

Tao in Ten: Easy Lessons for Spiritual Growth

By Annellen Simpkins, Ph.D. & C.
Alexander Simpkins, Ph.D.

Tuttle Publishing
Boston, 2002
158 pages

Tao in Ten, by psychologists Annellen and Alexander Simpkins, is one book of a new series that is complementary to an earlier series on Eastern philosophy. The earlier series, including *Simple Zen*, *Simple Confucianism*, and *Simple Tibetan Buddhism*, has been very successful, having been identified as a Behavioral Science Books Service best-seller and already has been translated into several languages.

The new series, of which *Tao in Ten* is the first, is followed by the just released *Zen in Ten*. It provides an

experiential opportunity especially directed to the therapist who wishes to expand their perspectives and integrate self-learning with heightened awareness and sensitivity to client concerns.

Tao in Ten is a ten-lesson guide that begins with a historical overview of Taoism, and explains, in a very understandable way, the concepts associated with Taoist philosophy.

He liked to tell people, "Your unconscious is a lot smarter than you are!"

At the end of each chapter are a few exercises that facilitate experiential engagement in the reader. The beauty of this book is the simplicity of the approach. It provides a framework from which more serious involvement may continue. The richness of the material is that, through this delicate lattice of a framework, the grounded experience of the author

team glimmers. This book was written by, and for, individuals who are schooled in Western ways, yet who work with, and appreciate the broader spectrum of human differences and needs. The result is a harmony and balance of Western thinking and Eastern philosophy that can ultimately prove useful in expanding the capacity of the practitioner.

The brevity of the historical back-

ground provides a context from which readers can orient their own previous knowledge and exposure, finding familiarity with related elements such as the *I Ching* and meditation. Throughout the book, the Simpkins provide bridges that practitioners can carry into their own work, bringing a sense of "becoming" to their clients. In the chapter entitled

"Follow Your Dreams," they allude to their own learning stages, and to the integration of Taoist philosophy into their education as psychologist practitioners. "Our hypnosis teacher, Milton H. Erickson M.D., shared the Taoist idea of unconscious wisdom. He liked to tell people, "Your unconscious is a lot smarter than you are!" (p. 133).

Reading this book, considering the ideas, and participating in the exercises, it is inevitable that the reader will grow beyond current limits and begin to drift into a broader understanding of the unity of all life. As simple as it may appear, the depth behind the structure is present. Not only does this little gem *Tao in Ten*, look like an "Easy Lesson in Spiritual Growth," it actually feels easy.

Reviewed by:
Roxanna Klein RN, Ph.D.
Dallas, TX

Tapes Order