

Rev S. Suzuki
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Los Altos

The most important point in our practice is to have right effort. The right effort which is directed to right direction is necessary. Usually our effort is making towards wrong direction. Especially, if your effort is making...your effort is directed towards wrong direction without knowing it means so-called deluded effort. Our effort in our practice should be directed from being to non-being, from achievement to non-achievement. Usually when you do something you want to achieve something but in our practice from achievement to non-achievement means to get rid of some evil result of the effort. Whether or not whether you make your effort you have good quality. So if you do something that is enough but when you make some special effort to achieve something, some excessive quality or element is involved in it. So you should get rid of some excessive things. If you...when your practice is good, without being aware of it you will become proud of it. That is something extra. Pride is extra. What you do is good but something more is added to it. So you should get rid of that something which is extra. This point is very, very important. But usually we are not subtle enough to realize that. And you are going to wrong direction. So this kind of effort to get rid of something extra is very important point and that is the effort we make.

As all of us are making same mistake, or same...doing something in the same way. We do not realize it. So without realizing it we are making many

mistakes. And we create problems between us. This kind of bad effort is called 'dharma-ridden, practice-ridden'. You are involved in something big and you cannot get out of it. When you are involved in some dualistic idea it means your idea is not pure. The purity means just things as they are. When something is added that is impure. When something becomes dualistic that is not pure. So purity does not mean to polish something, to make some impure thing pure. Purity...by purity we mean just things as it is. So we say there is enlightenment and practice but we should not be caught by it. You should not be tainted by it. Of course we practice zazen. Practice is necessary but we should not attach to the attainment. Because even you are not aware of it you have the quality so forget all about what you gained from it. Just do it. Then you will have it. If you think if you practice zazen you will get something, that is already...you are involved in some impure practice. Just do it then you have it. Even though you do not know...that is pure practice and there you have enlightenment.

People may ask you if you practice...what do you mean to practice zazen with gaining idea? What kind of effort is necessary in your practice...if you have no gaining idea? The answer is to get rid of something extra from our practice. So if some extra idea comes over you, you should try to stop it... you should remain in pure practice. That is the point our effort is directed to.

To hear the sound of one hand clapping...usually this is the sound (demonstrating by clapping his hand) but this is not sound (demonstrating by clapping just one hand) for us usually, but this (one hand) is sound. Even

though you do not hear there is sound. So if you clap with two hands you can hear the sound. If there is no sound you cannot make sound. Because there is sound you can hear it. Before you make it there is sound. If there is no sound you cannot make sound. Sound is everywhere. If you just practice it there is sound. Don't try to listen to it. If you do not listen to it the sound is all over. Because you try to hear the sound, sometimes there is sound and sometimes there is no sound. Do you understand? Even though you do not do anything you are a quality. You have the quality always, but if you try to find, if you try to see the quality you have no quality.

You are living on this world as one individual, but before you take your form of human being you are there...always there. We are always there. Do you understand. We are always here, but you think before you were born you were not here. But how is it possible for you to appear in this world when there is not you. Because you are there, so you can appear in this world. You may say, if we disappear nothing exists, but how is it possible to vanish something which does not exist? Because something is there, that something can vanish. Even though it vanished something which is existent cannot be non-existent. That is the magic. We cannot spell any magic on this world. There is some reason why we vanish from our sight, but from our sight can vanish, but if we do not try to see it that something cannot vanish. Because you see it you are watching it, it can vanish from yourself, but if no one is seeing it how is it possible for something to vanish? If you are...if someone is watching you, you can escape from him, but if no one is watching you, you cannot escape from yourself. So try not to see it; try not

to achieve it. Because you have it. If you understand this ultimate fact there is no fear. There may be some difficulty, of course, but there is no fear.

When you have pain, you have headache, it is not intolerable, but when you become feverish and become dizzy, and when you feel...standing on your head, that is awful. So even though you have difficulty, that is not so bad, but if people have difficulty without being aware of the difficulty, that is true difficulty. You don't know what to do. We should not be like that. We should be always...have some basic understanding of our life. Then there is not much intolerable difficulty.

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