

Zoom Zazen - Saturday 9 September 2023

Using words and images, Master Wanshi teaches us what practice is all about:

"Moonlight floats on the water, the wind blows through the pine trees. Light and shadow no longer trouble us, sounds and voices no longer hold us back. The whistling wind of impermanence can penetrate everywhere without finding any resistance in us, wherever it goes.

"We slip into the current of things, in harmony with them without ever straying from them. We let ourselves go unconditionally into the flow of earthly dust. And yet we have not yet reached our original home. We need to clear away and forget all the remnants of our conditioning.

"So let us sit, detached from the anxieties of the world, in the silence and the light, clear and radiant, in an acceptance devoid of desire, beyond all reach and yet totally receptive."

How can we resolve the apparent contradictions in which we find ourselves?

"By embracing them," Master Deshimaru would have replied. That's to say, without separating things, dividing them or considering them to be different from ourselves.

"And regardless of illusory dust," concludes Master Wanshi, "realise what your own mind is, join the field of its unlimited space and immediately recognise all the Patriarchs."

Resolving our own contradictions means putting an end to the dualism that the 'me' [self] establishes in our perception of the world and of others. It is to find the unreachable, to attain the unattainable, as Vimalakirti teaches in the sutra of inconceivable freedom. And that cannot be reached or found apart from our total surrender to Presence is not somewhere other than in Presence. It is the immediate acceptance of what is, as it is. Mind

Only the return to our own Mind, to That which, within ourselves, looks at the ten thousand things, in an impartial way, brings us the effortless answer, the inaudible teaching.

The essence of Zen is quite simply to recognise the original nature of our own mind. At the heart of the limitless present moment lies absolute peace. It is therefore always now that Awakening unfolds.

Master Hyakujo addressed his disciples:

"The majority of followers of the Way seek awakening through the doctrine taught through words, and not through the doctrine of the Mind. Even after ages and ages of effort, they will never succeed in attuning themselves to their original Buddha nature.

"But as soon as one reaches the inexpressible, immanent understanding of the Mind, there is no longer any need to look for any doctrine, for then the Mind is the doctrine."
