



The Tao of Pooh

Description

default watermark



A friend of mine shared the book [The Tao of Pooh](#) by Benjamin Hoff with me right before the holidays. I had heard of the title, but didn't really know much about Taoism (more like I forgot what I learned in Philosophy 101), but I do know about Winnie-the-Pooh. He is a favorite character of mine and both of my children's nurseries were decorated in the Classic Pooh theme. I read this book in about two days which is fast for me. I feel it has a lot of great principles to share, and I will do my best to give you an overview of it. Author, Benjamin Hoff explains the principles of Taoism through Winnie-the-Pooh and the other characters of the Hundred Acre Wood. Lao-tse, author of the oldest existing book of Taoism has many teachings. [The Tao of Pooh](#) focuses on appreciating, learning from and working with whatever happens in everyday life. From the Taoist point of view, the natural result of this harmonious way of living is happiness.

One of the basic principles of Taoism is the Uncarved Block. Things in their original simplicity contain their own natural power, power that is easily spoiled and lost when the simplicity is changed.

Winnie-the-Pooh is the poster child of the uncarved block and may seem a little too simple at times. He is simple and pure of heart.

I most identify with **Rabbit** who seems to have a lot of chatter going on in his head and tries to be clever. The mind that follows the nature of things instead of trying to devise ways to make things work where they don't belong gets things done. When you work with what is, you don't think about it, you just do it which is more like Pooh. "The surest way to become tense, awkward and confused is to develop a mind that tries too hard- one that thinks too much. The animals in the forest don't think too much; they just are." I tend to think more than I do. Maybe I need to spend some time in the forest.

Owl studies knowledge for the sake of knowledge and doesn't really have much first hand experience. "Sometimes the knowledge of the scholar is a bit hard to understand because it doesn't seem to match up with our own experience of things." Knowledge that comes from experience is more valuable.

Tigger thinks he can do everything and tends to ignore his limitations. "Once you face and understand your limitations, you can work with them, instead of having them work against you and get in your way. In many cases your limitations can be your strengths." **Piglet** on the other hand knows his limitations and can be very afraid at times. There are times though that the limitation of being small makes him more brave than one would expect from him.

Eeyore is full of gloom and doom. I can display some Eeyore tendencies from time to time. Eeyore seeks knowledge for the sake of complaining about it. His attitude gets in the way of enjoying life and gaining wisdom.

There are so many great quotes and lessons in *The Tao of Pooh*. You can read more about it [here](#). If I were to write them all I'd be bordering on plagiarism. I'll end with this bit of wisdom. "Inner nature, when relied on, cannot be fooled. The way of self-reliance starts with recognizing who we are, what we've got to work with, and what works best for us. The wise are who they are. They work with what they've got and do what they can do." I had no idea all these lessons could be found in A.A. Milnes tales of Winnie-the-Pooh. I think I'll break out my old VHS tapes and re-watch a few shows. This time around I'll be watching it with new eyes.

Date Created

2013/01/24

Author

queenie