

Shobogenzo Introductory Study

Compiled by Taizen Verkuilen

Using the Translation by Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross

*“The discriminating mind is a dancer and a magician
with the objective world as his stage.
Intuitive-mind is the wise jester who travels with the magician,
and reflects upon his emptiness and transiency.”*
Shakyamuni Buddha in the Lankavatara Sutra

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Preface

By Gudo Wafu Nishijima Tokyo 1994

Shobogenzo was written by Master Dōgen in the thirteenth century. I think that reading Shobogenzo is the best way to come to an exact understanding of Buddhist theory, because Master Dōgen was outstanding in his ability to understand and explain Buddhism rationally.

Of course, Master Dōgen did not depart from traditional Buddhist thought. But at the same time, his thought as expressed in Shobogenzo follows his own unique method of presentation. If we understand what this method is, Shobogenzo is not so difficult to read. But unless we understand his method of thinking, it is completely impossible for us to understand what Master Dōgen is trying to say in Shobogenzo.

Buddhists revere Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Buddha means Gautama Buddha. Sangha means those people who pursue Gautama Buddha's truth. Dharma means reality. Master Dōgen's unique method of thought is his way to explain what Dharma is.

Basically, he looks at a problem from two sides, and then tries to synthesize the two viewpoints into a middle way. This method has similarities with dialectic method in western philosophy, particularly as used by Hegel and Marx.

Hegel's dialectic, however, is based on belief in spirit, and Marx's dialectic is based on belief in matter. Master Dōgen, through the Buddhist dialectic, wants to lead us away from thoughts based on belief in spirit and matter. Master Dōgen recognized the existence of something which is different from thought; that is, reality in action.

Action is completely different from intellectual thought and completely different from the perceptions of our senses. So, Master Dōgen's method of thinking is based on action, and because of that, it has some unique characteristics.

First, Master Dōgen recognized that things we usually separate in our mind are, in action, one reality. To express this oneness of subject and object. Master Dōgen says, for example, "If a human being, even for a single moment, manifests the Buddha's posture in the three forms of conduct, while [that person] sits straight in samadhi, the entire world of Dharma assumes the Buddha's posture and the whole of space becomes the state of realization." This sentence, taken from the Chapter Bendowa, is not illogical, but it reflects a new kind of logic.

Secondly, Master Dōgen recognized that in action, the only time that really exists is the moment of the present, and the only place that really exists is this place. So, the present moment and this place – the here and now – are very important concepts in Master Dōgen's philosophy of action.

The philosophy of action is not unique to Master Dōgen; this idea was also the center of Gautama Buddha's thought. All the Buddhist patriarchs of ancient India and China relied upon this theory and realized Buddhism itself. They also recognized the oneness of reality, the importance of the present moment, and the importance of this place.

But explanations of reality are only explanations. In Shobogenzo, after he had explained a problem on the basis of action, Master Dōgen wanted to point the reader into the realm of action itself. To do this, he sometimes used poems, he sometimes used old Buddhist stories that suggest reality, and he sometimes used symbolic expressions.

So, the chapters of Shobogenzo usually follow a four-phased pattern. Master Dōgen picks up and outlines a Buddhist idea [**S**ubjective]. In the second phase, he examines the idea very objectively or concretely, in order to defeat idealistic or intellectual interpretations of it [**O**bjective]. In the third phase, Master Dōgen's expression becomes even more concrete, practical and realistic, relying on the philosophy of action [**A**ction]. And in the fourth phase, Master Dōgen tries to suggest reality with words. [**R**eality]

Ultimately, these trials are only trials. But we can feel something that can be called reality in his sincere trials, when we reach the end of each chapter.

I think this four-phased pattern is related with the Four Noble Truths preached by Gautama Buddha in his first lecture. By realizing Master Dōgen's method of thinking, we can come to realize the true meaning of Gautama Buddha's Four Noble Truths. This is why we persevere in studying Shobogenzo.

Forward

By Taizen Verkuilen

The purpose of the study is to offer a means to begin or augment an existing study of Zen Master Dōgen's Shobogenzo.

The method employed during study each of the fascicle is accomplished by using Gudo Nishijima Roshi's translation of his four-phase pattern of Dōgen's writing of subjective, objective, action, and reality [S.O.A.R.]. Each fascicle follows this pattern of writing and the repetitive format can be used and understood as a method of approaching and comprehending the teaching intent of the fascicle.

Enhanced Emergent Knowledge [see Appendix] will investigate the meaning of a fascicle, and to prepare the practitioner to experience its experiential truth. This will be accomplished in the following manner:

1. The practitioner will read the fascicle introduction and excerpts. They can continue to read the whole fascicle or not. It helps to read it, but it's not essential. This practice will introduce the S.O.A.R. writing style and create it as the foundation of study and communication.
2. The practitioner chooses an excerpt from the booklet or the fascicle as the basis of the Want Statement for the ensuing Emergent Knowledge session. Choosing one teaching for the Emergent Knowledge inquiry offers an intimate doorway into the whole of the fascicle's intent.
3. The Emergent Knowledge session is performed generating a Proclamation Statement, the stepping off point for embodiment of the summarized truth of the EK session.
4. A brief essay as a summary captures the personification of the change.
5. This Proclamation Statement, essay, and embodied awakening provides the foundation for practitioner's Vision Statement

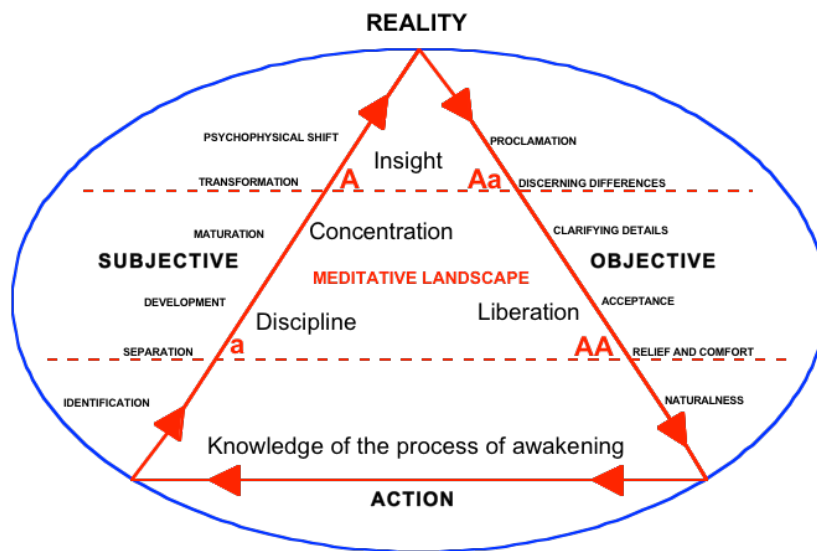
This method is based on intuitive engagement as the starting point of study. What we are doing is to start with one piece of the puzzle and gain understanding of the teaching of the fascicle. This is analogous to seeing the picture of a jigsaw puzzle and then working to put the pieces in place, rather than trying to put the pieces of the puzzle together without knowing the puzzle's picture. This way of working on the Shobogenzo acknowledges that each fascicle is a holographic truth, and to understand one piece of the hologram offers the possibility to comprehend all of the other pieces. In other words, starting with the one and working to the all, rather than starting with the all and working to the one.

The desired outcomes of this method of study are:

1. Familiarity with the Shobogenzo
2. Understanding the goal of each fascicle and how Dōgen embraces and follows the S.O.A.R. pattern
 - a. Understanding the details of S.O.A.R.

- b. **Subjective:** a Buddhist idea [A truth from the sutras]
 - c. **Objective:** a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation [intuitive nonconceptual Buddhist wisdom]
 - d. **Action:** a way life of active accomplishment [how realization changes the practitioner and subsequently the world]
 - e. **Reality:** a description of reality in words [an easily grasped illustration]
3. Ability to recognize and excerpt their own S.O.A.R. patterns
 4. To create an intuitive pathway used to generate Vision Statements

NISHIJIMA'S **S.O.A.R.** AND THE PROCESS OF AWAKENING



The listing below of the Shobogenzo fascicles of Nishijima's translation of Volumes 1 through 4 provides a means of study described in the preface. Examples of the four activities of Subjective, Objective, Action, and Reality are excerpted and offered for each fascicle, along with a Vision Statement: an attempt by the compiler to capture the central teaching of the fascicle in a short sentence. Studying Nishijima's explanation of the title, his understanding of Dōgen's intent, along with the excerpts, provide the Shobogenzo student with the means to penetrate and embody the essential teaching of the fascicle.

The Nonduality Resolution Sequence Symbol pictures the four elements of S.O.A.R. along with their relationships to the Yogacara principles of Nonduality, complementary dualities, the three axioms of the Process of Awakening, the Four Awakenings, and the Resolution Sequence.

Volume 1

1. Bendowa Pursuing the Truth [1]

Ben means to make an effort or “to pursue,” **do** means “the truth,” and **wa** means “a talk” or “story”. Master Dōgen usually used the word **bendo** to indicate the practice of Zazen, so Bendowa means a talk about pursuing the truth, or a talk about the practice of Zazen. This volume was not included in the first edition of Shobogenzo. It was found in Kyoto in the Kanbun era (1661-1673) and added to the Shobogenzo when the 95-volume edition was edited by master Hangyo Kozen in the Genroku era (1688-1704).

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Transmission of the Dharma is authentically transmitted from master to disciple, beginning in prehistoric times, continued by Shakyamuni Buddha. What is the authentic gate? Zazen is the authentic gate through which truth is attained. [6]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

In the Buddha Dharma [in Zazen], practice and experience are completely the same. Practice now is also practice in the state of experience; therefore, a beginner’s pursuit of the truth is just the whole body of the original state of experience.... Because practice is just experience, the experience is endless; and because experience is practice, the practice has no beginning. [10]

Action: a way life of active accomplishment

To experience and enter the Buddha Dharma, one need not always use the worldly wisdom of human beings and gods as a vessel for transcendence of the world. [A case like this] was the devout woman preparing a midday meal who disclosed the state of realization when she saw a stupid old monk sitting in quietness. This did not arrive from her wisdom, did not derive from writing, did not depend on words, and did not depend on talk.; she was aided only by her belief. [17-18]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The following is a poem written by a high-ranking member of government that expresses his accomplishment of the Buddhist Way.

*When official business allows, I like to sit in Zazen.
I have seldom slept with my side touching a bed.
Though I have now become Prime Minister,
My fame as a veteran practitioner has spread across the four seas.* [14]

Vision Statement

Without confusion or vexation, the truth pursues you.

2. Maka-Hannya Haramitsu Maha Prajna Paramita [21]

Maka is the phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit word Maha, which means great. **Hannya** is a phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit word Prajna, which can be translated as real wisdom, or intuitive reflection. **Haramitsu** is a phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit word paramita, which literally means to have arrived at the opposite shore. That is to have accomplished the truth. So **maka-hannya-haramitsu** means the accomplishment which is great real wisdom. In this chapter, Master Dōgen wrote his interpretation of the Maha-prajna-paramita-hrdaya-sutra means heart. This short sutra, usually called the Heart Sutra, represents the heart of the 600 volumes of the Maha-prajna-paramita-hrdaya-sutra. The right decision comes from the right state of body and mind, and the right state of body and mind comes when body and mind are balanced and harmonized. So, maha-prajna-paramita is wisdom that we have when our body and mind are balanced and harmonized. And Zazen is the practice by which our body and mind enter the state of balance and harmony. Maha-prajna-paramita, then, is the essence of Zazen.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

When the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara practices the profound prajna-paramita, the whole body reflects that the five aggregates are totally empty. [21]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The bhikṣu's secretly working concrete mind at this moment is in the state of bowing in veneration of the real dharmas is prajna itself – whether or not real dharmas are without appearance or disappearance – and this is a venerative bow itself. [23]

Action: a philosophy of active accomplishment

The God Indra asked the Monk Subhuti, “Virtuous one, when bodhisattva-mahasattvas want to research the profound prajna paramita, how should they research it? Subhuti replies, “Kausika, when bodhisattva-mahasattvas want to research the profound prajna paramita, they should research it as space. [23-24]

Reality: a description of reality in words

My late master, [Tendo Nyojo] the eternal Buddha says:

Whole body like a mouth, hanging in space;

Not asking if the wind is east, west, south, or north,

For all others equally, it chatters Prajna:

Chin Ten Ton Ryan Chin Ten Ton. [24]

Vision Statement

Chanting the prajna sutra collapses the barriers that enables “research it as space.” Only kindness, openness, and humility remain.

3. **Genjo Koan** **The Realized Universe.** [27]

Genjo means “realized,” and **koan** is an abbreviation of kofu-no-antoku, which was a notice board on which a new law was announced to the public in ancient China. So **koan** expresses a law or a universal principle. In Shobogenzo, **genjo koan** means the realized law of the universe that is Dharma, or the real universe itself. The fundamental basis of Buddhism is belief in this real universe, and in **Genjo Koan** Master Dōgen preaches to us the realized Dharma, or the real universe. Itself. When the seventy-five-chapter edition of the Shobogenzo was compiled, this chapter was placed first and from this fact, we can recognize its importance.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Driving ourselves to practice and experience, the myriad Dharmas is delusion. When the myriad Dharma actively practice and experience ourselves, that is the state of realization. [27]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

To learn the Buddhist truth is to learn ourselves, to learn ourselves is to forget ourselves, to forget ourselves is to be experienced by the myriad Dharmas, to be experienced by the myriad Dharmas is to let our own body and mind and the body and mind of the external world fall away. There is a state in which the traces of realization are forgotten, and it manifests the traces of forgotten realization for a long, long time. [28]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Realization is the state of ambiguity itself. [30]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Life is an instantaneous situation and death is also an instantaneous situation. It is the same, for example, with winter and spring. We do not think that winter becomes spring and we do not say that spring becomes summer. [28]

Vision Statement

Ambiguity – not contradiction, and not choosing one over the other – promotes complementary relationships.

4. Ikka-No-Myoju One Bright Pearl [31]

Ikka means “one,” **myo** means “bright” or “clear,” and **ju** means “pearl.” So **ikka no myoju** means one bright pearl. This chapter is a commentary on Master Gensa Shibi’s words that the whole universe in all directions is a splendid as a bright pearl. Master Dōgen loved these words, so he wrote about them in this chapter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Master Gensa says, “In the end, I cannot be deceived by others.” Master Gensa makes it sound as if he would like to be able to learn from others, but in the end, it is impossible: he can be satisfied, not with secondhand knowledge, but only by experiencing things for himself. [31]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding? [32]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

So even though it seems to be continually changing the outward appearance of its turning, and not turning, it is just the bright pearl. The very recognition that the pearl has been existing like this is just the bright pearl itself. The bright pearl has sounds and forms that can be heard like this. [34]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Therefore, forward steps and backward steps in a demon’s black mountain cave are just the one bright pearl itself. [35]

Vision Statement

The first step on the wisdom path encompasses and embraces spiritual autonomy.

5. **Ju-Undo-Shiki** **Rules for the Hall [37]**

Ju-undo or “the Hall of the Heavy Cloud” was the name of the Zazen Hall of Kannon-dori-kosho-horin-ji temple. **Shiki** means rules. So **ju-undo-shiki** means “Rules for the Hall of the Heavy Cloud.” Kannon-dori-kosho-horin-ji temple was the first temple established by Master Dōgen. He built it in Kyoto prefecture in 1233 several years after coming back from China. **Ju-undo** was the first Zazen Hall to be built in Japan. Master Dōgen made these rules for the hall and titled them. The chapter was not included in the Shobogenzo when the 75-chapter addition was compiled, but was added with the 95-chapter edition was compiled at the end of the 17th. Century. The inclusion of this chapter is very useful in understanding Shobogenzo, because what is written here represents in the concrete way Master Dōgen’s sincere attitude in pursuing the truth.

Subjective: Buddhist idea

Feeling compassion for future ages, we should value the present. [37]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The benevolence of the members of the Sangha in promoting each other’s health and in promoting each other’s practice, surpasses even that of a father and mother. The father and mother are only parents for the short span between life and death, but the members of the Sangha will be friends in the Buddha’s truth forever.[37]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

In general, we should staunchly guard the prohibitions and precepts of the Buddhist patriarchs. The pure criteria of monasteries should be engraved on our bones and should be engraved on our minds. [40]

Reality: a description of reality in words

These few rules listed above, are the body and mind of the eternal Buddha. We should revere them and follow them. [40]

Vision Statement

The intimacy of the Sangha consists of the living reality of Indra’s Net.

6. Soku-Shin-Ze-Butsu Mind Here and Now Is Buddha [41]

Soku means “here and now.” **Shin** means “mind.” **Ze** means “is.” **Butsu** means “buddha.” The principle of **soku-shin-ze-butsu** or “mind hearing now is buddha” is very famous in Buddhism, but many people have interpreted the principal to support the beliefs of naturalism. They say if our mind is here and now is just buddha, our conduct must always be right, and in that case, we did not make any effort to understand, or to realize Buddhism. However, this interpretation is a serious mistake. The principle **soku-shin-ze-butsu**, “mind here and now is buddha” must be understood, not from the standpoint of the intellect, but from the standpoint of practice. In other words, the principle does not mean belief in something spiritual, called “mind,” but it affirms the time “now” and the place “here” as reality itself. This time and place must always be absolute and right, and so we can call them the truth or “buddha.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained this meaning of **soku-shin-ze-butsu**, “mind here and now is buddha.”

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The great truth exists in our own body now, so we can easily recognize it situation. In other words, a spiritual intelligence distinguishes between pain and pleasure, naturally senses cold and warmth, and recognizes discomfort and irritation. The spiritual intelligence is neither restricted by things nor connected with circumstances: things come and go and circumstances arise and pass, but the spiritual intelligence always remains, unchanging. [41]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The immediate universe exists: it is not awaiting realization, and it is not avoiding destruction. This concrete triple world exists; it is neither receding nor appearing, and it is not just mind. Mind exists as fences and walls; it never gets muddy or wet, and it is never artificially constructed. [44]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

If we establish the mind and do practice and experience, even in a single moment, this is mind here and now is Buddha. [45]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When a person becomes conscious of the mind, there is not one inch of soil on the Earth. Remember, when we become conscious of the mind, the whole of the heaven falls down and the whole ground is torn apart. [44]

Vision Statement

Prajna exists as the ever-unfolding every-moment language of realization.

7. Senjo

Washing [47]

Sen means “to wash” and **jo** means “to purify.” So, **senjo** means “washing.” Buddhism is neither idealism nor materialism, but belief in reality, which has both the spiritual side and a material side. So, Buddhism insists that to clean our physical body is to purify our mind. Therefore, in Buddhism, cutting our fingernails, shaving our head, and washing our body are all very important religious practices. In this chapter, Master Dōgen expounds the religious meaning of such daily behavior, and preaches the importance in Buddhism of cleansing our physical body.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Dai-e says, “It is not that there is no practice and experience, but the state can never be tainted.”

The Sixth Ancestor says, “Just this untainted state is that which Buddhas guard and desire. You are also like this. I am also like this, and the ancestral masters of India were also like this.” [47]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Relying upon the Buddha Dharma, we have this form of behavior, and we call it “washing.” It is to receive the authentic transmission of a body and mind of the Buddhist Patriarch immediately; it is to see and hear a phrase of the Buddhist Patriarch intimately; and it is to abide in and retain the state of brightness of the Buddhist Patriarch clearly. [48]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

When the dignified behavior of the Buddhist Ancestors is realized, false teaching naturally succumbs. [49]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Remember, this is not only the Buddha-form followed by one buddha. It describes the places of truth, the monasteries, of the Seven Buddha. It is never initiated. It is the dignified form of the buddhas.

Vision Statement

Great purity and great compassion are inseparable from fundamental awareness. Personal purity and action in “this world” make communication with the world of the Bodhisattvas possible.

8. Raihi-Tokuzui Prostrating to Attain the Marrow [57]

Raihai means “to prostrate oneself to,” **toku** means “to get” or “to attain” and **zui** means “marrow”. So **raihai-tokuzui** means prostrating oneself to attainment of the marrow, in other words, revering what has got the truth. In this chapter, Master Dōgen preached to us that the value of a being must be decided according to whether or not it has got the truth. So, he said, even if it is a child, a woman, a devil, or an animal like a wild fox, if it has got the truth, we must reveal it whole-heartedly. In this attitude, we can find Master Dōgen’s sincere reverence for the truth and his view of men, women, and animals.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Getting the marrow and receiving the Dharma, invariably comes from sincerity and from belief. There is no example of sincerity coming from outside, and there is no way for sincerity to emerge from within. Sincerity just means attaching weight to the Dharma and thinking light of one’s own body. [58]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

When you meet teachers, who expose the supreme state of bodhi, have no regard for the race or caste, do not notice their looks, do not dislike their faults, and do not examine their deeds. [58]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

When master Kankei becomes the master of his own temple, he preaches to the assembly, “When I met master Rinzai, there was no discussion. Arriving directly at the moment of the present. I am completely satisfied.” [60 FN#27]

Reality: a description of reality in words

*All actions are in the state without constancy,
Concrete existence is the arising and passing of dharma.
After rising and passing have ceased
The peace and quiet is pleasure itself.* [58 FN#14]

Vision Statement

There is no past, present or future, no beginning and no end, no entry and no exit, just constancy.

9. Keisei-Sanshiki Voices of River and Valleys [71]

Kei means “river-valley,” **sei** means “sound” or “voice,” **san** means “mountain,” and **shiki** means “form” or “color”, so **keisei-sanshiki** means voices of river-valleys and forms of mountains – that is Nature. In Buddhism, this world is the truth itself, so Nature is a face of the truth. Nature is the material side of the real world, so it is always speaking the truth and manifesting the law of the universe every day. That is why it has been said, since ancient time that sounds of rivers are the preaching of Gautama Buddha, and forms of the mountains are the body of Gautama. In this chapter, Master Dōgen preached to us the meaning of Nature in Buddhism.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The study of nature is a gate of entry in Buddhism, where mountains flow, and waters do not flow. This expresses the relativity of Nature. [72 FN#16]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

When we each get rid of our husk, we are not restricted by former views and understanding, and things which have for vast kalpas been unclear, suddenly appear before us. [71]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

From the time when the Tathagata was in the world until today, many people have seemed to consider that our concern in learning the truth is to get fame and gain. If, however, on meeting the teachings of a true master, they turn around and pursue the right Dharma, they will naturally attain the truth. [76]

Reality: a description of reality in words

“When a single word is far transcendent and unique and exceptional, then many words are not necessary. And many are not useful.” Transcendent means to get rid of something, so far transcendent suggests the state in which things are as they are being far removed from the superfluous. [79 FN#67]

Vision Statement

Constant rapid change, autonomous healing, and intimate regard for all, mark the action of Nature and Sangha.

10. Shoaku-Makusa Not Doing Wrongs [81]

Sho means “many” or “miscellaneous,” **aku** means “wrong” or “bad,” **maku** means “not” or “don’t,” and **sa** means “to do.” So **shoaku-makusa** means “not doing wrong.” These words are quoted from a short poem, called the “Seven Buddha Universal Precept.” Don’t do wrong; do right; then our minds become pure naturally; this is the teaching of many Buddhas. This poem tells us how closely the teaching of Buddhism is related to morals. In this chapter Master Dōgen teaches us the Buddhist theory of morality. Morality or ethics is, by its nature, a very practical problem. But most people are prone to forget the practical character of morality, and usually only discuss it with words, or as an abstract theory. However, talking about morality is not the same as being moral. Morality is just doing right or not doing wrong. Here Master Dōgen explains real morality, quoting an interesting story about Master Choka Dorin, and a famous Chinese poet called Haku Kyōi.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“In regard to the *wrongs*, which we are discussing now, among *rightness* and indifference, there is *wrongness*. Its essence is just non-appearance.: ...In this sentence, Master Dōgen begins his conceptual explanation of right and wrong by introducing the idea of instantaneous nonappearance, describes the state at the moment of the present. [82 FN#10]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

At the same time, at each concrete place these three properties include innumerable kinds of dharmas. [82]

Master Dōgen is explaining right and wrong as reality. In the previous sentences, he began by explaining them as inclusive concepts in the first or conceptual phase. From here, he explains them as concrete individual and relative facts, at the second or concrete phase. [82 FN#12]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

There is the Buddhist truth of taking up at one moment, and letting go at one moment. At just this moment, the truth is known that wrong does not violate a person, and the truth is clarified that a person does not destroy wrong. When we devote our whole mind to practice, and when we devote the whole body to practice, there is 80 or 90% realization of not committing wrongs. [83]

Reality: a description of reality in words

*Not to commit wrongs,
To practice the many kinds of right,
Naturally purifies the mind,
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.*

Vision Statement

Awareness of the moment purifies the path of patience, gentleness and acceptance.

11. Uji

Existence Time [91]

U means “existence” and **ji** means “time,” so **uji** means “existent time,” or existence-time. In this chapter, Master Dōgen teaches us the meaning of time in Buddhism. As Master Dōgen explains in other chapters, Buddhism is realistic. Therefore, the view of time in Buddhism is always very realistic. Specifically, time is always related with existence, and existence is always related with momentary time. So, in reality the past and future are not existent time; the present moment is the only existent time – the point at which existence and time come together. Also, time is always related with action here. And action can only be realized in time, and time can only be realized in action. The view of time in Buddhism reminds us of existentialism in modern philosophy. It is very important to understand the Buddhist view of time in order to grasp the true meaning of Buddhism.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Because real existence is only this exact moment, all moments of Existence-Time are the whole of time, and all Existent things and all Existent phenomena are Time. The whole of existence, the whole universe, exists in individual moments of time. [92]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Because passage through separate moments is a virtue of time moments of the past and present are neither piled up on top of one another nor lined up in; and, for some reason, Seigen is time, Obaku is time, and Kozei and Sekito are time. [93-94]

The lives of all Buddhist masters are just moments of the present. [93 FN#23]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

But just what is the ancestral Master’s intention in coming from the West?

Reality: a description of reality in words

The whole universe is neither beyond moving and changing, nor beyond progressing and regressing. It is passage from one moment to the next.

Vision Statement

The views of the quantum scientists swim in the wake of Master Dōgen’s teaching.

12. Kesa-Kudoku

Merit of the Kasaya [99]

Kesa represents the Sanskrit word kasaya or Buddhist robe and **kudoku** means “virtue” or “merit.”. So, **kesa kudoku** means the merit of the kasaya. Being a realistic religion, Buddhism reveres our real life. In other words, Buddhism esteems our real contact in daily life; wearing clothes and eating meals are very important parts of Buddhist life. In particular, the kasaya and patra, or Buddhist bowl, are the main symbols of Buddhist life. In this chapter, Dōgen explains and praises the merit of the kasaya.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The kasaya has been called since ancient time the *clothing of liberation* [liberty, release, deliverance, final emancipation] [101, FN#16]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Mental images arise and vanish, instantaneously; they are without an abode. The physical body also arises and vanishes instantaneously; it too, is without an abode. Nevertheless, the merit that we practice always has its time of ripening and shedding. [105]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

During my stay in Sung, China, when I was making an effort on the long platform, I saw that my neighbor at the end of every sitting would lift up his kasaya and place it on his head; then holding the hands together and veneration, he would quietly recite a verse. The verse was:

*How great is the clothing of liberation,
Formless field of happiness, robe!
Devoutly wearing the Tathagata's teaching,
Widely I will save living beings. [121]*

Reality: a description of reality in words

Great Arhats are equipped with the three kinds of knowledge and the six powers...

The three kinds of knowledge are supernatural insight, knowing past lives, and ending the superfluous. The six powers are the power of mystical transportation, the power to know others minds, the power of supernatural sight, the power of supernatural hearing, the power to know past lives, and the power to end the superfluous. [112]

Vision Statement

Reverence, affection, and intimacy with the wide Sangha are the fruits of the kasaya.

13. Den-e Transmission of the Robe [125]

Den means “transmission” and **e** means “robe” so **den-e** means “the transmission of the robe.” The content of this chapter is very similar to that of the previous chapter, Kesa-kudoku. Furthermore, the date recorded at the end of each chapter is the same. But whereas the note at the end of Kesa-kudoku says preached to the assembly at Kannon-dori-kosho-horinji temple. The note to this chapter, says written at Kannon-dori-kosho-horinji temple. It seems likely that it is the draft of the lecture Master Dōgen was to give on October 1st, and Kesa-kudoku is the transcript of the lecture he gave that day.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The Buddha says, “If any living being having entered my Dharma commits grave sins or falls into wrong views, but in a single moment of consciousness, this person with reverent mind honors the samghati robe, the buddhas and I will give affirmation without fail, that this person will be able to become Buddha in the three vehicles. [130]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Furthermore, when Shakyamuni Buddha first left the royal palace and was going to enter the mountains, a tree god, the story goes, holds up a samghati robe and says to Shakyamuni Buddha, “If you receive this robe upon your head, you will escape the disturbances of the demons.” Then Shakyamuni Buddha accepts the robe, humbly receiving it upon his head, and for twelve years, he does not set it aside even for a moment.” [130]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Reflecting on this, we could say that even if we see the kasaya one thousand times, and hear of it ten thousand times, that is not as good as getting it once, and never as good as to having received the authentic transmission of the Buddha robe. [132]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, remember that the kasaya is the body of the Buddha and the mind of the Buddha. It is called the clothing of liberation, called the robe of a field of happiness, called the robe of endurance, called the robe form, called the robe of compassion, and called the robe of *annutara samyak sambodhi*. [133]

Vision Statement

The kasaya transforms its wearer from a wanderer to a follower of the direct path.

14. Sansuigyo

Sutra of Mountains and Water [141]

San means “mountain,” **sui** means water – rivers, lakes, and so on. Sansui suggests natural scenery, or nature itself, or Nature itself. as Buddhist sutras. **Kyo** or **gyo** means Buddhist sutras. So **Sansuigyo** means mountains and water, or Nature as Buddhist Sutras. Buddhism is basically a religion of belief in the Universe, and nature is the Universe showing its real form. So, to look at nature is to look at the Buddhist truth itself. For this reason, Master Dōgen believed that Nature is just Buddhist sutras. In this chapter, he explains the real form of Nature, giving particular emphasis to relativity in Nature

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The mountains and water of the present are the realization of the words of the eternal buddhas. Both mountains and water abide in place in the Dharma, having realized ultimate virtue. [141]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The Blue Mountains are constantly walking, The Stone Woman bears children by night. Mountains lack none of the virtues with which mountains should be equipped. For this reason, they are constantly abiding in stillness and constantly walking. [141]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Shakyamuni Buddha left the palace of his father, the king, to enter the mountains. But his father, the king, did not resent the mountains. The royal father did not distrust those in the mountains who would teach the prince, whose twelve years of training in the truth were mostly spent in the mountains. [150]

Reality: a description of reality in words

There are worlds of sentient beings in clouds, there are worlds of sentient beings in wind, there are worlds of sentient beings in fire, there are worlds of sentient beings in earth, there are worlds of sentient beings in the world of Dharma, there are worlds of sentient beings in a stalk of grass, and there are worlds of sentient beings in a staff. [150]

Vision Statement

The worlds of plants, animals, and minerals all reach back and express beginningless time.

15. Busso Buddha Ancestors [153]

Butsu means “buddha” or “Buddhist.” **so** means “patriarch,” and therefore Busso means Buddhist patriarchs. Master Dōgen revered Buddhas of the past; he also esteemed the Buddhist transmission from Buddha to Buddha. Furthermore, he believed in the continuity of the Buddhist order; the successive leaders of the Buddhist order held an important place in his thought. Here Master Dōgen enumerates the names of the Patriarchs of the Buddhist order, and in doing so, he confirms the Buddhist tradition they maintained.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The realization of the Buddhist patriarchs is our taking up the Buddhist patriarchs and paying homage to them. [153]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

It is just to enumerate those who have maintained and relied upon the real features of Buddhist patriarchs to do prostrations to them and to meet them. [153]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Making the virtue of the Buddhist patriarchs manifest and uphold itself, we have dwelt in and maintained it, and have bowed to and experienced it. [153]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Buddhas alone, together with buddhas, can perfectly realize that all dharmas are real form. [158 FN#50]

Vision Statement

Chanting the verse of the ancestors connects us to their living reality.

16. Shisho

Certificate of Succession [161]

Shi means “succession” or “transmission.” **Sho** means certificate. So **shiso** means “the certificate of succession.” Buddhism is not only theory, but also practice or experience. Therefore, it is impossible for a Buddhist disciple to attain the Buddhist truth, only by reading Buddhist sutras, or listening to a master’s lectures. The disciple must live with a master and study the master’s behavior in everyday life. After a disciple has learned the master’s life, and has realized the Buddhist truth in his or her own life, the master gives a certificate to the disciple certifying the transmission of the truth from the master to disciple. This certificate is called **shiso**. From a materialistic viewpoint, the certificate is only cloth and ink, and so it cannot hold religious meaning, or be revered as something with religious value. But Buddhism is a realistic religion, and Buddhists find religious value in many concrete traditions. The certificate is one such traditional object, which is revered by Buddhists. Therefore, Master Dōgen found much value in this certificate. In this chapter, he explains why the certificate is revered by Buddhists, and records his own experiences of seeing such certificates in China.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

It is impossible to certify a buddha without being a buddha, and no one becomes a buddha without receiving the certification of a buddha. [161]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

There was also the principle to be mastered in practice that Kasyapa Buddha succeeds to the Dharma of Shakyamuni Buddha. Those who do not know this principle do not clarify the Buddha state of truth. Without clarifying the Buddha’s state of truth, they are not the Buddha successors... Shakyamuni Buddha says, “The buddhas of the past are the disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha.” The Buddhist doctrine of all the buddhas is like this. [162-163]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

We learn that Shakyamuni Buddha succeeded to the Dharma of Kashyapa Buddha, and we learn that Kashyapa Buddha succeeded to the dharma of Shakyamuni Buddha. When we learn it like this, it is truly the succession of the dharma of the buddhas and patriarchs. [171]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The fundamental point is this although Shakyamuni Buddha realizes the truth before the Seven Buddhas, it has taken him a long time to succeed to the Dharma of Kasyapa Buddha.

Vision Statement Each transmission between ancestor and ancestor leaves in us two deep impressions: 1] of their embodied wisdom and compassion; and 2] of their generosity in sharing joy and knowledge.

17. **Hokke-Ten-Hokke Flower of the Dharma Turns the Flower of the Dharma [173]**

Ho means “Dharma,” “the law of the Universe,” or the Universe itself. **Ke** means “flowers.” So **hokke** means “the universe which is like flowers.” The full title of the Lotus Sutra, **Myo-ho-renge-kyo**, the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma,” is usually abbreviated to **Hokke-kyo**. So **hokke** also suggests the wonderful universe has manifested in the Lotus Sutra. Ten means to turn,” or “to move.” So **hokke-ten-hokke** means “the wonderful universe, which is like flowers is moving the wonderful universe, which is like flowers itself.” This is the Buddhist view of the Universe, and Master Dōgen’s view. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains this view of the Universe, quoting many words from the Lotus Sutra. The message of the Lotus Sutra is, “How wonderful is the Universe in which we are now living.” So, here Master Dōgen unfolds his view of the Universe, following the theory of the Lotus Sutra.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Herein all the Buddha of the ten directions and the three times and beings of annutara-samyak-sambodhi have times of turning the Flower of Dharma and have times of the Flower of Dharma turning... It is the calm and clear state of samadhi which is difficult to understand and difficult to enter. [173-4]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

This is why the Buddha has manifested himself in reality, calling sole reliance on the one vehicle, the one great matter... The method, for that is inevitably the one buddha-vehicle, and buddhas alone necessarily teach its perfect realization to buddhas alone. [175]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

It is just a moment by moment of red mind [mind just as it is] upon which we rely solely. So do not worry about the mind being deluded. Your actions are the bodhisattva way itself... an instance of Flower of Dharma turning. [179]

Reality: a description of reality in words

*When the mind is in the state of delusion, the Flower of Dharma turns.
When the mind is in the state of realization, we turn the Flower of Dharma.
If perfect realization can be like this,
The Flower of Dharma turns the Flower of Dharma.*

Vision Statement

Our choice is to be turned by the Flower of Dharma, or to join the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in turning the Flower of Dharma.

18. Shin-Fukatoku Mind Cannot Be Grasped (1) [189]

Shin means “mind” **fu** expresses negation, **ka** expresses possibility, and **toku** means “to grasp.” **Shin-fukatoku**, “mind cannot be grasped,” is a quotation from the Diamond Sutra. On the basis of our common sense, we usually think our mind can be grasped by our intellect, and we are prone to think that our mind must exist somewhere substantially. This belief also extends into the sphere of possibility; Renee Descartes, for example, started his philosophical thinking with the premise, “Cogito ergo sum,” “I think, therefore I am.” The German idealists, for example, Kant, Fichte, von Schnelling and Hegel also based their philosophies on the existence of mind. But in Buddhism we do not have confidence in the existence of mind. Buddhism is a philosophy of action, or philosophy of the here and now; in that philosophy mind cannot exist independently of the external. In other words, Buddhism says that all existence is the instantaneous contact between mind and external world. Therefore, it is difficult for us to grasp our mind independently of the external. In short, Buddhist theory cannot support belief in the independent existence of mind. In this chapter, Master Dōgen preached that mind cannot be grasped, explaining a famous Buddhist story about a conversation between Master Tokuzan and an old woman selling rice cakes.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Past mind cannot be grasped, present mind cannot be grasped, and future mind cannot be grasped. [189]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The old woman says I have heard it said in the Diamond Sutra that past mind cannot be grasped, present mind cannot be grasped, and future mind cannot be grasped. Which mind do you now intend somehow to refresh with rice cakes? [191]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

A rice cake painted in a picture cannot kill hunger. [191]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Mind cannot be grasped, means cheerfully buying a painted rice cake, and munching it up in one mouthful. [192]

Vision Statement

The mind of the moment is Indra’s mind: infinite reflections.

19. Shin-Fukatoku Mind Cannot Be Grasped (2) [195]

The 95-chapter edition of Shobogenzo has two chapters with the same title **Shin-fukatoku**, or “mind cannot be grasped. We usually discriminate between the two chapters with the words, the “former” and the “latter.” The contents of the two chapters are different, but the meaning of the two chapters is almost the same. Furthermore, the end of each chapter records the same date, the summer retreat of 1241. However, while the former chapter says “preached to the assembly,” this chapter says “written.” So it may be that the former chapter was a shorthand record of Master Dōgen’s preaching, and the latter was Master Dōgen’s draft of his lecture. This is only a supposition and scholars in the future may be able to find a more exact conclusion.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

[Tokuzan] understood that for Buddhist training it is always necessary to meet a true person.[197]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Now, the Master is unable to say something, so please go ahead and ask this old woman. The old woman will say something for the Master instead. [197]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The God Indra ask the National Master, “How can we be free from becoming?” The National Master says, “Celestial One, you can be free from becoming by practicing the truth.” The God Indra asked further, “What is the truth?” The National Master says, “Mind in the moment is the truth. “The God Indra says, “What is the mind in the moment? Pointing with his finger, the National Master says, “This place is the stage of Prajna. This place is the net of pearls.” [204]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When we learn mind in Buddhism, the myriad dharmas are mind itself, and the triple world is mind alone. [199]

Vision Statement

There is great freedom in a mind that cannot be grasped.

20. Kokyo

Eternal Mirror [207]

Ko means “ancient or “eternal” and kyo means “mirror,” so **koko** means the “eternal mirror.” And what “the eternal mirror” means is the question. In this chapter, Master Dōgen quoted Master Seppo Gison’s words, “When a foreigner comes in front of the mirror, the mirror reflects a foreigner.” From these words, we can understand the eternal mirror as a symbol of some human mental faculty. The eternal mirror suggests the importance of reflection, so we can suppose that the eternal mirror is a symbol of the intuitional faculty. In Buddhist philosophy, the intuition faculty is called Prajna or wisdom. Real wisdom in Buddhism means our intuitional faculty on which all our decisions are based. Buddhism esteems this real wisdom more than reason or perception. Real wisdom is the basis for our decisions and our decisions decide our life, so we can say that our real wisdom decides the course of our life. For this reason, it is very natural for Master Dōgen to explain the eternal mirror. At the same time, we must find another meaning of the eternal mirror because Master Dōgen also quoted other words of Master Seppo Gison, “Every monkey has the eternal mirror on its back.” Therefore, we can think that the eternal mirror means not only human wisdom, but also some intuitional faculty of animals. So, we must widen the meaning of the eternal mirror and understand it as a symbol of the intuitional faculty which both human beings and animals have. Furthermore, Master Seppo Gison said when the world is ten feet wide the eternal mirror is ten feet wide. “When the world is ten feet wide the eternal mirror is ten feet wide.” These words suggest the eternal mirror is the world. We can say that the eternal mirror is not only a symbol of an individual faculty, but it is also something universal. From ancient times Buddhist have discussed the eternal mirror. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the meaning of the eternal mirror in Buddhism, quoting the words of ancient Buddhist masters.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

What all the buddhas and all the patriarchs have received and retained, and transmitted one-to-one is the eternal mirror. They have the same view and the same face, the same image and the same cast; they share the same state and realize the same experience. [207]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Zen master Engo says, “I bow my head to the ground before Sokei, the true eternal Buddha. So remember the words with which the founding Patriarch Daikan displays the mirror. Originally, we do not have a single thing. At what place could dust and dirt exist? The clear mirror needs no stand. We should strive to understand it. [210]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Without the dharma of polishing a tile, how could the great saints have any expedient method of teaching people? The power to teach people is the bones and marrow of a Buddhist patriarch. [223]

Reality: a description of reality in words

“What is the eternal mirror before it is polished?”

“The eternal mirror?” [222]

Vision Statement

Intuition [universal cognizance, prajna] gently touches all beings, connecting heart to heart.

21. Kankin

Reading Sutras [225]

Kan means “to read” and **kin** means “sutras.” Many Buddhist sects revere reading sutras, because they think that the Buddhist truth is theory which can be understood through abstract explanation. They think we can understand Buddhism only by reading. At the same time, there are other sects who deny the value of reading sutras; they say that Buddhism is not a theoretical system we can attain the truth by reading sutras. Master Dōgen took the middle on the problem: rather than deny the value of the reading of the sutras, he said that reading sutras is one way of finding out what Buddhist practice is. He did not believe, however, that we can get the truth by sutras. He did not think that sutras might exercise some mystical influence over life. In this way Master Dōgen’s view on reading sutras was very realistic. His understanding of reading sutras was not limited to written sutras; he believed that the universe is a sutra. He thought that observing the world around us is like reading a sutra. Grass trees, mountains, the moon, the sun, and so forth were all Buddhist sutras. He even extended his view of reading sutras to include walking around the master’s chair in the middle of the Zazen hall. This viewpoint is not only Master Dōgen’s; it is the viewpoint of Buddhism itself. So, in this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the wider meaning of reading sutras.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The practice and experience of annutara-samyak-sambodhi sometimes relies on the good counselors and sometimes relies on the sutras. Good counselors mean Buddhist patriarchs who are totally themselves. Sutras means sutras which are totally themselves. [225]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

From now on, you’ll be rightly called the “Sutra Reading Monk”. We should know that there are sutra reading monks in Buddhism. It is the direct teaching of the eternal Buddha of Sokei. Reading in this [phrase] “Sutra Reading Monk” is beyond having ideas, being without ideas, and so on. [227]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

For countless kalpas, we have never recognized the situation of breathing out and breathing in. But just now the moment has come when we can recognize it for the first time and so we hear it does not reside in the world of aggregates and it does not follow circumstances. [228]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In the house of the Buddhist patriarchs, some experience it directly, and some do not experience it directly, but reading sutras and requesting the benefit of the teaching are the common tools of everyday life. [222]

Vision Statement

Mind and body engage intimately at the last moment of every breath.

Volume 2

22. **Busscho** **Buddha Nature [1]**

Butsu means “Buddha” and **sho** means “nature,” so **busscho** means Buddha nature. The Chinese characters read in Japanese as **busscho** represent the meaning of the Sanskrit word, buddhata, or Buddha nature; this is usually understood as the potential we have to attain the truth, or as something which we have inherently and which grows naturally day by day. But Master Dōgen was not satisfied with such interpretations. In his view, the Buddha nature is neither a potential nor a natural attribute, but a state or condition of mind and body at a present moment. Therefore, he saw the Buddha nature neither as something we might realize in the future, nor as something that we have inherently in our body and mind. From this standpoint, Master Dōgen affirmed and at the same time denied the proposition, “We all have the Buddha nature.” He also affirmed and at the same time denied the proposition, “We all don’t have Buddha nature.” At the first sight, these views appear contradictory, but through his dialectic explanation of the Buddha nature in this chapter Master Dōgen succeeded in interpreting the concept of the Buddha nature from the standpoint of action or reality.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The Buddha nature is always Total Existence for Total Existence is the Buddha nature. [3]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The wanting to know the meaning of the Buddha nature does not only mean knowing, it means wanting to practice it, wanting to experience it, wanting to preach it, and wanting to forget it. [4]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The mountains, rivers and the Earth,

All relying on it, are constructed.

Samadhi and the six powers

Depending upon it, manifest themselves [5]

Reality: a description of reality in words

If you want to realize the Buddha nature, you must first get rid of selfish pride. [13]

Vision Statement

Action finds direction in knowing, marking the path of Buddha nature.

23. Gyobutsu Yuigi The Dignified Behavior of Acting Buddha [29]

Gyo means to practice or to act, **butsu** means Buddha, **yui** means dignity or dignified, and **gi** means ceremony, formal attitude or behavior. Therefore, **Gyobutsu-yuigi** means the dignified behavior of acting buddha. Buddhism can be called a religion of action. Buddhism esteems action very highly, because action is our existence itself, and without acting, we have no existence. Gautama Buddha's historical mission was to find the truth of action, by which he could synthesize idealistic Brahmanism and the materialistic theories of the six non-Buddhist teachers. In this chapter Master Dōgen explained the dignity that usually accompanies Buddhism in action.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The buddhas always practice to the full dignified behavior: this is acting buddha....Mastery of action in the Buddha's ascendant state of truth belongs to acting buddha alone. [29]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Sokei says, "Just this untaintedness is that which buddhas guard and desire. You are also like this. I am also like this. In this untainted state, which is truly beyond "I" and beyond "you" real I this concrete I, that which the Buddha guard and desire, is the dignified behavior of acting buddha. [31]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Truly, we should remember, although at that time the Shakyamuni of the human world spread the teaching which was the manifestation of his extinction, the Shakyamuni of the heavens above is still there now, teaching the gods. FN#42 [Lotus Sutra] In order to save living beings as an expedient method, I manifest Nirvana, yet really, I have not passed away. [35]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When we act in fetching and taking away and then leaving and entering through a common gate, because the whole world has never been hidden, the World Honored One's secret talk, secret experience, secret action, secret transmission, and so on, are present. 32FN#28 Reality in the present is neither entered nor left.

Vision Statement

Hand in hand with the Bodhisattvas, it's easy to relax and feel at home.

"Dignified manner is the Buddha Dharma. Decorum is the essential teaching." Ikko Narasaki Roshi

24. Bukkyo The Buddha's Teaching [47]

Butsu means Buddha or Buddhist, and **kyo** means teaching or teachings. **Bukkyo**, is usually translated as Buddhism, but in this chapter Master Dōgen emphasizes the importance of the theoretical side of Buddhism. For this reason, it is better here to translate **bukkyo** as “Buddha’s teaching” in order to distinguish between the peculiar usage of the word in this chapter and the usual usage. Some Buddhist sects, wanting to emphasize the value of practice in Buddhism, insist on the importance of a transmission which is beyond and separate from theoretical teachings. They say we need not rely on any verbal explanation of Buddhism. But Master Dōgen saw this theory itself is mistaken. Of course, practice is very important in Buddhism, but Master Dōgen considered that both practice and theory are important. If we deny the importance of the theoretical side of Buddhism, and we lose the method to transmit Buddhism to others. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained the role of Buddhist theory and insisted that we should not forget the importance of theoretical Buddhist teachings.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

For this reason, the Buddha’s teaching is just teaching a buddha. It is the perfectly realized virtue of a Buddhist patriarch. FN#2 The eternal teaching of the Buddha, and the concrete fact of Buddhist being taught in the present, are one. [48]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

If we do not speak of a transmission outside the mind, we should never speak of a separate transmission outside the teachings. [49]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Remember when one phrase is authentically transmitted, the authentic transmission of the whole Dharma takes place. [49]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Remember in sum, that the three vehicles [sravaka, pratyekabuddha, bodhisattva], the 12 divisions of the teaching, and so on, are the eye of the Buddhist patriarchs. [58]

Vision Statement

The three knowledges of Buddhist teaching tally in a seamless whole.

25. Jinzu Mystical Power [59]

Jin means mystical and **zu**, which is a corruption of **tsu**, means ability or power, so **jinzu** means mystical power. It is said in Buddhism that a person who has attained the truth may have certain kinds of mystical power, but many Buddhists invented fantastic exaggeration of these. Master Dōgen did not affirm such exaggerations. He affirmed the existence of Buddhist mystical powers which we can get when we become buddhas, but he thought that in the case of Buddhist mystical powers mystical means not supernatural, but real.¹ Buddhist mystical powers are the abilities we use in our usual life. When asked what Buddhist mystical powers are, an old Chinese Buddhist replied, “Fetching water and carrying firewood.”

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Mystical power as it is, is the tea and meals of Buddhist, and the buddhas to the present, have not tired of it. In it, there are six mystical powers, and there is the one mystical power. There is the state of being without mystical power, and there is the supremely ascendant mystical power. [59]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Without the mystical power of Buddha, [Kyozan] could not fetch a bowl of water, and fetch a towel, there could be no turning to lie facing the wall, and there could be, after washing the face, no short while of sitting. [61]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Carrying water means loading water and fetching it. There being our own work and self-motivation, and there being the work of others and the motivation of others, water is caused to be carried. This is just the state of mystically powerful buddha. [62]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The six kinds of mystical function are emptiness and are beyond emptiness.

A bowl of brightness, transcends inside and outside. [67]

Vision Statement

The one great mystical power is realizing the one great mystical power.

¹ The six powers are:

The power of supernatural insight, the power of mystical transmutation, the power to know others' minds, the power of supernatural hearing, the power to know past lives, the power to end the superfluous [living with the commitment to and cultivation of the Process of Awakening as the heart of motivation]

26. Daigo

Great Realization [69]

Dai means great and **go** means realization, so **daigo** means great realization. Many Buddhist scholars, for example Dr. Daisetsu Suzuki, have translated **go** as enlightenment. But the meaning of the word enlightenment is ambiguous, and the word has for many years been a stumbling block to the understanding of Buddhism. So, it may be better to translate **go** as realization. The meaning of realization in Master Dōgen's theory is also difficult to understand. Anyway, it is clear that realization is not only intellectual understanding, but a more concrete realization of facts in reality. So, we can say that Master Dōgen's realization and theory is realization in real life. We can study his thoughts on the realization in this chapter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Namely, there are the innately intelligent, who, by living, penetrate and get free from life – this in other words, whether at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of life, is a physical realization.

FN#3 In Master Dōgen's commentary, innate does not mean innate in a naturalistic sense. It means naturally present, but at the same time realized by effort in life. [69-70]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

People of great realization, still realize great realization, and people of great delusion still realize great realization. [71]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The present moment of which he speaks is the now of every person. Although instances of causing ourselves to think of the past, the present, and the future occurred in thousands and tens of thousands, even they are present moments, are now. Moments are now the state of each person is inevitably the present moment. [74]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, heads of great realization are black and heads of great realization are white. [75]

Vision Statement

Realization is an ongoing event, rooted in the pure as well as the impure.

27. **Zazenshin** **A Needle for Zazen [77]**

Shin means a bamboo needle that was used for acupuncture in ancient China. So, **shin** means a method of healing body in mind, and the word came to be used for a maxim that has the power to cure a human being, a physical and mental disease. Subsequently the word **shin** was used to describe short verses useful in teaching the important points of a method of training. In this chapter Master Dōgen first explained the true meaning of Zazen, quoting and commenting on a famous exchange between Master Nangaku and Master Baso. Then he praised Zazenshin by Master Wanshi Shokaku, and finally, he wrote his own Zazenshin.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

While Great Master Yakusan Kodo is sitting, a monk asked him, “What are you thinking in the still-still state?” The Master says, “Thinking the concrete state of not-thinking.” The monk says, “How can the state of not-thinking be thought?” The Master says, “It is nonthinking.” [77]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Just in the moment of sitting in Zazen, what kind of aim is being realized? More than we love a carved dragon we should love the real dragon.

FN #16 “Carved dragon, symbolizes representation or explanation of Zazen. “Real dragon symbolizes Zazen itself. Master Dōgen emphasized the need for both kinds of dragon. [79]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

To be illuminated by the presence of the Buddhist patriarchs’ brightness is to exert oneself in the investigation of this sitting in Zazen. [84]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, children and grandchildren of the Buddhist patriarchs should unfailingly learn in practice that sitting in Zazen is the one great matter. This is the authentic seal, which is received and transmitted one-to-one.

Vision Statement

Q. Are the infinite forms of your own mind the infinite forms of Buddha?

A. The totality of every being is one with the intricate web of mystery, beauty, and universal cognizance.

28. Butsu Kojo No Ji The Matter of the Ascendant State of Buddha [91]

Butsu means “buddha,” **kojo** means “ascend” or “be beyond,” and **ji** means matter, so **butsu-kojo-no-ji** means “the matter beyond buddha” or the matter of the ascendant state of buddha. These words describe a Buddha continuing Buddhist practice after attaining the truth. Attainment of the truth is the practitioner’s recognition that he or she has been buddha since the eternal past. Therefore, even though buddhas have attained the truth, they do not distinctly change their thought, their physical condition, their life and their practice Zazen, after having attained the truth. They just continue with their lives practicing Zazen each day. Buddhas like this are called “beyond buddha” or “ascendent buddhas” because they are buddhas who do not look like buddhas, and who continue the same usual Buddhist life as the life which they had before they were enlightened. Master Dōgen revered these ascendent buddhas very much. Ascendent buddhas like these are actual buddhas, and we cannot find buddhas other than they in this world. So, in this chapter Master Dōgen explained the matter of ascendent buddhas quoting the words of many masters.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Remember, the matter of the ascendant state of buddha is beyond latent causes and is beyond the fulfillment of effects: even so we can experience it to the full by physically attaining the state of when speaking, not listening. [92]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

For this reason, I say so is that the other individual buddhas and individual patriarchs are numerous, they have never even dreamt of Tozan’s words on the ascendant state of buddha. [93]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

It is called the right Dharma eye treasury, and the fine mind of nirvana. Though it is present in the self, it may be necessary to know. Though it is present in the self, it is still never known.

FN #71 In other words, it is beyond intellectual recognition. [99]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Those who know the pivotal matter of the ascendent state are called human beings in the ascendent state of buddha; they physically attain the matter of the ascendent state of buddha. [100]

Vision Statement

Non-conceptual knowledge penetrates universal mysteries; conceptual knowledge is limited to human conventions.

29. **Inmo** **It** [101]

Inmo is a colloquial word in Chinese and it means “it,” “that” or “what.” We usually use the words “it,” “that,” or “what” to indicate something that we do not need to explain. Therefore, Buddhist philosophers in China use the word **inmo** to suggest something ineffable. At the same time one of the aims of studying Buddhism is to realize reality, and according to Buddhist philosophy, reality is something ineffable. So, the word **inmo** was used to indicate truth or reality, which in Buddhist philosophy is originally ineffable. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained the meaning of quoting the words of Master Ungo Doyo, Master Samghanandi, Master Daikan Eno, Master Sekito Kisen, and others.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

We ourselves are tools which it possesses within this universe and ten directions. How do we know that *it* exists? We know it is so because the body and the mind both appear in the universe yet neither is ourself. [108]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Mastering this principle, we should penetrate and clarify the past, we should penetrate and clarify the future, and we should penetrate and clarify the very moment of the present. [103]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Great master Musai of Nangaku-zan mountain on one occasion is asked by Yakusan, “The three vehicles and the twelve divisions of the teaching, I roughly know. But I have heard that in the south there is direct pointing at the human mind, realizing the nature, and becoming Buddha. Frankly, I have not clarified this yet. I beg you master out of compassion, to teach me. [107]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Because this is something, we should realize an experience that all myriad things are truly something. We should realize an experience that every single thing is truly something. Something is not open to doubt: it comes like this. [108]

Vision Statement

We vanish and the truth of the self manifests in knowing.

30. Gyoji [1] Pure Conduct and Observance of the Precepts (1) [109]
Gyoji [2] Pure Conduct and Observance of the Precepts (2) [131]

Gyo means deeds, actions, or conduct: and **ji** means observance of precepts. So **gyoji** mean “Pure Conduct and Observance of Precepts,” In short, we could say that Buddhism is a religion of action. Gautama Buddha recognized the importance of action in our life, and he established an ultimate philosophy dependent on action. In sum, the solution to all problems relies upon the philosophy of action and therefore Master Dōgen esteemed action highly. In this chapter, he quoted many examples of pure conduct and observance of precepts by Buddha and patriarchs. The contents of this chapter are thus very concrete and encourage us in our Buddhist life and observing the Buddhist precepts.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

In the great truth of the Buddhist patriarchs, there is always pure conduct and observance of precepts above which there is nothing. It continues in an unbroken cycle so that there is not the slightest interval between establishment of the mind, training, bodhi and nirvana: conduct and observance is a continuing cycle. For this reason, it is not doing that is forced upon ourselves, and it is not doing that is forced from outside; it is conduct and observance that has never been tainted. [109]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The words “the present moment” do not describe something that exists prior to conduct and observance. The realization of conduct and observance itself is called the present moment. [110]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The benevolent father, the great teacher, Shakyamuni Buddha practiced pure conduct and observance of precepts. [111]

Reality: a description of reality in words

What is Buddha? Baso said, “The mind here and now is buddha.”

Vision Statement

The practice of pure conduct is the practice giving joy.

31. Kai In Zanmai Samadhi State Like the Sea [157]

Kai means “sea,” and **in** [a translation of the Sanskrit word *mudra*] means seal or stamp. **Zanmai** [phonetic representation of the Sanskrit word *samadhi*] means the state in Zazen. So, **kai-in zanmai** means “sea-stamp samadhi” or “samadhi as a state like the sea.” These words appear frequently in the Garland Sutra. Master Dōgen explains the words describe the state of Zazen or the mutual interrelation between subject and object here and now. In this chapter, Master Dōgen expounds on samadhi as a state like the sea, quoting from the Vimalakirti Sutra, the Lotus Sutra, and from a conversation between Master Hakuin and his disciple.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

An instant before, an instant after; instant does not depend on instant;

A dharma before, a dharma after; dharma does not oppose dharma.

Just this is called samadhi, state like to sea. [158]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Because it is real dharmas, it is not confined to the atoms of the objective world, and because it is not confined to the atoms of the objective world, it is untainted. Simply this untainted is the buddhas and the patriarchs themselves. [160]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

A man of old said, “While we are meeting it, it does not stand out; when our attention is drawn to it, then we recognize its existence. [161 FN# 29]

Reality: a description of reality in words

What is meant by “the sea?” “It includes myriad existence.” [163]

Vision Statement

The tranquil unity of subject and object pierces every cell with joy, wonder, healing, and fulfillment.

32. **Juki** **Affirmation [167]**

Ju needs to give and **ki** means affirmations, so **juki** means affirmation. Buddhist sutras contain many descriptions of Gautama Buddha giving his disciples affirmation that they would attain the truth, but few Buddhist scholars concern themselves with the meaning of these affirmations. Master Dōgen, however, saw the great significance of these affirmations in Buddhist philosophy. In this chapter, he explained the meaning of the affirmation and taught us why Buddhist sutras so often describe the affirmations of attaining the truth.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Remember, affirmation has realized the self, and affirmation is just the self which has been realized. Therefore, what has been received from the buddhas and the patriarchs, rightful successor to rightful successor, is nothing other than affirmation. [168]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

But if we understand, hear, and say that our self is really our self, the universe that realizes affirmation will definitely be present. [171]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

This is why buddhas receive the affirmation of the buddhas. In general, in their giving of affirmation with a single hand they give affirmation with both hands they give affirmation, and with a thousand hands and eyes they give affirmation and are given affirmation. [171]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Because the past, the present, and the future are included in the giving of affirmation, they are realized when the self is affirmed, and they are realized when the external world is affirmed. [176]

Vision Statement

Dharma companions reveal themselves and affirm good fortune and validate right effort.

33. **Kannon** **Avalokiteshvara [179]**

Kannon is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese name of Bodhisattva called Avalokiteshvara in Sanskrit. Avalokiteshvara is described in the Lotus Sutra as someone who always comes to the world to save a man or woman who cries for help. Kannon literally means “Regarder of Sounds,” and this expresses the character of Avalokiteshvara who always responds to the cries of help of living beings. Thus, Avalokiteshvara is usually thought of as a symbol of compassion. But Master Dōgen understood Avalokiteshvara as a symbol of a life force that is more fundamental to living beings than compassion. So, in this chapter, he explained the meaning of Avalokiteshvara quoting a famous conversation about Avalokiteshvara between Master Unko Doyo and Master Dogo Enchi.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Limitlessly abundant means countless. It is an expression of infinite abundance –of diversity without restriction. Given that the diversity is originally unrestricted, we should not limit it even with a measure of limitlessness. We should learn in the arithmetic of using limitless abundance, like this. It is already beyond the countless and limitless. [180-181]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Unkan’s words “I understand I understand” are not saying that “I understand” the words of Dogo. [182]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Dogo says “Your words are nicely spoken. At the same time, your expression of the truth is just 80 or 90% of realization.” The point here is that expression of the truth is speaking to a nicety. “Speaking to a nicety means hitting the target by speaking clearly, manifesting something by speaking and leaving nothing unexpressed. [183]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Dogo says “The thoroughly realized body is hands and eyes.”

Vision Statement

Those with Dharma ears respond with unhesitating compassion.

34. **Arakan** **The Arahats 187]**

Arakan represents the sound of the Sanskrit word, arhan or arhat, which means a person who is worthy of veneration. Arhathood is also the ultimate state of sravaka or rigoristic Buddhist. The sravaka belongs to Hinayana Buddhism, and so Mahayana Buddhists usually did not value arhathood. But Master Dōgen did not share this opinion. According to Master Dōgen, there cannot be any difference between Hinayana Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism because he believed that there is only one Buddhism, which has been transmitted from Gautama Buddha to us. He thought that the difference between Mahayana, Buddhism and Hinayana Buddhism was a difference produced by the difference between ages, and that and we so we should not affirm the existence of more than one Buddhism. From this basis, he explained the supreme value of the arhat in this chapter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Realization of all bonds of existence is the whole Universe in ten directions never having been hidden. [187]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Of old it was said, “In the sutras of sravakas, arhat is the name given to the state of Buddha.” [189]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

To desire, and to pursue the state of arhat is to be satisfied with your gruel and to be satisfied with your rice. [190]

Reality: a description of reality in words

We can say: When arhats are in the state of the profane all things and phenomena disturb them, and when arhats are in the state of the sacred all things and phenomena liberate them. [191]

Vision Statement

Arahats carry out enlightening activities in endless contexts without regression.

35. **Hakajushi Cedar Trees [193]**

The koan or story **Hakujushi**, “The Cedar Trees,” is very famous both in China and in Japan. Although many Buddhists have presented their interpretation of the story, most of them are unsatisfactory. In this chapter, Master Dōgen gives his own interpretation. First, he describes Master Joshu’s character, then he interprets the story. In the story a monk asks Master Joshu what was Master Bodhidharma’s intention, in coming to China from the west. Master Joshu says, “The cedar trees in the garden.” His intention is, “It was just reality” or “It was just Dharma.” But the monk understood him that cedar trees are just objective things. So, he asked for another answer. But the Master again and insisted that cedar trees in the garden are just reality.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Truly, pursuing the truth by sitting in Zazen is the direct path to the Buddhist truth. [195]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“The cedar trees in the garden.” [196]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The time of cedar trees becoming buddha, while provisionally described as “in the twelve hours” is also “in the twelve hours themselves.” [199]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In conclusion, cedar trees, and the Buddha nature are not different sounds in the same tune. They are, in other words, the indefinable. We should investigate them, asking “like what?”

Vision Statement

The cedar trees endlessly teach the form of connection of the inner and outer worlds.

36. Komyo Brightness [201]

Komyo means luminosity, light, or brightness. Such light has been revealed in Buddhism since ancient times and has both a physical and mental or spiritual side. Generally speaking, idealistic people believe in spiritual light, whereas materialistic people only believe in physical light, but according to a Buddhist, brightness has both a physical side and a mental side. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained this brightness. He explained the Universe is our own brightness, that the Universe is just brightness, that our behavior in the Universe is brightness and that there is nothing other than brightness.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

At this time [Bodhidharma] hung his traveling staff at Shorin-ji Temple. He authentically transmitted the Dharma to the second patriarch, Zen Master Taishō. This was the direct experience of the Buddhist patriarchs' brightness. [202]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“The whole Universe in the ten directions is the brightness of the self.” We must learn this self, which is brightness as the whole Universe the ten directions, living-and-dying, going-and-coming are the going-and- coming of the brightness. [204]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

[Unmon] preaches to the assembly: “Each human being totally possesses the brightness. When looked for it is invisible, obscured and utter darkness. Just what is this brightness that is present in all people?” The assembled monks make no reply. Unmon himself says in their place, “The Monks’ Hall, The Buddha Hall, the Kitchen and the Three Gates.” [205]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The brightness naturally is each human being; each human being naturally possesses each human being; each moment of brightness naturally possesses each moment of brightness; each moment of existence possesses each moment of existence; and the existence of each moment of totality possesses each moment of totality.

Vision Statement

Universal radiance opens the mind to inherent Buddha nature, one shared by all beings.

37. **Shinjin Gakudo** **Learning the Truth with the Body and Mind [209]**

Shinjin means “body and mind,” and **gakudo** means “learning the truth,” so **shinjin gakudo** means learning the truth with body and mind. Generally speaking, people usually think that they can arrive at the truth through intellectual reasoning. In Buddhism, however, it is taught that the truth can be attained not by the intellect alone, but through action. Therefore, learning the truth in Buddhism includes both physical pursuit of the truth and mental pursuit of the truth. This is why Master Dōgen called Buddhist pursuit “learning the truth with body and mind.” In this chapter, he explained learning the truth with body and learning the truth with the mind, and at the same time, he explained that the two ways of pursuing the truth are always combined in the oneness of action. So, we can say that the division of learning into two ways is only a method of explaining the Buddhist truth pursuit of the truth through action.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Therefore, former buddhas and later buddhas all unfailingly practice the Buddhist truth. Provisionally there are two ways to learn the Buddhist truth: to learn it with the mind and to learn it with the body. [209]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Further, after we have established – through sympathetic communication of the truth – bodhi mind, we take refuge in the great truth of the Buddhist patriarchs and learn the concrete actions which are the establishment of the bodhi mind. Even if the real bodhi mind has not yet risen in us, we should imitate the methods of the Buddhist patriarchs who established the bodhi-mind before us. [209-210] See FN #7

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Establishment of the bodhi-mind: this is sometimes achieved in life-and-death, sometimes achieved in nirvana, and sometimes achieved in circumstances other than life-and-death and nirvana. It does not depend on the place; rather at a place where the mind is established, [the establishment] unhindered. [213]

Reality: a description of reality in words

To do a prostration and to bow with joined hands are the moving and still forms of dignified behavior. [216] *Dignified manner is Buddha Dharma; decorum is the essential teaching.* – Ikko Narasaki

Vision Statement

The power of samadhi empowers both body and mind.

38. Muchu-Setsuma Preaching a Dream in a Dream [219]

Mu means “dream,” and **chu** means “in,” and **setsu** means “preach,” so **muchu-setsumu** means “preaching a dream in a dream.” In Buddhist philosophy, there is an idea that our life is a kind of dream because in everyday life, we cannot recognize our life itself. In other words, our actual life is just a moment here and now and we cannot grasp such a moment. We are living at every moment and every moment cannot be expressed with words. So, we can say that we are living in like a dream. At the same time to preach Buddhist, theory as a kind of preaching a dream, and furthermore to live our life is also kind of a preaching, telling, or manifesting a dream. So, Master Dōgen compared our life to preaching a dream in a dream.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The truth which the Buddha and patriarch manifest is prior to the sprouting of creation; therefore, it is beyond discussions that arise from old nests. [219]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Thus, the whole Earth is the instantaneously limitless wheel of Dharma, and all the Earth is unambiguous, causing and effect. [221]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

In general, expressing the truth in a single phrase, and not understanding and not knowing, all the preaching of a dream in a dream. [224]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Learning and practice the present teaching of the Buddha, we should perfectly realize the Buddhist order of the Buddha. This preaching is not a metaphor. [225] FN#51

Vision Statement

Metaphoric images and verbal articulations are concrete existence itself.

39. **Do-toku** **Expressing the Truth** [229]

Do means “to speak” and **toku** means “to be able,” so **do-toku** literally means “being able to say something.” But overtime, the meaning of **do-toku** changed to “expressing the truth,” or “an expression of the truth.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained the meaning of **do-toku**, or expressing the truth, from his standpoint.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

In other than Buddhist patriarchs, the question is lacking, and the expression of truth is lacking – because the state is lacking. [229]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

So, a lifetime without leaving the monastery is a lifetime without leaving the expression of the truth. [231]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

“What is the ancestral Master’s intention in coming from the west?” The hut-master said, “The ravine is deep so the dipper’s handle is long.” [232]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When there is learning and practice of knowing the self, there is the reality of expressing the truth. [234]

Vision Statement

Liberation is attained by communing with the source of language and higher knowledge.

40. **Gabyo**

A Picture of Rice Cake [235]

Ga means a picture, a painting, or a drawing, and **byo** means rice cake. Therefore, **gabyo** means a rice cake painted in a picture. Needless to say, a picture of a rice cake cannot satisfy an appetite. Therefore, in Buddhism, painted rice cakes have frequently been used as a symbol of something serving useful purpose. Notably, they were used as a symbol for abstract theories and concepts, which are useless to realize Buddhism. Master Dōgen's interpretation about rice cakes differed from this usual interpretation. He felt that a painted rice cake represents half of the Universe – the conceptual or mental side of reality. Therefore, we can say that, even though abstract theories and words have sometimes misled people who are studying Buddhism, if they were no theories of words, it would be impossible to understand Buddhism systematically, or explain Buddhist philosophy to others. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained the real meaning of painted rice cakes in Buddhism: painted rice cake concepts cannot satisfy hunger, but they can be utilized to understand and explain the Truth. Further, Master Dōgen insists that existence has both physical, material, and a conceptual, mental side, and that these two aspects are inseparable in Reality. Without a picture of a rice cake that is the concept rice cake – we can never find the real existence of rice cakes.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Although buddhas and things are beyond a single essence and beyond a single state of mind, in the moment of experience the experience of each – without hindering the other – is realized. [235]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Every movement and every moment of stillness is nothing but the painting of a picture. [238]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Through this power of liberation, earth, fire, and wind are made into a vigorous livelihood, and mind, will, consciousness, and wisdom are made into the great death. [240]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Truly, because the whole Universe and the whole of Dharma is the painting of a picture, human reality is realized from a picture, and Buddhist patriarch are realized from a picture. [240]

Vision Statement

Teachers may use their mastery and transcendent power to teach concepts, work directly on transforming the hearts of others, or both at the same time.

41. Zenki All Functions [243]

Zen means “all” or “total” and **ki** means “functions” so **zenki** means “all functions” or the “total.” From the Buddhist standpoint, we could say this world is the real realization of all functions. Master Dōgen explained this state of the world quoting the words of Master Engo Kokugon that that life is the realization of all functions and death is the realization of all functions.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The Buddha’s great truth, when perfectly mastered, is liberation and is realization. This liberation describes that – for some – life liberates life and death liberates death. Therefore, there is getting out of life-and-death, and there is entering into life-and-death, both of which are the perfectly mastered great truth. [243]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

There is nothing, a single moment nor a single Dharma, that is not part of life. There is nothing, not a single matter nor a single state of mind, that is not part of life. [244]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Life can be likened to a time when a person is sailing in a boat. On this boat., I am operating the sail, I have taken the rudder, I am pushing the pole; at the same time, the boat is carrying me, and there is no I beyond the boat. [244]

Reality: a description of reality in words

We feel that before this realization there was no real. Nevertheless., the state before this realization was the previous manifestation of all functions. [245]

Vision Statement

All manners of homage paying and obeisance arise from “all functions” – the living reality of Buddha’s teachings.

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42. **Tsuki** **Moon [1]**

Tsuki means “the moon”; in this chapter Master Dōgen uses the moon as a symbol to explain the relationship between an abstract concept and a concrete entity. The moon existed yesterday, it exists today, and it will exist tomorrow. We can say that at one moment in time the moon is a unique and independent entity. At the same time, there is the abstract concept “the moon.” The concept “the moon” is an abstraction of the concrete moon which exists at one moment; that is the moon yesterday, the moon today, the moon tomorrow. Although the unique, concrete moon is the origin of the abstract concept “the moon,” we are prone to discuss philosophical problems only in terms of abstract concepts, forgetting concrete facts, and creating a division between thinking and perception. Buddhist philosophy synthesizes the two factors, and here Master Dōgen explains the mutual relationship between thinking and sensory perception comparing the abstract concept “the moon,” with the concrete moon. Secondly, Master Dōgen uses the relationship between moon and cloud to explain the relationship between subject and object. Buddhist theory says that reality is oneness between subject and object here and now. Master Dōgen explains this using the example of the moon and a cloud that surrounds the moon.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The round realization of moons is not only three and three before and not only three and three after. [Buddhist philosophy, synthesizes the two factors, and here Master Dōgen explains the mutual relationship between thinking and sensory perception, comparing the abstract concept “the moon” with the concrete moon.] [1]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“Being like” does not express resemblance; “being like” is concrete exist. The Buddha’s true “Dharma-body” is reality itself. [2]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Just as, for example, moving eyes are able to stir calm waters and still eyes make fire seem to swirl, so it is that when a cloud flies, the moon moves, and when a boat sail, the shore drifts. [5]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Because the moon’s moving is never a metaphor, it’s essence and form are alone and round.....What is truly lovely for practice is the moon. See fn35 [6]

Vision Statement

“Subtly includes within the true, inquiry and response come up together.” Buddhist intuition [wisdom] is a solid fact.

43. Kuge Flowers in Space [7]

Ku means “the sky,” or “space,” and **ge** means “flowers.” What are flowers in space? Master Dōgen uses the words “flowers in space” to express all phenomena in this world. According to the ideas of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, we cannot be sure whether things really exist in this world, but we can be sure that there are phenomena which we can perceive with our senses. Therefore, for him, phenomena are not necessarily identified with reality although they do actually appear in this world. He refused to discuss the metaphysical problem of “real existence” and based his philosophy on human reason. The same idea was present in ancient Buddhism. Master Dōgen thought that this skeptical attitude was important in considering the meaning of our life, and so in this chapter he explains the meaning of “flowers in space,” which in Buddhism expresses real phenomena.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“Natural realization” is the very moment of opening flowers and bearing fruit and the very moment of transmitting the Dharma and saving the deluded. [8]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

A person of clouded eyes is a person of original realization, a person of subtle realization, a person of the Buddha, a person of the triple world, and a person in the ascendant state of Buddha. [10-11]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

When an instant of cloudedness is there in the eyes, flowers in space tumbled down, express maintenance of buddha. [15]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Even if we buy throughout the country, there is no gate: it is not that there is no buying throughout the country; it is buying the gateless [17].

Vision Statement

The mind empty of the certainty of phenomenal existence is open to resolution of conditioning.

44. **Kobusshin** **The Mind of Eternal Buddhas [19]**

Ko means “old” or “eternal,” “**butsu**” means “buddha” and **shin** means “mind.” So **kobusshin** means “the mind of eternal buddhas.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen sites examples of the mind of eternal Buddhas, quoting Master Tendo Nyojo, Master Engo Kokogon, Master Sosan Konin, and Master Seppo Gisan. Then he explains a story about the National Master Daiocho (Master Nan-yo Echu) and his disciples that suggests the oneness of the mind of eternal Buddhas and miscellaneous concrete things. At the end of the chapter, he quotes Master Zengan Chuko’s words on the matter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Because Sokei has the virtue of ascending and of descending, he receives the authentic transmission from the Seven Buddhas. [19]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The reason we speak of the eternal mind is that the mind is eternal. The moment and causes-and-conditions of the present, and the lands of dust in space of the present are both nothing other than the eternal mind. [22]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Sozan says, “On the peak of Daiyu-rei mountain, an eternal Buddha is present and is radiating brightness that shines on this place.” [20]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The nine mountains and eight oceans, which are *the occurrence of the world*, are eternal buddhas, sun-faces and moon-faces and eternal buddhas’ skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. [21]

Vision Statement

The mind stream intimately participates in the cosmic network of perpetual awakening.

45. Bodaisatta-Shishobo Four Elements of a Bodhisattva's Social Relations [25]

Bodaisatta means “bodhisattva,” a person is pursuing the Buddhist truth; **shi** means “four.” and **shobo** means “elements of social relations” or methods for social relations.” The four are dana, free giving; priya-akhyana, kind speech; artha-carya, helpful conduct; and samana-arthata, identity of purpose or cooperation. Buddhism put great value on our actual conduct. For this reason, our conduct and relating to each other is a very important part of Buddhist life. In this chapter Dōgen preaches that these ways of behavior are the essence of Buddhist life. He explains the real meaning of Buddhism in terms of social relations.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

First is free giving. Second is kind speech. Third is helpful conduct. Fourth is cooperation. [25]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Truly, it is because we are originally equipped with the virtue of free giving that we have received ourselves as we are now. [26]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Remember kind speech arises from a loving mind, and the seed of a loving mind is compassion. We should learn that kind speech has the power to turn around the heavens; it is not merely the praise of ability. [27]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Cooperation is the conduct and the vow of a bodhisattva. We should face all things only with gentle faces. [27]

Vision Statement

Compassion is known as a principle of reality.

46. **Katto** **The Complicated [31]**

Katsu means “arrowroot” and **to** means wisteria. Arrowroot and wisteria, being vines, are unable to stand by themselves, but grow by entwining with other plants. Because of this in China and Japan, arrowroot and wisteria are used as a symbol of something that is very complicated. Buddhist philosophy strives to describe what reality is. Because reality cannot be adequately expressed with words, it is sometimes described as the ineffable. Master Dōgen uses the word *Katto*, the complicated, to suggest reality, which is very direct, but complicated. He feels the words, “the complicated” express the nature of reality rather well.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The First Ancestor, under the Venerable Prajnātara in the past, has directly experienced and has received the direct transmission of the Buddha’s instruction and the bones of the truth. [31]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

What [the Ancestor] expresses for the four disciples is from the beginning, utterly the same. The Ancestor’s expression is utterly consistent, but this does not necessarily mean the four understandings are the same. [33]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Say then, “Bodhidharma gave the transmission to what person?” [35] [fn22]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, the truth that skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are entangled is the standard for the state of *you have got me* which is preached by eternal Buddhas. We should endeavor to master this criterion.

Vision Statement

The entangled mind manifests with unending capacity.

47. Sango-Yuishan The Triple World Is Only the Mind [37]

San means “three” and **kai** means “world.” So **sangai** means the “three worlds” or “the triple world.” Traditionally Buddhist theory looks at the world as an amalgamation of three worlds: the world of thinking, the world of feeling, and the world of action. In traditional Buddhist terminology, these three worlds are called the worlds of volition, matter, and non-matter. The phrase, “the three worlds” or “the triple world” is often used to mean this world here and now, the whole world, the real world, which includes the world of thinking, the world of feeling, and the world of action. **Yui** means “only” or “alone” and **shin** mean “mind.” So **sangai-yuishin** means “the triple world is only the mind” or “the triple world is the mind alone.” The phrase, “the triple world is only the mind” is often interpreted as an idealistic insistence that the whole world is produced by our mind. Historically, many Buddhist monks thought that this was the case. Master Dōgen insisted that in Buddhism, the phrase “the triple world is only the mind” means something far more real. This phrase refers to the teaching that reality exists in the contact between subject and object. From this viewpoint, when we say that the world is only the mind, we also need to say that the mind is only the world, to express the fact that the relationship is a mutual one. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the meaning of the phrase “the triple world is only the mind” from the Buddhist viewpoint, criticizing idealistic interpretations.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The Great Master Shakyamuni Buddha says,

The triple world is only the one mind,
There is nothing else outside of the mind.
The mind Buddha and living beings –
The three are without distinction. [37]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

For this reason

Great Master Shakyamuni Buddha says,

Now this world
All is my possession
And living beings
All are my children. [38-39]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Great Master says, “If we search the whole Earth for a person who understands the Buddha Dharma, it is impossible to find one.” [41]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Moreover, there is the triple world-mind alone, which is beyond both understanding and not understanding.

Vision Statement

Awakening cannot be found outside of the never-ending relationship of conditioning and awakening.

48. **Sesshin-Sessho Expounding Mind-Expounding Nature [43]**

Setsu means “teach,” “explain,” or “expound.”. **Shin** means “mind,” and **sho** means “the essence,” or “the nature.”. So **sesshin** means “expounding the mind,” and **sessho** means “expounding the nature.” Some Chinese Buddhist monks asserted that expounding the mind and expounding the nature belong within the sphere of intellectual effort, and so to make such effort to explain the mind and essence is not only unnecessary, but also detrimental to attainment of Buddhist truth. They believe that the Buddhist could never embrace intellectual understanding. Master Dōgen had a different opinion. He thought the concepts **sesshin** and **sessho** in Buddhist refer to something much more real. He understood **sesshin-sessho** as a manifestation of the mind and manifestation of the nature in the real world. Master Dōgen saw no reason to deny the concept **sesshin** and **sessho**; instead, he used them to explain the fundamental theory of Buddhism.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Expounding the mind and expounding the nature are the universal basis of the Buddha’s truth, by virtue of which every buddha and every ancestor is realized. [43]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The mind, Buddhist ancestors express is skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. [45]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

To work earnestly under a teacher is to investigate physically, in the very moment of the body-mind, and is to investigate in experience, both before the body, and after the body, nothing other than expounding the mind and expounding the nature. [45] [fn 17]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Even before experience of the state, expounding the mind and expounding the nature is the Buddha way; at the same time, it is by expounding the mind and expounding the nature that we experience the state. [47]

Vision Statement

Universally illumined knowledge informs mind and nature.

49. Butsudo Buddhist Truth [51]

Butso means “Buddha” and **do** originally means “way,” but also “morals” and “the truth.” So **butsudo** means “the Buddha’s truth,” or “the Buddhist truth.” The concept of “the Buddhist truth” is central to Dōgen’s theory, and it is helpful to examine the meaning from each of the four phases of Buddhist philosophy. In the first [subjective] phase, the Buddhist truth is a bodied in the Buddhist philosophical system. In the second [objective] phase, the Buddhist truth is the external world, or nature. In the third phase [based on action], the Buddhist truth is ethical or moral conduct and everyday life; that is, everyday life as we live it. In the ultimate phase, the Buddhist truth is an ineffable, the complicated.; the state is Zazen, or reality itself. In this chapter, however, Master Dōgen does not try to explain these meanings of “the Buddhist truth”; he simply asserts that there is only one Buddhism—that which was established by Gautama Buddha. Based on his assertion, although there are several Buddhist sects, we do not need to use the titles that these sects have been given. Master Dōgen insists that the title “the Buddhist truth,” or “Buddhism” is sufficient, and that it is wrong to use titles such as the Ummon Sect, the Hogen Sect, the Iggyo Sect, the Rinzai Sect, and the Soto Sect. We usually think of Master Dōgen as belonging to the Soto Sect, but he himself did not approve of the use of even the title “Soto Sect.”

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

My Dharma gate has been transmitted and received from past buddhas; it is, without discussing, the balanced state of Zen or diligence, solely to master the wisdom of the Buddha. [54]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

My late Master, the eternal Buddha, in formal preaching in the Dharma Hall, addresses the assembly as follows: “That individuals today talk solely of their being differences in the customs of the lineages of Unmon, Hogen, Iggyo, Rinzai, Soto, and so on, is not the Buddha Dharma and is not the truth of the ancestral Master. [56]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Though cessation is the essence in form of the right Dharma eye treasury, the transmission is passed on like this.

Reality: a description of reality in words

In conclusion, if you want to receive the authentic transmission of the conduct of the truth as one who follows the Buddha, do not see or hear the names of sects. [65]

Vision Statement

The truth of all sects is preached eternally at Buddha’s assembly.

50. Shoho-Jisso All Dharmas Are Real Form [67]

Sho expresses plurality; it means “all,” “various,” or “many.” **Ho** means “dharmas,” both physical things and mental phenomena. **Jitsu** means “real.” **So** means form. The Lotus Sutra teaches the most important and fundamental theory in Buddhism: that all things and all phenomena are real form. Because Buddhism is a philosophy of realism, its viewpoint is different from idealism and materialism. The idealist sees only phenomenon which cannot be confirmed to be substantially real. Idealists thus doubt that phenomena are real form. The materialist looks at the detail, breaking things into parts, losing the meaning and value that is included in the whole. Buddhism says that reality is all things and phenomena existing here and reveres them as real substance: reality itself. This teaching is found in the Lotus Sutra expressed with the words “all dharmas are real form. This chapter explains the meaning of the Lotus Sutra’s teaching.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The realization of the Buddhist ancestors is perfectly realized real form. Real form is all dharmas. All Dharmas are forms as they are. [67]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Appearance in the world as Buddha alone together with Buddha, is the preaching practice and experience of all dharma’s are real form. This preaching is the perfect realization of momentarily being able. [68] [fn8]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Opening the gate of expedient methods means revealing true form. [72]

For 80 years in the world and for 50 years of preaching the Dharma, the Buddha did his upmost to educate human beings and gods, he transformed all living beings and caused them all to enter the Buddha’s truth. [73]

Reality: a description of reality in words

While, Great Master Shu-itsu of Gensa in Temple is preaching informally, he hears the chirping of swallow chicks and says, “This is profound preaching of real form and skillful expounding of the pivot of the Dharma.” He gets down from his seat. Afterwards a monk requests instruction saying, “I do not understand.” The Master says, “Go away! No one believes you.” [77]

Vision Statement

Everything is transformable – within the eye of awareness.

51. Mitsugo Secret Talk [79]

Mitsu means “secret,” or “mystical,” in the sense of not apparent to the senses or to the intellect, but experience directly or immediately—as if two things are touching. **Go** means “words” or “talk.” So **mitsugo** means “secret talk,” that is something communicated directly without sound. In Buddhism it is said that there is secret talk that can be recognized and understood even though it has no sound. So, secret talk suggest the existence of intuitive perception. It is a fact that we can sometimes discover meaning or secrets without receiving any external stimuli, but we need not see the fact as particularly mystical. An analogy that helps us to understand facts is the sympathetic resonance of tuning forks.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

When the great truth, that which buddhas guard and desire, is realized as the real universe, the state expressed, “*You were like this, I am like this, and each of us must guard it well,*” is experienced exactly in the present. [79]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The principle of the words, “If you do not understand,” is to sanction a course of quietly learning in practice we should consider this through effort and pursuit of the truth. [80]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The World Honored One says, “I have the Right-Dharma I treasury and the fine mind of nirvana. I transmit them to Mahakasyapa.” [82]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In conclusion, that places of teaching people at moments of intuition and affirmation are, in every case, the manifestation of secrecy,[and] is the authentic tradition transmitted by buddhas and ancestors. [83]

Vision Statement

Mitsugo is the language of the cosmic network of perpetual awakening.

52. **Bukkyo** **The Buddhist Sutras [85]**

Butso means “Buddha” or “Buddhist,” and **kyo** means “sutra” or “scripture.” So **bukkyo** means Buddhist Sutras. Shobogenzo chapter 24 is also called **Bukkyo**, but in that chapter **kyo** is a different word meaning “teaching.” In Buddhism, there are fundamentally two ways that are useful in pursuing the truth. One is practicing Zen and the other is reading sutras. But some people emphasize the value of practicing Zen so strongly they are blind to the value of reading sutras, and so they deny the value of reading them. They insist that Buddhism is not philosophical theories, and therefore that to attain the truth we need only practice Zazen, and that reading Buddhist Sutra is useless or even detrimental to pursuing the truth. But Master Dōgen did not think so. He esteemed the value of reading sutras and he thought it was necessary to read Buddhist sutras in order to attain the truth. Therefore, he recorded the true meaning of reading Buddhist sutras in this chapter. Furthermore, in Master Dōgen’s thought, Buddhist Sutra are not only Buddhist scriptures, but they are also the universe itself, which shows us and teaches us the true meaning of our life.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The method of teaching bodhisattvas, and the method of teaching buddhas exists in the here, and now. [85]

A good counselor means a teacher who can give concrete practical guidance on how to apply the principles of Buddhism in daily life. [fn3]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The moment before and a word after are both the same state as the sutras and act as a good counselor. [85-86] Action—intuition before, consideration after. [fn4]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Because there are times in which a true person is known, and there are times in which a true person goes unknown. [94]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In conclusion, we should know that in the Buddha’s truth, there are inevitably Buddhist sutras; we should learn and practice as the mountains and the oceans, their universal text and their profound meaning; and we should make them or standard for pursuing the truth. [94]

Vision Statement

“Intuition before, consideration after” is the guidance of the kalyanamitra.

53. **Mujo-Seppo The Non-emotional Preaches the Dharma [95]**

Mujo means the non-emotional and **Seppo** means to preach the Dharma. Originally **mujo** means inanimate or insentient things, so **mujo-seppo** means inanimate things preach the Dharma. But Master Dōgen's usage of the word **mujo** was wider than the usual usage as if the words cover the whole of nature, human beings, as well as mountains, rivers, and so on. Master Dōgen insisted that even inanimate things can preach the Dharma, and at the same time he insisted that human beings can preach the dharma when they are they are non-emotional. He insisted that anything that is non-emotional can preach the Dharma –a viewpoint that profoundly expresses the true nature of Buddhist teaching.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Therefore, having been authentically transmitted from buddhas of the eternal past to the Seven Buddhas, and having been authentically transmitted from the Seven Buddhist to today, there exists the non-emotional preaching the Dharma. [96]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Can the insentient really preach the Dharma or not? The National Master says: they are always preaching ardently; they preach without interval. [96]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

[The Buddha] is certifying that the non-emotional preaching the dharma, though multifarious, does not require the activation of the intellect. [102]

Reality: a description of reality in words

What is the non-emotional preaching the dharma? The Master says, “No abusive language.” [104]

Vision Statement

The non-emotional intuitive response arises from the every-moment awareness of Buddha's assembly.

54. **Hossho** **The Dharma Nature [105]**

Ho means Dharma, that is Buddhist teaching, or the Universe itself. **Sho** means essence or nature so **hossho** means the Dharma-nature, or the essence of the Universe. Needless to say, we are living in the Universe. Therefore, what the Universe means is one of the most important philosophical problems in our life. Some people insist that the Universe of something spiritual. Others the Universe is something material. But from the Buddhist standpoint, the Universe is neither spiritual nor material, but something real. It is very difficult to express the Universe is something because reality usually transcends explanations with words. Master Dōgen undertook this difficult task, in order to express the nature of the Universe, in this chapter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Independent realization without a master is the working of the Dharma-nature. [105]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Shakyamuni Buddha says, “Form as it is, the nature as it is. So, opening flowers and falling leaves are just the nature as it is. [107]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

All living beings for countless kalpas, have never left samadhi as the Dharma-nature; they were always in the reality of samadhi as the Dharma-nature, putting on clothes and eating meals, speaking and conversing, the working of the sense six origins, and all actions are totally the Dharma-nature. [106]

Reality: a description of reality in words

“The whole is the Dharma-nature.” [108]

Vision Statement

Our hope and practice is to discern the differences inherent in dualities, and to live within and admire the harmony of their relationships.

55. Darani Dharani [109]

The Chinese characters pronounced the **da-ra-ni** represent the Sanskrit dharani, which originally means a spell or incantation that is believed to have mystical omnipotence. But Master Dōgen's interpretation was more concrete, and especially he esteemed the value of the prostrations as dharani. In this chapter, he explains the meaning of prostrations as dharani.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

To perform such service is not only to learn the pivot of the Buddhist ancestors' mind; it is to meet inside the pivot of the mind with one Buddhist ancestor or with two Buddhist ancestors. [110]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The kasaya is the banner of Buddhists. This conclusion is hard to arrive at and hard to meet. [114]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

When we are prostrating ourselves to the master who transmitted to us the dharma, we prostrate ourselves without selecting a time or worrying about the place. [112]

Reality: a description of reality in words

.... to do prostrations are excellent examples. They are precedents of the ancestors. They are the great dharani. [114]

Vision Statement

With openness and humility, practitioners easily grasp the meaning of bowing.

56. **Senmen** **Washing the Face [115]**

Sen means to wash, and **men** means the face. Idealistic religions, generally revere only the spiritual side of the world; every day activities, such as eating meals, getting dressed, washing the face and taking a bath or not considered to be religious practices. Buddhism is a religion based on the real world; these every day activities are important religious practices without which there can be no Buddhist life. This is why when a Chinese Buddhist was asked by his disciple, “What is the fundamental principle of Buddhism?” The master answered, “Wearing clothes and eating meals.” Master Dōgen put the greatest value on the practice of washing the face. In this chapter he explains the Buddhist meaning in the daily activities of taking a bath and washing the face.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

[The bodhisattva] applies oil to the body,

Having bathed away dust and dirt,

And puts on a fresh and clean robe:

Totally clean within and without. [115]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The fact is simply that, when we maintain and rely upon the practice-and-experience of the Buddhist ancestors, Buddha-methods such as using water to wash and bathing in water are transmitted. When we practice-and-experience on this basis, we transcend purity, pass through impurity, and get free of non-purity and non-impurity. [117]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

We utilize emptiness to bathe emptiness and utilize emptiness to bathe the body-mind. [117]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, chewing the willow twig and washing the face are the right Dharma of eternal buddhas and people who are devoted to practicing the truth with the will to the truth should practice and experience them. [126]

Vision Statement

Our life is the pure and unending expression of Buddha nature.

57. Menju

Face-to-Face Transmission [129]

Men means face, and **ju** means transmission. **Menju** means the transmission of the Dharma from a master to a disciple face-to-face. In Buddhism, what is transmitted from a master to a disciple is not only abstract theory, but also something real, including actual conduct, physical health, and intuitional wisdom. Therefore, the transmission of this cannot be actualized through explanations with words or simply by passing on some manuscript. For this reason, the Dharma that Gautama Buddha taught has been transmitted in person from master to disciples since the days of Gautama Buddha. Without this, the Buddhist Dharma cannot be transmitted. In this chapter Master Dōgen praises the transmission of Buddhist explains its importance.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “I possess the right-Dharma-eye treasury and the fine mind of nirvana. I transmit them to Mahakasyapa.” [129]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The Venerable Ananda prostrates himself directly before the Buddha’s face of the Venerable Mahakasyapa. This is the face-to-face transmission. [130]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

I am able to know Great Master Unmon, I am able to meet Great Master Unmon, and I am quite able to succeed Great Master Unmon. [136]

Reality: a description of reality in words

People who have the power of learning in practice take up the expressions of Hyakujo and Obaku, and people who have the directly accessible and settled state can fathom those expressions. [137]

Vision Statement

The True Thusness of face-to-face transmission opens the world of the Buddhas for offerings of homage and obeisance.

58. **Zazengi** **Standard Method of Zazen [139]**

Gi means a form or standard of behavior. Therefore, Zazengi means the standard method of Zen. Master Dōgen wrote several treatises about Zazen. First, he wrote the **Fukan-zazengi**, [The Universal Guide to the Standard Method of Zazen, in 1227, just after coming back from China. In Shobogenzo he wrote **Bendowa**, [A Talk about Pursuing the Truth], **Zazenshin** [A Needle for Zazen], **Zanmai-o-zanmai** [Samadhi that is King of the Samadhis], and this chapter **Zazengi**. **Fukan-zazengi** was the first text Master Dōgen wrote, and thus it was the first proclamation of his belief in Zazen. **Bendowa** was an introduction to Zazen written in an easy style and format to help us understand the fundamental theories of Zazen. **Zazenshin** contains a guiding poem on Zazen and Master Dōgen's interpretation of it. The reason Master Dōgen used poetry to interpret the meaning of Zazen is that it is difficult to interpret the philosophical meaning of Zen in prose, because the ultimate meaning of Zen is something that cannot be explained with words. Master Dōgen felt that it was appropriate to suggest the ultimate philosophical meaning of Zen in poetry. But in this chapter, **Zazengi**, Master Dōgen explained the method of practicing Zazen. The existence of this chapter indicates how highly revered the formal standard of Zazen.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

To practice Zen is to sit in Zazen [139]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Sitting in balance in the mountain-still state, think the concrete state of not thinking. How can the state of not thinking be thought? It is nonthinking. [140]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Fifth Ancestor on Obai-zan mountain had no other practices; he solely practiced Zazen. [140]

Reality: a description of reality in words

[Zazen] is the great peaceful and joyful gate of Dharma. It is untainted practice-and-experience. [140]

Vision Statement

Zazen is the hand-to-hand practice of sentient beings and Bodhisattvas.

59. **Baïke** **Plum Blossoms [141]**

Baïke means plum blossoms. Master Dōgen loved plum blossoms very much and we can find many descriptions and poems about plum blossoms in his works. Master Tendo Nyojo, Master Dōgen's master, also loved plum blossoms and so we can also find many poems about plum blossoms in his works. Plum blossoms may have been a great pleasure to Buddhist monks living in temples when there were a few consolations to relieve the hardship of winter – because plum blossoms bloom at the very beginning of spring, when there are no other flowers, and the plum blossoms are pretty and fragrant. In this chapter, Master Dōgen described the real situation of nature, quoting Master Tendo Nyojo's poems and preaching on plum blossoms.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“The opening of flowers is the occurrence of the world.” [142]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“In the heavens above and under the heavens I alone am the Honored-One,” and it is honored throughout the reality of the Dharma-world. [144]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Veteran monk Fu was formerly a giver of lectures. Enlightened by the cook of Kassen mountain, he realized the great state of realization, which is the plum blossoms letting the spring wind blow, in gusts large and small. [151]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In the becoming of rain and the becoming of clouds the past-and-present is naturally there. The past-and-present being empty, what end-point could there be? [151]

Vision Statement

Plum blossoms awaken with beginningless and endless aroma.

60. Juppo

The Ten Directions [153]

Ju mean ten and **ho** means “direction,” so **Juppo** means “the ten directions.” The ten directions are east, west, south north, northeast, southeast, southwest, northwest, and upward and downward. These represent all directions the whole space of the whole world. In Buddhist philosophy, the meaning of space is frequently discussed. These discussions, the word **juppo**, “the ten directions,” is often used as a concrete expression of space. In this chapter, Master Dōgen picks up the word **juppo** and uses it to discuss real space.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Shakyamuni Buddha tells a great assembly, “In the Buddha-lands of the ten directions, there only exists the one-vehicle Dharma.” [153]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“The whole Universe in the ten directions is a sramana’s whole body.” [156]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Great Master Shu-itsu of Gensa-in temple says, “The whole Universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl.” [157]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, we just learn in practice, as the ten directions, nostrils that are alive. [158]

Vision Statement

The one bright pearl comprehends the myriad forms of the ten directions

61. **Kenbutsu** **Meeting Buddha [159]**

Ken means “look at,” “meet,” or “realize the state of,” and **butsu** means “Buddha” or “buddhas.”. Therefore, **kenbutsu** means “meeting Buddha” or “meeting buddhas.” In order to meet buddhas it is necessary to become buddha because buddhas can be seen only by buddhas. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explained the real situation of meeting buddhas and the true meaning of meeting buddhas.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“If we see [both] the many forms and [their] non-form, we at once meet the Tathagata.” [159]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Getting free of attainment of “being close” is called instant attainment. [162]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

“If there is anyone who receives and retains, reads and recites, rightly remembers, practices, and copies this Sutra of the Flower of Dharma, we should know that that person is meeting Shakyamuni Buddha, and hearing this Sutra as if from the Buddha’s mouth. [163]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When the authentic transmission of the right-Dharma-eye treasury is present, the dignified behavior is realized of a buddha manifesting an easy bearing, and the state of meeting buddha, at this place, is towering and magnificent. [171]

Vision Statement

Vexations transform into the dignified manner of the Buddha Dharma.

“Climb this razor-edge-path mountain and jump from there into the fire—thus will your enlightening practice be purified. “
Jayoshmayatana, Victorious Heat – Benefactor #9 from the Flower Ornament Sutra

62. **Hensan** **Thorough Exploration [173]**

Hen means “everywhere” or “widely,” and **san** means “to visit” or “to study” through experience. Originally **hensan** described the custom Buddhist monks used to have of traveling around in order to meet excellent masters with whom they could be satisfied. But according to Master Dōgen, **hensan** or “thorough exploration” is accomplished not by traveling around, but by a Buddhist monk’s thorough exploration of the Buddhist state under one true master. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the true meaning of **hensan**.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The great truth of Buddhist ancestors is exploration of the ultimate state through and through, [173]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Thorough exploration is a big stone being big and a small stone being small. [176]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

When the fourth Ancestor learned in practice for nine years under the third Ancestor, that was just thorough exploration. [178]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The great truth is gateless. “

It springs out beyond your brains.

As space, it transcends any path. [177]

Vision Statement

“Exploration” realizes the meeting place where our interests and actions unite with the needs and wishes of our companions.

63. **Ganzei** **Eyes [181]**

Ganzei, which means “eyeballs” or “eyes,” symbolizes the viewpoint of Gautama Buddha, that is, the Buddhist view. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the meaning of the word **ganzei**, which appears frequently in the Shobogenzo, quoting Master Tendo Nyojo, Master Ungan Donjo, Master Tozan Ryokai, and other Buddhist Masters. [fn1 (GANZEI) is capitalized in translation (“the Eye”) when the sense of Buddhist viewpoint is stronger than that of concrete eyeballs.]

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

If Kotis of thousand myriad kalpas of learning in practice are gathered together into a happy circle, it will be eighty-four thousand Eyes. [181]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“I do not have it.” These are words naturally expressed by the Eye itself. We should quietly investigate the principle of, and learn in practice, the realization of words like this. Ungan says, “You have. Where are you directing it?” The Eye of this expression is that the not having in “I do not have it,” is to have it and to be directing it somewhere. And to be directing it somewhere is to have it. [182]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

What sort of person does he [Tendo] fashion?[184]

fn21 Master Tendo fashioned people who were not worried by the impermanence of reality.

Reality: a description of reality in words

They are manifesting the diamond Eye.

Aah!

The complicated! The complicated. [184]

Vision Statement

Katto, The Complicated

“But know my son, that all of them are your own! Each has at some time been the nest of your dreams and delusions and desires. Not even one of them is the skull of another being. All—without exception—have been yours, in the billions of your former lives.” – Lafcadio Hearn, In Ghostly Japan, p. 3

64. **Kajo** **Everyday Life [187]**

Ka means “house” or “home.” and **jo** means “usual” or “every day.” So **kajo** means “everyday” or “everyday life.” People are often prone to think that religious matters should be different from daily life being more sacred than and superior to daily life. But according to Buddhist theory, the Buddhist life is nothing other than our daily life. Without daily life, there can never be Buddhism. In China, it was said that wearing clothes and eating meals are just Buddhism. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the meaning of **kajo**, everyday life, on the basis of Buddhism.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

In general, in the house of the Buddhist ancestors, [drinking] tea and [eating] meals are everyday life itself. This behavior of [drinking] tea and [eating] meals has long been transmitted and is realized in the present. Thus, the Buddhist ancestors’ vivid activity of [drinking] tea and [eating] meals has come to us. [187]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“When hunger comes, I eat a meal, when tiredness comes, I sleep. Forges span the Universe.” [189]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Master says, “Have some tea.” [191]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, the everyday life of Buddhist ancestors is nothing other than drinking tea and eating meals. [192]

Vision Statement

A quiet life embraces contentment.

65. Ryugin The Moaning of Dragons [193]

Ryu means “dragons” and **gin** means “sing,” “chant,” or “moon.” Dragons, of course are not living animals, but mythical animals. So, it would be very strange for dragons to sing or moan; and it is impossible for dragons to sing or moan. But in ancient China people use the word **ryugin**, “the moaning of dragons,” or “the whisperer of dragons,” as a symbol of something mystical in nature or in the universe, for example, in the expression, **kokubo ryugin**. **Kokubo** means “withered trees”; conjure an image of a lonely, desolate landscape of withered trees where we feel we can hear something that is not a sound. This concept entered into Buddhist explanations. The moaning of dragons is not a sound, but something which cannot be heard with the ears; that is quietness nature, the universe or reality. Buddhism is not simple mysticism and so we should not readily believe in the existence of something my. At the same time, we should not limit reality to the area of sensory. This basis explains the meaning of **ryugin** or “the moaning of dragons” in this chapter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“Among withered trees does the moaning of dragons exist or not?” [193]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

On another occasion, a monk asks Sozan, “What is the moaning of dragons among withered trees?”

Sozan says, “The bloodline being unbroken.”

fn 15 [but] maintenance of the purity of the Buddhist tradition does not call for a fighting attitude or a rigid outlook. [195]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

We do not know what words these are describes the existence, in words of dragons. Those who hear all share the loss.

fn 20 “to lose body and life,” is an ironic expression of attaining the state of realization. [196]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The effort to curb ourselves and to promote others is ceaseless. [194]

Vision Statement

Inner quiet nurtures the needs of all beings.

66. Shunju Spring and Autumn [197]

Shun means “spring” and **ju**, which is a corruption of **shu**, means “autumn. **Shunju**, spring and autumn, expresses the season. In this chapter, Master Dōgen, describes the Buddhist attitude toward cold and heat. First Master Dōgen quotes a famous conversation on this subject between Master Tozan Ryokai and a monk. Then he discusses the comments of some ancient masters in order to explain the true meaning of the story.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“When cold or heat come, how are we to avoid them?”

The Master says, “Why do you not go to the place without cold and heat? [197]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

[Those] who have never explored Tozan’s inner sanctum, people who have not walked the threshold of the truth of the Buddha-Dharma, mistakenly assert that Tozan teaches people with his five positions of the relative and the absolute, and so on. This is an outlandish insistence and a random insistence. [198]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Thanks to you, I have penetrated the place without cold or heat. A withered tree has bloomed again. [201]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Do not misunderstand that cold and heat in the Buddha’s truth are the same as the cold and heat of stupid fellows. Just be diligent in practice at once.[202]

Vision Statement

The spring and autumn of the yearly cycle manifest endlessly.

67. Soshi-Sairai-No-I Master's Intention in Coming West [203]

So means “ancestor” or “patriarch” and **shi** means “master”; thus **soshi** means “ancestral masters” or the “ancestral Master.” The word sometimes as in this case indicates Bodhidharma. **Sai** means “west” and **rai** means “come.” **I** pronounced not as in white, but is in green, means “intention” or “aim.” So **Soshi-sairai-no-i** means Master Bodhidharma’s intention, coming from the west. It said that in the sixth century, Master Bodhidharma went from India [the west] to China [the east] to spread Buddhism, and that this event marked the transmission of true Buddhism to China. Master Bodhidharma was then called first Ancestor in China and so Chinese Buddhist thought it very important to discuss Master Bodhidharma intention in coming from the west. In this chapter, Master Dōgen picks up a famous discussion between Kyogan Chikan and his disciple to explain the real meaning of Master Bodhidharma’s intention and coming from the west.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

If we consider

[The story] by utilizing not thinking, and by utilizing non-thinking, effort on one round cushion with Old [Master] Kyogen will naturally be present. Once we are already sitting, in the mountain-still state, upon the same round cushion as Old Kyogen, we will be able to understand this story in detail even before Kyogen opens his mouth. [204]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“A person has gone up a tree on a thousand-foot precipice.” [204]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

He is hanging in space. [205]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When suddenly we answer others, we turn around the body and invigorate life. In conclusion, the mouth of each person being full is the state of truth, [in which state] we should answer each other, should answer ourselves, should ask each other, and should ask ourselves. [206]

Vision Statement

Bodhidharma put his mind to following the path of nonduality.

68. **Udonge** **The Udumbara Flower [209]**

Udonge means the flower of a type of fig tree called Udumbara in Sanskrit. The Udumbara tree (*Ficus glomerata*) is a large tropical tree of the mulberry family (*Moraceae*). Its flowers grow around the fruit, so they look like peel rather than flowers. Because of this, people in ancient India considered the Udumbara to be flowerless. Consequently, they used the Udumbara flower as a symbol of something that rarely happens;¹ for example, the realization of the Buddhist truth. In a Buddhist sutra called Daibonten-o-monbutsu-ketsugi-kyo (The Sutra of Questions and Answers between Mahabrahman and the Buddha) there is a story that one day Gautama Buddha showed an Udumbara flower to an audience. No one

could understand the meaning of Gautama Buddha's suggestion other than Master Mahakasyapa, who smiled. In Chinese Buddhism this story symbolized the transmission of the truth. So, Master Dōgen used Udumbara flowers to explain the meaning of the transmission. Because Daibonten-o-monbutsu-ketsugi-kyo was said to have been written in China, it was criticized by some Buddhists as not expressing Gautama Buddha's true intention. Master Dōgen, however, insisted in Shobogenzo, chapter 74, Tenborin, that even if a Buddhist sutra was produced in China, after its words have been discussed by Buddhist masters it becomes a Buddhist sutra which expresses the true intention of Gautama Buddha; we need not worry whether or not it was written in India.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The Seven Buddhas and the many buddhas are all in the same process of twirling flowers, which they have practiced-and-experienced, and realized as twirling of flowers the ascendant state, and which they have torn open and exposed as twirling of flowers down in the here and now. [210]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The Seven Buddhas and the many buddhas are all in the same process of twirling flowers, which they have practiced-and-experienced, and realized as twirling of flowers the ascendant state, and which they have torn open and exposed as twirling of flowers down in the here and now. [210]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Fn13 A monk asks Master Tosu Daido, "In the teachings of the Great Treasury are there miracles or not?" The Master says, "To preach the teaching of the Great Treasury [is itself a miracle].

Reality: a description of reality in words

In general, the mountains, rivers, and the Earth;
the sun and moon, the wind and rain; people, animals, grass, and trees—the miscellaneous things of the present displaying themselves here and there—are just the twirling of the Udumbara flower. [211]

Vision Statement

Udumbaras seldom flower, but that flowering is not rare.

69. **Hotsu-Mujoshin Establishment of the Will of the Supreme [215]**

Hotsu means “to establish,” **mujo** means “supreme,” and **shin** means “mind” or “will.” **Hotsu-mujoshin** means the establishment of the will to the supreme truth. In the original sentences of this chapter, we do not find the words **hotsu-mujoshin**; but the words **hotsu-bodaishin**, which mean “the establishment of the bodhi-mind,” appear many times. Therefore, the title **Hotsu-mujoshin** may have been selected to distinguish this chapter from the next chapter, **Hotsu-bodaishin**. Furthermore, the two chapters end with exactly the same words: “Preached to the assembly at Kippo temple in the Yoshida district of Eschu on the 14th day of the 2nd lunar month in the 2nd year of Kangen [1244].” We need to consider how the two chapters are related. Dr. Fumio Masutani has suggested that **Hotsu-mujoshin** was preached for lay people who were working on the construction of Daibutsu-ji temple (later called Eihei-ji temple), and that **Hotsu-bodaishin** was preached on the same day for monks. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to prove this theory conclusively, but the content of the two chapters does lend it some support. Both **hotsu-mujoshin** and **hotsu-bodaishin** mean the will to pursue the Buddhist truth, which can never be pursued for any purpose other than the truth itself. Master Dōgen highly esteemed this attitude in studying Buddhism, and he explains the importance of establishing the will to the truth in these two chapters.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“The mind in every instance is like trees and stones [215]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The mind in every instance—the mind of a person of the whole Earth, of a Buddhist ancestor of the whole Universe in the ten directions, and of gods, dragons, and so on—is trees and stones, beyond which there is no mind at all. [215-216]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Ceasing thought and concentrating the mind is non-doing. Non-arising and non-becoming are true reality. Observing and practicing the real form of the Dharma-nature is non-doing.”

Reality: a description of reality in words

Thousands of kotis of people’s establishment of the mind are occurrences of the one establishment of the mind. [220]

Vision Statement

“You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form.” Dōgen in the Fukanzazengi

70. Hotsu Bodaishin Establishment of the Bodhi Mind [225]

It is supposed that this chapter and the previous chapter originally had the same title, i.e., **Hotsu-bodaishin**, “Establishment of the Bodhi-mind,” but that the title of the previous chapter was changed to **Hotsu-mujoshin**, “Establishment of the Will to the Supreme,” for the purpose of distinction. Dr. Fumio Masutani believes that the former chapter was a sermon for lay people and this chapter was a sermon given on the same day to monks and nuns. Whatever Master Dōgen’s intention was, one point is that this chapter includes a presentation of the “The Theory of the Momentary Appearance and Disappearance of the Universe.” In Buddhist theory, action is esteemed highly; when we consider the meaning of life, we can consider that our life is just a series of moments of action. Why do we say that our life is momentary? Because once we have done an act we can never return to the past to undo it. At the same time, we can never perform an act until its time comes to the present. So, an act is always done just at the moment of the present. Furthermore, the moment of the present is cut off from the moment immediately before it and the moment immediately after it, because we can never act in the past and we can never act in the future. According to Buddhist theory, then, our life is momentary, and the whole Universe appears and disappears at every moment. This theory, also known as “The Theory of Instantaneousness,” is important in resolving the conflict between human freedom and the law of cause and effect; that is, free will versus determinism. In this chapter, Master Dōgen clearly explains the theory.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

At a place where there is mystical communication of the truth, establishment of the bodhi-mind occurs. [226]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Only the Tathagata clearly knows the length of this instant. [228]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Buddha says, “How do bodhisattvas guard the one matter, namely the bodhi-mind?”

Bodhisattva-mahasattvas constantly endeavor to guard this bodhi-mind as worldly people protect an only child. [231]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Establishing the mind and the ultimate state: the two are without separation.

Of these two states of mind the former mind is harder [to realize]:

It is to deliver others before attaining one’s own deliverance.

For this reason, I bow to [your] first establishment of the mind. [227]

Vision Statement

Are we free or are we trapped? The questioning is without beginning or end, but freedom immediately arises from the unspoken response.

71. **Nyorai Zenshin The Whole Body of the Tathagata [237]**

Nyorai represents the Chinese translation of the Sanskrit word tathagata, which means a person who has arrived at the truth. Sometimes, as in this case, **nyorai** means Gautama Buddha himself. **Zenshin** means “the whole body.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen teaches that Buddhist sutras are Gautama Buddha’s whole body, using the word “sutras” to express the real form of the Universe. Thus, Master Dōgen insists that the Universe is Gautama Buddha’s whole body.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The volumes of the Sutra are the whole body of the Tathagata. [239]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Thus, Master Dōgen insists that the Universe is Gautama Buddha’s whole body. [Intro 237]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Bodhisattva Wisdom Accumulation said, “I have seen [how] Shakyamuni Tathagata, during countless kalpas of hard practice and painful practice, accumulating merit and heaping up virtue, has pursued the bodhisattva-way and has never ceased. I have observed that in the three-thousand-great-thousandfold world, there is no place even the size of a mustard seed where he has not abandoned his body and life as a bodhisattva for the sake of living beings. After acting thus, he was then able to realize the truth of bodhi. [239]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Having attained buddhahood he practices all the more vigorously, and having educated the great thousandfold world he is still going forward. The vigorous activity of the whole body is like this. [239-240]

Vision Statement

The Universe as Gautama Buddha’s whole body manifests the truth that compassion is a principle of reality.

72. Zanmai-o-Zanmai King of the Samadhis [241]

Zanmai is the Japanese pronunciation of the phonetic rendering in Chinese of the Sanskrit word samadhi,” which means the state in Zazen; that is, the balanced state of body and mind. **O** means “king.” We can consider that there are many kinds of samadhi in our daily lives. However, according to Buddhist theory the most important and best samadhi is just the samadhi that we can experience in Zazen. Therefore, we call the state in Zazen “the king of samadhis.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains what Zazen is, and so he chose the title **Zanmai-o-zanmai**, The Samadhi That Is King of Samadhis.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

To transcend the whole Universe at once, to live a great and valuable life in the house of the Buddhist ancestors, is to sit in the full lotus posture. [241]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

[Samadhi] Like the sun lighting up the world, it clears away sleepy, lazy, and melancholy mind. [242]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The meeting of Buddha with Buddha is this moment. This is just the time when living beings become Buddha. [243]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Clearly understanding this truth, Buddhist ancestors pursue and realize the establishment of the will, training, the state of bodhi, and nirvana. [241]

Vision Statement

In the myriad kalpas of each moment, we live the great life.

Volume 4

73. **Sanjushichi-Bon-Bodai-Bunpo** Thirty-seven Elements of Bodhi [1]

Sanjushichi-bon means “thirty-seven kinds.” **Bodai** represents the Sanskrit bodhi, which means “the truth,” and **bunpo** means “elements” or “methods.” So **sanjushichi-bon-bodai-bunpo** means “thirty-seven elements of the truth.” There are two fundamental schools of Buddhism; Hinayana (Small Vehicle) and Mahayana (Great Vehicle). The thirty-seven methods are usually said to belong to Hinayana Buddhism, because they are discussed in the Abhidharma-mahavibhasa sastra, which is one of the primary sutras of Hinayana Buddhism. In Japan, and especially among Mahayana Buddhist masters, it was very rare for Buddhist monks to discuss these teachings. But Master Dōgen has his own views on Mahayana and Hinayana. According to him, there exists only the Buddhism that Gautama Buddha taught. He thought that any distinctions between Mahayana and Hinayana are reflections of the different ages and cultures in which the two schools of Buddhism were taught, and he refused to discriminate between the two Buddhist streams. In this chapter Master Dōgen explains the thirty-seven elements of the truth with no division into Hinayana or Mahayana, but based upon the practice of Zazen.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The reality of eternal Buddha is present; it is namely, the teaching, practice, and experience of the 37 elements of bodhi. The entanglement of ascending and descending through their classification is just the entangled state of reality, which we call the Buddha and which we call the ancestors. [1]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Those sweet melons are totally sweet right through to their stems and bitter gourds are totally bitter right to the whole of their roots, suffering is not easily groped. We should ask ourselves: What is suffering? [3]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

This constant practicing is head to tail rightness through the whole past, present, and future. “*I constantly practice diligence*” says “*I have already realized Bodhi*”. [8]

Reality: a description of reality in words

These thirty-seven elements of bodhi are the very eyes and nostrils, the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, and the hands, feet, and real features, of the Buddhist Ancestor. We have been learning in practice, as the thirty-seven elements of bodhi, the Buddhist Ancestor’s whole person. [22]

Vision Statement

Conflict arises from adherence to categories; embodied principles promote unity.

74. Tenborin

Turning the Dharma Wheel [23]

Ten means “turn,” **ho** means “Dharma,” or the Buddha’s teaching, and **rin** means “wheel”—in Sanskrit “cakra.” In ancient India a cakra was a wheel with pointed spokes, used as a weapon. The Buddha’s preaching was likened to the turning of a cakra, and thus **tenborin**, or the turning of the Dharma wheel, refers to the preaching of Buddhism. In this chapter Master Dōgen explains the true meaning of preaching Buddhism. Before his explanation, he quotes the words of several masters on what happens when someone “realizes the truth and returns to the origin,” in order to illustrate the value of Buddhist scriptures written in China. Some people have insisted that only scriptures written in India qualify as being genuine “Buddhist scriptures,” and therefore the scriptures that were written in China do not expound true Buddhism. But Master Dōgen takes a wider view: he says that any scripture quoted by a true Buddhist master is a true Buddhist scripture, even if it was written outside of India. He insists that when a true Buddhist master quotes a scripture, that act confirms the scripture as a true Buddhist teaching. From this, Master Dōgen explains that the preaching of Buddhism can be done in all places and at all times, and these preachings thus have universal validity. At the same time, he asserts that to preach true Buddhism is to practice Zazen throughout one’s life.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

When a person exhibits the truth and returns to the origin, space in the ten directions totally disappears.” The Master comments: “This is just the preaching of the World-Honored One, but everyone has been unable to avoid producing odd interpretations of it. Tendo is not like that. When a person exhibits the truth and returns to the origin, a beggar boy breaks his food bowl.”

Master Ho-en of Goso-zan mountain said, “When a person exhibits the truth and returns to the origin, space in the ten directions is jostling.” [23]

[fn3] “jostling,” is an onomatopoeic expression for the crunching of stones or gravel. It suggests a condition in which miscellaneous concrete things are jostling against each other, rather than an idealistic notion of harmony.

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Remember when living beings transcend their realization of the right state of truth, they are Buddhist ancestors. [25]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

My reason of being preached by Buddhist ancestors, even if a Sutra is forged once Buddhist ancestors have preached and quoted it. It is truly a Sutra of Buddhist and a Sutra of ancestors, and it is intimately Dharma wheel of the Buddhist ancestors. [24-25]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Turning the Dharma wheel means striving to learn and practice throughout a life without leaving the temple grounds; it means requesting the benevolence of the teaching and pursuing the truth upon long platforms. [25]

Vision Statement

A sutra is the living reality of a Buddhist ancestor.

75. **Jisho-Zanmai**

Samadhi as the Experience of the Self [27]

Ji means “self,” **sho** means “to experience,” and **zanmai** means “samadhi,” or “the balanced state.” So **jisho-zanmai** means samadhi, as the state of self-experience. In this chapter Master Dōgen explains the meaning of **jisho-zanmai**, criticizing the wrong understanding of Master Dai-e Soko and his disciples. They understood **jisho-zanmai** a meaning an intellectual state referred to as “enlightenment,” a state that they made their utmost efforts to attain. Master Dōgen did not agree with this belief. In this chapter he strongly criticizes Master Dai-e Soko and explains the true meaning of samadhi.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

What the buddhas and the patriarchs have authentically transmitted, from all the buddhas and the Seven Buddhas, is samadhi as the state of experiencing the self So, remember, untainted practice-and-experience is the Buddhist ancestors themselves, and is the Buddhist ancestors’ samadhi as a thunderclap, wind, and rolling thunder. [27]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Because we can realize our [whole] life at each moment in Dharma and make our [whole] body at each moment into Dharma, we bring together both single molecules and the universal order and let them experience Dharma. [30]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

We should extend the practice from an hour to a day and from a year to a lifetime. [30]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In conclusion expressions of the self and expressions of the external world expressed by Buddhist ancestors inevitably include a Buddhist ancestor’s body-mind and a Buddhist ancestor’s eyes because they are a Buddhist ancestor’s bones and marrow. They are beyond ordinary people’s attainment of the skin.

Vision Statement

Each pristine moment of reality manifests the principle of Universal Good.

76. Dai-Shugyo Great Practice [37]

Dai means “great,” and **shugyo** means “practice.” So **dai-shugyo** means “great practice.” There is a famous Chinese story about Master Hyakujo Ekai and a wild fox; the story concerns the relation between Buddhist practice and the law of cause and effect. This relation is explained in two ways, each totally at odds with the other. The first explanation says that someone of great practice “does not fall into cause and effect”; in other words, it denies the influence of cause and effect upon someone of great practice. The other explanation says “do not be unclear about cause and effect”; in other words, it affirms the influence of cause and effect upon someone of great practice. But Master Dōgen considered the difference between these two explanations to be only a matter of intellectual thought, and that the situation in reality had no such dichotomy. He explained that someone of great practice transcends both the negation and the affirmation of the law of cause and effect, by acting here and now in the real world.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The koan realized just now is great practice itself. [38]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Cause-and-effect is neither inherent nor initiated: cause-and-effect never idly waits for a person. [40]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

[The old man] yes, free of the body of a wild fox under the word of transformation from the present Hyakujo. [41]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Great practice is transcendent cause-and-effect itself, it gets rid of the body of a wild fox. [41]

Vision Statement

Commitment to great practice leads to knowledge of the process of awakening.

77. Koku

Space [47]

Ko means “vacant” or “void,” and **ku** means “air,” “space,” or “emptiness.” So **koku** means “space.” Space and time have been fundamental concepts in philosophy since ancient times and in science too; even in ancient India people frequently discussed the nature of space and time. And this tradition influenced Buddhism, so the nature of space and time became a very important subject in Buddhism in India. The topic also passed to Buddhism in China, and so there are many stories of Chinese Buddhist masters discussing space and time. In this chapter Master Dōgen discusses space. He first quotes a discussion about space between Master Shakyō Ezo and Master Seido Chizō. Then he gives his own explanation, quoting a poem by Master Tendo Nyojō, a discussion between Master Baso Do-itsu and a monk called Seizan Ryo, and the words of Master Vasumitra.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Because “*this place is where something ineffable exists*,” it is through the realization of these words that Buddhist ancestors are caused to be. [47]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Previously he has thought about meeting another, but suddenly he has been able to meet himself. At the same time, to taint the self is not permissible: the self must be practiced. [49]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Ancestor says, “From birth to old age, it is just this.” [50]

Reality: a description of reality in words

A big stone being big and a small stone being small is no right and nothing wrong. We solely investigate for the present, as the right-Dharma-eye treasury and the fine mind of nirvana, space like this. [51]

Vision Statement

Within the “space” of Koku flows manifest qualities of impermanence, interdependence and intimacy.

78. Hatsu-U

The Patra [53]

Hatsu is a phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit patra, and **u** means bowl or bowls. In India, Buddhist monks ate their meals from a large bowl called a patra, and the tradition was passed to Buddhist monks in China. In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains the importance of the patra, which has traditionally been highly revered as a symbol of Buddhist life.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The principle of learning in practice of each such group has its own standing as an expression of the truth. At the same time there is learning practice in a further ascendant state. [53]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

With regard to the patra: only of real dharmas is the patra composed; only of the patra are real dharmas composed; only of integrated mind is the patra composed; only of space is the patra composed. [55]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

If someone today were suddenly to ask, ‘Venerable [Nyo]jo, what is a miracle?’ I would only say to them, ‘What miracle could there be?’ Finally, what else? The patra of Joji having passed to Tendo, I eat meals.” [54]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Do not call it a bit of tile, and do not call it chunk of wood. We have realized it in experience like this.

Vision Statement

The nutrition of the Patra is without limit.

79. **Ango**

The Retreat [57]

An means “peaceful” and **go** means “reside.” The word **ango** refers to the ninety-day summer retreat. In India, the rainy season lasts for about three months in the summer. Buddhists in ancient India used this time for intensive practice of Zazen, and this period was called varsika in Sanskrit. The tradition was passed to China, and when Master Dōgen went to China, he experienced the concentrated practice of Zazen for three months in the summer. He felt it his mission to introduce this tradition to Japan.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

[The ninety-day summer] retreat is the brains and the real features of the buddhas and the ancestors, and it has been directly experienced by their skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. [57]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

To see ninety days as a summer is a tool of our lineage; at the same time, because the Buddhist Ancestor [Nyojo] did not personally decide it by himself, [the tradition] has been authentically received by buddhas and by ancestors, rightful successor to rightful successor, until today. [58]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Stacking our bones upright on the flat earth, [We each] dig a cave in space. [57]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In conclusion, people in the house of the Buddhist ancestor decidedly must practice this summer sitting in retreat for three months. [76]

Vision Statement

The ninety-day angō of Buddha’s assembly has no announcement to signify its start and no bell that marks its end.

80. Tashintsu

The Power to Know Others' Minds [77]

Ta means “others,” **shin** means “mind,” and **tsu** (short for jinzu) means “mystical power.” So **tashintsu** means “the mystical power to know others’ minds.” Some Buddhist groups believed it possible for Buddhist practitioners to attain a mystical power allowing them to see into others' minds. On this subject, there is a famous story concerning Master Nanyo Echu’s questioning of an Indian monk called Daini Sanzo. The story was often discussed, and the interpretations of five famous Buddhist masters are given in this chapter. Master Dōgen was not satisfied by their explanations and criticizes the views they expressed, in the process presenting us with his own views.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

A monk asks Kyozan “Why does Daini Sanzo not see the National Master the third time?” Kyozan says, “The first two times [the Master’s] mind is concerned with external circumstances; then he enters the samadhi of receiving and using the self, and so [Sanzo] does not see him.” [78]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Even a one-foot gem is not a treasure, but every inch of time is vital. [81]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The National Master is beyond having the Buddha-nature, is beyond not having the Buddha-nature, and is beyond the body of space. [82]

Reality: a description of reality in words

“You have got my marrow” is just the power to know others’ minds. [85]

Vision Statement

Knowing our mind is identical to knowing another’s.

81. O-Saku-Sendaba A King's Seeking of Saindhava [87]

O means “king,” **saku** means “to seek,” and **sendaba** is a phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit saindhava. Saindhava means “products of the Indus river basin.” The Maha-parinirvana-sutra contains a story which uses the multiple meanings of words to express the ambiguity of reality. When a king needs to wash his hands and requests saindhava, his servant will bring water. When the king is eating a meal and requests saindhava, the servant will bring salt. When the king wants to drink water and requests saindhava, the servant will bring a cup. And when the king wants to go out and requests saindhava, the servant will bring a horse. Buddhist monks in China often used this story to discuss the multiple meanings of words and the ambiguous nature of reality. In this chapter Master Dōgen explains the meaning of “A King’s Seeking of Saindhava” from his own unique viewpoint.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Words – no words;

Real wisteria and real trees;

Feeding donkeys, feeding horses;

Clear water and transparent clouds. [87]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

A wise retainer like this is able to understand in four ways a great king’s secret talk. [88]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

“Inside a thicket of lines of the sacred,” means in a monastery where many Buddhist practitioners are sitting in rows which means a place where many practitioners are gathered for Buddhist practice. [fn34]

Reality: a description of reality in words

We should painstakingly investigate who is described by “The mind here and now is buddha.” Does anyone know that it is saindhava jostling?

Vision Statement

Service without consideration of self uncovers the piety of devotion.

82. Ji-Kuin-Mon

Sentences to Be Shown in the Kitchen [[93]]

Ji means “to show,” **kuin** means the Kitchen Hall of a temple, and **mon** means “sentences.” So **ji-kuin-mon** means “sentences to be shown in the Kitchen Hall.” This chapter was not originally included in Shobogenzo, but when Master Hangyo Kozen edited the 95-chapter edition in 1690, he included this chapter along with Bendowa and Ju-undo-shiki. Master Dōgen placed great value on the activity of cooking in Buddhist temple life, and wrote his views down in a book called Tenzo-kyokun or “Instructions for the Chief Cook.” The reason that he wrote the book, and the reason he revered the activity of cooking in the temple originates with his experiences in China. Just after arriving in China, he met an old monk who took pride in being the cook in his temple, and who explained to Master Dōgen that cooking is Buddhist practice itself. Later, Master Dōgen came across another old monk who was diligently drying seaweed for the monks’ meals, and he realized how important is the activity of cooking meals for the practitioners in the temple.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

In preparing meals for the Sangha,

To do so with reverence is fundamental. [93]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

For instance, call gruel “honorable gruel” or call it “morning gruel”; do not call it [just] gruel. [94]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Disrespect invites misfortune and mistakes; it never has good effects. [94]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Only disciples of the Buddha

Are able to receive their transmission. [95]

Vision Statement

Everywhere our glance happens to fall is an invitation to reverence and affection – the heart of Zen practice.

83. Shukke

Leaving Family Life [97]

It was the custom in ancient India for people who wanted to pursue the truth to leave their family, and this custom was retained in Buddhist orders. It is said that Gautama Buddha first left his family life and began the life of a monk when he was 29 years old. For this reason, Buddhist orders revere the tradition of transcending.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The buddhas of the three times all say that to leave family life is to realize the truth. [97]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

In sum, the supreme state of bodhi is perfectly satisfied at the time of leaving family life and receiving the precepts. [98]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

And since I actually realized [the state of] buddha, [my] eternity has been such as it is. [99]

Reality: a description of reality in words

“In my youth I left family life and attained anuttara-samyak-sambodhi.” [100]

Vision Statement

Leaving one family and joining another.

84. Sanji-No-Go

Karma in Three Times [101]

San means “three,” **ji** means “time” and **go** means “conduct.” In this chapter, **sanji** means three kinds of time lag and **go** refers to both conduct and its effect. Belief in cause and effect forms a central part of Buddhist philosophy. This is the reason why Master Dōgen wrote the chapter of Shobogenzo titled **Shinjin-inga**, or “Deep Belief in Cause and Effect.” He insisted that all things and phenomena in the Universe are governed by the law of cause and effect, perfectly and without any exception. In accord with this theory, we should deny the existence of indeterminate events. But in our daily life it often seems that such accidents happen. So if Buddhism insists that the law of cause and effect is all-encompassing, it is necessary to explain the apparent existence of accidents. Buddhism explains these apparent accidents with the theory that there are three kinds of time lag between our conduct and the effect of our conduct. The effect of an action sometimes manifests itself at once, sometimes after a short time, and sometimes after a very long time. In the second and third cases, it is often difficult to believe that the whole world is governed completely by the law of cause and effect. But if we affirm that there are three kinds of time lag between conduct and its effect, we can affirm the validity of the law of cause and effect in all cases without exception. Master Dōgen explains the problem in this chapter.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“Retribution for good and bad has three times” mean 1) retribution is received in the immediate present; 2) it is received in one’s next life; 3) it is received latterly. These are called “the three times.” [102]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“Even with the passing of hundreds of kalpas, the karma that we make does not perish. When causes and conditions come together, effects and results are naturally received.” [109]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

You should abandon actions that are purely black and that are a mixture of black and white. You should be diligent in practicing and learning actions which are purely white. [109]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The meaning of “Nirvana is atonement. [108]

Vision Statement

There is no small wrong; and there is no small right.

85. Shime

The Four Horses [111]

Shi means “four” and **me** means “horses,” so **shime** means four horses. An ancient Buddhist scripture called Samyuktagama contains a story about four kinds of horses: horses that know the rider’s intention at the sight of the whip, horses that know the rider’s intention when the whip touches their hair, horses that know the rider’s intention when the whip touches their flesh, and horses that know the rider’s intention when the whip reaches their bones. These differences between four kinds of horses are used as a simile for the differences between the levels of intuition that Buddhist students exhibit in studying Buddhism. Studying Buddhism is not based only on intellectual teachings; the ability to intuitively understand the Master’s teachings is important, as Master Dōgen explains in this chapter using the simile of the four kinds of horses.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Those who are able to enter through this [story] are all like good horses in the world seeing the form of a whip and running. Those who are able to enter through that establishment of the teaching which is beyond sacred silence and sacred preaching, are also like this. [111-112]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The meaning of this “to feel aversion” is as follows: “When the Buddha expounds the Dharma with a single utterance, living beings each understand according to their type. Some have fear. Some rejoice. Some feel aversion and detachment. Some cut doubt.” [113]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

The Sutra of the Great [Demise] says: The Buddha said, “Good sons! It is like training horses. Broadly there are four kinds [of horse]: Those which 1) are contacted through hair, 2) are contacted through skin, 3) are contacted through flesh, or 4) are contacted through bone, and which, according to those respective places of contact, obey the rider’s will. The Tathagata also is like that. With four kinds of Dharma, he controls and subdues living beings: 1) he preaches to them of life, and then they accept the Buddha’s words, like [a horse], when its hair is touched, following the rider’s will; 2) he preaches of life and aging, and then [living beings] accept the Buddha’s words, like [a horse], when its hair and skin are touched, following the rider’s will; 3) he preaches of life and also of aging and death, and then [living beings] accept the Buddha’s words, like [a horse], when its hair, skin, and flesh are touched, following the rider’s will; 4) he preaches of life and also of aging, sickness, and death, and then [living beings] accept the Buddha’s words, like [a horse], when its hair, skin, flesh, and bone are touched, following the rider’s will. Good sons! There is no certainty in a rider’s training of a horse, [but] the World-honored Tathagata’s control and subjugation of living beings are assured and are never in vain. For this reason, the Buddha is titled ‘Controller of Men.’” [113]

Reality: a description of reality in words

[The Tathagata's] purpose is—by this preaching to others of life, aging, sickness, and death—to cause all living beings to grasp the reality of anuttara-samyak-sambodhi.

Vision Statement

The four Buddhist horses create sensitivity to the means of treading the path of awakening.

86. Shukke-Kudoku The Merit Leaving Family Life [117]

Shutsu means “to get out of” or “to transcend.” **Ke** means “house,” “home,” or “family life,” and **kudoku** means “merit.” So **shukke-kudoku** means the merit of leaving family life. In this chapter Master Dōgen praised and emphasized the merit of leaving or transcending family life. Most people are brought up within a family, and the influence that our family has on us is often much stronger than we realize. The aim of studying Buddhism is to realize what the truth is. To achieve this, it is necessary for us to transcend our family life, because the habits we form and the influence that our family has on us tend to prevent us from seeing clearly what the truth is. This is why the merit of the tradition of leaving family life is revered in Buddhism, as Master Dōgen explains here.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

“What is the most difficult thing in the Buddha-Dharma?”

“Leaving family life is [most] difficult.” [118]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

[In the human world] there are four kinds of supreme excellence: 1) meeting Buddha, 2) hearing the Dharma, 3) leaving family life, and 4) attaining the truth.” [121]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

“In the Buddha-Dharma the effects and results of leaving family life are unthinkable. Even if a person erected a stupa of the seven treasures as high as the thirty-three gods, the merit gained would be inferior to that of leaving family life. Why? Because a stupa of the seven treasures can be demolished by greedy and malicious stupid people, [but] the merit of leaving family life is indestructible. [121-122]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In general, the inherent nature of leaving family life is to have compassion for all living beings as if they were babies.

Vision Statement

Leaving the charity of home opens the door to the vastness of Sangha.

87. Kuyo-Shobutsu Serving Offerings to the Buddha [137]

Kuyo means “to serve offerings,” **shobutsu** means “buddhas,” and so **kuyo-shobutsu** means “to serve offerings to buddhas.” There is a tradition in Buddhism of believers serving offerings to buddhas, that is, people who have attained the truth. It is a very natural action, therefore, to serve offerings to buddhas. People who have a purely spiritual viewpoint may feel it unnecessary to serve material offerings, believing that religious reverence is sufficient. Buddhism, however, is not a spiritual religion but a religion of reality, and so it reveres conduct. Thus Buddhism values the action of making real offerings, and affirms the

serving of offerings as a demonstration of sincere belief, whether or not the offerings are materially valuable or not. The value is in the serving of the offering itself, which is just Buddhist conduct.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

People who have a purely spiritual viewpoint may feel it unnecessary to serve material offerings, believing that religious reverence is sufficient. Buddhism, however, is not a spiritual religion but a religion of reality, and so it reveres conduct. [Introduction]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Yet those buddhas did not affirm me [by saying,] ‘In a coming age you will be able to become buddha.’ Wherefore? Because I had expectation of gain. [138]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Those who serve offerings to past buddhas and, leaving family life, follow and obey them, inevitably become buddhas. They become buddhas by virtue of serving buddhas. [137]

Reality: a description of reality in words

When the service of offerings contravenes the Dharma-standards, it is not genuine. If the service of offerings is not genuine, its merit is spare. Without fail we should learn, and receive the authentic transmission of, the method of serving offerings which accords with the Dharma. [154]

Vision Statement

True Thusness opens the world of the Buddhas for offerings of homage and obeisance.

88. Kie-Sanbo

Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures [155]

Kie means “devotion to,” or “taking refuge in,” and **sanbo** means “the Three Treasures”: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Buddha means Gautama Buddha and other people who have attained the same state as Gautama Buddha. Dharma means reality. Sangha means the Buddhist community of monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen. The Three Treasures are of supreme value in Buddhism and Master Dōgen emphasized the importance of devoting ourselves to them. He says that devotion to the Three Treasures is the beginning and the end of Buddhism.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

We accomplish the merit of this taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha whenever sympathetic communication of the truth. [155]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“Because these three kinds [of treasure] are ultimate places of refuge and they can cause living beings to get free from life and death and to experience the great state of bodhi. Therefore we take refuge in them. These three kinds [of treasure], in conclusion, are of unthinkable merit.” [156]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

“The Three Treasures [each] as a totality”: experience and understanding of the great state of truth is called the Buddha-Treasure; purity, being beyond taintedness, is called the Dharma-Treasure; and ultimate principles making harmony, being without hesitation and without stagnancy, is called the Sangha-Treasure. [157]

Reality: a description of reality in words

The World-honored One said, “Ordinary people, fearing oppression, often seek refuge in mountains and parks and in forests, solitary trees, caityas, and so on. Such seeking for refuge is not excellent and such seeking for refuge is not valuable. It is not possible, through such seeking for refuge, to be liberated from the many kinds of suffering. If beings take refuge in Buddha and take refuge in Dharma and Sangha, they will, in the reality of the Four Noble Truths, constantly observe with wisdom, knowing suffering, knowing the accumulation of suffering, knowing eternal transcendence of the many kinds of suffering, and knowing the Eightfold Noble Path that leads to the balanced and peaceful state of nirvana. This taking refuge is most excellent and this taking refuge is supremely valuable. It is always possible, by thus taking refuge, to be liberated from the many kinds of suffering.” [158]

Vision Statement

Liberation results from adherence to the refuge found in the Three Treasures.

89. Shinjin-Inga

Deep Belief in Cause and Effect [165]

Shin means “deep” and **shin** (in this case pronounced **jin**) means “belief.” In means “cause,” and **ka** (in this case pronounced **ga**) means “effect.” So **shinjin-inga** means “deep belief in cause and effect.” It is clear that Buddhism believes in cause and effect. But many so-called Mahayana Buddhists say that the Buddhist theory of belief in cause and effect belongs to Hinayana Buddhism, and that Mahayana Buddhists are able to transcend the rule of cause and effect. This belief, however, is wrong. Master Dōgen emphasizes in this chapter that to understand Buddhism it is very important to believe in the law of cause and effect. Chinese Buddhism contains a widely-known story about a Buddhist priest who fell into the body of a wild fox because he denied the law of cause and effect, but who was saved by the words of Master Hyakujo Ekai. Many Buddhist students thought mistakenly that this story illustrates transcendence of cause and effect. But Master Dōgen points out their mistakes in this chapter. He explains clearly the true meaning of the story, and he affirms Buddhism’s profound belief in the rule of cause and effect.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Do not be unclear about cause and effect. [165]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

“Do not be unclear about causing effect,” evidently is deep belief and causing effect as a result of which the listener gets rid of bad states. We should not wonder at this and should not doubt it. [166]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

“Even as [people] discuss ‘not falling’ and ‘not being unclear,’ still they are forcing themselves into nests of entanglement” just mean that not falling and not being unclear may amount to the same. [169]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Therefore, if people of learning in practice, seeing the bodhi-mind as foremost, wish to repay the vast benevolence of the Buddhist ancestors, they should swiftly clarify causes and effects. [171]

Vision Statement

Clarifying causes and effects is the very essence of Buddhist liberation.

90. Shizen-Biku

The Bhiksu in the Fourth Dhyana [173]

Shi means four. **Zen** represents the Sanskrit word dhyana, which means Zazen or “the state in Zazen.” **Biku** represents the Sanskrit word bhiksu, which means a Buddhist monk. **Shizen-biku**, or the bhiksu who had attained the fourth state in Zazen, refers to a monk who mistakenly thought that his own state was the state of the arhat, a Buddhist practitioner who has reached the fourth and ultimate stage of practice. When he was dying, an apparition appeared before this monk; something not usually seen by someone who has attained the fourth state in Zazen, so he felt that Gautama Buddha had deceived him. And because of his mistaken idea, he fell into hell. Master Dōgen quotes this story as an example of the wrong approach to Buddhism. In addition, in this chapter he warns strongly against the serious mistake of believing that Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism all teach the same thing.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

The essence of what Shakyamuni teaches is seeing the nature. Integrity, detachment, seeing the nature: different in name, same in substance. When we master the point at which they converge, there is nothing that does not concur exactly with this truth.” [178]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

The fourteenth patriarch, Bodhisattva Nagarjuna, said, “The great arhats and pratyekabuddhas know eighty thousand great kalpas. The great bodhisattvas and [buddhas] know countless kalpas.” [181]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Recently I have heard that the great man Bodhidharma is residing at Shaolin. A consummate human being may not be far away. [Under him] I shall mold the profound state.” [185]

Reality: a description of reality in words

In sum, all those who have the power of learning in practice know it. Living beings of the present degenerative age must not heed the mad utterance of the dimwits of the Sung Dynasty, that the three teachings are at one. It is the utmost ignorance. [188]

Vision Statement

Annutara samyak sambodhi marks Buddhist teaching as different.

91. Yui-Butsu-Yo-Butsu

Buddhas Alone, Together with Buddhas [189]

Yui means “only” or “solely,” **butsu** means “buddha” or “buddhas” and **yo** means “and” or “together with.” So **yui-butsu-yo-butsu** means “buddhas alone, together with buddhas.” **Yui-butsu-yo-butsu** is a phrase from a well-known quotation from the Lotus Sutra. The full quotation is: “buddhas alone, together with buddhas are directly able to perfectly realize that all dharmas are real form.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen explains what buddhas are.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Because it is realized only by buddhas, we say that “buddhas alone, together with buddhas, are directly able perfectly to realize it.”[189]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Realization itself is nothing like we imagined. That being so, to imagine it beforehand is not useful. [189]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

A man of old said that the whole earth is our own Dharma-body—but it must not be hindered by a “Dharma-body.” “The whole earth is our own Dharma-body.” [190]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Fn28 The Dragon’s Gate is the name of a set of rapids on the Yellow River. It is said that a carp that gets through the Dragon’s Gate becomes a dragon. [194]

Vision Statement

How can a carp ever envision the nature of a dragon?

92. Shoji

Life and Death [197]

Sho means “life” and **ji** means “death,” so **shoji** means “life and death.” Although the words “life” and “death” exist in all languages, Master Dōgen says that we are not able to understand intellectually what our life and death are. He says that their meaning is embedded in our real day-to-day life itself. In this chapter he explains life-and-death as the real momentary state at the present moment. In our daily life, life and death both exist in undivided wholeness.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Because in life-and-death there is buddha, there is no life and death.[197]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation When we understand that only life-and-death itself is nirvana, there is nothing to hate as life and death and nothing to aspire to as nirvana. [197]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

When we are without dislike and without longing, then for the first time we enter the mind of buddha.[198]

Reality: a description of reality in words

There is a very easy way to become buddha. Not committing wrongs; being without attachment to life-and-death; showing deep compassion for all living beings, venerating those above and pitying those below; being free of the mind that dislikes the ten thousand things and free of the mind that desires them; the mind being without thought and without grief: this is called buddha. Look for nothing else. [198]

Vision Statement

With a gentle caring for self, and deep feeling for all others, witness life then death, over and over.

93. Doshin

The Will to the Truth [199]

Doshin represents the Sanskrit bodhicitta. **Do**, which means “way” or “truth,” is a translation of the Sanskrit word bodhi, and **shin** means “mind/consciousness” or “will.” In this chapter, Master Dōgen preaches the will to the truth, devotion to the Three Treasures, the making of buddha-images, and practicing Zazen. The teachings in this chapter are rather concrete and direct, and some Buddhist scholars suppose that this chapter may have been written and preached for laypeople.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

In pursuing the Buddha’s truth, we should see the will to the truth as foremost. [199]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

We should profoundly venerate the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. [199]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Even until we arrive at the buddha-effect of bodhi, we should not let up. [200]

Reality: a description of reality in words

Zazen is not a method of the triple world: it is the method of the Buddhist ancestors. [200]

Vision Statement

Zazen is simple engagement with the generous unremitting tutelage of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

94. Jukai

Receiving the Precepts [203]

Ju means “to receive,” and **kai** means the Buddhist precepts. So **jukai** means “receiving the precepts.” The traditional way of entering the Buddhist order is by receiving the Buddhist precepts. It is a ceremony marking entry into Buddhist life; becoming a Buddhist. Master Dōgen put great value on receiving the precepts; in this chapter he explains what that value is, and gives an outline of the precept-receiving ceremony.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Zen-en-shingī says, “The buddhas of the three times all say that to leave family life is to realize the truth. [203]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

If we do not depart from excess and guard against wrong, how is it possible to realize the state of buddha and to become an ancestor? [203]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

...in every case, by those who have long learned in practice in the inner sanctum of the Buddhist ancestors. [204]

Reality: a description of reality in words

There have been ancestral masters who did not receive the bhikṣu-precepts, but there has never been an ancestral master who failed to receive these bodhisattva-precepts authentically transmitted by the Buddhist ancestors. [207]

Vision Statement

The authentic life is discovered in the life of precepts. The mind stream relinquishes habit energies, opening engagement with Universal Good.

95. **Hachi-Dainingaku The Eight Truths of a Great Human Being [209]**

Hachi means “eight.” **Dainin** means “a great human being,” that is, a buddha. And **kaku**, pronounced here as **gaku**, means “an intuitive reflection or truth.” Gautama Buddha preached the eight truths of a great human just before he died, and they are recorded in the Yuikyo-gyo (The Sutra of Bequeathed Teachings); they were his last teachings. Master Dōgen preached this chapter when he felt his death was not far away, and in his case, too, it was his last teaching. This chapter thus forms the last chapter in the 95-chapter edition of Shobogenzo.

Subjective: a Buddhist idea

Buddhas are great human beings. [The Dharma] that great human beings realize is therefore called “the eight truths of a great human being.” [209]

Objective: a concrete expression that is not idealistic or an intellectual interpretation

Therefore, disciples of the Tathagata unfailingly learn this [instruction]. Those who do not practice and learn it, and who do not know it, are not the Buddha’s disciples.[212]

Action: a way of life of active accomplishment

Human bodies on the southern continent are best of all—because they meet Buddha, hear the Dharma, leave family life, and attain the truth. [212]

fn19 “the three continents,” means Jambudipa (south; the transient human world in which it is easiest to feel the winds of impermanence), Purva-videha (east), and Aparā-goodana (west). The fourth continent, Uttara-kuru (north), is an immortal realm inhabited by angels.

Reality: a description of reality in words

In learning them now, in developing them life by life and arriving without fail at the supreme [truth of] bodhi, and in preaching them for living. [212]

Vision Statement

Dōgen’s final gift of directions and encouragement naturally arose from his Buddhist heart.

Appendix

Enhanced Emergent Knowledge

[The] key to personal transformation: my life situation can be transformed by reforming what motivates my actions right now, and by making these volitions habitual. ²

I. WHAT IS EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

Emergent Knowledge is an introspective method of studying the self that relies solely on an individual's insight, intuition, and tacit knowledge. The skills required for successful application of Emergent Knowledge are clarity of intention and nonjudgmental attention. Emergent Knowledge offers unlimited potential for beneficial change, subtle and profound. Its systematic approach provides an accessible means to move from coping with afflictive emotions to freedom from them, achieved through the process of transformation. By means of an explicit system of investigation, intuitive information arises and gives form and clarity to a practitioner's problem and its resolution. Generating, developing, and integrating this information need not be a mystery or left to happenstance.

Emergent Knowledge is a psycho-linguistic method of questioning an individual's inner life, accessing information uncontaminated by interpretation from either a facilitator or practitioner. This form of inquiry enables intimate dialogue free of interjections and presuppositions. The pioneering psychotherapist David Grove developed it. He discovered that questions that least interfered with a client's experience were in fact the most effective in bringing about meaningful change.

Emergent Knowledge is a user-based method of investigation that neither taints nor distorts information that arises during inquiry, by applying a limited number of precisely worded questions. The process allows facilitators and practitioners to refrain from unconsciously projecting their unresolved issues and interpretations.

Grove's first developments were Metaphor Therapy and Cosmology of Space, but later their essential elements were adapted for the facilitator-free process of Emergent Knowledge. Emergent Knowledge provides a systematic method that can be, after initial training, successfully accomplished without a facilitator. This technique is easy to learn and apply, offering a means to address varied problematic issues. The goal of Emergent Knowledge is to resolve negative dynamics that are repetitive, and that limits one's ability to respond to life situations as one might otherwise prefer.

Emergent Knowledge's precise rules of questioning are a simple reproducible information-centered approach that:

² David Loy, *A New Buddhist Path*, [Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications 2011, p. 137]

- Helps to foster a state of concentration necessary to observe the response without recourse to analysis
- Avoids contamination of judgment and assumptions
- Resonates with the practitioner's experience

II. THE PURPOSE, FORM, AND METHOD OF EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

How to Begin

You may use Emergent Knowledge for any problem you might wish to resolve, goal you'd like to achieve, or decision you need to make.

It is best to work with a pencil and paper, as the information is ephemeral and slips away like a dream when we awake from sleep. Begin where you are. Set the intention of the session by asking and answering:

“What do you want?” The outcome will be a “Want Statement.”

For Example: *I want to be able to study without anxiety.*

Repeat the statement three times, silently or out loud. The question series should be done quickly without analysis even though some responses may not make sense. These actions hone intuitive receptiveness and trust in the process.

[1] Now ask yourself: What is the first thing I know about that? Record the response.

[2] And what else? Record response.

[3] And what else? Record response.

[4] And what else? Record response.

[5] And what else? Record response.

[6] And what else? Record response.

[7] And what do I know now that I didn't know before? [WDIKN?] Record response.

The answer to WDIKN? is known as the “Proclamation Statement”.

It is important not to reject or second-guess the responses that comes up, even if you don't understand them. There is time to reflect on the answers after the session is completed.

Below are three individual's records. The first deals with an outer relationship, the second with an internal emotional concern, and third for deepening insight.

“Nancy”

Want Statement: *I want to get along with my co-worker Jim.*

[1] What is the first thing you know about that? *He makes me defensive.*

[2] And what else? *I'm anxious.*

[3] And what else? *I freeze.*

[4] And what else? *He is brash to everyone.*

[5] And what else? *It isn't just about me.*

[6] And what else? *It's about who he is.*

[7] And what do I know now that I didn't know before? **Proclamation Statement:**

I don't have to like him to work with him. All I have to do is to remember this.

“Bob”

Want Statement: *I want be less anxious about the future.*

[1] What is the first thing you know about that? *I am always anxious.*

[2] And what else? *I'm like my father.*

[3] And what else? *It's tiring and it doesn't help.*

[4] And what else? *I can't know outcomes.*

[5] And what else? *Just do the best I can.*

[6] And what else? *I need to trust myself.*

[7] And what do I know now that I didn't know before? **Proclamation Statement:**

The only thing I can really do is to take care of whatever situation I'm in, the best I can.

In addition to Emergent Knowledge being used for problem resolution, it can be applied beneficially for gaining insight and deepening understanding. Below is an example.

“Jean”

Want Statement: *I want to understand the meaning of autonomy more deeply.*

[1] What do I know about autonomy? *It's my relationship to myself.*

[2] And what else? *It means staying centered in my relationship to the world.*

[3] And what else? *I lose connection with it when I worry about what others think.*

[4] And what else? *I'm ineffective when that occurs.*

[5] And what else? *I need to recognize that more quickly.*

[6] And what else? *See what actions I must take to regain balance and the proper relationship to the world.*

[7] And what do I know now that I didn't know before? **Proclamation Statement:**

My sense of autonomy is dependent on the level of awareness I maintain in my interactions with the world.

The responses to the examples above may seem questionable to you, but they were intimate glimpses for Nancy, Bob, and Jean for their own understanding. The answers are always idiosyncratic. Your work only has to be meaningful to you. When it is, you may change and your relationship to the world can change.

A few weeks after their Emergent Knowledge session, Nancy, Bob, and Jean were asked to write a brief report on any changes they may have experienced.

Nancy reported:

“I didn’t notice any change for the first couple of days back to work. Then I read again the Post Emergent Knowledge Session Process (*outlined below*) and found it very helpful. When I said I didn’t see any changes, there actually were some. The “habit energies” confused me. Then I noticed that I was able to stay steady when they did arise. What I mean by that is, I felt less defensive in his presence even though my stomach still tightened when first encountering him. Knowing that I was able to get past the discomforting feelings, I could think beyond them. What I mean by that is I could be more present in the circumstance, not freeze. The habit energies slowly ebbed to nothing. Also, I was more able to observe how other co-workers react to him. It was obvious many have ill feelings toward Jim. That actually made me feel sorry for him. Anyway, in just over a month or so, the situation is really different in ways I never thought could be possible. I feel more relaxed at work. I actually don’t dislike him, although he can still be irritating. We are not friends outside the office, but feel I am better able to get along with him as a co-worker.”

Bob Reported:

“I feel more relaxed in my body, even when thinking about the future.
I can have thoughts about the future without feeling overwhelmed.
I don’t just start imagining crises all the time.
I feel more comfortable with the unknown when thinking about the future.
I feel more engaged with my life as it is now.
Over all, I do feel less anxious. All I can say about that is, Wow!”

Jean Reported:

In the weeks since my Emergent Knowledge session on Autonomy, I’ve noticed feeling more confident in social encounters. This was true even in instances of meeting new people, which always made me more nervous than I thought I should be feeling. I guess I’m just more confident in myself. I find I’m much less concerned about what others think of me. It’s not that I don’t care. It’s just that I’m not preoccupied by that. This feels significant to me.

Post Emergent Knowledge Session Process

Emergent Knowledge requires observational skills after a session. The changes need to be noted to gain the full benefit of the process, especially soon after a session is completed. The dynamics we may choose to work on can have long-standing tendencies that frustrate us. There tends to be an energy to their arising that is automatic that doesn't disappear immediately after working on it. These are called "habit energies." It takes keen attention to note the differences. This is difficult because we are used to the dynamic arising and may mistakenly assume the session was unproductive. Attention is needed to notice the subtle difference in our responses.

When it is just the 'habit energy' we find that their arising does not elicit our habitual response to it. It doesn't go to the same place in us. We do not get upset in the usual way. The quicker and more frequently we can observe this, assists in the energy dissipating until it no longer arises.

The stages to work and observe after Proclamation are:

Discerning Differences – There can be an odd sensation of disorientation, that is not unpleasant. It feels curious to be free of the afflictive energy of the problem. Yet, the change is not articulated specifically. It may feel vague and amorphous.

Clarifying Details – We can name and identify how the differences manifest. The residue of the resolved problem is more easily dealt with. Freedom from it becomes the new way of sensing the self.

Acceptance – Requires enough time living the changes to accept they are enduring. One can fully grasp the significance of the transition from the problematic symptom.

Relief & Comfort – Issues forth a recognition of a change of behavior. To be free from the habit energy of the dynamic worked on brings a sense of relief and gratitude.

Naturalness - Living without the discomfort of the original dynamic, sometimes finding it to be difficult to even remember the problem. One can live freed from the boundary of limitations the dynamic created. Naturalness is activated awareness, with unencumbered activity as the outcome.

When working with the process, you may find that the first three responses may come quite easily. The information is not surprising or particularly inspiring. For the most part, it tends to be what we cognitively already know. At step 4 [what David Grove called "the wobble"] there may be a pause before the next response. It is easy to feel that there is no more information available. Hold your nonjudgmental awareness and wait patiently for the response to come. It will. Steps 4, 5, and 6 present the information that offers deeper understanding.

It is essential not to reflect on responses until after Step 7 is completed. In Steps 1—7 reflections will inhibit the smooth flow of the process. The information derived at Step 7 can be used as the “Want Statement” of another Emergent Knowledge round of inquiry, if you intuitively feel the round is incomplete. The deeper you drill down with a series of inquiries, the more meaningful the understanding and subsequent change. When doing more than one round, use the meaning of Proclamation Statement to form the Want Statement of the next round. “Six rounds” is called a series and usually leads to in-depth understanding and change.

The more you work with Emergent Knowledge the easier it will flow, but Step 4 will usually to be a turning point.

A Practice Emergent Knowledge Session

CREATE A WANT STATEMENT [A STATEMENT OF INTENTION]

[1] What is the first thing I know about that? Record response.

[2] And what else? Record response.

[3] And what else? Record response.

[4] And what else? Record response.

[5] And what else? Record response.

[6] And what else? Record response.

[7] WHAT DO I KNOW NOW THAT I DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE? [WDIKN]
[PROCLAMATION STATEMENT] RECORD RESPONSE.

III. DOCUMENTATION OF EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

All information connected with the Emergent Knowledge session should be documented using the Emergent Knowledge Documentation sheet. Practitioners should carry a notebook so that thoughts and reflections that arise can be recorded and later transferred to the documentation sheet.

I. The required information includes:

1. An identified, observed, and studied problem.
2. A Want Statement (s) based on the problem (or a WDIKN responses in multiple round sessions)
3. Response to each of the six questions
4. Answer(s) to a WDIKN question(s)
5. All intuitions, reflections, and inferences that arise during and after formation of the Proclamation Statement

II. Recording Information

1. Enter information about the problem to be used in the top row boxes.
2. Formulate a Want Statement based on the problem and enter in Round 1 “Want Statement.”
3. Record each response.
4. Enter Round 1 answer to WDIKN. If this is the completion of the session, enter the WDIKN answer in Proclamation.
5. For multiple round sessions, formulate a want statement using the previous Round’s WDIKN. Then repeat items 3 & 4.
6. For multiple round sessions, the Proclamation Statement is the last WDIKN.

Documenting captures ephemeral insights and provides the framework for gauging progress, introspection, and in time, reveals hidden relationships. The thoroughness and accuracy of the documentation of information determines the depth and speed of the assimilation of benefits from the session.

EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE DOCUMENTATION

| What is the problem?? | How does the problem affect me? | What triggers the problem? | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Round 1 Want Statement | Round 2 Want Statement | Round 3 Want Statement | Round 4 Want Statement | Round 5 Want Statement | Round 6 Want Statement |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |
| WDIKN | WDIKN | WDIKN | WDIKN | WDIKN | WDIKN |
| Proclamation | Discerning | Clarifying | Acceptance | Relief and | Naturalness |
| | | | | | |

IV. IMPORTANT POINTS IN EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

I. Before Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Cultivate a deep and wide understanding of all aspects of the problem that has your attention. Take time to thoroughly grasp the effects of the problem on your life, and only then formulate a Want Statement.

II. During Emergent Knowledge Questioning

Approach Emergent Knowledge sessions with a calm deliberate mind. Cultivate awareness of the intimate spot where the information arises. Ask the questions as described and record the responses without analysis or reflection. Upon completion of the six questions ask and answer the WDIKN question, and write out the Proclamation Statement for that round.

III. Major Points of Understanding after the Emergent Knowledge Session

David Grove's teaching on Emergent Knowledge ended at the writing of the Proclamation Statement. However, in Enhanced Emergent Knowledge, two additional sections have been devised that offer a means to refine the beneficial effects summarized in the Proclamation Statement. They are introspective methods that instruct practitioners to integrate the freedom that results from their resolution.

Each of the stages performs two services:

1. Summarizes the action and effects of the process.
2. Supplies direction for correct orientation. Each label is associated with an expansive introspection and a proper alignment with the process, providing correct guidance in transformation of mental afflictions.

The first section offers a means to integrate the freedom gained from Emergent Knowledge questioning. It is a step-by-step method that directs how to reduce leftover habit energies, remnants of the problem identified in the Want Statement that may continue to arise.

ADDED SECTION 1 - INTEGRATING FREEDOM [BLUE ON DOCUMENTATION SHEET]

1. Discerning Differences focuses on the comparison of the Want Statement to present emotional and intellectual circumstances, and to notice the presence, frequency, and intensity level of habit energies.
2. Clarifying Details: Continues the work of Discerning Differences. The practitioner clearly articulates observed differences, appreciating and enjoying them.
3. Acceptance: Acknowledges the enduring quality of the changes and weakening of habit energies.
4. Relief and Comfort: Practitioners note that habit energies associated with the problem identified in the Want Statement do not arise.

ADDED SECTION 2 - LIVING FREEDOM [RED ON DOCUMENTATION SHEET]

Naturalness: Living freely without memory or encumbrance of the problem described in the Want Statement. Unencumbered activity is the normal state of affairs.

V. RECURRING THEMES IN EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE

Attributes of Emergent Knowledge

1. Provides the foundation for identifying problems that cause emotional affliction and/or mental confusion.
2. Provides the means to clarify the source of environmental triggers of identified problems.
3. The six questions bring the practitioner to a transformation and a psychophysical shift that uproots the problem.
4. Provides an initial awakening that presents the pathway to freedom.
5. The Proclamation Statement captures and summarizes the answers to the Emergent Knowledge six questions.
6. The process gives equal value to rational inquiry and intuitive response.
7. Prepares the practitioner for the integration of freedom and the creation of harmony of the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.
8. Removal of obstruction provides a means of healing.
9. With mature experience, the resolution process moves with increased speed.

Emergent Knowledge qualities to be developed and cultivated

1. Do it on your own: Practitioners should develop confidence in their own abilities.
2. Develop a sense of composure: Practitioners should practice with unfaltering calm, not beset by confusion and worries. *[Don't be confused by the confusion.]*
3. Be neither tense nor slack: Being tense impregnates the mind with anxiety; being slack opens the door to torpor.
4. Do not seek a particular emotional feel: Awareness should proceed without requiring a particular "taste"; there is no value in adding or subtracting from an experience.
5. Abandon efforts of only intellectual understanding: *trust intuition and insights.*
6. Establish and cultivate a continuity of awareness: Fully engage with each inquiry and response.
7. Understand, refine, and integrate the essence of the Proclamation Statement.
8. Follow the process to completion: Understand and follow the five-fold elements of mental discipline, concentration, insight, liberation, and living freely.

VI. BACKGROUND MATERIAL OF ENHANCED EMERGENT KNOWLEDGE³

Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching can be summarized in one sentence, "I teach the nature of *dukkha* and its cessation." Putting his teaching into practice requires knowledge of what constitutes *dukkha* and how to bring about cessation.

A famous story illustrates the nature of *dukkha* and the correct orientation to its manifestation. A man has been shot with an arrow, and it is very painful for him. It is necessary to remove the arrow from his body order to relieve his pain. It is not necessary to understand who shot the arrow, what wood the arrow was made out of, what bird the feathers came from, or anything else like that to relieve the pain. Similarly, in Emergent Knowledge, it is enough to understand what the problem is, and use that knowledge as a foundation. Interpretation and analysis during the inquiry and response portion of Emergent Knowledge are of no help, offering only adverse interruptions.

Cessation is accomplished using the Emergent Knowledge skillful means with six inquiries about a Want Statement, documenting the responses, and answering the WDIKN question that results in the formation of the Proclamation Statement.

Emergent Knowledge questioning assumes the nature of the universe is a hologram described in ancient Indian lore as Indra's Net.

Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net that has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant tastes of the deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each eye of the net, and since the net itself is infinite in all dimensions, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars of the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we arbitrarily select one of the jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring.

Adhering to the Want Statement and not attempting interpretation or analysis during inquiry/response is equivalent to studying one jewel of Indra's Net. In comprehending one jewel, one relates to all others.

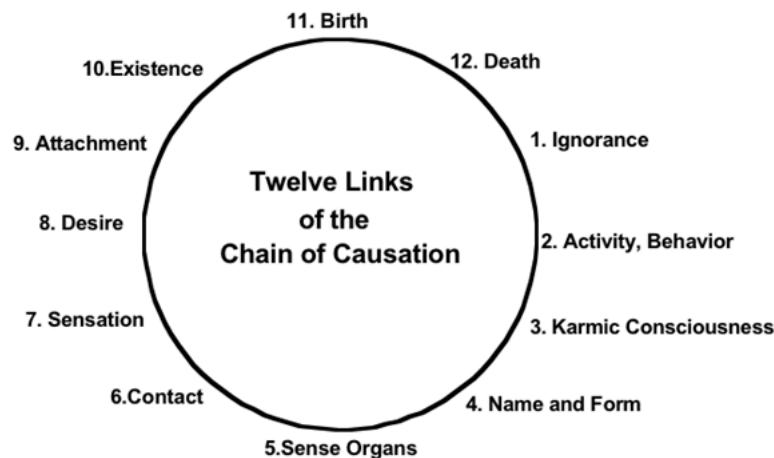
³ Technical, professional, and Buddhist terminology was deliberately left out of the description of the Enhanced Emergent Knowledge process. However, this brief appendix addition was added for Zen practitioners and others of similar mental outlook.

This method realizes the one rank of the infinite cosmic network. In doing, a shortcut means is established, avoiding trying to position the infinite number of pieces of the net into a coherent whole. Instead, one piece is grasped, and intuitive connection with the intricate totality of the net's makeup becomes the new norm of experience.

The following information briefly notes the high points of the process of awakening from the beginning where a life problem is first noticed, through to Naturalness where the conditioned state causing the problem has been resolved, the habit energies no longer manifest, and an unencumbered mind of balance and harmony is achieved.

WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?

The Twelve Links is the foundational principle of Buddhist instruction illustrating the cyclical nature of a life unconsciously constrained by causes and conditions. Without conscious intervention, the Twelve Links arises and operates automatically, repeating itself again and again. From the first link of Ignorance culminating in the 11th and 12th of Birth and Death, the functioning of the Twelve Links reveals a dizzying array of mental and emotional states that emerge, exist for a time, and inevitably pass on. Though the phenomena may come to an end, the underlying conditions of the Twelve Links are more basic and continue to exist, with no discernible beginning or end.



The practice of Zazen witnesses the mechanical process of the Twelve Links of the Chain of Causation. A cause triggers the first link of Ignorance (storehouse consciousness), producing pleasant and afflictive outcomes in the second link of Behavior. This goes on and on without stopping unless something is done to intervene. Zazen practice provides knowledge of the mental states produced by Ignorance and its influence on Activity and Behavior. This emerging awareness uncovers the deep truth regarding the operation of the first two links. Observation, coupled with a fundamental awareness, replaces the previously unconscious action of the Twelve Links with an ability to perceive the action of conditioned

states. Experiential truth of the nature of conditioned states and their connection with afflictions and awakening moderates the uncertainty and perplexity of ingrained reactive responses.

Of the three kinds of dukkha (physical pain, impermanence as the nature of reality, and conditioned states), we are interested in conditioned states and the afflictive emotions and mental confusion that arise from them. They express themselves automatically with negative emotional tones that are often considered “normal,” because they have existed within us for most or all of our conscious life.

Conditioned states leave a painful wake, one of reactive response and disharmony. No amount of well-intended willful action seems to have any permanent effect at alleviating their dynamics, let alone the root cause. Understanding what conditioned states are helps in forming a correct view of our existential dilemma. Zen practice becomes infused with energy, clarity, and direction when coupled with firsthand experience about the form and function of conditioned states.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

AND HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DO IT?

“A skill-in-means creates awareness of the Earth-centered buddha-fields. Following the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’ intuitional guidance, skill-in-means are formulated, developed, and followed. Intuition’s open dialogue facilitates the dynamic interplay of thinking. We may not immediately understand all sides of the opportunities that are presented, but in all of our pursuits dwells a secret force that is guarding us and helping us to live.” Teaching of the 5th Benefactor Mukta of the Flower Ornament Sutra ⁴

The Want Statement

The Want Statement is formulated with the knowledge of a conditioned state. The ability to create a Want Statement is based on knowledge of the problem, what it feels like, what are its effects, and what triggers it. It is also beneficial, but not essential, to know where the physical form of the conditioned state is located within the body. Once these factors are known, the next stage is feasible: formation of a Want Statement, a statement of intention to resolve the conditioned state.

“[Using the Want Statement as your guide], the responses you receive will most likely not be in complete sentences. It may be just a single word or a phrase, a memory, a felt sense, or an image. Pay close attention and follow where it leads. See what else comes up about it.”

The Six Inquiries: intuitive understanding arises within each inquiry/response

“This is the process by which we open the conversation with the Universal Aspect of Mind. It takes time to establish trust and rapport to speak that language fluently again.”

⁴ All italics in the background material are statements by Renshin Verkuilen unless otherwise noted.

The first three inquiry/responses reveal the personal side of the issue; the second three the universal. They should be accomplished without recourse to reflection in any form. Ask the question and document the result. Any other activity will stand in the way of intuitive interaction.

“The difficulty with intuitive knowing is that our intellectual center, from which we primarily operate, doesn’t understand how the information arises. And initially we may have no real clarity as to its meaning. Then we have the tendency to reject the information.”

Transformation and Psychophysical Shift

“Hold whatever arises gently. Watch out for opinions that might minimize your appreciation of what is given. Please don’t reject the “myriad things” that are coming to awaken you.”

The conditioned state is uprooted, resulting in a psychophysical change of being, The awakening has all the capabilities of Buddhahood in nascent forms.

“A moment of awakening is always accompanied by gratitude.”

The Proclamation Statement {What do I know now that I didn’t know before?}

“Openness is the channel that sets up the rapport to that which we are questioning. It is a very creative state. Turning moments are also possible through activities or events. They are experiences that awaken us to deep intimacy with our life.”

The Proclamation Statement summarizes the changes brought about by the six inquiry/responses and the Transformation and Psychophysical Shift. It contains information on the awakening uncovered in Transformation. Choosing to commit to following the Bodhisattva path is made after the Proclamation Statement is completed.

INTEGRATING AWAKENING

“Studying the Dharma is a practice that requires our participation at many levels of experience. What we understand in an intuitive way needs to be integrated. The process of integration thoroughly digests what we have understood intuitively. The mutual refinement is a dance between the Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind.”

Discerning Differences

When the physical or mental remnants of the conditioned state appear, they are experienced as rootless and ephemeral.

The state of being before and after Transformation is compared and the differences noted. Distinctions are recognized between resolved conditioned state and its leftover habit energies.

Clarifying Details

At this stage, the mind-set of freedom unifies itself with the intuitive information.

The practitioner clearly articulates observed differences, appreciating and enjoying them as freedom, while drawing upon them for reflection. The frequency and intensity of habit energies are closely observed.

Acceptance

Acceptance is grounded in the practitioner's trust and confidence in the validity and durability of change.

Practitioners have trust and confidence in the changes, and are able to fully grasp the significance of the transition from the problematic symptom to freedom from affliction and confusion. Habit energies rarely arise and are easily dismissed.

Relief and Comfort

Relief and Comfort is a breakthrough to a change of behavior.

The practitioner relates to the world fully in both its Personal and Universal aspects, conscious of the non-arising of habit energies. Concordant activity of Personal and Universal Aspects of Mind results in balance and harmony.

Naturalness

Abiding in naturalness, one is truly ordinary.