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This lecture was the source for the chapter of *Not Always So* called "Sun-Faced Buddha, Moon-Faced Buddha" on p. 146.

I am glad to see you from here [laughs]. My throat may not be so good yet, but today I'm testing, just testing. [Laughs, laughter.] I don't know if it works or not. Whether it works or not, or if I speak or not, is not such a big problem for us. Whatever happens to us, it is something which should happen. So the purpose of our practice is to have this kind of complete composure in our everyday life.

Some Japanese member thought, "Because I am practicing always zazen," he will not catch cold. [Laughs.] He will not suffer from flu. But it was funny for him to stay in bed so long. [Laughs.]

But the purpose of zazen is to make ourselves physically strong or to make ourselves mentally healthy or strong, maybe to make our mind healthy and body healthy. But healthy mind is not just "healthy mind" in its usual sense, and weak body is not weak body in its usual sense. Whether it is weak or strong, when that weakness and that strength is based on so-called-it truth or buddha-nature, that is healthy mind and healthy body.

As you know, there is a kōan in *Blue Cliff Record*. It was the third kōan in *Blue Cliff Record*¹ and 30—maybe 35 in *Shōyō-roku*.² Sōtō use mostly *Shōyō-roku*, and Rinzai use mostly *Blue Cliff Record*, but subjects we find is same. We find same subjects in a different order, with different commentary.

Anyway, the story is Zen master Baso, the grandson of the Sixth Patriarch—Baso Dōitsu³—the Sixth Patriarch Enō⁴ and his disciple. One of the two main disciples is Nangaku,⁵ and Nangaku's disciple is Baso. The other important disciple is Seigen.⁶ Those are the most important lineage from the Sixth Patriarch because, under those two

¹ Case 3, "Master Ma Is Unwell," *Blue Cliff Record*.

² Case 36, "Master Ma Is Unwell," *Book of Serenity*.

³ Jiangxi Mazu Daoyi (Jap. Baso Dōitsu): 709-788. Disciple of Nangaku Ejō, and master of many disciples.

⁴ Daijan Huineng (Jap. Daikan Enō): 638-713. Sixth Chinese Zen Patriarch. Disciple of Daiman Kōnin, and master of Nangaku Ejō.

⁵ Nanyue Huairang (Jap. Nangaku Ejō): 677-744. First prominent disciple of Daikan Enō, and master of Baso Dōitsu.

⁶ Qingyuan Xingsi (Jap. Seigen Gyōshi): d. 740. Second prominent disciple of Daikan Enō, and master of Sekitō Kisen.

disciples, Zen Buddhism flourished, and we have many good, famous Zen masters under those two teachers: Seigen and Nangaku.

Nangaku's disciple was Baso. Baso was big—physically he was very strong and great—a man of great physique, like this [draws in air the figure of a large man]. And when he speaks, his tongue covered [laughing] his nose. Maybe he was a very fluent speaker [laughs, laughter]. But once he was ill, so the temple acolyte or temple master, who takes care of the temple, asked him, "How are you, recently? Are you well or not?" And Baso said, "The sun-faced buddha and the moon-faced buddha. The sun-faced buddha and the moon-faced buddha." *Nichimenbutsu gachimenbutsu.*

Nichimenbutsu is supposed to live for one thousand and eight hundred years. And the moon-faced buddha lives only one day—one day, one night. That is the "one-faced buddha." So, when I am sick, I may be the moon-faced buddha [laughs]. When I am healthy, I am the sun-faced buddha. But "the sun-faced buddha" or "the moon-faced buddha" has no special meaning. It means that, whether I am ill or healthy, still I am practicing zazen. There is no difference. So you shouldn't worry about my health. Even though I am in bed, I am buddha. So don't worry about me.

And this is quite simple. This is actually what we are doing every day. But the difference between Baso and we ordinary people is for Baso, whatever happens to him, he can accept things as it is, as it happens. But we, we cannot accept everything. Something which you think is good, you may accept it. But something which you do not like you don't accept it. And you compare one to the other. And you may say, "this is the truth; this is not true." And "he is a true Zen master; and he is not a true Zen master." And "he is good Zen student; but I am not." That is quite usual way of understanding. With this kind of understanding you cannot figure out with what kind of idea we can sit every day.

To attain enlightenment means to have this kind of complete composure in our life, without any discrimination. But, at the same time, if we stick to this kind of attitude of non-discrimination, that is also a kind of discrimination. So how we practice zazen—how we attain this kind of complete composure—is the point you should have when you start our practice.

First of all, you should know that with ordinary effort you cannot practice our way. When I was in Japan, I also had some Zen students. Some of them were very rich, and some of them were very influential people. And some of them were just students. Some of them were carpenter, and some of them were other workers. In Japan, still we have some—not class, but we respect, still, we treat someone—a

mayor or teachers in some different way. We have some special way of addressing them and we have some special way to talk with him. And we have also special manner to them. As you say, "Yes, sir." [Laughs.] That is a kind of thing you have. But nowadays I don't think you have this kind of difference in your way of communication. But I always told them, "If you are Zen students, you should forget all about your position, or work, or title, and you should be just Zen students, or else we cannot practice zazen in its true sense."

Actually, when you sit I say, "Don't think." "Don't think" means don't treat things in term of good or bad, or heavy or light. And just accept things as it is. So even though you do nothing, you may hear, and the moment—usually the moment you hear, your reaction is—what will it be? Yeah, "That is a motor car," or "That's very noisy. That may be the motorcycle."

But in zazen you should not react in that way. You should just hear the big noise or small noise, and you should not be bothered by it. It looks like impossible for you, especially for a beginner, because the moment you hear some reaction follows. But if you practice zazen—if you try—if you continuously try not to do so, just accept "things as it is," you can do it eventually.

Of course it is difficult. That difficulty is not some difficulty, like to carry some heavy things, or to work on mathematics. That difficulty wants some special effort. How you can do it is to be concentrated on your posture, or breathing, or perfect physical practice. That is the only way to have right reaction.

That is why Zen and *samurai*—in Japan *samurai* practiced zazen to master the sword—martial art.⁷ Martial art is not just physical things. It is the matter of whether he loses or wins. So [laughs]—so long as they are afraid of losing their life [laughs], they cannot act in their full ability. Only when he is free from "to kill or to be killed," and only when he reacts to his enemy's activity—that is only way to win. If he try to win, he may lose. [Laughs.] So, how he can act without this kind of fear, which will keep himself in limited activity, is the most important thing. Because they had this kind of problem, they practiced Zen very hard. It is matter of [laughs], whether he can survive or he cannot in battlefield. So he fought his fight in zendō, not in battlefield [laughs].

But we have not much need in our every day life, so we don't feel the necessity of this kind of practice. But our human problems we have in this world are created this kind of desire for this kind of activity. Because we make our effort just to achieve something in its

⁷ See also SR-69-04-19.

materialistic sense, or spiritual sense, we cannot achieve anything. We must achieve nothing [laughs], so that is the real meaning of nothingness.

So at first, I think, you should observe, you should understand your own everyday activity in two ways. And then you should be able to understand or react in one way without problem. One is to understand our life in dualistic way: good or bad, right or wrong. We should try hard to understand things in terms of good or bad. And sometimes you should be able to ignore the understanding from the viewpoint of good or bad. "Good" or "bad" is just superficial understanding. But when you understand things, everything is one. Everything is one. Or all things are one. Then that is the other understanding: understanding of oneness. The understanding of duality.

At first you should be able to understand—accept things in two ways, but this is not enough. It is still dualistic. So you should be able to understand in one of the two ways without thinking, "This is one of the two understandings." So here you come back from starting point, but actually it is not starting point because you have freedom from one to the other. So you will not be bothered by it. And whatever you do, that is the great activity of the practice.

The sun-faced buddha is good; the moon-faced buddha is good. So whatever it is, that is good—that all things are Buddha. And there is no Buddha, even. But usually when you say "no Buddha," [laughs] it means that you stick to one—only one of the three understanding: that is, "no buddha," the opposite of "buddha." Buddha, no buddha, and no buddha and Buddha, or Buddha and no buddha. Whatever you say, it is all right. If you have complete understanding of it, whatever you say, it is all right. Only when you don't understand buddha, you are concerned if I say there is no-buddha. "You are a priest—how you can say there is no buddha?! And why do you chant? Why do you bow to buddha?" [Laughs.]

To bow to buddha is "no buddha" for us. There is no buddha, so we bow to buddha. [Laughs, laughter.] If you bow to buddha because there is buddha, that is not true understanding of buddha. So whatever you say, it is all right. If you say, "The sun-faced buddha, the moon-faced buddha"—*Nichimenbutsu gachimenbutsu*—no trouble. [Laughing.] Whether I am at Tassajara or Soko-ji, that's no trouble. [Laughs.] Should not be any trouble. Even though I die, with me it is all right, and with you it is all right. And if it is not all right you are not Zen student. [Laughs.] It is quite all right. That is buddha.

When I die, the moment I am dying, if I suffer, that is all right. That is suffering buddha. [Laughs.] No confusion in it. Maybe everyone will struggle because of the physical agony or spiritual agony too. But

that is all right. That is not a problem. We should be very grateful to have limited body like me, or like you. If you have limitless life, it will be a great problem for you. [Laughs.]

My wife's favorite TV program is [laughs]—start from 4 o'clock and 4:30. I don't know what is the title—in Channel 7.⁸ Some ghost program. Some of them—the monsters, the people who lived long, long time ago and appear in this world, and creating many problems for people, and creating problem for himself. [Laughs.] That is what will happen.

And we are almost reaching to the moon now, but we cannot create human being in its true sense. We can create robot, but we cannot create human being. Human being is human being. We can enjoy our life only with our limited body and limited life. This limitation is vital element for us. Without limitation nothing exists, so we should enjoy the limitation. Weak body, strong body; man or woman. The only way to enjoy our life is to enjoy the limitation which was given to us.

Whatever it is, the limitation has some meaning—not some meaning—it has absolute meaning in it. That is most important point: for us to know the limitation. So, "the sun-faced buddha, the moon-faced buddha" does not mean, "I don't care the sun-faced buddha or the moon-faced buddha." It means that the sun-faced [hits table with stick] buddha, the moon-faced [hits table with stick] buddha. We should enjoy the sun-faced buddha, the moon-faced buddha. It is not indifference. It is more than attachment—strong, strong [laughs] attachment to the moon-faced Buddha or the sun-faced buddha. But usually our attachment—we say "non-attachment." When our attachment reaches to the non-attachment, that is real attachment. So if you attach to something, you should attach to something completely [laughs]. The sun-faced buddha, the moon-faced buddha! "I am here, I am right here."

This kind of confidence within ourselves is important. When you have this kind of confidence in yourself, in your being, we can practice true zazen, which is beyond perfect or imperfect, good or bad.

Thank you very much.

Source: City Center transcript. Entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Checked against tape and made verbatim by Dana Velden and Bill Redican (10/26/00). Lightly edited for readability by Gordon Geist (7/22/06).

⁸ Possibly *Dark Shadows*, a soap opera that prominently featured a vampire.