

Zoom Zazen Saturday 17 July 2021

This is the last zazen of the July summer session.

The teaching has been about the Great Wisdom *Hannya*, which is vision, contemplation, understanding of the Oneness of emptiness, the Original Source, and of beings and phenomena: *Ku soku ze shiki* and *shiki soku ze Ku*. We practice and realise Great Wisdom during zazen, without really understanding - and it's fine like this.

Simply sitting in the silence and stillness of zazen we can see, perceive, feel, in the whole of the body and in the space of the mind how the movement of things wells up, unfolds, transforms and finally disappears in a continuous flowing. All sensations, perceptions and mental constructions bear witness to this movement of emptiness, of non-form. Emptiness reveals itself through form, in the never-ending play of impermanence.

Zazen is the contemplation of the Original Source. It manifests through the aggregates, through beings, in the changing circumstances of this illusory, unreal world. And we have the privilege when we sit of being able to contemplate this in our own body-mind. We return to our homeland.

We often speak of turning the gaze inwards during meditation. This watching is simply the attention that turns towards its own source, the awareness that sees and experiences first-hand the movement of the appearance and disappearance of things. This can only be known directly. That which *is* in the now - it's beyond words, explanations. Things - these are forms, sensations, perceptions, and the mental world.

And during zazen, everything that is seen, sensed, perceived, contemplated is in our own mind. There is nothing to look for or to find. We witness the incredible spectacle of emptiness putting itself into play within itself in the play of appearances.

Our meditation is simply vision-perception, seeing-sensing.

The more we let go of our beliefs, our expectations, then the more this letting go leads us to the heart of this seeing-perceiving.

We can understand, realise, that there is no-one who sees and perceives. But there *is* seeing-perceiving.

We learn to dwell in this Presence, where we taste the simple fact of being, nothing missing. All expectation and questioning is let go, forgotten. This is peace - it's Great Wisdom.

We also have the experience that we can see that the fact of observing is not separate from that which is observed. The spectator is, itself, that which it is observing. There is no conscious entity hidden behind the veil of thoughts. When we contemplate in this way, the 'me' is forgotten - there's nothing but Presence, the natural state, the limitless space at the heart of which the universe arises.

A last piece of advice from Master Fuke, who would often walk around town ringing a bell and crying:

"If a clear mind comes, let it come.

If a mistaken mind comes, let it be.

If the wind comes from the four or eight directions, allow it to be a whirlwind.

And if space itself comes, then I hit it again and again."

This acceptance of things *as they are* puts an end to existential pain. Let's put aside illusions and carry on living, doing that which needs to be done. There's nothing intellectual, secret or hidden about Zen. It shows us the truth and the original simplicity of things. And to see that, there's no need to rely on anything, but the high remains high and the low remains low. Everything is in constant harmony without ever needing to change things.

To hit space is like dissolving oneself into emptiness and recognising the limitless space of the buddha-nature which keeps nothing, neither the clear thoughts, nor the deluded ones, nor the winds of the four or eight directions.

The Way taught by the Buddha teaches us to let the space of our own mind join the space of the Great Wisdom which goes beyond. A path which we take in the company of all beings. Always together in the same Presence!
