



10 LEADERSHIP LESSONS from the TAO TE CHING

AN ANCIENT TEXT WITH A MODERN MESSAGE

KEN TABOR

If you want to know me,
look inside your heart.

POEM 70

Tao Te Ching
consists of **81** poems
written by **Lao-Tzu**
around 550 BC

TAO TE CHING ROUGHLY MEANS “THE BOOK OF THE WAY”

Think of the **Tao** as the
unnamable, essential, ideal form,
and process of all existence.

PLEASE DIG DEEPER - IT'S A HUGE CONCEPT

I have just three things to teach:
simplicity, patience, compassion.
These three are your greatest treasures.

POEM 67

wei wu wei
action without action

IT'S NOT A MATTER OF DOING NOTHING

How can we achieve a wholly
instinctive way of behaving?

WHERE WE CANNOT SEPARATE AN ACTOR FROM THE ACTION

1

**If you don't trust the people,
you make them untrustworthy.**

POEM 17

2

**Knowing others is intelligence;
knowing yourself is true wisdom.**

**Mastering others is strength;
mastering yourself is true power.**

POEM 33

3

**If you over esteem great men,
people become powerless.**

POEM 3

4

In thinking, keep to the simple.
In conflict, be fair and generous.
In governing, don't try to control.
In work, do what you enjoy.

POEM 8

5

**Those who know don't talk.
Those who talk don't know.**

POEM 56

6

**The Master leads
by emptying people's minds
and filling their cores**

POEM 3

7

When they think that they know the
answers,

people are difficult to guide.

When they know that they don't know,
people can find their own way.

POEM 65

8

The Master doesn't talk, he acts.

**When his work is done,
the people say, "Amazing:
we did it, all by ourselves!"**

POEM 17

9

The Master has no possessions.

**The more he does for others,
the happier he is.**

**The more he gives to others,
the wealthier he is.**

POEM 81

10

Care about people's approval
and you will be their prisoner.
Do your work, then step back.
The only path to serenity.

POEM 9

Tao Te Ching

Translations (C) 1988 by

Stephen Mitchell

Harper & Row, Publishers

Tao Te Ching

Written in Chinese

it must be **translated**

Written 25 centuries ago

it must be **interpreted**

In the form of poetry

it must be **expressed**

We shape clay into a pot,
but it is the emptiness inside
that holds whatever we want.

Stephen Mitchell

Hollowed out,
clay makes a pot.
Where the pot's not
is where it's useful.

Ursula K. Le Guin

One hollows the clay and shapes it into pots:
In its nothingness consists the pot's
effectiveness.

Richard Wilhelm and H.G. Ostwald

Shape clay into a vessel;
It is the space within that makes it useful.

Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English

4 TRANSLATIONS FOR THE SAME PASSAGE OF POEM 11

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