

Rev Suzuki  
September 27, 1967

The more you understand our thinking, the more you find it difficult to talk about it, because the purpose of talk is to give some idea of our way, but originally our way is not for something to talk, but something to practice. So the best way is just to practice without saying anything. When we talk about our way we are apt to create some misunderstanding of our way. Because true way is always...has at least two sides, negative side and positive side which is opposite. So when we talk about negative side, the positive side is missing and when we talk about the positive side the negative side is missing, and it is impossible to talk positive way and negative way at the same time. So we don't know what to say. So not to say anything, and to do it, is the best way. Showing one finger or drawing a round circle may be the best way, or bow.

But once...but if we understand how to talk about it, and how to understand it, then we will have perfect communication, and to talk about something will be one of our practices, and to listen to the talk is also practice. When we practice zazen we just practice zazen, without any gaining idea. When we talk about something we just talk about something...just positive side or negative side. Not to figure out some intellectual understanding, not to express some intellectual, one-sided idea, and you listen to it without figuring out...without trying to understand it in...from just from one sided view. This is how we listen to a talk, and how we talk about our teaching.

The Soto way is always double...has double meaning, positive and negative. And our way is also Hinayanistic and Mahayanistic. I always say our practice is very Hinayanistic. Hinayana practice with Mahayana spirit is Soto way. And rigid formal practice with informal mind. This is our practice. Our practice sometimes looks like very formal, but our mind is not formal. Our mind is very informal, but we practice with people who have some clinging idea. So we...according to the

situation we practice our practice in various forms and various ways. As long as we do something it is already...we already have.....should be some form. But that form should not be always the same. But there's no reason why it should not be always different.

We practice zazen every morning in the same way, but because we practice zazen in the same way, there is no reason why to practice zazen in the same way is formal practice. It is not a matter of formal or informal. Formal or informal is not in our practice. Inside of the practice there is no formal or informal. But your understanding, your discrimination makes it formal or informal. So if you have Mahayana mind, there is no formal or informal...something people call formal may be informal. Something people call informal may be formal. So we say the Hinayana...observing the precepts in Hinayana way is violating the precepts in Mahayana way. So even though you observe our precepts in some certain way, because of your observing it in formal way...in formal way, it cannot be always observing precepts in Mahayana spirit. So before you understand this point, you have always have problem. Whether you should observe our way literally, or we should not concerned about the formality which we have. But if you understand our way completely there is not such problem because whatever you do that is practice, and as long as you have Mahayana mind, there is no Mahayana or Hinayana practice. Or there's whatever you do that is observing the practice. Even though you looks like violating precepts it is observing...you are observing precepts. The point is whether you have the big mind or the small mind. In short, when we do everything without thinking this is good or bad, and when you do something with your mind and body...whole mind and body, then that is our way.

In Zuimonki, Dogen zenji says, "When you say something to someone, someone, sometime may not accept it, but try not to ...try not to make him understand it intellectually, and try not to argue with him and just listen to his objections until he finds something wrong with his objections". This is very interesting. Try not to

force your idea but to think about it with some one. And if you...after discussing something with people, if you feel you won the discussion, that is wrong. That is wrong attitude. Try not to win in the discussion, in the argument...just to listen to it. But it is also wrong to behave as if you lost. That is also wrong. Usually we say something we are apt to sell our teaching or force our idea but between Zen students there is no purpose...no special purpose in speaking or in listening. We just listen to it and sometimes you just talk...that's all. Like a greeting, 'Good morning'. But in communicating ...in this kind of communication we can develop our way. Just as you eat your meal...your food in meal time. Not to say anything may be good enough, but there's no reason why we should be always silent. Whatever you do, or even including non-doing, that is...those are our practice. Those are expressions of our big mind. So the big mind is something to express, but is not something to figure out. Big mind is something which you have but is not something to seek for. So big mind is something to talk about or to express by our activity or something to enjoy. If so, in our way of observing precepts there is no Hinayana way or Mahayana way. Hinayana way is Hinayana way because of their gaining idea. We have problem because of our gaining idea. The problem we have is a kind of appreciation of big mind that is not problem any more. Because we have big mind and sometimes it is very complicated...complicated big mind... that is our problem. Sometimes simple...too simple big mind to figure out what it is. That is also big mind. But because you try to figure out what it is...because you want to simplify the complicated big mind, that is problem for you. So whether you have problem in your life or not is up to the way you have so there is no problem in your understanding because of the double nature of the truth or paradoxical nature of the truth. This kind of mind will be obtained by your true zazen.