

Rev. Suzuki lecture
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In our practice the important thing is our physical posture we take, and breathing...way of taking breathing. Those are very important because we have...we are not so much concerned about our deep understanding of Buddhism. As a philosophy Buddhism has very deep and wide and firm system in our thought, but Zen does not concerned about those philosophical understanding but we emphasize our practice. But why it is so important...we must understand why our physical posture and breathing exercise is important is...there is some reason and instead of discussing or having deep understanding of the teaching we want strong confidence, or you may say faith, a kind of faith in our teaching that we have originally Buddha Nature. And our practice is based on this faith. Originally we have Buddha Nature. If so we have to behave like Buddha is why we practice zazen. You may feel rather funny in our reason why we practice zazen but if you compare the various practice or training with our...to our practice you will understand our practice better. Before Bodhidharma came to China, there were, of course, there were many people who were interested in Zen practice and there were many literature which looked like Zen. You may...almost all the famous stock words were originated even before Bodhidharma came to China. Sudden Enlightenment...Sudden Enlightenment is not the right translation but tentatively I say sudden enlightenment. Enlightenment comes all of a sudden to us. That is true enlightenment. But before Bodhidharma, people thought that after long preparation, sudden enlightenment will come. So, this is actually... this Zen practice is a kind of training to gain enlightenment. Actually many people are practicing zazen in this idea. But that is not our traditional Zen. Our traditional understanding of Zen, from Buddha to our time now is without

any preparation, when you start zazen there is enlightenment. That is traditional understanding of Zen. Whether you practice zazen or not you have Buddha nature. Because you have Buddha nature in your practice there is enlightenment. That is our practice. The point we put emphasis on is not the stage we attain, but our strong confidence in our original nature which is nothing different from Buddha nature, and to practice Zen the same sincerity with Buddha's. The transmission...to transmit our way is to transmit our spirit from Buddha. That is the most important point we have. So we have to harmonize our spirit with the traditional way, or we have to harmonize our physical posture or activity with the traditional way. That is the main point in our practice. Not...you may attain some stage, of course, but the spirit should not be based in egoistic idea. Buddhism...traditional understanding of our human nature is (egolessness) in Buddhism. Egoistic idea is delusion. When we have no idea of ego we have Buddha's view of life. Because of ego-centered idea our Buddha nature will be covered by the delusion of egoistic idea. So our spirit should not be based on egoistic idea. So we should be very faithful to the Truth only...not without having any egoistic idea...at least we should try to give up your egoistic idea. You may have...we always are creating some egoistic idea and are following the egoistic idea, and we will repeat this process over and over again, and our life will be occupied by egoistic idea completely. This is so-called karmic life...karma.

The Buddhist life should not be karma life. Our purpose of practice is to cut off the karmic spinning mind. So our practice should not be...should be quite different from our karmic practice. Even though you are trying to attain enlightenment, that is a part of karma. You create karma, you are driven by karma, and wasting time on black cushion. That is repetition of the karma... from Bodhidharma's understanding of our practice. So forgetting this point,

later many Zen masters emphasized some stage which we will attain by our sincere practice, but more important thing than the stage which you will attain is the sincerity or true understanding of practice, and right effort to...for the... for our traditional practice. This point is very important. When you understand this point you will understand how important it is to keep your posture right. When you do not understand this point the posture we take, the way of breathing is just means to attain enlightenment. So, if it is so it may be better to take some drugs instead of cross-legged position. That's much better. If so, you haven't any way to attain enlightenment. You lose your way to the goal-- the meaning of the way to the goal. When you believe in your way firmly you are already attained enlightenment. When you believe in your way, there is enlightenment. But when you cannot believe in the meaning of the practice which you take in this moment, you cannot do anything. You are just wandering about...around the goal...with monkey mind. You are looking for something always, and without knowing what you are doing. If you want to see something you should open your eyes. Instead of opening your eyes you are trying to look at something with your eyes closed.

That is what we are doing actually. If you do not know the important point which Bodhidharma point out. We do not slight the idea of attaining enlightenment, but the most important thing is in this moment, not someday. We have to make our effort with right effort in this moment. This is the most important thing for our practice. Before the study of Buddha's teaching created...resulted in many philosophical and deep, lofty philosophy of Buddhism, and people try to attain that high ideal which they created by study of...intellectual study of Buddhism. And they tried to attain it by our practice. This was a mistake. Bodhidharma found out that was a mistake by creating some lofty idea or deep idea and trying to attain it and practice zazen is not

zazen. If that is our zazen our zazen is nothing different from our usual activities, or monkey mind. It looks like very good and very lofty and very holy activity, but it does not...there is no difference between it and our monkey mind activity. That is the point that Bodhidharma pointed out. So our practice... before Buddha attained enlightenment he made all possible efforts for us and at last he attained thorough understanding of our way, various ways. You may think Buddha attained some stage where he was free from karmic life, but it is not so. There...many stories were told by Buddha about his experience after he attained enlightenment. He did not at all differ from us...even after he attained enlightenment he was continuing the same effort we are making, but he is not...his view of life is not shaky. His view of life is stable and he is watching everyone's life including his own life. He was watching himself and he was watching the people and with the same eyes when he watched a stone and plants and everything, he was...in this point his understanding was a very scientific understanding. That was his way of life after he attained enlightenment.

When his mother country was going to be conquered by neighboring powerful country he told his disciple, his own karma, how he suffers when he saw his mother country was going to be conquered by the king (Hessinoko). If he is someone who attained perfect enlightenment where he has no suffering there is no reason for him to suffer when his mother country is going to be conquered. When we have the traditional spirit to follow the truth as it goes and practice our way without any egoistic idea then we will attain enlightenment in its true sense. And when we understand this point we will make our effort, best effort on each moment. That is true understanding of Buddhism, so our understanding of Buddhism is not just intellectual understanding. Our understanding will result...at the same time, is the practice. Through practice

we can understand what is Buddhism, not by just reading or contemplation of philosophy. So when you understand Buddhism thoroughly, even in intellectual, you will find out how difficult it is to express yourself in writing or talking about it. It is very difficult. That is why we have more and more artistic or poetic...Zen becomes more and more poetic, because it is almost impossible...or it is not possible to express ourselves in intellectual way. If you...you cannot use a photograph, or when you give up your photography you will use some brush or ink. That is why zen monks become more artistic, because it is almost...they know it is impossible to express it in intellectual way. Or it is almost impossible to talk about what is Buddhism. So just to do it is the direct way. KKKK!

So if you do not understand it we will use this one (Nyo). How is it?

That is the best way to communicate. Our way is very direct. But that is not zen, you know. It is not our traditional way, but we find it easier to express it in this way. When we want to express it, but the best thing will be just to sit without saying anything. Then you have full meaning of it. Even though you use this one, it will not be enough. If I use it until I lose myself, or until you die, still it is not enough. The only way is to sit without saying anything. Here we have full meaning of traditional zen. This kind of practice is our practice, so our practice is not just to attain some stage in our...by our practice.