

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

Lao Tzu's Poetic, Philosophical Treatise

# Tao Te Ching

Volume 6 of 14 (*Chapters 31-36*)

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Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tao Te Ching*  
*chapter Thirty-one*

*(31: 1)*

Weapons are  
the tools of violence;  
all decent men  
detest them.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tools of violence*

*When attending an air show, and  
stumbling upon complex war machines such as  
tanks, helicopters or jets, it's  
easy to fall into fascination's thrall.*

*These are engineering marvels and  
besides they're really cool.*

*That is until we remember that they're  
instruments of murder as well as mayhem and  
have helped cause untold suffering.  
Why this contradiction?*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Perhaps it's the nature of our triune brain. The creative and analytical nature of our pre-frontal cortex is arguably morally ambiguous and simply loves anything new, sparkly, strong and fast.*

*It is the mechanisms of our brain stem that can get pretty ruthless in the name of self-preservation (which should not be confused with strawberry preserves, because*

*although those are delicious, they are completely different); and when our brain stem and pre-frontal cortex team up, we (as a species) can do some pretty horrible things.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Our limbic system, on the other hand, contains (amongst other things) our empathy center that*

*would rather apply the cleverness of our pre-frontal cortex to cooperation, compassion and overall sustainability.*

*In the latter chapters of the book “Cosmos” Carl Sagan explored how the components of our triune brain evolved haphazardly and interdependently their three influences could*

*always make their presence felt, except in the presence of sever defect, trauma, or conditioning (we’re looking at you, psychopathy and sociopathy).*

*(31: 2)*

Weapons are  
the tools of fear;  
a decent man  
will avoid them...

except in the direst necessity  
and, if compelled,  
will use them  
only with the utmost restraint.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tools of fear*

*Fear is typically a painful emotion and often employed manipulatively and coercively by members of yang's patriarchy.*

*History tells us that when the leaders of the inquisition wished to stop Galileo Galilei from teaching in favor of Copernicus' model of the heliocentric (or sun centered) universe they*

*forcibly removed him from his home, took him to their dungeons and showed him their instruments of torture, inferring that*

*they would be used on him if he did not recant his "heretical" views.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*It is interesting to note that the earth centered view is not really a major point of Christ's Gospel, it's just that the inquisition, like all other forms of*

*Yang's patriarchy really enjoyed controlling folks' behavior, communication and even their thoughts; for dominance is a prevailing drive of yang.*

*It could be argued that advancing the frontier of science could be integral to the survival of our species, but*

*the dark and twisted drives of yang's patriarchy favors short term, petty tyranny over long term survival, no less well-being.*

*Perhaps that is why the Tao Te Ching warns against the path of yang, in favor of the path of yin.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*(31: 3)*

Peace is his highest value.

If the peace has been shattered,  
how can he be content?

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*His*

*Yes, most cultures and languages favor a patriarchal world view but it is important to note that the translator or this version of*

*the Tao Te Ching attempted to remedy that by alternating the sages' pronouns every other chapter.*

*So in one chapter the sage could be referred to as he, and in the next chapter, as a she.*

*Although this is neither perfect, nor does it right all the wrongs of female oppression it seems to be a good-hearted step in the right direction.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Content*

*Unlike 1982's "Conan the Barbarian" who insisted that the meaning of life could be found in*

*"...crush your enemies,  
see them driven before you, and  
to hear the lamentations of their women."*

*For a sage of the Tao, this  
is NOT a source of contentment.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*(31: 4)*

His enemies  
are NOT demons,  
but human beings  
like himself.

*(31: 5)*

He does NOT  
wish them personal harm.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Not demons*

*When exploring the intersection of sociology, economics and public health it becomes evident that free will is an illusion and that all of us are more subject the momentum of*

*circumstance and conditioning than we're comfortable admitting.*

*In view of this it becomes easier to generate compassion towards even the most dangerous of individuals treating them more*

*as if they had a virulent infection and less like Satan himself.*

*I therefor recommend reading the Neuro Scientist, Sam Harris' "Free Will."*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*(31: 6)*

Nor does he  
rejoice in victory.

*(31: 7)*

How could he  
rejoice in victory  
and delight  
in the slaughter of others?

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Slaughter*

*Just as it would seem foolish to  
punish someone for contracting a  
virulent infection, it could seem prudent to  
medically isolate them, thus*

*protecting society while  
nursing them to health.*

*Likewise the sage of the Tao rejoices not  
in the defeat of patriarchy's minions, but  
in their continued evolution toward the path of yin.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*(31: 8)*

He enters a battle gravely,  
with sorrow...

and with great compassion,  
as if he  
were attending  
a funeral.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Enters a battle gravely*

*In moments of personal or collective self-defense the  
sage of the Tao is not given to  
the fever of blood lust but,*

*as always, acts vulnerably, non-conceptually, and  
acquiescently from a place of centered spontaneity.*

*One is not born a sage, it  
is the fruit of consistent training upon  
the path of awareness and acquiescence.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tao Te Ching*  
*chapter Thirty-two*

(32: 1)

The Tao can NOT be perceived,  
smaller than an electron  
it contains  
uncountable galaxies.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Electron, contains, galaxies*

*We've heard the term quantum leap.  
It means a very small change with  
very big and far reaching consequences.*

*Like wise the vulnerability, non-conceptuality, passiveness,  
patience, compassion, awareness, acquiescence and  
centered spontaneity of yin's path of Tao is  
also quite subtle but with huge consequences like*

*global: sustainability, cooperation,  
empathy, generosity, innovation,  
peace, happiness and fulfillment.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(32: 2)

If powerful men and women  
could remain...

centered in the Tao  
all things  
would be in harmony.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Pax Romana*

*Pax Romana was a policy of enforcing the superficial appearance of peace at the point of a sword.*

*In other words, act peacefully or Rome is going to get you.*

*This superficial contrivance might make perfect sense from the anti-Tao perspective of Yang's path.*

*Of course the Tao perspective of the Yin path teaches that world peace begins on the inside of individuals.*

(32: 3)

The world  
would become a paradise.

(32: 4)

All people  
would be at peace,  
and the law  
would be written in their hearts.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*In their hearts*

*When people's seemingly deceit behavior is motivated by fear of punishment, that is not true ethics, but merely a pale, superficial analog.*

*True decency comes neither from fear of punishment nor desire for reward but is the natural momentum of empathy.*

*This spontaneous compassion is its own reward for it seeks no reward and is the fruit of the Tao's path of yin.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(32: 5)

**When you have  
names and forms,  
know that they  
are provisional.**

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Names and forms*

*Just as it is silly to confuse a paper map of the United States, with the actual country, likewise it's pretty lame to confuse an object, being or circumstance with the label we adhere to it.*

*A clear illustration of this is found in the dystopian novel "1984" where the ministry of peace wages war and the ministry of love practices torture, brain washing and murder.*

*Or in our reality where monopoly is labeled free market, those who exploit others, rape the environment and out-source manufacture are called "Job creators" and...*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*those who suffer from unfortunate external conditions or physical maladies are maligned with the label “Takers.”*

*After all, if during our morning walk we happened upon a heaping pile of dog doo, wouldn't it be silly to whip out a three by five card, scribble the word “chocolate” upon it, and gingerly place the*

*card upon the droppings, thinking that had somehow changed the scent, no less, nature of the substance.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(32: 6)

**When you have institutions,  
know where  
their functions should end.**

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Should end*

*All healthy, sentient beings crave life and happiness.*

*No cow wants to be a hamburger, no*

*chicken wants to be a barbeque, no*

*pig wants to be a sausage, and no fish wants to be dinner.*

*Likewise institutions and organizations can*

*sometimes seem to take on a life of their*

*own, striving to increasing in size, importance and*

*power, performing tasks they're not qualified to perform and generally out living their usefulness.*

*This institutional behavior is like a greed dog, who*

*doesn't know when to stop eating, and*

*so continues to consume until*

*his stomach bursts, and he dies.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*It is taught that Lao Tzu, the author of the Tao Te Ching, spent the majority of his adult life working with China's imperial bureaucracy, so*

*it sounds like, in this passage,  
he was writing from his vocational experience.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(32: 7)

**Knowing when to stop,  
you can avoid any danger.**

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*knowing when to stop*

*How could we know when to stop any behavior? By habitually practicing the centered spontaneity of flowing with yin's Tao.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(32: 8)

All things end in the Tao  
as rivers flow into the sea.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*All things end*

*All organisms eventually die, and when they do, they decompose. This decomposition process is a great example of passive acquiescence.*

*If some form of passive acquiescence is inevitable it is not a question of if we yield to the Tao but, when.*

*We are advised to start yielding yesterday, and if not then, then at least today. Perhaps that is why in the fourth sentence of the twenty-fifth chapter of the Tao Te Ching it is written*

*“If you want to be reborn,  
let yourself die.”*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Notice this is not written in the active voice, but in the passive one; we are NOT told to actively kill ourselves BUT to passively let ourselves die.*

*Now, quick, hurry, practice the centered spontaneity of awareness and acquiescence.*

*Tao Te Ching*  
*chapter Thirty-three*

(33: 1)

Knowing others  
is intelligence;  
knowing yourself  
is true wisdom.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Silence of the Lambs*

*The is a scene in the movie where Clarisse was trying to coerce Hannibal into filling out a psychiatric questionnaire with the words:*

*“...you see a lot doctor,  
but are you strong enough to  
point that high powered perception at  
yourself?”*

*What about it? Why don't you  
look at yourself and  
write down what you see? Maybe  
you're afraid to. ”*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*I suspect the answer was no, for he busied himself for the rest of the evening by manipulating Meeks, the prisoner in the cell to his right, to kill himself by swallowing his own tongue.*

*Are we braver than Hannibal Lector? Do we have the courage to vulnerably, non-conceptually and passively sit in awareness and acquiescence?*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(33: 2)

Mastering others  
is strength;  
mastering yourself  
is true power.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Others or self*

*There are many steps from  
Yang's ANTI-tao of patriarchy to  
Yin's Tao of matriarchy.*

*As we've previously explored control, and  
domination are hallmarks of yang.*

*Perhaps the first few steps in  
moving from yang to yin is  
shifting the subject of our controlling tendencies from  
others to ourselves.*

*But remember the key to yin lays in  
releasing all efforts to control anyone,  
even ourselves.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*But if we do that, what's  
to stop us from being a puppet to  
our every dark impulse?*

*The awareness and acquiescence that  
feed our centered spontaneity.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(33: 3)

If you realize  
that you have enough,  
you are truly rich.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*enough*

*In our capitalistic culture we can observe that those on the precipice of homelessness, hunger and exposure can act as if keenly motivated to stave off all facets of destitution.*

*We can see that as they approach a sort of survival equilibrium their actions can lose many of their manic attributes.*

*But sometimes that fear of lack transforms into a longing for more.*

*A longing that cannot be sated like a hungry dog who, given the chance could eat until its stomach bursts and it dies.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Yang appeals to our fear of lack and  
our craving for more, whereas  
yin ceases to strive and  
relaxes into the flow state of centered spontaneity.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(33: 4)

If you stay in the center  
and embrace death  
with your whole heart,  
you will endure forever.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Endure forever*

*In our interdependent and ever changing physical bodies of flesh, blood and bone will most assuredly die.*

*So how are we to live forever? By ceasing to identify with this brain, this body, or this circumstance and instead...*

*become as one with this community, this nation, this continent, this world, this solar system, this galaxy, this local group, this universe, the multiverse itself, in its entirety.*

*Lovely thoughts, but how do we actualize them? Read on.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Stay in the CENTER and EMBRACE death*

*We stay in the center when we have so mastered the passive awareness of our mindfulness that we practice it spontaneously, habitually, easily and effectively.*

*Embracing death is a visceral and perhaps disturbing metaphor for yielding, surrendered acquiescence.*

*Let us imagine a tree upon the shore of a tropical lagoon, and that we are hanging from one of its branches, over the warm, welcoming waters.*

*It is the formal, consistent and regular practice of awareness and acquiescence that help us release our grip upon the branches of fear, greed, and self-identity, fall into the infinite ocean of universal compassion and dissolve*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tao Te Ching*  
*chapter Thirty-four*

*(34:1)*

The great Tao  
flows everywhere.



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*everywhere*

*The Tao is not a sentient being, no less a finite resource but merely the means by which any entity can enter the flow state.*

*Therefore it is available to all beings everywhere and it as close as mounting awareness upon one's inhalation and acquiescence upon one's exhalation.*

*The more these physical and mental acts become spontaneous and uncontrived the more we'll viscerally master the flow state of the Tao.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(34:2)

All things  
are born from it,  
yet it  
does NOT create them.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Does not create them*

*Yes it could be said that  
the entire universe, as we know it, was  
created by the effortless and uncontrived acquiescence of  
all matter to...*

*gravity's, electromagnetisms', strong nuclear force's and  
weak nuclear force's four universal forces;  
but it could be a mistake not only to  
anthropomorphize the acquiescence of the Tao by...*

*generally attributing human attributes to it but  
it's even more of an error to attribute the  
specific factors of intention, agenda, and effort.  
Why is that letter so dangerous?*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Because intention, agenda and effort are attributes of yang, which is the anti-tao.*

*At university, first year psychology students are taught there are two flavors of motivation: extrinsic or external and intrinsic or internal.*

*For example, cleaning the dishes so as to not annoy one's domestic partner or*

*cleaning the dishes because doing so delights, and pleases one as well as contributes to one's sense of order.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*But what if there was a third set of motivation, atrinsic or no motivation?*

*According to the Tao Te Ching, acting from centered spontaneity, with OUT any: intention, effort or agenda is not only the...*

*key to serenity but also the means by which we can have the greatest beneficial effect upon the world around us.*

*For instance, Lao Tzu wrote these eighty-one concise chapters more than twenty-five centuries ago, and they're still...*

*influencing the thoughts of those who seek greater peace, happiness and fulfillment.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(34:3)

It pours itself  
into its work,  
yet it makes  
NO claim.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Pours... makes no claim*

*The subtext infers that  
even though when we act from  
centered spontaneity we do so with  
complete abandon, and no thought of self preservation, we...*

*also do so without any sense of  
greed for: credit, fame, profit or prestige.  
For what if flowing with the Tao was  
its own reward?*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(34:4)

It nourishes  
infinite worlds,  
yet it does **NOT**  
hold on to them.



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Nourishes without holding*

*Let's recall that the three treasures of the Tao are:  
simplicity, patience and compassion.*

*When our compassion is seasoned with acquiescence we  
are able to act for the benefit others with OUT  
being actively attached to either the outcomes of our actions or  
the recipients of our actions.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(34:5)

Since it is merged  
with all things  
and hidden in  
their hearts...

it can be called  
humble.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Hidden in their hearts*

*The potential to practice awareness and acquiescence and as such flow from a place of centered spontaneity is latent within the mind of every sentient being;*

*existing first in potentiality before it is ever actualized through our choices and action.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(34:6)

Since all things  
vanish into it  
and it alone  
endures...

it can be called  
great.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*All things vanish into it*

*Although all of us can resist acquiescence on some level, since dying and decomposition are the ultimate acts of yielding, it could be said that surrender; mental or physical, deliberate or inadvertent, is inevitable.*

*I'm re minded of the commercial aired in 1972 for Fram oil filters where the auto mechanic says " ...the choice is yours you can pay me now or you can pay me later. "*

*Likewise, in the grand scheme of time, from the geological, no less cosmological, point of view, all beings yield, it's simply a matter of time.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*The sooner we do so, from  
a place of centered spontaneity and...*

*make a habit of it, the sooner we'll be more:  
peaceful, happy and of greater beneficial to  
the world around us.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(34:7)

It is **NOT** aware  
of its greatness;  
thus it is truly great.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*NOT aware*

*Although the journey from yang to yin starts with a decision, the completion of the process of transcending yang's conditioning could take a while.*

*For instance our yin training in meditation's awareness and acquiescence could cause us to non-conceptually flow in centered spontaneity.*

*Our passive mindfulness could notice what's going on and then our yang tendency for over-analysis could kick in and we could find ourselves, narrating our...*

*experience, our achievement as well as the means by which we accomplished it and could improve upon it.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*This error will occur,  
it's par for the course.*

*Don't beat yourself up,  
for simply noticing the folly of yang is  
integral to passively evolving beyond it.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tao Te Ching*  
*chapter Thirty-five*

(35: 1)

She who is **centered**  
in the Tao  
can go where she wishes,  
without danger.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Without danger*

*One of the benefits of cultivating centered spontaneity is that it can enhance one's experience of safety, although...*

*it is VERY important not to confuse the centered spontaneity that comes from yin's passive mindfulness with...*

*the neurotic grasping that comes from yang's active concentration.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(35: 2)

She perceives  
the universal harmony,  
even amid  
great pain...

because she has found  
peace in her heart.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*The universal harmony*

*In the history of science we recognize that there were radio waves long before people had the technology to perceive them.*

*Any student of surfing can tell you that it's not a question of if a suitable wave will come, but whether one is skillful enough to catch it and ride it.*

*Likewise the author of the Tao Te Ching infers that universal harmony already exists, it is merely a question of whether or not we have plugged into it, no less perceived it.*

*It bears mentioning that key to cultivating the inward peace that helps us tune into the outward peace is the consistent practice of awareness and acquiescence.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(35: 3)

**Music**

or the smell of good cooking  
may make people  
stop and enjoy.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*(35: 4)*

**But words  
that point to the Tao  
seem monotonous  
and without flavor.**

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Music and the smell of good cooking*

*In the latter chapters of “Cosmos”  
Carl Sagan mentioned the triune brain of  
R-complex, Limbic system and Prefrontal cortex.*

*Music and the smell of good cooking could  
have a powerful, visceral, pre-cognitive effect upon  
the mechanisms of our brain stem’s R-complex.*

*In contrast, it can find very little attractive or  
enticing about words that point to the Tao.*

*However the emotional Limbic system and  
the analytical Prefrontal cortex can  
find the words that point to the Tao to  
be compelling and interesting.*



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*It could therefore be helpful to practice the passive mindfulness that can discern our instinctual, emotional and analytical mindsets.*

*Let us traverse the middle path between repressing our instincts and indulging their every whim, as if it was a spoiled child.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(35: 5)

When you look for it,  
there is nothing to see.

(35: 6)

When you listen for it,  
there is nothing to hear.

(35: 7)

When you use it,  
it is inexhaustible.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Active folly*

*Congratulations you've  
decided to master the Tao.  
Now that you've set your goal, how  
will you accomplish it?*

*Actively straining and striving to  
perceive the Tao reminds me of  
Reverend Alan's wife who strove to...*

*get a cat out from under the couch by  
screaming at it and striving to  
pry it out with a broom handle.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*After his wife had given up in frustration, Alan walked calmly into the kitchen and used the electric can opener to open a can of the cat's favorite food.*

*Moments later the cat left its hiding place beneath the couch and enthusiastically entered the kitchen of its own accord.*

*Just as we cannot force a cat to do what it does not want to, neither can we force our brain stem's R-complex to take interest in the Tao. But...*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*just as we can entice a cat to  
leave its hiding place with  
the promise of food, we can...*

*entice our instinctual nature to  
take interest in the Tao if  
our regular practice of awareness and acquiescence proves  
to be sufficiently pleasurable.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Tao Te Ching*  
*chapter Thirty-six*

*(36:1)*

If you want  
to shrink something,  
you must first  
allow it to expand.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Allow it*

*The question is NOT if  
there are things we want to do, BUT  
rather what we'll do with that impulse.*

*When we want to  
shrink something,  
get rid of something, or  
take something do...*

*we act from yang or yin,  
patriarchy or matriarchy,  
ego or no self,  
pride or love...*

*do we MAKE something happen or  
LET something happen?*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(36:2)

If you want  
to get rid of something,  
you must first  
allow it to flourish.



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Expand, Flourish*

*Clearly expanding is the opposite of shrinking and flourishing is the opposite of something being gotten rid of.*

*One of the benefits of this strategy is that we are rebelling against the tyranny of impulsiveness.*

*There is great freedom in recognizing a problem, as well as our impulse concerning it and merely choosing to: “see how this plays out.”*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*For it can be useful to  
give ourselves breathing room between  
scattered impulsiveness and  
centered spontaneity.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(36:3)

If you want  
to take something,  
you must first  
allow it to be given.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*first*

*Yes it can feel unbearable to  
allow rather than act, but  
it could be helpful to remember that  
in the larger scheme of things our...*

*life's purpose is NOT to  
satisfy every impulse of greed or aversion BUT  
to master the Tao's path that...*

*all beings may benefit from  
the momentum of  
our awareness and acquiescence.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(36:4)

This is called  
the subtle perception  
of the way things are.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*The way things are*

*How are things?*

*In our skull we have a triune brain.*

*At its stem is the seat of the  
petulant, selfish anti-tao.*

*In its mid-brain is the center for  
both compassion and cooperation that  
is integral to our mastery of the tao.*

*How are things? We have a choice to  
play the short game of fleeting benefiting for  
ourselves by indulging our reptilian impulses or...*

*the long game of enjoying the deep and  
meaningful benefit of traversing the path of  
matriarchy for the benefit of all.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*How are things?*

*We can choose one, or  
the other but not both, for  
they are mutually exclusive.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(36:5)

The soft  
overcomes the hard.

(36:6)

The slow  
overcomes the fast.



Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*Soft and slow versus hard and fast*

*Although this could describe the difference between intimate love making and recreational, anonymous fucking, in...*

*a larger sense it's reminding us that regardless of the protests of our brain stem, the path of no-self is much more beneficial than the path of selfishness.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

(36:7)

Let your working  
remain a mystery.

(36:8)

Just show people  
the results.

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*A mystery*

*An individual may spend  
months, years or even  
decades perfecting a skill.*

*And with the best of intentions they might  
actively chase down would be students and  
verbally assail them with...*

*the benefits and methods of their system.  
That is the folly of yang.*

Commentary – of Volume 6 (chapters 31 - 36)

*If that same individual passively allowed  
the fruits of his skill set to  
speak for themselves then...*

*good hearted, would-be apprentices and  
journeymen would seek him out.*

*Or to put it more concisely, in  
the words of the American existentialist Ralph Waldo Emerson:*

*“Build a better mouse trap and  
the world will beat a path to your door.”*