

# Zen *for* *Decision Makers*

A module/workshop based on  
*The Conscious Manager*  
by Fred Phillips



# Welcome to the workshop.

## Today we will discuss and experience:

*management*



Zen



Non-attachment

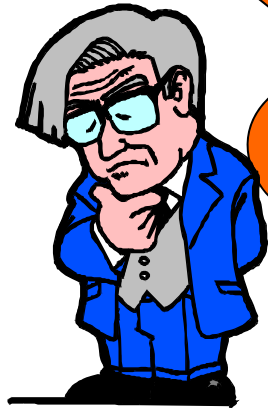
Martial Art



And these topics too:

DECISION

compassion!

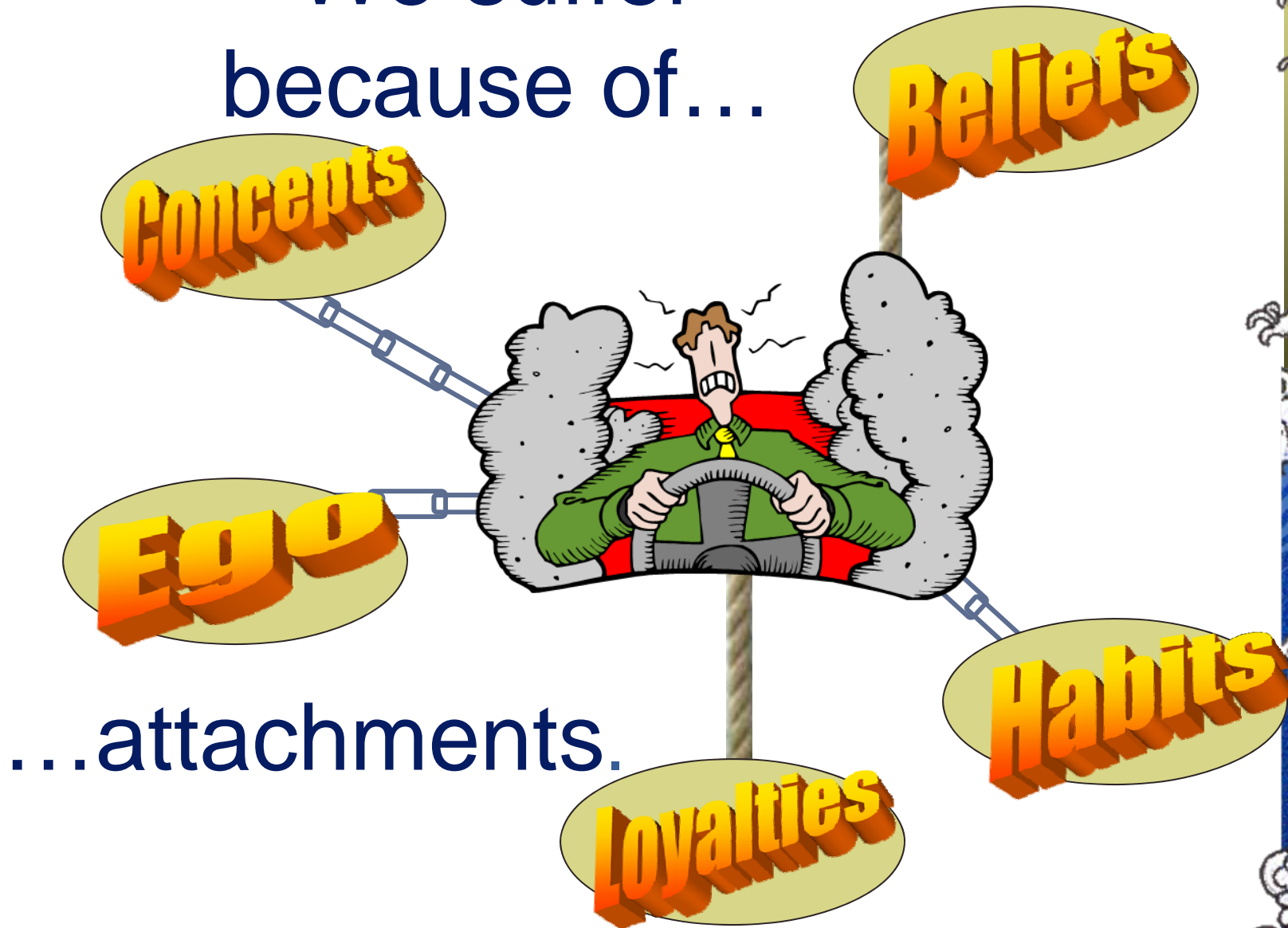


meditation

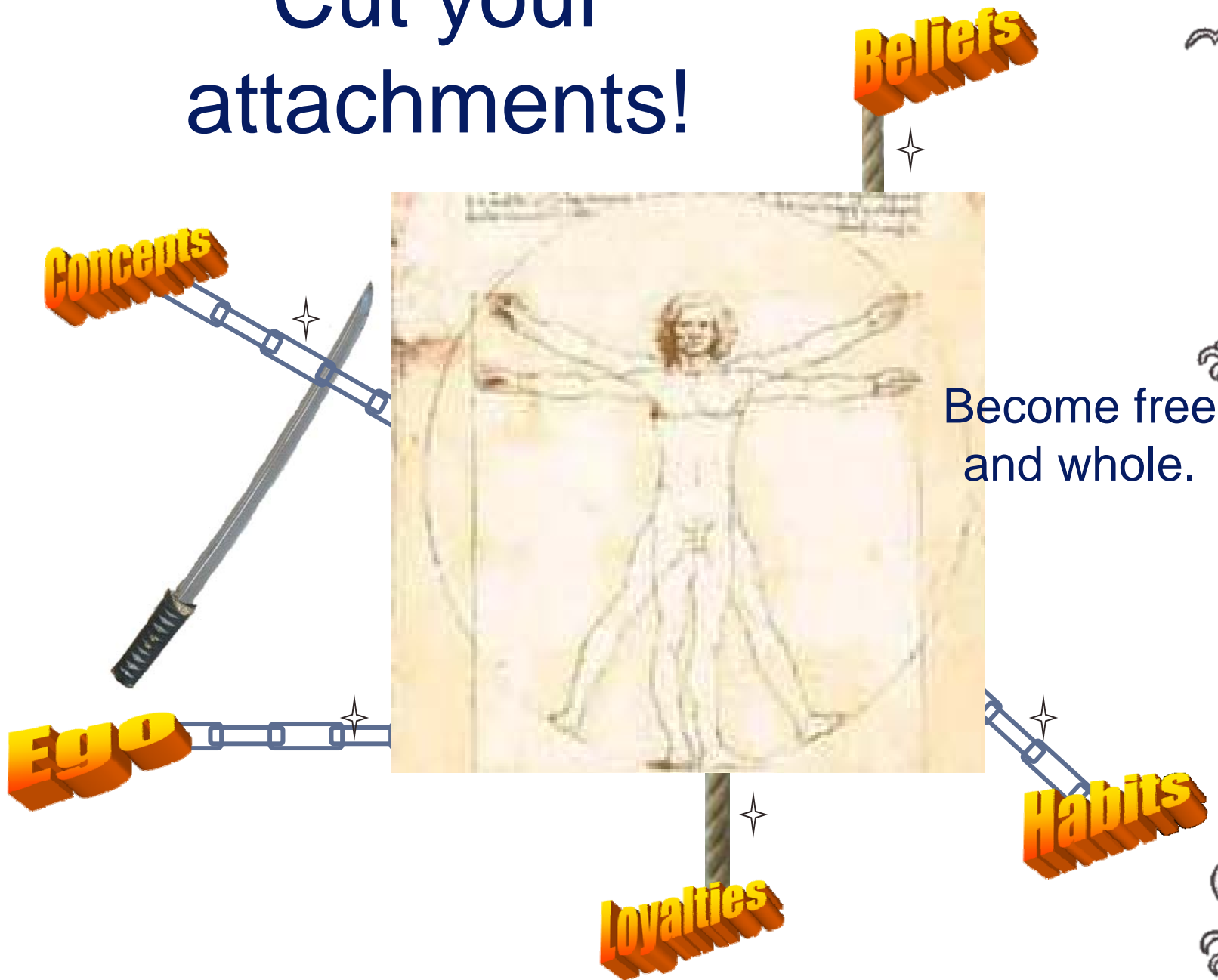
There has been Zen advice on how to maintain your motorcycle and how to cope with oppressive bosses. But now you are the boss. You make decisions for yourself, your family, your company, your clubs and charities, on political issues....



We suffer  
because of...



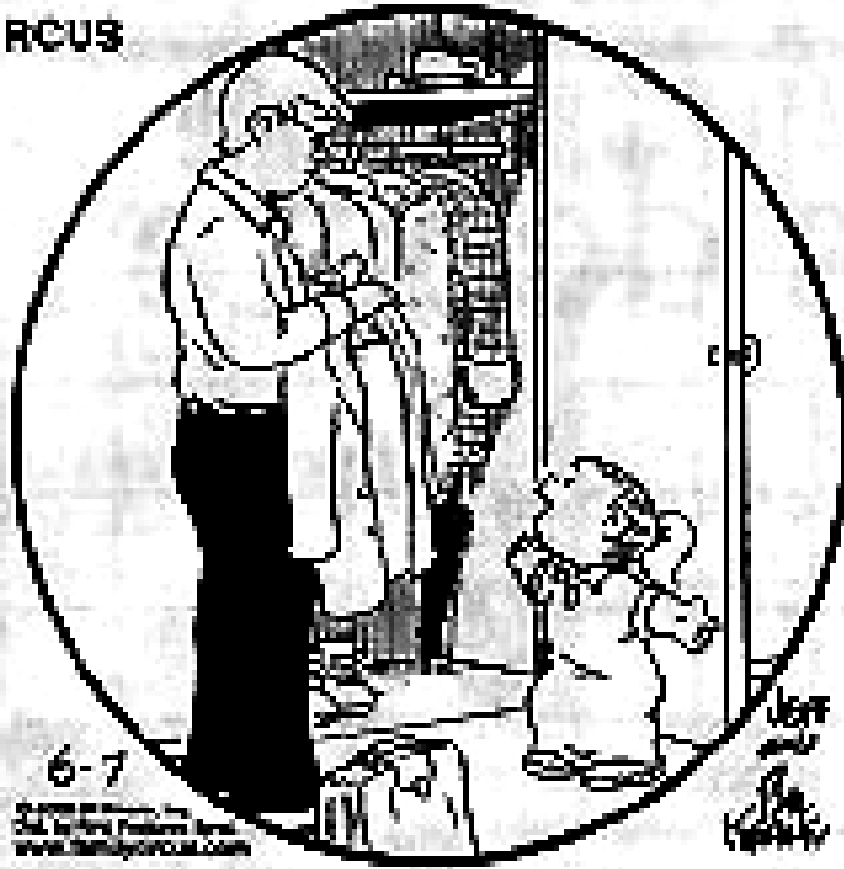
# Cut your attachments!



# How not to accomplish this...

## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

"There's lotsa room in the closet now. Mommy got rid of the vacuum cleaner 'tachments!"



# More How not to accomplish this...

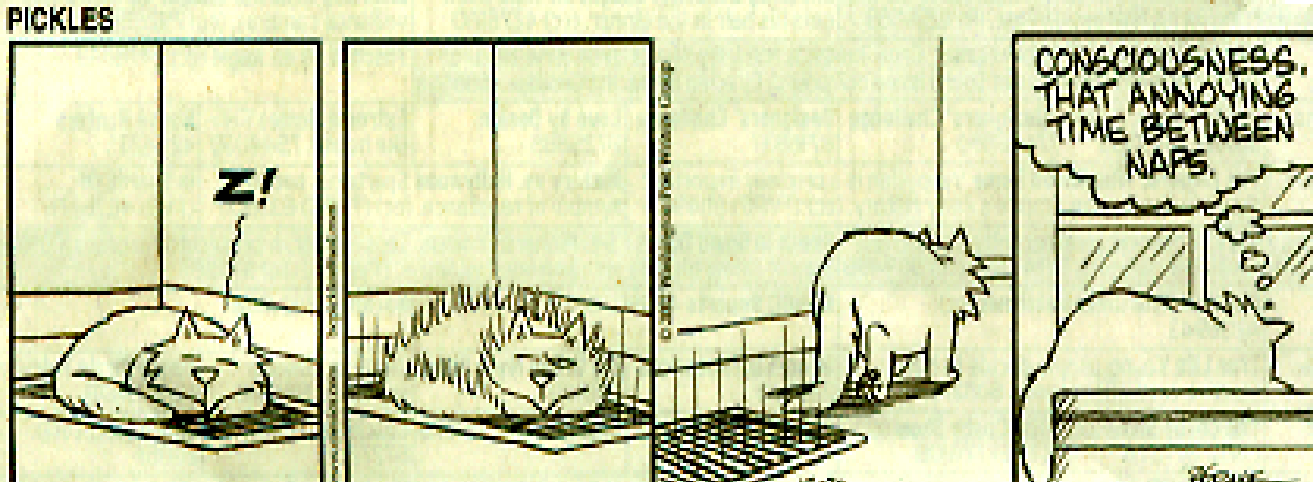


Boss holding martial arts book: *"I want to try something, Carothers - Come at me like you're asking for a raise!"*



# *The light of consciousness embraces the whole universe.*

-Pan-Shan



Little  
mind,  
big  
mind



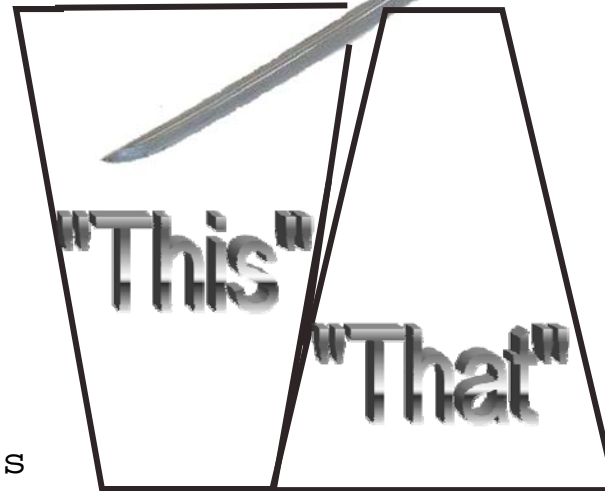
# Why the sword?

## *Making a distinction is the fundamental act of cognition.*

*And one of our first. An infant learns, "Some things are mother, and other things are not mother."*



*To distinguish things is to take a sword, figuratively, and cut the world in two.*



*Genesis: "...the earth was without form, and void... and God divided the light from the darkness."*



# Cutting: The fundamental metaphor for Zen decisions

*A surgeon makes an incision to fix your appendix.*



*A manager makes a decision, eliminating alternatives.*

A1

A2



A3

A4

A5

*Decide: from Latin decidere, to cut off*



# Stages on the path to conscious decision making

1. *Beginnings ("Hunger")*
2. *Practice*
3. *Opening*
4. *Support*
5. *Test*
6. *Mission*



*"Mission Possible"*  
(should you decide  
to accept it)



# A Zen decision

- ▶ *Flows from your mission.*
- ▶ *Here's how it works:*
  - ▶ *You decide whether to decide.*
  - ▶ *You generate alternatives.*
  - ▶ *You cut away all but one alternative.*
  - ▶ *You take action and don't look back.*
- ▶ *You make decisions with more speed, less anxiety, and fewer regrets.*
- ▶ *(Advanced topic) Tai Sabaki: Quickly moving to where it's safe to generate alternatives.*



# Generating alternatives: creative ideation

Your "habitual  
domain" - P.-L. Yu



More  
fixes

Still  
other  
approaches

Solution

Approach

Tool

Fix

Answer

More  
tools

Still  
other  
tools

Still  
other  
solutions

More  
answers

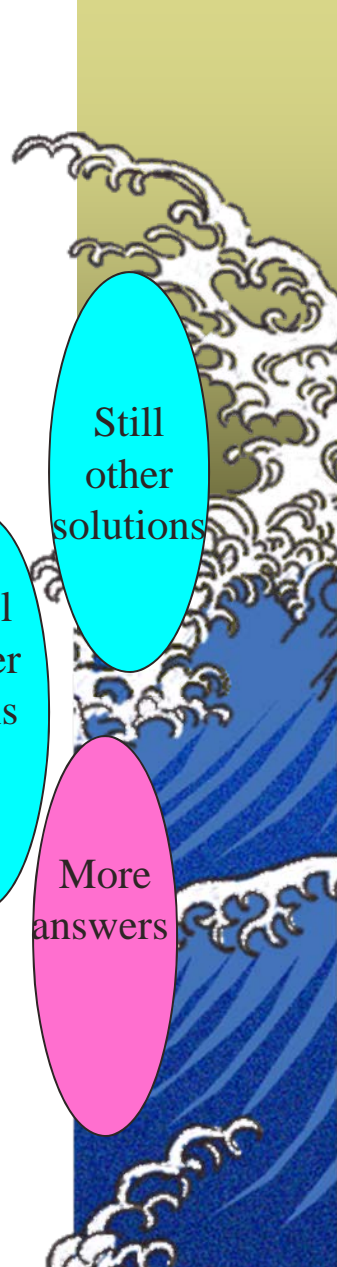
More  
solutions

More  
approaches

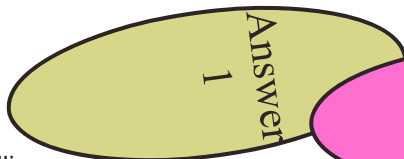
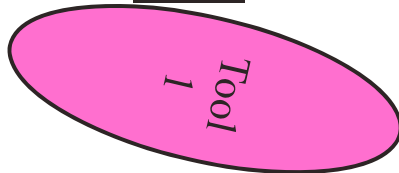
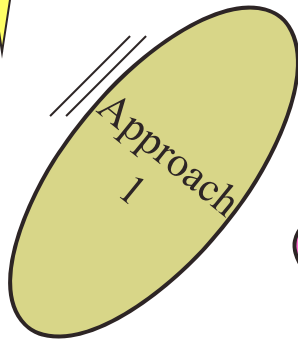
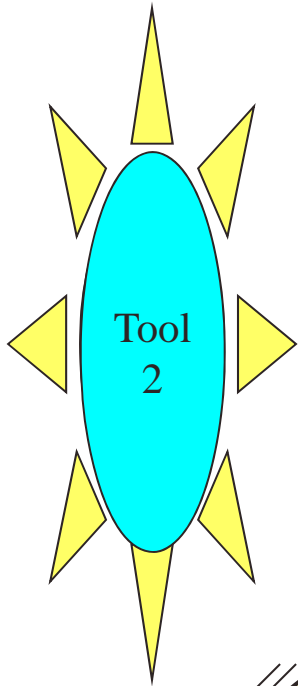
Still  
other  
answers

Still  
other  
fixes

*"Changing the battle-ground"* - Kenichi Ohmae



# Eliminating alternatives



“Kendo.” Calligraphy by Taisen Deshimaru



“Hara.” Calligraphy by Taisen Deshimaru



# The Conscious Manager...

1. Attends to detail but looks at context; tries to see the big picture.
2. Doesn't believe everything he or she is told.
3. Rejects easy labels.
4. Constantly hones personal skills.
5. Is committed to lifelong learning – for everyone in the organization.
6. Exercises respect and compassion, but not indulgence, in all dealings.
7. Is flexible but not wishy-washy.



# The Conscious Manager also...

8. Spares no effort to match the right people with the right jobs.
9. Lets employees put their best foot forward.
10. Controls the organization loosely.
11. Gives employees the chance to stretch themselves.
12. Tries to see the adversary's point of view.
13. Shows a creative imagination.
14. Is focused and steadfast in pursuit of a mission.
15. Uses every tool at his or her command.





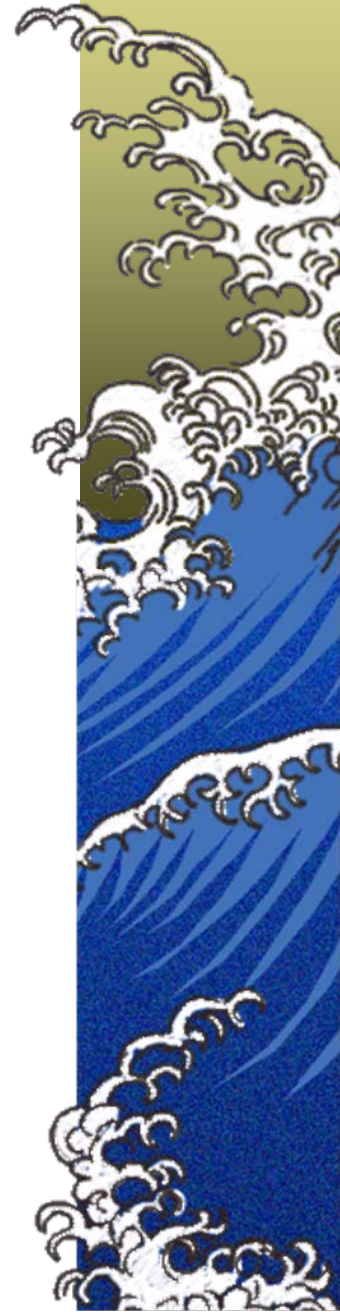
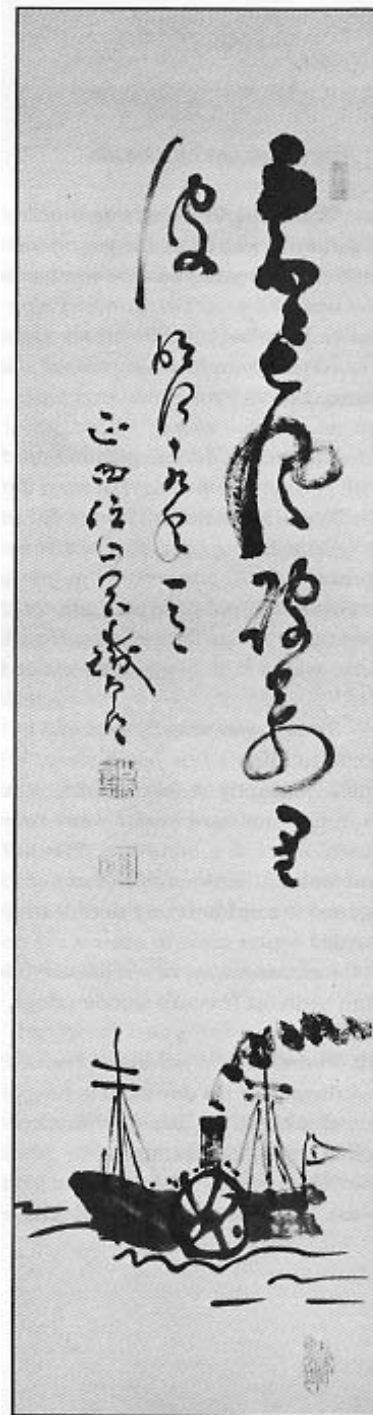
# Dealing with change and progress

Steamship with the inscription,  
"Riding the great winds, shattering the  
waves of ten thousand leagues."

Calligraphy by Tesshu Yamaoka.

Buddhist scholar John Stevens  
interprets Tesshu's intention: "The  
clock cannot be turned back, and one  
should not be afraid of change.

Developments in technology, too,  
must be used to expand one's  
horizons."



# From America's great Zen novel.

*Reaching up to a high shelf he took down a square green bottle, the contents of which he poured into a green-gold dish, beautifully carved. Placing this before the Cowardly Lion, who sniffed at it as if he did not like it, the Wizard said: "Drink."*

*"What is it?" asked the Lion.*

*"Well," answered Oz, "if it were inside of you, it would be courage. You know, of course, that courage is always inside one; so that this really cannot be called courage until you have swallowed it."*

*The Lion hesitated no longer, but drank till the dish was empty.*

*"How do you feel now?" asked Oz.*

*"Full of courage," replied the Lion.*

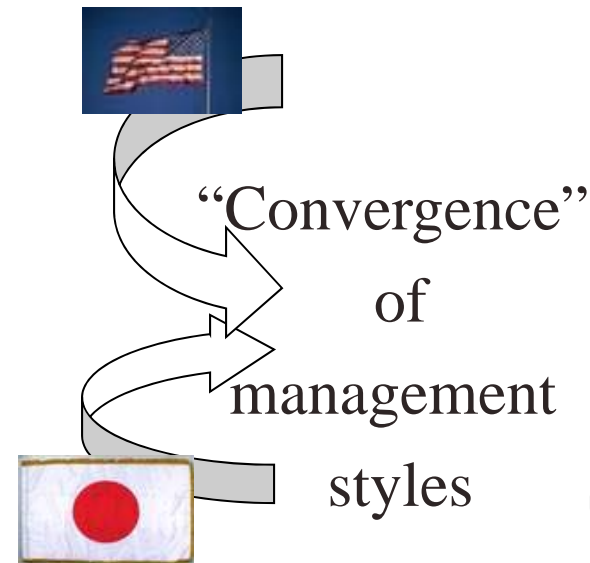
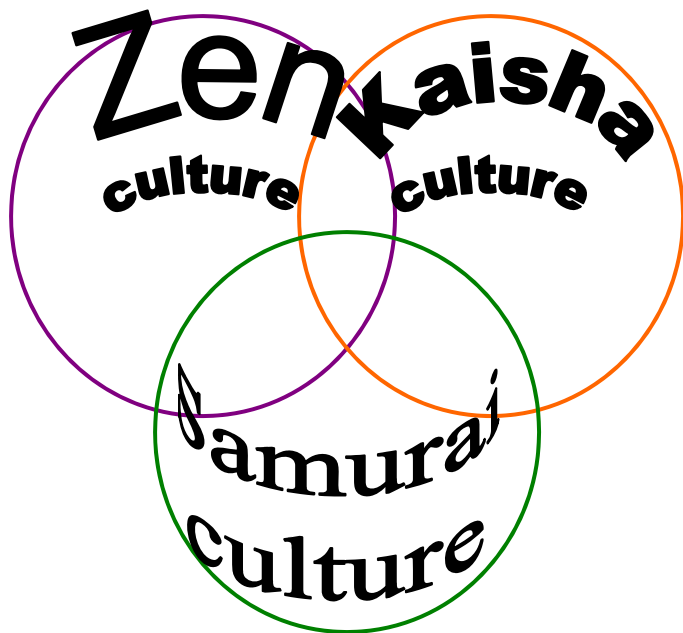
*- L. Frank Baum, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*



"Must every decision we make be decided by drawing straws?"

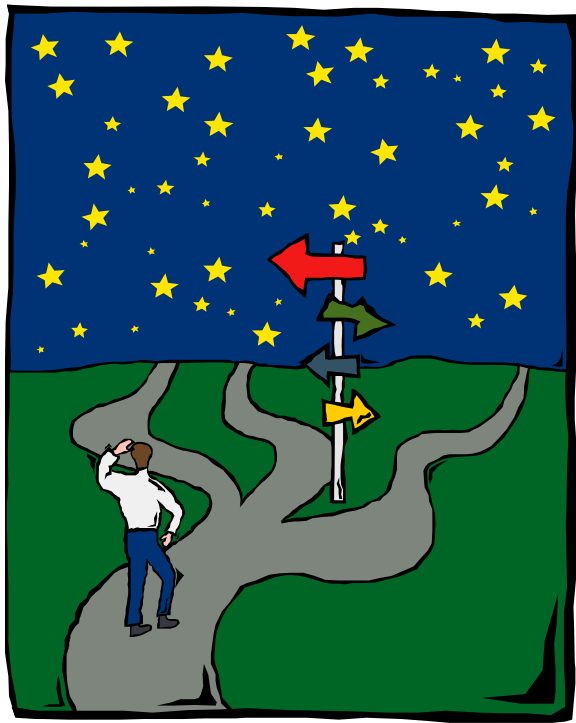
# Understanding Japanese business culture vs. improving your own decision making.

“Can one really explain how Japanese companies operate by focusing on the country's agricultural origins, Zen Buddhism, gardening, tea ceremonies, and the like?... Japanese culture has no fixed ideological core, so the Japanese model of appropriate behavior depends on the context one perceives.... *It is very Japanese to distrust ideologies.*” (Yoshimura and Anderson)



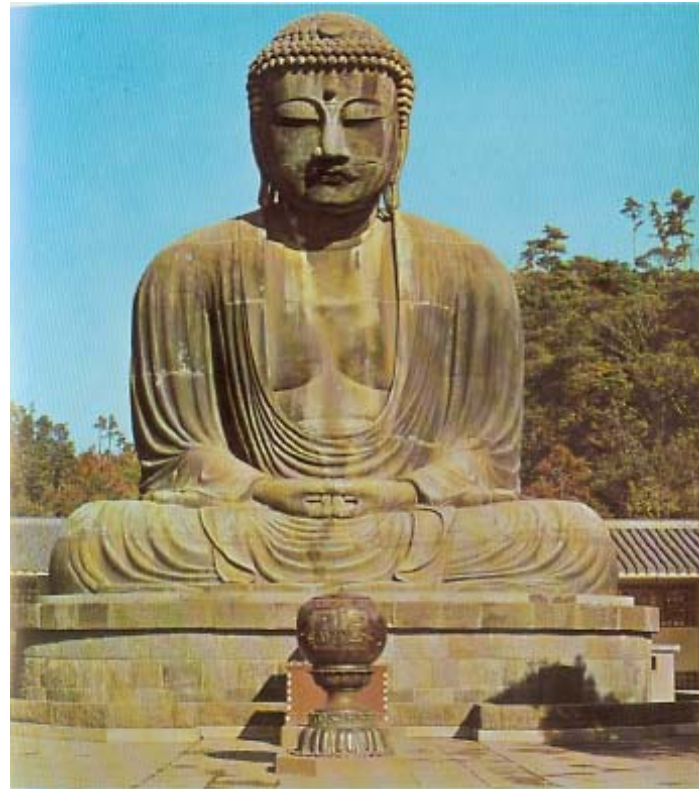
# Summary

“The way that taught how to cut one's enemies in two...”



...became the way that taught how to cut one's own mind. A way of decision, resolution, determination.”

- Taisen Deshimaru

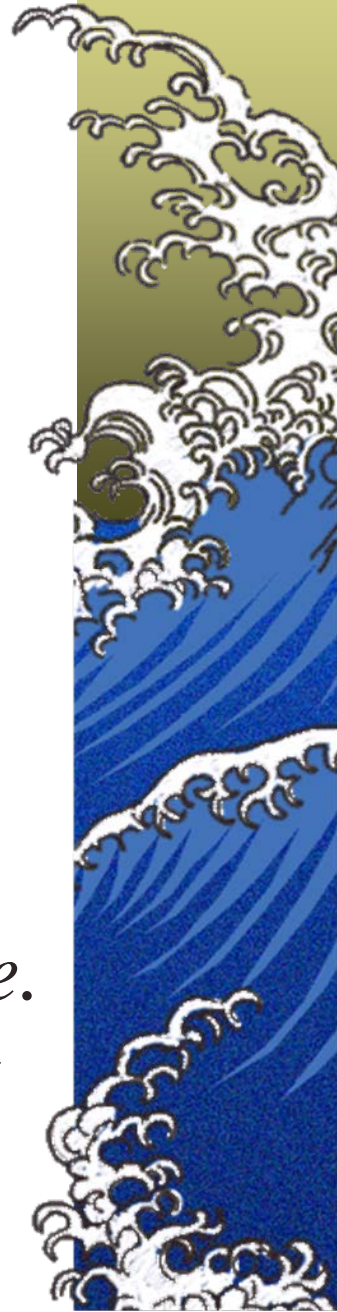


# Conclusion



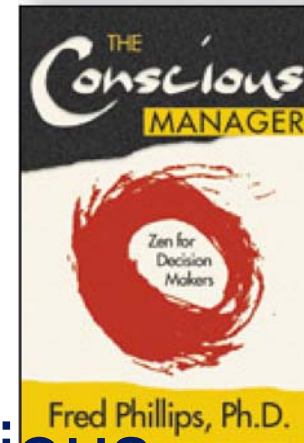
*Do not think that  
This is all there is.  
More and more  
Wonderful teachings exist.  
The sword is unfathomable.*

- Teshu Yamaoka



# Buy *The Conscious Manager*

- ▶ At <http://www.generalinformatics.com/CM/preorder.htm>
- ▶ At fine independent bookstores
- ▶ At your favorite online bookstore
- ▶ Direct from the author, 503-521-8116 or [fp@generalinformatics.com](mailto:fp@generalinformatics.com)



Share resources for conscious managers

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