

Testimony of Tao

By Greg Edwards

This is the story of my experience after being introduced to Great Light Tao. I received Tao and became vegetarian two years ago, and it has had a tremendous impact on my life. Before, I was suffering in all aspects of life - mentally, physically, and spiritually. Now, I am more peaceful and content. I am healed from certain conditions I had been suffering from for years. But most importantly, I have learned how to cultivate Tao, attain spiritual knowledge, and repair my spiritual path.



I was a severely depressed teenager and literally could not function without anti-depressant medications. When I was 16, all of my mental health counselors told my parents not to expect me to live to graduate from high school. I tried to kill myself twice, and during one attempt I came very close to actually dying. I tried to stop taking the medications once, but I ended up being hospitalized after just one month. I continued psychiatric therapy for over ten years and I was told by several doctors that I would have to take the medications for the rest of my life.

I worked hard while I was in treatment, rebuilt myself from scratch, and learned about how to keep myself more mentally and emotionally healthy. After years of only focusing on my mental and emotional health, I reached a plateau and decided to focus more on my physical well being. I felt that making lifestyle changes pertaining to how I treated my body could improve my wellness as a whole, and thus have a positive impact on my mental well being from a different angle. A few years ago, I started cutting back on fast food, candy, and soda. I quit smoking after ten years of addiction, and began to seek alternative forms of

health care such as massage and acupuncture.

I enjoyed massage so much I decided to look into becoming a massage therapist myself. I noticed several benefits from the acupuncture as well. It helped me get more in touch with myself and take better care of my body. I was eating healthier and exercising more regularly, and over the following year I was able to lose 60 pounds. But what really surprised me was that I needed much lower doses of medication. The same medications I had been taking for years had become too strong, and the side effects were starting to bother me. At this point I realized that there was a great deal of wisdom in Chinese medicine and philosophy, which seemed to be able to decrease my chronic imbalances at their root (and increase harmony), instead of using medicinal "crutches."

During the summer of 2002, I was able to stop taking the anti-depressant medications successfully for the first time. It wasn't easy though, and it was expensive because I had to see the acupuncturist once a week. My efforts failed, and I had to start taking the medications again after only three months. I was stuck between taking very small doses of medicine and being annoyed by the side effects, and not being well enough to stop taking them. All of the exercise, healthy eating, massage, and acupuncture helped me, but they were not enough.

It was an awkward period of transition. There was something restless inside me searching for peace - not just mentally or physically, but spiritually. In April 2003, I followed through with my interest in massage and I started going to massage school. Two months later, a massage therapist named Claire, who visited my office once a month, asked me what I learned in massage school the past weekend. I told her we were introduced to energy (Qi), Tai Chi and Qi Gong. She said she knew a man named Young who taught Qi Gong, and she gave me his contact information.

The first night I met Young and his students I felt very comfortable. Everything I had been learning about acupuncture and massage led right into Qi Gong, and I was open to trying anything that could help me find peace. They suggested that I stop eating meat, so I gave it a try and became vegetarian that night.

Through Young, I was introduced to Great Light Tao and I received Tao a few days later. After receiving Tao, becoming vegetarian, and practicing Qi Gong, I was able to stop taking the anti-depressant medications in just a few weeks. I haven't taken them since, although it has been a very challenging two years! I also used to have very bad allergies to pollen and dust, and now I don't need medication for them anymore, either.



Interesting, isn't it? Sometimes it's good for me to remember that I had conditions that I thought were permanent (and supposedly biological or genetic), like severe depression and allergies. After receiving Tao, becoming a vegetarian, and practicing Qi Gong, my transformation was so subtle and effortless it was difficult to notice. Only by comparing who I am now to who I used to be, can I see how amazing the change truly was.

That was just the beginning! I have only been writing about changes in my physical conditions so far because they were the easiest to see. More importantly, changes were happening on the spiritual level. What we can see on the physical level are actually the manifestations of the spiritual level.

When I was first admitted into a psychiatric hospital in late 1992, I remember my priest coming to visit me and telling me that what I was going through was a spiritual conflict between angels and demons fighting for my soul. I told my psychiatrist what my priest had said, and he laughed and said I just had a chemical imbalance. That led me to think my priest was crazy. Now I realize through my experiences that my priest was seeing more clearly than my psychiatrist was. 10 years of medications with minimal results compared to being practically cured in only 10 weeks in a spiritual practice!

Through Great Light Tao, I have learned how to cultivate Tao and repair my spiritual path, which are more important than any physical benefits. I have had the opportunity to learn about Tao, karma, reincarnation, and other aspects of life and spirituality from various religions that I previously knew little about. When my priest was talking to me about the conflict between angels and demons, I see it now as the forces of karma, or the consequences of my actions.

I believe that my depression and self-destructive behavior were the products of my actions from previous lives. The spiritual energy of the people who I hurt before were trying to kill me, but those who I had helped before were trying to save me. I have had experiences that support this perspective, and it means that my suffering and subsequent learning from my suffering was like

making payments on a “spiritual credit card.” Attaining this knowledge of the spiritual level has helped my mind and soul be more at peace. I can choose to live my life in ways that will either increase or decrease my spiritual debt. I am responsible for my life; I am not a victim.

I used to only focus on things on the physical level like material possessions, unhealthy attachments to other people, emotional highs, and so on. I thought I was “living,” but I was really just suffering. I was always wanting, and I was never content. Receiving Tao helped me get more in touch with my spiritual-self, and it helped me to look beyond the physical level to see life more deeply. Now, I feel more centered and calm. However, I’m not saying that my life has been any easier. In fact, it’s been quite the opposite! Before, even the smallest things would cause me

a great deal of stress. Since I have been cultivating Tao, I have been presented with several challenges that would have toppled me over, but now I am working through them with a sense of peace and understanding that I have never known.



This perspective helps me make the most out of my life and encourages me to work through my karma with love and awareness, instead of anger and avoidance. The journey will not be easy, and I will need to find the courage and discipline to face the challenges both around me and inside of me that I don’t want to face. The greater ongoing process is to find and fulfill my purpose in this life. I feel like I am heading in the right direction, and I have learned valuable tools that can help me on my journey. Ultimately, I am trying to find harmony with Tao (the natural way of the universe; God’s will), and I want to try to help others find their harmony with Tao.

Thank you to everyone who has helped me along the way, because I could’ve never made it this far on my own.