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Exclusive

VAN DAMME

*A Quest in Martial
Arts Film Action*

With
SAMMO HUNG
Kung Fu Trilogy



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ORIGINAL TRUTH: YIN AND YANG

FIGHTING FILM REVIEWS

Article: Lak Loi
Photographs: ©Lak Loi
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Original Truth...

ULTIMATE POTENTIAL

CREATING THE ULTIMATE LIFE USING MARTIAL PRINCIPLES

Often used in martial art school logos, the 'Yin and Yang' symbol is synonymous with martial arts. Why? Lak Loi gives the complete low-down on this ancient symbol.

The true meaning of the **Yin and Yang** actually comes from Chinese philosophy, and is an integral part of Taoism, Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism, and the I Ching. The philosophy behind **Yin and Yang** describes the **Natural Order of the Universe**.

It is a common misconception in the western world that **Yin and Yang** represent a dualistic view of the world, such as...

Black and White; Good and Bad; Light and Dark; Gentleness and Firmness; Hot and Cold; Life and Death; Male and Female; Active and Passive; Strength and Weakness; Cause and Effect; Fire and Water; Sun and Moon, and so on.

However, **Yin and Yang** actually represent a monistic view, one which is complementary, interconnected, and interdependent.

For example...

'Darkness is the absence of light' and 'Silence is the absence of sound'.

Yin and Yang therefore represents a dynamic relationship of an indivisible whole, in which

the whole is greater than the sum of the assembled parts.

For example...

'A shadow cannot exist without light' and 'An echo cannot exist without sound'.

Bruce Lee stated:

'So neither gentleness nor firmness holds any more than half of a broken whole, which, fitted together, forms the true Way of Gung Fu.'

'Gentleness/firmness is one inseparable force of one unceasing interplay of movement.'

'They are conceived of as essentially one, or as two coexistent forces of one indivisible whole.'

Now that you understand the true essence of **Yin and Yang**, you can start to manage it by perceiving **Yin and Yang** as equal and opposite energies of an indivisible whole.



For example, let's say you get into a heated argument. If the situation is managed poorly, then you may respond to aggression, i.e. **Yin**, with agitation, frustration and even anger which is also **Yin**, and the whole situation will become imbalanced and escalate due to compounding energies.

To re-balance the **Yin and Yang**, you could stay silent and be calming to introduce **Yang** energy to alter the state of the whole to lower the **Yin** energy, and restore balance and harmony to the situation.

This is what **Lao Tsu** depicts in **Tao Te Ching**:
*'Tao engenders one,
 One engenders two,
 Two engenders three,
 Three engenders all things.
 All things carry the yin while embrace the yang.
 Neutralising energy brings them into harmony.'*

In this case the **Tao** is one. The heated argument and silence are the two opposing **Yin and Yang** energies in the equation, which refer to two. And the way they interact to create a new outcome is three. The outcome, is therefore the result of the two energies neutralising, restoring balance within the **Yin and Yang** formula, therefore maintaining harmony and happiness.

In life, our ultimate goal is to apply this philosophy of **Yin and Yang** energy management, to create balance and maintain a constant state of harmony and happiness.

The Symbol

The **Yin and Yang** symbol is also known as the **Taijiti**, which literally means **Ultimate Potential**. The circular symbol



is comprised of two colours, where **Black** represents **Yin** and **White** represents **Yang**. The roundedness of the two 'fishlike' halves, seemingly 'flowing in motion' shows a continual interplay of the two halves of a complimentary, interconnected, interdependent parts of an indivisible whole.

In each half, there is a dot of the opposite energy, symbolising that **Yin is rooted in the Yang**, and that **Yang is rooted in the Yin**, inseparable, opposing, yet complimentary and interchangeable to create a new relational state.

The challenge for us in life is to balance the **Yin and Yang** in everything we do, to find harmony and happiness.

As **Lao Tsu** describes:
*'The Sage who is Forthright but not hurting;
 Sharp but not wounding,
 Candid but not being crude;
 Shining but not dazzling.'*

However, like a full moon wanes (gets darker), and a new moon waxes (gets brighter), the

Ying and Yang depicts an interplay of energies, whilst noting the moon is the same, the **Tao** remains **ONE**.

Law of Harmony

The application of the principles of **Yin and Yang** in **Gung Fu** are expressed as the '**Law of Harmony**', also known as '**The Bamboo Principle**'. The **Law of Harmony** states that one should be in harmony with, not in rebellion against, the force of the opposition. This means that one should do nothing that is not natural or spontaneous: the important thing is **Not** to strain in any way.

As **Bruce Lee** said:

'So neither gentleness nor firmness holds any more than one half of a broken whole which, welded together, forms the true way of martial art. The tendency to guard against is from getting too firm and stiff. Notice that the stiffest tree is most easily cracked, while the bamboo or willow survives by bending with the wind. This is why a Gung Fu man is soft yet not yielding, firm, yet not hard.'

'The best example of Gung Fu is water. Water can penetrate the hardest granite because it is yielding. One cannot stab or strike at water and hurt it because that which offers no resistance cannot be overcome.'

From a combative standpoint, **Bruce Lee** went on to say:

'When the opponent expands, I contract. When he contracts, I expand.'

Master Your Life

The **Tao of Life**, or the **Way of Life**, is to maintain harmony by balancing the **Yin and Yang** energies in all aspects of your life – Buddhists call this the '**Middle Way**'... not sad, not happy, just balanced.

To do that, the **Tao of Life** methodology allows you to take an eagle eye perspective of your life by evaluating the balance of your life currently, in order to identify areas that need attention so that you can rebalance your life to create the future you want today. The **Tao of Life** diagram shown below provides a visual snapshot and tool for your current and ideal future life. The next section explains step-by-step how to use the **Tao of Life** to achieve your end desires.

Question: Take five minutes to list up to eight key areas of your life. As a guideline, I have provided eight generic areas of life below:

1. Physical,
2. Mental,
3. Spiritual,
4. Financial,
5. Social/hobbies,
6. Career/vocation,
7. Family and Friends,
8. Romance.

How to Use the Tao of Life

1. Print the Tao of Life

Download and print the **Tao of Life** diagram from www.MartialMindPower.com/Resources.

2. Genius Storm areas of life

Genius Storm up to eight different dimensions which are important in your life. You can use one of the following methods:

Key areas of your life:

Physical, mental, spiritual, financial, social/hobbies, career/vocation, family and friends, and romance.

Roles you play in your life:

Brother/sister, husband/wife, father/mother, friend, colleague, team player, etc.

Important things in your life:

Financial freedom, freedom of speech, artistic expression, contribution, growth, love, environment, etc.

3. Write Down the Tao of Life

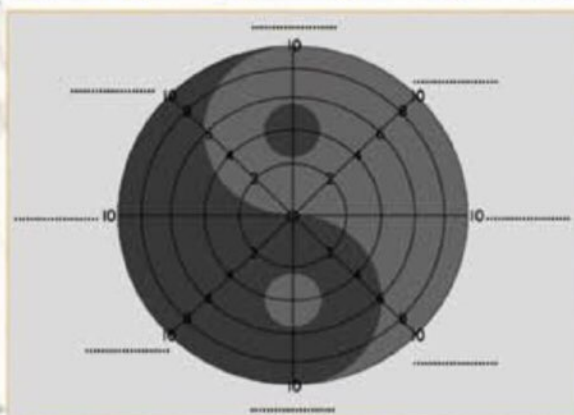
On each spoke of the **Tao of Life**, write down each area you identified in the step above.

4. Analyse Each Dimension

The big idea is that if you find the right balance of attention in each dimension you identified in your life, then you will also find fulfillment and gratification in them. In this step, analyse the amount of attention you're paying to each dimension, and mark a dot on the corresponding spoke on a scale from one (lowest) to ten (highest).

5. Join the Dots

As they say in dot-to-dot, join the dots to see the bigger picture. Where the wheel kinks, you will be able to clearly see areas of your



life where you need to give more attention to re-balance your life.

6. Visualise Ideal Life

Now start to visualise your ideal life in all the dimensions you identified, and start thinking if the score you gave should stay the same, lower or higher. As before, draw the dots for your ideal life on the **Tao of Life** using a different colour so you can differentiate between the current and ideal future states.

7. Act Now!

The big idea now is to identify the gaps between your current and ideal future life states, and figure out what you need to do to bridge the gap by either:

Increasing attention in a dimension of your life because there's currently not enough attention in it.

Decrease attention in a dimension

of your life because there is currently too much time spent in it, which is sapping energy and enthusiasm from other areas of your life.

Once you have a clear idea of the gaps and how to bridge them, write down a list of simple actions that you need to take to **Achieve Your Ultimate Potential** and ideal future state to restore the balance in your **Tao of Life**, using the following as a guideline:

Increase attention:

What extra things do you need to start doing now?

Decrease attention:

What things do you need to re-prioritise, delegate to someone else, or stop doing all together?

Finally, **DO IT NOW!**

As **Bruce Lee** said:

'Knowing is not enough, one must apply. Willing is not enough, one must DO!'

To learn more about **Self Mastery**, pick up your copy of the **Master Your Life** book on **Amazon** and go to **Chapter 8: Power Side Forwards**. ■

**PEACE, RESPECT & LOVE,
SIFU LAK LOI**

