



THE TAO OF CREATIVITY A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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The design of our world expands, evolves, changes, repairs, and augments itself every day. The entire range of technological capabilities available for our day to day use is complex beyond the comprehension of many people. Diverse accessibility methods offered by Web 2.0 apps have enabled us to access our media from multiple platforms and multiple locations: Del.icio.us, digg.com, Facebook, MySpace, Flickr all allow us equal access from anywhere in the world with a password. As a result, our generation is literally the most well-documented ever in history. Our society has reshaped itself from a nomadic lifestyle to one that is mobile, literally accessing an infinite amount of information through our things to document, interact with, and *create* countless moments and experiences.

But so much of our experiences are intangible, and so much of what we want to create cannot be expressed. As a result, we've created more and more tools and technologies with the hope of simplifying, redefining, re-contextualizing our ideas in a way that we hoped could be shared and therefore understood by others. We have an Internet of Things to keep us connected, but nothing that keeps us together. We're great at designing and redesigning products, services and systems, but perhaps its time for us to consider redesigning a perspective that allows our creative capabilities to explode at the pace of our technology.

Design is the capability of redefining and reformatting products, services and systems that realign people's desires with the possibilities of technology and the capabilities of organizations. The role of Design can be defined as the Equilibrium Integrator, reestablishing the balance between a business and its markets, or the individual and their social network, in the face of everyday change and disruption. It is our belief that we can draw from the wisdom of our past to inspire the ideas of the future, creating a new perspective from an ancient practice, transforming what we see possible for the improvement of the human condition and quality of life.

This is a remixed framework for the generation and perception of ideas and creativity, a state of mind that characterizes the totality of our existence. Rather than a concept, it is a generative source – the place that concepts originate from, an ecology of ideas and creative harmony through an one of the earliest means of expression – **Wu**.



One of the basic teachings of the Buddha is that all things are caused and that nothing comes into being without a reason. Zen is a school of Mahayana Buddhism that places great importance on this awareness moment-by-moment. It is a new perspective in the idea of interdependent causation and relationships, taking the concept of Ubuntu in a radically different direction. While Ubuntu is about a person through the eyes of another person, and Zen focuses on the source of that experience and its relation to everything in the universe, they end up at the same destination: Both place emphasis on the belief in a universal bond that connects all humanity, and the overall improvement of the human condition.

Taoism and Buddhism (later Zen) were born in the same century. While Taoism is more of a philosophy and less of a religion as Buddhism is, both are founded on closely similar beliefs and complement each other in a manner that allows for practical and fluid transition from one to another. The term Tao itself means the way, the path, the rhythmic balance and natural flow of the universe, and the continuous cosmic process of harmonious motions and activity between the yin and the yang.

One of the doctrines of Zen and Taoism explores the concept of seeing Nothingness or Nonbeing, respectively, as a source or ultimate principle, a way of the universe that is beyond distinction and oppositions; While at the same time, recognizing its infinite capability as the creative function, a cosmogenic force dependent upon something else.

This is **Wu** – Nonbeing, the nameless, the no thing, no way. Nonbeing is more than the opposite of Being, it is prior to being, so it is the ultimate source of all things. It does not mean it is empty or devoid of everything. In fact, it means they are devoid of limitations but not devoid of definite characteristics.

Both the Taoist and Zen creativity comes from this structure. They are not dependent on understanding, knowledge, books or level of education. They have nothing to do with intelligence or cleverness, but about true nature. Their explanations are outside the domain of our acquired conditioning and learning, which frustrates the ego because we are composed with identifying or associating with something. In fact, unlike Western philosophy, which emphasizes individuality and specialization, the dissolution of the ego is very much a central focus, to clear the mind of unnecessary hindrances that we create for ourselves through barriers of habit, patterns, thought, activity, routines or routines that are in our comfort zone. The purpose of Taoism and Zen Buddhism is to inhabit creativity through disassociating with everything, because the inclination of being engrossed in subjective habits of thought and feeling is precisely what inhibits the mind from realization and ultimately, Eros.

“The Tao that can be spoken of is not the Tao itself.
The name that can be given is not the name itself.”
Lao Tzŭ (老子)
Tao Tê Ching



They don't interfere with change; they contemplate *what's so* and harmonize *what is* with *what could be*, creating and maintaining the balance between nature and the life. By learning to empty one's self through the elimination of all conscious striving, we become truly responsive to the flow of creativity.

And the Zen perspective on creativity is that all things in nature (creativity) are the workings of one mind - the universe. The belief is that when we arrive at a quietness still enough to mimic the silence of The Way, we get closer to it, become one with this force of nature, like a mirror reflection, that holds nothing but reflects everything. Our creativity, the way we learn, play, love, these expressions are the creative force of nature and the universe working itself out through human beings and our behavior.

This is where Taoism's Nonbeing most closely relates to Zen's Nothingness. Both try to return to the source of personhood. Before we can ask '*Can you hear me?*' we have to ask '*What am I?*'. And that is where we find our deepest sense of humanity. To understand the human self, the reason for our behavior, we must put effort into finding our mind. Just like we ask

What can the world be because I'm here?

We should also strive to ask

How can I be because the world is here?