

## **FUKANZAZENGI**

### **A Universal Recommendation of Zazen**

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The Way is originally perfect and all-pervading. What need is there for practice and realization? The Dharma vehicle is rolling freely. Why should we exhaust our effort? There is no speck of dust in the whole universe. How could we ever try to brush it clean? Everything is manifest at this very place. Where are we supposed to direct the feet of our practice?

Now, if you make the slightest discrimination, you will create a gap like that between heaven and earth.

If you follow one thing while you resist the other, your mind will be shattered and lost.

Suppose you are confident in your understanding and rich in enlightenment, gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance, attaining the way and clarifying the mind, arousing an aspiration to reach for the heavens. Now your head is stuck in the entranceway, while your body has no clue how to get out.

Although Shakyamuni was wise at birth, can't you see the traces of his six years of upright sitting? Bodhidharma transmitted the mind-seal from India. Can't you hear the echo of the nine years he sat facing a wall?

If even the ancient sages were like this, how can we today dispense with wholehearted practice?

Therefore, put aside the intellectual practice of investigating words and chasing phrases, and learn to take the backward step that turns the light and shines it inward.

Your body and mind will drop away of themselves, and your original face will manifest. If you want to get into touch with things as they are, you - right here and now - have to start being yourself, as you are.

For practicing Zen, a quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Put aside all involvements and suspend all affairs.

Don't think about "good" or "bad". Don't judge true or false. Your mind, intellect, and consciousness are spinning around - let them have rest. Give up measuring with thoughts, ideas, and views. Have no designs on becoming a Buddha. How could that be limited to sitting or lying down?

When you sit, spread a mat and put a cushion on it. Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position. In the full-lotus position, first place your right foot on your left thigh, then your left foot on your right thigh. In the half-lotus position, simply place your left foot on your right thigh.

Tie your robes loosely and arrange them neatly. Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left hand on your right palm, thumb-tips lightly touching.

Straighten your body and sit upright, leaning neither left nor right, neither forward nor backward. Align your ears with your shoulders and your nose with your navel. Rest the tip of your tongue against the front of the roof of your mouth, with teeth and lips together both shut. Always keep your eyes open, and breathe softly through your nose. Once you have adjusted your posture, take a breath and exhale fully, rock your body right and left, and settle into steady, immovable sitting. Think of not thinking. Not thinking: What kind of thinking is that? Letting thoughts go (Nonthinking). This is the essential art of zazen.

Zazen is not a meditation technique. It is simply the Dharma gate of joyful ease, it is practicing the realization of the boundless Dharma way. Here, the open mystery manifests, and there are no more traps and snares for you to get caught in.

If you grasp the point, you are like a dragon gaining the water, like a tiger taking to the mountains. For you must know that the true Dharma appears of itself, so that from the start dullness and

distraction are struck aside.

When you arise from sitting, move slowly and quietly, calmly and deliberately. Don't do it head over heels. Understand that those who transcended the mundane and sacred, and dyied while either sitting or standing, have all committed themselves entirely to this power.

In addition, turning the Dharma wheel with a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet, and realizing it with a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout - these cannot be understood by discriminative thinking. Much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power. Your conduct must be beyond seeing forms and hearing sounds, it must be based on the order that is prior to knowledge and views. Don't worry about if you are more intelligent than the others, or not. Make no distinction between the dull and the sharp-witted. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is wholeheartedly engaging the way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Practicing the way means to live the present day.

In our world and others, in both India and China, all equally hold the buddha-seal. The wind of truth is blowing unhindered, so just give yourself to the sitting, be totally blocked in resolute stability.

Although they say that there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations, just wholeheartedly engage the way in zazen. Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain through the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep you stumble past what is directly in front of you. You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form. Do not pass your days and nights in vain.

You met the Buddha way in this life - how could you waste your time delighting in sparks from a flint stone? Form and substance are like the dew on the grass, the fortunes of life like a dart of lightning - emptied in an instant, vanished in a flash.

Please, honored followers of Zen, long accustomed to groping for the elephant, do not doubt the true dragon.

Devote your energies to the way that points directly to the real thing. Revere the one who has gone beyond learning and is free from effort.

Share the wisdom of Buddhas with Buddhas, transmit the samadhi of patriarchs to patriarchs. Continue to live in such a way, and you will be such a person. The treasure store will open of itself, it is up to you to use it freely.

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