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Tuesday, August 17, 1971
Zen Mountain Center

In my lecture, sometimes I say everyone has buddha-nature, and whatever you do, that is Buddha's activity. But on the other hand, I say you must follow the rule, and when you practice zazen you should practice in some certain way: Keep your spine straight, cross your legs, and pull your neck as if you are supporting something. And pull in your chin. There are many instructions.

So you will be confused—it looks like a contradiction to put emphasis on rules and to follow our schedule. If whatever you do, that is Buddha's activity, then why we must have rules? This kind of question you may have.

The other day I said long bamboo is long Buddha. Short bamboo is short Buddha [laughs]. And my statement discouraged [laughs] some sincere students, didn't it? As if I am encouraging some easy way. For instance, you know the Sun-Faced Buddha and the Moon-Faced Buddha. When he is sick, he is Moon-Faced Buddha. When he is healthy he is the Sun-Faced Buddha. And when it is hot, we are hot—we should be hot Buddha. When it is cold, we should be cold Buddha. This kind of statement invite many misunderstanding.

When we talk like this, "Sun-Faced Buddha," "the Moon-Faced Buddha," or "everyday is good day," or "everyone has buddha-nature," or "in our great activity, whatever we do, that is our great activity," or "nothing is too long or nothing is too short" [laughs]. Even though you recite sūtra with long, long voice [laughs]—it cannot be too long. Even though we say something, we hope it is not too short. If you say so, maybe someone who is practicing how to hit *mokugyo*—how to hit bell—will be discouraged. "Oh, Suzuki-rōshi doesn't care [laughs] how we hit *mokugyo*. Even though we hit it fast, he doesn't care." But it is not so.

There are two completely different viewpoints. One is when we say everyone—everything has buddha-nature, nothing is great or nothing is small—too small. To lift up a speck of dust means to lift up whole universe. When we say in that way, it means that we are talking about our original nature from standpoint of the first principle. When we put emphasis on strict rule, at that time we put emphasis on actual practice. Practice is the way to attain, to have direct experience of the first principle. Only when you put emphasis on your practice you will have the direct experience of the first principle. But when we talk about this by words, we cannot say both sides at once. When we talk about the first principle, we—everything has buddha-nature period [laughs]. No words follow "Everything has buddha-nature."

But when you hear that, you will understand, "If everything has buddha-nature," "then" or "but." "But" or "then" does not follow when we talk about

the first principle. When you say "then" or "but," therefore your understanding of the first principle is not anymore the first principle. If that is the first principle, "Everything has buddha-nature." Period.

Do you know the difference? You cannot say "therefore." If you say "therefore," it is the condition—"therefore"—a reason or excuse or something for your lazy [laughs] practice. So it is not first principle any more. Everything has buddha-nature, period. No idea follows. Not any kind of idea comes up by that statement. So, "Everything has buddha-nature," someone say [thumps table]. Yes! Only when you could say so, that is the first principle. You shouldn't say "therefore" or "but." That is the first principle.

But when we talk about actual practice you can say "therefore," or "that is why," or "even it is so." You can say so. That is the difference between first principle and the second principle. And if you confuse the first principle and second principle, you don't understand anything. You are always going round and round: no end to your confusion. You will be always confused. So when you practice you should be strictly involved in the rules. There there is the first principle, actually. Moment after moment there is first principle.

Even so—I explained the other night, if we realize that our practice is lazy practice, then you may not feel good. And this kind of mistake is happening every day, and we cannot enjoy our practice. What should we do? And what I said was that you realize your practice is not good. What mind found out your lazy practice? Your big mind found out your mistake. So if you find out the big mind which is working on your lazy practice—small-minded practice—then, at that point, at least your practice is good. So before you make some complaint, you should appreciate the big mind which appear in your mind. That was my answer.

It looks like I said, "Whatever you do it is okay," but I don't mean that. Important point is, only when big mind appear, the small mind will vanish—should vanish. You should not compare a big mind to a small mind. What I mean is don't worry about your small mind when you have big mind.

How to continue your true practice based on the big mind is the point. That is the point. But I do not mean even though you have lazy practice it is okay. That is big misunderstanding. It is not okay. But if I say so, it is not okay. You will be discouraged if I say it is not okay, so [laughs] your practice will be the continuous practice of "not okay." One after another, "not okay practice" will continue [laughs]. You feel in that way, but if you carefully think about it, the continuous practice of wrong practice is big-minded practice—continuous activity of big mind. If you understand in that way, that is true understanding of your practice.

In your big mind, small mind has some position—some place. Good and bad also has some place, some seat. We cannot ignore the small mind of wrong

practice completely. There is some seat. That is big mind. The small mind—even though the mind is good, small mind does not allow for wrong mind or small mind to sit together. Even though it is good practice, but small-minded good practice is not real practice. Big-minded good practice is really, really good practice. And it gives a seat for the good practice and bad practice. And you don't feel so bad about your bad practice. And you will not be arrogant with your good practice.

You don't like mostly sermon or lecture. Why you don't like is—when someone give lecture, someone will convince you of something—something special. But Buddhist lecture do not force anything on you. What we want is to have big mind—to acknowledge things as they are, to clear your mind from various one-sided wrong understanding of things. That is the purpose of lecture.

Sometime we slap you or are angry with you. Someone may talk, but why someone become angry is to correct—to cut off your delusion, or to empty your mind. If someone stick to some one-sided view, it is pretty difficult to get rid of it for humans and for the creatures too. So [laughs] we try various ways. The purpose of why we do so is because we want to get rid of the wrong concrete idea in your mind—that's all. Do you understand? That is what I wanted to tell you tonight specially.

After making many lectures, almost every evening, I found out that some of you didn't understand what I meant. Most people like Zen because Zen has no idea of things or no idea of good or bad. That is why people like it [laughs]. But we are pretty strict with our practice—maybe very strict. Even though we are very strict, we do not seriously cope with the problem in our practice—actual practice. We have always smile, even though the way we practice is hard. You know that that is the second principle. It is something to help us. Even though your teacher is angry, you do not take it so seriously [laughing]. That is trouble [speaking more quietly] [laughter]. You know that that is the second principle, not first principle. So when I say something, mostly about rules, I say it with smiling, so you don't take it so seriously [laughs].

Do you have some questions? There must be many questions. *Hai.*

Student A: Rōshi, I thought that our eyes are focused...

Suzuki-rōshi: I—I am sorry I couldn't follow it.

Student A: Shotaku [?] said our eyes should focus.

Suzuki-rōshi: Eyes? Close?

Student B: Shotaku [?] said that we focus.

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh, focus. You are not gazing at anything. "Focus," we say, but it is not to gaze but to focus some, maybe four feet ahead. At first it is difficult just to put focus on some area. Unless you see something, some beginner may put something four—three-four feet ahead. If there is nothing, they pick up [laughs], edge of the *tatami*. That is easy, maybe, but that is not the best way. If you have something to watch it is easy to be concentrated, but you should be able to half focus. Best four—maybe for you four feet or more feet ahead. Do you understand? *Hai*.

Student B: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Hai*.

Student B: When you—can you say something about—about [1 word] or for us to [2-3 words] in our practice? How we can help each other?

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. *Hmm*. Best way to help others is to have good practice. If you have good practice, that is the best way to help others. That is very true. To help others is not different from to help themselves. But originally—this is again the first principle. You and others is not two. One. You see? That is the first principle. Even intellectually, this is the reality we should accept—ultimate reality.

The first principle is something which you cannot ignore. It is very true. But [laughs] if I talk about for students who listen to me, looks like I am talking about something that has nothing to do with you. You may feel in that way.

Everything is one. Even though I say so, it doesn't help you [laughs]. Even though I talk about Buddhist philosophy, it doesn't help. Your actual problem is always with you, and just philosophy—philosophical understanding of Buddhism doesn't help. But the philosophy—Buddhist philosophy is so true that you cannot deny it. And it is so universal and so common, so it is not so interesting either. Maybe when you discuss something, when you have argument with some other people, it may be interesting, because your philosophy is graceful—graceful philosophy. So you will win anyway. So it maybe graceful [laughing].

But it doesn't help you at all. You cannot deny it, that's all. If that is so true, if that is the ultimate truth, why you have problem? The actual questions start from that point. If we are all Buddha—then why we hate each other? Why we have to kill animals? Real problem will start from that point.

So Buddhism, on the other hand, is the teaching of or about human nature. What is human being is Buddhist teaching. In comparison to when we have buddha-nature, why human being is like this is the first problem or question you will have. So to study Buddhism is to study ourselves. To study ourselves is to forget ourselves, like Dōgen-zenji says. To study Buddhism—

or to study the first principle is to study the second principle. To study the second principle is to practice second principle until you forget all about it, until you don't feel you have rules.

How you help others is—there is no special way to help others. Let them know our human nature, and let them know how we have problem. And to encourage people by your own practice, that is the best way to help people. Learning will not help. Almsgiving will not help. But when you follow, when you understand what is human being and what is the way for human beings to follow Buddhist way—is how to help people. We should be concentrated on that point, and we shouldn't try to help people by giving something or by some special way. Okay? [Laughs.] Some question?

Student C: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: *Hai.*

Student C: What does the woodworking mean above your door? "The Mahābodhisattva Zendō"?¹

Suzuki-rōshi: Mahābodhisattva Zendō?

Student C: The calligraphy above the—above the door?

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh. Did you see it? Oh. Mahābodhisattva Zendō. Bodhisattva is the—bodhisattva—"bodhisattva."

Student C: I mean the—the calligraphy above your door—your apartment door—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student C: —the framed calligraphy there?

Suzuki-rōshi: No, not [1-2 words]. Mahābodhisattva. I asked—I send it to Japan—

Student C: No. I mean the—above your door.

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh!

Student C: Above the door.

¹ In the early years of San Francisco Zen Center, the zendō itself was informally known as the "Mahābodhisattva Zendō."

Suzuki-rōshi: Above the door.² Oh, that is not "Mahābodhisattva Zendō." [Laughter.] That is—I am sorry—that is two characters, which is *Jo un*—"to glide cloud" or "to ride on cloud." *Jo un*—in Dōgen-zenji's "Sansui-kyō"—"Sūtra of Mountain and River"—he says the water has life of riding cloud [laughs].³ *Jo un no kudoku ari.*⁴

People think water is running, flowing in the stream, but "Water has also the merit of driving cloud." Cloud itself, it may be water [laughs]. When he says so it means also the first principle.

So if you understand what is first principle, that will be a good help to release your body in our life. Even though we are like water, always running in valley or stream, we should not complain. Water has also the virtue of being cloud, and water is everywhere. But when we are in the stream, when they in the stream, water may feel, "Why you are running—go by our stream? I wish I could be like a cloud." That is our complaint. But actually, water can be a cloud. If we don't limit our power, our power is [1-2 words unclear; said in a whisper]. So, that will be the [1 word].

Do you know how *Lotus Sūtra* started? *Lotus Sūtra* was recited by many people. We don't know exactly—no one knows exactly who compiled the sūtra, but while people, Buddhists, were reciting the sūtra, the sūtra became more and more famous. And they get together and recited that sūtra. At that time, temples were some place for the priests to practice their way—for the priests to study Buddhism. But for layman there is not much good place to have meeting. And people get together in cemetery, or in the temple yard they recited the sūtra.

The group of people were making pilgrimage all through Indian villages. Once in a while, I don't know how many times a year, they visited some certain place. People were waiting for the group who recite sūtra to come. In that way *Lotus Sūtra* became very popular. And that sūtra encouraged people ... [*Sentence was probably finished. First tape (of two) turned over here.*]

The more you know about human nature, the more you will be interested in the first principle. In this way you can encourage your practice. But if you confuse the first principle with the second principle, or if you rely on our teaching, it doesn't help you so much. *Hai.*

² The framed calligraphy of two Japanese characters hanging over the door to Suzuki-rōshi's former rooms on the second floor of City Center, San Francisco.

³ "When human beings look at water, the only way we see it is as flowing ceaselessly. The flowing takes many forms" Water "rises up to form clouds, and it comes down to form pools" (Eihei Dōgen, "Sansui-kyō," *Shōbōgenzō*; Nishijima and Cross, trans., Book 1, p. 174).

⁴ *Jo* (ride); *un* (cloud); *no* (as—indicating that *jo un* and *kudoku* are the same); *kudoku* (merit); *ari* (there is). This is not an exact quote from the *Shōbōgenzō*; Suzuki-rōshi may be interpreting or simplifying the phrase.

Student D: Rōshi, what does it mean in practice when [6-10 words]?

Suzuki-rōshi: Include what?

Student D: That sometimes we include both [2-4 words] in practice [2-3 words] between thought and [1-2 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Practice—zazen practice, first of all—what is the purpose of zazen practice? That is something I am talking about so many times. Perhaps why it is difficult for you to improve your understanding is you listen to our lecture day by day without learning—remembering what I said before without accepting clearly what I mean. Moreover, [laughs] you don't have to remember what I say. It means [1-3 words]. But what I mean is, when you listen to my lecture, and when you say "yes," that is the point. When you say "yes," you accept it—"That's okay." And it means that your mind is open and your ears are open. Then, more and more, you will be able to understand the teaching. But you are much better than usual Japanese people. Japanese people, when some teacher come and give lecture, they may say, "Oh, he is very good, he is very good lecturer. His sermon is so interesting." [Laughs.] So someone like me has very difficult time [laughs], because I cannot give any interesting lecture [laughs, laughter]. [Someone boos from audience. S.R. laughs.] *Hai*.

Student E: Rōshi, in the last lecture you talked about communication, and how it creates a better image for those people. Could you talk some more about how we create a better image of ourselves?

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm.

Student E: In part to let it go.

Suzuki-rōshi: Communication start by understanding—your own understanding about people. Even though you want them to understand you, unless you understand people, it is almost impossible. Don't you think so? Only when you understand people, they may understand you. So even though you do not say anything, if you understand people there is some communication. Winks of your eyes—it is [laughing, laughter]. It is very difficult for me to do this. You see? That is, maybe, perfect communication.

Student E: I was asking—what I wanted to ask is how can we communicate better with ourselves? Not with other people.

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh.

Student E: Sometimes we have difficulty defeating problems in ourselves, and we know that [4-6].

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. Oh, okay.

Student E: And—and the question is how we cultivate these bad feelings—not to push them aside, but sort of cultivate them like [2-4 words] to other people—like we cultivate that relationship with people. But it seems that zazen is—I'm having the feeling that it helps somehow if I have bad feelings about myself.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. That is because you are hasty—or you are not patient enough. Anyway, it is impossible to have perfect understanding, to feel good about yourself. Whether you feel good or bad, that is the communication. That is you. We cannot improve you instantaneously. Even though you stay at Tassajara three-four years, it is difficult to accept your practice here. And it should be so. And if you try to accept yourself so easily, then there is something wrong with your practice.

In such case, you should think about the first principle. It is you who feels bad, but you yourself is not bad, and your practice is not bad. But because of your desire you feel bad—that's all. Desire means to expect something which you cannot have—that is desire, the terminology of desire.

You have that kind of desire. As long as we know completely about this kind of desire, you cannot be patient enough to accept—your mind cannot be wide enough to accept your bad practice. I feel as if you are always trying to feel good, [laughs] always. But I am not. I rather feel better when I don't feel good [laughter, laughs]. If I feel good, I think, "Oh, I must be careful." [Laughs, laughter.] "I shouldn't feel so good." It is a kind of idea—some selfishness in me. "Oh no." You feel much more stable when you are not so happy [laughs].

Student F: In another lecture you said we should try and be happy.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Happy, happy, but, happiness is not that kind of happiness. My happiness is to suffer with people or to enjoy with people. Maybe to suffer more than people and to enjoy less than people is real happiness. Even though I feel in that way, as we are very selfish actually, maybe if I am trying to feel less happy, then maybe they are equal.

If I divided watermelon—I cut watermelon just into quarters—it is very difficult to be fair. And even though I think I didn't take best one, maybe I have best one in my hand [laughs]. That is human nature. So only when we try not to take best one, maybe you will be pretty fair with people.

So to know our human nature is very important. Without knowing what is hunger, what is selfishness, it is almost impossible to help others. When you know what is hunger, what is thirst, what is love, how difficult it is to love some people, then you can help people. That is how we study the first principle. That is approach to the first principle. Even though you can

explain about the first principle, like the great philosophers [laughs], you cannot help people. You will be a scholar, but you cannot help people.

Student G [Niels Holm]: Rōshi?

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm?

Niels Holm: What do you mean when you say "help people"? What kind of help do you mean? Define the word.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. That is, maybe, good question. If you know what is help, then you will know how you will help people. It is rather difficult to explain. But you may understand how you feel when you're helped by people. "Help people," I say—or we say, "to save sentient beings, to save others." "To save" means to give perfect understanding of the problem of birth and death, or true meaning of our life, is how you help people. After knowing many things, you will come to difficult things. So unless you have good understanding or good experience of our human life, meaning of life, you cannot help people. I say "help people," but "save people." Why we say "save people" is they are suffering; they are in the midst of the problem. That is true. Some other question? Could you say? *Hai*.

Student H: Rōshi, is the meaning of Buddhist practice to continually develop our small mind? [4-6 words] the big mind continues in small mind.

Suzuki-rōshi: You can say so. It is possible to say so—because we are always involved in small mind. But big mind—without knowing what is big mind, it is suffering. But if you know what is big mind, then even though your life is continuous practice—continuous small-minded practice, and you feel in that way, but it will be quite different from usual suffering you may have. But right now you understood what I am saying. Maybe for the first time I used this kind of statement, "continuous [laughs] practice—continuous small-minded practice." So it looks like in our practice there is no true joy or something like that. But if you know what is big mind—when you hear the bird, you will find the mountain calmer than before. That kind of feeling. Continuous hearing of the bird is big mind—is our practice. If you understand what I mean, background is calmness of the deep, deep mountain. And you hear the bird, and for the deep remote mountain, bird cannot disturb the mountain. But we hear the bird. Before, you feel as if bird is disturbing the calmness of the mountain. That is usual feeling we have. If small problem happen to your life, you will be very much discouraged or disturbed, but if you know the vastness of the big mind or buddha-mind, that kind of problem is not problem. But we see the problem. There is big difference. Feeling your skin [?] accept the problem. Do you understand?

So anyway, you must have some feeling about—if possible you must have even a branch of the big mind. And on the other hand you should be faithful

to things that happen in your life. Then you will not be disturbed by the problem you have, and you will be encouraged—your practice will be encouraged—practice to appreciate the big mind will be encouraged. Okay?

Some questions? [2-3 words] is too late. [Laughter, laughs.] No question? *Hai*.

Student I: Rōshi, cutting apples in the kitchen is [4-6 words] or particularly zazen is that sometimes it's hard to [1-2 words] to acknowledge that a [2-4 words] isn't really bad, but they're really [1 word] a lot. Or—or—I can't understand what—what—what the practice means. I [3-4 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm? [Laughs.] Pleasure is—pleasure is [1-2 words]—Will you please say it again?

Student I: If I'm cutting apples in the kitchen and eating—if I eat them, is —is that bad karma? I mean, I think I ate [3-6 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, you did. [1 words] bad. [Laughs.] Again, when you realize it—as—as Buddha said, "I found out the carpenter who is making the house." [Laughs.] Do you understand what does it mean? I will find out the carpenter who is making the house—who found out someone picking up small piece of apple—who found out someone eating apples. [Laughs.] Buddha found out a carpenter who is building your house. Did you understand?

Student I: [She may have responded, but it was not audible.]

Suzuki-rōshi: To feel in that way is good, but I cannot say to eat apples while you are cutting is good, but I agree with you. But, on the other hand, you should know that who found out. Big mind found out. Buddha found out. [Laughs.] That—oh!—you are [4-6 words as S.R. thumps on or with microphone]. Buddha is still alive in [laughs]—in your mind. He will help you. He will always help you.

So that is—I cannot say bad practice. Again, I am not encouraging you to eat apples in the kitchen. This is the point—something I want you to be very careful when you listen to my lecture. I may say "that is good,"—that you have big mind always to see your self, basically, but sometime I just say, "That is good; that is not bad practice," I may say briefly instead of explaining carefully in that way. So you may think it is okay for us to eat in the kitchen while we are cooking, as many people do. It is okay. "Before he said it is not okay, but this time he said okay." [Laughs.] So I want you to be very careful because it takes time if I explain things in such way. *Hai*.

Student I: [4-6 words] about if the Buddha knows [4-6 words] if the Buddha knew that one of the people did something wrong, but is it really something wrong? Is it—I mean, is it a true confession of something being

wrong, or is it just something imposed by Buddha where we have [1-2 words] a rule. If the rule was you should eat in the kitchen while we're cooking, then we would feel bad if we didn't eat while we were cooking. [Laughter.] And is the—

Suzuki-rōshi: [Talks over student, who continues asking question.] That is just argument [laughs, laughter]. It doesn't make sense.

Student I: What doesn't make sense?

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm? No—there could be any rules like that. [Laughs.] You can create, for one or two days you can [1-2 words]. "If you work in kitchen you should eat." That will last one hour or two hours. But that is not—cannot be rule.

Student I: The reason I'm asking and what I don't understand to some extent is in this procession of rules [8-10 words] we have this idea of rules. If we didn't have an idea of rules—a rule about not eating—

Suzuki-rōshi: [Speaks over student.] When you say so, that is already idea of absolute. In realm of absolute there is no rules. There cannot be any rules. You see? There is confusion: You confuse absolute and second principle—second. Do you understand?

Student I: No.

Suzuki-rōshi: No [as if he is echoing student].

Student I: I can understand why there is a rule about food, but—

Suzuki-rōshi: You see—

Student I: —I don't understand how you separate—

Suzuki-rōshi: No.

Student I: —[4-6 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: When we talk about things-as-it is, like a scientist, that is observation of the first principle. And when we accept our human nature and how to apply, how to have more organized life as a human being, that rules is just for human being, not for trees or water or some chemical happening, but just for human being, which is so selfish. That is secondary rule—the rules for human being. So you shouldn't compare—you shouldn't talk like you are like a cat or dog. You are worse than cat or dog. [Laughter.] Do you understand? [Laughs.] No.

Student I: [2-3 sentences.]

Suzuki-rōshi: For an instance, in the city?

Student I: Some place other than here, yes. [6-10 words.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, that kind of life will not last. That is just bubbles [laughs]—tentative bubble which cannot last. When our rules, our way of life is not based on our human nature, it doesn't last. As long as you are young it is maybe okay, but everyone is growing, and world is changing day by day, and we cannot exist unless we know our human nature. I have no special superimposed idea. That is what I am talking about. I am not forcing on you anything. Just to understand what is human being, what is things-as-it-is. You see? That is the point of my talk. If we do not have so many students at Tassajara, we don't have to have rules like this. As we must practice our way with many people here, so we must have some rules. Okay?

Rules is not something which we create, which someone—some special person create for sake of Buddhism or for sake of Zen or for sake of the leader to have, but something which we need. That is rule. So we can change if it is not right, so we are improving our rules. Maybe we are spending too much time in discussion about our rules. I feel in that way. But still, I appreciate your effort to establish some rules for us. You try to be very fair to everyone. So, on the other hand, our rules become more and more strict, because we spent so much time in establishing your rules. After establishing some rules, you cannot [laughs]—change it so soon. That is the nature of precepts. Buddha didn't establish precepts. Disciples established precepts, in some monastery. Buddha said you shouldn't run away from the temple when you are listening to lecture. That is one precept. [Laughs, laughter.] For very good students there is no rule. Rule is necessary, but students make so many rules. That is projected rules, projected human nature. We need it, not buddhas, or not universe. Whether this earth vanish from the universe, it is not big problem [laughs]. It is okay for the universe. If we want to protect this earth, maybe we should study more about how flying planes are going [laughs]. Then, maybe our planet is just one of them. That kind of study is our study.

I don't know why you do not like rules. There must be some good reason why you don't like it. But here I don't think so, because it is you who are creating rules, not me. Buddhist rules is not like that.

So that is why you have to have good understanding of the first principle compared to the second principle or human principle—human rules. Then—then you will find out why you have to have this kind of practice—the meaning of practice. Okay? Okay. Five more minutes. *Hai*.

Student J: [3-4 sentences.] Or tentatively, what can we rely on in ourselves—anything?

Suzuki-rōshi: You should rely on your spirit of practice. Before you break rules, why don't you follow the rules? That is the point. After breaking rules, it is too late to discuss about that. It belongs to the past. So it can't be helped. Why don't you try not to break rules again? That is the point. So to reflect upon what you have done is not so good way—not so good idea. Even to think about what you are doing right now is not so good too. [*Sentence probably finished. Tape changed to second tape.*]

... Mm-hmm.

Student K: You say that creating some kind of rule or schedule for yourself or some [4-6 words] will not work. I'm asking you essentially how do you find out [3-4 words] adopt rules that we live with at Tassajara, or do we rely more on our good feeling about things?

Suzuki-rōshi: You are still relying on rules. When I came to San Francisco I had no rules for you to observe. I sit and practice zazen and recite sūtra when I wanted to. People came. That's all. One after another they come, and [laughs] as you are so many—we have so many people now, and I must have rules. That's all. So it is too soon to worry about it [laughs]. Buddha will take care of everything. And if Buddhist rule is good, it will help. This is why I became angry [laughs] to see someone who talk about Japanese way or Buddhist way or— Actually, if you don't want Buddhist way, why don't you have some other rules? I think Buddhist way is pretty good, because after Buddha's time, the idea of Buddha's precepts is way of life, and the rules belongs to human being, not Buddha. Buddha has the first principle, but human being has second principle for themselves. So this kind of understanding is very suitable idea of rules.

So I want you to be very sincere with yourself, about your future too. You shouldn't depend on anything. Only thing you depend on is your zazen practice. Without saying anything, if you practice every day, then you will have students, you will have friends. Then you may need some rules. "What time do you start zazen?" or something like that. That is enough. You don't have to worry about so many rules which we need at Tassajara. Okay?

So I want each student to practice our zazen wherever you are. That will be the best help for the people. As some more things happen, then case by case you should think about it, that's all. You will find out how to help people, especially when you have experience of practice at Tassajara. It will be a great, great help for you when you have your self. You shouldn't depend on Tassajara too much. All the confusion comes from that point, because you depend on Tassajara too much. Buddha said, without depending on yourself, how is it possible to depend on something else—or only thing you can depend on is you yourself. That is very true. Only when you can depend on yourself you will be very kind. Something flowing over from you will help people, without trying to help people. If you depend on

something special, then nothing will come out from you. If someone ask you what to do, "Oh, we have rules here, so why don't you read." In that way you will not have any friends [laughter]. To me, you are trying to do so [laughs], always trying to do so whenever you ask me question. I feel that you may be trying to establish something like Tassajara [laughs]. I have no such idea for you to establish anything like this. If Tassajara practice is good enough to be a good example for other group, maybe they may follow us, but we should not have any idea of to be a good example for others. Anyway we should make our best effort, that's all. It cannot be more than that. If it is more than that, Tassajara is involved in wrong practice. It is not Buddhist practice.

[Sighs.] Tomorrow? What time? [Laughs.] [1 word] person? Not one person [?], right?

Thank you very much.

Source: City Center transcript by Barry Eisenberg. Entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Checked against tape and made verbatim by Bill Redican (9/26/00). Miyagawa Keishi-san kindly provided assistance with the translation of Japanese terms. Lightly edited for readability by Gordon Geist (11/30/06).