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Again, I have nothing in my mind [laughs, laughter]. I think I want you to hit my head, you know, like this, and try what kind of sound I make—my head make—makes. Would you hit my, you know, head like this? If possible, you know, hit my head with long, long talk, maybe one hour long. It will be a great help. Do you have some long, long stick to hit my bell? If you have some long stick—longer the better. Do you have some question? Long, long question [laughter]. No question? Some question? *Hai*.

Student A: [4-6 words unclear] on *shikantaza*?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Shikantaza*? Oh. Practice of *shikantaza* or—? We say there is no such thing like *shikantaza*, you know, actually. But in comparison to *kōan* practice, we—because we don't use, you know, *kōan*, people say that is *shikantaza*.

Shikan means, you know, to be involved in *zazen* completely. That is *shikan*. *Taza* is *zazen*. So to—if you practice our way, even without any gaining idea, or even without any idea of enlightenment, that is *shikantaza*. So sometime it may be actually—*kōan* practice may be also *shikantaza*. When you are completely involved in *kōan* practice, that is actually *shikantaza*.

And there is—there may be various misunderstanding about *shikantaza*. If you think *shikantaza* is just to sit, you know, without making not much effort, you know: just sit, like this, is *shikantaza*. And we say, when, you know—sometime we say when some im- [partial word]—you have some image, you know, let it come and let it go away. That is *shikantaza*, we say. It looks like, you know, if you just sit with some idea in my mind, or without some idea in my—in our mind—if you just sit, you know, that is *shikantaza*. But that is not actually *shikantaza*.

Why we say, "Let the idea come in, and let it go away" means don't sit, you know, to—it means that, actually, don't sit with some purpose, you know, some purpose of to free yourself from various idea. You know, to free yourself from various idea—actually not to be bothered by various idea you will have in *zazen*.

That is true, but even though you are able to do it, that is not *shikantaza*. If you think this is *shikantaza*, that is not *shikantaza* anymore. So *shikan*—if I explain what is *shikantaza*. In this way, to sit, you know, with some idea which may come to you without, you

know, being bothered by it, and just to sit is *shikantaza*. That is, you know—sometime that is *shikantaza*, but it is not always so. Do you understand [laughs] what I am trying to say? It is rather difficult, but —. So if possible, of course, if you are able to sit without any, you know, image or thinking mind, that is, of course, better, you know. But if I say, "When you practice *shikantaza* you will have many ideas, you know, so let the idea come in and let them go away. That is *shikantaza*." If I say so, it does not mean—it means that, for a beginner, that is *shikantaza*.

But for more advanced student or for student who sit for two, three years, you know, if he remain in that practice, you know, it is not—I don't think he is practicing *shikantaza* in its true sense. That was very lazy practice, you know. "Oh, this is *shikantaza*. I am practicing *shikantaza* [laughs]," you know. "Rōshi said," you know, "even [though] you have various idea in your mind, that is all right. Let them come in! [Laughs.] Eventually it will go away. That is *shikantaza*. So I am practicing *shikantaza* every day!" If you understand in that way, that is not *shikantaza*.

So I think if you—that is why, you know, I am—I want you right now to practice counting breathing practice, instead of, you know, just to sit, because you will have very lazy idea of *shikantaza*. So if you try to count your breathing, you know, you will find out it is pretty difficult [laughs] to practice counting breathing practice. Even though in counting your breathing, even though you are successful in counting breathing, just to count your breathing without mistake—that is not also *shikantaza*.

So when you practice counting breathing practice you—of course you have to count, but at the same time you should be very careful with your posture. The—about your *mudrā*, with straight back, and your mind should take care of every parts of—every part of your physical condition. And you have—you must have good breathing, you know. So with all of your, you know, effort—physical effort and mental effort, you should count your breathing. That is *shikantaza*.

For an instance, there is, you know, flower vase like this, you know. It is possible to hold it like this, you know. And it is—at the same time you can hold it like this. So if you—if I say "counting breathing practice" or "following breathing practice," it is same thing to hold the vase this part—by this, by the handle, or by the mouth, you know. Anyway, you should hold all the vase, you know [laughs]. If you take hold of this part, it doesn't [make] much difference, you know, whether you take hold of this part or this part. Anyway, you take hold of whole vase. So *shikantaza* points out—means to take hold of whole being, or all of your mind and body, which include all the world, you know. That is *shikantaza*.

If kōan practice [is] to take hold of this part, you know—people say this is kōan practice. But for us, this is *shikantaza*, because in perfect kōan practice he is taking hold of whole vase. And counting breathing practice may be to take hold of this vase by your—by the mouth of the vase. Do you understand [laughs]? No?

So most teacher may say *shikantaza* is not so easy, you know. It—it is not possible to continue it more than one hour, because it is intense practice to take hold of all our mind and body by the practice which include everything. So in *shikantaza*, our mind should pervade every parts of our physical being. That is not so easy. Did you understand? If you actually practice zazen you will understand it, you know. As I always say, to count your breathing like this is not zazen [laughs], you know. Just to count our breathing is not counting breathing practice, actually. With, you know, with your whole body and mind, you should count your breathing.

You know, for an instance, we say when you put your hand together or when you sit, you should feel as if you have one egg or two eggs under your arm like this [gestures], you know. Don't crush it, don't drop it [laughs]. That is how you put your arm, you know, in right position. It means that—just, you know, try[ing] not to drop it is not, you know, practice. But that—it means that in that way, you know, your arm should join our practice. Do you understand? In that way, your arm should join our practice. If you are like this [gestures], you are holding eggs under your arm, you know. If you are like this [gestures], you are not holding eggs. So your mind should be free from the idea of holding eggs or not holding eggs [laughs], you know. And join—let our arm join our practice. If you are doing like this [gestures], you know, your arm is not joining your practice, you know. Maybe all of your body is joining the practice of your holding-eggs practice [laughs, laughter], instead of, you know, joining—instead of arm joining in your practice. Do you understand?

So in that way you should understand what is *shikantaza*. Did I explain? Does it make some sense? Your eyes, you know, is not watching anything, you know. Even though there is flower like this in front of you [puts vase down on table with a thump], in your practice, your eyes are not watching it. Even though our focus is around here, like this [gestures]. Now I am watching, you know, you like this, but now I am not watching you [laughs, laughter]. My focus is right there. You may see the difference, you know. You may see the difference in my eyes when I am watching something and when I am not watching anything. The—my eye focus is right there. Do you understand? [Laughs.]

So, you know, if I say: "*Shikantaza* is to do—or like this is

shikantaza," is same thing I say: "To watch you is *shikantaza*," you know. But it is not so, actually. Even though people who do not have this kind of experience—maybe look—looks like same, you know. But if you carefully, you know, see my eyes you will find out the difference. Did you understand?

You know, "One is everything," we say. We have a kind of stock term: "One is everything, and everything is one." This is, you know—you can explain intellectually, "One is everything and everything is one." Because everything is changing, moment after moment, one is not always one. It may—it will change into something else in next moment. So actually, one is everything, and everything is also one.

So if you—so we say if you pick up a part of a net, you know, you will have whole—all the net, you know. It—it means that our—it does not mean some intellectual explanation of the relationship [of] one and many, but it points out actual practice. When I am not watching anything, you know, with this kind of eyes, you know, if someone moves I will immediately catch you [laughs]. If you don't, I—I don't see anyone. If someone move, you know, I—I will feel something, you know. That kind of eyes, you know, covers everything [laughs]. When you don't see anything, you see clearly everything [laughs, laughter]. If you are watching something, you know, you lose the rest of the things, you know. *Hai*.

Student B: Is that just ordinary—

Suzuki-rōshi: Ordinary practice?

Student B: —practice?

Suzuki-rōshi: When—usual practice?

Student B: Non-seeing—just ordinary natural mind.

Suzuki-rōshi: Natural—yeah.

Student B: Not seeing anything, but covering—still seeing everything.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student B: Is—that is the natural order of—of mind?

Suzuki-rōshi: Natural. Yeah. "Natural order of mind."¹ But as I said, you know, when you are counting something, you know, like in office work, you know, you should be concentrated [starts tapping] on

¹ A line from an early version of the meal chant used at Zan Center.

one thing [stops tapping], on what you are doing. That practice is more, you know, the practice of—at Tassajara I explained various ways of understanding of things, and various kinds of practice. Form is emptiness and emptiness is form. And form is form. "Form is form" means—oh—"emptiness is emptiness" means to—to use this kind of eyes, you know. This is [laughs] "emptiness is emptiness." Complete emptiness.

And to be concentrated on something like this, you know, without any idea of anything, this is "form is form." But underlying spirit is the same, but way of expressing the feeling of zazen is different. So even though you are strictly, you know, watching something like this, still you have freedom from this. But for usual people, you know, who don't—who do not have any experience of practice, to watch something like this is—immediately he will [be] caught by the flower, you know. So there—still there is difference, but—but even though he is detached from this flower, he will not make any mistake in describing things. His mind will be very articu- [partial word]—articular [articulate]. But he has, at the same time, freedom from it.

So we, you know, when we—this is, you know—eventually, even though we practice zazen, we will come back to the starting point. Form is form, you know. But when you come back from—to the original stage, it looks like you come back to the original state, going around making trip all the way to heaven [laughs], and come back to earth again. But actually this is not the same level, so maybe as Hegelian [?] explains, you know, we are making this kind of trip—like this, you know. It looks like we came to the same point, but level is not the same. But this is, I think, just intellectual explanation of reality. Some other question? *Hai*.

Student C: What do you mean when you say that we will vanish—or you will vanish?

Suzuki-rōshi: Vanish?

Student C: Vanish. Disappear.

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Disappear. The idea you have should disappear, I mean. If you—when you say, "Here is flower," you know, but there is no such flower. [It] substantially exists, you know, in some particular way because it is always changing. In other word, it is always vanishing.

Student C: So you've vanished when you've stopped clinging—you're just [1-2 words] without clinging to the self?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. But this kind of—if you really unders- [partial

word]—try to un- [partial word]—if you really unders- [partial word]—try to understand what does it mean—everything—by "everything vanishes," you should know the only way is to practice zazen. If you want to bring that idea into practice, you know, the only way is to practice zazen.

So there—there [are] two ways: to have intellectual understanding of it, you know, it should be—everything should be like that, and everything is going in that way, you know. That is—intellectually we can understand that. But real understanding—not understanding, but I don't know—if you accept that truth, actually you must practice zazen. That is the only way to have direct experience of the teachings or philosophy of Buddhism. Some other questions? *Hai*.

Student D: Could you talk about guilt?

Suzuki-rōshi: Guilt?

Student D: When I'm listening to you—when I'm not listening to you, I—when my mind wanders off, I feel bad about it. And then my mind wanders off to my feeling bad about it, and then I think I shouldn't feel bad about it, and the "shouldn't" itself makes me feel guilty. I know what I am supposed to think, but I can't think that way.

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs, laughter.] Yeah. You cannot think that way. That is, you know, when you feel bad, you know, about it, it is already, you know, you—you are out of practice, you know. You are not practicing true way, you know. You are just thinking about it.

Sometime you are making some excuse, you know [laughs]. You know, to feel bad about it, you know, means at the same time [laughs] you—you are finding some good excuse, you know. The same—same activity—no, no—different activity based on same, you know, impulse. You don't want to be bad [laughs], so you feel bad. So, you know, in that way you cannot solve—you cannot find out your own way just by finding out some reason why you did it or some teaching to justify your—what you have done. You are far away from the prac- [partial word]—real practice.

So anyway what you have done will create some effect, you know. That—it is inevitable, you know, for some acts to create some result. So it is not matter of bad or good, you know [laughs]. Anyway, you will have the result of it. So, you know, Buddha is very fair to everyone. You cannot escape from what you have done. So it is more than to say you did something bad [laughs], you know.

If you, you know, accept—if you understand your life in that way, there is no more—no idea of good or bad already. You may feel very

bad about it, you know, but it doesn't make much difference. You may feel—sometime you will find out some excuse for it, but it doesn't make any difference [laughs]. Do you understand? That much is very true, I think.

If so, what you should do is—will be the next question. So naturally you will be very, very careful what you will do. Not because people say—people may say something—people may be critical with you or not because we have various precepts. If you make that kind of effort, you know, people will have very good feeling ab- [partial word]—with you, I think. And you may feel very good when you accept the truth of cause and effect completely. If you are ready to accept the result of what you have done, that is the only way to be free from what you have done—to go beyond the idea of good and bad. *Hai*.

Student E: It seems to me that in every one of us there is an animal that lives inside of us, and there is a human being, and there is a buddha. And they all need different food. How do you go about feeding the different parts of you? Zazen is maybe good food for the buddha, you know, but for the animal, he wants some meat!

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs, laughter.] He—he wants meat! But he is not so greedy as human being [laughter]. A human being wants to eat meat and some [of] buddha's food. That is human being, you know. So that is not just human being—Buddha's teaching is not for just human being. Because even though they do—the animal doesn't live [?], they are not so greedy, you know—but they are not so greedy as human being. So we have some special food, you know, because of the human nature. So I don't know which is better, you know, human being or [laughs] animal. I don't know which is better.

But anyway, everyone has food provided by Buddha, you know. And some special being like human being has some more feed, you know—food to reduce human being like animal, maybe, in some way. So my understanding may be opposite to your understanding, you know. I think human being is worst animal, maybe. That is why we need Buddha's mercy badly [laughs]. *Hai*.

Student F: Could you speak to us of bowing and taking refuge?

Suzuki-rōshi: Excuse me?

Student F: Could you speak to us of bowing—

Suzuki-rōshi: Bowing?

Student F: —bowing—and taking refuge?

Suzuki-rōshi: B- [partial word]—taking refuge. "Taking refuge" is not, you know, good translation. Taking refuge is to, you know, to protect yourself in Buddha's home, maybe like that. But it—it is so, but if you know how to protect yourself, that translation may work, but "to take refuge in Buddha" looks like to escape from this world and to go to Buddha, you know. But it is not actually so. To be one with Buddha is "to take refuge in Buddha." Or to—to be Buddha, you know, is to "take refuge in Buddha." There is no special home for Buddha, you know, or for us. The home is always within ourselves. So it is not to go to Buddha, but to find out buddha-nature within ourselves is "to take refuge in Buddha."

To bow to Buddha is same thing, you know. To bow to the buddha on the altar is not actual meaning of "to bow to Buddha." To find ourselves as a disciple of Buddha is to bow to Buddha. So Buddha is rather behind you, you know [laughs], not in front of you, you know. "I am your children," you know. "May I help you? [Laughs.] If you—if you have something to do, I will do it" you know. That feeling is, you know, to bow to Buddha—to find ourselves as a disciple of Buddha.

So even though Buddha passed away so many years ago, we are Buddha and we are disciple of Buddha. We should not lose his way. And, you know, so we have to behave. And we should know what he will, you know, tell us, you know, when he is with us right now. With this kind of attitude we should bow to Buddha, you know, as if you help your—your mother or father, you know, as if you serve something to your parents. That is how you bow to Buddha. Bow is just, you know, one of the many ways of expressing our sincerity to him, as if he is alive and he is with us. Do you understand? That is how—why we bow to Buddha.

Student G: It's said that—I think the Buddha said that, "The greatest gift we can give is the dharma." If that's so, how do we give that gift?

Suzuki-rōshi: Dharma.

Student G: That that is the greatest gift—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student G: —the dharma.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student G: I don't understand what that means, "to give the dharma."

Suzuki-rōshi: "To give the dharma." There is, you know, various—that is very complicated. If I want to clarify, you know, your question, it is necessary to give you long, long lecture, you know. What is dharma? What is buddha? What is sangha, you know? What is the—what is the scripture, you know? What is a building? Or what is equipment to offer something to Buddha, you know? What is priest? Or who is Buddha, you know? There is [laughs]—we have to study, you know, this kind of philosophy, maybe.

Student G: Would you say how to give a gift unselfishly, then?

Suzuki-rōshi: How to give gifts is, you know—in short, maybe to practice zazen is—will be the greatest gift you can give to anyone, in short. You know, we practice zazen because just to read scripture, just to understand scripture, and just to give some virtue of, you know—virtuous meaning of scripture to other people is not, you know, good enough. It is not best way.

So we practice zazen because that practice is complete, you know. By our practice, we can experience or we can actually accept the dharma in its true sense. And in that way, we can transmit our dharma to others in its complete sense. Why that is so is—need pretty long explanation about what is dharma, and historically what kind of idea we have had, you know, about dharma. And we could not [be] satisfied with the explanation of the dharma, you know. Or we couldn't [be] satisfied with the written teaching, you know, or dead teaching. We wanted some, you know, some actual, you know, dharma rather than, you know, dead dharma written in scriptures or understood by philosophical mind. I think you must have some idea of, you know, why we practice zazen and why practice of zazen is so important, you know. *Hai.*

Student H [Reb Anderson]: Does a Zen master suffer in a different way than his students suffer?

Suzuki-rōshi: Same way [laughs, laughter]—like to others. If he is different, you know, I don't think he is good enough, you know. "Form is form" [laughs]. We—we must make that kind of effort. After you understood what is, you know, zazen, and what is practice, what is dharma, what is sangha, and various interpretation of our teaching. So we must try to forget all about that kind of, you know, confusion. And we should be able to just do something as people may do. It is also—it is very important practice. After you understood what is Buddhism. *Hai.*

Student I: Suffering, then, has something to do with this "form is form"?

Suzuki-rōshi: Suffering? Yeah.

Student I: —has to do with this "form is form"?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, we—we have to, you know—some people try to help people in the stage of "emptiness is emptiness," you know, like this [probably gestures], you know, without watching any particular ... [Gap in tape of unknown (probably short) duration.] ... in the form of "form is form" rather than "emptiness is emptiness." [Sentence finished. Tape turned over.]

[The great poet Bashō²]³ expressed this kind of feeling through his poem. He is always, you know, crying with people. He is always full of tears in—in his eyes. That is, you know, stage of "form is form." He was a completely good friend of children and poor people. And sometime, you know, once in a while very learned scholar, or he—he was a very—he himself was very learned scholar, but his practice is always in the form of "form is form," rather than "emptiness is emptiness."

Student I: Can you give some examples of this particular [3-4 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Example?

Student I: Yeah, of the practice of "form is form," or the practice of "emptiness is emptiness"? A master's approach to this—

Suzuki-rōshi: To be completely the friend of people is "form is form" practice. And "emptiness is emptiness" is to help people in, you know—to give big encouragement to people or to force some people, you know, to attain enlightenment. If you attain enlightenment, you will not suffer so much, you know, with big slap [laughs]. That is more Rinzai way, you know. Sōtō way is not to say: "This is zazen," or "You should attain enlightenment." We do not say so. We will be completely with—the friend of ordinal [ordinary] people. We take form of various, you know—if you see a woman is suffering, he will be a woman, you know. If he see—like Bodhisattva, you know, Avalokiteshvara. That is more practice of "form is form."

Student J: I—I thought you had said that you cannot really help people in that way.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

² Matsuo Bashō (Matsuo Munefusa) (1644-1694): The renowned *haiku* poet of Japan.

³ The phrase in brackets is from the original transcript (not on tape).

Student J: Yet that's the Sōtō way.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yes.

Student J: I don't understand that.

Suzuki-rōshi: You know, if you try to, you know, follow Sōtō way without [laughs], you know, without having this kind of true experience of zazen, you know, even though you give, you know, people something special, that will not help. Unless you have real quality—after you get going through those, you know, practice of "form is emptiness," and "emptiness is form," and "emptiness is emptiness"—and then "form is form," then you can help people. But [laughs] even though, you know, "form is emptiness," you know, but if you don't—if you do not have real experience of actually "form is emptiness," you know, then you cannot help people, even though you have a lot of money to help. That is what I say. *Hai*.

Student K: What does the word mean, "I vow to save all sentient beings"?

Suzuki-rōshi: "I vow to save all sentient being." And "Sentient beings are numberless," you know. "I vow to save them." So it means we will continue our practice forever, in short, because there is no other way, you know. It is not matter of "I will help," or "I will not help," you know. There is no choice, you know. The only way is continue to help others. That's all—all what we can do. And that way is the only way which continue forever. Do you understand? To help sentient beings is to continue our practice through zazen practice as I explained, you know. That is, you know, "to help sentient being"—"to save sentient beings."

Student L: Can a doctor or a psychiatrist help sentient beings?

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Sometime you may need him, you know. But he will not save you, you know, in its complete sense. We cannot, you know, help people in its complete sense, actually. But [laughs] we are, you know—we will continue, you know, incessantly to help people, even though our way is not complete. There is—there is some slight difference.

We should know that there is no complete remedy [laughs] for sickness. No complete remedy. If you know that, you can discuss with psychiatrist, you know. He may help—help you, but if you think he will help you completely, it means that you are ex- [partial word]—you are, you know, you are a big burden for—for him, you know. Okay? *Hai*.

Student M: Is enlightenment a complete remedy?

Suzuki-rōshi: No.

Student M: Why not?

Suzuki-rōshi: Why not. [Laughs, laughter.] Do you think—I said, you know, there is no complete remedy [laughs, laughter]. To think there is some complete remedy is delusion, you know. Cannot be so. Even Buddha cannot help, you know, in its ordinal [ordinary] sense—in its dualistic sense. "He will help us," you know. We are enlightened being without being helped. When this—maybe you can say in this way, too: Even—because we are not perfect, we are Buddha. You may say so. If you are—if you think you are perfect, you know, that is delusion. Perfect one is not—cannot be someone, you know, some special person who has almighty power, you know. That kind of, you know—that is just idea of something. Idea of God. The idea of God but not real God. So toilet paper may be God, you know, in this sense. So, you know, toilet paper, or flower, or everything is God if you understand toilet paper with some idea, you know. But in reality God is God because he is beyond our conceptual world. *Hai*.

Student N: In one of the sūtras, it says the—for a bodhisattva practicing the *pāramitās*, that he should dedicate the merit involved to complete enlightenment. And I am having a hard time understanding what merit is—I mean, what you should do with it. On the one side it seems if you do good works, good works will be returned. But you shouldn't have selfish ideas about things returning—returning back. And the other side is what you said about accepting—what you said earlier about accepting—be willing to accept the consequences or effects of our actions. Is that—is that some kind of definition you have [1-2 words]?

Suzuki-rōshi: So merit, you know—I don't know what do you mean by merit, you know [laughs, laughter].

Student N: That's what I thought.

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Yeah. Maybe so. Bo- [partial word]—as Bodhidharma said, "No merit," you know. "No merit is merit." [Laughs.] So we have to get through the idea of "no merit" before we discuss what is "merit." "No merit" means to believe in the strict rules of cause and effect. Even Buddha must suffer his karma, you know. If—as long as he is historical Buddha, you know, he must suffer his own karma. But because we couldn't satisfy the idea of Buddha as historical Buddha, we started to have deeper idea of Buddha, you know. Like Sambhogakāya Buddha or Dharmakāya Buddha.

So, you know, scripture tells us—if you read, you know, scripture without having any idea of zazen practice, you know, it looks like, you know, some myth or, you know, maybe bodhisattva is someone who has miraculous power, you know. But actually it is not so. Those sūtra is based on, you know, deep understanding of our practice. That is why, without any contradiction, they can describe Buddha's miraculous power. It looks like very mystic, you know—a kind of myth. But we cannot criticize it, you know, because it is based on very profound philosophy and very deep experience of Zen practice. You cannot criticize it. That is, you know, why Mahāyāna sūtra is—oh, that is why *Lotus Sūtra* is called "King of the—All the Sūtra." Okay?
Hai.

Student O: When you say "disease," I think it is an understanding of "no disease."

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student O: By that I mean, I don't think there is a perfect remedy because I don't think there is anything wrong that needs a remedy. If I have what I call a "disease," and I go to meditate and [am] absorbed by pure practice, and I get up and I have no disease, is that a delusion?

Suzuki-rōshi: Disease is, you know—if you pick up, you know, some painful, you know, part of your body, you know, thinking that "here is disease," you know, that is disease in its usual sense, you know: if you have headache here, and I have disease here. But why your head is painful is not just because of your disorder of your head—brain, you know. And it means that disorder of your whole body. And our organic system, our body, you know, try to control—try to have more, you know, smooth, harmonious, you know, living activity. So that is why we have pain here, you know. But that is not because this part is in disorder. But maybe your tummy is not so good, you know. Maybe you didn't sleep well, you know. So even though you cut off, you know—you have operation [laughs] on your head, I don't think it will help completely, unless you, you know—you should find out in what way your natural, you know, organic activity is going.

When you realize this point—actually we—even though you have, you know—to have pain is not disease, you know. Still you are in right order. To pain—if you are not painful, you know, when you should be painful, that is disorder. So even though you have operation here, you know, you think for a while it is the remedy. But actually your cause of, you know, trouble is still remain as before. So I don't think—"disease," we say, but it is not so simple, you know, like mechanics, you know.

So to some extent we, I think—when you are—we are ill, we should pa- [partial word]—we should be patient, you know, patient enough to—to, you know, suffer. After you suffer pretty long time, you know, you will understand your physical condition better, and you will find out perfect remedy for it. So in this sense, I think no one is completely healthy. Everyone is sick, you know—sick people. If you say "disease," you know—if we say—you say, "You are sick person," all of us are sick people, I think.

So the point is to find out—to understand your physical condition is very important, rather than to be caught by idea of disease. For an instance, you know, the stomach is very—is very closely related to your head, you know—brain. So when your mind become calm, your tummy will be healthy without having operation on your tummy. When you think you have disease here [patting self], I think you are actually creating disease here [pointing]. It will make your tummy weak, you know, by concept of disease.

But if you understand yourself better, and if you know how to control your mind, it will be a great help to your physical condition. For an instance, you know, most people, when you are young—when they are young, they have weak stomach, you know. When they become fifty or sixty [laughs]—I don't know why—they will not suffer [from] their stomach so much. For an instance, I was very weak, you know. My tummy was very weak. And doctor told me to have operation on my tummy to cut off [laughs] a part of it. And my friend, you know, who live in—near my temple had also bad stomach, you know, and he had operation. And he told me: "You should go and have operation. I—He [the doctor] cut off half of—one-third of my tummy, and I feel very good," he said.

So I thought if it is possible for him to cut off one-third of his tummy, you know, [laughs], I thought tummy is not so subtle thing. Even though a doctor cut off, you know, one-third of the tummy, it doesn't matter for the tummy operation. If it is so strong, may be better not to be—better not to have operation [laughter]. It doesn't make much difference, I thought. It means that, you know, our tummy is so strong.

So I didn't have operation, and the doctor I—saw me whenever I was weak, you know. [He] was amazed, you know, why I, you know, why I am so—why I have so—why I could survive, you know, without having operation. I don't know why, but soon after that we started building our—mending our temple,⁴ and I became so busy that I

⁴ Starting in March 1958, Suzuki-rōshi directed the rebuilding of the main structure of Rinso-in temple in Japan. This may be the year he is referring to. And the "tummy" problem may have been a gallbladder disorder. (Suzuki-rōshi had it removed in 1971.)

forgot all about my tummy problem [laughs]. And now, my tummy is not so strong, but I have no problem, you know, with my tummy. And —but I—I have problem of cough, you know [laughs, laughter].

So I, you know, I always tell them to tell people even though your tummy is so strong, you cannot give your tummy to other people after you—you don't want—when you don't need it, you know. In other word, after you die, you cannot give your tummy to other person. So if your tummy is strong enough, you know, to give you some nourishment, you know, until you die, it may be all right. So, you know, the natural—some natural order is more important than to have some strong, you know, to strong—to have some strong remedy for it. Leave it like that, you know. Let it survive as long as possible. So if our body is always in, you know, some harmony, I think it is good enough.

One more question? One more question, please. *Hai.*

Student P: When we try to practice hard in the city, where we have a lot of freedom, it seems that sometimes we can become caught by our own way and become too narrow and hurt ourselves too much by trying to practice hard in our own way. What should we do?

Suzuki-rōshi: In city, you know, our way looks like very narrow, you know, narrow approach. But actually it is not so. It is basic, you know. Our practice is directed to the basic problem we have, you know, always. So you cannot compare our practice to some other ways of life, you know. It is necessary for you for some time, maybe, to be caught by narrow idea of practice, which is not actually narrow. But if you are concentrated on some—on our practice, eventually you will find out that is not narrow—that was not narrow practice. But before you find out true meaning of our practice, you may think this is narrow practice. So even though you think you are caught by narrow idea of practice, I think you should continue it without some conviction —with some conviction, excuse me [laughs]. Without any doubt, you know.

Thank you very much.

Source: City Center transcript entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Transcript checked against tape and made verbatim by Carmel Crane and Bill Redican (2/2/01).