

Fukanzazengi

The true way is universal so why is training and enlightenment differentiated? The supreme teaching is free so why study the means to it? Even truth as a whole is clearly apart from dust. Why adhere to the means of "wiping away"? The truth is not apart from here, so the means of training are useless. But if there is even the slightest gap between, the separation is as heaven and earth. If the opposites arise, you lose the Buddha Mind. Even though you are proud of your understanding and have enough enlightenment, even though you gain some wisdom and supernatural power and find the way all illuminate your mind, even though you have power to touch the heavens, and even though you enter into the area of enlightenment - you have almost lost the living way to salvation. Look at the Buddha: though born with great wisdom, he had to sit for six years. Look at Bodhidharma, who transmitted the Buddha Mind: we can still hear the echoes of his nine-year wall gazing. The old sages were very diligent. There is no reason why modern man cannot understand. Just quit following words and letters. Just withdraw and reflect on yourself. If you can cast off body and mind naturally, the Buddha Mind emerges. If you wish to gain quickly, you must start quickly.

In meditating you should have a quiet room. Eat and drink in moderation. Forsake myriad relations-abstain from everything. Do not think of good and evil. Do not think of right and wrong. Stop the function of mind, of will, of consciousness. Keep from meaning memory, perception, and insight. Do not strive to become the Buddha. Do not cling to sitting or lying down.

In the sitting place, spread a thick square cushion and on top of it put a round cushion. Some meditate in Paryanka (full cross-legged sitting) and others in half Paryanka. Prepare by wearing your robe and belt loosely. Then rest your right hand on your left foot, your left hand in your right palm. Press your thumbs together.

Sit upright. Do not lean to the left or right, forward or backward. Place your ears in the same plane as your shoulders, your nose in line with your navel. Keep your tongue against the palate and close your lips and teeth firmly. Keep your eyes open. Inhale quietly. Settle your body comfortably. Exhale sharply. Move your body to the left and right. Then sit cross-legged steadily.

Think the unthinkable. How do you think the unthinkable? Think beyond thinking and unthinking. This is the important aspect of sitting.

This cross-legged sitting is not step by step meditation. It is merely comfortable teaching. It is the training and enlightenment of thorough wisdom. The Koan will appear in daily life. You are completely free - like the dragon that has water or the tiger that depends on the mountain. You must realize that the Right Law naturally appears, and your mind will be free from sinking and distraction. When you stand from zazen, shake your body and arise calmly. Do not move violently. That which transcends the commoner and the sage - dying while sitting and standing is obtained through the help of this power: this I have seen. Also the supreme function (lifting the finger, using the needle, hitting the wooden gong) and enlightenment signs (raising the hossu, striking with the fist; hitting with the staff; shouting): are not understood- by discrimination. You cannot understand training and enlightenment well by supernatural power. It is a condition (sitting, standing, sleeping) beyond voice and visible things. It is the true beyond discriminatory views. So don't argue about the wise and foolish. If you can only train hard, this is true enlightenment. Training and enlightenment are by nature undefiled. Living by Zen is not separated from daily life.

Buddhas in this world and in that, and the patriarchs in India and China equally preserved the Buddha seal and spread the true style of Zen. All actions and things are penetrated with pure zazen. The means of training are various but do pure zazen. Don't travel futilely to other dusty lands, forsaking your own sitting place. If you mistake the first step, you will stumble immediately. You have already obtained the vital functions of man's body. Don't waste time in vain. You can hold the essence of Buddhism. Is it good to enjoy the fleeting world? The body is transient like dew on the grass-life is swift like a flash of lightning. The body passes quickly, and life is gone in a moment.

Earnest trainees, do not be amazed by the true dragon. And do not spend so much time rubbing only a part of the elephant. Press on in the way that points directly to the Mind. Respect those who have reached the ultimate point. Join your-self to the wisdom of the Buddhas and transmit the meditation of the patriarchs. If you do this for some time, you will be thus. Then the treasure house will open naturally, and you will enjoy it to the full.