

**LECTURE OF SUZUKI RŌSHI**  
**Written down by Tony Artino**  
**at Old Bush Street Zendo**  
**Wednesday, November 16, 1966 or 1967**

**NOT VERBATIM**

Many people mistakenly believe that Zen Buddhism (and other religions) are mystical. The practice of zazen is not for gaining a mystical something. Zazen is for developing--or allowing--a clear mind, as clear as a bright autumn sky.

Zen practice is to get to our True Mind, the mind not accessible to thinking. This mind cannot be consciously known by ordinary efforts. An unusual effort is necessary--this effort is zazen.

If we give up our foolish measuring of our zazen--e.g., as good or bad--then we can be free, and will attain Buddhahood. If we practice zazen in a true sense, we will know a clear sky (mind).

### **Question Period**

We usually see with "dead eyes," i.e., focus our mind on past thoughts or feelings (or feelings and thoughts of past occurrences). We have to learn (relearn?) to see things as they are. "Even without eyes we can see things as they are." To empty the mind means only not to be distracted by trivial thoughts."

An experience under LSD may be psychologically similar to a "Zen experience," but the way the experience is regarded differs between the Buddhist and ordinary few. Also Zen Buddhism doesn't attach to special experiences, but values equally all ordinary experiences. That is why Soto Zen doesn't lay great emphasis on (Kensho) enlightenment.

There is nothing absolute for us ... but when nothing is absolute--that is absolute.

[Suzuki suggested practicing with others to avoid "selfish zazen".]

As long as we are alive we are attached to something--and vice versa. Complete detachment doesn't exist in this life.

True Mind is beyond the ordinary faculty, and also beyond the ordinary feeling and emotional faculties.

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This transcript is a retyping of the existing City Center transcript by Tony Artino. It is not verbatim. No tape is available. The City Center transcript was entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. It was reformatted by Bill Redican (10/27/01).