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Good morning.

We have been practicing *sesshin*, so I feel I didn't see some of you for a long, long time. We actually—"sesshin" means, you know, to, in one sense, to calm down, to have more calmness of mind in our activity and in our practice. But what does it mean, by "calmness of your mind." It's maybe pretty difficult for you to understand.

The calmness of mind is, you know, for instance, you may think if you seclude yourself in some remoted mountain or seclude yourself in zendō, you know, and practice without saying anything, without taking some good food or some food which will give you some pleasure or excitement [laughs], or without hearing someone's, you know, opinion, in this way you will have calmness of your mind. But that will help, but it is not the calmness of mind which we mean, because real—if, you know, that is calmness of mind, you will have worry to lose the calmness of your mind, you know. When you feel so, calmness of your mind is not already there. If you think—if you afraid of losing the—or being disturbed by someone, you know, that is not already calmness of your mind.

So real calmness of our mind is, you know, as I told you in *sesshin* time, to have, you know, oneness of the mind with your surrounding. That is real calmness of your mind. You are not, you know, you are—You are not him, but he is you, I said, you know, as Tōzan-zenji—I referred to Tozan-zenji's words, you know. "You are not him," you know, when you say, "I am," you know, when you say, seeing yourself in the mirror when you say, "This is me," you know [laughs]. But that is not you, because that is not you in its true sense because you think, "This is," you know, "This I me. This is me." Dualistic.

But rather when you say, you know, "This is," you know, excuse me, "I am this," you know. When you say, "I am the image in the mirror," when you say so, "I"—strong idea of "I" is here. "Who is I? Who am I?" You know, you are always seeking who you are. "Maybe," you know, "someday I will understand who I am," and, "Oh, now I met with me. I am this one," you know, "this image in the mirror."

But this is, you know, "you" in dualistic sense: me and him—the image. But rather when you say, "This is me," you know, image comes first and "you" follows, you know. "This is me," you know. There is not much strong idea of "you." You are rather, you know, involved in something you see. At that time, you know, you are one

to some extent, or, you know, sometime completely, sometime incompletely, but anyway not much idea of "you" is not included. So when you say, "This is me," you know, it is more like calmness of your mind in which you can see things.

This morning I brought some material for you to—[unfolds paper]. And I want to refer to Buddha's, you know, last words. And this is, you know—the translation, you know, goes—someone translated. But translation goes like this:

The Merit of Seclusion: Yea Brethren, if you desire quietude in action and joy, always avoid confusion and noise. Live alone in a quiet retreat. The man who lives in solitude is respectfully worshiped by Indra and all the gods.

And it goes more, but—Dōgen-zenji's, you know, explanation to it goes like this: Calmness means, you know, and Dōgen-zenji give the title to this part of Buddha's last word: *How to Enjoy the Calmness*. And—in Japanese or Chinese, *jakujo*. *Jak* means, you know (and this is my explanation), *jak* means "no sound" or "no voice," you know, "not much voice," you know [laughs], "very calm." And *jo* means—"jo" is—nowadays we use it in various way, but *jo* is also "calmness," but it is more "calmness of our mind," "inner calmness," but "inner calmness," but more positive and, you know, some function is there. You know, "to do something very carefully," you know, and "to do something with calmness of your mind," or "to do things precisely," "to say something precisely"—not too much or not too little [laughs], just, you know, just enough. This is what we mean by "*jo*."

So to enjoy the calmness means to do things, you know, in your surrounding which you are with careful mind, and to do things precisely and to do things thoroughly, without error. How you can do it is when you enjoy [laughs] the calmness of your mind, you know. So when you enjoy the calmness of your mind, that is zazen practice. In zazen practice [laughs] you should enjoy the calmness of your mind.

And you will have, of course, pain, but if you fix your mind to practice zazen, even though you have, you know, pain, you have joy of one to become one with pain, you know. To become one—you suffer with pain [laughs], with pain, but I don't say "with pain" [laughs] but "with pain" [laughs, laughter]. Do you understand me? With pain. Joy of pain [laughs, laughter]. "Oh no!" [Laughs, laughter.] You may say, "Oh no." But if you, you know, fix your mind, you know, to get married with pain [laughs], you will have joy of, you know, marriage with pain.

That is oneness of, you know, pain and you. And at that time you have no idea of pain, but rather pain is you, you know. Pain. What is in your practice is just pain [laughs], no more you! "Ahhh!" [Laughs, laughter.] Just pain. That is calmness of your mind. And when you feel in that way, you have calmness of your mind in pain. People may say, "He is struggling with [laughs] pain," but "with" is, you know, extra. When you are one with pain, you are not struggling with pain. You are struggling pain [laughs]. Always "with" is necessary. Struggling pain. Enjoying the pain. Pain is going on, you know. Pain may be very happy, you know [laughs], to go with you [laughs, laughter]. That is, you know, complete calmness of your mind.

So even though you are city, you know, it is possible to have calmness of your mind. But because you fight with the pain or voice from everywhere, you have no calmness of your mind. So that is how you seclude yourself from city. Physically and also mentally, you will be in city, but if you become completely— If you fix your mind to exist in city—"This is my zendō" [laughs]—when you do not try to escape from the city—"This is my zendō, I must practice zazen here," you know—then everyone will listen to you, even deity [deities, *et seq.*] in the heaven will listen to you. But as long as you are involved in the fight, "Oh, this is right. Oh, that is not right." And then even [though] you are in Zen Center, you know, you are in the confusion of city.

That is confused mind. Even in confusion you can have the calmness of your mind. Because you have calmness of your mind, you can see clearly, and you will find out how you can—how you solve the problem or how you dissolve the problem. When you see it, you know, the problems will be dissolved—or, I mean—problems will dissolve. It goes, you know, naturally in its way, and you are just one with it and with your calmness of your mind you are watching it. "Ohhh" [laughs]. "Okay." You may say, "Okay." You don't fight with it, but you see how it dissolve, or how it resume calmness where there is no problem.

To do so, what is necessary there is the practice—the big, you know, decision to practice zazen right here. Only when you have this confidence you will have absolute dignity. Not small dignity (your dignity or my dignity), but, like sutra says, "Even various deity in the heaven will listen to you, will admire you and respect you." That is not just, you know, talk, it is not just story. It happens in that way. And it has been happening in that way in our Buddhist history.

[Unfolds paper.] This is a translation of Buddha's last words—literal, literal translation:

This is why you should leave your own and other communities to live alone in the solitude, pondering the

extinction of the origin of suffering.

Why we suffer, you know, how we suffer.

—pondering about the extinction of the origin of suffering. Those who rejoice in company have the pain of company, just as when many birds flock upon a great tree, it is in danger. Attachment to the world drowns one in suffering of mankind, just as an old elephant drowning in the mud cannot get himself out.

This is what is called "solitude." This is what is called "seclusion." But we should not take, you know, his word literally. We should, you know, know exactly what he meant.

As our group became larger and larger, you know, bigger and bigger, we tend to lose this point. When we were small group, you know, this kind of—there was not much danger of this kind. But right now, actually we have, I must confess [laughs], sometime I myself involved in the confusion [laughs, laughter]. But this point should be always remembered. And if the danger is greater, you know, I think our practice will become deeper and deeper. But if you [laughs] escape, not seclude, you know, try to escape from the confusion, the confusion will be bigger. You add one more confusion of escaping from it.

What you should do, you know, whether Zen Center is big or small, it is not problem. It is same thing, you know. If you have real practice here, even though we have many things to do, if you have real practice, it doesn't matter at all. But as we are very lazy [laughs], lazy animal [laughs], you know, if we have not much problem, we have not much spirit to practice zazen. But maybe to have—there is some advantage in our practice when we are big group. But on the other hand, we have some disadvantage, you know, of losing ourself in the problems we have. How not to be lost in our problem is our practice.

I feel, you know, I have a lot of things to say, you know, on this point, but, you know, the foundation of our spirit, our practice, is here: to come to attain calmness of your mind or to have spirit to be here always. Wherever you are, the place you are is your zendō. Whatever you are doing, that is your practice.

Maybe even so, it is better for us to share our, you know, problems. And under some limitation, it is better to practice our way because for a beginner it is easier. *[Sentence finished. Tape turned over.]* [Whatever your position may be] ¹ ... [if?] you practice this practice, you will be worshipped [laughs] by all the people and all the deities in

¹ Text in brackets is from a notation on the Side A label of the original tape.

the heaven too. [Laughs.] But don't laugh at me [laughs, laughter]. I am not [laughs], you know [laughs], I am not talking something, you know, mysterious. Why I say so is because I cannot say, you know, we are the highest being and we human being knows every corner of the universe, you know [laughs]. So there may be some deity who are watching us, and he may say, "Oh, you are great. You are practicing [laughs] real practice. I worship you." [Laughs, laughter.] I am sure, you know, they will also respect you.

That kind of thing, you know—every day, if you carefully, you know, watch, you know, Zen Center, that kind of thing every day happening, you know. But you ignore it, that's all. No. You should not, you know, you shouldn't be caught by, you know, your own, you know, observation. So maybe even though you cannot trust a deity in the heaven [laughs], you must have some room, you know, to have some deity in the heaven. Even though you do not acknowledge it completely, but you must have some room for everything to exist, and your practice should be extended whatever it is, you know, where something exist. That much confidence you must have in your, you know, everyday practice.

Thank you very much.

Sources: City Center transcript and handwritten notation on Side A label of the original cassette. Entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Transcript checked against tape and made verbatim by Bill Redican (11/16/00).