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**WINTER SESSHIN LECTURE NO. 5**  
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**Tassajara**

I explained briefly about bodhisattva mind. And we have also bodhisattva practice—bodhisattva practice—we count six and sometime four [bodhisattva practices].

Of course, [1] most important one is zazen practice. That is the most important one, maybe. And [2] to keep precepts and [3] to—to practice almsgiving—almsgiving, to offer something or to Buddha or to people to help, and to keep precepts, and [4] to vigorously practice all those practice, and [5] endeavorance to be patient, and [6] wisdom—to have wisdom. Those are six practice of bodhisattva.

And Dōgen-zenji might [?] count four practices: [1] and one is *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*, which is to give something; and [2] to give kind words; and [3] to benefit others; and [4] last one is to be friendly with others. Those are four bodhisattva's practice. I want to explain it according to *Shōbōgenzō*.

The "to give something" does not mean just to give something—some words or some dharma. Those are, you know—so, it may be divided, classified into: one is material, the other is spiritual giving. But when we practice this, we must not have any idea of selfish—self. So it means that something—according to the nature of something, you know, if rice or food is something to eat, you know, let them eat the food. Let the food go to something hungry—someone who is hungry [laughs]. That is—according to him, that is almsgiving.

So, you know, without any idea of "me" or "you," you know, to give—let the things goes where the things want to go [laughs]. That is almsgiving. That is bodhisattva spirit. In this way, we treat things, we practice bodhisattva way.

So where a bridge is needed, to cross the bridge is also *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*. Or to provide a ferry where we should—where people need, you know, is also *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*. Or to cultivate the farm or garden is also *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*. So even one word, if you know something about it, as soon as you hear something good, you should, you know, talk—tell people about it. When you—when you think, "that is wonderful," then you—immediately you should tell people about it.

So—and even [if] you have nothing to give or nothing to know [laughs], you know, you don't know anything and you don't have

anything, you can practice *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*. How you do it is to enjoy someone giving something to someone else [laughs, laughter]: "Oh! You did very good thing." [Laughter.] Then, you know, his practice will be as good as someone who give something to others. So, you know, it is not matter of you know something or you don't—you have something. Even though you have nothing, you can practice *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*, he says. I think this is very true.

But usually, if you see someone [laughs] doing something good [laughs], someone may not feel so good [laughs, laughter]: "Oh, he has a lot of money, so it is all right" [laughs, laughter]. "He knows many things, so that's—that is why he is—he talks about many things, but we don't know so much [laughs]. That's just words—nothing to do with me." That is usual, quite usual. But if we have bodhisattva mind we can practice bodhisattva way. That is *dāna-prajñāpāramitā*.

The next one [is] to give kind words is like a mother, you know, speak to her baby, you know. We should give—always give kind words to people. And this kind—kind words, he says—if you give kind words in front of people, directly, he will be very grateful, of course. And if you give kind word indirectly, you know, not to direct to someone but to—to talk about someones kindly with someone, you know, and he eventually he may hear it. That kind of kind words will, you know, penetrate into his heart, right to his heart. And that kind word sometime will, you know, he says, will turn over the heaven [laughs]. Kind words—one kind words will turn over all the heaven and earth [laughs, gestures], like this. That is kind words. And, in Japanese, he describe very beautifully, so almost everyone knows that words. I cannot, you know, ex- [partial word]—translate it so well, but—

And third one is to do something good, or to benefit people. That is the third one. And he says foolish people may say, "If you work for others," you know, "you will not have no time to work [for?] yourself." If you always helping others, you will not be helped. You have no time to help yourself. But actually it is not so. To—to help others is to help yourself, because there is no—if you think [it] over—there is no difference between you and others. Others is you and you are others. And you are part of all society.

So to—even [if] you think you help yourself, it means that you are helping others [laughs]. Do you understand? It is others, not you. Where is you? [Laughs.] There is—there is no "you," actually. But foolishly we think, "This is me and that is you" [laughs]. But no one knows who is you, you know, as I explained the other day. Eyes cannot see themselves, you know. You—you think this is eyes [probably pointing to his eyes], but eyes doesn't know themselves. So when you say "eyes," eyes is not you any more. That is some object about what you are thinking. And you say, "This is me and this is—

that is him," but that is not right.

So [laughing] anyway, we are helping others. So you shouldn't say: "Now I am helping myself, and someday I will," you know, "after I help myself, I will help others." That is very poor understanding.

And the last one is rather difficult: to be friendly with others. To be friendly [laughs] with others, you know. If I—if I, you know, say "There is no me or no you," that's all [laughs]. But he explained more carefully about it. To be friendly with others means to—to accomplish oneness of everything: in bodhisattva practice, oneness of all things. That is to be friendly with others. And how, you know, this practice could be done is when you say "I," you know—"I" include everything. When I say "you," at that time, "you" include everything. Actually we are practicing always this way. We say, "I am here and bowing to Buddha." We say so.

But when you say "Buddha," there is no you; when you say "I," there is no Buddha. You know, I am—when—when we put our hand together and bow to Buddha [bows] carefully, you know, that is you or that is me, not Buddha. Buddha is me. When you open your eyes and see the Buddha, there is no you [laughs]. You are forgotten at that time, if that is real practice. When you feel, "I am here and I am practicing—I am—I am bowing to Buddha," that is very superficial bow. There is no sincerity in it. So it is all right when you bow to Buddha with utmost care to bow to Buddha [bows], then Buddha is here, right here. And when we bow to Buddha and when you lift your hand, and when you feel Buddha, you know, then Buddha is right here and there is no me. We—we cannot, you know, say, "This is me or this is Buddha," because in—in one second, in each moment, "Buddha/me. Buddha/me." And we don't know which is which [laughs]. It is foolish to say, "This is me, or "This is Buddha."

When you see Buddha in your eyes, there is no you. When you feel Buddha, there is no you. So mostly, when you bow to Buddha, the world is world of Buddha only. When you bow to Buddha with utmost care, that is you, you know. Buddha is not here—there. So when you practice bow you are Buddha, and, at the same time, you are practicing bodhisattva way in the realm of Buddha, the world of Buddha only. This is, you know, complete oneness: when you don't know which is which.

After you bow, you know, "Oh, I bowed to Buddha this morning nine times." You may say so, but when [laughs] you are doing [so], we don't know which is which. That is complete oneness. When we talk with each other, you know, we don't know which is which. When we have complete communication, you know [laughs], there is no differ-[partial word]—we cannot say which is which. As long as you feel, "I

am here, and he is there," that is not complete communication. And this is the experience you actually have always, but you ignore this actual experience and say, "This is me, and that is others."

That is, you know, silt of your practice [laughs]. After some hours, you know, even in the stream you will have silt, and when the silt is mixed with water, that is real water. But, you know, when silt is divided from the water, that is already something which will happen later. So we shouldn't, you know—actually water has something in it, you know. That is actual water. We—you call [it] "mineral water"? What do you call it—the water you buy from the store in the bottle? Hmm?

**Student:** Distilled water?

Still water?

**Students:** Spring water?

Spring water? [Laughs.] No, that is not spring water [laughs]. But—do you call it spring water? [Laughter.] The—you mix, you know—wine, you know, and—

**Student:** Soda water?

No, no! [Laughs, laughter.] You know, when you drink some—not *sake*, but wine—

**Student:** Coca Cola?

[Laughs.] No, no, not Coca Cola. [Laughs, laughter.] I think you call it "mineral water"—

**Students:** Yeah. Mm-hmm.

—to—to make the wine weaker.

**Student:** Why do that? [Laughs, loud laughter.]

That will be the pure water, maybe, but I don't think that kind of water doesn't exist, you know, in the stream. I think we have to, you know, more organic [laughs]. You say you like the word "organic" [laughs, laughter]—organic water [laughs, laughter]. In other word, muddy water. You are very much discouraged when you see the muddy water for several days. But actually, water is not so pure.

If water stays for a long, long time, you will have silt, and it will—may be divided in two. But something else will appear from it [laughs]:

bugs and flies [laughs], because it is dead water. If it is running, you know, there must be something in it. That is actual, you know, world.

So we should live always in actual world. We should not live in something—some imagination. When we live in actual world, there is no problem. When you—we become very sophisticated and very wise, something will happen, you know. We should be able to see things as it is. Then there is true friendship.

We say—so Dōgen-zenji said—we say Buddha and sentient—people. But when Buddha is Buddha, people are also Buddha. When we bow to Buddha, everyone who bow to Buddha is Buddha. That is very true. When we really bow to Buddha, we are Buddha because we forget ourselves when you really bow to Buddha. When you don't forget yourself and bow to Buddha, that is formal practice [laughs], very formal one, you know. Even though you know, you know, who is Buddha, who is Dharmakāya Buddha, and Sambhogakāya Buddha [laughs], and Nirmānakāya Buddha, you know. And "I am bowing now, may be Nirmānakāya Buddha." [Bows. Laughs, laughter.] This is very formal practice [laughs].

So, anyway, you know, as children bow to Buddha [bows]. That is, you know, informal practice. But people say that is very formal practice [laughs], and to bow to Buddha knowing which Buddha we are bowing—"Is this Avalokiteshvara [laughs, laughter] or Shākyamuni Buddha?" Or "This Buddha is—how old this Buddha is?" [Laughs.]

This kind of, you know, practice is not our practice at all. Our practice is more natural and maybe primitive—not so civilized practice [laughs]. This is how to be friendly with each others. So this kind of interpretation is—what he is talking about is, you know, based on actual practice, not based on thinking or canon of Buddhism or understanding of Buddhism—but based on actual practice we do, and there there is, you know, real Buddha.

So this kind of understanding will be something which you should understand. Someth- [partial word]—it is not something which you can understand but something you will be familiar with, you know. When something—you can feel something which you will be, you know, more intimate by your practice. This is bodhisattva practice.

Excuse me. Tomorrow we will have, you know, practice of [for] *shosan* ceremony for the seventh days of *sesshin*. And the day after tomorrow we will have Buddha's Enlightenment Day ceremony. So—*hai*.

**Student:** Tomorrow is Thursday—

Hmm?

**Student:** Is that Thursday?

No. Not—so—[tomorrow is] preparation. And the day after tomorrow we will have *shōsan*.

**Student:** And the day after that?

The day after that we will have—did I made some mistake? Okay? Excuse me. The eighth day, you know—seventh day we will have [laughs, laughter]—huh?

**Student:** Seven days [2-3 words unclear].

Yes. Confusing. The eighth day—

**Student:** When we're going to have it, Rōshi, we will tell you.

Okay. [Loud laughter.] [2 words unclear.] Okay. So. He—he will tell you. Maybe. [Laughs.] Okay. [Laughter.] You know, it will be, you know, something—it may be something [laughs, laughter]. So, you know, practice hard [laughs] tomorrow. Okay?

Thank you very much.

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Source: City Center transcript entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997.  
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