

Teisho.03
Roshi Sama.

Deeper and deeper, the strength and power of all the zendo – of the One– grows deeper and stronger.

There was a Sōtō sect teacher who was recalling his younger days in the zendo, when the *keisaku* was used so strongly, and he was saying something like, “Thinking back to younger times struck with the *keisaku* again and again, my body bruising under the strikes, the pain. Now, I gratefully recall it. Looking back on it now I could have received still more”.

His words bring up familiar feelings to me. When I was 21–22, first practicing in the zendo, I was struck again and again –most definitely struck. With some attainment, there was no-one, who would strike me anymore, but I remember well with nostalgia the striking that I received in my first year or two in the zendo.

I was so fortunate to meet with a true teacher – with *Daiun Rōshi Sama*. I was blessed to be able to throw myself into practice, to become like a white sheet of paper. I remember his words so well that first meeting,

“If you are prepared to give your life for it, there is a way – a path, that will not only will take care of your own small problems and dissatisfaction, but will enable you to know in this life great peace of mind, to bring great peace of mind. But if you work at the practice weakly, if your practice is lukewarm or half-baked, you won’t find that peace of mind. You might as well not even attempt it, if you aren’t prepared to die for it. There is no room for selfishness. Will you follow my teaching to the letter?”

I was able to say “yes”. I had already resolved to give my life once in the war. I went to war ready to sacrifice my life to protect my country and those I loved. I believed that it was the thing to do. My goal in life was already to be of service to others, so sparing my own life was not a factor for me. When the emperor announced the end of the war I couldn’t believe my ears. I felt crushed that I hadn’t been able to be of any help to anybody.

After that, many times I came close to death, but I made it back to Japan in one piece. Back in one piece, but miserable. So many of my class mates had made that final flight and here I was still alive, why? Nothing made sense to me. Someone sent me to *Daiun Rōshi Sama* – I was 21, and still alive. What good fortune that I was able to still be alive to hear his teaching, to receive his guidance. I was ready and willing to practice when I heard his words, “You can follow a path which will lead to salvation for all beings, to great peace of mind, but if you plan to play at practice, you can go right on back home now”.

“I will give it my all, practice just as you show me”. His eyes were small and black as coal. How they shone when he said simply, “You may stay. The way is One. You follow this One Way, this one practice. You don’t allow your value judgements to enter into it. Be a pure white sheet of paper, let go of everything – it’s the only way”.

I was able to do that. Still in that first sesshin with *Daiun Rōshi*, I remember I sat next to the president of a big candy company, he was making things called “candy drops” that made children so happy. He had been working hard at his practice for 10–20 years, but his eye was still not open, so he was pouring himself into his practice with a ferocity that was contagious. When the *junko* would pass he would invariably *gassho* and ask for the *keisaku*. I naturally followed his lead. He was a great example for me. How fiercely I was struck over and over. The atmosphere of the zendo was electrifying. The One was so intently devoted, the power of the One, the power of the group. I hope I wasn’t an obstacle to anybody in my enthusiasm, but at that time the only thing on my mind was doing what *Daiun Rōshi* had told me to do. Just staying with this one thing.

It’s like that teacher of old whose words I was recalling – I remember being struck repeatedly, the back turning purple. It was a positive, good, good, thing. Yes it hurt. Pain is pain, but one directly, openly receives that *keisaku* down to the bones. “Looking back I can see that it was still superficial, still light. If I had received it more ferociously”, he said, “I wouldn’t have left with the mind still picking and choosing”. Struck, striking. Struck with clear, crisp force. Striking and striking, you are now being struck, you are now being struck.

You don’t have to hold onto to the crumpled mind: “this” and “that” and “that” and “this”. You don’t have to involve yourself in your thoughts and your ideas and your value judgements. You are being struck – Truth. Don’t look off. Watch your posture. There should be no tension. You are not hard and stiff, neither are you floppy and slouching. Sit as you have been shown. Straighten from the lower backbone – the back of the head should be as if there is a string reaching from the back of the head to the heavens. The chin is sticking out forward – it means that your lower back is not stretched tight, stretched tall. [There is several of you even now with your chin sticking out]. If your posture is correct, your centre naturally falls to the *tanden*. It is from the *tanden* that you work, always, always. Exhale, inhale... doing just your practice. *Shikantaza* – good. *Muji* – the sound of one hand –Your original face. Just do your practice – counting [the breath], following [the breath], do it heart-and-soul, doing....

We are already past the mid-point of sesshin, the time will zoom by now. Sesshin will be over in a flash. Even to be able to sit for a day doing zazen, what a blessing. You have this one week to sit, to build

your zazen power, to strengthen your zazen, to become deeper and deeper, this one week without stopping staying right on track – how blessed you are. How happy you are reaping huge blessings. You are able sit here now this sesshin because your way seeking mind has been cultivated. Just. Just. All is One – there is nothing distant, there is nothing separate. All the world – “I alone”. If that sounds lonely, it’s because you can as yet only conceive of something limited in meaning – separate. Lifetimes of “I”, “me”, “mine” – and there is no such beast anywhere to be found. All being is One – “I alone”. It has never been any different. May all the Buddhas and ancestors who have attained the Buddha way, be compassionate and free me from karmic effects, allowing me to practice the way without hindrance... allowing me to practice the way without hindrance. May we share their compassion, which fills the boundless universe with the virtue of their enlightenment and teachings.

All being is universal and complete, nothing is distant. Receive one thing and you receive all. Stay with this one practice, this one practice, this one way path. What compassion, what warmth...compassion which fills the boundless universe .. the compassion of a thousand Buddhas, the ten thousand teachers, is right Now-Here... this one doing. You are cared for wholly – you are receiving everything. You are perfectly cared for.

The All is in the One, the One in the All.
Truth falls perfectly into time, place and circumstance.
Where is there anything to object to...receiving, receiving, receiving... everything is just right.
Do you have a complaint? Don’t look off [away].
Buddhas and ancestors of old were just as we are now. We in the future shall be Buddhas and ancestors. Reverent Buddhas and ancestors we are One.
One Buddha, One ancestor.
Yes, you have your complaints, you have your objections.
There are things that you would definitely change about your life.
As babies to the practice, the very Buddhas and teachers were just like you, relying on “this” and “that” – discriminating mentality.
They too must have been filled with objections.
So enlightenment is necessary.
Until you attain awakening, it will seem that you are a hard and brittle, caught off [separate] entity – dissatisfied, frustrated, anxious – a mass of complaints, isolation.
Good, good, that’s just fine.
We in the future will be Buddhas and ancestors, without fail.
Reverent Buddhas and ancestors, we are One.
One Buddha, One ancestor.
Awakening Bodhi mind, we are one Bodhi mind.
There is nothing else, you know. There is just One-Truth.

Discriminating mind chops it up to seem to be “this” and “that”, when all is just One-Truth. The thousand, the ten thousand, the hundred thousand things appear separate, ..different, different, different, different, but awoken to one thing and you awoken to all things. The One is in the many, the many is in the One. Nothing is left out. So Truth cannot help but to awoken to Truth. Original mind finds itself. Extending their compassion freely and without limit, we are able to attain the Buddha way, and to let go of that attainment.

What compassion – heaven and earth – this One-Truth. So, doing, doing, doing, let your practice ripen and mature more and more. Let your practice deepen. Those who in past lives were not enlightened, will now be enlightened. In this life, save the body, which is the fruit of many lives. That is just what you are here doing. You are not here by some quirk of fate, there is no such thing. You are able to be here sitting, now-and-here, here in Truth, practising Truth, it is the fruit of many lives. Hundreds of thousands of millions of lifetimes of deep endeavour has brought you here.

The dharma, profoundly deep and minutely subtle, is rarely encountered even in hundreds of thousands of millions of *kalpas*. Always, on and on, forever and ever, forever and always, now-and-here, you are guarded and protected and nurtured Buddha nature. But you must not sit back and coast. In this life, save the body which is the fruit of many lives. Before the Buddhas were enlightened, they were the same as we. Enlightened people of today are exactly as those of old. Quietly explore– This–, as this is the exact transmission of a verified Buddha.

When it comes to this one important matter, you must not hold back – do not hesitate. The self seeks to know self.

It is for the sake of One-being that you practice and awaken.

That One is you yourself –limitless eternal Life. Anywhere, anytime, no matter what – all is well.

Repenting one never fails to receive profound help from all Buddhas and ancestors. Revealing and disclosing your lack of faith in practice before Buddha, the power of this revolution melts away the roots of transgressions.

Let go of body and mind. Open your palms wide. Release the hold of self-judging.

Just receive this One-Truth. Carry through with your practice. Carry through with your intimacy with One-truth. Yes, over and over and over, you will look away from it, but the time will come for you to naturally let go of everything. So stay with –This–. Let the time ripen. Aren't you now perfectly embraced in Truth, nurtured in the warmth of One-Truth? One never fails to receive profound unseen help from all the Buddhas and teachers.

If you haven't been able to hear about true self – original Buddha nature– you might spend your entire life grasping self and die still holding onto the notion of “I”. The important time is Now. Upon meeting true dharma, I will renounce worldly views and embrace and maintain Buddha dharma and so doing, together with the great earth, and all living beings, the Way is attained.

You are ripe and mature in dharma, your time has come. Although my past evil karma has greatly accumulated and deeply causing conditions and obstacles for practicing the Way, may all Buddhas and ancestors, who have attained the Way, be compassionate and free from karmic effects, allowing me to practice the Way without hindrance.

Drop the grasping hold of clinging to a notion of “I”– don't look off. Let the delusion drop away. Stay with –This–. May they share their compassion, which fills the boundless universe with the virtue of their enlightenment and teachings. You are perfectly receiving the blessings of the universe. Who is so blessed? Certainly not the bound and constrained “I”, that you falsely perceive yourself to be. Original Buddha mind answers yes, yes, always and forever receiving heart and soul. This life is precious. This instant is precious.

I dare talk again about my own experience. That first day *Daiun Rōshi Sama* asked me:
“You think that the Himalayas are big, and Mt. Fuji is middle-sized and Mt. Otagura here behind the temple is small. It appears that way, but is that really so? Look closely, investigate by doing this one doing. If your own discriminating mind is clever: dividing, and contrasting and comparing, but you have to open your eyes to the root, to the centre, to the fundamental. If you are prepared to be totally earnest, serious about practice, you may stay. The only way to do it is to follow my teaching. Do not follow your own thinking and judgments. Do not follow what seems obvious to you. Just let it all go – be One with –This–”.

“I will drop my own views.”

“I will practice as you teach.”

Because, and only because I vowed to follow his teaching, and I carried through with that vow, I was able to see that things were just as he said they are, and I am here waiting for you to do the same.

Die completely, and you will see what it is to be calm – at ease.

Until you die, you can't even imagine it.

This is the death of self-cherishing, the death of attachment to discriminating mind.

Die while alive, be completely dead, and do what you will and all will be well.

All is well.

You have come alive to your true self.

Please become one who can appreciate life and repay your gratitude for all the blessings of life.

The practice that you are doing, what you are doing Here-Now, is for the sake of many, many beings, who are still looking away from Truth. If you desire to work for benefit of all beings, how can you look away? Directly, encourage all those who are suffering, encourage all beings through your single minded devotion to this One Doing.. Now-here.. its done.

Together with all beings we attain the Buddha way.