

**The System and Control Theory in the
Vipassana Meditation of the Noble Eightfold Path
as taught by Buddha
-understanding meditation with
the Taichi Yin-Yang system in modern terminologies**

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ABSTRACT

The theory in the Vipassana Noble Eightfold meditation technique of Buddha is believed to be the Theory of Everything. However, Chinese believed that the Taichi Yin-Yang theory is the Theory of the Universe. Albert Einstein and Richard Feynman believed in the unity of all the equations and theories of physics to explain the nature. Could they be the different truth of the universe? Or they are all the truth of the universe but only illustrated in different terminologies? It is believed that the latter one is the case. The links between these theories are illustrated in this paper using modern system and control theories.

The evolution of science gave birth to our modern materialistic world. Does this materialism contradict with our spirituality? It is believed that both of them follow the Theory of Everything. All the contradictions arise only because of human beings, who tried to control and manipulate the universe to suit their frame of reference involving cravings, aversions and ignorance. The practice of Vipassana meditation allows us to realize the union of materialism and spirituality, because Vipassana helps us to acquire the ultimate wisdom, to be the master of our own mind, and to be able to make decisions base not on emotions but on compassion.

Buddha explained the theory of our universe but said that the ultimate truth cannot be

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explained in the words and concepts that we use to communicate. Our common senses are based on pattern differentiation. Our communications are based on languages. And the fundamental of all languages are mathematical logic, set theory, and Taichi Yin-Yang system theory, which all are again based on differentiation. Buddha said that the ultimate truth is without differentiation, which is beyond our common senses and our communication abilities. However, Buddha taught a method for everyone of us to experience the ultimate truth ourselves. The beauty of this method is that it is simple, practical and realistic, involving no sectarianism, no imagination and no super-natural power. The method is similar to a virus cleaning program that will eliminates all the impurities within our mind, allowing us to experience the ultimate truth. Even though the ultimate truth cannot be explained in words, the Vipassana method itself is within our basic concepts and hence can be explained in terms of system and control theories.

The Taichi, boundary, of this system is the "purification of my mind". According to the Taichi Yin-Yang theory, the Yin-Yang combo will be formed in different parts of the system namely the internal part, and the superficial part which acts as the interface between the internal and the external of the system. Research reveals that the internal Yin component of Vipassana method is equanimity, the balance of the mind, and the Yang component is our awareness. The superficial Yin component is wisdom and the Yang component is compassion. Our goal of regulation is to keep both parts of this system working within the balanced range of the Cold-Hot and Deficiency-Excess spectrum.

The preparation stage of Vipassana meditation is Anapana meditation, the concentration of the mind through the observation of the breath. Research shows that the technique requires the observer to fix the frame of reference on the entrance of the nose. Then observe the flow of air during breathing in and breathing out. However, only the polarity of the first derivative of the flow of air at this moment is observed. That is, whether the breath is coming in or going out at this moment. The value of the derivative, the second and higher derivatives, the memory of the past moments, or the prediction of the coming moments should all be ignored.

This paper will demonstrate our research of the Vipassana meditation technique as taught by S.N. Goenka globally nowadays, in terms of the Taichi Yin-Yang system theory which is now structured in terms of modern system and control theories with our research.

Keywords: Control Theory, Differentiation & Integration, System Theory, Spirituality and systems, The Taichi Yin-Yang system, The Four Noble Truths, Vipassana Noble Eightfold Path of Buddha, Dhamma, The Theory of Everything, Vipassana Meditation As Taught By S.N. Goenka, Systems that make a difference.

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ANCIENT AND MODERN THEORY OF EVERYTHING

The pursuit of the Theory of Everything, or the general system theory, exists in different cultures around the world ever since the ancient times as shown in Table1.

Table 1. The theory of everything around the world

Taichi Yin-Yang theory Traditional Chinese Medicine, Toaism, Confucianism CHINESE		Relativity, Quantum Macheinics, Albert Einstein Richard Feynman Physics
	Mathematics, Set theory, System Theory	
	Vipassana Noble Eightfold Path Budda, INDIA	

- Buddha: ultimate wisdom cannot be explained but can only be experienced
- Toaism: The theory that can be explained in words is not the true and everlasting theory (Laozi 590BC).
- Physics: understanding how the universe behaves in terms of theories expressed mathematically
- System theory: the general theory for all field of science

What kind of wisdom cannot be explained? Let us investigate with mathematics, the basic of modern scientific language as in Figure 1. And the basic of mathematics is commonly known as set theory

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Wu Chi 無極 :

The Universe

宇 Space
宙 Time

"Everything" + "Nothing" at "all times".

The closest description of the Universe in Chinese culture:

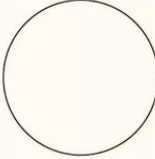
"The Tao that can be explained (in words) is not the true and everlasting Tao.
The Name that can be named (in words) is not the true and everlasting name." (Tao De Ching 01)

"Tao always does no action and does not do no action" (Laozi, 590 BC, Ch37)

"Meditate at the place of nothing and everything"
7th level meditation technique (jhana) of Buddha

"Meditate at the place of not thinking and not not thinking"
8th level meditation technique (jhana) of Buddha (Buddhaghosa, 1956, The Path of Purification. p198)

"They are neither Dharmas nor non-Dharmas."
The Diamond Perfection of Wisdom Sutra by Buddha
(Dharma: The principle or law that orders the universe)



$Wu\ Chi = (A \cup \bar{A}) \cup (A \cap \bar{A}) = U \cup \emptyset = U \forall time$

where A is any particular set, \bar{A} is the complement of A, \cup is the union operator, and \cap is the intersection operator. Buddha said that the past is only our memories and the future is only our imaginations, hence NOW already include all times. \triangleleft

無極 Wu Chi -

Mathematics

Aristotelean logic Set Theory

Aristotelean logic using the format of predicate calculus:

1. Identity: $\forall x (Ax \equiv Ax)$: A is A
2. Non-contradiction: $\neg \exists x (Ax \wedge \neg Ax)$:
3. Either-or: $\forall x (Ax \vee \neg Ax)$: Either A or non-A.

Extending these sets of fundamental axioms of logic to the concept of set theory, we will have the following axioms:

- 1 The Set A is set A.
- 2 The set not A, denoted by \bar{A} is the compliment of the set A
- 3 The set A intersected with \bar{A} is the empty set, \emptyset such that $A \cap \bar{A} = \emptyset$ and $\bar{A} \cap A = \emptyset$
- 4 The set A union with \bar{A} is the Universal set, U such that $A \cup \bar{A} = U$ and $\bar{A} \cup A = U$

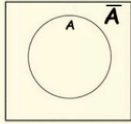


Figure 1. Comparison of Ancient theories and Set theory in mathematics

This is the starting point of what can be explained and what cannot. What is it before differentiating A from U, 0, A, A' ? Buddha said the act of differentiation is the start of this universe, the state before the differentiation cannot be explained, however, it can be experienced with human body.

Our common senses including thoughts are based on pattern differentiation. Our communications are based on languages. And the fundamental of all languages are mathematical logic, set theory, and Taichi Yin-Yang system theory, which all are again based on differentiation. It seem that the state before differentiation is beyond our common tools.

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The Taichi Yin-Yang system

Taichi Yin-Yang system theory starts from differentiation. Taichi is A, our system, our desire, or something we want. Yin and Yang are the fundamental components arise according to the Taichi we differentiated. (Wong2005)(Wong2007)

Balance between Yin and Yang is what we want to achieve because the system A will then behave exactly as we would like it to be. The more the imbalances between Yin and Yang will make the system A behaves less like what we would like it to be. A simplified table format of the Taichi Yin-Yang system structure in (Wong 2005) is shown in Table2.

Table 2. The Taichi Yin-Yang simple structure:

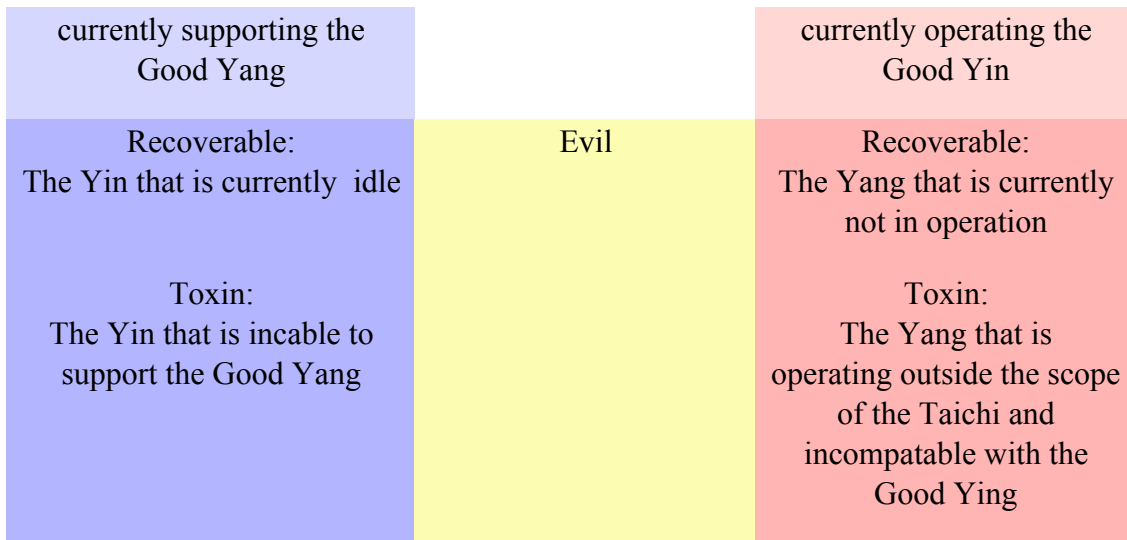
Yin Component supports:	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition:	Yang Component operates:
Behavior	Good	Behavior
Behavior	Evil	Behavior

Each of the four components (quadrant) can be further divided into Yin-Yang combo (Native-Mercenary, Recoverable-Toxin), as shown in Table3.

Table 3. The Taichi Yin-Yang Native and Foreign components:

Yin Component supports:	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition:	Yang Component operates:
Replacement: mercenary Yin that is both capable to support and currently supporting the Good Yang	Good	Replacement: mercenary Yang that is both capable to operate and currently operating the Good Yin
Native: Native Yin that is both capable to support and		Native: Native Yang that is both capable to operate and

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The changes in the magnitude of four basic quadrants represents different states of the Taichi Yin-Yang system. The input and internal feedback loop affect the state of the system while the output behaviour reflect the state of the system as shown in Figure2.

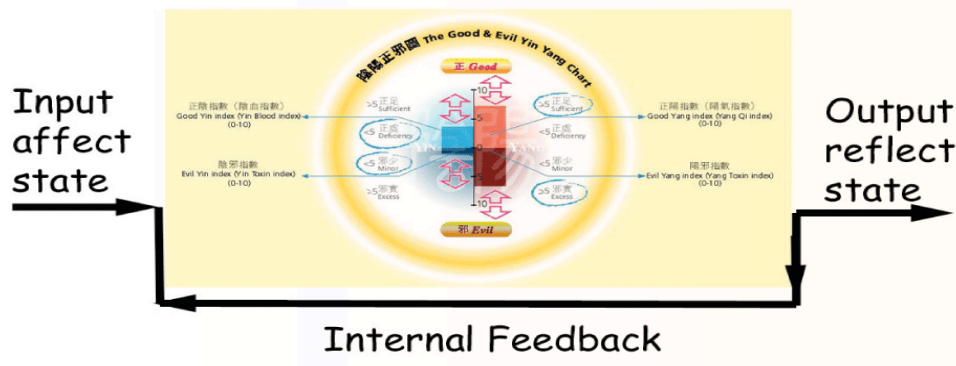


Figure 2. The input, output and feedback of a Taichi Yin-Yang system

The magnitude of the four quadrants can be measured with another Yin-Yang combo (Deficient-Sufficient, Minor-Excess) as shown in Table4. (Wong 2005)

Table 4. The Good & Evil Yin-Yang chart:

Yin Component supports:	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition:	Yang Component operates:
Sufficient	Good Quantity x Quality	Sufficient

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Deficient		Deficient
Minor	Evil	Minor
Excess		Excess

The changes in the magnitude of four basic quadrant forms the spectrum of states named the Cold-Hot Deficient-Excess spectrum in (Wong 2005) and (Wong 2007) is expressed graphically in Figure3 and expressed in a table format in Table 5.

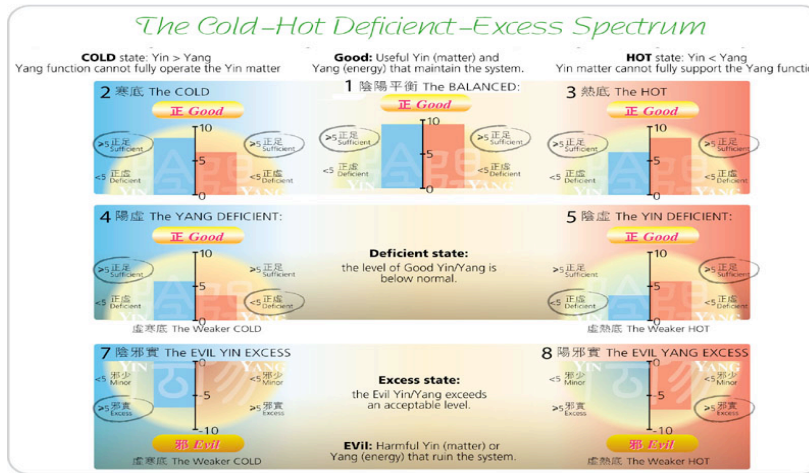


Figure 3. The cold-hot deficiency-excess spectrum is the all the possibilities of the changes of a system, A.

Table 5. The Cold-Hot Deficient-Excess Spectrum

Tai Chi: Differentiation
system definition:

COLD	Good Balanced Yin - Yang supports - operates component identification	HOT
Yang Deficient weaker COLD	Either side in Deficient	Yin Deficient weaker HOT

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Yin Yang Deficient weakest COLD	Yin Yang Deficient	Yin Yang Deficient weakest HOT
Minor Evil Yin	Minor Evil	Minor Evil Yang
Excess Evil Yin	Excess Evil	Excess Evil Yang

The Taichi Yin-Yang system theory is illustrated in (Wong 2007) with comparison with mathematics and modern system theory, and it will be employed for the following analysis of the paper.

WHAT IS HAPPINESS

Why do we need the ultimate wisdom? Why do we need to practice Vipassana? Buddha said in (Buddha 500BCa)(Buddha 500BCb) that wisdom will bring us real happiness, peacefulness and harmony. So first of all, let us investigate what happiness is.

When will we feel happy? Everyone has different answers but all have the same rule: when the desires are satisfied. In economics terms, this is when the supply meet the demand, Yin-Yang balanced. Let us investigate what are the spectrum of possibilities by employing the Taichi Yin-Yang system theory. Table 5 shown the compositions in each of the quadrants in this happiness system (Taichi).

Table 6. The Taichi Yin-Yang simple state spectrum structure in table format:

Yin Component supports: Objects in the environment (Materialism)	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition: Happiness is to feel that our desires are satisfied	Yang Component operates: Desires (Spirituality)
The Yin that is both capable to support and currently supporting the Good Yang Our likes: beautiful materials	Good	Yang that is both capable to operate and currently operating the Good Yin Our desires that is currently being satisfied through

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<p>food and wine people treasure reputation good memories</p>		<p>pleasant sensation triggered by our senses: Sight, Hearing, taste, smell, touch, memory in our mind</p>
<p>Recoverable: The Yin that is currently idle materials we process that we may desire in the future</p>	<p>Evil</p>	<p>Recoverable: The Yang that is currently not in operation</p> <p>Desires that are currently not satisfied by materials</p> <p>not to get what one desires disassociation with something that one does like</p>
<p>Toxin: The Yin that is in-cable to support the Good Yang</p> <p>Associated with our dislikes: ugly rubbish bad taste foods people loans humiliation</p>		<p>Toxin: The Yang that is operating outside the scope of the Taichi and incomptable with the Good Yin</p> <p>Our desires that can never be satisfied:</p> <p>always get what we want born in rich family born in a loving family never get sick never get old liberate without practice never get sorrow never get lamentation never get pain grief distress never die immortal</p>

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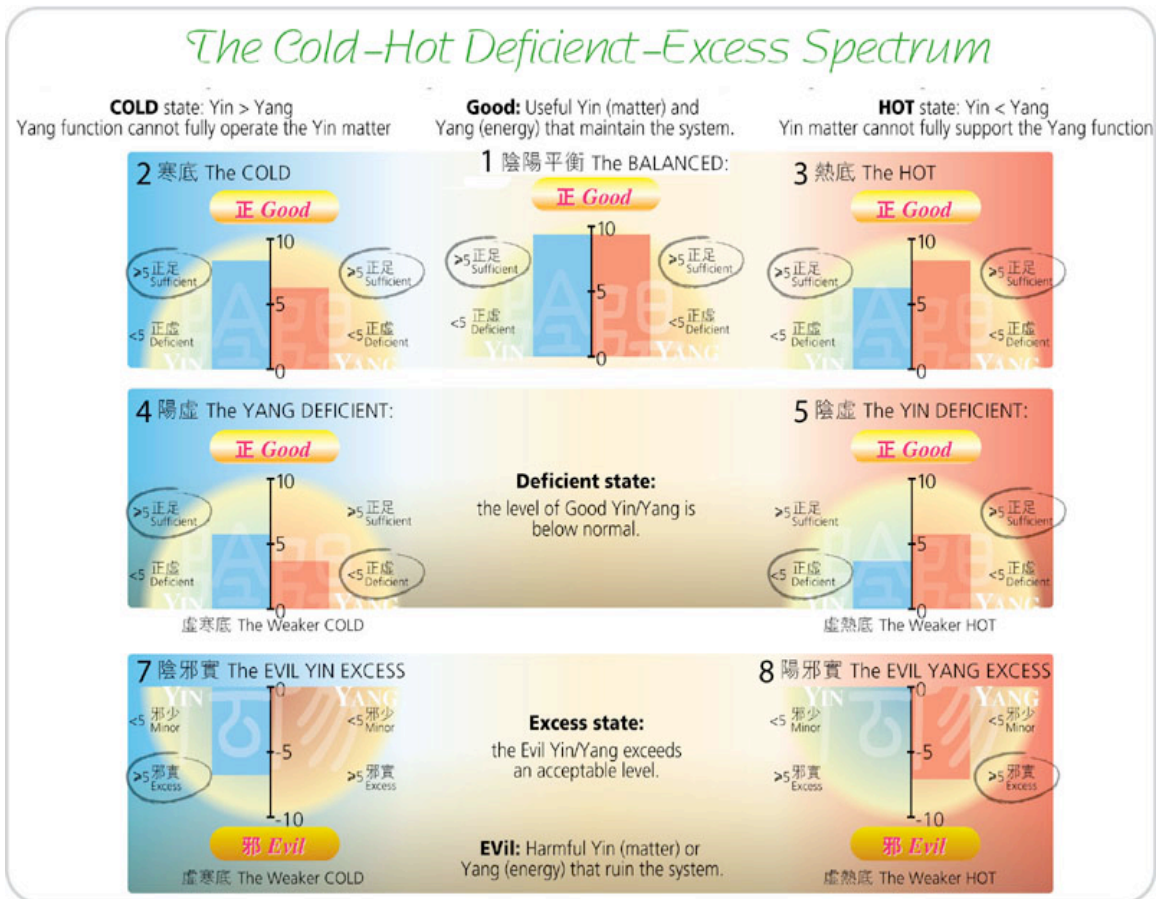


Figure 4. The Cold-Hot Deficient-Excess Spectrum on Desires and Supply

It can be seen from Figure 4 that one will be happy only in the Balanced state 1. Even if one accepts the Cold and Hot states 2 and 3 to be “acceptable” happiness, the possibility of unhappiness (imbalance states) are much higher! This is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: When will we be happy?

Happy	Unhappy
1. getting what we desire (the Balanced state) 20% of the time on average?	1. association with something that one does not like (Evil Yin) ____ 2. disassociation with something that one does like (transition from Balanced state to all the other states) ____

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	3. not to get what one desires (all the Hot states) _____
	4. desire the impossibles _____

Therefore the truth is that we suffer almost 80% of the time! We have been deceived for all our lives!

The fundamental teaching of Buddha is the Four noble Truth as discussed in (Buddha 500BCa)(Buddha 500BCb)(Goenka 1987a)(Goenka 1987b). And the above illustration is the first part of the Four noble Truths: the fact of suffering as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: The Four noble Truths

The Four noble Truths	Contents
1. the fact of suffering	Suffering is unavoidable
2. the origin of suffering (craving)	Desire is the cause
3. the cessation of suffering	Stop all unwholesome acts, perform only wholesome acts.
4. the path leading to the cessation of suffering	The Noble Eightfold path

HOW TO MAINTAIN HAPPINESS

The spirit of system and control theory is about “system that make a difference” in human life. In terms of the happiness Taichi system, the aim of control is to balance the Supply (Yin) and the Desire (Yang) in all the possible states. However, maintaining happiness means that we need to be satisfied continuously. That is, we require new desires continuously and that they are satisfied continuously. As shown in the previous section, there is a 20% chance that one desire will be satisfied. Therefore the probability of continuous satisfaction is 0.2 to the power of N.

Nevertheless, system scientists always search for improvements. The rule of regulation in Taichi Yin-Yang system theory is to manipulate either the Yin or the Yang as illustrated in (Wong 2005)(Wong 2007). It should be noted that control or regulation is an act, and

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hence create another Taichi Yin-Yang system, which will be further analysed in (Wong TBP c). Therefore it should be very careful on what system will be created when maintaining happiness.

Solution 1: create a system that will manipulate the supply to meet the desires

That is, to express the desires freely and manipulate the supply to meet the desires. This is what we have been doing especially in the last century with economics. However, the first question in economics is How to satisfy the desires with scarce resources. The desires give rise to materialism and money(resources), which result in the struggle of power with war between countries, government and politicians. Many indexes arise like Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Product (GNP), Gross National Income (GNI) etc but none seem to fulfil our goal of maintaining happiness. Some country even have the Gross National Happiness (GNH) index to monitor the goal. The fact is that all the people and events happening around cannot be 100% controlled and hence it is too hard to manipulate the supply to meet the desire.

solution 2: create a system that will regulate the demand to meet our supply

In the previous century, the resources human found are too little to meet the simple basic desires of human. Therefore regulations are setup by governments, laws, religions, and communism to control the desires, in order to prevent chaos in society. However the fact is that our mind cannot be 100% controlled by others. How can we regulate the demand by ourself?

1. create a system call "morality"

That is to keep telling ourselves "not to" in order to suppress our desires. Buddha said that complete freedom will only bring suffering, however morality is only the first three steps in the Eightfold noble Path (the last part of the Four noble Truths) (Buddha 500BCb)(Goenka 1987a)(Goenka 1987b). The classic example of why morality alone cannot solve the problem is: try "not to" think of a monkey eating a banana in the next minute while closing your eye. And the result is that one will either fall asleep, keep thinking of the monkey eating the banana, or thinking of something else.

2. create a system call "concentration"

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The fact is that our minds grasp on thoughts every moment. After morality, concentration is required to continuously fix our mind on one thought. This can be done by concentrating on one object, usually status of gods or words of gods in different religion (pray, visualisation, and meditation). Concentrating on something we love, say our favorite food, is much easier but that may create more desires. In many traditions people concentrate on their favorite objects for long time until their desire for the objects is totally lost. But one may have infinite number of favorite objects. Even if we succeeds, the “concentration system” itself will become our biggest desire and we will be very unhappy if we found ourselves cannot concentrate! How do we get rid of this final system that could make us unhappy?

According to (Buddha 500BCa)(Buddha 500BCb)(Goenka 1987a)(Goenka 1987b), one should concentrate on body sensations because that is the important breakable point in the vicious cycle. The body sensation would directly cause our action to create new desires and hence new systems.

In the next section we will investigate what is concentration, what to concentrate, and who is concentrating. And in (Wong TBPb) we will investigate how long concentration could last and why one need to go for the next step in the last part of the EightFold noble path: Wisdom.

3. Attain Wisdom and create a system that will eliminate all the desires and then eliminate itself in the end

In the known history of mankind, only Buddha discover this method and able to teach others. Buddha said that he did not invent this method but only re-discover it again. It was the practice method of all the enlightened ones in the past, at the present moment, or in the future. Buddha called it Vipassana, the last part of the Noble Eightfold Path.

The key is Acceptance: accept everything we observe as it is. With the help of concentration on body sensations, we can break the vicious cycle of new desires and new disappointments and attain the final liberations from all the sufferings and maintain real happiness. (Buddha 500BCb)(Goenka 1987a)(Goenka 1987b)

Note that when all the possible imbalanced states are balanced by adjusting our demand (accepting whether we observe), the Cold-Hot Deficient-Excess spectrum disappears, the happiness system will always be balance and will always be happy.

It has been said that to maintain happy is easy by: “Do not be too happy, do not be too said, be satisfied with simple things.” This is just increasing the acceptable range of the state spectrum. The is close to the path of Vipassana but the actual practice will bring much greater happiness because it help us to accept the whole spectrum happily. Furthermore, only with practice would we discover all the hidden desires, craving, aversion and ignorance hidden deep inside our subconscious.

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CONCENTRATION - THE UTILIZATION OF OUR MIND

In this section we will investigate what is concentration, what to concentrate, and who is concentrating. Table 9 shows the structure of concentration. Concentration on the conscious level is not enough. The proper concentrating technique should also investigate the subconscious part of our mind.

Table 9: The Taichi Yin-Yang simple structure of concentration:

Yin Component supports: Subconscious	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition: Concentration	Yang Component operates: Conscious
rest are all subconscious	Good:	3-5% of our mind are being
.how to access?	be able to concentrate on one	used consciously and be able
.how to concentrate?	object or matter at any	to concentrate
.what is inside there?	instance	try hard to concentrate
.what kinds of memories?		
.what kinds of functions?		
.don't know why feel concentrated	Evil:	do not try to concentrate and
don't know why feel distracted	being distracted by other	become distracted
	objects or matters	

Spirituality

In order to understand what to concentrate, we should investigate spirituality with the Taichi Yin-Yang system theory as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. The Taichi Yin-Yang simple structure on spirituality:

Yin Component supports:	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition:	Yang Component operates:
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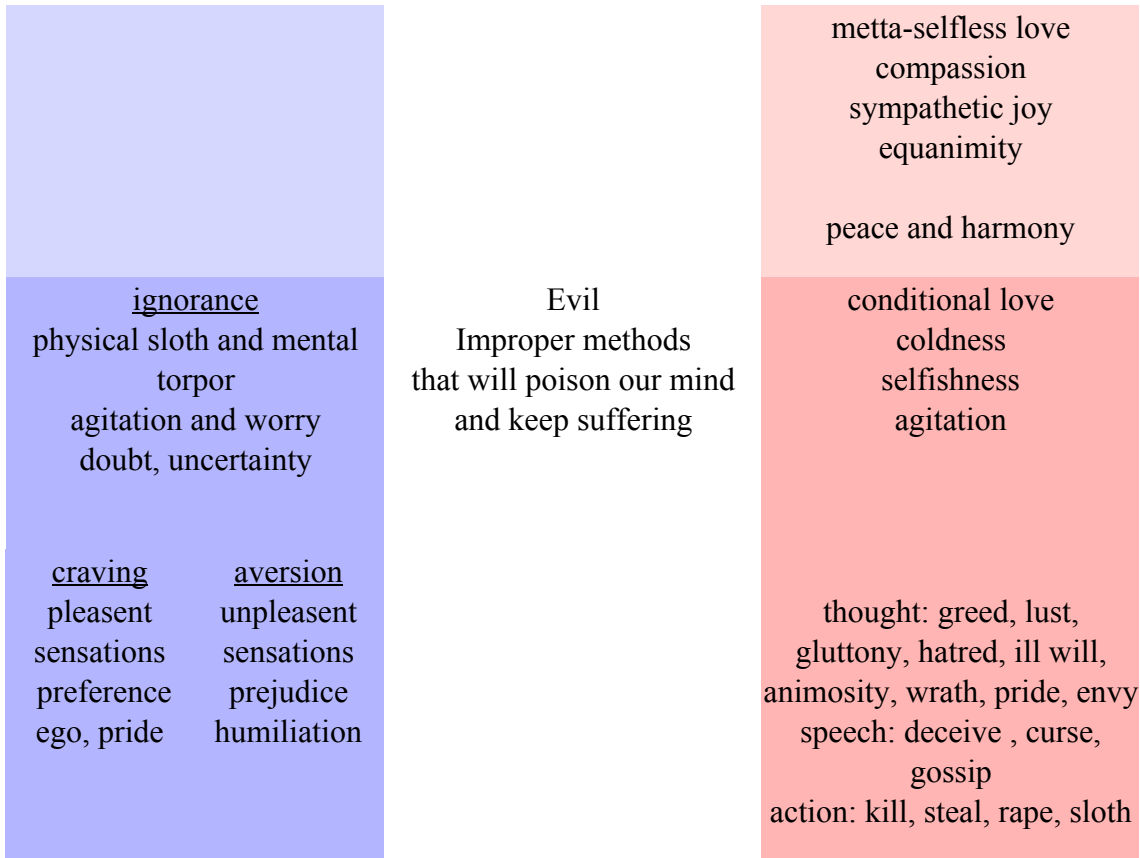
Spirit	ME	Body
Spirit? Soul? Ghost? Our control? Need special device to detect? Spirituality? characteristics of our sprit. The content of our mind: Subconscious & Conscious which can be analyzed with system theory.	Good good person but to what frame of reference? ourself? family? society? country? world? Earth? universe?	Behavior: Thoughts Speech Body actions (manipulation of energy and matter)
Behavior	Evil	Behavior

In the rest of the analysis, the content of our mind is considered as our spirituality. That is, the methods or programs in our mind. Next we investigate the content of our mind with the Taichi Yin-Yang system theory as shown in Table 11.

Table 11. The Taichi Yin-Yang simple structure of Mental Contents:

Yin Component supports: Why to Act	Tai Chi: Differentiation System definition: Mental Contents	Yang Component operates: How to Act
<u>wisdom</u> the understanding of the three characteristics of phenomena of this universe: 1. anicca- impermanence 2. egolessness 3. suffering	Good Proper methods that will purify our minds and be liberated	<u>Dhamma:</u> (1. morality:) right speech right action right livelihood (2. concentration:) right effort right awareness right concentration (3. wisdom:) right thought right understanding <u>four qualities of a pure mind</u>

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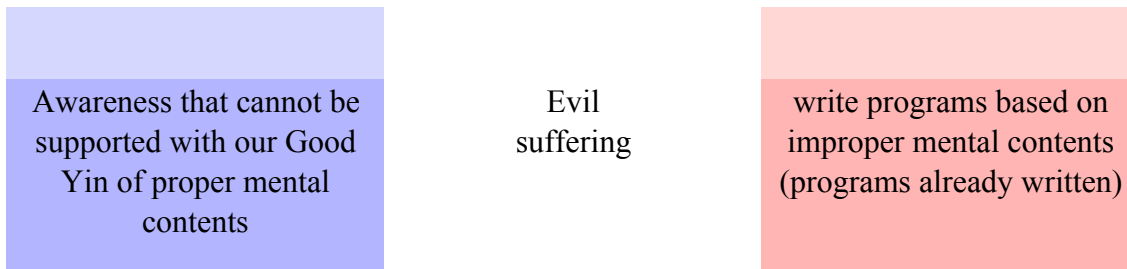


Note that the size of each of the components determine our individuality. The common ability of our mind: who are us after all? What are our commonality.

Table 12. The Taichi Yin-Yang simple structure of all human:

Yin Component supports: Awareness	Tai Chi: System definition: Common ability of us	Yang Component operates: the power to Act
<p>Conscious+Sub-conscious Awareness through sensation triggered by our senses: Sight, Hearing, taste,smell, touch, memory in our mind Awareness that is supported by our Good Yin of proper mental contents</p>	<p>Good liberation</p>	<p>ability to create new Taichi: Differentiation write programs based on proper mental contents (programs already written)</p>

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commonality and individuality

One interesting note is: Once our individuality is eliminated, only our commonality remains? Can we preserve individuality? Only if we preserve our craving, aversion and ignorance, which must lead to suffering.

(Buddhaghosa 1956) discussed 40 classic concentration method for human of different states of mind to practice. The one we researched is Anapana, the observation of our breath, the observation of the flow of air in and out of our body, which will be further investigated in future papers. This particular method is chosen because it is taught worldwide in a well organized course named Vipassana Meditation As Taught By S.N. Goenka (Goenka 1987a)(Goenka 1987b)

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Discussing about system and control theory is good but that is only theory. They need to be practically apply to real life systems, with experiments. And the most important and easy place to perform experiments are within our bodies and minds.

Therefore control ME and Regulate ME to achieve the goal of maintaining happiness. We system scientist want to make a difference by convincing people to apply system theory in real life situation. With this theory involving human system, we system scientist should start practising ourselves to make a difference within ourselves, in order to show others that system theory does work! System scientists research system theory, but should become real life practitioners before showing to the end users. Act now and attend a 10 days Vipassana meditation course as taught by S.N. Goenka as found in www.dhamma.org

According to (Buddha 500BCa)(Buddha 500BCb)(Goenka 1987a)(Goenka 1987b), there are three kinds of wisdom: (the learning process)

suta-maya panna-wisdom gained by listening to others

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cinta-maya panna-intellectual, analytical understanding

bhavana-maya panna-wisdom based on direct personal experience

CONCLUSION

In the search for happiness, the first part of the Four Noble Truths, sufferings, has been investigated with the Taichi Yin-Yang system theory and seem that sufferings are unavoidable in our systems that are driven by desires.

In the pursuit of maintaining happiness, the last part of the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path has been analysed and concentration is found to be a important step. It is hence being investigated with Taichi Yin-Yang system theory and spirituality is defined in terms of consciousness, subconsciousness, and the content of the mind. The commonality and individuality of human are identified.

Future work is the investigation of the Anapana breathing technique and the wisdom part of the Vipassana meditation technique as taught by S.N. Goenka.

Future work also include the investigation of a mathematical proof to show that the system of acceptance in Vipassana is a system that can eliminate all the desire system and eliminate itself in the end. That is, acceptance is the solution of differentiation.

Another important future work is the integration of Mathematics, Vipassana, Taichi Yin-Yang System Theory, Modern System Theory , Physics, Chemistry , Biology, Economics and other fields of modern sciences.

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