

ZENSHO W. KOPP

The direct  
**ZEN-Way**  
to Liberation



Instructions  
by a Western  
Zen Master

This book is the extended version of the audio book that was published by Amazon Publishing under the same name.

In their letters to the author, many listeners expressed the wish to have the audio recording in book form so that they may delve more deeply into its profound wisdom.

This wish has now led to the text at hand, together with Zen Master Zensho's detailed "Introduction to the essence and practice of Zen".

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## Preface

Exceptionally clear in their directness, the statements in this book are filled with the profound wisdom of Zen. They hold within them such spiritual brilliance that they touch us at our very core.

Here, the logic of our deep-rooted intellectual thinking is often shattered and an opportunity arises for us to intuitively grasp the truth, which is incomprehensible to the intellect.

In a modern and refreshingly unconventional way, Zen Master Zensho teaches a Zen way which is completely free and not bound to any special form. Thus in this book we find alongside the many Zen-quotes, numerous quotes from Indian Vedanta and Christian mysticism too.

What is special about Zensho's teaching methods is that he comes directly to the point, without any sonorous digressions, and he points to the essence. Thus, his arousing words in this book are also a complete rebellion against our conditioned intellect, for they smash all our fixed concepts and tender illusions. With Zenistic consistency, everything is swept away so that we become able to reach liberation

of the mind beyond our limited intellectual logic and can experience the state of pure awareness.

For Zensho, from the first page to the last, it is a question of our awakening from the everyday slumber of our habits which prevent us from directly experiencing reality. Zensho says:

Therefore, it is essential in Zen to realise absolute awareness Now-Here, from moment to moment, wherever we are and in everything we do. The truth of Zen is simple and direct. Indeed it can be seen in the most commonplace things of everything life.

The reality we are seeking is constantly present – right now in this instant! In drinking a glass of water or tying shoelaces the mystery and marvel of Zen reveals itself. Yet this can only be understood and experienced by those people who live life in the complete presence of the immediate moment.

A wonderful example of this can be found in Zensho's drawings in this book, drawn with great spontaneity and absolute awareness, which directly express the Zen mind. Zen is solely based on experiencing. Thus, all the great masters of Zen warn us over and over again of making Zen the object of logical, rational speculation, since we cannot master the truth of Zen through concepts, teachings or philosophies.



## Some remarks on the drawings

The special value and uniqueness of the collection of drawings in his book is that they are revelations in pictorial form of an enlightened consciousness. Far from all traditional confinement, the Zen Master and artist Zensho W. Kopp goes his own individual way by not painting with black tusche as is common in Zen art but by creating pencil drawings.

Zensho's drawings, which breathe the true Zen mind, are reflections of his innermost being which have become visible. His artistic way of expression corresponds to that of the old Chinese and Japanese Zen painters, who, with few strokes and often downright tumultuous brush use, knew how to express the bare essentials. Zensho's spontaneous art of painting, along with the abstract forms of his drawings, express the spirit of Zen in a way that is not possible through words.

Thus we feel that something intangible moves us from within the subtle tension affinities of his drawings – between line and the white background area, between form and formless. The forms appear to float away dematerialised, to be preserved in the empty depths of the transcendent, otherworldly spheres.

Thus, the empty background in Zensho's paintings is much more than just an unpainted part of the picture.

In Zen painting, the empty background relates to the empty base of being, and represents the form and featureless void, Sunyata. This empty base is that absolute reality which shines through the transparency of all forms and colours, and thus all phenomena.

Here too, the profound meaning of the omissions and the areas left empty can be seen in the master's paintings. The reduction of the appearances to their essence is the core of Zensho's artwork. It does not deal with phenomena perceived by the senses, but rather with that absolute reality which lies behind everything. In Zen painting, this highest reality of all is expressed by the circular symbol "Enso". It is the best known symbol of Zen that we find again and again in Zensho's drawings. In his drawings, characterised by atmospheric clarity, the essence of a spiritual master is expressed, who, having awoken to the reality of Being, has experienced the harmony and totality of the universe, which underlies everything. Immersed in silent contemplation of these images, a new, unimagined insight opens to us into the reality of our true being. For that which the artist and mystic has imbued into his images, gushes forth from them and flows with irresistible force into our mind.

Zen Master Zensho's drawings in this book are true masterpieces of artistic creativity. And whoever immerses himself in these revelations of the invisible which have entered into the realm of the visible, likewise immerses himself in that reality from which they have emerged.

May 2015

Edward Duvernoy



# Introduction to the essence and practice of Zen

## Instantly grasping reality

The main objective of Zen is the awakening to the reality of our true being. Zen points constantly and with great emphasis to the One Mind as our original, true essence, and at the same time is an entirely practical teaching, completely oriented to the reality of here and now. The method of its spiritual conveyance is strikingly simple and instantly direct. For this reason, Zen puts all frills aside and points solely to absolute reality, which reveals itself Now-Here.

Zen is the height and the quintessence of the whole of Buddhism. Although it originated from Buddhism, it quickly turned away from traditional Buddhism, for Zen is not at all interested in the high philosophical speculations of Buddhist erudition. Quite the opposite – it much rather endeavours to consistently break with discursive rational thinking, which is

itself “Now-Here”. Everything which appears before our eyes as the myriad forms is the reflection of this One Mind. There is no existence and no non-existence of the phenomena. Appearance and reality pervade each other completely. This is the central message of Zen.

For this reason it is also written in the Mahaprajnaparamita Hridaya Sutra, “Heart-Sutra” for short, which is recited daily in Zen monasteries, “Form is emptiness and emptiness is form.” An intuitive understanding of this “Mind-only-teaching”, with an unshakeable belief in the original purity of the mind is seen in Zen as the essential prerequisite for reaching Enlightenment.

There is nothing which could not be holy. Ultimately, this means, “nothing is holy”. In the words of Bodhidharma in his answer to the question: what is the holiest in the world, he replied, “Boundless openness – nothing holy!”

Zen is a pure matter of personal experience. Therefore it wants to and must be lived, everywhere and at all times, in each instant of the day, for the present moment encompasses everything, the entire fullness of being. If we miss the present moment, we miss out on true life since we miss omnipresent divine reality.

## The sword of wisdom

In the direct presence of Now we abide in the time-less eternity of being. Therefore, we must experience the present moment in crystal-clear consciousness and as constantly new by completely immersing ourselves in it – free from all notions and concepts.

We must truly experience the truth of Zen in its entirety and inwardly absorb and live it with our whole being. Yet, since we are unable to grasp the unspeakable, profound mystery of Zen with our thinking, we require the wordless initiation by an enlightened master so that our inner eye of perception opens. This takes place in the tradition of Zen in a direct, secret transfer from Heart-Mind to Heart-Mind. For this reason, the Chinese Zen Master Huang-po (ninth century) says:

There is no understanding through words, just  
a transfer from mind to mind.

In their powerful, direct way of conveyance, the masters warn their students over and over again not to cling to words, since the highest truth cannot be spoken, has never been spoken, and will never be spoken. The highest truth is dynamic and vivacious, whereas our

concepts are static and dead.

Therefore, Zen calls on us to liberate our mind from everything – whatever it may be, and not to rely on any artificial methods of reaching the truth. So follow this viewpoint and grasp the sword of non-discriminating wisdom and shatter right now, in this instant, the chains of your intellectual interpretations. In the powerful words of Zen Master Hsueh-tou:

Where the sword of wisdom flies, sun and moon lose their shine and heaven and earth lose their colour. Through this experience the devils' bellies burst and the eye of transcendental wisdom opens to you.

Zen is not a matter of learning but rather of un-learning. It is a return to the origin of our true being. This means we must completely leave behind us all our illusory knowledge and the knowledge of Zen and Buddhism we have accumulated up to now if we wish to achieve sublime Enlightenment. At the most, one could concede that these teachings are of guiding, preparatory value. Yet in the eyes of the great old Chinese Zen Masters like Lin-chi, Ma-tsu, Hui-neng and Huang-po, all the scriptures of traditional Buddhism were just worthless paper. The Chinese Zen Master



Yung-chia (eighth century) is of the same opinion:

Directly cutting off the roots, that is the buddha's seal. I do not care about collecting leaves and seeking twigs.

If we truly wish to experience the profound truth of Zen, we must immerse ourselves in it directly and avoid becoming separated from reality through concepts and ideas. In the language of Zen: "Where nothing is sought, the unborn Self-Mind is present." For this reason, Zen masters do not give explanations and define nothing, for defining means setting limits.

## The Self-Mind is Buddha

With the greatest emphasis, Zen constantly points to the "Heart-Mind" as our true essential nature, so that we become able to discover the truth "within ourselves" and awaken to our original buddha-nature. Indeed, it is completely impossible to find the Self-Mind, that is, our true self, anywhere else than in our own mind. We can search externally as much as we like yet how could we possibly find ourselves when we look anywhere other than in ourselves? The Chinese Zen Master Yuan-wu (twelfth century) says of this:

The great truth of Zen is in everyone's possession. Just look into your own, true essence and do not seek it through others. Your own mind is beyond all forms, it is free and silent and self-sufficient. Perpetually it reveals itself. In its light everything dissolves.

Zen Master Yuan-wu gives us this good piece of advice: "Just look into your own, true essence." This well-intentioned advice points to Zen meditation practice as an essential element of Zen. Even though this is so, nowadays most adherents of Zen Buddhism occupy themselves only theoretically with the teachings of Zen. That is a very sad state. For without the "clarity of mind", accomplished in Zen meditation it is not possible to liberate oneself from the dualism of discriminating, conceptual thinking, which, like dark clouds, covers the light of our true self. This is why the Chinese Zen Master Hung-chi (twelfth century) says:

To experience Zen in its complete profoundness, you must clear the mind and immerse yourself in the silent practice of inward perception. If you gain fully unlimited insight into the origin of reality, the mind is open, clear and bright like the moon, which takes away the

The great Chinese masters of the Golden Age of Zen were very creative minds who had the ability to spontaneously bring forth koans which were adapted to the individual consciousness-state of their students. One of the best known koans is the following one from the Mumonkan, the “Gateless gate”, a koan collection from the thirteenth century by the Chinese Zen Master Mumon:

It is just like the Zen monk, hanging by his teeth on the branch of a tall tree with nothing else to support him. His hands cannot grasp the branch; his feet cannot touch the tree. A passing traveller comes to a halt beneath the tree and asks him, “Why did Bodhidharma come from the West?” (This question, often asked in Zen in fact means: “What is the profound meaning of the truth of Zen?”) If he does not answer, he will not fulfil the Buddhist vow of helping all beings reach liberation. Yet if he answers, he will lose his life. What should he do?

To this end, the Chinese Zen Master Mumon provides the following commentary:

Although your eloquence flows like a river, it does not help you at all here. Even if you can recite the entire collection of Buddhist sutras it is of no value either. Yet if you can truly answer, you will kill the living and bring the dead to life.

The following koan is found in the Mumonkan too and is considered in Zen as one of the eight most difficult ones:

A cow goes through a window. Its head, its horns, its belly and its four legs are already through. How can it then be that the tail does not go through?

### At the abyss of the void

A koan is no puzzle, we cannot solve it since it has no possibility of a solution as does a puzzle, by which we just have to find the correct answer. A true Zen koan is insoluble, we cannot solve it; we can only “dissolve” it. And since we cannot solve a koan there is only one way out:

We must awaken from our dream of body, mind and world and thus “dissolve” the illusion of our attachment

to the cycle of birth and death. This means: the answer to the koan lies “within us”, for the koan solely involves us and no one else.

The striking feature of all koans is their alogical nature – the absurdity of the words and actions. The answers of the Zen masters to their students’ questions emanate from the Zen mind. On reading these answers, confusion arises and one asks oneself what the answer has actually to do with the question.

However, we should make it clear to ourselves that these statements of the great Zen masters have nothing to do with any conceptual or intellectual assertion within the usual bounds of our logical thinking. Instead we are dealing with the manifestation of a tremendous experience of such all-encompassing universality that within it, all barriers of space and time and all limitations of verbal communication are transcended.

The koan overwhelms our intellect. It causes a short circuit in our thinking and paralyses our capacity for critical discernment. For the intent and purpose of a koan is that it brings us into a spiritual borderline situation in which our intellect is trapped and we can neither move forwards nor backwards. We find ourselves faced with the abyss of the void and our only salvation is to let go of ourselves and everything, whatever it may be. In the words of the Chinese Zen

Master Ta-hui from the twelfth century:

If you allow your mind to abruptly sink into the unfathomable depths which intellect and thought can never penetrate, you will behold the absolute, radiating One Mind. This is how you achieve liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

Essential when dealing with a koan is that we achieve that crystal-clear consciousness state from out of which the words were spoken, and which logical analysis can never reach. For only when the mind is mature enough that it is completely akin to the mind of the master who gave us the koan will the profound truth disclose itself to us which was concealed in the koan.

## The master

A true master will never offer his student an answer to a koan though. For in doing so he would deprive him of the opportunity of experiencing the manifestation of the hidden truth within the koan which reveals itself to him in a sudden inner explosion of recognition.

The principle function of a Zen master is much

rather in removing all obstacles which separate us from directly experiencing the truth. With tender harshness he shatters with the sword of non-discriminating wisdom the whole forest of concepts which darken our mind like a dense, creeping tangle.

His efforts, which are often of a physical nature, have the sole purpose of revealing that which from the beginning onwards has been present in our innermost self as our true essence. The following example elucidates this:

The Chinese Zen Master Yun-men (tenth century) entered the Dharma hall and said: “Buddha achieved Enlightenment when the morning star appeared.”

To this a monk asked, “What is it like to achieve Enlightenment when the morning star appears?”

Yun-men replied, “Come here and I’ll show you!”

The monk went up to him. The master hit him with his staff and chased him out of the Dharma hall.

A master will make use of all available means, be it loud cries or blows with a stick, to burst open the

concealed behind the dark clouds of discriminating, conceptual thinking. Zen Master Huang-po (ninth century) describes this wonderful experience with the following words:

This pure Mind, the source of everything, shines forever and on all with the brilliance of its own perfection. But the people of the world do not awake to it, regarding only that which sees, hears, feels and knows as mind. Blinded by their own sight, hearing, feeling and knowing, they do not perceive the spiritual brilliance of the source-substance.

If they would finally throw off all conceptual thought in a flash this source-substance would manifest itself like the sun ascending through the void and illuminating the whole universe without hindrance or bounds.

In the powerful words of the Chinese Zen Master Fa-yong from the twelfth century:

The power of non-thinking is like the embers of the flame or the lightening-fast blow of a sharp sword. The moment the mind is free of thoughts, the lion's roar is reached. All further



description would only place lesser minds in fear and confusion.

The dark clouds of our spiritual ignorance disappear in this liberation from the chains of our self-caused limitations. The mind radiates like the clear sky in boundless openness and emptiness, and nothing can darken it any longer. The reality of our original, true being lies within ourselves. There is nothing to achieve and nothing to change. Our true self is already absolutely consummate right now and has always been so.

By recognising that the own mind as our true being is buddha, and neither begins with birth nor perishes with death, the mystery of Zen reveals itself. That is why Zen places the highest importance on the insight that Enlightenment is indwelling in the mind and so there is nothing to achieve. The direct experience of the truth of Zen is by reaching the original state of the mind and thus being free from all limitations and illusions.

It is completely clear to me that some of what is written in this book will be challenging and startling for the reader. For much of what he is convinced of and believes in will be laid bare and swept away. However, this is intended to be so.

Not for nothing is it said in Zen: “The Zen path to liberation is no path for small minds.” For only he who is truly prepared to leave behind his accustomed perspectives and liberate himself from all concepts will be mature for the transformation into the highest consciousness level of the boundless liberation of the mind.

Wiesbaden, Germany, Spring 2015  
Zensho W. Kopp





When we interpret things with our intellect we become more and more distant from the reality we are seeking for we remain solely within our self-made limitations of dualistic discrimination. In this way we embroil ourselves ever deeper in the creeping tangle of our discriminating, conceptual thinking. But Zen rises above all this and calls to us:

If you could only free yourself from conceptual thinking you would recognise that there is no other buddha than the one in your own mind.

These words by Zen Master Huang-po from the ninth century form the core of the true, original Zen of the ancient Chinese masters. We are only truly on the path to liberation when we can prevent our thoughts from roaming and seeking. For when we try to grasp Zen with concepts, we create our own restrictions and fall short of reality.

“All conceptual thinking is a mistaken opinion,” says Zen. So why stuff your brain with all sorts of intellectual rubbish? What is the point of rooting around in every corner like a dog scraping up all kinds of old rubbish in its muzzle? Instead, let us dig into our own treasure, for the truth we are seek-ing is closer to us than we are to ourselves.

There is nothing to seek, there is nothing to gain! There is no space in which things could be separate from one another, and there is no time in which anything is yet to appear or is no longer there. For everything takes place simultaneously, by which all things mutually permeate one another.

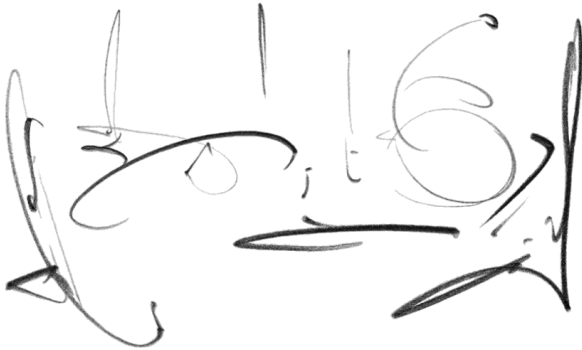
Everything is an all-encompassing whole which contains everything within it “Now-Here”. And since everything is Now-Here, where will we seek and “what” will we seek? When we wish to experience our true, original being, there is no other way than to immerse ourselves in it “Now-Here”. For how can we experience what is here right now when we are caught in tomorrow or the day after or when we are anywhere else than here?

## Silent perception

If we wish to perceive our true being, it is absolutely necessary that we penetrate through and cast off the subjective projections of our own mind. It is equally necessary for us to give up our exclusive trust in our acquired knowledge and understanding.

This means we must completely rid ourselves of our trust in our perception of the world through conceptual definition. Thus, transform your desire for

rational understanding into silent inner perception, free of intellectual speculation. Cast doubt on all religious and philosophical beliefs! They are nothing more than interpretations of the neurotic intellect. Therefore, we do not need to believe in any religious dogmas. The old Chinese Zen masters constantly pointed with great emphasis to the fact that on the Zen path there is nothing to achieve and nothing to learn. There is nothing to reach and there is no holy truth to realise.



Rid yourself of all concepts! Completely break free from all forms of limitation and everything that can be explained! For the truth of our true being can never be made the object of logical, rational explanations. The ancient Chinese Zen masters had their own

special way of making this clear to their students:

On one occasion, news spread throughout the land that Zen Master Huang-po planned to deliver a great public dharma sermon on the truth of Zen and that all monks from neighbouring monasteries were invited to attend. The monks came from everywhere, from near and far. The great dharma hall was hardly big enough to accommodate the many eagerly waiting listeners.

Then the big moment came. The bell was sounded and Zen Master Huang-po entered the Dharma hall and sat down on his high seat. After a moment's silence he began:

“Having many sorts of knowledge cannot be compared with giving up seeking for anything. This is the best of all things! Mind is not of several kinds and there is no doctrine which can be put into words. And as there is no more to be said, the assembly is dismissed!”

Having spoken these impressive words, Zen Master Huang-po stepped down from his high seat and left the dharma hall.





Everything is the reality of the One Mind. There is nothing that exists which is not a phenomenon of reality. Yet we superimpose these phenomena with the notion of multiplicity and separateness.

However, we will not find any inner peace until Ultimate Reality reveals itself in us as the origin and aim of all life. This will only take place when we awaken from the dream of an apparent, multitudinous world.

This experience of our true, divine being will only be bestowed on us when we are prepared to free ourselves of our false perspective. This means letting go of all our habitual behaviour patterns and ways of thinking and thus letting go of ourselves. For we can only achieve liberation when we have let go of our “self”, that is, what we believe we are. Then peace and the fullness of Divine Being will be accorded to us in the mind-state of “inner detachment”. Only then will we achieve that solitude which represents far more than just “externally” letting go since it effectuates an “inner” transformation. The Christian Mystic Meister Eckhart from the fourteenth century gives us the following advice:

Firstly you should forsake “yourself”, then you have forsaken everything. Indeed, were a man

to forsake a kingdom or the whole world, but would retain himself, so would he have forsaken nothing. Yet were he to leave off from himself, then whatever he may keep, be it riches or otherwise, he will indeed have forsaken everything.

Yet, without our trust in the reality of Divine Being we will never achieve such inner disengagement. However, we are not talking here about pseudo-trust in the sense of taking something to be true on a superficial, intellectual level. Instead, we are talking about that particular trust which is an irrefutable inner certitude of the soul. It is the inner certitude which remains, even when no enduring belief is present in your thoughts, and even then when the intellect rebels, refuses and doubts everything.

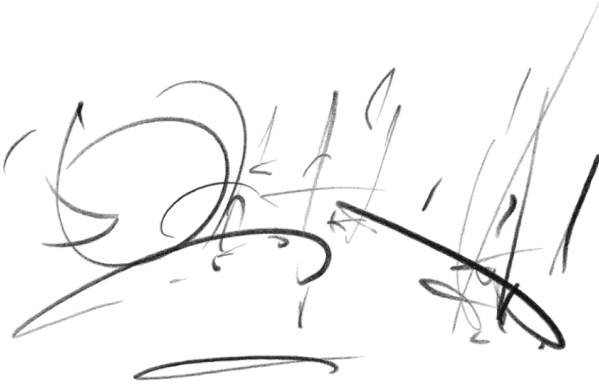
## Trusting of the heart

All those who make serious efforts on the spiritual path also know the varying periods of disappointment, darkness, and wavering belief. Yet at the same time there is something there which abides with us and remains, despite all doubt. It is that something which tells us in our innermost self that what we have turned

to is nonetheless true. However, this trust is not the wavering trust of the beginner on the spiritual path but rather that “great trust” which has first to develop.

When you have seriously followed the spiritual path for a long time, this unswerving trust within your heart will remain despite all internal and external challenges. Even when such trust may appear to the mistrusting intellect as blind trust, it is nevertheless endlessly wiser than any human intelligence, caught in logical thinking.

Through this great trust we reach that inner detachment which leads us from the limiting, grasping ego-awareness to our original identity within our true



essence. We go from a state of contracted awareness to the true state of unlimited being, transcending space

and time. By becoming free from ourselves, we will likewise become filled with the fullness of divine being. In the words of the Japanese Zen Master Dogen Zenji from the thirteenth century:

Truly understanding the true self means forgetting yourself; forgetting yourself means Enlightenment.

The great masters of all religious traditions have time and again pointed out the fact that we must become spiritually empty. For every form of identification and attachment to the transient world of the senses must inevitably lead to suffering. Whatever we may achieve in our lives, be it riches, success or esteem, in the end none of these can bring us lasting contentedness. We remain inwardly unfulfilled and can find no inner peace.

Only by turning inwards to the “true source” of all happiness will we experience the peace of our true self. Yet as long as we continue to seek externally in the hope of finding true happiness, our lives will end in discontentment and disappointment. Whichever way we look at it, there is no other way than the way of inner detachment from everything. Whichever worldview we may adhere to, ultimately this will not exempt us from going this path.



boundless ocean of the One Mind, will we come to know the truth. That is why Zen does not offer any philosophical explanations. Zen says: “If you want to know how tea tastes – drink it! Do you want to know how an apple tastes? Then take a bite of the apple! Then you know: that’s how it tastes.” That is pure Zen.

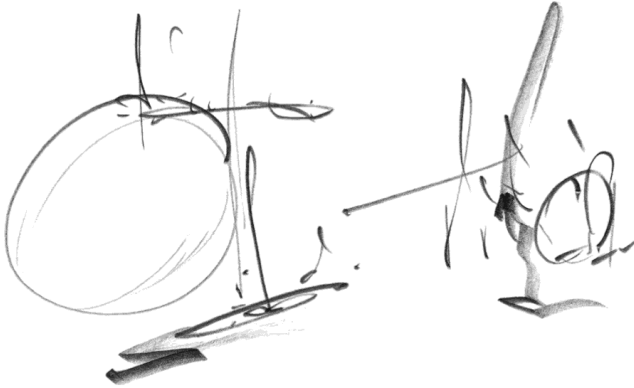


Zen is always immediate and direct. With the greatest emphasis, it constantly points to your own heart without becoming caught in the tangle of conventions and concepts. It is free, and without this freedom it loses its spontaneity and freshness, ending up as just a dead, empty shell, devoid of all life.

## Impermanence

Zen always points to the pure naked truth. It wastes no time with external aesthetic chitchat or mind-bending speculation.

The absolute reality which lies beyond all that changes or can be named will only reveal itself when we are truly prepared to leave everything far behind us which sense and reason can comprehend.



However, as long as we are not prepared to take this decisive step, we live in a state of indifferent non-awareness and mindless routine. We are bound through ourselves and thus remain trapped in our delusion of a stable and ideal world. This state remains until the painful experience of suffering or disappointment



finally achieves its purpose and awakens in us the desire for liberation. This is the moment when we recognise that we have been clinging to an illusion. We must go the redemptive way to liberation. In the words of Zen Master Yung-chia from the eighth century:

The matter of life and death is immense and impermanence swiftly grasps hold. How can you waste your time with trivialities?

Each individual moment we experience is a divine gift and a unique opportunity for realisation, for no one knows whether he will be able to take another breath. The death-bringing demon of impermanence can arrive in an instant and destroy all our hopes.

Whether we believe in Samsara, the cycle of birth and death or not – we are in its midst.

Whether we believe in Karma, the law of cause and effect or not – we are ruled by it.

Whether we are prepared to devote ourselves to spiritual practice or not – death will certainly come to us regardless of whether we are now ready for it.

Therefore, we should recognise how absolutely necessary it is that we immerse ourselves now in the spiritual way. If not, our death will be no more than

the pitiful conclusion to a pointlessly wasted life. This is why Zen Master Lin-chi (ninth century) gives us the admonishing words:

There is no time to lose. Do not beguile yourselves into great confusion by compulsively rummaging about in the external world instead of seeking within yourselves.

And Zen Master Pai-chang from the ninth century gives us this good piece of advice:

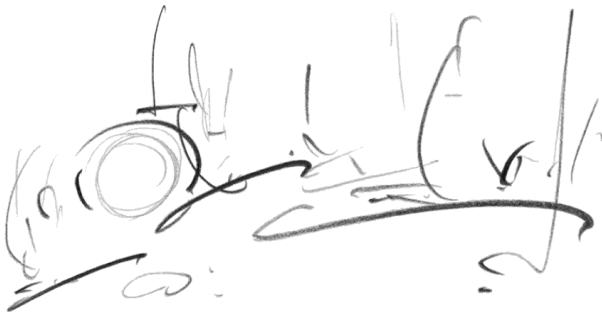
If you are afraid that at the moment of death you will turn mad with fear and not be able to reach freedom, you should first of all be free in this instant, right now. Then everything will be alright.



his spiritual striving is greatly deceived. As authorities on the spiritual path, the great enlightened mystics have constantly pointed out this error of “spiritual materialism”.

All sacred writings proclaim that Enlightenment can only be brought about by the action of the One Mind. So too in the sacred Indian writings of the Upanishads we read:

Only the one whom He chooses can recognise Him, the Atman manifests its essence to this chosen one.



Now one might start to ask, “Is the Universal Spirit biased, that he gives his grace to one person but excludes another? And anyway, why should I make such an effort on the spiritual path when everything

just depends on the whim of divine grace?”

When most people think of divine grace, they imagine a personal being with human qualities. Others who believe in an impersonal ultimate reality will ask themselves how – in the language of Buddhism – the “impersonal void” could bestow grace. Indeed, many people imagine the attributeless ultimate reality as a lifeless abstraction, like a creative mechanism, similar to an automated machine.

## Abandonment to the Eternal

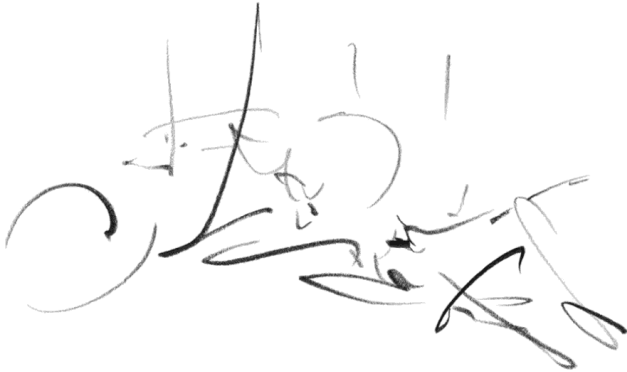
In truth, however, the One Mind is absolute awareness. It is absolute Beingness – beyond all personal and impersonal attributes – and is thus “transpersonal”. Since it is free of all limitations of space and time, it cannot be grasped by a human consciousness limited in space and time.

Yet our trusting in our limited consciousness, bound in space and time, is the reason why grace cannot act within us. For by upholding our ego-delusion we hinder ourselves from becoming empty to receive the fullness of divine being, and thus we hinder the action of the One Mind.

However, the more we are prepared to surrender ourselves to the Absolute, the more we will be granted

grace as the action of the great Essence beyond space and time. And the more it acts in us, the more we are capable of ever greater and more steadfast self-surrender.

Surrendering oneself to the Eternal means opening oneself and “becoming transparent to the transcendental”. It means letting go and becoming empty in the form of opening up to something completely



different and thus becoming filled by it. Whoever, out of love of the Eternal, lets go of this small life in space and time, likewise opens himself to the great life beyond space and time which is waiting for him. In this inner detachment, the reality of our true self, which exists concealed within us in our innermost being then becomes a vivacious, inner experience. In

the words of Meister Eckhart from the fourteenth century:

Unmoving detachment leads a person into the Great Equality with God. It draws a person into purity and simplicity, and from simplicity into immutability.

This engenders an equality between a person and God. Yet this equality must be borne of grace, for grace draws a person forth from all temporal things.

