

曹源一滴水

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From Shodo Harada Roshi, Abbot of Sogenji, Okayama, Japan

2005, New Year.

“To be always at home, yet forever on the way.” to all of the people in the One Drop Zendos all over the world, Happy New Year!

Yet, while saying that in our hearts it is a difficult time to make such a celebratory greeting with so many things all around us that are so challenging and difficult. There are just so many of them too many of them.

As everyone knows, the Sumatra earthquake occurred in December, There are over 200,000 people who have died in that, and in the aftermath at least as many are without food and supplies. The problem of the spread of contagious disease has become a reality as well.

All of the news is focused on this catastrophe, but at the beginning of this year in the North of Europe, there were huge storms, many have died and there have been many victims as well. Last year in Japan there was a heat so extreme that it has rarely been experienced here before, and several typhoons passed over the Japanese mainland with such force that there was hardly any place in the whole country not touched by disaster.

There was an earthquake in Niigata, which has not yet healed, and even now, there are thousands still living in temporary shelter. The east coast of the United States has also had several huge hurricanes; it really brings one to wonder if something has happened to this planet.

Simultaneously, the problem of feeding our growing population becomes a real question. There are droughts in some areas and with the global warming at the poles; there is also the melting of glaciers. Has the earth come to a new moment of change?

It is said that the earth has had four glacial eras and that it is always in flux. The word tsunami is Japanese; Japan is a country that has suffered from tsunami throughout its history. Everyone in Japan is taught about the terror of the tsunami. But the size of the tsunami from the Sumatra earthquake this time was so

huge that knowing about it had little affect. No matter how much technological development we may create, in the face of these activities of nature we are powerless.

In the earthquake in Kobe ten years ago, 6,500 people died. At that time, volunteers from all over the world came and offered a hand of warm kindness for material things, working and helping in every way. People wanted to help somehow for the world and for people. This must mean that these kinds of people have increased.

The people who were in the Sumatra earthquake, they lost their homes their jobs and their family members, so many things were lost, but the offering of love and support to the victims was also huge. This time in this earthquake it was of a different level, and people from all over the world offered help and came to assist. With the United Nations leading the effort, huge amounts of money and supplies have come from countries all over the world.

That people have been able to organize on-site with personnel and distribution of aid is an example of what we all have to be able to do and take responsibility for in the future as well. The earth is alive and this is why at times it shows us its ability to destroy us. But this earth is also our one and only mother. As long as we are living here together for the 6.3 billion people here to join hands and cooperate and support each other, or else we will no longer be remaining here, the earth is teaching us this.

Nevertheless, there are still meaningless conflicts continuing all over the world today. There are still many people who think that to use power is the best way to protect oneself. What we need to survive on this earth right now is not power, whether it is about the internal or the external, what we need is harmony. What we need is health and an internal huge spaciousness; it is not about how we appear externally or about how we look. Internally all of our organs have to work together in harmony.

In this world, there are cultures that have developed in many different lands. The people who lived in these areas are the ones who cultivated these cultures. We have to learn the wisdom that is already here. In accordance with that which we learn, we will be able to awaken to what we need to know for all humanity. This is harmony, only when harmony is realized can truly healthy progress be made.

Rinzai Zenji said "always at home, yet forever on the way." It is said that there is no final destination in science that one after another, new discoveries are made; of course, there is no end or final destination. This is because in human motivation there is no ending. No matter the number of discoveries made and the amount of progress, the human process has to continue progressing. This is also on the way, no matter what we discover there is no ending to the discovering.

The life, which we have received from our parents, is one part of an infinite process. There is no point where we say, just this far, and there cannot be such a thing either. No matter what an excellent character we awaken to within, there is no such thing as "that is good enough."

Because humans have a never-ending mind to improve and evolve, we can be saved from the mind of disappointment and discouragement. For our whole life, until we die, no through all of our rebirths and more rebirths we polish our mind more and more. As the National Treasure Dancer said "still not enough, still not enough, dancing and dancing continuing to the other world...." these words are famous.

This development that humans have, this enthusiasm to evolve is the natural character of human beings. This is also the meaning of human existence. Yet, today because of humans ego filter and obstruction, our pure mind is lost. Politics, economy, education, art, religion have all forgotten that life is for the joy of all people.

In the very most basic building blocks of society today we have lost track of this joy as the as the most important point. This is because we have lost track of where our home is "always at home, yet forever on the way." This is the home of our true heart. There is no place as comfortable and as easy a place in this world as our own home. It is our own home where we can at any-time lay down in perfect ease, with our legs and arms stretched out and completely relax. That home where we can completely be at ease is our true destination.

For our whole life we have to progress, we are always on the way, always mid-process, yet still we must always have our home where we can rest in harmony and at ease. Every day every day is mid-process, on the way, and every day every day is our destination, our being at

ease. This state of mind is Zen. Humans always have to be making progress and be optimistic and forward looking and each day has to be harmonious, satisfied, joyful and lived in gratitude I believe. If every day, every day, we are harmonious, satisfied and feel gratitude we will without fail make progress naturally.

This is what Rinzai Zenji was saying when he said "always at home, yet forever on the way." About that true home, Daruma Daishi wrote "To cut away all connections to the external world and let go of all concerns within. When our mind is like a tall firm wall we are at one with the true path." We receive the actual outside world exactly as it is, and without judging or criticizing it, if it is there it is no obstruction. This is what is called "za" or to sit. It is not about our body sitting but about our mind sitting. Zen is to sit and not be unmoved by ideas of good or bad. Our mind is moved around because at this time and that time the various things that occur to our mind blow us around. If we do not give them any attention at all, our mind is from the origin completely quiet. This is what is called the true home.

When we move forward we have to plant our moving foot firmly right down on the ground. When we put our next foot down the first foot has to be stable. We have to walk firmly one step after the next. The feet go forward and then progress can be made. Because our feet are in motion, we are still mid-way, because the foot that is down is firmly on the ground we are at home and at ease. In this way, we can for the first time make stable progress. Modern day people who are always in a hurry for a result and not watching their footsteps carefully will always end up falling over in haste. Or we run in a hurry to get somewhere, get exhausted and cannot continue. There is nothing you can do about that.

We have to awaken to an eternal being mid-way, a being on the way. We hold harmony as precious and everyday we are optimistic and forward-looking, "not sufficient yet, not sufficient yet". While making progress, we are every day full of gratitude and of a state of mind, which is at ease.

When we realize this and live each day in gratitude then it can be said that we have done Zen training. If a person like this meets a catastrophe they will not be afraid, the wisdom of each place and each moment will be brought forth, they will not be confused by society's confused dualistic thinking but will know the response from the clear nature with which we have been born.

To hold this important and work on it daily is zazen and is how to realize the way of the Buddha. While seeing the outside world clearly and not be moved around by it, we make our faith firm. This is the way to walk through this dark world of today. This is Zen.

Sogenji 2005 Sesshin Schedule, for information contact sogenji@po.harenet.ne.jp

January 6-10 kosesshin 15-21 osesshin 24-28 kosesshin	April 4-10 kosesshin 16-22 osesshin 25-29 kosesshin	July 4-10 osesshin 15-21 kosesshin 26-30 kosesshin	October 5-11 kosesshin 16-22 osesshin 26-30 kosesshin
February 1-4 kosesshin 7-13 osesshin 18-24 kosesshin	May 4-10 kosesshin 16-22 osesshin 26-6/1 kosesshin	August 6-20 kosesshin 17-23 kosesshin 28-9/3 kosesshin	November 8-12 kosesshin 15-21 osesshin 25-29 kosesshin
March 1-7 kosesshin 12-18 osesshin 23-29 kosesshin	June 6-12 osesshin 16-22 kosesshin 26-30 kosesshin	September 7-11 kosesshin 16-20 kosesshin 24-30 osesshin	December 4-10 Rohatsu 15-21 Osesshin 24-28 kosesshin

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