

1. ^{underbelly} ~~the belly~~ part of Japanese culture - We focus a lot on art & not on suffering.
Japan's basic tone - balance given.
2. Paradox of insanity - similar between Jap & U.S.
3. Psychological shift of many featured style - Protest style.
Shift from individual to individual.

all those go against conventional wisdom - It is called cheater. Left eye tells less
of cheater pattern & tells instead of ^{ZEN} cheater process.

① a case but your wa-
 ter more, I don't ~~sub~~ fragments -
 or to experience

Had many
many Am. youth
has gone thru
Christ change.

In order to experience Japan and its rich culture fully,
it is desirable to have even a brief acquaintance with
Zen. Perhaps it would better be called a friendship with
Zen for it should not be seen as a spectator but rather
as a participant. A Zen approach to personal awareness
adds much to the richness of life.

10-1-55 (P11)

Why Protestants adds much to the richness of life.
in Am. Jap. On Dark - change England's product & input - (Clark)
Protestant style -

Simple things are difficult to describe. Zen is so simple it appears to be exotic and mysterious. Dogen, a Zen master who introduced Soto sect Zen to Japan in the 13th century, wrote, "A Flower Does Not Talk". A flower does not need to talk and, indeed, it is not necessary to talk about it. One could go a step farther and say that talking about a flower distracts our attention from experiencing the flower fully. *(11) Proteins - Greek can change into any style. One can*

flower
mark. *imago* *extinction*.

And this is an essence of Zen - be more aware of self and everything self experiences. Life can only be lived now. Partake of the journey, time enough later to consider the destination.

The End

Art School changes fast. Artist find it

Sister, The Word:

The Second part

father.

IV. Also constructive style.

V. Porter Style (Continued)

the following excerpts are necessarily wordy. But the message is simple. It is repeated here again and again in different words. Do not be as concerned with a logical understanding of what follows as with "getting the feel of Zen". Try, his students have no one outside to hold to. This makes them more open, yet aware, at one time. Because there is gap between other self + within self.

Proctor eff. note for absolutely + mockery - absolute + mockery - his keeps me at distance. Note like Grass - mockery - additional beyond Proctor is suspicion of competitiveness.

Also Peter van is ambivalent toward technology.
What about exp of guilt, anxiety? Target is less clear. Because of
but of per plotting. Has to do with cuts of passage no large
internal articulated.
Ambivalent to change's motion.
Is Peter van a young man. He is all are. Peter style was marked in young

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Zen Approach to Living

Until the 1970's most of the writing on ZEN in the English language was done by Daisetsu Suzuki. He states that ZEN is not a religion and it is not a philosophy but it is a "way of life". It does not look to any outside agency for spiritual growth but looks inward to "self realization". His point is illustrated by two ZEN aphorisms:

"If you do not get it from yourself, where will you go for it?"

"A special transmission outside the Scriptures;
No dependence on words and letters;
Direct pointing to the soul of man;
Seeing into ones nature and the attainment of Buddhahood."

The mention of Buddha immediately raises the thought of religion and seems contradictory. The explanation from the standpoint of ZEN is: There was an Indian Prince named Siddhartha Gautama who in the 5th C. B. C. discovered himself through meditation, reaching a state termed "enlightenment". In Sanscrit, the word for enlightenment is Buddha (the enlightened one) - budh is "to awake or to know". Thus it is the method used by Siddhartha to know himself that ZEN adopts. To understand the methods is simple; to apply them takes self discipline and considerable practice.

ZEN is a special form of that which we speak of as Buddhism. Indeed, it is ZEN BUDDHISM and herein lies the source of confusion because other forms of Buddhism sprang from the enlightenment and preaching of Siddhartha and they, since they apotheosized this enlightened man, built up intricate mazes of religious practices around his teachings. In time the facade of the Buddhist structure grew so large that many branches, schools and sub-schools developed and the religious ritual grew to staggering proportions both in complexity and the beauty of its artistic manifestations.

If the dichotomy between ZEN (which for clarity will be labeled only ZEN) and all other forms of Buddhism is kept in mind, we can proceed to consider what ZEN has to offer to westerners whatever their religious beliefs may be. In the following quotations, the writers may use the word "religion". Where they do it should be considered in the sense of "inner spirit" rather than in the sense we would usually use the word.

In Plato's APOLOGY, Socrates says, "the unexamined life is not worth living". ZEN offers a method of examining and understanding ourselves.

The Sense of Zen

(Excerpts from Chapter 1 of ZEN BUDDHISM by Daisetsu Suzuki
Doubleday Anchor Book A90)

ZEN in its essence is the art of seeing into the nature of one's own being, and it points the way from bondage to freedom. By making us drink right

from the fountain of life, it liberates us from all the yokes under which we finite beings are usually suffering in this world. We can say that ZEN liberates all the energies properly and naturally stored in each of us, which are in ordinary circumstances cramped and distorted so that they find no adequate channel for activity.

This body of ours is something like an electric battery in which a mysterious power latently lies. When this power is not properly brought into operation, it either grows mouldy and withers away or is warped and expresses itself abnormally. It is the object of ZEN, therefore, to save us from going crazy or being crippled. This is what I mean by freedom, giving free play to all the creative and benevolent impulses inherently lying in our hearts. Generally, we are blind to this fact, that we are in possession of all the necessary faculties that will make us happy and loving towards one another. All the struggles that we see around us come from this ignorance. ZEN, therefore, wants us to open a "third eye", as Buddhists call it, to the hitherto undreamed-of region shut away from us through our own ignorance. When the cloud of ignorance disappears, the infinity of the heavens is manifested, where we see for the first time into the nature of our own being. We now know the signification of life, we know that it is not blind striving, nor is it a mere display of brutal forces, but that while we know not definitely what the ultimate purpose of life is, there is something in it that makes us feel infinitely blessed in the living of it and remain quite contented with it in all its evolution, without raising questions or entertaining pessimistic doubts.

When we are full of vitality and not yet awakened to the knowledge of life, we cannot comprehend the seriousness of all the conflicts involved in it which are apparently for the moment in a state of quiescence. But sooner or later the time will come when we have to face life squarely and solve its most perplexing and most pressing riddles. Says Confucius, "At fifteen my mind was directed to study, and at thirty I knew where to stand." This is one of the wisest sayings of the Chinese sage. Psychologists will all agree to this statement of his; for, generally speaking, fifteen is about the age youth begins to look around seriously to inquire into the meaning of life. All the spiritual powers until now securely hidden in the subconscious part of the mind break out almost simultaneously. And when this breaking out is too precipitous and violent, the mind may lose its balance more or less permanently; in fact, so many cases of nervous prostration reported during adolescence are chiefly due to this loss of the mental equilibrium. In most cases the effect is not very grave and the crisis may pass without leaving deep marks. But in some characters, either through their inherent tendencies or on account of the influence of environment upon their plastic constitution, the spiritual awakening stirs them up to the very depths of their personality. This is the time you will be asked to choose between the "Everlasting No" and the "Everlasting Yea". This choosing is what Confucius means by "study"; it is not studying the classics, but deeply delving into the mysteries of life.

Normally, the outcome of the struggle is the "Everlasting Yea", or "Let thy will be done"; for life is after all a form of affirmation, however negatively it might be conceived by the pessimists. But we cannot deny the fact that there are many things in this world which will turn our too sensitive minds towards the other direction and make us exclaim with Andreyev in "The Life of Man": "I curse everything that you have given. I curse the day on which I was born. I curse the day on which I shall die. I curse the whole of my life. I fling everything back at your cruel face, senseless Fate! Be accursed, be forever accursed! With my curses I conquer you. What else can you do to me? With my last thought I will shout into your asinine ears: Be accursed, be accursed!" This is a terrible indictment of life, it is a complete negation of life, it is a most dismal picture of the destiny of man on earth. "Leaving no trace" is quite true, for we know nothing of our future except that we all pass away, including the very earth from which we have come. There are certainly things justifying pessimism.

Life, as most of us live it, is suffering. There is no denying the fact. As long as life is a form of struggle, it cannot be anything but pain. Does not a struggle mean the impact of two conflicting forces, each trying to get the upper hand of the other? If the battle is lost, the outcome is death, and death is the fearsomest thing in the world. Even when death is conquered, one is left alone, and the loneliness is sometimes more unbearable than the struggle itself. One may not be conscious of all this, and may go on indulging in those momentary pleasures that are afforded by the senses. But this being unconscious does not in the least alter the facts of life. However insistently the blind may deny the existence of the sun, they cannot annihilate it. The tropical heat will mercilessly scorch them, and if they do not take proper care they will all be wiped away from the surface of the earth.

We are too ego-centred. The ego-shell in which we live is the hardest thing to outgrow. We seem to carry it all the time from childhood up to the time we finally pass away. We are, however, given many chances to break through this shell, and the first and greatest of them is when we reach adolescence. This is the first time the ego really comes to recognize the "other". I mean the awakening of sexual love. An ego, entire and undivided, now begins to feel a sort of split in itself. Love hitherto dormant deep in his heart lifts its head and causes a great commotion in it. For the love now stirred demands at once the assertion of the ego and its annihilation. Love makes the ego lose itself in the object it loves, and yet at the same time it wants to have the object as its own. This is a contradiction, and a great tragedy of life. This elemental feeling must be one of the divine agencies whereby man is urged to advance in his upward walk. God gives tragedies to perfect man. The greatest bulk of literature ever produced in this world is but the harping on the same string of love, and we never seem to grow weary of it. But this is not the topic we are concerned with here. What I want to emphasize in this connection is this: that

through the awakening of love we get a glimpse into the infinity of things, and that this glimpse urges youth to Romanticism or to Rationalism according to his temperament and environment and education.

How does ZEN solve the problem of problems?

In the first place, ZEN proposes its solution by directly appealing to facts of personal experience and not to book-knowledge. The nature of one's own being where apparently rages the struggle between the finite and the infinite is to be grasped by a higher faculty than the intellect. For ZEN says it is the latter that first made us raise the question which it could not answer by itself, and that therefore it is to be put aside to make room for something higher and more enlightening. For the intellect has a peculiarly disquieting quality in it. Though it raises questions enough to disturb the serenity of the mind, it is too frequently unable to give satisfactory answers to them. It upsets the blissful peace of ignorance and yet it does not restore the former state of things by offering something else. Because it points out ignorance, it is often considered illuminating, whereas the fact is that it disturbs, not necessarily always bringing light on its path. It is not final, it waits for something higher than itself for the solution of all the questions it will raise regardless of consequences. If it were able to bring a new order into the disturbance and settle it once for all, there would have been no need for philosophy after it had been first systematized by a great thinker, by an Aristotle or by a Hegel. But the history of thought proves that each new structure raised by a man of extraordinary intellect is sure to be pulled down by the succeeding ones. This constant pulling down and building up is all right as far as philosophy itself is concerned; for the inherent nature of the intellect, as I take it, demands it and we cannot put a stop to the progress of philosophical inquiries any more than to our breathing. But when it comes to the question of life itself we cannot wait for the ultimate solution to be offered by the intellect, even if it could do so. We cannot suspend even for a moment our life-activity for philosophy to unravel its mysteries. Let the mysteries remain as they are, but live we must. The hungry cannot wait until a complete analysis of food is obtained and the nourishing value of each element is determined. For the dead the scientific knowledge of food will be of no use whatever. ZEN therefore does not rely on the intellect for the solution of its deepest problems.

By personal experience it is meant to get at the fact at first hand and not through any intermediary, whatever this may be. Its favorite analogy is: to point at the moon a finger is needed, but woe to those who take the finger for the moon; a basket is welcome to carry our fish home, but when the fish are safely on the table why should we eternally bother ourselves with the basket? Here stands the fact, and let us grasp it with the naked hands lest it should slip away-this is what ZEN proposes to do. As nature abhors a vacuum, ZEN abhors anything coming between the fact and ourselves. According to ZEN there is no struggle in the fact itself such as between the finite and the infinite, between the flesh and the spirit. These are idle distinctions fictitiously designed by the intellect

for its own interest. Those who take them too seriously or those who try to read them into the very fact of life are those who take the finger for the moon. When we are hungry we eat; when we are sleepy we lay ourselves down; and where does the infinite or the finite come in here? Are not we complete in ourselves and each in himself? Life as it is lived suffices. It is only when the disquieting intellect steps in and tries to murder it that we stop to live and imagine ourselves to be short of or in something. Let the intellect alone, it has its usefulness in its proper sphere, but let it not interfere with the flowing of the life-stream. If you are at all tempted to look into it, do so while letting it flow. The fact of flowing must under no circumstances be arrested or meddled with; for the moment your hands are dipped into it, its transparency is disturbed, it ceases to reflect your image which you have had from the very beginning and will continue to have to the end of time.

Logically considered ZEN may be full of contradictions and repetitions. But as it stands above all things, it goes serenely on its own way. As a ZEN master aptly puts it, "carrying his home-made cane on the shoulder, he goes right on among the mountains one rising above another". It does not challenge logic, it simply walks its path of facts, leaving all the rest to their own fates. It is only when logic neglecting its proper functions tries to step into the track of ZEN that it loudly proclaims its principles and forcibly drives out the intruder. ZEN is not an enemy of anything. There is no reason why it should antagonize the intellect which may sometimes be utilized for the cause of ZEN itself.

No amount of wordy explanations will ever lead us into the nature of our own selves. The more you explain, the further it runs away from you.

Evidently, ZEN is the most irrational, inconceivable thing in the world. And this is why I said before that ZEN was not subject to logical analysis or to intellectual treatment. It must be directly and personally experienced by each of us in his inner spirit. Just as two stainless mirrors reflect each other, the fact and our own spirits must stand facing each other with no intervening agents. When this is done we are able to seize upon the living, pulsating fact itself.

Freedom is an empty word until then. The first object was to escape the bondage in which all finite beings find themselves, but if we do not cut asunder the very chain of ignorance with which we are bound hands and feet, where shall we look for deliverance? And this chain of ignorance is wrought of nothing else but the intellect and sensuous infatuation, which cling tightly to every thought we may have, to every feeling we may entertain. They are hard to get rid of, they are like wet clothes as is aptly expressed by the ZEN

masters. "We are born free and equal". Whatever this may mean socially or politically, ZEN maintains that it is absolutely true in the spiritual domain, and that all the fetters and manacles we seem to be carrying about ourselves are put on later through ignorance of the true condition of existence. All the treatments, sometimes literary and sometimes physical, which are most liberally and kindheartedly given by the masters to inquiring souls, are intended to get them back to the original state of freedom. And this is never really realized until we once personally experience it through our own efforts, independent of any ideational representation. The ultimate standpoint of ZEN, therefore, is that we have been led astray through ignorance to find a split in our own being, that there was from the very beginning no need for a struggle between the finite and the infinite, that the peace we are seeking so eagerly after has been there all the time.

The mind is ordinarily chock full with all kinds of intellectual nonsense and passional rubbish. They are of course useful in their own ways in our daily life. There is no denying that. But it is chiefly because of these accumulations that we are made miserable and groan under the feeling of bondage. Each time we want to make a movement, they fetter us, they choke us, and cast a heavy veil over our spiritual horizon. We feel as if we are constantly living under restraint. We long for naturalness and freedom, yet we do not seem to attain them. The ZEN masters know this, for they have gone through with the same experiences once. They want to have us get rid of all these wearisome burdens which we really do not have to carry in order to live a life of truth and enlightenment. Thus they utter a few words and demonstrate with action that, when rightly comprehended, will deliver us from the oppression and tyranny of these intellectual accumulations. But the comprehension does not come to us so easily. Being so long accustomed to the oppression, the mental inertia becomes hard to remove. In fact it has gone down deep into the roots of our own being and the whole structure of personality is to be overturned.

MEDITATION

The practice of meditation plays a central role for many Asian people. It is found in Indian Yoga, in Tibetan Buddhism, in the midst of the grand ritual of Esoteric Buddhism and, of course, in ZEN. There is nothing mystical about ZEN meditation - which is called ZAZEN. It is simply a method of clearing our mind of the turmoil of daily living. Perhaps Thoreau could keep a clear mind at Walden pond, but the modern urbanite seldom has a peaceful mind. The cacophony of modern life is a wall between self and understanding of self. We collect a mindful of trivia blown up to crisis proportions by all forms of communications media to attract our attention and by this collection, that ZEN calls rubbish, we lose track of our values. ZEN offers a method for getting back on the track and restoring the quality of life. Alexis Carrel proposes: "The quality of life is more important than life itself."

Shunryu Suzuki (no relation to Daisetsu Suzuki) settled in San Francisco. He was a Zen Master and gave talks at the Zen Center which have been brought together in ZEN MIND, BEGINNERS MIND published Wetherhill, New York and Tokyo.

Beginner's Mind "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few".

People say that practicing Zen is difficult, but there is a misunderstanding as to why. It is not difficult because it is hard to sit in the cross-legged position, or to attain enlightenment. It is difficult because it is hard to keep our mind pure and our practice pure in its fundamental sense. The Zen school developed in many ways after it was established in China, but at the same time, it became more and more impure. But I do not want to talk about Chinese Zen or the history of Zen. I am interested in helping you keep your practice from becoming impure.

In Japan we have the phrase shoshin, which means "beginner's mind". The goal of practice is always to keep our beginner's mind. Suppose you recite the Prajna Paramita Sutra only once. It might be a very good recitation. But what would happen to you if you recited it twice, three times, four times or more? You might easily lose your original attitude towards it. The same thing will happen in your other Zen practices. For a while you will keep your beginner's mind, but if you continue to practice one, two, three years or more, although you may improve some, you are liable to lose the limitless meaning of original mind.

For Zen students the most important thing is not to be dualistic. Our "original mind" includes everything within itself. It is always rich and sufficient within itself. You should not lose your self-sufficient state of mind. This does not mean a closed mind, but actually an empty mind and a ready mind. If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind there are few.

If you discriminate too much, you limit yourself. If you are too demanding or too greedy, your mind is not rich and self-sufficient. If we lose our original self-sufficient mind, we will lose all precepts. When your mind becomes demanding, when you long for something, you will end up violating your own precepts: not to tell lies, not to steal, not to kill, not to be immoral, and so forth. If you keep your original mind, the precepts will keep themselves.

In the beginner's mind there is no thought, "I have attained something". All self-centered thoughts limit our vast mind. When we have no thought of achievement, no thought of self, we are true beginners. Then we can really learn something. The beginner's mind is the mind of compassion. When our mind is compassionate, it is boundless. Dogen-zenji, the founder of our school, always emphasized how important it is to resume our boundless original mind. Then we are always true to ourselves, in sympathy with all beings, and can actually practice.

So the most difficult thing is always to keep your beginner's mind. There is no need to have a deep understanding of Zen. Even though you read much Zen literature, you must read each sentence with a fresh mind. You should not say, "I know what Zen is," or "I have attained enlightenment." This is also the real secret of the arts: always be a beginner. Be very careful about this point. If you start to practice zazen, you will begin to appreciate your beginner's mind. It is the secret of Zen practice.

RIGHT PRACTICE

"Zazen practice is the direct expression of our true nature. Strictly speaking for a human being, there is no other practice than this practice; there is no other way of life than this way of life."

POSTURE "These forms are not the means of obtaining the right state of mind. To take this posture is itself to have the right state of mind. There is no need to obtain some special state of mind."

Now I would like to talk about our zazen posture. When you sit in the full lotus position, your left foot is on your right thigh, and your right foot is on your left thigh. When we cross our legs like this, even though we have a right leg and a left leg, they have become one. The position expresses the oneness of duality: not two, and not one. This is the most important teaching: not two and not one. Our body and mind are not two and not one. If you think your body and mind are two, that is wrong; if you think that they are one, that is also wrong. Our body and mind are both two and one. We usually think that if something is not one, it is more than one; if it is not singular, it is plural. But in actual experience, our life is not only plural, but also singular. Each one of us is both dependent and independent.

After some years we will die. If we just think that it is the end of our life, this will be the wrong understanding. But, on the other hand, if we think that we do not die, this is also wrong. We die, and we do not die. This is the right understanding. Some people may say that our mind or soul exists forever, and it is only our physical body which dies. But this is not exactly right, because both mind and body have their end. But at the same time it is also true that they exist eternally. And even though we say mind and body, they are actually two sides of one coin. This is the right understanding. So when we take this posture it symbolizes this truth. When I have the left foot on the right side of my body, and the right foot on the left side of my body, I do not know which is which. So either may be the left or the right side.

The most important thing in taking the zazen posture is to keep your spine straight. Your ears and your shoulders should be on one line. Relax your shoulders, and push up towards the ceiling with the back of your head. And you should pull your chin in. When your chin is tilted up, you have no strength in your posture; you are probably dreaming. Also to gain strength in your

posture, press your diaphragm down towards your hara, or lower abdomen. This will help you maintain your physical and mental balance. When you try to keep this posture, at first you may find some difficulty breathing naturally, but when you get accustomed to it you will be able to breathe naturally and deeply.

Your hands should form the "cosmic mudra." If you put your left hand on top of your right, middle joints of your middle fingers together, and touch your thumbs lightly together (as if you held a piece of paper between them), your hands will make a beautiful oval. You should keep this universal mudra with great care, as if you were holding something very precious in your hand. Your hands should be held against your body, with your thumbs at about the height of your navel. Hold your arms freely and easily, and slightly away from your body, as if you held an egg under each arm without breaking it.

You should not be tilted sideways, backwards, or forwards. You should be sitting straight up as if you were supporting the sky with your head. This is not just form or breathing. It expresses the key point of Buddhism. It is a perfect expression of your Buddha nature. If you want true understanding of Buddhism, you should practice this way. These forms are not a means of obtaining the right state of mind. To take this posture itself is the purpose of our practice. When you have this posture, you have the right state of mind, so there is no need to try to attain some special state. When you try to attain something, your mind starts to wonder about somewhere else. When you do not try to attain anything, you have your own body and mind right here. A Zen master would say, "Kill the Buddha!" Kill the Buddha if the Buddha exists somewhere else. Kill the Buddha, because you should resume your own Buddha nature.

Doing something is expressing our own nature. We do not exist for the sake of something else. We exist for the sake of ourselves. This is the fundamental teaching expressed in the forms we observe. Just as for sitting, when we stand in the zendo we have some rules. But the purpose of these rules is not to make everyone the same, but to allow each to express his own self most freely. For instance, each one of us has his own way of standing, so our standing posture is based on the proportions of our own bodies. When you stand, your heels should be as far apart as the width of your own fist, your big toes in line with the centers of your breasts. As in zazen, put some strength in your abdomen. Here also your hands should express your self. Hold your left hand against your chest with fingers encircling your thumb, and put your right hand over it. Holding your thumb pointing downward, and your forearms parallel to the floor, you feel as if you have some round pillar in your grasp--a big round temple pillar--so you cannot be slumped or tilted to the side.

The most important point is to own your own physical body. If you slump, you will lose your self. Your mind will be wandering about somewhere else; you will not be in your body. This is not the way. We must exist right here, right

now! This is the key point. You must have your own body and mind. Everything should exist in the right place, in the right way. Then there is no problem. If the microphone I use when I speak exists somewhere else, it will not serve its purpose. When we have our body and mind in order, everything else will exist in the right place, in the right way.

But usually, without being aware of it, we try to change something other than ourselves, we try to order things outside us. But it is impossible to organize things if you yourself are not in order. When you do things in the right way, at the right time, everything else will be organized. You are the "boss". When the boss is sleeping everyone is sleeping. When the boss does something right, everyone will do everything right, and at the right time. That is the secret of Buddhism.

So try always to keep the right posture, not only when you practice zazen, but in all your activities. Take the right posture when you are driving your car, and when you are reading. If you read in a slumped position, you cannot stay awake long. Try. You will discover how important it is to keep the right posture. This is the true teaching. The teaching which is written on paper is not the true teaching. Written teaching is a kind of food for your brain, but it is more important to be yourself by practicing the right way of life.

That is why Buddha could not accept the religions existing at his time. He studied many religions, but he was not satisfied with their practices. He could not find the answer in asceticism or in philosophies. He was not interested in some metaphysical existence, but in his own body and mind, here and now. And when he found himself, he found that everything that exists has Buddha nature. That was his enlightenment. Enlightenment is not some good feeling or some particular state of mind. The state of mind that exists when you sit in the right posture is, itself enlightenment. If you cannot be satisfied with the state of mind you have in zazen, it means your mind is still wandering about. Our body and mind should not be wobbling or wandering about. In this posture there is no need to talk about the right state of mind. You already have it. This is the conclusion of Buddhism.

BREATHING "What we call "I" is just a swinging door which moves when we inhale and when we exhale. "

When we practice zazen our mind always follows our breathing. When we inhale, the air comes into the inner world. When we exhale, the air goes out to the outer world. The inner world is limitless, and the outer world is also limitless. We say "inner world" or "outer world", but actually there is just one whole world. In this limitless world, our throat is like a swinging door. The air comes in and goes out like someone passing through a swinging door. If you think, "I breathe," the "I" is extra. There is no you

to say "I". What we call "I" is just a swinging door which moves when we inhale and when we exhale. It just moves; that is all. When your mind is pure and calm enough to follow this movement, there is nothing: no "I", no world, no mind nor body; just a swinging door.

So when we practice zazen, all that exists is the movement of the breathing but we are aware of this movement. You should not be absent-minded. But to be aware of the movement does not mean to be aware of your small self, but rather of your universal nature, or Buddhas nature. This kind of awareness is very important, because we are usually so one-sided. Our usual understanding of life is dualistic: you and I, this and that, good and bad. But actually these discriminations are themselves the awareness of the universal existence. "You" means to be aware of the universe in the form of you and "I" means to be aware of it in the form of I. You and I are just swinging doors. This kind of understanding is necessary. This should not even be called understanding; it is actually the true experience of life through Zen practice.

So when you practice zazen, there is no idea of time or space. You may say, "We started sitting at a quarter to six in this room." Thus you have some idea of time (a quarter to six) and some idea of space (in this room). Actually what you are doing, however, is just sitting and being aware of the universal activity. That is all. This moment the swinging door is opening in one direction, and the next moment the swinging door will be opening in the opposite direction. Moment after moment each one of us repeats this activity. Here there is no idea of time or space. Time and space are one. You may say, "I must do something this afternoon," but actually there is no "this afternoon." We do things one after the other. That is all. There is no such time as "this afternoon" or "one o'clock" or "two o'clock". At one o'clock you will eat your lunch. To eat lunch is itself one o'clock. You will be somewhere, but that place cannot be separated from one o'clock. For someone who actually appreciates our life they are the same. But when we become tired of our life we may say, "I shouldn't have come to this place. It may have been much better to have gone to some other place for lunch. This place is not so good." In your mind you create an idea of place separate from an actual time.

Or you may say, "This is bad, so I should not do this." Actually, when you say, "I should not do this," you are doing not-doing in that moment. So there is no choice for you. When you separate the idea of time and space, you feel as if you have some choice, but actually, you have to do something, or you have to do not-doing. Not-to-do something is doing something. Good and bad are only in your mind. So we should not say, "This is good," or "This is bad." Instead of saying bad, you should say, "not-to-do"! If you think, "This is bad," it will create some confusion for you. So in the realm of pure religion there is no confusion of time and space, or good or bad. All that we should do is just do something as it comes. Do something! Whatever it is, we should do it, even if it is not-doing something. We should live in this moment. So when we sit we concentrate on our breathing, and we become a swinging door, and we do something we should do, something we must do. This is Zen practice. In this practice there is no confusion. If you establish this kind of life you have no confusion whatsoever.

Tozan, a famous Zen master, said, "The blue mountain is the father of the white cloud. The white cloud is the son of the blue mountain. All day long they depend on each other, without being dependent on each other. The white cloud is always the white cloud. The blue mountain is always the blue mountain." This is a pure, clear interpretation of life. There may be many things like the white cloud and blue mountain: man and woman, teacher and disciple. They depend on each other. But the white cloud should not be bothered by the blue mountain. The blue mountain should not be bothered by the white cloud. They are quite independent, but yet dependent. This is how we live, and how we practice zazen.

When we become truly ourselves, we just become a swinging door, and we are purely independent of, and at the same time, dependent upon everything. Without air, we cannot breathe. Each of us is in the midst of myriads of worlds. We are in the center of the world always, moment after moment. So we are completely dependent and independent. If you have this kind of experience, this kind of existence, you have absolute independence; you will not be bothered by anything. So when you practice zazen, your mind should be concentrated on your breathing. This kind of activity is fundamental activity of the universal being. Without this experience, this practice, it is impossible to attain absolute freedom.

CONTROL "To give your sheep or cow a large, spacious meadow is the way to control him."

To live in the realm of Buddha nature means to die as a small being, moment after moment. When we lose our balance we die, but at the same time we also develop ourselves, we grow. Whatever we see is changing, losing its balance. The reason everything looks beautiful is because it is out of balance, but its background is always in perfect harmony. This is how everything exists in the realm of Buddha nature, losing its balance against a background of perfect balance. So if you see things without realizing the background of Buddha nature, everything appears to be in the form of suffering. But if you understand the background of existence, you realize that suffering itself is how we live, and how we extend our life. So in Zen sometimes we emphasize the imbalance or disorder of life.

Nowadays traditional Japanese painting has become pretty formal and lifeless. That is why modern art has developed. Ancient painters used to practice putting dots on paper in artistic disorder. This is rather difficult. Even though you try to do it, usually what you do is arranged in some order. You think you can control it, but you cannot; it is almost impossible to arrange dots out of order. It is the same with taking care of your everyday life. Even though you try to put people under some control, it is impossible. You cannot do it. The best way to control people is to encourage them to be mischievous. Then they will be in control in its wider sense. To give your sheep or cow a large, spacious meadow is the way to control him. So it is with people: first let them do what they want, and watch them. This is the best policy. To ignore them is not good; that is the worst policy. The second worst is trying to control them. The best one is to watch them, just to watch them, without

trying to control them.

The same way works for you yourself as well. If you want to obtain perfect calmness in your zazen, you should not be bothered by the various images you find in your mind. Let them come, and let them go. Then they will be under control. But this is not so easy. It sounds easy, but it requires some special effort. How to make this kind of effort is the secret of practice. Suppose you are sitting under some extraordinary circumstances. If you try to calm your mind you will be unable to sit, and if you try not to be disturbed, your effort will not be the right effort. The only effort that will help you is to count your breathing, or to concentrate on your inhaling and exhaling. We say concentration, but to concentrate your mind on something is not the true purpose of Zen. The true purpose is to see things as they are, to observe things as they are, and to let everything go as it goes. This is to put everything under control in its widest sense. Zen practice is to open up our small mind. So concentrating is just an aid to help you realize "big mind," or the mind that is everything. If you want to discover the true meaning of Zen in your everyday life, you have to understand the meaning of keeping your mind on your breathing and your body in the right posture in zazen. You should follow the rules of practice and your study should become more subtle and careful. Only in this way can you experience the vital freedom of Zen.

Dogen-zenji said, "Time goes from present to past." This is absurd, but in our practice sometimes it is true. Instead of time progressing from past to present, it goes backwards from present to past. Yoshitsune was a famous warrior who lived in medieval Japan. Because of the situation of the country at that time, he was sent to the northern provinces, where he was killed. Before he left he bade farewell to his wife, and soon after she wrote in a poem, "Just as you unreel the thread from a spool, I want the past to become present." When she said this, actually she made past time present. In her mind the past became alive and was the present. So as Dogen said, "Time goes from present to past." This is not true in our logical mind, but it is in the actual experience of making past time present. There we have poetry, and there we have human life.

When we experience this kind of truth it means we have found the true meaning of time. Time constantly goes from past to present and from present to future. This is true, but it is also true that time goes from future to present and from present to past. A Zen master once said, "To go eastward one mile is to go westward one mile." This is vital freedom. We should acquire this kind of perfect freedom.

But perfect freedom is not found without some rules. People, especially young people, think that freedom is to do just what they want, that in Zen there is no need for rules. But it is absolutely necessary for us to have some rules. But this does not mean always to be under control. As long as you have rules, you have a chance for freedom. To try to obtain freedom without being aware of the rules means nothing. It is to acquire this perfect freedom that we practice zazen.

MIND WAVES "Because we enjoy all aspects of life as an unfolding of big mind, we do not care for any excessive joy. So we have imperturbable composure."

When you practice zazen, do not try to stop your thinking. Let it stop by itself. If something comes into your mind, let it come in, and let it go out. It will not stay long. When you try to stop your thinking, it means you are bothered by it. Do not be bothered by anything. It appears as if something comes from outside your mind, but actually it is only the waves of your mind, and if you are not bothered by the waves, gradually they will become calmer and calmer. In five or at most ten minutes, your mind will be completely serene and calm. At that time your breathing will become quite slow, while your pulse will become a little faster.

It will take quite a long time before you find your calm, serene mind in your practice. Many sensations come, many thoughts or images arise, but they are just waves of your own mind. Nothing comes from outside your mind. Usually we think of our mind as receiving impressions and experiences from outside, but that is not a true understanding of our mind. The true understanding is that the mind includes everything; when you think something comes from outside it means only that something appears in your mind. Nothing outside yourself can cause any trouble. You yourself make the waves in your mind. If you leave your mind as it is, it will become calm. This mind is called big mind.

If your mind is related to something outside itself, that mind is a small mind, a limited mind. If your mind is not related to anything else, then there is no dualistic understanding in the activity of your mind. You understand activity as just waves of your mind. Big mind experiences everything within itself. Do you understand the difference between the two minds: the mind which includes everything, and the mind which is related to something? Actually they are the same thing, but the understanding is different, and your attitude towards your life will be different according to which understanding you have.

That everything is included within your mind is the essence of mind. To experience this is to have religious feeling. Even though waves arise, the essence of your mind is pure; it is just like clear water with a few waves. Actually water always has waves. Waves are the practice of water. To speak of waves apart from water or water apart from waves is a delusion. Water and waves are one. Big mind and small mind are one. When you understand your mind in this way, you have some security in your feeling. As your mind does not expect anything from outside, it is always filled. A mind with waves in it is not a disturbed mind, but actually an amplified one. Whatever you experience is an expression of big mind.

The activity of big mind is to amplify itself through various experiences. In one sense our experiences coming one by one are always fresh and new, but in another sense they are nothing but a continuous or repeated unfolding of the one big mind. For instance, if you have something good for breakfast, you will say, "This is good." "Good" is supplied as something experienced some time long ago, even though you may not remember when. With big

mind we accept each of our experiences as if recognizing the face we see in a mirror as our own. For us there is no fear of losing this mind. There is nowhere to come or to go; there is no fear of death, no suffering from old age or sickness. Because we enjoy all aspects of life as an unfolding of big mind, we do not care for any excessive joy. So we have imperturbable composure, and it is with this imperturbable composure of big mind that we practice zazen.

MIND WEEDS "You should rather be grateful for the weeds you have in your mind, because eventually they will enrich your practice."

When the alarm rings early in the morning, and you get up, I think you do not feel so good. It is not easy to go and sit, and even after you arrive at the zendo and begin zazen you have to encourage yourself to sit well. These are just waves of your mind. In pure zazen there should not be any waves in your mind. While you are sitting these waves will become smaller and smaller, and your effort will change into some subtle feeling.

We say, "Pulling out the weeds we give nourishment to the plant." We pull the weeds and bury them near the plant to give it nourishment. So even though you have some difficulty in your practice, even though you have some waves while you are sitting, those waves themselves will help you. So you should not be bothered by your mind. You should rather be grateful for the weeds, because eventually they will enrich your practice. If you have some experience of how the weeds in your mind change into mental nourishment, your practice will make remarkable progress. You will feel the progress. You will feel how they change into self-nourishment. Of course it is not so difficult to give some philosophical or psychological interpretation of our practice, but that is not enough. We must have the actual experience of how our weeds change into nourishment.

Strictly speaking, any effort we make is not good for our practice because it creates waves in our mind. It is impossible, however to attain absolute calmness of our mind without any effort. We must make some effort, but we must forget ourselves in the effort we make. In this realm there is no subjectivity or objectivity. Our mind is just calm, without even any awareness. In this awareness, every effort and every idea and thought will vanish. So it is necessary for us to encourage ourselves and to make an effort up to the last moment, when all effort disappears. You should keep your mind on your breathing until you are not aware of your breathing.

We should try to continue our effort forever, but we should not expect to reach some stage when we will forget all about it. We should just try to keep our mind on our breathing. That is our actual practice. That effort will be refined more and more while you are sitting. At first the effort you make is quite rough and impure, but by the power of practice the effort will become purer and purer. When your effort becomes pure, your body and mind become pure. This is

the way we practice Zen. Once you understand our innate power to purify ourselves and our surroundings, you can act properly, and you will learn from those around you, and you will become friendly with others. This is the merit of Zen practice. But the way of practice is just to be concentrated on your breathing with the right posture and with great, pure effort. This is how we practice Zen.

THE MARROW OF ZEN "In the zazen posture, your mind and body have great power to accept things as they are, whether agreeable or disagreeable."

In our scriptures (Samyuktagama Sutra, volume 33), it is said that there are four kinds of horses: excellent ones, good ones, poor ones, and bad ones. The best horse will run slow and fast, right and left, at the driver's will before it sees the shadow of the whip; the second best will run as well as the first one does, just before the whip reaches its skin; the third one will run when it feels pain on its body; the fourth will run after the pain penetrates to the marrow of its bones. You can imagine how difficult it is for the fourth one to learn how to run!

When we hear this story, almost all of us want to be the best horse. If it is impossible to be the best one, we want to be the second best. This is, I think, the usual understanding of this story, and of Zen. You may think that when you sit in zazen you will find out whether you are one of the best horses or one of the worst ones. Here, however, there is a misunderstanding of Zen. If you think the aim of Zen practice is to train you to become one of the best horses, you will have a big problem. This is not the right understanding. If you practice Zen in the right way it does not matter whether you are the best horse or the worst one. When you consider the mercy of Buddha, how do you think Buddha will feel about the four kinds of horses? He will have more sympathy for the worst one than for the best one.

When you are determined to practice zazen with the great mind of Buddha, you will find the worst horse is the most valuable one. In your very imperfections you will find the basis for your firm, way-seeking mind. Those who can sit perfectly physically usually take more time to obtain the true way of Zen, the actual feeling of Zen, the marrow of Zen. But those who find great difficulties in practicing Zen will find more meaning in it. So I think that sometimes the best horse may be the worst horse and the worst horse can be the best one.

If you study calligraphy you will find that those who are not so clever usually become the best calligraphers. Those who are very clever with their hands often encounter great difficulty after they have reached a certain stage. This is also true in art and in Zen. It is true in life. So when we talk about Zen we cannot say, "He is good," or "He is bad," in the ordinary sense of the words. The posture taken in zazen is not the same for each of us. For some it may be impossible to take the cross-legged posture. But even though you cannot take the right posture, when you arouse your real, way-seeking mind, you can practice Zen in its true sense. Actually it is easier for those who have difficulties in sitting to arouse the true way-seeking mind than for those who can

sit easily.

When we reflect on what are doing in our everyday life, we are always ashamed of ourselves. One of my students wrote me saying, "You sent me a calendar, and I am trying to follow the good mottoes which appear on each page. But the year has hardly begun, and already I have failed! Dogen-zenji said, "Shoshaku jushaku." Shaku generally means "mistake" or "wrong". Shoshaku jushaku means 'to succeed wrong with wrong,' or one continuous mistake. According to Dogen, one continuous mistake can also be Zen. A Zen master's life could be said to be so many years of shoshaku jushaku. This means so many years of one single-minded effort.

We say, "A good father is not a good father." Do you understand? One who thinks he is a good husband is not a good husband. One who thinks he is one of the worst husbands may be a good one if he is always trying to be a good husband with a single-hearted effort. If you find it impossible to sit because of some pain or some physical difficulty, then you should sit anyway, using a thick cushion or a chair. Even though you are the worst horse you will get to the marrow of Zen.

Suppose your children are suffering from a hopeless disease. You do not know what to do; you cannot lie in bed. Normally the most comfortable place for you would be a warm comfortable bed, but now because of your mental agony you cannot rest. You may walk up and down, in and out, but this does not help. Actually the best way to relieve your mental suffering is to sit in zazen, even in such a confused state of mind and bad posture. If you have no experience of sitting in this kind of difficult situation you are not a Zen student. No other activity will appease your suffering. In other restless positions you have no power to accept your difficulties, but in the zazen posture which you have acquired by long, hard practice, your mind and body have great power to accept things as they are, whether they are agreeable or disagreeable.

When you feel disagreeable it is better for you to sit. There is no other way to accept your problem and work on it. Whether you are the best horse or the worst, or whether your posture is good or bad is out of the question. Everyone can practice zazen, and in this way work on his problems and accept them.

When you are sitting in the middle of your own problem, which is more real to you: your problem or you yourself? The awareness that you are here, right now, is the ultimate fact. This is the point you will realize by zazen practice. In continuous practice, under a succession of agreeable and disagreeable situations, you will realize the marrow of Zen and acquire its true strength.

NO DUALISM "To stop your mind does not mean to stop the activities of mind. It means your mind pervades your whole body. With your full mind you form the mudra in your hands."

We say our practice should be without gaining ideas, without any expectations

even of enlightenment. This does not mean, however, just to sit without any purpose. This practice free from gaining ideas is based on the Prajna Paramita Sutra. However, if you are not careful the sutra itself will give you a gaining idea. It says, "Form is emptiness and emptiness is form." But if you attach to that statement, you are liable to be involved in dualistic ideas; here is you, form, and here is emptiness, which you are trying to realize through your form. So "form is emptiness, and emptiness is form" is still dualistic. But fortunately our teaching goes on to say, "Form is form and emptiness is emptiness." Here there is no dualism.

When you find it difficult to stop your mind while you are sitting and when you are still trying to stop your mind, this is the stage of "form is emptiness and emptiness is form." But while you are practicing in this dualistic way, more and more you will have oneness with your goal. And when your practice becomes effortless, you can stop your mind. This is the stage of "form is form and emptiness is emptiness."

To stop your mind does not mean to stop the activities of mind. It means your mind pervades your whole body. Your mind follows your breathing. With your full mind you form the mudra in your hands. With your whole mind you sit with painful legs without being disturbed by them. This is to sit without any gaining idea. At first you feel some restriction in your posture, but when you are not disturbed by the restriction, you have found the meaning of "emptiness is emptiness and form is form". So to find your own way under some restriction is the way of practice.

Practice does not mean that whatever you do, even lying down, is zazen. When the restrictions you have do not limit you, this is what we mean by practice. When you say, "Whatever I do is Buddha nature, so it doesn't matter what I do and there is no need to practice zazen," that is already a dualistic understanding of our everyday life. If it really does not matter, there is no need for you even to say so. As long as you are concerned about what you do, that is dualistic. If you are not concerned about what you do, you will not say so. When you sit, you will sit. When you eat, you will eat. That is all. If you say, "It doesn't matter," it means that you are making some excuse to do something in your own way with your small mind. It means you are attached to some particular thing or way. That is not what we mean when we say, "Just to sit is enough," or "Whatever you do is zazen." Of course whatever we do is zazen, but if so, there is no need to say it.

When you sit, you should just sit without being disturbed by your painful legs or sleepiness. That is zazen. But at first it is very difficult to accept things as they are. You will be annoyed by the feeling you have in your practice. When you can do everything, whether it is good or bad, without disturbance or without being annoyed by the feeling, that is actually what we mean by "form is form and emptiness is emptiness."

When you suffer from an illness like cancer, and you realize you cannot live more than two or three years, then seeking something upon which to rely, you

may start practice. One person may rely on the help of God. Someone else may start the practice of zazen. His practice will be concentrated on obtaining emptiness of mind. That means he is trying to be free from the suffering of duality. This is the practice of "form is emptiness and emptiness is form." Because of the truth of emptiness, he wants to have the actual realization of it in his life. If he practices in this way, believing and making an effort, it will help him, of course, but it is not perfect practice.

Knowing that your life is short, to enjoy it day after day, moment after moment, is the life of "form is form, and emptiness is emptiness." When Buddha comes you will welcome him; when the devil comes, you will welcome him. The famous Chinese Zen master Ummon said, "Sun-faced Buddha and moon-faced Buddha." When he was ill, someone asked him, "How are you?" And he answered, "Sun-faced Buddha and moon-faced Buddha." That is the life of "form is form and emptiness is emptiness." There is no problem. One year of life is good. One hundred years of life are good. If you continue our practice, you will attain this stage.

At first you will have various problems, and it is necessary for you to make some effort to continue our practice. For the beginner, practice without effort is not true practice. For the beginner, the practice needs great effort. Especially for young people, it is necessary to try very hard to achieve something. You must stretch out your arms and legs as wide as they will go. Form is form. You must be true to your own way until at last you actually come to the point where you see it is necessary to forget all about yourself. Until you come to this point, it is completely mistaken to think that whatever you do is Zen or that it does not matter whether you practice or not. But if you make your best effort just to continue your practice with your whole mind and body, without gaining ideas, then whatever you do will be true practice. Just to continue should be your purpose. When you do something, just to do it should be your purpose. Form is form and you are you and true emptiness will be realized in your practice.

The Aspen Institute conducts a seminar on Japanese Thought in Japan each October. The purpose is not to introduce the participants to Japan, it is to introduce them to themselves through the medium of presenting new possibilities of thought quite different from our own western approach to coming to terms with life. The list of readings can be obtained from the Institute offices. Following is a brief selection from the text on ZEN. It is from APPROACH TO ZEN by Kosho Uchiyama Roshi (Roshi = Aen Master), published, Japan Publications, Inc. 1255 Howard Street, San Francisco, California 94103

THE MEANING OF DOING ZAZEN

Ants in a Sugar Bowl

One day I received a visit from a fifty-year old Jewish American who was a company president. I don't speak anything but Japanese but since he brought along an excellent Japanese interpreter we had no trouble communicating. He asked me the following question:

"I have plenty of money and a wonderful family, but for no reason at all about ten years ago, I began to feel a terrible emptiness in my life. First, I studied Judaism, but I couldn't find any satisfaction. Then I studied Christianity but I couldn't find any satisfaction there either. After that, I felt that only Zen Buddhism could satisfy me and I have been studying Zen ever since. Now, I have come to Japan in order to study Zen more deeply. What do you think about this feeling of emptiness I have?"

In response to his sincere statement and question, I said; "You're searching for the value, basis, and recognition of your existence only in things outside yourself such as property, work, or other peoples' opinions. Perhaps you feel this emptiness because you haven't found anything in the reality of your own true self. In other words, you probably feel this emptiness in your life because you are always living only in relation to other people and things, and aren't living out your true self."

This simple answer seemed to strike him as quite right, and he immediately agreed with me.

"It's just as you say. Every moment of the day, I live only in relation to other things, which must be the reason I feel such an emptiness in my life."

Since he accepted my answer so completely and without hesitation I didn't have to make any further explanation.

He continued, "Well, what should I do about it?"

I replied, "You'll never be able to resolve the uneasiness in your life by drifting around and searching in things outside yourself. The important thing is that 'the self live out the truth of the self,' or that 'the self live out the reality of the self.'" Zazen puts into actual practice this idea that "the self lives out the reality of the self." My teacher, Sawaki Kodo Roshi always used to say, "Zazen is the self making the self into self." He nodded as if my answer was just what he had expected and said, "That's just what I thought zazen was. I would like to do zazen here at Antai-ji."

My replies to his questions were not just my personal opinion. I merely told him what has been recorded in Buddhist Sutras since ancient times. In the Sutanipada, which is one of the oldest Buddhist sutras, it is written, "To

rely on others is to be uneasy." And in the equally old Dhammapada there is the phrase, "The abode of the self is only the self."

This man was most unusual in that he was able to accept these simple but important passages, which I have quoted, with such humility and readiness. And that is why I have brought up my conversation with him. His mind must have already been developed enough to accept immediately and without discussion these two important Buddhist phrases.

In most cases, however, much more explanation is necessary before a person can accept these Buddhist phrases as they are. So now, I offer the previous discussion as a conclusion and will add the following explanation.

Why is it that today's wealthy and in so many ways fortunate Americans feel this kind of emptiness? I say Americans, but really many people from well-off countries like England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Canada and Australia feel this emptiness, and, seeking to understand Zen, they come to a rather poor country like Japan and to an even poorer temple like Antai-ji. At first glance this seems really strange, but during the last few years I have had many opportunities to come into contact with these people and in my own small way feel like I can understand why they come and what their psychology is. Briefly, and in my own words, I think the best explanation is to compare the people living in the advanced countries of Europe and America to ants which have fallen in a sugar bowl.

Think about ants that have fallen into a bowl of sugar. They suck on the sweet stuff until their stomachs are swollen and practically transparent. And yet, everything they see and hear, the whole world which surrounds them, is nothing but the same tedium of sugar. It's only natural that they feel an emptiness in their lives. Being inside this sugar bowl, there's nothing else for them to do but bathe in the self-consoling intoxication of LSD and marijuana or else commit suicide.

When I draw this caricature of Americans and Europeans and compare them to ants fallen in a bowl of sugar, I must naturally think about what kind of condition Japanese society is in. If I were to apply this caricature to present day Japanese, I would draw a figure standing outside the bowl. He's thinking how great it would be if he fell in the bowl of sugar too like the Americans and Europeans. He follows the trail of spilled sugar outside the bowl and tries as hard as he can to get in. Although they are known as economic animals throughout the world, the Japanese themselves are rejoicing as if they have become a great economic power. As a Japanese, I can only say that this situation is truly regrettable. Finally, I will add one more figure to this caricature. He, too, is standing outside the sugar bowl. He watches the white people getting fat, and resentfully, stamps and screams that he wants some too. This is the American black man today.

Now, do you think that, in the above caricature, the ants in the sugar bowl

are in the best position, that the ants trying to get in are second, and that the most miserable ants are the one's resentfully screaming outside. If that's what you think, then you're only using the yardstick of an economic animal. Looking at it in terms of real life, all three types are pathetically meaningless ways of life. Each one of these life styles is basically only to live in relation to others, and to have completely lost sight of the true self. They are not living out the life of the true self.

Maybe I should bring up one more point in order to conclude. We must reflect on just how this thing we usually call "I" comes about.

6 | THE REALITY OF ZAZEN

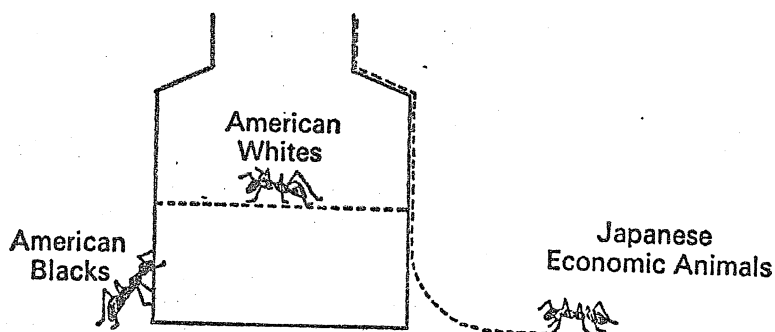


Figure 1

TO RELY ON OTHERS IS TO BE UNEASY

What is the thing we usually call "I"? It seems that the thing called "I" comes out in relief only in contrast with other people, only when we meet other people.

For example, a certain man sees himself as a 'husband' with respect to his 'wife' and a 'parent' with respect to his 'child'. At work, he sees himself as an 'inferior' with respect to his 'superiors' and as a man of 'no ability' with respect to his colleagues who have ability. He sees an 'I' which has a structure like this; a 'salesman' with respect to the customers; an 'opponent' with respect to his fellow workers, a 'poor man' with respect to a rich one, 'I can't buy it' with respect to 'a good thing like that', a 'loser' with respect to a winner, 'powerless' with respect to society. It would certainly be a wonder if a man who was conscious of himself by means like these didn't become neurotic with a feeling of inferiority. (See Figure 2)

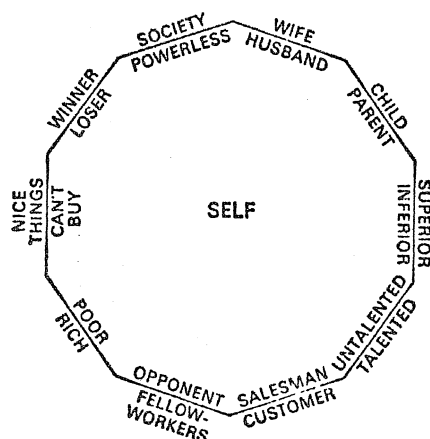


Figure 2

But even in the case of a man who was conscious of himself only as inferior when compared to others, maybe he wouldn't become resentful and bitter and suffer from an inferiority complex. Maybe another part of his self consciousness would say, just like the present Japanese economic animals, "Okay, I'll work hard and study a lot. I'll chase after the others-money, status, ability, fame, etc., and someday I'll catch up and pass them. I'll win!" What would happen if a man lived with a positive idea of himself like this?

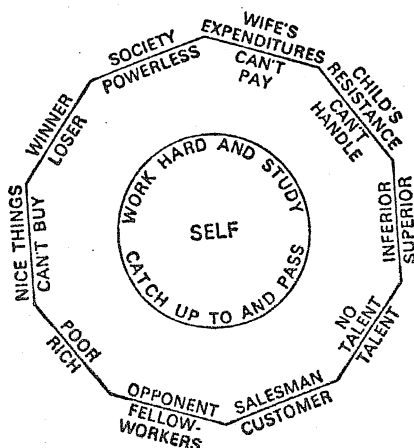


Figure 3

Or, how it would be if a man, due to his circumstances, was in the position where he could feel sufficiently superior as opposed to those people who must have a consciousness of inferiority?

These seem completely different or even totally opposite to the case of inferiority. But really they're all in the same category. The point is that people think

of their 'I' as something that is determined from the outside as something which is balanced against other people and things. Essentially there isn't a bit of difference between these examples. There is certainly no doubt that we live like this, being conscious of our 'I' as something fixed from the outside and in balance against others, but if one thinks that only this is his 'self', if one lives only as something balanced against other people and things, then I must conclude that he has lost sight of his real 'self' which is the reality of life.

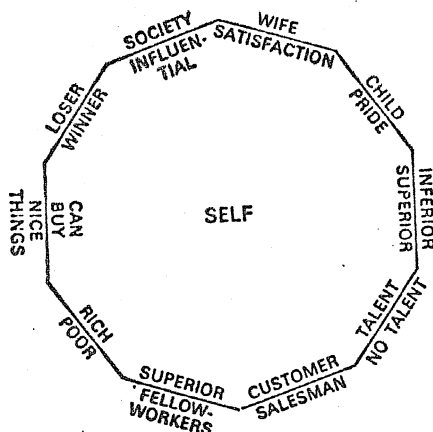


Figure 4

Rousseau wrote the following in Emile. "Any man whether he's a king, or a noble, or a millionaire, is born naked and poor, and when he dies, he must die naked and poor." This is certainly the absolute truth. However we aren't naked during the entire time from birth until death. We all wear some kind of clothes during our lifetime. There are people who wear splendid and gorgeous clothes like a queen's and people who must spend their whole life wearing poor, tattered rags. Some people wear army uniforms; others prison clothes; and others, monk's robes.

Actually, these clothes aren't limited only to those made of cloth, but of course, there are the clothes of class, status, fame, and wealth. They're the clothes of nobles, company presidents, congressmen, and millionaires. I say these are clothes because there will always be a time when a man is stripped naked of things like class, status, fame and wealth. There are also clothes called 'beautiful woman' and 'genius'. No matter how beautiful a woman is, there will finally come the time when she must change clothes and wear the garb of an old woman. And the genius must in the end change into the clothes called 'senility'. Likewise, there are the clothes 'superiority complex', 'inferiority complex', 'happiness', and 'unhappiness', and further the ones called 'so-and-soism', 'so-and-so race', and 'so-and-so people'. Also people change from one system of thought or ism to the next, and when it's time to die, doesn't a man even take off his old clothes of racial distinction and die as a completely naked 'I'?

Even though these are just clothes that we wear in the interval between naked birth and naked death, almost all people are taken in by only these clothes.

They think that the entire problem of living is out of all these clothes, which nice ones will they wear? And isn't it true that they never once ask the questions: "What is the self which is the reality of life?" "What is the naked self?" In other words, what I previously described as a relationship which is determined from the outside and balanced against other people and things is the same as the 'clothes' I'm talking about now. At any rate, while we are now certainly living out our 'I', we are not in fact living out the reality of the true self. We are only concerned with the 'clothes' during the interval when we are alive, or the self which is determined from the outside and balanced against others. It seems we assume that this is all there is in life.

As long as this is so, it is not at all strange that people should find an emptiness in their lives. Whether they suffer from an inferiority complex (Figure 2) or burn with the spirit of competition (Figure 3) or have a superiority complex (Figure 4) it's only natural that they all feel the same hollowness in their lives. "To rely on others is to be uneasy." A man can find no true peace of mind until he lives out the reality of the life of the self, until "The abode of the self is only the self."

EVERYTHING IS JUST AS IT IS

Doing zazen is not to think of yourself as something determined by a relationship with other people and things or, as the clothes I mentioned before, but rather it is living out the reality of the life of the self. That's right. More than anything, when we enter the world of Zen, we enter the 'world of practice' where we live out the reality of life. Actually, this 'world of practice' which is to live out the reality of the life of the self is nothing special, but regardless of that, these words probably sound quite strange to you. That's because they pertain to a world which is undreamed of in the sphere of Western thought as well as in our ordinary daily life.

What I mean is that, as I have already said, we ordinarily live only as an 'I' which is related to the world, which has only a social appearance and only a worldly evaluation. In other words, only in the midst of others do we find the value, basis, and recognition of existence. We assume that what is called 'I' is that sort of thing, and conversely, we end up thinking that living a life of practice as our real selves is something special.

On the other hand, Western thought has turned its eyes away from the reality of life in a different way. That is to say, Western thought, which began in ancient Greece, has become too used to grasping all existence in the form of logos (language). To grasp something in the form of logos is to establish precisely the relationship of that thing with other things by means of logos. Because Western thought has become too used to this kind of definition of things, it even tries to grasp the self and life itself by definitions. The important thing here is that even the power to understand all things by definitions is the power of the life of the self. The life of the self is not something which comes about by being defined. It is something that lives as real experience even if it is not understood and defined. Although this

is something which naturally ought to be recognized, it cannot be easily recognized by a Western rationalistic way of thinking. If one thinks about the reality which exists before the definitions of speculative thought, that itself creates a kind of definition. So hasn't it ceased to be before definition? Therefore, one ends up thinking that the definition itself is the real thing.

But the basis of Buddhism, which began in India, is the reality of life which goes beyond all definitions. More than that, since really life produces all relative definitions, any kind of definition is life itself, but the reality of life can't be bottled up in a definition. Although it produces all kinds of definitions, the reality of life goes beyond and transcends all definitions.

Why does Buddhism presuppose that there is a reality beyond definition? The reason is simple. If we actually touch a flame, we will certainly be burned, but if, without touching the reality of fire, we say the word 'fire' our tongues will not be burned. And likewise, if we only think about it, our heads won't be set ablaze. So, the definition of fire, whose nature is to burn all things, can't be the reality. Fire exists beyond its definition. In Zen, it is said that a man only knows cold things and warm things when he himself experiences them. Everything is interpreted as the real life-experience of the self. This means there is no value in definitions of things, reports of other people, or pure observation of things in which the life-experience of one's self is removed. As far as that goes, can't we say that the difference between Zen and existentialism is that present existentialism is the philosophy of general existence and is not the 'practice' of the very life of the existentialist himself. The important thing for the self is practice in which the self truly lives out the life of the self, not discussions of general existence which has been observed.

According to Western thought where everything must be defined by logos, a reality which is beyond definition is nonsense and utterly impossible, but as for practicing reality, the very power which is beyond thinking and creating definitions with words must be the reality of life. Professor Daisetz Suzuki emphasized 'Japanese Spirituality.' The world of 'Japanese Spirituality' opens up only when we actually practice the reality of life which transcends Western rationalistic thought.

Now, do you suppose that the reality of life which transcends definitions, words, and thought is some mystical, esoteric world which is deeply hidden somewhere something we can't talk about and is even unimaginable? This is not at all so, because we are always living out the reality of life.

Let's try putting our hands to our own hearts. My heart does not beat because I think about making it beat. Nor does it beat because of physiological or medical definitions. A power which is beyond the definitions of words and ideas is making it beat. But as long as it's really beating inside me, it is, needless to say, the reality of my life.

Also, my respiration goes on, without ceasing, at a rate of so many times a minute. Maybe I can take two or three deep breaths by thinking about it, but it's completely impossible for me to make it function without a rest even when I'm sleeping by simply thinking about it. There are neurotic people who feel

anxiety about almost everything, but there's no one who can't sleep because he worries about how terrible it would be if he forgot to breathe so many times a minute all night long. I go to sleep and leave my breathing up to some great power which is beyond my own management. That power is really working. Although this is not done by a power which I control, since it's really working inside of me, it's nothing other than the reality of my life.

This is reality as physiological life but let's go a little further. I was born a Japanese and you were born a Caucasian. This is not something which we chose by our so-called will, and yet in fact, I am a Japanese, and you are a Caucasian. This is the reality of life which transcends our own management and discretion. Also, I am a Buddhist priest and I'm living a life of zazen practice in a certain temple in Kyoto, Japan, but is this way of life a way which I chose by my own power? Certainly, in a sense, I did choose it, but where did I get the power to choose it? I can only think that this choice too has been given life by a great power, whether it be coincidence, fate, or the Providence of God, which transcends my own so-called will power and thought.

In this case, when we use our intellect to come up with some answer, this is nothing but a one-sided and abstract thought. As for the reality of life, we can only say that it's just as it is. That's right. The reality of life of the self is simply to live life just as it is. The self does not exist because I think about it or not, this very thing, the self, is my life. Zazen is truly to put this reality of life into practice.

THE MEANING OF LIVING OUT THE REALITY OF LIFE

I said that the reality of life is the very fact of living life just as it is, and that zazen is the practice of the reality of life. But is there any other way to live besides the reality of living life just as it is? In other words, is it possible to live outside reality? Of course, whatever our way of life is, being alive is the reality of life, and there can't be such a thing as living outside the reality of life. Nevertheless, there can be such a thing as living, having lost sight of the reality of life itself, and just because of that there is pain and suffering in our lives.

Here's an example. Recently a woman in her forties came to talk to me. She was very distraught and upset as she told me the following story. She has always loved to paint pictures and was also quite talented. When she was about twenty, her parents helped her go to Tokyo and try to become an artist. In the beginning she met with considerable success. Her paintings were exhibited everywhere, she often won prizes, and even the critics gave her a generous praise as a young, beautiful, and accomplished artist. However, her brilliant beginning met with an obstacle. Just when her reputation was beginning to grow and she was about to succeed, her father lost all his property. It was still a little risky for her to live only on her painting, and since she was also worried

about her disappointed parents, she returned to the country. There she did all she could to look after her parents. As the years went by, her parents grew quite old. However, her unceasing passion for painting won't allow her to just stay in the country and wither away. So she made the decision to go to Tokyo again, get a job for awhile, and try to establish herself as an artist. Taking her aged parents along, she went to Tokyo, and while working during the day, she devoted herself to painting at night. She continued this effort for several years, but she couldn't win any recognition the way she did when she was twenty. Every work she exhibited and placed her hopes in, lost in competition. As a result she couldn't sell any paintings, and she was forced to go on working in order to support herself. Her energy and spirit were finally exhausted. She lamented her unfortunate situation saying, "I'm unlucky. I haven't been able to fulfill my talent because my family lost their property."

While I sympathized about her fate of not being able to attain her goal as a painter because of a setback in her circumstances, I spoke up and said,

"You're thinking about it all wrong. It's a big mistake to think that it's only natural for a person to have property from his family. What's natural is that a person have no property at all. In your case, however, you were able to study painting which you like so much until you were twenty by means of your family's property. That's unusual and you should be very grateful. Furthermore, already twenty-some years have passed since your family lost their property. In spite of the fact that now you don't have any at all, you still think, "Oh, if only my family hadn't lost their property!" Crying about all this is just to be dragged around by fantasies of the past. Isn't that kind of thing completely meaningless? You must open your eyes to the present reality and start off with a completely naked self which has no property or anything else.

Furthermore, when you were in your twenties, the pictures you exhibited always won and received prizes. You still remember those days and think, "A taste of that again!" Isn't your agony when things don't work out like that nothing but being dragged around by fantasies? You ought to forget these fantasies about wanting things to be the way they were when you were twenty, and begin with your present reality.

The one thing that is most basic is this. Isn't it that you like to paint pictures and that you paint just because you like it? You should be satisfied with just that. But instead of that, if you do the painting you like so much and then complain that you can't sell your pictures, you're being all together too greedy. It's quite all right to have a job to support yourself. If you can make a living like that, then you can spend a pleasant life whether anyone recognizes you, or not. Shouldn't you be very happy about this?

I haven't been doing zazen because I want to make it into something sellable. I've been leading a life of zazen for thirty years, but for the first twenty, I was completely ignored by the world. I did zazen in obscurity and poverty with hardly enough to eat. But just by doing zazen, I was able to find the meaning of my own life even in those circumstances. In the last ten years, people who sympathize with the attitude of my zazen have come to join me in zazen, but even now I don't have the slightest intention of making zazen into a saleable product. I just do my zazen. For you, too really painting the pictures

you like is your life. Shouldn't just that be your greatest joy? "

This woman completely understood what I had told her and she went home with a bright look on her face.

Actually, we are always living out the reality of our own life, but regardless of that, it sometimes happens that a person loses sight of the reality of his own life. When things come down to be just terrible fantasies of the past or comparing one's self to others, then a person is dragged around by those fantasies and by comparing himself with others. Doesn't this just lead to being filled with jealousy, envy, pain and suffering?

This is what happened to me when I went to a place in the country once. Looking from a distance, there was a thick forest on the side of a mountain, and I could make out the roof of a large temple hidden among the trees. According to the story of a villager, previously, this temple had been much bigger, but after being burned down, the present building was put up on a smaller scale. Being guided by the villager, I climbed up a long, stone stairway. When I finally approached the place and had a look at the temple, far from being small, it was a magnificent structure. And yet, it didn't seem to have been built at all recently. I began to wonder about it and asked the villager just exactly when the temple had burned down. He told me it happened during the Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333). Probably, before the Kamakura Period it had been a much bigger temple, but the Kamakura Period was seven or eight hundred years ago. I burst out laughing because when the villager was talking about "after it burned down" and all, I thought he meant five or six years ago or at most twenty or thirty years ago. At any rate, I found it interesting that these country people handed down the story of something they hadn't seen themselves as if it happened only yesterday.

On second thought, a thing happened seven or eight hundred years ago is undoubtably a recent event. The Jewish people vividly remember the temple which Solomon built several thousand years ago as if it was only yesterday. Really when people use the word "remember", they should be talking about things they themselves experienced or at least things which happened in their own lifetime. But in this case they are "remembering" what they heard their ancestors tell about. It would be one thing if these were simply memories, but the Jewish people are gambling the fate of their entire people for the sake of these memories, and along with the Mohammedans and Christians are killing and being killed. This isn't at all a one-sided affair. It's also combined with the "memories" of the Mohammedans and Christians. At any rate what in the world is this kind of thing?

In mythological and sectarian religions, people act according to what they've been taught, what is written in books, and what has been handed down by their ancestors. And yet, there are too many times when they wage giant wars

and kill each other in mass. This isn't limited to only mythological and sectarian religions. It's just the same with so-called isms and ways of thought. Instead of looking at the reality of raw life with their own eyes, people end up stifling the reality of real life with the name of God, the name of Justice, the name of Peace, and with fixed dogmas and formalized thought.

As long as memories, fantasies, myths, history, isms, or ways of thought are produced by human life, we can never say they are meaningless. However, these are not the raw (i, e Living right now) life-experiencing itself, but rather they have a conceptual existence which is fixed within our thoughts. This is past experience and past wisdom or perhaps, the experience and wisdom of mankind, but it should be made to live only within the raw life-experience of self which is here and now.

But it sometimes happens that we plunge our heads far into memories and fantasies, or myths and history, or else religious dogma and the formalized way of thought of isms. When we admire these, believe in them blindly, and become frenzied and fanatical, we vividly activate this fixed and conceptual existence. We totally confuse this kind of conceptual existence with the raw life experience which is now and end up being dragged around by it. We do things which only stifle raw life. This happens a great many times. In the case of an individual who is like this, he can be admitted to a mental institution as a schizophrenic, but when huge masses of people begin to act according to sectarian religions or isms, then the schizophrenic activity is of the mass itself. There is hardly a hospital where they could be admitted, and far from that, these fanatic groups eventually move the very history of man. Can't we really say that the history of man is a continuum of this kind of thing?

If we think about it, there is no doubt whatsoever that everyone is always living out the reality of life, even if it be insane. But going a little further we have to conclude that the important thing is to really practice and aim at "living out the reality of life".

Here is where we truly find out what it means to say that zazen puts into practice the "living out of the reality of life. "

LETTING GO OF THOUGHTS

I have already said that if during zazen you are thinking, then that's thinking and not zazen. Then is it that during zazen no thoughts at all occur to us? Is good zazen when all thoughts have ceased to come into our minds?

Here, we must distinguish 'thinking' and 'chasing after thoughts' from 'thoughts occurring'. If during zazen a thought occurs to you and you chase after it, then you're already thinking and not doing zazen. But this doesn't mean that you're doing zazen only when thoughts have entirely ceased to occur. So, just what is it?

First, try placing a big rock next to a person doing zazen. Since this big rock is not alive, no matter how long it sits there a thought will never occur to it. However, a person doing zazen, unlike a rock, is a living human being. Even if you take a stationary position like the rock, we can't say that, like the rock, no thoughts will occur to you. Moreover, if thoughts did cease to occur to you we would have to say that you weren't alive. However the truth of life never becomes something which is not alive. Therefore, it's false that thoughts cease to occur to a person sitting zazen, rather it's natural that thoughts should occur. But, if a person chases after thoughts, he is thinking and no longer doing zazen. So what should our attitude be?

Briefly our mental attitude should be to aim at the posture of zazen with our flesh and bones, and maybe the expression 'letting go of thoughts' is the most appropriate. What is 'letting go of thoughts'? When we think, we think of 'something'. Thinking of 'something' means grasping that something with thought. But during zazen we open wide the hand of thought which is trying to grasp something, and don't grasp at anything at all. This is 'letting go of thoughts.'

Actually, maybe some thought will occur to you. But if only the thought does not grasp, it will be formed into any'thing'. For example, even if thought A (a flower) occurs to you, as long as it is not followed by thought B (is beautiful) no significance such as A is B (a flower is beautiful) is formed. Neither is it something which could be taken in the sense of A which is B (beautiful flower). Then, even if thought A does occur in your head, as long as you don't continue the thought, A stands before the formation of meaning. It is meaningless, and in that condition will disappear as consciousness flows on.

Because blood recedes from the head and excitability is lessened by keeping this posture, zazen is primarily a posture in which you can't chase after thoughts. So as long as you leave everything up to the zazen posture, simultaneously letting go of thoughts will come naturally. However, human life is not a machine and so even in the zazen posture, if you feel like thinking you can think however much you want. So the important thing when doing zazen is first to aim, full of life, at the posture of zazen with your flesh and bones. At the same time, you should leave everything up to the posture and let go of thoughts. By aiming at the posture of zazen and simultaneously letting go of thoughts, both body and mind do zazen in the spirit of zazen. Zazen is never thinking about doing zazen in the spirit of zazen. It's something one actually practices.

Dogen Zenji, quoting the words of Yakusan Osho, called this 'the thought of no thought.' While doing zazen with your flesh and bones, you aim at (think of) letting go of thoughts (no thought). Also Eisan Zenji used the word, 'kakusoku'. He meant that one is wide awake and actually living out reality.

Because Eisan Zenji's word, 'kakusoku' seems to state admirably well the mental attitude of a person doing zazen, I will talk about conditions during

zazen by using the word 'wake up' in this sense. 'Kakusoku' means, as I just said, to wake up and be real, or perhaps, I could say that the real thing wakes up as the real thing. At any rate, this 'waking up' is not what is called thought or perception. In thought and perception there is a confrontation between the thing which knows and the thing which is known, but in 'waking up' there is no such confrontation. This is important.

As I already explained earlier, we are at all times and places living out the reality of our own lives. However, regardless of that, we lose sight of the reality of our own lives and cause this reality to be dull and foggy. How do we lose sight of the reality of our lives and cause it to be dull and foggy? This happens because of our dozing off to sleep or by our thinking. If we drive a car while dozing or thinking, our driving becomes dull and foggy. Please remember that this is dangerous. 'Waking up' is to let go of our thoughts, to wake up from sleeping or thinking, and to perform the reality of the zazen posture which you are practicing with your flesh and bones. In other words, by doing zazen with your flesh and bones, you actually live out the reality of self.

A charming further exploration of ZEN is available on a cassette tape at the Aspen Institute offices. It is the actual recording of one of the ZEN sessions held for the 1974 Japan Seminar at Ryokoin, a part of the great Daitokuji Temple in Kyoto, Japan. The speaker is Nanrei Kobori Roshi. For those with the patience to listen attentively for one hour it holds the possibility for a dramatic new approach.

The following is a brief selection from The Empty Mirror, by Janwillem Van de Wetering, published by Houghton-Mifflin.

According to the myth Buddha was guided to awareness of the first truth by highly placed heavenly personages who wanted him to show the way to a better pattern of life. Buddha had once been a spoiled prince who lived in a luxurious palace. At his birth a peculiar and mysterious light had been observed in the sky and some courtiers said that they heard heavenly music. His father, ruler over a small kingdom, called in astrologists who predicted that the child had an exceptional personality and would become either a world ruler or an enlightened spirit who would solve the questions of the universe and who would be able to show the way to the mysteries to others as well. The father decided to take his son along a purely worldly path. The son should be given the impression that material things, wealth, success, power, are ideals which have a permanent as well as an essential value. Old people, sick people, poor people, depressed people, anyone miserable in any way, were kept outside the palace fence and the prince saw nothing but seducible young women and happy young men instead. He took part in sports and made music, and the courtiers arranged parties. One day the prince, curious to know what happened outside the fence, asked permission to go out. The king made sure that the prince wouldn't see anything unpleasant: he arranged a conducted tour, briefed the carriage driver, told the people around the palace what to do and what to say, and had the miserable removed. But the heavenly personages materialised and took the forms of a beggar, a sick man, a very old man leaning on a

stick, thin as a rake and almost blind, a corpse at the side of the road, and a wandering monk in a yellow robe. The driver of the carriage was questioned by the prince. He had to admit that the world knows a lot of misery, a lot of suffering.

The prince asked about the wandering monk in the yellow robe.

'He is a man, your highness, who has given up the superficial life and who tries to approach reality through discipline and meditation.'

'So you think there is a reality which is more real than what I see, and hear, and smell, and feel, and taste, and can imagine?'

'Yes your highness.'

'And do you know that reality?'

The coachman didn't know what to say. He did believe there was a higher reality but he couldn't say he knew that reality. The driver was a devout Hindu who believed that the apparent injustice of earthly suffering is an illusion and that behind, or in front of, or next to that illusion, or perhaps somewhere in the illusion itself, would exist a reality which could explain everything.

'Life is suffering,' Buddha concluded. He wasn't a Buddha then, but Gautama Siddarta, an Indian prince. Even happiness, enjoyment, gaiety are forms of suffering, because these feelings are limited in time, and will stop. The essence of happiness is suffering because we always know that there will be an end to it because the subject, or the person, or the thought which causes happiness is temporary. The energetic businessman who is successful has a heart-attack, the happy couple suddenly apply for a divorce, the promising child falls out with his parents and runs away from home, the fertile pastures are flooded, the ship sinks or is broken up, the loved pet is run over by a car. Everything is temporary, will die, will cease to exist. The baby which is now gurgling and burbling in its cot will die, now or later, but it will die.

What the Indian prince surmised then, has been surmised by everybody. Every human being who reflects, who observes, suspects that life is suffering. Perhaps he doesn't like talking about it and prefers to push the thought away, but he knows that life is a difficult road, a way of the Cross which will continue till it is ended by death. The thought is suppressed by drinking, by work, by spending time on hobbies, but the thought will always return. It is possible to find temporary relief in books, or in conversations with friends, but books begin to bore after a while and friends don't really have an answer either. So doubt returns. If life is suffering, and if death approaches a little more every day, then why live? If Buddhism hadn't gone any further than this first truth, that life and suffering are synonyms, then Buddhism could be called a negative religion, without anyone arguing the point. But there are another three truths, stated by Buddha:

suffering is caused by desire to have and the desire to be;
the desire, the desire to have and the desire to be, can be broken;
the desire can be broken by applying the eightfold path.

'Zen,' is a meditation training. Buddha has found a way which leads to the answer to all questions, and the way is called the eightfold holy path. The eight parts are clearly defined, to wit:

1. right understanding (understanding the four truths, knowing life is suffering, that the eternal desire, the will to have and to be is the cause of suffering, that desire can be broken and the breaking of desire is caused by walking the eightfold path)
2. right intention (always to intend to walk the path)
3. right speech (to be friendly, not to insult or hurt people by words)
4. right action (to try to do everything as well as possible)
5. right means of livelihood (to earn your living in a decent manner)
6. right effort (to continue producing the energy needed to continue)
7. right awareness (to know the situation in which one happens to be, so that one can control one's reactions to that situation)
8. right meditation.

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Tenn. Said her my tips.*