding (not faith as in the religious systems most people are familiar with) and this intellectual understanding needs to be coupled with behaviour (probably to stabilize the mind from desire like one trains the body before an athletic competition).

15 From *The Transmission of the Lamp*. - Note: The Tao = The Path (of mental liberation that is Zen)

16 Entrance by Reason" may also be rendered "Entrance by Higher Intuition", and "Entrance by Conduct", "Entrance by Practical Living"

We know in our age that mind and body are so connected we might as well call them mind-body. In ancient China this was the normal understanding of the human being. The separation of mind from body is an intellectual concept that exists in Ancient Indian, Middle Eastern, Pagan and Ancient Greek philosophy which has been passed down to the present.

***By "Entrance by Reason" we mean the realization of the spirit of Buddhism by the aid of the scriptural teaching.***

What this sentence is saying that to enter the path of the Tao/Zen one has to understand - with their mind - what exactly the Buddha was saying and how it applies to them in everyday life.

Note:

Scripture in Ancient China (& to a degree in Ancient India, i.e. only the philosophical texts) was written to help the people achieve the results the writers had achieved or to pass on the knowledge that the writers had understood or figured out.

The "spiritual" approach was actually more like a doctor's prescription, i.e. it had an outline of the problem, the source of the problem the best cure for the problem and how to implement that cure. In western religions it's "God's grace" that brings a person "close to God" and creates a "Holy Man". In the east it was the individual who attained their goals themselves with their own efforts. So while religious figures or holy men/women in the west were otherworldly the holy ones of the east were accomplished practitioners of their art (yoga or zen) and are more comparable to professional sportsmen than to western holy men spouting rhetoric according to their belief & blind faith.

***We then come to have a deep faith in the True Nature which is the same in all sentient beings.***

This is the perfect example of the difference between zen and normal religions.

In the religion one sees the world as sinful or a fall from grace i.e. something which has to be overcome.

IN zen the pure state of mind is something one shares with all living beings because it's the natural state of mind.

In other words, spirituality in zen is about finding your most natural way of being while in western religions or even in yoga, it involves transcending yourself completely so nothing recognizable as “normal” remains.

***The reason why it does not manifest itself is due to the overwrapping of external objects and false thoughts.***

This concept is explained in the introduction under .... . In short, your idea of reality isn't necessarily reality itself.

In other words, the world has already been labeled and explained to whatever degree in the culture you were born in. These labels were created to get around in the context of that culture.

For example, we only have a few names for snow and it's enough for us to get around in our culture. We got “snow” & “sleet” and maybe “hail”. That it. Eskimos have over 70 different words for snow. Why do the eskimos have so many words for snow? Because snow can come down as flakes that you can see as little shapes (pic), in can come down with many flakes stuck together, as tiny little balls of snow as sleet etc. To an eskimo, whose entire life is lived in snow and ice, these little differences are noticed and named as it affects their lives. We don't care. We don't hunt in the arctic so we don't need to know what kind of snow is falling to plan out hunting trips and so on.

Basically, the words we create and use helps us navigate our lives within our culture and way of life. Yet these words are made by categorizing the world in an arbitrary way.

Bodhidharma is saying that these definitions and labels that we use for navigation are false and in a way they are because they are arbitrary and do not reflect the true essence or context of the object in the universe but only in the particular culture that the word was created in.

What Bodhidharma is saying is that when you have all these labels and ways of categorizing the world you fail to see the world as it is (as Emerson pointed out in his essay on Nature) and thus a person has overlapped “external objects” with “false thoughts” or concepts.



***When a man, abandoning the false and embracing the true, in singleness of thought practises the Pi-kuan<sup>17</sup> he finds that there is neither self nor other, that the masses and the worthies are of one essence, and he firmly holds on to this belief and never moves away therefrom.***

If conceptions (words) can 'wrap' themselves around external objects becoming 'false thoughts', then how do you extricate yourself from these false thoughts? Here is where we discover Bodhidharma's meditation technique called *wall gazing* which must be pursued with single minded purpose to achieve results.

The technique is probably to literally sit in front of a wall and practice meditation. The type of meditation normally practiced in zen circles involves sitting in a comfortable position and focusing only on your breathing, eyes half closed. Some meditate with eyes closed. The wall gazing technique is probably what he did, i.e. sit in front of a wall and meditate to reduce the possibility of distraction and when he taught, he taught what he knew to work for him.

When practicing this technique Bodhidharma asks you to see everyone as the same/equal/conscious-beings-only.

The following is a technique of basic meditation found in the book **The Religion Of The Samurai** (available for download at taoist-books.com) which should provide enough information for anyone to practice the basic 'wall gazing technique' as the Samurai derived their meditational techniques from Bodhidharma;

*Zazen, or the Sitting in Meditation.--Habit comes out of practice, and forms character by degrees, and eventually works out destiny. Therefore we must practically sow optimism, and habitually nourish it in order to reap the blissful fruit of Enlightenment. The sole means of securing mental calmness is the practice of Zazen, or the sitting in Meditation. This method was known in India as Yoga as early as the Upanisad period, and developed by the followers of the Yoga system.<sup>18</sup> But Buddhists sharply distinguished Zazen from Yoga, and have the method peculiar to themselves. Kei-zan<sup>19</sup> describes the method to the following effect: 'Secure a quiet room neither extremely light nor extremely dark, neither very warm nor very cold, a room, if you can, in the Buddhist temple located in a beautiful*

17 the wall gazing technique

18 See Yoga Sutra with the Commentary of Bhoja Raja (translated by Rajendralala Mitra), pp. 102-104.

19 Kei-zan (Jo-kin), the founder of So-ji-ji, the head temple of the So To Sect of Zen, who died at the age of fifty-eight in 1325. He sets forth the doctrine of Zen and the method of practising Zazen in his famous work, entitled Za-zen-yo-jin-ki.

*mountainous district. You should not practise Zazen in a place where a conflagration or a flood or robbers may be likely to disturb you, nor should you sit in a place close by the sea or drinking-shops or brothel-houses, or the houses of widows and of maidens or buildings for music, nor should you live in close proximity to the place frequented by kings, ministers, powerful statesmen, ambitious or insincere persons. You must not sit in Meditation in a windy or very high place lest you should get ill. Be sure not to let the wind or smoke get into your room, not to expose it to rain and storm. Keep your room clean. Keep it not too light by day nor too dark by night. Keep it warm in winter and cool in summer. Do not sit leaning against a wall, or a chair, or a screen. You must not wear soiled clothes or beautiful clothes, for the former are the cause of illness, while the latter the cause of attachment. Avoid the Three Insufficiencies--that is to say, insufficient clothes, insufficient food, and insufficient sleep. Abstain from all sorts of uncooked or hard or spoiled or unclean food, and also from very delicious dishes, because the former cause troubles in your alimentary canal, while the latter cause you to covet after diet. Eat and drink just to appease your hunger and thirst, never mind whether the food be tasty or not. Take your meals regularly and punctually, and never sit in Meditation immediately after any meal. Do not practise Dhyana soon after you have taken a heavy dinner, lest you should get sick thereby. Sesame, barley, corn, potatoes, milk, and the like are the best material for your food. Frequently wash your eyes, face, hands, and feet, and keep them cool and clean.*

*'There are two postures in Zazen--that is to say, the crossed-leg sitting, and the half crossed-leg sitting. Seat yourself on a thick cushion, putting it right under your haunch. Keep your body so erect that the tip of the nose and the navel are in one perpendicular line, and both ears and shoulders are in the same plane. Then place the right foot upon the left thigh, the left foot on the right thigh, so as the legs come across each other. Next put your right hand with the palm upward on the left foot, and your left hand on the right palm with the tops of both the thumbs touching each other. This is the posture called the crossed-leg sitting. You may simply place the left foot upon the right thigh, the position of the hands being the same as in the cross-legged sitting. This posture is named the half crossed-leg sitting.*

*'Do not shut your eyes, keep them always open during whole Meditation. Do not breathe through the mouth; press your tongue against the roof of the mouth, putting the upper lips and teeth together with the lower. Swell your abdomen so as to hold the breath in the belly; breathe rhythmically through the nose, keeping a measured time for inspiration and expiration. Count for some time either the inspiring or the expiring breaths from one to ten, then beginning with one again. Concentrate your attention on your breaths going in and out as if you are the sentinel standing at the gate of the nostrils. If you do some mistake in counting, or be forgetful of the breath, it is evident that your mind is distracted.'*

*Chwang Tsz seems to have noticed that the harmony of breathing is typical of the harmony of mind, since he says: " The true men of old did not dream when they slept. Their breathing came deep and silently. The breathing of true men comes (even) from his heels, while men generally breathe (only) from their throats."<sup>20</sup> At any rate, the counting of breaths is an expedient for calming down of mind, and elaborate rules are given in the Zen Sutra<sup>21</sup>, but Chinese and Japanese Zen masters do not lay so much stress on this point as Indian teachers.*

***He will not then be a slave to words, for he is in silent communion with the Reason itself, free from conceptual discrimination; he is serene and not-acting. This is called "Entrance by Reason".***

After unpacking the earlier statements you can notice how clear and direct Bodhidharma is being in his explanation.

Instead of being caught by in words and conceptions you will be set free from 'conceptual discrimination' of one thing being better or worse than another.

With all the labels categorizing your experience gone, all just is as it is.

Now Bodhidharma begins to describe the approach of 'practical living' that helps one attain zen. This explanation is written for the Sage although this was adopted by the Samurai as well as the pure dhayana or zen state would make the following an easy task

***By "Entrance by Conduct" is meant the four acts in which all other acts are included. What are the four?***

- 1. To know how to requite hatred;***
- 2. To be obedient to karma;***
- 3. Not to crave anything; and***
- 4. To be in accord with the Dharma.***

Taking each number separately;

***1. What is meant by "How to requite hatred"? He who disciplines himself in the Path should think thus when he has to struggle with adverse conditions:***

20 Chwang Tsz, vol. iii., p. 2.

21 Dharmatara-dhyana-sutra.

***"During the innumerable past ages I have wandered through a multiplicity of existences, all the while giving myself to unimportant details of life at the expense of essentials, and thus creating infinite occasions for hate, ill-will, and wrongdoing. While no violations have been committed in this life, the fruits of evil deeds in the past are to be gathered now. Neither gods nor men can foretell what is coming upon me. I will submit myself willingly and patiently to all the ills that befall me, and I will never bemoan or complain. The Sutra teaches me not to worry over ills that may happen to me. Why? Because when things are surveyed by a higher intelligence, the foundation of causation is reached." When this thought is awakened in a man, he will be in accord with the Reason because he makes the best use of hatred and turns it into the service in his advance towards the Path. This is called the "way to requite hatred".***

This paragraph explains how one needs to think on the path of zen. It begins with 'during innumerable past ages I have wandered through multiplicity of existences' which I think needs to be unpacked.

In zen there is a concept of the Self that is something you have to create and maintain by continuously recreating the Self (I've gone into this in more detail in the introduction).

So looking at this paragraph as a psychological technique, Bodhidharma is saying 'in the many stories I have created of myself, which are like many lives, there have been many instances for me to get angry and do things motivated by anger. I understand that everything has a cause, either in myself through my own bad actions at some time in the past or through a cause and effect at work in society and in the culture which creates the effect I am observing now'.

In other words, this technique involves coming through conclusions through reason and observation, that help you explain the cause of whatever situation you are dealing with. When you understand it, it loses some of its power over you and gives you the ability to release your anger as you have gained distance on it.

Note:

In zen, death & rebirth (reincarnation) is seen as a psychological phenomenon following from the illusion of the self.

An ancient Zen Scholar, Hui-Neng's Tan Ching, Writes;

*What is Paramita? This is a Sanskrit term of the Western country. In Yang it means "the other shore reached". When the meaning (artha in Sanskrit) is understood, one*

*is detached from birth and death. When the objective world (visaya) is clung to, there is the rise of birth and death; it is like the waves rising from the water; this is called "this shore". When you are detached from the objective world, there is no birth and death for you; it is like the water constantly running its course: this is "reaching the other shore". Hence Paramita.<sup>22</sup>*

The idea being expressed here: When you cling to the world you have to create to create a self to deal with each new situation, thus you experience 'death and rebirth' (of the ego). When you let go and dwell in the zen state your consciousness stays steady and thus you don't experience birth and death (of the ego).

For example: When you try and do good deeds you are trying to create a new self. By working on being better and better, you are destroying an old way of being (the old 'self') and you are creating a new one. Your 'self', i.e. how you define or imagine yourself to be, is going through death and rebirth.

***2. By "being obedient to karma" is meant this: There is no self (atman) in whatever beings are produced by the interplay of karmic conditions; the pleasure and pain I suffer are also the results of my previous action. If I am rewarded with fortune, honour, etc., this is the outcome of my past deeds which by reason of causation affect my present life. When the force of karma is exhausted, the result I am enjoying now will disappear; what is then the use of being joyful over it? Gain or loss, let me accept the karma as it brings to me the one or the other; the Mind itself knows neither increase nor decrease. The wind of pleasure [and pain] will not stir me, for I am silently in harmony with the Path. Therefore this is called "being obedient to karma".***

This is saying that life is as it is. Good things in life happen and bad things in life happen. Your good actions can lead to good things (such as working to make money gives you the ability to buy things, i.e. "good" actions leads to good results, and so on). The goal of this paragraph seems more to detach a person from the sense of profit and loss that people associate with living due to their attachment to life.

This idea is expressed by this story;

*There was a farmer whose horse ran away. All his neighbors came by to say how sorry they were at his misfortune. All he said was, "We shall see". Next, his horse returns fallen by a group of wild horses. His neighbors congratulate on his good fortune and the farmer once again says, "We shall see". Then his son falls off the*

22 Hiu Neng's Tan Ching - Manual Of Zen Buddhism by Dr. Suzuki

*same horse and breaks his leg. The neighbors once again exclaim at his misfortune and once again he says, "We shall see". In a few days the army comes by collecting young men for a war. The farmer's son was ignored as his leg was broken. His neighbors congratulate him and all he says is, "We shall see".*

Notice that in this story every event of the day or week did not make the farmer giddy with happiness or depressed at having a bad day. This is the goal Bodhidharma is asking the reader to strive for.

**3. By "not craving (ch'iu) anything" is meant this: Men of the world, in eternal confusion, are attached everywhere to one thing or another, which is called craving. The wise however understand the truth and are not like the ignorant. Their minds abide serenely in the uncreated while the body moves about in accordance with the laws of causation. All things are empty and there is nothing desirable to seek after. Where there is the merit of brightness there surely lurks the demerit of darkness. This triple world where we stay altogether too long is like a house on fire; all that has a body suffers, and nobody really knows what peace is. Because the wise are thoroughly acquainted with this truth, they are never attached to things that change; their thoughts are quieted, they never crave anything. Says the Sutra: "Wherever there is a craving, there is pain; cease from craving and you are blessed." Thus we know that not to crave anything is indeed the way to the Truth. Therefore, it is taught not "to crave anything".**

As in basic yogic philosophy *craving* is considered to be the source of all mental ills affecting society and man. Thus the concept of non-attachment to the world is a central pillar of zen buddhism and of practicing zen itself. I've covered this concept in the introduction.

Bodhidharma is saying that since your concepts and stories change with your imagination and how you label the world changes with how you categorize it... why crave anything in the world at all? Clearly your attachment to the world is what causes pain and anguish to begin with. Even heightened pleasure followed by the low is a sort of pain as you wish you could have that heightened feeling again and are thus back in attachment of craving of the world.

**4. By "being in accord with the Dharma" is meant that the Reason which we call the Dharma in its essence is pure, and that this Reason is the principle of emptiness (sunyata) in all that is manifested; it is above defilements and attachments, and there is no "self", no "other" in it. Says the Sutra: "In the Dharma there are no sentient beings, because it is free from the stain of**

***being; in the Dharma there is no 'self' because it is free from the stain of selfhood." When the wise understand this truth and believe in it, their lives will be "in accordance with the Dharma".***

In other words, Bodhidharma is saying that if you live life from zen (the emptiness of zen, i.e. non attachment and alert awareness) then dharma, or doing your duty, becomes easy. Life is easier when you aren't constantly chasing it. Reminds me of the verse in the Tao Te Ching 'the sage does everything while doing nothing' and so I agree with the belief of D.T.Suzuki and Alan Watts that the Tao Te Ching is the worlds oldest zen poem and zen is essentially a far eastern (ancient Chinese) practice derived from the ancient Indian yogic practice of dhayana.

***As there is in the essence of the Dharma no desire to possess, the wise are ever ready to practise charity with their body, life, and property, and they never begrudge, they never know what an ill grace means. As they have a perfect understanding of the threefold nature of emptiness, they are above partiality and attachment. Only because of their will to cleanse all beings of their stains, they come among them as of them, but they are not attached to form. This is the self-benefiting phase of their lives. They, however, know also how to benefit others, and again how to glorify the truth of enlightenment. As with the virtue of charity, so with the other five virtues [of the Prajnaparamita]. The wise practise the six virtues of perfection to get rid of confused thoughts, and yet there is no specific consciousness on their part that they are engaged in any meritorious deeds. This is called "being in accord with the Dharma".***

Describes what living a life of zen is like.

**Note on enlightenment:** Once you understand Zen you are "enlightened". It's not something you seek to practice forever as such striving tends to become the goal in and of itself. As one writer explains: "*That followers of Zen fail to recognize the Buddha is due to their not rightly recognizing Where their own Mind is. They seek it outwardly, set up all kinds of exercises which they hope to master by degrees, and themselves work out diligently throughout ages. Yet they fail to reach enlightenment. No works compare with an immediate awakening to a state of mushin itself*"<sup>23</sup>

23HUANG-PO'S SERMON, FROM "TREATISE ON THE ESSENTIALS OF THE TRANSMISSION OF MIND" (DENSIN HOYO)

## Chapter 4

### Tao Te Ching: The World's Oldest Zen Poem

Bodhidharma taught a taoistic version of zen. Alan Watts, a student of D.T.Suzuki, called The Tao Te Ching "the worlds oldest poem". As fortune would have it, celebrated zen scholar, D.T. Suzuki's translation of the Tao Te Ching is in the public domain. This means I am free to analyze it as I will. So I decided to do a commentary on the Tao Te Ching. This chapter represents some of my preliminary analysis of this ancient zen poem and the next chapter is some additional analysis into chapters related to war that I did, to show that the Tao Te Ching accepted all aspects of life, from sage to warrior.

#### **Zen translation by DTS (D.T. Suzuki);**

#### **1. Reason's Realization.<sup>24</sup>**

***1. The Reason that can be reasoned is not the eternal Reason. The name that can be named is not the eternal Name. The Unnamable is of heaven and earth the beginning. The Namable becomes of the ten thousand things the mother.***

#### ***Therefore it is said:***

<sup>24</sup>The phrase '*yu ming*, "having name" (or simply *ming*, "name") means that which the definition of a name involves, and as such the term represents the actualized types of things. However *wu ming*, "not name" or "the Unnamable," corresponds to Plato's conception of the prototype of things before they have been actualized. Lao-tze speaks with reverence of the Unnamable, which closely corresponds to the "Ineffable" of Western mystics.

The words "these two things" apparently refer to the Unnamable and the Namable.

What Lao-tze calls "the Name" or "the Namable" is in Spinoza's language *natura naturata*, while "the Unnamable" is *natura naturans*. In either system the two are one; they are two aspects of one and the same thing which in Lao-tze's taoism is the Tao and in Spinoza's cosmotheism is God as the eternal substance. [See also Chapters 32 and 41]



**2. "He who desireless is found  
The spiritual of the world will sound.  
But he who by desire is bound  
Sees the mere shell of things around."**

**3. These two things are the same in source but different in name. Their sameness is called a mystery. Indeed, it is the mystery of mysteries. Of all spirituality it is the door.**

**Commentary;**

1. D.T. Suzuki translates "Tao" as Reason (Reason being another way of saying "Zen"). The idea here is that if you can think about reason then you are using the mind to think about the mind and thus you aren't living directly from your mind. In other words, using your reasoning faculty to think about reasoning means you aren't living directly from your reasoning part of your (mind).

Said another way, '*The Tao that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging Tao.*' or the reasoning ability that you can think about isn't your true direct experiencing faculty of Reason that is the direct perception of the mind without any sort of introspection.

If the mind can be used to describe the mind then you are not in unitive consciousness (the zen state). So if you can name something then you are living out of your thinking ability and are not in the zen state of direct experience. Thus, '*The name that can be named is not the eternal Name*'

Finally, since naming something puts a person in a mental state of categorizing the world around you so you can describe it, i.e. not naming something means everything just is as it is while naming it you separate an object from everything else by giving it a category or label for the object to fit in. Thus a tree that was just an object connected to earth and air can now be separated into 3 different things, i.e. tree, earth and air.

So by naming things and putting them in categories you have created knowledge or language. In other words, '*The Namable becomes of the ten thousand things the mother.*'

Note: *The 10,000 things* is the buddhist way of saying the infinite number of objects and categories that exist once you start naming stuff.

2. Within the poem like chapter there is a rhyming verse set which explains the basic yogic and zen idea of dhayana or learning to maintain your awareness free of attachment to things around you.

Literally its; The person who can maintain a desireless state of non-attachment will reach the height of spirituality (as defined by ancient zen and taoist masters). On the flip side, if you are attached to the world around you you will see the world in a superficial way i.e. you will see only it's "shell" or outer appearance.

The idea here is expressed by this story;

*There was a farmer whose horse ran away. All his neighbors came by to say how sorry they were at his misfortune. All he said was, "We shall see". Next, his horse returns fallen by a group of wild horses. His neighbors congratulate on his good fortune and the farmer once again says, "We shall see". Then his son falls off the same horse and breaks his leg. The neighbors once again exclaim at his misfortune and once again he says, "We shall see". In a few days the army comes by collecting young men for a war. The farmer's son was ignored as his leg was broken. His neighbors congratulate him and all he says is, "We shall see".*

Notice that in this story every event of the day or week did not make the farmer giddy with happiness or depressed at having a bad day because he wasn't attached to the world through desire, i.e. he existed in a state of non-attachment.

3. Here is the most amazing statement, i.e. that both of the statements (1 & 2) are two different techniques for the same goal.

In the first statement Lao Tzu described the simple zen way of seeing things as I outlined in my voluminous introduction to zen, i.e. simply by shutting of conception you can see beyond conception and without self-reflexive thought (unitive consciousness). In the second statement he explains that to see beyond the distractions which can take you away from unitive consciousness as described in the simple first technique it to learn and practice non-attachment (as is at the foundation of zen buddhism and yoga itself).

So, together, these two techniques open the door to the zen state of being, i.e. 'of all spirituality it is the door'.

**Standard translation by James Legge:**

1. *The Tao that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging Tao. The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name. (Conceived of as) having no name, it is the Originator of heaven and earth; (conceived of as) having a name, it is the Mother of all things.*

2. *Always without desire we must be found,  
If its deep mystery we would sound;  
But if desire always within us be,  
Its outer fringe is all that we shall see.*

3. *Under these two aspects, it is really the same; but as development takes place, it receives the different names. Together we call them the Mystery. Where the Mystery is the deepest is the gate of all that is subtle and wonderful.*

## 2. Self-Culture.<sup>25</sup>

**1. *Everywhere it is obvious that if beauty makes a display of beauty, it is sheer ugliness. It is obvious that if goodness makes a display of goodness, it is sheer badness. For;***

**2. *"To be and not to be are mutually conditioned.  
The difficult, the easy, are mutually defined.  
The long, the short, are mutually exhibited.  
Above, below, are mutually cognitioned.  
The sound, the voice, are mutually coalitioned.***

<sup>25</sup> The first sentence reads literally, "Under the heavens [i. e., all over the world, or everywhere] all know [i. e., it is obvious], if beauty acts beauty it is only ugliness." The verb "acts" is to be taken in the same sense as it is used in English, viz., "making a display or show of." We deem our present rendering an improvement on our former version.

According to a notion of the early Christians the devil would like to play the part of God, as Tertullian says, *Satanas affectat sacramenta Dei*. On Lao-tze's theory the nature of the devil consists exactly in the attempt of acting the part of God.

The close interrelation of goodness with badness and of beauty with ugliness suggests the quotation on opposites. It sets forth the coexistence of contrasts, and their mutual dependence is more obvious to the Chinese than to other nations, because in their word-combinations they use compounds of contrasts to denote what is common in both. Thus a combination of the words "to be" and "not to be" means the struggle for life, or the bread question; "the high and the low" means altitude; "much and little" means quantity, etc. But what originally seems to have been the trivial observation of a grammar-school teacher acquires a philosophical meaning when commented upon by Lao-tze.

***Before and after are mutually positioned."***

### **3. Therefore**

***The holy man abides by non-assertion in his affairs and conveys by silence his instruction. When the ten thousand things arise, verily, he refuses them not. He quickens but owns not. He acts but claims not. Merit he accomplishes, but he does not dwell on it.***

***"Since he does not dwell on it  
It will never leave him."***

### **Commentary:**

1. The idea here is that pride of showing off can turn something beautiful into something ugly. For example; A girl who knows she is beautiful and makes a display of her beauty displays ugliness in the pride she displays. (An example that I think applies to the culture the Tao te Ching was written in if not ours). Seen from another angle, if you know what beauty is then you have an idea of what ugliness is as well as you wouldn't be able to know something is beautiful without being able to label something else as ugly.

This same idea also applies to being good or acts of goodness which is probably more understandable to western/abrahamic cultures. If someone pretends to be humble then it isn't humbleness but pride. If someone pretends to be good when they are not they are hypocrites. Conversely, it can be seen as 'if you can perceive good then you already have an understanding of what evil is or you wouldn't have even been able to perceive good in the first place'.

2. This part is rhyming poetry and goes something like this;  
You know that something exists by having an idea of what non-existence might be like. You know something is difficult because you know what easy is. You know something is long because you know what short is. That fact that you can define something as "up" or "down" means you have these opposite concepts in your head to begin with. Even music attains the ability to sound good by the contrast between the different notes thereby, together, creating a melody. You know what is before you by defining something as being after the said conception.

In other words, this sounds very much like one of Socrates dialogues in its content. The idea that one can only know something is long relative to something that is short and these are all ideas one has in their heads to define absolutes which don't exist in nature without our additional labeling. Ideas from Plato's dialogues in the

Tao Te Ching written roughly the same time? Doesn't seem that far fetched to me. The people in the ancient world seemed to travel quite a bit.

3. Since the world doesn't exist in absolutes, the Sage is content with a non-authoritative (or more maternal) approach to dealing with daily affairs. Allowing people to go about their business and leading by example where he/she can.

When the many distractions of the world arise the Sage doesn't refuse or ignore them nor does he seek them out. He does what needs to be done without laying claim to the fruits of his actions. He does "good" deeds but he doesn't care about that as it was just something that had to be done. Since he doesn't try and own it, or hold on to it, whatever he did is with him always and just adds to his skill set.

The idea here is that the Sage learns to be IN the world but not OF it and can thus flow with the ways of the world in his culture.

**Standard translation;**

*1. All in the world know the beauty of the beautiful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what ugliness is; they all know the skill of the skilful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what the want of skill is.*

*2. So it is that existence and non-existence give birth the one to (the idea of) the other; that difficulty and ease produce the one (the idea of) the other; that length and shortness fashion out the one the figure of the other; that (the ideas of) height and lowness arise from the contrast of the one with the other; that the musical notes and tones become harmonious through the relation of one with another; and that being before and behind give the idea of one following another.*

*3. Therefore the sage manages affairs without doing anything, and conveys his instructions without the use of speech.*

*All things spring up, and there is not one which declines to show itself; they grow, and there is no claim made for their ownership; they go through their processes, and there is no expectation (of a reward for the results). The work is accomplished, and there is no resting in it (as an achievement).*

*The work is done, but how no one can see;  
'Tis this that makes the power not cease to be.*

### 3. Keeping The People Quiet<sup>26</sup>

**1. Not boasting of one's worth forestalls people's envy.**

**Not prizing treasures difficult to obtain keeps people from committing theft.**

**2. Not contemplating what kindles desire keeps the heart unconfused.**

**3. Therefore the holy man when he governs empties the people's hearts but fills their stomachs. He weakens their ambition but strengthens their bones. Always he keeps the people unsophisticated and without desire. He causes that the crafty do not dare to act. When he acts with non-assertion there is nothing ungoverned.**

#### **Commentary;**

Here is a psychological theory of how to manage a society. You may notice the very tribal like values the poet advocates. Makes me think of this as a philosophical and

26In former editions we have translated the verb *shang* by its common meaning "to exalt," but here it is obviously a reflex verb meaning "to exalt oneself" or "to brag, to boast."

The word *fu* means literally "stomach" or "the interior," but it may also mean "soul," for according to Chinese ideas the soul has its seat in the stomach.

The idea that the belly is the noblest part of the body where tender sentiments dwell was quite common among early peoples. Thus, e. g. the Hebrew *rakhamim*, [ רַחֲמִים ] which originally means "entrails," is used in the sense of "compassion" and "love." In Japan that death was considered most worthy in which the first attack upon life was made upon the seat of the properly psychic faculties; therefore the victim of *hara-kiri* rips open his belly and is then beheaded by his best friend so as to shorten the pain of death. It is, however, quite probable that Lao-tze in this connection really means what he literally says, viz., that the holy man, when he governs, empties the people's hearts of desires, but takes care of their bodily wants, i. e., "fills their stomachs and strengthens their bones."

The word *kuh* might be translated (as in former editions) "backbone," but in the original it reads "bones." To make a man strong-boned means to render him steady in character. I prefer to translate the passage literally in all its roughness and will leave the interpretation of it to the reader.

poetical treatise on living in a world of zen like the ancestors who lived in the tribal and feudal days when society was less violent and corrupt as the hierarchical structures that emerge in an agricultural society of monarchy hadn't yet emerged. In Lao Tzu's day the agricultural town and it's resulting ownership of land and accumulation of wealth amongst a few people led to a society fueled by greed and the whims of a few people at the very top of society. As a result people would often reminisce about the old ways. In some ways that's what this treatise is beginning to remind me of. To get an idea of how things were in a tribal community and how things are in an agricultural community, consider this table;

The following table shows the basic differences in behavior between Takers (agriculturists) and Leavers (Tribal/Primitive societies) as described in Daniel Quinn's book *My Ishmael*.

<b>Takers (Agriculturists)</b>	<b>Leavers(Tribal Societies)</b>
<b>Believe only their way is right</b>	<b>Don't believe only their way is right - it's right for them</b>
<b>The world would be better if people were better</b>	<b>You don't need to improve people to make their system work.</b>
<b>Can't develop a lifestyle that works (sustainable and inherited)</b>	<b>Lived in a working lifestyle for 100's of thousands of years</b>
<b>Everything is based on utopian ideals (government, school etc. assumes a type of person which is evolved)</b>	<b>Based on human nature and tradition with years of evolution of their particular tribal law.</b>
<b>Force others to follow their way - believe their way is best</b>	<b>Believe their way is best for them, others can live their own way</b>
<b>Annihilate others in war</b>	<b>Fight to show their metal and be unpredictable - not to annihilate</b>
<b>Get products and give products</b>	<b>Get support and give support</b>
<b>Specialization; smaller and smaller family units till the breakup of nuclear family is</b>	<b>Complete cradle to grave support</b>

<b>complete</b>	
<b>Laws prohibiting stuff - people know laws will be broken and this divided society into law breakers and upright citizens</b>	<b>No laws prohibiting as it doesn't take into account that humans will break laws - so the laws are to minimize the effects of damage to society</b>
<b>Tribal security exchanged for money - a kind of substitute for the sense of tribal community that our species evolved with for 10,000s of thousands of years.</b>	

So when looking at what Lao Tzu is talking about when he starts outlining his ideas of how to manage a society you have to keep in mind that this is his theory of how to return to a more human friendly tribal type culture where people are just people. The poet is getting poetic.

With that introduction, let's look at the verses again;

1. By not placing one person above another person you can't create society crippling envy. Not placing too much value on objects keeps them from being seen as so valuable that they bestow status of wealth on someone thus making it an object of envy or jealousy which can lead to theft.
2. Not thinking about the 10 thousand things (distractions) you keep the head clear.
3. Thus the Sage ruler (or "Philosopher King" if looking at it using Plato's words) governs the people by keeping them satisfied equally. He discourages competition that would result in the perception of any person being better than anyone else but keep the population healthy and strong. He guides the people to practice non-attachment so that they can control thier desires and not be led by them. All the while helping people live fully engaged in daily life with full stomachs and happy hearts. Thus there is no reason for people to be clever or crafty in deception as it wouldn't be needed in such an environment (though there would probably always be trouble makers of some sort, but by this logic the trouble makers would be a part of the tao and thus good/normal).



The key to a well functioning society is to have a governor so skilled at government that through a non-assertive (maternal) approach, everything that needs to get done, gets done without the governor having appeared to have done anything.

**Standard translation:**

*1. Not to value and employ men of superior ability is the way to keep the people from rivalry among themselves; not to prize articles which are difficult to procure is the way to keep them from becoming thieves; not to show them what is likely to excite their desires is the way to keep their minds from disorder.*

*2. Therefore the sage, in the exercise of his government, empties their minds, fills their bellies, weakens their wills, and strengthens their bones.*

*3. He constantly (tries to) keep them without knowledge and without desire, and where there are those who have knowledge, to keep them from presuming to act (on it). When there is this abstinence from action, good order is universal.*

**4. Sourceless.<sup>27</sup>**

***1. Reason is empty, but its use is inexhaustible. In its profundity, verily, it resembleth the arch-father of the ten thousand things.***

***2. "It will blunt its own sharpness,  
Will its tangles adjust;***

<sup>27</sup>The word *tsung*, "arch-father," translates a Chinese term which means "patriarch, or first ancestor, founder of the family," and is frequently used with reference to Shang Ti, the Lord on High, in the sense of God.

The word *ch'an*, "dust," is a Buddhist term which means the worry of worldliness, and it is possible that this usage antedates Buddhism and that the word was current in the same sense in the time of Lao-tze. If that be so, if *ch'an* means the troubles of life, the travailing of the world, we offer the following alternate translation of the verse in which the word occurs:

"It will blunt its own sharpness,  
Will its tangles unravel;  
It will dim its own radiance  
And conform to its travail."

The same holds good in Chapter 56, where the same verse is quoted.

***It will dim its own radiance  
And be one with its dust."***

***3. Oh, how calm it seems to remain! I know not whose son it is. Apparently even the Lord it precedes.***

**Commentary:**

1. Reason or *the Original Mind* is obviously empty. It doesn't contain anything yet it can perceive everything and name everything thereby creating the '10,000 things'. From the mind all concepts are created and all things are defined. Since Tao is defined as the Path of Zen, the poet is saying, 'like the Mind, the Tao (path of the mind,) is empty as it's not matter but it can define matter into categories making it useful and explainable thus it can be seen as the source of all conceptions and things. The idea being that if you have no conceptions or ideas of things then everything just exists as it is without definition. That is the Tao, i.e. everything just flowing with life with no definition attached to it.

2. This verse describes the Mind (Reason) as something which dims (becomes less sharp with age) and then it dissolves into nothingness at death.

3. The Original Mind by itself is peaceful and calm and since all conceptions arise from the mind itself the Mind precedes everything (God and the angels etc. are seen as mentally created things i.e. fantasy or imagination at work).

This chapter seems to try and define the Mind/Tao as other zen practitioners do in their explanations to prepare a person to understand and practice zen. Only here it's done in poetic form and long before the word zen even came into use.

What the poet seems to be doing is describing Samadhi as an aspect of the Tao, i.e. the result of practicing the meditation technique called dhayana in yoga where definitions are dissolved to keep the mind silent and focused (or unfocused) and empty of all thought. After being empty of all thought to think again and to define things into categories is like creating the world from scratch. In other words, it's like 'creating the 10,000 things'.

**Standard translation;**

***1. The Tao is (like) the emptiness of a vessel; and in our employment of it we must be on our guard against all fullness. How deep and unfathomable it is, as if it were the Honoured Ancestor of all things!***

- 2. We should blunt our sharp points, and unravel the complications of things; we should attemper our brightness, and bring ourselves into agreement with the obscurity of others. How pure and still the Tao is, as if it would ever so continue!*
- 3. I do not know whose son it is. It might appear to have been before God.*

This analysis should be enough to show that The Tao Te Ching is the world's oldest Zen poem explaining what it's like to be a sage. Now lets see what advice it has for warriors;

## Chapter 5

### Tao Te Ching's Advice For Warriors

Towards the end of the Tao Te Ching we notice advice for Warriors (to complement that advice I've added the ancient text of The Art of War as an appendix)

The Tao Te Ching begins with advice for warriors in Chapter 67 verse 5 as, "the compassionate will in attack be victorious, and in defence firm. Heaven when about to save one will with compassion protect him." i.e. the poet advocates a way of compassion for the warrior.

The standard translation comes out roughly as;

*Gentleness is sure to be victorious even in battle, and firmly to maintain its ground. Heaven will save its possessor, by his (very) gentleness protecting him.*

With such a belief it's no wonder martial arts such as Aikido have emerged that seek to win a fight without hurting the opponent where possible and if not then not killing him where possible. The idea of the Sage Warrior amongst the Samurai with their elaborate *King Arthur & The Knights of the Round Table* like code of conduct can also be attributed to inspiration from this text.

The following are the chapters specifically for warriors outlining the basics of the warrior path of zen followed by other related chapters to show how embedded in - the way of the Tao - Zen, the path of war (if necessary) really is;

#### 68. Complying With Heaven

***1. He who excels as a warrior is not warlike. He who excels as a fighter is not wrathful. He who excels in conquering the enemy does not strive. He who excels in employing men is lowly.***

**2. This is called the virtue of not-striving. This is called utilizing men's ability. This is called complying with heaven-since olden times the highest.**

**Commentary;**

1. The best warrior is not warlike, i.e. he doesn't like war but fights only if he absolutely has to. One he decides to fight he fights to win but not out of anger or vengeance. The person who truly defeats his enemy does so naturally without pushing for their way. The one who is best is getting good service from people working for him/her is a person who is humble.

2. This is the zen way of fighting the enemy. You don't fight the enemy with passion but with tactics when and where appropriate and then you accept the results. Striving is the continuous seeking after results when you know not what will work. Such striving is often pointless like looking for a particular grain of sand on a beach. This method of fighting without passion is so ancient it goes back as far as we can imagine.

**Standard Translation;**

*He who in (Tao's) wars has skill  
Assumes no martial port;  
He who fights with most good will  
To rage makes no resort.  
He who vanquishes yet still  
Keeps from his foes apart;  
He whose hests men most fulfil  
Yet humbly plies his art.*

*Thus we say, 'He ne'er contends,  
And therein is his might.'  
Thus we say, 'Men's wills he bends,  
That they with him unite.'  
Thus we say, 'Like Heaven's his ends,  
No sage of old more bright.'*

**69. The Function Of The Mysterious**

**1. A military expert used to say: 'I dare not act as host [who takes the initiative] but act as guest [with reserve]. I dare not advance an inch, but I withdraw a foot.'**

**2. This is called marching without marching, threatening without arms, charging without hostility, seizing without weapons.**

**3. No greater misfortune than making light of the enemy! When we make light of the enemy, it is almost as though we had lost our treasure--[compassion].**

**4. Thus, if matched armies encounter one another, the one who does so in sorrow is sure to conquer.**

**Commentary:**

1. An expert war master doesn't seek to advance every foot possible but to retreat and let the enemy calm down. Having the most territory isn't the same as having the most wealth or the best trade wealth. A humble approach to foreign relations is what is advised here.

2. This way a true warrior keeps balance within his army is by preparing them to fight in the right way mentally and winning through positive propaganda alone.

3. Never underestimate the enemy. Always put in careful thought and preparation when dealing with the enemy.

4. Here the poet says the one that engages in a war not in fear or anger or vengeance or greed but with sorrow (implying this is a duty that must be done and is being done as a last resort) is the one that will win.

**Standard Translation:**

*A master of the art of war has said, 'I do not dare to be the host (to commence the war); I prefer to be the guest (to act on the defensive). I do not dare to advance an inch; I prefer to retire a foot.' This is called marshalling the ranks where there are no ranks; baring the arms (to fight) where there are no arms to bare; grasping the weapon where there is no weapon to grasp; advancing against the enemy where there is no enemy.*

*There is no calamity greater than lightly engaging in war. To do*

*that is near losing (the gentleness) which is so precious. Thus it is that when opposing weapons are (actually) crossed, he who deplors (the situation) conquers.*

## **War Is Always A Last Resort**

### **31. Quelling War**

- 1. Even victorious arms are unblest among tools, and people had better shun them. Therefore he who has Reason does not rely on them.***
- 2. The superior man when residing at home honors the left. When using arms, he honors the right.***
- 3. Arms are unblest among tools and not the superior man's tools. Only when it is unavoidable he uses them. Peace and quietude he holdeth high.***
- 4. He conquers but rejoices not. Rejoicing at a conquest means to enjoy the slaughter of men. He who enjoys the slaughter of men will most assuredly not obtain his will in the empire.***

### **Commentary:**

1. Weapons are one of the worst of man's inventions. "It would be best if we had never invented a weapon" the poet laments. So zen/tao doesn't depend upon weapons.

2. This is an interesting way of arranging the concepts of peace and war. I'm sure that left's aversion to weapons and the right propensity for war in our time is just a coincidence. That said, the fact that a Taoist when peaceful is of 'the left side' and when functioning as a warrior is of 'the right side' is something that should be easily understandable by an American audience.

3. Here the poet makes it clear that while weapons are the worst inventions of man and are not used by the "Superior" man (Taoist/zen practitioner), if there is no other choice than using weapons (going to war/fighting) is fine. You don't go out hunting a tiger for the sake of hunting it but if attacked or under threat by a tiger then you have to take up arms to not only repel it but to kill it so it doesn't strike/eat someone else. Same applies to other situations in everyday life or once in a lifetime wars/battles.

4. A zenist who fights, who has to fight, does so with no joy in what he has to do. If a person enjoys killing then he reveals a flaw in his character. A person who enjoys killing can't build an empire that lasts because his own attitude of enjoyment in death comes back to get him.

**Standard Translation:**

*Now arms, however beautiful, are instruments of evil omen, hateful, it may be said, to all creatures. Therefore they who have the Tao do not like to employ them.*

*The superior man ordinarily considers the left hand the most honourable place, but in time of war the right hand. Those sharp weapons are instruments of evil omen, and not the instruments of the superior man;--he uses them only on the compulsion of necessity. Calm and repose are what he prizes; victory (by force of arms) is to him undesirable. To consider this desirable would be to delight in the slaughter of men; and he who delights in the slaughter of men cannot get his will in the kingdom.*

*On occasions of festivity to be on the left hand is the prized position; on occasions of mourning, the right hand. The second in command of the army has his place on the left; the general commanding in chief has his on the right;--his place, that is, is assigned to him as in the rites of mourning. He who has killed multitudes of men should weep for them with the bitterest grief; and the victor in battle has his place (rightly) according to those rites.*

**Winning the War**

**67. The Three Treasures**

***1. All in the world call me great; but I resemble the unlikely. Now a man is great only because he resembles the unlikely. Did he resemble the likely, how lasting, indeed, would his mediocrity be!***

***2. I have three treasures which I cherish and prize. The first is called compassion. The second is called economy. The third is called not daring to come to the front in the world.***



**3. The compassionate can be brave; the economical can be generous; those who dare not come to the front in the world can become perfect as chief vessels.**

**4. Now, if people discard compassion and are brave; if they discard economy and are generous; if they discard modesty and are ambitious, they will surely die.**

**5. Now, the compassionate will in attack be victorious, and in defence firm. Heaven when about to save one will with compassion protect him.**

**Commentary:**

1. You are amazing because of being unusual not because you are usual. If you resembled all the things people call great then you are just like other great things and thus just mediocre in nature and not great at all! (poet is saying that things aren't as they often appear to be).

2. The three things the poet cherishes and prizes as valuable is the ability to feel empathy for other living beings or "compassion". The second treasure is the ability to be frugal and careful in living and the third is to be satisfied without the fame of living in the limelight. In other words, the poet claims there is benefit to gain from remaining in the shadows, so to speak.

3. Compassion can make you brave as you try to help the less fortunate. Being careful with expenditure means that when needed you can be generous with you accumulated wealth. Those who can remain in the shadows rather than residing in the limelight can be the perfect instruments of implementing the will of the people.

4. - If people are brave without being compassionate i.e. fighting for a cause rather than fighting to help people.

- If they aren't careful with expenditure YET are generous in giving (thereby giving more than you have which can lead to other problems)

- If people discard modesty but seek stuff through ambition (thus seeking to boost their own ego by accomplishing stuff) then you surely walk the path of mental and spiritual death.

5. The compassionate person will be victorious in attack for all eternity and in defense will hold out forever. (even if one loses the battle one wins the war, so to speak). Even the universe of life itself seem to help the compassionate man succeed while protecting him.

**Standard Translation:**

*All the world says that, while my Tao is great, it yet appears to be inferior (to other systems of teaching). Now it is just its greatness that makes it seem to be inferior. If it were like any other (system), for long would its smallness have been known!*

*But I have three precious things which I prize and hold fast. The first is gentleness; the second is economy; and the third is shrinking from taking precedence of others.*

*With that gentleness I can be bold; with that economy I can be liberal; shrinking from taking precedence of others, I can become a vessel of the highest honour. Now-a-days they give up gentleness and are all for being bold; economy, and are all for being liberal; the hindmost place, and seek only to be foremost;--(of all which the end is) death.*

*Gentleness is sure to be victorious even in battle, and firmly to maintain its ground. Heaven will save its possessor, by his (very) gentleness protecting him.*

## Chapter 6

### **The Force, The Jedi & Taoist Teachings**

When I started studying mythology and came across Joseph Campbell I discovered that George Lucas used the 'Hero Archetype', as explained by Joseph Campbell, to construct the hero's journey of Luke Skywalker (Book: Hero With A Thousand Faces).<sup>28</sup> At the same time I was studying yoga and chi kung. Both systems believe that there is 'energy' all around us (called 'chi' in Chinese and 'prana' by the yogis). Both systems provide ways in which a person can become more attuned with the energy around them attain 'the flow'. Since then I have also discovered writers using the words "QiGong" (chi kung) in a Star Wars origins book called "Dawn Of The Jedi" so clearly the arcane arts of yoga and Chinese meditational techniques are influential in the creation of the concept of the Jedi & The Force. Now, while Star Wars and the Jedi are fictional there are some parallels between Jediism and Taoism that can be drawn and that's what this chapter is about.

In Chi Kung (Qi Gong), A Taoist Teaching;

Energy exists everywhere and connects everything. Just like the Jedi concept of the force.

A person can connect with and absorb energy from the world (earth plus air) around him/her. Again, just like a Jedi.

The only difference is that in star wars only gifted individuals have the ability to tap into the force. (something to do with their cellular structure) In reality every single person has the ability to connect, feel, flow with and use energy.

So it occurred to me, *what if there were enough similarities between the Star Wars concept of 'the force' and the practices of Yogis, Taoists, Zenists, Qi Gong*

28 Watch "Bill Moyers and Joseph Campbell on Star Wars" on @Vimeo  
<https://vimeo.com/37749698>

*practitioners and concepts the Samurai used, to write a guide to becoming a warrior of the Force! Like, a Real Life Jedi!*

So, based on what I know of these topics, I put together a basic guide to becoming like a Jedi, using eastern material covered in this book, to show the correlations between it (eastern knowledge) and the Star Wars approach to the Jedi & The Force.

Note: In the latest version of the Jedi, "Rey", doesn't require practice or the development of skills (as if the source of power for the Jedi is 'The Holy Ghost'). She doesn't even require books, which are burnt in the movie as per western tradition/history for dealing with arcane knowledge. In other words, Stars Wars trilogy has become very Christian and in no way represents anything in this book on on the website. The style here corresponds to the Old Republic style of Jedi training in the Star Wars universe. No magic here, only science.

### **Become Like A Jedi - A Manual**

#### **The Force Manifests As Electricity In The Body**

**From Time.com<sup>29</sup>**

*ACUPUNCTURE There is growing scientific evidence that acupuncture, a pillar of Chinese medicine, can relieve many kinds of pain, but there's no clear agreement about how it works. That was underscored by a German study of migraines: it found that inserting needles at various acupuncture points in the body relieved pain just as effectively as inserting them in the points that are supposed to affect migraines. Both therapies cut the number of episodes more than 50% over a 12-week period; a control group that did not receive either treatment continued to suffer as before.*

**Book: The Body Electric: Electromagnetism And The Foundation Of Life<sup>30</sup>:**

29 A-Z Guide to the Year in Medicine: From advances in acupuncture, AIDS and Alzheimer's, to the latest on fish oil, painkillers, Parkinson's and whether tea is good for you, all the way to the memory- enhancing powers of zinc, here is everything you need to know about the year's biggest news in medicine, by the letter  
<http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1134763,00.html>

30 The Body Electric: Electromagnetism And The Foundation Of Life by Robert Becker (Author), Gary Selden (Author)  
<http://www.amazon.com/Body-Electric-Electromagnetism-Foundation-Life/dp/0688069711>

*The Body Electric tells the fascinating story of our bioelectric selves. Robert O. Becker, a pioneer in the field of regeneration and its relationship to electrical currents in living things, challenges the established mechanistic understanding of the body. He found clues to the healing process in the long-discarded theory that electricity is vital to life. But as exciting as Becker's discoveries are, pointing to the day when human limbs, spinal cords, and organs may be regenerated after they have been damaged, equally fascinating is the story of Becker's struggle to do such original work. The Body Electric explores new pathways in our understanding of evolution, acupuncture, psychic phenomena, and healing.*

Meridians have been found using an imaging technique using radioactive isotopes. To summarize, they indicate that:

*"No radioactive isotope was observed to migrate when it was injected into points of normal electric resistance. Nor was any migration observed when injecting isotopes other than sodium pertechnetate in points of least electric resistance.*

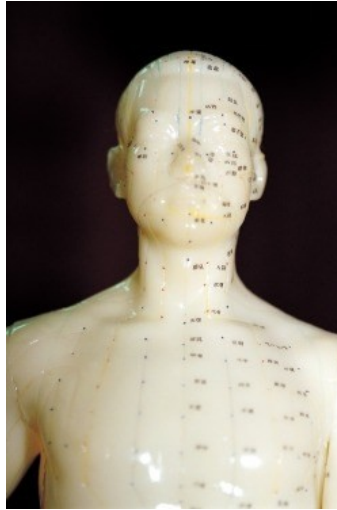
*Each time sodium pertechnetate was injected into points of least electric resistance, its migration was observed constantly, approximately at 2.5 cms per minute and always following the same longitudinal pathway."*

*The characteristics of the migration rule out the possibility that the radioactive isotope was carried through the nerves, vessels or lymphatic system. For example, when it was injected in a vein underlying the point of least electrical resistance, transport of a different speed and pathway was observed. Additionally on injecting sodium pertechnetate and thallium at the same time, it was observed that the first was transported while the second was not.*

**An exploration of meridians (abstract on government site)<sup>31</sup>:**

*"It is imperative to define the fundamental concepts of Qi, channels, and the meridian system of Chinese medicine in terms of scientific terminology before any meaningful and mutually beneficial dialog can begin between Chinese and Western medicine. In the Chinese theory, the meridian system as a whole is the system of the body. We propose the existence of a meridian regulatory system that governs interactions between and adjusts functions of internal organs, connects them to the body surface through a network of pathways (channels) and displays their status on the skin."*

31 Website: [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16265988?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultsPanel.Pubmed\\_DiscoveryPanel.Pubmed\\_Discovery\\_RA&linkpos=2&log\\$=relatedreviews&logdbfrom=pubmed](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16265988?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DiscoveryPanel.Pubmed_Discovery_RA&linkpos=2&log$=relatedreviews&logdbfrom=pubmed)



### **Basic Force Building Method**

In Yoga 'pranayama' is the name given to a breathing technique done before every technique, and on it's own. Prana literally means life force and yama means lengthening. Together pranayama is a method of breath control to increase your life force.

In Qigong the 'dai tin' (the area below your navel) is considered to be the center of your physical and energetic body. Slow deep belly breathing is the basic method to develop this energy center to connect with chi (Chi = energy/life force around us according to the Chinese)

The first and most important Jedi training technique is deep regular breathing.

This will revitalize your mind-body, making you more sensitive to the energy fields around you.

You will also develop a connection to the force.

With regular practice you will be able to actually feel the force build in your body as energy gets stored in your energy centers.

Breathing patterns: The breathing pattern is slow and deep. Fast breathing leads to hyperventilation. Practice slow and deep breathing (diaphragmatic) and if you get tired just relax for a while and begin again. This is the main method of connecting to “the force”.

Practice 2 basic patterns: First pattern is simply to take a deep breath of 4-7 seconds depending on your lung capacity) and then exhaling for exactly the same amount of time. The second pattern is to inhale for 4- 7 seconds (depending on your lung capacity), hold your breathe for the same amount of time. Exhale for the same amount of time. Then hold your breath for the same amount of time and then inhale again, i.e. repeat the breathing pattern. The goal is to practice regularly and to, over time, increase the breath count as your lung capacity increases. 5 - 10 minutes a day is enough to start. Do that for at least 3 months.

Within weeks you'll notice a major difference. In a year or two you'll be able to feel the force, more and more. As you practice, pretend to stroke your hand with you fingers as if they were twice as long. i.e. stroke you hand with the “energy” of your fingers without actually touching the other hand. When you can feel this you are feeling chi (the force) and you've made a major step forward. You can rub you hands together to sensitize them and make feeling the energy easier. For some this will be easy and for others this could take weeks of practice. Practice qigong regularly to advance your skills in addition to the breathing exercises.

IMPORTANT: The breathing pattern is slow and deep. Fast breathing leads to hyperventilation. Practice slow and deep breathing and if you get tired just relax for a while and begin again. This is the main method of connecting to the force.

**Here is an extract from an abstract reported on a government site<sup>32</sup>:**

*What was found: Emission of extremely strong magnetic fields from the head and whole body during oriental breathing exercises.*

*“This article reports the result of an experiment that was designed to measure the biomagnetic field emanating from two individuals who were practicing traditional Oriental Qi Gong breathing exercises.*

32[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9051169?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultsPanel.Pubmed\\_DiscoveryPanel.Pubmed\\_Discovery\\_RA&linkpos=1&log\\$=relatedarticles&logdbfrom=pubmed](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9051169?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DiscoveryPanel.Pubmed_Discovery_RA&linkpos=1&log$=relatedarticles&logdbfrom=pubmed)

*It is concluded that traditional Oriental Qi Gong breathing appears to stimulate an unusually large biomagnetic field emission.”*

**Another article on the same site is an abstract of how the levels of energy from the practitioners hands was more than normal<sup>33</sup>:**

*What was found: Detection of extraordinary large bio-magnetic field strength from human hand during external Qi emission.*

*“It is generally accepted that more than 10(-6) gauss order magnetism was not detected in normal human condition. However, we detected 10(-3) gauss (mGauss) order bio-magnetic field strength from the palm in special persons who emitted External Qi (“Chi” or “Ki”).*

*This magnetic field strength was greater than that of normal human bio-magnetism by 1,000 times at least. A simultaneous measurement of bio-magnetic field strength and its corresponding bio-electric current was examined in one subject. During exhibiting such strong bio-magnetism, its corresponding electric current was not detectable. Therefore, the extra-ordinary large bio-magnetic field strength can not derive from internal body current alone, hence the origin of the large bio-magnetism is still unknown. We suppose that the extraordinary large bio-magnetic field strength might be originated from “Qi” energy in the oriental medicine or in the oriental traditional philosophy.”*

**Discovery of meridians described by Chinese acupuncture (abstract on a government site)<sup>34</sup>:**

*“The “Bi-Digital O-Ring Test” imaging method has been successfully used not only to outline the internal organs but also malignant tumors as long as identical reference control tissue is available, regardless of whether it comes from the same individual or others, without exposing the patient to undesirable radiation from X-Rays, strong magnetic field or ultra-sound. While imaging the outline of the internal organs the author found that, from the surface of each organ, lines or networks of lines extend to other parts of the body. Such a line closely resembles well-known lines of meridians of major internal organs in Oriental medicine.”*

33<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1353653>

34[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2883838?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed\\_ResultsPanel.Pubmed\\_DiscoveryPanel.Pubmed\\_Discovery\\_RA&linkpos=3&log\\$=relatedarticles&logdbfrom=pubmed](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2883838?ordinalpos=1&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DiscoveryPanel.Pubmed_Discovery_RA&linkpos=3&log$=relatedarticles&logdbfrom=pubmed)



## **Jedi perspectives from Bodhidharma (Zen)**

Bodhidharma was probably a teacher of yoga and qigong, as were many of the teachers of his day. His writings cover only his philosophy of mind which came to be known as "Zen".

This philosophy is used by ninjas and the ancient samurai.

### **Some sayings of Bodhidharma extracted from a translation of Bodhidharma's sermons by Red Pines<sup>35</sup> ;**

***What is the mind? You ask. That's your mind I answer. My answer is your mind. If I had no mind how could I answer; If you had no mind how could you ask. That which asks is your mind.***

What he is saying is that the act of perceiving anything be it question a thought or an image or anything else, that is an act of the mind. If you ask for a definition of the mind it is your mind that is asking for that definition.

So you got your answer, anything you say, do ask, want or imagine that is the mind itself.

### **Definition of the mind in more detail;**

Your mind creates your thoughts. If you try to describe your mind then that is basically you using your mind to describe your mind.

In other words, your mind is creating images and thoughts to describe itself so it can only do so by analogy and if your mind is engaged in any task that an earlier analogy did not take into account then your mind has to come up with a new analogy.

So any description your mind comes up with an image of itself is like a camera looking into the lens of another camera and constantly moving backward in a sort of infinite regression. If you try to conceptualize an end mind, it's like the woman who believed the world was set on a large turtle and when asked what was underneath 'the turtle that held the world up', she replied; '*nice try. It's Turtles all the way down.*'

35 The Zen Teaching Of Bodhidharma <http://www.amazon.com/Teaching-Bodhidharma-English-Chinese-Edition/dp/0865473994>

In other words, as soon as you imagine something about the mind, the mind is distancing itself from itself to describe itself and you can do this forever. Ultimately you discover the mind can't be understood, only experienced.

**Bodhidharma says: *But the mind has no form and its awareness no limit.***

This means that any form or image you can imagine is a creation of your mind and since it is a creation of your mind, the mind itself has no form, i.e. the mind isn't a thing that you can find like a stone, it is formless as it is not made of matter.

**Bodhidharma: *All appearances are illusion. They have no fixed existence or constant form. They are impermanent.***

People grow old and mountains erode over the millennia by the wind and rain (or a strong rainfall). In other words, given a large enough perspective on time, everything you can see, touch, smell, feel or hear is impermanent. In fact a sound or the taste of something or a smell is by its very nature impermanent. Everything in the material world exists as a flow of information to our senses that is ever changing.

**Jedi Talk:** As long as you're attached to appearances, you're unaware that your mind is empty. By clinging to appearances you lose your connection with the force

**Bodhidharma: *"The mind's capacity is limitless, and its manifestations are inexhaustible. Seeing forms with your eyes, hearing sounds with your ears, smelling odors with your nose, tasting flavors with your tongue, every movement or state is all your mind. At every moment, where language can't go, that's your mind."***

Anything you experience can be remembered in the mind thereby making its capacity seem limitless. Anything you can name or classify is a "manifestation" and you can make up anything on and on forever making it seem limitless. What you sense by smell or touch is sensed by your mind. Where language can't go (such as explaining the taste of strawberries), that too is the mind.

**Bodhidharma: *"And as long as you're subject to birth and death, you'll never attain enlightenment."***

**Jedi Talk:** By being self-conscious you reduce your connection to the flow of the

force

In zen death & rebirth is seen as a psychological phenomenon following from the illusion of the self.

### **An ancient Zen Scholar, Hui-Neng's Tan Ching, Writes;**

*What is Paramita? This is a Sanskrit term of the Western country. In Yang it means "the other shore reached". When the meaning (artha in Sanskrit) is understood, one is detached from birth and death. When the objective world (visaya) is clung to, there is the rise of birth and death; it is like the waves rising from the water; this is called "this shore". When you are detached from the objective world, there is no birth and death for you; it is like the water constantly running its course: this is "reaching the other shore". Hence Paramita.<sup>36</sup>*

The idea being expressed here: When you cling to the world you have to create to create a self to deal with each new situation, thus you experience 'death and rebirth' (of the ego). When you let go and dwell in the zen state your consciousness stays steady and thus you don't experience birth and death (of the ego).

For example: When you try and do good deeds you are trying to create a new self. By working on being better and better, you are destroying an old way of being (the old 'self') and you are creating a new one. Your 'self', i.e. how you define or imagine yourself to be, is going through death and rebirth.

### **Definitions drawn from Bodhidharma's sermons;**

Enlightenment = heightened awareness that can be maintained constantly

Nirvana = a state where the self (or yourself that you create in your mind) ceases to exist and all the world is experienced directly.

**Bodhidharma: "To search for enlightenment or nirvana beyond this mind is impossible."**

Recognizing and living in the mind is by itself enlightenment. Enhanced awareness is one of the effects of said enlightenment.

The idea here is that as soon as you begin 'seeking' an experience, you have put that experience into a category and separated it from yourself.

36 Hui Neng's Tan Ching - Manual Of Zen Buddhism by Dr. Suzuki

Then you chase this conception you have of what 'enlightenment' or 'nirvana' should be. As long as you have an image to chase, i.e. your mind is chasing something it has created; you will be like a donkey with a carrot forever just out of reach, going round and round attaining nothing. Why? Because all enlightenment/nirvana are attributes of your mind itself (it is your "original mind" to be more precise). You already have what you seek. So looking for what you already have is pointless .

**Jedi Talk:** To look for oneness with the force outside of yourself is impossible – the force is everywhere, around you, in you, you exist in the force. Looking for the force as something separate from you is like a fish looking for the mythical substance called 'water'.

### **Going deeper;**

To know that an object you perceive is a tree is a conception you have that you have created in your mind and imposed on it. What you're perceiving could just as easily be called an air filter or a lung of the earth or a home for the spirits and every such definition is accurate in its particular context in that it is an image the mind has of its surroundings.

Thus noticing an object without defining it is your mind in a state of direct experience... which can be fun, like when you are engaged in a game or boring like if you are waiting in line. The key is not to go meta on what you are experiencing, i.e. if you are having fun, don't think about the fun you're having, just stay involved in enjoying yourself without any self-reflection, pondering or imagination – daydreaming or in any way being mentally not there which can include thinking of others opinions which take you away from your own experience

Same goes for if you are bored. Enjoy the boredom as it helps differentiate the boring time from the fun times. You could go 'meta' (outside of the experience of the situation) by imagining how bored you are and what a waste of time it is or go into an escape made by fantasizing doing something else (like daydreaming to pass time) but don't. Simply experience waiting in line as waiting in line without imposing any value judgment such as fun or boring, good or bad, and you are experiencing waiting DIRECTLY without any mental wanderings. That is a form of zen. Practice it and waiting can serve as a meditative practice, as can work as keeping your mind on your task is easier if your whole body is engaged. That's probably why Monks in Zen Monasteries had so many chores and physical practices, i.e. as a form of mediation.

In short just experience. Notice and observe without conception, i.e. without thinking of anything in particular. Take the example of a baby, they have no conception of right or wrong, up or down, male or female – so they experience life directly and respond to it without imposing conception of how things are and THEN responding to how they think is appropriate (and I mean non-habitual behaviors as well).

This brings me to a common misconception about zen. Zen is not about sitting like a stone no matter what is around you (though some zen masters have done this to make a point, like in the following stories told by

**Alan Watts:**

*“The story is told of a zen monk who wept upon hearing of the death of a close relative. When one of his fellow students objected that it was most unseemly for a monk to show such personal attachment he replied; ‘Don’t be stupid! I’m weeping because I want to weep.’ The great hakuin was deeply disturbed in his early study of zen when he came across the story of the master Yen Tao, who was said to have screamed at the top of his voice when murdered by a robber. Yet this doubt was dissolved at the moment of his satori (enlightenment) and in Zen circles his own death is felt to have been especially admirable for its display of human emotion. On the other hand, the Abbot Kwaisen and his monks allowed themselves to be burned alive by the soldiers of Oda Nobunager, sitting calmly in the posture of meditation. Such contradictory ‘naturalness’ seems most mysterious, but perhaps the clue lies in the saying of Yun-Men;*

***In walking just walk. In sitting, just sit. Above all, don’t wobble.***

*For the essential quality of naturalness is the sincerity of the undivided mind which does not dither between alternatives. So when Yen- tao screamed, it was such a scream that it was heard for miles around*

*But it would be wrong to suppose that this natural sincerity comes about by observing such a platitude as ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. When Yen tao screamed he was not screaming in order to be natural, no did he first make up his mind to scream and then implement the decision with the full energy of his will. There is a total contradiction in planned naturalness and intentional sincerity. This is to overlay, not to discover, the ‘original mind’. Thus to try to be natural is an affectation to try not to try to be natural is also an affectation.*

**As a Zenrin poem says**

*You cannot get it by taking thought*

*You cannot seek it by not taking thought*

In other words, if you practice 'no-self' then there should be no thought to how you should or shouldn't do anything because both involve thinking and creating an ego-image to decide the action you think is appropriate for that situation

*“Social conditioning fosters the identification of the mind with a fixed idea of itself as the means of self control, and as a result man thinks of himself as ‘I’ – the ego. Thereupon the mental center of gravity shifts from the spontaneous or original mind to the ego-image. Once this has happened, the very center of our psychic (i.e. mental) life is identified with the self-controlling mechanism. It then becomes almost impossible to see how ‘I’ can let go of ‘myself’, for I am precisely my habitual effort to hold on to my self.” Alan Watts in *The Way of Zen**

**Bodhidharma: “And as long as you’re subject to birth and death, you’ll never attain enlightenment.”**

As long as ego interferes with your perception you can never attain flow.

When you try and do good deeds you are trying to create a new self. By working on being better and better, you are destroying an old way of being (the old 'self') and you are creating a new one. Your 'self', i.e. how you define or imagine yourself to be, is going through death and rebirth.

Self-improvement is great yet it is unnecessary for Zen because enlightenment is awareness of all the mind and what is perceived. By trying to do things to attain what you already have you are simply going round and round (once again).

**Bodhidharma: “Buddha is Sanskrit for what you call aware, miraculously aware. Responding, perceiving, arching your brows, blinking your eyes, moving your hands and feet, it’s all your miraculously aware nature. And this nature is the mind. And the mind is Buddha. And the Buddha is the path. And the path is Zen. But the word ‘zen’ is one that remains a puzzle to both mortals and sages. Seeing your nature is Zen. Unless you see your nature, it’s not Zen.”**

Buddha here means complete awareness. So this is saying to reach complete awareness (enlightenment) all you have to do is realize your nature. Since all enlightenment exists as your mind then if you truly understand and are one with your mind in a state of complete awareness then you have attained 'buddhahood'.

**Jedi Talk:** To become one with the force, you have to understand your true nature. When you understand your nature you flow with the force.

***“And the Buddha is the person who’s free; free of plans, free of cares.”***

**Jedi Talk:** When you are fully aware you find freedom from irrelevant thoughts and you are truly connected to the force.

If you are thinking of the past of the future or even of yourself (seeking to imagine or define who you are) then you are drifting in the thoughts of your mind. If you let go of thoughts about yourself, past and future, good and bad, then you are free from ‘plans and care’. When your mind flows with you, with no conceptual state whatsoever, you are in a zen state of awareness.

**Bodhidharma: “A Buddha is free of karma, free of cause and effect”.**

A person of complete awareness simply exists. Life itself is the meaning of life. He/she doesn’t try to do good or bad deeds. They simply do what needs to be done when it needs to be done. This is done without thought of reward or punishment. If you take action without desiring good or avoiding the bad you do not create ‘karma’ for yourself.

**Bodhidharma: “A Buddha doesn’t do good or evil. A Buddha isn’t energetic or lazy. A Buddha is someone who does nothing, someone who can’t even focus his mind on a Buddha. A Buddha isn’t a Buddha. Don’t think of Buddhas.”**

The above states plainly that ANY conception immediately takes you away from direct experience. So rather than walking down a beach you are thinking of yourself walking down a beach while you are actually doing that very thing.

What Bodhidharma is saying is to forget all preconception you may have, don’t think just be. The self-reflexive aspect of the mind is turned off in favor of direct experience.

**Jedi Attitude of Trust in The Force**

The force is everywhere and in everything. If you trust in the force, connect with the force, set goals and work towards them ...the force will seem to conspire to bring you what you want.

In the same way no challenge is ever too much for a Jedi. You may be terrified, hurt, sorrowful, joyful but emotion comes and goes. Any challenge given to you by the force is there for you to overcome. To make you stronger. Unless you die (which is something a Jedi must accept before he/she can accept life as it is) you are meant to overcome it.

A Jedi may have many enemies but the enemies are also being manipulated by the force. The challenges you are presented with, although may be with a person motivated by intent of the dark side, are there to help you get stronger physically, mentally and energetically. Trust that this is so and it will be.

Having an enemy creates conflict. Conflict creates learning. Many powerful leaders believe that without their enemies they could never have attained the success they did. So it may be a scary idea, but enemies litter the path of a Jedi more than friends. That is how it is for most people.

To protect oneself from an enemy is to love them fully. Only when you love your enemy you can you understand them. Only when you understand your enemies can you defend against attacks. Thus a Jedi Knight is never vengeful but always alert.

**Related quotes from the Tao Te Ching;**

**1**

*The Tao that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging Tao. The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name.*

*(Conceived of as) having no name, it is the Originator of heaven and earth; (conceived of as) having a name, it is the Mother of all things.*

*Always without desire we must be found,  
If its deep mystery we would sound;  
But if desire always within us be,  
Its outer fringe is all that we shall see.*

*Under these two aspects, it is really the same; but as development takes place, it receives the different names. Together we call them*



*the Mystery. Where the Mystery is the deepest is the gate of all that is subtle and wonderful.*

2

*All in the world know the beauty of the beautiful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what ugliness is; they all know the skill of the skilful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what the want of skill is.*

*So it is that existence and non-existence give birth the one to (the idea of) the other; that difficulty and ease produce the one (the idea of) the other; that length and shortness fashion out the one the figure of the other; that (the ideas of) height and lowness arise from the contrast of the one with the other; that the musical notes and tones become harmonious through the relation of one with another; and that being before and behind give the idea of one following another.*

*Therefore the sage manages affairs without doing anything, and conveys his instructions without the use of speech.*

*All things spring up, and there is not one which declines to show itself; they grow, and there is no claim made for their ownership; they go through their processes, and there is no expectation (of a reward for the results). The work is accomplished, and there is no resting in it (as an achievement).*

*The work is done, but how no one can see;  
'Tis this that makes the power not cease to be.*

### **Jedi Mind Trick – Pain Control**

Generally if you have an area of pain you have to be careful with it. Get it treated, don't stress it etc. So it heals back fast.

As a Jedi there will be times when you have to control your pain.

The following is a basic pain control technique.

(always consult your doctor if you have an injury before applying any techniques outlined in this book)

Pretend as if you can draw a circle around the painful area and isolate it. You may feel pain waves emanating from it, but since it is isolated notice how pain free other parts of the body are and keep your attention on the good feelings.

You can enhance your mood by being grateful to your body for being in pain reminding you to be more appreciative of it when it's not in pain.

The feeling of gratefulness turns your inner attitude from being a victim to one who is learning and growing stronger. This can help you be more positive and in control even when in pain.

Another pain control method that goes hand in hand with this one is to simply accept the pain as it is.

Don't try and stop it, ignore it, or isolate it.

Simply accept it.

In the same way that we can accept construction noise (or other background noise) to get work done, we can also accept pain. When you genuinely accept it, the pain can just fade into the background. It's still there but not the focus of your attention.

Of course, degree of pain can be a big factor in how well you can apply this technique. How well you are trained in going into a Jedi Healing Trance and how well you are able to balance your energetic meridians that keep you connected with the force.

*"Sit in a quiet place and meditate in imagination that body is no more bondage to you, that it is your machine for your work of life, that you are not flesh, that you are the governor of it, that you can use it at pleasure, and that it always obeys your order faithfully. Imagine body as separated from you. When it cries out, stop it instantly, as a mother does her baby. When it disobeys you, correct it by discipline, as a master does his pupil. When it is wanton, tame it down, as a horse-breaker does his wild horse. When it is sick, prescribe to it, as a doctor does to his patient. Imagine that you are not a bit injured, even if it streams blood; that you are entirely safe, even if it is drowned in water or burned by fire."* **From Religion Of The Samurai**

### **Parable: The Hero and the Bear**

This story is meant to exemplify why a Jedi needs to practice non-attachment to his/her actions and environment;

Once upon a time there was a hero. He went around saving others. It's what hero's like to do. One day he saved the life of a bear by releasing it from a bear trap. The two became friends. They traveled together as the hero went about his heroism and the bear, in a state of gratitude, sought to help the hero as much as it could often in ways that weren't helpful but the hero went along with it for friendship's sake.

One day the hero was sleeping peacefully. The bear noticed that there were a lot of flies over the hero's head. This bothered him. He decided that it is his duty to help the hero have a more peaceful sleep by getting rid of the flies over his head.

Bears don't have much understanding and go for whatever makes sense in the moment without much thought to it. The bear noticed a large stone. Picking up the huge rock, the bear raised it over his head and crushed the flies with a forceful throw... and with it the Hero's head.

**Lesson:** Saving bears is fine but be-aware if friends with them.

### **The Code of A REAL Jedi Knight**

*Drawn from the standard feudal system of morality as per King Arthur & The Knights Of The Round Table Or the Samurai*

A Jedi can come from any background. Becoming a Jedi involves experience and understanding NOT belief. Those who have created a 'religion' out of the concept of the Jedi have entirely missed the point of what a Jedi is. An explorer of the force. In the books it is shown that people who don't believe in the Jedi or the Force, see it as a 'hokey religion'(Han Solo's words). Some people online have actually gone ahead and created hokey religions.

This book will only show you how you can actually become more like a Jedi. It may be a fictional approach to self-improvement and personal development...but it's definitely NOT a religion.

Jedi are like yoga or chi kung practitioners. They learn and apply their skills to the real world and to themselves. They do not have a creed, they have a code.

A creed is a set of beliefs you believe in without evidence (i.e. like a religion). A code guides and sets limits related to how you can use and apply your knowledge of the force.

You can be a Jew, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist and still be a Jedi.

Here you will discover how you can feel the force, how you can increase your capacity to absorb the force and what it means to be a Jedi Knight.

King Arthur is known for bringing justice to the land through his knights of the round table.

The code of the Knights of the Round Table is Truth, Honor, Justice, Brotherhood.

### **The Code of a "Jedi" On This Path is...**

**Honor,  
Truth,  
Justice and  
Love  
(for all beings of the force).**

Of course, the order doesn't have to be as I've outlined. But all 4 must be applied together to all situations. That is the responsibility of a Jedi.

### **Other Basic Zen like Jedi Principles**

#### **A Jedi must maintain a neutral attitude of skepticism:**

A Jedi must be a skeptic, a person who doesn't believe or disbelieve, to be able to keep centered in the force and to be able to make appropriate decisions based on the reality of a situation that they have to deal with. The reality of a situation can only be seen by someone who can clear their head of expectations and delusions of how things 'should' be. The point of view can be expanded through consultation but the ultimate decision has to be your own.

**As a Jedi you act on your decisions with utmost integrity.** Holding only yourself responsible - with no excuses for mistakes made.

**A Jedi is an explorer of the force and everything encompassed within the force.**

**A Jedi Master is someone who has mastered one or more aspects of the Force.** Inner force or outer force. Masters can specialize in one aspect of the force like yoga, martial arts, ninja techniques or meditation (or they can be masters of several methods)

**A Jedi explores their inner selves.** This is done through various types of meditations.

A Jedi Knight is a person who is determined to hold him/her self to the highest levels of self integrity – irrespective of society's perception of him/her – with the goal of upholding the Old Code of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table OR the Samurai (same basic thing model of behaviour). For the purposes of this manual, this is your code:

**Love, Honor, Truth and Justice.**

Since an explorer of the Force is presumed to have an infinite path (as the force/energy fields are too large to comprehend emotionally- therefore they are infinite by human standards)

then there can be no ultimate Jedi Masters. A true Jedi remains a Knight all his life. Always open to new perspectives.

### **Glossary of terms used:**

**Jedi:** A Jedi is a person who is aware of the force (energy field) and works on personal development to connect with and flow with the force.

**The Force:** The force as termed in Star Wars has a real life counterpart. According to Quantum Mechanics (physics) everything is interrelated like a 'wave pattern', a 'force' if you will.

**Yoga/Chi-kung :** These are types of techniques developed by yogis in prehistory that enhance concentration, increase reflexes/awareness, open up a person's sensitivity to experience energy fields that exist around us.

**Energy Fields:** our bodies have an energy field and a magnetic field. These fields exist around other animals and plants and (according to physics and Kirlian photography) every living object.

**Quantum Mechanics:** A revolutionary new way of understanding the universe which began to develop in the beginning of the 19th century. Quantum Mechanics shows that everything in the universe is interconnected and can be perceived as a wave form or energy field. The theory of Quantum Mechanics led to the technological developments of radio, TV, computers, cell phones, and the new fiber optic cable technology for high speed internet.

**E=mc<sup>2</sup>** - Einstein's famous equation that shows that all matter can converted to energy. Proving once and for all the matter is composed of energy and light.

## Appendix

### **The Training Of The Mind & The Practice Of Meditation For The Samurai<sup>37</sup> By Kaiten Nukariya**

1. The Method of Instruction Adopted by Zen Masters.--Thus far we have described the doctrine of Zen inculcated by both Chinese and Japanese masters, and in this chapter we propose to sketch the practice of mental training and the method of practising Dhyana or Meditation. Zen teachers never instruct their pupils by means of explanation or argument, but urge them to solve by themselves through the practice of Meditation such problems as--'What is Buddha?' 'What is self?' 'What is the spirit of Bodhidharma?' 'What is life and death?' 'What is the real nature of mind?' and so on. Ten Shwai (To-sotsu), for instance, was wont to put three questions<sup>38</sup> to the following effect: (1) Your study and discipline aim at the understanding of the real nature of mind. Where does the real nature of mind exist? (2) When you understand the real nature of mind, you are free from birth and death. How can you be saved when you are at the verge of death? (3) When you are free from birth and death, you know where you go after death. Where do you go when your body is reduced to elements? The pupils are not requested to express their solution of these problems in the form of a theory or an argument, but to show how they have grasped the profound meaning implied in these problems, how they have established their conviction, and how they can carry out what they grasped in their daily life.

A Chinese Zen master<sup>39</sup> tells us that the method of instruction adopted by Zen may aptly be compared with that of an old burglar who taught his son the art of burglary. The burglar one evening said to his little son, whom he desired to instruct in the secret of his trade: "Would you not, my dear boy, be a great burglar like myself?"

37Chapter 8 from "The Religion Of The Samurai". Full book available for download at Taoist-Books.com

38The famous three difficult questions, known as the Three Gates of Teu Shwai (To Sotsu San Kwan), who died in 1091. See Mu Mon Kwan, xlvi.

39Wu Tsu (Go So), the teacher of Yuen Wu (En Go).

"Yes, father," replied the promising young man. "Come with me, then. I will teach you the art." So saying, the man went out, followed by his son. Finding a rich mansion in a certain village, the veteran burglar made a hole in the wall that surrounded it. Through that hole they crept into the yard, and opening a window with complete ease broke into the house, where they found a huge box firmly locked up as if its contents were very valuable articles. The old man clapped his hands at the lock, which, strange to tell, unfastened itself. Then he removed the cover and told his son to get into it and pick up treasures as fast as he could. No sooner had the boy entered the box than the father replaced the cover and locked it up. He then exclaimed at the top of his voice: "Thief! thief! thief! thief!" Thus, having aroused the inmates, he went out without taking anything. All the house was in utter confusion for a while; but finding nothing stolen, they went to bed again. The boy sat holding his breath a short while; but making up his mind to get out of his narrow prison, began to scratch the bottom of the box with his finger-nails. The servant of the house, listening to the noise, supposed it to be a mouse gnawing at the inside of the box; so she came out, lamp in hand, and unlocked it. On removing the cover, she was greatly surprised to find the boy instead of a little mouse, and gave alarm. In the meantime the boy got out of the box and went down into the yard, hotly pursued by the people. He ran as fast as possible toward the well, picked up a large stone, threw it down into it, and hid himself among the bushes. The pursuers, thinking the thief fell into the well, assembled around it, and were looking into it, while the boy crept out unnoticed through the hole and went home in safety. Thus the burglar taught his son how to rid himself of overwhelming difficulties by his own efforts; so also Zen teachers teach their pupils how to overcome difficulties that beset them on all sides and work out salvation by themselves.

2. The First Step in the Mental Training.--Some of the old Zen masters are said to have attained to supreme Enlightenment after the practice of Meditation for one week, some for one day, some for a score of years, and some for a few months. The practice of Meditation, however, is not simply a means for Enlightenment, as is usually supposed, but also it is the enjoyment of Nirvana, or the beatitude of Zen. It is a matter, of course, that we have fully to understand the doctrine of Zen, and that we have to go through the mental training peculiar to Zen in order to be Enlightened.

The first step in the mental training is to become the master of external things. He who is addicted to worldly pleasures, however learned or ignorant he may be, however high or low his social position may be, is a servant to mere things. He cannot adapt the external world to his own end, but he adapts himself to it. He is constantly employed, ordered, driven by sensual objects. Instead of taking possession of wealth, he is possessed by wealth. Instead of drinking liquors, he is swallowed up by his liquors. Balls and music bid him to run mad. Games and shows order him not to stay at home. Houses, furniture, pictures, watches, chains, hats,



bonnets, rings, bracelets, shoes--in short, everything has a word to command him. How can such a person be the master of things? To Ju (Na-kae) says: "There is a great jail, not a jail for criminals, that contains the world in it. Fame, gain, pride, and bigotry form its four walls. Those who are confined in it fall a prey to sorrow and sigh for ever."

To be the ruler of things we have first to shut up all our senses, and turn the currents of thoughts inward, and see ourselves as the centre of the world, and meditate that we are the beings of highest intelligence; that Buddha never puts us at the mercy of natural forces; that the earth is in our possession; that everything on earth is to be made use of for our noble ends; that fire, water, air, grass, trees, rivers, hills, thunder, cloud, stars, the moon, the sun, are at our command; that we are the law-givers of the natural phenomena; that we are the makers of the phenomenal world; that it is we that appoint a mission through life, and determine the fate of man.

3. The Next Step in the Mental Training.--In the next place we have to strive to be the master of our bodies. With most of the unenlightened, body holds absolute control over Self. Every order of the former has to be faithfully obeyed by the latter. Even if Self revolts against the tyranny of body, it is easily trampled down under the brutal hoofs of bodily passion. For example, Self wants to be temperate for the sake of health, and would fain pass by the resort for drinking, but body would force Self into it. Self at times lays down a strict dietetic rule for himself, but body would threaten Self to act against both the letter and spirit of the rule. Now Self aspires to get on a higher place among sages, but body pulls Self down to the pavement of masses. Now Self proposes to give some money to the poor, but body closes the purse tightly. Now Self admires divine beauty, but body compels him to prefer sensuality. Again, Self likes spiritual liberty, but body confines him in its dungeons.

Therefore, to get Enlightened, we must establish the authority of Self over the whole body. We must use our bodies as we use our clothes in order to accomplish our noble purposes. Let us command body not to shudder under a cold shower-bath in inclement weather, not to be nervous from sleepless nights, not to be sick with any sort of food, not to groan under a surgeon's knife, not to succumb even if we stand a whole day in the midsummer sun, not to break down under any form of disease, not to be excited in the thick of battlefield--in brief, we have to control our body as we will.

Sit in a quiet place and meditate in imagination that body is no more bondage to you, that it is your machine for your work of life, that you are not flesh, that you are the governor of it, that you can use it at pleasure, and that it always obeys your order faithfully. Imagine body as separated from you. When it cries out, stop it instantly, as a mother does her baby. When it disobeys you, correct it by discipline,

as a master does his pupil. When it is wanton, tame it down, as a horse-breaker does his wild horse. When it is sick, prescribe to it, as a doctor does to his patient. Imagine that you are not a bit injured, even if it streams blood; that you are entirely safe, even if it is drowned in water or burned by fire.

E-Shun, a pupil and sister of Ryo-an<sup>40</sup>, a famous Japanese master, burned herself calmly sitting cross-legged on a pile of firewood which consumed her. She attained to the complete mastery of her body. Socrates' self was never poisoned, even if his person was destroyed by the venom he took. Abraham Lincoln himself stood unharmed, even if his body was laid low by the assassin. Masa-shige was quite safe, even if his body was hewed by the traitors' swords. Those martyrs that sang at the stake to the praise of God could never be burned, even if their bodies were reduced to ashes, nor those seekers after truth who were killed by ignorance and superstition. Is it not a great pity to see a man endowed with divine spirit and power easily upset by a bit of headache, or crying as a child under a surgeon's knife, or apt to give up the ghost at the coming of little danger, or trembling through a little cold, or easily laid low by a bit of indisposition, or yielding to trivial temptation?

It is no easy matter to be the dictator of body. It is not a matter of theory, but of practice. You must train your body that you may enable it to bear any sort of suffering, and to stand unflinched in the face of hardship. It is for this that So-rai<sup>41</sup> (Ogiu) laid himself on a sheet of straw-mat spread on the ground in the coldest nights of winter, or was used to go up and down the roof of his house, having himself clad in heavy armour. It is for this that ancient Japanese soldiers led extremely simple lives, and that they often held the meeting-of-perseverance<sup>42</sup>, in which they exposed themselves to the coldest weather in winter or to the hottest weather in summer. It is for this that Katsu Awa practised fencing in the middle of night in a deep forest.<sup>43</sup>

Ki-saburo, although he was a mere outlaw, having his left arm half cut at the elbow in a quarrel, ordered his servant to cut it off with a saw, and during the operation he could calmly sit talking and laughing with his friends. Hiko-kuro (Takayama)<sup>44</sup>, a

40Ryo an (E-myo, died 1411), the founder of the monastery of Sai-jo-ji, near the city of Odawara. See To-jo-ren-to-roku.

41One of the greatest scholars of the Tokugawa period, who died in 1728. See Etsu-wa-bun-ko.

42The soldiers of the Tokugawa period were used to hold such a meeting.

43 Kai-shu-gen-ko-roku.

44A well-known loyalist in the Tokugawa period, who died in 1793.

Japanese loyalist of note, one evening happened to come to a bridge where two robbers were lying in wait for him. They lay fully stretching themselves, each with his head in the middle of the bridge, that he might not pass across it without touching them. Hiko-kuro was not excited nor disheartened, but calmly approached the vagabonds and passed the bridge, treading upon their heads, which act so frightened them that they took to their heels without doing any harm to him.<sup>45</sup>

The history of Zen is full of the anecdotes that show Zen priests were the lords of their bodies. Here we quote a single example by way of illustration: Ta Hwui (Dai-ye), once having had a boil on his hip, sent for a doctor, who told him that it was fatal, that he must not sit in Meditation as usual. Then Ta Hwui said to the physician: "I must sit in Meditation with all my might during my remaining days, for if your diagnosis be not mistaken, I shall die before long." He sat day and night in constant Meditation, quite forgetful of his boil, which was broken and gone by itself.<sup>46</sup>

4. The Third Step in the Mental Training. -- To be the lord of mind is more essential to Enlightenment, which, in a sense, is the clearing away of illusions, the putting out of mean desires and passions, and the awakening of the innermost wisdom. He alone can attain to real happiness who has perfect control over his passions tending to disturb the equilibrium of his mind. Such passions as anger, hatred, jealousy, sorrow, worry, grudge, and fear always untune one's mood and break the harmony of one's mind. They poison one's body, not in a figurative, but in a literal sense of the word. Obnoxious passions once aroused never fail to bring about the physiological change in the nerves, in the organs, and eventually in the whole constitution, and leave those injurious impressions that make one more liable to passions of similar nature.

We do not mean, however, that we ought to be cold and passionless, as the most ancient Hinayanists were used to be. Such an attitude has been blamed by Zen masters. "What is the best way of living for us monks?" asked a monk to Yun Kū (Un-go), who replied: "You had better live among mountains." Then the monk bowed politely to the teacher, who questioned: "How did you understand me?" "Monks, as I understood," answered the man, "ought to keep their hearts as immovable as mountains, not being moved either by good or by evil, either by birth or by death, either by prosperity or by adversity." Hereupon Yun Kū struck the monk with his stick and said: "You forsake the Way of the old sages, and will bring my followers to perdition!" Then, turning to another monk, inquired: "How did you understand me?" "Monks, as I understand," replied the man, "ought to shut their eyes to attractive sights and close their ears to musical notes." "You, too,"

45Etsu-wa-bun-ko.

46Sho-bo-gen-zo-zui-mon-ki, by Do-gen.

exclaimed Yun Ka, "forsake the Way of the old sages, and will bring my followers to perdition!" An old woman, to quote another example repeatedly told by Zen masters, used to give food and clothing to a monk for a score of years. One day she instructed a young girl to embrace and ask him: "How do you feel now?" "A lifeless tree," replied the monk coolly, "stands on cold rock. There is no warmth, as if in the coldest season of the year." The matron, being told of this, observed: "Oh that I have made offerings to such a vulgar fellow for twenty years!" She forced the monk to leave the temple and reduced it to ashes.<sup>47</sup>

If you want to secure Dhyana, let go of your anxieties and failures in the past; let bygones be bygones; cast aside enmity, shame, and trouble, never admit them into your brain; let pass the imagination and anticipation of future hardships and sufferings; let go of all your annoyances, vexations, doubts, melancholies, that impede your speed in the race of the struggle for existence. As the miser sets his heart on worthless dross and accumulates it, so an unenlightened person clings to worthless mental dross and spiritual rubbish, and makes his mind a dust-heap. Some people constantly dwell on the minute details of their unfortunate circumstances, to make themselves more unfortunate than they really are; some go over and over again the symptoms of their disease to think themselves into serious illness; and some actually bring evils on them by having them constantly in view and waiting for them. A man asked Poh Chang (Hyaku-jo): "How shall I learn the Law?" "Eat when you are hungry," replied the teacher; "sleep when you are tired. People do not simply eat at table, but think of hundreds of things; they do not simply sleep in bed, but think of thousands of things."<sup>48</sup>

A ridiculous thing it is, in fact, that man or woman, endowed with the same nature as Buddha's, born the lord of all material objects, is ever upset by petty cares, haunted by the fearful phantoms of his or her own creation, and burning up his or her energy in a fit of passion, wasting his or her vitality for the sake of foolish or insignificant things.

It is a man who can keep the balance of his mind under any circumstances, who can be calm and serene in the hottest strife of life, that is worthy of success, reward, respect, and reputation, for he is the master of men. It was at the age of forty-seven that Wang Yang Ming<sup>49</sup> (O-yo-mei) won a splendid victory over the rebel army which threatened the throne of the Ming dynasty. During that warfare Wang

47These instances are quoted from Zen-rin-rui-shu.

48E-gen and Den-to-roku.

49The founder of the Wang School of Confucianism, a practiser of Meditation, who was born in 1472, and died at the age of fifty-seven in 1529.

was giving a course of lectures to a number of students at the headquarters of the army, of which he was the Commander-in-chief. At the very outset of the battle a messenger brought him the news of defeat of the foremost ranks. All the students were terror-stricken and grew pale at the unfortunate tidings, but the teacher was not a whit disturbed by it. Some time after another messenger brought in the news of complete rout of the enemy. All the students, enraptured, stood up and cheered, but he was as cool as before, and did not break off lecturing. Thus the practiser of Zen has so perfect control over his heart that he can keep presence of mind under an impending danger, even in the presence of death itself.

It was at the age of twenty-three that Haku-in got on board a boat bound for the Eastern Provinces, which met with a tempest and was almost wrecked. All the passengers were laid low with fear and fatigue, but Haku-in enjoyed a quiet sleep during the storm, as if he were lying on a comfortable bed. It was in the fifth of Mei-ji era that Doku-on; lived for some time in the city of Tokyo, whom some Christian zealots attempted to murder. One day he met with a few young men equipped with swords at the gate of his temple. "We want to see Doku-on; go and tell him," said they to the priest. "I am Doku-on<sup>50</sup>," replied he calmly, "whom you want to see, gentlemen. What can I do for you?" "We have come to ask you a favour; we are Christians; we want your hoary head." So saying they were ready to attack him, who, smiling, replied: "All right, gentlemen. Behead me forthwith, if you please." Surprised by this unexpected boldness on the part of the priest, they turned back without harming even a hair of the old Buddhist.<sup>51</sup>

These teachers could through long practice constantly keep their minds buoyant, casting aside useless encumbrances of idle thoughts; bright, driving off the dark cloud of melancholy; tranquil, putting down turbulent waves of passion; pure, cleaning away the dust and ashes of illusion; and serene, brushing off the cobwebs of doubt and fear. The only means of securing all this is to realize the conscious union with the Universal Life through the Enlightened Consciousness, which can be awakened by dint of Dhyana.

5. Zazen, or the Sitting in Meditation.--Habit comes out of practice, and forms character by degrees, and eventually works out destiny. Therefore we must practically sow optimism, and habitually nourish it in order to reap the blissful fruit of Enlightenment. The sole means of securing mental calmness is the practice of Zazen, or the sitting in Meditation. This method was known in India as Yoga as

50 Doku On (Ogino), a distinguished Zen master, an abbot of So-koku-ji, who was born in 1818, and died in 1895.

51 Kin-sei-zen-rin-gen-ko-roku, by D. Mori.

early as the Upanisad period, and developed by the followers of the Yoga system.<sup>52</sup> But Buddhists sharply distinguished Zazen from Yoga, and have the method peculiar to themselves. Kei-zan<sup>53</sup> describes the method to the following effect: 'Secure a quiet room neither extremely light nor extremely dark, neither very warm nor very cold, a room, if you can, in the Buddhist temple located in a beautiful mountainous district. You should not practise Zazen in a place where a conflagration or a flood or robbers may be likely to disturb you, nor should you sit in a place close by the sea or drinking-shops or brothel-houses, or the houses of widows and of maidens or buildings for music, nor should you live in close proximity to the place frequented by kings, ministers, powerful statesmen, ambitious or insincere persons. You must not sit in Meditation in a windy or very high place lest you should get ill. Be sure not to let the wind or smoke get into your room, not to expose it to rain and storm. Keep your room clean. Keep it not too light by day nor too dark by night. Keep it warm in winter and cool in summer. Do not sit leaning against a wall, or a chair, or a screen. You must not wear soiled clothes or beautiful clothes, for the former are the cause of illness, while the latter the cause of attachment. Avoid the Three Insufficiencies--that is to say, insufficient clothes, insufficient food, and insufficient sleep. Abstain from all sorts of uncooked or hard or spoiled or unclean food, and also from very delicious dishes, because the former cause troubles in your alimentary canal, while the latter cause you to covet after diet. Eat and drink just to appease your hunger and thirst, never mind whether the food be tasty or not. Take your meals regularly and punctually, and never sit in Meditation immediately after any meal. Do not practise Dhyana soon after you have taken a heavy dinner, lest you should get sick thereby. Sesame, barley, corn, potatoes, milk, and the like are the best material for your food. Frequently wash your eyes, face, hands, and feet, and keep them cool and clean.

'There are two postures in Zazen--that is to say, the crossed-leg sitting, and the half crossed-leg sitting. Seat yourself on a thick cushion, putting it right under your haunch. Keep your body so erect that the tip of the nose and the navel are in one perpendicular line, and both ears and shoulders are in the same plane. Then place the right foot upon the left thigh, the left foot on the right thigh, so as the legs come across each other. Next put your right hand with the palm upward on the left foot, and your left hand on the right palm with the tops of both the thumbs touching each other. This is the posture called the crossed-leg sitting. You may simply place the

<sup>52</sup>See Yoga Sutra with the Commentary of Bhoja Raja (translated by Rajendralala Mitra), pp. 102-104.

<sup>53</sup>Kei-zan (Jo-kin), the founder of So-ji-ji, the head temple of the So To Sect of Zen, who died at the age of fifty-eight in 1325. He sets forth the doctrine of Zen and the method of practising Zazen in his famous work, entitled Za-zen-yo-jin-ki.

left foot upon the right thigh, the position of the hands being the same as in the cross-legged sitting. This posture is named the half crossed-leg sitting.

'Do not shut your eyes, keep them always open during whole Meditation. Do not breathe through the mouth; press your tongue against the roof of the mouth, putting the upper lips and teeth together with the lower. Swell your abdomen so as to hold the breath in the belly; breathe rhythmically through the nose, keeping a measured time for inspiration and expiration. Count for some time either the inspiring or the expiring breaths from one to ten, then beginning with one again. Concentrate your attention on your breaths going in and out as if you are the sentinel standing at the gate of the nostrils. If you do some mistake in counting, or be forgetful of the breath, it is evident that your mind is distracted.'

Chwang Tsz seems to have noticed that the harmony of breathing is typical of the harmony of mind, since he says: " The true men of old did not dream when they slept. Their breathing came deep and silently. The breathing of true men comes (even) from his heels, while men generally breathe (only) from their throats."<sup>54</sup> At any rate, the counting of breaths is an expedient for calming down of mind, and elaborate rules are given in the Zen Sutra<sup>55</sup>, but Chinese and Japanese Zen masters do not lay so much stress on this point as Indian teachers.

6. The Breathing Exercise of the Yogi.--Breathing exercise is one of the practices of Yoga, and somewhat similar in its method and end to those of Zen. We quote here<sup>56</sup> Yogi Ramacharaka to show how modern Yogis practise it: "(1) Stand or sit erect. Breathing through the nostrils, inhale steadily, first filling the lower part of the lungs, which is accomplished by bringing into play the diaphragm, which, descending, exerts a gentle pressure on the abdominal organs, pushing forward the front walls of the abdomen. Then fill the middle part of the lungs, pushing out the lower ribs, breastbone, and chest. Then fill the higher portion of the lungs, protruding the upper chest, thus lifting the chest, including the upper six or seven pairs of ribs. In the final movement the lower part of the abdomen will be slightly drawn in, which movement gives the lungs a support, and also helps to fill the highest part of the lungs. At the first reading it may appear that this breath consists of three distinct movements. This, however, is not the correct idea. The inhalation is continuous, the entire chest cavity from the lower diaphragm to the highest point of the chest in the region of the collar-bone being expanded with a uniform movement. Avoid a jerking series of inhalations, and strive to attain a steady, continuous action. Practice will soon

54Chwang Tsz, vol. iii., p. 2.

55Dharmatara-dhyana-sutra.

56Hatha Yoga, pp. 112, 113.

overcome the tendency to divide the inhalation into three movements, and will result in a uniform continuous breath. You will be able to complete the inhalation in a couple of seconds after a little practice. (2) Retain the breath a few seconds. (3) Exhale quite slowly, holding the chest in a firm position, and drawing the abdomen in a little and lifting it upward slowly as the air leaves the lungs. When the air is entirely exhaled, relax the chest and abdomen. A little practice will render this part of exercise easy, and the movement once acquired will be afterwards performed almost automatically."

7. Calmness of Mind.--The Yogi breathing above mentioned is fit rather for physical exercise than for mental balance, and it will be beneficial if you take that exercise before or after Meditation. Japanese masters mostly hold it very important to push forward. The lowest part of the abdomen during Zazen, and they are right so far as the present writer's personal experiences go.

'If you feel your mind distracted, look at the tip of the nose; never lose sight of it for some time, or look at your own palm, and let not your mind go out of it, or gaze at one spot before you.' This will greatly help you in restoring the equilibrium of your mind. Chwang Tsz<sup>57</sup> thought that calmness of mind is essential to sages, and said: "The stillness of the sages does not belong to them as a consequence of their skilful ability; all things are not able to disturb their minds; it is on this account that they are still. When water is still, its clearness shows the beard and eyebrows (of him who looks into it). It is a perfect level, and the greatest artificer takes his rule from it. Such is the clearness of still water, and how much greater is that of the human spirit? The still mind of the sage is the mirror of heaven and earth, the glass of all things."

Forget all worldly concerns, expel all cares and anxieties, let go of passions and desires, give up ideas and thoughts, set your mind at liberty absolutely, and make it as clear as a burnished mirror. Thus let flow your inexhaustible fountain of purity, let open your inestimable treasure of virtue, bring forth your inner hidden nature of goodness, disclose your innermost divine wisdom, and waken your Enlightened Consciousness to see Universal Life within you. "Zazen enables the practiser," says Kei-zan<sup>58</sup>, "to open up his mind, to see his own nature, to become conscious of mysteriously pure and bright spirit, or eternal light within him."

Once become conscious of Divine Life within you, you can see it in your brethren, no matter how different they may be in circumstances, in abilities, in characters, in nationalities, in language, in religion, and in race. You can see it in animals,

57Chwang Tsz, vol. v., p. 5.

58Za-zen-yo-jin-ki.



vegetables, and minerals, no matter how diverse they may be in form, no matter how wild and ferocious some may seem in nature, no matter how unfeeling in heart some may seem, no matter how devoid of intelligence some may appear, no matter how insignificant some may be, no matter how simple in construction some may be, no matter how lifeless some may seem. You can see that the whole universe is Enlightened and penetrated by Divine Life.

8. Zazen and the Forgetting of Self.--Zazen is a most effectual means of destroying selfishness, the root of all Sin, folly, vice, and evil, since it enables us to see that every being is endowed with divine spirituality in common with men. It is selfishness that throws dark shadows on life, just as it is not the sun but the body that throws shadow before it. It is the self-same selfishness that gave rise to the belief in the immortality of soul, in spite of its irrationality, foolishness, and superstition. Individual self should be a poor miserable thing if it were not essentially connected with the Universal Life. We can always enjoy pure happiness when we are united with nature, quite forgetful of our poor self. When you look, for example, into the smiling face of a pretty baby, and smile with it, or listen to the sweet melody of a songster and sing with it, you completely forget your poor self at that enraptured moment. But your feelings of beauty and happiness are for ever gone when you resume your self, and begin to consider them after your own selfish ideas. To forget self and identify it with nature is to break down its limitation and to set it at liberty. To break down petty selfishness and extend it into Universal Self is to unfetter and deliver it from bondage. It therefore follows that salvation can be secured not by the continuation of individuality in another life, but by the realization of one's union with Universal Life, which is immortal, free, limitless, eternal, and bliss itself. This is easily effected by Zazen.

9. Zen and Supernatural Power.--Yoga<sup>59</sup> claims that various supernatural powers can be acquired by Meditation, but Zen does not make any such absurd claims. It rather disdains those who are believed to have acquired supernatural powers by the practice of austerities. The following traditions clearly show this spirit: "When Fah Yung (Ho-yu) lived in Mount Niu Teu<sup>60</sup> (Go-zu-san) he used to receive every morning the offerings of flowers from hundreds of birds, and was believed to have supernatural powers. But after his Enlightenment by the instruction of the Fourth Patriarch, the birds ceased to make offering, because he became a being too divine to be seen by inferior animals." "Hwang Pah (O-baku), one day going up Mount Tien Tai (Ten-dai-san), which was believed to have been inhabited by Arhats with supernatural powers, met with a monk whose eyes emitted strange light. They went

59'Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali,' chap. iii.

60A prominent disciple of the Fourth Patriarch, the founder of the Niu Teu School (Go-zu-zen) of Zen, who died ill A.D. 675.

along the pass talking with each other for a short while until they came to a river roaring with torrent. There being no bridge, the master had to stop at the shore; but his companion crossed the river walking on the water and beckoned to Hwang Pah to follow him. Thereupon Hwang Pah said: 'If I knew thou art an Arhat, I would have doubled you up before thou got over there!' The monk then understood the spiritual attainment of Hwang Pah, and praised him as a true Mahayanist." "On one occasion Yang Shan (Kyo-zan) saw a stranger monk flying through the air. When that monk came down and approached him with a respectful salutation, he asked: 'Where art thou from?' 'Early this morning,' replied the other, 'I set out from India.' 'Why,' said the teacher, 'art thou so late?' 'I stopped,' responded the man, 'several times to look at beautiful sceneries.' Thou mayst have supernatural powers,' exclaimed Yang Shan, 'yet thou must give back the Spirit of Buddha to me ' Then the monk praised Yang Shan saying: 'I have come over to China in order to worship Mañjuçri<sup>61</sup>, and met unexpectedly with Minor Shakya,' and, after giving the master some palm leaves he brought from India, went back through the air."<sup>62</sup>

It is quite reasonable that Zenists distinguish supernatural powers from spiritual uplifting, the former an acquirement of Devas, or of Asuras, or of Arhats, or of even animals, and the latter as a nobler accomplishment attained only by the practisers of Mahayanism. Moreover, they use the term supernatural power in a meaning entirely different from the original one. Lin Tsi (Rin-zai) says, for instance: "There are six supernatural powers of Buddha: He is free from the temptation of form, living in the world of form; He is free from the temptation of sound, living in the world of sound; He is free from the temptation of smell, living in the world of smell; He is free from the temptation of taste, living in the world of taste; He is free from the temptation of Dharma<sup>63</sup>, living in the world of Dharma. These are six supernatural powers."<sup>64</sup>

Sometimes Zenists use the term as if it meant what we call Zen Activity, or the free display of Zen in action, as you see in the following examples. Tüng Shan (To-Zan) was on one occasion attending on his teacher Yun Yen (Un-gan), who asked: "What are your supernatural powers?" Tüng Shan, saying nothing, clasped his hands on his breast, and stood up before Yun Yen. "How do you display your supernatural

61Mañjuçri is a legendary Bodhisattva, who became an object of worship of some Mahayanists. He is treated as a personification of transcendental wisdom.

62Hwui Yuen (E-gen) and Sho-bo-gen-zo.

63The things or objects, not of sense, but of mind.

64 Lin Tsi Luh (Rin-zai-roku).

powers?" questioned the teacher again. Then Tüing Shan said farewell and went out. Wei Shan (E-san) one day was taking a nap, and seeing his disciple Yang Shan (Kyo-zan) coming into the room, turned his face towards the wall. "You need not, Sir," said Yang Shan, "stand on ceremony, as I am your disciple." Wei Shan seemed to try to get up, so Yang Shan went out; but Wei Shan called him back and said: "I shall tell you of a dream I dreamed." The other inclined his head as if to listen. "Now," said Wei Shan, "divine my fortune by the dream." Thereupon Yang Shan fetched a basin of water and a towel and gave them to the master, who washed his face thereby. By-and-by Hiang Yen (Kyo-gen) came in, to whom Wei Shan said: "We displayed supernatural powers a moment ago. It was not such supernatural powers as are shown by Hinayanists." "I know it, Sir," replied the other, "though I was down below." "Say, then, what it was," demanded the master. Then Hiang Yen made tea and gave a cup to Wei Shan, who praised the two disciples, saying: "You surpass Çariputra<sup>65</sup> and Maudgalyayana<sup>66</sup> in your wisdom and supernatural powers."<sup>67</sup>

Again, ancient Zenists did not claim that there was any mysterious element in their spiritual attainment, as Do-gen says<sup>68</sup> unequivocally respecting his Enlightenment: "I recognized only that my eyes are placed crosswise above the nose that stands lengthwise, and that I was not deceived by others. I came home from China with nothing in my hand. There is nothing mysterious in Buddhism. Time passes as it is natural, the sun rising in the east, and the moon setting into the west."

10. True Dhyana.-- To sit in Meditation is not the only method of practising Zazen. "We practise Dhyana in sitting, in standing, and in walking," says one of the Japanese Zenists. Lin Tsi (Rin-Zai) also says: "To concentrate one's mind, or to dislike noisy places, and seek only for stillness, is the characteristic of heterodox Dhyana." It is easy to keep self-possession in a place of tranquillity, yet it is by no means easy to keep mind undisturbed amid the bivouac of actual life. It is true Dhyana that makes our mind sunny while the storms of strife rage around us. It is true Dhyana that secures the harmony of heart, while the surges of struggle toss us violently. It is true Dhyana that makes us bloom and smile, while the winter of life covets us with frost and snow.

65One of the prominent disciples of Shakya Muni, who became famous for his wisdom.

66One of the eminent disciples of Shakya Muni, noted for his supernatural powers.

67Zen-rin-rui-sku.

68Ei-hei-ko-roku.

"Idle thoughts come and go over unenlightened minds six hundred and fifty times in a snap of one's fingers," writes an Indian teacher<sup>69</sup>, "and thirteen hundred million times every twenty-four hours." This might be an exaggeration, yet we cannot but acknowledge that one idle thought after another ceaselessly bubbles up in the stream of consciousness. "Dhyana is the letting go," continues the writer--"that is to say, the letting go of the thirteen hundred million of idle thoughts." The very root of these thirteen hundred million idle thoughts is an illusion about one's self. He is indeed the poorest creature, even if he be in heaven, who thinks himself poor. On the contrary, he is an angel who thinks himself hopeful and happy, even though he be in hell. "Pray deliver me," said a sinner to Sang Tsung (So-san).<sup>70</sup> "Who ties you up?" was the reply. You tie yourself up day and night with the fine thread of idle thoughts, and build a cocoon of environment from which you have no way of escape. 'There is no rope, yet you imagine yourself bound.' Who could put fetters on your mind but your mind itself? Who could chain your will but your own will? Who could blind your spiritual eyes, unless you yourself shut them up? Who could prevent you from enjoying moral food, unless you yourself refuse to eat? "There are many," said Sūeh Fung (Sep-po) on one occasion, "who starve in spite of their sitting in a large basket full of victuals. There are many who thirst in spite of seating themselves on the shore of a sea." "Yes, Sir," replied Hüen Sha (Gen-sha), "there are many who starve in spite of putting their heads into the basket full of victuals. There are many who thirst in spite of putting their heads into the waters of the sea."<sup>71</sup> Who could cheer him up who abandons himself to self-created misery? Who could save him who denies his own salvation?

11. Let Go of your Idle Thoughts.<sup>72</sup>--A Brahmin, having troubled himself a long while with reference to the problem of life and of the world, went out to call on Shakya Muni that he might be instructed by the Master. He got some beautiful flowers to offer them as a present to the Muni, and proceeded to the place where He was addressing his disciples and believers. No sooner had he come -in sight of the Master than he read in his mien the struggles going on within him. "Let go of that," said the Muni to the Brahmin, who was going to offer the flowers in both his hands. He dropped on the ground the flowers in his right hand, but still holding those in his

69The introduction to Anapana-sutra by Khin San Hwui, who came to China A.D. 241.

70The Third Patriarch.

71Hwui Yuen (E-gen).

72A famous Zenist, Mu-go-koku-shi, is said to have replied to every questioner, saying: "Let go of your idle thoughts."

left. "Let go of that," demanded the Master, and the Brahmin dropped the flowers in his left hand rather reluctantly. "Let go of that, I say," the Muni commanded again; but the Brahmin, having nothing to let go of, asked: "What shall I let go of, Reverend Sir? I have nothing in my hands, you know." "Let go of that, you have neither in your right nor in your left hand, but in the middle." Upon these words of the Muni a light came into the sufferer's mind, and he went home satisfied and in joy.<sup>73</sup> "Not to attach to all things is Dhyana," writes an ancient Zenist, "and if you understand this, going out, staying in, sitting, and lying are in Dhyana." Therefore allow not your mind to be a receptacle for the dust of society, or the ashes of life, or rags and waste paper of the world. You bear too much burden upon your shoulders with which you have nothing to do.

Learn the lesson of forgetfulness, and forget all that troubles you, deprives you of sound sleep, and writes wrinkles on your forehead. Wang Yang Ming, at the age of seventeen or so, is said to have forgotten the day on which he was to be married to a handsome young lady, daughter of a man of high position. It was the afternoon of the very day on which their nuptials had to be held that he went out to take a walk. Without any definite purpose he went into a temple in the neighbourhood, and there he found a recluse apparently very old with white hair, but young in countenance like a child. The man was sitting absorbed in Meditation. There was something extremely calm and serene in that old man's look and bearing that attracted the young scholar's attention. Questioning him as to his name, age, and birthplace, Wang found that the venerable man had enjoyed a life so extraordinarily long that he forgot his name and age, but that he had youthful energy so abundantly that he could talk with a voice sounding as a large bell. Being asked by Wang the secret of longevity, the man replied: "There is no secret in it; I merely kept my mind calm and peaceful." Further, he explained the method of Meditation according to Taoism and Buddhism. Thereupon Wang sat face to face with the old man and began to practise Meditation, utterly forgetful of his bride and -nuptial ceremony. The sun began to cast his slanting rays on the wall of the temple, and they sat motionless; twilight came over them, and night wrapped them with her sable shroud, and they sat as still as two marble statues; midnight, dawn, at last the morning sun rose to find them still in their reverie. The father of the bride, who had started a search during the night, found to his surprise the bridegroom absorbed in Meditation on the following day.<sup>74</sup>

It was at the age of forty-seven that Wang gained a great victory over the rebel army, and wrote to a friend saying: "It is so easy to gain a victory over the rebels

73 'Sutra on the Brahmacarin Black-family,' translated into Chinese by K' Khien, of the Wu dynasty (A.D. 222-280).

74O-yo-mei-shutsu-shin-sei-ran-roku.

fortifying themselves among the mountains, yet it is not so with those rebels living in our mind."<sup>75</sup> Tsai Kiün Mu (Sai-kun-bo) is said to have had an exceedingly long and beautiful beard, and when asked by the Emperor, who received him in audience, whether he should sleep with his beard on the comforters or beneath them, he could not answer, since he had never known how he did. Being distracted by this question, he went home and tried to find out how he had been used to manage his beard in bed. First he put his beard on the comforters and vainly tried to sleep; then he put it beneath the comforters and thought it all right. Nevertheless, he was all the more disturbed by it. So then, putting on the comforters, now putting it beneath them, he tried to sleep all night long, but in vain. You must therefore forget your mental beard that annoys you all the time.

Men of longevity never carried troubles to their beds. It is a well-known fact that Zui-o (Shi-ga)<sup>76</sup> enjoyed robust health at the age of over one hundred years. One day, being asked whether there is any secret of longevity, he replied affirmatively, and said to the questioner: "Keep your mind and body pure for two weeks, abstaining from any sort of impurity, then I shall tell you of the secret." The man did as was prescribed, and came again to be instructed in the secret. Zui-o said: "Now I might tell you, but be cautious to keep yourself pure another week so as to qualify yourself to learn the secret." When that week was over the old man said: "Now I might tell you, but will you be so careful as to keep yourself pure three days more in order to qualify yourself to receive the secret?" The man did as he was ordered, and requested the instruction. Thereupon Zui-o took the man to his private room and softly whispered, with his mouth close to the ear of the man: "Keep the secret I tell you now, even at the cost of your life. It is this--don't be passionate. That is all."<sup>77</sup>

12. 'The Five Ranks of Merit.'--Thus far we have stated how to train our body and mind according to the general rules and customs established by Zenists. And here we shall describe the different stages of mental uplifting through which the student of Zen has to go. They are technically called 'The Five Ranks of Merit.'<sup>78</sup> The first stage is called the Rank of Turning<sup>79</sup>, in which the student 'turns' his mind from the external objects of sense towards the inner Enlightened Consciousness. He gives up all mean desires and aspires to spiritual elevation. He becomes aware that he is

75 *Ibid.*

76 This famous old man died in A.D. 1730.

77 Se-ji-hyaku-dan.

78 Ko-kun-go-i. For further details, see So-to-ni-shi-roku.

79 Ko in Japanese.

not doomed to be the slave of material things, and strives to conquer over them. Enlightened Consciousness is likened to the King, and it is called the Mind-King, while the student who now turns towards the King is likened to common people. Therefore in this first stage the student is in the rank of common people.

The second stage is called the Rank of Service<sup>80</sup>, in which the student distinguishes himself by his loyalty to the Mind-King, and becomes a courtier to 'serve' him. He is in constant 'service' to the King, attending him with obedience and love, and always fearing to offend him. Thus the student in this stage is ever careful not to neglect rules and precepts laid down by the sages, and endeavours to uplift himself in spirituality by his fidelity.

The third stage is called the Rank of Merit<sup>81</sup>, in which the student distinguishes himself by his 'meritorious' acts of conquering over the rebel army of passion which rises against the Mind-King. Now, his rank is not the rank of a courtier, but the rank of a general. In other words, his duty is not only to keep rules and instructions of the sages, but to subjugate his own passion and establish moral order in the mental kingdom.

The fourth stage is called the Rank of Co-operative Merit<sup>82</sup>, in which the student 'co-operates' with other persons in order to complete his merit. Now, he is not compared with a general who conquers his foe, but with the prime-minister who co-operates with other officials to the benefit of the people. Thus the student in this stage is not satisfied with his own conquest of passion, but seeks after spiritual uplifting by means of extending his kindness and sympathy to his fellow-men.

The fifth stage is called the Rank of Merit-over-Merit<sup>83</sup>, which means the rank of meritless-merit. This is the rank of the King himself. The King does nothing meritorious, because all the governmental works are done by his ministers and subjects. All that he has to do is to keep his inborn dignity and sit high on his throne. Therefore his conduct is meritless, but all the meritorious acts of his subjects are done through his authority. Doing nothing, he does everything. Without any merit, he gets all merits. Thus the student in this stage no more strives to keep precepts, but his doings are naturally in accord with them. No more he aspires for spiritual elevation, but his heart is naturally pure from material desires. No more he makes

80Bu in Japanese.

81Ko in Japanese.

82Gu-ko in Japanese.

83Ko-ko in Japanese.

an effort to vanquish his passion, but no passion disturbs him. No more he feels it his duty to do good to others, but he is naturally good and merciful. No more he sits in Dhyana, but he naturally lives in Dhyana at all times. It is in this fifth stage that the student is enabled to identify his Self with the Mind-King or Enlightened Consciousness, and to abide in perfect bliss.

13. 'The Ten Pictures of the Cowherd.'<sup>84</sup> -- Besides these Five Ranks of Merit, Zenists make use of the Ten Pictures of the Cowherd, in order to show the different stages of mental training through which the student of Zen has to go. Some poems were written by Chinese and Japanese teachers on each of these pictures by way of explanation, but they are too ambiguous to be translated into English, and we rest content with the translation of a single Japanese poem on each of the ten pictures, which are as follows:

**The first picture, called 'the Searching of the Cow,' represents the cowherd wandering in the wilderness with a vague hope of finding his lost cow that is running wild out of his sight. The reader will notice that the cow is likened to the mind of the student and the cowherd to the student himself.**

84The pictures were drawn by Kwoh Ngan (Kaku-an), a Chinese Zenist. For the details, see Zen-gaku-ho-ten.





尋牛

*"I do not see my cow,  
But trees and grass,  
And hear the empty cries  
Of cicadas."*

**The second picture, called 'the Finding of the Cow's Tracks,' represents the cowherd tracing the cow with the sure hope of restoring her, having found her tracks on the ground.**



見跡

*"The grove is deep, and so  
Is my desire.  
How glad I am, O lo!  
I see her tracks."*

The third picture, called 'the Finding out of the Cow,' represents the cowherd slowly approaching the cow from a distance.



*"Her loud and wild mooing  
Has led me here;  
I see her form afar,  
Like a dark shadow."*

The fourth picture, called 'the Catching of the Cow,' represents the cowherd catching hold of the cow, who struggles to break loose from him.



*"Alas! it's hard to keep  
The cow I caught.  
She tries to run and leap  
And snap the cord."*

The fifth picture, called 'the Taming of the Cow,' represents the cowherd pacifying the cow, giving her grass and water.



*"I'm glad the cow so wild  
Is tamed and mild.  
She follows me, as if  
She were my shadow."*

The sixth picture, called 'the Going Home Riding on the Cow,' represents the cowherd playing on a flute, riding on the cow.



六  
騎  
歸  
家  
牛

*"Slowly the clouds return  
To their own hill,  
Floating along the skies  
So calm and still.*

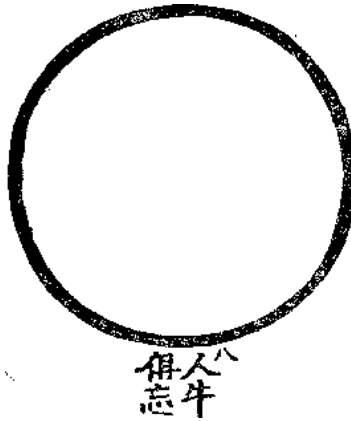
**The seventh picture, called 'the Forgetting of the Cow and the Remembering of the Man,' represents the cowherd looking at the beautiful scenery surrounding his cottage.**



七  
忘  
人  
牛

*"The cow goes out by day  
And comes by night.  
I care for her in no way,  
But all is right."*

The eighth picture, called 'the Forgetting of the Cow and of the Man,' represents a large empty circle.



*"There's no cowherd nor cow  
Within the pen;  
No moon of truth nor clouds  
Of doubt in men."*

The ninth picture, called 'the Returning to the Root and Source,' represents a beautiful landscape full of lovely trees in full blossom.



還返<sup>九</sup>  
源本

*"There is no dyer of hills,  
Yet they are green;  
So flowers smile, and titter rills  
At their own wills."*

The tenth picture, called 'the Going into the City with Open Hands,' represents a smiling monk, gourd in hand, talking with a man who looks like a pedlar.



昭和辛卯夏  
富吉郎  
西井刻摺  
十  
入  
手  
歸

*"The cares for body make  
That body pine;  
Let go of cares and thoughts,  
O child of mine!"*

These Ten Pictures of the Cowherd correspond in meaning to the Five Ranks of Merit above stated, even if there is a slight difference, as is shown in the following table:

The 5 Ranks	The 10 Pictures
1. The Rank of Turning	1. The Searching of the Cow. 2. The Finding of the Cow's Tracks.
2. The Rank of Service	3. The Finding of the Cow. 4. The Catching of the Cow.
3. The Rank of Merit	5. The Taming of the Cow. 6. The Going Home, Riding on the Cow.
4. The Rank of Co-operative Merit	9. The Returning to the Root and Source. 10. The Going into the City with Open Hands.
5. The Rank of Merit-over-Merit	7. The Forgetting of the Cow and the Remembering of the Man. 8. The Forgetting of the Cow and of the Man.

14. Zen and Nirvana.--The beatitude of Zen is Nirvana, not in the Hinayanistic sense of the term, but in the sense peculiar to the faith. Nirvana literally means extinction or annihilation; hence the extinction of life or the annihilation of individuality. To Zen, however, it means the state of extinction of pain and the annihilation of sin. Zen never looks for the realization of its beatitude in a place like heaven, nor believes in the realm of Reality transcendental of the phenomenal universe, nor gives countenance to the superstition of Immortality, nor does it hold the world is the best of all possible worlds, nor conceives life simply as blessing. It is in this life, full of shortcomings, misery, and sufferings, that Zen hopes to realize its beatitude. It is in this world, imperfect, changing, and moving, that Zen finds the Divine Light it worships. It is in this phenomenal universe of limitation and relativity that Zen aims to attain to highest Nirvana. "We speak," says the author of Vimalakirti-nirdeça-sutra, "of the transitoriness of body, but not of the desire of the Nirvana or destruction of it." "Paranirvana," according to the author of Lankavatarasutra, "is neither death nor destruction, but bliss, freedom, and purity."

"Nirvana," says Kiai Hwan,<sup>85</sup> means the extinction of pain or the crossing over of the sea of life and death. It denotes the real permanent state of spiritual attainment. It does not signify destruction or annihilation. It denotes the belief in the great root of life and spirit." It is Nirvana of Zen to enjoy bliss for all sufferings of life. It is Nirvana of Zen to be serene in mind for all disturbances of actual existence. It is Nirvana of Zen to be in the conscious union with Universal Life or Buddha through Enlightenment.

15. Nature and her Lesson.--Nature offers us nectar and ambrosia every day, and everywhere we go the rose and lily await us. "Spring visits us men," says Gu-do,<sup>86</sup> "her mercy is great. Every blossom holds out the image of Tathagata." "What is the spiritual body of Buddha who is immortal and divine?" asked a man to Ta Lun (Dai-ryu), who instantly replied: "The flowers cover the mountain with golden brocade. The waters tinge the rivulets with heavenly blue." "Universe is the whole body of Tathagata; observed Do-gen. "The worlds in ten directions, the earth, grass, trees, walls, fences, tiles, pebbles-in a word, all the animated and inanimate objects partake of the Buddha-nature. Thereby, those who partake in the benefit of the Wind and Water that rise out of them are, all of them, helped by the mysterious influence of Buddha, and show forth Enlightenment."<sup>87</sup>

Thus you can attain to highest bliss through your conscious union with Buddha. Nothing can disturb your peace, when you can enjoy peace in the midst of disturbances; nothing can cause you to suffer, when you welcome misfortunes and hardships in order to train and strengthen your character; nothing can tempt you to commit sin, when you are constantly ready to listen to the sermon given by everything around you; nothing can distress you, when you make the world the holy temple of Buddha. This is the state of Nirvana which everyone believing in Buddha may secure.

16. The Beatitude of Zen.--We are far from denying, as already shown in the foregoing chapters, the existence of troubles, pains, diseases, sorrows, deaths in life. Our bliss consists in seeing the fragrant rose of Divine mercy among the thorns of worldly trouble, in finding the fair oasis of Buddha's wisdom in the desert of misfortunes, in getting the wholesome balm of His love in the seeming poison of pain, in gathering the sweet honey of His spirit even in the sting of horrible death.

85A commentator of Saddharma-pundarika-sutra.

86One of the distinguished Zenists in the Tokugawa period, who died in 1661.

87Sho-bo gen-zo.



History testifies to the truth that it is misery that teaches men more than happiness, that it is poverty that strengthens them more than wealth, that it is adversity that moulds character more than prosperity, that it is disease and death that call forth the inner life more than health and long life. At least, no one can be blind to the fact that good and evil have an equal share in forming the character and working out the destiny of man. Even such a great pessimist as

Schopenhauer says: "As our bodily frame would burst asunder if the pressure of atmosphere were removed, so if the lives of men were relieved of all need, hardship, and adversity, if everything they took in hand were successful, they would be so swollen with arrogance . . . that they would present the spectacle of unbridled folly. A ship without ballast is unstable, and will not go straight." Therefore let us make our ship of life go straight with its ballast of miseries and hardships, over which we gain control.

The believer in Buddha is thankful to him, not only for the sunshine of life, but also for its wind, rain, snow, thunder, and lightning, because He gives us nothing in vain. Hisa-nobu (Ko-yama) was, perhaps, one of the happiest persons that Japan ever produced, simply because he was ever thankful to the Merciful One. One day he went out without an umbrella and met with a shower. Hurrying up to go home, he stumbled and fell, wounding both his legs. As he rose up, he was overheard to say: "Thank heaven." And being asked why he was so thankful, replied: "I got both my legs hurt, but, thank heaven, they were not broken." On another occasion he lost consciousness, having been kicked violently by a wild horse. When he came to himself, he exclaimed: "Thank heaven," in hearty joy. Being asked the reason why he was so joyful, he answered: "I have really given up my ghost, but, thank heaven, I have escaped death after all."<sup>88</sup> A person in such a state of mind can do anything with heart and might. Whatever he does is an act of thanks for the grace of Buddha, and he does it, not as his duty, but as the overflowing of his gratitude which lie himself cannot check. Here exists the formation of character. Here exist real happiness and joy. Here exists the realization of Nirvana.

Most people regard death as the greatest of evils, only because they fear death. They fear death only because they have the instinct of self-preservation. Hereupon pessimistic philosophy and religion propose to attain to Nirvana by the extinction of Will-to-live, or by the total annihilation of life. But this is as much as to propose death as the final cure to a patient. Elie Metchnikoff proposes, in his 'Nature of Man,' another cure, saying: 'If man could only contrive to live long enough--say, for one hundred and forty years--a natural desire for extinction would take the place of the instinct for self-preservation, and the call of death would then harmoniously satisfy his legitimate craving of a ripe old age.' Why, we must ask, do you trouble

88Ki-jin-den.

yourself so much about death? Is there any instance of an individual who escaped it in the whole history of mankind? If there be no way of escape, why do you trouble yourself about it? Can you cause things to fall off the earth against the law of gravitation? Is there any example of an individual object that escaped the government of that law in the whole history of the world? Why, then, do you trouble yourself about it? It is no less silly to trouble yourself about death than you do about gravitation. Can you realize that death, which you have yet no immediate experience of, is the greatest of evil? We dare to declare death to be one of the blessings which we have to be thankful for. Death is the scavenger of the world; it sweeps away all uselessness, staleness, and corruption from the world, and keeps life clean and ever new. When you are of no use for the world it comes upon you, removes you to oblivion in order to relieve life of useless encumbrance. The stream of existence should be kept running, otherwise it would become putrid. If old lives were to stop the running stream it would stand still, and consequently become filthy, poisoned, and worthless. Suppose there were only births and no deaths. The earth has to be packed with men and women, who are doomed to live to all eternity, jostling, colliding, bumping, trampling each other, and vainly struggling to get out of the Black Hole of the earth. Thanks to death we are not in the Black Hole!

Only birth and no death is far worse than only death and no birth. "The dead," says Chwang Tsz, "have no tyrannical king about, no slavish subject to meet; no change of seasons overtakes them. The heaven and the earth take the places of Spring and Autumn. The king or emperor of a great nation cannot be happier than they." How would you be if death should never overtake you when ugly decrepitude makes you blind and deaf, bodily and mentally, and deprives you of all possible pleasures? How would you be if you should not die when your body is broken to pieces or terribly burned by an accident--say, by a violent earthquake followed by a great conflagration? Just imagine Satan, immortal Satan, thrown down by the ire of God into Hell's fiery gulf, rolling himself in dreadful torture to the end of time. You cannot but conclude that it is only death which relieves you of extreme sufferings, incurable diseases, and it is one of the blessings you ought to be thankful for.

The believer of Buddha is thankful even for death itself, the which is the sole means of conquering death. If he be thankful even for death, how much more for the rest of things! He can find a meaning in every form of life. He can perceive a blessing in every change of fortune. He can acknowledge a mission for every individual. He can live in contentment and joy under any conditions. Therefore Lin Tsi (Rin-zai) says: "All the Buddhas might appear before me and I would not be glad. All the Three Regions<sup>89</sup> and Hells might suddenly present themselves before me, and I would not fear. . . . He (an Enlightened person) might get into the fire, and it would not burn him. He might get into water, and it would not drown him. He might be born

89(1) Naraka, or Hell; (2) Pretas, or hungry demons; (3) beasts.

in Hell, and he would be happy as if he were in a fair garden. He might be born among Pretas and beasts, and he would not suffer from pain. How can he be so? Because he can enjoy everything."<sup>90</sup>

90Lin Tsi Luk (Rin-zai-roku).