『Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind』 Shunryu Suzuki（鈴木俊隆）●９月１３日。

◎第１６章　Mistakes in Practice

There are several poor ways of practice that you should p71-①

understand. Usually when you practice zazen, you become ②

very idealistic, and you set up an ideal or goal which you 　　　　③

strive to attain and fulfill. But as I have often said, this is 　　 ④

absurd. When you are idealistic, you have some gaining idea 　 ⑤

within yourself ; by the time you attain your ideal or goal, 　 p71-⑥

your gaining idea will create another ideal. /// So as long as 　⑦

your practice is based on a gaining idea, and you practice 　　 ⑧

zazen in an idealistic way, you will have no time actually to 　 ⑨

attain your ideal. Moreover, you will be sacrificing the meat 　 ⑩

of your practice. Because your attainment is always ahead,　p71-⑪

you will always be sacrificing yourself now for some ideal in p72-①

the future. You end up with nothing. This is absurd; it is not ②

adequate practice at all. But even worse than this idealistic 　　③

attitude is to practice zazen in competition with someone 　　　　　④

else. This is a poor, kind of practice.　　　　　　　　　　　p72-⑤

Our Soto way puts an emphasis on shikan taza, or “just 　　　⑥

sitting.” Actually we do not have any particular name for 　　　⑦

our practice; when we practice zazen we just practice it, 　　　　　⑧

and whether we find joy in our practice or not, we just do 　　　　⑨

it. Even though we are sleepy, and we are tired of practicing 　⑩

zazen, of repeating the same thing day after day; even so, we 　　⑪

continue our practice. Whether or not someone encourages 　　⑫

our practice, we just do it.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　p72-⑬

Even when you practice zazen alone, without a teacher, 　　　　⑭

I think you will find some way to tell whether your practice 　　　⑮

is adequate or not. When you are tired of sitting, or when　 　　⑯

you are disgusted with your practice, you should recognize ⑰

this as a warning signal. You become discouraged with your 　⑱

practice when your practice has been idealistic. You have ⑲

some gaining idea in your practice, and it is not pure 　　 p72-⑳

enough. /// It is when your practice is rather greedy that you 　㉑

become discouraged with it. So you should be grateful that ㉒

you have a sign or warning signal to show you the weak 　 　㉓

point in your practice. At that time, forgetting all about 　 　㉔

your mistake and renewing your way, you can resume your 　㉕

original practice. This is a very important point. p72-㉖

So as long as you continue your practice, you are quite 　 　㉗

safe, but as it is very difficult to continue, you must find 　　 　㉘

some way to encourage yourself. /// As it is hard to encourage　㉙

yourself without becoming involved in some poor kind of 　　p72-㉚

practice, to continue our pure practice by yourself may be　　　　㉛

rather difficult. This is why we have a teacher. With your 　㉜

teacher you will correct your practice. Of course you will 　　　㉝

have a very hard time with him, but even so, you will always 　㉞

be safe from wrong practice.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　p72-㉟

Most Zen Buddhist priests have had a difficult time with 　　　㊱

their masters. When they talk about the difficulties, you p72-㊲

may think that without this kind of hardship you cannot p73-①

practice zazen. But this is not true. Whether you have 　　②

difficulties in your practice or not, as long as you continue it, 　③

you have pure practice in its true sense. Even when you are 　④

not aware of it, you have it. So Dogen-zenji said, “Do not 　　　⑤

think you will necessarily be aware of your own enlightenment.”　⑥

Whether or not you are aware of it, you have your 　　　 ⑦

own true enlightenment within your practice.　　　　　　　　　　p73-⑧

Another mistake will be to practice for the sake of the joy 　　⑨

you find in it. Actually, when your practice is involved in a 　　⑩

feeling of joy, it is not in very good shape either. Of course 　　⑪

this is not poor practice, but compared to the true practice 　　　⑫

it is not so good. In Hinayana Buddhism, practice is classified　⑬

in four ways. The best way is just to do it without having any 　⑭

joy in it, not even spiritual joy. This way is just to do it, forgetting⑮

your physical and mental feeling, forgetting all about 　　　　　p73-⑯

yourself in your practice. This is the fourth stage, or the 　　　　　⑰

highest stage. /// The next highest stage is to have just physical ⑱

joy in your practice. At this stage you find some pleasure in 　　⑲

practice, and you will practice because of the pleasure you 　　　　⑳

find in it. In the second stage you have both mental and physical ㉑

joy, or good feeling. These two middle stages are stages 　　p73-㉒

in which you practice zazen because you feel good in your 　　　　　㉓

practice. The first stage is when you have no thinking and no 　㉔

curiosity in your practice. These four stages also apply to 　　　　㉕

our Mahayana practice, and the highest is just to practice it.　　　㉖

If you find some difficulty in your practice, that is the 　　　p73-㉗

warning that you have some wrong idea, so you have to be 　　　　㉘

careful. But do not give up your practice ; continue it, 　　　　　　㉙

knowing your weakness. Here there is no gaining idea. Here 　㉚

there is no fixed idea of attainment. You do not say, “This is 　　㉛

enlightenment,” or “That is not right practice.” Even in 　　　p73-㉜

wrong practice, when you realize it and continue, there is 　　　　㉝

right practice. Our practice cannot be perfect, but without 　　㉞

being discouraged by this, we should continue it. This is the　　　㉟

secret of practice.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　p73-㊱

And if you want to find some encouragement in your 　　　　　　㊲

discouragement, getting tired of practice is itself the 　　　　　　p74-①

encouragement. You encourage yourself when you get tired of it.②

When you do not want to do it, that is the warning signal. It ③

is like having a toothache when your teeth are not so good. 　　　　④

When you feel some pain in your teeth, you go to the 　　　　　　　　⑤

dentist. That is our way.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　p74-⑥

The cause of conflict is some fixed idea or one-sided idea. 　　　⑦

When everyone knows the value of pure practice, we will 　　　　⑧

have little conflict in our world. This is the secret of our 　　　　⑨

practice and Dogen-zenji's way. Dogen repeats this point in 　　⑩

his book Shobogenzo (A Treasury of the True Dharma).　　　　p74-⑪

If you understand the cause of conflict as some fixed or 　　　　　⑫

one-sided idea, you can find meaning in various practices 　　　　⑬

without being caught by any of them. If you do not realize 　　⑭

this point you will be easily caught by some particular way, 　　⑮

and you will say, “This is enlightenment! This is perfect 　　　⑯

practice. This is our way. The rest of the ways are not perfect.⑰

This is the best way.” This is a big mistake. /// There is no p74-⑱

particular way in true practice. You should find your own 　　　⑲

way, and you should know what kind of practice you have 　　　⑳

right now. Knowing both the advantages and disadvantages 　㉑

of some special practice, you can practice that special way 　　　㉒

without danger. But if you have a one-sided attitude, you 　　㉓

will ignore the disadvantage of the practice, emphasizing 　　　㉔

only its good part. Eventually you will discover the worst 　　㉕

side of the practice, and become discouraged when it is too 　　㉖

late. This is silly. We should be grateful that the ancient 　㉗

teachers point out this mistake.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　p74-㉘