



## **Rochester Institute of Technology**

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the College of Imaging  
Arts and Sciences in candidacy for the Computer Graphics  
Design degree of Master of Fine Arts

**Title: Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation**

**Submitted by:** Yang Dan

**Date:** Nov 12, 2010





## Reproduction Granted

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby grant/deny permission to Rochester Institute of Technology to reproduce my thesis documentation in whole or part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Author

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Inclusion in the RIT Digital Media Library Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Archive:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, additionally grant to Rochester Institute of Technology Digital Media Library the non-exclusive license to archive and provide electronic access to my thesis in whole or in part in all forms of media in perpetuity. I understand that my work, in addition to its bibliographic record and abstract, will be available to the worldwide community of scholars and researchers through the RIT DML. I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles and books) all or part of this thesis. I am aware that Rochester Institute of Technology does not require registration of copyright for ETDs.

I hereby certify that, if appropriate, I have obtained and attached written permission statements from owners of each third party copyrighted matter to be included in my thesis. I certify that the version I submit is the same as that approved by my committee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Author

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Abstract

**Thesis URL: <http://www.yangdan.info/thesis>**

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation is an interactive graphic design project which introduces the Taoism philosophy to college students, it's also a personal graphic interpretation of Taoism. This project is a flash website that runs on any computer that has access to the Internet.

My goal for this project is to explore the history, principles, and rules of Taoism philosophy, its applications in modern society and to interpret Taoism through creative interactive graphic solutions based on personal understanding. My targeted audience is college students from 18 to 25 who have interests in Taoism, philosophy, or Chinese culture; I wish that by introducing Taoism to a young western audience, they can benefit from this ancient eastern philosophy by learning Taoist theories and also try some of its relaxing practices.

There are four parts: "about," "learn," "watch," and "practice". "About" is the reason I created the project; "Learn" is the introduction of Taoism philosophy; "Watch" introduces the principles of Taoism by motion graphics; And, in "practice" users can follow instructions and practice Taoist applications like meditation. I started the project by user investigation and have been doing user testing through the process, which includes the initial brainstorming and sketching, test mockups in Adobe Flash, storyboards in Adobe Illustrator, and production in Flash and After Effect.

Through this project I achieved my personal goal of exploring more theories and applications of Taoism and have developed a deeper understanding of effective marketing to a Western audience. Most Taoist websites are text-heavy and lack interactivity; by creating a graphical, interactive, and user-centered site, I hope young people can really benefit from learning and practicing the Taoism philosophy in their own lives.

## Contents

1. Introduction
  - 1.1 Problem Statement
2. Survey of literature
3. Process
  - 3.1 Project Overview
  - 3.2 Project Goals
  - 3.3 Target Audience
  - 3.4 Software
  - 3.5 Define
    - 3.51 Design Survey
    - 3.52 Peer Review
    - 3.53 Content Resarch
  - 3.6 Design
    - 3.61 Logo Design
    - 3.62 Interface Design
    - 3.63 Visualizing Content
    - 3.64 Visual Design
    - 3.65 Motion Graphics
    - 3.66 Interactive Design
  - 3.7 Develop
    - 3.71 Technique issues
    - 3.72 Performance
4. Summarise
  - 4.1 Troubleshooting
  - 4.2 Usability Testing
5. Conclusion
6. Appendix



## Introduction

### **Problem Statement**

Philosophy, in most people's opinion, is complicated, obscure and distant from everyday life. In fact, philosophy can be about practical issues that are related to people's everyday lives: Where do I come from? What am I doing? Where am I going? What should I do? Taoism is an ancient Chinese philosophy that focuses on naturalness, vitality, peace, "non-action", emptiness, etc. It also reveals the rules of the nature that all beings follow.

As I read «Tao Te Ching», a fundamental book of Taoism, I had these questions in mind: How can an ancient Chinese philosophy benefit modern people? Is there a more interesting way to explain a philosophy as complicated and obscure as Taoism? I also found that the most common medium for Taoism, or philosophy in general is books or online articles. So I came up with this idea to make use of what I learned as an interactive graphic designer and to interpret Taoism in a graphical and interactive way.

Over the past twenty years or so we see that applications of the Eastern philosophy, meditation for example, have gained an increasing acceptance and practice in the West, this has proven to be both a practical and effective tool for increasing health as well as happiness. Taoism philosophy is especially helpful in soothing depression caused by material desires, since it proposes naturalness, peace and non-desire. As I always had a strong interest in Taoism and thought it would be turn out to be a great thesis project topic.



## Survey of the Literature

### Books

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Taoism

*Brandon Toropov , Chad Hansen*

This is a guide book for people who know nothing about Taoism. They can learn how the Taoist tradition has enlightened seekers throughout the centuries. It illustrates Taoist principles, the teachings of Zhuangzi and Laozi, master sage of Taoism. Through reading this book, I got a big picture of what concepts should be covered in my thesis considering that my audience is a Western audience that knows little about Taoism.

365 Tao: Daily Meditations

*Ming-dao Deng*

This is a very inspiring book that includes brief, poetic aphorisms and meditations for everyday of the year. It is based on each day's single Taoist principle, and very inspiring in understanding the Taoist spirit.

Tao Te Ching

*Laozi*

The Tao Te Ching is a fundamental scripture essential to philosophical Taoism. It is the Bible of Taoism and the source from where Taoist words and concepts come. I have read Tao Te Ching many times and each time I learn something new. I learned the basic Taoism principles and thinking by reading this book.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Psychology of Happiness

*Arlene Matthews Uhl*

Arlene Matthews Uhl gathers all the current research in the study of happiness and helps readers apply it to their everyday lives. I learned a new phrase through reading: "Positive Psychology"—the study of what makes people happy—This is helpful for me in designing the story of animations to fit users' expectations.



## **Papers**

Similarities between Chinese Taoism and Western graphic design

*Sung, Lillian Yin-Ling C.*

Rochester Institute of Technology

May 9, 1981

This dissertation is about connections and contrasts between basic laws of Chinese Taoism and Western graphic design. It is about the relationship between Taoism and Graphic Design including man and his environment, the harmony of life, and the unity of all the world, and how Eastern and Western thought meet together for the progress of enhancing the quality of life. This thesis serves as a bridge between concepts of Graphic Design and Taoist philosophy. It is very inspiring in providing graphic solutions to philosophical problems.

Ancient Chinese Philosophical Advice: Can it help us find happiness today?

*Veenhoven, R; Guoqing, Z.*

2008

The review is about recommendations and considerations of what promises a happy life in present day society. Recommended behaviors are compared with conditions for happiness as observed in present day investigations. Based on this analysis, I can extend the theory and apply it to current cases for college students.

## **Articles**

Media Choice (Marketing Campaign For The Spectator)

*Marshall, Caroline*

June 15, 2001

The article is about choosing media to launch a successful campaign. It is a reference that prods my thinking the best media for my project.

Pursuing Happiness

*John Lanchester*

New Yorker

February 27, 2006

The author started from a story of two primitive human beings to discuss the original reason for human happiness. He analyzes happiness from both psychological and physical aspect with reference to human history. This article is an interesting and valuable reference concerning what happiness is and why people are happy. Thus, it helps me understand the extent to which my project about Taoism philosophy can benefit people.





The Dream of Life

*Chuang Tzu*

This is a classical article on Taoism. It is the story of Chuang Tzu who did not know whether he was Chuang Tzu, who had dreamed that he was a butterfly, or whether he was a butterfly dreaming that he was Chuang Tzu. I learned basic principles about two-way thinking in Taoism from this article.

Focus: Can you teach happiness

From *The Sunday Times*

April 23, 2006

This survey review includes psychologists at Harvard and Cambridge, and economists in both the US and Britain, that considers the role of positive psychology as a bridge between academe and the self-help movement. It is a helpful reference for how to teach people and change their minds.

### **Online Resources**

<http://www.blogcatalog.com/blog/practice-the-tao>

Julia Chung and Nick Barnett created this blog and updated it by exploring one verse of the Tao Te Ching each week with discussion of how Lao Tzu's teachings could be related to personal development and coaching principles. On this blog I understood how people interpret Tao from a different cultural background.

[http://taosculture.org/english/health\\_vegetarian\\_01.php](http://taosculture.org/english/health_vegetarian_01.php)

This is one section of "Tao's culture" website, which is about benefits and reasons for being vegetarian from a Taoist's point of view. Since my project will be relevant to life and the way of living, food will also be part of it. Learning about Taoists' choices of food is very helpful for enriching the project.

<http://www.blogcatalog.com/blog/the-path-of-water/077377c9eda8af7e9b31504cc295623c>

Dealing with loss is an issue that everyone has experienced in their life. This article tells people how to deal with loss from the Taoism point of view. It triggered my thoughts as to whether I should make human issues in a different categories in my project.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/taoism/>

Scholars of religion sort out the conceptual definition of Taoism. This site provides rich information at an academic level.



## Process

### Project Overview

The process includes a 4-phase development process: Define, Design, Develop and Summarise.

Define	Design	Develop	Summarise
Design Survey	Logo Design	Technique issues	Trouble Shooting
Peer Review	Interface Design	Performance	Usability Testing
Content Resarch	Visualizing Content		Conclusion
	Visual Design		
	Motion Graphics		
	Interactive Design		

### Project Goals

1. To explore Taoist philosophy and interpret it by creative interactive graphic solutions.
2. To create a series of experiences and animations about Taoist principles that flow into each other and retell the information in an intimate and interesting interactions .
3. To introduce Taoism to a young Western audiences, they can benefit from this ancient eastern philosophy by learning Taoist theories and practicing meditation.

### Target Audience

My target audience is college students from 18 to 30 years old, who have interests in Taoism, philosophy or Chinese culture as well as students who are open to new opinions.

There are two reasons for this choice: first, college students are more educated and open to new ideas. It's easier for them to accept an ancient Chinese philosophy like Taoism. Second, according to *USA Today*, young adults are the most stressed group of people in western society. The Taoist teaching is about how to relax and let go and that a person should leave things alone and let it be through Wu-Wei, or "not doing". A person should not try to manipulate others' thoughts but instead they should be allowed to find their own way based on their faith in the Tao. Thus it is very suitable for releasing stress and is beneficial for young people. To better serve my target audience I conducted initial user research, and have continues having user testing all the way through the process.

### Software

Adobe Flash, After Effect, Final Cut, Illustrator, Photoshop, Dreamweaver



## DEFINE

### Design Survey

The user investigation began with interviews and surveys of my classmates throughout the department, to understand what they wanted and needed most. I conducted a mini user research study before starting my projects, and had 20 of my classmates fill out a questionnaire about their interest in the Taoist content. These surveys served as a reference when choosing the content for my website. Their input provided valuable insights into how to a truly revolutionary website about Taoism could be built. Here is the result: (See Page 34 in the index for the original questionnaire)

### Questionnaire Result

Date: Oct.27.2009

Participants: 20

*"Which part of Taoism are you interested?" (followed by number of people)*

1. Origins and history of Taoism:	11
2. Taoism philosophy and thoughts:	14
3. Taoism principles:	12
4. Taoism practice:	12
5. Taoists (famous people in Taoism):	10
6. Taoism and Chinese culture:	11
7. Discussion and opinions about Taoism:	4
8. Tao in modern society or daily life:	12
9. Taoism in western countries:	11
10. Taoism Applications: Tao Te Ching:	1;
Qi Gong (Tao Yoga): 3; Feng Shui:	11

*"What interests you about Taoism or philosophy in general? "*

- application in design psychology
- nothing
- the natural part
- I ching
- never thought about it
- how it integrates into everyday life?
- everyday practice
- how the principles affect the morals of individuals
- concepts and how they affect people's life-styles and behaviors
- what's the main difference with other believes and related movies
- have no idea
- longevity of human being

### Conclusion

Most graduate students and design majors know little about Taoism, yet many show interest and support. I worked closely with my target users throughout the project — from initial concepts to early prototyping to the final development — and stay focused on how to introduce Taoism to young people.



## **Peer Review**

Most Taoism websites are very text-heavy and provide only text-based links, They also look somewhat alike in terms of content and structure. Most of the websites also have poor information hierarchy and navigation. The title and description for the page are treated the same, for example, and priority words in the meta data are not evident enough for effective marketing. Checking competitors sites, I analyzed how other web competitors use web design elements, and noted areas where I may be doing a better job. This helped me design strategies to gain visibility for my project. After the peer review research I target my website to be: graphical, interesting, simple, and clearly designed for young people.

## **Content Research**

I began my content research by reading books related to Taoism. After the first 3 months, soon I found I need to start reading with a purpose in mind because Taoism is a very broad subject. For this website my users are a young Western audience. After this period of intense reading, I was pretty clear about the basic Taoist concepts I should cover in my thesis, like the Taoist origins, history, principles and practice, Taoists and Tao in modern or Western society.

### ***Website Content:***

ABOUT: About the project

LEARN: Introduction of Taoism

WATCH: Principles of Taoism

PRACTICE: Taoist practices

Yin-Yang, Wu-Wei, Shi-Fei

Observation, Meditation, Interview

Using the insights gained through the peer review research, I compared and analyzed the content available on my website and competitors' websites. The comparison includes the amount of content on the competitors pages, keywords, quality of the content and much more, since most of the Taoist websites are text-based Taoist scripts, I outlined a strategy of innovation around the whole experience to offer users an integrated learning experience featured by reading, watching, and practicing with clear and intuitive website navigation. Another reason I added "practice" and "watch" is based on people's learning memory mode see the chart below. Apparently, practice by doing is more effective than only reading or listening when learning:

## **Design**

### **Design Parameters**

#### ***Logo Design***

"TAOPHI" is short for "Taoism philosophy". The logo of the website should reflect the duality of Taoism (Yin and Yang) while differentiating itself from the traditional, religious Taoism symbol. After an extensive exploration of the possibilities of color and shape, the final design features two half circles forming a whole circle. The dark and light symbolize the marriage of the opposites, such as Yin and Yang, female and male, etc. This logo is very clear with respect to the role duality plays in Taoism philosophy.



Logo Sketches



Logo Mockups



Final Logo



### **Interface Design**

Design of website 'look & feel' and navigation: I utilized information gathered during the definition phase while exploring different approaches to communicating the Taoist messages and implementing user navigation. I then presented various versions of the homepage. When choosing the final version, criteria that were taken into consideration were: simple, clear navigation and ease of use. After a version was chosen I further refined the designs until the final solution was developed.

#### Menu Design Mockups

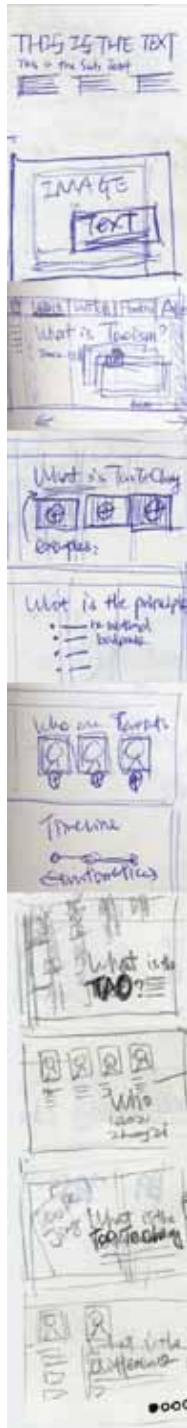


### **Visualizing Content**

The part "Learn" is a brief introduction to Taoism, created for the users to get a general idea of what Taoism philosophy is. The user experience begins with interactive flash context with ambient music, and users can learn about the Taoism philosophy in a direct and interactive way when they act cooperatively. The content is illustrated by graphics and text and is coded in Adobe Flash. I was exploring and defining the best combination between text and graphics, which is the biggest challenge of this part. The content concerns origins, definitions, Taoists and Taoism geographical locations, Taoism principles and practice, Taoist books. By seeing the peaceful text and graphics together with Taoist background music, users get a sense of the Taoism philosophy through visual and audio experiences.



Sketches



Design Mockups





### **Visual Design**

Drawing on my human-centered design expertise, I quickly determined that the visual design of this website should reflect Chinese cultures, because Taoism originated in China and plays an important role in Chinese culture and history. I spent a week doing research related to Chinese-style design. This research and its findings led to constructing a series of prototypes. I used complementary colors like red and green, and blue and orange in my earlier mockups. Then I came to realize the color is too distracting to for what I was trying to get across to the users. So, in my later mockups, I got rid of the colors and kept the black-and-white style to find this accords more with the Chinese-style look and feel. Also, according to user feedback, black and white is much better for a philosophical theme as serious as Taoism. Especially the gray scale in the animation makes the story much more clear and easier to understand.

Color: from colors to gray scale



### **Motion Graphics**

In “Watch”, after learning about basic Taoist concepts users can sit back and watch animations about Taoism principles. I started the animation from a storyboard of each key frame. The storyboards for the first round were based on the book “Tao Te Ching” the Taoist scripture. The initial animation has five mini animations about the Taoist principles I obtained from the book, each lasting 20 seconds. After the first round of user testing, I found most people did not get it after seeing the animations because the texts are philosophical, complicated, and difficult to understand. Therefore I realized I needed to make serious revisions if I was to accomplish the goal of communicating to my target audience.

An example of the storyboard (1st round)

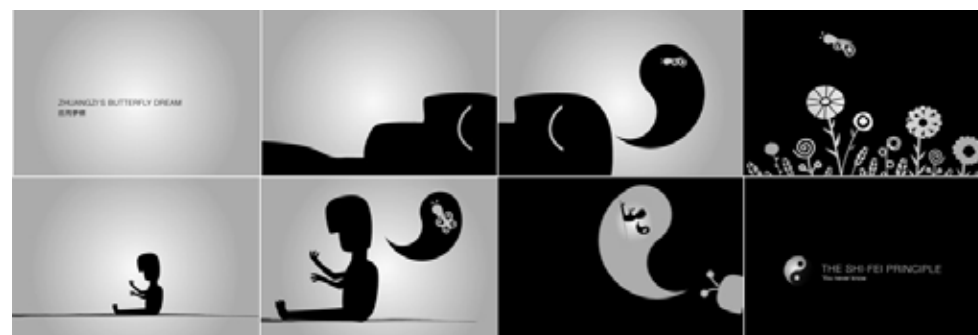
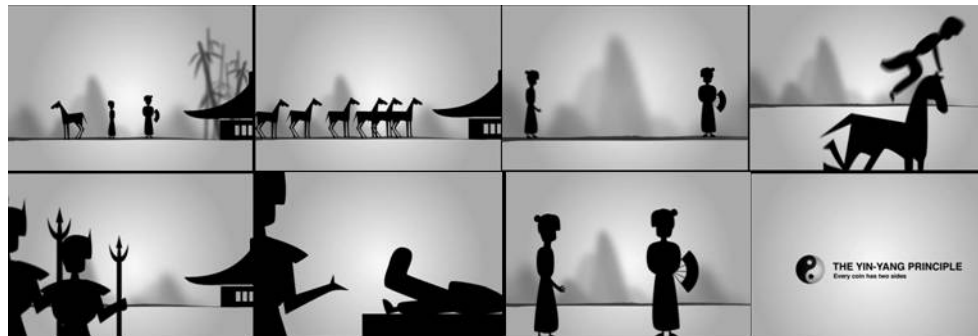






After that development I started seriously considering redoing all five animations; and so I did. Hearing from the previous user feedback the five tedious philosophical animations were replaced with three simple stories that explained the three major principles of Taoism: Yin-Yang, Wu-Wei and Shi-Fei. The animation should be simple and easy to understand a Western audience. Take the Yin-Yang principle for example. In stead of actually showing text like "the Yin-Yang principle could be seen everywhere in life, like the day and light, left and right, female and male" on the screen, I chose to use a short story called "who knows what's good and bad". The story is about what happened to a Chinese farmer and shows that there is no absolute good and bad:that every coin has two sides. Likewise, for the other two Taoist principles I used two other simple stories that replaced the previous abstract version.

- Right: Original Color Design  
Down: Final version of storyboard:
1. Yin-Yang
  2. Wu-Wei
  3. Shi-Fei



### **Interactive Design**

In part “Practice”, users can observe nature, meditate or read the Taoist suggestions. The reason why I chose observation and meditation as the Taoist practice of the website, is that these two practices are essential in Taoist practice, and easier to be presented and explained by interactive design solutions. There are a lot of other Taoist practices and applications like Fengshui, Qi Gong-Tao Yoga etc, and they are not as important, and more difficult to realize in terms of graphic design.

Meditation has always been an important practice of Taoism because Taoists believe it helps in taking care of their physical health and longevity and helps them be in harmony with Tao. So does observation: Taoists believe that nature is not artificially imposed hierarchies and codes of etiquette, everything in the universe is an expression of Taoism. By observing nature, we can learn about the cosmetic rules and apply it into our own lives and it should be the guiding model for human behavior. In this part, users are provided choices in the simulated environment to observe and meditate, and to apply what they learned earlier in real life.

#### Interactive Design Sketches and Mockups



## Develop

The Project is built in Adobe Flash, and contains images, text, mp3 audios and flv animations. The production process is mainly divided into two parts: one is the interactive design built in Flash, the other part is the animation built in After Effect. For the interactive production I met some coding issues during the process, and the animation production was pretty smooth.

### Technical Issues

#### Coding

Generally speaking I did not have much trouble in writing the ActionScript. The biggest coding challenge was customizing the flv skins. The default flv skins do not fit the pitch of my project, so I was trying to customize the flv skins by revising the source fla. file in the flash installment folders, and exported swf files and had them appear in the pull-down menu. The customized skin looked fine, but later I found unless I copied the files into other computers' default files of Flash, I could not have it show up in the project in other computers. I was working in the school's lab and needed to change computers all the time, so I decided to solve this problem by loading the flv video through coding rather than importing it directly onto the stage, and left only the stop/play and pause button. It worked well that way.

The first step in coding the website involved writing ActionScript to dynamically load all sections. I wrote the separate files in Flash for individual sections, and set up the main stage to load each section when users click corresponding buttons. Examples are shown below: (please refer to the Appendix for the rest of the ActionScript)

```
1  stop();
2
3  loaderText_txt.visible = false;
4  bar_mc.visible = false;
5
6  //loader
7  var topicLoader:Loader = new Loader();
8  topicLoader.y = 80;
9  addChild(topicLoader);
10 topicLoader.load(new URLRequest("Topics/home.swf"));
11
12 topicLoader.contentLoaderInfo.addEventListener(ProgressEvent.PROGRESS, showProgress);
13 function showProgress(e:ProgressEvent){
14     loaderText_txt.visible = true;
15     bar_mc.visible = true;
16     var percent:int = (e.target.bytesLoaded / e.target.bytesTotal) * 100;
17     loaderText_txt.text = String(percent + "%");
18     bar_mc.width = percent;
19 }
20
21 topicLoader.contentLoaderInfo.addEventListener(Event.COMPLETE, onComplete);
22 function onComplete(e:Event) {
23     loaderText_txt.visible = false;
24     bar_mc.visible = false;
25 }
26
27 //-----button array-----
28 //add event listener to buttons
29 var s = this.navigationButton_mc
30 var subButtons:Array = new Array(s.home, s.learn, s.watch, s.practice);
31 for (var i:int = 0; i < subButtons.length; i++){
32     subButtons[i].addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, navigate);
33 }
34
35 function navigate(e:MouseEvent):void {
36     topicLoader.unload();
```

The second step was to write the ActionScript, in part to “Learn” to animate graphics. I was using a Flash tween engine called “Green Sock” for all the tweens used in the part “Learn”, this works by loading an external Green Sock file outside of the Flash File. An example of this code is shown on the following page, and the full code is available in the Appendix.

```
1 import fl.transitions.Tween;
2 import fl.transitions.easing.*;
3
4 previous.enabled=false;
5 previous.visible=false;
6
7 flash.media.SoundMixer.stopAll();
8
9 // ----- next/previous buttons -----
10 next.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onthisNext);
11 previous.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onthisPrevious);
12
13 function onthisNext(e:MouseEvent):void {
14     content.nextFrame();
15     var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
16     if(content.currentFrame==2)
17     {
18         previous.visible=true;
19         previous.enabled=true;
20     }
21     if(content.currentFrame==content.totalFrames)
22     {
23         next.visible=false;
24     }
25 }
26
27 function onthisPrevious(e:MouseEvent):void {
28     content.prevFrame();
29     var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
30     if(content.currentFrame==content.totalFrames-1)
31     {
32         next.visible=true;
33         next.enabled=true;
34     }
35     if(content.currentFrame==1)
36     {
37         previous.visible=false;
38     }
39 }
```

Third, when I had all the animation videos and audio files ready I loaded them in Flash and made sure they were compatible with Flash. For example, all the animations that are exported as Quick Time movies had to be transformed into .flv format with Adobe Media Encoder.

The last step is uploading the website. This includes requires website functionality, hosting, and the post launch website revision process. I have a personal website with hosting and space at goDaddy.com, so I uploaded the website using Fetch.

### **Performance**

After uploading the website online I found another problem: The animation videos took longer than expected to load after I uploaded the site was online. Load times depend on the internet speed which differs for different areas, but it normally takes 10 seconds for a 7MB flv video to load. A decision of balancing speed and quality of the video led to using the Adobe Media Encoder to minimize the file size and the picture quality; It now takes around 5 seconds for each videos to load. This would not have been a problem if I built the website in html and loaded the videos from Vimeo rather than ActionScript. It is a lesson I learned.



## Summarise

### **Trouble Shooting**

#### ***Lessons Learned***

The whole thesis process is about learning, revising according to user feedback and reviewing. New content is added all the time, and I needed to make choices concerning what technology and graphics are best suited for the content and purpose, and what is best for the users. The other solutions must be abandoned. Over the course of my thesis I learned three main lessons:

First, planning ahead and following the plan rigorously no matter what happens is very important. By planning ahead I intend to foresee hardship and to leave time for troubleshooting. One example: I did not leave enough time for production of my previous five animations resulting in the delay of all other productions. I had to revise my original plan and spent more time to ensure a better production work. This was due to my lack of planning and not being able to follow the production plan rigorously.

Also it is very important to have the goal in mind during the process. The thesis process took more than one year and the research, design, and production were all very time-consuming. It is very easy to spend hours on an irrelevant topic or to work solving an unimportant technical issue for hours unless I remind myself of the purpose of the thesis. I found myself coming back and reviewing my original goal from time to time, and started limiting time spent on irrelevant learning and devoting more time to production-centered research and design. This was especially true when it came to the end of the thesis work.

It is equally important to be able to make choices. I abandoned ideas and adopted other ideas as long as this was goal-centered and more efficient. For example, in the interactive part my original idea for the observation was that when users rolled over graphics and the content could be popped out from an individual window. Later I found this lacked of interactivity and was hard to realize in coding. Then I switched to another way and made the graphics into buttons in Flash and put the roll-over content in the roll-over state. This act saved me a lot of time in production.

## **Usability Testing**

### ***Method***

Usability testing is a core component of my thesis and I have involved user testing all the way through the project. This contributed to clarifying my thinking and was very helpful in improving the thesis website.

The normal procedure is to ask one, or several, of my target audience to sit down and play with my project, while watching how they interact with the project. One can see if it is difficult for a user to navigate and can pay attention to their feedback about which part is impressive, which part should be improved and what changes they would like to see and the parts they dislike. I observe whether there are technical bugs that were invisible before and evaluate suggestions that might be enhancements worth my efforts to improve the website. My peer designers and professionals also gave me a lot of valuable suggestions in terms of graphic design and animations. An example of user testing can be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rc4862g3Nas>





## **Conclusion**

My goal for this project is to explore the history, principles and rules of Taoism philosophy and the applications of Taoism in modern society. Next, interpret using creative interactive graphic solutions based on my personal understanding. I am pretty sure that I achieved my goal. I am very happy to see the final project turned out the way I wanted and am glad to receive the many positive responses from people who visited the website.

I learned so much from the process: First I learned more about the Taoism philosophy and how to explain it through interactive graphic design applications; My graphic design skills and aesthetics were greatly improved by reading design books and learning from other good websites. I learned how to code for a flash website with multimedia including audio, video, and interactive graphics; and, my animation and story techniques skills are also greatly improved.

I hope that by creating this website Taoism philosophy is brought to the Western audience in a simple graphical way and enlightening way. I have witnessed how technology changed people's lives and provided great convenience. People might be ten times more efficient than before but they still feel lonely, restless or confused. I think technology should not only provide convenience for people's lives, but should also help solve their spiritual problems. For me, this is far more important than creating a Flash website that sells products. Through learning philosophy, I found my heart is more peaceful than before. Philosophy inspires people to think about their lives and to self-reflect. Particularly in learning Taoism, and the basic principles that Taoism philosophy reveals like the alternations of phenomena and accomplishing things through non-doing, I was able to soothe my restlessness or depression caused by material wants or other desires. I wish to share what I found helpful through this thesis opportunity.

In the future I would like to send this project to the interactive design awards and will have a link to the website on my personal portfolio website (<http://www.yangdan/info>). My interest in interactive design related philosophy has never ended, and I definitely will keep exploring and introducing more philosophy in addition to Taoism. I am very happy to see myself following what I think is right and meaningful rather than creating a commercial website with the purpose of looking for jobs.

I greatly appreciate of my committee members for their patient instruction, my classmates involved in usability testing and interviews, and the encouragement and help from people I didn't even know. Their encouragement kept me holding on until the project was finally finished.





---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

## Abstract

*Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation* is an interactive graphic design project, a personal interpretation of Taoism. My goal for this project is to explore the history, principles and rules of Taoism philosophy and its applications in modern society, the interpretation will be by creative interactive graphic solutions based on personal understanding. I will create a series of experiences and animations about Taoism principles that flow into each other and educate through an intimate and interesting interaction.

## Problem Statement

Philosophy, in most people's opinion, is complicated, obscure and distant from everyday life. In fact, philosophy is about practical issues related to everyday life: Where do I come from? What am I doing? Where am I going? What should I do?

Taoism is an ancient Chinese philosophy that focuses on naturalness, vitality, peace, "non-action," and emptiness. It also reveals the rules of nature that all beings follow.

As I read «Tao Te Ching», a fundamental book of Taoism, I had these questions in mind: How can an ancient Chinese philosophy benefit modern people? Is there a more interesting way to explain a philosophy as complicated and obscure as Taoism? I also found the most common medium explaining Taoism or philosophy in general, to be books or online passages. So, I came up with an idea to make use of what I learned as an interactive graphic designer and interpret Taoism in an intriguing way. An introduction to this beneficial and ancient philosophy based on a series of creative interactive graphic solutions will be the goal of my thesis.

I am targeting college students from 18 to 30 who are educated and are open to new opinions. My research includes study related to design and philosophy. For design research I will focus on storytelling techniques for a young audience, instructinoal multimedia design and advertising for philosophy and animation principles; My philosophy research includes Taoism origins and principles, Taoists in history and in current society, Taoism and Chinese culture, Tao application in modern society, and Taoism practices.

---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

## Survey of the Literature

### BOOKS

The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Psychology of Happiness

*Arlene Matthews Uhl*

Arlene Matthews Uhl gathers all the current research in the study of happiness and helps readers apply it to their everyday lives. I learned a new phrase through reading: Positive Psychology—the study of what makes people happy—This new discipline will help me find more resources about human happiness and what people care about in general.

### PAPERS

Similarities between Chinese Taoism and Western graphic design

*Sung, Lillian Yin-Ling C.*

Rochester Institute of Technology

May 9, 1981

This dissertation is about connections and contrasts between the basic laws of Chinese Taoism and Western graphic design. It is about the relationship between Taoism and Graphic Design with man and his environment, the harmony of life, and the unity of all the world, and how Eastern and Western thought meet together for the progress of enhancing the quality of life. The thesis serves as a bridge between concepts of Graphic Design and Taoist's philosophy and is very inspiring in graphic solutions to philosophical problems.

Ancient Chinese Philosophical Advice: Can it help us find happiness today?

*Veenhoven, R; Guoqing, Z.*

2008

This review is about recommendations and considerations of what constitutes a happy life in present day society. Recommended behaviors are compared with conditions for happiness as observed in present day investigations. Based on this analysis, I can extend the theory and apply it in current cases for college students.

### ARTICLES

Media Choice (Marketing Campaign For The Spectator)

*Marshall, Caroline*

June 15, 2001

The passage is about how to choose media for launching a successful campaign. It is a reference that prompts me to think about what is the best media for my project.

---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

Pursuing Happiness

*John Lanchester*

New Yorker

February 27, 2006

The author started from a story of two primitive human beings and discussed the original reason for human happiness. He analyzed happiness from both psychological and physical aspects with reference to human history. This article is an interesting and valuable piece of work discussing what happiness is and why people are happy. Thus, it helps me understand the extent to which my project about Taoism philosophy can benefit people.

The Dream of Life

*Chuang Tzu*

This is a classical article on Taoism. It is the story of Chuang Tzu who did not know whether he was Chuang Tzu, who had dreamed that he was a butterfly, or whether he was a butterfly dreaming that he was Chuang Tzu. I learned basic principles about two-way thinking in Taoism from this article.

Focus: Can you teach happiness

From *The Sunday Times*

April 23, 2006

This survey review includes psychologists at Harvard and Cambridge, and economists in both the US and Britain that find out the role of positive psychology is to bridge between academe and self-help movement. It is a helpful reference for how to teach people and change their minds.

## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

<http://www.blogcatalog.com/blog/practice-the-tao>

Julia Chung and Nick Barnett created this blog and updated it by exploring one verse of the Tao Te Ching each week with a discussion of how Lao Tzu's teachings could be related to personal development and coaching principles. From this blog I understood how people interpret Tao from a different cultural background.

[http://taosculture.org/english/health\\_vegetarian\\_01.php](http://taosculture.org/english/health_vegetarian_01.php)

This is one section of "Tao's Culture" website, which is about the benefits and reasons for being a vegetarian from a Taoist's point of view. Since my project will be relevant to people's lives and way of living, food will also be part of it. Learning about Taoists' choices of food is very helpful for enriching the project.

---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

[http://uselesstree.typepad.com/useless\\_tree/2006/02/the\\_pursuit\\_of\\_.html](http://uselesstree.typepad.com/useless_tree/2006/02/the_pursuit_of_.html)

The author analyzed the obstacles to people's happiness and the expression of happiness combining both Taoist and Confucian understanding. The explicit connection made me realize the elements of happiness in Western society.

<http://www.thetaobums.com/Starting-a-Tai-Chi-practice-t11533.html>

A simple article about how to practice Tai Chi internal art and mind exercise of Taoism. It is helpful for understanding physical happiness. I can add this part into the part of project about practicing TaiChi, which is effective for relaxing both body and mind.

<http://path-of-water.blogspot.com/2009/06/taoism-parties-and-fitting-in.html>

This is written by someone who benefited from Taoist philosophy in his own experience. He realized that the reason he felt awkward and clumsy was because he was trying to fit into these situations according to the Taoism rules. The passage is valuable in how people actually benefit by combining self-conscience with the rules.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taoism>

Wikipedia's definition of Taoism. It contains useful resources to discover what is Taoism.

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/taoism.htm>

A general introduction of Taoist concepts, beliefs and practices. The Yin Yang symbol, Quotations, and history of Taoism are discussed. A useful link to get a rough idea of Taoism philosophy.

<http://factsanddetails.com/china.php?itemid=91&catid=3>

This resource provides facts and details of Taoism with connections to Chinese traditional art, which is built up a connections to the artistic side of design. I will consider applying the traditional Chinese Taoism artistic look and feel to my project.

The Skillful Use Of Desire On The Taoist Path

*Elizabeth Reninger*

[http://taoism.about.com/od/practices/a/Booster\\_Engines.htm](http://taoism.about.com/od/practices/a/Booster_Engines.htm)

The article deconstructs happiness from a philosophical point of view. The author asked "why, what and how" for the pursuit and process of happiness. It strengthened my knowledge of happiness from an academic point of view.

---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

<http://www.blogcatalog.com/blog/the-path-of-water/077377c9eda8af7e9b31504cc295623c>  
Dealing with loss is an issue that everyone has experienced in their life. This article tells people how to deal with loss from the Taoism point of view. It triggered my thoughts as to whether I should include human issues in different categories within my project.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/taoism/>  
Scholars of religion try to sort out the conceptual definition of Taoism. It provides rich information at an academic level.

## PPT RESOURCES

<http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/hayleyjmiller-186469-taoism-projectttttt-religion-entertainment-ppt-powerpoint/>

This is a PPT presentation that provides general information on Taoism, such as the worldwide percentage of adherents, core belief, symbols, the roles of women in Taoism. It helps me get a general idea of the issues of current society from a Taoist's point of view.

[http://74.125.47.132/search?q=cache:YsPCrVCG\\_AsJ:www.stc.arts.chula.ac.th/ABC2007/abc2007pptfiles/200307/Session%252011/A%2520Comparative%2520Study%2520of%2520Confucian%2520and%2520Taoist%2520Conceptions.ppt+taoism+happiness&cd=8&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=firefox-a](http://74.125.47.132/search?q=cache:YsPCrVCG_AsJ:www.stc.arts.chula.ac.th/ABC2007/abc2007pptfiles/200307/Session%252011/A%2520Comparative%2520Study%2520of%2520Confucian%2520and%2520Taoist%2520Conceptions.ppt+taoism+happiness&cd=8&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=firefox-a)

A power point presentation of A Comparative Study of Confucian and Taoist Conceptions of Well Being. Comparing Confucian and Taoist philosophy, people can develop a better idea of the implications of Taoism in regarding all activities aiming at excessive material satisfaction. This comparison helps me understand the benefits of different philosophies to human being.

---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

## Project Description:

### Participants

College students who have interests in Taoism, philosophy, or Chinese culture.

### Computer graphics

Vector graphics for logos

Animation for Taoism principle

Flash and Actionscript for the instructional interactive part

Video editing for interviews

### Procedure

*Fall quarter:* Taoism theory study; survey of college student's interest about Taoism.

*Winter quarter:* project process which includes animation, flash and video shooting

*Spring quarter:* documentation and presentation

*Fall quarter review: Questionnaire Result*

*Date: Oct.27 Participants: 20*

1. Origins and history of Taoism: 11
2. Taoism philosophy and thoughts: 14
3. Taoism principles: 12
4. Taoism practice: 12
5. Taoists (famous people in Taoism): 10
6. Taoism and Chinese culture: 11
7. Discussion and opinions about Taoism: 4
8. Tao in modern society or daily life: 12
9. Taoism in western countries: 11
10. Taoism Applications: Tao Te Ching: 1;  
    Qi Gong (Tao Yoga): 3; Feng Shui: 11

*Typical answers of "What interests you about Taoism or philosophy in general?"*

- application in design psychology
- nothing
- the natural part
- I ching
- never thought about it
- how it integrates into everyday life?
- everyday practice
- how the principles affect the morals of individuals
- concepts and how they affect people's life-styles and behaviors
- what's the main difference with other believes and related movies
- have no idea
- longevity of human being

---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

## *Conclusion*

Most graduate students in the Design majors know little about Taoism, yet many show interest and support.

## **Software**

Flash, After Effect, Final Cut, Illustrator, Photoshop, Cinema4D, Dreamweaver

## **Implications of the Research**

Design Research:

- Use online and library resources for related theories
- Get feedback from target audience and instructor

Philosophy Research:

- Work under instructions from instructors from Computer Graphic Design and Philosophy departments
- Use online and library resources for related study

## **Design**

The project consists of four parts: introduction, interaction, feedback, and project introduction. The users may start with amusing animations about the principles of Taoism; The interactive Flash will explain Taoism in specific contexts by interacting with the users; I will also interview participants about their philosophy of life.

**1. Introduction:** humorous animation of Taoism rules and principles based on a Taoism context.

**Content:** Origins and history of Taoism; Taoism philosophy and thoughts; Taoism principles and practice; Taoists; Taoism and Chinese culture; Tao in modern or Western society.

**Style keywords:** Amusing, simple, clear, cute. (Please refer to the images below).

**2. Interactivity:** The user experience begins with a fun and joyful activity like interactive Flash with ambient music and sound based on the choices of participants. The activities aim at educating users about Taoism philosophy in a more direct and interactive way when they act cooperatively.

**Content:** Taoism principles and practice for specific situations; Taoism Applications (Fengshui, Qi Gong-Tao Yoga).

**Interaction:**

- Provide choices in a simulated environment
- Allow personalization by uploading files or making use of the web cam

**3. Interview:** Participants are interviewed before and after playing around with the project. Their point of view should be representative, the content should be about personal philosophy, and any negative or positive feedbacks concerning the project.

**4. About:** An introduction of the motivation, purpose, and processes of the project.

---

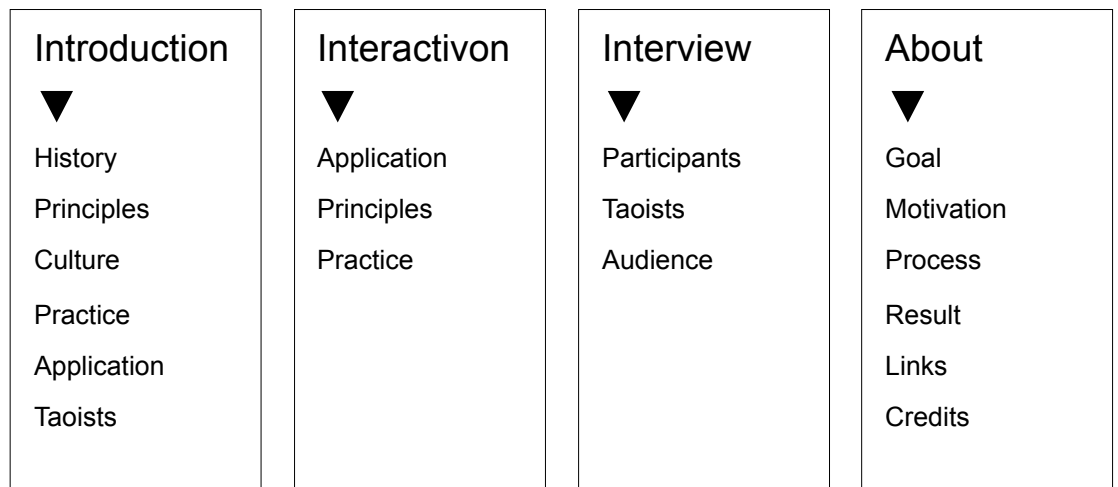
# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

## Flow Chart



## Budget

Travel s.p.& Museum – \$500

Conference – \$200

Other resource fee – \$100

Oct.2009 – Nov.2009

- Survey about student's interest in Taoism
- Reading books recommended by professor Brian Schroeder from the Philosophy department of RIT
- Prototype
- Continue researching

Nov.2009 – Mar.2010

- Create series of animations for Taoism principles
- Interview participants and get feedback, revise design accordingly
- Create interactive Flash to create direct interaction with users
- Continue reading and researching

Mar.2010 – Apr.2010

- Finish production
- Preparation for thesis exhibition

## Marketing Plan

I will put the project on my portfolio website and looking for opportunities to cooperate with websites in related areas. I will consider selling it on DVD or on-line in the future.



---

# Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree

Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

by Yang Dan

---

## Attachment – Questionnaire

**Gender:** MALE      FEMALE

**Class:** '06 '07 '08 '09 UNDERGRAD/GRADUATE

**Major:**

This is an anonymous, voluntary questionnaire to obtain your interests about Taoism, which is a Chinese philosophy that focuses on nature, liberty, action through inaction, compassion, etc. It does not matter if you know nothing about it. The results will be used in my thesis, which is an interactive graphic introduction of Taoism. Your answers are greatly appreciated.

***Which aspect of Taoism will you be interested in?***

*YES-interested NO-not interested NOT SURE-have no idea*

**1. Origins and history of Taoism**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**2. Taoism philosophy and thoughts**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**3. Taoism principles**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**4. Taoism practice**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**5. Taoists (famous people in Taoism)**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**6. Taoism and Chinese culture**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**7. Discussion and opinions about Taoism**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**8. Tao in modern society or daily life**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**9. Taoism in western countries**

YES      NO      NOT SURE

**10. Taoism Applications: (Choose the one you might be interested in)**

Tao Te Ching      Qi Gong (Tao Yoga)      Feng Shui      Others (please specify)

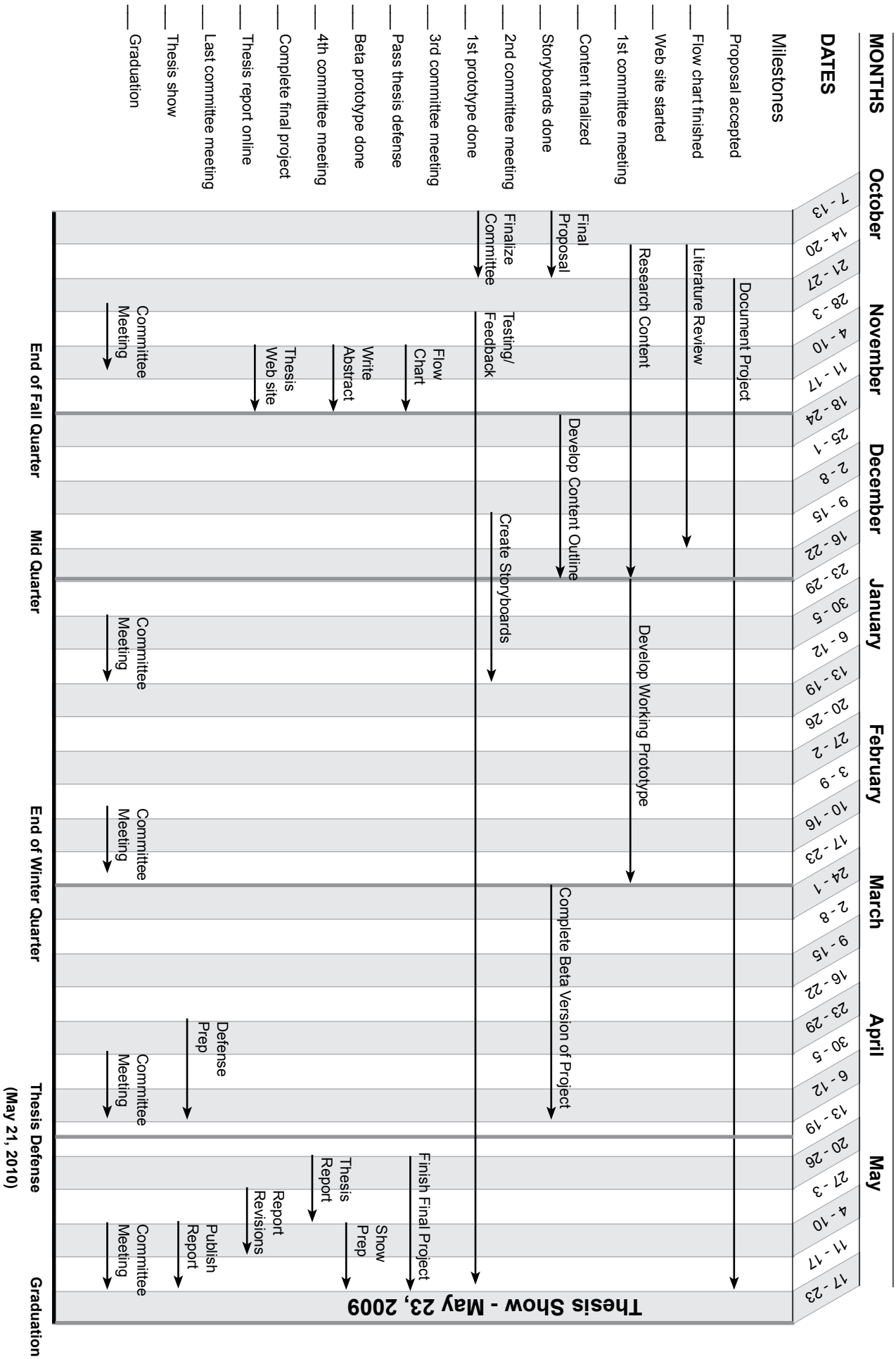
**11. What interests you about Taoism or philosophy in general?** \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Other suggestions or opinions?** \_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Taoism Philosophy: A Visual Interactive Interpretation

## Thesis Timeline

by Yang Dan





## Appendix

### ActionScript

#### Code For Main Stage

This ActionScript code set up the loader. When users click the button, corresponding section will be loaded, and the number will show how many percentages have been loaded while users are waiting.

```
stop();
loaderText_txt.visible = false;
bar_mc.visible = false;

//loader
var topicLoader:Loader = new Loader();
topicLoader.y = 80;
addChild(topicLoader);
topicLoader.load(new URLRequest("Topics/home.swf"));
topicLoader.contentLoaderInfo.addEventListener(ProgressEvent.PROGRESS, showProgress);
function showProgress(e:ProgressEvent){
    loaderText_txt.visible = true;
    bar_mc.visible = true;
    var percent:int = (e.target.bytesLoaded / e.target.bytesTotal) * 100;
    loaderText_txt.text = String(percent + "%");
    bar_mc.width = percent;
}
topicLoader.contentLoaderInfo.addEventListener(Event.COMPLETE, onComplete);
function onComplete(e:Event) {
    loaderText_txt.visible = false;
    bar_mc.visible = false;
}
//button array
//add event listener to buttons
var s = this.navigationButton_mc
var subButtons:Array = new Array(s.home, s.learn, s.watch, s.practice);
for (var i:int = 0; i < subButtons.length; i++){
    subButtons[i].addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, navigate);
}
function navigate(e:MouseEvent):void {
    topicLoader.unload();
    topicLoader.load(new URLRequest("Topics/" + e.target.name + ".swf"));
}
```



```
//send navigation bar to front
//setChildIndex(navigationButton_mc, numChildren-1);
setChildIndex(logo, numChildren-2);
//logo
logo.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onLogo2);

function onLogo2 (e:MouseEvent):void {
    topicLoader.unload();
    topicLoader.load(new URLRequest("Topics/home.swf"));
}
fullScreen_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.MOUSE_DOWN, fullScreen);
function fullScreen(event:MouseEvent):void {
    stage.displayState=StageDisplayState.FULL_SCREEN;
}
normal_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, normalScreen);
function normalScreen(event:MouseEvent):void {
    stage.displayState = StageDisplayState.NORMAL;
}
```

### **Code For “Learn“**

This ActionScript code sets up the tweens, buttons functions and music controls in “Learn“. The tweens for the graphics are using “Greensock“ scripts; Button functions include previous and next functions; Music controls include stop, play and volume control.

```
import fl.transitions.Tween;
import fl.transitions.easing.*;
previous.enabled=false;
previous.visible=false;
flash.media.SoundMixer.stopAll();

//next/previous buttons
next.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onthisNext)
previous.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onthisPrevious)
function onthisNext(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.nextFrame();
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, “alpha”, Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
    if(content.currentFrame==2)
    {
        previous.visible=true;
        previous.enabled=true;}
    if(content.currentFrame==content.totalFrames)
    {
        next.visible=false;}}
```



```
function onthisPrevious(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.prevFrame();
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
    if(content.currentFrame==content.totalFrames-1)
    {
        next.visible=true;
        next.enabled=true;
    }if(content.currentFrame==1)
    {
        previous.visible=false;
        previous.enabled=false;}
    }
//Music
//External Sound Files
// create an instance of the sound class
var mySound:Sound = new Sound();

// load the sound class
mySound.load(new URLRequest("music/DoubleDrift_intro.mp3"));
var soundSet:SoundTransform = new SoundTransform();
soundSet.volume = 0.4;
var myChannel:SoundChannel = mySound.play(0,1,soundSet);

// create a custom variable to store position of audio when stopped
var pausedPosition:int;
// create the event listeners for the buttons
play_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, playSound);
stop_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, stopSound);
// hide the play button when the file loads
play_btn.visible = false;
// create the event handlers
function playSound(evt:MouseEvent):void {
    myChannel = mySound.play(pausedPosition);
    play_btn.visible = false;
    stop_btn.visible = true;
}
function stopSound(evt:MouseEvent):void {
    pausedPosition = myChannel.position
    myChannel.stop();
    play_btn.visible = true;
    stop_btn.visible = false;
}
```



```
//slider
mySlider_mc.x = bar_mc.x + bar_mc.width/2;
mySlider_mc.buttonMode = true;
mySlider_mc.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, moveSlider);
mySlider_mc.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, stopSlider);
mySlider_mc.addEventListener(Event.ENTER_FRAME, changeVolume);

function moveSlider(evt:MouseEvent):void {

    var myBoundaries:Rectangle = new Rectangle(bar_mc.x, bar_mc.y, bar_mc.width, 0)
    evt.target.startDrag(true, myBoundaries);
}
function stopSlider(evt:MouseEvent):void {
    stopDrag();
}
function changeVolume(evt:Event):void {
    var left:Number = bar_mc.x;
    var right:Number = left + bar_mc.width;
    soundSet.volume = (evt.target.x - left) / (right - left);
    myChannel.soundTransform = soundSet;
}

//slide short cut
//next/previous buttons
slide1.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide1);
slide2.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide2);
slide3.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide3);
slide4.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide4);
slide5.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide5);
slide6.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide6);
slide7.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide7);
slide8.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide8);
slide9.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onslide9);

function onslide1(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("1");
    //slide1.gotoAndStop("2");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide2(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("2");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
}
```



```
function onslide3(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("3");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide4(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("4");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide5(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("5");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide6(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("6");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide7(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("7");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide8(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("8");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
function onslide9(e:MouseEvent):void {
    content.gotoAndStop("9");
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(content, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0, 1, 3, true);
}
```

#### **Code For "Watch" (Video Controls)**

This ActionScript code sets up the video controls in "Watch". When users click the thumbnail, corresponding video will be loaded.

```
flash.media.SoundMixer.stopAll();
stop();
setChildIndex(videoone_btn,numChildren - 1);
setChildIndex(videotwo_btn,numChildren - 2);
setChildIndex(videothree_btn,numChildren - 3);
import com.greensock.*;
import com.greensock.loading.*;
import com.greensock.events.LoaderEvent;
```



```
import com.greensock.loading.display.*;
import com.greensock.easing.*;
import flash.events.MouseEvent;

var video1:VideoLoader = new VideoLoader("Videos/animation1.flv", {name:"myVideo",
onComplete:completeHandler1, autoPlay:false, x:200, y:250});
var video2:VideoLoader = new VideoLoader("Videos/animation2.flv", {name:"myVideo",
onComplete:completeHandler2, autoPlay:false, x:200, y:250});
var video3:VideoLoader = new VideoLoader("Videos/animation3.flv", {name:"myVideo",
onComplete:completeHandler3, autoPlay:false, x:200, y:250});

video1.load();
function completeHandler1(event:LoaderEvent):void {
addChild(video1.content);}
function completeHandler2(event:LoaderEvent):void {
addChild(video2.content);}
function completeHandler3(event:LoaderEvent):void {
addChild(video3.content);}

videoone_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, playVideo1);
videotwo_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, playVideo2);
videothree_btn.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, playVideo3);

//start loading
function playVideo1(evt:MouseEvent){
video1.load();
video2.unload()
video3.unload()
}

function playVideo2(evt:MouseEvent){
video2.load();
video1.unload()
video3.unload()
}

function playVideo3(evt:MouseEvent){
video3.load();
video1.unload()
video2.unload()
}
```





```
//video control
var isPlaying:Boolean;

isPlaying = true;
PAPL.PA.alpha = 1 ;
PAPL.PL.alpha = 0 ;
SD.wave.alpha = 1 ;

PAPL.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, clickPlayPause);

function clickPlayPause(evt:MouseEvent):void {
    if (isPlaying) {
        PAPL.PA.alpha = 0 ;
        PAPL.PL.alpha = 1 ;
        video1.pauseVideo();
        video2.pauseVideo();
        video3.pauseVideo();
        isPlaying = false;
    } else if (!isPlaying) {
        PAPL.PA.alpha = 1 ;
        PAPL.PL.alpha = 0 ;
        video1.playVideo();
        video2.playVideo();
        video3.playVideo();
        isPlaying = true;
    }
}

var muted:Boolean = false;
SD.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, clickSD);
function clickSD(evt:MouseEvent):void {
    if (muted) {
        video1.volume = 1 ;
        video2.volume = 1 ;
        video3.volume = 1 ;
        SD.wave.alpha = 1 ;
        muted = false;
    }
    else {
        video1.volume = 0 ;
        video2.volume = 0 ;
        video3.volume = 0 ;
        SD.wave.alpha = 0 ;
        muted = true;
    }
}}
```



### **Code For “Practice“ (Observation)**

This ActionScript code allows the graphics to move with the user’s cursor, also when users roll over the graphics, the text will show up.

```
flash.media.SoundMixer.stopAll();
// set up variables
var stageWidth:Number = stage.stageWidth;
var speed1:Number = 55;
var speed2:Number = 55;
var mc1Width:Number = front_mc.width;
var mc2Width:Number = back_mc.width;
var mc1X:Number = front_mc.x;
var mc2X:Number = back_mc.x;

// set up vertical variables
var stageHeight:Number = stage.stageHeight;
var mc1Height:Number = front_mc.height;
var mc2Height:Number = back_mc.height;
var mc1Y:Number = front_mc.y;
var mc2Y:Number = back_mc.y;

var lock_scroll:Boolean = false;

// create an empty mc container for content to display
var contentBox:MovieClip = new MovieClip();
addChild(contentBox);
// reposition the new movie clip on the stage
contentBox.x = 195;
contentBox.y = 92;

// create a loader for the external content
var myLoader:Loader = new Loader();
var myFile:URLRequest
```



```
// create a function that communicates to the Loaded file
function onComplete(event:Event) {
    // display the file on the Stage
    addChild(myLoader);
    // reposition the image
    myLoader.x = 200;
    myLoader.y = 50;
    // rotate the image
    myLoader.rotation = 30;
}

// define the function to scroll the front and back layers
function scroll_mc(){
    // declare a variable that keeps track of where the cursor is
    var xDistance = mouseX;
    //var xDistance = mouseX - (stageWidth/8);
    // the further the mouse is from the center, the faster the scroll
    mc1X += -xDistance/speed1;
    mc2X += -xDistance/speed2;
    // prevent the left edge of each layer from scrolling too far
    if (mc1X >= 0) { mc1X = 0; }
    if (mc2X >= 0) { mc2X = 0; }
    // prevent the right edge of each layer from scrolling too far
    if (mc1X <= stageWidth - mc1Width) { mc1X = stageWidth - mc1Width; }
    if (mc2X <= stageWidth-mc2Width) { mc2X = stageWidth - mc2Width; }
    // update the each layer's horizontal position on the stage
    front_mc.x = mc1X;
    back_mc.x = mc2X;
}

// perform the parallax scrolling
stage.addEventListener(Event.ENTER_FRAME, parallaxScroll);
function parallaxScroll(e:Event) {
    if (!lock_scroll){ // if the variable lock_scroll is NOT true
        scroll_mc(); // activate the scroll_mc function
    }
}

// create event listeners for the buttons inside the back_mc movieclip
back_mc.image1.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.image2.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.image3.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.image4.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
```



```
back_mc.image5.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.image6.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.image7.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.image8.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.printArt.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.webArt.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.books.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
back_mc.experimental.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
front_mc.magazines.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, loadExternalFile);
```

```
// create the event handler for the listener
function loadExternalFile(e:MouseEvent){
    //trace(e.target.name);
    var fileName:String = e.target.name + ".swf"
    myFile = new URLRequest(fileName);
    myLoader.load(myFile);
    myLoader.contentLoaderInfo.addEventListener(Event.COMPLETE, done);
}
// create a function that responds to external file completely being loaded into Flash
function done(e:Event) {
    tint_mc.gotoAndPlay("on");
    contentBox.addChild(myLoader);
}
```

#### **Code For "Practice" (Meditation)**

This ActionScript code sets up the audio controls in "Practice". When users come to the "Meditation" section, the audio will play automatically.

```
var mySound:Sound = new Sound();
var myChannel:SoundChannel = new SoundChannel();
mySound.load(new URLRequest("mp3/meditation.mp3"));
mySound.play();

previous.addEventListener(MouseEvent.CLICK, onPrevious2);

function onPrevious2(event:MouseEvent):void {
    this.prevFrame();
    var myTweenAlpha:Tween = new Tween(this, "alpha", Strong.easeOut, 0.3, 1, 3, true);
    flash.media.SoundMixer.stopAll();
}
```



## **Animation Script**

### ***The Yin-Yang Principle***

Who knows what's good and bad?

Once upon a time there lived a farmer in the three kingdoms of China.

This farmer had a son and a horse.

The horse ran away one day.

The neighbor came and said, "I'm sorry to hear that".

The farmer said, "who knows what is good or bad?"

The next day, the horse came back and followed by a whole herd.

The neighbor said, "You have great luck." The farmer said, "who knows?"

The next day the farmer's son was riding the new horse and broke his leg.

The neighbors said again, "What bad luck, your son broke his leg!"

The farmer said, "who knows what is good or bad?"

The next day the army came recruiting.

and the son was not recruited because of his broken leg.

The local farmers said, "What great luck, your son did not get recruited."

The farmer again, said, "who knows what is good or bad?"

### ***The Wu-Wei Principle***

Ting the butcher

Cook Ting was the best butcher in China.

he never sharpen his knife for even once after cutting up thousands of cows.

When asked why his knife doesn't wear down, Cook Ting said:

"A mediocre cook changes his knife once a month — because he hacks".

"When I cut the meat,

I allow the knife to find its own way through the flesh without effort or stress."

That's how I take care of my knife.

### ***The Shi-Fei Principle***

Zhuangzi's butterfly dream

Zhuangzi Once dreamt he was a butterfly,

a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased.

He didn't know he was Zhuangzi.

Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Zhuangzi.

But he didn't know if he was Zhuangzi who had dreamt he was a butterfly,

or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuangzi.



## **Meditation Script**

***Narrator: Tim Hungerford***

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is being aware of this present moment without judgement, without trying to change it.

It is so simple that you can do it anywhere,

You can do it while drinking a cup of tea,

You can do it while standing in the line of supermarket,

You can even do it right here.

Let's try it!

If you feel comfortable, just close your eyes for a second.

Be aware of what's happening to your belly as you take a few deep breath.

If you do,

You noticed that as you breath in, your belly expand.

And as you exhale, your belly contract.

Bring your awareness and sensation,

That is mindfulness.

You know how does it work?

You just did it!



## **Bibliography**

Adobe Flash Support. Adobe.com. Retrieved February 26, 2010, from <http://www.adobe.com/support/documentation/en/flash>

Brandon Toropov , Chad Hansen (2002). The complete idiot's guide to Taoism  
Alpha Books

Deng, Ming (1992) 365 Tao: daily meditations  
HarperSanFrancisco

Zhuangzi (1974) Zhuang zu: Inner chapters  
Vintage Books

Sung, Lillian Yin-Ling C.(1981) Similarities between Chinese Taoism and Western graphic design  
Rochester Institute of Technology

Uhl, Arlene (2008) The complete idiot's guide to the psychology of happiness  
Alpha Books

Veenhoven, R; Guoqing, Z.(2008) Ancient Chinese Philosophical Advice: Can it help us find happiness today? Vol. 9, issue 3, pages 425-443

Tilo Hartmann (2009) Media Choice: A Theoretical and Empirical Overview  
Taylor & Francis

Krug, Steve, Riewald, Scott. (2005). Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability. Berkley, California: New Riders Publishing.

Ippa, Nicholas V. (2001) Interactive Design for New Media and the Web. Boston  
Focal press

Elin, Larry. (2001) Designing and Developing Multimedia: A Practical Guide for the Producer, Director, and Writer.  
Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Shupe, Rich. (2008). Learning ActionScript 3.0: A Beginner's Guide.  
Sebastopol, California: O'Reilly Media Inc.