

Osho Zen and the Mystery of No-Mind



A Course in Witnessing

144 Programs in 7 Modules

Osho Zen and the Mystery of No-Mind

This book is a collection of all the discourses which are part of the Listening Meditations in the module [*Osho Zen and the Mystery of No-Mind*](#) which is the sixth module in [*A Course in Witnessing*](#).

A Course in Witnessing is a collection of 144 Meditation Programs which are grouped into seven modules. The Osho discourses in this module are from talks in which Osho spoke on Zen in various discourse series in Pune, India from 1974 to 1989. Throughout all of these discourses is a common thread and that is Osho's teaching of what he referred to as the very core of meditation, witnessing.

Osho spent his whole life working to awaken as many individuals as possible through the practice of meditation. In addition to teaching the 112 ancient meditation techniques of the *Vigyan Bhairava Tantra*, Osho also devised new "active" meditation techniques designed specifically to overcome the complexities and busyness of the modern mind. Osho, however, also says that the very core of meditation is witnessing.

"Real meditation is Zen, Vipassana. Real meditation is nothing but to sit silently, doing nothing. Just doing nothing, sitting silently, that is real meditation. [...]"

Real meditation is not a technique. Real meditation is just relaxing, sitting silently, letting it happen, whatsoever it is. Allowing the whole anxiety to come up, to surface. And watching it, watching it. And doing nothing to change it. Witnessing it is real meditation.

In that witnessing your Buddhahood will become more and more powerful. Witnessing is the nourishment for your Buddhahood. And the more powerful your Buddhahood is, the less anxiety there is. The day your Buddhahood is complete, all anxiety is gone."

-Osho

From *The Perfect Master, V.1*, Discourse #8

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01 Immediacy, the Whole Insistence of Zen

Immediacy, the Whole Insistence of Zen

God *is*. Truth *is*. Love *is*. There is no way to say it, and there is no way to hide it. There is no word which can express it, and there is no methodology of how to keep it unexpressed. That is the dilemma of the mystic. He has to say it, and it cannot be said. He cannot keep quiet about it; he cannot keep silent. It overflows him; it starts overflowing; it is beyond him to keep silent. He has to say it, and nobody has ever been able to say it.

God is not a word, neither is truth a word, nor is love a word. And they are not just silences either, because their isness is a singing isness; they are songs. It is not just dull and dead there. It is full of joy; it is overflowing joy. It is celebration, it is ecstasy, it is orgasm, because it is a meeting of the opposites, because it is a meeting of the polarities, because it is a marriage, a marriage of yin and yang, day and night, summer and winter, life and death, sound and silence.

So when it happens, you cannot say it, but you have to sing it, and that is the beauty of the song. It has something of the word and something of silence in it. That is the beauty of poetry, the beauty of dance. Something is visible, something is invisible; the manifest and the unmanifest meet there, embrace each other, are fulfilled in each other.

If you simply say and use words and there is no silence in those words, your words will be like dead stones. They can hit somebody's head, you can argue with them, but you cannot convert. They don't have that quality of silence which becomes conversion. When a word has a silence at its innermost core, when a word is luminous with silence, it brings conversion.

Then it is a gospel, then it is good news. Then somebody, who is saying something with silence in it, is not throwing a dead rock at you, but is throwing a flower. It will also hit you, but it will also caress you, and it will go deeper because you can be vulnerable to it and it will reach to your very heart. Because how can you protect yourself against it? You will be nondefensive.

So remember, all the mystics have been singing and dancing, celebrating. They go on saying, "We cannot say it," and they go on saying all the same.

There is a difference in saying and saying. When you say without knowing it, without realizing it, it is just gibberish, just words and words and words, without any soul in them; it is a corpse; there is no aliveness in it. Those words stink – they stink of death. There is no heartbeat of life. When you know, when you have experienced, when you have fallen into that abyss called God, when you are transformed by that surrender, when you are totally immersed in it, when your every cell is bathed in it, then you say; but your words are not mere words.

They carry silence. They are vehicles of silence; they are gestures of silence. We have a special name for it in the East: *mahamudra* – the great gesture.

Look at my hand. If it is empty, if there is nobody behind it who has experienced, then it is an ordinary gesture. But if there is somebody behind it who has known, who has lived, who has experienced, then raising this hand is a great gesture, *mahamudra*. Then the ordinary hand becomes extraordinary. Then ordinary words are no more ordinary words. You cannot go to the dictionary to find their meaning. When a word is full of silence, you will have to go within yourself to find its meaning, not to a dictionary, not to a library. You will have to go within yourself. The meaning will be found in your experience.

The word of a man who knows is loaded, loaded with great fragrance. You will have to decode it in your innermost core of being, into the innermost shrine of your being. Truth is a transcendence, transcendence of all duality. So those who say truth cannot be said, only say a half-truth; and those who say that truth can be said only in silence, they also say a half-truth.

Zen brings the whole truth to the world. Zen is a great blessing to the world; it brings the whole truth.

The whole truth is: Truth cannot be said, and yet can be said. If not said, then showed, indicated. The ordinary duality is transcended. We are always moving from one pole of the duality to the other. Sometimes we say, “Yes, it can be said”; this is one pole. Then we become aware, “How can it be said?” – the other pole. Then we keep silent, but then again, we become aware that there is something left: “Yes, it can be said.” This way it goes on moving, it swings.

Zen says truth is a transcendence, transcendence of all duality. The duality between the word and the silence is also to be transcended.

The Bible says in the beginning there was the word. The Vedas say in the beginning there was silence, eternal silence, and the silence brooded over the sea, and it was dark. And the Bible says there was the word. The first thing that happened in existence was the word. God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. Both are half-truths.

If you ask the Zen people . . . They have not written any Bible or any Veda yet, and they will never try, because they don’t believe in scriptures. They say it is beyond the scriptures; it is a transmission beyond the scriptures. But if they ever write a Bible, or if they are forced to, like Lao Tzu was once forced to write the *Tao Te Ching* because the king wouldn’t allow him to leave the country unless he wrote his experiences . . .

Lao Tzu wanted to go to the Himalayas, to die there; certainly, there cannot be any more beautiful a place to die. Those eternal peaks, those snow-covered virgin peaks, where can you find a better place to disappear in God? What better moment? He wanted to go – he was very old, and he wanted to go to the Himalayas to rest and disappear there, nobody ever knowing about him. He wanted to disappear absolutely alone. He wanted his death to be private.

And death is a private thing. Nobody else can be with you when you die; it is absolutely internal. So he wanted to escape and go away from the crowds. He was afraid too many people will surround him and his death will become a public affair.

But the king insisted, “First you write whatsoever you have known.” And he ordered the guards on the boundary saying that “This man is not to be allowed to go out.” So he was caught at a guard post, and for three days he sat in the guards’ room and wrote down the *Tao Te Ching*.

If somebody forces a Zen Master to write down a Bible, a Veda, then they will say there was song in the beginning. Neither word nor silence, but song. There was song in the beginning, and God sang and danced. Not “Let there be light”: God sang and danced. And that dance became the beginning of creation.

That dance continues. That dance is what existence is.

The song has a mystery about it because it is a meeting, a marriage of opposites. In the song there is sound and silence. The song says something, but says it in such a way that you cannot grasp it. Not that it doesn’t say anything. It makes much available, but you cannot grasp it, you cannot just possess it. If you try to possess, you will kill it. You cannot have a song in your fist, otherwise the song will be killed. It is too delicate; you cannot be that rough with it.

A song has to be preserved in the heart, not in the fist. About a song, you have to be receptive, not aggressive. You can keep an argument in the fist; it is hard, rocklike, it will not die. You can keep and possess an argument; you can become the possessor of an argument. That's why the ego enjoys very much to have arguments, proofs, logic, philosophies. The ego feels very much fulfilled: "I know so much."

The song cannot be possessed that way; the ego cannot be its possessor. The song can penetrate your being, but the ego has to give way. If the ego comes in between, the song will be shattered. You may get fragments of it, and you may start interpreting those fragments, but you will miss the unity of it. And it was in the unity.

A song has not to be thought about. If you start thinking about a song, you are already missing it. When you listen to music, how do you listen? Do you bring your mind in? If you bring your mind in, where is the music? Music and the mind both cannot exist together. That is the mystery of music: you have to put your mind aside. You cannot argue with music; you cannot nod your head in agreement or disagreement. You cannot say, "Yes, I agree," or "No, I don't agree." There is no question of agreement or no agreement. With music you simply become one. If you want to feel it, you have to put your head aside. The heart has to open toward it. It goes directly to the heart; it showers on the heart. It helps the flower of the heart to open and bloom. It is a nourishment for the inner lotus.

The Zen people will say, "There was song in the beginning, and then God sang and God danced, and that's what he has been doing since then." Each moment it is a dance. Look around. Can't you hear these birds? These are not birds; don't be deceived by them. These are not birds. It is God singing, the God of the beginnings – because it is always a beginning. Each moment is a beginning. Never think that the beginning was somewhere in the past. This is the beginning, and it is always the beginning and there is no end. It is God singing.

Can't you hear the silence of the trees? It is God, silent.

In the birds he is singing, in the trees he is silent. Birds cannot exist without the trees, and, let me tell you, the trees cannot exist without the birds either. The birds sing for the trees, and the trees are silent for the birds, and there is a marriage. They are tied together. If trees disappear, birds will disappear. Kill all the birds of the world, and you will one day see the trees are disappearing. Everything is intertwined, everything is interlinked. This is what we mean by the word "ecology" – everything is together.

It is God singing, it is God silent.

Once you understand that God is both, then this highest possibility opens for you. This is the first principle, that you need not divide, all division is false, that you need not create any duality, because existence is nondual, because existence is one.

And all our misery is because we are divided. Why do you feel so thrilled when you are in love? What happens? Is the thrill just chemical, hormonal? No, it is not. The thrill is existential. When you are in love, at least with one person you feel to be one, at least with one person you have dropped duality, at least with one person you are no more separate, at least with one person the boundaries are not there. You have removed the boundaries. Two spaces have come so close, they overlap. You feel so thrilled with love, so blissful with love, because it is an experience of God, a very limited experience of course.

And if it is so beautiful to be one with one person, how much more beautiful will it be to be one with the whole, to be one with all the persons, men and women, trees and birds and animals and

the clouds and the mountains and the stars? How will it be? How much more beautiful? The beauty cannot be imagined, because the difference will not be only of quantity, it will be of quality. It will be utterly different.

Love can, at the most, be only a glimpse of a ray, not the ray itself, but only a glimpse in the lake. A ray of the sun playing on the lake, and you see the glimpse. That glimpse is love. When you find out the real ray, it becomes prayer. When you start moving through that ray, upward, you start climbing on that ray and you start reaching toward the source of all light, then you are growing in spirituality. One day you are dissolved into that light. You yourself have become that light. That is the orgasm I talk about. That's ecstasy.

And Zen people say that when you know, you have to say, knowing well that it cannot be said. You have to sing it.

Zen Masters have been very creative. Either they were singers, dancers, or painters, or in some sort of art, calligraphy, pottery. Whatever they could do, they did. That became the gesture of their expression. They were not inactive people. Deep down they were not doers, and on the surface, they were not inactive at all. Deep down they were just instrumental to the divine. No doer, no idea of doing anything – just being, but on the surface very creative. The world would have been far richer if every religion had developed such a school as Zen. For example, Hindu monks have lived a very uncreative life. Jaina monks have lived a very uncreative life. Except Zen, even Buddhists have lived a very uncreative life. So has been the case with the Catholics.

Zen brings creativity. And remember, if you want to be one with the creator, you will have to learn some ways of creativity. The only way to be one with the creator is to be in some moment of creativity, when you are lost. The potter is lost in making his pottery; the potter is lost while working on the wheel. The painter is lost while painting. The dancer is lost; there is no dancer, only the dance remains. Those are the peak moments, where you touch God, where God touches you.

Now, the scholar, the so-called scholar, becomes wordy. He goes on learning more words, more words, more information, more scriptures. He has no silence. That is a very lopsided phenomenon. Then against the scholar there are a few saints, who keep quiet; they don't even say a single word. That too is moving to the other extreme. They become uncreative. Of course, they are silent, better than the scholar – at least they will not throw their rubbish into other people's heads, at least they are not committing any crime – but in a higher sense, they are also criminals because they are not benefiting existence. They are parasites. They are not making existence richer by their being here. They are not helping God in his dance, in his song.

Zen brings the highest synthesis. Don't be afraid of speaking, but don't go on speaking if you don't know. Don't be silent. Just being silent will not help.

It has to be understood because too many times this comes to your mind too: Why go on speaking? Why not keep quiet? But your silence will be *your* silence. The words will go on moving, revolving inside you. You will become a madhouse inside. You may look silent from the outside; you will not be silent inside. How can you simply drop those words, those old habits of many lives? The mind will go on chattering, the mind will go on saying things, repeating things. The mind is like an automaton; even if you don't want to talk, the mind goes on. If you don't talk to others it goes on talking to itself. It creates both the parties: it talks from one side and answers from another side; it goes on playing the game. From the outside one can be easily silent, but from the inside?

And if you are silent from the inside, you will be surprised that your silence becomes so loaded with ecstasy that you have to sing. There is no other way. That you have to dance, that you have to share. When you have, you have to share. If you have it at all, you will have to share. If you don't have it, you can keep quiet, but what is the point of keeping quiet if you don't have it?

There are two types of people: one who goes on talking without having it, and one who goes on keeping silent without having it. Both are in the same boat.

There is a third type of person, [one] who has come to know it, who has really become silent and in the silence, he has heard the soundless sound, in the silence God has delivered his message to him. God has spoken to him. He has had a dialogue with God himself. The silence has filled his heart with so much juice, with so much life, with life abundant, that he is bursting.

He has to say it. There is no way to get rid of it.

And his saying will have a totally different significance because words will not be mere words. If such a person sits silently, even his silence will be a sharing. If such a person keeps completely silent, you will see his silence is singing all around him. You will feel the vibe. His silence is saying something. He is indicating from his silence too. If he speaks, he speaks. If he is silent, then too he speaks.

If you don't sing it, remember, you don't have it. If it does not overflow in a thousand and one gestures, then it is not there. You cannot hold it if it is there. And you cannot possess it if it is there; it is not your property. You cannot become the owner of it. You cannot hoard it; you cannot be miserly about it. If it is there at all, it drowns you utterly. It possesses you. You cannot possess it; it possesses you. And then it leads you into a thousand and one gestures. In a thousand and one streams you start flowing, and whatsoever you do becomes an expression. [...]

Be a little more alert. The sermon is preached constantly. From everywhere God is speaking to you. Even when everything is silent, he is speaking through silence. His song is eternal.

Zen says, "Truth is not hidden from the very beginning, so you are not to uncover truth, you are only to uncover your eyes." You just have a curtain on your eyes. Just pull your earplugs out. Your ears are plugged; hence, you cannot hear.

How to unplug the ears? How to open the eyes? How to drop barriers that don't allow you to become sensitive enough? What is the way? The way is *immediacy*. Be immediate, be in the moment.

Otherwise Buddhas can go on shouting from the housetops, and you will not hear – or you will hear something which has not been said at all.

A few scenes.

First scene:

Warden: "Can't you see the sign 'NO FISHING HERE'?"

Angler: "Yes, and I don't agree. There is good fishing here! Just look at this lot I have landed today. Whoever put that sign up must be crazy."

The second scene:

The Dean of Women was lecturing to a class on the subject of sex morality. "In moments of temptation, ask yourself just one question: Is an hour of pleasure worth a lifetime of shame?"

One of the girls raised her hand naively and asked, “How do you make it last one hour?”

The third scene:

Ethel was shapely out shy, and visited a doctor for the first time. He ushered her into his private office and said, “Now, my dear, please get completely undressed.” Ethel blushed and replied, “Okay, Doctor, but you first.”

Fourth scene:

The following ad appeared in the Personal Column of a London paper: “My husband and I have four sons. Has anyone any suggestions as to how we may have a daughter?” Letters poured in from all over the world. An American wrote, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, and try again.” A Buddhist from Thailand suggested that they should seek the help of Buddha.

A South African recommended a special diet. An Indian proposed yoga.

A Frenchman merely wrote, “May I be of service?”

And the last and the fifth scene:

A lion tamer had quit without notice, and the circus manager needed someone to replace him for the next night’s show. He put an ad in the local paper, and the next morning, two applicants showed up outside his office. One was a rather ordinary looking young man, and the other a ravishing redheaded beauty. Neither one of them looked very much like a lion trainer, but the manager was desperate. “All right,” he said. “Here is a whip, a chair, and a gun. Let us see what you can do with the big Leo over there. We will let you have the first try, miss, but be careful. He is a mean one.”

The ravishing redhead strode past the whip, the chair, and the gun, and empty-handed, fearlessly entered the cage. Big Leo rose, snarling, then came charging across the cage toward her with a ferocious roar. When the lion was almost upon her the girl threw open her coat. Underneath, she was stark naked. Leo skidded to a stop and crawled the rest of the way on his belly. He nuzzled the girl’s feet with his nose, purred, and licked her trim ankles. The astonished circus manager grinned happily and turned to the pop-eyed young man.

“Well, young fella,” he asked, “think you can top that?”

“Yeah,” panted the applicant. “Just get that stupid lion out of there.”

Truth is all around, but your interpretations are your interpretations. God is speaking all the time, but you hear not, or even if you hear, you hear something else. You hear according to you, your mind comes in, and hence you go on missing.

Unless the mind is dropped you will not be able to know what truth is. Truth cannot be discovered by mind; mind is the barrier. It is because of the mind that you have not been able to discover it. It is not a question of how to train the mind to know the truth. The more the mind is trained and becomes capable, the less is the possibility to know the truth. The more skilled a mind, the farther away you are from the truth.

Mind is the barrier. No-mind is the door.

How to attain to no-mind? The only way – the *only* way – is to be in the present. The only way is not to think of the past, not to think of the future. And you cannot think of the present. That is the whole secret: you cannot think of the present; there is not space enough for thought to move.

Thought needs room to move. Can you think anything right now? If you think it, either it will be of the past or of the future.

This moment of silence. If you think, “Yes, this is a moment of silence,” it is already past. Or you say, “How beautiful!” It is already past. Utter a word “beautiful,” and it is already past. You cannot think. Thinking stops when you are in the present. So that is the only key, and it is a master key; it unlocks all the doors of being. Immediacy, that is the whole insistence of Zen.

From *The First Principle*, Discourse #7

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What is Satori?

What is satori and how to attain it?

Pratima, satori is exactly your ordinary nature; it is not anything special. Hence there is no question of attaining it - it is already the case. You are in it, you have just forgotten. You have become too occupied with the outside world. You have forgotten your own kingdom, you have forgotten your own treasure, you have forgotten yourself. You have become too concerned with others. You are too much in the world, and you don't give any time, any space for your inner nature to have a dialogue with you, to whisper a few things to you. You have become artificial.

You have created a false ego because nobody can live without a center. You have forgotten your real center, and nobody can live without a center, so you have created a false center as a substitute. That's the ego. Ego simply means living with a false center.

Satori is dropping the false, entering into the real; just being yourself, your natural self, your ordinary self.

The word "ordinary" has to be remembered because the mind is not interested in the ordinary at all; it wants to be extraordinary; it wants to be special. It is through being special that the ego survives.

It is constantly striving to be more special, more special. It wants to be more rich, more powerful, more respectable; it is ambitious. Hence the word "ordinary" has no appeal for the mind. And that is the beauty of the word "ordinary" – because it has no appeal for the mind.

Mind is an achiever and the ordinary need not be achieved; it is already the case. The extraordinary has to be achieved, the extraordinary becomes the goal. It is far away; you have to make all kinds of efforts, you have to struggle for it, you have to fight for it because there are so many competitors.

To be ordinary . . . and there is no competition at all. You can just be ordinary; nobody has any objection. People will simply feel sorry for you that you have dropped out of the competitive race.

One competitor less – they will feel good but sorry for you. They will say, "Poor fellow! What happened to him? Why did he have to drop out?" The dropouts are not respectable people. Buddha is a dropout. All real Masters are dropouts. To be a sannyasin means to be a dropout. To drop out of the rat race is to drop in, because when you are in the race you cannot enter in. When you are no longer in the race there is nowhere to go. You start moving inward because life is a flow: if there is no outer direction, it takes the inner direction. If the goal is not there far away in the future, then you start moving into your nature in the present. That is satori.

Satori is very ordinary. Satori means your nature. You have come with it; it is your original face – all other faces are masks.

Yoka says:

*A disciple speaks in accordance with the ultimate, the absolute truth.
Remember that one should cut the root and not the branches and the leaves.*

What is the root of your misery? The root is your ambition, desiring. One wants to be this and that, one wants to possess this and that, one wants to be somebody, one wants to be significant.

Yoka says: Cut the root, only then are you a disciple. And the moment you cut the root – not the branches, not the leaves – you attain the ultimate truth. The ultimate truth is not far away; it is the immediate truth, it is your truth, it is your very being.

Most people do not recognize the perfect jewel, the jewel of supreme wisdom, satori. It is hidden in the secret place of Tathagata, awaiting its discovery.

It is to live in your suchness; it is hidden in your suchness. Whatsoever you are, live in it. Don't create any conflict, don't live through the ideal. Don't be an idealist, just be natural.

But everybody is being taught to be an idealist: "Become a Jesus" or "Become a Buddha" or "Become a Krishna." Nobody tells you just to be yourself! Why should you be a Jesus? One Jesus is enough, and one Jesus is beautiful – he enriches the existence. Many Jesuses just carrying crosses, and wherever you go you meet them . . . It won't look beautiful; it won't add to the beauty of existence; it will make the whole world ugly. Wherever you go you meet a Mahavira standing naked . . . It is because of this that God never creates the same person again. He never repeats; he is original.

He always creates a new person. You have never been before, and there is no one who is like you, and there will never be anybody else like you again. In the whole of eternity, you alone are just like you. Look at the beauty of it and the glory of it and the respect that God has shown to you! What more respectability do you need? See the uniqueness of yourself. There is no need to be unique; you are already unique, just as everybody else is unique. You are unique in your ordinariness, in your suchness.

Satori is hidden, says Yoka, in the secret place of your suchness, awaiting its discovery.

It has not to be created, it is already there; you just have to discover it. Go in and discover it! It is waiting and waiting. And centuries have passed and many, many lives have passed, and you have become addicted to extroversion. You never move in.

The first step toward satori is meditation. Satori is the ultimate experience of meditation when meditation is fulfilled, when meditation has reached to its ultimate flowering.

Yoka says:

The world is complete illusion, yet nothing exists which might be called illusion.

The world that you have created through your mind is illusory, but there is another world which is not your creation. When your mind disappears, you discover that world: the world of suchness. That is a totally different experience. No words can describe it. Thousands of mystics have tried to describe it, but nobody has ever been able and nobody will ever be able to describe

it. It is so mysterious; it is so beautiful that all words fall short. No poetry reaches to its level, no music even touches its feet.

The perfect light of this wisdom enlightens one.

The moment you have put your mind aside – mind means ambition, the ego trip of being this and that - the moment you have put the whole mind aside, a great light explodes in you and you are enlightened. This is satori. It does not come from the outside: you are not delivered by somebody else; you are delivered by your own being, by your own nature.

That is possible only by practicing zazen beyond speculation. You can see clouds naturally in the mirror but to hold on to the reflection is impossible.

That is possible only by practicing zazen . . . Satori is possible only by practicing zazen. Zazen means:

Just sitting, doing nothing, the spring comes, and the grass grows by itself.

You are simply relaxing into your own being, not doing anything at all. It is not a question of doing; it is simply a question of being. You go on relaxing into your being. A moment comes when you are in your utter purity, in your utter simplicity, in your utter innocence. That is satori.

Zazen is a beautiful word. It simply means just sitting – not even doing meditation. In fact, you cannot do meditation. Meditation is just sitting silently; it is not a question of doing. If you are doing something, you are disturbing your meditation.

Somebody is chanting a mantra; he is disturbing his meditation. Somebody is focusing on something; he is disturbing his meditation. Somebody is concentrating, somebody is praying, somebody is thinking of God: they are disturbing their meditation. All these are the doings of the mind, and if the doing continues, the mind continues. Stop doing, and where is the mind? When the doing disappears, mind disappears. And the disappearance of the mind is satori.

It is beyond speculation, says Yoka. You cannot think about it, you can only experience it. It is the ultimate experience, and the immediate experience too, of truth, of beauty, of love, of bliss, of God, of nirvana.

From ***Walking in Zen, Sitting in Zen***, Discourse #4

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What is Meditation?

What is meditation? Is it a technique that can be practiced? Is it an effort that you have to do? Is it something which the mind can achieve? It is not.

All that the mind can do, cannot be meditation. It is something beyond the mind, the mind is absolutely helpless there. The mind cannot penetrate meditation; where mind ends, meditation begins. This has to be remembered, because in our life, whatsoever we do, we do through the mind; whatsoever we achieve, we achieve through the mind. And then, when we turn inward, we again start thinking in terms of techniques, methods, doings, because the whole of life's experience shows us that everything can be done by the mind.

Yes. Except meditation, everything can be done by the mind; everything is done by the mind except meditation. Because meditation is not an achievement. It is already the case; it is your nature. It has not to be achieved; it has only to be recognized, it has only to be remembered. It is there waiting for you — just a turning in, and it is available. You have been carrying it always and always.

Meditation is your intrinsic nature. It is you; it is your being; it has nothing to do with your doings. You cannot have it, you cannot not have it, it cannot be possessed. It is not a thing. It is you. It is your being.

Once you understand what meditation is, things become very clear. Otherwise, you can go on groping in the dark.

Meditation is a state of clarity, not a state of mind. Mind is confusion. Mind is never clear. It cannot be. Thoughts create clouds around you — they are subtle clouds. A mist is created by them, and the clarity is lost. When thoughts disappear, when there are no more clouds around you, when you are in your simple beingness, clarity happens. Then you can see far away; then you can see to the very end of existence; then your gaze becomes penetrating, to the very core of being.

Meditation is clarity, absolute clarity of vision. You cannot think about it. You have to drop thinking. When I say, 'You have to drop thinking,' don't conclude in a hurry, because I have to use language. So I say, "Drop thinking," — but if you start dropping, you will miss, because again you will reduce it to a doing.

"Drop thinking" simply means: don't do anything. Sit. Let thoughts settle themselves. Let mind drop on its own accord. You just sit gazing at the wall, in a silent corner, not doing anything at all. Relaxed. Loose. With no effort. Not going anywhere, as if you are falling asleep awake. You are awake and you are relaxing but the whole body is falling into sleep. You remain alert inside but the whole body moves into deep relaxation.

Thoughts settle on their own accord; you need not jump amongst them; you need not try to put them right. It is as if a stream has become muddy . . . what do you do? Do you jump in it and start helping the stream to become clear; you will make it more muddy.

You simply sit on the bank. You wait. There is nothing to be done. Because whatsoever you do will make the stream more muddy. If somebody has passed through a stream and the dead leaves

have surfaced and the mud has arisen, just patience is needed. You simply sit on the bank. Watch indifferently: the stream goes on flowing, the dead leaves will be taken away — and the mud will start settling because it cannot hang forever. After a while, suddenly you will become aware the stream is crystal-clear again.

Whenever a desire passes through your mind, the stream becomes muddy. So just sit. Don't try to do anything. In Japan this "just sitting" is called *zazen*; just sitting and doing nothing. And one day, meditation happens. Not that you bring it to you; it comes to you. And when it comes, you immediately recognize it; it has been always there, but you were not looking in the right direction. The treasure has been with you, but you were occupied somewhere else: in thoughts, in desires, in a thousand and one things. You were not interested in the only one thing — and that is your own being.

When energy turns in — what Buddha calls *parabhruti*: the coming back of your energy to the source — suddenly clarity is attained. Then you can see clouds a thousand miles away, and you can hear ancient music in the pines. Then everything is available to you.

From *Ancient Music in the Pines*, Discourse #7

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02 Consciousness Minus Thinking is Samadhi

Consciousness Minus Thinking is Samadhi

In the search for the first principle, silence is the door – the only door. And except it there is no way to approach the first principle. The first principle can be known only when you move to the primordial state of your being. Thinking is secondary. Existence precedes thinking; existence comes first. First you are, and then you start thinking. Thinking is secondary. Thinking is a shadow activity; it follows you. It cannot exist without you, but you can exist without it. Through thinking you can know secondary things, not the primary things. The most fundamental is not available to thinking; the most fundamental is available to silence.

Silence means a state of consciousness where no thought interferes.

The first principle is not far away, it is not distant. Never think for a single moment that you are missing it because it is very far away. No, not at all. It is the closest thing to you. It is the obvious thing. It surrounds you. It surrounds you just like the ocean surrounds a fish. You are in it. You are born in it and born out of it. You live in it, you breathe in it, and one day you disappear in it. It is not far away, not that you have to travel to it. It is there. It is already there around you, within and without. It is your very existence, that first principle.

Zen people call it the first principle; other religions call it God. There is no difference. The Zen approach is far better because with the word “God,” trouble starts. The first principle becomes personified; then you can create an image. You cannot make an image of the first principle, but that’s what all the religions do. They say, “God is the first cause, the uncaused cause, the most fundamental, the substantial, the substratum.” Zen people call it the first principle. It is beautiful to call it the first principle because nothing preceded it. Everything has followed it.

So if you want to have a communion with the first principle, you will have to seek and search for a reality within yourself which is original, which has not been preceded by anything else.

Silence is primordial. Sound exists in silence. Sound comes and goes, silence remains. Sound is like light, and silence is like darkness. Darkness remains; light comes and goes. Light needs some cause to be. Darkness needs no cause. No fuel is needed for darkness; it simply exists without any fuel. It exists as primordial existence. Darkness is eternal; light is momentary. In the morning the sun rises and there is light. By the evening the sun is gone, the light is gone. Don’t think that the darkness comes. Darkness never comes; it is always there. Light comes and goes. You burn a lamp and there is light. You blow out the lamp and light is gone. Not that darkness comes; darkness is there. Light is accidental; darkness is existential.

Silence is there. You can create sound; you cannot create silence. The moment sound is no more created, there is silence. Thinking is sound; meditation is silence. So all the religions of the world have been searching for and seeking in one way or another that silence which has not been preceded by anything else, which is the first.

Now a few things before we analyze this state of silence.

First thing. Man is missing this first principle not because he is not a skilled thinker but because he is, not because he is not a trained logician but because he is. Thinking creates a screen around you, a screen of smoke, and because of that smoke the obvious is lost. To see the obvious, you need clarity, not thinking, not logic. You simply need clarity, you need transparency. Your eyes should be completely empty, naked – naked of all clothes, naked of all concepts, empty, empty of all thoughts. When the eyes are just empty, you can see the first principle, and not only can you see it as an object outside you, you see it as your own interiority, as your own subjectivity.

In fact, it is thinking that creates the distinction between the subject and the object. It is thinking that creates division. It is thinking that creates a split. It is thinking that makes things separate. Once thinking is dropped, existence is one, it is one unity, it is one orgasmic experience where duality is totally lost. All boundaries lose themselves into each other, merge into each other. Everything is joined to everything else. The smallest leaf of grass is joined to the greatest star. And then there is nothing high, nothing low, nothing good, nothing bad, because all is joined together. The greatest saint is joined to the greatest sinner; they are not separate.

Nothing is separate. With the disappearance of thinking, schizophrenia disappears, this existential schizophrenia of dividing everything: this is man, this is woman; this is good, this is bad; this is beautiful, this is ugly; this is mine, this is thine. All distinctions create neuroses. Man is mad because he thinks too much, and he goes on missing the obvious.

God is very obvious.

I have heard about a great philosopher:

He married a beautiful girl many years his junior. After a while he began to be torn by doubts as to her faithfulness

Natural for a philosopher to be torn by doubts. A philosopher lives in doubts; doubt is his trade. He doubts, and he goes on doubting. Through doubt he creates questions and then answers, and through doubt he makes more questions out of the answers. His whole life is a procession of doubts. Naturally, “he began to be torn by doubts as to her faithfulness.”

. . . So he hired a private detective to watch her while he left on a trip. On his return he called the detective.

“Out with it, out with it!” shouted the philosopher. “I can take it. It is the element of doubt that is driving me crazy.”

“It looks bad,” said the detective. “As soon as you left the house a handsome fellow called for your wife. I followed them to a night club. They had four or five drinks and then danced – and very close. Then they went back to their table and held hands. Finally they took a cab back to your house. The lights were on, and I saw them walk into the bedroom and embrace. Then the light went out and I could not see any more.”

“What did I tell you?” shouted the philosopher. “That damned element of doubt!”

Now, even the obvious – “That damned element of doubt!” Even the obvious is not obvious to a philosopher. The greater the philosopher, the more doubts he has. He has doubts about everything. He doubts even his own existence – which in fact cannot be doubted. How can you doubt your own existence? Even to doubt, you are needed to be there. The doubt cannot exist in the air. The doubt cannot exist without you. The doubt can exist only if *you* are there, but philosophers have been doubting even their own existence: Who knows whether we are or we are not?

Doubt is the only outcome of thinking. Non-thinking gives you trust, non-thinking gives you faith, non-thinking brings you closer to reality, face to face with reality. So the first thing to be understood: thinking is not a way to the first principle. Not through philosophizing will you arrive at the first principle, because philosophy is secondary. You can know secondary things through the secondary. To know the primary, you will have to achieve the primary within yourself. You can know only that which you are.

If you live in thinking, you will be able to know only secondary things. You will be able to know the shadow world, what Hindus call the world of *maya*. Through the mind you can know only the world of maya, the shadow world, the world of illusions. You will be surprised. In Sanskrit we have two terms. One is *vidya*; vidya means “knowledge”. Another is *avidya*; avidya means “nonknowledge”. And you will be surprised, in Sanskrit “science” is called avidya – “nonknowledge”. Science is called avidya. Why? Science knows more than anything else, but in Sanskrit they call science avidya. Why? Because science knows only the shadow world – knows the secondary, the nonessential; knows the object, misses the subject; knows the body, misses the soul; knows the world, misses God; knows the secondary.

To know the primary, you will have to become primary. You will have to fall into that wavelength where the primary pulsates, that silence. That is the state of no-mind. No-mind preceded your mind.

A child is born. He comes without any mind whatsoever; he simply exists. His existence is pure, unhampered by any thought, unhindered by any cloud. Look into the eyes of a child. They are so innocent, they are so transparent, so crystal clear. From where comes this clarity? This clarity comes from no-thought. The child still has not learned how to think, how to accumulate thoughts. He looks, but he cannot classify. If he looks at the trees, he cannot say they are trees, he cannot say they are green, he cannot say they are beautiful. He sees the trees, but no classification, no category. He has no language yet to be clouded with. He simply sees. Color is there, but he cannot say there is color; green is there, but he cannot say it is green. Everything is purely clear, but he cannot label it. Hence the innocence of the eyes.

A man of understanding again attains the same eyes. He again becomes a child, as far as the clarity is concerned. Jesus is right when he says, “Become like small children; only then will you be able to enter into my kingdom of God.” He is not saying become foolish like children; he is not saying become childish; he is not saying learn tantrum again; he is not saying that a child is the last stage. No, he is saying simply one thing. He is not saying become a child; he is saying become like a child. How can you become a child again? But you can become like a child. If you can drop thinking, if this cloak of thinking is dropped and you become nude, again you will have the same clarity.

It happens sometimes through drugs. Not a very good way to attain it – very dangerous, very costly, and illusory – but it happens. Hence the appeal of the drugs down the ages. Drugs are not

new in the world; even in the Vedas they talk about *soma*. *Soma* seems to be one of the most powerful drugs ever discovered by man. It must be something like LSD. Aldous Huxley has said that in the future, when the ultimate drug will be known, we will call it *soma*. From the Vedas, the ancient-most book in the world, to Timothy Leary, man has always been attracted by drugs – alcohol, marijuana, opium. Why this attraction? And all the moralists have been against it, and all the puritans have been against it, and all the governments have tried to curb and control, but it seems beyond any government to control it. What has been the cause of it? It gives something . . . it gives a glimpse into the innocent mind of the child again.

Through chemical impact, the mind becomes loosened for a few moments or a few hours. Under the impact of the drug your thinking slips. You start looking into reality without thinking; again the world is colorful, as it is for the child; again in a small pebble you can see the greatest diamond; ordinary grass looks so extraordinary; an ordinary flower looks so tremendously beautiful; an ordinary human face looks so divine. Not that anything has changed. The whole world is the same. Something has changed in you – and that too only temporarily. Through the forceful drug your mind has slipped down. You don't have the mask; you can see into things with clarity. That is the appeal of the drugs down the ages.

And unless meditation becomes available to millions of people, drugs cannot be prevented.

Drugs are dangerous because they can destroy your body's equilibrium, they can destroy your nature, they can destroy your inner chemistry. You have a very delicate chemistry. Those strong drugs can destroy your rhythm. And more and more drugs will be needed and you will become addicted – and less and less will be the experience. By and by, the mind will learn how to cope with the drugs, and then, even under the drug, you will not attain to the state of innocence. Then you will need even stronger drugs.

So this is not a way.

The mind can be put aside very easily. There is no need to depend on anything chemical, on anything artificial. There is a natural possibility to get out of the mind, because we were born without minds. Deep down we are still no-minds. The mind is only on the periphery. That's why I say it is just a cloak, a dress that you are wearing. You can slip out of it.

And one moment of slipping out of it will reveal to you a totally different world: the world of the first principle.

So the real fight in the future is going to be between meditation and drugs. In fact, that has always been the case: the real fight is between drugs and meditation, either drugs or meditation.

So it is not coincidental that when you start meditating by and by the pull of the drug becomes less and less. If it is not becoming less and less, then know well you are not meditating yet, because when you know the higher, the lower is dropped automatically.

But one thing has to be understood. Drugs do something; they *undo* something in you. They help you to get out of the mind. They give you courage to look into reality without thinking. For a moment the curtain slips, and suddenly you are aware that the world has a splendor it had never had it before. You had passed through the same street and you had looked through the same trees and at the same stars and the same people, and today, now everything suddenly is so luminous

and everybody is so beautiful and everybody is afire with life, with love. A saint – one who has attained – lives in that state continuously, without any effort.

You were born as a no-mind. Let this sink into your heart as deeply as possible because through that a door opens. If you were born as a no-mind, then the mind is just a social product. It is nothing natural; it is cultivated. It has been put together on top of you. Deep down you are still free; you can get out of it. One can never get out of nature, but one can get out of the artificial any moment one decides to.

Existence precedes thinking. So existence is not a state of mind; it is a state beyond. To be is the way to know the fundamental, not to think. Science means thinking, philosophy means thinking, theology means thinking. Religion does not mean thinking. The religious approach is a non-thinking approach. It is more intimate; it brings you closer to reality. It drops all that hinders, it unblocks you; you start flowing into life. You don't think that you are separate, looking. You don't think that you are a watcher, aloof, distant. You meet, mingle, and merge into reality.

And there is a different kind of knowing. It cannot be called "knowledge". It is more like love, less like knowledge. It is so intimate that the word "knowledge" is not sufficient to express it. The word "love" is more adequate, more expressive.

In the history of human consciousness, the first thing that evolved was magic. Magic was a combination of science and religion. Magic had something of the mind and something of the no-mind. Then out of magic grew philosophy. Then out of philosophy grew science. Magic was both no-mind and mind; philosophy was only mind; and then mind plus experimentation became science. Religion is a state of no-mind.

Religion and science are the two approaches to reality. Science approaches through the secondary; religion goes direct. Science is an indirect approach; religion is an immediate approach. Science goes round and round; religion simply penetrates to the heart of reality.

A few more things. Thinking can only think about the known – it can chew the already chewed. Thinking can never be original. How can you think about the unknown? Whatsoever you can manage to think will belong to the known. You can think only because you know. At the most, thinking can create new combinations. You can think about a horse who flies in the sky, who is made of gold; but nothing is new. You know birds who fly in the sky, you know gold, you know horses; you combine the three together. At the most, thinking can imagine new things, but it cannot know the unknown. The unknown remains beyond it. So thinking goes in a circle, goes on knowing the known again and again and again. It goes on chewing the chewed one. Thinking is never original.

And the first principle means to come upon reality originally, radically, to come upon reality without any mediator, to come upon reality as if you are the first person to exist and you come upon reality. That is liberating. That very newness of it liberates.

And when you come to know reality directly, it is never reduced to the known; the mystery remains. In fact, it becomes a deeper mystery than ever. The more you know, the more you feel that you don't know. The more you know, the less you feel you know. The more you know, the more vast is the mystery of it. Religion is mysticism, religion is magic, because religion is a no-mind approach.

Thinking can think only about the known; it is repetitive. Philosophy is repetitive. You can go into the books of philosophy, into the history of philosophy, and you will see the same thing being repeated again and again – new phraseology, new words; new terms, new definitions, but nothing fundamentally different. From Thales to Bertrand Russell you can go on, but you will find the same thing being repeated again and again. The wheel moving; the same spokes come to the top again and again.

Science can experiment only with the objective; experimentation is possible only with the objective. You cannot experiment with the experimenter himself; there is no way. The subjective reality remains outside science. Einstein may know much about matter, but he does not know anything about himself. Newton may know much about gravitation, but he does not know who he is. One goes on accumulating knowledge about the objective world, and one remains in deep darkness within one's own self. One's own light is not yet there, and one goes on groping, experimenting.

Science can experiment only with the objective, philosophy can think only about the known, and the reality is beyond both. The reality is unknown – not only unknown but unknowable – and the reality contains the subjective element. So the very methodology of philosophy and science prohibits coming to the fundamental, to the first principle. To come to the fundamental, you will have to find another door, a door other than science and philosophy. That door is religion.

And religion can be reduced to one word, and that word is “meditation,” or call it silence – to be in such a silence that you are almost not, there is no noise within you, the stillness is absolute. Only in that stillness something stirs, only in that stillness do you start hearing the still, small voice of the first principle – call it God or call it soul. Only then life calls forth life. Only then the source calls forth the source. Only then are you close to reality, hand in hand with the fundamental. And that is the search, that is what we are seeking; and without knowing it, without realizing it, there is going to be no fulfillment.

The last thing: then we enter into this small parable. When thinking disappears you are left with the first principle. It has always been there; you were not there just because of thinking. Now you are also there: two presences meet. Ordinarily you are absent, you are somewhere else. In your thoughts you are lost. When there is no thought, you are here-now; then there is no way to go from here-now. Thought functions as a bridge to go away from yourself. The moment a thought has come in, you are already far away from yourself. When there is no thought, where can you go, how can you go? When there is no thought, you have to be in the present. Thought can take you to the past, thought can take you to the future; no-thought brings you to the present. And only the present is. This moment is all there is.

When you are here-now, absolutely here-now, how can you miss the real, how can you miss God? When thinking disappears you are left with the first principle.

But when I say, “when thinking disappears,” I am not saying “when you fall asleep,” because in deep sleep thinking does disappear. In the East we have divided human consciousness into four phases. The first phase we call “waking”, *jagrat*. Waking means “consciousness plus thinking”; you are conscious, but your mind is crowded with thoughts. The second state we have called “dreaming”, *swapna*. The second state means “unconsciousness plus thinking”; you fall asleep, but the thinking continues so there is dreaming. Dreaming is a way of thinking in sleep, and thinking is a way of dreaming while awake. Thinking and dreaming are not two separate things. Dreaming is only thinking in a very primitive language – the language of images. Then the third

state we call *sushupti*: sleep, deep sleep, dreamless deep sleep. The third state is “unconsciousness minus thinking”; you are unconscious – you don’t know where you are, who you are, all consciousness has disappeared, you are at rest – and with the consciousness has disappeared thinking too, dreaming too.

These three are ordinary states: waking, dreaming, sleeping. We all know these three. The fourth is the state of meditation. The fourth is called *samadhi*, *turya*. It means “consciousness minus thinking”.

So four stages: consciousness plus thinking is waking, consciousness minus thinking is *samadhi*, unconsciousness plus thinking is dreaming, unconsciousness minus thinking is sleep.

So *samadhi* has something similar to waking and something similar to sleep; hence Patanjali has defined *samadhi* as “waking sleep” – sleep and yet not sleep. Sleep in the sense that there are no thoughts now, no dreams. And not sleep in the sense that you are perfectly aware, that the light of your awareness is there, that you are conscious, that you know that there is no knowledge now, that you are aware that all thinking has disappeared, that you are aware that now there is no dream lurking in your field of consciousness, that you are absolutely zero, *shunyam*.

This is the state that the East has been trying to achieve. The West has been too involved with science; hence it has missed religion. The East’s involvement is with *samadhi*: hence it has missed science.

These four states can be thought of in some other ways also. Consciousness plus thinking means waking. Science is a waking activity, so is philosophy, so is theology. Second, dreaming: unconsciousness plus thinking. That is what art is, poetry, painting, music. It is a dream activity, so it is not just accidental that we call the poets dreamers, that we call the artists dreamers, that we don’t trust them much – they are not reliable, they cannot be the guides to reality. We enjoy them, it is fun, but we cannot accept them as guides to reality – they are not. They live in fantasy. They dream while awake. Their eyes are full of dreams. So waking is science, philosophy, theology, logic; and art, all kinds of art, is dream activity.

Unconsciousness minus thinking means sleep. Of course all activity ceases in sleep, so nothing is born out of sleep – no science, no art.

Consciousness minus thinking is *samadhi*. *Samadhi* gives birth to religion. When Jesus attained to *samadhi* Christianity was born. When Nanak attained to *samadhi* Sikhism was born. When Buddha attained to *samadhi* Buddhism was born. Religion is born out of *samadhi*, the fourth state. What is *samadhi*? If you can stop your thinking and yet remain alert and don’t fall asleep. Difficult, arduous, one of the most difficult things, almost impossible. It is easy to be awake and thinking, it is easy not to think and fall asleep, but to remain awake and not think is the most difficult thing, because it is not part of evolution. It is a revolution. It is not given by nature automatically. You have to attain it.

That is the task man has to solve. That is the challenge given to man, and very few have accepted that challenge. And those who have accepted it, only they are man; others are man only for the name’s sake. We exist as potential man, not as actual man. It is our potentiality. We can become a Buddha or a Christ, but it has not happened yet. We are just seeds. That’s our misery because a seed can never be satisfied unless it becomes a tree and blooms. A seed will remain miserable

because there is a feeling deep down that “I am not yet that which I am meant to be; my destiny is not fulfilled.”

Have you not observed this in you? If you had not observed it, you would not be here. You are here only because you feel something is missing. You are here only because you continuously feel that something has to happen and it is not happening, that something is just there by the corner and yet you cannot grasp it, seems to be not very far away, yet seems to be beyond reach. The tree is not very far away from the seed. If the seed finds the right soil, falls into the soil, relaxes, surrenders to the soil, dissolves into the soil, dies into the soil, then the tree is not very far away. In the right season the seed will sprout, a tender plant will be born, and the seed will be able to see the light.

Only when the seed has become a plant will it be able to feel the wind and the ecstasy that the wind is and be able to feel the sunrays and the ecstasy that the sun brings and be able to live and be able to accept the challenges and start growing. Come storm, come wind, come rains, and the small, tender plant will become stronger and stronger. Every challenge will give it strength and integration; and one day there will be a great tree whispering to the skies, it will bloom, and the fragrance will be released to the winds in all directions. Then there will be jubilation.

When Jesus says again and again to his children, to his disciples, “Rejoice!” what he is saying is true because he has become a tree and he has bloomed. But his disciples must have looked here and there, they must have thought, “What does he mean? Why does he go on saying again and again, ‘Rejoice’?” They are seeds; how can they rejoice?

When I say to you, “Celebrate!” you start thinking, “For what? Why? What have we got to celebrate?” You cannot celebrate because celebration is possible only when you bloom. I know it! But I go on saying, “Celebrate!” And Jesus knows it and he goes on saying, “Rejoice!” In fact, he wants to create such a thirst in you to know what this rejoicing is that out of that thirst you start seeking and searching for the right soil.

To find a right Master is to find a right soil because only through the Master will you be able to dissolve, only through the Master will you be able to surrender. A seed needs to surrender. A seed has to die; only then is there a new life born out of it. Death makes it possible. Death is tremendously beautiful: it makes it possible that a man can be new, a man can be reborn.

Samadhi is celebration, samadhi is rejoicing. Samadhi is your gratitude toward God, your thanksgiving.

How can you thank God right now? You have nothing to thank him for. You can complain, you cannot thank him; so your prayers are more of complaints, less of thanks. You cannot say, “Thank you.” How can you? For what? In fact, you are very angry with God. Why has he given birth to you? Why has he created so much misery? Why has he put you in such anguish and turmoil? Why in the first place? What wrong have you done? If suddenly you come across God, you will jump upon him. That’s why he goes on hiding. You will kill him. You will say, “What have you been doing? For what are we suffering? What wrong have we done? Why did you make us in the first place? Not to be would have been better – no anxiety, no anguish. Not to be would have been more peaceful. Why did you create us?”

The whole existence seems to be mischievous. It seems as if somebody, a sadistic God, is sitting there, torturing people, creating a thousand and one ways to torture them.

Right now, you cannot thank him because right now you are not. When you are, you will be able to thank him. And the way to be goes through death, through surrender. And the way goes through silence. But it is not easy to be silent; it is the most arduous thing to be silent.

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03 The Unity of Emptiness

The Unity of Emptiness

The world there because of you – you create it, you are a creator. Every single being creates a world around himself, it depends on his mind. The mind may be illusory, but it is creative – it creates dreams. And it is up to you to create a hell or heaven.

If you leave this world, you will not be able to leave it. Wherever you go you will create the same world again, because the world is constantly coming out of you just as leaves are coming out of the tree.

You don't live in the same world, you cannot because you don't have similar minds. Just by the side of you somebody may be living in heaven, and you may be living in hell – and you feel that you are living in the same world? How can you live in the same world when minds differ?

So, the first thing to be understood is that you cannot leave the world unless the mind disappears. They are related, they depend on each other, they make a vicious circle. If the mind is there . . . And a mind is always a particular mind. When the mind is no more a particular mind, when it becomes a Mind with a capital M it is no more mind; it has become consciousness. A mind is always a particular mind, and it carries a particular aroma around it – that is your world.

The mind creates the world and then the world creates the mind, helps the mind to remain the same. This is the vicious circle. But the source is in the mind; the world is just a by-product. The mind is substantial; the world is just the shadow of it. And you cannot destroy the shadow, but everybody tries to destroy it.

If *this* wife doesn't suit you, you think another wife will. You are trying to change the world, and you are the same. You will just turn the next wife into an exact replica of the old. You will again create because the wife will be just a screen.

And you will be surprised: people who have married many times, their experience is really strange. A person who has been married ten times recognizes the fact that "How does it happen? In such a wide and big world, I always stumble upon the same type of woman? Even by accident it seems impossible! Again, and again!"

The problem is not the woman, the problem is the mind. The mind is again attracted to the same type of woman, again creates the same relationship, again finds the same mess and the same hell.

And the same happens in everything you do. Do you think you will live happily in a palace? You are wrong! Who is going to live in the palace? *You* will live there. If you are not happy in your hut, you will not be happy in your palace. Who will live in the palace? Palaces don't exist outside you.

If you can live happily in a hut, you can live happily in a palace because you create the world around you. Otherwise, as the hut pinches you the palace will pinch – even more so because it is

a bigger thing. It will be a hell, just the same – more decorated, but a decorated hell is not a heaven. And even if you are forcibly thrown into heaven you will try to find an exit, or you will create your hell there.

I have heard about one man, a great businessman, a dress manufacturer. He died. Somehow, by some technical mistake, he entered heaven. He met his old partner there. The old partner was as sad as he was on this Earth. So the businessman said, “What does it mean? You are in heaven, and so unhappy?”

The partner said, “It is okay, but personally I prefer Miami.”

And the other also came to the same conclusion within days. They again became partners there, and they wanted to start a business firm to manufacture dresses.

The *same* is going to happen wherever you go, because *you* are the world. You create a world around you, then the world helps the mind which has created it. The son helps the father, the son helps the mother, your shadow helps the substance – then the mind is strengthened more, then again you create the same world on the same lines. From where to start a transformation? How to change?

If you look, the first look will say to change the world, because it is so apparent around you. Change it! And that’s what you have been doing for many lives: continuously changing the world, changing this and that, changing houses, bodies, wives, husbands, friends – changing, but never looking at the fact that you remain the same, so how can you change the world?

That’s why a false tradition of renunciation came into existence all over the world. Escape from the house and go to the monastery. Escape from the market, go to the Himalayas. Escape from the world! To the Himalayas you can go easily, but how can you escape from yourself? You will create the same world there – the same! It may be a miniature world, it may not be so vast, but you will do the same. *You* are the same – how can you do anything else?

Deeper insight reveals that change the mind, then the world changes. Then wherever you are a different world is revealed. You go deeper, and then you understand that if you want to be really without the world around you . . . because howsoever beautiful the world is, sooner or later it will become a boredom, and you will be fed up. Even if it is a heaven, you will start longing for the hell, because the mind needs change. It cannot live in the eternal, it cannot live in the non-changing, because the mind hankers for some new curiosity, some new sensation, some new excitement. It is not possible for the mind to stop time and to remain timelessly.

That’s why the mind cannot live in the now, the here, because now is not a part of time. It never changes; it is eternal. You cannot say it is unchanging; it is not permanent, it is eternal. It is simply as it is. Nothing happens there. It is emptiness.

Buddha has called it *sunyata* – absolutely empty. Nothing happens there, nobody comes, nobody goes. There is nobody, because if somebody is there then something or other will happen.

Mind cannot live in the eternal now. Mind wants change and goes on hoping, and goes on hoping against all hope. The whole situation is hopeless, but mind goes on hoping.

I have heard . . .

Mulla Nasruddin remained unemployed for many, many years because he wanted to be an actor and he had no talent. But every day, religiously, he would go to the agent. Hopefully, he would knock at the door, enter the office, and inquire, “Has something happened? Am I booked somewhere?”

And the agent would say always the same: “I cannot do anything, nothing is possible.”

Days passed, weeks passed, then years passed and the Mulla’s knocking became a routine. Whatsoever the season, the climate, good or bad, but one thing was certain for the agent – that Mulla would come. And he would again ask hopefully, and the man would again say the same thing: “Nasruddin, I cannot do anything, nothing is possible.”

Then one day the knock was different, a little sad. And when Mulla came in, even the agent was surprised: “Why is he so sad?”

Mulla said, “Listen, for two weeks don’t book me anywhere because I’m going for a vacation.”

This is how mind functions – goes on hoping, not for many years, but for many lives! You knock on the same door with the same inquiry and desire, and it is always no. What have you gained through mind except nos?

Yes has never come that way, it cannot come. Mind is a futile effort. It is desert like, nothing grows on it, nothing can grow. But it goes on hoping. Even a desert dreams, and dreams of beautiful gardens, rivers flowing, brooks and waterfalls. Even a desert dreams . . . and that is the dream of the mind.

One has to be alert. There is no need to waste any more time – no need to knock on the agent’s door. Enough you have lived with the mind. Nothing have you achieved through it. Is it not the right time to be alert and aware?

Of course, you have gathered many miseries and many hells – if you call them achievements then it is okay – anguish, frustration. And wherever you move with the mind something goes wrong, because mind is the mechanism of the wrong. You look, something goes wrong.

Mulla Nasruddin’s son was entered into the school. The teacher was talking about geography, and she talked and explained the shape of the Earth and everything. And then she asked Mulla Nasruddin’s son, “What is the shape of the earth?”

He remained silent, so just to provoke his answer she said, “Is it flat?”

The son said, “No.”

She became more hopeful; she said, “Then is it a globe, round-shaped?”

Nasruddin’s son said, “No.”

Then she was surprised. She said, “Only two are the possibilities: either it is flat, or it is global, and you say no to both. So what is your idea?”

The son said, “My Dad said it is crooked!”

For the mind everything is crooked, not because everything is crooked – the way the mind looks, anything that penetrates the medium of the mind becomes crooked. Just as you put a straight thing into water, a straight staff, and suddenly you see the medium of the water has done something; it is no more straight. You bring it out of the water; it is again straight. Put it in again . . .

And you know that the staff remains straight even in water, but your eyes still say that it is not straight. A hundred times you can bring it out and put it in. Even if you know well that the staff remains straight, the medium will again give you the false information that it is no more straight.

You have known many, many times that the misery is created by the mind, but again you fall a victim. Mind creates misery. It cannot create anything else because it cannot encounter reality. It can only dream – that is the only capacity for the mind. It can only dream. And dreams cannot fulfill, because whenever they come against the reality they are shattered.

You live in a house of glass; you cannot face reality. Whenever reality comes, your house is shattered, and many houses you have lived in are shattered. You carry their ruins in the mind – the anguish that resulted. And that has made you very sour, very bitter.

Taste anybody and you will taste bitterness. And that is the experience of others about you also: everybody tastes bitter. Come closer and everything goes bitter; remain distant, everything looks beautiful. Come closer, everything goes bitter – because when you come closer, minds penetrate each other and everything is crooked, then nothing is straight.

This has to be realized as your experience, not as a theory from me or Sosan. Sosan can’t help, neither can I. It *must* become your own experienced phenomenon. Experienced, it becomes a truth – and then many things start changing – then you drop the mind.

And when the mind drops, all worlds disappear. When the mind drops, objects disappear; then they are no longer objects. Then you don’t know where you end and where things start, then there are no boundaries. Boundaries disappear.

In the beginning you feel as if everything has gone blurred, but by and by you settle in the new phenomenon which is of no-mind. Then stars are there, but they are part of you, no more objects. Flowers and trees are there but they flower in *you*, no more outside. Then you live with the totality.

The barrier is broken – the barrier was your mind. Then for the first time there is no world because “world” means the totality of objects. For the first time there is a universe, and universe means one. Remember the word *uni*. This you call a “universe”? Wrongly. Don’t call it a “universe”: for you it is a multiverse. Many worlds, no longer one. It is not yet.

But when the mind drops, worlds disappear. There are no objects. Boundaries mingle and meet into each other. The tree becomes the rock, the rock becomes the sun, the sun becomes the star,

the star becomes the woman you love, and everything is meeting and mingling into each other. And you are not there, separate. You are in it, throbbing at the very heart, pulsating. Then it is a universe.

Mind drops, objects disappear – the source of dream has disappeared. What have you been doing? You have been trying to get a better dream, to no avail of course. But the whole effort of the mind is to get a better dream. Don't think that mind can give you a better dream – a dream is a dream. Even if better, it will not be a satisfactory thing, it cannot give you a deep contentment. A dream is a dream.

If you are feeling thirsty you need real water, not dream water. If you are hungry, you need real, substantial bread, not dream bread. For a few moments you may be able to deceive yourself, but for how long?

Every night it happens: you are hungry, the mind creates a dream – you are eating, you are eating delicious things. For a few minutes it is okay, even for a few hours it is okay, but for how long? Can you stay in this dream forever and ever?

It helps sleep, you don't get disturbed. Otherwise hunger will disturb you, you will have to get up and go to the fridge. It helps: you can go on sleeping, feeling that you are eating; there is no need to go anywhere. But by the morning, you will know that your mind deceived you.

Your whole life is just like a dream, and you are substituting dream objects for the reality. So every day everything is shattered, every day you are shocked into reality, because the reality goes on bumping from here and there. You cannot avoid it! A dream is a very fragile thing; the reality goes on bumping in and breaking.

And it is good, it is for your good, that the reality breaks your dreams, shatters them to pieces. But you again start collecting those pieces and creating other dreams. Drop it! Enough you have done that. Nothing has been achieved. Now no more of it!

Once you understand that dreaming has to be stopped, the world of objects disappears. The world will be there, but not of objects. Then everything becomes alive, everything becomes subjective.

That is the meaning of religious people who say that everything is God. What are they saying? God is just a metaphor. There is nobody sitting somewhere in heaven, controlling, managing, engineering. God is just a metaphor – the metaphor that the things in the world are not like things, they are persons. Deep inside a subjectivity is there. Everything is alive and throbbing. And this throbbing is not a fragmented process, this throbbing is a *whole* throbbing.

Of course, you feel the beat of the heart near the heart, at the heart. But you think it is only in the heart? Then you are wrong – the whole body is throbbing. The heart only indicates, the whole body is throbbing. That's why when the heart stops, the body is dead. It was not the heart really that was throbbing, the whole body was throbbing through the heart; the heart was just an indicator.

You are throbbing, but the whole is throbbing through you – you are just an indicator, a heart. The universe throbs and beats through you. You are not; the universe is.

And the universe is not a totality of objects, it is a subjectivity. It exists as a person. It is alive, conscious. It is not a mechanical arrangement. It is an organic unity.

Now try to understand these words of Sosan:

When thought objects vanish, the thinking subject vanishes, as when the mind vanishes, objects vanish.

Things are objects because of the subject; the mind is such because of things.

Things are there around you because of you. You attract them. If you feel hell around you, it is you who has attracted it. Don't be angry about it and don't start fighting with it; it is useless. You attracted; you invited – you have done it! And now your desires are fulfilled: whatsoever you needed is around you. And then you start fighting and getting angry. You have succeeded!

Remember always that whatsoever is happening around you is rooted in the mind. Mind is always the cause. It is the projector, and outside there are only screens – you project yourself. If you feel it is ugly then change the mind. If you feel whatsoever comes from the mind is hellish and nightmarish, then drop the mind. Work with the mind, don't work with the screen, don't go on painting it and changing it. Work with the mind.

But there is one problem – because you think you are the mind. So how can you drop it? So you feel you can drop everything, change everything, repaint, redecorate, rearrange, but how can you drop yourself? That is the root of all trouble. You are not the mind; you are beyond mind. You have become identified, that's true, but you are not the mind.

And this is the purpose of meditation: to give you small glimpses that you are not the mind. Even for a few moments the mind stops . . . you are still there! On the contrary, you are *more*, overflowing with being. When the mind stops, it is as if a drainage which was continuously draining you has stopped. Suddenly you are overflowed with energy. You feel more!

If even for a single moment you become aware that the mind is not there but “I am,” you have reached a deep core of truth. Then it will be easy to drop the mind. You are not the mind; otherwise how can you drop yourself? The identification has to be dropped first, then the mind can be dropped.

The whole Gurdjieff method is how to get unidentified. When next time a desire comes, look at it. Say within yourself, “Okay, I will watch where this mind is moving.” And you will feel a distance, you are looking at it. Who is this looker, the spectator? And the desire moves and creates dreams.

Sometimes you may forget, sometimes you may become one with the desire. Pull yourself together again, look at the desire again: the desire is moving on its own. It is as if a cloud has entered, a thought has come into the sky of your being. Just look at it, watch it. And remember, if you can be unidentified even for a fragment of a second – the desire is there and you are here and there is a distance – suddenly there is illumination, a light has happened to you.

Now you know that the mind works on its own, it is a mechanism. You can drop it! You may not use it; you may use it; you are the master. Now the slave, the mechanism, is put in its place; it is

no more the master. Then dropping is possible. When you are different from it, only then is dropping possible.

Meditation, witnessing, silently sitting and looking at the mind, will be of much help. Not forcing, simply sitting and looking. Not doing much, just watching as one watches birds flying in the sky. Just lying down on the ground and watching, nothing to do, indifferent. Not your concern really, where they are going; they are going on their own.

Remember, thoughts are also just like birds: they are moving on their own. And sometimes it happens that people who are around you, their thoughts enter into your sky, your thoughts go on entering into their sky. That's why sometimes you feel that with some man suddenly you become sad; with some other man suddenly, you feel an upsurge of energy and happiness and delight. Just looking at somebody, being near to him, something changes in your mood.

It happens even with places. You go into a house and suddenly a gloom settles on you. You go in another house, and suddenly you feel light as if wings have come to you, you can fly, you are weightless. You enter a crowd, and you are no more yourself, something has changed. You enter another crowd, again something has changed.

This is the base of satsang: being with a Master who has no thoughts. Just being with him, sometimes his no-thought, his no-mind, will knock at your door. In some moments . . . it cannot be manipulated, one has to wait, one has just to pray and wait and watch. It cannot be forced because it is not a thought. A thought is a thing; it can be thrown at you. No-thought is not a thing, it cannot be thrown.

A thought has its own movement and propulsion. Whenever you are near a person who has too many thoughts, he will fill you with his thoughts. Just being near he will go on pouring his mind in you – whether he speaks or not, that is not the point. Continuously, thoughts, like sparks, are falling from his head all around – you catch them.

And sometimes you are even aware that this is not your thought. But when it comes you become filled with it, you become identified even with that. This is not your anger; somebody else was angry and you felt something within you. Somebody was hateful and the hate hit you. Everything is infectious, and mind is the most infectious disease in the world. No flu can compete with it, it goes on infecting people all around.

If you can see, you can see just sparks falling from the head of a person. They have different colors. That's why so many mystics became aware of auras, because if a gloomy person comes, he brings a gloomy aura. You can see it if your eyes are clear. You can see when a happy person comes around you. Even if you have not seen him – he is coming from behind you, you have not seen him – but suddenly you feel something happy is happening around.

Thoughts are not your own, they are not you. When you die your thoughts are scattered all around. It has happened, and next time you go near a dying man, watch – it is an experience in itself. When a man is dying, just sit and watch what happens to your mind. You will be surprised; thoughts which have never been there, thoughts you are not accustomed to, thoughts which are unknown, suddenly bubble up in you – pop! The man is dying, and he is throwing his thoughts all around, like a dying tree throwing its seeds. It is in a panic; before the tree dies it should throw seeds so other trees come up.

Never go near a man who is dying if you are not aware, because then the dead will influence you. Basically, never be near a man where you feel gloomy, sad, unless you are aware. If you are aware, then there is no problem. Then the gloom comes and passes; you never get identified with it.

Have you ever felt, going in a church, people praying, you feel immediately different. So much prayer, even not very real, just a Sunday prayer, but still, they are doing it, even for a few moments the windows open – they are different. A fire catches you; you feel sudden changes within you.

Be aware! And then see how thoughts enter in the mind, how you get identified and become one with them. And they are moving so fast, the speed is so great, because there is nothing faster than thought. It is not possible to create anything faster than thought. It takes no time to reach anywhere. It jumps from one infinity to another; space doesn't exist for it.

Thoughts are there, moving with fast speed. Because of the fast speed you cannot see two thoughts separately. Sit, close your eyes, slow down all processes of the body. Breathing slows, heartbeat slows, blood pressure slows. You slow down everything; you relax, because if everything slows, thought has to slow down, because it is a compact whole. When everything is slow, thought has to get slow.

That's why in deep sleep thought stops because everything is so slow, and thought is so speedy a thing that there comes a breaking – the process cannot continue. The man is so slow, and thought is so speedy, they cannot get together. Thought disappears. In deep sleep, only for a few hours, two hours at the most in the night, thought stops, because you are completely relaxed.

Relax and just watch: as the thought process slows you will be able to see gaps. Between two thoughts there is an interval – in that interval is consciousness. Between two clouds there is an interval – in that interval is the blue sky.

Slow down the thought process and look in the intervals and pay more attention to the intervals than to the clouds. Shift the attention, change the gestalt. Don't look at the figure, look at the background.

If I put a blackboard, a big blackboard the size of this wall here, and mark it with a white point and ask you what you see, ninety-nine percent is the possibility that you will not see the blackboard, you will see the white dot – because we see the figure, not the background.

Such a big blackboard, but if I ask you, "What do you see there?" you will say, "I see a little white spot." Such a big blackboard is not seen and only a little white spot, which is almost invisible, is seen? Why? – because this is the fixed pattern of the mind: to look at the figure, not at the background; to look at the cloud, not at the sky; to look at the thought, not at the consciousness.

This gestalt has to be changed. Pay more attention to the background and less attention to the figure. You will be nearer reality. In meditation this has to be done continuously. The mind, because of old habit, will look at the figure. You just shift again: look at the background.

You are here; I am here. We can look at each other in two ways. I can look at the background; in the background are the trees, plants, greenery, the sky – the vast universe is your background. Or I can look at you, you are the figure. But mind always looks at the figure.

That's why it happens if you go to a person like Sosan, Jesus or Buddha, you feel that their eyes are not looking at you. You are just the figure, and they are looking at the background. Their gestalt is different. You may feel that their eyes are cold because they are not paying attention to you. You are just a cloud.

Persons like Buddha, when they look, you *are* there, but just as a small part of the background. And vast is the background, and you are just a dot. But you would like somebody to look at you, at the small dot, as if *you* are the universe, as if nothing exists beyond you.

Buddha's love will look cold. You need a hot love, eyes which look at you and forget the whole. That is not possible for a Buddha. You have your place, but you are still a small dot. Howsoever beautiful, you are just part of a vast background – the whole attention cannot be given to you.

That's why the ego feels very much hurt near a Buddha, because the ego wants the whole attention – "Look at me, I am the center of the world." But you are not the center of the world. Really, there is no center in the world because the center is possible only if the world is limited. If it is a finite circle, then the center is possible – and it is an infinite circle.

It is absurd to think of a center. There is no center in the world; the world exists without any center. And it is beautiful. That's why everybody can think, "I am the center." If there is a center, then it is impossible.

That's why Mohammedans and Christians and Jews will not allow Hindu assertions that "I am God – *Aham Brahmasmi*." They say, "This is heresy. What are you saying? Only God is the center. Nobody else is the center." But Hindus can assert playfully "I am God," because they say there is *no* center, or everybody is the center.

But when you ask that the whole attention should come to you, this is the mind, the old habit of the mind, not to look at the background, just to look at the figure.

In meditation you have to shift from the figure to the background, from the star to the sky. The more this shift happens, the more you will feel you are not the mind, the more you will feel it can be dropped easily.

It is just like dropping a dress. You have made it so tight that it feels like a skin. It is not; it is just like a dress you can drop it easily. But one has to understand that one is the background, not the figure. And when this mind drops, says Sosan, then the objective world simply vanishes.

What does he mean? Does he mean that if you are in deep meditation, if you have reached the goal of no-mind, then these trees will disappear, vanish? Then this house will no more be here? Then you will not be sitting here? If I have attained, will this chair I am sitting on vanish?

No. Objects disappear as objects; not this chair, not that tree – they remain, but they are no more limited. Now they have no boundaries. Then this chair is meeting with the sun and with the sky, then the figure and the background have become one. There is no figure separate from the

background, their identities are lost. And they are no more objects because you are no more a subject there.

Krishnamurti goes on saying something very beautiful: that in deep meditation the observer becomes the observed. This is true, but you will feel that this looks absurd. If you are looking at a flower, does Krishnamurti mean that you become the flower? Then how will you get back home? And somebody may pluck you and you will be in trouble.

“The observer becomes the observed.” Does it mean that you become the flower? No – but still, in a sense, yes. You don’t become the flower in the sense that you can be plucked, and somebody can carry you and you are no more a man. No, not in that sense. But when there is no mind, there is no boundary to you which separates you from the flower, no boundary to the flower which separates it from you. You have both become a subjective pool, you are merging and meeting. You remain you, the flower remains the flower – nobody can mistakenly pluck you – but there is a merging.

It only happens in your life sometimes in a few moments when you love a person. That too is rare, because man’s mind never leaves him even in love. It goes on creating its own nonsense, creating its own world. And the lover is no more allowed such closeness that he reaches to the background. The figure, the ego, always stands in between. But a few times it happens.

Of course, it must be happening in spite of you. It is so natural that even if you have made all the arrangements, sometimes the reality bumps into you. With all your arrangements, with all your dreams, sometimes it penetrates you; sometimes you are not on guard. Sometimes you forget, or you are so much occupied in a certain thing that a window opens, and you are not looking at that window and the reality enters in.

For a few moments, in love, this happens, when the observer has become the observed. This is a beautiful meditation: if you love a person then sit with the person and look into each other’s eyes – not thinking anything, not thinking who he is, not creating a thinking process, just looking into each other’s eyes.

There may be a few glimpses when the observer will become the observed, when you will be lost, and you will not know who you are – whether you have become the beloved or the beloved has become you. Eyes are beautiful doors to enter into each other.

And why do I say only in love it is possible? Because only in love are you not on guard. You relax. You are not afraid of the other, you can be vulnerable, you can afford it. Otherwise, you are always on guard, because you don’t know what the other will do; you don’t know whether he will hurt you. And if you are not on guard, the hurt can go very deep.

In love you can look into each other’s eyes. There will be some glimpses when the background and the figure dissolve into each other. You will be shaken to your very foundations. Suddenly, you will have a glimpse: you are not. Still you are. Somewhere deep there has been a meeting.

This happens to a real meditator with the universe itself – not that he becomes a tree, but still, he becomes a tree. When he is with a tree, boundaries are not there. And when he becomes tuned to this no-boundary land, then he moves without boundaries . . .

This is the meaning of Sosan. When the mind disappears, objects vanish. When the objects vanish, you vanish, the ego vanishes. They are related.

Understand the relativity of these two, the basic and the reality: the unity of emptiness.

You exist because of your objects around you. Your boundary exists because of the boundaries of other things around you. When their boundaries are lost, your boundary is lost – you are related to each other, you are together.

Your mind and your objects outside are joined together, they have a bridge. If the one bank disappears the bridge falls. And with the bridge the other bank also disappears, because there is no possibility for one bank to exist without the other. This is the meaning of relativity.

And then there is a unity – unity of emptiness. You are empty and the flower is empty, because there is no boundary to the flower, then how can there be a center? This is one of the deepest realizations of Buddha, and only Buddhists have asserted this so beautifully. They say there is no *atma*, no self.

And this was very much misunderstood because Hindus say that their whole religion is based on *atma*, the self, the supreme self. And Buddha says, “When there is no boundary, how can the self exist?” When there is no boundary and the mind has become totally silent, how can the “I” exist? . . . because the “I” is a noise. How can you say “I am” when the whole is? When the figure and background have become one, how can you say “I am”?

This is the emptiness of Buddha, *anatta*. This word is beautiful – *anatta*, no-selfness. You are no more and still you are. Really, for the first time you are as the whole, but not as the individual, not as the defined, demarcated, fenced. You are as the whole, but you are not as an individual, as a marked, defined separateness. You are no more an island; you are the vast expanse of emptiness.

And the same is with the flower, and the same is with the tree, and the same is with the bird and the animal, and the same is with the rock, stars and the sun. When your self disappears, the self disappears from everywhere, because it was your self reflected, it was your self resounded by the universe, it was your madness reflected. Now it is no more there.

Sosan is saying that when there is emptiness there is unity. If *you* are, how can there be any unity? Your *very* being separates, creates the disunity.

Mohammedans say that they love Hindus, they are brothers; Christians say they love Jews, they are brothers. Everybody is a brother, but how can you be a brother when you are a Christian? How can you be a brother when you are a Hindu? Your demarcation, your boundary, carries the enmity in it. At the most you can tolerate the other, but you cannot be one with the other. And just by saying “brother” doesn’t help, because nobody can fight as dangerously as brothers.

Saying that I am a Hindu, I am making myself separate from the whole. Saying that I am powerful, I am separating myself from the universe. Saying that I am extraordinary, I am separating myself from the universe. This is what Chuang Tzu says: “Be just the ordinary.” That means don’t separate in any way, don’t make clear-cut definitions about yourself. Live with liquid boundaries, which are always ready to meet and melt.

Understand the relativity of these two, the basic and the reality: the unity of emptiness. In this emptiness the two are indistinguishable . . .

They cannot be distinguished; they cannot be felt as separate – separate from the other. They *are* separate, but this separateness is totally different. You can distinguish, but this separateness is not of the ego.

It is just like a wave in the ocean. You can distinguish. The wave is the wave, not the ocean – still it is the ocean. The wave cannot exist without the ocean. The ocean is waving in it, the ocean is pulsating in it. It is separate as a form, and still not separate as existence. You remain separate, and still you are not separate. This is the most fundamental paradox a man comes to experience when he experiences no-selfness, *anatta*.

. . . And each contains in itself the whole world.

Not separate, you don't lose anything, you gain the whole. And you are always afraid of losing. You always think, "If I lose myself then I am no more. What am I going to gain?" You lose, and you gain the whole. And you lose nothing but your misery, your anxiety, anguish. What have you got to lose?! You don't have anything to lose – only your suffering, your bondage.

. . . And each contains in itself the whole world.

When you lose, you become the whole world. All is yours. You are beggars because of yourselves; you can be emperors. Mind is the begging bowl.

I have heard one Sufi story. It is one of the oldest Sufi teachings.

A beggar came to an emperor's palace. The emperor was just in the garden, so he heard the beggar. The man on the gate was going to give something, but the beggar said, "I have one condition. I always take from the master, never from servants."

The emperor heard. He was taking a walk, so he came to look at this beggar, because beggars don't have conditions. If you are a beggar, how can you have conditions? "Seems to be a rare beggar." So, he came to look – and he *was* a rare beggar. The emperor had never seen such an emperor-like man before; he was nothing. This man had some glory around him, a grace. Tattered his dress was, almost naked, but the begging bowl was very, very precious.

The emperor said, "Why this condition?"

The beggar said, "Because servants are themselves beggars and I don't want to be rude to anybody. Only masters can give. How can servants give? So if you are ready, you can give, and I will accept it. But then too I have a condition, and that is: my begging bowl has to be completely filled."

A small begging bowl! The emperor started laughing. He said, "You seem to be mad. Do you think I cannot fill your begging bowl?" And then he ordered his ministers to bring precious stones, incomparable, unique, and fill the begging bowl with them.

But they got into a difficulty, because the more they filled the begging bowl, the stones would fall in it and they would not even make a sound, they would simply disappear. And the begging bowl remained empty.

Then the emperor was in a fix, his whole ego was at stake. He, a great emperor who ruled the whole earth, could not fill a begging bowl! He ordered, "Bring everything, but this begging bowl has to be filled!"

His treasures . . . for days together all his treasures were emptied, but the begging bowl remained empty. There was no more left. The emperor had become a beggar, all was lost. The emperor fell to the beggar's feet and said, "Now I am also a beggar, and I beg only one thing. Tell me the secret of this bowl, it seems to be magical!"

The beggar said, "Nothing. It is made of the human mind, nothing magical."

Every human mind is just this begging bowl. You go on filling it, it remains empty. You throw the whole world, worlds together, and they simply disappear without making any sound. You go on giving and it is always begging.

Give love, and the begging bowl is there, your love has disappeared. Give your whole life, and the begging bowl is there, looking at you with complaining eyes. "You have not given anything. I am still empty." And the only proof that you have given is if the begging bowl is full – and it is never full. Of course, the logic is clear: you have not given.

You have achieved many, many things – they have all disappeared in the begging bowl. The mind is a self-suicidal process. Before the mind disappears, you will remain a beggar. Whatsoever you can gain will be in vain; you will remain empty.

And if you dissolve this mind, through emptiness you become filled for the first time. You are no more, but you have become the whole. If you are, you will remain a beggar. If you are not, you become the emperor.

That's why in India we have been calling beggars *swamis*. *Swami* means a master, an emperor. You cannot find a better word for sannyasins. When I was thinking what name to give to the new sannyasins, I couldn't improve on it. Swami seems to be the best.

It means one who has thrown himself so completely he is no more; he has become the whole world, the master of all. Otherwise even emperors remain beggars; they go on desiring, asking and suffering.

If you do not discriminate between coarse and fine you will not be tempted to prejudice and opinion.

If you don't distinguish between coarse and fine, good and bad, beauty and ugliness, this and that – if you don't distinguish, if you don't discriminate, you simply accept the whole as it is. You don't put your mind in it, you don't become a judge. You simply say, "It is so."

The thorn is there, you say, "It is so." The rose is there, you say, "It is so." A saint is there, you say, "It is so." A sinner is there, you say, "It is so." And the whole knows; nobody else can know

why a sinner exists. There must be some reason, but that is a mystery for the whole, not for you to bother about.

The whole gives birth to saints and sinners, thorns and roses – only the whole knows why. You simply fall into the whole and you don't make any discriminations. You will also know why, but only when you have become the whole.

The mystery is solved when you have become the mystery itself. You cannot solve it *remaining* yourself. If you remain yourself, you will become a great philosopher. You will have many answers and no answer; you will have many theories but no truth. But if you become the mystery itself, you will know. But that knowledge is so delicate it cannot be put into words. That knowledge is so paradoxical it defies all language. That knowledge is so contradictory – because opposites lose boundaries, they become one – no word can say it.

The figure means the word and the background means the silence. In that knowledge the figure and the background have become one, the silence and the word have become one. How can you say it? But still it has to be said because there are many who are thirsty for it. Even hearing about it, it may be that somebody's heart starts on a journey. That's why Sosan is saying these things.

Sosan knows they cannot be said, because whenever you say it, you have to make discrimination. Whenever you say something, you have to choose a word. Whenever you have to say something, you prefer this to that, and the mind enters.

But nobody has tried better than Sosan. He is incomparable. You cannot find another man who has put that silence into words so beautifully. Even a Buddha will feel jealous. This Sosan is really a Master – Master of silence and Master of words. He has put something into *this* world which doesn't belong to this world. He has penetrated into words a deep silence of his experience.

Listen to his words – not only listen, imbibe. Let them melt into your heart. Don't memorize them. Let them move into your bloodstream and become your blood and bones. Imbibe, eat them, digest them, and forget them. And they have tremendous power to transform.

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04 Zen is Not a Theology

Zen is not a Theology

Zen is not a theology, it is a religion – and religion without a theology is a unique phenomenon. All other religions exist around the concept of God. They have theologies. They are God-centric not man-centric; man is not the end, God is the end. But not so for Zen. For Zen, man is the goal, man is the end unto himself. God is not something above humanity, God is something hidden within humanity. Man is carrying God in himself as a potentiality.

So there is no concept of God in Zen. If you want you can say that it is not even a religion – because how can there be a religion without the concept of God? Certainly those who have been brought up as Christians, Mohammedans, Hindus, Jews cannot conceive of what sort of religion Zen is. If there is no God then it becomes atheism. It is not. It is theism to the very core – but without a God.

This is the first fundamental to be understood. Let it sink deep within you, then things will become clear.

Zen says that God is not extrinsic to religion, it is intrinsic. It is not there, it is here. In fact there is no “there” for Zen, all is here. And God is not then, God is now – and there is no other time. There is no other space, no other time. This moment is all. In this moment the whole existence converges, in this moment all is available. If you cannot see it that does not mean that it is not available – it simply means you don’t have the vision to see it. God has not to be searched for, you have only to open your eyes. God is already the case.

Prayer is irrelevant in Zen – to whom to pray? There is no God sitting there somewhere in the heavens and controlling life, existence. There is no controller. Life is moving in a harmony on its own accord. There is nobody outside it giving it commandments. When there is an outside authority, it creates a kind of slavery . . . a Christian becomes a slave, the same happens to a Mohammedan. When God is there commanding, you can be at the most a servant or a slave. You lose all dignity. Not so with Zen. Zen gives you tremendous dignity. There is no authority anywhere.

Freedom is utter and ultimate.

Had Friederich Nietzsche known anything about Zen he might have turned into a mystic rather than going mad. He had stumbled upon a great fact. He said, “There is no God. God is dead – and man is free.” But basically, he was brought up in the world of the Jews and the Christians, a very narrow world, very much confined in concepts. He stumbled upon a great truth: “There is no God. God is dead, hence man is free.” He stumbled upon the dignity of freedom, but it was too much. For his mind it was too much. He went mad, he went berserk. Had he known anything like Zen he would have turned into a mystic – there was no need to go mad.

One can be religious without a God. In fact, how can one be religious with a God? That is the question Zen asks, a very disturbing question. How can a man be religious with a God? –

Because God will destroy your freedom, God will dominate you. You can look into the Old Testament. God says, "I am a very jealous God and I cannot tolerate any other God. Those who are not with me are against me. And I am a very violent and cruel God and I will punish you and you will be thrown into eternal hell fire." How can man be religious with such a God? How can you be free and how can you bloom? Without freedom there is no flowering. How can you come to your optimum manifestation when there is a God confining you, condemning you, forcing you this way and that, manipulating you?

Zen says that with God, man will remain a slave; with God, man will remain a worshipper; with God, man will remain in fear. In fear how can you bloom? You will shrink, you will become dry, you will start dying. Zen says that when there is no God there is tremendous freedom, there is no authority in existence. Hence there arises great responsibility. Look . . . if you are dominated by somebody you cannot feel responsible. Authority necessarily creates irresponsibility; authority creates resistance; authority creates reaction, rebellion, in you – you would like to kill God. That's what Nietzsche means when he says God is dead – it is not that God has committed a suicide, he has been murdered.

He has to be murdered. With him there is no possibility to be free – only without him. But then Nietzsche became very afraid himself. To live without God needs great courage, to live without God needs great meditation, to live without God needs great awareness – that was not there. That's why I say he stumbled upon the fact; it was not a discovery. He was groping in the dark.

For Zen it is a discovery. It is an established truth: there is no God. Man is responsible for himself and for the world he lives in. If there is suffering, you are responsible; there is nobody else to look to. You cannot throw off your responsibility. If the world is ugly and is in pain, we are responsible – there is nobody else. If we are not growing, we cannot throw the responsibility on somebody else's shoulders. We have to take the responsibility.

When there is no God, you are thrown back to yourself. Growth happens. You have to grow. You have to take hold of your life; you have to take the reins in your own hands. Now you are the master. You have to be more alert and more aware because for whatsoever is going to happen you will be responsible. This gives great responsibility. One starts becoming more alert, more aware. One starts living in a totally different way. One becomes more watchful. One becomes a witness.

And when there is no beyond . . . The beyond is within you, there is no beyond beyond you. In Christianity the beyond is beyond; in Zen the beyond is within. So the question is not to raise your eyes toward the sky and pray – that is meaningless, you are praying to an empty sky. The sky is far lower in consciousness than you.

Somebody is praying to a tree . . . Many Hindus go and pray to a tree, many Hindus go to the Ganges and pray to the river, many pray to a stone statue, many pray toward the sky or many pray toward a concept, an idea. The higher is praying toward the lower. Prayer is meaningless.

Zen says: only meditation. It is not that you have to kneel down before somebody. Drop this old habit of slavery. All that is needed is that you have to become quiet and silent and go withinward to find your center. That very center is the center of existence too. When you have come to your innermost core you have come to the innermost core of existence itself. That's what God is in Zen. But they don't call it God. It is good that they don't call it God.

So the first thing to remember is that Zen is not a theology, it is a religion – and that too with a tremendous difference. It is not a religion like Islam. There are three fundamentals in Islam: one God, one book, and one prophet. Zen has no God, no book, no prophet. The whole existence is God's prophecy; the whole existence is his message.

And remember, God is not separate from this message either. This message itself is divine. There is no messenger – all that nonsense has been completely dropped by Zen. Theology arises with one book. It needs a Bible; it needs a holy Koran. It needs a book which pretends to be holy, it needs a book which tries to say that it is special – that no other book is like this, this is a Godsend, a gospel.

Zen says everything is divine so how can anything be special? All is special. Nothing is nonspecial so nothing can be special. Each leaf of every tree and each pebble on every shore is special, unique, holy. It is not that the Koran is holy, not that the Bible is holy. When a lover writes a letter to his beloved that letter is holy.

Zen brings holiness to ordinary life.

A great Zen Master, Bokoju, used to say, "How wondrous this. How mysterious. I carry fuel, I draw water."

"How wondrous this. How mysterious." Carrying fuel, drawing water from the well and he says, "How mysterious." This is the Zen spirit. It transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. It transforms the profane into the sacred. It drops the division between the world and the divine.

That's why I say it is not a theology. It is pure religion. Theology contaminates religion. There is no difference between a Mohammedan and a Christian and a Hindu as far as religion is concerned but there is great difference as far as theology is concerned. They have different theologies. People have been fighting because of theology.

Religion is one; theologies are many. Theology means the philosophy about God, the logic about God. It is all meaningless because there is no way to prove God – there is no way to disprove either. Argumentation is just irrelevant. Yes, one can experience but one cannot prove – and that's what theology goes on doing. And theology goes on doing such stupid things – logic chopping. When you look at it from a distance you will laugh. It is so ridiculous.

In the Middle Ages, Christian theologians were very much concerned, very much troubled, puzzled about problems which will not look like problems to you. For example, how many angels can stand on the point of a needle? Books have been written about it – great argumentation.

Mulla Nasrudin, the owner of two lovebirds, sent for a veterinarian. "I'm worried about my birds," he announced. "They haven't gone potty all week."

The doctor looked inside the cage and asked, "Do you always line this thing with maps of the Earth?"

"No," answered Mulla Nasrudin, "I put that in last Saturday when I was out of newspapers."

“That explains it!” replied the vet. “Love-birds are very sensitive creatures. They’re holding back because they figure this planet Earth has taken all the crap it can stand!”

Theology is crap. And because of theology, religion becomes poisoned. A really religious person has no theology. Yes, he has got the experience, he has the truth, he has that luminosity, but he has no theology. But theology has been of great help to scholars, pundits, the so-called learned people. It has been of great interest to the priests, to the popes, to the *shankarcharyas*. It has been of great benefit to them. Their whole business depends on it.

Zen cuts the very root. It destroys the very business of the priest. And that is one of the ugliest businesses in the world because it depends on a very great deception. The priest has not known and he goes on preaching; the theologian has not known but he goes on spinning theories. He is as ignorant as anybody else – maybe even more so. But his ignorance has become very, very articulate. His ignorance is very decorated – decorated with scriptures, decorated with theories; decorated so cunningly and cleverly that it is very difficult to detect the flaw. Theology has not been of any help to humanity but certainly it has helped many people: the priests. They have been able to exploit humanity in the name of foolish theories.

Two psychiatrists meeting in a busy restaurant got to talking and one said he was treating a rather interesting case of schizophrenia.

At that the other analyst balked. “What’s so interesting about that? Split-personality cases are rather common, I would say.” “This case is interesting,” responded his colleague. “They both pay!”

That’s how theologians have lived. Theology is politics. It divides people. And if you can divide people, you can rule them.

Zen looks at humanity with undivided vision – it does not divide. It has a total look. That’s why I say that Zen is the religion of the future. Humanity is growing slowly toward that awareness where theology will be dropped and religion will be accepted purely as an experience.

In Japanese they have a special word for it. They call it *konomama* or *sonomama* – “Thisness” of existence. This – capital “This” – is it. This isness of life is God. It is not that God is, but the very isness is divine: the isness of a tree, the isness of a rock, the isness of a man, the isness of a woman, the isness of a child. And that isness is an undefined phenomenon, undefinable. You can dissolve into it, you can merge into it, you can taste it. “How wondrous! How mysterious!”

But you cannot define it, you cannot pinpoint it logically, you cannot formulate it into clear-cut concepts. Concepts kill it. Then it is the isness no more. Then it is a mind-construction. The word *God* is not God, the concept *God* is not God. Neither is the concept *love* nor is the word *food*. Zen says a very simple thing. It says: remember that the menu is not the food. And don’t start eating the menu. That’s what people have been doing down the centuries: eating the menu.

And of course, if they are undernourished, if they are not flowing, if they are not vital, if they are not living totally, it is natural, it is predictable. They have not lived on real food. They have been talking too much about food and they have completely forgotten what food is. God has to be eaten, God has to be tasted, God has to be lived – not argued about.

The process of “about” is theology. And that “about” goes round and round, it never comes to the real thing. It is a vicious circle. Logic is a vicious circle. And Zen makes every effort to bring you out of that vicious circle.

How is logic a vicious circle? The premise already has the conclusion in it. The conclusion is not going to be something new; it is contained in the premise. And then in the conclusion the premise is contained. It is like a seed: the tree is contained in the seed and then the tree will give birth to many more seeds and in those seeds trees will be contained. It is a vicious circle: seed, tree, seed. It goes on. Or, egg, hen, egg, hen, egg . . . it goes on ad infinitum. It is a circle.

To break out of this circle is what Zen is all about – not to go on moving in your mind through words and concepts but to drop into existence itself.

A great Zen Master, Nanin, was cutting a tree in the forest, and a professor of a university came to see him. Naturally the professor thought that this woodcutter must know where Nanin lived in the hills, so he enquired. The woodcutter took his axe in his hand and said, “I had to pay very much for it.”

The professor had not enquired about his axe. He was enquiring where Nanin lived; he was enquiring if he would be in the temple if he went there. And Nanin raised the axe and said, “Look, I had to pay very much for it.” The professor felt a little puzzled and before he could escape, Nanin came even closer and put his axe just on the head of the professor. The professor started trembling and Nanin said, “It is really sharp.” And the professor escaped.

Later on, when he reached the temple, he came to know that the woodcutter was nobody but Nanin himself. Then he enquired, “Is he mad?”

“No,” the disciple said. “You had asked if Nanin was in and he was saying yes. He was showing his *inness* and *isness*. That moment he was a woodcutter; that moment, axe in his hand, he was totally absorbed in the sharpness of the axe. He was that sharpness in that moment. He was saying ‘I am in’ by being so immediate, by being so totally in the present. You missed the point. He was showing you the quality of Zen.”

Zen is non-conceptual, non-intellectual. It is the only religion in the world which preaches immediacy; moment-to-moment immediacy; to be present in the moment, no past, no future.

But people have lived with theologies. And those theologies keep them childish, they don’t allow them to grow. You cannot grow by being confined in a theology, by being a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan or even a Buddhist. You cannot grow; you don’t have space enough to grow. You are confined very much, in a very narrow space; you are imprisoned.

A young priest took a hundred thousand dollars from the church safe and lost it on the stock market. Then his beautiful wife left him. In despair he went down to the river and was just about to jump off the bridge when he was stopped by a woman in a black cloak with a wrinkled face and stringy gray hair.

“Don’t jump,” she rasped. “I’m a witch, and I’ll grant you three wishes if you do something for me!”

“I’m beyond help,” he replied.

“Don’t be silly,” she said. “Alakazam! The money is back in the church vault. Alakazam! Your wife is home waiting for you with love in her heart. Alakazam! You now have two hundred thousand dollars in the bank!”

“That’s w-w-wonderful,” stuttered the priest. “What do I have to do for you?”

“Spend the night making love to me.”

The thought of sleeping with the toothless old hag was repellent, but certainly worth it, so they retired to a nearby motel. In the morning, the distasteful ordeal over, the priest was dressing to go home when the bat in the bed said, “Say sonny, how old are you?”

“I’m forty-two!” he replied. “Why?”

“Ain’t you a little old to believe in witches?”

That’s what happens. If you believe in God you can believe in a witch, it is the same package. If you can believe in one kind of nonsense, you can believe in all kinds of nonsense. But you never grow. You remain juvenile.

Zen means maturity. Zen means drop all wishes and see what is the case. Don’t bring your dreams into reality. Clean your eyes completely of dreams so that you can see what is the case. That isness is called *konomama* or *sonomama*. *Kono* or *sonomama* means the isness of a thing – reality in its isness. All ideologies prevent you from seeing. Ideologies are all blindfolds, they obstruct your vision. A Christian cannot see, neither can a Hindu, nor a Mohammedan. Because you are so full of your ideas you go on seeing what you want to see, you go on seeing what is not there, you go on projecting, you go on interpreting, you go on creating a private reality of your own which is not there. This creates a sort of insanity. Out of a hundred of your so-called saints, ninety-nine are insane people.

Zen brings sanity to the world, utter sanity. It drops all ideologies. It says: “Be empty. Look without any idea. Look into the nature of things but with no idea, with no prejudice, with no pre-supposition.” Don’t be preoccupied – that is one of the fundamentals. So theology has to be dropped otherwise you remain preoccupied.

Can you see the point? When you have a certain idea, there is every possibility that you will find it in reality – because the mind is very, very creative. Of course, that creation will be only in imagination. If you are seeking Christ, you may start having visions of Christ, and they will be all imaginary. If you are seeking Krishna, you will start seeing Krishna, and they will be all imaginary.

Zen is very down to earth. It says that imagination has to be dropped. Imagination comes out of your past. From childhood you have been conditioned for certain ideas. From childhood you have been taken to the church, to the temple, to the mosque; you have been taken to the scholar, to the pundit, to the priest; you have been forced to listen to sermons – all kinds of things have been thrown into your minds. Burdened with all that, don’t come to reality – otherwise you will never come to know what reality is.

Unburden. That unburdening is Zen.

A minister of the Gospel was conducting religious services in an asylum for the insane. His discourse was suddenly interrupted by one of the inmates crying out wildly, "I say, have we got to listen to this tommyrot?"

The minister, surprised and confused, turned to the keeper and said, "Shall I stop speaking?"

The keeper replied, "No, no, keep right on, that won't happen again, not at least for seven years. That man has only one sane moment every seven years."

It is really very difficult to be sane in an insane world.

Zen is simple and yet difficult. Simple as far as Zen is concerned – it is the most simple thing, the simplest, because it is a spontaneous thing – but very difficult because of our conditioned minds, because of the insane world in which we live, by which we have been brought up, by which we have been corrupted.

The second thing: Zen is not a philosophy, it is poetry. It does not propose, it simply persuades. It does not argue, it simply sings its own song. It is aesthetic to the very core, it is not ascetic. It does not believe in being arrogant, aggressive, toward reality, it believes in love. It believes that if we participate with reality, reality reveals its secrets to us. It creates a participatory consciousness. It is poetry, it is pure poetry – just as it is pure religion.

Zen is very, very concerned with beauty – less concerned with truth, more concerned with beauty. Why? Because truth is a dry symbol. It is not only dry in itself but people who become too much concerned with truth become dry also. They start dying. Their hearts shrink, their juices flow no more. They become loveless, they become violent, and they start moving more and more in the head.

And Zen is not a head thing, it is a total thing. Not that the head is denied, but it has to be given its right place. It is not given any dominant status. It has to function with the totality. The guts are as important as the head, the feet are as important as the head, the heart is as important as the head. The total should function as an organism. Nobody should be dominated.

Philosophy is head-oriented; poetry is more total. Poetry has more flow to it. Poetry is more concerned about beauty. And beauty is non-violence and beauty is love and beauty is compassion.

The Zen seeker looks into reality to find out the beautiful . . . in the songs of the birds, in the trees, in the dance of a peacock, in the clouds, in the lightning, in the sea, in the sands. It tries to look for the beautiful.

Naturally, to look for the beautiful has a totally different impact. When you are searching for truth, you are more male; when you are searching for beauty, you are more female. When you are searching for truth, you are more concerned with reason; when you are searching for beauty you have to be more and more concerned with intuition. Zen is feminine. Poetry is feminine. Philosophy is very male, very aggressive. It is a male mind.

Zen is passive – that’s why in Zen, sitting became one of the most important meditations. Just sitting – zazen. Zen people say that if you simply sit doing nothing, things will happen. Things will happen on their own; you need not go after them, you need not seek them, you need not search for them. They will come. You simply sit. If you can sit silently, if you can fall into a tremendous restfulness, if you can “unlax” yourself, if you can drop all tensions and become a silent pool of energy, going nowhere, searching nothing, God starts pouring into you. From everywhere God rushes toward you. Just sitting, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself.

And remember, when Zen says “just sitting” it means just sitting – nothing else, not even a mantra. If you are repeating a mantra you are not just sitting, you are again getting into some tommyrot, again into some mind thing. If you are not doing anything whatsoever. . . Thoughts are coming, coming; they are going, going – if they come, good; if they don’t come, good. You are not concerned with what is happening, you are simply sitting there. If you feel tired you lie down. If you feel your legs getting tense you spread them. You remain natural. Not even watching. Not making any effort of any kind. That’s what they mean by just sitting. Just sitting it happens.

Zen is the feminine approach and religion is basically feminine. Science is male, philosophy is male – religion is female. All that is beautiful in the world – poetry, painting, dance – has all come from the feminine mind.

It may not have come from women because women have not been free to create yet. Their days are coming. When Zen becomes more and more significant in the world, the feminine mind will have a great upsurge, a great explosion.

Things move in a togetherness. The past has been male-dominated – hence Islam and Christianity and Hinduism. The future is going to be more feminine, more soft, more passive, more relaxed, more aesthetic, more poetic. In that poetic atmosphere Zen will become the most significant thing in the world.

Philosophy is logic; poetry is love. Philosophy dissects, analyses; poetry synthesizes, puts things together. Philosophy is basically destructive; poetry is life-giving. Analysis is the method of philosophy – and it is the method of science, the method of psychoanalysts. Sooner or later psychoanalysis will have to be replaced by the more profound psychosynthesis. Assagioli is far more right than Sigmund Freud because synthesis is closer to truth. The world is one. It is a unity. Nothing is separate. Everything pulsates together. We are joined with each other, interlinked. The whole life is a net. Even the small leaf around this Chuang Tzu auditorium is joined with the farthest star. If something happens to this leaf something is going to happen to that farthest star too. Everything is together, this togetherness. Existence is a family.

Zen says don’t dissect, don’t analyze.

A farmer, who was a witness in a railroad case up in Vermont, was asked to tell in his own way how the accident happened.

“Well, Jake and me was walking down the track and I heard a whistle, and I got off the track and the train went by, and I got back on the track and I didn’t see Jake. But I walked along and pretty soon I seen Jake’s hat, and I walked on and I seen one of Jake’s laigs, and then I seen one of

Jake's arms, and then another laig, and then over on one side Jake's head, and I says, 'By crickey! Something musta happened to Jake!'"

That's what has happened to humanity. Something has happened. Man has been cut into parts. There are now specialists: somebody takes care of the eyes and somebody takes care of the heart and somebody takes care of the head and somebody takes care of something else. Man is divided.

Zen says man is a total organism.

In modern science a new concept is becoming very prevalent – they call it *androgeny*. Buckminster Fuller has defined *androgeny* as the characteristic of a whole system, an organism. An organism has something which is not just the sum total of its parts. It is called synergetic – that is, more than the simple sum of its parts. When these parts are united in a functioning whole, in a working order, a synergetic dividend appears – the “tick”. You can open a clock and you separate everything – the tick disappears. You put the parts together again in a functioning order – the tick appears again. The tick is something very new. No single part can be made responsible for it; no single part had it. It is the whole that ticks.

That tick is the soul. You take my hand away, you take my leg away, you take my head away, and the tick disappears. The tick is the very soul. But the tick remains only in an organic unity.

God is the tick of this whole existence. You cannot find God by dissecting; God can be found only in a poetic vision of unity. God is a synergetic experience. Science can never reveal it; philosophy can never come to it – only a poetic approach, a very passive, a very loving approach can. When you fall *en rapport* with existence, when you are no more separate as a seeker, when you are no more separate as a watcher, when you are no more separate as an observer, when you are lost into it, utterly lost it is there, the tick.

The third thing: Zen is not science but magic. But it is not the magic of the magicians, it is magic as a way to look into life. Science is intellectual. It is an effort to destroy the mystery of life. It kills the wonder. It is against the miraculous. Zen is all for it – for the miraculous, for the mysterious.

The life mystery has not to be solved because it cannot be solved. It has to be lived. One has to move into it, cherish it. It is a great joy that life is a mystery. It has to be celebrated.

Zen is magic. It gives you the key to open the miraculous. And the miraculous is in you and the key is also in you.

When you come to a Zen Master, he simply helps you to be silent so that you can find your key which you are carrying all along the way, and you can find your door – which is there – and you can enter into your own innermost shrine.

And the last fundamental: Zen is not morality, it is aesthetics. It does not impose a code of morality, it does not give you any commandments: do this, don't do that. It simply makes you more sensitive toward the beautiful, and that very sensitivity becomes your morality. But then it arises out of you, out of your consciousness, Zen does not give you any conscience as against consciousness; it simply gives you more consciousness and your more consciousness becomes

your conscience. Then it is not that Moses gives you a commandment, it is not that it comes from the Bible or Koran or Vedas . . . it is not coming from outside. It comes from your innermost core.

And when it comes from there it is not slavery, it is freedom. When it comes from there it is not that you are doing it as a duty, reluctantly. You enjoy doing it. It becomes your love.

Excerpt from ***Zen: The Path of Paradox, V.1***, Discourse #1

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Why Can't I Know God?

Why can't I know God?

For you are it! Knowledge is not possible. Knowledge pre-supposes division, split. The knower has to be separate from the known. That's why God cannot be known. You can be God – you are – but you cannot know Him. The very effort to know Him is based on separation. Knowledge separates, divides; it never bridges you. That's why I insist again and again: Be innocent, not knowledgeable – then you will be in harmony with existence. Then you will be existence! Be ignorant. Blessed are the ignorant.

Why? Because when there is no knowledge, no effort to know, divisions disappear. You merge . . . you meet . . . you become one.

You cannot know God because God is hiding in you. God cannot be reduced to an object. God cannot become the known. God is the *knower*; God is your subjectivity. It is not the goal, it is the seeker. It is not at the end of the journey, it is in the beginning – in the very beginning. It is the beginning of the journey; it is the pilgrimage. So don't try to know God, otherwise you will fail and there will be great frustration.

Become God! Be God! And when I say become God, I am using language which is not adequate.

You are God! Recognize it – that's all that I mean by becoming it. *Look* within yourself. Don't seek God – *find* Him! Without seeking He has to be found. All search leads astray, because the search starts from the very false idea that He is separate, that He is far away, that He is somebody else.

He is in the seeker – He is the search!

From ***Walk Without Feet, Fly Without Wings and Think Without Mind***, Discourse #9

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05 Like the Empty Sky it Has No Boundaries

Like the Empty Sky it has no Boundaries

And now this profound sutra.

Like the empty sky it has no boundaries, yet it is right in this place, ever profound and clear.

Replace “it” by “God” and you will immediately understand – but Zen people don’t use the word “God”, they say “it”.

Like the empty sky it has no boundaries, yet it is right in this place, ever profound and clear.

If you start looking for the sky, you will never find it. If you start searching and you become very serious you will never find the sky. Where will you find the sky? The sky is not somewhere, it is everywhere and that which is everywhere cannot be searched for. You cannot locate it; you cannot say it is in the north, you cannot say it is in the south, you cannot say it is there – because it is everywhere. That which is everywhere cannot be found somewhere. And where will you search? You will be rushing into the sky itself, here and there. And it is all sky. God is like the sky, like the empty sky.

It has no boundaries so it cannot be defined. You cannot say where it begins and where it ends. It is eternal, it is infinite – yet it is right in this place, just in front of you. If you are relaxed it is there; if you become tense it disappears.

A Zen Master used to say, “It is clear and so it is hard to see. A dunce once searched for a fire with a lighted lantern. Had he known what fire was, he could have cooked his rice much sooner.”

Now with a lighted lantern you are searching for fire and you are carrying fire in your hands all the time. Yes, the Zen Master was right: had he known what fire was he could have cooked his rice much sooner. You could have always cooked your rice much sooner. And you are hungry, and you have been hungry for centuries, for eternity. And you have been searching for fire with a lighted lantern in your hand.

People go on asking where God is and he is just in front of you. He surrounds you. He is in and he is out because only he is. But Zen people call it “it” so that you don’t get trapped into the word “God”.

When you seek to know it, you cannot see it.

Why? Because when you want to know it, your very wanting becomes a tense state of affairs. You become narrow. You become concentrated. *When you seek to know it, you cannot see it.* You miss – because it can be seen only when you are utterly relaxed, when you are open from everywhere, when you are not concentrated.

Listen to it. Ordinarily people who don’t know what meditation is, write that meditation is concentration. There are thousands of books in which you will find this statement, this utterly

stupid statement – that meditation is concentration. Meditation is not concentration – it is the last thing that meditation can be. In fact, concentration is just the diametrically opposite. In concentration you are very tense, focused, looking for something. Yes, concentration is good if you are looking for tiny things. If you are searching for an ant, concentration is perfectly good – but not good for God. God is so vast, so tremendously vast. If you look with concentration, you will find an ant, not God. For God you have to be utterly open, unconcentrated, open from every side, not searching, not looking. An unfocussed consciousness is what meditation is – unfocused consciousness. [...]

When you seek to know it, you cannot see it.

So the very effort to see it, the very desire to see it becomes a barrier. Don't seek God. Don't seek truth. Rather, create the situation of unfocusedness and God comes to you, it comes to you. It is there. [...] God is unconditionally available.

When you seek to know it, you cannot see it.

You cannot take hold of it, but you cannot lose it.

See the beauty of this statement. *You cannot take hold of it.* If you want to possess God you will not be able to. God cannot be possessed. [...]

Life cannot be possessed because life is God. Existence cannot be possessed because existence is God.

You see a beautiful flower – a rose – on a bush, and you immediately take it away from the bush. You want to possess it. You have killed it. Now you put it in your buttonhole – it is a dead flower, it is a corpse, it is no more beautiful. How can a dead thing be beautiful? It is just a memory and it is fading. It was so alive on the bush; it was so beautiful on the bush. It was so young and so happy and there was dance in it and there was a song around it. You killed all. Now you are carrying a dead flower in your buttonhole.

And this is what we are doing in everything. Whether it is beauty, love, God, we want to possess.

You cannot take hold of it – remember.

But you cannot lose it.

So beautiful. Yes, you cannot possess it, but there is no way to lose it either. It is there. It is always there. If you are just silent you will start feeling it. You have to fall in tune with it. You have to become silent so you can listen to it. You have to become silent so the dance of God can penetrate you, so God can vibrate in you, so God can pulsate in you. You have to drop your rush, your hurry, your ideas to go somewhere, to reach, to become, to be this and that. You have to stop becoming. And it is there; you cannot lose it.

In not being able to get it, you get it.

In not being able to get it, you get it. The moment you understand that you cannot possess it, and you drop your possessiveness, it is there – and you have got it. The moment you understand that

love cannot be possessed, a great understanding has arisen in you. And now you will have it, and you will have it forever. You cannot exhaust it.

But you will have it only when you have got the point that it cannot be possessed, that there is no way to get it.

This is the Zen paradox – Zen is the path of paradox. It says that if you want to possess God, please don't possess him – and you will possess him. If you want to possess love, don't possess, and it is there and it is always yours. You cannot lose it; it is not possible to lose it.

When you are silent, it speaks; when you speak, it is silent. [...]

Either you speak and God is not there, or God speaks and you are not there. If you dissolve, disappear, then you hear him. Then he is speaking from everywhere – from every chirping of every bird and from every murmur of every brook and from every wind passing through every pine. He is everywhere – but you fall silent.

When you are silent, it speaks; when you speak, it is silent.

The great gate is wide open to bestow alms, and no crowd is blocking the way.

There is no competition, there is nobody blocking your way, there are no competitors. You need not be in a hurry. You need not make any effort to grab. There is nobody competing with you and there is nobody standing in front of you – only God, only God. You can relax. You need not be afraid that you will miss it. You cannot miss it in the very nature of things. You cannot lose him. You relax.

All these statements are just to help you to relax. God cannot be lost – relax. There is nobody blocking the way – relax. There is no hurry because God is not something in time – relax.

There is nowhere to go because God is not distant on some star – relax. You cannot miss in the very nature of things – relax.

The whole message of all these paradoxical statements is – relax. It can be condensed into one thing – relax. Don't seek, don't search, don't ask, don't knock, don't demand – relax. If you relax, it comes. If you relax, it is there. If you relax, you start vibrating with it.

That's what Zen calls satori . . . utter relaxation of your being; a state of your consciousness where there is no becoming left; when you are not an achiever anymore; when you are not going anywhere; when there is no goal; when all goals have disappeared and all purposes have been left behind; when you are, simply are. In that moment of *isness* you dissolve into totality and a new tick arises that has never been there. That tick is called satori, samadhi, enlightenment. It can happen in any situation – whenever you fall in tune with the whole.

From ***Zen: The Path of Paradox, V.1***, Discourse #1

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My “Now” Contains “This” and “That”

In lecture yesterday you spoke about the Master’s work: keeping his disciples from settling for less than “freedom from the self”. In the West, much is made of the experience that “This is it,” that nothing can be different than it is – right now!

Is this a copper mine experience? How can there be anything else?

Deva Sambuddha, I also say, “This is it,” but when I say this is it, it has a totally different meaning. It is not the same statement as it is being made in the West. The statement in itself has no meaning of its own; the meaning comes through your experience.

Man can live on different planes. When Gautam the Buddha says, “This is it!” he is using the same words as you use. The words are exactly the same and the dictionary meaning is the same, but the existential meaning is totally different; it may be even diametrically opposed to your meaning.

In the West it has become fashionable to say that this is all, to live right now is all there is. But the people who are saying it have no idea of meditateness; have no idea of absolute silence, thoughtless awareness; they have not experienced witnessing. Hence what they are saying – “This is it” – is nothing more significant than their mind.

So if your mind is full of lust, your “this is it” will be only lust and nothing else. If your mind is full of greed, full of anger, full of jealousy, then how can it have the same meaning as it has when Chuang Tzu says, “This is it”? It is not possible to have the same meaning. Meaning comes from the person, his presence, his realization.

The West has got clichés from the East. Now Zen has become very fashionable in the West, not that the West is capable yet to understand Zen. Zen, the very word “Zen”, comes from *dhyana*. Buddha himself never used Sanskrit language; he was the first enlightened person in India who used the language of the people. That was one of the things that made the priesthood, the *brahmins* of India, be antagonistic to Buddha.

Amongst many things that was one of the major, because the priests of India have always used Sanskrit as their language. It was their property. And only the scholarly people could understand it; the masses were absolutely ignorant about it. Hence what was written in the scriptures was known only to the few priests, and of course, through that knowledge they were powerful. And they never wanted it to be known by the masses, otherwise their power would be lost, their vested interests would be destroyed.

Buddha was the first man who dynamited their whole establishment. He used the language of the people; the language of the people in Buddha’s time was Pali. In Pali, *dhyana* is pronounced as *jhana*. Because Buddha used the word *jhana* it changed its color. When it reached China through Bodhidharma it became *ch’an* because in Chinese *jhana* cannot be written; in Chinese there is no alphabet. Chinese is a pictorial language, so the closest picture that they had which could express the word *jhana* was *ch’an* or *ch’ana*.

And from China it reached Japan. They use the same pictorial language, but their pronunciation is different. In Japan it became Zen; in a way, it came back to the original place. It came closer to Buddha's jhana; it became Zen.

Now the West has not yet understood what it is all about, but Zen has an appeal for the simple reason because it is very absurd, illogical, paradoxical. And the West has become fed up with logical philosophies – with Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein – it has become fed up. From Aristotle to Wittgenstein, two thousand years of logical thinking has not led anywhere except to a point where the West feels that life is absolutely meaningless and accidental. Now this is the right situation for any illogical philosophy to become fashionable.

The western painting has become illogical. You can see it in Picasso, Dali, Cezanne and other painters: the painting has become absolutely illogical, absurd. The poetry has become illogical – Ezra Pound and others. You can read it, but you will not find any meaning in it. The novels, the plays, all other art forms have taken a turn; they have become very illogical. This illogicalness is the outcome of two thousand years of logical effort which has completely failed: it has not provided any significance and meaning to man's life.

In the same flood of illogicalness, Zen also has become influential, but the reasons for its influence are totally different. It is not that the West has experienced meditation – it is simply a reaction against logic that Zen has a great appeal. The absurd anecdotes, the absurd lives of the Zen Masters – seems to be appealing because it has no logical construction.

A great Zen Master, Ryokan, is known in Japan as the Great Fool – a great Master, of the same caliber as Buddha, is known as the Great Fool for the simple reason because his whole life was absurd, unpredictable. If you ask him a question he may hit you on the head; if you don't ask him a question he may hit you on the head. He used to say, "Ask me a question and I will beat you; don't ask me a question and I will beat you!" He used to throw his disciples . . .

Once he cut one of his disciple's fingers with a knife, and when the finger was cut and the disciple was in deep agony, he said, "This is it!" And in that moment the disciple became enlightened – because he was meditating for twenty years. Don't forget those twenty years! In the West those twenty years are completely forgotten. Those twenty years have brought this climax. At the right moment the Master gave the last push. He wanted to bring him to the present, and cutting the finger is so painful that you cannot think of the past, you cannot think of the future, you cannot fantasize any more. For a moment everything stops. It is like an electric shock – you are suddenly here-now. But those twenty years of meditation had created a different quality: the shock became a *satori*. Just by cutting somebody's finger, you cannot make him enlightened, but Ryokan did the miracle.

Ryokan lived in such a way that anybody will call him a fool, an idiot, and he enjoyed the word "idiot" very much; he himself used to call himself an idiot. He will forget his robe, will reach to the marketplace naked – with his shoes on! He will forget about everything.

He had written a list of things that he has to take when he goes out, and he has pasted the list on the door so that he can look at the list – what things he had to carry: his staff, his robes, the shoes, the cap. And even this was written: "Where you have to put the cap – on the head." Otherwise he will forget, he may put the shoes on the head! But still the same thing continued – because he will forget to read the list.

This Ryokan helped many people to become enlightened. His illogical ways, his absurd methods proved of tremendous help. Now in the West people will love Ryokan; they will feel at ease with him. They are fed up with Aristotle. Aristotle has become “Aristotlitis” – a great disease! They don’t want anything to do with Aristotle; they want something more alive, something more paradoxical because life is paradox; it is not logic.

Remember it, that life is not logical and cannot be understood by just logic. Life is far more than logic, far bigger than logic. It is not arithmetic. So there are planes to understand.

The West is not yet capable of being here-now; he has only heard the word. And there are different motives why the western youth, particularly the new generation, has become infatuated with Zen-like things. The Third World War is gathering around. Life seems to be very fragile; it had never been so before. Wars have always been there – in three thousand years we have fought five thousand wars – so war is not a new thing, but something new has happened. The Third World War will be the last war, it will be a total war. It will destroy not only humanity but all life from the Earth. And the clouds are becoming darker and coming closer every day. It is creating a great fear. The western new generation is freaking out.

And now because the world can end – the whole future – Zen seems to be appealing: live here and live now because there is no future. Tomorrow may never arrive. This is a totally different reason why the West has become interested in it right now.

Sambuddha, this has to be remembered: the motive is different. The eastern mystics, from Buddha to Ryokan, were talking about the beauty of now-here for totally different reasons. Not that there is no future – there is infinite future, eternity – but the future never comes. All that comes is now; now is the only reality. When future comes, it also comes in the form of now. When tomorrow comes it will come as today, so you have to learn the art of being here, living today, because tomorrow will come but it will also be another today. And if you know how to live *this* day you will know how to live that day which will be coming. This was a totally different vision.

These are the four planes which have to be understood. First is the body. On the bodily plane, the man who lives identified with the body, if he says, “This is it,” he will only mean food and sex and nothing else. His “this is it” will contain only two things, food and sex, which are not very different either. Food is nourishment for you; you cannot survive without food. And sex is nourishment for the coming generations; they cannot survive without sex. Your parents’ sex has created you; your sex will create your children. The society needs sex as food; it is food, it is survival for the society, just as food is your survival.

Food and sex are deeply connected. Hence it always happens if somebody starts controlling sex, becomes a celibate, he will start eating more; he will substitute his sexuality by food. It almost always happens when women get married, they start becoming fatter, for the simple reason that before marriage they are interested in sex, after marriage they become fed up with it. They start feeling as if the man is exploiting their bodies. Reluctantly they go into it, but they are fed up. Then their interest changes toward food.

And the people who starve themselves for any reason – maybe naturopathy, dieting, or some religious reason, fasting – the people who will starve themselves will become full of sexual

fantasies. Hence Jain monks are more full of sexual fantasies than anybody else, because of the fasting. It is a natural change: their energy starts moving from one pole to another.

Sambuddha, anybody who knows only his body, his “this is it” simply means food and sex. That’s what is happening in institutes like Esalen – food and sex. That’s what is happening all over America. Sambuddha comes from America.

The second plane is mind. With food and sex, you can have pleasure and pain. On the body level, if your body is satisfied, you will have a pleasant feeling; if it is not satisfied you will feel pain. The second phenomenon above the body is mind. Mind goes a little higher than pleasure; it starts experiencing happiness and unhappiness. With body there is only duality, food and sex, only two dimensions; with mind there are many dimensions. Mind opens up a greater world: music, poetry, painting, dance, et cetera, et cetera. It opens up many dimensions; you can enjoy more.

With the first you are just like an animal; your “this is it” will be nothing but animalistic. With the second, if you know that you are more than the body, higher than the body, you will have many dimensions, more richness. You become human; you rise above animals. When you say, “This is it,” now it will be music, poetry, painting, dance; it will have a totally different meaning.

On the third plane is the soul, the self. With the body the duality; with the mind, *manyness*, multitude; with the soul only oneness, and that is meditation. You will know the real meaning of “this is it” only when you arrive at the third point.

And with the fourth . . . In the East we have called it the fourth, simply “the fourth”, *turiya*; we have not given it any name because no name is possible, it is inexpressible. With the fourth, *turiya*, there is neither two nor many nor one. You can call it either wholeness or nothingness. Buddha used the word “nothingness”, *Isa Upanishad* uses the word “wholeness”; they mean the same thing. The zero symbolizes both, nothing and the whole. This is the state of bliss, ecstasy.

On the body level pleasure is opposed by pain; on the mind level happiness is opposed by unhappiness; on the soul level joy is opposed by misery. But on the fourth, bliss is not opposed by anything; bliss has no polar opposite to it.

Where you are on these four planes will make the difference. When I say, “This is it,” I am talking from the fourth plane. And when in America, in the institutes like Esalen, people are talking about “this is it,” they are talking about the first plane, the body.

You ask me, *In the West, much is made of the experience that “This is it,” that nothing can be different than it is – right now!*

Yes, nothing can be different than it is, but you can be different. The world is the same – to the Buddha, to the enlightened, to the unenlightened – but you are different and that makes the difference. That’s the difference that makes the difference. The world is the same – Buddha moves here, you move here, gods live here, dogs live here – it is the same world. But because their awareness is different, their depth and height are different, their “this is it” will be different too, their now will also be different.

So, when I am talking about now, my “now” contains “this” and “that” both. When in the West people are talking about now, their now only contains “this”.

Remember what the *Isa Upanishad* says: “This is whole. That is whole. The whole comes from the whole, still the whole remains behind.”

This is the fourth state, turiya, the ultimate state beyond which nothing happens. Unless you have reached to it, Sambuddha, you are living at the copper mine. You have to move to the silver mine, then to the gold mine, and then to the diamond mine, and then to the beyond.

From *I Am That*, Discourse #14

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The Old Problem of the Goose in the Bottle

The official, Riko, once asked Nansen to explain to him the old problem of the goose in the bottle.

The problem is very ancient. It is a *koan*; it is given to a disciple, that he has to meditate on it. It is absurd; you cannot “solve” it. A koan is something which cannot be solved. Remember, it is not a puzzle. A puzzle has a clue; a koan has no clue. A koan is a puzzle without any clue. Not that more intelligence will solve it. No, no intelligence will ever solve it. Even if it is given to God, it will not be solved. It is made in such a way that it cannot be solved. This is a koan.

“If a man puts a gosling into a bottle,” said Riko, “and feeds him until he is full grown, how can the man get the goose out without killing it or breaking the bottle?”

Don’t break the bottle — and the goose has to be taken out — and don’t kill the goose. Now, these are the two conditions to be fulfilled. The koan becomes impossible. The bottle has a small neck; the goose cannot come out from it. Either you have to break the bottle or you have to kill the goose. You can kill the goose, and piece by piece you can take the goose out, or you can break the bottle, and the goose can come out alive, whole. But the condition is the bottle has not to be broken and the goose has not to be killed. The goose has to come out whole and the bottle has to remain whole. Nothing has to be destroyed; no destruction allowed. Now, how are you going to solve it? But meditating on it, meditating on it . . . one day it happens that you see the point. Not that you solve the problem, suddenly the problem is no more there.

Nansen gave a great clap with his hands and shouted, “Riko!”

“Yes, Master,” said the official with a start.

“See,” said Nansen, “the goose is out!”

Now, it is tremendously beautiful. What he is saying is that the goose has never been in, the goose has always been out. What is he saying, the moment he said, “Riko!”? What happened? Those seven layers of ego disappeared and Riko became aware. The shout was so sudden, the sound was so unexpected. He was expecting a philosophical answer.

That’s why sometimes the Zen Master will hit you on your head or throw you out of the window or jump upon you or threaten you that he will kill you: he will do something so that those seven layers of ego are immediately transcended and your awareness, which is the center of all, is alert. You are made alert.

Now, shouting “Riko!” so suddenly, for no reason at all — and he has brought a small puzzle to be solved and this Master suddenly shouts “Riko!” — he cannot see the connection.

And that is the whole clue to it. He cannot see the connection, the shout startles him, and he says, “Yes, Master.”

“See,” said Nansen, “the goose is out!” [...]

“Yes, Master” — in that moment Riko was pure consciousness, without any layer. In that moment, Riko was not the body. In that moment, Riko was not the mind. In that moment, Riko was just awareness. In that moment, Riko was not the memory of the past. In that moment, Riko was not the future, the desire. In that moment, he was not in any comparison with anybody. In that moment, he was not a Buddhist or a Mohammedan or a Hindu. In that moment, he was not a Japanese or an Indian.

In that moment, when the Master shouted “Riko!” he was simply awareness, without any content, without any conditioning. In that moment, he was not young, old. In that moment, he was not beautiful, ugly. In that moment, he was not stupid, intelligent. All layers disappeared. In that moment, he was just a flame of awareness.

That is the meaning when the Master says, “See, the goose is out — and I have not broken the bottle, I have not even touched the bottle.” The bottle means the ego, those seven layers. “I have not broken the bottle, it is there, and I have not killed the goose. And the goose is out.” Now, there are three types of religions in the world. One which will destroy the bottle. Then you become very vulnerable, then you become very insecure, then great trembling arises in you, and then there is every possibility you may go mad. That sort of thing happens many times in India. There are methods which can destroy the bottle, easier methods. They destroy the bottle, and the goose is out; but then the goose has no house to abide in, no shelter; then there is every possibility the man may go mad. And many people in India, seeking, searching, working toward the unknown become mad. When the unknown comes into them, they have no protection.

Remember, you need protection even against God because God can be too much too suddenly. Those protections have not to be destroyed; practically, they have to remain there. Just think of a person who has no ego. Now, the house is on fire: he will not run out. For what? “I am not. The fire cannot burn me, because I am not.” Just think of a man who has no ego, and he is standing in the middle of the road, and there comes a bus and the driver honks and honks, and he does not bother. He is the immortal soul; he is not the ego. This state can be dangerous. It happens if you destroy the bottle.

Zen says don’t destroy the bottle. Use it when it is needed. Whenever you feel to have protection, the goose simply goes inside the bottle. Sometimes one needs rest, and sometimes the bottle is also useful. It can be put to a thousand and one uses. The ego can be used if you know that you are not the ego. Then the ego cannot use you, you can use it. And there are methods which will save the bottle and kill the goose — self-destructive methods are there — so one becomes more and more unaware. That is what I mean when I say kill the goose: one becomes more and more unaware. Drugs can do that. Drugs have been used in India for thousands of years. They can kill the goose. The bottle remains protected, but the goose is killed. If you take some foreign chemicals inside your being and your nature is not ready to absorb them, by and by, you will kill the goose, your consciousness will be gone, you may fall in a coma.

The first possibility, if the bottle is broken and thrown; you may go mad. The second possibility, if the goose is killed, or almost killed: you will become so unconscious that you will become a zombie. You can find zombies. In many monasteries there are zombies, whose goose is killed, or at least drugged. And there are mad people, maniacs. Zen says avoid both. The bottle has to remain and the goose has to come out. This is a great synthesis.

“Yes, Master,” said the official with a start.

“See,” said Nansen, “The goose is out!”

It must have been a moment of great discovery to Riko. He must have seen it, “Yes, it is out.” He is fully aware. The trick worked, the device worked, the shouting and clapping worked. In fact, Riko must have been almost on the verge, otherwise shouting would not do. You can go on shouting. Clapping won’t do. But the man must have been just on the verge of it. Just a small push, and he has jumped the barrier.

Meditate over it. This is the way to attain the first principle: to know that the goose can be out without destroying the bottle, that you can be God without destroying your humanity, that you can be God without destroying your ordinariness.

A disciple of His Divine Grace Prabhupad came to see me. Prabhupad is the founder of the Krishna Consciousness movement. Naturally, to be respectful to me, he also called me His Divine Grace. I said, “Don’t call me that; just call me ‘his Divine Ordinariness’.” The ordinary is the extraordinary. The ordinary has not to be destroyed. Once the ordinary is in the service of the extraordinary it is beautiful, it is tremendously beautiful.

Let me repeat: the trivial is the profound, *samsara* is nirvana. Whatsoever you are, there is nothing wrong with it. Just something is missing. Nothing wrong with it! Something is simply missing. Just that missing link has to be provided, that plus, and everything that you have becomes divine.

Love has not to be destroyed, only awareness has to be added to it. Relationship has not to be destroyed, only meditation has to be added to it. You need not go from the marketplace; you need not go to any cave in the Himalayas; only God has to be called there in the marketplace.

The bottle is beautiful, nothing is wrong in it. You just have to learn that you can come out of it whenever you want and you can go into it whenever you want, that it is your pleasure. It is almost like the house. When you feel too cool or cold in the house, freezing cold, you get out under the sky, under the sun, to warm yourself. Then it becomes too warm and you start perspiring; you go into the house. You are free. The same door takes you out, the same door takes you in, and the house is not the enemy.

But if you cannot get out of the house, then something is wrong. There is no need to leave the house, there is no need to drop being a householder. There is only one thing needed: in the house become a sannyasin, in the world remain in such a way that the world is not in you. See, the goose is out. In fact, the goose has always been out, just a recognition is needed.

From *The First Principle*, Discourse #9

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Forget the Content

Recognize the self – the self which is not the ego, the self which has nothing of the ego in it. Hindu mystics have called it the *atman*. Buddha has given it a totally different name, not only different but diametrically opposite: he has called it *anatta*, no-self.

The self is a no-self because there is no ego in it. To be an ego is to fall from your reality – the original sin. The self is not the ego, absolutely not; it is not personal, either. It is misleading to speak of “my self.” The self is universal. The moment you say “my self” you have lost track of the universal and you have become small. Now you will feel suffocated; you have created the suffocation yourself.

The self, the real self, the supreme self, is beyond any person, identification, form, process, position. But they all arise in it and dissolve in it – it is the ocean. The self is the space in which everything appears and disappears. That space has to be found within yourself. Don’t get identified with any content, otherwise the ego arises.

For example, there is sadness surrounding you. Immediately you become identified, you say, “I am sad.” That is stupid, unintelligent, you are unaware, you don’t know what you are saying. You are not the sadness; you are the witness. Sadness is there, but you are separate from it: you are the knower of it.

Say, “I am seeing that sadness surrounds me,” but don’t say, “I am sad.” Anger is there, but don’t say, “I am anger,” or “I am angry.” Simply say, “There is anger, I can see it is there.” Anger is the content of your consciousness; it is not the consciousness itself. Consciousness is the space, the witnessing space.

This is the revolution, if you forget the content and remember the consciousness. Two things are continuously happening in you: the content and consciousness. A thought passes through your mind and you become identified with it. You say, “I am it.” If you are hungry, you say, “I am hungry.”

Please be a little more aware: say, “I watch, I am a witness, that the body is feeling hungry.”

When you have eaten well and you feel satiated, don’t say, “I am satiated.” Again, remember.

Because of our ignorance we have created a wrong kind of language too. We say, “I am satiated.”

You were never hungry and you are never satiated. Hunger was a content, so is satiation. Sadness was a content, so is happiness.

This mindfulness Sufis call *zikr*, remembrance. Buddha has called it “mindfulness, right awareness.”

Just go on cutting yourself off from the content. Slowly, slowly, the bridge is broken. The day you recognize the fact that you are never the content but always the consciousness, you have arrived home.

The English word “contemplation” is very beautiful; it comes from a root “tem”. “Tem” means “to cut off”. From the same root comes “temple”; that too is beautiful. “Temple” means that which cuts you off from the world, and “contemplation” means the process of cutting yourself off from the mind, from the content. Identification is the fall: you become Adam, you are expelled. Through dis-identification, cutting yourself off from the mind and its contents, you become Christ. You are no longer outgoing; the inner journey has started. Adam has turned toward the source, is returning home. The self arises out of identification, self with a lower-case s arises out of identification. Self with a capital S arises out of dis-identification. And this is the whole art of religion.

From *Unio Mystica*, V.2, Discourse #1

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06 What is this You in Yourself

What is Compassion?

Compassion is the ultimate flowering of consciousness. It is passion released of all darkness, it is passion freed from all bondage, it is passion purified of all poison. Passion becomes compassion.

Passion is the seed; compassion is the flowering of it.

But compassion is not kindness, kindness is not compassion. Kindness is an ego-attitude, it strengthens your ego. When you are kind to somebody, you feel the upper hand. When you are kind to somebody there is a deep insult – you are humiliating the other, you are feeling happy in his humiliation. That's why kindness can never be forgiven. Whomsoever you have been kind to will remain somehow somewhere angry with you, is bound to take revenge. Because kindness is only on the surface as compassion, but deep in the depth it has nothing to do with compassion. It has other ulterior motives.

Compassion is unmotivated, it has no motive at all. It is simply because you have, you give – not that the other needs. The other is not a consideration at all in compassion. Because you have, you go on overflowing. Compassion is very spontaneous, natural, like breathing. Kindness is a cultivated attitude. Kindness is a kind of cunningness; it is calculation, it is arithmetic.

You have heard one of the most important sayings – it happens in almost all the scriptures of the world in one form or another – Do unto others as you would like to be done with you. This is a calculated attitude; this is not compassion. This has nothing to do with religion – it is a very lower kind of morality, a very worldly morality: Do unto others as you would like to be done with you. It is very businesslike; it is not religious at all. You are doing only because you would like exactly the same in return. It is selfish, it is self-centered, it is egoistic. You are not serving the other, you are not loving the other – in a roundabout way you are serving yourself. You are using the other.

It is very enlightened egoism, but it is egoism – very intelligent, but it is egoism. Compassion is a very uncalculated flowering, flowing. You simply go on giving because there is no other way to be.

So remember, the first thing: it is not kindness, in one sense – in the sense you use the word “kindness” it is not kindness. In another sense, compassion is the real kindness. You are not being kind to somebody, you are not bigger than the other, you are simply releasing the energy that you are receiving from the whole. It comes from the whole, it goes to the whole – you don't stand as an obstacle, that's all.

When Alexander was coming to India he went to see one great mystic, Diogenes. And Diogenes was lying on a riverbed, taking a sunbath. Alexander had always cherished the desire to see this man Diogenes, because he had heard that this man has nothing, yet there is no other man who is more rich than this man. He has something within him, he has a luminous being. He is a beggar,

but he is really an emperor. So Alexander had become intrigued. While coming to India he heard that Diogenes was just nearby, so he went to see him.

Early morning, the sun is rising, Diogenes is lying naked on the sand. Alexander says, "I am happy to see you. Whatsoever I have heard seems to be true. I have never seen a happier man. Can I do something for you, sir?" And Diogenes said, "You just stand to the side – you are preventing the sun. And remember! never prevent the sun. You are dangerous, you can prevent the sun reaching many people. Just stand to the side."

Compassion is not something that you give to others, it is simply not preventing the sun. See the point of it: It is simply not preventing God. It is becoming a vehicle of the divine, it is simply allowing the divine to flow through you. You become a hollow bamboo and God goes on flowing through you.

You know? Only the hollow bamboo can become a flute – because only a hollow bamboo is capable of allowing a song to flow through it.

Compassion is not from you, compassion is from God; kindness is from you – the first thing to be understood. Kindness is something that you do, compassion is something that God does. You simply don't prevent, you don't come in the way, you don't stand in the way. You allow the sun to fall, to penetrate, to go wherever it wants.

Kindness strengthens the ego – and compassion is possible only when the ego has disappeared utterly. So don't be misguided by your dictionaries, because in the dictionaries you will find compassion is synonymous with kindness. It is not so in the real dictionary of existence. And Zen has only one dictionary, the dictionary of the universe.

Mohammedans have the holy Koran as their scripture and Hindus have the Veda as their scripture, and Sikhs have Gurugranth, and Christians have the Bible as their scripture, and Jews have the Talmud. If you ask me, "What is the scripture of Zen?" They don't have any scripture, their scripture is the universe. And that is the beauty of Zen.

In every stone is the sermon, and in every sound of a bird God is reciting. In every movement around you it is God dancing.

Compassion is when you allow this eternal song to flow through you, to pulsate through you – when you cooperate with this divinity, when you move hand in hand with God. It has nothing to do with you; you have to disappear for it to be. For compassion to be, you have to disappear utterly – it flows only into your absence.

Kindness cultivated makes you very egoistic. You can go and see: people who are kind are very, very egoistic, more egoistic than the people who are cruel. This is strange. The cruel person feels a little guilty too, but the so-called kind person feels perfectly okay – always holier-than-thou, always better than others. He is very, very self-conscious in what he is doing; his each act brings more energy and more power to his ego. He is becoming greater and greater every day. The whole trip is of the ego.

This is the first thing: compassion is not the so-called kindness. It has the essential part of kindness in it – the essential part of being soft, of being sympathetic, of being empathetic, of not

being hard, of being creative, of being helpful. But nothing is done as an act on your part; everything flows through you. It is from God, and you are happy and thankful that God has chosen you as a vehicle. You become transparent and it passes through you. You become a transparent glass so the sun passes through you – you don't hinder. It is pure kindness with no ego in it.

The second thing: compassion is not your so-called love either. It has the essential quality of love, but it is not *your* love. Your love is just lust parading as love. Your love has nothing to do with love – it is a kind of exploitation of the other, in a beautiful name, with a great slogan.

You go on saying “I love you” – but have you ever loved anybody? You have simply used others; you have not loved. Then how can using the other become love? In fact, to use the other is the greatest destructive act possible in the world – because to use the other as a means is criminal. Immanuel Kant, describing his concept of morality, says: “To use the other as a means is immoral – the basic immoral act.” Never use the other as a means because everybody is an end unto himself.

Respect the other as an end unto himself. When you respect the other as an end unto himself, you love. When you start using – the husband using the wife, the wife using the husband – there are motives. And you can see it all around.

People are not destroyed by hate; people are destroyed by their so-called love. And because they call it love, they can't look into it. Because they call it love, they think it has to be good and all right.

It is not. Humanity is suffering from this disease of so-called love. If you look deep down into it, you will find just naked lust. Lust is not love. Lust wants to get, love wants to give. The whole emphasis of lust is: get as much as you can and give as little as you can. Give less, get more. If you have to give, give it only as a bait.

Lust is absolutely a bargain. Yes, you have to give something because you want to get – but get more and give less. That is what the business mind is. If you can get without giving, good. If you cannot get without giving, then give a little bit, pretend that you are giving very much, and snatch the whole from the other.

Exploitation is what lust is. Love is not exploitation. So compassion is not love in the ordinary sense, and yet it is love in its real sense. Compassion only gives, it knows no idea of getting back. Not that it does not get back, no – never think that for a single moment. When you give without any idea of getting, you get a thousandfold. But that is another thing; that has nothing to do with you. And when you want to get too much, in fact, you are only deceived; you don't get anything. Finally, you are only disillusioned.

Each love affair ends in disillusionment. Have you not observed it, that each love affair finally leaves you in a ditch of sadness, depression, of being cheated? Compassion knows no disillusionment because compassion does not start with an illusion. Compassion never asks for any return; there is no need. First, because it is not my energy that I am giving, it is God's energy.

Who am I to ask anything for it? Even to ask for a thank you is meaningless. That's what happened when a man came to Jesus and Jesus touched him and he was cured. And the man thanked Jesus – naturally, he was in tremendous gratitude. He had been suffering from that disease for years and there was no cure and the physicians had told him that “Now nothing can be done, you have to accept it.” And he is cured.

And Jesus says, “No sir, don't be thankful toward me, be thankful toward God. It is something that has happened between you and God! I am nobody in it. It is your faith that has healed you, and it is God's energy that has become available because of your faith. I am, at the most, a bridge – a bridge through which God's energy and your faith have joined hands. You need not be worried about me; you need not be thankful to me. Thank God. Thank your own faith. Something has transpired between you and God. I come nowhere.”

This is what compassion is. Compassion goes on giving, but knows no feeling of giving, knows no feeling that “I am the giver”. And then existence goes on responding in thousands of ways. You give a little love and from everywhere love starts flowing. The man of compassion is not trying to snatch away, he is not greedy. He does not wait for the return, he goes on giving. He goes on getting – but that is not in his mind.

So, the second thing: compassion is not the so-called love, and yet it is the real love.

The third thing: compassion is intelligence but not intellect. When intelligence is freed of all forms, of all logical forms, when intelligence is freed from all argumentation, when intelligence is freed from the so-called rationality – because rationality is a confinement – when intelligence is freedom, it is compassion. A man of compassion is tremendously intelligent, but he is not an intellectual. He can see through and through, he has absolute vision, he has real eyes to see, nothing is hidden to him – but it is not guesswork. It is not through logic, it is not through inference, it is through clear eyesight.

Remember it: the man of compassion is not unintelligent, but he is non-intellectual. He is tremendous intelligence, he is the very embodiment of intelligence. He is pure radiance. He knows – but he does not think. What is the point of thinking when you know? You think only as a substitute. Because you don't know, hence you think. Because you can't know, hence you think. Thinking is a substitute process – it is a poor substitute, remember. When you can know, when you can see, who bothers to think?

The man of compassion knows, the intellectual thinks. The intellectual is a thinker and the man of compassion is a non-thinker, non-intellectual. Intelligence he has, tremendous intelligence he has, but his intelligence does not function through the pattern of intellect. The intelligence functions intuitively.

And the fourth thing: compassion is not feeling – because feeling has many things in it which are not in compassion at all. Feeling has sentimentality, emotionality – those things don't exist in compassion. The man of compassion feels, but without any emotion. He feels, but there is no sentimentality. He will do whatsoever is needed, yet he remains untouched by it. This has to be understood very deeply. And once you understand compassion, you have understood what a Buddha is.

Somebody is suffering: the man of feeling will start crying. Crying is not going to help. Somebody's house is on fire: the man of feeling will shout and cry and beat his chest. That is not going to help. The man of compassion will start moving – he will not cry, that is pointless. Tears don't help. Tears cannot put the fire off, tears cannot become the medicine for the suffering, tears cannot help a drowning man.

A man is drowning and you are standing on the bank and crying and weeping – and crying and weeping really hard. You are a man of feeling, certainly, but not a man of compassion. The man of compassion acts. The man of compassion immediately jumps into action. His action is immediate; he does not waver for a single moment. His action is instant – the moment something arises in his vision he immediately translates it into action. Not that he exactly translates – it is translated. His understanding and his action are two aspects of the same phenomenon, they are not two separate things. One side of it is called understanding; the other side of it is called the act.

That's why I say a religious man is by his very nature involved, committed – committed to life, committed to God. He will not cry and weep. The man of feeling sometimes appears as if he is the man of compassion. Don't be misguided – the man of feeling is of no use. In fact he will create more mess. He will not be of any help, he will create more confusion. He will delay things rather than being a help.

The man of compassion is sharp. Without tears, without emotions, he simply moves into action. He is not cold but neither is he hot. He is simply warm. And cool. That is the paradox of the man of compassion. He is warm, because he is loving, and yet he keeps his cool. His cool is never lost; whatsoever happens he remains cool, and out of his coolness he acts. And because he remains cool, he helps.

These four things are to be understood, then you have a vision from four dimensions of what compassion is. How does this compassion arise? – because it cannot be cultivated. If you cultivate, it becomes kindness. How has this compassion to be brought into life? You cannot go into the scriptures, you cannot read and be helped by what Buddha and Christ say – because that will bring intellect in, it will not bring intelligence.

You cannot go on loving more and more, the way you have been loving up to now. If you move in the same direction, you will not attain to compassion. Your love is not in the right direction. If you go on loving in the same way – if you listen to a Buddha talking about love, or a Christ talking about love, and you think, "Good. So I have to love more, the way I have been loving up to now" – then your quantity will be more but your quality will remain the same. You will go in the same direction.

Your direction is basically wrong. You have not loved. Once this thing sinks deep into your heart, that "I have not loved yet" . . . Yes, it is very terrible to feel that "I have not loved yet" – it is very, very hard. We can believe others have not loved – that's what we already believe. Nobody has loved you – that's okay, people are hard. But to see that you have not loved shatters your ego. That's why people don't want to see that simple fact that "I have not loved yet." And because they don't want to see, they don't see. And because they don't see, they are never going to be transformed. They will go on moving in the same rut; they will go on repeating the same mechanical thing again and again. And again and again they will be disillusioned.

So how to bring compassion in? If it was just your love you could have run in the same direction – to run faster, with more speed and more quantity, would be the right thing to do. But you are not in the right direction. So if you go faster, you will be going faster away from it, not toward it. Speed is not going to help because, in the first place, you are moving in the wrong direction – it is the direction of lust and desire.

Then how to bring compassion in? And I say it is not feeling either. Otherwise you can cry your heart out, you can beat yourself, you can cry a thousand and one tears for a thousand and one sufferings all around, you can become very emotional. You can feel for everybody in Vietnam, in Korea, in Pakistan, or anywhere; you can feel for all the poor people.

Leo Tolstoy remembers his mother in his memoirs. He says she was a very kind woman, very, very kind – “kind” in the sense I am using it, not in the sense of compassion. She was very kind – so kind that she used to cry in the theater the whole time. They were very rich people; they belonged to royalty. A servant used to be around Leo Tolstoy’s mother with many handkerchiefs when she would go to the theater, because she would need them again and again. Crying the whole time. And Tolstoy says: “But I was surprised to see that in Russia, even in winter when the cold would be so much below zero, and snow would be falling, she would go to the theater – she was a great lover of theater – and the driver of her coach would go on sitting outside the coach in the falling snow.”

And almost always it used to happen, the man would die. Because nobody knew when the countess would come out – any moment she would get so much disturbed by the theater that she would run toward home to fall into her bed and cry. So the coachman, the driver, had to be there on the coach and it would happen that he would get so cold that he would die. And when she would come out the driver would be thrown away, replaced by another man, and she would go home. And she would never think about this man who had simply died there for no reason. And she would go on crying tears for something she had seen in the theater.

Sentimental people, emotional people. It costs nothing to cry, it costs nothing to feel. It costs much to be compassionate; it costs your whole life to be compassionate. A man of compassion is a very realistic man. The man of feeling simply lives in dreams, vague emotions, fantasies.

So it cannot be brought through feeling, either. Then how to bring it? What is the Zen way to bring it? To bring it, the only way is meditation. It is attained through meditation.

Excerpt from ***Zen: The Path of Paradox, V.2***, Discourse #3

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What is this You inside Yourself

So we have to understand what meditation is.

Gautam Buddha, the founder of Zen, the founder of all great meditative techniques in the world, defines it in one word. Somebody asked him one day, “Bhagwan, what is meditation? What is it all about?” And Gautam Buddha said a single word, he said: *Halt!* That was his definition of meditation. He says, “If it halts, it is meditation.” The full sentence is: “The mad mind does not halt. If it halts, it is meditation.”

“The mad mind does not halt. If it halts, it is meditation.” Meditation is a state of thoughtless awareness: Meditation is a state of non-emotional, non-sentimental, non-thinking awareness. When you are simply aware, when you become a pillar of awareness. When you are simply awakened, alert, attentive. When you are just a pure awareness.

How to enter into it? The Zen people have a special word for the entry, they call it *hua t'ou*. This Chinese word means ante-thought, or ante-word. The mind, before it is stirred by a thought, is called *hua t'ou*. Between two thoughts there is a gap, that gap is called *hua t'ou*.

Watch. One thought passes on the screen of your mind – on the radar screen of your mind one thought passes like a cloud. First it is vague – it is coming, it is coming – then it is there suddenly on the screen. Then it is moving, then it has gone out of the screen, again it becomes vague and disappears . . . another thought comes. Between these two thoughts there is a gap – for a single moment or a split second the screen is without any thought.

That state of pure no-thought is called *hua t'ou* – ante-words, ante-thought, before the mind is stirred. Because we are not alert inside, that's why we go on missing it – otherwise meditation is happening each moment. You have just to see it happening, you have just to become aware what treasure you are carrying always within you. It is not that meditation has to be brought from somewhere else. The meditation is there, the seed is there. You have just to recognize it, nurture it, take care of it, and it starts growing.

The interval between two thoughts is *hua t'ou*. And that is the door to enter into meditation. *Hua t'ou* – the word literally means “word head”. “Word” is a spoken word, and “head” is that which precedes the word. *Hua t'ou* is the moment before a thought arises. As soon as a thought arises it becomes a *hua wei* – *hua wei* literally means “word tail”. And then when the thought has gone or the word has gone and there is a gap again, it is again *hua t'ou*. Meditation is looking into this *hua t'ou*.

“One should not be afraid of rising thoughts,” says Buddha, “but only of the delay in being aware of them.” This is a tremendously new approach toward the mind, never attempted before Buddha. Buddha says one should not be afraid of rising thoughts. One should only be afraid of one thing – of not being aware of them, of being delayed in awareness.

When a thought arises, if with the thought your awareness is also there – if you can see it arising, if you can see it coming, if you can see it there, if you can see it going – then there is no problem at all. This very seeing, by and by, becomes your citadel. This very awareness brings you many fruits. You can first see, when you see that you are not the thought. Thought is separate from you;

you are not identified with it. You are consciousness and it is content. It comes and goes – it is a guest, you are the host. This is the first experience of meditation.

Zen talks about two words: *foreign dust*. “And this is just where we would begin our training.” Zen says, “For instance, a traveler stops at an inn where he passes the night or takes his meal. And as soon as he has done so, he packs and continues his journey, because he has no time to stay longer. As for the host of the inn, he has nowhere to go.

“The deduction is that the one who does not stay is the guest, and the one who does stay is the host. Therefore, a thing is foreign when it does not stay. Again, in a clear sky when the sun rises and sunlight enters the house through an opening, the dust is seen moving in the ray of light – whereas the empty space is unmoving. Therefore that which is still is voidness, and that which moves is dust. Foreign dust illustrates false thinking and voidness illustrates self-nature – that is, the permanent host who does not follow the guest in the latter’s coming and going.”

This is a great insight. Consciousness is not the content. You are consciousness: thoughts come and go, you are the host. Thoughts are the guests – they come and stay for a while, take a little rest, or their food, or stay overnight, and then they are gone. You are always there. You are always the same, you never change you are eternally there. You are eternity itself.

Watch it. Sometimes you are ill, sometimes you are healthy, sometimes you are depressed, sometimes you are happy. One day you were very, very small, a child, then you became young, and then you became old. One day you were strong; one day comes, you become weak. All these things come and go, but your consciousness remains the same. That’s why, if you look inside, you cannot reckon how old you are – because there is no age. If you go inside and look and try to find out there how old you are, there is no age, because there is no time. You are exactly the same as when you were a child or when you were young. You are absolutely the same inside.

For age you have to look at the calendar, at the diary, at your birth certificate – you have to look for something outside. Inside you will not find any age or aging. Inside there is timelessness. You remain the same – whether there is a cloud called depression or the cloud called happiness, you remain the same.

Sometimes there are black clouds in the sky – the sky does not change because of those black clouds. And sometimes there are white clouds also, and the sky does not change because of those white clouds. Clouds come and go, and the sky remains. Clouds come and go, and the sky abides.

You are the sky and thoughts are the clouds. The first thing, if you watch your thoughts minutely, if you don’t miss them, if you look at them directly, will be this understanding – and this is a great understanding. This is the beginning of your Buddhahood, this is the beginning of your awakening. You are no more asleep; you are no more identified with the clouds that come and go. Now you know you abide forever.

Suddenly all anxiety disappears. Nothing changes you; nothing will ever change you – so what is the point of being anxious, in anguish? What is the point of being worried? No worry can do anything to you – these things come and go; they are just ripples on the surface. Deep in your depth, not a single ripple ever arises. And you are there, and you are that. You are that being. Zen people call it the state of being a host.

Ordinarily, you have become too much attached with the guests – hence your misery. One guest comes, you become too much attached. And then the guest is packing and is leaving, and then you cry and you weep and you run around and you go with him – at least to see him off, to give him a send-off. And then you come crying and crying – one guest has left and you feel so miserable. And another guest comes and again you fall in with the guest, again you become identified with the guest, and again he is going.

Guests come and go, they don't stay! They can't stay, they are not to stay, they are not *meant* to stay.

Have you watched any thought? It never stays, it cannot stay. Even if you want to make it stay, it cannot stay. Try. That's what people try sometimes – they try to keep one word in the mind. For example, they want to keep one sound *aum* in the mind. For a few seconds they remember, and then it is gone, slipped. Again they are thinking of their market, of their wife, of their children . . . Suddenly they become aware – where is that *aum*? It has slipped.

Guests are guests – they have not come to stay there. Once you see that all that happens to you is going to move away from you, then why be worried? Watch: let them be there; let them pack; let them leave. You remain. Can you see the peace that arises if you can feel that you always abide? This is silence. This is an unworried state. This is non-anguish. Suffering ceases the moment identification ceases. Don't get identified – that's all. And if you can watch somebody who lives in such eternal timelessness, you will feel a grace, a coolness, a beauty around him.

It happened – the story is about Buddha, a beautiful story. Listen to it carefully because you can miss it.

One day, at mealtime, the World Honored One put on his robe, took his bowl and entered the great town of Sravasti to beg for his food. After he had begged from door to door, he returned to his place. When he had taken his meal, he put away his robe and bowl, washed his feet, arranged his seat, and sat down.

Go slowly, as if the film is moving very slowly. It is a Buddha film, and Buddha films move very slowly. Again, let me repeat it . . .

One day, at mealtime, the World Honored One put on his robe, took his bowl and entered the great town of Sravasti to beg for his food. After he had begged from door to door, he returned to his place. When he had taken his meal, he put away his robe and bowl, washed his feet, arranged his seat, and sat down.

Visualize Buddha doing all this and then sitting down on his seat.

This shows the Buddha's ordinary life and daily activities which were similar to those of others and had nothing special about them. There is, however, something which is uncommon, but very few know it.

What is that? What is that uncommon unique quality? – because Buddha is doing ordinary things. Washing his feet, arranging his seat, sitting down, putting away his robe, putting away his bowl, going to bed, coming back – ordinary things everybody is doing.

At the time, one of Buddha's disciples – a great disciple – Subhuti, who was in the assembly, rose from his seat, uncovered his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, respectfully joined the palms of his hands and said to the Buddha: "It is very rare, O World Honored One! It is very rare!"

Now, nothing rare seems to be there on the surface. Buddha coming, putting away his robe, putting away his bowl, arranging his seat, washing his feet, sitting on the seat – there seems to be nothing unusual. And this man, Subhuti . . .

Subhuti is one of the most insightful disciples of Buddha – all great beautiful stories about Buddha are concerned with Subhuti. This is one of those stories, very rare.

At the time, the elder Subhuti, who was in the assembly, rose from his seat, uncovered his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, respectfully joined the palms of his hands and said to the Buddha: "It is very rare, O World Honored One. It is very rare!"

Never seen before, it is unique.

The Tathagata's daily activities were similar to those of other men but there was here one thing which was different, and those who sat face to face with him did not see it. That day, suddenly Subhuti uncovered it, praised it, and said: "Very rare! Very rare!"

Alas! The Tathagata had been thirty years with his disciples and they still did not know anything about his common acts of daily life. As they did not know, they thought these acts were ordinary and let them pass unnoticed. They thought only that he was similar to others and were, therefore, suspicious of and did not believe what he said. Had Subhuti not seen clearly, no one would really know the Buddha.

So say the scriptures.

If there was not a Subhuti, nobody would have seen what was happening inside. What was happening inside? Buddha remains the host. Not for a single moment does he lose his eternity, timelessness. Buddha remains meditative. Not for a single moment does he lose his *hua t'ou*. Buddha remains in his *samadhi* – even when he is washing his feet, he is washing so alertly, so aware, so consciously. Knowing well that "These feet are not me." Knowing well that "This bowl is not me." Knowing well that "This robe is not me." Knowing well that "This hunger is not me." Knowing well that "All that is around me is not me. I am just a witness, a watcher of it all."

Hence the grace of Buddha, hence this unworldly beauty of Buddha. He remains cool. This coolness is what meditation is. It has to be attained by being more alert of the host, by being more alert of the guest, by getting disidentified with the guest, by disconnecting yourself from the guest. Thoughts come and go, feelings come and go, dreams come and go, moods come and go, climates change. All that changes is not you.

Is there something that remains unchanging? That's you. And that is God. And to know it, and to be it, and to be in it, is to attain to *samadhi*. *Dhyana* is the method, meditation is the method, *samadhi* is the goal. *Dhyana* is the technique to destroy this identification with the guest. And *samadhi* is dissolving into the host, abiding in the host, getting centered there.

Each night one embraces a buddha while sleeping,

Each morning one gets up again with him.

When rising or sitting, both watch and follow one another.

Whether speaking or not, both are in the same place.

They never even for a moment part,

But are like the body and its shadow.

If you wish to know the Buddha's whereabouts,

In the sound of your own voice there is he.

This is a Zen saying: "Each night one embraces a Buddha while sleeping." The Buddha is always there, the non-Buddha is also there. In you meet the world and *nirvana*, in you meet God and matter, in you meet the soul and the body. In you meet all the mysteries of existence – you are a meeting-place, you are a cross-roads. On one side the whole world, on the other side the whole of God. And you are just a link between the two.

Now, it is only a question of emphasis. If you go on focusing yourself on the world, you remain in the world. If you start changing your focus, if you shift your focus and you start focusing on consciousness, you are God. Just a small change, as if one changes a gear in the car – just like that.

"Each night one embraces a Buddha while sleeping, each morning one gets up again with him." He is always there because consciousness is always there; not for a single moment is it lost.

"When rising or sitting, both watch and follow one another." The host and the guest, both are there. Guests go on changing, but somebody or other is always there in the inn. It is never empty – unless you become disidentified with the guest. Then an emptiness arises. Then sometimes it happens your inn is empty; there is only the host sitting at ease, not being bothered by any guests. Traffic stops, people don't come. Those moments are of beatitude; those moments are of great blessing.

"Whether speaking or not, both are in the same place." When you are speaking, there is also something silent in you. When you are lusting, there is something beyond lust. When you are desiring, there is somebody who is not desiring at all. Watch it, and you will find it. Yes, you are very close, and yet you are very different. You meet, and yet you don't meet. You meet like water and oil; the separation remains. The host comes very close to the guest. Sometimes they hold hands and hug each other, but still the host is the host and the guest is the guest. The guest is one who will come and go; the guest will go on changing. And the host is one who remains, who abides.

"They never even for a single moment part, but are like the body and its shadow. If you wish to know the Buddha's whereabouts, in the sound of your own voice there is he." Don't go on looking for the Buddha somewhere outside. He resides in you – he resides in you as the host.

Now, how to come to this state of the host? I would like to talk to you about a very ancient technique; this technique will be of tremendous help. To come to this unknowable host, to come to this ultimate mystery of your being, this is the way – one of the very simple ways Buddha has proposed.

Deprive yourself of all possible relationships and see what you are. Suppose you are not a son to your parents, nor the husband to your wife, nor the father to your children, nor a relative to your kindred, nor a friend to your acquaintances, nor a citizen to your country, and so on and so forth – then you get you-in-yourself.

Just disconnect. Some time once a day, sit silently and disconnect yourself of all connections. Just as you disconnect the phone, disconnect yourself of all connections. Don't think any more that you are a father to your sons – disconnect. You are no more a father to your son, and you are no more a son to your father. Disconnect that you are a husband or a wife; you are no more a wife, no more a husband. You are no more a boss, no more a servant. You are no more black, no more white. You are no more Indian, no more Chinese, no more German. You are no more young, no more old. Disconnect, go on disconnecting.

A thousand and one connections are there – just go on disconnecting all the connections. When you have disconnected all the connections, then suddenly ask: Who am I? And no answer comes – because you have already disconnected all those answers that would have come.

Who am I? And an answer comes, “I am a doctor” – but you have disconnected with the patients. An answer comes, “I am a professor” – but you have disconnected yourself from your students. An answer comes, “I am Chinese” – but you have disconnected it. An answer comes, “I am a man or a woman” – but you have disconnected it. An answer comes, “I am an old man” – but you have disconnected it.

Disconnect all. Then you *are* in yourself. Then for the first time the host is alone and there is no guest. It is very good sometimes to be alone without any guest because then you can see into your hostness more closely, more carefully. The guests create turmoil, the guests create noise, and they come and demand your attention. And they say, “Do this, and hot water is needed, and where is the breakfast? And where is my bed? And there are bed bugs” . . . and a thousand and one things. And the host starts running after the guest. Yes, of course, you have to take care of these people.

When you are completely disconnected, nobody bothers you – nobody can bother you. Suddenly you are there in all your aloneness – and that purity of aloneness, that pristine purity of aloneness. You are like virgin land, the virgin peak of a Himalaya where nobody has ever traveled. This is what virginity is.

This is what I mean when I say, “Yes, Jesus's mother was a virgin.” This is what I mean. I don't agree with Christian theologians – whatsoever they say is all bull. This is what virginity is – Jesus must have been conceived by Mary when she was in such a disconnected state. When you are in such a disconnected state, of course if a child enters, he can only be a Jesus, nobody else.

In ancient India there were methods for how to conceive a child. Unless you are tremendously in deep meditation, don't make love. Let meditation be a preparation for love: that is the whole

meaning of tantra. Let meditation be the basis – only then make love. Then you invite greater souls. The deeper you are, the greater soul will be invited.

Mary must have been absolutely disconnected in that moment when Jesus penetrated her. She must have been in this virginity; she must have been a host. She was no more a guest and she was no more clamored at by the guest and no more identified with the guest. She was not the body, she was not the mind, she was not her thoughts, she was not a wife, she was nobody. In this nobodiness she was there, sitting silently – a pure light, a flame without any smoke around it, a smokeless flame. She was virgin.

And I say to you, exactly the same is the case when Buddha is conceived or when Mahavira is conceived, or Krishna is conceived or Nanak is conceived – because these people cannot be conceived in any other way. These people can enter only the most virgin womb. But this is my meaning of being a virgin. It has nothing to do with the foolish ideas that go around – that she never loved a man, that Jesus was not conceived with a man, that Jesus was not the son of Joseph.

That's why Christians go on saying: "Jesus the son of Mary." They don't talk about his father; he was not a father. Son of Mary and son of God – there was no Joseph in between. But why be so angry about poor Joseph? Why can't God use Joseph too, if he can use Mary? What is wrong in it? He uses Mary for the womb – that does not spoil the story. Then why not use Joseph too? The womb is half the story, because one egg from the mother has been used. Then why not use another egg from Joseph? Why be so angry at this poor carpenter?

No, God uses both. But the state of consciousness must have been of the host. And really, when you are the host there is no wonder if you receive the greatest guest: Jesus comes in. If you are disidentified from all the guests, then God becomes your guest. First you become the host, pure host. Then God becomes your guest.

When you are disconnected . . . you-in-yourself. Now ask yourself: "What is this 'you-in-yourself'?" You can never answer this question – it is unanswerable because it is cut off from all knowable relationships. This way one stumbles upon the unknowable; this is entering into meditation. When you have become settled into it, utterly settled, it becomes *samadhi*.

Excerpt from ***Zen: The Path of Paradox, V.2***, Discourse #3

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07 All Moons in the One Moon

All Moons in the One Moon

I cannot understand the philosophy of Zen. What should I do to understand it?

Baula, Zen is not a philosophy at all. To approach Zen as if it were a philosophy is to start in a wrong way from the very beginning. A philosophy is something of the mind; Zen is totally beyond the mind. Zen is the process of going above the mind, far away from the mind; it is the process of transcendence, of surpassing the mind. You cannot understand it by the mind; mind has no function in it.

Zen is a state of no-mind; that has to be remembered. It is not Vedanta. Vedanta is a philosophy; you can understand it perfectly well. Zen is not even Buddhism; Buddhism is also a philosophy.

Zen is a very rare flowering – it is one of the strangest things that has happened in the history of consciousness – it is the meeting of Buddha's experience and Lao Tzu's experience. Buddha, after all, was part of the Indian heritage: he spoke the language of philosophy; he is perfectly clear, you can understand him. In fact, he avoided all metaphysical questions; he was very simple, clear, logical. But his experience was not of the mind. He was trying to destroy your philosophy by providing you with a negative philosophy. Just as you can take out a thorn from your foot with another thorn, Buddha's effort was to take out the philosophy from your mind with another philosophy. Once the first thorn has been taken out both thorns can be thrown away and you will be beyond mind.

But when Buddha's teachings reached China a tremendously beautiful thing happened: a crossbreeding happened. In China, Lao Tzu has given his experience of Tao in a totally non-philosophical way, in a very absurd way, in a very illogical way. But when the Buddhist meditators, Buddhist mystics, met the Taoist mystics they immediately could understand each other heart to heart, not mind to mind. They could feel the same vibe, they could see that the same inner world had opened, they could smell the same fragrance. And they came closer, and by their coming closer, by their meetings and mergings with each other, something new started growing up; that is Zen. It has both the beauty of Buddha and the beauty of Lao Tzu; it is the child of both. Such a meeting has never happened before or since.

Zen is neither Taoist nor Buddhist; it is both and neither. Hence the traditional Buddhists reject Zen and the traditional Taoists also reject Zen. For the traditional Buddhist it is absurd, for the traditional Taoist it is too philosophical, but to those who are really interested in meditation, Zen is an experience. It is neither absurd nor philosophical because both are terms of the mind; it is something transcendental.

The word "zen" comes from *dhyāna*. Buddha used a certain language, a local language of his times, Pali. In Pali *dhyāna* is pronounced "*jhan*"; it is from *jhan* that "zen" has arisen. The word comes from *jhan*; *jhan* comes from the Sanskrit *dhyāna*.

To understand Zen you need not make a philosophical effort; you have to go deep into meditation. And what is meditation all about? Meditation is a jump from the mind into no-mind, from thoughts to no-thought. Mind means thinking, no-mind means pure awareness. One simply is aware. Only then, Baula, will you be able to understand Zen – through experience, not through any intellectual effort.

Yoka says:

There is one nature, perfect and penetrative, present in all natures, one reality which includes all, comprising all realities in itself. The one moon is reflected wherever there is water. And all moons in water are comprised in the one moon.

The moment you move beyond the mind, suddenly you have moved from the many to the one. Minds are many, consciousness is one. On the circumference we are different, at the center we are one. That one can be called Brahma, can be called God, the absolute, the truth, nirvana.

Zen calls it no-mind for a particular reason. If you call it God, then people start thinking in terms of a person, they start imagining a person – of course the supreme most person, but their idea of personality is derived from human personality; it is a projection, it is not truth.

The Bible says God created man in his own image; that is not true. Man has created God in his own image; that is far more true. The God that we have created is our idea; it is anthropocentric. If horses were philosophers, then God could not be a man, then God would be a supreme horse.

If donkeys were philosophers – and who knows? – they may be; they look very serious, always brooding, as if in deep contemplation, thinking of great things . . . Watch a donkey and you will be certainly aware of this simple fact that donkeys are great thinkers. They are constantly somewhere else far away, involved in great esoteric things; that's why people think they are fools. They are not fools; they are philosophers. If donkeys think, if they are theologians, theosophists, philosophers, then God will be a supreme donkey. God cannot be a man, that's impossible. They cannot imagine God to be a man.

Hence Zen avoids any anthropocentric terminologies, any words that can become associated with our circumference. It does not call God Brahma because that is a philosophical term; maybe the best philosophical term, but even the best philosophical term is still philosophy, and philosophy is something of the mind – you can think about Brahma.

In India we have been thinking about Brahma for centuries and there are as many interpretations of Brahma as there have been philosophers. Shankara interprets it in one way, Nimbarka in another, Ramanuja still in a different way, and so on and so forth. Not even two philosophers agree and the dispute still continues. Philosophers go on quarreling. They never come to any conclusions, they cannot, because mind has no capacity to conclude about the One.

Even Shankara, the greatest non-dualist, remains a dualist deep down. He talks about Brahma, the One, but to talk about the One he has to bring in maya, illusion; then One becomes two. If you want to talk about the real you will have to talk about the unreal; that is a necessity, an absolute necessity. Without talking about the unreal you cannot talk about the real; without the unreal the real loses all meaning. Human languages are dualistic, hence Shankara got into trouble, great trouble. He tried to sort it out but he could not, and for one thousand years many

philosophers who have followed Shankara have tried to find a way out, but they have not been able to. Even if you say that *maya* means illusion, *maya* means that which does not exist, you have to talk about it. To define Brahma, you have to use illusion as a support, otherwise who will define it? How will you define it? The One remains indefinable; the One needs something else to define it. So, although the philosophy of Shankara is thought to be non-dualist, it is not. No philosophy can be non-dualist.

Zen is neither dualist nor non-dualist; it is not a philosophy at all. It simply says, "Move from the mind into the no-mind and see." It believes in seeing.

Yoka says:

The spirit operates naturally through the organs of sense. Thus, the objective world is perceived. This dualism mists the mirror. But when the haze is removed, the light shines forth. Thus, when each individual spirit and the objective world are forgotten and emptied suchness affirms truth.

When all words are gone, your mirror has no more dust on it, no more mist on it. When you look at things you collect impressions; that is the dust – that's what you call thinking. When you see a rose flower, the rose flower is outside you but it makes a reflection inside you. The rose flower will fade away by the evening, the petals will fall and disappear, but the inner rose flower, the rose that has become imprinted in your memory will continue. It will remain forever with you, you can always remember it. And if you are a sensitive, aesthetic, artistic person you can visualize it again and again; you can imagine it as if it is true. In fact, if you try you will be surprised: you can even experience the fragrance of the rose again. If you create the whole situation in your imagination: the garden, the green grass, the dew on the grass, and you are walking with naked feet on the grass . . . and the sweet smell of the earth and the cool air and the birds singing; you just create the whole atmosphere . . . and then suddenly you discover a beautiful rose flower hidden behind a bush . . . and the fragrance! And then suddenly you will see: the fragrance has come back to you; the imprint is there. The outer rose is gone, but the inner rose is alive.

Now scientists, particularly brain experts, have discovered that if certain spots in the brain are touched by electrodes, certain memories become immediately active. Those memories are lying there deep frozen; touched by the electrode they start becoming alive. A very strange experience. If your brain is touched by an electrode at the point where the rose memory is lying deep, suddenly you will forget the present; you will be again in the same garden. Maybe twenty years have passed, but it will be again as real as if you were in the garden again: the same smell, the same wind, the same coolness, the same flower. And if the electrode is taken out, the memory disappears. Put the electrode back again in the same spot and again the memory starts revealing itself.

And one thing more has been discovered: you can do it thousands of times. Again and again the same memory comes, and again and again the memory repeats itself from the very beginning. The moment you remove the electrode it seems that there is an automatic rewinding; the memory coils back into the same original state. Touch it again with the electrode and as the electricity starts flowing the memory begins from the beginning: you are entering the garden again . . . and the same sequence of events. And this can be done thousands of times. In fact, scientists say there is no limit to it; it can be done millions of times.

The outer reality goes on changing, but the mind goes on collecting dust. Your consciousness is a mirror, and you are carrying so much dust from this life and from other lives – such a thick layer of dust! That’s why you cannot understand Zen: because you cannot understand yourself, because you cannot understand life, because you cannot understand existence. Zen is not philosophy; it is existential, not philosophical.

. . . when the haze is removed, says Yoka, the light shines forth. Thus when each individual spirit and the objective world are forgotten and emptied suchness affirms truth.

When all is emptied – you have forgotten all the memories, you have forgotten even your individual existence, your separate existence; you are no more an island, you have melted into the whole; you are not like an ice cube floating in the water, you have become water itself – this is what Zen is. Then suddenly truth is revealed.

Vision is clear, says Yoka.

These four lines are of tremendous importance.

Vision is clear. But there are no objects to see. There is no person. There is no buddha.

This is the ultimate declaration of Zen. This is the lion’s roar!

Vision is clear.

This is a strange phenomenon. When there are objects to see, your vision is not clear because those objects are making impressions on you. Your vision cannot be clear; it is full of mist. When vision is clear, there are no objects at all, just clarity, just pure consciousness with no content, just seeing and nothing to see, just watchfulness and nothing to watch. A pure observer, a pure witness and nothing to witness.

There is no person.

And when there is nothing to witness, nothing to see, you cannot exist as a separate entity. The “I” can exist only with the “thou”; if the “thou” disappears, the “I” disappears. They are part of each other, they are always together like two sides of a coin; you cannot say “one.” This is what many stupid religious people go on doing: they go on saying to God, “I am not. Thou art.” That is sheer stupidity. In the very saying you are, otherwise who is saying “Thou art”?

There is a famous poem of Jalaluddin Rumi; I agree with him up to a point and then my disagreement starts. On the really essential point I cannot agree with him. My feeling is he must have written that poem before he became enlightened. He was an enlightened man, but the poem is decisive – it must have been written before he became enlightened. The poem is beautiful, because sometimes poets say things almost like seers, but remember they are almost like seers. There is bound to be some flaw, it can’t be flawless. You may not be able to find the flaw.

Listen to the story of the poem.

Jalaluddin says:

A lover comes to his beloved's home, knocks on the door.

The beloved asks, "Who is there?"

And the lover says, "I am – your lover."

The beloved says, "The house of love is so small, it cannot contain two, so please go back. When you are no more, then come again. The house of love cannot contain two, it can only contain one."

So far so good!

The lover goes to the forest, he becomes an ascetic. He meditates, he prays to God. His prayer is only one: "Dissolve me!" Many moons come and go, months pass, years pass, and one day he comes back. He knocks again on the door, and the beloved asks the same question: "Who is there?"

And he says, "Now I am no more, only you are."

And Rumi says:

The doors open and the lover is received in the home of love.

There I don't agree – it is too early! Then who is the person who is saying "I am no more"? Even to say that "I am no more," you are needed. It is as foolish as if you went and knocked at somebody's house and he leaned out of the window and said, "I am not at home." That is self-contradictory; you cannot say that. To say it is to prove that you are.

Jalaluddin must have written this poem before he became enlightened. He should have corrected it. But these enlightened people are crazy people. He may have forgotten all about the poem, but it needs correction. I can do the correction. I would like to say that the beloved says, "Go back again because you are still there. First you were positively there, now you are negatively there, but it makes no difference."

The lover goes back. Now there is no point in praying because prayer has not helped. In fact, prayer cannot help: in prayer the duality persists. You are praying to somebody; God becomes your "thou." God cannot help. Now he becomes a Zen monk – not a devotee but a real meditator. He simply goes deep within himself, searching and seeking. "Where is this 'I'?" He tries to find out where it is. And anybody who goes in is bound not to find it because it is not there; it is non-existent; it is only a belief. So he searches and searches and finds it nowhere.

So he comes back, knocks on the door. The beloved asks the same question: "Who is there?" And there is no answer because there is nobody to answer. Just silence. She asks again, "Who is there?" but the silence deepens. She asks again, "Who is there?" but the silence is absolute. She opens the door. Now the lover has come, but he is no more; there is nobody to answer. He has to be taken inside the home, taken by the hand. He is completely, utterly empty.

This is what Zen people call "emptied suchness."

Vision is clear. But there are no objects to see. There is no person. There is no buddha.

Everything has disappeared. Zen has achieved the ultimate peak of enlightenment; hence it can say that there is no enlightenment either because if the enlightened person goes on thinking, “I am enlightened,” he is not enlightened. If he claims enlightenment then he is not enlightened, because every claim is an ego claim. Enlightenment is not a claim; it is a silent presence.

Baula, don't try to understand Zen. Go within yourself to find out who you are, where you are. You will not find anybody there, just pure emptiness. And then vision is clear. No person, no Buddha. All is silent, utterly silent. There is nothing to say. In that silence one becomes truth. Not only that one knows truth, one becomes truth. That is the only way to know it.

From ***Walking in Zen, Sitting in Zen***, Discourse #16

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The Essence of Buddha Dharma

What is the essence of Buddha Dharma – The religion of the Buddha?

Mouna,

Yoka says:

If you reach the Zen of Buddha, at that very moment you accomplish everything.

In your dream there are many pathways, but when you wake up, they are reduced to nothing. Neither error, nor happiness, nor loss, nor gain.

Do not try to find anything in the essence of your being. It is a long time since you wiped the dust from your mirror, now it is time for you to see its brilliancy perfectly.

Who can not-think, all is his. If you practice charity in order to become Buddha when will you succeed? Never – a thousand times never.

Drink and eat according to your true nature. All things in the universe are impermanent, and therefore all existence is void. That is the whole understanding of Buddha.

This is the essence of Buddha Dharma, the religion of the Buddha. First: it is not a philosophy that you can understand intellectually; you have to become a Buddha to know it. Hence Yoka says:

If you reach the Zen of Buddha – the state of the Buddha – at that very moment you accomplish everything.

Nothing is missing when you reach the ultimate state of awakening; all is fulfilled, you are utterly contented. Life is known for the first time as a great significance, as a great dance, a celebration. Life is known for the first time as absolutely perfect. There is no complaint, no desire, no hankering for things to be other than they are. One is simply contented, totally contented. All desiring disappears.

And what is the state of Buddha? What is this “Zen of Buddha” Yoka is talking about? It is the state of no-mind. Hence Yoka says:

Who cannot-think, all is his.

The greatest thing in life to experience is a state of no-thought. The greatest art of life is to be able to be without mind. Even if it happens for a single moment – just a glimpse – you have reached the beyond and you have crossed the point of no-return.

Don't go on thinking about it – what it is. By thinking you will go on missing it. Thinking is the sure way of missing the Buddha Dharma; non-thinking is the way to achieve it. It is your own nature!

Buddha does not talk about some great mysteries, hidden secrets, esoteric knowledge. He does not believe in mythology; he is not an occultist. He is a very simple man, very ordinary. He believes in the ordinary existence. He says your day-to-day life is all there is. If you can live it joyfully, silently, understandingly, watchfully, there is nothing else to be done. Your very ordinary life starts becoming extraordinary.

Drink and eat according to your true nature.

Just remember: don't distort your nature, remain true to your nature. Listen to your own nature and follow it. Don't follow anybody else.

Buddha says, "Even if you meet me on the way, kill me immediately." He is saying: Don't follow me, just take the hints. Try to understand, imbibe the spirit. Feel my presence and then go on your way. Live according to your own light, howsoever small it is; but if it is yours and you live according to it, it will go on growing.

Buddha says, "Be a light unto yourself." That is his greatest message. Nobody else in the whole world, in the whole history of humanity, has been so respectful toward others as Gautam the Buddha. "Be a light unto yourself."

Buddhas only point the way – fingers pointing to the moon. You have to follow, and you have to follow according to your nature. You have to be silent, quiet, so you can listen to the still small voice within you, and then follow it. Wherever it leads it is good. Go in deep trust, following your own voice. Be spontaneous, natural, ordinary. This is the way of being extraordinary. Be ordinary but aware, and the ordinary becomes the sacred.

All things in the universe are impermanent . . .

So don't be worried. All things are impermanent: pleasure and pain, friendship and enmity, poverty and richness, success and failure, birth and death. All is in a flux, all is impermanent, so why be worried? Everything goes on changing. Don't cling – clinging brings misery, clinging shows your misunderstanding. The moment you cling to something, you are living with the idea that it can be permanent. Nothing can be permanent, and nothing can be done about it. It is just the nature of things to be impermanent.

You are trying to catch hold of rainbows. They are beautiful, but you cannot catch hold of them – one moment they are there and another moment they are gone. So don't cling to anything because everything is impermanent. And don't desire anything because even if you get it, you will lose it. If you don't get it, you will be frustrated. If you get it and lose it, you will be frustrated. Either way you will be in misery, you are inviting misery. So don't desire anything and don't cling to anything.

Whatsoever comes, accept it. Buddha calls it *tathata*, suchness. Just accept it, live through it silently, without being disturbed by it. Misery comes, it will go. Happiness comes, it will go. Everything passes away, nothing abides, so there is nothing to worry about.

Go on passing through all kinds of experiences, and then you will know that one can pass through the world uncontaminated, uncorrupted. One can live in the palaces without clinging,

then he is a sannyasin; and one can live in a hut and can cling to the hut, then he is not a sannyasin.

That's why I don't tell you to renounce the world, I simply say: "Be watchful." That is the essence of Buddha's message.

People ask me, "But Buddha *renounced* the world. Why did *he* renounce?" He renounced when he was not a Buddha. He renounced when he was as ignorant as anybody else. He renounced in ignorance.

When he attained the truth, when he experienced the truth and came back home, his wife asked him only one question. "Just tell me one thing," she asked. "Whatsoever you have attained . . . I can see you are a transformed being. You have become luminous; you are no longer the same person. The old is gone, you are reborn. It is so clear to me – even a blind person like me can see it. But just answer me one question. Whatsoever you have attained, was it not possible to attain it living here with me in this palace?"

And the story is: Buddha remained silent, looking downwards. The wife was right. He didn't say anything.

In the East, not saying anything is thought to be a sign of agreement: *Mounam sammati lakshanam*. "To be silent means I agree with you." It says more than Buddha saying yes. His silence says more, it is more pregnant with meaning.

He immediately felt it: "She is right." Whatsoever he had attained could have been attained anywhere. There was no need to go into the jungle.

There is no need for you to go anywhere. Wherever you are you can assert your Buddhahood, you can become awakened.

The essence is to slip out of the mind, to get out of the mind. The mind is the world. The mind is full of desires, full of clings, attachments, longings. Get out of the mind! Create a little distance between you and the mind. Be a watcher, a watcher on the hills, and you will be surprised: as you watch the mind, the distance becomes bigger and bigger. As you watch the mind, as you become more and more established in watching, the mind recedes farther and farther away. One day it happens: you cannot hear the chatter of the mind; it is no longer there. It is simply, absolutely silent. In that silence, truth descends in you. In that silence, you encounter yourself, you encounter your innermost core. And that is the innermost core of the whole existence. Your being is the being of all.

We are separate as minds, as bodies, but not as consciousness. In consciousness we meet, we are one. That consciousness is God. That meeting, that oneness where all differences dissolve, where we are no longer separate ice cubes, where we have melted and disappeared into the universal, Buddha calls *nirvana*. The word is beautiful; it means cessation of the ego. When the ego ceases you are God, you are a Buddha, you are a Christ. It is the ego that is giving you a limitation. It is the ego that is making you live in a prison. Get out of the ego! And nobody is preventing you – it is your own clinging; it is your own attachment. You have become too attached to your chains; you have become too attached to your prison cell. You think it is your home, and it is not. Come out of it! Wake up!

To be awake is to be a Buddha. And Yoka is right.

If you reach the Zen of Buddha – the state of Buddha – at that very moment you accomplish everything.

Excerpt from ***Walking in Zen, Sitting in Zen***, Discourse #3

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This Witnessing is the Buddha

When there is nothing to perceive – No input from the body or the mind and so one has nothing by which to define oneself – Is what is left witnessing? There does not even seem to be a witness, but just the awareness that there is no one there.

That's exactly right. There is no witness, there is only witnessing. There is only consciousness, but no personality to it, no form. There is only awareness, like a flame arising from nowhere and disappearing into nowhere, and just in the middle you see the flame.

Have you watched a candle, where the flame goes? Gautam Buddha himself used as the word for the ultimate experience, blowing out the candle. *Nirvana* means blowing out the candle. Nothing is, just a pure awareness, not even confined into your individuality, but just a floating cloud, no firm shape – a tremendous isness, a great joy.

But it is not your joy; you are absent. Then arises in your absence the joy, the blissfulness. The moment you are not, then the witnessing is pure. And this witnessing brings the greatest benediction possible. This witnessing is the Buddha.

From *Rinzai: Master of the Irrational*, Discourse #7

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08 All Beings are from the Very Beginning Buddhas

All Beings are from the Very Beginning Buddhas

I was thinking what should I give to you today? Because this is my birthday, I was incarnated into this body on this day. This is the day I saw for the first time the green of the trees and the blue of the skies. This was the day I for the first time opened my eyes and saw God all around. Of course the word “God” didn’t exist at that moment, but what I saw was God. I was thinking what should I give to you today? Then I remembered a saying of Buddha: *sabba danam dhamma danana jnati* – the gift of truth excels all other gifts. And my truth is love.

The word “truth” looks to me a little too dry and desert-like. I am not in much tune with the word “truth” – it looks too logical, it looks too “heady”. It gives you the feeling of philosophy, not of religion. It gives you the idea as if you have concluded – that you have come to a conclusion, that there has been a syllogism behind it, argumentation and logic and reasoning. No, “truth” is not my word, “love” is my word. Love is of the heart. Truth is partial, only your head is involved. In love you are involved as a totality – your body, your mind, your soul, all are involved.

Love makes you a unity – and not a union, remember, but a unity. Because in a union those who join together remain separate. In a unity they dissolve, they become one, they melt into each other. And that moment I call the moment of truth, when love has given you unity. First, love gives you unity in your innermost core. Then you are no more a body, no more a mind, no more a soul. You are simply one – unnamed, undefined, unclassified. No more determinate, definable, no more comprehensible. A mystery, a joy, a surprise, a jubilation, a great celebration.

First, love gives you an inner unity. And when the inner unity has happened the second happens on its own – you are not to do anything for it. Then you start falling in unity with the whole beyond you. Then the drop disappears in the ocean and the ocean disappears into the drop. That moment, that moment of orgasm between you and the whole, is where you become a Buddha. That moment is the moment Buddhahood is imparted to you. Or, better, revealed to you – you have always been that, unaware.

My word is love. So I say: My beloved ones, I love you. and I would like you to fill the whole world with love. Let that be our religion. Not Christianity, not Hinduism, not Islam, not Jainism, not Buddhism, but love. Love without any adjective to it. Not Christian love – because how can love be Christian? It is so stupid. How can love be Hindu? It is ridiculous. Love is simply love. In love you can be a Christ. In love you can be a Buddha – but there is no Buddhist love and there is no Christian love.

In love you disappear, your mind disappears. In love you come to an utter relaxation. That’s my teaching to you, I teach love. And there is nothing higher than love.

Then I thought I should give you something beautiful on this day. And I remembered Hakuin's Song of Meditation. It is a very small song but a great gift. Hakuin is one of the greatest Zen masters. His song contains all: all the Bibles and all the Korans and all the Vedas. A small song of few lines, but it is like a seed – very small, but if you allow passage to it to your heart, it can become a great tree. It can become a Bodhi tree – it will have great foliage and much shade and thousands of people can sit and rest underneath it. It will have big branches, and many birds can come and have their nests on it.

See: I have become a tree. You are the people who have come to make their nests on my tree. You can also become this. Everybody *should* become this – because unless you become this you will go on missing your fulfillment. Unless you become a great tree which has come to its foliage, flowers and fruits – which is fulfilled – you will remain in discontent. Anguish will go on gnawing in your heart, misery will linger around you. Bliss will be only a word, signifying nothing. God will be just gibberish.

When you have fulfillment then there is grace and then there is God. In your fulfillment you come to realize the benediction of existence.

This is a song of meditation. Hakuin has called it “song” – yes, it is a song. If meditation is without a song, it is dull and dead – it does not beat, it does not breathe. It is a song and a dance: sing it and dance it. Just don't think upon it – then you will miss the messages, you will miss its content. You will find this song and its meaning only when you are singing and dancing. When the music of life has overtaken you, has possessed you.

Hakuin's song is so small and yet so vast, it is unbelievable. How can a man condense so much truth and so much love and so much insight into so few words? But Hakuin was a man of few words, a man of silence. For years he would not speak at all, and then he would speak a word or two.

Once the Emperor of Japan invited him to deliver a sermon in the palace. And the queen and the king and the prime minister and the ministers and the high officials and the generals, they all had gathered with great respect to listen. Hakuin came, stood there for a single moment, looked around, and left the hall. The king was puzzled. He asked his prime minister, “What is the matter with this man? We had come to listen.” The old prime minister said, “This is the greatest sermon that I have ever heard. He has said it! You had asked him to come and teach you about silence. He has taught it! He stood there in silence, he *was* silence. What more do you ask? What more do you demand? He was pure silence, standing there for those few seconds. He was utter silence. He was silence, throbbing, pulsating. But you were looking to hear some words.”

But about silence nothing can be said. And all that is said about silence will be wrong. How can you say anything about silence? To say something will be falsifying it. That's why Lao Tzu says: Nothing can be said about Tao – and if something is said, in the very saying of it, it has become untrue. Tao is silent. But that silence is not the silence of a cemetery. It is the silence of a garden where trees are alive breathing and yet there is utter silence. It is not a dead silence; it is an alive silence. Hence, he has called it “The Song of Meditation”.

Buddha says: My approach to reality is not of belief but of seeing. His religion has been qualified as “*Ihi passika*: Come and see.” Not as “Come and believe.” Buddha says, “Come and see: *Ihi passika*.” It is here, present – you just come and see. He does not require you to believe. He is the

only great teacher in the world who dropped belief – and with dropping belief, he transformed religion from a very low childish stature to a very mature thing. With Buddha religion became young. Otherwise it was childish. It was a kind of belief – belief is superstition, belief is out of fear. And belief is blind. Buddha has given eyes to religion. He says: See, and there is no need to believe. And when you have seen then it will not be a belief, it will be knowing.

In this song of Hakuin you will see the way of seeing – how to open the eyes. Because truth is always there, has been always there. It is not that the truth has to be produced. Buddha says: *Yatha bhutam* – It is! It is already there, it is confronting you! It is in the east, it is in the west, it is in the north, it is in the south. It surrounds you – it is without and it is within. But you will have to see it: *Ihi passika*. Your eyes are closed, you have forgotten how to open them.

Meditation is nothing but the art of opening your eyes. The art of cleansing your eyes. The art of dropping the dust that has gathered on the mirror of your consciousness. It is natural, dust gathers. Man has been traveling and traveling for thousands of lives – dust gathers. We are all travelers, much dust has gathered – so much so that the mirror has completely disappeared. There is only dust upon dust, layers and layers of dust, and you cannot see the mirror. But the mirror is still there – it cannot be lost because it is your very nature. If it can be lost then it will not be your nature. It is not that you have a mirror: you *are* the mirror. The traveler is the mirror – he cannot lose it, he can only forget it. At the most, forgetfulness.

You have not lost your Buddhahood. Buddhahood means the mirror clean of dust. The mirror again fresh, again reflecting, again functioning – that's what Buddhahood is. Buddhahood means a consciousness which has become awakened. The sleep is no more and the dreams are no more and the desires have disappeared. The dust gathers, it is natural. But you cling to the dust – your desire functions like a glue.

And what is your desire? That has to be understood. If you have understood your desire, you have understood all. Because in the understanding of desire, desire ceases. And when desire ceases, suddenly you have a totally new feel of your being; you are no more the old. What is the desire? What are you searching? What are you seeking?

Happiness. Bliss. Joy. That's what you are seeking. And you have been seeking for millennia, and you have not found it yet. It is time, the *right* time, to think again, to meditate again. You have been seeking so hard, you have been trying so hard – perhaps you are missing just because you are trying? Maybe it is trying that keeps you away from happiness? Let us think over it, brood over it. Give a little pause to your search, recapitulate.

You have been searching for many lives. You don't remember other lives, no need – but in this life you have been searching, that will do. And you have not found it. And nobody has ever found it by searching. Something is wrong in the very search. In the search naturally you forget yourself; you start looking everywhere, everywhere *else*. You look to the north and to the east and to the west and to the south, and in the sky and underneath the seas, and you go on searching everywhere. And the search becomes more and more desperate, because the more and more you search and you don't find, great anxiety arises – “Am I going to make it this time, or am I again going to miss it?”

More and more desperation, more and more misery, more and more madness. You go nuts. And the happiness remains as far away as ever – in fact it recedes farther away from you. The more you search, the less is the possibility to get it. Because it is inside you.

Happiness is the function of your consciousness when it is awake. Unhappiness is the function of your consciousness when it is asleep. Unconsciousness is your mirror burdened with great dust and luggage and past. Happiness is when the burden has been dropped and the mirror has been found again. And again your mirror can reflect the trees and the sun and the sand and the sea and the stars. When you have again become innocent, when you again have the eyes of a child – in that clarity you are happy.

I was reading a few lines of Michael Adam. They are beautiful.

“Perhaps trying even makes for unhappiness. Perhaps all the din of my desiring has kept the strange bird from my shoulder. I have tried so long and so loud after happiness. I have looked so far and wide. I have always imagined that happiness was an island in the river. Perhaps it is the river. I have thought happiness to be the name of an inn at the end of the road. Perhaps it is the road. I have believed that happiness was always tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. Perhaps it is here. Perhaps it is now. I have looked everywhere else.

“So: here and now.

“But here and now is clearly unhappiness. Perhaps then no such thing as happiness. Perhaps happiness exists not, it is just a dream created by an unhappy mind. Certainly it cannot be as I unhappily imagine it. Here and now there is not happiness. So happiness is not. I need not therefore waste myself on what is not. I can forget about happiness then; I can cease to care and instead concern myself with something that I do know, can feel and fully experience. Happiness is an idle dream: now it is morning. I can awaken and stay with unhappiness, with what is real under the sun this moment. And now I see how much of my unhappiness came from trying to be happy; even I can see that *trying* is *unhappiness*. Happiness does not try . . .

“At last, I am here and now. At last, I am what I am. I am unpretending, at ease. I am unhappy – so what? . . . But is *this* what I ran from? Is this really unhappiness? . . .”

Think over it, meditate over it.

“And when I cease to try to be happy or anything else, when I do not seek anymore, when I do not care to go anywhere, get anything, then it seems I am already arrived in a strange place: I am here and now. When I see that I can do nothing, that all my doing is the same dream, in the moment that I see this, my mind the old dreamer and wanderer is for the moment still and present.”

Naturally. If you are not searching, not seeking, not desiring, not dreaming, for a moment the mind falls into a silence. It is still. There is nothing to hanker about, nothing to make a fuss about, nothing to expect and nothing to be frustrated about. For a moment the mind stops its constant chasing. In that moment of stillness you are in a strange place, you are in a strange space, unknown, never known before. A new door has opened. For the moment the mind is still and present.

“For the moment, here and now, the real world shows, and see: here and now is already and always all that I had sought and striven after elsewhere and apart. More than that: I have hunted after shadows; the reality is here in this sunlit place, in this birdcall now. It was my seeking after reality that took me from it; desire deafened me. The bird was singing here all the while. . .

“If I am still and care less to find happiness, then happiness it seems is able to find me. It is, if I am truly still, as still as death – if I am thoroughly dead, here and now.”

Happiness suddenly jumps upon you. When desire disappears, happiness appears. When the striving is no more, for the first time you see who you are. That knowing is what Buddha means: Come and see – *Ihi passika*. From where is he calling you: “Come and see”? He is calling you from your desires. You have gone far away from your home; you have lost your home base. You are not where you appear to be. Your dream has taken you to faraway worlds – imaginary, illusory, your own creation.

Zen people have a special word for meditation, they call it *fu-sho*. *Fu-sho* means “unproduced”. You cannot produce it, you cannot do anything to bring it. You have to be passive, in a state of non-doing – then it comes. Then it comes suddenly, from nowhere, from the blue. And in that coming, in that shower of silence and stillness, is the transformation. It is nothing special, Zen people say. How can it be special? It is everybody’s nature, so how can it be special? It is utterly ordinary, everybody has it. You may know, you may not know – that is a different thing – but you have it. Not for a single moment have you missed it. Not for a single moment has it been taken away from you. It has been there, lying and lying and waiting for you to come back home.

Another word Zen people use for meditation is *wu-shi*. It means “nothing special” or “no fuss”.

Now this song of Hakuin.

All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.

This one sentence is enough. It is the beginning and the middle and the end. It is all. The alpha and the omega.

All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.

You are Buddhas. Never for a single moment have you been otherwise. You *cannot*. You cannot really go away from your Buddhahood, you can only dream. You can only dream that you have gone away, but while dreaming you will still remain here now. This is impossible, to lose your Buddhahood, because God is involved in everything and every being. And when Hakuin says, “All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas,” don’t think that he is talking only of human beings. Animals are included, so are included the birds and the trees and the rocks. All that is, is included.

The English word “being” comes from a Sanskrit root *bhu*. *Bhu* means “that which grows”. All that grows is God. The trees grow, the birds grow, the rocks grow. All that grows is God. And everything grows in its own pace. Remember, the root of “being”, the word “being”, is *bhu*. It simply means that which breathes, that which grows, that which has life – howsoever rudimentary, howsoever primitive. All is included.

All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.

And what is the meaning of a Buddha? “Buddha” means a consciousness that has come back to itself – is no more wandering in dreams, is no more thinking of the future, is no more thinking of the past. A consciousness that is not possessed by memories or possessed by imagination. A consciousness that has got rid of the past and rid of the future, a consciousness that has only present. A consciousness that lives in the moment, utterly here now. Alert, awake, radiant.

All beings are Buddhas. Zen people call this single sentence “The Lion’s Roar”. It is. In a single stroke Hakuin has delivered you, has saved you from yourself. There is no more salvation needed. A single statement is enough to release you from all bondage. You are a Buddha. But remember you are not a Buddha in any special sense. Everybody is – your dog and your cow and your buffalo and your donkey, everybody is! So don’t take it in an egoistic sense, that “I am a Buddha”. Don’t make it ambitious, don’t go on an ambition trip. *All* is Buddha. Life is Buddha, being is Buddhahood, existence is Buddhahood.

Just think of it. One of the greatest statements ever made:

All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.

Hakuin has finished in one sentence. The remaining song will be a repetition, really. The remaining song will be for those who cannot understand the first statement. It is said, when Hakuin was writing this song and he wrote his first sentence – “All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas” – one of his disciples was sitting there and he said, “Stop now. Now there is no more to say.” He left the room, the disciple left the room. He said, “Now there is no point. You have finished in the first sentence – this should be the *last* sentence!”

But still the song is beautiful. It will help you from different directions to come to the same truth. It will help you to see the point from different vantage points, from different windows. You will see the same Buddha sitting, from every window of the temple. But it is good, because from some window there may be more light falling on the Buddha, from some window the green of the trees may be reflected in the Buddha’s face, from some other window a star may be looking at the Buddha, from some other window something else – a bird may be sitting and singing a song.

All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.

The universe is made of the stuff called “God”. So God is not in the end. God is in the beginning, in the middle, and the end. Only God is. But let me remind you, when I use the word “God” I mean godliness.

*It is like water and ice:
Apart from water, no ice,
Outside living beings, no Buddhas.*

Hakuin says: It is like water and ice. There is no difference between water and ice, and yet a sort of difference. If you have gone to the market to purchase ice, you will not purchase water. You will purchase ice – you will insist. If somebody says, “Take this water,” you will say, “I have come for the ice.” There is a sort of difference. But not much, not really – only on the surface.

The ice will melt and will become water, and the water can become frozen and can be turned into ice. They are two phases of one phenomenon.

You are like ice and Buddha is like water. You are frozen, he has melted. And let me repeat: There is no other alchemy then love to help you melt. Love melts because love is warmth. People melt only in love. When they are not in love, they become cold, and in the cold they freeze. And you must have watched it, even in your small ways. When you are loving you are flowing. When you are flowing you are glowing. When you are loving you expand. When you are not loving you shrink. When you are loving you have warmth around you. When you are not loving you are surrounded by a cold wind – you are freezing, and anybody who comes close to you will freeze.

There are people, if they look at you with their cold eyes you will feel a shivering. And there are people, when they look at you with their warmth, with their love, you suddenly feel this is your home. There are eyes which give you the feeling of being at home, and there are eyes which stare at you and make you aware that you are a stranger here.

*Apart from water, no ice,
Outside living beings, no Buddhas.*

So Buddhahood is nothing but a state of merger. Frozenness is gone. Your definition has disappeared. You are no more limited; you are no more confined. At the deepest core, you are no more. Because if you *are* then there will be some kind of frozenness in you. If you *are* then you cannot be flowing – something will be hindering and something will be stuck and something will be obstructing. When you are *not* at all . . . That's why when two lovers are in deep embrace there are not two persons. There is only one energy, revolving. When two lovers are really in deep embrace there comes a moment, the woman forgets whether she is woman or man, and the man forgets whether he is man or woman. If that moment has not come, then you have not loved.

In deep love you disappear. Still something is there, a kind of presence – but nobody is present. There is no center as a frozen ice, there is no self. That's why Buddha has very much insisted that your self is the root cause which is hindering you from being a Buddha. The feeling that "I am" makes you ice, icy and cold. If this feeling "I am" disappears, there is no problem. Ice will melt.

*It is like water and ice:
Apart from water, no ice,
Outside living beings, no Buddhas.*

The Buddhist doctrine talks about Buddha's three bodies. They have to be understood. The first body is called the body of truth, the universal body, the divine body. You can call it God. The second body is called the bliss body – the bridge between the first and the third. You can call it the soul. And the third body is the physical body.

You know only your physical body. You have not known your second body, the bliss body. And unless you know the second body you will not be able to know the third, the deepest – your universal body, your cosmic body, your Buddha body.

This is the Buddhist trinity – the father, the son and the holy ghost. Or, this is the Buddhist *trimurti* – the three faces of God. Buddha says everybody has these three bodies. The first, the physical, is very frozen. The second is in a state of liquidity. And the third is vaporous. First the

ice has to melt into water and then the water has to evaporate. Have you watched? The ice has definition, boundaries; the water has no definition, no boundaries. You pour the water into any jug, into any pot, it takes the shape of the pot. It is non-resistant, it is non-aggressive, it does not fight. It is liquid, it adjusts.

The man of compassion and love is like water, he adjusts. He has no resistance; he does not enforce his form on anybody. He accommodates, he is accommodative, he is spacious.

And then the third, when the water has evaporated and has disappeared and become invisible. Now you cannot even pour it into a pot. It has become part of the sky, it has moved into the eternal, into the infinite.

These are the three states of water, and these are the three states of consciousness too. You have become too gross because you have become too much identified with your first body. As if a man has befooled himself in believing that the walls of his house are his house. The walls of the house are not the house, you have to go a little in. You have to find the innermost core of your being – and that innermost core is invisible. That innermost core is almost like emptiness.

The first body is essence, the second body is form, the third body is action. People who live only in the physical body live only in doings – what to do, what not to do. Their whole life is just swerving, swaying, between this and that. Their life consists of doing; they don't know anything else.

The second body is of form. A man starts seeing glimpses of non-action. That's what happens in meditation – when you are sitting silently doing nothing, great joy arises. From nowhere, for no cause. You don't know from where it is coming but great joy arises, as if out of nothing. Miraculously, magically. This is the second, the form. The joy takes form.

And then there is the third. If you go on following and go on moving inward, one day you reach to the essence. That, Buddha calls the body of truth. There, no action and no no-action. All has disappeared, the whole duality has disappeared, you have come to the very essence of existence. That essence is liberating. That essence is *nirvana*. And you are not to go anywhere to find it, you are carrying it all along.

*All beings are from the very beginning Buddhas.
It is like water and ice:
Apart from water, no ice,
Outside living beings, no Buddhas.
Not knowing it is near, they seek it afar. What a pity!*

And if you go on seeking afar for that which is near, you will go on missing. Nobody is at fault. Before you go into the four corners of the world to search for it, first go into yourself. If you don't find it there, then you can go anywhere you like. But people don't go within, they start by without. And the without is vast – you can go on and on, you can search all over the Earth. And people are searching. People come to me, and they say, "We have been searching for our whole lives. And we have been to here and there, and we have been to Japan and to Ceylon and to Burma and to Thailand, and we have travelled all over the East. And we have not found it yet."

The East is within you! It is not in Thailand; it is not in India. And you will not find it anywhere. At the most, if you accidentally come across an enlightened man, he will throw you to yourself. Not that he will give it to you. Nobody can give it to you. It is already there; there is no need to give it.

And because in the modern world communication has become easy, traveling has become easy, people are becoming even more mad. They go jumping from one city to another, from one airport to another airport. They are driving themselves crazy. And to reach home you need not enter into any airplane, into any train, into any car. You only need to enter into yourself. And ticketless – no ticket is needed. And nobody is there to debar you; it is your territory.

I have heard:

A party of Americans happened to arrive at Mount Vesuvius during one of its more spectacular eruptions. “Say!” exclaimed one of the Yanks in an awed tone, “doesn’t that beat all Hell!” “Sapristi!” said the Italian guide. “How you Americans-a travel!”

Now even Hell is in danger, afraid of the tourists.

People go on searching and seeking for something which needs no search, which can be found only when search stops. And I am not saying that you strive to stop it – then again you have started it. If you strive to stop it, then you have missed the point. You have just to see the point of it, that striving will take you away from you, that striving will create more and more tension. Seeing the fact – *Ihi passika*. Seeing this, striving disappears and there is suddenly a stillness. In that stillness the first glimpse will come of bliss. You will enter into your second body. And when you have entered into the second body then it will be more and more easy, very lucid, to slip into the central most core – the essential body, the body of truth.

Once you have tasted something of your inner bliss then you have the vision where to really search for, where to go now. Disappear into your innermost being and you will find it. Seek, and you will miss. Don’t seek and find.

*Not knowing it is near, they seek it afar. What a pity!
It is like one in the water who cries out for thirst;
It is like the child of a rich house
Who has strayed away among the poor.*

And has forgotten that he is rich – may have become a beggar. You *are* rich, infinitely rich. You are all emperors and empresses, gods and goddesses. Just recognize. Don’t get too much into begging – and desire creates the beggar. Even a man like Alexander is a beggar because the desire is there. A man like Napoleon is a beggar because the desire is there. See the richest people of this Earth and you will see just beggars and nothing else. And sometimes it happens, you come across a beggar and you see the emperor sitting there under the tree – having nothing, not possessing anything.

Just possess yourself and you have possessed all. Be the master of yourself and you have become the master of all. Possessing things, you will remain a beggar. And people go on changing but not really transforming. You possess one thing, then you start possessing another thing, then you possess a third thing. Sometimes you start possessing other-worldly things, but nothing changes.

Just form changes. Somebody possesses money and somebody starts possessing virtue. Now it is the same, not much difference. [...]

I am not saying start striving to stop striving, otherwise you will simply change the name of your madness, and you will remain the same. You will just change the label of your neurosis. There are people who are greedy for money and there are people who are greedy for God. It makes no difference at all; they are the same people. Greed is greed. It makes no difference about what greed is, for what greed is. Greed is greed.

Just see the point that striving is meaningless, that going anywhere is meaningless. Not because I am saying it – you have to see it: *Ihi passika*. You have to see it; you are not to believe it. Believing won't help; believing is just a whitewash on the surface. *Seeing* brings transformation.

It is like one in the water who cries out for thirst . . .

Hakuin says: You are crying for happiness, and you are like a fish in the water crying for water and crying, "I am thirsty." You have it! And you are begging everywhere.

*It is like the child of a rich house
Who has strayed away among the poor:
The cause of our circling through the six worlds
Is that we are on the dark paths of ignorance.
Dark path upon dark path treading,
When shall we escape from birth-and-death?*

What is the dark path of ignorance? Looking outward. The farther you look, the more darkness. Because the light burns inside you. Looking closer and closer, and there is more light. That's why we call a Buddha "enlightened" – he has come to know and realize his light. It is a perpetual light – without any fuel it is there, it cannot be exhausted. Suns will be exhausted and the moons will be exhausted and the stars will be exhausted. But the light that burns inside you as consciousness is inexhaustible. It is eternal. [...]

That's why Buddhas go on giving you whatsoever they have attained, go on sharing. Because the beauty of it is in sharing. That's why Hakuin has sung this song. That's why I am here, sharing my being with you, my joy with you, my celebration with you. It is something that has to be shared to keep it alive. It is something that has to be given. The more you give it, the more you have of it.

Never be a miser in your love and in your understanding. Share it. And you will have more and more of it. Don't hoard it, otherwise you will miss it. One day you will find it has disappeared and there is nothing but stink left. Instead of fragrance there will be stinking. Share your love with everybody and anybody. Don't make conditions to your love. And the best way to share is to share your understanding, to share your meditation.

Hakuin is doing that in this song. He's sharing his Buddhahood. What he has known, he is singing about it, he is praising it. He is making it clear to people who have not yet attained but *can* attain. Maybe somebody hears the song, somebody is struck by it, stabbed in the very heart by it. It is a lion's roar: somebody may be awakened out of his sleep.

*The cause of our circling through the six worlds
Is that we are on the dark paths of ignorance.
Dark path upon dark path treading,
When shall we escape from birth-and-death?*

Birth means getting attached to the physical body. Death means the frustration of that attachment to the body. Getting free of birth and death means getting free of the physical body. But how can you be free from the physical body? Unless you know the second body you will not be free from the physical body. So it is not a question of being free from the physical body; the basic question is how to enter into the second body. Once you are in the second you are free from the first. And once you are in the third you are free from the second too.

That's why you don't see Buddha laughing. Not that he didn't laugh, but he has not been shown as laughing. Because in the third body, the body of truth, even bliss is meaningless. First, the body, the physical body, is the body of misery. Attached to the physical body you remain miserable. The second body is the body of bliss. Once you reach to it, all misery disappears, you are blissful. But bliss is the opposite of misery – part of duality. The body of truth goes beyond both, it is transcendental. Misery has disappeared, so what is the point of keeping bliss? When there is no misery, there is no point in bliss. When poverty has disappeared what is the point of holding richness? Even that can be dispossessed.

When all duality disappears – pleasure and pain, happiness and unhappiness, day and night, life and death – then for the first time you are in God.

*The Zen meditation of the Mahayana
Is beyond all our praise.
Giving and morality and the other perfections,
Taking of the Name, repentance, discipline,
And the many other right actions,
All come back to the practice of meditation.*

Hakuin says: All that has been done in the name of religion down the ages, can be reduced to one single thing, and that is meditation – *dhyana*. And what is *dhyana*? Becoming aware of your physical body – the first *dhyana*, the first step of meditation. Becoming watchful of your physical body. Watch yourself walking, watch yourself eating, watch yourself running, talking, listening. Watch. And through watching you will see you are different from the physical body. Because the watcher cannot be the watched, the observer cannot be the observed, the seer cannot be the seen, the knower cannot be the known.

Watch the physical body, and the second body will arise. It is there – but you will start feeling. You will start recognizing it, it will start penetrating you. This is the first step of meditation: watch the physical body. Then the second step, and the last, is: watch the bliss body. Watch your ecstasy. And then you will suddenly see, the watcher cannot be the watched. “Ecstasy is there, but I am far away from it. Bliss is there, but I am the knower of it.”

Then you start getting into the third body, the body of truth. Then you become a pure witness – *sakshin*. And that is liberation. Hakuin says it happens through meditation that you discover, or *rediscover*, your Buddhahood.

*By the merit of a single sitting
He destroys innumerable accumulated sins.
How should there be wrong paths for him?*

And just in a single sitting it can happen. Hakuin does not preach the gradual path, Hakuin preaches the sudden path. It can happen in a single moment. It can happen now. You need not postpone it for tomorrow. Who knows? Tomorrow may never come. It never comes, really. It can happen this very moment. If your awareness is lucid, if your awareness is there, clear, crystal-clear, it can happen this very moment. *This* very sitting and you can become a Buddha. And nobody is hindering the path except yourself. Nobody is the enemy except yourself, and nobody is the friend either.

*By the merit of a single sitting
He destroys innumerable accumulated sins.*

Hakuin says: Don't be worried about sins and your past karma. In a single sitting of meditation, all that can be burnt. The fire of meditation is so potential, it can burn your whole past in a single moment. There is no need to be worried about past karma – "I have done some bad, so I have to suffer. I have done something, so I have to go to Hell." If you want to go, you will *have* to go! But these are all rationalizations that you are trying to find. If you wish, it is your wish – it will be fulfilled. This existence is very obliging. It goes on obliging – if you want to go to Hell, it supports. It says, "Go! I am all with you."

But if you decide that "Enough is enough, and I have suffered enough," a single moment of meditateness is enough to burn all your millions of past lives and millions of future lives too. You are released.

Start meditating. First on the body. Then on your inner feelings of bliss, joy. And go moving inward. And one day the song of Hakuin will burst forth in you too. You will flower. And unless you flower you have not lived, or lived in vain. You are here to bloom. And unless you bear much fruit and many flowers you will go on missing the meaning of life.

People come to me, and they ask, "What is the meaning of life?" As if meaning is there somewhere sold in the market. As if meaning is a commodity. Meaning has to be *created*. There is no meaning in life. Meaning is not a given thing; it has to be created. It has to become your inner work. Then there is meaning – and there is *great* meaning.

Love and meditate and you will attain to meaning. And you will attain to life, and abundant life.

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09 This Very Place the Lotus Paradise

This Very Place the Lotus Paradise

Man lives in illusion. Man lives through illusion. Man lives for illusion. In short, man lives because of illusion. Hence the fear of truth. Nobody wants truth, although everybody goes on seeking for it. That seeking is a deception, that seeking is an avoidance. To seek truth means to avoid truth.

It has to be understood – how the seeker goes on avoiding truth. To seek means to look far away, to seek means to look somewhere else, to seek means to go on a trip. To seek means to postpone – to seek means it will happen tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, it is not happening right now. It is not here, it is there. It is not this, it is that.

Man goes on living in illusion. But to live in illusion one needs to avoid truth, because if truth comes it will shatter all your illusions and all your so-called life and all your so-called love. Truth looks like a calamity. And Friedrich Nietzsche is right in a sense when he says: Please don't give truth to humanity. Otherwise, you will destroy people's joy, you will destroy their enthusiasm, you will destroy their gusto. Don't give truth to humanity, otherwise all that they have will disappear. Because all that they have is a kind of dream. Don't wake humanity, otherwise the dreams will be shattered. And they may be seeing beautiful dreams – or hoping to see, somewhere, sometime.

That's why Christ is crucified, Socrates is poisoned, Buddha is stoned. They bring truth to people who have become almost illusory. They bring light to people who live in darkness and dream in darkness. And their dreams depend on darkness – when somebody brings light into the darkness, the darkness disappears and the dreams and the desires.

One feels hurt by a Buddha or a Christ. The Christ looks not like the savior but like the enemy. Otherwise why should you crucify Christ? There is no other reason. The basic reason is: he uproots you, he shatters you. This has to be understood very deeply. And when you live in illusion, you search for truth. That is a double deception, so that you can go on telling yourself and consoling yourself that "I am searching. Look what great efforts I am making, how much I am putting my energy into the search – look!"

The search for truth arises out of your lie. It is the lie that puts you on the search for truth. It is a protection for the lie; it is the way of the lie to survive. It says: Go and search for truth. It is there far away in some distant land. You will have to travel, and the travel is long and the travel is not going to be finished soon. It will take lives and lives, it will take millennia, but go! Go on searching, one day you will find it. The lie gives you hope, it gives you a future, it gives you future dreams. Your God is somewhere far away. It has to be far away, because close by He will be dangerous. [...]

But in your very destruction is the possibility of a new birth. Out of the ashes the new is going to be born. The myth of the phoenix is not a myth, it is a metaphor for man's rebirth. You have to die first to be reborn. [...]

But if you come close to me – and initiation means coming close, initiation means coming as close as possible – you will be burned. You will be burned to ashes. You will disappear.

But that is the only real hope. If you disappear as you are, you will be born as you really *are*. Only the disappearance of the lie that you have become can be the birth of truth. And truth is not far away, it is just hiding within you. And you are clinging to the lie. Your personality is the lie. And because of the personality you cannot move toward the essence. The personality is taught by the society; the society creates lies. Lies are very, very convenient. Lies function like lubricants, lies make life smooth. You see somebody and you smile. And the smile is a lie – because it is not coming from your heart, it is just painted there on the lips. You have created it, you have managed it, it is a kind of exercise of the lips. But it lubricates relationship, the other man starts smiling.

If you are true, if you are as you are, it will be difficult, the relationship will become difficult. Psychologists say that if every person starts revealing what is in his heart, friendship will disappear from the earth, love will disappear from the earth. That is true. It will be impossible to find friends if you simply say what is in your heart. If you say what is in your heart, your beloved will leave you and your lover will leave you.

You go on keeping it in the heart, and you go on playing something which is not really there – you do something else, just the opposite. You may be angry but you smile. You may be hurt but you smile. You may be boiling within but you smile. You may want to scream but you go on singing. You may want to do something else but it is not feasible, it is not practical, it is not the right thing to do.

The society creates this persona, this mask around you, this personality.

There are three “yous” in you. You-1 – that is the personality. The word personality comes from a Greek root “persona”. In the Greek drama they used to use masks, and the voice would come from the mask. “Sona” means voice, sound, and “per” means through the mask. The real face you don’t know – who the real actor is. There is a mask, and through the mask comes the voice. It appears as if it is coming from the mask, and you don’t know the real face. The word “personality” is beautiful; it comes from Greek drama.

And that’s what has happened. In the Greek drama they had only one mask. You have many. Masks upon masks, like layers of an onion. If you put one mask away there is another, if you put that away there is another. And you can go on digging and digging and you will be surprised how many faces you are carrying. How many! For lives you have been collecting them. And they are all useful, because you have to change many times. You are talking to your servant; you cannot have the same face that you have when you talk to your boss. And they may be both present in the room: when you look at the servant you have to use one mask and when you look at your boss you have to use another mask. You continuously change. It has almost become automatic – you need not change, it changes itself. You look at the boss and you are smiling. And you look at the servant and the smile disappears and you are hard – as hard as the boss is to you. When he looks at *his* boss, he smiles.

In a single moment you may be changing your face many times. One has to be very, very alert to know how many faces one has. Innumerable. They cannot be counted.

This is your first you, the false you. Or call it the ego. It has been given to you by the society, it is a gift from the society – from the politician and the priest and the parent and the pedagogue. They have given you many faces just to make your life smooth. They have taken away your truth; they have given you a substitute. And because of these substitute faces you don't know who you are. You *can't* know, because the faces change so fast and they are so many, you cannot trust yourself. You don't know exactly which face is yours. In fact none of these faces is yours.

And the Zen people say: Unless you know your original face, you will not know what Buddha is. Because Buddha is your original face. You were born as a Buddha and you are living a lie.

This social gift has to be dropped. That is the meaning of sannyas, initiation. You are a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan, that face has to be dropped. Because it is not your own face – it has been given to you by others, you have been conditioned for it. And you have not even been asked, you have not even been requested. It has been imposed forcibly, violently.

All parents are violent and all educational systems are violent. Because they don't take any note of you. They have a-priori ideas, they already know what is right. And they put the "right" on you. You squirm, you scream inside, but you are helpless. A child is so helpless and so delicate, he can be molded in any way. And that's what the society does. Before the child becomes strong enough it is already crippled in a thousand and one ways. Paralyzed, poisoned.

The day you want to become religious, you will have to drop religions. The day you want to relate to God, you will have to drop all ideologies about God. The day you want to know who you are, you will have to drop all the answers that have been given to you. All that is borrowed has to be burnt.

That's why Zen has been defined as: "Direct pointing to the human heart. Seeing the nature and becoming Buddha. Not standing on letters. A separate transmission outside the scriptures." A separate transmission outside the scriptures: the Koran cannot give it to you, neither can the Dhammapada nor the Bible nor the Talmud nor the Gita. No scripture can give it to you. And if you believe in the scripture you will go on missing truth.

Truth is in you. It has to be encountered there. "Seeing the nature and becoming Buddha. Direct pointing to the human heart." You are not to go anywhere. And wherever you go you will remain the same, so what is the point? You can go to the Himalayas; it is not going to change anything. You will carry all that you have with you. All that you have become, all that you have been made, you will carry all your artificiality. Your synthetic faces, your borrowed knowledge, your scriptures will go on clinging inside you. Even sitting in a cave in the Himalayas alone you will not be alone. The teachers will be there around you, and the priests and the politicians and the parents and the whole society. It may not be so visible but it will be there inside you crowding you. And you will remain a Hindu there or a Christian or a Mohammedan. And you will go on repeating words like parrots. It will not change, it cannot change. [...]

Wherever you go you will be yourself. Even in Heaven or in the Himalayas. You cannot be otherwise. The world is not outside you; you are the world. So wherever you go, you take your world with you.

The real change has not to be of place, the real change has not to be outside, the real change has to be inner. And what do I mean by real change? I don't mean that you have to improve upon

yourself, because improvement is again a lie. Improvement means you will go on polishing your personality. You can make it immensely beautiful – but remember, the more beautiful it is, the more dangerous, because the more difficult it will be to drop it.

That's why it happens that sometimes a sinner becomes a saint. But your so-called respectable people never become. They cannot become – they have such valuable personalities, so much decorated, polished, and they have put so much investment in the personality, their whole life has been a kind of polishing. Now it is too costly to drop those beautiful personalities. A sinner can drop it, he has no investment in it. In fact he is fed-up with it, it is so ugly. But how can a respectable person drop it so easily? It has been paying him so well; it has been such a profit. It has been making him more and more respected, he is going higher and higher, he is reaching the pinnacle of success. It is very difficult for him to stop going on this ladder of success. It is a non-ending ladder, you can go on and on for ever. [...]

When you are succeeding in the world it is difficult to stop. When you are becoming richer it is difficult to stop, when you are becoming famous it is difficult to stop. The more refined personality you have, the more it clings to you.

So I am not saying that you have to improve upon yourself. All the great masters, from Buddha to Hakuin, nobody has said to improve. Beware of the so-called “improvement books”. The American market is full of those books: beware. Because improvement is not going to lead you anywhere. It is not a question of improvement because by improvement the lie will be improved. The personality will be improved – will become more polished, will become more subtle, will become more valuable, will become more precious – but that is not the transformation. The transformation comes not by improvement but by dropping the personality utterly.

The lie cannot become the truth. There is no way to improve upon the lie so that it becomes the truth. It will remain the lie. It will look more and more like the truth but it will remain the lie. And the more it looks like the truth, the more you will be engrossed in it, rooted in it. The lie can look so much like the truth that you can even become oblivious of the fact that it is a lie.

The lie tells you: Search for the truth. Improve your character, your personality. Search for the truth, become this, become that. The lie goes on giving you new programs: Do this, and then everything will be good and you will be happy for ever. Do this, do that. This has failed. Don't be worried, I have other plans for you. The lie goes on giving you plans, and you go on moving in those plans and wasting your life.

In fact the search for truth also comes out of the lie. That will be hard to understand but it *has* to be understood. The search for truth comes from the lie itself. It is the lie's way to protect itself – it gives you even the search for truth. Now how can you be angry with your personality? And how can you call it a lie? It propels you, it enforces you, it pushes you to search for truth.

But the search means going away. And truth is here, and the lie pushes you to go there. And truth is now, and the lie says “then” and “there”. The lie always speaks either of the past or of the future; it never speaks of the present. And the truth is the present. This very moment! It is herenow. That's what Hakuin means when he says:

*This very place the Lotus paradise,
This very body the Buddha.*

So the first “you” is the lie, the act. The pseudo-personality that surrounds you. The public face, the phoniness. It is a fraud. The society has imposed it upon you and you have become a cooperator with it. You have to drop your cooperation with the social lie. Because only when you are utterly nude are you yourself. All clothes are social. All ideas and all identities that you think you are, are social – given by others. They have their motives to give those ideas to you. It is subtle exploitation.

The real exploitation is not economic or political, the real exploitation is psychological. That’s why all the revolutions up to now have been failures. Hitherto, no revolution has succeeded. The reason? Because they have not looked at the deepest exploitation which is psychological. They only go on changing superficial things. A capitalist society becomes communist, but it makes no difference. A democracy becomes dictatorial, a dictatorial society becomes democratic, it makes no difference. These are just superficial changes, like a whitewash, but the structure remains deep down the same.

What is the psychological exploitation? The psychological exploitation is that nobody is allowed to be himself. That nobody is accepted as himself or herself. That nobody is respected. How can you respect people if you don’t accept them as they are? If you impose things upon them and then you respect – you respect your own impositions. You don’t respect them as they are, you don’t respect their nudity. You don’t respect their naturalness, you don’t respect their spontaneity, you don’t respect their real smiles and real tears. You respect only phoniness, pretensions, actions. Their actions you respect.

This you-1 has to be utterly dropped. Freud helped much to make humanity aware of the pseudoness of personality, of the conscious mind. His revolution is far deeper than the revolution of Marx, his revolution is far deeper than any other revolution. It goes deep, although it does not go far enough. It reaches to the second you, you-2. It is the repressed you, instinctive you, unconscious you. It is all that the society has not allowed; it is all that the society has forced inside your being and locked in there. It comes only in your dreams, it comes only in metaphors, it comes only when you are drunk, it comes only when you are no more in control. Otherwise it remains far away from you. And it is more authentic, it is not phony.

Freud has done much to make man aware of it. And the humanistic psychologies and particularly growth groups, encounter and others, have helped tremendously to make you aware of all that is screaming inside you, all that has been repressed, crushed. And that is your vital part. That is your real life, natural life. Religions have condemned it as your animal part, they have condemned it as the source of sin. It is not the source of sin; it is the source of life. And it is not lower than the conscious. It is deeper than the conscious, certainly, but not lower than the conscious.

And nothing is wrong if it is animal. Animals are beautiful, so are trees. They still live naked in their utter simplicity. They have not yet been destroyed by the priests and the politicians; they are yet part of God. Only man has gone astray. Man is the only abnormal animal on the Earth – otherwise all animals are simply normal. Hence the joy, the beauty, the health. Hence the vitality. Have you not seen it? When a bird is on the wing have you not felt jealous? Have you not seen it in a deer running fast into the forest? Have you not felt jealous of the vitality, of the sheer joy of energy?

Children: have you not felt jealous? Maybe because you feel so jealous, that’s why you go on condemning childishness. You go on condemning. Montague is right when he says that instead

of telling people “Don’t be childish” we should start telling people “Don’t be adultish”. He is right, I agree. A child is beautiful, the adult is what ugliness is. He is no more a flow; he is blocked in many ways. He is frozen, he is dull and dead. He has lost zest, he has lost enthusiasm, he is simply dragging. He is bored, he has no sense of mystery. He never feels surprised; he has forgotten the language of wonder. Mystery has disappeared for him. He has explanations; mystery is no more there. Hence, he has lost poetry and the dance and all that is valuable and all that gives meaning and significance to life, all that gives flavor to life.

This second “you” is far more valuable than the first. That is where I am against all the religions, that is where I am against all the priests, because they cling to the first, the most superficial. Go to the second. But the second is not the end – that is where Freud falls short. And that is where humanistic psychology also falls short – goes a little deeper than Freud but still does not go deep enough to find the third.

There is a third “you”, you-3. The real you, the original face, which is beyond you-1 and you-2, both. The transcendental. The Buddhahood. It is undivided pure consciousness. The first you is social, the second you is natural, the third you is divine. Or, if you want to use Hakuin’s terms, the first you is the physical body, the second you is the bliss body, and the third you is the essential body. These are the three bodies of Buddha.

And remember, I am not saying that the first is not at all useful. If the third exists then the first can be used beautifully. If the third exists, the second can be used beautifully. But only if the third exists. If the center functions well, then the periphery too is okay, then the circumference too is okay. But without the center, only the circumference, is a kind of death.

That’s what has happened to man. That’s why in the West so many thinkers think that life is meaningless. It is not. It is only because you have lost touch with your source from where meaning arises.

It is as if a tree has lost its contact with its own roots. Now, no flowers come. Now, the foliage starts disappearing, the leaves fall and no new leaves arrive. And the juice stops flowing, the sap no more exists. The tree becomes dead, the tree is dying.

And the tree may start philosophizing, the tree may become existentialist, a Sartre or somebody else, and the tree may start saying that there are no flowers in life. That life has no flowers, that there is no fragrance, that there are no more any birds. And the tree may even start saying that it has been always so, and the ancients were only fooling themselves that there are flowers – they were imagining. “It has always been so, the spring has never come, people have only been fantasizing. These Buddhas and these Jinas, they have been simply imagining, fantasizing, that flowers bloom and there is great joy and birds come and sunlight. There is nothing. All is darkness, all is accidental, and there is no meaning.” The tree can say it.

And the real thing is not that there is no meaning, not that there are no more flowers, not that flowers don’t exist, not that fragrance is fantasy, but simply that the tree has lost contact with its own roots.

Unless you are rooted in your Buddhahood you will not bloom. You will not sing; you will not know what celebration is. And how can you know God if you don’t know celebration? If you have forgotten how to dance how can you pray? If you have forgotten how to sing and how to

love then God is dead. Not that God is dead. God is dead in *you*, only in you. Your tree is dry; the sap has disappeared. You will have to find roots again. Where to find these roots? Roots have to be found here and now. That is the whole message of Hakuin's song of meditation. Before we enter into the song, a few things.

A man can seem to be the sum total of his days, of all that he does from the beginning to the end. But this is not the true man. What you do is just on the periphery. What you feel goes a little deeper. What you *are* is really at the roots. A man is not the sum total of his acts. A politician *is* the sum total of his acts because he lives only on the circumference. That's why it is easy to write history about the politicians. It is difficult to write history about Buddhas because they live at such depth where we cannot reach them. They live in such eternity that time takes no record of them. They exist in such a transcendental way that they leave no traces on the Earth. They are like birds in the sky: they fly but no footprints are left.

Politicians leave footprints. They live in the mud, in the dirt, they drag themselves in the mundane reality. They leave many footprints; they leave much bloodshed behind them. A Buddha exists as if he has never existed. He exists so absently, he exists like a space, empty space.

Remember, a man is not a sum total of his actions. And if he is, he is not yet a man; he is just a fiction, he is living in illusion. You are not what you do. So don't be too much concerned with your doing, start going deeper into being. That's why all meditations are basically a way to sit silently – so silently that all action stops. On the physical plane, on the mental plane, action stops, thought stops. Because thought is also action on the mental plane – you are doing something. When all doing disappears and you are simply there, just there, a presence, then the meditation has happened.

Sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself.

That is the meaning of the word *zazen*. “Za” means sitting doing nothing. And “zen” means: in that sitting when you are not doing anything you fall upon yourself, you encounter yourself, you see yourself. That is *zen*, *dhyana*, meditation. The word *zazen* is beautiful. “Sitting and looking into yourself” – that is the meaning of it.

Man is more than the sum total of his acts, his thoughts, his feelings. Behind the acts, thoughts and feelings there is another man – that which is, that which essentially *is*. But many seldom if ever show themselves in their essential being. Very few ever reach to that point of their essential beinghood, to their very ground of being. Those who reach, only they know that life is a benediction. A sheer joy, eternal celebration.

But if you remain on the surface, you know only misery, nothing else. Agony, nothing else. Let me say it in this way: You-1 knows only misery and agony. You-3 knows ecstasy of being and joy of being. And you-2 neither knows ecstasy nor knows agony. It knows pleasure/pain, it is just in the middle. Ecstasy is exceeding joy without any bounds to it, infinite joy. Agony is infinite misery, no bounds to it. Just between the two exists the animal and the child. It knows play, it knows pleasure/pain. It knows neither agony nor ecstasy. It does not know infinity.

If the child moves toward the first, which society forces him to do, he will know agony. If he finds somebody who can help to move him toward the third, he will know ecstasy. To find a

master is nothing but to find a man who has known his essential being, so that he can help you to go toward your own essential being.

A master is not to be followed, a master is not to be imitated, a master is only to be understood. In that very understanding is the revolution.

A man's true life is the way in which he puts off the lie imposed by others on him. Stripped, naked, natural, he is what he is. This is a matter of being and not of becoming. The lie cannot become the truth, the personality cannot become your soul. There is no way to make the non-essential the essential. The non-essential remains non-essential and the essential remains essential, they are not convertible. And striving toward truth is nothing but creating more confusion. The truth has not to be achieved. It cannot be achieved; it is already the case. Only the lie has to be dropped.

All aims and ends and ideals and goals and ideologies, religions and systems of improvement and betterment, are lies. Beware of them. Recognize the fact that as you are, you are a lie. Manipulated, cultivated, by others. Striving after truth is a distraction and a postponement. It is the lie's way to hide. See the lie, look deep into the lie of your personality. Because to see the lie is to cease to lie. No longer to lie is to seek no more for any truth – there is no need. The moment the lie disappears, truth is there in all its beauty and radiance. In the seeing of the lie it disappears and what is left is the truth.

To see the lie of striving after truth is to fall into an eternal silence. A stillness comes when you see the lie of your personality. There is nothing more to do. Hence the stillness – what can you do?

Just the other night, a sannyasin was saying “What can I do? Whatsoever I do, I fail. What can I do?” There is nothing really to be done. Doing is not going to help, doing will be again the same rut. Only being is going to transform you, not doing. So when one fails again and again and again, only then the insight arises that “Doing is never going to lead me anywhere.” The day that sword has hit you – that “Doing is not going to lead me anywhere” – what will you do? Nothing is left to do.

In your utter helplessness, the surrender. And silence and stillness. This is the silence that transforms – not the silence that somehow you impose upon yourself by repeating a mantra or doing TM; that is not the real silence, that is a created silence. Any silence that you manage to create will belong to the personality. It will not be of much use, it will not go deeper than that – how can your doing go deeper than you? When you have utterly failed, when you have seen your ultimate failure and you have seen that there is no possibility and no hope for you to succeed, what will you do in that silence? You will just be there. All has stopped. The mind no more spins any thoughts.

And in that very moment the door opens. And that silence is being, that silence is Buddha.

This stillness is not the opposite of action, it is not brought about by will or by withdrawal from the world. One cannot withdraw from the world; one *is* the world. The want to escape keeps us imprisoned – because the wish to be without desire is still desire and the will to be still is disturbance. You cannot will your silence, will is the base of all disturbance. Will has to

disappear. You can only see into the futility of it. Doing, willing, improving, bettering yourself, achieving, reaching – all these words are just projections of the lie.

When the lie has been seen in its totality . . . the illumination, the enlightenment.

Now Hakuin's sutras.

The Pure Land paradise is not far.

Zen people call the state of no-mind "the pure land paradise". So please don't interpret it in Christian ways. Paradise, to a Christian, is somewhere there in the sky. For a Buddhist, particularly for a man like Hakuin, it is the state of no-mind.

The Pure Land paradise is not far.

Stop thinking and you are there. And in fact that is the Biblical meaning of the parable of Adam's expulsion. He has not been expelled; there is nobody to expel him. He has only eaten the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge – he has become a mind. The more knowledge you accumulate, the more of a mind you become. Adam has become knowledgeable, he has become a mind, and that is the expulsion from the paradise. If he can drop his mind, he will suddenly find himself again in the paradise, and he will also find that he has always been there. Even when he was thinking he had lost it, it was not lost. It was only forgotten. He became too much obsessed with knowledge, that's why it was forgotten.

The day the child starts becoming knowledgeable he loses paradise. Each Adam loses it again and again. And don't think that it happened once in history, and we are suffering for that ancient Adam. No. It has happened to our life – to *each* life, to *each* child. For a few months the child lives in the Garden of Eden. He knows nothing. Without knowing, he is a no-mind – he simply exists moment to moment, he has no worries. When he feels hungry, he cries, when he feels satisfied, he falls asleep. When he is happy, he smiles, when he is angry, he screams. But he has no ideas about anything. He neither praises a smile nor condemns screaming. He neither feels shy about crying and weeping nor feels very good that he has been a good boy today. He knows nothing about all this nonsense. He knows nothing good, nothing bad; he makes no distinctions. He lives utterly one with reality. And whatsoever happens, happens; there is no rejection.

But by and by he will become knowledgeable, he will start learning things. The day he starts learning things he is trapped by the snake. Now he has started eating the fruit of the tree, sooner or later the paradise will disappear. Beaches will be there but no more beautiful. Butterflies will be still floating in the wind but for the child they don't exist anymore. What exists is arithmetic, geography, history. Flowers still bloom but they don't bloom for the child any more, he is too much into his homework. Once in a while still he hears the bird singing out the window, but only once in a while. And the whole society tries to drag him away from that.

The teacher will say "Look here at the blackboard! What are you doing there? Concentrate on me!" The child *was* concentrating. The birdcall was so beautiful outside the window, the child was in concentration, utter concentration. This teacher has distracted him; now he has to look at the blackboard. And there is nothing to look at it, just a blackboard. But by and by we will manage to distract the child.

The expulsion is not by God but by the society. The society drags each Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. And once you have become too much of the head, it is very difficult to enter back into that purity, that pure land paradise. Zen masters say, just like Jesus said: Unless you are like small children you will not enter into the kingdom of God.

A Christian missionary went to a Zen master and started reading the Sermon on the Mount. The Zen master listened and he said, "Whosoever has said it must be very close to Buddhahood." The Zen master had never heard about Christ, he had never read the Bible, but he said, "Whosoever has said it must be very close to Buddhahood." And when the missionary read, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God," the Zen master said, "Now stop. Now there is no more to read. Now there is no need to read any more. Whosoever has said it is a Buddha."

"Poor in spirit" means empty of mind. "Poor in spirit" means empty – all thoughts have disappeared. Then you are again back in paradise.

The Pure Land paradise is not far.

It is just there! Beating in your heart. Your each breath goes and touches the pure land paradise, each moment. You live from it. Every night when you fall asleep and dreams disappear, you are in it again. That's why in the morning you feel so fresh, again young, rejuvenated. You have been on a short trip to the pure land paradise.

*When in reverence this truth is heard even once,
He who praises it and gladly embraces it
Has merit without end.*

Hakuin says, *When in reverence this truth is heard even once*. The question is not of hearing the truth many times. If you hear even once, if you have understood it even for a single moment in deep trust and reverence, it is yours forever. Doubt distracts. Doubt does not allow you to understand, doubt does not allow you to see it. Listen in reverence, in love. Be en rapport.

That is the way to be with a master – be en rapport, be bridged. But small things, very small things, distract you. Very small things which mean nothing – but you are distracted by those small things, and doubt arises. And doubt becomes a cloud and you become blind.

. . . in reverence this truth is heard even once,

It is enough.

How much more he who turns within . . .

Even hearing the truth is a deliverance. *How much more he who turns within* – who not only hears it but looks within and sees it . . .

*And confirms directly his own nature,
That his own nature is no-nature . . .*

When you look deep into yourself you will not find anything there obstructing your vision. It is pure space. Your nature is no-nature. It is emptiness, *sunyata*.

Such has transcended vain words.

Only when you look into your nature . . . and find nothing. You only find an empty infinity there. Words will not have any meaning any more, you have transcended words. You have looked into your nature and now you know no word can explain it, no word can define it, no word can even indicate it. All scriptures become meaningless.

The gate opens, and cause and effect are one . . .

When you look inside yourself and there is no content, and the no-nature has been felt and you have seen your inner sky . . .

The gate opens, and cause and effect are one

And the source and the goal are one. Now you are not to go anywhere, you have come to your source. And to be at the source is to be at the goal. To be at the beginning is to be at the end.

Straight runs the way – not two, not three.

Taking as form the form of no-form,

Going or returning, he is ever at home.

And once you have seen the form of no-form, once you have seen the thought of no-thought, once you have seen the nature of no-nature, you are a totally new being. What happens . . .

Going or returning, he is ever at home.

Then wherever you are, you are at home. In the prison you are at home, in the temple you are at home, in the shop you are at home, in the Himalayas you are at home, in the marketplace you are at home. You are simply at home. Once you have seen your center, your essential being, your Buddhahood has been glimpsed. Then wherever you are you are at home because all is your home. Then there is no need to leave the world.

Zen people are not against the world. They say: To be against the world is still to be attached to the world. To go to the opposite extreme is not transformation. When you no more choose between two extremes, you settle in the middle. And the middle is the way.

Straight runs the way – not two, not three.

It is a simple way – one.

Going or returning, he is ever at home.

Taking as thought the thought of no-thought,

Singing and dancing, all is the voice of truth.

Then whatsoever you do, you express truth. Whatsoever. Eating, you express truth. Walking, you express truth. When a Zen master hits a disciple, he is expressing truth. When Kabir sings, he is expressing truth, when Meera dances, she is expressing truth. Jesus expresses truth dying on the cross, and Krishna expresses truth singing on his flute. Whatsoever you do, there is no way to avoid expressing truth. You *are* truth. The lie has been dropped.

*Singing and dancing, all is the voice of truth.
Wide is the heaven of boundless Samadhi,
Radiant the full moon of the fourfold wisdom.
What remains to be sought?
Nirvana is clear before him,
This very place the Lotus Paradise,
This very body the Buddha.*

Remember the word *This*.

This very place the Lotus Paradise . . .

And once you have known your source, wherever you are, you are in the lotus paradise.

*This very place the Lotus Paradise,
This very body the Buddha.*

And whatsoever you do – *whatsoever*, without any conditions – is the expression of truth.

I have heard a beautiful story about Roshi Taji, a great Zen master.

As Roshi Taji approached death, his senior disciples assembled at his bedside. One of them, remembering the roshi was fond of a certain kind of cake, had spent half a day searching the pastry shops of Tokyo for this confection which he now presented to Roshi Taji. With a wan smile the dying roshi accepted a piece of the cake and slowly began munching it. As the roshi grew weaker, his disciples leaned close and inquired whether he had any final words for them.

“Yes,” the roshi replied.

The disciples leaned forward eagerly. “Please tell us!”

“My, but this cake is delicious!” And with that he died.

Meditate over it. What a man! What manner of man! A Buddha. Each act and each word and each gesture becomes the expression of truth. In that moment only *that* was true, the taste of the cake. In that moment anything else would have been false, untrue. If he had talked about God, that would not have been true. If he had talked about nirvana, that would not have been true. In that moment the taste on his tongue was still alive. In that moment that was his authentic gesture.

He said “My, but this cake is delicious.” *This* cake.

*This very place the Lotus Paradise,
This very body the Buddha.*

Zen people talk about four wisdoms.

*Wide is the heaven of boundless Samadhi,
Radiant the full moon of the fourfold wisdom.*

The first wisdom is called “the wisdom of the mirror”. When there is no thought you become a mirror. This is the first wisdom, becoming like a mirror. The second wisdom is called “the wisdom of sameness”. When you become a mirror without any thought, all distinctions in the world disappear. Then it is all one. Then the rose and the bird and the earth and the sky and the sea and the sand and the sun are all one, it is one energy.

When you are a mirror – the first wisdom – the second wisdom arises out of the first: the wisdom of sameness. Duality disappears. And out of the second arises the third wisdom, “the wisdom of spiritual vision”. When you have seen that all over the world it is one energy, then only can you see inside yourself that you are also that energy. Then the seer and the seen become one, the observer and the observed become one. That is the third wisdom, the wisdom of spiritual vision. Buddha has a special word for it, he calls it *dhamma chakkhu* – the eye for truth, or the truth-eye. The spiritual vision opens – what yogis call “the third eye”. What Christ also calls “the one eye”, when two eyes become one. *Dhamma chakkhu* opens, the wisdom of spiritual vision is attained.

And out of the third arises the fourth, “the wisdom of perfection”. When you have seen that all is the same, and when you have looked within and seen that without and within are also the same, you have become perfect. In fact, to say that you have become perfect is not true, you have always been perfect. Now it is revealed to you – it is only a revelation. In that moment one knows . . .

*This very place the Lotus Paradise,
This very body the Buddha.*

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10 The Whiskers of the Pebble

The Whiskers of the Pebble

What is religion? It is not the howling of the wolves at the moon, but that's what it has become to the masses. If the masses are right, then animals have a great religious sense – wolves howling, dogs barking at the moon, at the distant, at the faraway.

Paul Tillich has defined religion as the ultimate concern. It is exactly the opposite: it is the immediate concern, not the ultimate concern. In fact, the immediate is the only ultimate there is.

Religion is not a desire for the distant, a curiosity for the faraway. It is an inquiry into one's own being.

That's why Buddhism is not concerned with God at all. It is concerned with you, with your reality. It's whole process is like peeling an onion. Buddhism continues to peel your reality, layer upon layer; it goes on destroying the illusions, the dreams. And just as happens when you peel an onion, ultimately, only nothing is left in your hands. That nothing is the source of all. Out of that nothing all arises and slowly, slowly disappears back into that nothing.

Now physicists are coming very close to it. They call that nothing "the black hole" – matter disappears into black holes, is utterly annihilated, and becomes nothing. Now, after black holes, there is talk in scientific circles about white holes too. Out of white holes, matter arises. It seems black holes and white holes are just two aspects of the same reality – like a door. On one side of the door is written "Entrance"; the other side of the same door is called the "Exit".

When things appear out of the womb of nothingness, the door is called the white hole – white because it gives birth, white because life comes out of it. By calling it white we are appreciating it, we are valuing it. One day every thing disappears back into the same door – then we call it black. We have always called death black. Man has always been afraid of the black, of the dark, of death.

But it is the same reality! From one side it is "black hole", from the other side it is "white hole". Buddha calls it *sunyata*.

There is every possibility that modern physics will come every day more and more close to Buddha. It has to come. It has to recognize Buddha's insight into reality because nobody else ever dared to call nothingness the source of all. How did Buddha stumble upon the fact? He was not a physicist. He was not working into the deepest reality of matter, but he was working into the deepest reality of his own psychology.

You have to be reminded of that also: Buddhism is not a metaphysics. Metaphysics is always a concern with the ultimate. "Meta" means beyond – beyond physics, beyond that which can be seen; beyond the earth, beyond the visible, the tangible, the sensuous. Metaphysics always means the faraway, the distant reality, the God.

Buddhism is basically purely a psychology; it is not concerned with metaphysics. Its concern is with the reality of the mind, how the mind functions, what constitutes the mind. And it goes on penetrating deeper into the layers of the mind, and finally comes to the realization that deepest, at the bottom core, there is nothingness.

Buddha was not believed by people because who can believe in nothingness? Who wants nothingness in the first place? Modern physics is also puzzling people, driving them crazy. But reality is as it is; whether you like it or not is not the question. Your liking or not liking is not going to change it. Your liking and disliking can only keep you in illusions. Reality has to be seen as it is. And to be capable of seeing that is all that is needed to become religious: the courage to see reality in its naked truth, in its nakedness, undisguised, uncovered, undressed.

And once you have seen reality as it is, once you have had a glimpse of the real man, a great transformation happens of its own accord – that very insight transforms you, transmutes you. You are never again the same because all illusions disappear. Seeing the reality, how can you continue to delude yourself? How can you continue to dream? How can you continue in your prejudices? How can you go on keeping false opinions? How can you carry on with doctrines and philosophies and scriptures? Seeing the reality, all simply disappears, only reality is there. And to be with that reality is liberation.

Jesus is right when he says: Truth liberates. Truth is liberation. There is every possibility that Jesus learnt the secrets of the truth through Buddhist masters. There is every possibility that before he started his work in Israel, he was in India, in Nalanda, with Buddhist masters. Nalanda was one of the most ancient Buddhafields, a great university of monks. Never before and never after has something like that ever existed again.

I am hoping to create something like that again, on a wider scale, a bigger scale. Nalanda was a great experiment, an experiment with truth, an experiment to see truth as it is. Ten thousand monks continuously meditated, worked, penetrated, with no prejudices, with no a priori ideas. They were not bent upon proving anything; they were *real* seekers.

The unreal seeker is one who is bent upon proving something from the very beginning. The unreal seeker is one who says, “I am in search of God” – one thing he has accepted, that God exists. Without knowing? If he knows, then why search? If you don’t know, then how can you search for God? Who knows? – God may exist, may not exist. The search is already based on an a priori belief.

In Nalanda, those ten thousand monks were not searching for God, they were not searching for any heaven. They were not searching in reality for something a priori. They were simply searching into their own being with no idea of what they were searching for. Their search was pure. They were just *looking* into reality . . . to see what is there. And because they were not preoccupied by any idea, they stumbled into nothingness, they came to know nothingness.

If you are preoccupied by some idea, then you are bound to create the illusion of your own idea in that nothingness, and that nothingness is capable of supporting any idea. Any dream that you are carrying in you can be projected on the screen of nothingness. If you are searching for Krishna, *you will* find him, and it will be just a projection. If you are searching for a Jewish God, you will find. If you are searching for a Hindu God, you will find. Whatsoever you search for you *will* find, but it will not be truth and it will not liberate you. It will be your imagination.

Remember, this is one of the most important things in life, that if you start a search with a fixed idea, a fixed attitude, you are bound to find it – and then there is a vicious circle. When you find it, you think, “Of course, it *is* because I have found it.” Then it enhances your belief even more, then you start finding it more, and so on and so forth . . . it becomes a vicious circle. The more you believe, the more you find it; the more you find it, the more you believe. And you go on pouring reality into a dream, and one can go on wasting lives together.

Search without any idea – that is Buddha’s message. Look, just clean your eyes and look. Don’t look for something in particular, just look, a pure look into things, into the suchness of things. The eyes have to be clean and pure, otherwise they can project; even a small particle of dust and it will show on the screen of nothingness. Just a little liking, disliking, a little choice, and you will create reality.

Buddha’s approach is such an absolute experiment – simple, once you understand, not complicated. But if you don’t understand, you can go on deluding yourself. [...]

The Buddhist approach has been to look into reality without any idea so that reality can reveal itself. Allow reality to reveal itself; don’t enforce anything upon it. All other religions have been enforcing something or other – hence they go on missing. Their work becomes metaphysical; in fact, their work becomes a kind of autohypnosis. Buddhism dehypnotizes man. Buddha’s work is dehypnosis: how to drop all kinds of hypnosis, all kinds of suggestions given by the society, by the people. And when you are utterly silent, with no conditioning, truth becomes known. That truth liberates.

*If it rain, let it rain;
If it rain not, let it not rain;
But even should it not rain,
You must travel
With wet sleeves.*

Now the sutras:

One very precious word in Buddha’s approach toward life is *samata*. *Samata* means equanimity, equilibrium, balance, choicelessness. Don’t move to the extremes, avoid extremes.

Pain and pleasure are two extremes – don’t choose. Don’t avoid either and don’t cling to either. Just remain in the middle of it, watching, looking at it, unattached. Pain comes, let it come – you just be a watchful consciousness. You just be awareness. There is a headache, you just watch it. Don’t say no to it, don’t start fighting with it; don’t deny it, don’t avoid it. Don’t try to engage yourself somewhere else so you are distracted from it. Let it be there: you simply watch. And in watching it, a great revolution happens.

If you can watch it without like and dislike, suddenly it is there but you are out of it, you are no more in it. You are standing there unbridged to it. Choicelessness unbridges you from all kinds of moods, from all kinds of minds. That is *samata*.

Pleasure comes, let it come. Don’t cling to it. Don’t say, “I would like to have you for ever and ever.” If you cling to pleasure, then you will avoid pain. And don’t go to the other extreme: don’t

start denying pleasure, don't start escaping from pleasure, because that is the same. If you start escaping from pleasure, you will start clinging to pain. That's what ascetics do.

The indulgent person clings to pleasure, avoids pain. And the ascetic person avoids pleasure and clings to pain. Both approaches are wrong; in both you lose balance. Buddhism is neither indulgence nor asceticism. It does not teach *anything* – it simply says: Watch!

And that's what Jesus goes on repeating again and again: Watch! Be watchful! Keep alert, keep awake.

You try it! This is an experiment in psychology – nothing to do with God. And you will be surprised and immensely benefitted. The day you can see that you are neither pain nor pleasure is a great day, is the greatest day – because from then onward things will be different.

If it rain, let it rain . . .

If there is pain, let it be so.

If it rain not, let it not rain . . .

If there is no pain, let it be so. If there is pleasure, let it be so. But you don't get identified with anything.

*But even should it not rain,
You must travel
With wet sleeves.*

But remember one thing: even if your life has been of convenience, comfort, pleasure, and there have not been great pains, great miseries, then too . . . *you must travel with wet sleeves*. Why? Because still you will become old, still you will have to die one day. So one can live a very pleasant life, but old age is coming, and death is coming. Death cannot be avoided; there is no way to escape from it; it is inevitable. So whether you lived a painful life or you lived a pleasant life will not make much difference when death comes. And death is coming.

Death has come the day you were born. In the very idea of birth, death has entered in you.

I have heard a very beautiful anecdote about one of the most famous Zen masters, Bankei:

Bankei had a terrible fear of death from his earliest age. When he was a small child, his mother created the fear of death in him. He says that at the age of three, his mother, as a punishment, constantly frightened him with death. Not only that: sometimes, because Bankei had committed something which was not right, she pretended that she had become dead. She would lie down with closed eyes and stop her breath, and the small child would cry and weep around her and would call her, "Come back! And I will never do such a thing again." Only then would she start breathing.

So from the very childhood the fear of death had entered into him. He was constantly afraid. Maybe that's why when he was young he became interested in Zen – because Zen people say there is no death. He entered a monastery and way overdid the austerities. Whatsoever was said,

he overdid it, out of the fear of death. He wanted to see that there is no death; he wanted to overcome death, he wanted to conquer it. He practiced *zazen* sitting for such long periods at a time that the places where he sat became covered with sores and boils. He became so ill, he nearly lost his life! Then he withdrew for a few months to recuperate.

It was during a feverish period of his convalescence that he had his first *satori*. And this consisted of an instantaneous realization that he could not die for the simple reason that he had *never been born*! The crux of the matter was that he had never been born.

Now, Bankei knew as well as you know and everybody knows that his body emerged from his mother's womb, that his body had been born. Yet he realized that *he* had never been born.

With the idea of birth, the idea of death arises. They go together, aspects of the same coin. Unless you get rid of the idea of birth, you will not get rid of the idea of death.

That's why Zen people insist: Go deep into your being and see your face that you had before birth. If you can have one small glimpse of that original face which you had before birth, then death has disappeared. Attached to birth, you are going to die – don't be attached to birth, then you need not be afraid of death. Watch birth and you will be able to watch death too.

And the greatest experience of life is to die watching death. But you have to prepare for it. If you cannot even watch a headache, if you cannot even watch a small pain in the stomach, if you cannot watch these small things, you will not be able to watch death.

Buddhism says: Watch! Let every moment of life become an experience in watchfulness – pain, pleasure, everything; love, hate, everything; good, bad, everything. Go on watching. Let one taste spread on your being: the taste of watchfulness, and *samata* arises out of it. One becomes utterly balanced in the middle of the polarities.

In that balancing . . . just like a tightrope walker walks balanced on the tightrope. He remains in the middle, does not lean to the left or to the right; or whenever he finds himself leaning to one side, he immediately balances himself. Between pain and pleasure, day and night, birth and death, go on balancing . . . and then that very balancing will give you an insight of the reality you are.

That reality has never been born. *This* body has been born; this body is going to die . . .

Another Zen master, Bokoju, was asked by a man . . . Bokoju was ill, old, just on the verge of death, and this stranger came and asked, "Master, where will you be when you are dead?"

And Bokoju opened his eyes and said, "I will be in the grave! All my four limbs raised toward the sky."

A strange answer. And you will miss the point if I don't remind you. When Bokoju is saying, "I will be lying in my grave with all my four limbs raised to the sky," what is he actually saying? He is saying, "The body will be in the grave and I will be watching it lying in the grave with four limbs raised to the sky. I will still be watching; I will still be a watcher. I have always been a watcher. The body was born and I was watching. The body became young and I was watching.

And the body became old and I was watching. And one day it will die and I will be watching. I am my watchfulness.”

This Buddha calls *samasati* – right awareness.

*If it rain, let it rain;
If it rain not, let it not rain;
But even should it not rain,
You must travel
With wet sleeves.*

So don't be deceived by your comfortable, convenient life – because death is coming to disrupt all, to destroy all. Prepare yourself!

And the only preparation is balance.

*Look at the cherry blossoms!
Their color and scent fall with them,
Are gone forever,
Yet mindless
The spring comes again.*

Life repeats itself mindlessly – unless you become mindful, it will go on repeating like a wheel. That's why Buddhists call it the wheel of life and death – the wheel of time. It moves like a wheel: birth is followed by death, death is followed by birth; love is followed by hate, hate is followed by love; success is followed by failure, failure is followed by success. Just see!

If you can watch just for a few days, you will see a pattern emerging, a wheel pattern. One day, a fine morning, you are feeling so good and so happy, and another day you are so dull, so dead that you start thinking of committing suicide. And just the other day you were so full of life, so blissful that you were feeling thankful to God that you were in a mood of deep gratefulness, and today there is great complaint and you don't see the point why one should go on living. And tomorrow again that blissful moment will come. The cherry blossoms will come again, and there will be fragrance and the singing of birds and the sunlit days . . . and again the cloudy days, and the dark nights of the soul. And it goes on and on, but you don't see the pattern.

Once you see the pattern, you can get out of it. Once you see the pattern – that it goes on and on mindlessly, it does not need you . . . People ordinarily think that when they are angry, somebody has created the anger in them. That is utterly wrong! Even if you were alone and there was nobody, you would have been angry in that moment. That has something to do with your inner wheel, with your inner periodicity, inner rhythm – it has nothing to do with somebody outside.

The outside is just an excuse because it is so ugly to think, “I am creating my anger myself.” The excuse feels good, it relieves you of a burden. Then someday, meeting a friend, you feel so happy and you think, “The coming of the friend has made me so happy” – that too is false. Even if you were sitting alone in that moment, you would have been happy.

That is one of the great realizations that comes to people who move into isolation for a few days. That's a good meditation, to move into isolation for a few weeks and just to be alone for a few

weeks. You will be surprised! Out of nowhere . . . one day you are feeling good – nobody is there and nobody has done anything to you. And one day you are feeling so bad. One day you are dancing, another day you are crying. And then you can see that you create your own states.

Once this is seen you stop throwing responsibilities on others and life becomes a different life. Otherwise, we are all throwing our responsibilities on others. We are making others feel guilty: “It is because of you that I am angry or sad.” And naturally the others have to accept it because they are doing the same thing themselves. And they have to accept it for another reason too, because sometimes they are praised because they make people happy too.

Once you know that you can’t make anybody happy, you have never made anybody happy and nobody can make you happy and nobody can make you unhappy – once this insight has become settled in your heart, you will never be throwing responsibility on anybody. All struggle, futile struggle, disappears. Then you know that you have an inner wheel that goes on moving. Sometimes one spoke is on top, sometimes another spoke comes on top.

And it moves *mindlessly*, remember. So the only way to get out of it is mindfulness. It is a robot; it is a mechanical thing; it is an automaton. So *all* meditations are nothing but de-automatization. All the processes that have become automatic in you have to be de-automatized. Anything that de-automatizes helps immensely.

For example, you walk at a certain pace. Buddha told his disciples: Walk slowly; change the pace. Just walk very slowly. And suddenly you will be surprised: if you walk slowly, you become aware of your walking. In fact, you can walk slowly only if you remain aware. The moment you lose awareness, you will gather speed; then you will become again an automaton.

Buddha’s meditations are to make you aware about life’s activities. Eating, eat with full awareness; chew with awareness of what you are doing. Walking, each single step has to be taken with full awareness of what is happening, what you are doing. Not verbally! but there has to be a consciousness behind: “I am raising my left foot” – not that you have to repeat it, “I am raising my left foot.” That is stupid. There is no need to repeat it. But you can watch it: “I am chewing. I am standing under the shower. The water is cool. It is too hot and the body is perspiring.” Not that you have to repeat these words: you have just to be watchful. Then slowly, slowly a new integration happens in you, a mindfulness arises. That mindfulness can take you out of the wheel – nothing else.

*Look at the cherry blossoms!
Their color and scent fall with them,
Are gone forever,
Yet mindless
The spring comes again.*

How many times has it happened to you? You had fallen in love with a woman or with a man, and then there was great frustration and great misery, and you suffered and there was anguish, and you thought you were finished for ever – never again! And after just a few days, again the spring comes, again you are feeling love blossoming in you, again you are falling into the same rut and routine. Again you are saying the same stupid things to another woman. Again you are whispering those sweet nothings, and you are hearing those sweet nothings. And again you are in a dream world, and you have completely forgotten the old experience.

And this will happen again and again! The spring goes on coming. Don't think you are very much different from a cherry tree. You are angry – and this is so about all your moods – you are angry and you feel the fire of it and the poison of it and the destructiveness of it, and you suffer. And you decide, “No more again. It is ugly and it is foolish and it is a sheer wastage of energy. So why should I be in anger again?” And you decide, and you decide very strongly, “This is the last time. Now I am going to avoid it.” And one day, mindlessly, it comes again. Just a small thing triggers it, and you are again on fire, again red, again doing destructive things. And later on you will remember. You will become mindful but always later on. Then it is of no sense, no meaning. It is impotent.

Mindfulness means in the moment. Everybody is wise when the moment has passed, remember this. Really wise are those who are wise in the moment. When something is happening – you are sad – this is the moment to become so watchful that you are unbridged from sadness, that you are disconnected from sadness; that sadness is there, you are here, and there is no connection. You are no more identified. You are simply seeing it.

You are not sad; you are the seer. Then you are wise.

When sadness has gone, then you think, “It was not good to become sad. It was so trivial, so foolish; there was no meaning in it. Next time I am not going to become so sad. There is no point.” But you will become sad again because awareness can be practiced only in the moment. This repentance is not on the right track.

Everybody repents, and things go on happening the same way they have always been happening. There is such a vicious circle that sometimes you think you are doing the opposite and you are not really doing the opposite but the same thing.

An angry person can decide, “I will never be angry,” and can go on repressing anger. Then by repressing anger, one day he has so much anger that it is uncontrollable, it explodes. If he had not repressed, he may not have been so angry. Now he is more angry because he tried not to be angry. [...]

This happens. You can go on thinking that you are doing something else, something contrary. But if you are mindless, something *else* is going to happen.

Your life is not lived by you – it is lived by a very mindless process. You are not really living it: you are being lived by a mindless existence. You are born, you are young, you become old; you have emotions, ideas – and they all are happening in you just like the cherry blossoms. And you go on repeating the same, year in, year out; you go on moving in a wheel. To see it, to see it totally, to see it as it is, is Buddha's way of becoming aware.

The vicious circle of birth and death has to be broken, but it can be broken only if you start looking into things which happen to you in a detached way, in a non-passionate way. What scientists call “a detached observation” is really a Buddhist discovery.

Scientists have been trying this only for three hundred years – in their labs they simply watch, without any prejudice, without for or against. They simply note down the facticity of it. But this is an ancient Buddhist meditation: the same way one has to watch one's own mind, one's own mind's functionings, structures, and slowly, slowly you start becoming aware of a wheel that

goes on moving inside you. And you are not moving the wheel; it moves on its own. The spell can be broken only if in this mechanical process of life something of awareness penetrates.

De-automatize yourself.

Buddhism

*Is the shaved part of the saucepan,
The whiskers of the pebble,
The sound that accompanies
The bamboos in the picture.*

Still Buddhism is not an “ism”, it is not a philosophy. It does not give you any idea of what reality is – because once the idea is given to you of what reality is like, you immediately jump upon it, you start clinging to it. And you will make reality like your idea, you will create it.

Buddhism simply takes all ideas away from you, it is negative. It does not give you any positive notion. It does not say what truth is: it only says what truth is not. It eliminates, it goes on eliminating. It is very severe. It does not allow you any nook and corner to cling to. It takes all, everything that you possess, away from you. Only then one thing is left, which cannot be taken away – that is your awareness. Then uncontaminated awareness is left; you become a mirror. In that mirror the reality is reflected. So Ikkyu says:

Buddhism

*Is the shaved part of the saucepan,
The whiskers of the pebble,
The sound that accompanies
The bamboos in the picture.*

So Buddhism as an “ism” is as false as . . . *the sound that accompanies the bamboos in the picture*, or as false as . . . *the whiskers of the pebble*. As an “ism” Buddhism is false.

Then what is it? If it is not a philosophy, then what is it?

It is just an approach toward reality, an opening. It is not a belief system. It is utterly devoid of beliefs; it negates beliefs. It is not a positive philosophy. And that is the beauty of it – because all positive philosophies are nothing but creations of the mind.

And people are very much interested in positive philosophies. They appeal – because they enhance your mind, they nourish your mind. They give you great ideas how to live your life, how to achieve more, how to become more, how to be enlightened, and all that.

Buddhism simply says: Just drop your ideas and you are enlightened. Just drop your mind and you are divine.

But Buddha was very, very careful even about saying that, because people are hankering so much to cling to something. He was very careful about making even a single statement positively. If you ask him, “What will happen when all has disappeared and one has become a mirror?” He says, “There will be no pain”; but he never says, “There will be bliss.” Never for a single moment, for a single time does he become positive.

People used to insist to him, because they had heard it down the ages that when the ultimate happens you will be blissful. And Buddha says, “You will not be miserable” – that’s all. “Why don’t you say,” they would ask him, “that we will be happy and blissful?” And he would say, “If I say that you will be happy, then it is never going to happen – then you will search for happiness! And you will fall into new dreams and new imaginations, heaven and paradise and so on and so forth. And you will create your own ideas of what happiness is. And *all* that you know is misery. So I say only: There will be no misery – and let me keep absolutely quiet about what there *will* be. You just drop misery and see what is.”

It didn’t appeal to ordinary, mediocre minds. The mediocre mind wants something to possess; he wants some keys which can open new doors to new treasures. Buddha simply takes all the keys out of your hands. He leaves you utterly alone . . . but in that utter aloneness, something immense happens, something infinite happens, something unimaginable happens, something inexpressible happens. And the first condition for it to happen is that you should not think about it, that no idea should be given to you about it – otherwise it will never happen because the idea will prevent it.

Buddhism

*Is the shaved part of the saucepan,
The whiskers of the pebble,
The sound that accompanies
The bamboos in the picture.*

Then what is Buddhism? Just a gesture, just a painted picture. There is no sound in it, no wind is blowing. Just Indian ink is there and nothing else – no sound, no wind. You just imagine sound and wind, you imagine movement – nothing is moving there. So people have created Buddhism out of their own imagination.

The religion that exists in the name of Buddhism is just a painted religion. Buddha never delivered this thing to the world. It is a creation of the people. Because people cannot live with nothingness, they created something.

What I say to you, you may not hear it, it may be too much for you. You may hear something which I have not said at all, because that you can manage. You may hear a few fragments. You may delete something, you may add something; you may create something out of what I am saying; you may create something out of it which is absolutely yours.

That’s how Buddhism has happened. That’s how Christianity has happened. That’s how all the religions have happened. The original expression has been lost in interpretations. What exists in the name of Buddhism is not what Buddha has said. What Buddha has said can be experienced only if you become a buddha – there is no other way.

What I am saying to you can be experienced only in the *same* state of mind, in the same state of awareness. It is impossible to convey it. Once it leaves one state of consciousness and enters into another kind of state, it is transformed, it is translated, it becomes polluted, it is never the same again.

If you can also become silent, quiet, unprejudiced, with no opinion in your mind, then things can happen. But people carry opinions in their minds – such opinions! amazing opinions!

Just the other day I was reading an article by Ashoka. Now he feels doubtful about my enlightenment because sometimes I look at the clock. “How can an enlightened person look at a clock? Can’t he know what time it is? And if he can’t even know what time it is, what else can he know?” And this type of thing continues. It is not only in Ashoka’s mind – in many people’s minds, because minds are minds.

But you have not looked at it without prejudice. You have some idea of how an enlightened person should be. You have some idea – in that idea it is implied that he will know without looking at the clock what time it is. The reality is just the contrary.

You may be able to know what time it is without looking at the clock but an enlightened person cannot – because for him time has disappeared. For him there is no more time! For him there is the only eternal now. Nothing moves. All has stopped. His clock has stopped! Now there exists no calendar in him anymore. He *has* to look to know what time it is. You can feel the time because your clock, inside clock, is working; you can have a certain inference about what time it must be. And within minutes you will be right; at the most, within ten minutes you will be right. Your mind can calculate. You know what time is; you know how much it feels when one hour passes by.

But to the enlightened consciousness, nothing passes. All simply is . . . and always is. There is no way to infer what time it is. Hence, I have to look at the clock again and again.

Sometimes Vivek becomes very much puzzled, because just five minutes before I had looked at the clock and I look again. And she says, “Just five minutes before you had looked, and you are looking again.” And I can understand her puzzlement: anybody can infer, any child can infer, that only five minutes have passed. But nothing is passing for me. Even for the day I have to inquire what day today is, what date today is.

But you have your mind, your idea, and naturally you can look only from your mind and from your idea. You will go on missing that way. You have to drop your prejudices; you have to drop *all* ideas. Why bother how an enlightened person should be when an enlightened person is with *you*? Why not *look* directly? Rather than having an idea, why not look directly?

You have a certain idea how a rose should be. Maybe you have never seen a black rose, and you think that a rose has to be only red. And there is a black rose, and you will say, “This is not a rose because a rose has to be red, has to be rosy. This is not a rose! It is not rosy – it is black. How can it be a rose?”

Drop the idea. Come close. Smell the flower. Sit silently with the flower. Let its fragrance give you the message. Let it have a communion with you! and you will know. And that will be far better, far truer. Otherwise, this goes on happening.

Buddha was there, and what he was saying people were not listening to – they were listening to something else. They were translating. Please, don’t translate me; otherwise, sooner or later I will be just . . . *the whiskers of the pebble, the sound that accompanies the bamboos in the picture.*

Don't create a picture! While the reality is here, why can't you have a contact with the reality? Why can't you bridge yourself? What is preventing you? A priori prejudices, opinions that you have gathered.

A Christian comes, and he looks at me and he wants to find Christ in me. And if he can't find Christ he says, "This man can't be enlightened!" A Buddhist comes, he looks for Buddha in me. A Jain comes, he looks for Mahavir in me. And if he can't find . . . and he *cannot* find, because I am myself.

This rose flower is black, that rose flower is yellow, another rose flower is red – there are thousands of rose flowers. Don't be too much concerned with the color, with the shape, with the form. But the roseness is the same, that flowering is the same.

There were people in Buddha's time who followed Jain philosophy. They would look at him, and because he was not naked, they would think he was not yet enlightened – because Jains have the idea that when a person becomes enlightened he drops all clothes. It is a beautiful idea, but clothes don't mean clothes literally. He drops all clothes, he becomes nude, utterly nude, but not literally. But who is going to prevent people from being literal? And Buddha was not nude, so he was not an enlightened person.

Buddha was one kind of rose flower. Jesus was another kind. Bodhidharma, Buddha's disciple, was a third kind. Buddha was silent and Bodhidharma was laughing. But I say to you: the taste of Bodhidharma's laughter was the same as Buddha's silence. But if you have seen Buddha sitting silently under his Bodhi Tree, you will not believe in Bodhidharma because he will be rolling on the floor. Such mad laughter! And you will say, "What is happening? This man must be mad – how can he be enlightened? An enlightened person always sits under a Bodhi Tree and never looks at a clock!"

Your ideas continuously interfere. You can miss this opportunity. It all depends on you. You can use this opportunity. You can be transformed by this opportunity . . .

*The puppet-player hangs them
Round his neck, not his heart;
He can take out a devil,
He can take out a buddha.*

Buddha has said that mind is a magician. All that it creates is magic work. You must have seen our sannyasin magician, Avinash. He can produce things out of empty boxes . . . Mind is a conjurer. Once you have a certain idea in the mind, it becomes a seed and the seed starts growing, and soon it will become a reality for you. [...]

Buddha says mind is a conjurer; it creates illnesses, it can create cures. Mind creates *all* kinds of illusions – beauty and ugliness, success and failure, richness and poverty . . . mind goes on creating. And once the idea settles in you, your whole life energy functions to create it, to make it a reality. Every thought becomes a thing, and every thing in the beginning was only a thought and nothing else. You live in a kind of hypnosis.

Buddha says this hypnosis has to be broken, and no other religion has tried so hard to break this hypnosis. Man has to be dehypnotized. Man has to be made aware that *all is mind*: pain and pleasure both, birth and death both. All is mind.

And once this has been seen absolutely, the conjurer disappears . . . and then what is left is truth. And that truth liberates.

*The puppet-player hangs them
Round his neck, not his heart;
He can take out a devil,
He can take out a buddha.*

A tremendously important statement. You can become a devil; you can become a buddha – it is all mind game. You can become a sinner, you can become a saint; you can become a criminal, an Adolf Hitler, or you can become a great mahatma – and it is all mind game. In both the ways it is mind playing.

Then who is a real buddha? If the devil is a mind thing and the buddha is a mind thing, then who is a real buddha? The real buddha is one who is no more the mind, who has come to see all the games of the mind and has retired from all the games of the mind. That is renunciation, that is sannyas: retiring from all games of the mind, playing no more new games.

Zen people say Buddha was never born, never lived, never uttered a word, never died, never attained enlightenment – and they are right. And obviously wrong too, because Buddha was born, he lived for eighty-two years, he is a historical person, he is not a myth only. He has left immense marks on the sense of time. He was born, he became enlightened, and he uttered millions of words. For forty-two years continuously he was teaching. These are obvious facts.

When Zen people say: Buddha was never born, never lived, never uttered a word, never died, never attained enlightenment, they are not denying these historical facts. Remember it. They are uttering something of more value. They are saying: Yes, he said many things but he never uttered a word – his *real* reality remained silent. Yes, he was born to a certain mother, to a certain father, in a certain place, but that birth was only a mind phenomenon, a dream that he lived through. But in his reality, he was never born.

And, in reality, you are not born either. And in reality, he never died, because how can you die if you are not born? Who can die? Who is there to die? And, of course, when you are not born and you cannot die, how can you become enlightened? Who is there to become enlightened? There is no one; there is nobody to become a buddha.

This is Buddhahood, this is enlightenment: seeing the fact that there is nobody, that the house is utterly empty, that there has lived nobody ever, that we were only playing games of the mind, that we were creating shadows, that we were fast asleep and dreaming things . . . then all disappears.

When in the morning you wake up, it is not only that the bad dreams were wrong or false – the good dreams were also false. Whether you dreamt in the night that you were a thief or you dreamt that you were a yogi doesn't matter in the morning – both are false. Whether you dreamt that you were Adolf Hitler or you dreamt that you were a Gautam Buddha doesn't matter in the

morning – when you are awake, all is finished. Gone is Adolf Hitler, gone is Gautam Buddha – all is gone. And what is left has always been there as the substratum. That eternal, that formless, that attributeless, that *nirguna*, that conditionless, is your reality. On that conditionless all kinds of conditions have been imposed; on that unconditional a thousand and one conditions have been put together. Those conditionings together are called the mind. And the only way to get out of the mind is to *see* the mind, to be aware of it.

Slowly, slowly, the more you become aware of the dream, the dream starts dissipating, the dream starts receding back. When awareness is perfect, dream has disappeared. Then you are neither a buddha nor a man nor a woman, neither this nor that. Who are you then? – nothing can be said about it. Only one thing can be said about it: A glimpse of the real man, and you are in love, and you are love.

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11 My Abiding Place has no Pebbles

My Abiding Place has no Pillars

Zen has no teaching; Zen has no doctrine. Zen gives no guidance because it says there is no goal. It says you are not to move into a certain direction. It says you are already there, so the more you try to reach there, the less is the possibility of reaching. The more you seek, the more you will miss. Seeking is the sure way of missing it.

Getting it simply means getting the point that it is already available, that it has already happened, that it is the very nature of existence.

Enlightenment is not a goal but the quality of being herenow. How can it be a goal? because the goal is never herenow – it is always therethen, it is always somewhere else. It is like the horizon: it is always distant and yet looks close by. And one feels that “If I travel a little bit, I will reach the horizon.” But one never reaches, because the more you reach towards the horizon, the more the horizon goes on receding back – because in fact there is nothing. Just an illusion.

The Earth and the sky are not meeting anywhere. They can’t meet because they are not two, they can’t meet because they are one. The Earth is just a materialization of the space of the sky; it is a wave in the ocean of the sky. How can they meet? For meeting, at least two are needed. And they are not two. The horizon exists only in the mind of man; it has no existential truth in it. But you can go on searching and searching. And the more you feel that you are not getting it, the more and more anxious you can become to find it. You can become mad after it.

Zen says: There is nowhere to go, so no guidance is needed. Then what is the purpose of a Zen master? His purpose is to bring you herenow. His purpose is to hit you so hard that you awake herenow. You have fallen asleep and you have started living in dreams.

Another story:

Zen student: “So, master, is the soul immortal or not? Do we survive our bodily death or do we get annihilated? Do we really reincarnate? Does our soul split up into component parts which get recycled, or do we as a single unit enter the body of a biological organism? And do we retain our memories or not? Or is the doctrine of reincarnation false? Is perhaps the Christian notion of survival more correct? And if so, do we get bodily resurrected, or does our soul enter a purely Platonic spiritual realm?”

Master: “Your breakfast is getting cold.”

That’s the way of Zen: to bring you herenow. The breakfast is far more important than any paradise. The breakfast is far more important than any concept of God. The breakfast is more important than any theory of reincarnation, soul, rebirth, and all that nonsense. Because the breakfast is herenow. For Zen, the immediate is the ultimate, and the imminent is the transcendental. *This* moment is eternity. . . you have to be awakened to this moment. So Zen is not a teaching but a device – a device to disturb your dreaming mind, a device somehow to

create such a state that you become alarmed, that you have to get up and see, to create such strain around you that you cannot remain comfortably asleep.

And this is the beauty of Zen and the revolution that Zen brings to the world. All other religions are consolations; they help you to sleep better. Zen tries to awaken you; it has no consolation at all. It does not talk about great things. Not that those great things are not there, but talking about them is not going to help. [...]

Zen is not a belief system. It is a way of awakening. And the Zen master is bound to be tough. That is his compassion. He has to hit you. And he goes on finding devices how to hit you.

Just listen to this story:

A Zen master was worshipping at a statue of the Buddha. A monk came by and said, “Why do you worship the Buddha?”

“I like to worship the Buddha.”

“But I thought you said that one cannot obtain enlightenment by worshipping the Buddha?”

“I am not worshipping the Buddha in order to obtain enlightenment.”

“Then why are you worshipping the Buddha? You must have some reason!”

“No reason whatsoever. I like to worship the Buddha.”

“But you must be seeking something; you must have some end in view!”

“I do not worship the Buddha for any end.”

“Then why do you worship the Buddha? What is your purpose in worshipping the Buddha?”

At this point, the master simply jumped up and gave the monk a good slap in the face!

It looks so wild, unexpected. And the monk is not asking any irrelevant question: he is asking a simple human question out of curiosity. He should not be treated like that; there is no need to hit him. No Hindu priest would hit him, no Catholic priest would hit him. Their purposes are different – only a Zen master can hit him. His purpose *is* different.

Why didn't he hit him in the first place? Why did he bother to answer so many questions and then hit him? He created the situation, the right situation. He created the heat. He created the curiosity more and more and more. He brought the monk to a state from where the hit could simply shock him to a kind of awareness.

He helped the monk to think about it more and more and more, to bring a peak of thinking – because only from the peak can the hit be of any help. But his hitting the monk is neither wild nor arrogant – it is not out of anger, remember. This story I have found in a book written by an American who thinks the master became angry because of the persistent query of the monk, and out of anger he hit him. This is stupid. You have missed the whole point. It is not out of anger!

He is not offended by the question; he is enjoying the question. He is bringing the monk to a more and more feverish state by answering in such a way that the question is not answered but enhanced. Just see the difference.

Ordinarily, you answer a question so that the question is finished. The Zen master is answering so that the question becomes even more pointed and poignant. He is helping the question to arise with a totality. He is giving the idea to the monk that his question is very important and the master is unable to answer it. He is helping the ego of the monk to become a big balloon so a small prick and . . . the balloon bursts.

It is not out of anger; it has nothing to do with anger. He is not angry with the monk; he is not annoyed with the monk. He must be feeling perfectly happy with the monk that he has asked – now he is giving a chance for the master. But it is a device. He is not answering.

Even the slap is not the answer, remember. A few people start thinking as if the slap is the answer – that is not the answer either. The slap is just to give you a jerk, just to shake your foundations, so even if for a single moment you slip out of your thinking you will have a glimpse of reality. Then you will forget about God and about Buddha and worship . . . and you will just see that your breakfast is getting cold. You will come herenow.

Zen is an existential approach, not a philosophical approach toward life. And it has helped tremendously; it has brought many people to awakening.

Zen does not believe in analyzing a problem, because it does not believe that any problem can be solved at its own level. No problem can be solved unless your consciousness is raised a little higher than the problem. This has to be understood. This is something very fundamental.

You ask me a question. I can answer it, but you remain on the same level of consciousness. My answer cannot raise your consciousness. You ask, “Does God exist?” I can say yes or no – but you remain the same! Whether I say yes or no will not help you in any way to become more conscious. It will not give you more being; it will only give you more knowledge this way or that. If you are an atheist and you ask, “Is there a God?” and I say no, you will feel very happy. You will say, “So I was right.” Or if I say yes, you will say, “This man is wrong. He does not know anything. He is just a blind person. I have argued, I have looked into the matter deeply, and I can’t find any proof for God.”

Whether I say yes or no, whether you are a theist or an atheist, either you will accumulate the knowledge, receive it if it fits with you, or, if it doesn’t fit with you, you will reject it. That’s what you are doing continuously in your mind. But your consciousness is not raised. And unless your consciousness is raised, no problem can be solved. In the first place the problem is created because of your consciousness, and it can be solved, not by any answer – it can be solved only by helping your consciousness to go a little higher from where it is.

That’s the work of Zen. It is not a transfer of knowledge – it is a transfer of consciousness, being. By slapping the monk, the master has simply helped the monk to become a little more alert. And if the monk becomes a little more alert, that slap is not only a slap – it is a leap of the master’s being into the disciple. But for that you need great love for the master, otherwise you will miss the slap. You need great trust in the master. [...]

Sannyas simply means that you are ready to go with me even if I hit you. You are ready to go with me even if I crush you, annihilate you. You are ready to go with me to any limits. Your trust is more. Your trust is more in me than your trust in yourself. Then the work starts. “The work” simply means you have become available to the master – only then can you be awakened. Because awakening is going to be painful. It is not going to be very sweet, you have slept so long, and you have dreamt so many beautiful dreams. And awakening is certainly going to destroy all those dreams. They are dreams, but you have thought up to now that they are realities. And when somebody starts taking them away from you it hurts. You start feeling that “I am getting nothing – on the contrary, I am losing all that I had before.”

Zen is a particular milieu, a climate between the master and the disciple of trust, of love, of infinite love, so the disciple is ready to go to any end. You will be surprised: sometimes Zen masters have been really wild.

It happened in one Zen master’s ashram: whenever he used to talk, and he used to talk about truth, he would raise one of his fingers toward the sky. That was his particular gesture. Naturally, it became a joke. Anybody who wanted to imitate the master would raise the finger.

A young disciple, very young, became very artful in repeating and imitating the master’s gestures – his face, the way he walked, the way he talked, the way he sat. Just a young boy he was. And anywhere and everywhere, whenever there was some serious discussion going on, he would raise his finger toward the sky in the same way as the master.

One day, the young boy was standing behind the master and the master was talking to people and he raised his finger, and from the back the boy also raised his finger. And the master called him . . . just took a knife and cut his finger! Now, you cannot think of this as compassion – just cut his finger. And the boy screamed out in pain, and the master said, “Don’t miss the point! Now raise the finger.” Now the finger is gone, there is nothing to raise, and the master says, “Now, raise the finger – don’t miss the point!” And the boy, with tears in his eyes, raised his cut finger towards the sky . . . and that very moment the satori happened. The boy was transformed.

Now, on the surface it is very cruel, violent. If you can only see the surface, you will be forever against these Zen people. They don’t look like saints. Saints are not known to do such things. Saints talk to the fish and saints talk to the trees, and birds come and sit on their shoulders. We have known such saints. But saints cutting the finger for no special reason? of such a simple young boy, who was, out of his innocence, imitating the master. Is the master angry? But if you look deep down, the boy was transformed.

If you see the transformation, then it was worth it – even if the master had cut the head of the boy, it would have been worth it. A finger is nothing. The boy was totally transformed.

About this same Zen master, it is said that when he was searching with his own master he had become very famous – famous because birds would come and sit on his shoulders and on his head. Once even, while he was meditating under a tree, a bird made a nest in his hair. He had become famous all over the country. People used to worship him like a buddha.

He became very egoistic, naturally – such a great attainment. His own master came and was very angry. He said, “What is this bird doing in your hair? Drop all this nonsense!” He was hurt, but he understood. And since that day, birds stopped coming to him.

People would come to see, but no birds would come – and they were surprised. They asked the master, “What has happened to your disciple? First birds used to come, animals used to come and sit by his side, but now they no more come.

The master said, “Now he has disappeared, he is no more special. He has attained. Now birds don’t take any note of him. Animals simply pass by. He is not there! First he used to be there. He was becoming a special person; he was attaining to a specific kind of ego. Now even that is dropped. He was becoming enlightened! – now even enlightenment is dropped. So birds no longer come to him. Why should they come when there is nobody? And why should animals come and sit there? – they can sit anywhere. It is all the same. There is nobody anymore.”

Now see the point! Zen has a totally different approach toward life. *Now* the master is happy that the disciple has completely disappeared – because one can even become attached to the idea of enlightenment. And you have to be alert about it.

Just a few months ago it happened: I told Somendra “You have had a small satori” – since then I have not seen him laughing. Since then he has become very serious. He has become enlightened! He has taken it to his heart. He has become special. He cannot laugh, he cannot enjoy – he cannot be ordinary.

And now, if this idea gets too much into him it will become a crust around him. He has to drop it. He has to become unenlightened again. He has to forget that satori. And not that it was not there – it was there – but many satoris happen before the ultimate satori happens. And the ultimate satori is dropping of all satoris, of all samadhis. The ultimate enlightenment is when you forget the very idea of enlightenment. Then there is innocence. Then there is just simple nature.

I have played a joke upon Somendra and he got caught into it.

I am creating here a climate of work – many things are happening, many are going to happen. And you have to be ready. And the first readiness is: when I hit you, when I shock you – now Somendra will be shocked – when I shock you, use the shock to become a little more alert, a little more aware.

Zen is a device, not an analysis of life.

My abiding place

Has no pillars,

It is roofless –

Yet the rain does not wet it,

Nor the wind strike it.

Go into each word with deep love, with deep sympathy.

First:

My abiding place

Has no pillars . . .

The inner has no boundaries, no supports, no pillars. It is infinite space; it is pure space. It is nothingness. And there is nobody there. It is utterly silent. Not a single sound has ever penetrated there. Nobody has ever walked on that beach of your inner being, no footprints are there. It is virgin land.

If you look into that inner space, you will start disappearing. The more you look inside, the more you will disappear. That's why people don't want to look inside. They talk about self-knowledge; they talk about how to look inside; they talk about techniques – but they don't look. And there is *no* technique.

It is a very simple phenomenon to look inside. It is as simple as looking outside. You can simply close your eyes and look inside. But fear arises, great fear arises in looking inside – because that emptiness overwhelms you. You start disappearing; you start feeling as if you are going to die. You rush back. You start thinking a thousand and one things.

Have you not observed? Whenever you sit silently and look inside, the mind creates so many thoughts immediately. Why? It is your device. It is just like the octopus: whenever he sees that some enemy is coming around, the octopus releases dark black ink like a cloud around himself. Immediately the ink cloud surrounds him and the enemy cannot see where he is.

When you go inside, immediately your mind starts secreting a thousand and one thoughts; immediately there is a great rush of energy into thinking. This is just like the octopus releasing dark black ink around himself – to create a cloud so you cannot see the innermost nothingness. You don't want to see. To see in is to commit suicide – to commit suicide as an ego, as a self.

Ikkyu says:

My abiding place

Has no pillars;

It is roofless . . .

It is just the vast open sky . . . no pillars, no roof. It is infinity.

Yet the rain does not wet it,

Nor the wind strike it.

How can the rain wet it if there is no roof and no pillar? and no ground either? Do you think when it rains the sky is wet? The sky remains as it is. Rains can't wet it. Do you think when it is cloudy those clouds leave any impact on the sky? Do you think the sky becomes contaminated, polluted by the clouds? Do you think it becomes darkened? Do you think any mark is left on the sky? Nothing is left.

How can you touch pure nothingness? And just as there is an outer sky, there is an inner sky. And “outer” and “inner” are just arbitrary words. The day you will know, it is all one sky – outer and inner, it is all one. One has to be very courageous to go into it. Once you have the courage to see your reality, all fear disappears – because all fear is for the ego, all fear is because of the ego. “Am I going to survive or not?” is what fear is all about. But once you have seen the inner sky, the fear can’t remain. You are not, so what? You have never been and you will never be, neither born nor dying. And that which is has been always there and will be always there. But you are not that! It appears only when you are not, when you have disappeared. You are just a dream. The dreamer is also part of the dream, and when the dream disappears, the dreamer also disappears. Living in this inner space, you are not afraid about security. Then insecurity *is* security.

That’s what Alan Watts means when he says “the wisdom of insecurity.” There is only one way to be really secure and that is: don’t have any roof, don’t have any pillars. Just move into the open sky. And then if it rains, let it rain – you will not get wet. You will be the sky; how can you get wet? Then if death comes, let it come – you will not be dying, because how can you die? You were never born. You don’t exist as a thing, as an entity.

Living in insecurity, one is secure. Trying to be secure, one remains insecure. This is the law of reverse effect. If you want something you will miss it – just because you want it. The more you want, the more difficulties you create. And then there is a vicious circle. You want to be secure; you don’t want to die. If you don’t want to die, you will have to die a thousand and one deaths; you will have to die every day. If you don’t want to die, then everything will become a death message; then you will be continuously trembling; and afraid. From everywhere you will see death coming.

And if you forget all about death, and you accept death, then even in death you will not die, even in death you will be a watcher. Death will come and go. You will see it coming, you will see it passing, and you will remain, you will abide. That which abides in you for ever and ever is not an entity – it is a consciousness. It is not a soul, it is awareness, it is pure awareness. And that awareness is part of the universal awareness.

Ikkyu says:

My abiding place

Has no pillars;

It is roofless . . .

It is just the vast open sky . . . no pillars, no roof. It is infinity.

Yet the rain does not wet it,

Nor the wind strike it.

One Zen master was moving with his disciples. They came across a small river – they had to cross it. It was not very deep, a shallow river. They started passing through it. The master had always said to his disciples, “When an enlightened person passes through the river, his feet never

become wet.” They were all waiting for an opportunity to see. They were puzzled because his feet were becoming wet. They became very much confused: “Is our master not yet enlightened?”

And just standing in the middle of the river, the master started laughing an uproarious laugh, a belly-laugh, and they asked, “What is the matter?”

He said, “You fools! I had said that the enlightened person’s feet never become wet, and my feet are not becoming wet – and the feet that are becoming wet are not my feet. You need not be confused; you need not look so puzzled and perplexed. This water is not touching me! Nothing can touch me because I am not. This water of the river is not touching the sky, it is not making the sky wet – how can it make *me* wet? I am part of the sky.”

Yet the rain does not wet it,

Nor the wind strike it.

So when you are communing with a master, remember it – you are communing with somebody who is a nobody; you are communing with something which is not an entity but only a presence. Communing with a master is not communing with a person but with a presence. A person will become wet, but the presence cannot become wet. The presence remains uncontaminated.

That presence is you. One has just to find it out – that’s all. But you have become so much entangled with the ideas about yourself – that you are a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Christian, a man, a woman, white, black, this and that – you have become so much entangled with identities that you never look inside to see that you are just a pure sky and nothing else. No Hindu exists there, no Mohammedan, no man, no woman, no black, no white. These are all identities.

Think of the one who is identified with these things, think of the inner sky. These are all clouds – Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, communist, capitalist – these are all clouds. Don’t get too much obsessed with the clouds. Go on remembering the sky.

When it blows,

The mountain wind is boisterous,

But when it blows not,

It simply blows not.

Once seen – this inner nothingness – a person becomes a suchness. This word “suchness” is of infinite value in Buddha’s experience, on Buddha’s path – *tathata* or suchness. When there is nobody, then what happens? A few things happen . . .

First, if there is nobody, there is nobody to control your life, there is nobody to manipulate, there is nobody to discipline. All control, all discipline, all manipulation disappears. That’s what freedom is – that’s what *moksha* is. Not something far away in the skies but something deep inside you right now.

When you are not there, how can you control your life? All control disappears – and with control disappear all kinds of tensions, with control disappears all uptightness, with control disappear all anxieties. You become an open flow, so open that

When it blows,

The mountain wind is boisterous,

But when it blows not,

It simply blows not.

Then whatsoever happens, happens.

A man of Zen is totally different from the man of Yoga, and the distinction has to be understood. The man of Yoga is in tremendous control. The whole methodology of Yoga is how to control yourself, how to control absolutely. The man of Yoga cannot be disturbed because he is in such utter control. The man of Zen cannot be disturbed because there is no control. But the difference is great.

The man of Yoga is not absolutely in control, nobody can be. There are possibilities when he will lose his control. You just have to bring about those possibilities – he will lose control, because all control is relative, it is only up to a certain extent.

Watch your control: if there is a ten rupee note you may not steal it, but ten thousand rupees? Then you feel a little inclined. And ten lakh rupees? Then you start thinking, then the idea seems to be worth thinking about. You start dreaming . . . ten lakh rupees? And just for once, and people are doing so many sins, you will be doing one and only one. And then you can donate half of the money to the church or to the temple. And it is not so wrong either, because it doesn't belong to a beggar – it belongs to some very rich person, and it doesn't matter to him whether he has ten lakhs less or more. And in the first place he has exploited people for all this money. Now you are gathering energy to do it! But if it is ten crore rupees? Then you will not think a second time: you will simply grab it and rush.

There is a certain limit to all control; beyond that you will fall. Nobody can be in absolute control, because control is an unnatural thing and nothing unnatural can ever be absolute. Only nature can be absolute. Unnature has to be maintained; it takes energy, conflict, struggle, and when you are controlling yourself, there is somebody inside you who is against it – otherwise what is the point of controlling?

Control always splits you: the one who controls and the one who is being controlled, the top-dog and the bottom-dog. And the bottom-dog waits for its own opportunities. There is constant barking and they go on fighting inside you. And you know it! There are moments when you can control your anger, and there are moments when you cannot. There are moments when you can control anything, and there are moments you cannot control. Sometimes the top-dog is powerful and sometimes the bottom-dog is powerful.

And the conflict continues and the victory is never absolute. Nobody ever wins it because the other remains there, maybe tired, resting, waiting for its time. And whenever one is in control,

the other is gaining power by resting. And the one who is in control is losing power by controlling because controlling means energy is being lost, dissipated. Sooner or later, the controller becomes weak and the controlled becomes powerful. And this goes on, this is a wheel.

The man of Yoga seems to be in great control but cannot be in absolute control. He has repressed. All that he has repressed is waiting there underneath him like a volcano – it will erupt. And when it erupts, he will be thrown in fragments.

The man of Zen cannot be disturbed – but the reason is totally different. Not that he is in absolute control: he cannot be disturbed because he is not. And then one thing more has to be understood: because he is not, there is no division. He is just a natural man. But you carry the idea of control from the man of Yoga, and that's why the natural man has always been misunderstood.

For example:

A master died and his disciple started crying, great tears started coming, sobbing. The disciple was known himself as an enlightened person. Others said, "This is not right – you should not cry, you should not weep. What will people think? Is it right for a man who is enlightened to cry?" And that disciple said. "There is no question of right and wrong – if tears are coming, they are coming. There is nobody to prevent them."

This is a totally different vision – this is the natural man.

And they said, "But you have been telling us that only the body dies, then why are you crying and weeping for the master's dead body? Only the body has died and the body was just material. It was going to die – dust unto dust."

And he said, "What are you talking about? I am not crying for the soul – the soul never dies, okay, so I am not crying for the soul! I am crying for the body, because it was beautiful, so beautiful. I will never be able to see such a beautiful man walk again. I will never hear his voice."

And they said, "But you should not be attached!"

But he said, "I am not attached! Just a flower has withered away and tears are coming to my eyes – I am not attached. These tears are not out of attachment."

This is very difficult to understand because we know only tears which come out of attachment. We have not known natural tears – we have forgotten *all* that is natural. We know tears of attachment; we don't know tears of innocence.

A Zen man is a natural man.

When it blows,

The mountain wind is boisterous, . . .

This is the description of a Zen man.

But when it blows not,

It simply blows not.

When he laughs, he laughs. When he cries, he cries. It is a simple phenomenon. Just as birds sing, the Zen master speaks; just as flowers bloom, he lives. But his life has no ulterior motive, no goal. His words are not teachings but assertions of joy – hallelujah! his celebration of being. And that, too, when it happens, it happens. When it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen.

There have been Zen masters who talked their whole lives, and there have been Zen masters who never talked. Sometimes it happens that the song is sung in words, and sometimes it happens that the song is sung in silence. But there is nobody to do something. Whatsoever is happening, is happening.

This is what is called freedom by Buddha: nobody to control and manipulate, all control disappears – freedom is born. Freedom from the self, the true freedom, Freedom for the self is the pseudo freedom. Yoga tries freedom for the self, and Zen is nothing but freedom from the self. Then one becomes like a tree, like an animal, like a child.

The sage is like a child, not like a yogi, not like a mahatma. The mahatma is trying to control himself continuously, day in, day out – curbing, dropping this, creating that. His whole life is his own effort. And, naturally, the so-called mahatmas look very tired, sad, desperate. Their life has not the quality of joy. They talk about *satchitanand*, but their life has not the quality of joy.

Zen people have the quality of joy. They don't talk about *satchitanand* – they *are* satchitanand. They are truth, they are bliss, they are consciousness.

Once Ma Tzu was asked, “Why did Buddha never talk about God?”

Ma Tzu said, “He was so busy living him, that's why. He didn't talk about God because he was too busy living him.”

This state is a simple state, a natural state. You cannot brag about it. No child brags about his childhood, no sage can brag about his sagehood – it is the second childhood. He is reborn, the circle is complete. He has seen the world, he has seen the ways of the world, he has seen all the miseries of it, he has become wise. Now desires no longer drag him away from reality. He simply lives. Feeling hungry, he eats; feeling sleepy, he sleeps. He goes on doing the small things of life, but he becomes absolutely a nobody.

Though it has no bridge,

The cloud climbs up to heaven;

It does not ask aid

Of Gautama's sutras.

And when you become natural, spontaneous, simple, you start rising – of your own accord. You need not ask Gautama Buddha for his help. No help is needed.

Though it has no bridge,

The cloud climbs up to heaven;

It does not ask aid

Of Gautama's sutras.

There is no need to have any guide. If you are simple, then simplicity is enough. If you are natural, then that naturalness is enough. If you are not natural, you will need the help of a master. And the master is not going to give you anything – he will simply take all that is plastic in you, all that is inauthentic in you.

The master, the real master, simply throws you back to your own utter naturalness. He does not make you an achiever. He does not give you great dreams that you have to become this and you have to become that. He simply says: You relax. You be in a let-go. You be – don't become.

This is one of the basic messages of Buddha: Be a light unto yourself. If you are not, then you need the help of a master, just for the time being. But what is his help? He throws you back to yourself; he goes on throwing you back to yourself. You would like to cling to the master and he goes on throwing you back.

The real master does not allow you to cling to him. He helps you to uncling, because unclinging is maturity, clinging is childishness. And remember: to be a child is one thing, to be childish is quite another. To be a child means to become a sage; to be childish means to remain clinging, immature.

Ripples appear

On the unaccumulated water

Of the undug well

As the formless, bodiless man

Draws water from it.

And this is the constant refrain of Buddha, that all is dream. Nothing has ever happened, and nothing is ever going to happen. But the mind lives in hope and through hope; it goes on thinking that something is going to happen. Nothing has ever happened; nothing is ever going to happen. All is. Hence the master reminded the disciple about the breakfast.

All is. You have to be reminded constantly of it, because you go on rushing away from it. All going is dreaming – whether you are going for money or for God does not matter. Whether you think of the body or of the soul does not matter. Whether you want to become very rich, very famous, or enlightened, doesn't matter. All is dream. Becoming is dream.

Look into that which you are, and don't go on looking for that which you would like to be. Hope is the secret of the mind; the mind lives through hope, nourishes itself on hope. Once you stop

hoping, once you relax and you just let hopes disappear, suddenly you are awakened to the truth – the truth of your being, the truth of the whole existence.

Ripples appear

On the unaccumulated water

Of the undug well . . .

Such is your life. Have you not seen in your dreams again and again? A lake is there and ripples appear, and a boat, and you are travelling in the boat – and there is no lake and no ripples and no boat and no traveler either. And in the morning, you find yourself just lying in your bed – there has been no lake, no water, no boat, nothing. But all had appeared.

The mind:

Since there is really

No such thing as mind

And now comes one of the most significant sutras, and only those who have followed the sutras up to now will be able to understand it. Now Ikkyu hits hard. He says:

The mind:

Since there is really

No such thing as mind . . .

because mind means nothing but *all* the processes of dreaming. You call a mind a materialist mind because it dreams of money; and you call a mind a spiritualist mind because it dreams of satoris – but mind is dreaming, mind lives in dreams. It thinks of the faraway, of the distant. It lives in imagination and in memory; both are part of imagination. It never comes to reality; reality is too much for it. Facing, encountering reality, it melts and disappears just like dewdrops disappear in the morning sun. Whenever the mind comes to herenow, to the breakfast, suddenly it evaporates.

Try it: taking your breakfast, just take the breakfast and don't think of God and the Devil and money and the woman and the man, and love and a thousand other things – don't think. Just take the breakfast, just be there, totally there – in it. Don't go here and there. Utterly present. And where is the mind? You will not find the mind.

Mind has never been found. Those who have looked, they have always found there is no mind.

The mind:

Since there is really

No such thing as mind,

With what enlightenment

Shall it be enlightened?

And then the question arises: If there is no mind, then why this talk about enlightenment? If there is no mind there – there is nothing to become enlightened, nobody to become enlightened. If there is no mind, no illusion, then how to get out of the illusion? If there is no mind, then how to become something which is beyond mind? If mind exists not, then what is the point of saying that one has to attain to no-mind?

Mind in itself is not . . . one cannot talk about enlightenment any more. But in fact, this is enlightenment. Enlightenment is not getting out of the mind: enlightenment is seeing that the mind exists not – then you are suddenly enlightened. Then you are a buddha.

There is the well-known incident about the Confucian scholar seeking enlightenment from a Zen master. The student constantly complained that the master's account was somehow incomplete, that the master was withholding some vital clue. The master assured him that he was withholding nothing from him. The student insisted that there was something the master was withholding from him. The master insisted that he was not withholding anything from him.

Later on, the two went for a walk along the mountain path. Suddenly the master said, "Do you smell the mountain laurels?"

The student said, "Yes!"

The master said, "See! I am not withholding anything from you."

A strange story, but of tremendous import. What is the master saying? The smell of the laurels . . . He says to the disciple, "Do you smell the mountain laurels?" They always bring you to the immediate: to the breakfast, to the mountain laurels. They don't bother about philosophical things.

And the disciple smells and he says, "Yes!"

And the master says, "See! I am not withholding anything from you. Just as you can smell the mountain laurels, so you can smell Buddhahood right now, this very moment. It is in the mountain laurels. It is on this mountain path. It is in the birds; it is in the sun. It is in me; it is in you. What keys and clues are you talking about? What secrets are you talking about?"

Zen has no secrets it is said. Zen is all openness. Zen is not a fist: it is an open hand. It has no esoteric ideology. It is down-to-earth, very earthly, very simple. If you miss, that simply shows that you have a very complex mind. If you miss, that simply means that you have been looking for complex ideologies, and Zen simply drags you back to reality, to the breakfast, to the mountain laurels. To *this* bird calling. This is Buddha calling! To *this* utter silence – this is Buddha present.

This communion between me and you. This moment when I am not and you are not. All is open, all is available. [...]

All is one. Nothing is separate. We are not islands. So the stones and the stars, all are joined together.

And everything is joined in *this* moment, is participating in this moment. If you become just *this* moment, all is attained. There is no other enlightenment.

Zen is a way back home – and the simplest way and the most natural way.

From ***Take It Easy***, Discourse #9

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12 Be Thoroughgoing

Stilling the Mind vs. No-Mind

There has been a long misunderstanding about these two things: *keeping the mind still* and *mindlessness*. There have been many people who have thought that they are synonymous. They appear to be synonymous, but in reality, they are as far apart as two things can be, and there is no way to bridge them.

So first let us try to find the exact meanings of these two words because the whole of Ta Hui's sutra this evening is concerned with the understanding of the difference.

The difference is very delicate. A man who is keeping his mind still and a man who has no mind will look exactly alike from the outside, because the man who is keeping his mind still is also silent. Underneath his silence there is great turmoil, but he is not allowing it to surface. He is in great control.

The man with no mind, or mindlessness, has nothing to control. He is just pure silence with nothing repressed, with nothing disciplined — just a pure empty sky.

Surfaces can be very deceptive. One has to be very alert about appearances, because they both look the same from the outside — both are silent. The problem would not have arisen if the still mind was not easy to achieve. It is easy to achieve. Mindlessness is not so easy to achieve; it is not cheap; it is the greatest treasure in the world.

Mind can play the game of being silent; it can play the game of being without any thoughts, any emotions, but they are just repressed, fully alive, ready to jump out any moment. The so-called religions and their saints have fallen into the fallacy of stilling the mind. If you go on sitting silently, trying to control your thoughts, not allowing your emotions, not allowing any movement within you, slowly, slowly it will become your habit. This is the greatest deception in the world you can give to yourself, because everything is exactly the same, nothing has changed, but it appears as if you have gone through a transformation.

The state of no-mind or mindlessness is just the opposite of stilling the mind — it is getting beyond the mind. It is creating such a distance between yourself and the mind that the mind becomes the farthest star, millions of light years away, and you are just a watcher. When the mind is stilled, you are the controller. When the mind is not, you are the watcher. These are the distinguishing marks.

When you are controlling something, you are in tension; you cannot be without tension because that which is controlled is continuously trying to revolt against you, that which is enslaved wants freedom. Your mind sooner or later will explode with vengeance. [...]

The process of controlling and repressing and disciplining is taught by all the religions, and because of their fallacious teaching, humanity has not moved a single inch — it remains barbarous. Any moment people start killing each other. It does not take a single moment to lose themselves; they forget completely that they are human beings — and something much more —

something better is expected of them. There have been very few people who have been able to avoid this deception of controlling mind and believing that they have attained mindlessness.

To attain mindlessness a totally different process is involved: I call it the ultimate alchemy. It consists only of a single element — that of watchfulness.

Gautam Buddha is passing through a town when a fly comes and sits on his forehead. He is talking to his companion, Ananda, and he just goes on talking and moves his hand to throw off the fly. Then suddenly he recognizes that his movement of the hand has been unconscious, mechanical. Because he was talking consciously to Ananda, the hand moved the fly mechanically. He stops and although now there is no fly, he moves his hand again consciously.

Ananda says, “What are you doing? The fly has gone away . . .”

Gautam Buddha says, “The fly has gone away . . . but I have committed a sin, because I did it in unconsciousness.”

The English word “sin” is used only by Gautam Buddha in its right meaning. The word “sin” originates in the roots which mean forgetfulness, unawareness, unwatchfulness, doing things mechanically — and our whole life is almost mechanical. We go on doing things from morning to evening, from evening to morning, like robots.

A man who wants to enter into the world of mindlessness has to learn only one thing — a single step and the journey is over. That single step is to do everything watchfully. You move your hand watchfully; you open your eyes watchfully; you walk, you take your steps alert, aware; you eat, you drink, but never allow mechanicalness to take possession over you. This is the only alchemical secret of transformation.

A man who can do everything fully consciously becomes a luminous phenomenon. He is all light, and his whole life is full of fragrance and flowers. The mechanical man lives in dark holes, dirty holes. He does not know the world of light; he is like a blind man. The man of watchfulness is really the man who has eyes.

From *The Great Zen Master Ta Hui*, Discourse #28

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Be Thoroughgoing

The problem with every awakened soul has always been the same: before awakening it is the very fact of awakening that is his problem. After awakening, it is again the awakening that comes as a problem — how to express it?

To experience something is one thing, and to express it is totally another. It is possible to feel at ease with existence, in a deep suchness, but how to say it? It is possible to listen to this beautiful evening, the dance of the rain and the silent joy of the trees, but how to say it? Words are so poor, and life is so rich. Life is so vast and words are so small. Just feel this very moment, and you will be able to see its immensity, its tremendous beauty, its splendor, its silence, its song. The heart feels it. The being is showered with flowers. The whole universe is so poetic. It is always poetry; it is never prose. If you just have eyes and sensitivity, life is always a rejoicing. And the deepest source of life is within you.

The whole effort of a seeker is to be awake to the source of being within — which is eternal, immeasurable, immortal. But then the problem arises . . . a deep urge, an irresistible longing to share it. All the masters, all those who have become awakened, have struggled hard in different ways, rational, irrational. They have even taken recourse to absurdities, just to give you a hint.

Ta Hui is facing the same situation. He has arrived home, and now he wants to invite all those who are still wandering in the darkness. He wants to send the invitation, but where are the words? He is trying his hardest. This morning, he gave you two words. One was the great affair of suchness — experiencing life as it is without bringing your mind in — and the second word was faith. Faith is a natural outcome of the experience of suchness. It certainly is a great affair.

Now he will be trying in these last sutras, for a few days more, from different angles, to approach this great affair again and again. One never knows what will penetrate to your heart. There is not much to say, but there is much to show. Every effort has been made, certainly by different teachers in their uniqueness. Ta Hui will be describing other masters too.

This evening the sutra is, *Be thoroughgoing*. Ordinarily, people are never thoroughgoing. They are always lukewarm, just so-so, wishy-washy, half-hearted, always thinking with a divided being: To be or not to be? A person who is divided takes one step forward and immediately takes another step backward. He remains in almost the same place as he has always been, although he is making every effort to move.

I have heard about a small child . . . it must have been a rainy day like today. The child was always a latecomer to the school, and he was always ready with some excuse. That day the excuse was absolutely clear — it was raining hard.

The child said to the teacher, “Before you ask, I can answer the question today. At least today the excuse is absolutely clear. The muddy road to the school is so slippery that you will not believe me, teacher: I would take one step forward, and I would slip two steps back!”

The teacher said, “If this is true, then how did you manage to reach here?”

The boy said, “I started walking toward my home, then finally I managed to reach the school.”

Every man is in search. It may be better to say that every man is a search, a longing for something; he does not understand exactly what, but something is missing, something is incomplete, something is not entire. There is a gap, and that gap allows no one to remain at rest; it asks to be filled, and unless it is filled, you will never feel that you really are.

George Gurdjieff wrote a book, *Meetings with Remarkable Men*. One of his disciples asked him, “What is the definition of a remarkable man?”

He said, “An ordinary man is still trying to find where he is, whether he is or not; a remarkable man is one who has found.”

Everybody is a search, a hunger, an appetite, a thirst, a longing — a longing to know oneself and a longing to know through oneself the whole beautiful universe. Certainly, one of the most important things should be, *be thoroughgoing*. Don't run in all directions; remain one-pointed, remain crystallized.

Life is small and time is moving fast. If you go on only thinking and never taking a solid step toward transformation, toward awareness, toward crystallization — it is not going to happen on its own accord. It cannot happen in a confused mind. Even at the last moment when a person is dying, if you ask him, “Are you certain, can you tell us what you wanted to be in your life?” ninety-nine point nine percent of people will not be able to answer it.

Gertrude Stein, a woman of tremendous genius, one of the greatest women in the whole of history was dying. Her very close, intimate friends were sitting in silence when suddenly she opened her eyes and said, “What is the answer?” The friends were shocked because the question had not been asked, so how can you say what is the answer? But to a dying woman they could not be hard. A great silence fell over them, but somebody managed to ask her, “You are asking what is the answer — but you have not asked, What is the question?”

Gertrude Stein laughed and said, “Okay then, tell me: What is the question?” And that was her last statement. She died.

In this small incident is contained the life of millions of people. They don't know what the question is, and they don't know, of course, what is the answer. And still, they are running all over the place in all directions.

Be thoroughgoing means, have a determination that you are going to discover yourself, whatsoever the cost. Having life without knowing it is almost equal to not having it. Living and not knowing what it is, is very humiliating. Loving and not knowing what it is, is unforgivable.

When Ta Hui says, *be thoroughgoing*, he means put every iota of your energy, stake everything on a single arrow and then perhaps you may be able to come home. You may be able to discover that which is missing. In fact, the reality is that the moment you are absolutely thoroughgoing, one-pointed, single-minded, with an undivided heart, this very thoroughgoingness is the arrival. You don't have to go anywhere. In this totality, in this intensity, the flower blossoms.

Now that you have taken up this affair . . . I love Ta Hui's continuous use of the words “this affair.”

Now that you have taken up this affair, you must steadfastly make yourself thoroughgoing, and sit upright in a room with what you have truly experienced and awakened to in the course of your life. It is like crossing a bridge made of a single plank carrying a two-hundred-pound burden. If your hands and feet slip, you can't even preserve your own life, much less save others.

Here, each moment is risky, because each moment can turn into death. You are all crossing the plank with a mountainous burden on you; just a small slip is enough, and you are gone. You have to be alert, so alert that no other energy is left in you, everything has become just a flame of awareness. [...]

There are only two types of people in the world: those who understand that every moment life is at risk, hence they do something, and those who are absolutely unaware that death can strike any moment and take away their whole future — all their dreams, all their imaginations, all that they were thinking they were going to do tomorrow.

Death does only one thing:

It takes away your tomorrow.

A man who has entered in this affair of the search leaves tomorrow himself; he does not wait for death to take it away. He has no tomorrow. He has only this moment, and he has to concentrate himself into this moment, without holding anything back. In this crystallization is the great happening of enlightenment.

Now that you have taken up this affair . . . Certainly you are here, so these words are actually addressed to you; they are not addressed to somebody fictitious. Being with me means you have taken up this great affair, that you are no more just an ordinary human being but a seeker, that you are ready to risk everything to find the secret of existence.

. . . you must steadfastly make yourself thoroughgoing. Do everything as if there is no time left, as if this is the last moment to do it; so do it fully, completely, without postponing, without saying, “There is no hurry. Something can be done today; something can be done tomorrow.”

Don't live in installments: that is the meaning of being thoroughgoing. It means don't be American! Don't live in installments; live totally now, as if tomorrow does not exist. In fact, it does not exist; it is only our idea; it is our laziness. It is our reluctance to put ourself totally at risk, now. We say, “What is the hurry” — we find a thousand and one excuses for postponing, particularly the great affair. [...]

And how does one become conscious? Just by being thoroughgoing, just by being total in every act. “Be as alert,” says Ta Hui “as if you are *crossing a bridge made of a single plank, carrying a two-hundred-pound burden: if your hands and feet slip, you can't even preserve your own life, much less save others.*”

In such a situation you will become absolutely aware. You will be simply awareness, nothing else. Just a purity, a luminosity . . . and that is enlightenment, the great affair.

From ***The Great Zen Master Ta Hui***, Discourse #30

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Witnessing the Monster

You have said much lately about inner silence and emptiness. After two years as your disciple, much of the time, particularly during the meditations at the ashram, my mind seems more than ever to be out of control and working like a computer gone mad. I try to be a witness to the whole absurdity, but the monster goes on and on!

Let the monster go on and on and don't you be worried. The very worry is the problem, not the monster.

The whole world is going on and on: rivers go on flowing; clouds go on moving in the sky; birds go on chattering in the trees. Just why are you so against only the mind? Let it also go on and on – you be unconcerned.

Witnessing is not an effort. When you are unconcerned the witness arises. Be indifferent to the mind; in the climate of indifference the witness arises. The very idea that you have to stop it is wrong, that you have to still it is wrong, that you have to do something about this constant ongoing process is wrong. You are not required to do anything. If you do anything it won't help – it will help the trouble, not you. That's why when you meditate you feel the mind going more mad; when you don't meditate it is not so mad. When you are meditating you are too concerned with the mind, trying your hardest to make it still. Who are you? And why should you be worried about the mind?

What is wrong with it? Allow the thoughts, let them move like clouds.

When you are indifferent, suddenly you are watching. With nothing left to do, what will you do?

You can only watch, you can only witness – and in witnessing mind stops. Not that you can stop it. Nobody has ever been able to stop the mind because the stopper is also part of the mind. The idea of meditation is part of the mind too – the idea that if you become silent you will attain to the ultimate is also of the mind. So don't be stupid! The mind cannot silence the mind.

Who is asking this question, you or the mind?

You are not aware of yourself at all; it's the mind playing tricks. The only thing that can be done, and which is possible, is to be indifferent and let the mind go. When you are indifferent suddenly a distance arises between you and the mind. You still listen to it because it is knocking continuously at your doors, but now you are indifferent. Now, inside, you are not worried whether it goes on or stops, you don't choose. You say to the mind, "If you want to go, you go on; if you want to stop, you can stop. It is none of my concern." This unconcern is needed. In this climate of unconcern and indifference the witness arises. Suddenly you see that the mind never belonged to you; it is a computer, it is a mechanism. You are absolutely separate from it.

Drop all efforts to still it and just remain passive, looking at whatsoever is going on. Don't give direction to the mind; don't say, "Be like this." Don't be a guide to the mind and don't be a controller.

The whole existence is going on, nothing disturbs you – why only this mind, a small computer, a small mechanism? Enjoy it if you can. If you cannot, then be indifferent. And then suddenly one

day you find that something which was fast asleep within you is awakening; a new energy is coming up in you – a distance from the mind. And then by and by the mind goes on – far away, far away, far away. Then still it goes on chattering, but you know that somewhere far away, near a star it is chattering; you cannot even make sense out of it, what it is saying. And this distance goes on and on and on, and one day, suddenly, you cannot find where the mind has gone.

This silence is qualitatively different from a silence that you can practice. The real silence comes spontaneously; it is not something to be practiced. If you practice it, you can create a false silence.

The mind is so tricky, it can give you a false notion of silence – and that too will belong to the mind.

So don't try hard to still it. Rather, stand aside, by the side of the road, and let the traffic pass.

Just watch it, just look at it with eyes of unconcern, indifference, and the thing that you have been desiring will happen – but not through desire. Because desire will not allow you to be indifferent.

Buddha has used a word *upeksha*; the word means absolute indifference. And he says that you can never become meditative unless you have attained to *upeksha*, to indifference. That is the very soil.

In that soil the seeds of meditation sprout – and there is no other way.

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13 Go Like an Arrow

Go Like an Arrow

Maneesha, Hakuin is one of the most respected Zen masters. His respect is because of his ability to express the inexpressible, to create devices that somehow can manage to give you a glimpse of the unknown. He is basically concerned with the method. If a right method is used in the right time and ripe time, it is not going to fail. If you are on the right way, it may take some time to reach, but you will reach. The whole question before Hakuin is: the right way, the right method, the right beginning.

It was Gautam Buddha's habitual way of expression. All the great qualities that he has called for in an experienced, self-realized man, all begin with the word "right". For example, he will not say simply samadhi. He will say *samma* samadhi. Samadhi can go wrong; people can mistake similar experiences for samadhi and get lost.

That's what happened to Aldous Huxley when he took LSD. He was a man of tremendous knowledge, particularly of the East, and most of the saints of the East he knew well. He immediately said that, "The experience of LSD is samadhi, the same experience that Patanjali has described, the ultimate phenomenon."

This gives a clear illustration that Buddha was right not to use simply the word samadhi. It is dangerous. You can find something else and think it is samadhi; there are similar phenomena. There are people who have become addicted to opium, or hashish, or marijuana. And these drugs have been used for centuries, from the very beginning of man. It is nothing new.

The reason why they became addicted is because the drugs gave them a glimpse of something . . . how things should be. They are temporary glimpses, and they are produced by chemicals so they don't go beyond the mind. But mind gets a glimpse, just as the lake reflects the faraway moon. And the experience is so beautiful that not to repeat it again and again becomes impossible.

All the societies have been fighting against drugs but the fight has not been successful. It will never succeed the way the society is. It can succeed only if you give people the right experience of *samma* samadhi — "*samma* samadhi" means right samadhi — so that they can make a differentiation, a discrimination between what is right and what is wrong. Those who have known their buddha-nature are not addicted to drugs, do not need drugs for their experience. Their experience is not caused by any chemicals; their experience is caused by turning their whole energy in toward the center of their being. That has nothing to do with chemicals. But chemicals can give you an illusion, something very similar.

Hakuin has adopted Buddha's habit. Buddha never spoke about anything without adding the word "right" first, because his understanding was — and he is correct — that everything can go wrong if you get caught up with something similar which is illusory. And you cannot make the distinction because you don't know the real. Unless you know the real, how can you expect to make a discrimination between the unreal and the real?

It was a great contribution of Gautam Buddha that he would talk about all the qualities using the word “right” first. Samma means right. Because everything can be taken for granted as right if you don’t have any experience of it. Then any illusion, any hallucination . . . and these hallucinations will drag you through life after life.

A man like Aldous Huxley, one of the most intelligent men of this century, got caught in it. He became addicted to LSD and he preached that what he was experiencing was the same as what Buddha experienced and Kabir experienced. This is definitely going beyond the limitations. Aldous Huxley has no way to know what Kabir experienced; he has no way to know what Buddha experienced. Buddha’s experience was not dependent on any LSD, it was an inner experience dependent only on his own consciousness.

LSD gives you unconsciousness, not consciousness. If you are in a good mood, LSD can give you paradise; LSD is simply a magnifying glass. If you are in a good mood, a loving mood, and you take LSD, you feel the whole world is filled with love. You will even touch your chair with a loving hand. All around everything will be beautiful, nothing will be wrong.

But it lasts only for a few hours and when you wake up, you wake up in a far worse world than the one you had been in before you took the LSD, because you have seen something beautiful and now you see an ordinary world which has lost its luster. You have seen in LSD rainbows all around; suddenly they have all disappeared. You have seen people having auras and now they are just so ordinary. But even to imagine that they had an aura looks stupid.

But Buddha or Kabir, once they become enlightened . . . this enlightenment is not something that has to be renewed every year like a license. Once it has happened, it has happened. It may become bigger and more mature, but there is no way of going back. That is the criterion of whether you are hallucinating through drugs or you are authentically meditating.

The word “right” has to be understood. Many people have been worried about why Buddha continually uses the word right about every quality. They are not aware that for every real quality there is a phony quality available — “made in U.S.A.” That phony quality is cheap, but it serves only for a few hours, and then you are caught in it because it is so beautiful — again and again . . . And every time you take it, you have to take it in a bigger dose because your body becomes immune. A moment comes when no LSD can make any difference; your body has become completely immune.

India is far more experienced with drugs because for ten thousand years at least it has been trying to use all kinds of drugs and poisons to create a cheap imitation of the ultimate experience. They have gone even to the point . . . even today there are monasteries in Ladakh where they keep cobra snakes.

When a person becomes so accustomed to all the drugs that no drug helps anymore, then the last thing is a cobra bite. The cobra bites on his tongue, then he feels a little samadhi. Otherwise a cobra bite usually means the end. And you will be surprised: there are cases of the cobra dying because the man is so full of poison.

It has been used in India for centuries. Each great king used to raise a beautiful girl, and from her very childhood she was given poison — from smaller doses to bigger doses. It made her so immune that she was able to absorb any dose of poison without falling unconscious. And the

final stage was, when she became a young girl, blossomed in her youth, she could be sent to the enemy king. There was no difficulty in it, she had just to move to the other capital and the king himself would become interested in her. Those girls were chosen from thousands of beautiful girls; they were unique specimens. Immediately the king would become aware that there was a beautiful girl he had never seen before, and just a kiss from that girl was enough to kill the man.

It is good that nowadays you don't find such trained and disciplined girls. They were available at the time of Gautam Buddha. And it was not something that you use one time and then throw away, in the American way. They would kill the king and they would come home ready to be sent somewhere else, because nobody could think that the kiss of the girl had killed the king.

Aldous Huxley and his colleagues are not aware of the whole history of drugs. And why was the girl ready to take it? It gave such a good feeling, such a joyful feeling. She was not thinking about what she was being prepared for, but she was floating in a euphoria.

Buddha is right when he says samma samadhi. He will not accept Aldous Huxley's samadhi as a right samadhi. It is an illusion.

But I wonder that nobody has criticized Aldous Huxley. All the governments are against drugs; obviously they should criticize Aldous Huxley first. But they don't have either the intelligence or the experience. That man at least had the experience of the illusory — the governments don't have the experience even of the illusory. But down the ages, although every government has been against drugs, this has not made any change. No prohibition ever makes any change; on the contrary, it increases your interest in the things prohibited.

I am against all prohibition. My own understanding is that if LSD can give some glimpse of samadhi, then all its bad aftereffects should be removed, because it is a chemical and it is in our hands. Those bad aftereffects are the problem. They should be removed and an LSD number two should be made — clean, taken in complete awareness that it is going to give you only a glimpse. Its addictiveness can be taken out, and when you know it is going to give you only a glimpse, there is no harm. It may lead you to the search for the real.

Rather than prohibiting the drugs, what is needed is to produce drugs which lead people to samadhi, which give an indication: if a chemical drug can be such a blessing, what will the real thing be? It is just a dewdrop in comparison with the real oceanic feeling, the oceanic ecstasy.

But nobody listens to any right approach. Thousands of people are unnecessarily in the jails. The number may be millions, not thousands, and most of them are underage; even six-year-olds have been found taking drugs. Nobody has suggested any solution for it.

And once a boy or girl, whatever their age, takes the drug, they cannot forget the experience. Everything else becomes just rotten; the mind continuously hankers for the drug.

It is the duty of the governments of the whole world, through their chemical drug research, to produce drugs which are not harmful, which are not addictive. Any bad aftereffects have been removed, and only that part which gives a joyous feeling, a desire to dance and a desire to find something real is left, because that feeling will disappear within hours.

These drugs can be used in a right way. Everything can be used in a right way and everything can be used in a wrong way, but it is still the same thing.

Hakuin said to his disciples:

The study of Zen is like drilling wood to get fire.

An old, ancient method.

The wisest course is to forge straight ahead without stopping. If you rest at the first sign of heat and then again as soon as the first wisp of smoke arises, even though you drill for three asamkhyeye kalpas . . .

Asamk means innumerable, and *kalpas* means *yugas*, or ages. If you drill for *asamk*, for innumerable ages, you will never find a spark of fire.

What he is saying is that there are things which have to be done fast. If you do them slowly, at the most you may create smoke but not fire. To create fire you have to drill hard and without resting. If, seeing that the wood is becoming hot, you say, “Let us rest a little,” the wood will become cool again. If, seeing that the wood is smoking, you say, “Now the fire is not far away we can rest a little,” the smoke will disappear, the wood will become cool again. The fire is hidden in the wood but you have to be very continuous until you find the spark, the flame jumping up from the wood.

This is a very good example for meditators. You go a little while and then you say, “I have to go tomorrow again, what is the hurry? It is enough, now rest — and if finally everybody has to become a buddha, what does it matter whether it is Sunday or Saturday? There are only seven days; someday I will become a buddha.” But if you think in terms of going slowly, in a lousy way, taking rests, you will never reach.

Although the path is very short, but it is short only for those who go like an arrow. The arrow does not stop on the way, there are no stations for the arrow. It does not rest a little while in the air and then go again, it simply goes straight without halting on the way. And that should be remembered by every meditator.

I have been using the word “arrow” purposely so that you can understand that going into yourself is not a morning walk — that you can return from anywhere. It is not something that you can do in parts; you have to do it one day in a single quantum leap. Whenever you decide, then don’t look back, just go ahead.

Certainly it needs guts and courage because you are moving in a dark and unknown space. You don’t have with you even a lamp — no companion, you don’t have any map. And meditation demands that you go with the speed of light, so fast that the journey of thousands of lives is completed in a single moment.

Hakuin says:

My native place is close to the seashore, barely a few hundred paces from the beach. Suppose a man of my village is concerned because he does not know the flavor of sea, and wants to go and

taste the water for himself. If he turns back after having taken only a few steps, or even if he returns after having taken a hundred steps, in either case when will he ever know the ocean's bitter salty taste?

You have to go to the ocean; one hundred feet or two hundred feet, that is not the question. You have to go all the way.

But, though a man comes as far as the mountains of Kosshu or Shinshu, Hida or Mino, if he goes straight ahead without stopping, within a few days he will reach the shore, and, the moment he dips the tip of one finger into the sea and licks it, he will instantly know the taste of the water of the distant oceans and the nearby seas, and of the southern beaches and the northern shores, in fact of all the sea water in the world.

But the question is of going to the sea, not just going in a lukewarm way: "Today a few steps and then we will see tomorrow." But tomorrow you will have to take these few steps again. And if this becomes your habit — "A few steps today and then we will see tomorrow" — if this becomes your pattern then you will never reach. Always you will be going on those few steps and then the decision that, "It is enough, now we will see tomorrow."

For the meditator there is no tomorrow.

Future is not the concern of meditation. Future is the concern of the mind; mind cannot live without future. If suddenly all future disappears, mind will be at a loss what to do. Future is the space in which mind goes on weaving imaginations, projects, ideas: what one is going to become, what one is going to achieve. All ambitions are laid out in the future. But if the future completely disappears — suddenly you come to the point where you see that there is no future — either your heart will stop or you will run away backward, thinking that at least the past will be there. But the past is not there.

The past and the future both are in your mind.

Existentially there is only this moment.

So when you meditate today, do it as if this is the last day. You may not have any chance to meditate again, so go all the way to the seashore. And once you have got the taste of your being — the rejoicing, the dancing, the blessing, the ecstasy — then there is no problem, you know the way. It is not far, it is just within you, just a few inches away from your mind. But once you have to know it. Just once you have to know it, then there is no problem. Then you cannot forget it, then you cannot go away against it; then it becomes your very life. And when meditation becomes one's very life, there is nothing more in this existence to make you richer, to make you more of a splendor. The secret is hidden within you.

A Zen poet wrote:

With a pierced net — a net with holes.

*With a pierced net
I have caught*

*All the butterflies
Of the universe.*

He is not talking about butterflies; neither is he talking about a pierced net. He is talking about your mind, which is certainly pierced -- so many holes, so many loopholes, so many stitches here and there, so many cracks. But the poet is saying, don't be worried:

*With a pierced net
I have caught
All the butterflies
Of the universe.*

Just know the secret. And the secret is to go beyond the pierced net. Be a master of your mind, then even a pierced net is capable of catching all the butterflies of the world. Right now your mind catches nothing. From all the holes and loopholes everything goes on leaking out. Have you seen that you are leaking continuously? I don't think . . . but now you will see.

Basho says, sitting silently . . . It is right, but he does not know that when you sit silently it is not necessarily true that the grass grows by itself. What seems to be more likely is that the mind leaks by itself. Basho's experience is a great experience, but this is a very simple experiment that you can do. Just sitting in your room with closed eyes, see: thoughts are rushing this way and that way, everything is leaking.

When I say go beyond the mind, I mean go beyond all this leaking so that you can find something solid to stand upon. Before you take the jump, you need to find a spot at least to stand on, from which to jump into the darkness, into the unknown territory of your own being.

Buddha is reported to have said that everything that is great is bitter in the beginning and very sweet in the end — and vice versa. That which is very sweet in the beginning, for example a honeymoon, is very bitter in the end. Meditation may be entering into darkness, unknown territory, but it ends up in self-illumination, into a great explosion of light. And once the explosion has happened, you remain the buddha forever; you cannot go back. The mind has gone, just as a shadow disappears. You function now from a no-mind, and any action from no-mind is good, is a blessing to the world.

Maneesha has asked:

Hakuin said, "The wisest course is to forge straight ahead without stopping." But if we knew where straight ahead was, would we need to walk it?

It is just a way of saying it. There is no problem in it when Hakuin says, *The wisest course is to forge straight ahead*. He is talking to the disciples, not to the students; he is talking to the meditators.

When I say to you, go straight in, you don't ask me, "Where is this 'in'?" You don't consult an encyclopedia or a map of the world — where is this 'in'? You understand, you know perfectly well where it is, just you have not gone that way before.

So, Maneesha, you know perfectly well where you have to go. Just go straight ahead. Walking will not do, not even running. That's why I have used the word "arrow" — with the speed of light. I have used the words "quantum leap". One moment you were not a buddha and another moment you are a buddha — so fast.

There is no distance between you and your buddhahood, only a misunderstanding. It is something like, two plus two is four but by some mistake you have been calculating that two plus two is five, and I tell you that this is a mistake: two plus two is not five, it is four. Do you think you will have to do something? Immediately you see the point.

It is said that psychotics are ones who think two plus two is certainly five. They are very fundamentalist. All fundamentalists are psychotics. They know everything — where God is . . . They know that the Holy Ghost committed a crime, and rather than hanging God on the cross, the Jews hung the poor boy Jesus — it was not his fault.

The Holy Ghost and God are not separate. The Holy Ghost seems to be God's personality, his mask. Not to say directly that God committed adultery, and with a poor virgin, Mary, they say that the Holy Ghost did it. And the poor boy who was born out of this criminal act, they crucified. They should have crucified God, but the difficulty is . . . In fact, everybody would like to crucify God, but where to find him? They found the only begotten son, so they said, "It is near enough. Crucify this fellow at least."

The psychotics cannot be convinced that two plus two is not five; the neurotics are those who think that perhaps two plus two is four, but they are very uncertain of it, very worried, why is it four? Why is it not five? With five they were perfectly at ease. This is the way psychologists find out who is a psychotic and who is a neurotic.

You cannot remove the psychotic from his position, whatever position he has taken. The neurotic you can remove, but he will remain always worried: "This seems to be right, but who knows? Perhaps I was right before, because then I was at ease. Here, with two plus two making four it creates such an anxiety."

There is no distance between you and your ultimate reality. Just an about turn . . . just, rather than looking outward, close your eyes and look in. In a single instance, when you have forgotten the outside world completely — the past, the future, everything — and you remain only in this moment, looking inward, the happening, the transformation, the arrival of the buddha . . .

Maneesha is also asking:

Is not our uncertainty, our groping, because we have to discover for ourselves what is straight ahead and what is going off track?

If you look in you cannot go off track, because there are no tracks. There are not two ways even. It is the outside world where if you don't know, naturally you will have to grope around. In the inside world you don't even have hands with which to grope. The inside world is a pure seeing.

In this country we have called this seeing *darshan*. Darshan means just seeing. And that does everything, you don't have to do anything else. [...]

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent, close your eyes.

Feel your body to be completely frozen.

Now look inward.

Collect all your life energy just like an arrow and without stopping anywhere go straight forward to the center of your being.

This moment you are the buddha.

This moment you are the glory of being.

This moment all that is yours will be revealed to you, all the secrets, all the miracles.

The greatest miracle is that as you go deeper darkness disappears and a totally different kind of light, a light without source, illuminates your being. And you have an absolute feeling of immortality, of eternity. [...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Forget your bodies — you are not your body.

And forget your mind — you are not your mind.

You are the watcher of both.

The body is lying there, the mind may be chattering — you are watching. You have always been a watcher, unscratched by any thought, any desire, any action. Your purity is eternal. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back.

But come back with your experience, come back with the light that you have seen.

Come back with the joy, with the blissfulness, the pure space in which you have moved.

Sit down for a few seconds, just as a buddha. Utterly silent, immensely contented, knowing nothing but full of wonder, desiring nothing but full of love.

This is your truth.

Okay, Maneesha?

From *The Language of Existence* #2

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14 The Emptiness of the Heart

The Emptiness of the Heart

Maneesha, Bukko has come to the ultimate expression of the experience of one's own being. Very rarely has a master succeeded to such a point as Bukko has in his statements.

Listen carefully, because rarely will you meet a Bukko again.

Bukko said:

Taking things easily and without forcing, after some time the rush of thought, outward and inward, subsides naturally, and the true face shows itself.

That's what I have been telling you. To be a buddha is not a difficult job. It is not some achievement for which you need a Nobel Prize. It is the easiest thing in the world, because it has already happened without your knowing.

The buddha is already breathing in you. Just a little recognition, just a little turning inward . . . and that has not to be done forcibly. If you do it forcibly you will miss the point. It is very delicate. You have to look inward playfully, not seriously. That's what he means by "taking things easily." Don't take anything seriously.

Existence is very easy. You have got your life without any effort; you are living your life without any effort. You are breathing perfectly well without being reminded; your heartbeat continues even in your sleep — so easy is existence with you! But you are not so easy with existence. You are very closefisted. You want everything to be turned into an achievement.

Enlightenment cannot be an achievement. That which you have already — how can it be an achievement? The authentic master simply takes away things which you don't have and you believe you have, and he gives you that which you already have. You are having many things which you don't have at all, you just believe that you have them. The master's function is that of a surgeon, to cut all that is not you and leave behind just the essential core — the eternal being.

It is a very easy phenomenon; you can do it on your own. There are no problems and no risk in taking things easily, but people take things very tensely. They take things very seriously, and that spoils the whole game.

And remember, life is a game. Once you understand it as a game, a deep playfulness arises on its own accord. The victory is not the point; the point is to play totally, joyously, dancingly.

What is called playfulness is very essential in the inquiry of your own being.

Taking things easily and without forcing, after some time the rush of thought, outward and inward, subsides naturally, and the true face shows itself.

When I say to you that meditation is nothing but thoughtlessness, you can misunderstand me. You are not to do anything to become thoughtless because whatever you will do will be again a thought. You have to learn to see the procession of thoughts, standing by the side of the road as if it does not matter to you what is passing by. Just the ordinary traffic — if you can take your thoughts in such a manner that they are not of much concern, then easily, slowly, the caravan of thoughts which has continued for thousands of years disappears.

You have to understand a simple thing, that giving attention is giving nourishment. If you don't give any attention but remain unconcerned, the thoughts start dying on their own. They don't have any other way to get energy, any other source of life. You are their energy, and because you go on giving them attention, seriously, you think it is very difficult to be free from thought. It is the easiest thing in the world, but it has to be done in the right way.

The right way is just to stand by the side. The traffic goes on — let it go. Don't make any judgment of good and bad; don't appreciate, don't condemn. That is what is meant by being easy. It is all okay.

Without forcing . . . and that is something that has to be remembered, because our natural tendency is that if we have to become thoughtless, why not force the thoughts? Why not throw them out? But by the very act of forcing them, you are giving them energy, you are giving them nourishment, you are taking note of them and you are making them important — so important that without throwing them, you cannot meditate.

Just try to throw out any single thought, and you will see how difficult it is. The more you throw it the more it bounces back! It will enjoy the game very much, and you are going to be defeated finally. You have taken a wrong route. [...]

You cannot repress any thought. The very repressive process gives it energy, life, strength. And it weakens you because you become a defeated partner in the game. The easiest thing is not to force but to be just a witness. If a monkey comes, let him come. Just say "Hello!" and he will go. But don't tell him to go. Just be a witness that a monkey has come, or a thousand monkeys have come. What does it matter? It is none of your business. They may be going to some gathering, some religious festival, so let them go. It is none of your concern. And soon the crowd will disappear, seeing that "the man is not interested."

All your thoughts are in the same category. Never force any thought to go away; otherwise, it will rebound with greater energy. And the energy is yours! You are on a self-defeating track. The more you throw it away, the more it will come back.

Hence, what Bukko is saying is the only way — I say the only way — to be thoughtless: don't pay any attention. Just remain silently watching all kinds of things . . . monkeys and elephants, let them pass. Soon you will find an empty road, and when you find an empty road, you have found an empty mind — naturally. Everything outward and inward subsides and there is the tremendous silence which easiness brings.

Now body and mind, free from all motivations, always appear as void and absolute sameness.

When you are in the state of no-mind, which is equivalent to thoughtlessness . . . when there is no thought cloud moving in your mind, you attain to the clarity of no-mind. Mind is simply a

combination of all the thoughts, of all the clouds. Mind has no independent nature of its own. When all the thoughts are gone and the sky is clean and clear, you will see that everything that you have paid so much attention to is nothing but emptiness. Your thoughts were all empty. They contained nothing; they were void. Whatever you thought they contained was your own energy. You have withdrawn your energy — just the empty shell of the thought falls down. You have withdrawn your identity and immediately the thought is no longer alive. It was your identity that was giving it life force.

And strangely enough, you thought that your thoughts were very strong and it was difficult to get rid of them! You were making them strong; you were cultivating them. Just by forcing them, you were getting into a fix.

I agree with Bukko. I have agreed out of my own experience that you can simply sit or lie down and let the thoughts pass by. They will not leave even a trace. Just don't get interested . . . and don't be disinterested either, just be neutral. To be neutral is to be easy, and to be neutral is to take back the very life force that you have given to your thoughts.

Suddenly, a man of no thought becomes so full of energy — energy which he had spread into the thoughts unnecessarily. He was weak because he was nourishing thoughts, which leads nowhere. They promise — thoughts are politicians. They promise great things to come, but the moment they have power, they forget all their promises. This has been going on for centuries.

Those promises are just seductive. Your thoughts are promising you many things: "You can be this, you can be that." And they drive you, they give you motivation to become the greatest leader in the world, to become the richest man in the world. They drive you into ambitions, they become your masters. It is one of the weirdest phenomena that the servants become masters, and the master becomes just a servant. The moment you take your energy back, you become a tremendous force, gathered in your own being and center.

This is the first and the most important thing to understand: never force anything, just let it go easily. If you ever want to find out what the secret of your life is, then you have to go inward. And thoughts are always going outward; every thought takes you outward. When all thoughts cease, there is nowhere to go — you simply are at home.

This at-homeness is meditation.

Utter silence and peace prevail.

In this silence every ambition seems to be stupid; the whole world of objects seems to be nothing but a dream. And your own being shines in its *brightness of heaven, at the center of the vast expanse of phenomenal things, and needing no polishing or cleaning.*

Your own being is so pure, so unpolluted, not even a particle of dust has ever reached there — cannot reach. Only your consciousness can reach there, and consciousness arises in you with no-mind. With no-mind you become so wakeful, so watchful — nowhere to go outside, because all thoughts are gone. So you turn inward, and for the first time face your own original being.

This is beyond all concepts . . .

What you are going to face in your meditation is beyond all concepts.

This is a very pregnant statement. . . . *beyond being and non-being*. We are using the word “being” because you will not be able to understand, while your thoughts are there, that something beyond being and beyond non-being is in existence within you. But when thoughts are gone, the first encounter is with a being, an individual being, bright and clean. And as you enter this being, you find yourself going beyond your individuality into the universal, which is beyond being and non-being. This is what ultimate enlightenment is. And Bukko has put it in the simplest possible way.

Leave your innumerable knowings and seeings and understandings, and go to that greatness of space. When you come to that vastness, there is no speck of Buddhism in your heart.

He is really a great master. His love toward Buddha is great, but that does not mean that he is a follower of Buddha. He is saying that when you enter into this great space, you will not find anything — *no speck of Buddhism* even in your heart. *And when there is no speck of knowledge about you* — you will not know anything, even about yourself — *you will have the true sight of the Buddhas* and the great masters.

Buddha himself had a great difficulty. Perhaps no man has had such a great difficulty in explaining his experience. In this country, the self, *atma*, has been considered to be the ultimate experience. The two other religions of this country, Hinduism and Jainism, have both emphasized that to know your self is all, there is nothing beyond it. Now, Buddha was going against all of India’s traditions by saying that the self is only a door to no-self. Don’t stop at the door, it is a bridge to be passed. Don’t make your house on the bridge because a vaster universe is ready to welcome you, if you can leave this small idea of your self.

What is this self that you carry, that all the traditions of this country and other countries think so much of? Hundreds of philosophers came to Gautam Buddha saying, “What you are saying goes against the *Vedas*, against the *Upanishads*.”

He said, “What can I do? It is my own experience; I cannot deny it. The self has to be transcended; only then you become one with the universe. The dewdrop has to disappear into the ocean.”

Why cling to the dewdrop?

What are you gaining by it?

Have you ever observed? — all the religions teach that you should liberate yourself from misery, from sin. You should earn virtue so that you can make a place in paradise. “You” are the center of all the religions — but not of Zen.

All the religions say, “Liberate yourself from your attachments.” Only Zen has the strange courage to say, “Liberate yourself from yourself!” Liberating yourself from your attachments is child’s play. The real, authentic seeker finally liberates himself not only from other things but even from himself. He drops the very idea that “I am”. Existence is.

Looked at from this viewpoint, it can be said that you are the center of all misery. And however you try, you will find you are only changing misery, from one misery to another misery. Maybe in the gap you feel a little light. From one marriage to another marriage — just in the meantime, while you have to wait, you feel good. But this goodness is not going to last, you are already filling in the form for another marriage. You are the problem. All other problems are just your children — a bus load of children, and you are the driver.

Buddhism, particularly, introduced the idea that it is not a question of dropping this greed, that anger, this passion, that possession. The question is of dropping yourself completely, disappearing into the universal energy from where we have arisen. In India, Buddha was not understood. I am experiencing the same thing. In India I am not understood, because India has, for ten thousand years or more, believed in the self as the ultimate value.

Self is not the ultimate value. What are you going to do with the self when you find it? Just sitting stupidly, looking weird to everybody. Just for a moment think: You have found your self, now what are you going to do? And remember, once you have found it, you cannot escape from it. It clings like German glue! It is not Indian glue . . .

Buddha took a tremendous step in the world of consciousness when he said, “The self is only a stepping stone. Step beyond it! And going beyond it, you are just empty.” But this “empty” is not nothingness. The word that Buddha used has been translated either as “emptiness” or as “nothingness,” but in English both words have a negative connotation. Buddha’s word was *shunyata*. It is not a negative phenomenon.

Bukko gives it perhaps the best expression I have come across:

When you can go and come in all regions equally, when there is nothing specially yours, no within, no without, when you conform to high and conform to low, conform to the square and conform to the round, that is it.

When you are simply available, with no self, you don’t have any boundaries anymore. Without boundaries you can conform to anything.

The emptiness of the sea allows waves to rise . . .

And your emptiness will also allow waves of blissfulness, peacefulness, splendor and unknown glory. You are at the highest peak available to any consciousness. But all these are still waves according to Bukko. That’s why I say he has made a great statement.

The emptiness of the sea allows waves to rise; the emptiness of the mountain valley makes the voice echo . . .

It is empty; otherwise how can it echo the voice?

Just nearby in Matheran, there is an echo point. A very clear echo point — I have seen other echo points in other mountains also. Whatever you say it simply repeats, the whole valley. If you bark like a dog, the whole valley barks like a dog. If you sing a song, the whole valley sings the song. Its emptiness allows it to conform to anything.

And Bukko is saying that when you are utterly empty of being and no-being, of mind and no-mind . . . When you are just merged into the universal it can be said from one side that you are empty, but from the other side you are so full that now you can conform to anything. You can be the moon, you can be the rose, you can be the clouds. Or you can just remain the empty sky.

For the first time you are free to be anything you want. For the first time your emptiness allows you to experience existence from different angles. It is a vast phenomenon. We know only small parts of it because our self-ness creates a boundary. We cannot go beyond the boundary.

The emptiness of the heart makes the buddha.

Once your heart is empty, you are the buddha — serene, silent, utterly blissful, at home. When I say to you that you are a buddha, I mean it. It is just that you have to recover from your dreams, afflictions, addictions. You just have to penetrate deeply to the point where even the self starts disappearing and the door opens to the vast, to the infinite. To be a buddha is the ultimate experience of joy, of eternity, of immortality, freedom and liberation.

And nobody else can do it for you. It is simple: you have to do it yourself.

When you empty the heart, things appear as in a mirror, shining there without differences between them. Life and death as illusion, all the buddhas are one's own body. Zen is not something mysterious; it is just hitting and piercing through.

I am reminded . . . A great industrialist had imported a totally new, sophisticated machine.

It worked so beautifully, a hundred times more productive than the older one, but one day it stopped. Nobody knew what to do.

The manufacturers were informed, and they said, “We can send our man. But his fee is ten thousand dollars plus all traveling expenses.”

The industrialist was losing thousands of dollars every day. He agreed; he said, “Send him immediately, right now.” The man came from the airport and without wasting a single moment, he took from his handbag a small hammer and hit the machine at a certain point and it started working.

The owner of the factory said, “But this is too much! Ten thousand dollars just for hitting it with this little hammer?” The expert said, “No, for hitting with the hammer just one dollar will do. The real thing is knowing where to hit.”

It is true, Zen is not something mysterious. It is just hitting and piercing through.

But don't believe in Bukko. The point is where to hit. It is not mysterious, but the problem is where to hit. Once you hit at the right time, at the right place, it is really very simple; there is nothing mysterious about it.

That's what I have been continuously trying to get you to experience, because there is no way to tell you where to hit. Everybody has to find the place by going deeper into himself, seeing where

the light is coming from, where the life is coming from, and the moving in that direction without any fear. This is what he means by “hitting and piercing through.”

Then don't stop. It will be very beautiful. Even in the beginning, the moment you see your light, your life source, it will have a tremendous beauty and there will be a desire to stop, that you have arrived. Don't do that. Much more lies ahead. Until you are finished completely... when you look all around and you don't find yourself — that is the goal.

This beyond is the buddha.

If you cut off all doubts, the course of life and death is cut off naturally. I ask you all: do you see it or don't you? — How in June the snow melts from the top of Mount Fuji.

He is saying that just as in June the snow starts melting from Mount Fuji . . . so simply, without making any fuss. As June comes, the snow does not say, “Wait a little, I am engaged in something else and I have to wait a little.” No — no resistance, no delaying, no postponing. As June comes, the snow starts melting.

So when you reach to the point where you feel, “this is my center,” then start melting. Your June has come. Then start melting and disappearing. Your very disappearance is making you the whole universe.

Buddha has said, “When I disappeared, I saw stars within me, sun rising, sunset, full moon nights — everything within me, not without me. It was my boundary that had been keeping them out. Now the boundary is no more; everything has fallen in. Now I am the whole.”

At the time of his death the Zen monk, Guin, wrote:

*All doctrines split asunder
Zen teaching cast away —
Fourscore years and one.
The sky now cracks and falls
The Earth cleaves open —
In the heart of the fire
Lies a hidden spring.*

When all is dropping and disappearing, in the heart of all this disappearance is hidden your spring. From this point you will start growing new flowers that you have never seen before.

Maneesha has asked:

Our beloved master,

In the West, they say that love — two full hearts — makes the world go round. Judging by the casualty rate, full hearts don't seem to be the answer. What is the world of the empty heart of Zen?

In the first place, whatever is said in the West, “that love — two full hearts — makes the world go round” is all nonsense. Whether you are here or not, the world will continue to go round.

And two hearts full of love . . . where are you going to find them?

The world would have stopped long ago if it were dependent on two hearts full of love. Even to find one heart is very difficult; two is too much! But those are just mass-mind oriented proverbs, not statements of a man like Bukko. When Bukko says the empty heart is the buddha, he is talking about a very authentic experience. And it does not depend on anybody else.

Love is both, a joy and a misery, because two are involved. Wherever there is duality, there is going to be conflict. You can put the conflict aside for a few days on the honeymoon, but after the honeymoon the conflict arises on every point. What kind of curtains? — and immediately there are two voices. What kind of carpets, and what kind of literature, what kind of furniture? On every point you will find that those great lovers are in absolute disagreement! There is the beginning of real love, which always ends in divorce.

The world of religion is not the world of duality. It is a world of oneness. You have to find your own heart, utterly empty, empty of all rubbish. And when your heart is empty of all rubbish, you are the buddha. There is no other experience which goes beyond it.

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be frozen; gather all your life energy inward and look in.

Deeper and deeper.

Find the center of your being.

Finding the center of your being is the door that leads you beyond yourself, that makes you a buddha.

Be well acquainted with this new space you are in, because you have to carry the buddha twenty-four hours — in your gestures, in your actions, in your words, in your silence, waking or sleeping.

If one can remain with this silence, then there is no need to follow any discipline, any virtue. Everything will happen on its own accord, spontaneously. And when things happen spontaneously, they have a beauty of their own.

It is a blissful moment.

You are dissolved into an oceanic consciousness, you are at home, realizing that which you have carried since the very beginning, for thousands of lives, but have never looked into it . . . never searched for it, have taken it for granted.

It is the most precious treasure in you.

It is the whole universe falling in you. [...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Relax, and just watch the body, the mind.

You remain a watcher.

Just a watcher.

Your body is born and dies.

Your mind every moment changes.

Only this watcher is your eternity.

Remember it.

Remind yourself of it.

And slowly, slowly make it your ordinary, simple life experience, just like breathing. You don't have to make any effort.

When your buddha is that spontaneous, you have found the truth. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back and bring with you all the fragrance that you have gathered.

Sit down slowly, gracefully as a buddha, for a few seconds.

This is going to be your lifestyle.

I don't want any followers.

I want everybody to be a buddha, a master unto himself.

Okay, Maneesha?

From ***The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart***, Discourse #1

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15 Ripe Plum

Ripe Plum

Maneesha, one of the most important things to be remembered all along is that the Zen master is not a philosopher. He is not rational. Basically he is very irrational and absurd, but miraculously he manages – from his absurdity, from his contradictory statements – to make the message clear to you. Today he may say something and tomorrow something else. If you bring your logical mind into it, you will think that you are being confused. But there are different ways of saying the same thing. In fact, even in contradictions the same message can be given.

This is one of the great contributions of Zen, that there are no contradictions. Everything is expressing the same truth, the same reality. The smallest piece of grass and the biggest star are not in any way giving you a different message. Nobody is lower and nobody is higher in existence. There is no hierarchy. And as far as truth is concerned, fundamentally it is inexpressible. But if you want to express the inexpressible, then you can use even contradictory terms to indicate the same thing.

Two different fingers, coming from two different angles, can point to the same moon. The mind may find it difficult. In fact the Zen master's whole work is to make things so difficult for the mind that you become tired of the mind, tired of thinking, and you put it aside. And that moment of restfulness, when you have put the mind aside, brings you to the door of existence.

This small anecdote is very significant.

Ma Tzu stayed with his master, Nagaku, for more than ten years. On leaving him, he became abbot of the Kai Yuan Temple at Chiang-si.

In his sermons, Ma Tzu followed closely the basic insights of the Sixth Patriarch, Eno – particularly, that there is no buddha outside of one's own mind.

This word “mind” can be understood as the ordinary mind, full of thoughts, emotions, sentiments and attachments. And this same mind can also be thought of as empty. You can empty it of all thoughts, of all emotions. And the moment this mind is empty, there is no difference between mind and no-mind. So there is no need to be confused.

A few masters will use: “The present mind contains everything, even the buddha.” But the condition is that the mind should be empty. Then it, itself, is the buddha.

Buddha's own statement is significant. He says, “This very body, the buddha; this very mind, the lotus paradise.” But continuously he is saying that you are not the body, you are not the mind. Then what does he mean with this contradiction? He is simply saying that if you are not identified with the body, this very body is as much a buddha as anything in the world. If you are not filled with thoughts, this very mind is as spacious as the whole sky. He is not contradicting himself, he is simply using contradictory ways to indicate the truth.

Eno was the man who had introduced Ma Tzu to Nangaku. Eno was getting old and Ma Tzu was very young, so he did not take the responsibility of guiding Ma Tzu into meditation. He gave the responsibility to Nangaku who was going to be his successor when he died. But the way Eno introduced Ma Tzu to Nangaku was so insightful: “Be very careful with this young man. He is going to be a buddha, and he is going to be your successor, just as you are my successor. Be very reverent, grateful, that you have got a man who is on the verge of becoming a buddha in your hands.”

Ma Tzu remained closer to Eno’s teachings although Eno was not his master, but Eno had seen his potentiality – the possibility, the invisible future. And at the same time he had seen that his death was coming closer, so taking on the responsibility of a disciple at this moment would be wrong, and particularly of a disciple who needs tremendous care because he is on the very verge of exploding. Being very old he thought it would be better that Ma Tzu should be given into the hands of his successor, Nangaku.

Nangaku was a master in his own right. His teaching was not just a following of Eno. In the world of Zen it is not necessary that a disciple should follow the master in details. All that is necessary is that the disciple should understand the master’s presence, his fundamental realization. It should not remain a belief to the disciple, it should become an actual taste. Doctrines and beliefs don’t matter at all. What matters is the master’s presence and his realization, and the splendor that the realization brings with it.

Eno never asked Nangaku to follow him – Nangaku had his own approach – but he had chosen Nangaku to be his successor. This is very strange. It does not happen in any other place in the whole world. People choose successors to follow them in detail. But Zen is unique in every way. It is not a question of following, it is that this man is also realized. His methods may be different, his devices may be different, his approaches may be different, but he is a realized man, he can be a successor.

But strangely, although Eno had given the responsibility of his initiation to Nangaku, Ma Tzu remained fundamentally close to Eno’s teaching, to Eno’s method of indicating the truth. Eno had caught a glimpse of his future. Nangaku took every care and helped him to become an enlightened master. But he was always more grateful toward Eno for this very reason: that he had refused to initiate him because his death was very close; and he had put him in the hands of the right person, who would take care of him because his spring was coming soon. He would be blossoming, and Eno would not be there.

Certainly, Ma Tzu and Eno, without any relationship of master and disciple, came very close in their hearts. Their hearts started beating in the same rhythm. His master’s teaching was in many ways different, particularly from Eno’s teaching that there is no buddha outside of one’s own mind.

But remember it, when Eno says “mind”, you can translate it as “no-mind”. What he means is “empty mind” which is equivalent to “no-mind”. What is left in an empty mind? – just a pure space. It depends on you whether you prefer to call it the empty mind or no-mind. But both are equivalent, not in the dictionaries, but in the existential experience.

One day, when Ma Tzu was on his way home from Chiang-si, he stopped to visit his old master, Nangaku.

He is a master now in his own right. He had gone to Chiang-si and was returning home from there, and *he stopped to visit his old master, Nangaku. When Ma Tzu had burned incense and made bows to Nangaku, Nangaku gave him this verse . . .*

This too has to be understood. Even when a disciple becomes enlightened, it does not matter, his gratefulness becomes even fuller. It is not that now there is no need of the master. It is not that “Now I am equal to the master, now I am experiencing the same buddhahood as the master.” No, it is not thought of in that way because that is the way of the ego. The ego has been lost long ago. The way of gratitude, the way of humbleness is that “Though I may have become a buddha, my master was the indicator toward the right path, and I will remain forever and forever in deep gratitude toward him.”

Sariputta, one of Buddha’s chief disciples, became enlightened. With tears in his eyes he came to Buddha and he said, “I was avoiding enlightenment, but you went on insisting. Now I am enlightened and my eyes are full of tears because I know you will send me away from you, just to spread the fire. And I understand your compassion, that you are continuously aware of the many who can become buddhas; just a little support is needed. Those who have not gone very far away from themselves can be called back very easily.”

Buddha said, “Then why are you crying?”

He said, “I am crying because I will not be able to touch your feet every day as I have been doing for these twenty years.”

Buddha said, “Do one thing. Keep a map with you, and remember in what direction I am dwelling. Just bow down in that direction. Touch the feet symbolically, touch the earth – because after all this body is made of earth, and one day it will go back to the earth. So touching the earth is not only touching my feet, but touching the feet of all the buddhas who have ever happened. They have all dissolved their bodies in the earth. So there is no need, and it does not look right, that an enlightened person should weep and cry.”

Sariputta said, “I don’t care what people think, but the reality is that tears are coming. And according to your teachings, I should be spontaneous and authentic. Even if you say, ‘Don’t weep,’ I am not going to listen. Tears are coming, what can I do? I cannot be a hypocrite, smiling though the eyes are full of tears.”

It is said that Sariputta, wherever he was, in the morning would look at the map, to find exactly where Buddha was, and in that direction, he would bow down and touch the feet of Buddha. He came to have thousands of disciples of his own and they said, “It does not look right. You need not do such a gesture. You are a buddha yourself.”

He said, “It is true, I am a buddha myself, but I would not have been a buddha if I had not met Gautam the Buddha. It is the meeting with this man that triggered something in me, burned all that was false and brought all that was true in its pristine purity and clarity. I owe so much to this man that there is no way to pay him. All that I can do is touch his feet from miles away.”

He continued to his very last breath. Before he died – he died before Gautam Buddha – the last thing he said to his disciples was, “Forgive me because you cannot see those invisible feet. Let me touch the feet of my master for the last time.” And he bowed down, tears flowing from his

eyes, and he died in that posture. He did not get up again. This is true humility – humbleness, devotion, love, trust.

Ma Tzu, visiting his old master, burned incense in front of him as you burn incense before a buddha statue and made bows to Nangaku. Nangaku gave him this *gatha*, this verse:

*“I advise you not to go home.
If you do, the Tao is immovable.
And an old woman next door to you
Will talk of your infant name.”*

Ma Tzu respectfully accepted it and swore to himself never to go home, however often he might be reborn. Staying only in Chiang-si, he had disciples come to him from all parts of China.

Very strange but meaningful advice. Nangaku told him not to go home. It implies many things. It implies that now you are homeless. The moment you become enlightened you don’t have a home, not even your body is your home. Now the whole existence is your home, so stop this old habit of going home once in a while. There is no home for you anymore. You are a homeless cloud floating in the sky, in total freedom, unattached to anything.

If you do, the Tao is immovable.

Nangaku is saying, “If you don’t listen to my advice and still go home, remember that your Tao, your empty buddha inside, never goes anywhere. So you are just acting; just a dead body, a corpse is going. Your real being is immovable; it never goes anywhere; it is always now and here.” And he said, “*And an old woman next door to you will talk of your infant name.*”

Ma Tzu’s childhood name was Baso. Nangaku is making a joke about his name, that the old woman next door to his home will call him Baso. They will not recognize that he is no more Baso, that he is Ma Tzu, that he is a great master. In their eyes he will be just the same; they have seen him born, and they have seen him growing up. It is very difficult for them to recognize that he has become a buddha, and they will think it very insulting to the Buddha.

Ma Tzu respectfully accepted it and swore to himself never to go home, however often he might be reborn.

He is saying that even if he is born again – although an enlightened person is never born again – he is giving his promise that even if he is born again and again, he will never go home. He has understood his homelessness, his aloneness.

Staying only in Chiang-si, he had disciples come to him from all parts of China.

One day a monk called Ta-mei joined a training assembly of Ma Tzu. Ta-mei asked the master: “What is buddha?”

Ma-Tzu replied: “It is the present mind” – the teaching of Eno that he followed all his life.

But remember that the mind is never in the present; it is either in the past or in the future. In the present is empty mind. You can call it the present mind if you are interested in using the positive

words or you can call it no-mind, if you want to use the negative. The truth can be expressed both ways, negatively or positively. The present mind in fact means no-mind. For those who understand the presentness, all mind disappears. Mind can be in the past, mind can be in the future but never in the present. Hence being in the present simply means being out of the grip of the mind.

Ma Tzu replied: "It is the present mind."

On hearing this, Ta-mei attained his full enlightenment. He took himself off into the mountains, and over the years hardly noticed the passing of time; he only saw the mountains around him turn green or yellow.

One day, Ma Tzu sent a monk specially to test him. The monk asked Ta-mei, "When you once saw Ma Tzu, by what word did you become enlightened?"

Ta-mei replied, "By Ma Tzu's saying, 'The present mind is the buddha.'"

"Now his way is another," The monk told Ta-mei.

"What is it then?" Asked Ta-mei.

"Ma Tzu now says that this very mind which is buddha is neither mind nor buddha," replied the monk.

This very mind is neither the buddha nor the mind. Now Ma Tzu is teaching this way.

"That old fellow!" said Ta-mei. "When will he cease to confuse the minds of men?"

There was no need to change, the old expression was perfect.

"Let him go on with his 'neither mind nor buddha.' I will stick to 'this present mind itself is buddha.'"

He has understood clearly that Ma Tzu has changed his expression from positive to the negative. He can confuse an ordinary man, but he cannot confuse an enlightened man anymore.

"That old fellow!" said Ta-mei. "When will he cease to confuse the minds of men?"

There was no need to change, the old expression was perfect.

"Let him go on with his 'neither mind nor buddha.' I will stick to this present mind itself is buddha.'"

You may think that he is not agreeing with his master, Ma Tzu, but then you will not have understood it. He is agreeing perfectly well. He understands that it means the same. He has just changed the expression from positive to negative. Only the expression is changed, not the expressed. So he says, "Let the old fellow do whatever he wants, but I am going to insist that this present mind itself is the buddha."

When the messenger told Ma Tzu of this exchange, Ma Tzu commented: “The fruit of a plum has ripened.”

Ma Tzu understood perfectly well that Ta-mei had become enlightened. Any unenlightened man would have been confused because the unenlightened mind can never think that positive and negative can be of the same significance and have the same meaning. There is a place where yes and no are not contradictory.

Ma Tzu said, “The fruit of a plum has ripened.”

Ta-mei’s name, in Chinese, means “big plum”.

Takuan wrote:

*The moon has no intent to cast
Its shadow anywhere,
Nor does the pond design to
Lodge the moon.
How serene the water of Hirosawa!*

Takuan’s monastery was near the lake Hirosawa. In this small poem is contained the whole essence of Zen. *The moon has no intent to cast its shadow anywhere . . .*

Do you think the moon has any intention to cast its shadow and reflection into thousands of seas and lakes and ponds? It has no intent at all.

And on the other side, *Nor does the pond design to lodge the moon.*

Neither the pond, the lake or the ocean are desiring to lodge the moon, or are interested to reflect the moon.

How serene the water of Hirosawa!

It is not even disturbed by the reflection of the moon. It does not care. His poem is saying to you to live without intentions, without any goals, without any desire of achievement, any ambition. Just live spontaneously, moment to moment. Whatever happens, accept it joyfully, rejoicingly, without any complaint or grudge.

Even if death comes, let it be welcomed. Dance, sing a song. That has been the tradition in Zen. Each master is expected – and they all have done it – that before dying they should write a small haiku containing their whole teaching.

It shows two things: that they are perfectly aware of death, and that even in death they are not in any sadness. Their haiku says their joy, their fulfillment. Without your asking for anything, existence has given everything to you.

A man who lives with intentions is bound to feel frustration. A man who lives with expectations is bound to feel frustrated because existence has no obligation to you. But if you live without intentions, without expectations, then miraculously you find that everything that you ever

dreamed of is being fulfilled. The moon is reflected in the lake – the lake never asked it, the moon never intended it. Existence goes on spontaneously. Don't bring your desire, your ambition and your expectation; they are the disturbing points. They create a chaos in your mind. But if there is no intention for anything, *How serene the water of Hirosawa!*

The moon is reflected but the water is not even thrilled. Such a beautiful moon and the Hirosawa lake takes the reflection naturally, spontaneously. If it was not reflected, there would not have been any frustration. Moon or no moon, nothing matters. The lake of Hirosawa is silent. And that should be your inner consciousness – just a silent lake.

Maneesha has asked:

How amazing it would be if you turned up one evening in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium, and all you could see was a vast hall of empty mirrors, or rows and rows of juicy, ripe plums.

Do you really think it's possible? Is anything happening? Or better: is nothing happening?

Maneesha, it is happening every day. The whole hall is full of mirrors and full of big plums. Look at Avirbhava, a dancing plum. [...]

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes.

Feel the body to be completely frozen.

Look inward as deeply as possible.

This is the way.

At the very end of the way, you are the buddha.

And the journey is very short – a single step.

Just total urgency and absolute honesty is needed to look straight into your own being.

There is the mirror we have been talking about.

The mirror is the buddha.

It is your eternal nature.

Deeper and deeper.

You have to go in until you find yourself.

Don't hesitate.

There is no fear.

Of course you are alone, but this aloneness is a great, beautiful experience.

And on this path, you will not meet anyone except yourself.

To make it clear that you are just a mirror, a witness of your body, of your mind, of everything.
[...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Relax, and just be a watchful, witnessing mirror, reflecting everything.

Neither do those things have any intentions to be reflected, nor do you have any intention to catch their reflections.

Just be a silent lake of Hirosawa, and all bliss is yours, and this evening becomes a benediction.

This present moment becomes no-mind, no-time, just a purity, a space unbounded.

This is your freedom.

And unless you are a buddha, you are not free.

You know nothing of freedom.

Let this experience sink deep in every fiber of your being.

Get soaked, drenched.

When you come back, come back drenched with the mist of your buddha nature.

And remember this space, this way, because you have to carry it out twenty-four hours
in all your actions.

Sitting, standing, walking, sleeping, you have to remain a buddha.

Then the whole existence becomes an ecstasy. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but bring with you all the experience, slowly, silently, gracefully.

Sit down for a few moments, recollecting the place you have been to, remembering the joy and the silence of being just a mirror, the immense freedom that comes when you are just a mirror unattached to anything, homeless, alone.

You become an Everest of consciousness.

Okay, Maneesha?

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16 Go on Digging

Go On Digging

The word *zazen* has to be understood before I can start discussing the sutras that you have brought. Zen, I have explained to you. It comes from the Sanskrit *dhyan*. Buddha never used Sanskrit as a part of his revolution. Sanskrit was the language of the learned, it has never been a language of the masses. Buddha broke away from tradition and started speaking in the language of the masses. It was a revolt against scholarship, learnedness, the pundits, the rabbis, the people of the scripture, whose whole heart is in their books. And because of those books they cannot see the reality.

Buddha started speaking in the language of his province, Pali. In Pali, *dhyan* changes its form a little bit. It becomes *jhan*. When Bodhidharma reached China, *jhan* again changed, into Chinese; it became *ch'an*. And when the school of Rinzai took the same message to Japan from China, the word *ch'an* came very close to the very original Pali, *jhan*. It became in Japan, zen.

In English there is no equivalent word. There are words like concentration, contemplation . . . but they are all of the mind. *Dhyan* means going beyond the mind. It is not concentration, it is not contemplation; it is just letting the mind be put aside and looking at reality and your own existence directly, without the mind interpreting it.

Have you ever tried small experiments? Watching a rose flower, can you watch the rose flower without the mind saying, “How beautiful”? Can you just watch the rose without the mind saying anything at all? In that moment you are in the state of *dhyan*, or zen.

I am reminded of a story. Twenty-five centuries ago it was a great coincidence that in Greece there was Socrates and in India were Gautam Buddha and Mahavira, and in China there were Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu – all expressing the existential truth, indicating toward it. It is very strange that suddenly, all over the world, there were at least six people fully awakened. Their words may be different because their languages are different, but their indication is to the same moon. That is absolutely certain.

Dhyan means looking, either outside or inside, without thinking – just looking straight forward. Your eyes become only a mirror. The mirror never says anything to anybody. Neither does it condemn the ugly nor does it appreciate the beautiful; it is simply non-judgmental.

Dhyan is, exactly, a non-judgmental state of mirror-like consciousness, just seeing and not saying anything. Then seeing becomes total. And in that seeing is the truth, is the good, is the beauty.

Because of this phenomenon, in the East there is no equivalent word for “philosophy”. In the East the word that has become equivalent is *darshan*, but *darshan* refers to a totally different dimension than philosophy. Philosophy means love of wisdom. It is love of knowledge. And *darshan* means just the opposite: not the love of wisdom or of knowledge, but of seeing. *Darshan* means seeing.

Dhyan is the method, the path; and darshan, seeing the truth with your own eyes, is the goal of the whole Eastern effort.

What is *zazen*? Zen is just once or twice a day . . . in the early morning when the sun is rising and the birds are singing, you sit silently by the side of the ocean or the river or the lake. It is not something that you have to do continuously. It is just like any other activity. You take your bath – that does not mean that for twenty-four hours you have to continue taking a shower. Zazen, exactly, means that: taking a shower continuously. Zen is a periodic effort to see the truth. Zazen is a twenty-four hour, around-the-clock remaining aware, alert, in the state beyond mind. Your activities should show it, your words should show it. Even your walking should show it – the grace, the beauty, the truth, the validity, the authority.

So zazen is an extension of Zen around the clock. Just because of zazen, monasteries came into existence. Because if you are living the ordinary life of a householder, you cannot manage to contemplate, to be in the state of Zen twenty-four hours a day. You have to do many other things.

And there is every possibility that while you are doing other things you may forget the undercurrent.

So monasteries came into existence. The society decided that the people who want to go deeper into their being are doing such a great experiment for the whole humanity, because if even one man becomes a buddha, with him the whole humanity rises a little bit in consciousness.

It may not be apparent. It is just like when the Ganges . . . a big river, so big that by the time it reaches to meet the ocean its name, from Ganga, becomes *Gangasagar*, “the ocean of Ganges.” It becomes oceanic – so vast. As it moves into the ocean, the ocean certainly rises a little bit. The ocean is so vast that even hundreds and thousands of rivers never create a flood in the ocean, but certainly even a single dewdrop raises the level. At least you can comprehend it: a single dewdrop losing itself in the ocean, and the ocean is something more than it was before – one dewdrop more.

The people of those days were certainly more subjective, of more clarity that the real evolution of man is not in developing machines, technology; the real evolution has to happen in the consciousness of man. His consciousness has to become a pinnacle, an Everest, a peak that rises high above the clouds. If even a single man succeeds, it is not only his success, it is also the success of all men – past, present, future – because it gives a clear-cut indication that we are not trying; otherwise, we could also be buddhas. Those who have tried, have become. It is our intrinsic nature.

The society supported the monks, supported the monasteries. There were thousands of monasteries with thousands of monks who were not doing anything. Society allowed them – “We are engaged in production. We will provide you with food and clothes. You go totally into your effort of reaching the highest peak of consciousness. Your success is not going to be only your success. If thousands of people become buddhas, the whole humanity, without any effort, will find a certain rise in consciousness.”

This was a great insight. And society took over the burden of thousands of monks, of thousands of monasteries; all their needs were fulfilled by the society. Today, that society has disappeared

because today even the concept that you are a hidden buddha has disappeared. A strange idea has caught humanity, that every man is an island. And that is sheer nonsense. Even the islands are not islands. Just go down a little deeper and they are joined with the continent.

Everybody is joined, it is just a question of going a little deeper. Our roots are entangled with each other, our source of life is the same.

It was a tremendous insight of those days that they decided – particularly, for example, in Tibet: every family had to contribute one child to the monastery, and in the monastery, he had to do only zazen. He had no other work to distract him.

But now that possibility does not exist. Hence, I have managed different devices in which you can remain in the world – no need to go to a monastery, because there is nobody to support you. You can be in the world and yet manage an undercurrent of fire that slowly, slowly becomes like your breathing. You don't have to remember it.

Maneesha has asked:

Beloved Osho,
On one occasion, Joshu said to his monks: I have single-heartedly practiced zazen in the Southern Province for thirty years.

He is referring to those thirty years with his master, Nansen. He is saying, "I have single-heartedly practiced zazen for thirty years continuously, without ever bothering about how far away enlightenment is." Is it going to happen or not? Is it a truth or just a mirage? Is it something real or only a fiction created by dreamers? Without any doubt, how can one sustain for thirty years the same routine around the clock – walking, sitting, sleeping?

The whole heart is devoted to one thing: how to become more conscious, how to become a witness, how to remain a witness whatever happens. It is possible only if you have come in contact with a master, exceptions not included. The master is an example that the dream can be fulfilled. That it is not a dream, it is a reality – it is just that we have not tried in the right way.

Joshu could continue for thirty years just because he saw Nansen. The very presence of Nansen filled him with a great explosion of joy. "It is possible! If it is possible for Nansen, it is possible for me."

Nansen had asked him, "Do you have a master or not?" and he did not reply to exactly the question that was asked. He said, "I am with the master." He said, "My master is in front of me," indicating Nansen, who was lying down meditating. And he addressed Nansen as "Tathagata".

Tathagata is the most lovely word used for Gautam Buddha. Just out of respect, the disciples don't use the name Gautam Buddha, they use the word "Tathagata." And tathagata is very meaningful.

It comes from *tathata*. Tathata means thisness, just here and now – a man who always remains here and now, never wavering toward past or future, is a tathagata. He neither goes anywhere nor comes back, he simply remains here. Time passes by, clouds pass by, but nothing touches him.

His being here is from eternity to eternity. That is the most cherished word the followers of Buddha used to address him.

Joshu said to Nansen, “Tathagata, I am with my master.” And in that moment, something happened – just in silence. Nothing was said, nothing was heard, but something transpired, something was transferred. In Zen they call it “transmission of the lamp.” And Nansen never asked him to be initiated; neither did Joshu ask to be initiated. The initiation had happened without any ceremony and without anybody ever knowing it. The moment he called him “Tathagata” . . . that moment was very precious.

“I am with my master.”

Nansen accepted him, without saying anything. He simply called the head monk of the monastery and told him, “Take care of this new fellow. He is going to become ripe very soon. If he can recognize me as tathagata, he has already moved half the way. It won’t take long for him to recognize himself as tathagata. He has the right vision, the right direction . . . just a question of a little time.”

But that “little time” took thirty years. Those days of patience are gone. Now you need quick things, the quicker the better. Because of this strange idea of quickness, all things that grow very slowly and very silently have disappeared. Consciousness is one of those things which you cannot grow quickly. Thirty years sitting in zazen, Joshu became enlightened. What Nansen said was, “He will take just a little time.” In the eyes of Nansen, thirty years are just a little time compared to the eternity of existence on both sides. What is thirty years? Nothing, not even a little time.

Joshu was talking to his disciples:

“If you want to realize enlightenment, you should realize the essence of Buddhism, doing zazen.”

The essence of Buddhism is not in the scriptures, not in the words of Buddha. It is something to be understood, because it has far-reaching implications. Whatever Buddha has said is as close to truth as possible, but even being close to truth, it is not true. Even closeness is only a kind of distance. So you cannot find the essence of the experience of Buddha through the scriptures. [...]

To realize the essence of Buddhism is to realize what Buddha realized, is to go as deep into yourself as Buddha went in. That’s what we are doing here. And we are not Buddhists, we don’t belong to any dead tradition or any dead orthodoxy. There is no need. We are all carrying the buddha within us – why go on searching anywhere else?

That is the purpose of zazen, to search through all the garbage that you have accumulated down the centuries. You have been here on the Earth for four million years in different shapes, in different bodies, in different species. You have gathered so much around your small buddha that you will have to dig as deep as possible. And don’t waver in digging.

One great Sufi mystic, Jalaluddin Rumi, one day took his disciples to a field where a farmer had been trying for months to dig a well. The disciples were feeling a little reluctant – what is the point in going there? Whatever he wants to say, he can say here. But Jalaluddin insisted: “You come with me. Without coming you will not understand.”

What the farmer had done was, he would start digging in one place, go ten feet, twelve feet, would not find water and would start digging in another place. He had dug eight holes and now he was working on the ninth. He had destroyed the whole field.

Rumi told his disciples, “Don’t be like this idiot. If he had put all this energy into digging one hole he would have found water, howsoever deep it is. He has wasted his energy unnecessarily.” And that’s what everybody is doing. You start, you go a little bit, and then you start again sometime later, or some years later. You go a little bit from a different direction.

These little bits are dangerous. Your effort should be concentrated, and once you start, and you have a master in whom you can trust and in whom you can see the realization of a buddha, then there is no going back. Then go on digging, even if it takes thirty years.

That’s what Joshu is saying:

In the course of three, five, twenty or thirty years, if you fail to grasp the way, you may cut off my head and make it into a ladle to draw urine with.

I promise you, at the risk of my head, that if you continue . . . one never knows. Three years, five years, twenty years, thirty years – one never knows how much garbage you have gathered. Sometimes it can happen in a single moment. Sometimes it can take years. It all depends on the thickness of the layers of dust, past memories, future aspirations, and how courageous you are to cut the whole thing in a single blow.

Without any rest, go on digging. The water is certainly everywhere; so is the buddha-consciousness in every living being. Only man is so fortunate that he can understand it. Other animals are also on the way . . . Scientists think that the theory of evolution is Charles Darwin’s concept. In the scientific field it is true, but they are not aware of the Eastern concept of evolution. A very different concept – far more relevant and far more valid. It is not that one monkey simply becomes man. It is very difficult. You can force him, massage him, stretch him, operate on his tail, put his tie right, but a monkey is a monkey. I don’t think that suddenly one day some monkey got the idea, jumped out of the tree, stood on his two feet, and started becoming man. If so, all the other monkeys would have become man. They don’t become, they are still there in the trees.

The East does not mean by evolution that a monkey becomes a man, but the consciousness of a monkey may be born into a human being. It is not the body that evolves; it is the consciousness within that goes on taking higher forms, goes on reaching toward higher peaks. Man up to now is the highest peak of all that the animals have been trying to be, unconsciously. This is the fortunate situation for man, that he can do consciously some work that other animals cannot do. It is impossible to teach meditation to a buffalo, although buffalos look more meditative than man. But nothing can be taught, and even if there are a few birds, or a few animals who can be taught a few tricks, that does not become their evolution. They simply become actors. A few animals have the capacity to imitate, but only to imitate. Neither can they add anything nor can they delete anything. [...]

The essence of Buddhism is not in the Buddhist scriptures, the essence of Buddhism is in being a buddha. And one becomes a buddha if he reaches his own center. Joshu is completely certain;

otherwise he would not have made such a statement: *In the course of three, five, twenty or thirty years . . . because in thirty years he became enlightened.*

He thinks, “If a man like me can become a buddha, then anybody can become. There are more intelligent people than me, more courageous people than me. Somebody may become in three years, somebody in five years.”

The question of time is irrelevant. The real thing is to begin now, don’t postpone for tomorrow. Deeper somewhere, there is a life source – that much is certain. You are alive, you are breathing, you are listening, your heart is beating. You are perfectly alive, so there must be a source from where life is coming to you. This much can be said with an absolute guarantee, that you are connected with the universe and that connection is your buddhahood.

Joshu is also reported to have said: Thousands upon thousands of people are only seekers after Buddha, but not a single one is a true man of Tao.

To be a seeker in a lukewarm way, thinking that buddhahood is certain . . . “If I don’t work it out today, there is tomorrow.” The seeker without an urgency – there are thousands of people around the world. There are even more cases now than at the time of Joshu – there are millions of people who have a certain idea that one day they will turn inward, but that day has not come yet. There are so many other things to be done. There are always, there have always been thousands of people interested, but not interested enough to risk their whole life. And unless you risk your whole life, unless it becomes such an urgency that it has to be done whatever the consequences – whatsoever the losses, you have to know yourself – unless this becomes such a total thirst, you will not become a buddha. Or a man of Tao – which are not two things; a man of Tao is the Chinese expression for the same experience as becoming a buddha.

Before the existence of the world the self-nature remains intact. Now that you have seen this old monk – Joshu is pointing at himself. Now that you have seen this old monk, you are no longer someone else, but a master of yourself.

If you have seen me clearly, you have seen yourself clearly, because I am nothing but a mirror. Only a blind man can pass without seeing himself in me, his own image.

The master’s basic, fundamental function is to be a mirror to the disciple so the disciple can have a certain idea of what a man of Tao means, what it means to be a buddha.

Joshu, with a lion’s roar, is saying, “When you have seen this old monk, you are no longer someone else but a master of yourself.” A master only reflects your masterhood. He reflects your potentiality; he reflects what originally you are and you have forgotten.

What is the use of seeking another in the exterior?

Joshu is saying, “If you cannot see the buddha in me, then don’t waste your time. You will not be able to see it anywhere.” This certainty comes with self-experience.

I have called this book *Joshu – The Lion’s Roar*. Normally, buddhas are very humble. Joshu is also very humble, but he cannot help but say with absolute authority that “once you have seen me, you have looked into a mirror. If you cannot find your master here, then you will be wasting

your time wandering around the world, and you will think that you are a seeker. There is no need to seek; just see that you are fortunate to have come across a master.”

This authority arises out of absolute experience.

Once a monk asked Joshu, “What is your family’s tradition?”

By “family” is not meant the ordinary family; by “family” is meant your master, your master’s master. Once you have become a buddha, you are reborn. Now there is no question of your ordinary family, your ordinary parents. Your master has become the one closest to you. Your master has become a rebirth for you. So, “*What is your family’s tradition?*” someone asked Joshu.

Joshu responded . . . and you have to learn how these Zen masters respond, they don’t reply.

They don’t repeat. Their response . . . perhaps the questioner has never dreamt that somebody will respond to his question in this way.

Joshu responded: “I have nothing inside, and I seek for nothing outside. This is the tradition of my family. Inside, an empty heart asking for nothing. Outside, no desire, no ambition. This is the tradition of my family.”

This is the tradition of all the buddhas. This has to become your tradition too.

Ryushu, a Zen poet, wrote:

*Three, two, one, one, two, three –
How are you ever going to probe
The mysteries of Zen?*

*Spring birds busy on my roof
After the rain
Try out some new sound,
Tweeting and chirping.*

What does Ryushu mean by *three, two, one*? Man begins either from the concept of three . . . just like the Hindu *trimurti*, three faces of God, or like the Christian trinity. The words “trinity” and “trimurti” both come from the same root, tri. The word “three” comes from tri. Either one can begin from three – the knower, the known and the knowledge, the seeker, the sought and the search – or one can begin in a contrary way: *One, two, three*. One can start from oneself; then he finds the other, he witnesses it. The other can be anything in your inner experience. And then the third: the third is the very witnessing. The one who witnesses, the other, which is witnessed, and the process of witnessing is the third.

Ryushu is saying: Whatever you do, this way or that, you will not reach to the ultimate. These are all games, which philosophers tend to play. It is better not to get involved in games of spirituality, but just be silent and watch what is happening around you.

Spring birds busy on my roof after the rain – watch these small things, the rain and the mist that it has left behind, and the fragrance that comes from the earth. And the birds who are busy on the roof – they are trying *new sounds, tweeting and chirping*. Ryushu is saying there is no need to be very serious about the search. You can become a witness of ordinary things – the witnessing is the same, whether you witness a bird chirping or you witness your mind chattering.

Whether you witness a sunrise outside or you witness your innermost being, witnessing is the same. Ryushu is saying, rather than getting involved in controversial philosophies, start from small things. Learn from small things one art – the art of witnessing. And then use that same art inward. It is easier to learn it in the outside world.

It is because of this that Zen became a very artistic religion. No other religion is so artistic: their monasteries are beautiful gardens, with beautiful ponds, birds, great trees, thick forests, mountains . . . and all this is for zazen. You sit under an ancient tree and nothing has to be done: just watch.

You know the famous haikus:

*Sitting silently,
Doing nothing,
Spring comes
And the grass grows by itself.*

*Ancient pond,
A frog jumps in
The sound*

– of the frog,

and then the great silence. And you are just sitting by the side of an ancient tree.

Zen has made the spiritual search very aesthetic. First learn it from outside, watching the flowers and the sunrise and the sunset. The effort is not concerned with the object, the effort is to learn the art of watching without any interpretation, without any judgment. A non-judgmental, mirror-like witnessing . . . if you have learned it from outside, it will be easy for you to enter in with the same art. [...]

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes, feel your body to be completely frozen.

Now look inward, gathering all your consciousness – almost like an arrow, forcing toward the center.

At the center you are the buddha. On the circumference you may be anybody, Tom, Dick, Harry; on the circumference you are all different but at the center your essential nature is that of a buddha, the man of Tao.

Deeper and deeper – because the deeper you go, the more will be your experience of your eternal reality. Flowers will start showering on you, the whole existence will rejoice in your silence.

Just be a witness from the center, and you have arrived home. [...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Relax, just remember that you are only a witness. The body is not you; the mind is not you. You are just a mirror.

And as you settle down into a mirror-like witnessing, the whole existence takes on a tremendously beautiful form. Everything becomes divine.

This evening was beautiful on its own, but Joshu's lion's roar has made it tremendously beautiful.

This very moment you are a buddha.

When you come back, bring the buddha with you. You have to live out the buddha in your day-to-day life. I am against renouncing the world – I am for recreating the world. The more buddhas there are, the world will have new skies, new dimensions, new doors opening . . . new mysteries, new miracles.

Collect as much fragrance and flowers as you can. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but come back as a buddha – peacefully, gracefully. Sit down for a few moments just to recollect your experience of the space that you have visited and the splendor that you have experienced.

Every day you have to go deeper and deeper.

So always remember how far you have gone: tomorrow you have to go a little more. It may take two, or five, or twenty, or thirty years – but you are to become a buddha. As far as I am concerned you are right now a buddha, you have only to gain courage.

In those thirty years you will not be changing into a buddha – you are a buddha already. Those thirty years are just to drop the doubt, the doubt that you – how can you be a buddha? Even if I say it, even if all the buddhas try to convince you, deep down is the doubt: “My God, me? and a buddha?”

But one day you will become convinced by your own experience. There is no real conversion without your own experience.

And Maneesha, I am not allowing you any exit.

You have been out for centuries.

Now you have to go in.

Okay, Maneesha?

From *Joshu: The Lion's Roar*, Discourse #4

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17 The Sky of Completion

The Sky of Completion

Friends,

First, a few questions. Somebody has asked:

I heard you say that we sometimes carry other people's wounds.

What does this mean?

Is another person's wound simply their thought pattern that we adopt? If we can so easily accept someone else's wound then why is it so difficult to accept our own buddhahood?

It is a very complicated question, but if you are ready to understand I am willing to answer. Everybody is carrying other people's wounds. In the first place, you are living in a sick society where people are angry, full of hate, enjoy to hurt – that is the superficial level which can be understood easily. But there are subtle levels, there are so-called religious saints who are creating feelings of guilt in you, who are condemning you to be a sinner. They are giving you an idea which will create misery around you.

And the older the idea is, the more easily people accept it. Everybody around the world is saying, "We are living in sin . . . all these people cannot be wrong." I am alone in declaring to you that you have chosen to live in misery; it is your choice. You can drop it immediately and dance in joy, in blissfulness.

But the wound is deep. And one becomes very much familiar with one's misery. One clings to it as if it gives you a certain coziness, but it only gives you a life of hell. But your hell is supported by everybody. If you are miserable everybody is sympathetic to you. Have you ever gone into the matter? When you are miserable, those who are sympathetic to you are nursing your misery. Have you ever seen anybody sympathetic to you when you are dancing with joy? When you are blissful, people are jealous, not sympathetic.

According to me, the whole foundation of life has to be changed. People should be sympathetic only when there is pleasure and joy and rejoicing, because by your sympathy you are nourishing. Nourish people's joy, don't nourish their sadness and their misery. Be compassionate when they are miserable. Make it clear that this misery is chosen by yourself.

On a deeper level . . . perhaps the questioner has not asked me to go that deep, but the answer will remain incomplete if I don't go deep enough.

The very idea of reincarnation, which has arisen in all the Eastern religions, is that the self goes on moving from one body to another body, from one life to another life. This idea does not exist in the religions that have arisen out of Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. But now

even psychiatrists are finding that it seems to be true. People can remember their past lives; the idea of reincarnation is gaining ground.

But I want to say one thing to you: the whole idea of reincarnation is a misconception. It is true that when a person dies his being becomes part of the whole. Whether he was a sinner or a saint does not matter, but he had also something called the mind, the memory. In the past the information was not available to explain memory as a bundle of thoughts and thought waves, but now it is easier.

And that's where, on many points, I find Gautam Buddha far ahead of his time. He is the only man who would have agreed with my explanation. He has given hints, but he could not provide any evidence for it; there was nothing available to say. He has said that when a person dies, his memory travels into a new womb – not the self. And we now can understand it, that when you are dying, you will leave memories all around in the air. And if you have been miserable, all your miseries will find some location; they will enter into some other memory system. Either they will enter totally into a single womb – that's how somebody remembers one's past. It is not your past; it was somebody else's mind that you have inherited.

Most people don't remember because they have not got the whole lump, the whole heritage of a single individual's memory system. They may have got fragments from here and there, and those fragments create your misery system. All those people who have died on the earth have died in misery. Very few people have died in joy. Very few people have died with the realization of no-mind. They don't leave a trace behind. They don't burden anybody else with their memory. They simply disperse into the universe. They don't have any mind and they don't have any memory system. They have already dissolved it in their meditations. That's why the enlightened person is never born.

But the unenlightened people go on throwing out, with every death, all kinds of misery patterns. Just as riches attract more riches, misery attracts more misery. If you are miserable, then from miles, misery will travel to you – you are the right vehicle. And this is a very invisible phenomenon, like radio waves. They are traveling around you; you don't hear them. Once you have the right instrument to receive them, immediately they become available. Even before the radio was there, they were traveling by your side.

There is no incarnation, but misery incarnates. Wounds of millions of people are moving around you just in search of somebody who is willing to be miserable. Of course, the blissful does not leave any trace. The man of awakening dies the way a bird moves into the sky, without making a track or a path. The sky remains empty. Blissfulness moves without making any trace. That's why you don't get any inheritance from the buddhas; they simply disappear. And all kinds of idiots and retarded people go on reincarnating in their memories and it becomes every day thicker and thicker.

Today, perhaps, it has come to the point to be understood and to be dissolved; otherwise it is too thick to allow you to live, to allow you to laugh.

Your own consciousness has no wounds.

Your own consciousness knows nothing of misery.

Your own consciousness is innocent, utterly blissful. To bring you in touch with your own consciousness, every effort is being made to detract you from the mind. The mind contains all your misery, all your wounds. And it goes on creating wounds in such a way that, unless you are aware, you will not even find how it creates them. [...]

Don't keep the past burning you. You have come into an open space, now learn the ways of freedom and love and friendliness. And you all have the capacity; there is no question of being miserable for any reason. No reason is valid to make anyone miserable. In fact, we have to search for a valid reason to be miserable. Otherwise people will ask, "Are you mad? Without any reason and you are miserable?" So somehow you go on inventing reasons. But remember, those are only invented reasons. Nobody asks you when you are happy, "Why are you happy?" There is no reason to be happy. Happiness is our nature. To be joyful needs no reason, no cause.

This commune has to be a commune of understanding, awareness, looking into one's own mind patterns and remembering that they are not yours. You are simply the watcher, and the watcher is outside the mind.

I teach you the watcher.

The only way to get out of misery patterns, whether ancient or new, is witnessing. I say it is the only way, because nobody has escaped from the mind without becoming a witness. Just witness, and suddenly you will start laughing at your own misery. All our miseries are so superficial – and most fundamentally, they are all borrowed.

And everybody is giving his misery to everybody else he comes in contact with. People are talking continuously about their miseries, about their troubles, about their conflicts. Have you ever heard anybody talking about his joyous moments? About his dances and songs? About his silences and blissfulness? No, nobody talks about these things. People go on sharing all their wounds, and whenever you are talking about your misery to somebody, without your knowing, you are transferring a miserable pattern. The person may be thinking that he is only listening to you, but he is also catching the vibe of misery, the wounds.

When I said that you carry other people's wounds, my statement meant that your own consciousness has no wounds. If everybody becomes alert, meditative, there will be no wounds in the world. They will simply disappear. They will not find any house, any shelter. This is possible. If it is possible for me, it is possible for everybody.

And in your question, you also ask why "we can so easily accept someone else's wound," and why it is "so difficult to accept our own buddhahood."

You can accept somebody's wounds because you also have wounds. You understand the language of wounds, miseries, sufferings.

And you ask why we cannot accept the idea of being a buddha.

In the first place, you rarely come across a buddha. Very rarely does a buddha exist in the world, so even if you meet him, you will not understand his language. Most probably you will misunderstand him. You know misery, and he is talking about bliss. You know wounds, and he is talking about eternal health. You know only death, and he is talking about eternity.

In the first place, it is difficult to find a buddha. In the second place, it is difficult to understand his language because it is not your language. Otherwise, this must be the simplest thing in the world – to understand one's buddhahood. It is so obvious. Your very being is already a buddha, but you have forgotten the path to your inner being. You have traveled long on many paths, but they all lead outside. And slowly, slowly you have forgotten that there is a small space within you which you have not explored.

Meditation is nothing but an exploration of your ignored inner space. That small space will suddenly remind you that you are a buddha. And unless it becomes a mindfulness in you that you are a buddha . . . It is not a concept; nobody can convince you that you are a buddha . . . you cannot be otherwise.

If you simply go in, the very experience of the interior space explodes in the recognition and remembrance of your buddhahood. It is not a philosophy; it is an existential experience.

The second question:

What is the relationship between Zorba and Zen?

The whole past of humanity has tried to keep them separate, and this has been an unfortunate experiment. The Zorba has remained incomplete, just superficial. And Zen has remained incomplete; it has only the inner world, and the outer is missing.

My Manifesto of Zen is that Zorba and Zen are not antagonistic to each other. The Zorba can melt into Zen and only then will both be complete.

The man who has lived outside has lived very superficially, and the man who does not know anything about the inner, knows nothing about the existential, about the eternal. And on the other hand, the man who knows something of the inner starts thinking that the outer is illusory.

Nothing is illusory.

The outer and the inner are part of one existence.

I want Zorbas to be buddhas and vice versa. And unless this becomes possible, there will not be many buddhas, and there will not be many Zorbas either. In the completion of Zorba and Zen, a tremendous quality comes to your life: you relish every moment of the outside world, every flower of the outside world. And you relish simultaneously the inner freedom, the inner joy, the inner drunkenness. There is no question of any division. But humanity has lived in a divided way and that has been a catastrophe.

It is time for Zorba to start meditating, and it is time for the people who are meditators not to allow themselves to escape from the world. They have to come to the world with all their juice, with all their ecstasy . . . to share.

It seems very difficult to understand, because the whole tradition of the world goes against it. But I don't see any difficulty.

In myself I have joined Zorba and Zen together; hence I don't see any difficulty. I am in the world, and yet I am not of the world.

I rejoice in the birds, the flowers, the trees.

I rejoice in myself, in my silence, and I don't see there is any difference. The inner and the outer slowly have become melted into one whole. And unless your inner and outer become one whole, you will remain incomplete – and incompleteness is misery.

Only in completion is there bliss.

Only in completion have you come home.

You have come to existence without any conflict, in tremendous ease, relaxed.

The Zorba in the past has been tense and worried that perhaps he is not the right person. And the man of Zen has been with the tension that he has to avoid this, he has to avoid that – that he has to become a recluse far away in the mountains. But the very fear of the world shows your misunderstanding.

The world has not to be feared, it has to be loved.

We are the world.

There is no question of escaping from anything. Every moment everything has to be enjoyed without any guilt, without any inhibition. But all the religions have been against it.

I proclaim with this manifesto a totally new sky for religious consciousness: the sky of completion, the joining of the inner and the outer, of the material and the spiritual, of Zorba and the Buddha.

The third question:

I understand from listening to you that although Mahavira and Buddha were enlightened, they still retained something of their former Hindu conditioning which colored their expression of truth.

In the therapies here, through your discourses, are you cleansing our minds from all conditioning so that we emerge as Buddhas who are absolutely free of conditionings?

It is unfortunate, but it is true that even a Buddha or a Mahavira remained within the conditioning of their social structure. That is a flaw in their enlightenment. It is not as high as it can be; some weights go on dragging them down.

My effort here is to destroy all conditioning – Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, Jewish . . . It does not matter what kind of conditioning you are carrying; I want you to drop it. It is a weight.

And through all the therapies, I am trying to do something else which the West has not understood yet. Through therapies they try to bring you to normal humanity. Their psychoanalysis brings people to what they call sanity.

My therapies here, and all the psychoanalytic methods used, have a different purpose. It is not to make you into normal, average, so-called sane people, it is to cleanse you of all traps, all theories, all religions, all kinds of conditionings. All these therapies here are deprogramming you and leaving you free without any program.

The negative part is being done by the therapies – they destroy your programming. And the positive part is done by meditation. As your minds are deprogrammed there is a danger, because you have become accustomed to live according to a pattern, a lifestyle. If it is taken away, you will immediately jump into another lifestyle, into another prison. You cannot live alone.

Therapies are doing the negative part, and meditation is giving you the joy of living in freedom, the joy of living in awareness – not according to any scripture, and not according to anybody, but according to your own light.

The day you start living according to your own light, your buddhahood is far more complete than even Gautam Buddha's. He is a good pioneer. He started a process, but in the beginning perhaps it was impossible to do it completely. After twenty-five centuries it is possible now to complete the process of Gautam Buddha, and not to create buddhas as against Zorbas, but to transform the Zorba into a buddha, make the Zorba the foundation of the temple of the buddha.

Man is not to be divided, and man has to be given the total freedom of being himself. But this is possible only when, first, therapies cleanse you of all the garbage that society has forced upon you, and when meditation takes you inward so you don't have to look into any scripture for guidance.

The scripture is within you.

And you don't have to borrow light, the light is burning always inside you, the inner flame. Once you have found your inner flame, you have found the whole universe in its completion.

You are the complete man.

The new man has to be the complete man.

A little biographical note:

When Tanka was eighty, he went to Mount Tanka and made a hut which attracted hundreds of seekers. Within three years a big monastery had grown.

The sutra:

Beloved Osho,

Once Hotetsu – a disciple of Ma Tzu – and Tanka Tennen, were on a Zen tour visiting various Zen masters to ask questions.

It is part of the Zen world that even masters go on traveling to different monasteries to ask questions. Questions are asked all over the world, but not the way it is being done in Zen. Masters who have arrived, who know the answer, just playfully go on traveling from monastery to monastery to ask questions to see whether this master is just a pretender. And out of their questions, a whole beautiful tradition has arisen: masters pulling each other's legs, and after finding that both know it, rejoicing in it like children dancing on the beach.

Hotetsu – a disciple of Ma Tzu – and Tanka Tennen, were on such a tour to ask Zen masters questions, and both were already enlightened.

One day, Hotetsu saw fish in a pond and motioned to them with his hand. Tanka said, "Tennen."

The word *tennen* has been given to Tanka because he was one of the most natural, simple, innocent persons.

When Hotetsu saw fish in a pond and motioned to them with his hand, Tanka simply said, "Tennen" – it is natural; don't feel embarrassed. A great buddha playing with the fish . . . don't be worried. Tanka said, "It is natural."

The following day, Hotetsu asked Tanka, "What is the meaning of what you said yesterday?"

Tanka threw his body to the ground and lay there, face down.

What is he saying? "A fish is born out of the water, lives in the water, disappears in the water – it is natural. And now if you ask me again, 'What is the meaning of what you said yesterday?' . . ."

Zen masters are not recorded to repeat their answers, they respond: *Tanka threw his body to the ground and lay there, face down.* He is saying, "I am also a fish made of the earth, and one day I will disappear into the earth. I am not anything more special than a fish."

On his last day, Tanka said to his disciples, "Prepare a bath for me – I am now going."

Then he put on his straw hat, held a stick in his hand, put on his sandals and took a step forward. But before his foot touched the ground, he had died.

What a way of dying! – with such clarity. Death is coming – be prepared for a journey. And the people who saw him standing with one foot up, could not see that that foot was indicating toward the invisible. He had left the body, and the consciousness had become part of the cosmos.

But a man of meditation becomes aware to leave the body when the time is ripe, or when the body is trying to get rid of his consciousness. A Zen man dies consciously; hence his death is not a death but an entry into immortality.

And Tanka Tennen would be the right figure – with his straw hat on, holding his stick in his hand, putting on his sandals, and taking a step forward . . . But before his foot touched the ground, he died, standing, ready for the eternal journey. This shows an intense awareness of one's being. And it also shows that the man is free of the mind.

Only a man free of mind has the clarity to see things as they are going to happen. And he is always ready, even for death. Most of the people are not found ready for death. If you ask them, “Are you ready for death?” they will say, “Wait, there are so many things to do.” Only a man of meditation is always ready. He has done everything in each moment with such totality, with such completion, that he will not ask death to wait.

Tanka ordered his disciples to prepare a bath. They had no idea why he was asking for a bath. They had no idea why he was putting on his straw hat. Where was he going? He did not say anything. The only thing he said was, “Prepare a bath for me – I am now going.” Going where? Going into nowhere, going into the cosmos: “Enough I have lived in the body. Now I am going to dissolve like ice dissolves in the ocean” – a beautiful way of dying.

Zen is both a beautiful way of living, and a beautiful way of dying.

A haiku:

*Autumn wind.
The strength of the lotus
In a single flower.*

There is a strong autumn wind, but that does not make the lotus flower freak out, although it is very fragile. The strength of the lotus in a single flower . . . a small stem.

Such is life. Any moment the strong autumn wind – and the lotus flower is gone. But go the way the lotus flower goes, without any misery, without any fear, without any concern. Existence is our home. Whether we are in the body or not in the body, it does not matter; in fact, not to be in the body gives you a tremendous space. You are everywhere. Once you used to be somewhere.

Now if you ask about Tennen’s address, it will be “care of nowhere,” or “care of everywhere” – both mean the same thing. But he died so naturally, just as he lived. [...]

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent . . .

Close your eyes . . . and feel your bodies to be completely frozen. This is the right moment to enter inward.

Gather all your energies . . . gather all your consciousness. And rush toward the center of your being, which is just two inches below your navel inside your body, with an urgency as if this may be the last moment of your life.

Deeper and deeper . . . Faster and faster . . .

As you are coming closer to the center of your being, a great silence will descend over you, and a great light, just like a flame, will arise from the very center of your being. This flame, this fire, is your eternal nature. This is your original face.

The only thing that needs to go deeper and deeper into the center is witnessing.

Witness, you are not the body.

Witness, you are not the mind.

Witness, you are only a witness, a pure awareness, symbolized by Gautam Buddha.

This moment you are the buddha. Next moment, it depends on your remembrance. You can remember and never forget it. It is up to you to live a miserable life of the mind, or to live a blissful, peaceful, rejoicing of no-mind.

Witnessing is the secret.

Make it deeper . . . [...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Relax . . . and just disappear.

This moment you are melting, and Gautama the Buddha Auditorium is becoming an ocean of pure consciousness . . .

This is the art of both life and death. If you can live with this consciousness, your whole life will become a path of roses, and your death will be the crescendo of your dance.

Sadness, misery, are man manufactured.

Bliss, joy, are your natural potentialities.

Meditation is just to know your potential.

[...] Gather all the light, all the joy, all the peace, all the silence – the whole truth of this moment.

And persuade the buddha, the flame, to follow you. It will come along; it has to come; it is your very nature.

These are the three steps: first, the buddha, the flame of light, follows you like a shadow; second step, the flame is ahead of you, you become a shadow; and the third step, even your shadow disappears, only the flame, the flame of awareness remains. Gautam Buddha is simply a symbol, a metaphor. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back . . . but come with grace and peace and silence.

And for a few seconds sit just to remember where you have been, what space you have entered in. And feel the flame behind you, the warmth, the love, the compassion. The buddha is standing behind you.

The day is not far away when you will be standing behind the buddha. And once you are behind the buddha, just a shadow, it does not take much time for the shadow to disappear and become part of the buddha.

The buddha is only a symbol of pure awareness. Don't take it literally.

This awareness, this silence, this peace, makes you the most blessed people on the Earth at this moment.

You can remain twenty-four hours in this blissfulness. It is up to you. Don't get into old patterns of misery. It takes a little while to get rid of them, but once you have some inner light within you, they start disappearing on their own.

Except meditation, there is no other religion.

Okay, Maneesha?

From *The Zen Manifesto*, Discourse #5

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18 Zen is a Brave Step

Zen is a Brave Step

Friends,

First the questions from sannyasins.

The first question:

From what I heard you say last night about reincarnation, I understand that even individuality is superficial.

Reincarnation was a consolation for me, that “my essence” or “soul” would continue. But now I understand that nothing of me will continue.

In witnessing, do we all “plug in” to the same witnessing energy? Don’t I even have my own witness?

The ultimate truth hurts very much.

Finally, everything is gone, including me and you. What remains is a pure consciousness.

It is not that you are plugged into it, you are no more.

The dispersion is so intimate and so ultimate that first your personality has to disappear, then your individuality has to disappear, then what remains is pure existence. It makes one feel a little worried and concerned, because you don’t know the experience of not being.

Just think for a moment . . . Before this life you were not. Was there any trouble? Any anxiety?

After this life you will not be again. What is the fear? There will be silence and peace, in the same space where anxiety, tensions and anguishes flourished. They all will have melted just the way a dewdrop disappears into the ocean.

Hence, Zen does not teach you self-realization. Self-realization is a much lower goal. Zen teaches you the ultimate: no-self realization, or realizing that disappearing into the whole is the final peace.

Your very being is an anxiety. At whatever level you are, some anxiety will remain. You are anxiety, and if you want anxiety to disappear, you have to be ready to disappear yourself.

The second question:

In my witnessing I have experienced nothing – by that, I mean that there was nothing discernable other than the simple state of conscious waiting. I have witnessed events of the mind, body and

emotions, and I have observed out-of-body experiences, but I don't have the clarity to understand the nature of these things.

What is the nature of no-mind apart from mind? Is it a receptive, passive mind as opposed to an active mind? Or is it truly non-mind? And how does consciousness receive and recognize information if it has no mind-brain to perceive it?

You have asked too many questions in one question.

The first thing to remember is that when I say witness, in the beginning you witness things of the body, of the mind, of the heart, emotions, thoughts . . . layer upon layer you go on witnessing. And finally, you find just a pure mirror, the witness itself. I call it a pure mirror because it is witnessing nothing. This nothingness is your very nature.

Out of this nothingness arises everything, and into this nothingness dissolves everything. And if you are ready to be nothing – even while you are alive – your life will have a flavor of peace, silence, and grace.

All your educational systems and all your cultural beliefs, force you to be ambitious, to be somebody. But to be somebody means creating anxieties in a silent pool, ripples and waves. The greater the ambition, the more tidal is the wave of anxiety. You can become almost insane desiring. Trying to be somebody, you are trying the impossible, because basically you are nobody.

Zen has an absolutely unique perception into the nothingness of everyone. It does not teach you any ambition, it does not teach you to be someone else. It simply wants you to know that in the deepest part of your being you are still nothing, you are still carrying the original purity which is not even contaminated by an idea of “I.”

So while you are witnessing, you say, “I have experienced nothing.” If you have experienced nothing, you should not be there. Experiencing nothing means you are not, nothing is – simply waves in the water, coming and going.

It is not that *you* witness nothing. You are creating another small “I,” but it contains the whole world of ambitions. Experiencing nothing simply means you are not. And there comes a tremendous joy, because the whole energy that was involved in anxieties and desires and tensions, is released in a dance, in a blissfulness, in a silence, in a tremendous insight, but it does not belong to any “I” – a pure white cloud without any roots, floating in freedom, without any reason and without any direction. The whole existence has become its home. It no longer separates itself. This inseparation is the ultimate blossoming of buddhahood. To know that you are not is the greatest knowing.

You ask in your question if there is no one who perceives all this. That no one is not yet no one if it perceives anything. When there is nothing left, there is no perceiver, everything is dissolved into existence.

Zen is the only existential religion in the world. Every religion thrives on your desire to be separate, to be individual, to be special, to be self-realized, to be a saint. Those are all cowardly desires.

Zen is a brave step.

It cannot be transcended by anything more courageous.

A quantum leap into nothing and silence . . .

If you start asking who is silent, you are not silent. If you start asking who is perceiving all this, who is witnessing, you have not yet come to the nothingness I am indicating to you.

And it is such a small thing to understand what you have gained by being – troubles. Zen shows you the way of non-being, the way out of all troubles, the way of silence.

Meditation comes to its flowering when there is nobody. This flower of nobodiness, of nothingness, is the ultimate expression of existential heights. Otherwise, you remain a small someone, somebody, confined. Why not be the whole? When it is possible to drop into the ocean, why remain a dewdrop and be afraid of many kinds of death, of the sun which will evaporate you . . .?

Why not take a small jump into the ocean and disappear? Why not be the ocean itself? It is another way of saying it. When I say, “Be nothing,” I am simply saying, “Why not be everything?”

Disappear into the existence. You will blossom into flowers, you will fly with the birds; you will become clouds, you will be oceans, you will be rivers, but you will not be somebody special with an “I.” The “I” is the trouble, the only trouble, and then it creates many troubles around it.

The whole experience of Zen is the experience of getting into a state of no-I, no-self, and then there is no question – nobody is to ask, and nobody is to answer.

The third question:

It has been said that duality is the nature of mind. But by saying “mind” does that mean only the analytical processes which occur mainly in the left brain? Does that mean that activity such as music, beauty, wholeness and synthesis also arise from an inevitable intrinsic dualism of the mind itself?

Everything that arises out of the mind is bound to be dual. It may be arising from the right side of the mind or the left side of the mind, it does not matter.

There is a music which does not rise from the mind. That music is absolutely soundless and is heard only by those who have come to be nothing. There is a beauty known, there is a dance experienced, only by those who have gone beyond the duality of the mind. Meditation can be defined as going beyond the duality of the mind.

Whatever comes out of the mind is going to be ordinary; it may be music, it may be mathematics. One arises from the right side; one arises from the left side – that does not matter. Your music and your mathematics, your philosophy and your poetry, all are very superficial.

But there is something in you, which is never heard, never can be said, never can be conveyed, but can only be lived. This nothingness I am talking about is a living experience of being no one. Out of that nothingness, a life arises full of music, but the music is soundless; full of beauty, but the beauty is formless; full of joy, but the joy is indefinable; full of dance, but there is no movement.

A meditator knows something that mind is not capable of knowing about. The mind only knows the superficial, and the superficial is always dual; it is divided for and against.

Nothingness is non-dual; it is not divided. It is just pure silence but a very alive silence. And if out of that silence anything happens, that has a beauty and a truth which anything created by the mind cannot be compared with.

A man of silence – he may not even do anything, but just his silence is a blessing to the whole existence. His silence is a music only heard by those who have gone deeper and beyond the mind.

The sutra:

Beloved Osho,

Sekishitsu was a disciple of Choshi. On a visit to Sekito, the monk, Sekishitsu, became enlightened. After his enlightenment, Sekishitsu went back to his master, Choshi. Choshi had also been a disciple of Sekito.

Choshi said, "Did you reach Sekito?"

Sekishitsu replied, "Yes, I did, but was not introduced."

Choshi said, "Who did you receive precepts from?"

Sekishitsu replied, "Not from him."

Do you see the mysterious way Sekishitsu is replying? When asked, "*Did you reach Sekito?*" he said, "*Yes, I did, but was not introduced*", because neither has he a form nor have I a form. Neither has he a name nor have I a name. There is no possibility of introduction."

Choshi said, "*Who did you receive precepts from?*" – then from whom have you received the teachings?

Sekishitsu replied, "*Not from him* – I have received, but I have received from a nothingness. To me, my master was not a man of words. We met beyond the words. We looked into each other's eyes and something transpired. But he has not said a single word; that is why I cannot say that I have received any teachings from him. Of course, being with him I have become enlightened."

Sekishitsu became enlightened just by seeing Sekito. Nothing was verbally said to him; neither did he become a disciple, nor did he become initiated. Just watching Sekito . . . just seeing that pillar of silence, that nothingness – and he simply disappeared as a being, himself; he became a nothing. And without saying a word, he left Sekito and went back to his master, Choshi.

Choshi became enlightened also in the company of Sekito. That is why he is interested in asking what has happened: *“Did you reach Sekito? – because you look as if you have not only reached him, but you have found him. You have penetrated his being; you are carrying his fragrance. What is the matter? Did you reach Sekito?”*

Sekishitsu replied, “Yes, I did, but was not introduced. Nothing was said by him, and nothing was said by me.”

Choshi said, “Then from whom did you receive the precepts? You seem to have realized the purity of consciousness. You cannot deceive me; I can see you are no more. How did it happen? Who told you the precepts – the techniques, the methods, the disciplines?”

Sekishitsu replied, again in a roundabout way, *“Not from him.”*

Choshi then said, “If you were like that there, what will you be here? If you have not received the teachings, the disciplines, the precepts from a great master, Sekito, what kind of person are you going to be here? If you were like that there, what will you be here?”

Sekishitsu said, “Not much difference. I will be the same. Neither time makes any difference, nor space makes any difference. I was no one there, I will be no one here.”

Sekishitsu said, “Not much difference.”

Choshi could not understand this roundabout way of talking; he was a simple man of Zen. He said, *“That is too much* if you are going to be the same here too. Here you have to follow the precepts; here you have to meditate. Here you have to enter into the world of Zen.”

But Choshi was not a great master of Zen, he was a man of Zen. He has understood nothingness, but he was not capable of conveying it. He said, *“That is too much* if you are not going to be any different here.”

Sekishitsu said, “My tongue has no color yet.” He is saying, “Don’t be worried. I am as pure as a child. I have not been programmed by anyone. I am a tabula rasa, a clean slate. My tongue has no color yet.”

Choshi replied, “You noisy novice” – because according to Choshi, this young man was just a novice. He could not penetrate and see in this novice the transformation that had happened in the companionship of Sekito.

He was an ordinary man of Zen who had followed precepts, principles, step by step. He could not understand this quantum leap – a pure jump. That was too much. He thought, “This man is too noisy. I am asking simple questions; he goes on in a roundabout way. *Go away!*” And *Sekishitsu immediately went away.*

This anecdote is very strange. Its strangeness is that it is not necessary that a man of Zen will be able to understand another man of Zen. Of course, a master will be able to understand all kinds of Zen people, but a master is multidimensional, and a man of Zen is only one-dimensional. He has followed a certain path, and he thinks only by following that path does one reach to the nothingness he has reached.

If one has to reach nothingness, any path will do. There are as many paths as there are people to travel. But to understand that, a great master is needed.

There have been enlightened people, but still they could not understand other enlightened people for the simple reason that they have followed a certain path and the other fellow has not followed that particular path. They have become too conditioned by the path. They cannot see that when you are going into nothingness, every path is the right path.

When you are going somewhere, every path is not the right path, but when you are going nowhere, every path is the right path. But to understand that every path finally leads into nothingness, needs a multidimensional consciousness.

There are masters, and there are mystics, and this is the difference: the mystic can understand only one-dimensionally; the master has a wider view, a bird's-eye view. He can look from above and see that all paths are leading to nowhere.

Choshi could not understand Sekishitsu. Sekishitsu left him immediately; this was not the right place for him. He had already gone beyond the paths and the precepts and the scriptures.

Kyorai wrote:

*Immobile haze.
Moon, spring, sleep.*

He is saying this is what life is: "Immobile haze. Moon, spring, sleep" – simple, no complication.

A sannyasin lives a life of such simplicity: the moon, the spring, the sleep – and he is fulfilled. A little immobile haze, and then arises the moon, then comes the spring – there are flowers – and then the sleep.

If you can conceive life in such simple terms – a little dance, a little love, a little playfulness, a little laughter, a little music, and then comes the eternal sleep, life becomes just a small drama. Soon the drama will be over. The acceptance that the drama will be over, that we are just players in a game which is not going to last forever – we will have to vacate the place for other players – then life becomes very simple, without any complexity and without any competition. One lives silently, peacefully, and prepares himself for the eternal peace, the eternal silence, the eternal sleep.

Maneesha's question:

Beloved Osho,

Fritjof Capra contends that, "Modern physics goes far beyond technology. The way – or Tao – of physics can be a path with a heart, a way to spiritual realization."

Do you agree?

Maneesha, the question is not of agreeing or not agreeing, because all agreements and disagreements are of the mind. I know that Capra is simply guessing. He is a man who knows

modern physics and a little bit of the philosophy of Tao. And it is a very small thing to create a physics of Tao, or a Tao of physics, because the word *tao* simply means the way, and modern physics certainly has gone beyond technology. It has moved beyond the boundaries of mind and is in a tremendous chaos. As far as mind was concerned, things were clear. But now, modern physics has come to a point where mind cannot make any sense. Capra himself, being a physicist, started learning about Tao in the effort to understand the chaos that modern physics has entered into, and that perhaps Tao may help.

But he is not a man of Tao, he is still an intellectual trying to make some definitions, trying to make something out of the chaos. He is still thinking of spiritual realization, and there is no spiritual realization because there is no spirit as such.

There is a dispersion into nothingness. You cannot call it realization. It can be called *derealization*, but it cannot be called realization. Nothing is realized. Even that which was there is no more – only silence prevails.

I know the chaos of existence is ultimate. Every effort to bring it into a system is bound to fail. Philosophies have failed; science has failed. More efforts will be made, but I can predict with absolute authority that no system is going to explain this vast existence. It is bound to remain a mystery.

Religions have tried in their own way but failed. Philosophies have failed. Science came with great systematic logic, and in the beginning of this century science was absolutely certain that it was going to succeed and explain away the whole mystery of existence, bring it down to rationalization. But on the contrary, the opposite has happened.

As science has approached deeper into reality, all its old concepts have become invalid. Now Aristotelian logic is no longer logic, and Euclidean geometry is no longer geometry. Now, science is at a point where everything again has become mysterious – no explanation, and no reason. But the effort continues.

My approach is totally different. I want you to know that chaos is the very nature of existence, you cannot make it a cosmos. You cannot make it a system, either by Tao or by Zen. You cannot make it an explained system where everything is knowable.

I have always divided existence into three segments: the known, the unknown, and the unknowable.

That which is unknown will become known tomorrow.

That which is known today was unknown yesterday. But the known and the unknown are a very superficial part. Beyond both is the unknowable. That unknowable is a chaos; it is irrational, illogical. There is no way to bring it into explanations, no way to make a science of it, or a philosophy of it. This chaos I have called nothingness. You can enter into it, you can be one with it, you can rejoice in it, but don't try to conceptualize it.

So it is not a question, Maneesha, of my agreement or disagreement with Fritjof Capra. I know existence is a chaos and will remain always a chaos. All efforts of man are bound to fail in systematizing it. It is not a system; it is not mechanics. Hence, I always have loved Gautam

Buddha's statement. Asked, "What is truth?" he replied in a very strange way. He said, "Whatever works." He did not define truth, he simply said, "Whatever works is true."

And more than that, even today we don't know. We don't know what electricity is, we only know how it works; we don't know what it is. There is no way to know it, and there is no need.

Let existence function.

Use it, love it, rejoice in it. There is no need to systematize it; all systems are bound to fail. Zen is not a system; it is a path toward the chaos.

Go dancingly in without bothering and worrying what it is.

Rejoice in it!

What is the point in thinking what is music?

Love it, listen to it, create it.

What is the point of finding the definition of dance?

Dance!

But still very few people are of the age, mature enough, to recognize this immense chaos without fear, and to use it as much as you can. Love it, live it, and drop the childish idea that you have to understand it. What are you going to do by understanding it? And in the first place, understanding is not possible.

Mind is too small, and existence is too vast – without any boundaries. There is no possibility that there will ever be a system which explains everything. And that will be a very fatal day if some system explains everything – life will lose all joy.

People are trying to explain everything. Then love becomes just chemistry, biology, hormones. Do you ever think about love as hormones, as biology, as chemistry? And the moment you think about chemistry, biology, hormones, love loses all mystery. And certainly, love is more than chemistry, biology, or hormones can explain. They may explain sex, but they cannot explain love.

Love need not be sexual. In fact, at the highest point even sexuality transforms into love . . . love unexplained, irrational, a chaos. You can experience it, but you cannot explain it. [...]

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent . . .

Close your eyes . . . and feel your bodies to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to enter in.

Gather all your energies, all your consciousness, and rush toward the inner center of your being. It is exactly two inches below the navel, inside you. In Japan they call it *hara*.

Rush toward this hara with absolute urgency as if this is going to be your last moment.

Faster and faster . . .

Deeper and deeper . . .

As you start coming close to the hara, a great silence descends over you. And inside, the whole interior becomes luminous.

At the very center there is a flame, the eternal flame of life. This eternal flame of light is your very source and is also going to be your goal.

As you come closer and closer to the flame, everything becomes peaceful inside, but a peace that is alive, a silence that is a music, and an experience which allows you to become a witness.

Witness that you are not the body.

Witness that you are not the mind.

Witness that you are only a witness, a pure witness and nothing else.

Deepening into this witnessing, one disappears into the ultimate chaos of existence. That is the greatest bliss.

Make the witnessing deeper and deeper. [...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Just remain a witness and melt like ice melting into the ocean.

Let this Gautama the Buddha Auditorium become an ocean of consciousness.

You are no more, only a consciousness pervading, prevailing.

You are drowned into the ocean.

This is the most refreshing experience, and the most transforming experience. This experience makes buddhas out of you.

A buddha is one who has come to be at ease with existence.

These three steps may be significant for you . . .

First, the flame follows you. The flame is represented symbolically by the buddha. In the East the face of the buddha has become a symbol of our ultimate nature.

In the first step you will find the buddha following you.

In the second step, you will find yourself following the buddha as a shadow.

In the third step, even the shadow disappears, only the luminous buddha remains. And this luminosity is eternal and immortal, can be experienced but cannot be explained.

Those who have experienced it, their life has become a light, a joy, a bliss, and a blessing for all those who have come into their contact. In other words, their life becomes a love, a song, a dance, for no reason at all.

This great experiment is being done here.

You are the most fortunate people in the world this moment, because everybody is busy in the mundane – you are looking for the sacred and the ultimate.

Before Nivedano calls you back, collect all this experience, this silence, this peace, these flowers that are showering on you – this music, and this luminosity. And persuade the buddha to come with you, to become part of your everyday existence. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but with the same grace, the same silence, the same beauty.

Sit for a few moments just to remember what space you entered into, what golden path you have followed.

And it is not a question just to do meditation at some time of the day. Meditation has to become your very breathing.

Whatever you have been in these silent moments, you can be twenty-four hours . . . an undercurrent of joy, peace, love, compassion.

In whatever you are doing, you can do it as if you are a buddha. The “as if” will disappear soon, because fundamentally you are buddhas. It is not something that you have to achieve, it is something that you have forgotten and you have to remember it – *sammasati*.

Okay, Maneesha?

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19 The Ocean is Always Waiting

The Ocean is Always Waiting

Friends,

First, the questions from the sannyasins.

The first question:

I heard you say that the center of our buddhahood is at the “hara” point inside the body.

Is there also a sleeping buddha energy in our hearts and in the third eye? Do we all have the same potential of remembering, each one with his or her unique expression of creativity.

Please comment.

The *hara* center is the source of all your energy. It can grow just like a tree grows from the roots into different branches.

According to a different calculation of Patanjali, the energy can be divided into seven centers, but the original source remains the *hara*. From the *hara* it can go up.

The seventh center is in the head, and the sixth center is what you call the third eye. The fifth center is in our throat, and the fourth center is exactly in the middle: the heart. Below the heart there are three centers, above the heart there are three centers. But all these seven centers grow like a tree from the original source of the *hara*. That’s why, in Japanese, suicide is called *hara-kiri*. People don’t cut their throats; they don’t cut their heads. They simply pierce a small knife into the *hara* center – just exactly two inches below the navel – and the person dies. And you will not know at all that somebody has committed suicide. Just the energy is released from the body, the source is opened.

I am trying to take you to the very original source. From there, it is up to you to bring your energy into any center you want.

Between the first center, the *hara*, and the seventh center in the head, the energy can move just like the energy moves into different branches of a tree – from the roots to the uppermost flowering. The *hara* is the source. When it blossoms, it reaches suddenly to the seventh center, piercing your heart, your throat, and at the seventh center it blossoms as a lotus. Man is also a flowering tree.

These are different ways of looking at things. Patanjali’s yoga is one of the ways; Zen is a totally different approach. To me, Zen seems to be more scientific, while Patanjali seems to be more intellectual and philosophical. Zen begins from the very source.

The buddha is not lying anywhere else other than in the hara; he is not lying in the heart. The energy can be brought to the heart, then the expression will be love. The energy can be brought to the third eye, then you will be able to see things which are not ordinarily visible – auras of people, auras of things, a certain kind of X-ray energy that goes deeper into things. If the same energy moves into the seventh center, according to Patanjali, *samadhi* is attained – you become enlightened.

But these are different calculations. Rather than talking about *samadhi*, I would rather encourage you to enter into the source of energy from where everything is going to happen. I don't like to talk about the flowers much, because that talk will remain simply conceptual. My approach is more pragmatic.

I want you to experience your sleeping energy. And the moment you reach there, it awakens. It sleeps only if you are not there. If your awareness reaches to the source, it wakes up, and in its waking is the buddhahood. In its waking you become for the first time part of existence: no ego, no self, a pure nothingness.

People are afraid of the word “nothingness”. In the second question that fear is clear.

The second question is:

Though you have infused the sutras with life and humor, for me, Zen remains the stark beauty of the desert, and I long for something else.

Why can't I drop the idea that my way is not via emptiness but fullness? I still carry this longing for some kind of union, a melting outward rather than dissolving into nothingness inside.

With whom are you going to melt outside? You don't know even who you are. And who has told you that Zen is a “stark beauty of the desert”? Zen is perhaps the most beautiful path, full of flowers, songs, joy and laughter.

But the idea of nothingness creates a certain fear of dissolving into a desert. It is just your mind that makes the difference between emptiness and fullness. In realizing either, you will be realizing the other too, because they are two aspects of one thing, of one phenomenon which can either be called nothingness, or can be called fullness.

Zen has chosen rightly to call it nothingness, because fullness can give you misunderstandings. The moment you think of fullness you start imagining. The moment you think of melting into someone outside, immediately a God, a paradise, a heaven, and all kinds of imaginations arise. And those imaginations will prevent you from going anywhere.

I am not helping your imagination at all. I am trying to uproot your imagination in every possible way. I want to leave you without images, in utter silence, in nothingness, because that is the only way to attain fullness.

When the dewdrop disappears in the ocean, it is not that it becomes nothing. Yes, it becomes nothing but it also becomes the ocean. In its disappearing as a dewdrop, it is also becoming, on the other side, the whole ocean. So the fullness and nothingness are not two things, only two

concepts of the mind, but in reality, only two ways of saying one thing. But emptiness, or nothingness is better because it does not allow any imagination to arise.

Fullness is dangerous. If rightly used there is no problem. Fullness will also dissolve God, and paradise, and heaven and hell, and incarnation. But mind is capable of using the idea of fullness in a way that it cannot use the word “nothingness”. To prevent the mind from using the word “fullness” and preventing you from realizing the reality, from Gautam Buddha onward the word “nothingness” has been chosen. But nothingness is not absence; nothingness is not dead. Nothingness is fullness, but so full that you cannot define it, and you cannot make a limit or a boundary to it.

Unbounded fullness and nothingness, in experience, mean exactly the same. But for the beginner, the word “fullness” is dangerous – and everybody is a beginner.

Begin with something which is less capable of taking you astray from reality. Fullness can be used only by a master who knows that nothingness and fullness are synonymous. But for the beginner it is dangerous, because for him fullness means something *opposed* to nothingness. If “fullness” is synonymous with “nothingness”, then there is no problem. Then the desert becomes the ocean, then there is only beauty and song and dance.

Nothingness gives the idea to the mind that everything will be lost. You will be lost, but the truth is, the moment everything is lost, including you, you have gained the whole universe – all the stars within you, and the vast universe inside your heart. It is not losing anything, so don’t be worried about “nothing”.

The questioner goes on:

Is this just my refusal to grow up? Am I fooling myself? Are we all to embrace the Zen Manifesto no matter what “type” we feel we are?

There is no question of type. All types are just superficial. At the innermost core there is only one existence. The Zen Manifesto is not for a particular type, it is for all – for men and for women, and for black and white, and for Hindu and Mohammedan, and for Christian and Buddhist. It does not matter what kind of conditioning you have been brought up in, Zen is simply a technique of entering into your *veryness*. The entrance is so deep that nothing remains, and all is found.

Gurdjieff has written a book, *All and Nothing*. I would like to withdraw the word “and”, because all is nothing; there is no question of and. Whatever type you are – introvert, extrovert – it does not matter, you are all part of the same existence. And when you relax into existence, all your differences disappear, only oneness remains. You can call that oneness whatever you like, but basically it is nothingness. You can give it any color, you can call it by any name, but don’t start calling it by another name from the beginning, because that can take you astray. Somebody may think that he can call it God, then he will start worshipping a God which is man manufactured.

For the beginner, *nothing* is the most secure path to avoid the mind playing games. *Nothing* is beyond the reaches of the mind, so it cannot play games with it. But anything else you name it, mind is capable of playing games with it.

The whole effort of meditation is not to allow the mind to play games. It has been playing games for centuries. One has to come to the point of seeing all the games of the mind: all the gods, all the messiahs, all the prophets, all the religions, all the philosophies.

Existence is available to a silent being, not to the learned, not to the well informed, not to the scholar. It is available to the innocent, and meditation is a way of becoming innocent again. Getting back your childhood, being reborn, knowing nothing, a silence, a joy, a blissfulness arises which is indestructible, which is eternal.

The third question.

The other night I heard you say there is no reincarnation, no soul, no spirit after death, only pure consciousness, pure silence.

Is it then so, that part of us, of our own consciousness, is aware of that endless silence, of being part of the whole?

All your questions arise out of your mind, and I am trying to take you beyond the mind. Beyond the mind there is no question, there is nobody to ask. But if you start thinking about meditation, that is not meditation. If you start thinking, “What happens when awareness witnesses the wholeness of existence?” – if you start thinking, you are moving inside the mind in a circle, in a vicious circle, you may find some answer, but that answer is not the truth.

You have to go beyond thinking, beyond questioning.

Just be silent and you will know.

You are not, only the universe is.

You are just a ripple in the river, arisen in a certain moment and dissolved back again, but not for a single moment separate from the river. This whole existence is nothing but a vast ocean in which all kinds of ripples, tidal waves, arise and disappear, and the ocean remains.

That which remains is your authentic reality. That which comes and goes is just a dream, or just a phenomenal, illusory reality. For a moment the tidal wave can think, “I am separate from the ocean.” But you know, however the wave may be tidal, it is not separate from the ocean. Even when it is thinking it is separate – and it looks separate – deep down it is part of the ocean.

I am taking you deep down into the ocean. In that ocean nobody is separate. Suddenly a tremendous joy arises that you are eternal, that you are oceanic, that you have always been and you will always be . . . but not those small personalities that you have taken again and again. This time you stop taking personalities and simply become the whole.

The *whole* feels more cozy than nothingness, but they are simply two ways of saying the same thing. The whole appears cozy, it seems you are becoming more than you were before. And *nothing* seems dangerous – you are becoming even less than you were before. You were at least something, now you are becoming nothing. But becoming whole, you have to become nothing. Becoming part of this vast existence, you have to relax the separateness, the individuality.

The questioner goes on asking:

Does the dewdrop still feel or experience some aliveness inside, when first it melts into the ocean?

The dewdrop disappearing into the ocean feels for the first time a vast life. Only the boundaries that were making it a small dewdrop have disappeared. The dewdrop is still there, but it is no longer a dewdrop, it has become the ocean.

I have told you about Kabir, one of the most important mystics of the East . . . When he became enlightened, he wrote down a small statement: “The dewdrop has disappeared into the ocean – *Bund samani samund mein.*” But before dying, he called his son Kamal, and told him, “Please correct it. It was my first experience, now I know better. The dewdrop has not entered into the ocean; on the contrary, the ocean has entered into the dewdrop. So write it down that the ocean has entered into the dewdrop.”

Both mean the same, but one is the experience of the beginner. The dewdrop disappearing into the ocean feels like you are going into a vast nothingness. But once you have reached into that vastness, when you are no more, suddenly that vastness is you. There will be no self, no sense of I, but a sense of totality, of wholeness.

It is difficult to bring it into language. That difficulty is shown in Kabir’s changing the statement. In fact, no statement is right. Whether you say the dewdrop has entered into the ocean, or you say the ocean has entered into the dewdrop, you are still talking of two things: the dewdrop and the ocean.

If I had been present there, I would have said, “It is better to cancel both. Whatever has happened has happened, nothing can be said about it. One thing is certain, there is no more separation. So what has entered into what does not matter. There have been two, now there are not two.”

The sutra:

Gyozan said to Sekishitsu, “Tell me what to believe in and what to rely on?”

Sekishitsu gestured across the sky above, three times with his hand, and said, “There is no such thing” in which you can believe, on which you can rely. “There is no such thing.”

What does he mean by gesturing three times to the sky?

Existence is just a vast sky with no end and no beginning, no boundary. There is nothing to believe and nothing to rely on. One has just to disappear. All belief is man manufactured, and all reliance, relying on a God or relying on a Christ, is out of your own fear. But there is nothing to rely on, and there is no security.

Don’t cling with anything. Everything that you cling to is your own imagination. Your gods are your imagination, and your philosophies are your imagination. Existence has no gods, and existence has no philosophies – just a pure silence, but a silence which is musical, a silence which is a dance; a silence which blossoms into many flowers, and into many fragrances; a

silence which manifests into immense varieties; a silence which is multidimensional. Just relax into it. Don't try to believe or trust because all belief and trust is clinging.

Sekishitsu gestured across the sky above, three times with his hand, and said, "There is no such thing . . . You just please drop the very idea of relying on anything, or believing in anything. Just relax. This whole existence is yours. Why do you want to cling to a special part? It is all the same – the same sky, the same silence, the same purity, the same innocence."

Gyozan asked, "What do you say about reading sutras?"

Man wants something. His mind is always finding some way to avoid the nothingness or the wholeness of existence.

Gyozan immediately asked, "If there is nothing to believe and nothing to rely upon, what do you say about reading sutras?"

Sekishitsu replied, "All sutras are out of the question. Doing things that are given by others is dualism of mind and matter. And if you are in the dualism of subject and object, various views arise. But this is blind wisdom, so it is not yet the Tao."

"If others don't give you anything, there is not a single thing . . ."

Have you ever thought about it? – that all that you know has been given to you by others. If you put that aside to sort out what is yours, you will find a pure emptiness is yours, everything else has been given to you by others. Then who are you? – a pure emptiness hidden behind all those words and beliefs and religions which have been given to you.

"If others don't give you anything, there is not a single thing. That's why Bodhidharma said, 'Originally, there is not a single thing.'"

Bodhidharma's statement is of tremendous value. There is not a single thing separate from the whole. All separation, all dualism, is the game of the mind. As the mind becomes silent, all that game disappears, all those players are no longer there.

What happens when you wake up in the morning to your dreams? In the dreams have you ever doubted that what you are seeing is not true? Nobody in a dream can doubt. Whatever appears in the dream, appears to be the right thing at the moment. Only in the morning when you wake up, do you suddenly realize that all the night you have been dreaming of things which were not true, which were just mind creations, flowers in the sky – Bodhidharma's statement, *"Originally, there is not a single thing."*

"You see, when a baby comes out of the womb, does he read sutras or not? At that time, the baby does not know whether such a thing as buddha nature exists or not. As he grows up and learns various views, he appears to the world and says, 'I do well and I understand.' But he doesn't know it is rubbish and delusion."

"Of the sixteen ways or phases of doing, a baby's way is the best. The time of a baby's gurgle is compared to a seeker when he leaves the mind of dividing and choosing. That's why a baby is

praised. But if you take this comparison and say, 'The baby is the way,' people of the present days will understand it wrongly."

And that is true even today.

When I am saying to you, "Be nothing," I am saying in other words, "Be just a newborn baby, a pure consciousness, undivided into knowing and not knowing. The baby's consciousness is pure. It knows nothing, it does not even know that it is."

You must have heard small babies talk about themselves as separate persons. They may say, "The baby is hungry. The baby is thirsty." The "I" takes a little time to grow. It takes at least three to four years for society to create an ego so the baby starts saying "I" – instead of saying, "The baby" is hungry, "I" am hungry. And the moment the baby says, "I am hungry," he is no longer a baby. He has entered into the world, he has graduated, in a way.

But according to Zen, once again you have to become just like the baby. This second childhood is the greatest revolution possible.

Jesus is right when he says, "Unless you are born again, you will not understand the truth." He had been traveling for seventeen years in the East, and he had gathered much. And that was really the problem why Jews could not accept him. He was talking a language that was not theirs. He was making interpretations of the old Jewish tradition in a way that had never been heard and that he had brought from the East.

And at that time the whole of the East was full of the vibrations of Gautam Buddha. Just five hundred years had passed since Gautam Buddha was alive, yet his vibrations were in the atmosphere. And there are possibilities that Jesus did not only visit India and Tibet. There is a place in Japan which also proclaims that he visited there. In the Bible these seventeen years are completely missing. They don't listen to any other argument, because that would be disturbing to whatever they have managed up to now as their Holy Bible.

Jesus was much influenced by Buddha's teachings. This teaching, "Unless you are born again," has the flavor of Gautam Buddha who was continuously teaching that you have to drop everything that has been told to you, you have to forget everything that has been programmed in you. Gautam Buddha brings to the world the first deprogramming philosophy. And when you are deprogrammed completely, who are you? – just a pure nothingness, just a silence. All words were borrowed, all sutras were given to you, all religions were forced on your mind. You are not a Christian, and you are not a Hindu, and you are not a Mohammedan. You were born just as pure consciousness.

You have to attain that pure consciousness again. This is rebirth. And this rebirth brings the buddha, the pure consciousness, the consciousness which knows no boundaries; hence, it cannot call itself "I." A consciousness which has become one with the whole has nothing to say.

Buddha, when he became enlightened, for seven days remained silent, wondering whether to say it or not. "Because in every possible way," he thought, "it will be misunderstood. It is better to be silent." But a compassionate heart could not be at ease in silence, seeing that "Everybody needs this exploration, this excursion into himself. I know the way, if I remain silent it will be criminal.

But if I say anything, then too, I will not be absolutely right in saying it, because that which is beyond the word cannot be brought into the word.”

So after seven days, compassion took over, and finally he tried. For forty-two years he went on saying to people and always making it clear – “What I am saying, don’t take it literally. I want you to experience it. Only then will you understand the meaning of it – not by hearing me, but by experiencing it. Only by tasting it, will you know the sweetness of it.”

Boncho wrote:

*River.
One long line
Through snowy fields.*

Life is just a river, a long river – a long line through snowy fields. And then what happens? Each river, small or big, dissolves into the ocean, finds its way without any guide, without any sutras, without any masters. It may go astray, zigzag, but finally it reaches to the ocean. And that reaching to the ocean is becoming the ocean. That is the rebirth. That’s what we mean by meditation. That’s what we mean by the Zen Manifesto.

Every river is destined to disappear one day into the ocean. Go dancingly, go joyfully. There is no need to be worried, there is no need to be hurried. The ocean is waiting – you can take your time, but take your time with joy, not with tensions and anxieties. Rejoice and dance and sing and love, and finally you are going to disappear into the ocean. The ocean is always waiting for you. [...]

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

He requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

. . . and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent . . .

Close your eyes . . . and feel your bodies to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to enter in.

Gather all your energies, your total consciousness, and rush toward the center of your being, just two inches below the navel inside you – the hara center – with an urgency as if this is the last moment of your life.

Faster and faster . . .

Deeper and deeper . . .

As you are coming close to the center of your being, a great silence descends over you, and a peace that you have never known, and a light fills your whole interior.

From the very center you can do one thing which is not possible otherwise – witnessing.

Witness that you are not the body.

Witness that you are not the mind.

Witness that you are only a witnessing consciousness, a pure consciousness, eternal, immortal.

This is your being and everybody's being. [...]

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Relax . . . but remember the source of hara – the very source of your life – and flowers will start showering on you.

You are melting into a consciousness which is vaster than you. Gautama the Buddha Auditorium has become an ocean of consciousness. Ten thousand buddhas are no longer ten thousand but a single, a non-dual, pure consciousness without any ripples in it.

This is your buddha nature. Out of this buddha nature arises all ecstasy, all blessings, all blissfulness.

This is only an experiment – it has to become your very life. You have to be a buddha around the clock, alert, aware, compassionate, loving, rejoicing in life, expanding life, making it a dance.

Zen is not a renunciation, it is a rejoicing.

It is the manifesto of dance and celebration.

Collect all these experiences which are happening inside you, you have to bring them to your everyday life. And ask the flame, which is symbolized by the face of Gautam Buddha, to come behind you. The face of Gautam Buddha is everybody's original face. It will come behind you. It has been waiting for you to request it.

First, it will come following you. Soon you will find you are following it. And at the third stage, the final stage, you will disappear, only the buddha remains.

The buddha is your nothingness, and it is your fullness. It is your wholeness. You can call it any name, but remember it is universal. It has nothing to do with you and me. [...]

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back . . . but come back as buddhas – silent, peacefully, with a grace, and a beauty.

Just for a few moments, remember where you have been, the space that you entered, the center that you touched, the flame that you have seen.

Slowly, slowly, meditation becomes your very life, your very heartbeat. That day is the most blessed day when you don't have to meditate – you are meditation. Your very being, whatever you are doing or not doing, is silent, peaceful, loving, alert and aware of its eternity.

This experience is the only sacred experience. This experience brings back again your childhood, a pure silent consciousness, rejoicing in everything that it does. The whole universe becomes a celebration and life is no longer a misery. Every moment existence is available for you to rejoice, sing, dance, love, and expand your life energies.

Mind only thinks, meditation lives.

Mind is a very small thing.

Meditation is as vast as the whole universe.

I teach you the vastness, I teach you universality, I teach you eternity.

You are not what you appear in the mirror, you are much more. You are vast, as vast as the whole universe.

This declaration is the Zen Manifesto.

Okay, Maneesha?

From *The Zen Manifesto: Freedom from Oneself*, Discourse #7

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20 Sammasati – The Last Word

Sammasati – The Last Word

Friends,

Before the sutras there are a few questions from the sannyasins. [...]

The first question:

Gesta Ital, a former famous German actress, was the first western woman who was allowed to enter in a Zen monastery in Japan and to work with an enlightened Master.

She wrote two books about her path and her experience of enlightenment. When I read these books I had the impression of a very hard and lonely path. Being with you is much more joyful and playful. Would you like to say something about this difference?

The traditional Zen is hard. It takes twenty to thirty years of constant meditation, withdrawing from everywhere all your energy and devoting it only to meditation.

That tradition comes from Gautam Buddha himself. He had to find his enlightenment after twelve years of hard work.

I am changing it completely from the traditional Zen, because I don't see that the contemporary man can devote twenty or thirty years to meditation only. If Zen remains that hard, it will disappear from the world. It has already disappeared from China, it is disappearing from Japan, and it disappeared from India long ago. It remained in India for only five hundred years after Gautam Buddha. In the sixth century it reached China, remained there for only a few centuries, and moved to Japan. And now it is almost extinct from both China and Japan.

You will be surprised to know that my books are being taught in the Zen monasteries. Zen masters have written letters to me: "Perhaps now Zen will exist in India, in its original place. It is disappearing from Japan because people are more interested in technology, in science."

That is the situation in India too. Very few people are interested in the inner exploration. Here you can find a few people from every country, but these are so few compared to the five billion human beings on the earth. Ten thousand is not a great number.

Zen has to be transformed in a way that the contemporary man can be interested in it. It has to be easy, relaxed, it has not to be hard. That old traditional type is no longer possible, nor is it needed. Once it has been explored, once a single man has become enlightened, the path becomes easy. You don't have to discover electricity again and again. Once discovered you start using it – you don't have to be great scientists.

The man who discovered electricity worked on it for almost twenty years. Three hundred disciples started with him and nobody remained because it took so long; everybody became exhausted. But the original scientist continued. His explanation to his own disciples was, "The more we are failing in finding the root of electricity, the closer we are going to the very root. Every failure is bringing us closer to the discovery."

And finally, one night in the darkness, suddenly the first electric bulb started radiating. And you cannot conceive the joy of the man who had been working for thirty years. His silence . . . he was

in awe. He could not believe his own eyes that after all this time it had happened, electricity had been controlled – “Now in our hands, how to use it?”

His wife called to him, “Come inside the bedroom, it is the middle of the night. Put the light out!”

She was not aware that it was no ordinary light, and that the scientist had called her – “Come here and be the first to see something original. You will be the first person I will introduce to the secrets of electricity.”

Now, you don’t have to work for thirty years to know about electricity. Nor do you have to work thirty years for the Zen experience. The awakening of the buddha is a very easy and relaxed phenomenon. Now that so many people have awakened, the path has become clear-cut; it is no longer hard and arduous. You can playfully enter inside and joyously experience the awakening of awareness. It is not as far away as it was for Gautam Buddha.

For Gautam Buddha it was an absolute unknown. He was searching for it like a blind man, knowing nothing about where he was going. But he was a man of tremendous courage, who for twelve years went on searching, exploring every method available in his time... all the teachers who were talking about philosophy and yoga. He went from one teacher to another, and every teacher finally said to him, “I can tell you only this much. More than this I don’t know myself.”

Finally, he remained alone, and he dropped all yoga disciplines. He had his own five disciples, who thought that he was a great ascetic. But when they saw that he had dropped all yoga discipline, and he was no longer fasting, they dropped him. All those five disciples left him – “He has fallen from his greatness; he is no longer a saint; he has become ordinary.”

But in that ordinariness, when he had dropped everything – just being tired and exhausted – that full moon night when the five disciples left him, he slept under the bodhi tree, completely free from this world and completely free from the very search for that world. For the first time he was utterly relaxed: no desire to find anything, no desire to become anything. And in that moment of nondesiring, he suddenly awakened and became a buddha. Buddhahood came to him in a relaxed state.

You don’t have to work for twelve years; you can just start from the relaxed state. It was the last point in Gautam Buddha’s journey. It can be the first point in your journey.

And the first thing Gautam Buddha did after he became awakened was to go in search of those five disciples to share what had happened to him. And when he reached those five disciples... they saw him coming – it is a very beautiful story.

They decided, “Gautama is coming, but we are not going to pay any respect to him. He has stopped being a holy man; he has started living a relaxed and comfortable life.”

But as Buddha came closer, all the five disciples stood up. Although they had decided not to pay him any respect, in spite of their decision, they could see that Gautama had changed completely – “He is no more the same person we used to know. He is coming with such a silence, with such contentment. It seems he has found it.” And they all touched Gautam Buddha’s feet.

And Gautam Buddha’s first statement to them was, “When you had decided not to pay attention to me, why are you paying such respect?”

All those five asked to be forgiven. They said, “We were thinking you were the same old Gautama. We used to know you – for five years we have been together, but you are not the same person anymore.”

Enlightenment is such a transformation that you are a totally different person. The old person dies away, and a totally new awareness, a fresh bliss, a flowering, a spring which has never been there . . .

It took twelve years for Gautam Buddha. It need not take even twelve minutes for you. It is simply an art, to relax into yourself. In the traditional Zen they are still doing whatever Buddha did in his ignorance, and finally they drop it.

I am telling you, why not drop it right now?

You can relax this very moment!

And in that relaxation, you will find the light, the awareness, the awakening.

What has happened to Gesta Ital, is not necessarily an introduction to Zen. She has been in the company of old and traditional Zen masters. I understand Zen to be a very simple, innocent, joyful method. There is nothing ascetic in it, nothing life-negative – no need to renounce the world, no need to become a monk, no need to enter a monastery. You have to enter into yourself. That can be done anywhere.

We are doing it in the simplest way possible. And only if Zen becomes as simple as I am trying to make it, can the contemporary man be interested in it. Otherwise, he has so much to do – so many things to do, so many paths to explore, so many things to distract him.

Zen has to become such a small playful thing, that while you are going to sleep – just before that – within five minutes you can enter into yourself, and you can remain at the very center of your being the whole night. Your whole night can become a peaceful, silent awareness. Sleep will be in the body, but underneath it there will be a current of light from the evening till the morning.

And once you know that even in sleep a certain awareness can be present inside you, then the whole day, doing all kinds of things, you can remain alert, conscious. Buddhahood has to be a very normal, ordinary, simple and human affair. [...]

The third question:

When energy goes inward it turns into thoughts, feelings, emotions, and when energy goes outward it turns into relationships with beings and nature. But when energy does not move inward or outward, it is just there pulsating, vibrating. Then it is one with existence, one with the whole is this Zen?

Exactly. When the energy is just there – not going anywhere, just pulsating at the original source, just radiating its light there, blossoming like a lotus, neither going out nor going in – it is simply here and now.

When I say go inward, I am simply saying don't go on moving in the head.

The whole society forces your energy to move in the head. All education consists of the basic technique of how to pulsate the energy only in the head – how to make you a great mathematician, how to make you a great physician. All the education in the world consists of taking the energy into the head.

Zen asks you to come out of the head and go to the basic source – from where the educational system around the world has been taking the energy, putting it into the head, and turning it into thoughts, images, and creating thinking. It has its uses. It is not that Zen is not aware of the uses of energy in the head, but if all the energy is used in the head, you will never become aware of

your eternity. You may become a very great thinker and philosopher, but you will never know, as an experience, what life is. You will never know as an experience, what it is to be one with the whole.

When the energy is just at the center, pulsating . . . When it is not moving anywhere, neither in the head nor in the heart, but it is at the very source from where the heart takes it, the head takes it . . . pulsating at the very source – that is the very meaning of Zazen.

Zazen means just sitting at the very source, not moving anywhere. A tremendous force arises, a transformation of energy into light and love, into greater life, into compassion, into creativity. It can take many forms, but first you have to learn how to be at the source. Then the source will decide where your potential is. You can relax at the source, and it will take you to your very potential. It does not mean that you have to stop thinking forever, it simply means you should be aware and alert and capable of moving into the source. When you need the head you can move the energy into the head, and when you need to love, you can move the energy into the heart.

But you need not think twenty-four hours. When you are not thinking you have to relax back into your center – that keeps the Zen man constantly content, alert, joyful. A blissfulness surrounds him; it is not an act, it is simply radiation.

Zazen is the strategy of Zen. Literally it means just sitting. Sitting where? Sitting at the very source. And once in a while, if you go on sitting in the source, you can manage all mental activities without any disturbance, you can manage all heart activities without any difficulty. And still, whenever you have time, you need not unnecessarily think, you need not unnecessarily feel, you can just be.

Just being is Zazen.

And if you can just be – only for a few minutes in twenty-four hours – that is enough to keep you alert of your buddhahood.

Before the sutras, a little biographical note.

Tozan Ryokai, a disciple of Ungan, was born in China in 807, and died in 869. He originally was a member of the Vinaya sect, but later became interested in Zen and set out on a journey to find a Master.

The Vinaya sect is the Buddhist name of the people who are interested in the scriptures, in the words of the masters in a philosophical and scholarly way. They are mentally active, but they are not moving into the experience themselves. They gather as much knowledge as possible, they become very wise. They know all the answers that are in the sutras, but they don't have a single experience of their own.

Tozan was first a scholar, studying all the literature – and Buddhism has the greatest literature in the world. Compared to any other religion it has more scriptures.

Just as Gautam Buddha died, his disciples became separated into thirty-two branches. Immediately there were thirty-two branches of scholarship, of different scriptures and sutras, pretending to be authentic, pretending to be the only true ones. The problem was that for forty-two years Gautam Buddha was teaching, morning and evening – a few people heard a few things, a few people heard a few other things.

In forty-two years he was constantly moving from one place to another place. Obviously there were different people who had heard different things from him, and they compiled sutras.

Immediately thirty-two branches started. Gautam Buddha had not written a single word, but every branch pretended to be the authentic one – “this is what Buddha said . . .”

It is very difficult now to find out what actually was said by Gautam Buddha, and what was added by the disciples. So there is a great scholarship in the Buddhist world where people search into scriptures trying to find what is authentic and what is not.

Just recently, the same kind of scholarship has started in Europe. The professors and the very scholarly Christians have formed a special committee, the Biblical Scholars. And they are now searching for what exactly was said by Jesus, and what has been added by others – what is fiction, what is myth, what is truth. [...]

They meet every few months, and they discuss papers. And if you listen to them, almost ninety percent of the Bible disappears. And they are absolutely right, because for the first time they are searching at the roots from where this saying, this statement, this gospel, has come. A few are found to be in the ancient scriptures of the pagans, and those scriptures have been destroyed so that nobody can prove that Jesus ever said these things.

Even the idea of the virgin birth is more ancient than Jesus. It was a pagan god, a Roman god who was thought to be born from a virgin, and to the same god, the crucifixion happened. And to the same god is connected the idea of the resurrection. All that has been taken and compiled into the Bible. The pagans have been destroyed, their temples have been burned, their scriptures have been destroyed. Now these Biblical Scholars are trying to find ways and methods to uncover the facts from contemporary literature about when Jesus was alive.

One of the gospels was written in India – the fifth gospel of Thomas. It has not been included in the Bible, for the simple reason that it was not available to Constantine, who was compiling, and who was deciding what was to be included and what was not to be included. It was because of him that all these ideas and mythologies and fictions have been added to the life of Jesus.

The same is true about Buddhist literature: much is borrowed from Hindu literature; much is borrowed from Jaina literature, because these were contemporaries. And a few contemporaries of Buddha have left no literature behind, but they were also teaching in the places where Buddha was teaching, so many of their teachings have been compiled and mixed with Gautam Buddha's.

A very scholarly tradition exists in Zen to find out the original teachings of Buddha. But even if you can find what is the original statement and what is not, that does not mean you can become enlightened. You may know exactly what Buddha said, but that will not make any difference to your consciousness.

Tozan was first a scholar, and found that however you go on trying to know and find the original sources, you still remain ignorant. You become a great knower, but deep down you know nothing about yourself. And the question is not to know what Buddha said, the question is to know your own inner buddha, your own inner consciousness.

After being in the scholarly Vinaya sect, he became interested in Zen. He dropped out of the scholarly world and set out on a journey to find a master. He had been with teachers, great scholars, but none of them was a master.

And a master need not be a scholar – it is not a necessity. He may be a scholar – that is accidental. What is necessary and existential is his own knowing, his own experience.

So he went in search of a man who himself knows what is the truth, and who can tell him the way to it. The sutra:

Beloved Osho,

Tozan had a question about whether inanimate objects expound the dharma. Tozan visited Isan, who recommended that he go to see Ungan.

His inquiry was whether inanimate objects in the world expound the dharma, the ultimate truth – whether you can find in the objective world the ultimate truth.

That's what science is trying to do – trying to find the ultimate truth in objects. You cannot find it in objects. But this is part of the Zen tradition, that also . . .

Isan was himself a master, but he recommended Tozan to go to see Ungan, seeing that Tozan was a scholar. Isan was not a scholar – he was a master, he knew his own buddhahood. But seeing that this man Tozan was bound to ask philosophical questions, he sent him to Ungan, who was a master and a scholar.

With Ungan, Tozan was first made aware of the truth, and he composed the following gatha to record his experience:

“How wonderful! How wonderful!

The inanimate expounding the dharma –

What an ineffable truth!”

Ungan told him to be in silence. And as you become silent, everything around you starts expounding the truth: the trees and the mountains . . . all the objects become suddenly aflame, afire with truth. If you are sitting silently in your own source of being, then everything in the world indicates towards the ultimate.

When he found his source he wrote this *gatha*:

“How wonderful! How wonderful!

The inanimate expounding the dharma –

What an ineffable truth!”

If you try to hear it with your ears, you will never understand it.

Only when you hear it through the eye, will you really know it.”

He is talking about the third eye. As you go inwards... your energy is in the head. First it has to pass the third eye. Going deeper it will pass through the heart, the fourth center – and the whole energy is at the first center. From there it can rise back to the seventh center in the head.

But if you remain hung up in the seventh center only, you will never know as an experience what is truth. You have to come down to the depths, to the valleys of your being. You have to reach to the very roots from where you are joined with the whole.

Ungan asked him, “Are you happy now?”

Tozan answered, “I do not say that I am not happy but my happiness is like that of someone who has picked up a bright pearl from the heap of garbage.”

For a while after his enlightenment, Tozan continued to travel around China.

He is saying that unless you see it yourself, there is no other way to know it. You cannot hear it from somebody else. No buddha can preach it to you, no master can teach it to you. They all can only make gestures. They all can only indicate their finger towards the moon, but the finger is not the moon. You have to drop looking at the finger, and to start looking at the moon. When you look at the moon yourself, you know the beauty of it. You cannot know that beauty by looking at the finger pointing to the moon.

All knowledge is pointing to the moon. All sutras, all scriptures are pointing to the moon – just fingers. And people are clinging to the fingers, they have completely forgotten that the fingers are not the point. The moon is far away, the finger is only pointing towards it. Don't cling to the finger; forget the finger. Forget all knowledge, all scriptures, and look at your truth yourself.

It is not a question of your ears, it is a question of your very eye, your inner eye. Unless you look inside . . . you cannot know it by hearing, or by reading. Becoming knowledgeable is not becoming a buddha, but becoming an innocent child, reaching to the sources playfully without any seriousness, joyously and cheerfully, dancing... Take your energy to the very source and remain there just for a few moments, and you will be filled with a new experience which goes on growing every day.

Soon you find you are filled with light – not only filled, but the light starts radiating around your body. That's what has been called the aura, and what Wilhelm Reich was trying scientifically to prove. But he was forced into an insane asylum because people could not understand what he was talking about – “What radiation is he talking about?”

But now, Kirlian photography is able to take the photograph of your life aura around your body. The healthier you are, the bigger is the aura. In your happiness it dances around you; in your misery it shrinks. When a miserable person was used as an object by Kirlian, he could not find any aura in the photograph – the aura had shrunk inside. But when he photographed children dancing and enjoying, joyfully plucking the wildflowers or collecting stones on the seabeach, he found such a tremendous aura around them.

The same aura has been found around the buddhas. And it is almost miraculous that although no photography was available in the times of Buddha or Krishna, the paintings, the statues all have the aura – a round aura around the head.

Once you have seen your own life source, you start seeing the same light radiating from every object in the world, every person in the world. You can see from the aura whether the person is miserable or is happy.

His master, Ungan, asked him, “*Are you happy now?*”

Tozan was a scholar, and he knew the way a buddha speaks. And now he himself has experienced it – you can see it in his answer. He says, “I do not say that I am not happy, but to say I am happy will make it a very ordinary statement. To say that I am happy is not something great, and what I have found is so great that it cannot be described by the word ‘happiness’, it is far more. So I will not say I am not happy. You have to understand, it is something more than happiness. Words cannot describe it. Only this much I can say: I have found a bright pearl in the heap of garbage.”

What he is calling the “heap of garbage,” is his scholarship. He has accumulated so much knowledge unnecessarily, and all that knowledge was only heaping up and hiding the original being – your very roots into existence.

It is not ordinary happiness, in fact there is no word that can describe it. ‘Blissfulness’ comes closer, even closer comes ‘benediction’, still closer comes ‘ecstasy’. But beyond that, no word is there; the experience is far deeper than ecstasy itself.

For a while after his enlightenment, Tozan continued to travel around China. One day he arrived at Leh T’an and met the head monk, Ch’u. Ch’u greeted Tozan and said:

“Wonderful, wonderful – the inconceivable realms of Tao and Buddha!”

Ch’u greeted Tozan, and in his greeting he said, *“Wonderful, wonderful – the inconceivable realms of Tao and Buddha! I can see in you the very meeting of Buddha and Tao.”*

It is the same experience. *Tozan responded, “I don’t know about these realms you are talking about. Who is talking of them?”*

He is indicating to Ch’u that it is beyond words – *“Look inside yourself. Who is saying these words? From where are these words coming? That source is beyond the words.”*

Ch’u remained silent, and Tozan shouted “Speak!”

Ch’u then said, “No need to fight about it. That is the way to miss.”

Tozan replied, “If it has not been mentioned, how can there be fighting and missing?”

Ch’u could make no answer to this.

Tozan then said, “Buddha and Tao – next you will talk of sutras.”

“First you mention Buddha and Tao, and then you will start talking about sutras. Once you begin to talk, there is no end to talking, and the thing you are trying to talk about is beyond words.”

Ch’u replied, “What do the sutras say about this?”

Tozan responded, “When all is understood, words are forgotten.”

Ch’u said, “This is sickness of the mind.”

Tozan said, “Is this sickness slight or severe?”

Ch’u could make no reply to Tozan.

That was the reason Isan sent him to Ungan. He was a man of great scholarship, and once he has found his own buddha, he will become a very great master. Ordinary teachers will not even be able to understand him. Ch’u was an ordinary teacher of Tao and Buddhism both. And you can see that Tozan denied even Buddha and Tao. Those words only indicate, they don’t describe. And he said to Ch’u, *“If you go on, soon you will start talking about sutras.”*

You can see his philosophical approach. Now that he has found the truth, it is very difficult for anybody who is just a scholar even to talk with him. He will be able to defeat any scholarly person very easily.

Seeing that Tozan is saying that even Buddha and Tao are not exactly the experience, Ch’u, as a teacher, said, *“What do the sutras say about this?”* He is still talking about sutras – *“What do the sutras say about this unknowable, this inexpressible? You are indicating that it is beyond Buddha and beyond Tao.”*

Tozan said, “When all is understood, words are forgotten. Once you have known it, once you have tasted it, you become silent.” Of course, a teacher will not agree on this point.

Ch'u, in anger, said, "This is sickness of the mind."

Tozan said, "Is this sickness slight or severe?"

What kind of sickness? It is not sickness, but a teacher is confined to the mind. You say anything beyond the mind and you are simply talking nonsense. You are sick, you are mad, you are insane. A teacher is confined to the mind, a master is beyond the mind.

Ch'u could make no reply to Tozan's inquiry whether this sickness was slight or severe.

One day the monk Akinobo, went to visit a poet friend of his. Chatting, he mentioned that he had made a collection of poems – one for each day of the year. He read him one:

The fourth day

Of the new year;

What a better day

To leave the world?

That very day was the fourth day of the first month of the year 1718. No sooner had he finished reciting the verse than Akinobo nodded his head and died.

Zen masters know how to live and also know how to die. They take neither life seriously nor death seriously. Seriousness is a sick way of looking at existence. A man of perfection will love to live, and will love to die. His life will be a dance, and his death will be a song. There will be no distinction between life and death.

It is time, Nivedano . . .

Osho leads a guided meditation into no-mind:

Osho requests the first beating of the drum . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

and everyone moves totally into gibberish.

(Gibberish)

After a few minutes Osho signals a second beating of the drum.

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Be silent . . . Close your eyes . . . and feel yourself completely frozen.

This is the right moment to enter inwards.

Gather all your energy, your total consciousness, and rush towards the inner center with deep intensity and urgency.

The center is just two inches below the navel, inside the body.

Faster . . . and faster . . . Deeper . . . and deeper . . .

As you come closer to the center of being, a great silence descends over you, and inside a peace, a blissfulness, a light that fills your whole interior. This is your original being. This is your buddha.

At this moment, witness that you are not the body, not the mind, not the heart, but just the pure witnessing self, the pure consciousness. This is your buddhahood, your hidden nature, your meeting with the universe. These are your roots.

Relax . . .

And the next drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Relax . . . and just be a silent witness.

You start melting like ice in the ocean. Gautama the Buddha Auditorium becomes an oceanic field of consciousness. You are no longer separate – this is your oneness with existence. To be one with existence is to be a buddha, it is your very nature. It is not a question of searching and finding, you are it, right now.

Gather all the flowers, the fragrance, the flame and the fire, the immeasurable, and bring it with you as you come back.

And the final drumbeat . . .

Nivedano . . .

(Drumbeat)

Come back peacefully, silently, as a buddha.

Just for a few seconds close your eyes and remember the path and the source you have found, and the buddha nature that you have experienced.

This moment you are the most blessed people on the earth. Remembering yourself as a buddha is the most precious experience, because it is your eternity, it is your immortality. It is not you; it is your very existence. You are one with the stars and the trees and the sky and the ocean. You are no longer separate.

The last word of Buddha was, *sammasati*.

Remember that you are a buddha – *sammasati*.

Okay, Maneesha?

-Osho

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