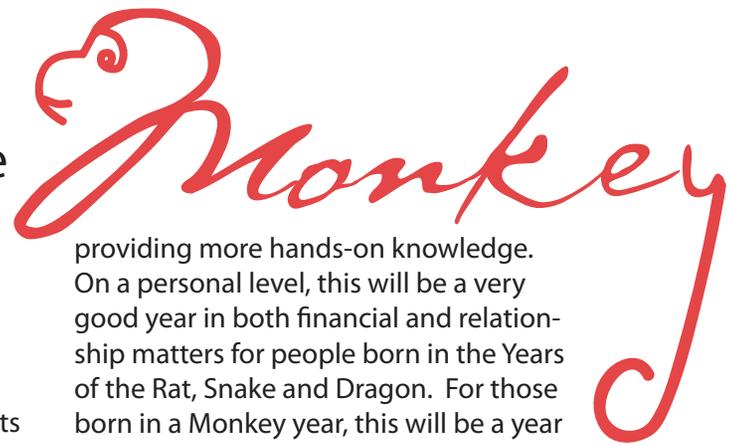


## Welcome to the year of the



This past year of the Sheep has indeed been an unpredictable one: the new normal, for many countries, of economic slowdown; the continued drop in the price of oil; the fast expansion of the Islamic State; the surge of more than a million refugees migrating to Europe. Other notable events are the rising influence of China in both political and financial realms, and signs of emerging economies in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Sheep years are yin; monkey years are yang. Therefore, we can expect that this coming year of the Monkey will be even more dynamic, and that it will bring changes that will be even more significant. The life cycle of ISIS will turn out to be like that of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane or flood: it came quickly and will go quickly. This does not however, mean that peace will follow, and people in the region can breathe more easily. Although many countries have combined in a united front against ISIS, they are all spending a lot of time and energy not in cooperating, but in juggling their actions and commitments to try to maximize their political influence in the post ISIS era. On a positive note, there will be at least two more women presidents in the world in 2016.

There is a Chinese saying: "In the jungle, when the tiger is away, the monkey is king". However there are many monkeys, so there will be active change in many

areas: military, political, and financial, as well as unexpected developments in the refugee situation and in terrorist activities. Monkeys are known for their agility, and this Monkey year will be characterized by many unexpected twists and turns. Because it is also a Fire monkey, some of these changes will be dynamic and chaotic. For us, and all ordinary people, these large-scale world events are beyond our control: all we can do is keep calm and do our own work, and remember that, in nature, dark clouds never last; they eventually turn into beneficial rain.

This will also be the twenty-sixth year of the Blue Mountain Institute. We regret to report that we have yet to finish developing the on-line courses we have been promising. It has taken much more work and resources than we anticipated. We are making it our primary goal for this year. We will also continue our Certification Program, in the form of a 10-day training. We will also offer a 4-day meditation retreat in Russia for people focusing on energy, health, meditation, and the application of natural laws. The Body-Mind-Chi health workshops have proved very beneficial and easy to practice, and we will offer them again a few times this year. We are also offering mini feng-shui lectures by Jenny Nakao Hones, who is a senior teacher at the Blue Mountain Institute, and a professional interior designer. These classes will focus on interiors and on

providing more hands-on knowledge. On a personal level, this will be a very good year in both financial and relationship matters for people born in the Years of the Rat, Snake and Dragon. For those born in a Monkey year, this will be a year of change, and it is important for you to remember that successfully working with change brings opportunities. For those born in a Tiger year, there will be challenges, and you should remember that challenge forges strength and brings inner growth. If you were born in the Year of the Pig, it will be necessary to work on relationships (not just romantic relationships). For people born in other years, this should be a relatively peaceful, even neutral year. It will be a good year to look inward and seek spiritual growth and fulfillment.

In any unpredictable situation, there are always embedded seeds of opportunity. We have to remember not to let our attention be dominated by challenge and struggle, but to take a wider view, so that we can notice the opportunities as they arise. In this way, we will be ready to work with the best that the Monkey year has to offer. The best way to chart our life is to practice a positive attitude and an open heart, and accepts what God provides us. Happy Monkey Year!

*Shan-Tung Hsu*

**A  
Year  
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