

TAKUAN SOHO (1573-1645)

- Zen monk, calligrapher, painter, poet, gardener, tea master and, perhaps, inventor of the *Takuan*] pickle that even today retains his name.

--- William Scot Wilson (translator) to Takuan Soho's book *The Unfettered Mind*
(subtitle: *Writings from a Zen Master to a Master Swordsman*)

- Takuan Soho's *The Mysterious Record of Immovable Wisdom*:

The Affliction of Abiding in Ignorance

The term *ignorance* means the absence of enlightenment. Which is to say, delusion.

Abiding place means the place where the mind stops.

... Abiding signifies stopping, and *stopping* means the mind is being detained by some matter, which may be any matter at all.

...

... we call this stopping of the mind *delusion*. Thus we say, "The affliction of abiding in ignorance."

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- The "ordinary mind knows no rules."

-- Yagyū Munemori, head of the Yagyū Shinkage school of swordsmanship and teacher to two generations of shoguns; friend of Takuan Soho, the eccentric and independent-thinking Zen monk

- The sword, the spiritual exercise and the unfettered mind ... [with] effort and patience ... should become one. We are to practise, practise with whatever we may have at hand, until the enemies of our own anger, hesitation and greed are cut down with the celerity and decisiveness of the stroke of the sword.

--- William Scot Wilson (translator) to Takuan Soho's book *The Unfettered Mind*
(subtitle: *Writings from a Zen Master to a Master Swordsman*)

- Confrontation, in the "right" [or "unfettered"] mind, would not only give life, but give it more abundantly.

--- "Introduction" to William Scot Wilson (translator) to Takuan Soho's book
The Unfettered Mind (subtitle: *Writings from a Zen Master to a Master Swordsman*)

- For Takuan Soho, the coalescence (or unity) of swordsmanship and Zen leads to a culmination not of "death and destruction" but of "enlightenment and salvation".

--- William Scot Wilson (translator) to Takuan Soho's book *The Unfettered Mind*
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QUOTES - TAKUAN SOHO

- If you follow the present-day world, you will turn your back on the Way; if you would not turn your back on the Way, do not follow the world.
- Not twice this day Inch time foot gem. This day will not come again. Each minute is worth a priceless gem.
- **If the mind is not restricted to just one direction, it will be in all ten.**
- When a person does not think, "Where shall I put it?" the mind will extend throughout the entire body and move to any place at all The effort not to stop the mind in just one place - this is discipline. Not stopping the mind is object and essence. Put it nowhere and it will be everywhere. Even in moving the mind outside the body, if it is sent in one direction, it will be lacking in nine others. **If the mind is not restricted to just one direction, it will be in all ten.**
- Consider the core of the mind to be a wagon, with will-power to be carried about in it. Push it to a place where there can be failure, and there will be failure. Push it to a place where there can be success, and there will be success. But whether there is success or failure, if one entrusts himself to the straightness of this wagon of the core of the mind, he will attain right-mindedness in either case. Severing oneself from desire and being like a rock or tree, nothing will ever be achieved. Not departing from desire, but realizing a desireless right-mindedness - this is the Way.
- [Develop] ... one's unmoving mind and unvacillating body. Unvacillating means not being detained by anything. Glancing at something and not stopping the mind is called Immovable. This is because when the mind stops at something, the breast is filled with various judgments, and there are various movements within it. When its movements cease, the stopping mind moves, but does not move at all ...
- One is not likely to achieve understanding from the explanation of another.
- "One does not divine this by impressions or knowledge." What this means is that no

matter how much you try to figure or calculate by means of impressions or knowledge, it will not prove the least bit useful. Therefore, separate yourself from the discrimination of figuring things out.

- When this No-Mind has been well developed, the mind does not stop with one thing nor does it lack any one thing. It appears appropriately when facing a time of need.
- We must know that it is not enough just to see what the Mind is, we must put into practice all that makes it up in our daily life. We may talk about it glibly, we may write books to explain it, but that is far from being enough. However much we may talk about water and describe it quite intelligently, that does not make it real water.
So with fire.
Mere talking of it will not make the mouth burn.
To know what they are means to experience them in actual concreteness.
A book on cooking will not cure our hunger.
To feel satisfied we must have actual food.
So long as we do not go beyond mere talking, we are not true knowers.
- The Buddha and all sentient beings are not two.

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