

普源一滴水

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From Shodo Harada Roshi, Abbot of Sogenji, Okayama, Japan

Hakuin Zenji's

Song of Zazen – Zazen Wasan

All sentient beings are essentially Buddhas. As with water and ice, there is no ice without water; apart from sentient beings, there are no Buddhas. Not knowing how close the truth is, we seek it far away--what a pity! We are like one who in the midst of water cries out desperately in thirst. We are like the son of a rich man who wandered away among the poor.

The reason we transmigrate through the Six Realms is because we are lost in the darkness of ignorance. Going further and further astray in the darkness, how can we ever be free from birth-and-death?

As for the Mahayana practice of zazen, there are no words to praise it fully.

The Six Paramitas, such as giving, maintaining the precepts, and various other good deeds like invoking the Buddha's name, repentance, and spiritual training, all finally return to the practice of zazen. Even those who have sat zazen only once will see all karma erased. Nowhere will they find evil paths, and the Pure Land will not be far away.

If we listen even once with open heart to this truth, then praise it and gladly embrace it, how much more so then, if on reflecting within ourselves we directly realize Self-nature, giving proof to the truth that Self-nature is no-nature.

We will have gone far beyond idle speculation. The gate of the oneness of cause and effect is thereby opened, and not-two, not-three, straight ahead runs the Way.

Realizing the form of no-form as form, whether going or returning we cannot be any place else.

Realizing the thought of no-thought as thought, whether singing or dancing, we are the voice of the Dharma. How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom! At this moment what more need we seek? As the eternal tranquility of Truth reveals itself to us, this very place is the Land of Lotuses and this very body is the body of the Buddha.

In this year of 2000 Sogenji is celebrating the three hundredth year since its founding. Because of many preparations we were able to invite people on the fourth of November, for a tea ceremony with 400 people, and many priests who are deeply and karmically connected to Sogenji came on the fifth of November. Several hundred people gathered together to celebrate the founding. This is also the hundredth year since the birth of Mumon Roshi. It is just thirteen years since he died. At Shofukuji Temple in Kobe and Reinin Temple in Kyoto people who are karmically affiliated with Mumon Roshi gathered and participate in two different ceremonies in honor of Mumon Roshi. It was a very busy year, and now that those various ceremonies are finished we are in the final stages of preparing for Rohatsu.

Even though it is November the sun is shining in the daytime. Everyone is perspiring, their foreheads shining with sweat; that is how warm it is. But the mornings are severely chilly. The greater the difference between the morning and noontime temperatures, the greater the colors of the maple trees in the garden. Bright blazing reds touch and color us to the bottom of our heart. Between the greens in the gardens you can see those bright red colors peeking through, refreshing our deepest mind. These brilliantly colored changing maple leaves whenever the wind blows the leaves flutter down, falling. Where they fall they create a great brocade, a golden brocade, like the world of gorgeous kimonos, quietly walking through the winter scenery. When we go into the countryside the rice harvest has already been completed, and through this there is the dark earth of the fields. The frost has fallen and brought great brightness to the deep green leaves of daikon and the scallions; really, the scene of winter has come. The things that should fall have fallen, the things that should settle have settled; it is a quiet, very serene world. Everywhere we look not a single bright,

bright flower lasts, only the small field cottage.

TakeNoJo, the teacher of Rikyu, described the mind of wabi with this poem, translated by Fujiwara Taiko:

"Everything, all decoration
has been dropped, and the
only thing that is left:
The tree trunk the bared
branches are pointing to the
heavens, stretching up.
But on the very tips of
those we can already see
the tips of spring.
The shining of life energy is
already potential there."

On the mountain the Buddha spent six years, doing ascetic training. For these human beings who have so much gathered ego clutter, to let go of that and know the true source, the true serenity of Nirvana, the Buddha entered this state of mind called Nirvana. Nirvana, where all the fire has burned away and all the decorations have burned up with it. All the flames of desire, anger, hate, conflict, arguments - where all of that has been burned up completely, and the ashes from that have been scattered everywhere. Like the winter scenery and its deep quiet - that same state of mind. From morning to night we carry things to think about in our heads. Our mind never settles. It is truly a daily struggling life of pain and challenge in this modern world for all of us. This state of serenity and world of quiet feel so far away. But if we dig into our deepest mind, then all people can find that they have never lacked this mind of Nirvana. If we can believe and have faith in that, while being alive in this world of suffering, delusion, and confusion, we can have great faith in our true original nature, that of all beings.

This place where all our decoration has been let go of and all our thoughts have been

dropped is called flexibility. There one can accept everything unconditionally, exactly as it is, like the mind of a brand new baby. In a baby's mind, no matter what world they are born into, no matter what era, however terrifying a time, no matter what kind of household they are born into, no matter what kind of people they arrive among, they receive it exactly as it is. Truly a state of mind where everything is received without any conditions; unconditional acceptance is truly the original state of mind of all people. For example after sixteen months children can understand the concept of "one," and after twenty-three months are able to understand the meaning of "two." There is a world of mind prior to "one" - of wisdom, God, truth, and Buddha. God is not something punishing. Recognizing that world of good and bad, while accepting and receiving all totally, is the mind of God and Buddha. Either a person understands or doesn't understand this.

The minds of parents should be like this. No matter what our child does, no matter what kind of person our child is, even if thrown out by society, this child is still the most important thing for a parent. Of course we do not blindly love everything about a person, but finally after everything else to unconditionally accept it. This hugeness of mind is most important. There must be a hometown, a place for the child to seek refuge in. Because in our mind the ego poison is so strong we have lost the home to which we can return. That brings even greater poison and confusion. If this is the phenomena of our life we have to let go of all our thinking and decorations, and by scraping all of that away we liberate the phenomena to a quiet place where everything has been let go of and entrusted. Otherwise there will no place to seek and find our mind's great quiet and security. That mind within us, that empty clarity, which has finally trust and faith in all beings and can embrace every person, which accepts every event and person.

All of us humans, if we do not want to decay completely, must not just fulfill all our desires and use up this earth, but support it and give importance to its life. This planet which has given us life for so long - embrace it and realize we are living beings who cannot live separate from this earth. The huge mind of this earth, to realize it and its great patience, that of the sixth paramita of great patience and forbearance. In life we work to have everything go the way we want it to, but how many times in life are things like that? We don't have choice about where we are born, we may have some decision karmically about it, but basically there is not much we can do about the circumstances in which we find ourselves. We can't live without water, that is impossible; there is not much we do about that. If we could survive without eating that would be fine, but it is impossible, if we could live without breathing air that would be fine, but we need air. We have in our essence not a single way of making things always go as we want them to. Eventually, we become sick and die, and the essence of all of that may appear to be something we can change but when we are old and sickness becomes intense we quickly realize we have little we can do about that. Finally when our life energy goes we realize that we can control this life very little. We can only entrust and move in accordance with the ways of heaven and earth. In the same way every encounter, every condition, every circumstance, we can only receive and accept it. There is nothing we can try to control and change. In this way we see our reality clearly. While there are many things we don't agree with and wish were different, rather than becoming stuck there we become the state of mind that accepts and receives. Bodhidharma described this mind of deep samadhi as letting go of everything external while not being concerned by ideas within. This is samadhi. No idea of win or lose, profit or loss, good or bad, rather to know the actuality and true reality, and no matter where we find

ourselves our mind is not moved around or upset and we hold our life energy precious. It is not people who make us suffer and be so tumultuously upset, it is we ourselves. It is patient forbearance that teaches us how to do this.

Hakuin Zenji, one of the greatest Zen masters of Japanese history, taught in this way. When we look at his records, at the age of 79 after long years of training and pushing and forcing he became dehydrated, and those around him were concerned and asked him not to go for far away Dharma talks. Everyone wanted him to stay alive and see his wonderful face and be liberated by that. He should take care of his body they pleaded. On the eleventh of December he gathered everyone and had something to tell. He said,

"Last night I had a dream. I was in my room at the head and all my old friends were sitting there, meditating, priests Gudo and Joshu and Shojuronin were all there.

One said, 'I planned to train for along time, but I realize now that I did not give up my life within my daily life; when I go outside I am confused, when I encounter situations I don't know what to do. I am very embarrassed to say this; I can barely look at you all. What should I do?'

Ukinosetsudo said, 'There is nothing to it!'

'What is the secret?'

'I can't tell you so easily as that!'

'Oh please, don't say that, tell me, I don't want to die like this!'

Ukinosetsudo opened his mouth and said, 'It is about straightforward bravery! If you have these two words of straightforward bravery everything gets simple; everything else is beside the point. Nothing is a problem when you have these two.'

All the other priests all agreed, 'Yes, yes, that's it, that's exactly how it is, yes, yes, that's how it is, that's how you have to go.' They all agreed. Priest Gudo and priest Taigo both said 'Yes, yes that's exactly how I followed the path as well.'

Then I suddenly came to and realized that all these priests in my room had already died and I said in a loud voice, 'I'm not going to join you guys yet!' And I woke up. I don't know but at that moment I just got so much energy, I'm not going to die yet, I am very well, I can be secure in that, we can plan on my eightieth birthday next year."

From that time on Hakuin's daily life became very bright, very abundant, full of energy he carried essence everywhere. And five years after that, at eighty-four, on the very same eleventh of December, he died.

In this story, whether a dream or a story designed to teach his students, a method which he often used, he used two words which could be used to describe the energy

running through his life in one line:
"straightforward bravery." Will this be a life full of hardened lumped up extraneous thinking? With that we can't break through the darkness at all. He was always saying, this deep straightforward bravery in each mind moment, connecting these in one line, it has to be this kind of ki, not hanging onto this, dragging along that, not being stuck on that. It has to be like this.

In the works that he left behind, *The Wild Strawberry*, *The Iron Teakettle*, he used this often.

"People on the path, only this: the mind of straightforward bravery."

He also said "sanzen is like two stones you rub together to make a spark, and you rub and rub, until the spark comes and the fire blazes, until that you don't stop but continue again and again and again, not wasting your energy on doing many things which will never bring resolution, but bring these stones and sticks and bring a spark to a flame or we will spend our whole lives in wasted efforts." It is these words he left to help us all.

Hakuin Zenji's calligraphies and scrolls and words and are all held within this truth, all about this human truth held in this one straight line, bringing it all through. Each and every one of his calligraphies, everything about his energy, his ki, his words, his expression, his full tautness is manifested and is truly something that brings people to astonishment. This is all straightforward bravery.

Jinyo Ensui held a pointed awl over his thigh so he would not sleep, all night doing zazen in this position. Hakuin read about this and looked over his life, saying, "Great efforts without fail bring great life! To be alive in this world yet have no effect and nothing that remains. For what use have we been born?" He was the young age of twenty-four when he said these words, expressing that very

superior mind. With his deep vow, given bright light, which gave all the heavens and earth radiance from his zazen; he died completely and brought forth this essence with his capabilities. His teaching was not original. In the last teaching of the Buddha, like a parent would leave the last words for their child, he left words in his last Sutra, "All of you if you work with great efforts and great care will have no regrets. To make effort in one straight line, continuously, make your mind one-minded and realize that what you do with that state of mind is limitless. There is nothing you can't do. If you work in this way and make ongoing efforts there is nothing you can't realize. If you gather drops of water continuously you can wear away any stone. A drop alone has tiny power, but if you don't pause, you can make a great crack in a rock. In the same way we make a fire by knocking two stones together, by not stopping and continuously going onward with our efforts we get fire. If we take a kettle off the flame it will never come to a boil. This is the same as training in zazen. If we don't come to resolution it is not the problem of zazen, it is that our firm determination has not reached that point yet. To lose track of our sense of a physical body, to lose track of our thoughts, where there is not one tiny thought left. Do it once to that great point. To sit to that place where at once we cut through that great root, where we let go of all of the slightest seeds of thoughts. Experience this.

Mumon Ekai told us very kindly the main points of focus of this process. In the *Mumonkan* he says fastidiously, "With all the three hundred and sixty thousand smallest pores, and all the eighty four joints, do this Mu with everything we have. From the tops of our heads to the bottoms of our feet, with every single part of our physical body focused, digging into this. Bringing forth this great doubt put it all into this great MUUUUUUUUU." What has to be done is to become one with this MU. Every single

particle of our body and mind comes together, melting in to it. We no longer know is it I or is it Mu? There is no seam, no difference in between. Separation disappears totally. We become it. Continuing through all the hours of the day not falling into the trap of nihilism, from morning to night, night until morning we keep that one deep focus. Keeping it going whether sitting or standing or sleeping or eating or walking or working it is MUUUUUUUUU. All of our awareness and conscious function melts together and not half, but everything we are, is thrown into it. Otherwise this true MU will not come forth. We can't stop mid-way. Every single breath, each and every one continues MU. It is born fully in each breath. We exhale it completely. We exhale and we inhale MU. Again and again that state of MU is born forth. We have swallowed a great bright burning ball of burning iron, we can't swallow it down, and we can't spit it out. It has to be gotten rid of. We have to take it to that place where our awareness cuts through. We are always thinking this and that thought, tossed and turned, but cut through that. If we can take it down to the point where Mu is finally digging into Mu, Mu is cutting Mu, and then it is not an I who is doing Mu. "I" am not trying to do Mu. Mu is birthing Mu. Those actual flavors, that full tautness, where everything we see and feel and know is real, the real way of being. We do Mu with our eyes, ears, body, feelings, and work, until there is no way for that awareness to be anywhere else or divided, instead it is melted together and transformed.

The samadhi of Mu is where even if you are told to think you cannot think, thoughts cannot enter. To continue to the point where everything we meet is Mu, and from that everything is born forth. Everything from our mind is born forth, and all that is piled up in our mind from before becomes useless. All we have learned is useless. Everything gets cut away, shaved off. Melting into this Mu which drinks down the whole world. Essence

like this expels all thoughts, they cannot enter in. We seem like total fools but our essence is clear. Finally, that Mu that is left becomes more clear and transparent, it drinks down our body, our awareness, the world, our eyes, our body's touch, our nose's smell, our mouth's taste, our awareness and perception, and there is nothing left to be dualistic about. All is embraced. There is no way to find a thing. Clear, open, bright. We enter a state of mind where there is no dualistic perception; there is no place for noisy interruptive complex thinking to enter there, where has it gone? We do zazen and realize this state of mind. And, if we find it possible, to be out in yaza realizing that depth that we can't realize in that daytime zazen. Letting go of that physical body, letting go of our awareness, of everything we are usually holding onto. There is nothing to think nothing to taste nothing to see nothing to feel. There is no Mu to hold onto. To enter this is to enter samadhi. If we haven't tasted this state of mind we can't say we know Mu, or we know Zen. If we can enter this mind once we can see that knowing things scholastically is not important, knowing fame, or social awareness, is not important. To know that true quality we all share, the bright clear transparent mind of everyone, to touch that is the most radical thing for humans. It is not about gathering information from outside, but independent of those things to live as when we were born. We rely on our child mind that we have had since we were born. It is not about gathering the fart gasses of other people from reading and listening, but the true clarity coming forth. If we encounter the world with this awareness there is nothing more wonderful than that.

Master Mumon Ekai says it is a person who cannot speak trying to tell their dream. They cannot speak but they cannot forget it. We can say something is there but there is no way for us to describe it because it is prior to mental understanding. No judgment or dualistic comprehension, but totally open,

completely open. Master Mumon said, "And then, as if shaking open the heavens and earth, astonishing heaven and shaking the earth, as if walking hand in hand with the Buddhas, seeing eye to eye with the Buddhas and patriarchs, entering that place where all things are playful samadhi." In this way Mumon describes this great deep seeing without any preconceived notions or conditioning at all. Like a new baby who opens its eyes, ears, and awareness for the first time. For a baby there is no past conditioning, no preconceptions. We all have this pure potential, given to us, free. The worlds of taste, of smell, that which is felt, are all a wide-open window, and everything around us flies right into us. All of it is astounding. All is fresh. All we have been borrowing, all the thoughts and ideas of others, depending on another's way of looking and speaking - no longer do we need to borrow anything. The fresh state of mind is brightly vivid. This is called returning from the great death. Tasting this we can say for the first time we understand Zen. In Buddhism it has to be the actual experience. To be able to encounter this truth and until then to not pause or look aside. This is the paramita of great effort. The paramita of deep essence is the paramita of deep samadhi. The sixth patriarch said, "To not bring forth thoughts of what is good and bad on the outside, and not have thoughts about what is perceived within, this is samadhi." To do this clearly is samadhi. Everything in the external world is a world of relative, dualistic creation. To not understand good or bad is to be pure. These relative, dualistic views are always being expressed, but in the world of dualism we face everything directly and reflect it. For us not to be afraid and insecure and close down on it, but have everything that comes to us welcomed and received. Like a mirror, the mirror does not become afraid of what it will perceive and reflect. In the same way we reflect the world and don't put our own opinions on it. No good or bad, we are not pulled around by what we reflect.

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The way is not to be moved by things external or internal. To be clearly quiet in both of these is what zazen is. What it means not to be pulled around externally is not to judge. A mirror is not affected by the

things it reflects. The mirror does not judge what appears in front of it. The mirror has no face itself. The mirror has no color, no tendencies, no inclinations, and no uneven surface. Know this clear quality of mind. The idea of an egoistic self is not who we really are, instead it is something temporarily floating on top of a surface. Simply, changing phenomena, one ephemeral form. That true mind from which the ego and phenomena are born has not a bit of anything. It is open, attached to nothing. We put our focus right on that. No opinion, no judgment, nothing - that is our true mind. From that place we reflect the world. One straight line reflecting only. We see beyond that dualism. No matter how wonderful the scene, without that mirror reflection it is useless. Without a base of reflecting what we see can't exist for us. Whatever we see is a shadow, even splendid Buddhas or Gods. No matter how huge and expansive the world is, the mind, which reflects it is bigger, more magnanimous. We can't understand it but we can realize the essence of it. This is what zazen is.

This world, this sun and moon, these stars and infinite universe, are settled in this true base of Mind. Our Mind is infinite, timeless, countless, has no past, no future, no qualities. It is eternal. We are here at this moment and the awareness extends three hundred and sixty billion, trillion years into the past and future, the world of time and space is all within this awareness. All is settled there and held within all this. A world of no dualism and no relativity exists in that Mind. Don't give special awareness to just the situation you are in; don't become the same dimension as the world around you. That dimension is always changing, always transient. See that outside world clearly from the view of the infinite past and the endless future. Reflect all of it, and within that don't be bothered, pushed or pulled; fitting only the current dimension - you are bigger than that. Our base is zero, and encountering every varying world we stay zero. Realizing

this state of mind is why we sit. Zazen is the expansive state of mind, our true mind's base. The great, all embracing, non-dualistic essence is zazen.

The classical crafts and arts of Japan are all of this flavor. Noh dancers go on stage whether they are watched or not, whether they are applauded or not, and they become the essence of that Noh completely. And there is no concern of where the audience is. If they dance well or don't dance well, whether mistaken or not mistaken, is not a concern. They dance in this firm, sturdy state of mind, where every hand motion and every footfall is done utterly and decisively. Their mind of truth comes pouring through without delusion or confusion. This is the essence of zazen. While dancing the true source is never moved. If we give life to this kind of essence, in our daily life, weeding, doing samu, cleaning, we completely forget time and our body or what we have done or how we've done it, or that we are working at all. There is no need for any of it, yet our body is absorbed into it completely with no turbulence or upset or twist. When this comes forth it is called zazen. When our zazen ripens our very life becomes an expression of that zazen. It is not about form. Zazen is the base. We can do efficient and essential work, being creative and inventive. Zazen in the zendo is the base of practice for our mind, but we do not stop there. To give use to that practice, to put to use that aligned essence, to work in our every life, actualize it, realize it, and act from it. And use it to clarify our confused awareness, when our mind is turbulent and we are being thrown around by the external world - to let go of that. This is the ripening of zazen. Samadhi is the reality of zazen.

The sixth patriarch continues, 'To let go of the external stratum is samadhi, to be serene within is samadhi.' We have a physical body as man or woman, a child or adult, a body of a philosopher or scholar, sometimes of

wisdom or no wisdom. There are many varieties of physical reality, that of a good or bad person, but our external body is always changing, so not to be pulled around by any of those physical appearances is Zen. When we are working in the real sense of the word working, when we forget our position and body and self-conscious awareness, when we are doing the best possible work, we are no longer keeping track of our body or our self-conscious awareness instead, we match perfectly with what we are doing. In our everyday life we let go of our small self. In the beginning we have to pay special attention to this, but eventually we melt into it and we become one with that essence of the doing. At each and every dualistic point we let go of mental awareness and are able to work in the best possible way, most efficiently. This is Zen. Our body and external world is all gathered into one. We go beyond physical form and realize the essence. At the same time in our mind we are not caught by and attached to forms, and in that way our mind's essence is very stable and that is samadhi. No matter what severe threatening circumstances or horrifying situation we are in we are not moved around, instead we match perfectly with each moment becoming it completely. This essence is called samadhi, and zazen is, as it is, samadhi, and samadhi is zazen. We are in the stream. This essence is called the paramita of samadhi. Always we align our life from that mind, so no matter what situation we match each thing. In the zendo we align our body and breath and we can align every world we encounter. Our mind becomes matched with our focus, and then we use it in our life. No matter what, we can match each circumstance without irritation or wandering around. In every situation we match perfectly and this is the paramita of samadhi.

In the Heart Sutra it says, "Without birth, without death, without impurity, without purity, without increase, without decrease..." Our mind is described in this way. That is

what we are chanting here. In this way the paramitas describe seeing clearly within and not being moved around by anything. The mind we are all united by is this. Not holding on to one single thing is the best way to reflect this world. In an honest way we hold onto nothing and we mirror the world. Leaving no remnants in this clear state of mind. This is the heart sutra's message. The prajna wisdom we all know. As the sixth patriarch said, "From the origin always empty; where could any speck of clutter land?" In our mind we are from the origin empty, with not one speck left. To leave nothing behind is our truth. To see it as clearing away garbage, clearing clutter means we have not really seen the quality of our real mind. To see our original cleanliness is satori.

Shido Bunan Zenji said, "Because we are alive, we laugh, we cry, and we suffer. But that laughing, that crying, that suffering: to know that which is the master of all that, not only conceptually or vaguely." 'I suffer, I am happy, I am sad; we get stuck on this because we don't look thoroughly into the essence of that. Our physical body, our self awareness, our consciousness, all are things we gather externally, all are conditioned reflexes and there is nothing actually there whatsoever. If we look at our mind in a quiet way, seeing it clearly in serenity, we can see that while we have a small self there is nothing real about that small self. It is merely phenomena. Misery is phenomena, suffering is phenomena, and gladness is phenomena. When we are happy we are happy, when we are sad we are sad, but not to be stuck on that feeling endlessly, instead let them go. If we can become clear with this that means our wisdom is opened.

Rinzai Zenji said, "When I see from my eyes there is no difference from the Buddha. I am a human being and the Buddha was a human being. There is not the slightest difference between us. My eyes can see, my ears can

hear sounds, my mouth can speak, my hands can carry anything and my feet can carry my body. The Buddha saw also that the willow was green and the flower was red. When I see, the willow is green and the flower is red. When the Buddha hears the cow 'moo' it the same as the eeeeeennnnnnnggggg I hear." It is only a difference of dualistic perception or none. If we perceive the world innocently without any added on perception, that encountered truth's essence is there. If we add a past or future then that is secondary. He says, "If we don't add on any second associations or third ideas or thoughts with ten years of pilgrimage, then from a place of nothing our eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin receive this world as it is. Without adding on anything we can always receive the truth. To analyze and imagine it is not it, but if we clarify, it has more essence than ten years in a zendo. But, if we sit in the zendo with essence, we immediately become the Buddha. Daruma Daishi realized that there is nothing held on to in clear mind, and was one with the Buddha's state of mind. That Mu unites all beings. It expands in heaven and earth. The dog barks once and we hear it, the sparrow chirps; we hear chirp! We are sad, we cry. We laugh totally energetic and free. Transforming, being, acting, working. To die and die completely, and everything we do is good. In each moment we are born anew, this is our truth. Laughing or crying - nothing at all. Beings of death, crying and laughing come from nothing at all, and this is prajna.

Buddha said, "Everyone has this clear mind but we don't know it." Then we lose our freedom; we are confused and trapped. To pull nothing from the past but to know what the truth of the true mind is and to reach the other shore, to awaken to enlightenment.

Hakuin Zenji spoke of the virtues of samadhi as the paramita of charity and that of wisdom. Shindon Shonin was also one who was very strict among those of Buddhism, saying there was no one who was as full of

sin and lust and desire as he was, that he would fall into the sea of lust and be confused by that endlessly. Because of this kind of reviewing your behavior, because we have this true mirror mind, our Buddha nature is able to manifest. Shindon Shonin said in the Tanisho, " In this world, everything is transient without exception." Our natural environment changes, we have earthquakes, we have typhoons, we have human made crises, wars, economic crises, and our physical body changes, gets sick, has accidents. Things are truly transient; there is nothing to be relied upon. Can we ourselves even be relied upon? Not even that. The essence of our mind is mysterious. As it says in the Yuigyo sutra, "Our minds are like poisonous serpents and gangs of thieves." We don't know what our mind will bring in a hard situation. This insecurity is how we are. We wish to secure this and believe in something bigger. This is the root of religion. We don't know when this life energy will end, and being in this life energy we become aware of the eternal - the energy which has no limit. Should we pray to the heavens? What is the truth? Here we should seek deep meaning.

Become deeply absorbed in this and realize this eternal life without limit. When we realize this, our mind is limitless as well. "The mind as it is, is Buddha," said Basso Doitsu. Throw away attachments and dive into eternal life, the living truth is our only liberation. To know the deep mind of the eternal, to know no division between the Buddha, and me this is what is being expressed here. The subjective world and objective world's wall and seam disappears and they become one world. The repeating of Buddha's name is zazen and zazen is repeating Buddha's name. This Buddha which is manifested in our true mind, that eternal life expressed in this truth, to offer to this is the expression. When I chant there is no me and Buddha there is only 'Namu ameda butsu, Namu ameda butsu.' In our zazen it is the same. There is no sense of

I; otherwise it does not live. The universe melts into our body. In Zen there is Kensho. Zazen is the chanting of the Buddha name with our whole body. Chanting is zazen with our mouth. This ultimate place of clarifying the Buddha's name is zazen.

In ancient times it was said humans differed from animals in these ways: invention and use of tools, use of writing, and mirrors. Humans invent tools; first simple tools like stone axes or bisque ware jar, while today there are complex tools like hydrogen and atomic bombs and vehicles that can go to the moon. Writing meant the development of the frontal lobes of the brain and the possibilities of cultures developing and communicating, making it possible to not only speak our words but to speak over distances and across generations. For humans to have mirrors means that we are able to see ourselves from without, and so we have religion. With invented tools we have more abundance and convenience. With printed words our consciousness can be extended and expressed to many. With mirrors we have no great advancement in our life. To see ourselves and correct ourselves from how the outside world sees us, from our appearance, is not the best thing for us. In the same way religion can be a way to see only what we look like from the outside. Instead we can review our behavior and improve our quality of being without pause. To bring forth that inner essence is the idea. Religion is not always the healthiest thing for us if we only look on the outside. We always want to improve; we see a mirror and review our form. We want to express ourselves well. We look at the hard places in us where we cannot express ourselves well and we can see that and change it. Animals do not reflect on past behavior and think up ideas of how to change it.

Today on the earth we are seeing the extinction of many animals. Because of our ignorance the earth is polluted and being

destroyed. To consider this and repent it is important. The ozone destruction, the dioxin problem, the plutonium dangers, and the global warming possibilities: if we don't repent and review our behavior on these points we will not learn. Today we can even rearrange DNA alignment. Our greatest hope is that humans use this in a healthy way. Human character changes as systems change, and if we cannot control it, it can become terrifying. If we can't survive without having to eat genetically controlled foods we have to really ask and look at our dangerous human future. Our religious mind needs reviving. This is a serious moment. Only increasing science and technology without deepening of the human spirit means that human beings will decay without question.

Hakuin Zenji says, "Nembutsu sange shugyoto:" " In repentance and review of our behavior there is samadhi." There is no religion without repentance and review of our unskillful behavior. No matter what religion, we must always look honestly at our mistake. Religion is seeking the eternal truth to realize the pure truth and know absolute good. Looking for Buddha and God is religion. They are not outside or inside us. In all religions the eternal truth is the point. We are incomplete so we search; our lives are not eternal and we are not pure and clear. If we negate our small selves we become eternal, and we do this with repentance.

In Buddhism we repent the karma from the past of greed anger and ignorance which have brought this physical body and mind and all our mistakes. We repent all of these before God and Buddha. We speak these and let go of our karma. This is the entrance to deepest faith. Confessing sins in Catholicism is the base of true religiosity. It starts with this when you admit to the priest, "I did this bad thing and that bad thing," and you let go of it, you offer it up to the greater good. Everything you repent and you receive permission to receive Communion. In

Buddhism we follow the precepts and repent out behavior to the thousand Buddha's of past present and future. We prostrate for one whole week to repent. There are many ways to repent.

In the Zendo we practice hidden virtue. We make mistakes and have unclear behavior, so to clear our mind we just do hidden helpful things, to clean the toilet unasked, to mend something on your own, to help people without their asking, we do this to let go. With our essence in mind we repent beyond form as our clear mind is moved to do this, we have to do this. If it is true repentance, honestly looking at ourselves, then our mind will be involved deeply and it will not be hollow. If it is only form without heart, then no matter how many prostrations we do it won't change us. We will repeat our mistakes. But if we only once sincerely repent our behavior with our whole heart we will be freed from that habit. From the origin that which gives rise to these mistaken acts is that we confuse what is real and what is temporary. Our physical body is not actual. It is a meeting of cause and effect. There is no substance. If we could see this we could not commit crimes, we would not speak badly about others; we would not get negative about people and bring pain to them.

Our true nature has nothing from the origin, and to see this totally we reach the source of this and cannot repeat the same mistakes. We cut away all the confusing obstructions. This deeply profound endless life energy embraces things with no discrimination. From here we have true security of mind. To just continue pain and misery in a stuck way has no meaning. To understand and confess and release, we understand God and Buddha and become this totally. There is no two-ness in mind and body. In our deepest mind there is endless samadhi. This is actually repentance.

Hakuin Zenji says that samadhi brings deep truth. We know that all the practices, offering to society, fasting, are all samadhi. That moral and religious high-quality behavior stems from this. Also the paths of the contemplative craft are based in this concentration as well. The pianist forgets both piano and fingers and just plays. The actor forgets their own age and embodies the age of the character. Inventors become engrossed totally in their work and great things come from that. All crafts people know the subtle flavor of these blessed works. Tea, martial arts, flower arranging, archery, and ceremony, all are Zen, all are total absorption. But there is no pride in Zen; there is no possible advertising of Zen. That is not Zen. Zen is samadhi, letting go of all of that.

Sesshin 2001

January	6-10	Kosesshin
	15-21	Osesshin
	26-30	Kosesshin
February	4-10	Kosesshin
	16-22	Osesshin

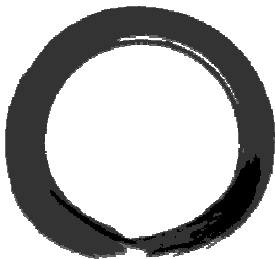
	27-3/5	Kosesshin
March	10-16	Kosesshin
	21-27	Osesshin
April	5-11	Kosesshin
	16-22	Osesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin
May	4-10	Kosesshin

	15-19	Kosesshin
	24-30	Osesshin
June	4-10	Kosesshin
	15-21	Osesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin

For more information contact sogenji@po.harenet.ne.jp

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6499 Wahl Road Freeland, WA 98249

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