

December 16, 1965  
Rev. S. Suzuki

The purpose of my talk is not to give you some intellectual understanding but just to express appreciation of our practice. To sit with you in this way—very unusual. Of course whatever we do in this life should be unusual; it is so unusual anyway. As Buddha said, “To appreciate our human life is as rare as soil on your nail.” You know, soil on your nail is so little. Our human life is so rare, and so wonderful, and when I sit I want to remain in this way forever, but I encourage myself to have another practice, for instance, to recite sutra or to make bow. And when we make bow, I think, “this is wonderful”, but we have to change our practice for reciting sutra. And when I recite sutra I don’t feel to talk after reciting sutra .... So the purpose of my talk is to express my appreciation, that’s all. Our way is not to sit for something; it is to express our true nature. That is our practice.

So if you want to express yourself there should be some natural and appropriate way to express. Even when you sway yourself, right and left, after you sit, is also to express yourself. It is not relaxation or preparation for the practice. It is a part of the practice. So we should not do it as if you are preparing for something. It is part of your practice, not preparation. To cook, to fix some food, is not preparation, according to Dogen’s idea. It is practice. It is the expression of our sincerity. To cook is not to prepare food for someone or for yourself. It is the expression of your sincerity. So when you cook, you should express yourselves in your activity in the kitchen. So you should take plenty of time to do it and you should work on it without expecting something, or without something in your mind. You should just....cook. Even cleaning is not preparation for

rituals. Cleaning itself is practice; and then we observe rituals; and then we clean up again. That is also expression of our sincerity; that is a part of practice; that is our way. So we should appreciate what we are doing always. There's no preparation for something else.

So, Bodhisattva's way is called 'single-minded way' or 'one railway track thousand miles....thousands of miles....one railway track thousands of miles, we say, one railway track. The railway track is always, you know, the same. If the railway track became wider, or narrower, it may be awful. Wherever you go the railway track is always the same. That is Bodhisattva's way. So even though the sun were to rise from west, the Bodhisattva's way is only one. There is no other way. To express his nature, his sincerity, is his way. And there's no other way. But, we say 'railway track', but actually there's no railway track. The sincerity is the railway track. And the sight you see from the train will be different, but we are running always on same track. This is Bodhisattva's way. And there's....for the track there's no beginning or no end. Beginningless and endless track. This is Bodhisattva's way; and this is the nature of our zen practice. So there is no beginning, or no attainment, no starting point or no goal...no attainment....nothing to attain. Our purpose is just to run on the track is our way. But when you become curious about what is zen, what is railway track, danger is there. You should not see the railway track. If you see it you will become dizzy. You should appreciate the sight you will have on your train. That is our way. There's no need to be curious about the railway track....for the passenger. Someone will take care of it. Buddha will take care of it. But sometime we have to explain what is railway track, because we are so curious....we become so curious if something is always same. "How

is it possible for him to be always same, like that? What is the secret?" But there's no secret. Everyone has same nature as railway track. This is our way of practice. So it is necessary to sit in this way. But just to sit is not our way. Whatever you do, it should be the same activity.

There were good....two good friends, Chokai and Shi Fu Ku. They started some talk about the Bodhisattva's way and Chokai said, "If the Arahats were to have evil desires, the Bodhisattva has no two ways." Shi Fu Ku said, "Even though you say so, your comment is not perfect." Chokai said, "What is your interpretation....what is the actual Bodhisattva's way?" Shi Fu Ku said, "Now I found out that you did not understand Bodhisattva's way." Chokai said, "What is your understanding of Bodhisattva's way?" Shi Fu Ku said, "We have had enough discussion. So let's have a cup of tea." They are good friends you know. Let's have a cup of tea. He didn't give any answer to him. It is impossible, you now, to give some interpretation to our way, but as a part of practice, they discuss something....they try to discuss, but they didn't want to find out something new, so, "Our discussion is over, let's have a cup of tea." That's very good isn't it? So, I should say, "I am hungry enough to have breakfast, so let's have some breakfast....my practice is over....I mean your listening is over." That is our way. There's no problem, and there's no need to remember what I say. There's no need for you to understand what I say. You understood. You have full understanding in....within yourself. But something must go on the track. We have to have some passengers. If we have railway track we have to have train....so, train track for dining room.

