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A famous Chinese Zen master, Yakusan,¹ did not give lectures for a long time. So his student asked him to give a lecture. So he came to lecture hall and mounted the altar, and sitting on the altar for a while, and came back to his room without saying anything. And his *jisha* asked him why he didn't give them lecture—some talk. Yakusan said: "I am a Zen master. So if you want—if you want to listen to lecture, you should go to some—some other master, like some Buddhist philosopher or someone who knows many scriptures. But I am Zen master, so you should know that I am Zen master," he said.

Last night Reverend Katagiri² was talking about how we should make our effort. When we say "to make some effort," [it] means to make effort with some goal or with some aim. For many hundreds of years, especially after Renaissance, we human being are involved in how to make our life easier and happy. So we are involved in scientific research. And to make effort means to find out some—to be involved in some scientific research, or to make freeway, or to work, to find a job, to earn some money, and to make our life happier—mostly in materialistic way.

So "to make effort" means, I think—mostly, we understand in that way. But to make effort or to study something means—does not mean that kind of study like the student of Yakusan who asked him to give some lecture.

While I was in bed for maybe two, three months, I found very difficult to put myself—to put my body on my bed. I tried various way, but it was pretty difficult. To lie on bed looks like very easy thing, but actually, you know, if you stay in bed so long time it is not so easy.

So how to, you know, find yourself physically and mentally is not so easy a thing. But when you are involved in something, you forget that point. And you are always running after something, to get something, to gain something, without finding yourself in right position.

¹ Yaoshan Weiyān (Yakusan Igen): 751-834. Dharma successor of Sekitō Kisen. Master of Ugan, Senu, and Dōgo. This story is Case 7 of the *Ts'ung-jung lu* (Jap. *Shoyoroku, Book of Serenity*) collection of kōans. Another version is reproduced in A. Ferguson, *Zen's Chinese Heritage*, Boston: Wisdom, 2000, p. 109. See also SR-71-08-08 and SR-68-10-12-A.

² Dainin Katagiri-rōshi (1928-1990): Japanese Sōtō Zen master who first came to the United States in 1963. He was Suzuki-rōshi's close colleague in the early years of San Francisco Zen Center, and he later established the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center.

Of course, we must work as long as we live in this world, which is organized in very materialistic way. It is necessary to work with this—in this sense. But more important thing is to find ourselves physically and mentally in right position. You may say to sleep on bed—in bed is not work [laughs]. It is most important work for us, in its true sense. To, you know, to work—to walk on the floor, you know, is very important work. You will find out important it is, you know, when you are hardly walk [work?]. To go to rest room is very important thing. If you cannot go to rest room, what will happen to you? The most important thing. But you don't think that is so important: those activity like to cook something in the kitchen, or to rinse your mouth as soon as you get up, or to get up at right time in right way. Those activities are ignored, or we don't pay any attention to those activities. Zen students put empha- [partial word]—put—pay mostly, you know, attention to those things. And, moment after moment, to find ourselves physically and mentally, is how to attain liberation.

What we do, you know, for an instance, to sit in this cross-legged position like this. And we, you know, pay utmost attention to, you know, our posture. It means that we find ourselves, moment after moment, what will be the best position right now. That is how we make effort.

So why we sit is not actually to attain enlightenment. To sit to attain enlightenment is something heretic [laughs] practice. When you, you know, without paying attention in your posture or in your state of mind, to seek for some other thing or to be involved in a gaining idea, forgetting our physical—physically and mentally our present life is not true zazen. What we do looks like very formal, you know. But it is not actually formality in its usual sense. When we pay best attention in our activity, moment after moment, naturally we will be formal, and we will be very careful in treating things, in acting, and in doing various things.

So in this sense, to bow to Buddha or to drive your car doesn't make much—any difference. If you do—when you—you have this kind of life, we say we have complete freedom because we are always amidst the center of the cosmic being, without being involved in anything else. We are—we are boss of everything. We are doing things for ourselves. Each one of us doing things for each one's own sake, and we are independent from everything. That is complete freedom, complete liberty.

So each one of us must have his own, you know, domain or castle. And we always try not to disturb others' life, but to help other's practice. That is true relationship, one to the other. We treat things not to destroy their own nature—nature of being. So we treat things very carefully. Nothing is—everything has its own buddha-nature. So we

should respect everything and treat everything in that way. That is our attitude to treat things.

But usually, you know, we treat things for- [partial word]—forgetting all about the true nature of things, and [we] abuse things for our own sake. Animals and vegetables are raised for benefit of human being [laughs]. This is very, you know, very shallow, very egoistic, ego-centered way of observing things, way of treating things. But mostly it—it is quite usual for people to use things in that way or to treat even your friend in that way.

That is difference Reverend Katagiri was talking [about] last night: the difference between usual effort and our effort. Our effort is—should be—our right effort should be continued incessantly, without any gap. Carried on forever. That is what we mean [by] to make right effort. Not—not only people—nowadays people or—not only non-Buddhist but also Buddhist and especially even priest has been involved in this kind of—Buddhist priest has been involved in this kind of wrong activity for a long time, I think—I am afraid. So I think now people already begin to realize what we have been doing for a long, long time. And they started to—to be aware of—started to realize their wrong effort.

I think we must be concentrated in—to concentrated in some kind of effort which is quite different—which has quite different quality—quite different meaning. You will realize exactly what Buddha meant when he said: "You should make great effort to attain liberation and to continue our sincere effort—to continue our true effort." And so he explains mostly about our wrong effort, what is—what we are doing actually, and what kind of disaster we will have by our wrong effort. He points out what is wrong with us—with our eye [?]. That is Buddha's teaching.

And actually, what is right effort is very difficult to explain. So to realize our mistake and to start to find out how to behave—how to make our right effort will be our—our practice. This kind of practice also will be continued forever. And way we behave, way we do, should be always renewed according to the time [and] according to the place you live. On each situation we must find how to live [and] how to practice our way. This is right effort.

First of all, we should know that we are involved in—most people are involved in wrong effort.

Thank you very much.

Source: City Center transcript entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Transcript checked against tape and made verbatim by Dana Velden and Bill Redican (1/24/01).