

Osesshin from 8th until 14th of January. The teisho text is DaiE no Sho - Letters by DaiE Zenji. Letters to Onaikan.

## DAY 1

Onaikan`s fifth child became sick and died. He writes about his sorrow of this to master DaiE. Who then answers him: I have carefully read your letter about your child`s death. Here master DaiE uses the most subtle, high quality language, truly a language of deep mind, giving his condolences: the care of a father for his child is greater than for his own welfare. And indeed, how deep is this feeling beyond any dualism and concepts. As long as we have life energy, the parent and child respect each other most highly. Our blood relationship is involved here. It is not something intellectual or shallow. But this state of mind of losing a child – this child`s life has stopped to continue. This deep caring happened because there was life energy, which is now cut. One punctuation of death stops this. Because there was a living child, so this moment is deeply felt. Because you both lived in the same world, this deep pain occurs in such a profound way. In this way master DaiE consoles his disciple as well as tells him to not miss the opportunity to resolve this deep matter for himself.

Russel Schweickhart went up in Apollo 9, practicing for the moon landing, so they did not have so much fuel on board since they were just going up and back. They went up with the mission of practicing how to go in and out of the ship. That was the very job of Russel Schweickhart. He actually had to walk out of the ship with a long line on him, and this particular experiment was broadcast by Nasa. If the line connecting him to the ship were broken, he would have gone flying off into the universe. The ship was traveling at a tremendous speed as he was stepping outside, yet the camera that was recording that test was stuck, so the crew told him to wait a few minutes while they repaired the camera. There he was, outside of the ship, in space, alone, with nothing to do. It was totally dark, no sound, no weight whatsoever. But because he had no weight, he could not even feel the high speed. There was no sense of up or down, it was all irrelevant. Inside they were working fast on getting that camera going again. And suddenly he didn't think about this anymore either. He was just completely alone. He thought to himself: why am I here? Until now it has always been about external things, about external work. What am I doing here? It is not because of my great abilities, there are others with even greater skills. Was I chosen by God for this? But I hardly ever go to church – it couldn't be that. What am I doing here? About 5 minutes and he condensed it all into a profound deep state of mind. The ship was rotating the whole time. At this very instant, when this question came up he looked below, and a huge blue earth was revealed just below his feet. And he knew: I am that earth. When he got back to earth he told everyone, that home was the earth. It was a different kind of knowing. You have to have this kind of deep knowing to know the truth. He had a deep, real awareness. As he flew by, he went over the country that worships Buddha, that worships Mohammed or Christ – all countries on this small blue ball, the earth, which rotates in just 5 minutes before his eyes. In this moment he saw it as an actuality that we are all one on this planet.

Here while we sit and sleep and walk, we have to continue this mu. But our emotions are not that simple. We have that deep emotion of a parent who loves his child, and the child who loves his parents. It is said that the moment of realization is like a splash of cold water, you suddenly get it. Wisdom comes in that sudden way. Yet emotions are not like this. They are likened to cutting a lotus root that even when cut still pulls along thin threads. But we can't see clearly from our ego that is ruled by

those emotions. We have to go beyond human concepts and ideas, and that is why we need to continue that MU. To realize that place where all concepts and ideas fall away completely, this is what is most important.

## DAY 2

To see if we have really felt this sadness or not. In the temple of Master Hakuin there lived an old lady nicknamed Osatsu. She was not always an old lady. When young she had a deep breakthrough experience and then ripened it for years under the teaching on Master Hakuin. She trained with Master Hakuin but was always helping out to clarify the confusion of all the monks. One day Old Lady Osatsu's daughter died and she cried and wailed, and was in great pain and suffering. People nearby said: "You have been training with Master Hakuin for such a long time! Haven't you gone beyond life and death after all that training?" She answered: "You idiots! You do not understand at all or all these offerings that are coming! My tears for her are her true offering! Can't you understand?"

She was crying and crying yet not moved around by it at all. This was her offering to her daughter. She knew it! She knew that at some time, they would see, eventually they would get it: Where was this sadness born forth from? As Master DaiE said to his student who had lost his child: "See truly where is this sadness coming from." At this time as it was said, the monks, the people of training, they cut all the weeds to be able to understand: what is that deepest nature of the true person. What is that suffering mind. To see it clearly. When the light falls off from our eyes and we die, then where do we go. These are the deep true koans for each and every human being. From where does our hurting and our suffering come from: are they real? Are they dreams? Are they actually happening to us? Look at where each mind moment comes forth from. If we focused well upon this, then we have to look directly to what is it that hurts, what is it that is suffering and dig deeper into that state of mind in every mind moment. Not letting go of that sadness and not be pulled around by it. We have to feel the heavens and earth with this sadness, not conceptualize it. To realize this life energy totally.

In the Blue Cliff records it is written about this monk called Zenge. He went with his Master to a funeral and wanted to know: where do you go when you die and what is it that is alive. He struggled with this question. Upon the arrival to the funeral, Zenge tapped the coffin and asked his Master: "Is this person alive? or is this person dead?" This question was not without essence. He truly wanted an answer. His teacher said: "I won't say I won't say!" Even being at a funeral, he answered like this. The eye of zen has to function this way. The monk asked again the same question.

Is this person alive or is this person dead, which came from his need to know what is it that is hearing! People who are alive are nervous about death, the people are filled with insecurity about life after death, even when they are alive right now.

Master Dogo gave Zenge the same answer. He said: "Why won't you say? If you don't tell me the answer, I will hit you". And the master replied: "Even if you hit me I

won't say, I won't say!" He hit his teacher. "Hitting is not a problem for me, run away if you want", and the monk left.

Time went by, Master Dogo died and the head monk Sekiso became his successor. Zenge came back to apologize and heard of his teacher's death. Sekiso remembered him. And Zenge asked: "If I were to ask you the same question right now, what would your answer be?" – "I won't say. I won't say!" and at that very moment he was deeply awakened. Sekiso asked further about his state of mind, Zenge replied: "It has become completely revealed and clear. When I hit my teacher, I was in a very dark place but now everything is clear." Sekiso confirmed his deep awakening.

We must wake up to this truth, we are not the slaves of our concepts. To live and to live completely. To die and to die completely. and in Zen the clear eye needs to be awakened and then we are no longer moved around by things.

Suffering is our mind being divided, are we dividing life and death? Are we dividing good and evil? But, is it a dream or is it real? We have to keep that Mu going. Sitting is that Mu, standing is that Mu, waking is that Mu, seeing is that Mu, hearing is that Mu, coming is that Mu, going is that Mu...and not divide the mind at all, only that one Mu with everything thrown into it. Or it is all about someone else over there, faraway. Zen is not saying to not be sad, to not be sorrowful but that we should do it and be it completely. To grieve and grieve and grieve, to think about that totally and not do it half way. If we do it half way that is the source of the confusion. Be totally sad. There is a sarcastic poem that goes: "A child crying with deep sadness for his parent's death, grabbing for the larger share of the inheritance". To grieve down to our deepest collective unconscious level, we can't sit shallow either. It has to be truly profound sitting, throwing everything completely into this Mu. If we have this deep state of mind, then it is like the ice melting and returning to water naturally. We have the words of the 24th patriarch: "Mind transforms with the circumstances, its way is miraculous subtle, if you follow its flow and can perceive its nature there is no more attachment to joy and sorrow". But it has to be wholehearted and sincere or it is shallow. Dig and dig into that pain and grief, dig to its deep source. If you touch that source directly, it is as if the ice melts, naturally returning to water and we know this source. And if not digging like that, it is because we are doing it in a half baked way. It is not that we can't be sad or confused. It is that we can't do it halfway.

Superficial Zen that is shallow and not profound is useless. Whatever we do in life, all of it, do it by throwing ourselves completely and totally into it, and then you will experience without fail your true life energy in the doing of it - that way regardless of what it is. It is not about looking smart to be clever, but that is not the point and that is not the true way of living a life of Zen.

When a parent sends off their child, when a child send off their parent, the mind is not quiet and peaceful, or at rest. There is truly deep pain and great sadness. But what is it that is sad, what is it that hurts, what is it that is feeling this. Repressing our emotions when we are sad and not experiencing our sadness completely, saying that it is not right to give in to our feelings, this is not zen.

## Day 3

We all have bodies and with those there are emotions, there is judging, there is dualistic perception - with this we live everyday, but eventually it dies. Then our understanding, judgments and dualist thinking also don't work anymore. In the everyday world we judge, we think; we ponder this is the world of Dharma but it is not the Buddha Dharma.

The Buddha said that in his eighties life became very difficult for him. "Ananda, I am now becoming like a car that is breaking down, the car is no longer working, I will have to leave this car behind soon". And Ananda was so upset and concerned he said: "But how are we all going to be taken care of? All this time you have taught us correctly and precisely. Every single day for every single problem. So how should we live?" To this the famous words of the Buddha were given to Ananda: "Look to yourself, take refuge on yourself, look to the Dharma, take refuge in the Dharma. Do not look externally, do not take refuge in others." He was saying clearly to not look at others. You can't ignore the world of actuality. Your eyes see, your ears hear, your nose smells... look at this well and take refuge in yourself. Look to the Dharma and take refuge in the Dharma. Do not look externally; do not take refuge in others. Just study and see this external world and take refuge in the Dharma. Here he named the truth precise and clear: "There is no Buddha Dharma separate from your emotions and body, but this external world is not the truth. This sounds contradictory but it is not: anger, greed and ignorance are not the truth. While living among the things of this world to see: what is it that is getting angry, what is it that is greedy, what is it that is ignorant. It won't be useful to be dragged around by profit and loss. You cannot ignore these things but you have to see clearly their source in order to not be pulled around by them. But to be one who can guide others in a world like this. But is what this true source? Picking the weeds, searching through the grasses, the one in training is doing this with the singular purpose of encountering their true nature. So how have you seen this true nature? This is what is asked here. If all of your senses and every bit of you knows how everything works, and where everything comes from is clear to you, then you know you will die. And that which is born without fail will always die. But if you have gone beyond birth and death then where will you go when you die? What is your true nature? You know clearly where you will go when you die? If you know this true place well, then living in a world of economics, politics and other practical things, you will not be fooled by anything. Have you realized this directly?

Master Hyakujo taught the Dharma to many people of training. Master Hyakujo could see in the lecture hall that there was one person that always came late and would leave before everyone. One day this person stayed and the Master asked: "Where are you from?" He replied: "Actually, I am not a human being. I was a teacher just like you and one day a monk asked if someone deeply awakened, as I was, could they also

fall in the effects of cause and effect."How do we get through this matters? Like the results of the earthquakes? Tasting, touching, seeing is only MU. Are you not touched by all this changes that happen in the world? All of the dualism of the world is irrelevant. So this old Master answered: "Not affected by them". And immediately he became a fox. And rebirth after rebirth as a fox, he begged Master Hyakujo to answer him: "Please tell me where was I mistaken?" If people of training are not careful they will be taken to a quiet, perfect place and even if still passionate in training, they don't advance. They are still caught in an idea of Heaven and Hell. These ideas are a great sickness for people of training and are a great misunderstanding for the rest of the world: Like being afraid if a fortune teller says something difficult to you,

We are actually heading for nothing like that. The old teacher has lived as a fox for 500 years. And Master Hyakujo said: "Ask me again that question: Is a person of deep awakening affected by cause and effect?" He answered: "He does not deceive cause and effect. He does not ignore it." And with that sentence the Master was liberated from this foxbody. And a funeral was made. It was not these words that liberated the Old Master from the Fox body. Can you live without eating or sleeping? are you affected by the earthquakes? No matter what comes along, what deep crisis, we do not get pulled around by it and hide in a quiet place. There are 7 billion people on this earth. We jump to what is best for all people. So it was the confusion in Old Master Hyakujo's divided mind that was suddenly unified with his present understanding; and from there a new true way of living appeared.

Be firm in our true inner master. Do not be afraid to jump into any and all experiences, this is satori. Throw yourself to each world that comes around, not trying to protect it with a quiet, peaceful state of mind. Everything that comes along - we meet it with courage, trust, and faith. The Dharma of the world is the Buddha Dharma, it lives right in the middle of everything that happens in society. We cannot look for this conceptually or in zazen. We must do zazen that is full of ki energy and burning hot and only in this way can we reinvigorate our state of mind directly.

Master Daie writes about losing a child, and that great sadness it brings. That knowing that being born means we will all eventually die. We live knowing this: Our families, our home, clothes all the many things that are our lives, we must leave behind. As the Buddha writes "This object that we call our body : it needs to eat, to have shelter and we need to gather many things for this to be alive, but we gather more than is necessary, and so we suffer. We lose things and we get insecure and we get more miserable the more things we own. And with this body we have to separate from the ones we love. We get and get and get and we still want more and we are never satisfied. We have to live and sometimes we have to spend so much time near people we can't even stand. And because we have a body we have more painful places as we get older. As the Buddha said: "no matter what a great awakening we have, we

still experience suffering", "I am eighty years old its taking me everything to keep this body going, now I am about to be liberated form all of that suffering of this painful, old body". "If you are sad that this is happening to me, then that is for yourself that you are upset". Don't cry, look well at the actuality of your own life. What is it that is suffering through your weeping and crying, what is the deep source of that misery".

This is a hard place to settle in to. Even though we know we need these things to live, we always gather too many and we suffer from that, but it is not only that. We will have to return this body but this body, changes in every instant. Its true nature is actually not physical. What is it that received this body, that is the true master and it has no form. We receive this body and as long as it is existing we use it and then we return it and then where do we go? Nowhere. Right here, we are simply the universe who received this body, used it and then returned it. And we return into being the eternal boundless universe, coming together with this form and then again, that form is lost. To see this clearly and directly, of course we are sad if we loose a friend or a parent or a child. We are naturally sad, to declare that we should not be sad because it is weak is totally not the point. It is like a reflection in the mirror that fades and leaves no remnant whatsoever, this is our truth. So when we are sad we should be totally sad, completely giving everything to our sadness, not leaving behind anything. And that, leaving behind stuff is what confuses us. To see that way of things cycling clearly. This is the Buddha Dharma. If we hold on to unnecessary thinking we create useless stuck places. We know with our body that it is impossible to know where have we gone, the present is moving, the future has not come yet. Everything is in flux. Like wind on waves, making those waves always change their form. And we can't get upset at those waves for always changing their form, they are only in flux because they are phenomena and affected by that wind. We are talking about the ego idea which gathers things and external knowledge.

From the origin, we don't come with that. A baby doesn't come to this world thinking of all sorts of ideas and worries, but we eventually gather the awareness of an I, of an ego version. And because we gather things and ideas an ego, we suffer more and more. But if we use it and not get used by it. And because we think we are that ego, then that is who we are. That is fine if we use that way of looking at things to evolve, improve and develop ourselves, perhaps. But more importantly we have to realize our true nature prior to that ego, our actual origin. And this is how we are. A baby is always showing us our true form, we think we are so clever but that is only from gathered ideas we adopted. We have to see the source of that directly. We gather our state of mind by focusing on zazen, that is creating the type of life we would like to have, but that can even bring a greater imbalance. If we don't get stuck in our mind then that is fine from the beginning, but we get caught on that small self idea of who we think we are. We always want to get the best part of every situation and in order to let go of that we have to throw it all away completely.

As the Sixth Patriarch says: To not add on any thoughts to what we perceive and to not add any thought or concerns to what we are experiencing within. It doesn't matter what thought comes along, we don't give it any extra attention. For this we have the koans, yet neither of them are absolute. Whatever the practice is, is about not giving it any gaps. That is where the ego comes in, pokes through. To not cut the flow, to not interrupt its natural flux.

You are already thinking "It's already Day 4 and I can't do this..." You would never doubt yourself if you don't interrupt the flux. But if we "try" to be quiet then it is like putting oil on flames, and the flames just go higher. Do not put in gaps: that's it. Babies don't think, but once we get the habit of thinking all the time, we get stuck on it. We think we have to think all the time and that is not the case, but our habits are strong. We just have to get rid of that habit. We get tired and thoughts come pouring in. It is as if we have to keep our efforts going without any idea to what will come out of it. And then, no matter what anyone says to us, we don't let go of our focused attention. Do not think if it is good or is it bad, if I loose this, then what will happen... Just do it with complete perseverance, just do it until we die totally and completely to everything. And for doing this, we can't let go of our focus.

It cannot be done conceptually either, we have to see our every day state of mind clearly, and honestly. Where our breath is in each footstep and each hand motion. To not be pulled around by anything that happens around us, we put our awareness in our lower abdomen and we don't think about anything else. Becoming the sussokan, becoming the koan completely, do not try to understand it or it will get complex. Continue this way from morning until night, from night until morning we continue with this focus. we become a deep essence within. giving our total focus to each and every moment. sitting, working, walking we become that Mu. we receive sadness and we become that sadness completely, becoming that pain completely. As Master Rinzai said: "if In every single moment we do not add any second thought or associations to what we perceive, then this is worth more in our practice, than 10 years of pilgrimage. Just as you hear it, leave it at that. just as yo taste it, leave it at that, just as you smell it, leave it at that. Do not add on anything to it. Leave it as it is. with nothing else added. and then you will see that the seeing, the hearing the suffering, as it is, is Buddha Nature. The pain just as it is is Buddha nature. Everything is an activity of Buddha nature, all that happens within is also Buddha Nature. But we spend too much time inventing things within. Like angry demons or hell realms. We don't need to drag all these things around. Just as it comes up, cut it. Cut until there is nothing left to cut. Until we don't know what is going on. We don't know where we are or who we are. Just do it like this. Do not add anything extra to what we perceive. Deciding, liking, wanting something, everything is Buddha nature if you can just leave it at that.

The real nature of ignorance is buddha nature, The illusory empty body is the Dharma Body. We pull things along and that is why we become confused and upset, we feel restricted, our legs hurt. We just have to leave it as it is. Not make anything extra of it. Just give it your all totally and completely until we don't know who we are, becoming, dying completely into that Mu. If we are really absorbed like that, then the stamp of this experience is impressed into us. This is why this experience is so important for, it is indeleibly impressed. And from this we know it as truth. There is no deceiving of one's own experience of this. That stamp of no self and no other, of no heaven and no hell. But we let go of our focus mid-way. Master Daie is saying that he himself knows this and has total faith and trust in the way of doing this. But if we choose to stay moved around by the world outside; then Master Hakuin says: "For someone who has no karmic affiliation with this, there is no way to liberate them". Everyone is sitting in one straight line, it is only the ego that makes it half baked. As the Sixth Patriarch said: From the Origin there is not one single thing. There is really nothing to hold on to but even thinking about that is a mistake. When doing it, we have to do it totally and completely.

Master Daie says of how clearly seeing KaUnshi experience is, prior to your words there is already a well realized truth here. All the Sutras left by the Buddha, they are not the experience of the Buddha, they are not Buddha's deepest mind essence. We can read and study without experiencing it, and it is only reading and often misunderstanding of his words. This happens in any era. It is not about comparing the various Sutras, and discussing which interpretation is more accurate. It is not about going for the leaves and the branches, it is about going straight for the root and dying completely. Any mental interpretation is mistaken, if looked from the experience of the realization. You say you want to express your state of mind to me, but as you take your brush and paper to write the letter, you have already seen what you want to say.

Buddha was awakened in 52 different levels, the first of these states is clearly seeing. From the place of deep mind, the source behind words and adjectives can be seen, there is no need to meet you on how you say it to me.

First there is the place mind to mind transmission, if one's basic truth is the same to another's basic truth then we can see the source of the state of mind that is manifested. And from what state of mind they are coming forth, we don't need an explanation from them. But for someone who has not had this experience, even to say it to them would have no meaning, they would not understand this.

Master Daie says as one of deep rebirth we know there are difficult things concealed and how everyone is struggling for success and power. But to put that aside and keep the bigger picture in mind, one that is deeply awakened will not be moved around by any of this. The way the things work in this world you know well by being in the middle of the political hub, but to not be moved around or upset by anything that



comes to you. To use this, he urges him to to go to an even higher quality of state of mind.