

No Dualism

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" To stop your mind does not mean to stop your activities of mind. It means your mind pervades your whole body... With your full mind you form the mudra in your hands. "

We say our practice should be without gaining ideas, without any expectations, even of enlightenment. This does not mean, however, just to sit without any purpose. This practice free from gaining ideas is based on the Prajna Paramita Sutra, but if you aren't careful the sutra itself will give you a gaining ideal. It says, " Form is emptiness and emptiness is form. " But if you attach to that statement, you are liable to be involved in dualistic ideas: here is you, form, and here is emptiness, which you are trying to realize through your form. So 'form is emptiness, and emptiness is form' is still dualistic. But fortunately ^{our teaching} the sutra goes on to say, " Form is form and emptiness is emptiness. " Here there is no dualism. When you find it difficult to stop your mind in your sitting and are still trying to stop your mind, this is the stage of 'form is emptiness and emptiness is form'. But while you are practicing even in this dualistic way, more and more you will have oneness with your goal. And when your practice becomes effortless you can stop your mind. This is the stage of 'form is form and emptiness is emptiness'.

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To stop your mind does not mean to stop your activities of mind. It means your mind pervades your whole body. Your mind follows your breathing. With your full mind you form the mudra in your hands. With your whole mind you sit with painful legs without being disturbed by them. This is to sit without any gaining idea. At first you feel some restrict-

ion in your posture, but when you are not disturbed by the restriction, you have found the meaning of 'emptiness is emptiness and form is form.' So to find your own way under some restriction is the way of practice.

So practice does not mean that whatever you do, even lying down, that is zazen. When your mind is not restricted by restriction, that is what we mean by practice. When you say, "Whatever I do that is Buddha nature, so it doesn't matter what I do, and there is no need to practice zazen," that is already a dualistic understanding of our everyday life. If it really doesn't matter, there is no need for you even to say so. As long as you are concerned about what you do, that is dualistic. If you are not concerned about what you do, you will not say so. When you sit, you will sit. When you eat, you will eat. That's all. If you say, "It doesn't matter," it means that you are making some excuse to do something in your own way with your small mind. It means you are attached to some particular thing or way. That is not what we mean when we say, "Just to sit is enough," or "Whatever you do that is zazen." Of course whatever we do, that is zazen, but if so, there is no need to say so. So when you sit, you will just sit without being disturbed by your painful legs or sleepiness. That is zazen. But at first it is very difficult to accept things as they are. You will be annoyed by the feeling you have in your practice. When you can do everything, whether it is good or bad, without disturbance or without being annoyed by the feeling, that is actually what we mean by 'form is form and emptiness is emptiness!'

Suppose you suffer from an illness like cancer, and you realize you cannot live more than two or three years. Then, seeking something upon which to rely, you will start practice. Someone may rely on the help of God. Someone may start the practice of zazen. His practice will be concentrated on obtaining emptiness of mind, believing the Buddhist teaching that originally we are empty beings. That means he is trying to be free from the suffering of duality. This is the practice of 'form is emptiness or emptiness is form.' Because of the truth of emptiness, he wants to have the actual realization of it in his life. Of course, this practice will help him. If he practices it, believing in its truth, and realizing that to be too concerned about this life is wrong, he is ^{at least} still making effort. That will help him of course, but that is not perfect practice.

Knowing that your life is short, to enjoy it, day after day, moment after moment, that is the life of 'form is form, and emptiness is emptiness'. When Buddha comes, you will welcome him; when the devil comes, you will welcome him. The famous zen master, Ummon, said, "Sun-faced Buddha, and moon-faced Buddha". When he was ill, someone asked him, "How are you?" And he answered, "Sun-faced Buddha and moon-faced Buddha". That is the life of 'form is form, and emptiness is emptiness'. There is no problem. One year of life is good. One hundred years of life are good. If you continue our practice, you will attain this stage.

But at first you will have various problems, and it is necessary for you to make some effort to continue our practice. Practice without effort is not true practice for

the beginner. For the beginner, the practice needs great effort. ^{Insert below} So the understanding that whatever you do, that is zen, so it does not matter whether you practice or not, is completely mistaken. But if you continue, if you make your best effort just to continue your practice, without gaining ideas and with your whole body and mind, then whatever you do, that will be true practice. So just to continue should be your purpose. When you do something, just to do it, should be your purpose. Then form is form and you are you, and true emptiness will be realized in your practice.

INSERT [From Roshin's lecture, Aug. 4, '68, in S.F.]

Especially for young people, it is necessary to try very hard to achieve something. And you must stretch out your arms and legs as wide as they will go. (Demonstrating.) Form is form. You must be true to your own way until at last you actually come to the point where you see it is necessary to forget all about yourself.

¶ Until you come to this point,