

Hsiu-Hsiu Am Discourse on Za-Zen

Generally, to practice Za(sitting)-Zen(meditation) is to reach the mental state of highest excellence and to be in the state of complete alertness.

When the mind is devoid of any thought and yet no drowsiness takes place, it is called Za; if there is no passion in a condition which fans it and if one transcends defilements in which one is, it is called zen.

When neither external sense-object enters the mind, nor the mind goes out towards external things, it is called Za. If the mind is neither attached to anything nor depends on anything so that the constant light illuminates, it is called Zen.

If the mind is not moved when the external conditions shake it and if the mind is quiet and free from agitation, it is called Zen. If the light going out is turned inward so that the source of the self-nature is reflected, it is called Zen.

If the mind is not agitated either by favorable or adverse conditions, nor is it rolled over by color or sound, it is called Za; if the light surpasses the sun and the moon when it illuminates the dark area, and if virtue surpasses heaven and earth when transforming things, it is called Zen.

To enter the state of *samadahi* in a condition of discrimination is called Za; to have the discerning *Prajna* in the condition of no discrimination is called Zen.

In conclusion: to keep the true nature of *samadhi* serene while the mind works like a blazing fire is called Za; to attain boundless wisdom and thereby to do things without any obstruction is called Zen.

Za-zen can be summarized briefly as this. However no amount of ink and paper would be sufficient for a detailed illustration.

The great *Samdahi* of *Naga* is neither quiet nor moved; the wondrous nature of True Thusness is neither born nor annihilated. Neither can it be seen when looked at, nor can it be heard when listened to. It is empty and yet it is not; it exists and yet it does not. It is as vast as to envelop what has no boundary and it is as minute as to enter what has no inside. The magic power, light, longevity, great moving power and the application of the one who is enlightened to it are inexhaustible and limitless.

If one with an aspiration to be enlightened practices Za-Zen in a proper way until one attains the great enlightenment, one will be filled with various powers of wondrous spirit at the roar of awakening. How could this be compared with the wicked heretics who, with their instructions, claim to be teachers, and who take what they gain to be the final goal?