

FUKAN ZAZENGI

The Way is originally perfect and all-pervading
how could it be contingent upon practice and realization?
The true vehicle is self-sufficient what need is there for our special effort?
Indeed the whole body is free from dust
who could believe in a means to brush it clean?
It is never apart from this very place what is the use of traveling around to practice?
And yet if there is a hairsbreadth deviation
it is like the gap between heaven and earth
If the least like or dislike arises the mind is lost in confusion
Suppose you are confident in your understanding and rich in enlightenment
gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance
attaining the Way and clarifying the mind
arousing an aspiration to reach for the heavens
You are playing in the entranceway
but you are still short of the vital path of emancipation
Consider the Buddha although he was wise at birth
the traces of his six years of upright sitting can yet be seen
As for Bodhidharma although he had received the mind-seal
his nine years of facing a wall is celebrated still
if even the ancient sages were like this
how can we today dispense with wholehearted practice?
Therefore put aside the intellectual practice
of investigating words and chasing phrases
and learn to take the backward step that turns the light and shines it inward
Body and mind of themselves will drop away and your original face will manifest
If you wish to realize such get to work on such right now
For practicing Zen a quiet room is suitable eat and drink moderately
Put aside all involvements and suspend all affairs
Do not think "good" or "bad" do not judge true or false
Give up the operations of mind intellect and consciousness
stop measuring with thoughts ideas and views
Have no designs on becoming a buddha
How could that be limited to sitting or lying down?

At your sitting place spread out a thick mat and put a cushion on it
Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position
In the full-lotus position first place your right foot on your left thigh
then your left foot on your right thigh
In the half-lotus simply place your left foot on your right thigh
Tie your robes loosely and arrange them neatly
Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left hand on your right palm
thumb-tips lightly touching
Straighten your body and sit upright leaning neither left nor right
neither forward nor backward
Align your ears with your shoulders and your nose with your navel
Rest the tip of your tongue against the front of the roof of your mouth
with teeth together and lips shut
Always keep your eyes open and breathe softly through your nose
Once you have adjusted your posture take a breath and exhale fully
rock your body right and left and settle into steady immovable sitting
Think of not-thinking not thinking what kind of thinking is that? Nonthinking
This is the essential art of zazen
The zazen I speak of is not meditation practice
It is simply the dharma gate of joyful ease
the practice-realization of totally culminated enlightenment
It is the koan realized traps and snares can ever reach it
If you grasp the point you are like a dragon gaining the water
like a tiger taking to the mountains
For you must know that the true dharma appears of itself
so that from the start dullness and distraction are struck aside
When you arise from sitting move slowly and quietly calmly and deliberately
Do not rise suddenly or abruptly
In surveying the past we find that transcendence of both mundane and sacred
and dying while either sitting or standing
have all depended entirely on the power of zazen
In addition triggering awakening with a finger a banner a needle or a mallet
and effecting realization with a whisk a fist a staff or a shout
these cannot be understood by discriminative thinking
much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power

they must represent conduct beyond human seeing and hearing

Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?

This being the case intelligence or lack of it is not an issue

make no distinction between the dull and sharp-witted

If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly

that in itself is wholeheartedly engaging the Way

Practice-realization is naturally undefiled

Going forward is after all an everyday affair

In general in our own world and others in both India and China

all equally hold the buddha-seal

While each lineage expresses its own style

they are all simply devoted to sitting

totally blocked in resolute stability

Although they say that there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations

they just wholeheartedly engage the Way in zazen

Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain

through the dusty realms of other lands?

If you make one misstep you stumble past what is directly in front of you

You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form

Do not pass your days and nights in vain

You are taking care of the essential activity of the buddha-way

Who would take wasteful delight in the spark from a flintstone?

Besides form and substance are like the dew on the grass

the fortunes of life like a dart of lightning

emptied in an instant vanished in a flash

Please honored followers of Zen long accustomed to groping for the elephant

do not doubt the true dragon

Devote your energies to the way of direct pointing at the real

Revere the one who has gone beyond learning and is free from effort

Accord with the enlightenment of all the buddhas

succeed to the samadhi of the ancestors

Continue to live in such a way

and you will be such a person

The treasure store will open of itself and you may enjoy it freely