

## Daigo, Great Realization, *Shobogenzo* Chapter 10

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There is a great question: “What is awakening? What is enlightenment?” What is this experience we seek, as silver-tongued great master Joshu says, “like Buddha-seeking fools”? There has been great controversy over this question and how to manifest realization for a couple thousand years between different schools of Buddhism. Many chapters of Dogen’s *Shobogenzo* attest to the importance of this question in Dogen Zenji’s teaching and in his subtle exposition of *practice-enlightenment*, and none more dear than in the fascicle *Daigo (Great Realization)*.

*Practice-enlightenment* or *practice-realization* is a phrase that is imminent in Dogen’s writing. He is particularly adamant that we see all things from a non-dualistic perspective, which is the underlying principle of Zen. But often our supposedly non-dualistic point of view, is still sticking to one side like glue! We contemplate over and over “Not one, not two.” It is a paradox. From Dogen’s point of view, we can’t understand enlightenment as a “thing” or an “event in time” that opposes or erases the ordinary perspective of life. Hee-jin Kim expresses this paradox as a “foci”. (1) “Foci” is used instead of the words: antitheses, polarity or opposites. It is the dynamic interplay between the two poles of daily life and enlightenment or the absolute and the relative. They are interdependent and have no independent self-nature. They are intertwined and dynamic, swirling around the foci of the present moment. Kim writes, “*The ultimate paradox of Zen liberation is said to lie in the fact that one attains enlightenment only in and through delusion itself, never apart from it. Strange as this may sound, enlightenment has no exit from delusion any more than delusion has an exit from enlightenment. The two notions need, are bound by, and interact with one another.*” (2)

1.

Often the first paragraph of a fascicle is the summary of the whole fascicle. Here is the first paragraph of Daigo using Okumura-Roshi's unpublished translation (3):

*The great Way of the buddhas has been transmitted intimately without interruption; the diligent activities of the ancestors have been manifested extensively in ordinary lives. Therefore the great realization is manifested; the Way is reached through no-realization; reflecting realization and freely utilizing the realization, losing realization and letting the practice go. This is the day-to-day activities in the household of the Buddha-ancestors.*

*The very moment of great realization is now!*

The merging with the great functioning of the moment is the great reality and our enlightenment. It is constantly transmitted in each moment of time and form in our daily life. It is none other than our daily life: *grasses, walls, tiles and pebbles*. The illumination of daily life is revealed when we no longer grab onto the illusion of a centralized self: a *me or mine*. Without a *me or mine*, (which is a realization unto itself; the digestion of no-centralized-self), the Way is reached through *no-realization* or no seeking of a future-Buddha but the wholehearted expression of the present moment. Katagiri Roshi, my root teacher, taught that the merging of subject and object i.e. the relinquishing of the "me-subject" into the total working of this very moment is enlightenment.

Some other translations illuminate this paragraph with certain phrases that I find helpful.

- Nishijima and Cross (4) translate "*transmitted intimately without interruption*" as "*a continuous line of immediacy*".
- Nishijima and Cross translates "*freely utilize*" as "*to play with realization*".
- Kaz Tanahashi (5) uses the phrase, "*enlightenment disappears in the practice of letting go.*" For the line: "*and letting the practice go*".

The translation “*intimately without interruption*” comes from two characters put together. One means cotton ball, that which cannot easily be pulled apart. And the other is the character for “sacred” or “intimate”. (6) Cotton is an example of intimacy and because it can’t be pulled apart, it is like practice/realization or delusion/enlightenment.

Okumura-Roshi said that the line, “*The way is reached through no realization*” is the main point. (7) This is an example of reversing what the Heart Sutra calls upside-down thinking or inverted views. This “no” is not negative. This “no” is a pointer at that which is not bound by time and space and pervades the whole universe. This “no” is allowing non-substantiality and impermanence to reflect (like moon in a dewdrop) in every moment and every object. This “no”, in and of itself, decomposes so-called “*enlightenment.*”

2.

Going on to the next lines of the text:

*“This is the day-to-day activities in the household of the Buddha-ancestors. There are twelve hours that (Buddha-ancestors) hold up and utilize, and there are twelve hours that (Buddha-ancestors) let go and are utilized. Furthermore, there are playing with mud-balls and playing with spirit that jumps over this pivotal point. (8)*

Where is the household of the Buddha-ancestors? It can be none other than right here and now, manifested through our practice/realization, through the complete connection to this moment. The Buddha-ancestor’s household is our house and our actions. It is the living vitality of these chairs, sofa, table, books in this very library I see in this moment. The 12 hours are the ancient Asian clocks equivalent to our 24 hours. Enlightenment is expressed through and only through the day-to-day activities of our life. How could it be otherwise? Where else could it be expressed? Could this, as some people misconstrue, only be expressed in zazen in a formal situation in the zendo?

The dharma wheel turns through this dynamic of inter-being: doing and receiving, holding on and letting go, or holding up and utilizing. We are utilized by the “Whole

Works” (Zenki, another fascicle in the *Shobogenzo*) in both are taking up and doing, and we are utilized by the “Whole Works”, in our letting go and non-doing or our receiving. So we can push the dharma wheel by our conscious activity and we receive back the response from the universe by the wheel moving us. This is playing with form and emptiness. This is playing with doing and non-doing. This is the pivotal point or as Kim calls it, the “foci” which is the swirling interplay of the opposites.

One of Zen’s traditional images is the Bodhisattva covered in mud. Because an enlightened person has to and does live in the world of form and samsara, we cannot help but be covered by mud. From a non-dualistic point of view, mud and cleanliness (purity) interact and are different sides of the moment. A misunderstanding of Zen practice is to aspire to live in the pristine, transcendent world of enlightenment that is separate from delusion. The teaching of Daigo is the counterpoint to that misunderstanding. In Zen reality, we wade into the swampland and we are unafraid of the entangled briars of life. We are able to do this playfully because at each moment we open up and see the moment as an expression of universal play “*without moving a speck of dust or destroying a single form*” (9). This means that the form world remains complete, as it is, even though our perception of it has been transformed. Through this process of pivotal awareness, we are able to be clear. We can serve others with a clarity and understanding of life that can actually help. We are not holding on to the three poisons that grow out of the idea of a separate self. We are light-hearted, supported by boundless openness, while we play in the mud of samsara.

Let us investigate now the common notion of realization as an “event” that occurs in space and time usually in a formal Zen setting. We often say that this is a *kensho* or an insight into the truth that happens in a moment. Zen students often spend our time obsessively looking for this experience and missing this actual moment of “total dynamic working” (another translation of Zenki) as it is, which is the present moment. This is why Dogen coined the term practice/realization as a remedy for searching. We can settle into the “self” in this very moment. With practice/realization, each moment, however we evaluate it, good or bad, right or wrong, *kensho* or delusion, is the form of that moment’s

realization. Seeing our life in this way, we begin to stop seeking for somewhere else and make peace with what is occurring right now and open up to the moment as “just this”.  
*“Like a fish swimming in water, like a bird flying in the sky”*, (*Zazenshin fascicle*) (10)  
we humans are always in the field of realization. It is our home.

3.

Oddly enough, there is a story of Dogen’s ‘moment’ of enlightenment even though he has written extensively against seeing realization as a singular event in time. The story of his enlightenment is now controversial amongst Zen scholars. Even though we have this legendary enlightenment story, Dogen’s subtle expression of the teaching, his exposition of practice/enlightenment, seems to be much more extensive and many faceted than a moment in time. He exposes how we experience a realization, how we use this realization, and how we forget this realization.

This story was taken from the biography of Dogen written by Keizan Jokin Zenji in the *Denkoroku* (Transmission of Light). The story is:

A monk fell asleep in the meditation hall. Tendo Nyojo (Rujing) shouted at the sleeping monk: “True zazen is the dropping off of body and mind, why do you sleep?”

These were turning words for Dogen.

When he was greatly awakened, He went to the abbot’s room and bowed with incense.

The abbot Nyojo: “Why do you offer incense?”

Dogen: “Body and mind have dropped off.”

The Abbot changed the order of the words and verified Dogen’s enlightenment: “Dropped off body and mind.”

Dogen: “Don’t approve me lightly, this is just a temporal ability.”

Abbot: I am not approving you without reason.

Dogen: Why then?

Abbot: You dropped off body and mind.

Dogen bows

Abbot: you have dropped off dropping off. (11)

Today some Dogen scholars, such as Sugio Genyu of Yamaguchi University and Ishii Shudo of Komazawa University, think Keizan put together this story arbitrarily, using certain aspects of the oral story of Dogen. Otherwise Dogen's criticism of practice aimed at attaining kensho only becomes a contradiction to his own teaching. (12)

Professor Ishii has said that the fictitious story of Dogen's enlightenment experience has caused more misunderstanding of Dogen's teaching than any other fabricated portion of Dogen's biography. (13)

It seems more accurate to trust the description that Dogen himself wrote in "Hokyoki (Record in the Hokyō Era)." "Dropping off body and mind" is the teaching Dogen received from his teacher Tiantong Rujing (Jap: Tendo Nyojo) and is at the heart of his own teaching. According to the Hokyoki, he had several dialogues with Rujing about this phrase over a period of time. It seems that these dialogues with Rujing elucidate more what Rujing meant by "dropping off body and mind" than the legendary story of a momentary event of insight.

In one of these teaching encounters, Rujing said, "Sanzen is dropping off body and mind" and "dropping off body and mind is zazen" Katagiri-roshi translated Sanzen as "practice" elucidating on the phrase *practice-realization*. Katagiri writes:

*"Sanzen is zazen. Usually sanzen is translated as practice. But in English, practice doesn't hit the mark of what sanzen is. Literally, sanzen means to surrender ourselves to tranquility or simplicity in life. Simplicity is manifested only when our life, our circumstances, are very clear. ....Living in the complicated world, how can we manifest or understand simplicity? This is a difficult matter for us, but we have to do it because it is our original nature. So everyday we try to practice. In order to submit to tranquility or simplicity in life we do zazen. Simplicity is zazen. Zen Buddhism sees or hears or understands the*

*world and human life as action that is constantly going on. Dogen Zenji particularly mentions that, under all circumstances, we should understand the human world in terms of the flow process and not in terms of concepts.”* (14)  
This “simplicity” of Katagiri-Roshi might be what is left after dropping off body and mind. It is the simplicity of the world “just as it is” with the dynamism of the absolute and relative intertwined, in “this very moment”.

In his lecture on Bendowa (Talk on the Wholehearted Practice of the Way) published in Eihei-ji’s magazine Sansho in July 1999, Suzuki Kakuzen Roshi wrote:

*“In the case of Dogen Zenji, his religious experience is not attaining some sudden and special psychological satori experience. Dogen never talked about such an experience in Shobogenzo. In his teachings, realization is a deep awareness of the fact that the existence of the self is not a personal possession of the self.”*(15)

Enlightenment is not something “a person” possesses or achieves. In truth, the pivotal point is that enlightenment happens when the world no longer revolves around the false sense of a permanent self. Our minds are quiet. The interdependence of the physical body is seen. The existence of a solidified independent unit of the body unravels. We join in with the universal functioning of the moment and lose the “I”. This happens in zazen and it can also happen in a more active version in our daily life.

In daily life, our surrender to the moment and its corresponding single-minded activity break open our “stories” or the “worlds” we conceive. We begin to understand that any moment’s activity is inherently enlightened. The idea that our form life is “bad” or to be “transcended” or that it is “just a delusion” drops away. The form that appears in this moment is life itself. Our mental fantasies about the moment can be dropped, but even our mental fantasies are not outside of the mystery. They are the mystery of our brain’s excretions and of being a human. These ancestors are pointed out that each moment, event, person or thing IS the eternal source. How could it be otherwise? There is no mystery outside of this one moment’s manifestation. It is verified in humans by doing this one moment’s activity, dropping off body and mind with no *me or mine*, and

becoming one with our activity. Going back to the first paragraph: Daily life *reflects realization*, we are able to *freely utilize the realization*, and *realization disappears through the act of letting go*.

What is it exactly that we drop off to achieve what Katagiri-roshi called simplicity or things just as they are? Rujing told Dogen in one of these dialogues that dropping off is being freed from the 5 desires and 6 coverings. (16) The 5 desires are the grabbing on that comes through the 5 senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching). The 6 covering are similar to the hindrances: greed, anger or hatred, sleepiness or dullness, distraction, doubt, with the addition of ignorance. With all our coverings dropped off, our naked being, interpenetrated with universal energy, is what is left in simplicity and in activity.

Lastly, here is an excerpt from the third conversation recorded between Dogen and Rujing in the Hokyoki:

Rujing: Buddhas and ancestors practice many virtues generation after generation and allow their mind to be flexible.

Dogen made a prostration and then asked, “What does ‘allowing the mind to be flexible’ mean?”

Rujing said, “Affirming the dropping off body and mind of the buddhas and ancestors is the flexible mind. This is called the mind-seal of the buddhas and ancestors.”

Dogen made six prostrations. (17)

I am more and more intrigued with what a “flexible mind” means and its relationship to enlightenment. Dan Brown, a contemporary Tibetan Teacher, calls it “a serviceable mind”. (18) This mind is non-distractable and clear. It does not grab on or reject. It meets. It meets each and everything as Buddha. It takes care of each and everything as Buddha because it sees the truth of the mystery of life in each phenomena arising. The

ancestors call this flexible mind like a pearl in a bowl, freely able to move in an unending flow in any direction with no obstacles.

To summarize Dogen's encounters with Rujing as written in the Hokyoki:

1. Practice (sanzen) is dropping off body and mind. Dropping off body and mind is zazen.
2. Dropping off is being freed from the 5 desires and 6 coverings.
3. Buddhas and Ancestors do not forget or abandon living beings in their zazen; they offer a heart of compassion to all.
4. Affirming the dropping off body and mind of the buddhas and ancestors is the flexible mind.

4.

The next section of Daigo is an acknowledgement of the variety of practitioners that exist and that human capacity is greatly varied. But he admonishes us: *"Among these types of people, don't regard one as sharp and another as dull. Various types of people, as they are, actualize various types of accomplishments."* (19) Dogen doesn't espouse the stepladder or developmental approach to realization. Nor does he want us to evaluate and discriminate one kind of practitioner as better than another kind of practitioner. *All these different types of practitioners must bring forth great realization and thereby realizing afresh the state of great realization. The time which is just the moment of this (realization) is now.* (20)

In the text he acknowledges four types of knowing:

1. Innate knowing – born with the ability to penetrate life, knowing through understanding and seeing life.
  2. Learned knowing – gotten through study and practice, "Study the self"
  3. Buddha's knowing – neither innate nor learned, going beyond time and space. Touching the network of all beings. "Forget the self."
  4. Knowing without a teacher – Dogen's use of this phrase is that the teacher and student have become one and therefore the student no longer relies on the teacher.
- (21)

We do not practice to attain enlightenment but we practice within enlightenment. We manifest great realization through our activities, our doing and non-doing, moment by moment. With 100% mind and body together, focusing on what we are doing, forgetting the self, we carry out great realization. We do this again and again in the current moment.

5.

*The great master Rinzai said: “In this great country of Tang (China), if we look for even one single person who is without realization, it is difficult to find one.”*

This section continues to break apart the idea that there is a “person”. What is the meaning of “*even one single person?*” Dogen unravels the concept that personhood is a “thing”. It brings forth the Buddhist main teaching of no-centralized self. *Who* realizes or does not realize enlightenment? The question is not so much “realization” but the investigation at the core of realization, which is the “who”. Dogen is questioning here what is realization with no fixed identity and how does that express itself in our moment-to-moment life of phenomenon arising?

Dogen can be relied upon to try and trick our brain through his semantics and the changing of syntax. He could be called a Twentieth century cubist. He tries in one paragraph to present and unbind all the different angles or views of an object. None of these different views are “right”. It is like Nagarajuna’s quadrlemma. It is not this and not that. It is not both or not neither. Where then do we reside? Beyond thinking and language. In showing all the angles and contradicting all the opposites, he dismantles our notions of solidity, independent identity and linear time. He encourages us to open our minds beyond our concepts and fixed views, and experience just this moment as it is realized.

Here again in this koan, there is a play on words in the meaning of “no realization” or “without realization”. *“If we look for even one single person who is without realization, it is difficult to find one.”* Is Rinzai or Dogen talking about the impossibility of finding a

“single person” because there is no independent personhood? A single person cannot be found at all! Or are they saying all people, whether they have insight or not, have inherent realization, and therefore it’s difficult to find a person who is “without realization”. Or are they talking about a Buddha/person who has entered into the realm of “letting go of their realization and leaving no trace”? These people are, indeed, very difficult to find.

Dogen continues:

*“This statement by Rinzai is the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of the authentic stream, which is not mistaken.” (22)*

Dogen brings forth his view that enlightenment doesn’t have levels or a step-ladder-approach-to-realization by bringing up the metaphor used in Bodhidharma’s transmission. If we believe that there is a realization that will take place in the future, we end up constantly leaning into the future and believing that a future moment will be “better” than this moment. This leaning into the future is actually absurd, if we understand the teaching that Katagiri Roshi expounded in his phrase “Each moment is the Universe”. (23) Leaning forward, we actually miss realization itself.

Dogen uses the story of Bodhidharma to illustrate this point. Bodhidharma had four students and with each one he said, “you have understood my skin, you have understood my flesh, you have understood my bones and finally, you have understood my marrow.” He did actually transmit to the student, Hui-k’o, who had understood his marrow. But in a non-dualistic teaching, what is the meaning of surface and deep, skin or marrow?

I have always enjoyed the pointed out of Master Joshu in this koan:

*The master Joshu instructed the assembly saying: “Kashyapa transmitted it to Ananda. Tell me, whom did Bodhidharma transmit it to?”*

*A monk asked: “Supposing that the Second Ancestor ‘got the marrow’, what about it?”*

*Joshu said: “Don’t slander the Second Ancestor”*

*And then Joshu added: “Bodhidharma had a saying, ‘Someone who is outside attains the skin; someone who is inside attains the bone.’ Tell me, what has the one who is inside attained?”*

*The monk asked: “What is the truth of ‘attaining the marrow’?”*

*Joshu said: “Simply be aware of the skin, where I am, the marrow is not established.”*

*The monk asked, “What is the marrow?”*

*Joshu said: “In that case, the skin too is sought and not found.”(24)*

This koan takes apart the metaphor of skin, flesh, bones and marrow. It disassembles this imagery because in the deepest truth (the marrow), there is no substantiality and that “no solid thing” crosses all the boundaries in all four levels. In the marrow’s view, there is no skin and there are no layers. Each layer is the expression of the mystery itself. Each moment is complete. The surface of ordinary life is still the full expression of inter-being and the absolute. But if you understand the marrow, you will look for the skin and not find it. Of course, in the discriminating form world, we still have all 4 layers of the body undisturbed by oneness, as any surgeon will testify. Respecting the world of this and that, undisturbed by oneness, Bodhidharma did not transmit to all four students; he still, only transmitted to the person who had the marrow. Illustrating again “Not one, not two”. But even though the skin and the marrow are different in our differentiated world, there is actually no real “value” difference in terms of essence.

Using this collapsed metaphor helps us break down all the ‘stages’ we experience in various understandings. The different facets of enlightenment are seen from a Cubist view as different angles of the same thing and expressed by Dogen thus:

1. The Great realization is manifested (kensho)
2. The way is reached through no-realization (emptiness) (beyond conceptualization and disappearing in the practice of leaving no trace.)
3. Reflecting realization and freely utilizing realization (returning to delusion or utilizing realization in form)

4. Losing realization and letting the practice go. (Being fresh in each moment and then the next, Being fresh in the flow of time)

Deep and shallow, realization and delusion, are bound to each other and pivot around each other dynamically. We cannot separate one from the other. We cannot “realize” through our discursive thinking, which always discriminates into categories and then compares. This is why we practice letting “thinking” go through concentration. *How do we think of not thinking? – Non-thinking.* (25) We “realize” through letting go of our discriminations and preferences. We see interdependence as a non-verbal knowing.

In this same section Dogen writes:

*“In the great country Tang” means “within the eyeball of the self.”*(26)

The country of Tang – China – is a vast geography. In the ancient time, it was the entire world. The entire world is reflected in the eyeball of one single person. The eyeball of the self is the gate of inside and outside. Each single person is part of the entire network of interdependent co-origination. Each eye, person, knot, or jewel is at the intersection where the ropes of Indra’s Net meet. If you pick up one knot, the whole network responds and moves. So, is there even one single person who doesn’t move with the whole of Indra’s net? The separation of I and other is dropped off. The single eye has become the whole universe. The eye can become really large - 2 or 3 great countries of Tang. We simply live in the movement of the whole Net. We are not limited by the whole universe or the dusty realms of samsara.

Dogen has such a wonderful way of encouraging people. He knows how difficult practice is and how much human beings compare and discriminate. He uses the metaphor of a ½ a person in a number of fascicles. This phrase, a ½ a person, is a very compassionate way to deal with and acknowledge the difficulties and inconsistencies of our practice.

Dogen writes: *“Even if it is difficult to find a single person without realization, there is half a person who is without realization and that person’s face is gentle and peaceful,*

*imposing and dignified; have you seen such a person? ..... We should try to find two or three great countries of Tang within one person or half a person. Is it difficult or not? When we have such an eye of insight, it is possible to say that we have been filled with the dharma of buddhas and ancestors.”(26)*

I have two ideas on what a ½ person might mean. First, it is all of us humble practitioners who do not hit the mark 100% of the time: ½ on, ½ off. Second is the middle way. It is the person who is able to integrate the relative and absolute. We are both, our human selves with all our foibles AND our absolute selves which sees the boundless. Katagiri–Roshi called this our “total personality”. This ½ person or perhaps this single person is the practitioner who has brought together the boundless and the particular. That person will have a face that is gentle and peaceful, imposing and dignified. This is the manifestation of the mysterious workings of a spiritual life. It is not controlled by an “I”. Realization has disappeared and the person has disappeared and just activity is left.

6.

*Great Master Bsozhi (Hochi) of Huayan (Kegon) temple in Jingzhao (Keicho) (Dharma Heir of Dongshan, his personal name was Xiujing); was once asked by a monk: How is it when a person of great realization returns to delusion?” The master said: “A broken mirror never reflects things again. Fallen flower never go up the tree.”(28)*

*How is it when a person of great realization returns to delusion?* Here is another way that Dogen is trying to break apart our notion that realization and delusion are dual. Is there a separate place other than our here and now that houses great realization? *Is there?* With this question, we seek to penetrate how delusion and enlightenment are one. Synonymously, we could also investigate form and emptiness as one. Dogen is repeatedly pointing us to the truth that the moment of phenomena arising and the boundless universal energy function together. The great realization is seeing that oneness without ignoring their twoness.

Our usual commonplace notion is that the development of enlightenment has a starting point, a process, and a result. In our ordinary minds, we see enlightenment as the result and zazen as the means or cause. Dogen encourages us to see cause and effect as one, and to see form and emptiness as one. He also encourages the opposite. Dogen will counter and break up this traditional instruction, by also saying: *form is form and emptiness is emptiness*. We honor oneness and we honor differentiation. They come together in the form of gassho, the left hand meeting the right. They are one whole and yet different. Like a leaf falling from a tree, first you see the front of the leaf, then the back of the leaf, but still, it is one whole leaf that falls to the ground.

*“How is it when the person of great enlightenment returns to delusion.”* It is like the 10<sup>th</sup> ox-herding picture, “Returning to the marketplace”. The world is born anew and we enter the dust and briars of the thicket of samsara. Delusion becomes the field for our enlightened expression. Manifested reality is the practice place of enlightenment. Dogen writes, *“As there is a person of great realization, there are buddhas of great realization; there are earth, water, fire, wind, emptiness of great realization; there are exposed pillars and lanterns of great realization.”*(29) The elements, the trees, grasses, and pebbles, the concrete objects of life, are all, also, Buddha beings.

The line that most informs this intertwining of form and emptiness is *“We should know that there is great realization that makes ‘returning to delusion’ into the most intimate partner.”*(30) Delusion and great realization are intimate partners! They need each other and they are actually inseparable.

“Returning to delusion” is “identity-action” written about in Dogen’s fascicle, *“The Bodhisattva’s four methods of guidance.”* Identity-action means to lose our personal identity by merging with the activity of the moment. We have to become the object and the object becomes us. In that intimacy, we know true interdependence. All the objects in the form world can begin to teach us about themselves. We can truly listen to the

mystery of the world. We have a continuous sense of awe in this mystery. This is how an enlightened person re-enters the world of delusion, discrimination and separation.

Katagiri Roshi writes:

“We have to see everything in equality but that doesn’t mean there is no difference. We have to see equality, but not in the realm of equality; we have to see equality in the realm of differentiation. Differentiation must be formed not in differentiation, but in equality. Then, differentiation and equality are working in identity action. Identity action does not function in a small area called ego, but in the vastness of existence.

When we clean a room, we just clean the room. The room is not something different from us. We are the room, the room is us. Then we and the room communicate with each other in the rhythm of identity-action. We have to take the best care of the room we can, because the room is not a material being apart from us. The room is a great being called Buddha-dharma. Buddha-dharma means the unity of Buddha and us, Buddha and the room.” (31)

With this as our understanding, we become very flexible and fluid. When oneness arises, we are completely absorbed in non-differentiated oneness. When a form arises, we become 100% the functioning of that form at that moment. It is not 50% and 50%. (32) In that sense, it is not the middle way between delusion and enlightenment. The middle way is actually 100% either this or that. But in the background, we know that they mysteriously influence each other, moment after moment.

Each moment/form/event is an arising from the whole network of karmic conditions rather than an “I” making a “thing” happen. Because this dynamic functioning cannot be stopped, cannot be identified by a certain “name” or “sign”, it goes beyond the notion of a “moment” or a “thing”; it is the eternal source itself,

This koan’s question, “*How is it when a person of great realization return to delusion?*”

The koan's reply, "*A broken mirror never reflects things again. Fallen flowers never go up the tree.*"

Our human stories are always broken and we are often shattered. As humans, we are and always will be covered in mud. This is the deeply unsettled human predicament. There is an inherent human tragedy and that is our death and all the losses along the way. We attach to our children and then we have to let them go. We attached to our life and our accomplishments and then illness comes and we have to let them go and die to our world. The small deaths we experience every day are broken mirrors and fallen flowers. They are the expression of the pivoting of life and death. Impermanence and insubstantiality is totally obvious in the world of delusion. *Nothing is hidden.* (from Tenzo Kyokun, in Eiheigen Zenji Shingi) In delusion, noticing this insubstantiality is enlightenment.

We become aware of the true nature of reality. "*Great realization of this present moment is neither the self of one's own nor the self of others; it does not come from somewhere else, there it fills in ditches and also fills up in valleys.*"(33) This realization fills the smallest ditch and the largest valley with boundlessness. "*Because the broken mirror is truly nothing other than a broken mirror*" meaning that life and death, appearing and disappearing, are always present and totally spinning around each other. "*No matter how many concrete activities are actualized, all of them are equally the reflection of never-again-reflecting*"(34) which points to emptiness or no-realization never-again-reflecting. This is the equality of oneness. Different then the traditional "mirror wisdom", this is the *no-realization* that doesn't reflect anything at all.

To return to delusion is to forget unity and realization and see the uniqueness of each phenomenon. "*Losing realization, and letting the practice go.*" Or "*enlightenment disappears in the practice of letting go.*" We need to be free from realization. Being free from freedom (35), we can come back to the world of discrimination and live in the world of discrimination without any clinging. We experience our stories freed from the charge of our desire system that centers around me and mine. The "I" is filled with "other" but the forms of the world appear the same.

As we return to the world of delusion, we cannot ignore the laws of the form world. We cannot reverse time, even though, strictly speaking, there is no time. There is no before and no after. Each object or event has its own dharma position. Fallen leaves do not go back on the tree, nor does ash turn back into firewood. A seed of a rosebush does not produce a magnolia tree. The karmic functioning of the form world is exactly as it is. The differentiated world cannot be ignored or obliterated, but must be vividly experienced and understood for what it is. Returning to delusion is practicing forever. (36). Bringing the hand of emptiness and the hand of form together in a bow.

7.

The last koan in this fascicle is:

*Master Mihi (Beiko) of Jinzhao (Keicho) let a monk ask Yangshan (Gyosan), “Do people of nowadays still need realization or not?”*

*Yangshan said, “It is not that there is no realization, but what should we do about falling into the second head?”*

*The monk returned to Mihi and reported (Yangshan’s answer). Mihi deeply appreciated it. (37)*

In finishing the fascicle, we come back to Dogen’s original question when he first went to China. If everything is Buddha or imbued with realization, why practice? or why try this hard to realize the truth? Or in other words: *Do people today still need realization or not?* Can we use the whole treatise on “delusion and enlightenment are one” to support a side that says we don’t need to realize the dharmakaya? *Yangshan said, “It is not that there is no realization, but what should we do about falling into the second head?”*

In this imagery, the first head is the head of realization, which is completely quiet, still and beyond discrimination. We could say, the second head is the head of discursive thinking and duality. The second head has two heads. One is the “monkey mind” which is filled with our fantasies and our desire system and its preference. The mind of the “I”. Another second head is the mind that approaches the form world, sourcing itself from the

organizing principles of no-centralized self and interdependent co-origination. This second head sourced from the first head begins to express enlightenment with whatever arises, black or white. In that case, the second head is also satori. With this understanding, we begin to make true contact with life. The first head and the second head dance with each other intimately.

Dogen writes:

*“It means that the second head is satori. To mention ‘the second head’ is like saying ‘Do we become satori?’ ‘Do we attain satori?’ It means that saying either ‘to become’ or ‘it is coming’ is satori. Therefore, although it seems that Yangshan regrets falling into the second head, he says that there is no second head (that is separate from the first head.) The second head made out of satori is, simultaneously the true second head. Therefore, even though it is the second head, or even the hundredth or thousandth head, it is nothing other than satori.” (38)*

Dogen doesn't suffer from the fear of falling into the second head. He includes the second head in enlightenment. He brings all of who we are: the present, the past, and the future selves together; he brings our darkness and our light together, into the essence of any given moment.

Dogen admonishes us to contemplate:

*“Do we rely upon realization or not? We must investigate these words quietly; we should replace our heart with them and replace our brain with them” (39)* Do we source our life from realization or not?

8.

If we listen to Dogen's teaching, we do not become “Buddha-seeking fools.” He implores us not to “*vainly wait for realization to come*”. He encourages us in this very moment to express practice/realization as the means and the end. The two notions of delusion and enlightenment, *need, are bound by and interact with one another*. They

have no beginning, middle or end. They have no separate place. *The day-to-day activities in the household of the Buddha-ancestors*, is our house, our life and our activity. This doing and non-doing, is imbued thoroughly with the total dynamic functioning of moment-to-moment reality. Nothing is left out, and there can be great peace and ease in this understanding. Even though realization is the experience of great, whole oneness, Dogen ends this fascicle by saying, “*The head of great realization is black; the head of great realization is white.*”(40)

*This article is very much based on the lectures of Okumura-Roshi and supplemented by the years of listening to Katagiri-Roshi talk about Dogen. To these wonderful teachers, I am greatly indebted. All misunderstandings are my own.*