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WAY-SEEKING MIND

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Way-seeking mind is the most important. This kind of chance is...usually in some difficult situation. When you have some difficulty in your everyday life I think you will have there you will have chance to arise Way-seeking mind. Once you arise the Way-seeking mind, your practice is on the track. Watanabe Genshu Zenji, who passed away several years ago...arise Way-seeking mind when famous _____ Zenji came to his temple. He was...he was chest-maker or what do you call it-he was making-not a carpenter, but...cabinet maker. He was cabinet maker and when he went to his temple to hear Arai Zenji's lecture or to see him maybe-to see the famous Zenji. He arose Way-seeking mind. And he made up his mind to follow him and asked his family to let him go and he joined Arai Zenji order. He had-when he was young he had a very difficult time at his home always, but he didn't complain about it, he rather enjoyed to make cabinets, but Arai Zenji was so great Zen Master that he made up his mind to follow him and so, you know, he doesn't forget his life in his-when he was young. When he became archbishop of Sojiji Temple he still had a big saw and tools on Tokonoma, and he didn't forget his difficult time when he was young and he was very grateful for having difficulties in his early days,-because, because, of that he could...join the order and study our way and practice zazen until he come archbishop of Sojiji Temple. He was unique archbishop. Because when he became Arai Zenji's disciple he went-he has some more schooling, he graduate from college called Toyo Dainachi but that was maybe-I don't know exactly when, maybe when he was pretty old.

The most Zen masters-great Zen masters are monks who had difficult time in his early life. In Meiji Period, Great Meiji period, our most famous Zen-Zen Master is Neishori Zenji (?) and Morita Zenji, Morita Koi. Neishori Zenji became archbishop of Sojiji Temple, Morita Zenji became archbishop of Eiheiji Temple. They were the monks who had very difficult time when they were young.

Morita Zenji joined-went to Eiheiji Monastery to practice when he was very young and his-when he was leaving his temple, his father was very ill, but knowing that his boy-he cannot take care of his boy, he persuaded his boy to go to Eiheiji Monastery. As you know life in Eiheiji is not so easy. Especially for a little boy, maybe thirteen or fourteen. His father must be very good-must have been very good teacher to know how important it is to continue his practice, but he had not much money for the boy so only way is to send him to Eiheiji Monastery. When he was going he said the first duty you will have at Eiheiji Monastery will be to collect radishes or garbage, or to hit big bell. You should know how to collect garbage is the most important duty in the monastery. The older students will sweep the garden and collect the leaves and garbages at certain time, certain place, so young priest of monks should collect it. We are told, you know, that even though you sweep the garden, if you don't, you know, collect the garbage in-or take it to the garbage can. In Japan we had no garbage can but we had some place

to burn the papers and leaves. If we don't take it to the place, to some certain place...you did, you know, half job, not complete job. Fifty percent. Another fifty percent is to take it to the place where they burn it. So his father told him if you take the garbage to some certain place, that means that you are doping half of the work even though you are just one of three people, if you do it...you are doing half of the work and many-rest of the works with many heads and hands will do half of it. So you must be proud of your duty he said to him. And to hit the bell, Buddha will appear. So when you, you know, at Eiheiji-if you go to Eiheiji you should-monks how each time they hit big bell. With that spirit you should hit the bell and he give him-give the boy various instructions like that. Without knowing his father was almost dying he went to Eiheiji Monastery and he started monastic life. The first morning he hit the great bell, Ekido Zenji (?) who was at that time the abbot or archbishop of Eiheiji Monastery asked his jisha find out who hit the bell this morning. I don't know how old Ekido Zenji was at that time. Maybe he was more than 80. maybe almost 90. And he was sitting in his room and hearing the bell-unusual bell he asked his jisha to find out who it was and there came the small boy. Ekido Zenji rather amazed to see such a small boy. He thought some good well trained monk will appear, but (laughs) small boy appears. So he wondered how he could hit such a-hit such a nice good sound, so he asked him, you know, the boy...how did you hit it and with what kind of feeling did he hit the bell? And he told him to hit one bell means to give birth to a Buddha, that was what my father told me, when I was leaving home for Eiheiji Monastery. Of course Ekido Zenji was very much impressed by the boy and he took care of-took good care of the boy until he become famous Zen Master.

Neishori Zenji is famous for his study of *Shobogenzo* and Morita Zenji is very famous for his zazen practice. For instance, when he was crossing the narrow between Hokkaido and Honshu Island, they met a big tornado or typhoon. The ship was almost wrecked. All the seamen, all the passengers and even seamen, including the captain of the boat was-became sea sick, but Morita Zenji in the corner of the room was sitting zazen. He didn't become sea sick, and the captain was very much amazed to see him and he could eat, you know, and after eating he went to his cabin-practicing zazen. Since then captain became a very good student of Morita Zenji. But all those-wonderful practice is the result of his difficult practice in his early age at Eiheiji Monastery.

Our life in monastery, you know, is a very simple and monotonous one-you know we are repeating the same thing everyday, over and over. There is nothing to enjoy. So sometimes we do something very foolish, you know, to enjoy-how foolish we are! If we find ourselves very foolish, we enjoy,-our foolishness, you know-to eat radish without cooking, just when we are carrying the radish, without washing, without even washing, bring out the radish and scratch the dirt out (laughs) sometimes that is not interesting enough for us, so late at night when there are fast asleep we cook it by bucket or something-outside of the monastery, but once you cook radish, smell is awful! All monastery will-filled with the smell of the radish. Of course, we know-we will be easily found out, but to do it is most important part and if we are scolded that is another-something, we have something more. They may scold us-"OK, let's do it!" Our life in the monastery is so simple and so monotonous, we cannot work fast, we should always

work slowly without making noise. We cannot talk loudly. If you enter someone's room, the head of the room will see you from your feet up to your head. He will check you, you know. If you have some reason it is very difficult to stay. Maybe recently, you know, their masters want-want them to be a priest, good priest, so even though they don't want-they themselves don't want to stay at Eiheiiji because their teacher or their master want them to stay at Eiheiiji, so that is maybe why they stay there for one year or so, but no more, not more than that. Most people feel in that way.

So I think we have so many students here, but I don't know how many of you will stay with us. I don't know how many. If you have good reason to stay here you will stay. But if you haven't not much reason, I don't know. What I am saying right now is when you have-when you want to be Buddhist it is necessary for you to see your-our everyday life more carefully. This is something...we say ordinary life it is not ordinary life, it is very...very dangerous and precarious life. We cannot trust people in city so much. Nothing is permanent or reliable in our society. If so, you know, someone should be, should become reliable, trustworthy person or else, you know, all society will be lost. If it is-if it is hot, when it is hot we need big tree under which we have cool wind. When it rain we need someone who has umbrella. When you see human life carefully you will find out how important it is to become trustworthy person. It is not necessary to be a great man, but we should be good enough to help our neighbors.

So purpose of Buddhism we say to help themselves and to help others. Why it is so is-it is actually our neighbor want s some help in some way. I said to carry-to collect the garbage to the garbage can is half of the job, whole job, you know, but we are liable to ignore to carry the garbage to the garbage can. We are liable to ignore something which is some duty which is dirty. Which is not pleasant. We are liable to ignore cleaning the corner of the room. If everyone ignore to clean the corners of the room, the room will be filthy pretty soon, because someone do it our room is always clean and we feel very good in clean room. There is many, you know, liable to-to in our human life, you know, we are liable to do this, to be like this, to be like that. Many 'liable to;' many 'apt to.' Someone must work hard so that we all of us can enjoy our life. maybe our zazen practice is the practice which most people do not like so much-we shouldn't try to attain even enlightenment, you should be there on the black cushion for two days without any reason why. There is no 'liable to.' Just to be there that is why you practice zazen. When you can do this kind of practice-if you can do *shikantaza* without expecting anything, I think you can do almost everything which is necessary. With this spirit-when you have this spirit, you will attain enlightenment, but without this spirit the enlightenment you will have is one of the 'liable to.' You will expose your...weakness, that's all. There's no true, you know, human nature appear. What you will have is just, you know, false...superficial attainment which is not true. So final (strings) will be attained by just sitting. After experiencing-starting from various difficulties, the difficulties we have is not actually difficult enough. Just to sit on the cushion is the most difficult thing, as you experience. I think you know how difficult it is just to sit on the black cushion. Without true spirit you cannot do that.

So if you have a chance to arise real Way-seeking mind...we should start

shikantaza. So for people who has no Way-seeking mind, who want some encouragement, who want some candy, we have to give some candy. Our world is not so easy, you know, and we are foolish enough to be fooled by candy. We are critical with others, and mostly with ourselves very critical, we cannot accept ourselves so easily. That is why we practice zazen. This time I started some-I started *dokusan*, but maybe, you know, better to be concentrated on just practice of zazen. Anyway I don't think I can finish *dokusan* for all the students in two days, so I almost gave up! (laughs) I think it is much better to just sit with you.

Thank you very much.

EZT – early SFZC transcript – 70-03-28
