

## Zoom Zazen - Saturday 1st April 2023

If our practice of zazen is sincere and authentic, we naturally restore confidence in ourselves. The only thing that is necessary is to sit in the heart of zazen, beyond thought, and gaze at impermanence. There we can recognize the truth of ourselves: the world appears in our own mind and That which contemplates this continual impermanence is our true nature. We are not the body nor the thinker of thoughts. Both are only transitory entities that have no lasting reality and are valueless when the breath is extinguished. The body and what we call the mind are merely things to which we have ignorantly attached ourselves and which we mistake for our identity. Their nature is as empty as the shining Source from which they emerge and to which they immediately return. Taking the mind-body as our true identity is like taking a crocodile as a boat to cross a river.

Identification with the body-mind is the obstacle that prevents us from restoring our Buddha identity. This Buddha who, at this very moment, right where we are, watches, motionless, what appears in the mind, illuminating all things, including the illusory world set in play by the individual self.

During zazen, we naturally detach ourselves from the illusion of being the body-mind. We experience the evidence of being, and the undeniable fact that That which sees the body and thoughts is different from it, does not change and illuminates all that it contemplates, without choosing or rejecting anything.

Master Wanshi calls this return to our true nature "*achieving a mutual relationship*" with Buddha:

*"What is simply asked of us is to restore and explore this mutual, intimate relationship. Then turn around and enter the world."*

When we have recognised the path to our home, the path to our heart, the path to the dojo, we can return to it without difficulty. There is no more anxiety. The world is no longer a space in which we have to fight and suffer, but an ever-new creation in our mind, a dream without beginning or end!

We are no longer afraid of this world when we understand that everything is only a reflection in the mirror of our mind.

When we feel unhappy, it is because we mistakenly take the world for real. And when we perceive and feel beauty, love and compassion, it is because we are in this mutual and intimate relationship with Buddha, life, the Real. This mutual, intimate relationship with

Buddha is what is called *samadhi*. There is no longer any subject or object.

From this *samadhi* that we actualise in zazen, we return to the world and live our own humanity for the benefit of others.

*"So go through and play in samadhi,"* Master Wanshi continues. *"Every detail appears clearly before you. Sound and form, echo and shadow arise spontaneously and leave no trace. From the simple fact that no perception of an object imposes itself or interposes itself between the outer world and yourself, nothing predominates (this is what we call equanimity, that which is beyond dualism). Only this non-perception (the samadhi beyond the perceiving subject and a perceived object) contains the ten thousand majestic forms of the empty space of the Dharma realm (Emptiness)."*

What Master Wanshi is telling us is that we can let go of all our attachments, simply by illuminating them. Then, when we let go of everything, the reality of the Dharma spontaneously reveals itself. The practice of zazen is nothing more than this surrender that yields nothing (*Shin jin datsu raku*), an open space without the self. We need nothing more than to see our own oneness with the empty space of the Dharma realm, the Void where the ten thousand things majestically appear and disappear.

The Lankavatara Sutra concludes:

*"When you realize that everything is Mind-only, you can no longer believe in the reality of external objects. This liberation from fictitious ideas and false beliefs coincides with the Middle Way."*

*"When the nature of your own mind is seen, the abolition of dualism occurs. This abolition is the effect of realisation. The moment you realise that everything is perception in the core of the mind, you remove the support from the self. Mind-only, thus freed from the subject and object of perception, I teach that this is Thusness."*

*Thusness* is what we *are* here and now, on our zafu. Nothing perceptible and nobody to perceive; nothing that can be grasped and nobody to grasp [anything]!

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