

hsin hsin ming

The Zen Understanding of
Mind and **Consciousness**

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Chapter 1 – The Great Way Is Not Difficult

The great way is not difficult
for those who have no preferences.
When love and hate are both absent
everything becomes clear and undisguised.
Make the smallest distinction, however,
and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.
If you wish to see the truth
then hold no opinion for or against....
The struggle of what one likes and what one dislikes
is the disease of the mind.

We will be entering the beautiful world of a Zen master's no-mind. Sosan is the third Zen patriarch. Nothing much is known about him – this is as it should be, because history records only violence. History does not record silence, it cannot record it. All records are of disturbance. Whenever someone becomes really silent, he disappears from all records, he is no longer a part of our madness. So it is as it should be.

Sosan remained a wandering monk his whole life. He never stayed anywhere; he was always passing, going, moving. He was a river; he was not a pond, static. He was a constant movement. That is the meaning of Buddha's wanderers: not only in the outside world but in the inside world also they should be homeless – because whenever you make a home you become attached to it. They should remain rootless; there is no home for them except this whole universe.

Even when it was recognized that Sosan had become enlightened, he continued his old beggar's way. And nothing was special about him. He was an ordinary man, the man of Tao.

One thing I would like to say, and you have to remember it: Zen is a crossbreeding. And just as more beautiful flowers can come out of crossbreeding, and more beautiful children are born out of crossbreeding, the same has happened with Zen.

Zen is a crossbreeding between Buddha's thought and Lao Tzu's thought. It is a great meeting, the greatest that ever took place. That's why Zen is more beautiful than Buddha's thought and more beautiful than Lao Tzu's thought. It is a rare flowering of the highest peaks and the meeting of those peaks. Zen is neither Buddhist nor Taoist, but it carries both within it.

India is a little too serious about religion – a long past, a long weight on the mind of India, and religion has become serious. Lao Tzu remained a laughingstock: Lao Tzu is known as the old fool. He is not serious at all; you cannot find a more non-serious man.

Then Buddha's thought and Lao Tzu's thought met, India and

China met, and Zen was born. And this Sosan was just near the original source when Zen was coming out of the womb. He carries the fundamental.

His biography is not relevant at all, because whenever a man becomes enlightened he has no biography. He is no longer the form, so when he was born and when he died are irrelevant facts. That's why in the East we have never bothered about biographies, historical facts. That obsession has never been here. That obsession has now come from the West; then people become more interested in irrelevant things. When a Sosan is born, what difference does it make – this year or that? When he dies, how is it important?

Sosan is important, not his entry into this world and the body, not his departure. Arrivals and departures are irrelevant. The only relevance is in the being.

And these are the only words Sosan uttered. Remember, they are not words, because they come out of a mind which has gone beyond words. They are not speculations, they are authentic experiences. Whatsoever he says, he knows.

He is not a man of knowledge, he is a wise man. He has penetrated the mystery, and whatsoever he brings is very significant. It can transform you completely, totally. If you listen to him the very listening can become a transformation, because whatsoever he is saying is the purest gold.

But then it is difficult too, because the distance is very, very great between you and him: you are a mind and he is a no-mind. Even if he uses words he is saying something in silence; you, even if you remain silent, go on chattering within.

It happened...

There was a case against Mulla Nasruddin in the court. The court could not prove much. He was charged with polygamy, having many wives. Everybody knew about it, but nobody could prove it.

The lawyer said to Nasruddin, "You remain silent, that's all. If you utter a single word you will be caught. So simply keep quiet and I will see to the matter."

Mulla Nasruddin remained silent – deep down boiling, in turmoil, wanting to interrupt many times, but somehow managing and controlling himself. Outwardly he looked like a buddha, inside a madman. The court couldn't find anything against him. Even though the magistrate knew that this man had many wives in the town, when there was no proof what could he do? So the magistrate had to release him.

He said, "Mulla Nasruddin, you are released. Now you can go home."

Mulla Nasruddin looked puzzled and said, "Er – Your Honor, which home?"

He had many homes because he had many wives in the town.

A single word from you will show the mind inside; a single word and your whole being is exposed. Not even a word is needed: just a gesture and your chattering mind will be there. Even if you are silent, your silence will not reveal anything other than the chattering monkey within.

When a Sosan speaks, he speaks on a totally different plane. He is not interested in speaking; he is not interested in influencing anybody; he is not trying to convince you about some theory or philosophy or “ism.” No, when he speaks his silence blooms. When he speaks he is saying that which he has come to know and would like to share with you. It is not to convince you, remember – it is just to share with you. And if you can understand a single word of his, you will feel a tremendous silence being released within you.

We will be talking about Sosan and his words. If you listen attentively, suddenly you will feel a release of silence within you. These words are atomic, they are full of energy. Whenever a person who has attained says something, the word is a seed and for millions of years the word will remain a seed and will seek a heart.

If you are ready, ready to become the soil, then these words, these tremendously powerful words of Sosan – they are still alive, they are seeds – they will enter in your heart if you allow, and you will be totally different through them.

Don't listen to them from the mind, because the mind carries no meaning about them; the mind is absolutely impotent to understand them. They don't come from the mind, they cannot be understood by the mind. They come from a no-mind. They can be understood only by a state of no-mind.

So while listening here don't try to interpret. Don't listen to the words but to the gaps between the lines, not to what he says but to what he means – the significance. Let that significance hover around you like a fragrance. Silently it will enter you; you will become pregnant. But don't interpret. Don't say “He means this or that,” because that interpretation will be yours.

Once it happened...

Mulla Nasruddin was coming back, completely drunk, in the wee hours of the morning. As he was passing by a cemetery he looked at the signboard. On it was written in big letters, capital letters: ring for the caretaker – and that's what he did.

Of course, so early in the morning, the caretaker was disturbed. He came out, staggering, angry, and when he looked at Nasruddin, absolutely drunk, he became even more angry.

He asked, “Why? Why did you ring? Why did you ring for me? What is the matter? What do you want?”

Nasruddin looked at him for one minute, silently, then looked at the signboard and said, "I want to know why you can't ring that damn bell yourself!"

It was written: ring for the caretaker. Now how to interpret it? It depends on you.

Don't interpret – listen. And when you interpret you can't listen, because the consciousness cannot do two opposite things simultaneously. If you start thinking, listening stops. Just listen as you listen to music – a different quality of listening because you don't interpret. There is no meaning in the sounds.

This is also music. This Sosan is a musician, not a philosopher. This Sosan is not saying words, he is saying more – more than the words. They have a significance, but they don't have any meaning. They are like musical sounds.

You go and sit near a waterfall. You listen to it, but do you interpret what the waterfall says? It says nothing, still it says. It says much, much that cannot be said.

What do you do near a waterfall? You listen, you become silent and quiet, you absorb. You allow the waterfall to go deeper and deeper within you. Then everything becomes quiet and silent within. You become a temple – the unknown enters through the waterfall.

What do you do when you listen to the songs of the birds, or wind passing through the trees, or dry leaves being blown by the breeze? What do you do? You simply listen.

This Sosan is not a philosopher, he is not a theologian, he is not a priest. He does not want to sell an idea to you, he is not interested in ideas. He is not there to convince you, he is simply blooming. He is a waterfall, or he is a wind blowing through the trees, or he is just a song of the birds – no meaning, but much significance. You have to absorb that significance, only then will you be able to understand.

So listen, but don't think. And then it is possible for much to happen within you, because I tell you: this man – this Sosan about whom nothing much is known – was a man of power, a man who has come to know. And when he says something he carries something of the unknown to the world of the known. With him enters the divine, a ray of light into the darkness of your mind.

Before we enter into his words, remember the significance of the words, not the meaning; the music, the melody, not the meaning; the sound of his soundless mind, his heart, not his thinking. You have to listen to his being, the waterfall.

How to listen? Just be silent. Don't bring your mind in. Don't start thinking, "What is he saying?" Just listen without deciding this way or that, without saying whether he is right or wrong, whether you are convinced or not. He does not bother about your conviction, you also need not bother about it. Simply listen and delight. Such persons like

Sosan are to be delighted in; they are natural phenomena.

A beautiful rock – what do you do with it? You delight in it. You touch it, you go around it, you feel it, the moss on it. What do you do with clouds moving in the sky? You dance on the earth, you look at them, or you just keep quiet and lie down on the ground and look at them and let them float. And they fill you. Not only the outer sky – by and by, the more you become silent, they fill your inner sky also. Suddenly you are not there, only clouds are moving, in and out. The division is dropped, the boundary is no longer there. You have become the sky and the sky has become you.

Treat Sosan as a natural phenomenon. He is not a man. He is godliness, he is Tao, he is a buddha.

Before we try to move into his significance, a few things have to be understood. They will give you a push.

Mind is a disease. This is a basic truth the East has discovered. The West says mind can become ill, can be healthy. Western psychology depends on this: the mind can be healthy or ill. But the East says mind as such is the disease, it cannot be healthy. No psychiatry will help, at the most you can make it normally ill.

So there are two types of illness with mind: normally ill – that means you have the same illness as others around you; or abnormally ill – that means you are something unique. Your disease is not ordinary, exceptional. Your disease is individual, not of the crowd; that's the only difference. Normally ill or abnormally ill, but mind cannot be healthy. Why?

The East says the very nature of mind is such that it will remain unhealthy. The word *health* is beautiful. It comes from the same root as the word *whole*. *Health, healing, whole, holy* – they all come from the same root.

The mind cannot be healthy because it can never be whole. Mind is always divided; division is its base. If it cannot be whole, how can it be healthy? And if it cannot be healthy, how can it be holy? All minds are profane. There is nothing like a holy mind. A holy man lives without the mind because he lives without division.

Mind is the disease. And what is the name of that disease? Aristotle is the name, or if you really want to make it look like a disease then you can coin a word: *aristotilitis*. Then it looks exactly like a disease. Why is Aristotle the disease? Because Aristotle says, "Either this or that. Choose!" And choice is the function of the mind; mind cannot be choiceless.

Choose and you are in the trap, because whenever you choose, you have chosen something against something else. If you are for something, you must be against something; you cannot be only for, you cannot be only against. When the "for" enters, the "against" follows as a shadow. When the "against" is there, the "for" must be there – hidden or not hidden.

When you choose, you divide. Then you say, “This is good, that is wrong.” And life is a unity. Existence remains undivided, existence remains in a deep unison. It is oneness. If you say, “This is beautiful and that is ugly,” mind has entered, because life is both together. And the beautiful becomes ugly, and the ugly goes on becoming beautiful. There is no boundary, there are no watertight compartments. Life goes on flowing from this to that.

Mind has fixed compartments. Fixedness is the nature of mind and fluidity is the nature of life. That’s why mind is obsession; it is always fixed, it has a solidness about it. And life is not solid; it is fluid, flexible, it goes on moving to the opposite.

Something is alive this moment, the next moment it is dead. Someone was young this moment, the next moment he has become old. The eyes were so beautiful, now they are no longer there – just ruins. The face was so rose-like, now nothing is there – not even a ghost of the past. Beautiful becomes ugly, life becomes death, and death goes on taking new birth.

What to do with life? You cannot choose. If you want to be *with* life, with the whole, you have to be choiceless.

Mind is a choice. Aristotle made it the base of his logic and philosophy. You cannot find a man more distant from Sosan than Aristotle, because Sosan says, “Neither this nor that – don’t choose.” Sosan says, “Be choiceless.” Sosan says, “Don’t make distinctions!” The moment you make a distinction, the moment choice enters, you are already divided, fragmentary; you have become ill, you are not whole.

Remember, if you ask a Christian who does not really belong to Jesus, who basically belongs to Aristotle... Christianity is more Aristotle-based than Christ-based. Jesus was more like Sosan. He says, “Don’t judge. Judge ye not!” He says, “Don’t make any choice. Don’t say, ‘This is good and that is bad!’ That is not your concern. Let the whole decide. Don’t be a judge.” But Christianity is not really Jesus-oriented. The founders of Christianity were more Aristotelian than Christian.

You cannot make a church out of Sosan or Jesus. How can you make a church if you remain choiceless? A church has to be for something and against something; it has to be for God and against the Devil. And in life God and the Devil are not two, they are one. The Devil is one face and God is another face of the same energy – they are not two.

Sometimes he comes as a Devil and sometimes he comes as a God. And if you can go deep and look, you will find they are the same. Sometimes he comes as a thief and sometimes he comes as a virtuous man. Sometimes you will find him in respectable quarters and sometimes with those who are not respected but condemned. He *moves*, he is a movement. And no shore is too distant for him to reach, nobody is beyond him – he moves in everybody.

Jesus makes no distinctions, but Christianity makes distinctions because a religion has to – a religion has to become a morality. And once a religion becomes a morality it is no longer a religion. Religion is the greatest daring possible. It takes the greatest courage to be choiceless, because the mind says, “Choose!” The mind says, “Say something! This is wrong, that is good. This is beautiful, this is ugly. I love this, I hate that.” Mind says, “Choose!” Mind has a temptation to divide. Once you divide, mind is at ease. If you don’t divide, if you say, “I’m not going to say anything. I’m not going to judge,” mind feels as if it is on its deathbed.

Aristotle says *A* is *A* and cannot be *not A* – the opposites cannot meet. Sosa says there are no opposites – they are already meeting, they have always been meeting. This is one of the most fundamental truths to be realized, that opposites are not opposites. It is you who say they are opposites, otherwise they are not opposites. Look existentially and you will feel they are the same energy.

You love a person... One woman came to me and she said, “For ten years I have been married to a person and we never quarreled. And now suddenly, what happened? He has left me.”

Now, she thinks that if they never quarreled it shows they were in deep love. This is foolish, but this is Aristotelian: the woman is absolutely logical.

She said, “We have been married for ten years. We never quarreled, we were never angry at each other.” She is saying, “We were in such deep love that we never fought about anything. There was not even a single moment of conflict. And now, what happened? Suddenly he has left me! Has he gone mad? Our love was so deep.” She is wrong.

If love is deep then there are bound to be some quarrels. Sometimes you will fight. And the fight is not going to break the love, it enriches it. If love is there, it will be enriched by fighting; if love is not there, then you part, you separate. Ten years is a long time – even twenty-four hours is too long to be constantly in one state of mind, because mind moves to the opposite.

You love a person; sometimes you feel angry. Really, you feel angry only because you love. Sometimes you hate! Sometimes you would like to sacrifice yourself for your lover, and sometimes you would like to kill the lover. And both are you.

If you have not quarreled for ten years it means there was no love at all. It means it was not a relationship. And you were so afraid that any anger, any conflict, any slight thing could break down the whole thing. You were so afraid you never quarreled. You never believed that the love could go deeper than the quarrel, that the quarrel would be momentary and after the quarrel you would fall into each other’s arms more deeply. No, you never trusted that. That’s why you managed not to fight. And it is not something to be surprised about, that the man has left. I said, “I am surprised that he remained with you for ten years.

Why?”

One man came to me and he said, “Something has gone wrong with my son. I have known him for twenty years – he was always obedient. Such a good boy you cannot find anywhere. He never disobeyed, he never went against me. And now suddenly he has become a hippie. Now suddenly he doesn’t listen. He looks at me as if I am not his father at all. He looks at me as if I am a stranger. And for twenty years he was so obedient. What has happened to my son?”

Nothing has happened. This is what was to be expected, because if a son really loves his father he disobeys also. Whom else should he disobey? If a son really loves his father and trusts him, sometimes he goes away also – because he knows the relationship is so deep that by disobeying it is not going to be broken. Rather, on the contrary, it will be enriched. The opposite enriches.

Really, the opposite is not opposite. It is just a rhythm, a rhythm of the same; you obey and then you disobey – it is a rhythm. Otherwise, you just going on obeying, obeying, and everything becomes monotonous and dead. Monotony is the nature of death, because the opposite is not there.

Life is alive. The opposite is there, a rhythm is there. You move, you come back; you depart, you arrive; you disobey, then you obey also; you love and you hate. This is life, but not logic. Logic says if you love you cannot hate. If you love, how can you be angry? If you love in this way then you love in a monotonous way, the same pitch. But then you will become tense, then it is impossible to relax.

Logic believes in linear phenomena: you move in one line. Life believes in circles: the same line goes up, comes down, becomes a circle.

You must have seen the Chinese circle of yin and yang. That is how life is: opposites meeting. That circle of yin and yang is half white, half black. In the white there is a black spot, and in the black there is a white spot. The white is moving into the black, and the black is moving into the white – it is a circle. The woman moving into the man, the man moving into the woman – this is life. And if you observe minutely, you will see it within you.

A man is not a man twenty-four hours a day, he cannot be – sometimes he is a woman. A woman is not a woman twenty-four hours a day – sometimes she is a man also. They move to the opposite. When a woman is angry she is no longer a woman; she becomes more aggressive than any man and she is more dangerous than any man, because her manhood is purer and never used. So whenever she uses it, it has a sharpness no man can compete with. It is just like soil which has not been used for many, many years; then you throw the seeds – and a bumper crop!

A woman sometimes becomes a man, but when she becomes one, then no man can compete. Then she is very dangerous; then it is better

for the man to submit. And that's what all men do – they become submissive, they surrender, because immediately the man has to become the woman, otherwise there will be trouble. Two swords in one seat – there will be trouble. If the woman has become the man, if she has changed role, immediately the man becomes the woman. Now everything is re-established. Again the circle is complete.

And whenever a man becomes submissive and surrenders, that surrender has a purity no woman can compete with – because ordinarily he is never in that posture, in that game. Ordinarily he stands and fights. Ordinarily he is a will, not surrender. But whenever he surrenders it has an innocence that no woman can compete with. Look at a man in love – he becomes just a small child.

But this is how life moves. And if you understand it then you are not worried at all. Then you know: the lover has departed, he will come back; the beloved is angry, she will love. Then you have patience. With Aristotle you cannot have any patience, because if a lover has departed, he has departed on a linear journey – no coming back, it is not a circle. But in the East we believe in the circle; in the West they believe in the line.

The Western mind is linear, the Eastern mind is circular. So in the East a lover can wait. He knows that the woman who has now left him will come back. She is already on the way, she must be already repenting, she must have already repented, she must be coming; sooner or later she will knock at the door. Just wait, because the opposite is always there.

And whenever a woman comes back after anger, then love again is fresh. Now it is not repetition. The gap of anger destroyed the past. Now she is again a young girl, a virgin girl. Again she falls in love – everything becomes fresh.

If you understand this, then you are not against anything. You know even anger is beautiful, even a quarrel here and there gives tone to life. And everything helps the richness. Then you accept, then deep in acceptance you are patient, then there is no impatience and no hurry. Then you can wait and pray and hope and dream.

Otherwise, if life is linear, as Aristotle thinks or – as Western thinking has moved from Aristotle to Bertrand Russell – as Bertrand Russell thinks, then life has much impatience. Nobody is going to come back; then you are always trembling, afraid, and then you become suppressive. Then you may stay with a woman for ten years or for ten lives, but that staying is with a stranger. You are controlling yourself, she is controlling herself, and there is no meeting. Life is not logic. Logic is just a part – of course, very clean-cut, categorized, compartmentalized, divided – but life is messy. But what to do? It is so. It is not so compartmentalized, so clear-cut, divided. It is a chaos. But logic is dead and life is alive, so the question is whether to choose consistency or to choose life.

If you are too much for consistency you will become dead, and deader and deader, because consistency is possible only if you drop the opposite completely. Then you love and only love and only love and are never angry, never hate, never fight. You obey, only obey – never disobedience, never rebellion, never going away. But then everything becomes stale, then the relationship becomes poisonous – then it kills.

This Sosan is not for logic, he is for life. Now, try to understand the significance of his words.

Says Sosan:

The great way is not difficult
for those who have no preferences.
When love and hate are both absent
everything becomes clear and undisguised.
Make the smallest distinction, however,
and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.
If you wish to see the truth
then hold no opinion for or against...
The struggle of what one likes and what one dislikes
is the disease of the mind.

Just like Chuang Tzu: “Easy is right.” *The great way is not difficult...* If it appears difficult, it is you who make it difficult. The great way is easy.

How can it be difficult? Even trees follow it, rivers follow it, rocks follow it. How can it be difficult? Even birds fly in it and fish swim in it. How can it be difficult? Man makes it difficult, mind makes it difficult – and the trick to make any easy thing difficult is to choose, to make a distinction.

Love is easy, hate is easy, but you choose. You say, “I will only love, I will not hate.” Now everything has become difficult. Now you cannot even love! To breathe in is easy, to breathe out is easy. You choose; you say, “I will only breathe in, I will not breathe out.” Now everything has become difficult.

The mind can say, “Why breathe out? Breath is life. Simple arithmetic: go on breathing in, don’t breathe out and you will become more and more alive. More and more life will be accumulated. You will become a great treasure of life. Only breathe in, don’t breathe out because breathing out is death.”

Remember, the first thing a child has to do when he is born is to breathe in. And the last thing when a man dies will be to breathe out. Life begins with breathing in and death begins with breathing out. Each moment when you breathe in you are reborn; each moment when you breathe out you are dead, because breath is life. That’s why Hindus have called it *prana*: *prana* means life. Breath is life.

It is simple logic, simple arithmetic. There is not much trouble, you

can make it plain: breathe in more and more and don't breathe out, then you will never die. If you breathe out you will have to die. And if you do it too much you will die soon! Arithmetic – simple, easy, appears easy. So what is a logician supposed to do? A logician will only breathe in, never breathe out.

Love is breathing out, hate is breathing in.

So what to do? Life is easy if you don't decide, because then you know breathing in and breathing out are not two opposite things; they are two parts of one process. And those two parts are organic parts, you cannot divide them. And if you don't breathe out? The logic is wrong. You will not be alive; you will be simply, immediately dead.

Try – just breathe in and don't breathe out. You will understand. You will become very, very tense. The whole being would like to breathe out because this is going to be death. If you choose, you will be in difficulty. If you don't choose, everything is easy. Easy is right.

If man is in difficulty it is because of too many teachers who have poisoned his mind, who have been teaching him: "Choose this! Don't do this, do that!" Their do's and don'ts have killed you. And they look logical. If you go to argue with them they will win the argument. Logic will help them: "Look! It is so simple: why breathe out if it is death?"

And this has happened not only with breathing, or even with breathing. There are schools of Yoga which say that your life is counted through breath; your life is counted not in years but in breaths – so breathe slowly. If you take twelve breaths in one minute you will die soon; take six, or three, then you will live long.

Nobody has succeeded, but people go on trying: breathe slowly. Why? – because if you breathe slowly the breath will be going out less and less, so less death will happen to you, or, the longer you will be able to live. The only thing that will happen will be that your zest for life will be lost. It will not be lengthened, but it may appear long.

It is said that married people live longer than bachelors, so somebody asked Nasruddin, "Is it true, Nasruddin?"

Nasruddin said, "It appears so. A married man does not live longer, but it appears that he has been living longer." – because when there is much trouble time seems longer, when there is no trouble time seems shorter.

These so-called yogis who go on breathing less and less, and slower, only slow down the process of life. They are less alive, that's all. They will not be alive longer, but less alive. They are not living fully; their candle is not burning perfectly. The zest, the enthusiasm, the dance is lost. They drag themselves, that's all.

And this has happened with sex, because people think with sex death enters. And they are right, because sex energy gives birth to life – so the more sex energy moves out, the more life is moving out.

Logical, absolutely Aristotelian, but foolish. And you cannot find greater fools than logicians. It is logical that life-energy comes from sex – a child is born because of sex, so sex *is* the source of life – so keep it in. Don't allow it to go out, otherwise you will be dead. So the whole world has become afraid.

But it is the same, just like keeping the breath in: then the whole being wants to throw it out. So your so-called *brahmacharis*, celibates, who try to keep the sex energy in, the semen in, the whole body wants to throw it out. Their whole life becomes sexual – their minds become sexual, they dream of sex, they think of sex. Sex becomes their obsession because they are trying to do something, logical of course, but not true to life. And they don't live long, they die soon.

This is a new finding, a new research: that a man lives longer if he prolongs his love life as much as possible. If a man can make love at eighty years of age he will live longer. Why? – because the more you breathe out, the more you breathe in. So exactly, if you want more life, breathe out more so you create a vacuum inside and more breath comes in. Don't think about breathing in; simply exhale as much as you can and your whole being will inhale. Love more – that is breathing out – and your body will gather energy from the whole cosmos. You create the vacuum and the energy comes.

It is just like this in every process of life. You eat, but then you become a miser, you become constipated. The logic is right: don't breathe out. Constipation is choosing breathing in, and being against breathing out. Almost every civilized person is constipated; you can measure civilization through constipation. The more constipated a country the more civilized, because the more logical. Why breathe out? Just go on breathing in. Food is energy. Why throw it out? You may not be aware but this is the unconscious getting logical and Aristotelian.

But life is a balance between throwing out and inviting in. You are just a passage. Share, give, and more will be given to you. Be a miser, don't give, and less will be given to you because you don't need it.

Remember, and watch your life processes. If you are really interested in ultimately understanding enlightenment, remember to give so that more is given to you, whatsoever it is. Breathe out, exhale more. That is what sharing means, giving means.

A gift is giving your energies, so more is given to you. But the mind says... It has its own logic, and Sosan calls that logic “the disease.”

The great way is not difficult...

You make it difficult, *you* are difficult. The great way is easy...

...for those who have no preferences.

Don't prefer – just allow life to move. You don't say to life, “Move this way, go to the north, or go to the south.” You don't say this – you simply flow with life. You don't fight against the current, you become one with the current ... *for those who have no preferences.*

The great way is easy ... *for those who have no preferences.* And you have preferences – about everything! You bring your mind in about everything. You say, “I like, I don't like. I prefer this, I don't prefer that.”

When love and hate are both absent...

When you have no preferences, all “for” and “against” attitudes are absent, both love and hate are absent. You neither like something nor dislike something, you simply allow everything to happen.

...everything becomes clear and undisguised.

Make the smallest distinction, however,
and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.

But your mind will say, “You will become an animal if you don't prefer. If you don't choose then what will be the difference between you and a tree?” There will be a difference, a great difference, but not the difference which brings the mind in – a difference which comes through awareness. The tree is choiceless, unconscious; you will be choiceless, conscious. That is what choiceless awareness means and that is the greatest distinction: you will be aware that you are not choosing.

And this awareness gives such profound peace. You become a Buddha, you become a Sosan, a Chuang Tzu. The tree cannot become a Chuang Tzu. Chuang Tzu is like the tree, and plus he is like the tree as far as choice is concerned; he is absolutely unlike the tree as far as awareness is concerned. He is fully aware that he is not choosing.

When love and hate are both absent... Love and hate both give color to your eyes and then you cannot see clearly. If you love a person, you start seeing things which are not there. No woman is as beautiful as you think when you love her, because you project. You have a dream girl in the mind and that dream girl is projected. Somehow the real girl functions only as a screen.

That's why every love comes to a frustrating point sooner or later, because how can the girl go on playing the screen? She is a real person; she will assert, she will say, “I am not a screen!” How long can she go on fitting in with your projection? Sooner or later you feel they don't fit. In the beginning she yielded, in the beginning you yielded. You were a projection screen for her; she was a projection screen for you.

Mulla Nasruddin's wife was saying to him – I overheard it – she

was saying, “You don’t love me as much as you loved me before, when you were courting me.”

Mulla Nasruddin said, “Darling, don’t pay much attention to those things – they were just campaign propaganda. I forgot what you said, you forgot what I said. Now let us be real.”

Nobody can play a screen for you forever because it is uncomfortable. How can somebody adjust to your dream? He has his own reality, and the reality asserts.

If you love a person, you project things which are not there. If you hate a person, again you project things which are not there. In love the person becomes a god, in hate the person becomes a devil – and the person is neither god nor devil. The person is simply himself or herself. These devils and gods are projections. If you love, you cannot see clearly. If you hate, you cannot see clearly.

When there is no liking, no disliking, your eyes are clear, you have a clarity. Then you see the other as he is or as she is. And when you have a clarity of consciousness the whole existence reveals its reality to you. That reality is godliness, that reality is truth.

What does it mean? A man like Sosan will not love? His love will have a totally different quality; it will not be like yours. He will love, but his love will not be a choice. He will love, but his love will not be a projection. He will love, but his love will not be a love for his own dream. He will love the real. That love towards the real is compassion.

He will not project this way or that. He will not see a god in you or a devil. He will simply see you and he will share because he has enough – and the more you share, the more it grows. He will share his ecstasy with you.

When you love, you project. You love not to give; you love to take, you love to exploit. When you love a person you start trying to fix the person according to you, according to your ideas. Every husband is doing that, every wife is doing that, every friend. They go on trying to change the other, the real, and the real cannot be changed – you will only get frustrated.

The real cannot be changed, only your dream will be shattered and then you feel hurt. You don’t listen to reality. Nobody is here to fulfill your dream. Everybody is here to fulfill his own destiny, his own reality.

A man like Sosan loves, but his love is not an exploitation. He loves because he has got too much, he is overflowing. He is not creating a dream around anybody. He shares with whomsoever comes on his path. His sharing is unconditional, and he does not expect a thing from you. If love expects then there will be frustration. If love expects then there will be unfulfillment. If love expects there is going to be misery and madness.

“No,” says Sosan, “neither love nor hate. You simply look at the

reality of the other.” This is Buddha’s love: to see the reality of the other, to see the other as he is, just to see the reality – not to project, not to dream, not to create an image, not to try to fix the other according to your image.

When love and hate are both absent
everything becomes clear and undisguised.

Mind has to love and hate, and mind has to go on continuously fighting between these two. If you don’t love and don’t hate, you go beyond mind. Where is the mind then within you? When choice disappears, mind disappears. Even if you say, “I would like to be silent,” you will never be silent because you have a preference. This is the problem.

People come to me and they say, “I would like to be silent, I don’t want these tensions any more.” I feel sorry for them – sorry because what they are saying is stupid. If you don’t want tensions any more you will create new ones, because this not-wanting is going to create a new tension. And if you want silence too much, if you are after it too much, your silence itself will become a tension. Now you will be more disturbed because of it.

What is silence? It is a deep understanding, understanding of the phenomenon that if you prefer, you will be tense. Even if you prefer silence, you will be tense.

Understand, feel it – whenever you prefer, you become tense; whenever you don’t prefer, there is no tension, you are relaxed. And when you are relaxed your eyes have a clarity; they are not crowded with clouds and dreams. No thoughts move in the mind; you can see through. And when you can see the true, it liberates. Truth liberates.

Make the smallest distinction, however,
and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.

The smallest distinction, the slightest choice, and you are divided. Then you have a hell and a heaven, and between these two you will be crushed.

If you wish to see the truth
then hold no opinion for or against....

Move without opinion. Move naked, with no clothes, with no opinions about truth, because truth abhors all opinions. Drop all your philosophies, theories, doctrines, scriptures. Drop all rubbish! Go silent, unchoosing, your eyes just ready to see what is, not in any way hoping to see some of your wishes fulfilled. Don’t carry wishes. It is said the path of hell is completely filled with wishes – good wishes,

hopes, dreams, rainbows, ideals. The path of heaven is absolutely empty.

Drop all the burdens! The higher you want to reach, the less burdened you must be. If you go to the Himalayas you have to unburden yourself completely. Finally, when you reach Gourishankar, Mt Everest, you have to drop everything. You have to go completely naked because the higher you move, the more weightless you need to be. And opinions are weights on you. They are not wings, they are like paperweights; opinionless, without any preference: *If you wish to see the truth, then hold no opinion for or against....*

Don't be a theist and don't be an atheist if you really want to know what truth is. Don't say "There is God," don't say "There is not," because whatsoever you say will become a deep desire. And whatsoever is hidden there in the desire you will project.

If you want to see God as a Krishna with a flute on his lips, someday you will see him – not because Krishna is there, only because you had a seed of desire that you projected on the screen of the world. If you want to see Jesus crucified, you will see.

Whatsoever you want will be projected, but it is just a dream world; you are not coming nearer to the truth. Become seedless within: no opinion, no thought for or against, no philosophy. You simply go to see that which is. You don't carry any mind. You go mindless.

If you wish to see the truth
then hold no opinion for or against...
The struggle of what one likes and what one dislikes
is the disease of the mind.

This is ...*the disease of the mind*: what one likes and what one does not like, for and against. Why is the mind divided? Why can't you be one? You would like, you wish to be one, but you go on watering the divisions, the preferences, likes and dislikes.

Just the other day a woman came and she said, "Bless me, I would like your blessings."

But I saw she was troubled, worried, so I asked, "What is the matter?"

She said, "But I am already initiated by another master."

A struggle – she wants my blessings but the mind says that I am not her master. She has another master, so what to do? I told her to drop both. It will be easier if I say to her, "Drop the old. Choose me." It will be easier because then the mind can go on functioning, but the trouble will remain the same. The name of the disease will change, but the disease will remain the same. Again, somewhere else, the same doubt will arise, the same wavering.

But if I say, "Drop both," because that is the only way to reach to a master, when you don't have any preference this way or that... You

simply come empty. You simply come without an opinion. You simply come vacant, receptive. Only then do you come to a master! There is no other way. And if the master is going to become the door to the truth, this is going to be so, because this is the preparation, this is the initiation.

A master is to help you to become opinionless, mindless. If the master himself becomes your choice then he will be a barrier. Then you have again chosen, again the mind has been used. And the more you use the mind, the more it is strengthened, the stronger it becomes. Don't use it.

It is difficult because you will say, "What will happen to our love? What will happen to our belonging? What will happen to our beliefs? What will happen to our religion, church and temple?" They are your burdens. Be freed of them, and let them be freed of you. They are keeping you here, rooted, and truth would want you to be liberated. Liberated you reach, with wings you reach, weightless you reach.

Says Sosan:

The struggle of what one likes and what one dislikes
is the disease of the mind.

How to overcome it? Is there any way to overcome it? No, there is no way. One has simply to understand it. One has simply to look at the facticity of it. One has just to close one's eyes and look at one's own life – watch it – and you will feel the truth of Sosan. And when you feel the truth, the disease drops. There is no medicine for it, because if medicine is given to you, you will start liking the medicine. Then the disease will be forgotten but the medicine will be liked, and then the medicine becomes a disease.

No, Sosan is not going to give you any medicine, any method. He is not going to suggest to you what to do. He is simply going to insist again and again and again, a thousand and one times, that you understand how you have created this whole mess around you, how you are in such misery. Nobody else has created it; it is your mind's disease of preference, of choosing.

Don't choose. Accept life as it is in its totality. You must look at the total: life and death together, love and hate together, happiness and unhappiness together; agony and ecstasy together. If you look at them together, then what is there to choose? If you see they are one, then from where can choice enter? If you see agony is nothing but ecstasy, ecstasy nothing but agony; if you can see happiness is nothing but unhappiness; love is nothing but hate, hate is nothing but love – then where to choose? How to choose? Then choice drops.

You are not dropping it. If you drop it, that will become a choice – this is the paradox. You are not supposed to drop it, because if you drop it that means you have chosen for and against. Now your choice is

for totality. You are for totality and against division, but the disease has entered. It is subtle.

You simply understand, and the very understanding becomes the dropping. You never drop it. You simply laugh, and you ask for a cup of tea.

Enough for today.

Chapter 2 – The Way Is Perfect

When the deep meaning of things is not understood
the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail.

The way is perfect, like vast space
when nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.
Indeed, it is due to our choosing to accept or reject
that we do not see the true nature of things.
Live neither in the entanglements of outer things,
nor in inner feelings of emptiness.
Be serene without striving for activity in the oneness of things
and such erroneous views will disappear by themselves.
When you try to stop activity to achieve passivity
your very effort fills you with activity.
As long as you remain in one extreme or the other
you will never know oneness.
Those who do not live in the single way
fail in both activity and passivity,
assertion and denial.

A few things before we enter this sutra of Sosan. In the West, just a few years back, there was a French hypnotist, Emile Coué; he happened to rediscover one of the basic laws of the human mind. He called it “the law of reverse effect” – that is one of the oldest sutras in Taoist and Zen thinking. Sosan is talking about this law. Try to understand this law, then his sayings will be simple to understand.

For example, if you don't feel sleepy what will you do? You will try to get to sleep – you will make efforts, you will do this and that, but whatsoever you do will bring just the reverse; just that which you need will not come. Just the opposite will happen because any activity, any effort, is against sleep.

Sleep is a relaxation. You cannot bring it, you cannot do anything for it to happen. You cannot force it, you cannot will it – it is not a part of your will at all. It is moving into the unconscious, and your will is just a fragment of the conscious.

When you move into the unconscious, towards the depth, that fragment which is consciousness, that fragment which is will, is left on the surface. You cannot take your surface to the depth, you cannot take your circumference to the center. So when you make efforts to go to sleep, it is a self-destructive thing. You are doing something which will become just the opposite – you will become more awake. The only way to enter into sleep is not to do anything. If it is not coming, it is not coming. Wait, don't do anything! Otherwise you will push it further away and a distance will be created. Just wait on the pillow, put off the

light, close your eyes, relax and wait. Whenever it comes, it comes. You cannot bring it by any act of your will – will is against the unconscious.

And this happens in many things in life: just the opposite comes out of it. If you want to be silent, what will you do? – because silence is just like sleep, you cannot force it. You can allow it to happen, it is a let-go, but there is no way to work it out. What will you do if you want to be silent? If you do anything you will be less silent than ever.

If you want to be quiet, what will you do? – because quietness means non-doing. You simply float, you simply relax. And when I say simply relax, I *mean* simply. No method is to be used for relaxation, because method means again you are doing something.

There is a book; the title of it is *You Must Relax!* And “must” is just against relaxation; the “must” should not be brought in, otherwise you will become more tense.

This law was rediscovered by Emile Coué, and he said, “Let things happen, don’t force them.” There are things which can be forced – all that belongs to the conscious mind can be forced. But there are things which cannot be forced. All that belongs to the unconscious, to your depth, cannot be forced.

It happens many times: you are trying to remember a name or a face and it is not coming, but still you feel it is just on the tip of your tongue. The feeling is so deep that you feel it is going to come and you try to bring it. And the more you try, the more it is not coming. You even become suspicious whether the feeling is true or not. But you feel... Your whole being says it is there, just on the tip of your tongue. But why is it not coming if it is on the tip of your tongue? It will not come. Do whatsoever you want to do, it will not come.

Then you get frustrated, then you feel hopeless, then you drop the whole project. You go in the garden, you start working in the garden, or you start reading the newspaper, or you put on the radio and listen to music – and suddenly it pops up. What happened?

It belonged to the unconscious, it was deep in you. And the more you tried, the narrower you became; and the more you tried, the more the unconscious was disturbed. It became a chaos, then everything became unsettled. It was there just on the tip, but because you were too active to bring it out: you were using will, and will cannot bring anything out of your depth. Only surrender brings it, only when you let go.

So when you went into the park or into the garden, started reading the newspaper, digging a hole in the earth, listening to the music, you forgot about the whole project; suddenly it was there. This is the law of reverse effect. With the unconscious, remember, will is of no use – not only of no use, it is also dangerous, harmful.

Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Bodhidharma, Sosan are the masters of this law of reverse effect. And this is the difference between Yoga and Zen.

Yoga makes every effort and Zen makes no effort, and Zen is truer than any Yoga. But Yoga appeals, because as far as you are concerned doing is easy – howsoever hard, but doing is easy.

Non-doing is difficult. If someone says, “Don’t do anything,” you are at a loss. You again ask, “What to do?” If someone says, “Don’t do anything,” that is the most difficult thing for you. It should not be so if you understand.

Non-doing does not require any qualification. Doing may require qualification, doing may require practice. Non-doing requires no practice. That’s why Zen says enlightenment can happen in a single moment – because it is not a question of how to bring it, it is a question of how to allow it. It is just like sleep: you relax and it is there, you relax and it pops up. It is struggling within your heart to come up. You are not allowing it because you have too much activity on the surface.

Have you ever noticed the fact that almost ninety percent of children are born in the night, not in the day? Why? It should be fifty-fifty. Why do they choose the night more? And ninety percent! – because the mother is unconscious, in a let-go. She is sleeping and the child can come out easily.

If she is aware, she will make effort and the law of reverse effect will be there. When the mother is awake, she will make every effort so that she goes beyond the pain and the thing is finished, the child is born. And every effort is a barrier; she is putting up hindrances. The more she tries, the narrower becomes the passage, and the child cannot come out.

In primitive societies mothers have no pain when they give birth to a child, none at all, no pain. And this is a miracle. When for the first time Western medical science discovered this – that there are still primitive societies where the mothers have no pain at all – they could not believe it. How is it possible?

Then many experiments were tried, many research projects, and it was found that it is because they are unconscious. They live like wild animals; there is no fight, no struggle, no forcing. They don’t will anything, they simply float. They are primitive, they don’t have a very conscious mind. The more civilized, the more you have a conscious mind. The more civilized, the more your will is trained, and your unconscious goes further and further, deeper, and there exists a gap.

If something is to be done, howsoever difficult, you can find the know-how, how to do it. You can learn the technique; there are experts, you can be trained. But in Zen nobody can be trained. In existence there are no experts and no authorities – cannot be, because it is not a question of know-how, it is a question of relaxing into your being; not doing. The greatest thing will happen to you only when you are not there. And if you are doing something you are bound to be there.

Sleep comes when you are not there. Enlightenment also follows the same rule – it comes when you are not there. But when you are

doing, how will you be absent at the same time? If you are doing something you will be there. Action feeds the ego. When you are not doing anything the ego cannot be fed. It simply disappears, it dies, it is not there. And when the ego is not there, the light descends.

So whatsoever you are doing willfully will be the barrier. In my meditations here, do them, but not willfully. Don't force them; rather, let them happen. You float in them, you abandon yourself in them. Be absorbed, but not willfully. Don't manipulate, because when you manipulate you are divided, you become two: the manipulator and the manipulated. Once you are two, heaven and hell are created immediately; then there is vast distance between you and the truth. Don't manipulate, allow things to happen.

If you are doing the Kundalini Meditation, allow the shaking – don't *do* it! Stand silently, feel it coming, and when your body starts a little trembling, help it, but don't *do* it! Enjoy it, feel blissful about it, allow it, receive it, welcome it, but don't will it.

If you force, it will become an exercise, a bodily physical exercise. Then the shaking will be there, but just on the surface. It will not penetrate you. You will remain solid, stone-like, rock-like within. You will remain the manipulator, the doer, and the body will only be following. The body is not the question, *you* are the question.

When I say shake, I mean your solidity, your rock-like being should shake to the very foundations so it becomes liquid, fluid, melts, flows. And when the rock-like being becomes liquid your body will follow. Then there is no shaker, only shaking; then nobody is doing it, it is simply happening. Then the doer is not.

Enjoy it, but don't will it. And remember, whenever you will a thing you cannot enjoy it. They are reverse, opposites; they never meet. If you will a thing you cannot enjoy it, if you enjoy it you cannot will it.

For example, you can will your love. You can do it according to the manuals, but then you will not enjoy it. If you enjoy it you will have to throw away all manuals, all Kinseys and Masters and Johnsons; you will have to throw them all away. You have to forget completely about all that you have learned about love. In the beginning you will be at a loss, because there are no guidelines, no maps. How to start?

Just wait, and let your inner energy move, and follow that energy wherever it leads. It may take a little time, but when love comes it overtakes you. You are no longer there. Love is there but there is no lover. Love happens as an energy, but it has no ego within it. Then it is tremendous, then it is a great release. And then love becomes an ecstasy, and you know something that has been known to those who have come to the divine. You know a fragment of it, a drop of the ocean. You know a ray – and then the taste comes to you.

Meditation, godliness, enlightenment, nirvana, they all came into being through love, because through love a glimpse was achieved. And

when the glimpse was there, daring souls went on an adventure to find the source from where this glimpse comes. Through love, God has been discovered. That's why Jesus goes on saying, whenever somebody asks, "What is God?" he says, "God is love," because through love the first glimpse comes.

But the process is the same: you cannot will love. If you will, the whole beauty is lost, the whole thing becomes mechanical. You go through the whole ritual, but nothing happens. There is no ecstasy – it is something to be done and be finished. It never reaches to your center, it never shakes your foundations, it never becomes an inner dance. It is not a throbbing of your being, it is just an act on the periphery.

Remember, love cannot be willed, and neither can meditation.

Throw all knowledge, because knowledge is needed only when you have to do something. When you don't have to do anything, what knowledge is needed? You don't need any knowledge. You need just to have a feel, a knack – how to drop, how not to be. And when I say "how" I don't mean technically, when I say "how" I don't mean that you have to know a technique. You have simply to search for it.

I will suggest two things which will be helpful. One is sleep: try to find out how sleep happens, how you fall into sleep. You may have a ritual but that ritual is not creating sleep, it helps. Everybody has a ritual. Small children have their rituals, a particular posture. Every child has his own posture, he may take his thumb in his mouth. It does not give *you* sleep, but it helps for that child – he has found his own ritual. If you follow that child you will not fall into sleep.

And the same is the case with all techniques of meditation – everybody finds his own ritual. It helps because it gives you a climate. You put off the light, you have a certain incense burning in the room, you have a certain type of pillow, a certain height, softness. You have a certain type of rug, you have a certain posture. This all helps, but this is not the cause of it. If somebody else follows it, this may become a hindrance. One has to find one's own ritual.

A ritual is simply to help you to be at ease and wait. And when you are at ease and waiting, the thing happens. Just like sleep godliness comes to you, just like godliness love comes to you. You cannot will it, you cannot force it.

And your whole life has become a problem because you have learned too much how to do things. You have become very efficient in mechanical things because they can be done, but you have become absolutely inefficient in human things, because they cannot be learned and they cannot be technically done; you cannot become efficiency experts in them.

Whenever there is a mechanical thing to do there can be a training place for it, but consciousness cannot be trained. And you go after gurus, this and that, to find some technique, some mantra, so that you

become enlightened. There is no mantra which can make you enlightened.

This is the mantra: Sosan says that you will have to become more understanding: less will, more let-go; less effort, more effortlessness; less doing of the conscious, more swimming in the unconscious.

Now try to understand the sutra:

When the deep meaning of things is not understood
the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail.

If you understand, there will be peace. If you don't understand, there will be disturbance, tension and anguish. Whenever somebody is in anguish it shows he has not understood the thing, the deeper meaning of things.

And you go on accusing others, that because of them you are in anguish. Nobody here is in anguish because of others. You are in anguish because of your nonunderstanding or your misunderstanding.

For example, somebody came to me – a husband, a father of five children – and he said that he was very much disturbed because his wife goes on quarreling, tries to dominate him and the children don't listen to him. "Their mother has become too influential and the children listen to her, they don't listen to me. I am nobody and I am in much anguish. Do something for me. Through your grace let my wife become a little more understanding."

I said, "That's impossible. Through my grace or through anybody's grace, the other cannot be made more understanding. *You* can be. And when you ask for the other's understanding you miss the whole point. Why does the wife look dominating? She looks dominating because you are also struggling for domination. If you are not struggling for domination she will not look dominating. It is a struggle, because you are after the same goal. And what is wrong if the children follow the mother? But you would like the children to follow you, hence the struggle."

Try to understand! Everybody is trying to dominate. That is the nature of the ego, to make every effort to dominate the other. Whether the other is husband, wife, or children or friends, makes no difference – but to dominate, to find ways and means to dominate.

And if everybody is trying to dominate and you are also trying to dominate, there will be struggle. The struggle is not because others are trying to dominate, the struggle is because you are not trying to understand how the ego functions.

Drop out of it! The others cannot be changed, and you will be unnecessarily wasting your life if you try to change the others. That is *their* problem. They will suffer if they are not understanding, why should you suffer? Simply understand that everybody is trying to dominate. "I drop out of it, I will not try to dominate." Your struggle

disappears. And a very beautiful thing happens.

If you don't try to dominate, the wife starts feeling foolish, and by and by she starts looking silly to herself – because the other is no longer there to fight. When you fight you strengthen the other's ego, and this is a vicious circle.

When you don't fight then the other feels he is fighting alone, in a vacuum: fighting with the wind or fighting with a ghost, but not fighting with anybody. And then you give an opportunity for the other also to see, to understand. Then the wife cannot throw the responsibility on you, she has to carry her own responsibility.

The same is the problem with everybody because human nature functions similarly, more or less; the differences are only of degrees. If you try to understand, you become a dropout. Not that you drop out of the society, not that you become a hippie and go and make a commune – that is not the point. Psychologically you are no longer in these trips of the ego; domination, aggression, violence, anger. You are no longer part of it. And then a distance is created, a detachedness. Now you can look at things and you can laugh. How foolish man is! And you can laugh. How ridiculous you have always been!

It is said about Rinzai that when he got up in the morning he would laugh a belly laugh so loud that the whole monastery – five hundred sannyasins were there – would hear it. In the evening when he went to sleep, he would again have a belly laugh.

Many people asked why, but he would simply laugh and he would not answer. When he was dying somebody asked, “One thing: tell us why you were laughing every day, morning and evening, the whole of your life? Nobody knows, and whenever we asked you laughed again. This is the only mystery. Please reveal it before you leave the body.”

Rinzai said, “I laughed because of the foolishness of the world. In the morning I laughed because now again I was entering the world and everybody around was a fool. And in the evening I laughed that one day passed so well!”

You will laugh, you will not be in anguish. The whole thing is so ridiculous all around, but you cannot see it because you are a part of it. You are so much involved in it you cannot see it. The ridiculousness cannot be known unless you gain a distance, a detachedness.

Says Sosan:

When the deep meaning of things is not understood
the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail.

And you gain nothing, you reach nowhere, you simply get disturbed. Where have you reached? What have you gained by your anxiety, tension, disturbedness? What are you? Where are you moving?

Nothing is gained. Even if something is gained... It may seem that through your being disturbed you are gaining something. You are not gaining something. On the contrary, you are losing. You are losing the precious moments which can become blissful, the precious time, energy, life, in which you could have flowered. And you cannot flower.

But you always think – this is the ignorant point of view – you always think, “The whole world is wrong, and if I could change everybody then I would be happy.” You will never be happy, you *cannot* be happy. This is the base of unhappiness. Once you understand that it is not for you to change the whole world, the only thing that you can do is to change yourself...

Bayazid, a Sufi mystic, has written in his autobiography, “When I was young I thought and I said to God, and in all my prayers this was the base: ‘Give me energy so that I can change the whole world.’ Everybody looked wrong to me. I was a revolutionary and I wanted to change the face of the earth.

“When I became a little more mature I started praying: ‘This seems to be too much. Life is going out of my hands – almost half of my life is gone and I have not changed a single person, and the whole world is too much.’ So I said to God, ‘My family will be enough. Let me change my family.’

“And when I became old,” says Bayazid, “I realized that even the family is too much, and who am I to change them? Then I realized that if I can change myself that will be enough, more than enough. I prayed to God, ‘Now I have come to the right point. At least allow me to do this: I would like to change myself.’

“God replied, ‘Now there is no time left. This you should have asked in the beginning, then there was a possibility.’”

This, everybody asks in the end. One who asks in the beginning, he has understood the nature of things. He understands that even to change oneself is not an easy thing. You are a whole world within you; you carry the whole world. All that exists, exists within you. You are a whole universe, not a small thing – if this change can happen you have attained. Otherwise:

When the deep meaning of things is not understood,
the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail.

The way is perfect, like vast space
where nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.
Indeed, it is due to our choosing to accept or reject
that we do not see the true nature of things.

The way is perfect, like vast space where nothing is lacking and

nothing is in excess. Everything is as it should be, you just have to settle in it; only you are unsettled. Everything is as it should be. Nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.

Can you think of a better universe than this? If you are wise, you cannot; if you are a fool you can. Nothing can be better than this, as it is. The only problem is you are not settled in it. Be settled in it and: *The way is perfect, like vast space, and nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.* Everything is balanced. Only you are the problem; the world is not the problem at all.

This is the difference between a political mind and a religious mind, and you are all political minds. A political mind thinks, “I am absolutely okay, everything else is wrong.” So he starts to change the world – a Lenin, a Gandhi, a Hitler, a Mao.

The political mind thinks, “Everything is wrong. If everything is settled then it will be beautiful.”

A religious mind thinks, “Only I am not settled. Otherwise, everything is as perfect as it can be.”

Perfect is the way like vast space: ...*nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.* Everything is as it should be, absolutely balanced. Only you are wavering, only you don't know where to go, only you are divided. Just think: if man disappears from the earth, the world will be absolutely perfect, absolutely beautiful – there will be no problems.

Problems come with man, because man's way of looking at things can go wrong – because man has a consciousness, and that consciousness creates trouble. Because you can be conscious you can divide things. Because you can be conscious you can say, “This is right and that is wrong.” Because you can be conscious you can say, “This is ugly and that is beautiful.”

This consciousness is not enough. If it becomes more, if it becomes a circle, perfect consciousness, then again everything is settled.

Nietzsche has said – and he has many insights to reveal – he has said that man is a bridge, he is not a being. He is a bridge, something to go beyond. You cannot make a house on the bridge. That's what Jesus says: “Go through it. Don't make a house on it, it is just a bridge.” Nietzsche's sentence is: “Man is just a bridge between two eternities, the eternity of nature and the eternity of God.”

Everything is okay in nature, everything is okay in God. Man is a bridge, he is just in the middle, half nature, half God – that is the trouble. Divided, the past belongs to nature, the future belongs to God. Tense, like a rope stretched between two eternities, sometimes moving towards nature, sometimes moving towards God, sometimes this way, sometimes that way; a constant trembling and wavering, unsettled.

Become settled, and either way will do. Chuang Tzu is in favor of being settled again in nature. If you settle in nature you become like gods, you become gods. Buddha is in favor of moving ahead and becoming godliness, then you will be settled. Either go back or go to

the very end, but don't stay on the bridge.

And this is the thing to be understood – one of the very significant things, one of the foundations – that whether you go back or you go ahead, you reach the same goal. The question is not of backwards or forwards, the question is not to be on the bridge.

Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, they say to fall back into nature, Tao. Shankara, Buddha, Jesus, they say to go ahead, pass through the bridge, reach the divine. This will look very paradoxical, but it is not – because both banks are the same, because this bridge is a circle.

Whether you go back or you go forwards you reach the same goal, the same point of being at ease, whatsoever you choose. If you feel that let-go is impossible for you, then follow Patanjali: effort, will, striving, seeking. Then you will move forward. If you feel that you can understand the law of reverse effect, not only understand, but let it happen within you, then follow Sosan, Chuang Tzu: fall back. But don't remain where you are; you will be divided on the bridge. You cannot be at ease there, you cannot make your home there. The bridge is not a place to make a home. It is not a goal, it is just something to be passed.

Nietzsche says man is something to be transcended, man is not a being. Animals have being, God has being, man has no being yet. He is just a transition, a transitory stage, a passing from one perfection to another. In between, he is divided.

Sosan says fall back, and if you ask me I will say Sosan is easier than Patanjali. The same will happen in the end. Much effort will bring you to effortlessness, no-effort also will bring you to effortlessness – because effort can never be the goal, effort can only be the means. You cannot go on making effort forever and forever. You make effort to reach a state of effortlessness.

With Patanjali, effort is the path, effortlessness is the goal; effort is the means, effortlessness is the end. With Sosan effortlessness is the means, effortlessness is the goal. With Sosan the first step is the last step; with Sosan there is no distinction between means and goals. But with Patanjali there is – you have to make many steps.

So with Patanjali the enlightenment will be gradual. With Sosan the enlightenment can be instantaneous, in this very moment – it can be sudden. If you can understand Sosan then there is nothing more beautiful than that. But if you cannot understand, then Patanjali is the only way.

The way is perfect, like vast space
where nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.
Indeed, it is due to our choosing to accept or reject
that we do not see the true nature of things.

Because we accept or reject, that's why we cannot see the true

nature. Then you bring your ideas, opinions, prejudices, and then you color everything. Otherwise everything is perfect. You have just to look. Pure... A look without any ideas, a look without any rejection. Acceptance... A pure look, as if your eyes don't have a mind behind them, as if your eyes are just mirrors: they don't say, "Beautiful. Ugly." A mirror simply mirrors whosoever comes before it, it has no judgment.

If your eyes have no mind behind them, they just mirror. They simply look. They don't say, "This is good and that is bad" – they don't condemn, they don't appreciate. Then everything is as clear as it can be, nothing is to be done. This clarity, these eyes without opinions and prejudices – and you have become enlightened.

Then there is no problem to be solved. Then life is no longer a riddle. It is a mystery to be lived, enjoyed, a dance to be danced. Then you are not in any conflict with it, then you are not doing anything here. Then you are simply enjoying, then you are blissful.

This is what heaven means: where you are not expected to do anything, where you don't try to earn bliss – where bliss is natural, where it showers on you. This can happen here and now. It has happened to Sosan, it has happened to me, it can happen to you. If it can happen to one, it can happen to all.

Live neither in the entanglements of outer things,
nor in inner feelings of emptiness.

Be serene, without striving activity in the oneness of things
and such erroneous views will disappear by themselves.

Don't divide the outer from the inner. Sosan says, "Don't say, 'I am interested in the outer.'" There are two types of people, and both will be in misery. C.G. Jung divides humanity into two types: one he calls extroverts, the other he calls introverts. Extroverts are interested in the outer. They are active people, worldly – after wealth, prestige, position, power. They become politicians, they become social reformers, they become great leaders, great industrialists. They are interested in things, the outer world; they are not interested in themselves.

Then there are introverts. They are not very active people. If they have to do something they will do, otherwise they have no inclination to do. They would like to remain with closed eyes. They become poets, mystics, meditators, contemplatives. They are not interested in the world, they are interested only in themselves; they close their eyes and they introvert their energies. But Sosan says these both are wrong because they are divided.

A person who is an extrovert will always feel inside that something is lacking. He may become a very powerful man: deep inside he will feel he is impotent, powerless. Outwardly he may accumulate much wealth, inwardly he will feel poor. He may be a great success in the

world; deep down, if you inquire, he knows he has been a failure. He is imbalanced, he has paid too much attention to the outer. He has moved in one extreme, and whenever there is extreme there is imbalance.

And the person who has been the poet, a contemplative, a mystic, who has always remained within himself, will always feel something is lacking because he is not rich in the outer world. And the outer world is also beautiful: flowers are there, and stars, and the sun rises there, and rivers flow and waterfalls sing. He is poor because he has been denying the whole universe; unnecessarily, he has lived in his own cave when he could have moved and known the many mysteries, the million mysteries around. He has remained a closed man, enclosed in himself, imprisoned. These two are the extremes.

Avoid extremes. Don't make a distinction between outer and inner, and don't become one of Jung's types, either extrovert or introvert.

Sosan says: Be flowing, balancing. Outer and inner are just like the right and left leg. Why choose one? If you choose one, all movement stops. They are like two eyes: if you choose one then you will be able to see, but your vision is not three dimensional anymore, the depth is lost. You have two ears: you can use one, you can be addicted to the idea that you are a left ear type or a right ear type, but then you lose. Then half the world is closed to you.

The inner and outer are just like two eyes, two ears, two legs – why choose? Why not use both choicelessly? And why divide? – because you are one! The left leg and the right leg only appear to be two. You flow within both – the same energy, the same being. You look through both your eyes. Why not use inner and outer and give them a balance? Why move to the extreme?

Remember, not only have people moved to the extreme, societies have also moved to the extreme. The East has remained introvert, hence the poverty. Who is responsible for it? Millions of men, dying every day. And those who are alive, they are also not alive – they are half starved. Who is responsible for this? – the introverts, the mystics, the poets, who talked too much of the inner and who condemned the outer, who said, “Outside is not for us”; who said, “Outside is wrong”; who said, “The outer world is something to be condemned. Live in the inner.” They raised the inner higher than the outer and the balance was lost.

The East has created introverts, but the outer beauty is lost. You see dirtiness all over in the East. I know how difficult it is for a Western man to come and live in the dirtiness of India. It is dirty – who is responsible? Why so much dirtiness? Why so much disease? Why so much ill health, starvation? – because the outer was neglected.

We were interested in purifying the inner, so: “Why bother about the outer dirtiness? Let it be. It is material, nothing to worry about. We are interested in the inner purity. Why bother about the body? Why bother about others?”

The result is that the East is one sort of imbalance. And the West is another sort: they are extroverts. They have created much wealth never created before, much cleanliness outside, better clothes – emperors may feel envious – better food, better hygienic conditions, beautiful surroundings, everything, but extrovert. And the inner being is poor, the inner being is empty.

So the East goes on teaching the West about the inner being. Eastern gurus go on teaching the West how to meditate, and Western gurus go on teaching the East how to be better engineers, how to be better electricians, how to be better city planners, how to create more wealth, how to advance technologically, how to raise the standard of living. So if you have to learn medicine you have to go to the West; if you have to learn meditation you have to come to the East.

But both are extremes and both are dangerous. Extremes are always dangerous. And the danger is that the wheel can turn, and the East can become materialist and the West can become spiritualist. There is every possibility that this is going to happen, because now the East is turning communist – that is the extreme of materialism – and the West is becoming too much spiritualist. The danger is there: the wheel may turn, because you are fed up with the outside world you want to move inside, you need an inner trip.

You may go on the inner trip. Look at the hippies; they are the future of the West. They are against technology – the same type, the introvert type that has devastated the whole East, that has been catastrophic to the East. They are against technology, they are against outside cleanliness. You cannot find more dirty people than hippies; they will not take a bath, they will not change their clothes. They say these are outside things, they are on the inner trip. They are interested in meditation, but they are not interested in sanitation. No! The same foolishness, the same extreme, the same opposite. It is appealing, because when you have lived on one extreme the mind says, “Now move to the other because this has not been fulfilling. This extreme has failed, so move to the opposite.” But remember, it is easy to move from one extreme to another, but extremes never fulfill. Look at the East: the inner extreme has also not been a fulfillment, it has also been a failure. It is not a question of outer and inner, it is a question of balance. Balance succeeds, imbalance fails.

And outer and inner are not two. Where does outer end and inner start? Can you demark, can you make a boundary? Can you say, “Here the outer ends and the inner starts?” Where? They are not divided. Those divisions are of the mind. Inner and outer are one: the outer is just the inner extended, the inner is just the outer penetrating. They are one – two hands, two legs, two eyes of one being.

Is the outer, outside of existence? It cannot be, because nothing can be outer to existence, nothing can be out of it. The whole must include the outer and the whole must include the inner. For the whole there is

nothing like outer and nothing like inner. This is what Sosan says. He says:

Live neither in the entanglements of outer things,
nor in inner feelings of emptiness.
Be serene without striving activity in the oneness of things
and such erroneous views will disappear by themselves.

People come to me – and mind is so cunning – they come to me and they say, “We would like to take sannyas but we want inner sannyas, not outer. We will not change clothes.” And they say, “Why outer? Let it be just inner!” They don’t know what they are saying. Where does the inner start?

When you eat food you never say, “Let it be inner.” When you are thirsty and you drink water, you never say, “Let it be inner. Thirst is inner, so why take outer water?” But where does the water end and where does the thirst start? – because if you take water the thirst disappears, so it means there is a meeting. Somewhere the outer water meets the inner thirst, otherwise how can it disappear?

You feel hungry and you take food. Food is outer, hunger is inner; for inner hunger why take outer food? Why be foolish? Take something inner. But there is no inner food. Hunger is inner, food is outer, but somewhere the food goes in. It changes territory: it becomes your blood, it becomes your bones. It becomes the very stuff your mind is made of, it becomes your thinking.

Food becomes your thought. And if food becomes your thought, remember, food will also become your no-thought. Food becomes your mind, food becomes your meditation. Without mind can you meditate? Without mind how will you become no-mind? Without thinking how will you drop thinking? Mind is very subtle food, no-mind is the subtlest food – but there is no division.

So when you want to take sannyas, even the color transcends territory. It starts from the outer and by and by penetrates into the deeper. It colors your very being; even the clothing touches your soul. It has to be so because outer and inner are not two, they are one. A simple gesture – it looks outer, goes to the very being, and it comes from there. Remember, don’t play games and don’t divide existence. It is undivided.

When you love a person you would like to hug the body. You will not say, “I love you, but I love you in the inner.” There was a fat girl here, very very fat. She told me, “I have got only one boyfriend and he also says, ‘I love only your spirit, not your body.’”

She felt very hurt, because when you say to a person, “I only love your soul, not your body,” what does it mean? When you love a person you love totally, you cannot make divisions. This is a cunning trick. That boy does not really love the girl, he is playing a game. He wants

to say, “I don’t love,” but he cannot say that.

If you don’t want to take sannyas, don’t take it! But don’t play games, don’t be cunning, don’t try to be clever. Don’t say, “This is outer and I would like something inner.”

In existence, the outer meets the inner, the inner meets the outer; they are two wings of one being. And no bird can fly with one wing, and no being can grow with one wing – you need both. This world needs godliness as much as godliness needs this world. This world cannot exist without godliness; godliness also cannot exist without this world.

I love one rabbi – his name is Baal Shem, a Jewish mystic, one of the few enlightened Jews. He used to say in every prayer, “Remember, as much as I need you, you also need me. Without Baal Shem, where will you be?” He used to say to God, “I need you, you also need me. Without Baal Shem, where will you be? Who will pray?”

Remember that. He knows something, he is right. The inner needs the outer, because the outer is nothing but the inner extended. The outer needs the inner, because the inner is nothing but the center of the periphery.

Can there be a center without a periphery? Can there be a periphery without a center? It is impossible. How can you have a center without a circumference? If you have a center, if you call it a center, that very moment a circumference comes in. How can you have a circumference if there is no center? It may not be visible but it is there, otherwise the circumference cannot be there. Then, if you look rightly and deeply, the circumference is nothing but the center extended, and the center is nothing but the circumference in seed, condensed, concentrated, in essence.

Live neither in the entanglements of outer things,
nor in inner feelings of emptiness.

Be serene without striving for activity in the oneness of things
and such erroneous views will disappear by themselves.

When you try to stop activity to achieve passivity
your very effort fills you with activity.

This is the law of reverse effect.

When you try to stop activity to achieve passivity
your very effort fills you with activity.

As long as you remain in one extreme or the other
you will never know oneness.

Those who do not live in the single way
fail in both activity and passivity,
assertion and denial.

Don't try to be passive because effort belongs to activity. Nobody can try to be passive. Then what to do? – be totally active, and then passivity comes. It follows like a shadow, it has to come. Think perfectly and then no-thinking comes. You cannot drop thinking. Nothing can be dropped which is incomplete, only the perfect can be dropped. In fact, the perfect drops itself automatically.

Be active. The activity itself creates the situation in which passivity happens. If you have been active the whole day, totally active whatsoever you were doing – digging a hole in the garden or working in a factory or in a shop or teaching in a school. Whatsoever you are doing, do it totally, and when the evening comes and the sun sets you will have a passivity descending upon you. That passivity is beautiful, it is as beautiful as activity. Nothing to choose! Both are beautiful and both are needed.

Don't try to be passive. How can you try to be passive? You can sit like a buddha, but that passivity will just be skin deep. Deep down you will be in a turmoil, you will be boiling, a volcano – you can erupt at any moment. You can force the body to sit silently – how will you force the being? The being goes on and on and on. That's why you cannot stop thinking. People sit in zazen for years, twenty years, twenty-five years, sitting for six hours, continuously just trying to make the mind silent, and it goes on working, goes on working, goes on working.

Hence my emphasis on active meditations. That's a balance. First, be active so totally that passivity follows automatically. When you have been active and the whole energy has moved, you would like to rest. If you have not been active, how can rest follow?

Logic will say something absolutely different. Logic will say, "Practice rest the whole day, so in the night you can rest beautifully."

Mulla Nasruddin went to his doctor. Coughing, he entered. The doctor said, "Still coughing? But it seems better."

Nasruddin said, "It has to, because the whole night I practiced it."

If the whole day you practice rest, don't expect any sleep in the night. Practicing rest will not bring more rest; practicing rest will bring activity. Then lying on your bed you will think, and move from this side to that. You will be doing exercises the whole night. And if you force your body then the mind will have to substitute, then the mind will go on in nightmares.

No, a wise man balances, and he knows life balances itself. If you do one – but totally, so nothing is left, the whole energy has enjoyed activity – then rest is automatic, then rest follows. And when you enjoy rest then activity follows, because when you rest you gain energy, you become rejuvenated. Then the whole body is filled, flooded with energy. Now, again you have to share it, and in activity you have to

release it. Again you will be filled.

It is just like clouds: they have to rain, again they will be filled – the ocean is there to fill them. They have to rain, again they will be filled. The river has to pour itself into the ocean, it will be filled again. The more it pours, the more it will be filled.

Sosan says: Be active totally, then you will be able to be passive totally. Then both the extremes meet and a subtle balance is achieved. That subtle balance is *samyaktva*, that subtle balance is tranquility. That subtle balance is the highest peace possible, the peak, the climax, the crescendo, because when two things balance – outer and inner, activity and passivity – suddenly you transcend them both. When they both balance you are no longer this, no longer that. Suddenly you are a third force – the onlooker, the witness. But you cannot strive for it.

When you try to stop activity to achieve passivity
your very effort fills you with activity.
As long as you remain in one extreme or the other
you will never know oneness.

Transcend extremes. Don't be a worldly man and don't be a so-called spiritual man. Don't be a theist, don't be an atheist. Don't be mad for outer wealth and don't be obsessed with inner tranquility. Balance – balance should be the motto.

Those who do not live in the single way
fail in both activity and passivity,
assertion and denial.

And this is the result: those who choose extremes fail in both, because if you go on being active and active and active, and no passivity is allowed, from where are you going to revitalize yourself? You will become an empty shell, impotent, powerless, poor.

That happens to so-called successful people in the world: politicians, presidents, prime ministers. By the time they have achieved, they have lost everything. They are no longer there. Success is there, but in the bargain they have sold themselves, they are no longer there. And the same happens to those who choose the inner, the introverts: by the time they reach inside, they find only turmoil all around.

If you choose the extreme, you will fail in both. If you don't choose, you will succeed in both. Balance succeeds, extremes fail. This balance is called by Buddha the middle path, *majjhim nikaya*; by Confucius, "the golden mean."

Just be in the middle. This is the greatest skill and art, just to be in the middle, not choosing, not moving left, not moving right. Don't be a leftist and don't be a rightist – just be exactly in the middle.

If you are exactly in the middle you transcend the world. Then you are no longer a man, no longer a woman. That's what Jesus says. Then you are no longer a materialist, no longer a spiritualist. Then no longer are you alive, no longer will you be dead.

Neither this nor that – the bridge is passed over. You have reached the goal. And the goal is not somewhere in the future, it is here between two extremes. Neither hate nor love.

Always remember, wherever you find two extremes, don't choose. Just try to find a balance in between. It will be difficult in the beginning just because of the old habit.

It happened...

Mulla Nasruddin was ill and he was hospitalized. After just a few minutes somebody knocked on the door and a snappy little woman entered.

She said, "I am your doctor. Undress, I have come to examine you."

Mulla asked, "Do you mean completely?"

The doctor said, "Yes, that's what I mean."

So he undressed. The woman checked, examined him. Then she said, "Now you can get into bed. Do you have any questions?"

Mulla Nasruddin said, "Only one: why did you bother to knock?"

The woman said, "Just old habit."

Even in your gestures, old habits persist. Habits are easy to follow because you need not be aware – they go on, on their own. Awareness is difficult because it has never been a habit for you.

You choose easily: you condemn, appreciate easily; you reject, accept easily. You say, "This is good, that is wrong" easily, because this has become a habit: for millions of lives, you have always been choosing. This is just a robot-like phenomenon.

Without any awareness, the moment you see something, you have decided and judged. A flower is there: you look and you say, "Beautiful," or, "Not beautiful." Immediate judgment comes; with the perception, judgment comes. Then you will never be able to remain in the middle.

Somebody came to Chuang Tzu and he talked about a man in town and said, "He is a sinner, a very bad man, a thief," and condemned him in many, many ways.

Chuang Tzu listened and said, "But he plays the flute beautifully."

Then came another man, and the first was sitting there, and the other said, "This man in the town is really a beautiful flute player."

Chuang Tzu said, "But he is a thief."

Both were present, so they said, "What do you mean?"

Chuang Tzu said, "Just balancing. And who am I to judge? – he is a

thief, he is a good flute player. For me there is no rejection, no acceptance. For me there is no choice. He is whatsoever he is. Who am I to judge or choose this extreme or that? For me he is neither good nor bad. He is himself and that is *his* business. Who am I here to say anything? I had to say something just to balance you both.”

It is difficult not to choose, but try, and in everything. When you feel hate, try to move to the middle. When you feel love, try to move to the middle. Whatsoever you feel, try to move to the middle. And you will be surprised that there is a point between every two extremes where both cease to exist – when neither do you feel hate nor do you feel love. This is what Buddha called *upeksha*, indifference.

Indifference is not the right word: *upeksha* means such a middle point from where you are neither this nor that. You cannot say, “I love,” you cannot say, “I hate.” You simply cannot say anything, you are simply in the middle. You are not identified. A transcendence happens, and transcendence is the flowering. That is the maturity to be attained, that is the goal.

Enough for today

Chapter 3 – Stop Talking and Thinking

To deny the reality of things
is to miss their reality;
to assert the emptiness of things
is to miss their reality.
The more you talk and think about it,
the further astray you wander from the truth.
Stop talking and thinking,
and there is nothing you will not be able to know.

The reality is always there, waiting just near your heart, near your eyes, near your hands. You can touch it, you can feel it, you can live it – but you cannot think it. Seeing is possible, feeling is possible, touching is possible, but thinking is not possible.

Try to understand the nature of thinking. Thinking is always about, it is never direct. You can see the reality but you will have to think *about* it, and about is the trap, because whenever you “think about” you have moved away. “About” means indirect. “About” means you will not see this flower here and now, you will think about it, and the “about” will become a barrier. Through that “about” you will never reach to *this* flower.

Seeing is direct, touching is direct, thinking is indirect. That’s why thinking misses. A lover can know the reality, even a dancer can know it, a singer can feel it, but a thinker goes on missing it.

I have heard about one Jewish philosopher. He was an ordinary peasant but very philosophical. His name was Yossel. He would think about everything, as philosophers do. It was very difficult for him to do anything because thinking would take all his time, and by the time he was ready the opportunity was lost.

Once he went to the market, to a nearby village, to sell his wheat. He told his wife, “As soon as I am able to sell the wheat, I will immediately send you a telegram.”

He sold the wheat with much profit so he wrote a telegram, went to the post office, filled in the form – and then started thinking about it.

He wrote: “Wheat sold profitably. Coming tomorrow. Love and kisses, Yossel.”

Then he started thinking and he thought, “My wife will think I have gone mad. Why “profitably”? Am I going to sell my wheat at a loss?” So he crossed out the word *profitably*. Then he became more concerned, because if he could miss and write a wrong word he may have made other errors also. So he looked, started thinking about each word.

Then he said, “Why ‘coming tomorrow’? Am I going to come next

month, or next year? My wife knows that I will come as soon as the wheat is sold.” So he crossed out the words *coming tomorrow*.

Then he thought, “My wife already knows that I have come to sell the wheat, so why write, ‘sold wheat?’” He crossed that out too.

And then he started laughing. He said, “I am writing to my own wife. Why should I write ‘love and kisses’? Am I writing to somebody else’s wife? And is it her birthday or Yom Kippur or something?” He crossed that out too.

Now only his name remained: Yossel. He said to himself, “Yossel, have you gone mad? Your wife already knows your name.” So he tore up the telegram, happy that he had saved much money and foolishness.

But this is how it happens: if you go on thinking “about” you miss the whole of life – everything is crossed out by and by. In the end you are also crossed out: not only is the word crossed out, you are also in the end crossed out. Thinking becomes like smoke; everything moves into it and everything is finished. And action becomes impossible – even to send a telegram is not possible. Action becomes impossible because action is direct and thinking is indirect. They never meet.

This is the problem in the world: people who think never act; and people who don’t think go on acting. The world is in misery. People who are fools go on acting because they never think, they jump into everything. Hitlers and Napoleons and Maos go on doing things, and wise people, the so-called thinkers – Aristotle, or Kant, or Hegel – go on thinking, they never do anything.

The problem for a man who is seeking reality is how to stop the vicious circle of thinking, yet be aware – because fools also don’t think, but they are not aware. Be aware: the energy that moves into thinking should become awareness. Consciousness that goes on in a vicious circle with thinking should be retained, purified. Thinking should stop; the whirling of consciousness should stop, but not consciousness. Consciousness should become more crystallized. And action should be there, action should not stop.

Awareness plus action, and you will attain reality immediately. And not only you – you will create a situation in which others can also attain reality. You will become a milieu, a climate around which things will start happening. That’s what happened with a Buddha, with a Sosan, with a Chuang Tzu.

Remember: action is good, thinking is a vicious circle; it never leads anywhere. So thinking has to stop but not action. There are people who will go on thinking: action will stop. That’s how it happens when a person renounces life, moves to the forest or the Himalayas. He renounces action, not thinking. He renounces the world where action was needed. He is renouncing reality itself, because through action you come in contact with reality. Seeing is action, moving is action, dancing is action, painting is action. Whatsoever you do, you come in

contact with reality. You have to become more and more sensitive in your doing. Doing is not to be renounced.

Action should be totally there, because that is the passage through which you move into reality, and reality moves into you. Try to understand, because this is very basic – basic to me: renounce thinking, don't renounce action.

There are people who go on thinking, and there are people who go on renouncing action. But in the Himalayas what will they do? Then not moving into action, the whole energy will move into thinking. They will become great philosophers. But philosophy is a fool's land: you live in words, not in realities. Love disappears, only the word *love* is retained. God disappears – because he was there in the fields, in the market, in the world – but the word *God* is retained. Actions disappear, only concepts are carried. Your head becomes your whole being.

Avoid this. Never renounce action, only renounce thinking. But if you renounce thinking there is a possibility you may become unconscious – or you may become a fool. You may start doing anything whatsoever, because now you don't know what to do, and you don't think. You may go crazy. Thinking is to be renounced, but you are not to become more unaware, more unconscious. You have to become more conscious.

This is the whole art of meditation: how to be deep in action, how to renounce thinking, and how to convert the energy that was moving into thinking, into awareness. It is going to be very delicate and subtle, because if you miss a step you fall into infinite ignorance.

It is easy to drop thinking, but then you go to sleep. Every day in deep sleep it happens: you renounce, thinking stops – but then you are no longer there, consciousness drops. Your consciousness has become too attached, associated with thinking, so whenever thinking stops you fall into a coma.

And this is the problem. One has to renounce thinking and *not* fall into a coma, because the coma will not lead you to reality. If you fall unconscious you are not going into reality, you are simply fast asleep: the conscious has merged into the unconscious. Just the reverse has to be attained: the unconscious merges into the conscious. If the conscious falls into the unconscious you fall into a coma, and if the unconscious falls into the conscious and becomes conscious itself, you become enlightened, you become a Buddha, a Sosan.

And it is very easy to help the conscious fall down into the unconscious, because it is a very small fragment. One tenth of your being is conscious, nine tenths of your being is unconscious. Just a small fragment has become conscious, and that too is always wavering. Any moment it can fall, it is very easy.

That's how it happens in intoxication: you take alcohol, the conscious falls into the unconscious. Hence, the appeal of alcohol in all the ages and all the climates and in all the countries. And this is what