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This lecture was the source for the chapter of *Not Always So* called "Changing Our Karma" on p. 21.

One day a Chinese famous Zen master was making a trip with his disciple.¹ A flock of geese passed over their heads, like this [gestures].

And the teacher said, "What are they?"

The disciple said, "They are geese."

"Where they are going?" [laughs] the teacher asked.

The disciple said, "I don't know," quite honestly because he didn't know [laughs].

The teacher twisted his disciple's nose, like this [laughs, gestures].

As a disciple of Buddha, we should know what we are doing, especially when we are with our teacher [laughs]. We should extend our practice to our everyday life, as you know. That is our practice. So if you know the secret of your life, you will understand the meaning of practice. And if you know the meaning of practice, you can extend our practice to your everyday life. That must be why the teacher twisted his disciple's nose. [Laughs.] "What are you doing now?" Actually, he was not talking about geese.

You become [laughs] very serious when you have a problem, without knowing that you are creating problems always. And even though you have a lot of trouble, somehow you think you can manage it. "Oh, this is not big trouble. I can manage it quite easily"—without knowing how you should cope with the trouble.

The other day when we had the *shuso* ceremony at Tassajara, someone asked the *shuso*, Peter [Schneider], that kind of question. And after many questions and answers, Tatsugami-rōshi² said, "A tiger

¹ Case 53 of *The Blue Cliff Record*. The teacher was Jiangxi Mazu Daoyi (Baso Dōitsu): 709-788. The disciple was Baizhang Huaihai (Hyakujō Ekai): 720-814.

² Sōtan Ryosen Tatsugami-rōshi: Sōtō Zen master and *ino-rōshi* at Eihei-ji monastery in Japan for many years. A teacher or master of Jean Ross, Grahame Petchey, and Philip Wilson (all students of Suzuki-rōshi) while they

catches a mouse with his whole strength." *Whht!* [Laughs.] A tiger does not ignore or does not slight any small animals. The way he catches a mouse and the way he catches or devours a cow is same way. But usually, although we have many problems, this is minor problem. So you don't think it is necessary to treat it in relationship with our practice. But to treat our problems in that way is the way many countries treat their international problems: "This is a minor problem. [Laughs.] So as long as we do not violate international treaties, it may be okay. [Laughs.] As long as we do not use atomic weapons, we can fight."

But that kind of small fight will eventually result in a big fight. It is the same thing. So even though the problem we have in our everyday life may be small, we should know how to solve those problems or else you will have big, big difficulties because of the law of karma. Karma starts from small things, but it will accelerate your bad karma. And you should know how to cope with those small difficulties or suffering.

Before Buddha's Nirvāna Day,³ I read some of his teaching about the fundamental Buddhist way:

Admonishing our many wishes, yea brethren, in receiving
all food and drink, you ought to accept them as medicine.

You must not accept or reject what you like or dislike.
Just support your bodies, and avoid starvation and thirst.

As a bee in gathering flowers takes only the taste of them
but does not harm their color or scent, so brethren, you
may accept just enough of people's offering to avoid
distress.⁴

Don't have many demands and thereby break their good
hearts.

Wise men, for example, having judged the capacity of his

attended Eihei-ji. He visited Tassajara to help establish monastic forms and practices, and he was head of training at Tassajara for the Spring and Fall 1970 practice periods.

³ Nirvāna Day is the observation of the traditional Mahāyāna date of Shakyamuni Buddha's death, usually falling on the second Sunday in February, which in 1971 was February 14.

⁴ This verse is from the *Dhammapada*, Verse 49. Literally: "As a bee without harming the flower, its colour or scent, flies away, collecting only the honey, even so should the sage wander in the village" [*Dhammapada*, trans. by Nārada Thera Vajirārāma, 1963, p. 53]. Suzuki-rōshi is probably translating from a Chinese text (see p. 3). This verse is also commented upon in SR-71-08-03. The source(s) of the other quotes is not yet known.

ass' strength, does not wear out its strength by overloading.

"Admonishing our many wishes": Oh—"many wishes" means "many desires." "Many wishes"—in the Chinese translation it is—"small wishes."

The "many wishes" means—many wishes or small wishes, or many desires and small desires—few desires. It is not a matter of so many or so few. The idea is to get rid of desires or to go beyond desires. But to have little wishes means not to divide our concentration on too many things. That is the actual meaning.

To do things with one true-hearted way, with oneness of mind—that is to have few wishes—to be restrained from many wishes. Many wishes looks like having various desires—to eat or to sleep. But [laughs] we cannot live without many wishes. We cannot restrict or it is almost impossible to get rid of some of many wishes. We should have all the wishes, but we should not divide our focus of activity. That is what it means.

"In receiving all food and drink, you ought to accept them as medicine." When you receive food, you should be concentrated, or you should accept it with your whole body and mind. That is what it means.

And at the same time, it means you should not accept it in a dualistic idea of "you" and "food." We say "we receive" or "we accept" food. We do not say, "we take food"—maybe [laughs]—"as we take food and drink [laughs]." That is maybe a wrong translation. "As we accept food and drink"—we should say so. "To take" and "accept" is different. "To take" is more dualistic. "To accept" is more complete activity.

You may say [laughs] "to take" is more complete action, and to accept is not so complete. When you take something, you will grasp it like this [gestures]. This is complete [laughs]—complete concentration on your activity is there. But according to Buddha's teaching, to grasp some food or to take food is not complete acceptance—because it is dualistic.

And in that way, we will create karma. When you grasp it—someone may grasp it because some other person wants to take it. So you must be very quick [laughs, laughter]. That is dualistic activity which will create karma [laughs]. But when you receive it, you have it already here [gestures], and if you accept it with great appreciation—"Thank you very much," it is the true activity or small wishes or small desires Buddha meant. You ought to accept them—"accept

them" is right. You ought to accept them as medicine, with full appreciation of it, without a dualistic mind.

"You must not accept or reject what you like or dislike." Like or dislike—you must not accept it or reject it, because accept or reject is also dualistic. You must not accept or reject what you like or dislike.

"Just support your bodies, and avoid starvation and thirst." "Just support your bodies"—it means that you should not take it with a dualistic idea of good or bad or enough or not enough. So this kind of teaching does not mean to have controlling power over your desires. If it is so, it is difficult to know how much you should accept—to accept how much food is appropriate for you. It is difficult to know the limit of the desire or to make some limit to your food.

If you want to control—have controlling power over your desires, how much you should control will be the next problem. And in that way, you will make more problems, one after another. And maybe you will make some good excuse to have more food [laughs]. In that way you will lose your way.

The point is, again, coming back to zazen practice, how you accept things is how you take care of your body and to know yourself, like you sit in zazen with many desires and problems. To feel your problem as your own problem is our practice. So when you eat—eating is a part of your practice. To eat food as you practice zazen is how to accept your food. So "to accept"—the word "to accept" is not a dualistic concept.

"Just support your bodies, and avoid starvation and thirst." So if you know how you practice zazen, then you will know how much food you should take. And there is no danger of eating too much or eating too little.

"As a bee in gathering flowers takes only the taste of the flower but does not hurt their color or scent—" this is a very famous parable. "As a bee in gathering flowers takes only the taste of honey but does not hurt their color or scent—" it means that to have the true taste of the flower is to take it not because the flower is beautiful or the scent is nice, but to take care of you and the flower. So to have the direct feeling of flower and taste the honey from it, like a bee, we do not have much desire in a dualistic sense.

So it is not possible to extend our practice in our everyday life without knowing what kind of difficulties we have. What is the usual attitude to take care of our problems in our everyday life? We are not so careful, you know. We may be like a carpenter bee sometime [laughs] and may violate many beautiful flowers. But sometimes we may be an

ant. Even though they do not destroy the flower, because of the ant the flower may die. They are too sticky [laughs], and stick too much, always in the same flower. The purpose of a flower having honey [nectar] is to help the plant in some way, inviting bees. To invite bees they have some honey [nectar]. Maybe they are expecting a honeybee or something, not a carpenter bee [laughs] or an ant. So it is necessary to know whether we are like a carpenter bee or sticky small ant [laughs]. It looks very gentle and kind [laughs], but eventually, if too many ants come to a flower, the flower will die. So in our everyday life, our minds should be more careful, or our mind must be more cautious, or attentive, or more reflective.

You may think we have too many rules [laughs] about the way of treating things, or the way of speaking, or in various ways we have various rules. But before you say that is too much, you should know what you are doing. You should know whether you are creating problems in your everyday life or creating bad karma for yourself and for others.

And you should know also why you suffer right now. There must be some reason you suffer. And if there is some reason to suffer, it is not possible [laughs] to escape from it. If there is some reason, it is not possible to escape from it. The only way is by treating it in some way, to change the function of the karma from bad to better. That is the only way.

How you can do that is—only when you are very attentive or when you know the nature of karma very well you can do that. It is not so easy to kick a stone by the [laughs] roadside. Because we have various karma we have created in some way, and the law of karma cannot be changed. When you follow the karma and drive the karma in a good direction [laughs] you can avoid the destructive nature of the karma. How you can do that is to be attentive to the nature of karma and the nature of your desires and activities.

So, as Buddha pointed out, to know the cause of suffering is to know how to avoid suffering. Why you suffer: If you know why you suffer, you will know the cause and effect of the karma. And when you understand cause and effect and how bad cause results in bad effect, then, if you know that, you can, in the same way, you can avoid the destructive power of the karma.

And there are some ways to make the power weaker. The best way is [laughs] to make karma work on the voidness of the air. It will not create any harm to anybody. But mostly that looks difficult for us because we exist here, which is the idea of self. As long as we have the idea of self, karma has some object to work on. If you have no idea of self, karma doesn't know what to do [laughing, laughter]. "Oh,

where is my partner, where is my friend?"

But that looks very difficult, and we know that. But some people try hard to banish it [laughs]. But I don't think that is possible. The best way is to treat them well—to tame it. And that is how we control ourselves. And that is possible when we, knowing the strict rule of karma, work on our karma immediately.

Did you go to Dr. Lancaster's seminar? I think some of you went to Dr. Lancaster's seminar the other day. Something he was making good point about—good explanation to—how to take care of things. If you know something is wrong with your car, you should immediately [laughs] stop your car and work on it. That is a good point. But usually we don't. "Oh, this is minor problem of my car. [Laughs, laughter.] It doesn't stop. Let's go." That is not our way. We should take care of our car very carefully, even though we can go on and on. But if you go on and on with many problems, the problems are constantly working on your car until it will create some destructive harm to your car.

Student A: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yes.

Student A: What if you know there is something wrong with your car, so you drive very slowly and you try to find out where the problem is? Can you do that? Or do you have to stop completely?

Suzuki-rōshi: Well maybe you can drive slowly [laughs]. Well, anyway you should take care—immediate care is necessary, which you don't [laughs]. Perhaps if you think it is a minor problem, you don't do that, and you don't realize how dangerous it is, to take care of minor things. This is, I think, a big problem for our society. This point is missing.

So as long as you don't violate your state law or federal law, you feel you are not doing anything bad. But even though you do not violate your rules, you are doing something which will result in some big result. And until you find yourself in some immediate necessity to violate your law when it is too late.

You may say our way is maybe too timid or something. But when you understand this teaching is just about our desires, you may understand in that way. But if you understand this kind of practice includes our zazen practice and everything—the whole area of Buddhist teaching. One teaching covers all the teachings we have. Whether it is Buddhist way, it covers the whole area.

If you think how to apply Buddhist teaching to your everyday life, if that is why you practice zazen, that is wrong practice. Buddha's teaching is here, and your life is here, and you are borrowing or you are asking for some aid from Buddha, or you ask Buddha's advice so that you may feel better, as if you think if you don't violate your law it is okay whatever you do. You have some excuse: "I am not doing anything wrong with our society. I am not creating any—we are not creating any trouble between our countries." But if you push your policy to the limit, what will happen? And when you find yourself—"Oh, we cannot continue, we have to stop our car." Maybe that is too late. And it takes quite a lot of strength to stop it. So everyday care is very important.

You may always say "Rinzai way" or "Sōtō way," but there is no difference between Rinzai or Sōtō. We are just more careful in our everyday life and in our practice, that's all—in our way of practice. When we have this kind of idea of practice, according to the person's ability, we can help each other. Everyone has a good position. Everyone will be a very useful person in our society when—only when we try to take care of things with complete attention. When we rely on some strong way, then people's needs will be limited. Unless you have strong physical power or sharp mental power, you cannot help people. But when our way is very cautious, cautious enough not to leave anything behind, then everyone will have their own position in our society, and everyone can have good practice. I think you should be more aware of this point. Do you have some more questions? *Hai.*

Student B: What do you mean by "good karma" and "bad karma"?

Suzuki-rōshi: Karma is a kind of succession—a link, like a chain of cause and result which is not bad or good. But because of the viewpoint we take, it can be good karma or bad karma. But anyway, karma is going. *Hai.*

Student C: In our actual life, what does it mean to stop?

Suzuki-rōshi: Excuse me?

Student C: In our actual life, what does it mean to stop?

Suzuki-rōshi: Stop?

Student C: To stop to take care of—

Suzuki-rōshi: Stop? [Laughs.]

Student C: —some minor problem.

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh, I—

Student C: Some [?] reaction of "stop."

Suzuki-rōshi: I don't mean to stop and wait or escape from it. Yeah? You cannot escape from it. Actually you cannot stop. [Laughs, laughter.] Even though it looks like you stop [laughs], you are still going to prepare for something—to go ahead—to go on. *Hai.*

Student D: Does the "stop" mean that you try to withdraw from too much involvement in what happens so that you can detach yourself enough from it to really see what's happening? I want to see what I'm doing, myself.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student D: It like a kind of a slightly diminished involvement.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student D: Does it mean something like that?

Suzuki-rōshi: Mmm. What I mean is more intuitive—not to think. What I'm talking about is how much misunderstanding you have or how deluded you are in your own idea of good or bad, good practice or bad practice, or in dualistic thinking mind. I am talking about getting rid of this understanding of life—to know what you are actually doing.

Student D: Actually one can attempt to know one's motivation, but one can't really know what is good and what is bad—

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student D: —because sometimes you think you do a good thing and it turns out to have been a bad thing after all.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, at the same time, only when you practice zazen without being bothered by the idea of good or bad—good sound or bad sound—when you accept it, when you have oneness of subjectivity and objectivity, then that is how we are—the way we should go. That is the point. And what you should do to find out some way, thinking about which way we should take—that is not what I mean. It is confusing because I am talking—because I use the word "good" or "bad" or "to stop" or "go ahead." But if you know what is your practice, how you take care of yourself in zazen, that is the way you take care of yourself. That is the point [laughs] of my talk. Why you cannot completely agree with me [laughs] is maybe you take my word literally, losing the point of my talk. *Hai.*

Student E: Sometimes after sitting—I will sit, and I'll feel very good about it. And then after I've finished sitting I get up, and for a while afterwards I'll find myself being irritated or nervous—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student E: —about any little thing—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student E: —and I'll—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student E: —lose my temper or—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student E: —be very—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student E: —irrational—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Student E: —for half an hour or so after I finish sitting.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. But—

Student E: It's like, one minute I'm sitting very quietly and then—

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Yeah. That is very much so.

Student E: —for a half hour—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student E: —I'm very intimate [?]. I'm not quiet, but jumpy and angry.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm

Student E: And I was wondering what—

Suzuki-rōshi: What you should do. [Laughs, laughter.]

Student E: Yes. What should I do. or if that's okay—if maybe that will go away. I don't know.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. At that time, you lost your practice, like you lost counting your breathing when you are practicing counting-breathing practice. So even though you are counting, you may lose your practice. So why I say, instead of counting breathing or following your breathing, I say be more attentive to what you are doing, or to take care of yourself, or to take care of things. In your practice, if you are following breathing, or counting breathing, you think you are practicing zazen. But it is not always so. Even [laughs] though you are sitting very straight without sleeping, but sometimes your zazen is not there. If you are really practicing zazen, you have no second notion or no second thought. All the thought you have will be only direct thought which will come over—no second thought of good or bad—what it is—"I shouldn't be bothered by it."

So there are two kinds of delusion: the delusion itself—delusion which can be understood in various ways—delusion itself is the same but it can be many things—delusion which arises simultaneously. [laughs] When we are not in oneness of mind, that is delusion. And delusion which will arise as a second notion or second thought is also delusion. Because of that, our practice will be divided in various ways because of the second notion of good or bad, agreeable or disagreeable. When it comes to you, it is not good or bad.

So the only way is when you eat, you should eat: "Oh, thank you very much." [Laughs.] That is our way, based on pure practice. And if you practice long enough and are attentive enough to your practice, you will easily find out where you are in your everyday life. And if you find out yourself where you are, there is no problem any more because the only way is to resume your own way. So you have no one to be mad at [laughs].

So actually I am giving you some material to test your practice, as I told you, from another angle, to encourage your good practice. So what I'm talking about is not just small desires or something like that—not as an art of life, but what is the right practice. *Hai*.

Student F: Sometimes we speak of pure practice.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student F: Sometimes we speak of good practice.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Student F: Are they the same, exactly?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, pure practice, good practice, yeah, real practice, yeah, same.

Student F: But we sometimes also say that real practice goes beyond good and bad.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student F: So good practice is actually—I don't know. If it's good, it should be good, but if it is beyond good, then it should be bad too.

Suzuki-rōshi: Beyond [laughs]—it is just words, you know [laughs, laughter]. Your mind is very fancy. His mind is very fancy [laughs, laughter].

Student F: Okay. [Said in a humorous tone of resignation.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. [Laughs, laughter.] Some other questions?

Student G: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Hai.*

Student G: I don't exactly how to tell you—can you do two things at a time—

Suzuki-rōshi: No.

Student G: —and stay healthy through them [preceding five words uncertain]?

Suzuki-rōshi: No. [Laughs, laughter.] That is not possible.

Student G: Not even if you do one just a little bit?

Suzuki-rōshi: Mmm. No. That is not possible. That is why it is easy. If you can do two things at the same time, we will [laughs]—we will have a big trouble. It is good that we can choose only one thing. We cannot choose two, anyway. Only when you fool yourself and you are making excuse for yourself, you can do it. If you become very sincere with yourself, you cannot do that.

Student G: Well, if we live here and have a job outside, that's kind of like doing two different things.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Looks like [laughs, laughter] Zen Buddhists cannot eat or drink. [Laughs, laughter.]

Student H: Rōshi, how can you tell if you are doing two things or one thing?

Suzuki-rōshi: Two things or one thing.

Student H: Is it not always one thing if you do it in the right spirit?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yes. It is one thing, actually. But after you did something—or before you do something, you may say it is two things. But actually, when you are involved in something, it cannot be two. So if you do things, you cannot do bad things. The easiest way to do something is to choose something more appropriate to do at that time. I don't say "something good" [laughs] because you will raise some other questions [laughs, laughter]. Some more questions?

Student I: Rōshi? Sometimes there is "do not waste time"—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student I: —and other times it's "to be patient."

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student I: And they seem as if there's two different ways.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student I: So if I do this, I'll be not wasting time. If I do this, I'll be impatient.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Student I: But shouldn't they be the same?

Suzuki-rōshi: "To waste time" means—without having oneness of your mind with something else is to waste time—according to what we mean. To waste time is to be involved in dualistic thinking only, without having the root of the practice. That is "to waste time." When we do not practicing our way, it is waste of time.

"To be patient"—it doesn't matter whether you are doing things quick or slow, okay? And that is also renunciation. Renunciation means to refrain from the dualistic world. Even though you are doing something in the dualistic world, on the other hand, we should be free from the idea—dualistic idea. Or you may say if you do one thing only—if you make best effort in something you do, that is renunciation. That is non-duality. That is to be patient sometime. When your full effort is

on your practice, that is, in short, not to waste your time. Okay? Yeah.

Student J: How about making plans for the future—what about working for a goal in the future?

Suzuki-rōshi: For the future. Future—you say "future," but the future is at the same time, right now. It is just a word, you know. You project your activity in the framework of past and present and future. There is no actual future, you know. The future will be different even though you have some plan or some idea about your future activity based on your present—based on things you are doing right now. But if the plan is not related to your present situation, it is a daydream. So sometimes you will be involved in just a daydream—the typical type of [laughs] dualistic mind.

Student K: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Hai.*

Student K: Does that mean that to think about what you want to do in the future is an entirely useless activity?

Suzuki-rōshi: No, I don't think so.

Student K: You can think about what you want to do in the future without involving yourself in delusion?

Suzuki-rōshi: If it is really a future plan, the future plan should involve the present situation, or the present situation should involve the future plan. That future plan is a kind of possibility, which is included—which is already in the present situation. There may be various possibilities, you know. The present possibility is not something which exists in the future, or else [laughs] you would not be able to think about it. If there is no possibility, you don't think.

Student L: Is the future now in possibilities, or is it—

Suzuki-rōshi: Future?

Student L: —actually something that actually is just occurring now, along with the past? And can we realize that there is no passing time and survive like [sounds like student snaps his fingers twice].

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Ahh [like a sigh].

Student L: How do you cope with the world as it appears—

Suzuki-rōshi: —appearance.

Student L: —as everyone else seems to see it appearing?

Suzuki-rōshi: Appearance. Future appearance. It is question of reality, or appearance and reality, or phenomenal things and some ontological being, or a problem of present and future, or—?

Student L: Excuse me?

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs, laughter.] The framework of my mind does not catch your question, so that is why I am asking.

Student L: Well, I was wondering if the future exists as possibilities now, or does it exist as—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student L: —well, to me it appears as if, in the future, I'll be in another place and time, which I had read is illusion. But I don't see the same that—I don't see all the events of my life as simultaneous. It seems like if I saw them as simultaneous, I'd be very confused, or I wouldn't be able to cope with each event. Do you understand what I'm asking?

Suzuki-rōshi: [Probably makes some gesture. Loud laughter.] *Hai.*

I am sorry.

Student M: He said if there is no past or future, then everything's happening in his life at the same time, so that makes for one big confusion because then things wouldn't be happening before and after each other. [Laughter.]

Suzuki-rōshi: No. You know, the present has various meanings or faces—angles. But actually it is many interpretations of the present fact or event you have. As a possibility, there may be many possibilities in this present moment, but before it happens, nothing happens. So there is nothing to worry [about]. There is no confusion.

Is it okay? Yeah. [Laughs, laughter.] Yeah, you are right. It is rather difficult to accept, you know.

Student L: Well, I hear certain things said and then I—

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Student L: The world still appears—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yes.

Student L: —as time to time [?].

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Student L: And I'm just asking you about how it really is.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. [Laughs, laughter.] Unfortunately, I am not so interested in [laughs] some fancy idea [laughs] or many interpretations of things. Oh. Some more questions? *Hai*.

Student M: I was reading Trung—what's the guy who wrote *Meditation in Action*?⁵ [Laughter.] —Trungpa?

Student N: Chögyam Trungpa.

Student M: He made this comment—we have images of ourselves, you know, like sometimes you get the image that—when you sit in meditation you have a fine image of how you sit—"I want to sit real good," you know.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student M: He said that you should examine you—

Suzuki-rōshi: You should examine yourself?

Student M: —examine in close.

Suzuki-rōshi: Closely.

Student M: Yeah. And I was wondering the best way to do that. [Laughter.]

Suzuki-rōshi: To examine?

Student M: Well, I have the image of myself as—when I walk, say—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student M: —I see myself. It's impossible to lose, you know.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. [Laughs, laughter.]

Student M: I wondered the best way to deal with it—deal with these

⁵ Chögyam Trungpa, *Meditation in Action*. London: Stuart & Watkins, 1969.

images.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. To have the feeling of Zen when you are walking or something—when you are eating.

Student M: To feel it rather than see it.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. What I mean is not to feel—to see yourself objectively. I don't mean so. Or to examine yourself, maybe, does not mean to see your *mudrā* or to see your posture [laughs, laughter]. I don't think so. If you are in perfect meditation or not will be the point. So when you walk, walk. What you should realize is, when you are out of practice, then you will realize, "Oh, I lost my practice." In that way, rather than to check yourself whether you are perfect or not, to check yourself whether you lost your sitting or not. It is easy to find yourself when you lose your meditation. It is very easy. Then I think you will have good practice eventually.

Student O: Excuse me, Rōshi? Earlier Pat said something about dualistic practice. I experienced that. Is that bad practice? A lot of times, when I'm away from the building I practice chanting to [?] Buddha, and when I—

Suzuki-rōshi: Out of building.

Student O: Yeah.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Student O: —as part of my practice.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh huh. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Student O: Is that a bad practice?

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs, laughter.] Yeah, we have that kind of tendency, and I understand that. After doing something seriously, you may feel: "What I have I been doing [laughs] all those days?" [Laughs, laughter.]

Student O: I just—my involvement with the people here—I get completely involved. I'm meeting all kinds of fascinating people.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mmm. Yeah, but—we cannot continue practice always. But if you know what is good practice, then that will be a great help. And, if possible, to have good practice when we are liable to lose our practice, that is very important. For instance, after you sit for a long, long, long time, you know, you may think, "Oh, *sesshin* is

finished! [Laughs.] *Rrrr!*" [Laughs, laughter.] That will be what almost all the people want to do. But that is not so good. If you know that, you should be careful. It is not so difficult. If you are a little bit careful, you can continue your practice. Before, my policy with myself was to remember the word "apt to" or "liable to"—to be so or to do so "liable to." That helps a lot. "We are liable to be so, but be careful." [Laughs.] That kind of thing is not so difficult. Just to know that—just to remember that word may be good help. *Hai*.

Student P: Sometimes we have an attitude of practicing, and sometimes we don't.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student P: What do we do when we don't have an attitude of practicing?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. That is a good question. [Laughs.] You know, if I use the word "liable to," people are liable to try not to practice zazen when you don't want to. In such case, you should practice [laughs] zazen. That will be a very good practice. When you practice zazen when you want to, then that practice has various dangers or various wrong possibilities. But when you do practice zazen when you don't want to, there's not much danger in your practice.

Student P: [3-4 words unclear.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Do you—hmm?

Student Q: I don't know if that was your question.

Student P: I don't know if that's the question that I asked or not.

Suzuki-rōshi: [Laughs.] Yeah, maybe so. [Laughs, laughter.] Your question—almost all our questions will be answered [laughs] in some other way than you want to ask me. For instance, how we should get out of birth and death? What you may expect from him [a Zen master] may be—even though you die, you will have a next life, so it may be okay. But almost all Zen masters who believe in the next life will not give you that kind of answer [laughs]. His answer will be: "The life is such-and-such." He will not give you the answer which you want. [Laughs, laughter.] And he will be very much concerned about your question: Why do you make such a question? And he will stick to the reason why you make the question. Maybe it's better to think, "Why do I make that kind of question?" Then question will be answered.

Student R: Rōshi, you said that if something was wrong that we

should stop and fix it. And in my life, if I feel something is wrong—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student R: —one of the ways that I try to do what I do is to sit zazen.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student R: But I can't see what it is. I can't find it. And no matter how I try, I—what should I do?

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student R: How can I see it to fix it?

Suzuki-rōshi: How—yeah. Maybe—how long, by the way, have you been practicing?

Student R: Two years.

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm?

Student R: Two years.

Suzuki-rōshi: Two years? Excuse me. [Drinks water.] I think you will—you will understand pretty soon.

Student S: I've been practicing five years. When will I understand? [Loud laughter.]

Suzuki-rōshi: You don't understand—do you know why? [Laughs.] Do you know why?

Student S: No.

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh. [Laughs.] Maybe because you are trying to practice good practice. Maybe that is the reason. Hmm. Yeah. This is very good question. That will be the question almost all students will have, I think. [Laughs.] But you shouldn't be disappointed. The only way is to continue your practice because there is no other way to solve our problems. Just to continue our practice—there is no other way.

Student T: When you said there is no other way, what do you mean? There is no other way from what?

Suzuki-rōshi: From the practice of zazen.

Student T: There is no other way from—other than the practice of zazen to find out who you are?

Suzuki-rōshi: I don't think so.

Student T: Then [SR laughs, laughter]—then what is meant when it is said that there are many, many different ways, and that—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. Many—

Student T: —zazen isn't necessarily the way—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student T: —for that individual?

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Yeah. What it means is there are many, many ways. It looks like there are many, many ways, but if it is really the actual way, that is various names of zazen practice. It means—it looks like many, many ways, but actually it is one way if it is actual practice. If it is not a daydream or—whatever you do, it looks like it is different, but actually it is one practice of Zen. And you may say—

Student T: Yoga is a different way than Zen.

Suzuki-rōshi: Looks like. [Laughs, laughter.]
Okay. Thank you very much.

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