

Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi
Wednesday Evening, August 4, 1971
Zen Mountain Center
ON BODHIDHARMA'S DAY

Tomorrow is the Bodhidharma's Day. We will have—we have special ceremony this evening, and tomorrow also we will have special ceremony for him. As you know, he is the twenty-eighth patriarch from Buddha, [not] counting Buddha as the first, and he is twenty-eighth patriarch. I should like to introduce how he became a successor of Hannyatara,¹ the twenty-seventh patriarch, and then I want you [to] ask some questions. I will briefly introduce you [3-8 words unclear] twenty-eighth patriarch.

Hannyatara-sonja,² the twenty-seventh patriarch, asked Bodhidharma, "There are many things."³ "Things" here means various things we see: stones, or mountains, or rivers, or ocean—everything we see and everything we think about. It include our various ideas we have. Those are "things."

"And what will be the thing which has no form—formless being—what will be the formless one?" Bodhidharma said, *Fuki musō*.⁴ *Fuki musō* is rather difficult to [explain]—I must explain about it. But it is a kind of technical term. *Fuki musō*. *Fuki* is no-, non-arising. *Musō* is formless.

So it means that before things happen, you know, how it—no one knows how things happen, and how we started to think about things, no one knows. Before nothing arise, that stage is *fuki musō*. That was his [Bodhidharma's] answer. [Puts away paper.]

But my interpretation is still enough. And—and twenty-seventh patriarch asked him, "What is then the most great thing?" The—and Bodhidharma asked [answered], "The dharma nature is the most great thing." That is question and answer between twenty-seventh patriarch and Bodhidharma. It is rather difficult [laughs], to, maybe to understand. It is not something to talk about, actually, or to understand. But tentatively I have to give you some suggestion, you know. Even though I cannot

¹ Japanese for Prajñādhāra (Prajñātāra), "Pearl of Wisdom," the 27th Indian Patriarch.

² -sonja: An honorific title for Hannyatara, roughly corresponding to the Japanese -daishō or -soshi (the latter used for Bodhidharma).

³ Suzuki-rōshi is translating the traditional transmission exchange between Prajñādhāra and Bodhidharma: "The Buddhist master Prajnatara asked Bodhidharma, 'What among things is formless?' Bodhidharma said, 'Nonorigination is formless.' Prajnatara asked, 'What among things is greatest?' Bodhidharma said, 'The nature of reality is greatest.'" (*Transmission of Light*, Keizan Jōkin's Denkō-roku, translated by Thomas Cleary, San Francisco, North Point Press, 1990, p. 118.)

⁴ *fuki musō*: *fu* ("no"); *ki* ("away") [?]; *mu* ("no"); *sō* ("form").

explain it, as much as possible I have to explain.

Why is it necessary, you know, to—to have this kind of understanding of the situation where nothing happens here—nothing happens? It is almost, maybe impossible to, you know, think about. We don't know when this earth even, this earth started, actually, when the sun started or the various stars started. No one knows exactly when, but there must be —there are various scientists who knows various things, but that is not correct. No one knows correctly what—how this earth happens, how everything happens. But before it happens, things happen.

But it is possible, you know, for us to think about the stage [?], even though we don't know exactly how, but there must be some way things happen, and if so, there must be some stage [?] where nothing happens.

We Oriental people, you know, start to think about things, one big, you know, one big thing before everything happens. It is, in other word, one. We, you know, our understanding is based on the idea of one—one which is, you know, something. It is something. Our thinking mind start based on idea of some [?]. And your, you know, thinking mind start with many —the relation of many experiences and many forms, and accumulation of those many things is some big being like universe.

But our [Buddhist] way of thinking is opposite. We start from nothing—nothingness or emptiness or one. One will be from which things happen. For you, everything is some concrete entity existing, but for us, everything is at least a part of one big being. The difference is [that] for us nothing is existent. It is just a part of big being. That is Buddhist understanding of things. Do you understand the difference? We infer various idea from one, and you—you accumulate various experiences and scientific fact, and, you know, [you] try to understand one big being—what is, you know, this universe? That is what you call it [?].

And—so Bodhidharma here—Bodhidharma's answer is pointing at that one being which is origin of various existence. And this is also some big, great, great being. You cannot compare that great, great being to anything else. That great being include everything, and it is origin of everything. Everything start from that big being—comes out from the great being. So nothing is greater than that. That is the Bodhidharma's answer.

And actually, you know, how we have—we are able to have the approach to it—it doesn't make sense, you know, even though I talk about [it] this way, you know, it doesn't make any sense to you and to me too [laughs]. As long as we are interested in each existence which we can see—usually we stick to the things we see. So as long as our main interest is something you can see, you know, it doesn't make much sense, you know, to talk about something which you cannot understand or which you

cannot see. If you stick—if I say how—how this universe started or how is it possible to make universe—even it is not universe—if I explain how human being can be buddha [laughs], then, an aggregate [?] up [of] many element, then you will be interested [in] what I'm talking about.

But we talk about something which you cannot experience, or which you cannot think about, doesn't, you know, make much sense for us. But here we have [1-2 words] in our understanding about things. And that is why we practice zazen: to have direct approach to this reality duality which is beyond our thinking. And when you are—when you experience, or when you have approach to this great being, that is enlightenment. And—and then, actually, every existence makes sense, even though it is not constant. It is not, you know—everything do not have any constant form or color. Itself it makes sense.

If each being comes first, then naturally you will stick to it, and the thing you see is each independent being. So, it is difficult to understand the relationship between one thing to the other. But if we understand each being is related being, or part of big being, then it is easier to understand the relationship between things—each existence, and easier to accept the teaching of non-duality and teaching of everything is changing.

Everything is a part of big being, you know, and that big being is not dead. It is always by itself automatically, you know, changing or going or moving. So we are a part of it. So if big being is always changing and moving, then we should, you know, we should move or change in the realm of big being. So it is easier to accept how we, you know, the way how we exist. It is easier to accept things-as-it-is. If you understand, you know, each being is independent, then it is very difficult to understand why, you know, we must have good relationship with each other. If possible, you know, you want to be independent. If possible, you want to cut off various relationship from [with] another being. That is quite natural tendency.

The understanding of each being [as] a part of big being, and understanding of each being goes first. But accumulation of various being in the great being is the two ways of, you know, thinking mind. Thinking mind goes two ways. It is possible to think both way. Mostly, you know, Oriental people think—think [1 word] way you think. For—for us, you know, it is—this is completely different, you know, and I started to talk about something about our practice now. Right now, I explained the way of thinking mind goes.

Your way of thinking is little bit, you know, inadequate to accept Buddhist way of thinking, actually. And to understand why you practice zazen, it is rather inadequate. And even though we will put emphasis on something, you know, some big being which goes first. Even so, it is inadequate to understand why we must practice zazen. It makes sense—zazen makes

sense [laughs], but, you know, you—you will understand why we should have group practice, or why we should have good relationship between teacher and disciple, and why it is necessary to have [dharma] transmission. It is easier to understand, but not complete because it is, again, a kind of, you know, way of thinking. The nature of thinking mind is to limit the reality and to understand—to make reality easier to understand. That is the nature of thinking mind.

So what we think about is not real; it is a shadow of reality. So how we catch the shadow is, you know, through zazen practice. In other word, when we do not depend on thinking mind, then we will have real understanding of—about things, about yourself, and about things around you. That is zazen practice.

So, when we talk about Buddhism, there is two ways of, you know, two ways: One is—maybe three ways—it is by thinking mind, first of all. The next thing is to talk about something, you know, goes before our thinking mind happen. And the third one is to talk about our practice: How it is possible to have approach to the right—the three ways? And we put best emphasis on practice rather than thinking mind. We can understand in that way, briefly. This is outline of, you know—this is how you—how you have—how you can—everything [?] have approach to the reality.

To some other religion, reality can be a god or deity, but for us, you know, we have no special deity to worship, or no idea of god— independent god which controls every being. Each being—each being or— [SR rejects "being" for "reality."] Reality is how things exist. How things are going is understanding of the god for us.

What is god? Maybe it's you. If I ask you what is god, maybe, if you are Buddhist and because you are—you are not Oriental thinker, maybe everything is god—accumulation of everything: If you add up everything, that is god. You may answer in that way, you know. If you—if I ask some Chinese or Indian or Japanese, they may say, god is something which exist before each being exist. That is god, they may say. But if you ask really, you know, what is god, [they may answer], "You yourself is god—god."

But only when you practice zazen, you are god. And when you extend your understanding of you to everyday life, you are god. You may understand—and you may answer in that way. So we put great emphasis on the practice, because thinking mind does not make much sense.

Mmm. Okay, you know, I will stop [laughs]. To talk about [laughs] this kind of, you know—even though I talk about [it] over and over, it may be same thing. If you have tape, you can hear it again [laughs, laughter]. It is same thing, you know. And so that is why I want you to ask me questions. Then, you know, it may be easier to understand what I mean.

Hai.

Student A: Is the world of the mind ... then I also hear you saying ... [1-2 sentences.] ... there's an actuality of the potential? [2-3 words] one is not differentiated.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. No. Uh-huh.

Student A: —then there are many [1-2 words] that its manifestation.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Manifestation, yeah. You—you—yeah. Manifestation of one big [1 word], you know.

Student A: Does it matter that one is on—on the [1 word] of the [1 word]?

Suzuki-roshi: One of—? "One of," we say, but actually it is one, you know. We—it looks like many—looks like many, actually, but it is one. They are one.

Student A: But does the memory at any given moment a—a totally—are they equal to the one? Isn't there more to the true potential than the one that is not manifest?

Suzuki-rōshi: More potential—?

Student A: —at any given moment.

Suzuki-rōshi: At any given moment—at some moment, you know, one—me, you know, has big potential, you know, because I—it is not possible to separate me from many being, you know—rest of the being.

Student A: What about those that aren't manifest?

Suzuki-rōshi: It include which was manifested and which is—which will be manifested.

Student A: All of them.

Suzuki-rōshi: All of them. One include, you know, things this way and this way [may be gesturing]—time span and space span. One include everything. That is right understanding. In that way we exist—each being exist. So it is not accumulation of many things.

You know, if you pick up something, this include everything. Before, you know—I don't know, there is no limit, you know, you cannot figure out how big it is. It looks like small. It looks like a cat. "Only a cat," you may say [laughs], but actually it include many things which exist in this

moment and which existed before and which will exist in future.
That is true, isn't it?

So thinking mind goes, when, you know, you have no trouble in your thinking mind, it goes *sssh!*—in one moment from various directions. You may have heard Dōgen-zenji [say] "thinking about non-thinking" and [3-6 words] [laughs]. If you, you know—if there is no trouble to understand in that way, your thinking mind goes to Buddha directly—*sssh!*—in one moment, when you say so, and it include, you know, Buddha and even before Buddha.

If you think, you know, many times, then, you know, each time you think will include everything. So times goes—usually we think time—time go this way, from past to future, but it is not so. From present to past. You are center of, you know, time and space. So time goes this way and that way. That is real, you know. You are real. If you cannot think in that way, why is because you stick to some—some idea of time and space which actually doesn't exist. It is convenient, you know—for convenience sake we say "time and space," but it is just idea and just, you know, way of thinking which doesn't exist. But it will help you understand it, you know, that's all. Then you shouldn't stick to the idea of time and space. That is enlightened mind. Okay?

Student B: How would you define "memory"? I don't understand that.

Suzuki-roshi: Memory—when you think about it, that is "memory," you know. So you include the memory. Memory—you think memory is something which existed long long time ago. So if you—if you have—if you stick to the idea of time, you know, what you will have in your mind about past is something which doesn't exist, but something you can keep it in memory. That is memory, isn't it?

Student B: [1-2 sentences intermittently unclear.] What about ...'s memory? The memory of a ... seems to be confused ... ?

Suzuki-roshi: That is—that is, you know, Buddhist [2-3 words]. That is not true, you know, quality said heresy of thinking mind. There is no [1-2 words].

Student B: [1-2 sentences unclear.]

Suzuki-rōshi: What?

Student B: [1-2 sentences unclear.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Again, that is, you know, not Buddhist way of thinking. We have no soul, you know [laughs]. Your—our body, according to you—your science, our body is accumulation of cells, but that—that doesn't

exist, actually. Modern, you know, physicists may—may not accept that kind of idea of—it is a kind of opposite [?], not actual being. Tentatively you can call it cell, but no such thing exist. That is maybe difficult for you to accept.

Student B: That's what it seems [?] to say.

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Yeah. Maybe so.

Student B: That's just a saying.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. Nowadays that is what they say. More and more, you know, if you think more and more and more nothing [laughs]—just nature, you know. That is *hosshō*,⁵ we say. That is the greatest being, and it is—ultimate [?] dharma-nature—dharma-nature which covers everything, which can be a nature of various phenomenal being.

Student B: [2-4 sentences unclear.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, yeah.

Student B: Then how does the experience [2-4 words] when you talk about how [2-4 words] practice.

Suzuki-roshi: The third one, third, not stream [?] but third way, you know—

Student B: Is this like—what I'm curious about is—is this what the Orientals call the Pure Land? Or is it something else?

Suzuki-roshi: Pure Land is—

Student B: —a phenomenon [?]-an interacting [?] phenomenon [?] and —

Suzuki-roshi: Uh-huh. That is more like it, you know. That is so-called-it "Buddha-land." Buddha-land is big, you know, something, in which everything exist in harmony, you know, and we are a part of it, you know. We are ornament of the Buddha-land [laughs, laughter].

Student C: I was going to ask if the thought of it exists, what does exist?

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm? Nothing exist.

Student C: Nothing exists.

⁵ *Hosshō*: The real nature of the phenomenal world; the original state of phenomena.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Nothing, you know—you think something exist, this exist, but not always in that way—changing moment after moment. That is dharma-nature, you know, which goes on and on and on. *Hai.*

Student D: Change exists.

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm?

Student D: Change exists.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. Change—something changes is—no, not "something"—but change exists, that's right [laughs]. I cannot do some things, you know—if I say so, it is already some emptiness which doesn't exist [laughs]. So it is—actually, you know, if we talk about [it] this way, this is very funny discussion. It doesn't exist at all [laughter].

Far better to invite some teachers [?] [laughs]. But if you make such a question to him, he may give up [laughs]. *Hai.*

Student E: [Long question—all unclear.]

Suzuki-rōshi: No. No. [Laughs, laughter.] That is, you know, is the difference between—between Buddhist and non-Buddhist, you know. In case of no change, you know, there is no need to—to have practice or no need to, you know, think about or no need to make effort, you know. Whether you are [1-2 words] or late [laughs], it doesn't matter. You may say, you can say so, but actually our practice—this, you know—our practice start from that point—actual problem we have. When we talk about it, there is no problem, but when ... [*Sentence not finished. Tape turned over.*]

Why we have—no one give you any problem, but still we have problem because we cannot accept the reality as it—as it is. We don't know why, so our—something, some delusion—that is, we say, because of ignorance. Bec- [partial word]—if we know the reality as-it-is, no problem, as we said. But we cannot accept the reality as-it-is, unfortunately. But, you know, that we cannot accept as-it-is, is important. Because of it, human being exist, you know. Because human being doesn't care anything about ourselves, human being will not exist. Because of our delusion, you know, deluded mind or attachment, our ignorance will exist in that way. So "ignorance," we say, but it is again because we think—we discuss something in some light, in some special standpoint [?]. So ignorance it is—so actually ignorance itself is a part of buddha-nature. So if we [are], you know, enlightened of ignorance we are buddha. If we are not enlightened of ignorance, we are ignorant. [2-4 words, possibly in Japanese.]

Student E: Whenever you make it to enlightenment, [do] you still exist as human beings?

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm?

Student E: If you're enlightened, do you physically exist as a human being?

Suzuki-roshi: If you—?

Student E: —exist as a human being?

Suzuki-rōshi: If you enlightened, you will exist as a human being in one way; on the other hand, you will exist as a [1-2 words] of many being. Same thing, you know. We are, you know—we—each being has same value, in one way, but each one has different function and different form, you know, way it goes. But even though each being is different, but it is same—same being, you know. So ignorance and enlightened mind—if you [are] enlightened of ignorance, you are enlightened. If you are ignorant about enlightenment, you are ignorant.

So if you really understand how we exist, it include, you know, morality, our practice, our many, you know, human culture. It include not as a special culture only, but also, understanding of our being [?] as one of the beings of many beings. That is right understanding of real human being; but if your understanding is limited—limited understanding or human-centered understanding, or if you are—if our human culture is human-centered culture only, it doesn't make sense. We will be human culture more and more separated from the nature. That is what is happening to us now because we are—our way of thinking, our culture is too much human-centered culture. Our unders- [partial word]—our mind doesn't go beyond, you know, human culture.

Student F: Rōshi, reincarnation is [3-6 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Incarnation?

Student F: Reincarnation. What do Buddhists believe?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, that is—it has been Buddhist belief, and no one can deny it, you know. It is difficult to say it doesn't exist. It is very difficult to say. [To say,] "It does exist" is easy [laughs], but we cannot—if you want to deny something,⁶ it is very difficult, you know [laughs]. It is easy to say, "I am not enlightened." This is easy. But it is very difficult to say, "I have no easy [?] desires"—I have no such easy desire as you have. Can you [laughs] clearly declare in that way, you know?

⁶ Perhaps "to prove a negative."

Maybe, you know, your idea—the thought of reincarnation—someone may say it is—it is superstition. It is easy—it is not so easy to say that is superstition. You have to prove, you know, everything from every angle if you want to say that is—reincarnation does not exist. It is almost impossible to deny something, some idea which you have. So maybe we shouldn't [laughs]. It is better not [to].

And actually, some of you may say that is superstition. Some of you may say so, but he himself, you know, what exactly what he does, actually, is based on that kind of idea—idea of reincarnation. That is how he is—how human nature is going. I may die tomorrow, you know, but I—until I die, I think I will live tomorrow too. When I go to bed I think I am quite sure [laughs] that I can get up tomorrow at five o'clock. I am quite sure. But we cannot be so sure [laughs]. You see, we—I believe in my future life always. That is actually what we are doing. So it is more than belief, you know. [It is] actual life we have. Okay?

Student G: [Most of question unclear: 4-6 sentences.] Rōshi, when you say that women ... say that ... I consider it in some way that it's like ... and I can't help but hear that you are not

Suzuki-roshi: Yeah, but that is—[laughs, laughter]. [Unclear brief exchange among SR and students who are apparently reacting to the question.] Is that democratic [?]. Are you proud of that understanding [laughs]? Are you very proud of your understanding of us [?]. You know, you must be very sorry that you cannot understand in that way [laughs]. That is a very important point, which you miss—always missing, that point is always missing in our practice. You know, very important, but I have to ignore big, you know, hole you have in your—in your practice. You know, it is too much to say so.

It—it is, you know—our practice is—if we put the emphasis on that point [laughs], you—you will not stay here, I am quite sure. More and more, you know, as you understand the Buddhist teaching, our philosophy, more and more you will pay more attention, and, you know, less think [?]. You think you are something [1-2 words], but something is bound to—bound to [1-2 words] our thinking. That is human-centered way of life. That is very important point, you know.

Student G: [Partially unclear.] I think I've heard But as a ... female I ignore it because it's too much. I think, you know, that takes care of itself. I'll ... I think ... But it means I start to—to feel that [1-3 words] I just get upset. ...

Suzuki-rōshi: Upset—

Student G: —it just can't mean anything [2-4 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Upset—you shouldn't be upset [laughs]. You should—should—you should enjoy instead of being upset. So you should do it step by step, a little by little. That is how you will [1-2 words: "treat it"?], you know, even though you feel you take care of it so that I than live [to] one hundred and fifty. "I am not so happy" [laughs]. If you take care of [1-2 words] or take care of migraine [?] or something else. I feel much happier if you, first of all, if you take care of yourself, you know. That is how you actually think [?]. That is Buddhist practice. I don't want to, you know, explain too much [laughs] or [1-2 words], you know. You understand? That is the main point: how to be Buddha.

Student H: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Hai.*

Student H: Is there an ideal that you are aware of—is there any definition of masculinity and femininity [3-6 words]?

Suzuki-rōshi: Similarity?

Student H: Yeah. What's the ideal? [3-6 words.]

Suzuki-rōshi: From—where it from? Where does it come from, you mean?

Student H: —in the Oriental mind.

Suzuki-rōshi: Oriental mind.

Student H: —would there be any ideal of masculinity or femininity in [1-2 words]?

Suzuki-rōshi: Oriental—Oriental culture is very much, as you say, it looks like, you know. Hmm? [Responding to something said by a student.] [Laughs, laughter.] There are many reasons, you know. It is—there is, maybe—there are many reasons. One I can point to or more, but, maybe two—important point is—Buddhism or Indian thought is based on religious life of people who entered religious life after finishing their household life. Okay? That is one [1 word]. And in Mahāyāna Buddhism we put more emphasis on how to help people—how to help people. It is easier for—for—for us to help others when you are single. In Mahāyāna school, to help others goes first, and to help thems- [partial word]—ourselves is next—especially [for a] Mahāyāna priest.

Those two reasons I can, you know, give to you, I can count. And there are many something like—must be some like, you know, background which exist wherever you go—still exist—some discrimination man and woman—about man and woman, or some discrimination about sexual

activity, you know. There are many reasons for it.

But there is no reason why we should [1-3 words] a man from—a woman from man or [4-6 words]. You know, that is, you know—when we—when we talk about the teaching from the reality, no discrimination, but when we talk about our practice, you know, there is some difference. It is actually easier for a man—for a single man to practice our way. It is easier, you know. And it is much harder for couple to practice our way. That's all. We—we have, you know, more special rules. *Hai.*

Student I: On that same talk [?], you talk of change, and you—everywhere changes always. And everything changes. But some things don't change because man can [8-12 words] everything else that changes.

Suzuki-roshi: Yeah, that—"everything changes" is a kind of, you know, law. That is why Buddha is called, you know, the teacher of the teacher. He is teacher of everything—demon [?], even, you know. Even though you go to heaven, things [are] changing.

Student I: I want to avoid the [1-2 words] I'm thinking of change and everything is still changing. And the way that I hear you is that there is change and there is everything else but change. But change does not change.

Suzuki-rōshi: Change does not change, you know. No, it doesn't [laughs]. It is—it is not possible to deny the teaching [of] things changing. This is not possible.

Student I: Everything changes but change.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. Everything change but change—change. Yeah. Yeah. That is very much so, and that is very important point. That is why we call dharma-nature, you know, nature. We don't say "dharma." If we say dharma it looks like something which does not change exists, you know. So we say dharma-nature—because it is nature it goes, it is nature's thing. *Hai. Hai.*

Student J: [Question unclear.]

Suzuki-rōshi: I think you understand. You are not [1-2 words], but nowadays [4-8 words]. You know, if you think so, you will have big trouble. You will be confused, you know. You cannot be honest with yourself. If you have children, you must face it. Or someone must face it. Your country at least must face it. Then we should pay tax [laughs, laughter]. And if you let other people, you know, raise your children, you don't feel good. Do you feel good? If you feel good, that is, you know, okay, but I don't think [3-6 words] Next time someone [4-7 words].

Anyway, to have children and to have family is one step to the problem [laughs, laughter]. You will have to know that, you know. Without, you know, being prepared for that, you know, if you get married that is big mistake. *Hai*.

Student K: Where there's a single person [1-2 words] freedom that a single person might practice. Maybe they go to a monastery and accept limitations—a very restricted situation. Why couldn't the couples use the limited situation of their family life that restricts them in certain ways—use that as a situation for practice? They [1-2 words] not use it in a monastic limitation.

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughing as the latter part of the question is asked.] You know, it looks like possible, you know—it looks like possible, [but] actually [it is] very difficult. Well, that is actually what we are trying, isn't it? And we are doing pretty well, I think, even though we have, you know, problem. And still I think we need some single monk, you know, single monk or nun here, you know. And it—that is not so easy for single person or a married couple here. But if you understand our life, if you are mature enough, maybe it is possible. More and more, even though you are young, you are pretty mature.

So I—I hope you can manage it, you know. I hope, but still I see many difficulties. But it is good to have difficulties, you know, and if you don't have any difficulties, it is not fair [laughs] when everyone in the world having difficulties. To, you know, to exist without difficulties is not fair. You don't feel so good, you know. So I think we are doing pretty well, and I agree [with] what you say.

Student K: [1-2 words] most of our monks are married, and maybe it is a stabilizing factor in their lives. [2-4 words.]

Suzuki-roshi: Yes. Yeah. I think so. Normally it is so. But, you know, still when you become very idealistic, you know—some of us are very idealistic, so idealistics should stick to single life [laughter] because they feel good. So you shouldn't compare, you know, single life to married life, and we shouldn't say which is better or, you know—that is something which—which we shouldn't discuss so much. We should—if we—if we have good understanding, then we can live together—married couple and single together. Married monk and monk together.

Student L (David Chadwick): Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Hai*.

David: I don't think that single men and women can exist any more themselves [6-8 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: [1-2 words] imperfect?

David: How do think single men and single women live together and stay single?

Suzuki-rōshi: With? With what?

David: How do single men and single women live together and be single men and single women? What—what magic do you have? [SR laughs, laughter.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Give me one more *kalpa* [3-4 words]. I will tell you my magic. Many people still doing, you know, and many people, you know, have been doing, you know, have been doing pretty well. There must be some magic. And magic is [2 words] zazen practice. If you sit hard enough, you know, you can be single. Zazen practice is a kind of magic. That is true. I am not single, so I can—I cannot prove it. But many teachers have proved how to remain single, how to be authentic monk—Buddhist monk. The magic is zazen practice, that's all. If you say so, there is no magic. You have, you know, when your foundation or when your foundation of life is based on individualism, you know, that is not possible. When we—you believe in the oneness of man and woman, and non-duality, then that is possible. And how to actualize non-duality in our physical life is zazen practice. So, you know, zazen practice is something more than you think about. *Hai*.

Student M: [3-4 words] that when you say something that I don't fully [?] expect—

Suzuki-roshi: Hmm?

Student M: When you say something that I don't expect you to say, I can't believe that you don't exist when you say that you don't exist for me. I think, well, am I making you up? And then how can you say something that I don't expect? It's—what [2-4 words]. I don't understand who is talking when you are talking, and I don't really understand who is listening when I'm listening.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. That is true. That must be so. You know, it is not you or me who is talking, and actually we are not talking about anything [laughs, laughter]. That is very true. So, you know, we say Buddha didn't say anything for nine—forty-nine years he didn't say anything, or we say "tongueless speech," you know. He has no tongue. It looks like he is talking about something.

That is very good, you know—it was big kōan for well-trained Zen master. Me or you is not qualified enough not to talk about this kind of, you know, kōan because this kind of kōan could be discussed when we have no

attachment [to] what I say or what you listen to. It is actually, you know, same thing. Mountain speak, river speak, insect speak, you know, Buddha's teaching. Whatever you see, that is Buddha's teaching. Right understanding of it is not to have special, you know, eyes or ears to see, but it means just to listen to it, you know. That which exist is not mountain or not—not you, but, you know, something which result between you two. A sound—not insect or not you, but sound. That is more true, you see? So actually I'm talking about [that] which you can understand, you know. I am not fooling about—fooling around either. I am talking about some ultimate truth which I can accept and which you can accept, that's all. Nothing special. But you feel I am talking about something special because your way of thinking is very special, that's all.

Oh. [Probably sees how late the hour is.]

Source: City Center transcript transcribed by Barry Eisenberg. Entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Transcript checked against tape by and made verbatim by Bill Redican (10/19/00). Miyagawa Keishi-san kindly provided assistance with the translation of Japanese terms.