

# Tao Tapestry 2016



A Taoist Teaching

~ Lao Tzu

*I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize.  
The first is gentleness;  
the second is frugality;  
the third is humility,  
which keeps me from putting myself before others.*

*Be gentle, and you can be bold;  
be frugal, and you can be liberal;  
avoid putting yourself before others,  
and you can become a leader of men.  
Gentleness brings victory to him who attacks,  
and safety to him who defends.*

*Those whom Heaven would save,  
it fences round with gentleness.*

*The greatest conquerors  
are those who overcome their enemies  
without strife.*



The Tao Te Ching, the best known text of Taoism, begins “The way you can go isn’t the real way. The name you can say isn’t the real name.” This fluidity and non-namingness made creating something in physical form extremely challenging.

The more we studied, the more complex and baffling things became. We finally made the choice, as we did with the Christian tapestry, to go back to one basic principle of this spiritual path, and essentially ignore all of the elements of Taoism **as the religion** in all its forms as it is practiced historically and today.

Our concept illustrates a very basic idea of the Tao, that this material world, the world called “the 10,000 things” is essentially a distraction. That formless Truth exists calmly apart from, yet interrelated with, this material world. We begin to master ourselves by education, observation, practice, play, and seeking the simplest path.

We have the central circle, a multi-layered pond, illustrating the 10,000 things. We collaged this, and if you get close, you will see in this pool food, and fashion, and sports, and politics, and pets, and religion, and many, many other pleasant/unpleasant distractions. The pool is deliberately the shiniest, most eye-catching element on the tapestry. It’s also designed to portray the yin and yang symbol. We’ve used coins (a core element of the 10,000 things) as the dots to the yin and the yang.

Surrounding the pond is a stone wall – or not? It’s also a dragon, symbol in Taoism of eternity, wisdom, and power. Is the dragon eating its tail? Or not?

Lao Tzu, representing all of the many sages and teachers of this spiritual path, sits calmly in focused meditation upon this dragon/stone. Or is he just asleep?

The background of abstract earth, water, and cloud forms completes the design..