

Cross Discipline Collection 9 by Ben Huot

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by Ben Huot

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First Things

For More Information

For more books and information, visit me on the web at
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I even enjoy constructive criticism

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Cross Discipline Collection

From philosophy
To history and politics
To technology and security
To the apocalypse and futurism
To theology and apologetics
To the military and Schizophrenia
To philosophy again

My writings are not poetry
They are not essay
They are not one topic
They are like songs
They go from tangent to tangent
This is simply how my mind works

The whole is greater
Than the sum of the parts
Everything is connected
There are no topics
Topics are all illusions
Truth is truth

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And wisdom is wisdom
It is all a means toward an end

The problem with names and categories
Is that they are limited to rational arguments
The problem with isolation between studies
Is that it is not reflective
Of life or non-academic reality

I study the humanities
These are the most cross discipline areas of academia
Many great works of literature especially in Asia
Are also great works of religion, philosophy, art, and history
Philosophy itself is the mother of theology, science, and most social sciences

We see everything as catalogued
We see everything as organized
Because we all want things to be predictable
But the modern world is chaotic

Bruce Lee cross trained in boxing, wrestling, and Ju-Jitsu
In addition to his previous knowledge of Kung Fu
The martial arts are more art than martial
The postures are based on ideas helpful for meditation
And are originally from India and are meant
To be religious or philosophical not martial

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Traditional martial arts are not the way to learn
To defend yourself or fight in combat quickly
They are too predictable and respectful
The military trains soldiers in close quarter combat
Which means fighting with few to no rules

Fights often end very quickly
The ones left alive in the end are often the ones
That are both fast and precise
You can learn these in martial arts training too
If you have decades to train
You can also learn to fight effectively in a matter of weeks
With fighting systems like the Israeli Krav Maga

The difference is that martial arts are a gateway device
To teach people about Chinese Philosophy
Which to a large extent is an entirely different matter
So how do we learn from tradition
But adapt to the modern world

We use something Bruce Lee called broken rhythm
This is the basis of his martial art he created
Called Jeet Kune Do
And has been developed and popularized by mixed martial arts

The problem with this is that you can go to far
So that you can accidentally maim or kill someone
With this concept applied to fighting

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If you take this concept to its fullest expression
You end up with no rules at all

Traditional Chinese art is based on Chinese Philosophy
So when a traditional East Asian artist
Describes their artwork as Taoist for instance
This is not just done because it sounds interesting
This means the art will actually incorporate
Elements of Taoist philosophy

So Chinese art can be creative but also within limits
Much as people who use creativity
In problem solving or other less artistic scenarios
In the modern West artists just painted what they felt
With no apparent connection to philosophy, science, or social science

In broken rhythm you must first
Establish a classical rhythm or style
And then break or adjust this style
So that it is no longer symmetric
This is like the idea of creating a flaw in a masterpiece of art
As in the yin yang paradox concept
Opposite concepts are related
So that if something is extremely beautiful
It must have a flaw in it as well

Mathematically perfect classical music
Can be broken up with drums and chanting

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Like in hip hop, jazz, and modern dance
It actually takes more skill to adapt the traditional style
To your own personality to reflect your feelings

It is like that a Traditional Chinese acupuncturist has to learn
More than a modern western medical doctor
Because they have to learn all of human anatomy
Plus the meridians and yin yang concepts as well

This is a way to be creative
At the highest levels of difficulty
People today are not impressed
By just skill or intelligence

People today want originality, creativity, and authenticity
They don't want you to quote cliches
They want to hear what you believe in your own words

Most people find it easier and more memorable
To find direction in art, music, and literature
Then to listen to a lecture on a non-fiction topic
Entertainment is now part of instruction
For better or worse

Many people can recite a line from a famous poem
But to stand out you need to write your own poem
The level of difficulty in this is much greater

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One of the really hard and respected feats
Is to combine creative works
From ideas in multiple disciplines
Merging philosophy with theology in unforeseen ways
Can grab someone's attention immediately

It is important to keep a consistent message
And that the message is unique
And not easily constructed
It must be timeless and relevant
But also speak to the current generation

This is the beginning of a work
That may be relevant to succeeding generations
If it survives and people of the future decide that

Feel Like Giving Up?

It is cold
It is dark
And I want to go home
I am hungry
I am tired
But I feel a fire
Burning from within me

I continue through the night
The wind tears through me
I struggle to hold back the rain
I continue through the sand
And up the hills
I see nothing ahead

I am running out of energy
When I burst open
With a flash of light
The radiance burns through me
And spills out overflowing
I am consumed from within
I become but a flame
Within this fire in my heart

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If you think you cannot win
All you have to do is resist
The war is already won
But there are minor battles to be fought
The minor battles look big
And the giant wars look small
It is as if we are seeing from afar
Across time and history
That the reality of our struggle
Appears distorted

Ask for eyes to see
Things as they really are
What is true is beautiful
And what is evil is gross
That we may see not
Just the enemy surrounding us
But Your army surrounding
This same enemy

That we may know that
Calling on Your name
Is not just powerful
It is not just magic
It is the power of reality

We don't just fight for ourselves
Or fight for our human race

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We fight for the future
We fight for hope beyond death

We are surrounded
By so many witnesses
Even when we think we are alone
We need to not settle
For just good enough to be saved

We must submit ourselves to God
In every aspect of our lives
The choice is to be possessed
By either the Holy Spirit
Or by the devil

There is ultimately no other choice
It is not like you can just
Not make up your mind
Or ignore the entire situation
You will be accountable
And your decision
Will determine your destiny

We treat life like it is a game
We see the struggle for what we want
We see the surface as the entirety
We expect there to be nothing more
Beneath the obvious and official story

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Why did the ancient peoples have myths
Why do we now have no more stories
Did things really change
Or do we choose to just not see
Do you really want to know the truth
Do you think you can figure everything out
By merely reading about it in a book

How is it that animals know things that we do not
How is it that a small creature
Can predict the weather
Better than a supercomputer

How is it that some people survive better
Who have not even prepared for a disaster
Why is it that pain is so different
For different people with the same disease
Why are our internal organs
Not all arranged the same

Why do people raised in the same families
Turn out so different
Why does it not make us happy
When we live better than emperors

Why do some people cower in fear
Over minor discomfort

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While others endure great pain
Without ever complaining

Maybe we need a second kind of sight
A way to see with the heart and soul
Not just with our eyes and brain
The bigger world can only be understood
Through our relationship with God

But we need to take a risk and trust
This God Who created us
We need to understand why we should want
To please our Creator

We need to accept that we need help
We need to know we are not
As strong as we think we are
We to unlearn most of what we were taught in school

We need to dream and work hard
We need to struggle and become wiser
We need to not hurry as much
We need more silence
We need time to reflect
We need to slow everything down
We need to start listening

We need to take time for God

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We need to pray and wait on God
We need to give to others in need
We need all these things
God does not needs us to be this way
We need God and need to follow Him

Do not just keep fighting the good fight
Realize you cannot lose
Because it is not you who fights
The Lord will engage the battle on your behalf

The most important factor spiritually
Is intent or choice
So when you use your Sword of the Spirit
You speak the exact thoughts of God
All you need to do is to take the step forward
Just swing your Sword and it will never miss

Being a soldier is not about being strong
It is about having faith in those you serve under
Good armies are well trained and well supplied
One person cannot do everything
The only reason a soldier is afraid
Is because the enemy tries to destroy him
If he stands his ground

But what if the rules are different spiritually
What if in standing up to them

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We then turn to God
And let Him fight for us
We do not need to be afraid

Our part of the battle
Is not in knowing how to fight
But merely making it obvious
Whose side we are on

Once we commit to this decision fully
These battles bring much less fear
We only need fear ourselves
Because the enemy has to deal with God

Does Progress Require Pain?

Do we need to hurt
To accept God's authority
Do we need to fail
To accept God's mercy

Maybe if we slow down
And open our eyes and ears
We will experience God
Our faith can grow deeper
Without suffering

We see many examples
Of those refined by difficulties
As a kind of trial by fire

The military is all trial by fire
The actually skills needed in combat
Are so simple even a slow kid
In elementary school
Is sufficiently intellectual
Enough for fighting as a soldier

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But even the smartest people
Fail when under stress
So the military does do psychological tests
This is what Basic Training is for
And any general infantry school is
Like airborne or ranger schools

The marines describe war as
80 percent boredom and 20 percent terror
Much of the advanced infantry training
Is just to subject you to pain
Like tear gas or lifting heavy weights

The military goes to extremes
There are a number of good ideas
That the military incorporates deeply
Then there are other ideas which are head scratchers

One of the big problems with Army training
Is that they never allot enough time for rest or sleep
We don't do this as a society either
Some things cannot be instilled in a person
In a short training period

Even the military acknowledges this
Because you train constantly
In combat survival skills

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First learned in Basic Training
Continually throughout your enlistment

Many of us wish for excitement
In our spiritual lives
But from my experience
An exciting spiritual life is no fun

It is great to feel close to God
But suffering can be very difficult
Some trauma in life is necessary
But there is no point in suffering
If you can avoid it

The other method of learning
Is slow and requires self-motivation
It ends with gradual improvement
Over decades rather than weeks
Martial arts training resembles this

Many people who leave the military
Have a hard time adjusting
The military is a difficult way of life
But it is very predictable and consistent

You do not have to balance
Many different aspects of your life
You do not have to and

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Are not encouraged to think at all

For someone to be good soldier
They are used to working as a team
They are also used to doing
What someone else tells them to do

In Army training you are meant to
Stop thinking as an individual
Your leaders are the brains of the operation
You do not have a lot of responsibility

All the Army requires of you
Is for you to follow all orders without hesitation
And to always give at least 100 percent
You can literally screw up everything else

And you will still do well
At least in your first enlistment
Obviously officers and senior enlisted
Have different expectations

The military training is very well planned out
Many ideas are based on lessons learned
In 18th century Prussia (later called Germany)
And are not even American in origin

We have plans on the books

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To fight every country
Including ones like Mexico
Which makes no sense

And there is no scenario in which
We would wage war with
Many 3rd world countries
But just in case
All the general has to do is pick a plan

Life outside the military is not planned
Modern society is chaotic like warfare
There is no one to tell you
To get up and go do your job

There are no expectations of you at all
There is no sense of common cause or any unity
You must be disciplined in a different way
Instead of being a follower
You are fully independent

If you screw up even one thing
In any one of many different areas
You go without food, clothing, shelter, decent hygiene, or medical
care

Just not paying your rent one month
Or late a couple months

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Can get you evicted
And your past stays with you

All of these are little stressors by themselves
Compared to the stress of the military
But the military supports its soldiers
In every way it can
(Except financially and legally)

So obviously few want to deal
With the military way of life
Many like this independence
But few can actually thrive in this situation

So although most people throughout history
Are more motivated by pain and fear
Maybe some of us could be motivated
By gratitude and positive experiences
But I think this requires time and patience

The more we realize
All God had done for us
The more we can be motivated
To do what is right

And the more we know
How others suffer
The more we can be motivated

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To avoid sin in our lives

Slow and predictable is the very definition
Of martial arts practice
These arts are very ineffective
At teaching people to fight effectively
Within a small amount of training time

But if you have the time and patience
They can teach you so much more
Useful and rewarding ideas

So instead of getting heart surgery
You should eat better
And instead of struggling with dementia
You should not abuse drugs

What is it like to live this
This is contained within the Psalms
How to do this
Is contained within the
New Testament Letters

Honest, Genuine, and Sincere

Is it true
Is it right
Is it beautiful

If it is honest
If it is genuine
If it is sincere

But it is not positive
If it is not helpful
If it is not good
What use is it

Some think life is just an experiment
That things just happen
But what kind of life is that
Cannot we live seriously
Cannot we strive to do good

Is there shame in not knowing
Or in doing something badly

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If I do an excellent job of starting a war
And everyone is happy afterwards
Or if I go out to raise money for a charity
But do so poorly and without insight
Is it better just not to offend
Or to truly reduce suffering

Is it not just in the how well
But also in the what and why
If the first gulf war ended well for the US
And the second gulf war ended worse for the US
Does this make either war ok

If you win a contract
Does it matter if you were honest
Or if you make a fortune
And it was at someone else's expense
Does this make you feel good

If you can be the best con artist in the world
Or be the worst humanitarian worker
What would you rather be
Is it more important to be famous
And remembered after you die
Or to raise a family as best you can

If you cannot be rich
Is life then not worth living

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If the best others can say of you is
That you are very talented
Does this not cause you to pause and reflect

Is intelligence worth it
If all it leads you to do
Are things that are not helpful to you or others
After you die
And people write things about you
Does it even matter what they say

If who you are does not stand on its own
What does it matter what others think
If you are only the most moral in your city
But you live in the contemporary world
Is this actually something to strive for

We have such high expectations
When we think about what we do
But does it matter who we are
And how do we determine that

Is it better to achieve victory
Or to fight the war more humanely
Is it best to achieve
Or to not compromise on morality
Is beauty an entirely visual thing
Or can how you treat others

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Fall into the same study of art

When I think of what are standards are today
I think the rest of the world
And people throughout history
Would be ashamed to associate themselves with us

If the best others can say is we are not hypocrites
But we sacrifice personal growth
And the attempt to do what is right
In this process
Does this make us good people

Why does it matter so much how richly you are dressed
But is matters less how much of your body you reveal
If we are to all be equal
Should we not strive to be better people
Than those we are not treated equal to yet

If we reach the stars and exoplanets
And colonize the galaxy
But turn earth into a literal hell
Is this something to be proud of

When we think of the future of the earth
Do we factor in what succeeding generations think
If we are running out of resources now
What makes us think that the increased energy will satisfy us

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When we think of problems
From our point of view
We think we need more
But we think like those not like us
We learn we would do better with less

If each generation is supposed to do better
Then how can the environment sustain this
If we are all to live to 150 years of age
What will the planet be like

If we cannot survive without more energy
How did others survive with much less
If we think we need so much
When will we have enough

We think like addicts today
The only thing we fear is change
Because we like things the way they are
Because we are comfortable

We want more of everything
But we don't want fundamental change
Because we might have to deal with issues
That we are uncomfortable dealing with
Like our own mortality

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We spend all this time thinking of
The future of our country
But not about our future after death
To plan ahead for retirement is considered wise
But to plan for eternity foolish
How absurd is this

If we cannot see ourselves from God's point of view
How can we imagine living forever
If we cannot accept God's plan
How will we ever believe the Bible is true

If we do not know how bad we are
How can we understand why Christ
Has offered us such a great gift
If we cannot believe we were created
How can we ever be kind
To those living under our power and authority

If there is no afterlife
Then what is the point in suffering
If there is no God
Then there would be no us

If there was no Bible
We would not know how bad we are
If we alone decided what was right and wrong
We would be where we are now

Technology and Disability

Why is growing old
So scary to so many
Why is it society's problem
That they have not yet found
Their peace with God

When we try to help
You push us away
Now we know how God feels
About all of us

When we are young
Some of us hurt less
But as we get older
Some of us get smarter

Do you not want
The benefit of their experience
Do you want to make
The same mistakes generation after generation
How can we ever learn

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If we never study history
Or even listen to our parents

If I listened to my parents
I may have been smart enough
To avoid my military experiences
I have suffered from Schizophrenia
For about 25 years
I have learned something over these years

But no one can learn
From my experiences
Because they want to learn
Everything all by themselves
People then suffer unnecessarily

If we cannot pass on
What we have learned
How can we raise children
How can we then guide these children
As they grow older themselves

When your body fails you
And sometimes your mind does too
You never need to give up
Just get more creative

Today especially this is possible

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We have an increasing population
Of the elderly and disabled
But today we can do so much
With poor physical or even
Poor mental health

Many of the advancements
Of the past generation or more
Are best made use of by those
Who have aged or are limited by disability

It is sad that if people
Can have their lives
Improved by technology
That we cannot include those
Who have disabling conditions
That are relatively easy to address
With current technology

If we are this advanced technologically
Why are the older and disabled
More held back then helped
By these advancements

Is it worth it
For there is be one less ad
And make the font size
A couple pixels bigger

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So you the writer
Can read your work 20 years later

If we are willing to use boring tools
With less buzzwords and marketing behind them
These issue are naturally addressed
Simply as part of the creation process

But because we do not value wisdom
And we do not value hard work
Using the Internet makes us dumber
Rather than smarter

Don't give up there is still time
Think of the Internet as a library
The Internet is not God
The point of it should be
To bring greater participation
In decision making and its responsibility
And remove misunderstandings
That lead to unnecessary divisions

Instead every major tech company
Sees things only from their point of view
Even at this extreme it is often taken farther
The goal is only what makes money this year

If you are overwhelmed

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With how fast technology changes
Invest in learning something
That seldom or even never changes
Philosophy and theology
Have never been more relevant and real

I once had a dream
That I would collaborate
I liked the idea
That I could get
An entirely different point of view
In some ways the Internet
Has made this easier than ever before
But the trust is completely gone

Ten years ago
I wanted to be on social media
Today I am glad I am not
Ten years ago I wanted to be a programmer
Now I am glad I am not responsible
For any computer programs

When I first heard about spyware
About 20 years ago
I said why is this a problem
When people would not give out
Even their email addresses
10-20 years ago

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Everyone thought they were paranoid

Today we know these people were wise
They must have foreseen the future
We are losing the battle
For the security of the Internet

The difference today is
Now criminals have the resources
To scan millions of websites
And routers automatically
To hack everyone as soon as
There is a known vulnerability
If it is not updated fast enough

Security also needs random unique passwords
For every login and every service
This is especially hard on the disabled and elderly
Who are also more likely to be targeted by scams

The big companies we rely on
Are constantly being hacked as well
You can be compromised
Even if you are not online
Even if you are not important

There are many solutions
But many have drastic consequences

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If you do not consider
Hundreds of different factors
You will break the Internet worse
The problem is that it is too complicated
And we need it too badly
Another problem is it is international

I am a liberal
But I am old school
And I have no party allegiance
I have not voted for anyone who has won
In any presidential election I voted in
Or those who I would have voted for
If I did not vote that time

I was against world trade since the 1990s
While I enjoy studying other cultures
And I want what is best for my nation
This one world economy
Is not good for any of us peons
In any nation or region of the world

International means more crime and fraud
International means more immorality and less control
International means more wars and more suffering
International means increasing brittleness and the impact of disasters

Have we not learned

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That many people overseas
And many in America
Do not like what
Comes out of Hollywood

The entire American entertainment industry
Is a net negative nationally and internationally
Big corporations are promoting violence and sexual immorality
To distract us from community involvement and personal responsibility

If they can keep us indoor forever
It is much easier to get more power for themselves
And get more power over our souls

Why My Childhood is Unwritten

My childhood was normal
One of the reasons
I have dealt with Schizophrenia
As well as I have
Was because of this experience

I was a silly kid
And I had problems with anger
Which I masked with humor
I was always very religious

I thought of death
From an early age
I was born again
When I was only 4 years old

I spent many days daydreaming
Through my elementary years
Later I began to read a lot of fantasy
I always was interested in other cultures

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I was involved in many clubs in high school
I ever started my own political one
I read maps and encyclopedias at this time as well
I got heavily involved in Model United Nations
I was involved in running for many years
And was even in cheerleading for a year

Many of these interests are still with me
But I am fundamentally
A different person as far as personality
I am much more serious now
I still have a sense of humor
But I am more serious in nature
Even much more than other mentally ill people

I think always to prepare
For worst case scenarios
I am lucky I do not need to worry
About keeping a job
I have had more success in writing now
As I have more to write about
In both my life and world changes

When I wrote an autobiography years ago
I only covered 2 years of my life
My experiences in the military
Changed me that much

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My military experiences
Made me focus on the problem of suffering
And gave me an interest in philosophical questions
I realized that I took too many risks
In my decision to join the military
This lead me to reduce my risks since then

I have tried both to suffer as little as possible myself
As well as search for ways to reduce
The suffering of other people and other life forms
The military taught me how weak I am

It also made me realize how cruel people can be
And how vulnerable we are to these kind of people
As individuals and as a society
The military is often confronted with the task
Of dealing with people like this in wars

This experience was very terrifying, depressing, and lonely
During my military experience I was always tired and terrified
I never felt safe and I never trusted anyone
These experiences helped me prepare for living
As a person with Schizophrenia
I thank God every day I am not in the military

No one was mean to me and I never served in combat
I only had to go through the gas chamber once
And I never had to go through POW training

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I realized soon that they were trying to
Prepare us for this severe reality
Both because of what they told us directly
And what was implied by what they trained us to do
And how they trained us

I served in the late 1990s and the conception I had
Of what war was like was obviously very tame
Of course I watched few violent films as a kid
But it seems like people were more careful how they portrayed war on
film
Compared to what you see in the last 10-20 years

I of course asked some very specific questions
In which the answers were highly inaccurate
While in the military the answers were much more candid
In America we cannot seem to contemplate
The extent to what people are motivated by religion
Throughout most of the world today
And throughout most of history

We also see little of how the US works
In the rest of the world
And the level of hate felt by those
Who feel they are being controlled by us
They blame all of us in America for this

And it is very much too late

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To do anything to reduce this feeling
Foreigners likely have greater misconceptions about Americans
Than we do about them even though
That is hard to believe that would be possible

Within America we are treated relatively kindly
It is like night and day outside of America
And maybe Western Europe
And some select allies in other parts of the world

We Americans likely are treated better within our empire
Because we are easier to manage that way
Americans never seem to revolt
No matter what our country does
To the rest of the world
Because they never see it or would never believe it
And most the abuses by the our government
Both in and out of the country are highly classified

Our government controls our hearts and minds
To such an extent
That many people's religious beliefs
Are tied to our nations ideology

It is hard for the government
To infringe on religious beliefs
Which is the only freedoms many care about having
If those religious beliefs are tied

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Into what is best for the establishment

It is understandable that we make compromises
Because a certain amount of cruelty
Is necessary to be the biggest world empire
You just can't keep stating the opposite of that
And then do those kind of things
And expect to fool everyone all the time

People who have grown up in America for the most part
Have experienced so little suffering
Compared to the rest of the world
That most of the world sees us as children
We are so optimistic in America
But then again we have never experienced true fear

Most Americans today have not served in the military
Even though we wage war on
Almost every country on the planet constantly
And we fight a major war almost every 10 years like clockwork
It all gets very tiring

My biggest question to God is
Why did You create people
Knowing what we would become
Animals turned out great
But people are all bad

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Everyone thinks they are good
And would be a hero if called on
A person can be broken so easily
A good person can do very bad things
Given the right situation and lack of options

The most vivid feeling
I still have from the military
Is not being in control of anything
Including my own self and situation
The military trained us by telling us
What and why they were doing
Then they offered us no choice

We have choices in America today
Because of the sacrifices of a few
Later we will have many fewer choices
As less and less are willing to enlist
When society totally collapses
We may very well have no choice as well

The Color Red

A procession formed across the open road
A long line of people
Wound its way back
Across fields and forests

Everything was red
Brilliant red
And reds of all shades
The people were all dressed in red
The forest, the water, and the grass
All red in their entirety

They played in the river
Each person was dipped into the water
Like an apple is dipped into caramel
The river ran red as well

It was not just the moon
That was the color of blood
But the sun was as well
Even when the night came
The sky still has a reddish glow
The stars were all crimson
Every one the same color as Mars

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The man leading the procession
Leaned on a red and white stripped cane
His nose glowed in the dark
He rode a red deer

As the procession continued
The deer picked up a scent
The aroma of cinnamon apples
They followed the scent
Until they saw a path of red stickers
On signs pointing the way onward

A bunny rabbit with a red tail
Darted across the road
The deer halted course
The man stepped out and greeted the bunny

The bunny now led the procession
Into a hole in the ground
A hole the rabbit dug
In this hole there was a passage
To another world

As you passed through
You were covered in clean water
The water was pure white
And filled with soap bubbles

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All smelling like lavender and vanilla

Upon entering the new world
They saw a man playing a card game
But the playing cards began to dance
The dancing surprised the man
He backed off to the corner
And set down his giant red and white striped hat

He scratched his long red beard
He thought of what he would do
After having a small tea party
He and the little elves attending the party
Decided to use their magic
Which they were given one a week
If they were good and did their work
To pay the wizard to shrink them

As soon as they began to shrink
They noticed a giant fat cat
Looking down on them with disgust
The giant cat looked like a stuffed toy
Except that he could sing and dance
He made a lot of noise

This made the monster angry
And he took the cat toy
And ran off with it

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Carrying it in his mouth

He didn't destroy it though
He thought to play a trick
And hide the cat toy
He buried it in the rabbit hole
And then the monster disappeared entirely
Into another world

The cat fell back into our world
The crowd gathered near the gateway
As the group wandered
They made up songs
That they heard in their heads
They picked up the musical instruments
That they found under a small lighted tree
In the middle of a small clearing

The deer sat down next to the tree
And the man with the candy cane
Started to build a little candy house
The people gathered for a party
Inside the candy house

During the party they ate so much chocolate
That when the rest of the dinner was served
They could eat nothing else
As their stomachs ached

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They got out of control and disrespectful
This really stressed out the candy cane man
But he was a kind man
So he just ignored the silliness

He started to dance
And everyone joined in
To get rid of the excess energy they acquired
From eating all the candy

Later on they got so tired
That they wanted to take a nap
While they slept
The leader began to fall asleep as well

In all the excitement
No one had realized
That they had grown big again
But the plain cards were still small
As the people began to dream
The playing cards woke up
And began to dance and sing

The candy cane man found the big toy cat
The toy was then washed
And given back to the people
Now with a pleasant expression on his face

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He was all clean and new
As he had been washed
In the vanilla soap bubbles

Out of the hole came a few elves
The elves then made the hole
Into a dedicated passageway
So that others knew just where to cross

The elves held onto a rope
As they walked
So that no one would fall down
Off the little bridge between the two worlds
The man with the candy cane
Guarded this same spot
Where the two worlds met

There were giant trees
With branches covering the passage way
And the people decided to never cross
Into the another world
Unless they were with another group member

The only time they were alone
Was when they were sleeping
A locked door was constructed
So that it required 2 keys that joined together
So no one would cross by themselves

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After spending much time
Traveling between worlds
They realized they could go faster
If they rode red deer
They became obsessed about riding red deer
So that soon they became red deer themselves

So then the man with the candy cane
Would bring them together
For one night of the year
To bring presents to both worlds

In one world they were giants
And in the other one they were very small
As time passed by
They began to get bigger
But they noticed the bigger they got
The more the world shrank around them

Eventually they tired of traveling
As they missed being with the entire group
You may ask why the group
Didn't just stay together
But there were only a few people
Who could be on the bridge at once

And arguments began to divide the group

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They didn't understand
Why everyone else in the world
Kept telling them to do things
That were annoying and disruptive

Whenever they got together
The leader with the candy cane
Would lead them off to another location
They never knew where they were going

Eventually they learned to watch
When the candy man starting getting sleepy
They gave him milk and cookies
Because that made him sleep
Then they would be free to sing and dance

Qi Gong Helps You Relax

Qigong and Tai Chi are both real and powerful. Some rare individuals have had problems with it because they had a history of psychosis and overdid the exercises under no supervision too fast. As a person with Schizophrenia I can see why some of the unusual feelings brought on by this combination could be disturbing. The good thing is that although a person with Schizophrenia should approach this with caution and extra guidance and some not at all, for the vast majority of people will encounter more problems and greater risk crossing the street in the morning.

Qigong is based on the idea of energy but it is not the same energy as they talk about in paganism or new age religions. For one thing, Qi is not spiritual but rather about the connection between mind and body. There is nothing spiritual going on there. The energy called Qi flows much like the blood flows through your body or you inhale and exhale in succession. This is already going on whether you agree with it or not. There are no special powers to gain and no deities involved.

Qi is not the same as science at all, but its relationship to religion is much as science is related to religion. Which is to say there is some cross over in some ways in both these things much as almost anything

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is related to something else in some way, but these are really just different disciplines.

Qigong is based on Philosophical Taoist ideas, but this philosophy has no theology or metaphysics. It is just kind of a view of how nature and animals see life and has a corresponding ethical code. Taoism actually fits Christian ideals much better than Neo-Platonism does by a long shot. Taoism does not promise eternal life or make any claims to who you should worship. It is no more religious than science is.

The confusion goes back to the lack of metaphysics or theology in traditional Chinese philosophy. There are no prohibitions to supernatural phenomena within traditional Chinese thought like we have in Christianity and maybe Islam or Judaism. The ancient Chinese thought is all based on the how and not the why. It is also considered perfectly acceptable to take parts of Chinese thought as well as with Indian thought and not the whole thing, unlike in Christianity or Islam.

There is also a huge difference between the Chinese philosophy as practiced by the scholar officials and the peasant based folk traditions. Even as early as the time of Confucius while China did have an animistic past by even 2,500 years ago the high society and government became completely philosophical based with no theology because of a change in leadership and a need to get legitimacy for the new government. There was a previous animistic or shamanistic tradition in China that is traditionally Chinese as well and existed back 5,000 years ago and was brought back in Religious Taoism.

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Also Tai Chi and most martial arts are based on Taoist ideas as well. Some of the most liked aspects of Zen Buddhism like spontaneity and artistic ideas seen as traditionally Chinese come directly from Taoism. So while Philosophical Taoism is by definition a philosophy only with no theology Religious Taoism very much is something I would consider contrary to Christianity. Most of these texts are still to even translated into English yet. They were also added to different schools of Taoism much later on and are really completely unrelated except in name and both being Chinese in origin.

Recently people for various reasons some political, some financial, and some based on real belief have tried to bring back paganism in Western Europe and the United States from the time of the European Enlightenment in the 18th century which later became the Theosophy movement and later became know as new age. There are actually some surprising connections between atheism and this Neo-Paganism. Early on in the 19th century writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson brought in ideas called Transcendentalism from Hinduism in the United States.

Later they were brought in alongside the anti-war movements of the 60s and 70s and by the 90s they became known as the new age movement. The defining thing about the new age movement is that things are drawn from almost every major religion including Christianity and paganism but there was a certain well known authors and thinkers who used Eastern philosophical concepts in non-traditional ways. In order to form a legitimacy and context for new age beliefs many lead-

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ers in that community both science and eastern philosophy have been used in non-traditional ways.

I would be wary of any religion that is a hybrid of multiple belief systems or that has scriptures that were written or the ideas that originate in the 19th or 20th centuries. But that goes across all religions. There are plenty of Christian and Islamic traditions as well as Scientific theories that have connections to these movements as well. The thing is though there is nothing really in keeping with any of these traditions whether scientific or religious. Part of the problem is that people who understand the ideas well like in science are poor writers and people often oversimplify things.

So Qi Gong has been coopted by many groups for many reasons including financial, political, and genuine faith. The Falun Gong movement incorporates ideas from Qi Gong and Buddhism but is seen by the Chinese as a political enemy. So for those who want the traditional Chinese philosophical Taoist version I would recommend finding a teacher who has decades at least of experience and it preferably trained in China or a country which has embraced traditional Chinese culture for hundreds or thousand of years like Taiwan, Singapore, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. The Shaolin “temple” is the historic center where Zen Buddhism originated and is probably the most elite training center of any of the Chinese meditations or marital arts traditions. Often times the kind of Qigong you want is likely the medical qigong.

The best advice for starting anything new including Qigong (and the same applies to Tai Chi as well) is to research it well, find a well trained and respected instructor, listen to their advise and start out

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slowly. If you run into problems seek advice from the instructor. Qi gong is much easier to do than Tai Chi and specifically targets the organs. It is a combination of breathing, awareness of your body and surroundings and simple physical movements much like stretching and breathing deeply. It can help tremendously with pain, insomnia, depression, and related symptoms or diseases.

It will never be fully proved by science much as religion will never be either because they are different disciplines. It is kind of like trying to prove that you are in pain or trying to prove that literature is good. It is not good to do if you have psychosis or you are so worried about it because the whole point is to relax you.