

This case is about Kyonin and his younger brother, he was a top politician, distracted and concerned about next life. Intellectually and dualistically stuck, even though he was making great efforts he would not deepen. Master Daie wrote to Kyonin's younger brother : He enumerates his insufficient realized places. He had been working on Master Unmon's Koan: "A monk asks Master Unmon, What is Buddha" Master Unmon answered without hesitation: A dried shit stick." But if we should interpret this as the whole earth and universe is the body of the Buddha is why this answer works. It has to be the perception prior any ideas. An answer with a mental view about it will not work. He says. While the older brother works every day his mind is still divided between the world and his practice. It is not possible to divide. We have to bring it all into One. If we divide, the cutting edge becomes dull and we cannot cut anymore. It has to be that life energy only realizing all day long, every day long, from morning until night from night until morning. Every single thing we perceive (see, hear, feel, any motion) we ask. What is It! Then we are at one with the world. Whether we are walking, standing or sleeping, we are an expression of heaven's and earth- Do not be caught on an idea of being nothing at all. Becomes those eyes, ears, and nose with no small self within. This is the content of the first letter to his younger brother. Now we have the second letter.

Master Daie responds to the letter: This life is short, time waits for no one. If we are not going to do it now, then when will we do it? if we live for our mental ideas and intellect only, we end up analyzing our essence and we appear to see our existence when in fact we are only able to exist in this very instant. You are only truly alive in this eternal present moment. It seems we have a have a history, if we see life as a yesterday, a today and a tomorrow, we are far from it. Neither is it about a death that will come one day. We die at every breath, in every instant, every day. But we "think" we are doing it in the zendo, we leave the zendo and we stay with the traces of that life energy. We have to be alive, and that happens on this very instant only. Sussokan is not just a breathing technique, it is a way to grasp this present moment. While being alive, to die and die completely. In this very instant, to put everything into this very instant, into this breath. Leaving not a speck or a trace behind. While being alive, to die and to die completely, and then everything we do is good. A new life energy surges forth, but only if we die completely. Otherwise we are like an insect floating on the water, going this way and that way. Only having done this, we are able to see that life energy clearly and directly and that is zazen. We must realize it completely. This is the way of zazen and sussokan, it is the path of dying completely, a path of encountering for the first time ever each and every moment. Not any past, present or future left. Not even a shadow of that left. If the koans can't save us then how can we use them to liberate others. All this koans are for dying completely, and if not, they are useless. Standing, is Mu, sitting is Mu, sleeping is Mu. From morning until night , from night until morning it is only Mu. If we sincerely do this, then it does not matter what we are doing we don't even feel that we are seeing, feeling or tasting. The most important thing is that there are no gaps between Mus , this is where thinking and

dualism comes in. We have to do this honestly. And then without exception we can realize this. We must see it for ourselves, no one else can see it for us. What is it that is seeing, what is it that is hearing, tasting, sleeping... It cannot be something over there that we think is what perceives. That is what becomes Mu and that becomes more pure and clear, with less thoughts we can see and hear directly, and that state of mind cannot be explained with words. It has to be experienced. But if we honestly and sincerely do it we will actually perceive this, we will be able to perceive this without crossing over into dualism. There the truth manifests. Then while saying Mu we bump right into it, but if we get drunk down by it, we then just turn into a lump. We must hold this state of mind with every single bit of our being. Without any idea at all. Also of being nothing as well. It is not only about osesshin, to continue that focus at all times, so that we can keep going and can dive in with every single footstep and every single hand motion. It must become second nature to us. It cannot become a transient experience of a Mu, we cannot have it become scattered and wasted. But even if we let go of the external world by doing this, we still have this inner wisps of doubting: What am I doing this for? Then our shadow is acknowledged and efforts become vague, we are making efforts but our cutting edge becomes dull and unable to cut as well.

Master Daie talks about Kyonin himself, everything he needs is within, but he still tries to find it in books, and it doesn't work. We have to make this true efforts. This is what he told him in the letter. He must not be caught in analyzing the koans of the past, but if he truly follows what Daie's letter says, if he can realize it with every cell, in every moment, he will not be deceived by any writings and words. Will not be swayed and distracted. But to stay focused. To keep his focus alive and not pay attention to anything extraneous. And if he can do this, that, without fail, will work. In this way, we can all cultivate this and not gather external things, But to ask that what is it that hears, what is it that smells, sits, sleeps... That Mu. We become it completely. Work on this creatively, if this can be done then it will be clear, you will know what to do, and you will realize completely.

Day 2

Daie Zenji is speaking through the younger brother of Kyonin, aiming his message to the older brother Kyonin. He is always doubting, even though he makes great efforts he can't deepen because of all these doubts. He would always refer to this letter for his practice. In our practice we need a Great doubt, Great belief and Great vitality. Not a mental doubt but one that asks what is existence? what is existing? we have to know this. If we only refer to words and the past and the current idea of the world of what happens after we die, then our doubts will never end. People of zen are never moved by any of this because they clarify the root of all existence. Even if we are not able to directly realize the deepest root, we have to see what is true and not be moved around. As the Buddha taught:

"We are what we think having become what we thought. Like the wheel that follows the cart pulling ox; Sorrow follows an evil thought." We are what we think having become what we thought, like the shadow that never leaves one; Happiness follows a pure thought. Everything in the world is based on mental and dualistic ideas. We are what we think having become what we thought. To be without any speck of extra thinking whatsoever.

When Shibodai was sitting deeply, the heavenly beings began raining down flowers on him. He asked: "Who is doing this? Who is pouring flowers on me?" The heavenly being said: It's me! your Prajna wisdom is so deep that's why." He answered: "But I never taught anything about Prajna wisdom." - "Yes, and I didn't hear you teach anything about Prajna wisdom. That is what I'm saying." Nothing extraneous. That is where the true Prajna is revealed. Not about mentally considering the Heart sutra or the Diamond Sutra's teaching on Prajna. But to realize it beyond any speck of thought about it. Because we make our own life span our measure, from our birth to our death thinking that span is what we compare everything to. If we find no meaning in that span, we feel it as a problem. But the Buddha Dharma is not about a span, is about realizing the truth. We can practice because we have a physical body, and while that body is phenomena, as it says in the Mahayana work of the awakening of faith: there is a realization of the deepest sort that is deep and direct and true of that deepest root. But there is also a superficial realization, the very first time we even hear about this truth that we can awaken to. We are all endowed with this true mind but we imagine we are deluded and we get confused. We all have this clear mind, but without directly realizing this truth, we don't even know it.

Just like the story of the prodigal son: A rich man's son leaves his home and turns into a beggar. Forgetting that he has a family, a home, people who care about him. Many years later he comes to beg to his own original father's home. The father being a metaphor for the Buddha. Many, many steps are taken to bring this beggar to be able to actually believe, and actually realize this was his original home. As it is said, although we have the seeds of awakening within us, if we don't awaken to that, we don't know this originally clear mind. We don't know our own parent's face. We have the examples of both Daido Shingen and Hotatsu Zenji both of whom realized awakening very late in their years. It is never too late because we are never without these seeds of awakening. So Master Daie writes that we are born and die, and if we look at our life energy, that history of our life energy is many billion of years ago that it began. First we were a fireball, evolving to a creature that could breathe air, from there we came to a womb, living on top of a tree, to a creature that looks sideways, to then be able to look straight and face forward. From all these evolutionary steps and more, never returning backwards, never to face sideways again. In our brain all of this ancestral evolutionary steps are thoroughly filed and when our life energy is born now, we have all that information within. It is not a coincidence that 2000 years ago Socrates, Christ, Buddha and Confucius were all born within such a close amount of

time. Each talked about human's truest happiness. Homo Sapiens survived but this is not without reason, if we ask why Buddha Nature is within each of us. All our ancestor's evolution talks about this question as well. But people will say: who knows about next life? Let's enjoy ourselves now. When we have this life span that we can know about for sure, but if we use our brain we can see that our bodies are transient, we don't know how much time we will live. And we can see that in our mind there must have been infinite transformations to become this being, the transformation, the struggle to continually evolve to what we are today and for that reason we can't waste our time and be inconsiderate of the huge efforts that have been made up until this moment.

Even if we say we can't deeply awaken in this life, we have to make a deep vow to make every possible effort to break through completely. This is the central point of the Mahayana. To vow to see the deepest truth even an instant and this effort will be rewarded with the mind of no speck mind. There is no greater joy than this. All of our senses in everything we perceive there is nothing twisted and that is the greatest joy. If we want to really experience this we have to do it from morning until night from night until morning every instant every day. We allow no gap in between not a single space. Just a like a fish's scales laid one on top of the other without any space in between, becoming one solid layer. If we can't do it is because we allow ourselves to get distracted. But if we let go of that, then we don't get moved around by external stimulations. When we are full and taught, then whether we are working here or anywhere it can be as Daito Kokushi writes: Even on the busiest bridge of Kyoto still concentrate with total focus or like Shido Munan Zenji who was testing his own Samadhi power by sitting where a wolf would always pass. People of old trained like this, life on the line. We have to cut all external ties, it can not be done otherwise. If our goal is to awaken then we cannot do it half way. The dried shit stick koan, that is always been mentioned here because Kyonin is working with it. Or Joshu's Mu focusing it all into that. Mu is hearing, sitting sleeping... Stop wondering if this is possible or not. Don't lack in your efforts. I pray that you will realize this deep awakening. In this way Master Daie concludes the letter.

Next he says: Kyonin realize the truth! Where are Buddhas, Patriarchs! Why are they special? If we realize this deepest truth, then; satori, being alive, dying, these are all names of phenomena and appearances only. Kyonin has asked if there is anything left after death. Everyone thinks like this because they are not fulfilled and have not realized the truth yet. And here he says clearly: "Don't be distracted by things of the world, don't look away from it. Your doubt only happens because you are not yet awakened". Kyonin is working at a prestigious job, but Master Daie says that is also phenomena. Whether it is on the job or outside the job to make efforts to deepen. This is all only phenomena. And then Master Daie speaks of himself: at age 57 surrounded by 17000 monks in Kinsan Monastery, there after 3 years he was exiled by the emperor. Being around 17000 monks, that was phenomena. Being exiled was

phenomena as well. If you believe this Kyonin, that is phenomena, if you don't believe this is phenomena as well, after all this, how is it? It is all phenomena. And yet this world is not false, but it is only phenomena. We think we have to go here or there but that is not how it works. It all comes right to where we are. And that state of mind of deep awakening, we go nowhere: The zendo comes to us, the jikido comes to us...This is the awakened state of mind. As the ancestors said: It is all phenomena of phenomena. Master Daie says it clearly. If it is not all clear and realized yet, do not be pulled by distractions, do not be pulled away from the focal point. Ripen completely do not slack in your efforts now.

Day 3

Ojogen, at the early age of 5 when most Chinese have their hair in 2 tops knots, he was already reading books. At age 18 he was already put in the pivotal role of government office. This is a rank of superior excellence, rank number 1; which is given directly by the emperor. He had to pass an examination that was presented by thousands. This is why Master Daie writes him this letter, addressed to him because he has such great responsibility now. When people have such high ranks, they usually act as if they were always high position, forgetting their humble past, and their old friends. He says: In this life to become this rank you must have had many life times of preparations, to be able to use your firmness and motivation to become like this. As the lotus sutra says: why do people come into this world? 1.- First to open the treasury of truth 2.- to indicate its meaning 3.- to cause sentient beings to see into it. and 4.- to cause sentient beings to enter it and abide in it. This is how clearly it is written in the Lotus Sutra. When the Buddha first came into this world he taught about how all sentient beings are endowed from the origin with this Buddha Nature and are born into this world to realize it. And to live not for our narrow benefit but to live for all beings just so that all beings can realize this true nature directly. To follow the Lotus Sutra's steps 1 to 4. From our most advanced and deep state of mind to teach this truth to all people. And with that clear mind realized to take refuge in it and cultivate people. This is our most greatest purpose and deepest truth. This is our most important work to do, to awaken to the Buddha's wisdom, to join hands with all people and work together for Peace.

This is why Ojogen work was so important, he could influence so many people, and if many people could awaken, find their true wisdom and become unmovable, they would become a person to whom all people could depend and rely on. Because it is usually the case that people in such high rank lose their humility, he opens up the letter praising the fact that this is not his case. Master Daie says referring to the Buddha, as it says in the Lotus Sutra: to open the treasury of truth. For all existence with or without form, all life energies are on a long, long journey to realize Buddha nature, and for this we are evolving. Darwin aside, we have evolved not only to adapt to our environment. Eventually evolving to awaken to this deep one truth without fail,

this is the clear direction that we can see. The way of being with the whole universe, is that really meaningless? This can only be seen with a certain depth of mind. To awaken to that actuality and to that true source is the point of our evolution. For every being this is the imperative to see, to experience this directly. In the precept of not taking life; All beings are one whole, to not divide that whole is to not kill life. We are all living from this one life energy, to give gratitude and see its interconnectedness. Then one can not possibly kill, not even a small insect. This is our deepest wisdom. When we chant in the 4 vows, it is about all this sentient beings, and if it is not about all sentient beings it becomes narrow and self referring, limited to a personal view. Everything has to be evolved and from our empathy comes all of our functioning and wisdom. This is the Buddha Dharma and if we can see this clearly we could not possibly think something is my possession: "I own this"; We can make use of it, but while there is nothing that is mine, all things are of one single life being, and to realize this is the Buddha Nature. And then we respect, use and give gratitude for this, and cultivate deepest faith.

For all of the various paths, those who hear the Buddhas words and from that follow the path of awakening, following Following the 4 noble truths and the Eightfold Path, and then following the path of seeing 20 links of causation then following the path of Samadhi, letting go the ego and then following the 6 Paramitas. But it has to be for all beings, then it is the greatest path and vow. This are all differences we stop to explain, there is actually no difference at all. When we have realized the True nature of all beings, such a division is not longer necessary . We can see that everything is one and the same truth and if we see this clearly, then we could not possibly lax in our efforts. First he praises Ojogen but now he tells him to not sleep in his laurels and must now deeply awaken.

Today in the world all the systems are loosing their true responsibility and function, Having been placed in motion by politicians that ignore human rights, parents have lost track of what is most important to their children. It is a parent who should be seeing that their child is offering their worth to all people. But even the parents are seeing the systems as most compelling, as what has more virtue for their children. The same happens with the practice. People see the practice as a part of a huge system, leaving early. People have enough money, use cash cards and lean on welfare, feeling a strange sense of security. To take for granted this absolute value of realizing out true nature is put aside, loosing track of what is most important. Humans most important purpose is not "this and that" in society, but we are drowning in confusion. People feeling satisfied: caught on one gear of a huge machine, and living and eventually dying in this way. We have to see where is our precious human truth? Or our training gets narrow and limited. We can't wholeheartedly do it. Nowadays for the majority of the 7 billion in this planet, the systematized way of living is the fact of life. How strange, increasingly going like this, everybody into the system. Where people's truest worth is dumped in the garbage, seeing it as something worthless. We

can't be slaves of systems, if we don't see this clearly, we will be suffocated by those systems. These systems are only created by people's concepts. They think they have to go and be in those systems. And that is not so. Humans can survive no matter what, but right now everybody believes this is the only way. We can't all let go of this truth of what we know to be most important. This is already in each person's deeply seeing eye. That seeing of what is truly most important: What is valuable? What is true? He asks each person to truly work on this and know we have to realize the truth no matter what. Or will our concepts make us throw it all away? Will we be moved around by our endless thoughts? We have to ask ourselves: What was I really born for. Do this completely and not lose it.

Day 4

Master Daie speaks the words of the Buddha: In this world Buddhas come forth to open the treasury of truth, then to indicate its meaning, to cause sentient beings to see into it. and to cause sentient beings to enter it and abide in it. All Buddhas come into the world to awaken people to their own true nature. There is nothing to awakening to this. Every Buddha has come into the world to teach and guide people in this way. All the sutras, the finger pointing to the moon, they are all meant to guide us to that true nature, telling us to awaken. Aside from that the Sutras have no other purpose. This is how Master Daie talks to Ojogen: A splendid and noble functioning is still not possible without awakening to his true original mind, he must work ever more intensely in his practice, not lax in his efforts and discover his greatest true functioning. See that while he works in the world doing this and that, every day thing, where is the truly, deeply awakening in that. As Confucius writes in the central analects of his teaching: "Throughout the heavens and earth the Buddha nature is to follow the way of heavens and earth. This is our true and original nature. And to live in accordance with this, is the true path". And to clarify this, we have the true teaching. From this we learn the ways of Heavens and Earth. To learn that path, and then to follow that path, to live that way, that is the point of our being alive. But many in society only worry about what is good or bad. We all have a body, we all have thoughts, and even if they are all ego they come with being born. We think they are who we are, all we are, even though they are small portion of the heavens and earth. We cannot live forever and yet we waste our time. All of us will be influenced without exception by birth, sickness, old age, and dying. Our true being is this huge space. While we have the karmic affiliation to become this body, our body is phenomena and we will have to return it. We mistake this phenomena for who we are because we don't yet know our true nature.

We don't do training for our own personal satisfaction, but to throw away our small self to become the way of heavens and earth. We speak of the Buddhas Way but what is important? How should we live? Don't do bad things, do do good things. Good actions aligns our mind. Our true mind is clarity and purity and when we live by it,

then we naturally don't do bad things and only do good things. We don't need anybody telling us what to do. We do them naturally and spontaneously. To sit zazen not even knowing that we are sitting. To not be caught in our ego attachment. There is a much more greater mind. The world is vast and wide do not drag around this petty mind. Whatever we encounter we become that fully and completely.

Become each moment totally and completely: encountering sitting, standing, cleaning...that is the Buddha's way. And after all how is it? Our true nature has to be realized, this is the Buddha Dharma. The Buddha's way is about following the ways of Heavens and Earth. Becoming it completely in everything we do. From morning until night from night until morning. Do it continually, do not follow any idea about entering a paradise or do something, each moment exactly as it is. Those who know this, know that separating from each movement of our feet is not the point. If we get caught on the ego we cannot hear the orders of heaven and earth. Or as Master Hakuin said. "The sound of a single hand". It can not be about listening to the ego. Do we see because there is a flower? We see because there is not a single mind moment arising. Born again each moment in each and every sound, with all the bells in the zendo. Hold on to nothing and then from there the rivers flow, the mountains are born, the birds sing... A new world is manifesting in each and every moment. As we continue it is been created in each moment. As it is said by the Buddha: "I have the true dharma eye, the marvelous mind of nirvana, the true form of the formless, and the subtle Dharma gate independent of words and transmitted beyond doctrine, how very mysterious is this".

If we let go of our clarifying mind, and just talk unnecessarily. Before anything angry, before anything happy, before anything sad or painful. That is where the true mind is of course, if there is a mistake we must not hesitate to correct it. And if sad to be naturally sad. But if we pull around our small self into these feelings and deceive it with a fake smile or insincerity then we are pulled around.

Rather to speak and act with no preconceived notion at all. To experience each and every thing: angry, sad, joyful...Do not try calculating about it. Getting angry and leave any traces from it. This is harmony, we are not satisfied from ego satisfaction. Be sad and joyful from your truest mind, from there our natural flow arises and we live in clarity in each moment. This is as Confucius says: "To live in the way of the heavens and earth. If we can awaken to this in the morning, then we can die in the evening with any regrets because we have heard the voice of the heavens and earth prior to ego".

Only bring that Mu into everything we do. Do not keep your attachments, concepts and thoughts. Where is there a more important path than this? Confucius says to take one thing and take to its most completed point. It has to be walked in every footstep, not mentally. Do not rely on any words. Forget the body, forget all thinking, become

the zendo completely. If we truly realize this, there is no word or even half a word. Dive into it with every single bit of our being until there is no a single speck remaining. Continue until it becomes as if we have a red hot iron ball that we cannot swallow and we cannot spit it out. Exhaling to the last possible point, without losing track of it, like fish scales. Until we are sucked into the zendo floor. Leave no gaps. Sussokan is most important, exhale and exhale and let the heavens and earth inhale. This we can do but only if we cut in one clear slash. Do it until it becomes second nature. This is how we can let go of all our conditioning, attachments and ideas. We clear and clean all the garbage that has been piling up for years. We complete one thing until the last point and we continue. And then there is no more sense if there is a me, or if there is a zendo. No more subject and object. Give it everything we have. Our ki increases from being right on it. Do not take your breath off of it. We experience it and we can't say it. No more unnecessary dualism left. And from there anyone and everyone can experience this. In this way Master Daie is teaching us kindly.

Day 5

Master Daie tells Ojogen to only practice in 1 straight line and only seek the truth explanations that would only be only betraying the true self. Words about awakening are conceited and the ego is not yet let go of. Like for example to talk about Prajna: we have to forget our body, our dualistic thinking and only then Prajna wisdom can arise. As Bodhidharma says: to not lie, to not take life, within that is to not say that you have realized awakening when you have not. That is breaking the precepts on not lying. Unless you have been thoroughly confirmed, that can only be between the teacher and the student. When the Buddha held out the flower, even the 84,000 bodhisattvas could not understand, only his disciple Kasho Sonja understood. And this is when the Buddha said: "I have the true Dharma eye, the marvelous mind of Nirvana, the true form of the formless, and the subtle Dharma gate independent of words and transmitted beyond doctrine, this I have entrusted to Mahakashyapa". This was the true wisdom of Nirvana, where all flames of greed, of anger and ignorance have been extinguished. And here all the poisoning impurities can be let go off, then we can know the mind is something no one can speak off or no one can hold on to. That mind is just like mirror. A flower comes into a mirror only a mirror reflected. A sad person comes into a mirror it only reflects a sad person. This is without anything added at all. But only can this be done with perfect clarity.

"I have the true Dharma eye, the marvelous mind of Nirvana, the true form of the formless, and the subtle Dharma gate, independent of words and transmitted beyond doctrine, this I have entrusted to Mahakashyapa". Nothing to be given, nothing to be taught, nothing to be spoken. Only mind to mind transmission. Not something that Kasho Sonja is missing and therefore must be given, only then to become the One matching state of mind. To not go against it. To not regret our behavior, this won't

work in this case, this is not possible, in this way he is teaching Ojogen clearly. If we realize directly Joshu's MU, that true state of mind of the ancients is what we dive right into. We only generally live in a world of mental thinking, of dualistic perception, but on our deepest experience we have a much wider world that doesn't suffocate us. Like someone who is looking at the sky through a hole in a straw. Stop that narrow view, and see our original's mind true nature. Let go of all those gathered mental ideas, conditioning, and attachments. The Mu koan is for doing this. To let go of everything. That is why everyone gets nervous when doing this koan, because they see everything go from under them. And we let it all go. In all 24 hours of the day, to let go of all our previous history, our attachments, until there is no more being deceived by any phenomena and here we can see there is no difference between inside and outside. This is what zazen is, the state of mind of no self, no heavens and earth. This is our true source but we cannot stop there. We have to experience the rebirth of that revitalized state of mind, where it becomes one with heavens and earth. Only then can we really function. That Mu is pierced through completely and we pass through all the gates of the ancients. If our mind is truly open, then as it is said in the Mummonkan: "Suddenly you break through the barrier, you will astonish heaven and shake the earth, you will walk hand in hand with the buddhas and the patriarchs spending your days together in the Samadhi of profound and mysterious play". This is our true home and this is how master Daie teaches us.

Next he puts it in a different way to Kyonin, through his younger brother. They are both involved in political work. Kyonin says many conceptual and intellectual things, he asks him to not put his training aside. He heard that he had been copying his letters. In China and Japan there were particular politicians that once they received a high rank name, that high rank name could not be spoken. He referred to him in this way: It is as rare as the flowering of the udambara flower. The udambara flower is rare because it only blooms every 3000 years, such a beautiful flower. And it takes the same span for a Buddha to appear, 3000 years. While hearing this we can't become conceited from having some special rank or money and forgetting everyone from before. But Kyonin has not forgotten, he has continued to keep his deep vow to breakthrough no matter what. And this can be seen because you are copying your letters from me for other people, showing that your vow is still deeply intact. Next he takes a different angle: The politics were always in chaos in this era in China. Master Daie had been called on to be present for certain trials. He said: when he had first seen him in person he had been impressed on how deeply unmoved and settled he was. With his eyes right set on the truth, not on external ideas or details. "I saw this inner depth and truth for myself". Now what is most important and the only thing that is left is for you to thoroughly complete this one last slash. He praises him and tells him that the time has come now to resolve it.

Now he brings in dualistic words to express about the ways of the world: Ideas of seeing things as bad as opposed to good, enlightened as opposed to deluded. As he

had brought in the words of Confucius. Here he is showing him the delusion of the dualism of this world. But if we crush the ego then we simply see. Without any judgement or differentiation. A flower is a flower, a river is a river, a bird is a bird. Things are exactly as they are, not smooshed together into oneness by some great bulldozer. We may have given things ranks but to let those go. When emperor Wu was visited by Bodhidharma he asked him: What is the highest truth? and he answered: Nothing holy only emptiness. Telling him there is nothing in the world to be considered holy. Emperor Wu was a brilliant scholar so; Does that mean that we can do anything if there is no highest truth? No, still there is clearly a good and a bad but not the poisonous dualism arising from judging from one's own mind's preferences. As it is said in the Zen words: We have the most excellent flavor of the distilled ghee, and we also have the general flavors. It can be easy to know which is which, and yet they are all flavors. and each and every one of those flavors is important. Or putting all the iron pots and pans into the fire, all of those various shapes, and forms, they all melt into a One single metal iron. Like our eyes seeing oneness clearly. And not something outside of us, but if we are still slaves to our ego, then we will be pushed and pulled around by the external differences. We will not suddenly be handed this excellent, special wisdom. We all already have it within us. It tells us clearly in the Heart Sutra: to kill and to give life, to be able to make gold into rubble and rubble into gold. If we realize this Prajna wisdom then a huge, unfathomable Prajna wisdom will begin to work and illuminate all the Heavens and Earth. Isn't this what is most important and the most beautiful thing in the whole world? Whether there is a heaven or a hell that is decided by whether there is an ego or not. We are all one and the same great mind. And there is no darkness within this great mind. We are all one and the same and this mind is within each of us.

In this way he speaks to Kyonin's brother in order to reach him: We can't waste our time, we must realize this huge excellent state of mind and not be moved around by anything that comes along.

Day 6

When the one thick layer of dualistic mental ideas is gone we come to know this great awakening and see all things as equal. Like all the pots and pans, returning to molten iron when melted. Mumon Ekai said that from morning until night and from night until morning, throughout all 24 hours of the day to practice until we can come to know this place where there is no more attachments, and conditioned thinking anymore. Until we know we have broken the barrier, and then: "Suddenly you break through the barrier, you will astonish heaven and shake the earth, you will walk hand in hand with the Buddhas and the Patriarchs spending your days together in the Samadhi of profound and mysterious play ". In this way Daruma Daishi says that we have to let go of everything external and hold no concerns within, then our mind becomes like a firm tall wall and we are one with the way. Only this one MU we have

to burn up everything completely. Melting it all into one. then we can't know if it is me or if it is Mu, all is clearly within this one state of mind, boundlessly. This is why we have zazen, but there we haven't yet encountered the true Master. We have seen the Unity but not yet the place that Mumon Ekai tells us, where: "you will walk hand in hand with the Buddhas and the Patriarchs spending your days together in the Samadhi of profound and mysterious play". That absolute equality of all things, that truth that illuminates everything in absolute confirmation is only in this way.

MU has to be this way too, following the orders of heaven and earth. If we fall into dualistic views we are crushed on the spot. Come to this place where we don't know who we are. It is not about being tied now to views of profit and merit, of good and bad. No matter where we find ourselves we are just not caught on anything. Even when exiled he never lost his responsibility for all people, never twisted within. He was never moved around by anything whatsoever, because he was living from the source, from his true Master within. He tells this to Ojogen about his elderly respected disciple. He tells him about this elderly disciple because he is already touching deeply that same path: " you have already reached that central core of not holding on to anything whatsoever, since that which touches that original nature is that core itself, that which is external and what is the core you can know the difference well. I can see it from when I saw you eyes. But you still have to cut the final cut it is not a matter of time, and is not faraway. If you realize that and your karmic affiliations ripen, then your joy surges forth of its own. Then socially, physically, and experientially, all things will fall away completely. And that wisdom will be clearly accessible. Not with some mental idea about it, this comes forth with this last, definite cut. And it is not so far away, and encourages him to not lax now. In our head it is not about all those past understandings, to be able to realize it once, then all the remaining things will fall way. To dive into this one truth is zazen. Not ego filled but with new born state of mind. A burst from the past comes through but we always stay in our fresh awareness. In this fresh awareness, clear mind is where we put our faith. If we put mental awareness into koans they bring forth the past. Koans increase the huge spaciousness of our inner wisdom, they don't bring an answer of mental consideration, or zen becomes only a mental quiz. It has to be deep faith that drives it and the koans become a key that opens it. We have a poem by Secho: Hearing, seeing, understanding, knowing, each of this is not something separate. For him, mountains and rivers do not appear in a mirror. When the frosty heaven's moon has set and midnight nears, whose shadow with mine will the cool pool reflect, so cold. Hearing, seeing, understanding, knowing, are not separate, only One whole with that Mu. This cannot be versions of a separate perception or they are only from this past collecting traces version.

That mind of all these hearing, seeing, understanding, and knowing is one great life energy. There is no need to be called One. Because it comes through our mouth it is called tasting, when it comes through our nose it is called smelling... From the origin

one bright ray of light, with no shadow. It is here where our focus is kept and then we come to know this place where hearing, seeing, understanding, and knowing are not separate, they are all one true source. Only that one true source exactly as it is. More and more we forget our thoughts and our body, the zendo, and it all gathers in one single point, all the heavens and earth are one awareness. Then, without even knowing it we are not aware of that focal point. We loose track of all those different senses, there is no more perception from a certain sense, no more heavens and earth. We see and feel the heavens and earth. Then we can see the body is not something which is individually existing. Each sound melts into that Mu. Each and everything melts into that Mu. All of that oneness is realized with the koans guidance until there is no more koans left. Until there is no more difference with the wisdom of the ancients. We all have this deep wisdom within. We cant stop until we realize this wisdom directly in every moment. It surges through our body and being. Even as we sleep we exhale that sound of Mu. Each koan ripens our experience until we realize this place where there is no separation between inside and outside. And this is the place where any and all koans come forth from. It is simple. Nothing separated to hear, touch, smell... We become the mountains and we soar, we become the rivers and we flow. We can not understand this in our brain. In every single case we must experience this. It is not important to pass many Koans, but to truly understand this state of mind, to truly die completely and taste this flavor directly. And then the wisdom of the ancients is revealed right there. Many different strata of wisdom opened by the koans key. Our mind opens further and further. Each koan widens our experience. Zazen is about opening our mind and it is an essential path for this. It is not about some spoken words, but it is about experiencing directly this clear mind, and this is what Master Daie is telling Ojogen.

There are many here who are young and this is almost better because you haven't been many years conditioned in the world. then we are freer of that kind of conditioned behavior. It is not so easy to let go of all those living patterns, that is why we have to drop deeply into that root. Into the Dojo' way of life. Even if you are dulaistic every day, to use all 24 hours of the day for letting go. As Secho says: hearing, seeing, understanding, and knowing, all of these are not separate. To see this and to live this experience and bring it all into oneness. We will all realize it because there is no one who is not endowed with this Buddha nature. it is a matter of which kind of awareness we are using. It is about how huge we are within, not a speck of anything in all the heavens and earth to be held on to. And then, it is as if a stamp is firmly imprinted in us deeply, and then even if we are in society we can continue to live deeply, even among the discursive ways. But for this we need deep experience even more, this firm stamping experience first. Until then we can't move around blindly, and once we have this stamping experience, then even in the world we cannot be deceived.

In this next section we will understand the relationship between Chinese politics and education of these times. To know the systems of that time is important, to understand the relationship between Confucius, Taoism and Buddhism. As we read before, Confucius taught that to follow the ways of heaven and earth was the way of the Buddha Dharma; And from there we would know what was good or bad or could value what was gain or what was loss. In Buddhism there is nothing to depend on, there is only buddha nature. We don't find the answers externally, we are all one true nature, and it does not vary and yet the teaching about it may vary according to different localities and countries. This is why while there is only one truth it is called the Dharma. In Buddhism, The different 5048 sutras are merely steps to guide us into true awakening. All words and phrases are used but they are not the awakening. In these days people are just gathering words and phrases with the internet and busy media, people being judged by their knowledge. Ojogen who was himself a brilliant genius that could simultaneously follow the words of the Buddha, could also easily get caught on this world of words and phrases.

At this time Master Daie has been exiled from the central area and also was living with all the 17,000 monks with great inconveniences in the mountains. A life with minimum supplies and yet he could chant and sit everyday. Here he writes back to Ojogen, he asks him not to worry about him: "my presence is not required for you". For his true path he must still have this deep faith to do that final slash and breakthrough completely. For this he compares it to an old Chinese legend: Everyone was saying what they needed the most. The first person said I need money; the second person said I want to become the major of Joshu; The third person said I want to ride a crane and become a magical hermit that flies in the sky (to live above the misery of all the world); and the last person said, I want a lot of money and then to ride the crane and then to become the major of Joshu. Master Daie says to not only have these 3 or 4 wishes, to have even more wishes if you breakthrough completely. Like this he urges Ojogen. For this there used to be another major politician named Dainen who followed Confucius. He felt he had no need to follow Buddhism, until one day he read the Diamond sutra and was astonished on how far deeper these words were than the words of Confucius and Taoism. He realized the preciousness of this depth. Also the disciple of Shuzan Seinen Zenji had continued to live from that deep state of mind, they had all learned how to be unmoved by great fame and knowledge, and not to be turned around by great wealth. They had seen there was nothing more precious than Buddha Nature. To this Master Daie said: "If we don't mistake what the path is and follow its clear revelation, we will make no mistake".

Master Joshu said: "All of you are used by the 24 hours of the day, but I use the 24 hours of the day. So where are we different? ". For Master Joshu, his true master within is different than for all the others. This the difference between living moved by the things of the world or living ruled by one's own true source. The path is to follow the order of heavens and earth: The way of how the 4 seasons are: flowers in the

Spring, cool breeze in the Summer, bright moon in the Autumn and clear snow in Winter. Or as Dogen Zenji says: "The sun rising in the East, the moon setting in the West the cock crows at dawn, and every four years there is a leap year". These are all the decided ways of heavens and earth, they are immutable. To follow these ways is to follow the path. Our deeply seeing eye that knows this, is the true path. And it is not to say that a separate path is not also a path. Scholars use words to describe the virtues, the way of being of a true person in Taoism: A daily life lived in deep mind but then thinking that you can learn this from deep study is a big mistake. Like with astrology or astronomy, studying things that are bigger than their own life and then thinking then, we will be able to understand .

Confucius said: "My path is taking one thing to its most final end". Yes, but so many rules are there, his students would ask, what does it mean?: To take one thing, to take the middle path and take it to its final way, and in integrity to live in empathy. This is the true way. We have the story of both Buddhism and Taoism: The story of the five blind men and the elephant. Each blind person was asked: what does the elephant look like? The first person touched an ear and said: An elephant is like a Fan, the next one touched the leg and said: an elephant is like a pillar, the next one touched the nose and said: an elephant is like a hose and the last one touched the tail and said: an elephant is like a broom. None of them are mistaken, but none of them had seen the whole thing. To only know a part of it is very different that knowing the whole thing. This is today's scholars dilemma. Master Daie says this to guide Ojogen.

Master Daie said that the Buddha also taught that taking thoughts and imagination, and thinking we can explain Buddha Nature is like trying to burn down Mount Sumeru with the light of a firefly. If we want to know what Buddha nature is like, we are trying to light this whole world with the light of a firefly. To let go of everything totally and completely is what Master Daie is saying here.

Our training cannot be done mentally, that is most foolish. We have the example of Kyogen Zenji who was awakened by the sound of the tile hitting the bamboo. A monk asked him: In your awakening what did you find out to be the path? He answered: it is the sound of moaning of a cracked dried up old tree. Then he asked him: What is the person who follows the path? to this Kyogen replied: it is looking out at the dried up skull's eye balls. We can't know things by mental ideas and ego. What is the path, what is the path of heavens and earth that all people can follow? In the dried woods without a single leaf left an old tree in the winter moaning in the wind, a branch giving out a moaning sound. This is the path. And what is one who follows this path? What is this but a skeleton which has eye balls. Of course a skeleton has eye holes, so then how can they see from them? this is how he answered. The monk went to Master Kyogen and had a hard time understanding so he went and asked Master Sozan the same question and got the same answer. He also said: The meaning of the dried tree moaning, is that there is blood still circulating there and if the eye balls are still seeing,

the skull is not completely dried out yet. There is a shimmer of being alive remaining, Finally this monk asked straight out: Who hears this tree's moaning? He answered there is not one who doesn't hear it. The single sound of Hakuin, Joshu's Mu, and all things are always hearing it. The mountain hears it and soars high, the rivers hear it and flow wide, all the 10,000 things hear it and exist. What is that skull? he then asked him. Sozan answers: I don't know, but everyone who hears it dies, everyone who hears it dies with the great death hearing it. Master Sozan then gives a poem to go with this: "The sound of the dried tree, the person of the path, the eye in the skull, the path, all beings, people, plants, existences, all together in one great path and what is that? The sound of the dried tree, everyone dying completely. The eye in the skull seeing, everyone dying completely." And there coming forth, from that complete dying, a fresh new awareness, that place of no self whatsoever. From there our eyes open and there is no ego, there is no discrimination or dualism possible.

The eyes and ears of a new awareness and the great joy pours forth eternally, not a small personal joy but a joy of all life energy. This joy is beyond dualism and all discrimination, all ranks and differences and with that comes this deeply seeing eye which is not possibly deceived. This is the true person. In the world of dualism and discrimination we suffer because we don't die completely. We have to realize that and be able to see this rebirth, the true path of the heavens and earth. The point is to be able to realize this. To die completely and realize this new awareness. It is not a concept in our heads. Everyone who has walked this path together, our friends of the same realization: Master Kyogen, Master Sekiso, Master Sozan, Master Joshu, all share one and the same deep experience. Open the path for all beings, no matter how much knowledge we pile up in our heads, there is no true possible function there, only when we die completely can we see beyond all of this. And if not we will all get caught at the final gate. this is how Master Daie teaches us.