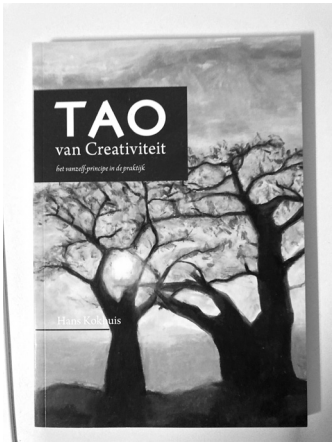
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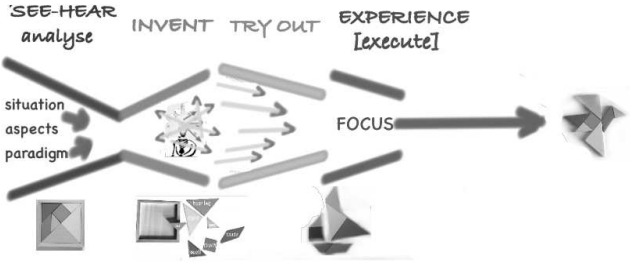
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Growing down & catharsis aka *SH-I-T-E*



Catharsis, the feeling of letting go and feeling relieved is one of the basics of a healthy life. For the creative process I use the anagram ***SH-I-T-E*** (more p.106). It came to me through a lecture by James Hillman. He explained the importance of the archetype 'trickster' (p. 6). It still amazes me how well catharsis explains one of the essential needs of *homo sapiens*. The evolution has shown that organisations have given life to new forms: *homo economicus*, *homo protocolus, homo proceduris, home algorithmicus*; [what more is there to come?] It is wise to look at the frames humans are lured & pushed in to comply with the most efficient models benefitting a few. The taoist approach will help to remain alert to the threats for creativity organisations often pose. For the past 100 years some have called organisations *the machine* [DHL, E.M. Forster, the Matrix, P. Kings-north …], today it is especially digital media that influence and …**?**… our lives. This book is a help to remain aware of your personal power. The point is made well in the story Krishnamurti told when he disbanded the theosophic society, who saw him as the new leader.

"You may remember the story of how the devil and a friend of his were walking down the street, when they saw ahead of them a man stoop down and pick up something from the ground, look at it, and put it away in his pocket. The friend said to the devil, "What did that man pick up?"

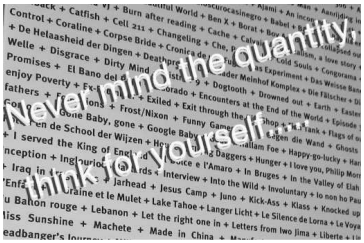
"He picked up a piece of truth," said the devil.

"That is very bad business for you, then," said his friend.

"Oh, not at all," the devil replied,

"**I am going to let him organise it**."

J. Krishnamurti





"banji jibun no tsuriai ga aru"

Any situation has its own balance

For my grandchildren and children

There is a lot of love in this world….
Go find it

'We have a commonality with all life.
Something is altered every time we deliberately injure
plant life or animal life.
We take life in order to live
but we must be willing to give up our lives
without resentment when it is our time.
We are so important and take ourselves so seriously
that we forget that the world is a great mystery
that will teach us if we listen.'

Carlos Castaneda

Unlocking the imagination

"Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind
Cannot bear very much reality.
Time past and time future
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present."
T.S. Eliot

We are born into time, so in a way ***we are time***. We create our own world and consider it natural. Engrossed in our own world we may forget that —for all of us— this is our time. In our *being* here today, each and every one unites *past and future*. It is this **present time** |*here and now*| that offers the opportunity to make this world a better place |*than I found it*.
While journeying though my life I am able to contribute to a better world. Every contribution, however small, counts. In a way my life can be the vehicle for change for the better. To aid me there is this one special instinct called ***creativity***. It holds the key to the treasure cove that is my imagination.
Creativity is the gift we receive with birth, it awaits our call to help give meaning to our endeavours and ventures. It is not always easy to heed its call, for it may come in an indirect, roundabout manner. It never forces itself upon you…Often it is **trickster,** the archetypal figure, revealing the flaws and weaknesses in my plans. It may seem to work against me by throwing a spanner into promising plans. Actually trickster does not trick, dupe or cheat, it really pulls the wool *from* one's eyes. Of course never cherished, yet it is the one honest voice that holds the warning to not unthinkingly follow some —well-trodden— 'safe' route.
When feeling absolutely certain, remind yourself of the jester or Murphy's law, the trickster. Learn to savour [yes really!?] the early warnings about bugs that might in a later stage upset the plan. Those run-ins should not be brushed aside, they are really the calls of the creative instinct. It is an invitation to look differently and find your blind spots. See them as an appeal to your courage to doubt, because nobody (even a tool as A.I.) is exempt from blind spots.
The idea is that I attend to my 'growing down'. The usual metaphor is growing up, but a tree needs good roots, and that's ***down*** (p.106).

For me the **Tao Teh Ch'ing** was a great help. While reading it came the idea to sit still and ponder on the meaning of the words. [At the time I had started the study of **chado** and practiced 'sitting', which sounds easier than it is]
In a way I think that by *just* sitting and letting the words sink in, new ideas got a chance spring up. The stillness somehow helped to open the eye of my soul. To comprehend the meaning took time. By taking the message with me in daily activity—*somewhere at the back of my mind*— the patterns behind actions tended to emerge. It is reflection that transforms actions into experiences, and *given time*, these may connect to soul. I have come to believe that soul-making gives meaning [and love] to life. We learn and grow from *reflecting on* experience.
To fully use our creative instinct we should not consider the ideas in the light of their practical usefulness only. Keep in mind: it is ideas that give meaning, enlighten and influence our perception and outlook. I look at the world *through ideas/theories* (i.e. filters) that make me see and practice what I think is right. Ideas direct our actions and the theories we imagine. So perhaps we should not make a rigorous distinction between theory and practice, ***my*** *practice is based on* ***my*** *theories* – theory therefore becomes practice.

—*'Life is the vale of soul-making.'* John Keats

Picking up a brush and finding words for my ideas unlocked my imagination and expanded my vision. The result has been this personal **DAO**: creACTivate in the mood of **wu wei** ***(p. 102)*** In no way it is a prescription or formula to follow step by step. Rather let it be inspiration to tickle your creative instinct. Some of the images expressed may awaken and stir up new ideas. Others may not be for you.
Reflecting on the ideas will be food for your imagination, and open a connection to your soul. Hopefully it is a wind that arouses your inner resources. Associating uncritically with the upcoming ideas will set your imagination going. You will see events and experiences in a new light, and enter a fascinating world with unforeseen opportunities and prospects. Hopefully this may help to fulfil the promise of your talent.
I wish you a soulful journey.

Hans Kokhuis, Eindhoven, November 2026

TAOISM AND CREATIVITY

The earliest known Taoist text seems to be the **I Ch'ing**, the *Book of Changes*. The **I Ch'ing** writings have the outward form of oracles. After the **I Ch'ing**, the most famous and popular of Taoist classics is no doubt the **Dao Te Ch'ing**. This text was compiled and recorded at a time of great conflict, and not surprisingly, much of the advice is presented to rulers. The reputed recorder of it is **Lao-Tzu**. Together with the writings of **Zhuang Tzu** it offers plentiful inspiration.

For Taoists the present is the moving infinity, it is the place of the Relative. Relativity seeks adjustment; adjustment is art. The art of life lies in the constant readjustment to our surroundings.

Taoism accepts the mundane as it is and, unlike Confucians and Buddhists, tries to find beauty in our world of woe and sorrow.

The Sung allegory of the *Three Vinegar Tasters* explains the basic idea of the three doctrines to the point. **Buddha**, **Confucius** and **Lao-Tzu** once stood before a jar of vinegar —the symbol of life— and each dipped in his fingers to taste the brew. And as the story says: ***Confucius found it sour, the Buddha called it bitter, and Lao-Tzu pronounced it sweet.***



"From the Taoist point of view, sourness and bitterness come from the interfering and unappreciative mind. Life itself, when understood and utilised for what it is, is sweet. That is the message of The Vinegar Tasters.
— Benjamin Hoff, The Tao of Pooh



The Taoists claimed that the *comedy of life* would be more interesting if everyone would preserve the unities, the balance. Modesty and allowing space to others without losing one's own position is the secret of a successful life.

In ethics the Taoists did not just accept traditional laws and moral codes of society, for them right and wrong were but relative terms, and subject to change. Many of our standards of morality are based on the needs of society in the past, but society does not remain the same. Observance of tradition involves a constant sacrifice of the individual to the state [seems little has changed in 2500 years]

Well demonstrated by their idea about traditional education: '*Education*,' they said, '*in order to keep up the big illusion, encourages a form of ignorance*.'

Seen in this light many of our anxieties are the result of our frightful self-consciousness. And consequently we find it hard to forgive others because *we know that we ourselves are in the wrong*. We seek refuge in pride because *we are afraid to accept the truth about ourselves*. Creativity can ***—and will—*** flourish when we accept all our peculiarities and drop all pretence and faking.
Only then we can tap our creative source. A source that is fantasy (in the child) and may develop into (mature) *imagination.* An imagination that *thrives* by carefully and attentively opening to the environment. The creative instinct prospers when this connection is made with an open and associative mind, so-called **wu wei ,mu shin** and **sho shin** (see pp. 100/4)
Lao-Tzu illustrates this by his metaphor of the vacuum. He claimed that only in vacuum lay the truly essential. The reality of a room, for instance, is to be found in the vacant space enclosed by the roof and walls, not in the roof and walls themselves. Of course it is the door and window that complete the picture. Just as the teacup is most useful when it is empty.
When an individual creates an emptiness within herself, creativity will find a way to fill it. As physicists tell us the universe started with a big bang. The motion and sounds of this big bang fill the emptiness and make the universe expand, grow bigger and bigger. This big bang, the Taoists say, is **dao**, the motion that makes everything move or grow.

The nature of the **dao** *is empty and yet useful.*
Somehow it never fills up. So profound!
It resembles the source of All Things.
Lao-Tzu

Hindsight can be a great teacher



Table of contents

Growing down & catharsis SH-I-T-E 3
Unlocking the imagination 6
DAO, the way of change 7
TAOISM and CREATIVITY 8
1 the beginning of creativity 14
2 the way of creativity 15
3 using a crisis 16
4 unwrapping creativity 17
5 holding to the centre 18
6 appreciating the subtle 19
7 perseverance 20
8 stagnation 21
9 overcoming stiffness 22
10 inner harmony 23
11 using what is not 24
12 using the senses 25
13 the little voice 26
14 the essence of **dao** 27
15 one's own change 28
16 creative growth 29
17 conscious creativity 30
18 true nature 31
19 returning to simplicity 32
20 developing independence 33
21 when less inspires 34
22 sharing abundance 35
23 the power of moving focus 36
24 enthusiasm 37
25 making the most of limitations 38
26 the power of subtlety 39
27 our place in time 40
28 uniting the forces 41
29 creating by non-interference 42
30 leading creativity 43
31 the use of violence 44
32 boundaries of specialisation 45
33 **no-mind**[1] as guide 46
34 the evolving **dao** 47
35 sensing the imperceptible 48
36 welcoming the change 49
37 the power of desirelessness 50
38 natural power 51
39 oneness in divergence 52
40 nature of creativity in **dao** 53
41 overcoming the paradox 54
42 wandering mind 55
43 subtle forces 56
44 the power in needing less 57
45 using emptiness 58
46 perfection of good enough 59
47 cultivating one's intuition 60
48 the art of effortless action 61
49 keeping an open mind 62
50 moving the protective shield 63
51 the power of respect 64
52 returning to impartial insight 65
53 the undivided path 66
54 integral vision on connectivity 67
55 the power in not competing 68
56 attaining oneness 69
57 less effort, more power 70
58 refining the perception 71
59 power in moderation 72
60 maintaining one's position 73
61 the power in temperance 74
62 the **dao** in creativity 75
63 creativity as lifeline 76
64 the power at the beginning 77
65 how more means worse 78

[1] *No mind* — [**mu shin**] 'doing what is natural'—'act without having to think about it'

66 the power in humility 79
67 the power in compassion 80
68 soft power | only imagine 81
69 trust prevails on force 82
70 living the everyday **dao** 83
71 ending procrastination 84
72 mindlessness vs P-O-E-T 85
73 the power in allowing doubt 86
74 the fitting perspective 87
75 self defeating creativity 88
76 creativity follows flexibility 89
77 steering creativity 90
78 being like water 91
79 using obstacles as teacher 92
80 achieving independence 93
81 satisfaction in going my way 94
Listen to the Lion 95
Outtroduction 99
DAO and **ZEN** 100
Intelligence:Artificial &otherwise 101
WU WEI, MU SHIN, SHO SHIN 102
Other publications on creativity 104
Wordles 105 & 107
Quick-view of SH-I-T-E process 106

