

Roshi Sama 001

(This is from the sixth day of the previous *sesshin*).

More and more, go deeper and deeper. This important one week of *sesshin*. There is only this one day. If that is your attitude, if you have decided that today is the day – today is your whole life, [then] you will practice the timeless practice of One. Just this practice - is your life. This one day, this one round of *zazen*, THIS One\_single\_doing – THIS is it .. being this one doing. This is the pure simple colour – the single colour of true practice, of the true mind of faith, of the true body of faith. So, what will you do?

Someone who was here ten years or so ago asked to come back. I told him that if you want to do *zazen* – come on -, if you want to eat the most delicious of all food, of all feasts, come on. He was telling me that his life was miserably unhappy and sometimes he feels like dying ... he just wants to find peace. If you want to find peace of mind, you're welcome. Come on. But don't come if you are of two minds, if you are insincere. If you are of two minds it probably won't do you any good to be here anyway. But maybe your practice will be the pure single colour of practice. The true mind of faith. The true body of faith. If your vow is pure, you may be able to awaken. But I warned him – watch it – that you don't rebel against the teaching again, but if there is *confinity*<sup>1</sup> that rebellion can just slip, slide away in an instant.

They say, these are words used in your society, it is said that, "where the potential for evil is great, there is a good chance that the potential for good is also great". Strong bad, strong good. If that good is the duality of good versus evil broken through, there will be real good.

He came back after ten years and he practised together with us just as if he had never left, as if he had been practicing with us all along. He was so grateful to be here, and so much warmer than before. He practised clearly, strongly. He had to leave after a few days to attend to his responsibilities, but he was here during the one *sesshin*, when the leaves of the ginko tree will be removed. He poured his heart and soul into it, devoting his life, his energy, all of his energy into his practice, to the great dharma.

One day as he left the *hondo*, something lightly brushed his face, and suddenly he knew what it means that everything is just all white. Nothing is separate, nothing is apart. A dead leaf, blowing in the wind from the tree,

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<sup>1</sup> Community of limits; contiguity

brushed his cheek, and he was able to see that all the universe, in all its myriad forms, are One. Life made itself known. Receiving life in all its fullness, This\_One\_Life, so intimate, revealing itself in causal relation in the myriad forms.

That which comes in through the gate, is not family treasure. That which appears to come from the outside, that which you think you can grasp, is nothing more than drawing pictures in your head. Its looking at pictures of tasty looking food in a cookbook, it will not feed your body or your spirit. You must openly be the One - receive that which is being thrust at you every instant. Then, at last, you can say for your self, "good, it's good, this flavour, delicious". That's worlds apart from imagining the taste, isn't it?

Cast off body and mind. Forget about them. Throw yourself right into this house of truth. Jump right in. If you are holding on, grasping, you cannot jump right in. Surely you can see that. So there is for you to let go of that stingy mean disposition. Ānanda was holding fast to a stingy mean self notion. Although he was right at the feet of Buddha, although he was touched by the breath of Buddha, Ānanda did not let go, but held on tight to the self idea, and he had to cry when Shakyamuni Buddha was dying, even though his tears were not true tears, because he was still holding himself dearly – self cherishing. Even Ānanda – Ānanda – so what about you?

When the council met after the Buddha's death in order to record his teachings, all of those awakened to Shakyamuni's Buddha's teachings were to meet. But Ānanda could not join the council although he was able to repeat every single word of the Buddha. If one joins who has not received the very life of Buddha, then that unawakened student's words could not be completely trusted. Mahākāśyapa knew he had to do something to help Ānanda awaken. It is just as it is with you right now during *sesshin* – do not be careless. Ānanda could not be careless - it was one with each instant. Mahākāśyapa was inside a room with the door locked and commanded Ānanda to come in. Ānanda easily entered through the keyhole. If you are grasping an idea of self, you will not be able to enter. If you have cast off body and mind, then there is nothing I/me/my – you can freely enter. So now Ānanda was invited to the council and he was able to faithfully repeat the Buddha's words. In that council of awakened beings, there may have been some that had dropped off the clod of a mean self, almost without even intending to, like a ripe fruit drops from a tree. Others there must have nobly, bravely cast off body and mind. Some may have passed through a difficult, painful time without becoming discouraged, and were thus able to break

through. There were many arhats at the council. All present nodded in assent to Ānanda's recitation of Shakyamuni Buddha's words.

Of course, Ānanda still had much house cleaning to do. The propensity to grasp is very sticky. Fling off the stingy disposition. When your *tantei*, your One\_Doing is pure, body and mind are forgotten. Just doing. Heaven and earth are One.

Yesterday, in *sesshin*, a very kind hearted person realized that everything – everything – is watching over him. No conditions. You can become One with Life, accept and receive the kindness that is Life – the kindness of all Life. You can respond directly to Life as it is – One with Life. When you can recognize and accept the kindness of all Life, then you will be able to return that kindness. You will be able to become kind to all of Life.

Everybody has got their own personality, their own character. Some people are so easy going. Its very easy if you are so easy going to become lazy and complacent. Some of you are dead set on always doing things your own way. Go ahead and be that way if you like, if you don't want anyone to stand beside you. Actually you know, that once and for all you must simply throw it all down. Pack up all your selfishness and shove it out – once and for all. We all have our habits. Some of you are brisk, and you just bust right along .. tak,tak,tak,tak. These habits – we have constructed them over countless lifetimes. Somebody told me this *sesshin* that they have the habit of always bending their neck forward and they said whenever I see a picture of myself I have my neck bent over – it's like I had a physical problem. But I see and I want to tell you that your neck looks very straight this *sesshin*. If you say, "I want to straighten my neck, I want to straighten my neck.. what's wrong with me.. my neck won't get straight no matter what I try to do, I can't get it together and straighten my neck". That doesn't usually do you any good. Stick with your practice. One day, - naturally, suddenly – you may notice something. Some of you may have the feeling that although you have been sitting for years and years, you still don't see any good coming from it. One day, as though out of nowhere, - suddenly – you notice .. aaah! The Buddhist teachers weren't lying, were they? Before buddhas were enlightened, they were the same as we. Until you awaken, though, you will always be side-tracked, lost, easily looking off. Enlightened people of today are exactly as those of old. With death, it may still appear to you, that death is parting forever. In truth, we are never separate for an instant. It is unpardonable for you not to face up to, for you not to meet with your true self. To whom is it unpardonable? To yourself. You yourself, are patiently waiting, waiting. Then finally, you came to see .. you hung in there and did not give up. At this

instant, who are you? Don't look off! You are a being of great vast dignity. You are precious. We say that your eyebrows will be entangled with the buddha's eyebrows, and you will see with the same eyes. You. Buddha. The eyes are horizontal, the nose is vertical.

So how is your world now? Even during this precious *sesshin* there is somebody here who has been wracking their brains out over familiar problems. Me. Me. Me. You are all being wrenched around with that. The attachment to a false precious self is the cause of all disharmony between you. Egos bumping, fighting demons. Even mild disharmony, egos bumping. Even mild disharmony creates a hungry ghost world for you. Egos bumping. Even though we cause pain for others we take it for granted that, well, we think that it just can't be helped. We defend ourselves to the bitter end. Even within close families, which is the celestial realm of Pure Land, we often make it into a hell. The three worlds are ablaze, but the buddhas have a plan for us. If your head is on fire, do you just sit there and let it burn? Do you still look off and fail to realize that you are on fire? The fires of greed, desire are ablaze. Do you look away from the problem, satisfied to cause others to suffer? What goes around comes right around. That karma will come right back to you.

Maybe you are thinking that I am talking too much of suffering and pain. Ok. Clear blue skies. Vast. Boundless. Your true heart. Clear skies, OK. Cloudy skies .. fine. The true face of Mt. Fuji never changes. No matter what words I use, I am saying always and only that I want you to open the mind's eye, to awaken to your essence, that it is only natural for you to awaken to your essence. Your essence is clear, bright, peace of mind, which is at the same time for us a rock. Peace of mind is for us Mt. Fuji... clear. I hope that you can openly accept my words. When the time is right, when it is your season is upon you, it happens, that you naturally come to be able to accept the Way. I experienced this for myself so I can tell you with utter clarity that this is the way it is.

When I first met with my teacher *Daiun Roshi*, he talked to me in a way that struck a chord with everything that I had been seeking. How clear, sure and kind were his words. His words, which were the same words over and over, were right on target. How he struck a chord with me, his words, his footsteps, the way he cleared his throat. How happy, happy, happy I felt to hear the truth. Reality.

Nobly, with good courage, let go of self-cherishing. Open your palms wide – be empty. Your each single doing springs forth from emptiness. The genuine

arises from a blank sheet of paper. Ego-karma arises from the hardened ego-idea. That karma will only provide you with more and more causes and conditions for obstacles to practice. That's really all the ego-idea gets you. We are down to the wire now in this precious *sesshin*. Don't take the lid off the rice pot before the rice is ready. Do not back down. Do not loosen up. Today is the sixth day. How longingly your teacher waits for you in the *dokusan* of the morning of the seventh day. You have a belly full of *zazen* power after six days of sitting. Will you burst forth to meet head on with THIS\_Truth? Will you realize THIS? Has it clicked? In morning *dokusan*, I always eagerly await to see the fruit of your Oneness of [as] Doing. Have you become Truth? Don't worry about tomorrow! Just pour everything into THIS\_single\_Doing. Be THIS\_Doing. In a single instant, you burst free. THIS\_ONE\_Doing. THIS\_ONE\_Single\_Doing.

ONE with all beings we awaken the Buddha Way.