



## Daoism Quotes

The debatable issue for this project is:

**By which ancient Chinese philosophy should people today be more influenced,  
Confucianism or Daoism?**

These quotations highlighting many of the beliefs of Taoism come from the *Tao Te Ching*, attributed to Lao Tzu from the late fourth century, BCE.

What should be abolished must first be cherished. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 36](#)]

What should be deprived must first be enriched. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 36](#)]

Misery is what happiness rests upon. Happiness is what misery lurks beneath. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 58](#)]

When everyone in the world sees beauty, then ugly exists. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 2](#)]

What is and what is not create each other. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 2](#)]

The highest virtue is not virtuous. Therefore it has virtue. The lowest virtue holds on to virtue. Therefore it has no virtue. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 38](#)]

The purest white seems stained. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 41](#)]

Thirty spokes are joined in the wheel's hub. The hole in the middle makes it useful. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 11](#)]

Mold clay into a bowl. The empty space makes it useful. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 11](#)]

Cut out doors and windows for the house. The holes make it useful. [[Tao Te Ching chapter 11](#)]

The value comes from what is there, but the use comes from what is not there. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 11\]](#)

Man is ruled by Earth. Earth is ruled by Heaven. Heaven is ruled by the Way. The Way is ruled by itself. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 25\]](#)

What the Way is to the world, the stream is to the river and the sea. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 32\]](#)

Conquering the world and changing it, I do not think it can succeed. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 29\]](#)

The world is a sacred vessel that cannot be changed. He who changes it will destroy it. He who seizes it will lose it. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 29\]](#)

The sage never strives for greatness, and can therefore accomplish greatness. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 63\]](#)

By moderation one can be generous. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 67\]](#)

Because he (the Sage) demands no honor, he will never be dishonored. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 2\]](#)

Not praising the deserving prevents envy. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 3\]](#)

He (the Sage) does not show off, therefore he shines. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 22\]](#)

Those who stay where they are will endure. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 33\]](#)

Without stepping out the door, you can know the world. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 47\]](#)

The sage puts himself last and becomes the first. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 7\]](#)

Supreme good is like water. Water greatly benefits all things, without conflict. It flows through places that people loathe.

Thereby it is close to the Way. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 8\]](#)

The highest virtue does nothing. Yet, nothing needs to be done. The lowest virtue does everything. Yet, much remains to be done. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 38\]](#)

Battles are followed by years of famine. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 30\]](#)

Weapons are ominous tools. They are abhorred by all creatures. Anyone who follows the Way shuns them. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 31\]](#)

Weapons are ominous tools. They are not the noble ruler's tools. He only uses them when he can't avoid it. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 31\]](#)

Peace and quiet are preferred. Victory should not be praised. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 31\]](#)

Those who praise victory relish manslaughter. Those who relish manslaughter cannot reach their goals in the world. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 31\]](#)

Those who defeat others are strong, those who defeat themselves are mighty. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 33\]](#)

The more restrictions and prohibitions there are, the poorer the people will be. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 57\]](#)

The more sharp weapons people have in a country, the bigger the disorder will be. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 57\]](#)

The more laws and commands there are, the more thieves and robbers there will be. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 57\]](#)

The Way is hidden and nameless. Still only the Way nourishes and completes. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 41\]](#)

It (Tao) is eternally without desire. So, it can be called small. All things return to it, although it does not make itself their ruler. So, it can be called great. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 34\]](#)

Words spoken about the Way have no taste. When looked at, there's not enough to see. When listened to, there's not enough to hear. When used, it is never exhausted. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 35\]](#)

Those who seek knowledge, collect something every day. Those who seek the Way, let go of something every day. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 48\]](#)

The superior student listens to the Way and follows it closely. The average student listens to the Way and follows some and some not. The lesser student listens to the Way and laughs out loud. If there were no laughter it would not be the Way. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 41\]](#)

The one who does not honor the teacher and the one who does not honor the task, although ever so knowledgeable, they are confused. [\[Tao Te Ching chapter 27\]](#)