

Conclusion

The Path

The book of Lao Tze—*Tao Tse Ching*—makes more sense to me than that of Confucius, who equates women with children and considers both to be ignorant. But the first poem of *Tao Tse Ching*—“The Path”—is difficult, especially for a young person. Lao Tse speaks without dogma, writes about nature and flow. As a teenager, I read it as so much mumbo-jumbo. Then one day I came across a book interpreting his poem. The explanation stays with me:

In ancient time, people walked with their bare feet to create a way. The way had a beginning and an end. But there were many paths—the usual and the unusual, the well trod and the untrod, the short-term and the long-term, the uphill and the downhill, and many more.

To illustrate: A horse grazing in the meadow somehow loses his way into the desert. He is hungry and thirsty. How can he save himself? Here are the options:

1. Take the usual path—continue and eventually die of exhaustion or thirst.
2. Take the unusual path—three more choices:
 - Backtrack to the meadow, with a 50/50 chance of making it.
 - Use every bit of strength to go through the desert as quickly as possible, with a 1 percent chance of survival.
 - Rest, listen for the direction of the wind, look for an animal, and drink its blood or follow it to water, with a 90 percent chance of success.

The wise horse, lost in the desert, follows the camel.

You must use what you know to find your own best path—even if you have to change or do the unfamiliar. Sometimes you see something and it means nothing; sometimes you see nothing and it means something. Life is full of mystery. Only you can discover and follow the path that is right for you.

The wise person, like the wise horse, is adaptable and resourceful—and thinks about what is possible and probable. Nothing is 100 percent certain—but do look for probabilities in your favor.

Our search for wellness and health has not followed the usual path. We have taken twists and turns, followed the best odds, taken byways and backtracked, sometimes found treasure, sometimes adapted it. This is the result—what has worked best for us. We hope it helps you find the best way for you.