

69-12-01

### WINTER SESSHIN #3

#### ROSHI'S LECTURE ON WAY SEEKING MIND. BODHISATTVA'S VOW

December 1, 1969. Tassajara.

Our way seeking mind is Buddha mind. And our practice is...makes sense when you practice with Buddha mind, or way seeking mind. But usually, when we say the Way seeking mind or *doshin, doshin*; *do* is *tao* and *shin* is mind-it also means Bodhi...Bodhisattva mind, Bodhistattva mind, to,,not only help ourselves but also to save or to help others. Strong nuance of this kind is always there when we say *doshin*. Right now we recited this perfect and penetrating dharma is rarely met with even in a hundred thousand *kalpas* of time. The moment we have right now doesn't come back again. I don't know how old are you but if this day pass you will not have the same day. So, not only dharma you listen, but also your life you have right now doesn't come back even, hundred thousand *kalpas* of time, you cannot repeat your life again and it is so. And so it is foolish to stick to something and ignore our life which does not come again. we should not be regretful after many years. That is why we make our effort, day by day, moment after moment. This is the third day of sesshin, one week sesshin is not so long. If you pass three days, the rest of days will be easier, but at the same time you will miss the day of the difficulties you have had. I think that is the actual feeling you have now when you pass already three days. When I am sitting with you like this, I appear as if I were only maybe 30 or 35 years old, but I am already 55, it is amusing, but I think, I feel as you feel right now. If you feel you are quite young that will be the mistake, thirty years or 60 years doesn't make any difference, so I think you should feel as I feel, and I should feel as you feel and we should practice zazen. This is Bodhisattva's mind to help others and to help themselves. Especially you do not make much progress after thirty or thirty-five, so while you are young, you must make best effort and try to have various experience as much as possible. and after forty years, after the age of forty. you will develop your work on the foundation you built before you were thirty. In this way, if it is so, your time is very valuable, you should make your best effort so that you will not regret the days you passed without making enough effort. Now, this kind of spirit is a spirit which you do not have. Not much people...not much American people understand this kind of spirit. You seek for something good always and you choose easy way and you depend on some teaching and you are asking always which way you should take, but that is, you know, I think that is a mistake. In that way, if you,...to choose something easy means you will follow the preconceived idea, you follow, you choose something you have had without seeking something new to you. If you always choose easy way, your way will be...your life will be the life you will regret. If you make every effort on each moment in various day as much as possible, you will not regret, when you become old, when you become old. So Bodhisattva spirit, is the spirit to seek for difficulties and to confront with difficulties. With firm conviction you should endanger your life. When you...you have this kind of spirit you will be quite different person. Your eyes will change, your behavior will change. And there are many Bodhisattvas, not only

Buddha time but also in China and in Japanese...in Japan too. Many and many Bodhisattvas who practice Bodhisattvas' way. Those who went to India and seek for the scriptures and translated it into Chinese and those who cross the China Sea and studied Buddhism in China, or Chinese priest who came to Japan without being afraid of the stormy weather of Japan...China Sea. The most famous one will be Ganjin, Chinese priest, Ganjin. He tried seven times to cross the ocean and he lost his sight with his difficulties and at last he came, he could come to visit Japan and built a temple, that is Bodhisattva mind. With this kind of effort, our way was supported by many people, because of the spirit, because of the feat of those great teachers. Buddhists respect tradition, you may say, but there is some reason why we respect tradition. The ancient Bodhisattva's way was always beyond our reach, almost beyond our reach and they are always encouraging us, not only because they have done great things, but they did not afraid of anything. They did not afraid of poverty, they did not afraid of death, or they did not afraid of failure. They found joy in failure, in poverty and in doing some small things with, you know, famous words of *Lotus Sutra* is to shine the one corner of the world, one corner of the room, that is enough. That kind of spirit may be difficult to understand, but to, you know, if you sweep, you know, square room, may be you may sweep so...only...you will not sweep the corner of the room. If you wipe the floor or scrub the floor, you always leave the corners. It is easy and it may be fast, you may think that it is better to scrub the corners of the room...you may think it is better to clean two rooms trying to clean each corner of the rooms and clean just one room, but we rather try to clean the one room completely with great difficulty, with greta effort, it looks foolish, but somebody must be foolish enough to spend al the time in cleaning each corner of the room. That is Bodhisattva mind. Do you understand? You know, my teacher, Sada (?) Roshi, always after clean...after clean the room, he come and (Roshi makes motion of looking for dust-laughter)...you know the *shoji* screen has many frames and it is rather difficult to clean up each of the frames, so sometimes we miss it...so he come, he doesn't say anything (Roshi laughs)...*Jigoo* (sounds like ??) tell us to shine one corner of the room. In *Lotus Sutra* also, there is a famous Bodhisattva who used to bow to everyone he met, everyone, he bowed to everyone, you may think that is very foolish, but that is Bodhisattva mind. In Japan, there are some rascal, he...he himself was not so bad but his wife was very bad person. She asked her husband always to do something bad. He married her when she was the wife of his master's wife. But he, for some reason, he married her. And after he got married with her, he felt so bad and he went to a temple and asked that...monk what to do. And he said it...it may be easier to commit *hara kiri*, you know. It is easier, actually, but if you die you cannot repay your sinful karma, you cannot change your karma, so it is better to live long enough to pay the bad karma. So they started on a trip and wherever they go his wife always asking to do something bad, and at last, again, he kidded someone to rob a traveller's money. And he mad up his mind to give up, to dismiss her and he started to work on cave...do you know this story?...in Kyushu Island there is a famous cave or tunnel for people. Each year some people was killed that pass because the road was so bad and the cliff was so steep. So he made up his mind to make a tunnel, but no one helped him because it looks like so silly, it looks like almost impossible, make a tunnel for that mountain, but he made up his mind and completed the tunnel. That is the famous tunnel which was built by that monk. That is also Bodhisattva mind. Very

foolish...very crazy idea, you may say but that is Bodhisattva mind. They followed the good example of Shakyamuni Buddha, the many examples of Bodhisattva way told by Buddha, sacrificing himself as a food of hungry tiger and just to know one verse of the truth. This kind of spirit is Bodhisattva mind. I think if you want to accomplish something in this land, you must have unusual mind to go beyond the usual way of life. And there you have greta mind, joyful mind and true kind mind which is Buddha mind. So, if you don't do anything, you don't have any mind. When you do it then there you will have joy and strength, and kindness. So that is why it is necessary for us to have vow, Bodhisattva vow and I think you must, each one of you must have his own...your own vow, vow for only yourself. My vow is...and what do you think my vow is...my vow is to scrape up the smoky pan. You know, in the kitchen, there are many black smoky pans. When I was young there were...we did not use gas, we burned things by wood. So bottom of...bottom of the pan is always black and full of smut, so it was...it is very difficult to boil something by,,unless you take off those black smut, you cannot boil anything. So Buddhism has a lot of smut outside of the pan so it is difficult to boil anything, so first of all is necessary to take off those black smut. That is my vow...to take off black smut of the pan so that you can boil something by it. If you take time and cook, some lazy will left the pan with smut and next morning someone must clean it or else the pan will have more smut until someone cleans it up. Someone must do it. I think, you know, when they feel very bad, when someone feels very bad with boiling by...receiving the black pan for...someone who...was in town recently. But I feel some joy of cleaning it and I have some joy of boiling it by cleaned up pan. each one of you must have some vow, then you will find joyful mind and big mind and kind mind, you will be every kind if...only when you vow...when you clean it because of your vow you will find you will be kind to everyone, instead of you know, angry at people, that is Bodhisattva mind.

Thank you very much.

EZT – early SFZC transcript – 69-12-01

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