

A very little Suzuki Roshi on Enlightenment

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Usually, you know, after you attain enlightenment, you may think you can establish true practice. But it is not so, according to Dōgen-zenji. True practice should be established in delusion, in frustration [laughs]. If you make some mistake, you know, you should stand b- [partial word]—you should establish your practice thereby. There is no other place for you to establish your practice.

I think our teaching is very good—very, very good. But if we become too arrogant, and if we believe in ourself too much, we will be lost. There will be no teaching at all, no Buddhism at all. So when we find out our joy of life or composure, when we, you know, don't know what it is, you know, when we don't understand anything, then your mind [is] said to be very great, very wide. Your mind is open to everything.

So for us it is not possible to stick to anything. So one after another, we have to practice our way in a quite renewed area and quite refreshed way. And our practice should be independent from past practice and future practice. We cannot sacrifice our practice for future attainment, because all the buddha who passed—attained enlightenment in this way, and all the buddha in future will attain enlightenment in this way. "In this way" means, you know [laughs]—"this," means "not any"—I do not, you know, mean Sōtō way or Rinzai way. Sometime Sōtō way. Sometime Rinzai way. Sometime some other school's way, according to the circumstances. The way we—how we attain enlightenment will be different. Someone will attain enlightenment when he see some flower or hear some sound like bamboo. Or someone may attain enlightenment when they take hot bath [laughs, laughter] there.

But enlightenment is not something like that. Enlightenment is something whether you realize it you have it. Whether you realize it or not you have it. But it is necessary for you to realize it, or else you don't know what you are doing. That's all. If you really know the meaning of zazen, that is enlightenment. When you know the meaning of zazen, you will know the meaning of our human life. That is enlightenment.

Enlightenment—even though you attain enlightenment, you have same trouble [laughs]. You cannot flee from your difficulties. The difficulty you have—if you know the meaning of the difficulty for you, the difficulty will help you. If you do not know the meaning of difficulty, it doesn't help. Same thing with zazen. If you do not know the meaning of everyday practice, even though you do not attain enlightenment, that zazen will not help you.