

# The Eightfold Path

by Ven. Anzan Hoshin roshi



## 1: “Complete View”

*Daijozan, February 27, 1989*

Good morning.

Welcome to the first day of the Winter 1989 Zen Training Session.[fn]For the first few years of its existence from 1985 the White Wind Zen Community held four Training Sessions annually rather than full seven-day O-sesshin. Training Session consisted of a full weekend sesshin with morning and evening sittings dedicated to the subject of a teisho series.[/fn] We are gathered here sitting in the early morning of our lives, sitting in the early morning of our bodies. What is it like? How are you in this moment? This moment arises as this very moment of body, this very moment of mind. Moment to moment, there is this arising, embodied. And so here we are. But where is this? Who is this? What is this? During this Training Session I hope that you will ask yourselves these questions again and again. I hope that you will practise these questions and I hope that you will ask these questions and answer these questions again and again, deeper and more completely each time that you ask. So please, ask with this breath, question into this breath, into this sound, into this very moment of body and mind.

Intensifying our practice means simplifying. As we sit, things are very simple. There is just this breathing, just these sounds. We eat, we walk, we sit, we lie down and go to sleep, we go to the washroom. Training

Session brings us to the basics of what we do and of what we are and so a Training Session will be a good time for us to consider some of the basic or fundamental teachings of the Buddha Dharma. What we will be examining is the Teaching known as the “Eightfold Path”, which was one of the Buddha’s favourite ways of speaking of the practice of Buddha Dharma, the practice of realizing oneself as being Buddha.

The Buddha taught Four Noble Truths: that all conditioned existence is inherently dukkha. The Second Noble Truth is that this dukkha is not inherently necessary, that it has its roots within craving, within grasping, within localizing. The Third Noble Truth is that it is possible to realize inherent freedom from dukkha, from suffering, from confusion, that it is possible to Wake Up from the sleep and restless dreams and stories and games of samsara. And the Fourth Noble Truth is that this freedom can be realized through the Path and the Buddha used to describe the Path as an Eightfold Path.

Now, the Eightfold Path is not like the Seven Factors of Enlightenment which describe a progressive development and deepening of insight. The Eightfold Path is often pictured as a wheel, a Dharmacakra, the Wheel of the Dharma, with eight spokes. So the eight parts of this path are integral to each other, but they don’t exactly follow a developmental sequence. The eight parts of this Path, the eight factors of this Path are:

1. Sammadicci, (Pali) “Complete View”, or “Shoken” (Japanese).
2. Samasamcappa, “Complete Thought” or “Shoshi”.
3. Samavacha, “Complete Speech”, or “Shoku”.
4. Samacamanta, “Complete Activity”, “Shogu”.
5. Sama-ajiva, “Complete Livelihood”, or “Shomyo”.
6. Samavayama, “Complete Effort” or “Sho-shojin”.
7. Samasati “Complete Mindfulness” or “Shonen”.
8. 8. Samasamadhi, “Complete Practice” or “Shojo”.

Here, “complete” is how I prefer to translate this word “sama”, which has also been translated as “right” or “true”. So, Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech. But it is characteristic of our practice to realize that what is needed is not to be “right”, but to be complete and to look into how we might realize this completeness, this wholeness through seeing and developing insight into how we scatter and break this wholeness into fragments of hope and fear. And so we say “complete”, which means unbiased, thorough, whole.

Interestingly, the Buddha begins his consideration of the Path through discussing the need for Complete View as the beginning of practice, rather than as the end. Complete View, whether as the fruit or the ground of our practice is truly a fundamental issue of our practice. In order to even consider practice, there must be some clarity present, some looking into one’s situation, some questioning of one’s assumptions. Questioning one’s assumptions means to loosen the density with which we have tried to cover over our world. It means to begin to bring our life into question. Bringing our life into question, questioning into our lives , what do we see when we allow for a Complete View?

The first thing that we see is that it is very difficult for us to take a Complete View because we are always,

again and again, taking on a point of view and as I often say, if we confuse the point of view with what is seen, then we haven't really seen it. Beyond that, each and every point of view is like one degree of a circle, so each point of view is 359 degrees blind so it is very difficult for us to take a Complete View. And that is the first thing that we see. There is the tendency towards hope and fear which immediately distorts; there is passion, aggression and stupidity, the three klesas of the fundamental styles with which self-image tries to poison its world, drain the world of its vitality so it is not so threatening, so unpredictable. We find that it is difficult to take a Complete View because of our tendency to live from the past, to live out patterns and habits and tendencies. And so to realize a Complete View we have to examine these tendencies, we have to witness our self-deceptions. We begin to realize the possibility of a Complete View through hearing the Buddha Dharma, through encountering the Dharma in words and letters written on a page and then the words and presence of the Teacher and the Lineage, and then we begin to realize the possibility of Complete View when we start to actually apply what we have heard. This application starts, actually, at the moment of hearing. At the moment of hearing the Dharma there is also an understanding which arises, the recognition of what is being said. So sometimes it is difficult to say that anything is being "taught", it is more as if something is being drawn out of both the Teacher and the student.

If we simply try to adopt a Dharmic point of view, we misunderstand Complete View. If we simply try to adopt, say, the Teacher's point of view, then we misunderstand because the Teacher does not have a point of view. The Dharma does not have a point of view. The Dharma is simply this viewing, simply the direct presentation of Things as They Are.

Within our practice we begin to recognize the possibility of this Complete View through dokusan and teisho, through zazen, through breathing in and breathing out, getting lost in thought, waking up, coming back to the breath, coming back to the wall, coming back to this posture, coming back to this moment. And we begin to realize perhaps just for a second, perhaps just for a glimpse, the possibility of being here and that when we are here we don't know where we are because our sense of reference cannot encompass the vastness of this moment. We begin to recognize our panic and our tendency to try to reinstate these references and we do so; yet at the same time we also have glimpsed a basic dignity in just taking a step, just hearing a bird's song, just breathing in and breathing out, just attending to our lives as they are. And so, as we begin to see very clearly the ways in which we limit the completeness or wholeness of our view we also do indeed gain a glimpse of a whole view, a Complete View, of Samaditti. It is funny because the phrase, "Complete View" in Japanese is "shoken". "Kensho" is the realization of this Complete View. Kensho means "seeing into one's own nature". What is it that sees? What is it that knows? What is this Knowing? When we ask "What is it that knows", we are not looking for any agent or entity, any "knower" when we ask this question. Because when we ask this question thoroughly we see that the moment of "knower" is simply one more object of knowledge, one more feeling, one more stance, one more game, one more texture, one more thought, one more object of mind.

To have a Complete View, we must look very thoroughly indeed, hear very thoroughly indeed, live very thoroughly, question completely. Whatever objects of knowledge arise, whatever moment of a knower arises, what is this knowing? What is this? Who is this? So to realize this Complete View is the essence of our practice. We are not gathered here to practice in meditation; we are not gathered here to be Buddhists. We are gathered here as Sangha, as the harmonious community[fn]The literal meaning of the word "sangha".[/fn] to realize Dharma, to realize and manifest and take responsibility for being Buddha by questioning into this moment, by entering into our lives again and again.

The sunlight is beginning to show and so I will end here for this morning.

Please, enjoy yourselves.

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## 2: Complete Thought

*Daijōzan, February 28, 1989*

Good morning and welcome to the second day of the Winter Training Session.

Mist, in the morning sky over the morning ground; the streetlights shining, the branches arching through it, half seen and half unseen. The mist of breath arising in the space before you, covering the wall. This moment rising all around in all directions and in this moment wall arising, breath arising, sound arising, half seen and half unseen. Here it is. But where did it come from? Where does it go?

Continuing our consideration of Sakyamuni Buddha's Teachings of the Eightfold Path, we will continue to consider the first factor, the first facet of the Path, the Complete View, throughout these teisho as we consider the other facets or spokes of the Dharma Wheel because all of the various factors of this Eightfold Path are a deepening and opening further into Complete View or Samaditta. Complete View is the ground Path and fruition of practice, looking more and more clearly, more and more completely, seeing into this moment, penetrating into this moment of self and other, this moment of time and space, this moment of body and mind. Looking in this moment, one of the first things that we become aware of as we begin to practise is how much we think, so it seems appropriate that the second factor to be considered is Complete Thought or Samasamcappa, Shoshin.

When we first begin to practise we discover just how much we really think, how continuous this thinking is, how it seems to run on and on and on. And yet, can not be about anything in particular, but shift randomly and drunkenly from content to content. But that these contents can generally be described as passionate thoughts, aggressive thoughts or thoughts that are dull and listless, thoughts of grasping, thoughts of grudge, thoughts of ignoring. We begin to see how thoroughly these thoughts cloud our experience and how thoroughly these thoughts break up and scatter our experience. We also begin to see that these passionate, aggressive, and ignorant thoughts, these thoughts arising based upon the three klesas are biased, are lopsided views of our world.

We also begin to notice that we have absolutely no choice about what thought is going to come up and so we begin to begin to see that there is no thinker to be found within these thoughts. There is just this thinking. We see how incomplete our thoughts are, the more completely that we see them, how based upon strategy they are. When we completely see a thought, we begin to see the possibility of a Complete Thought, a Complete Thought which is simply a thought which exerts itself in this moment and is gone. When the thoughts run on and on into each other, they are never complete. They never fully exert themselves. Well, actually they do, but this is simply not seen. To see a thought completely, see its arising, see its dwelling, see its decay, its vanishing; to see the arising of the next thought, the arising of the moment of hearing, the

arising of the moment of breath, see all of these completely. In seeing it arising within this whole moment of experiencing, this whole field of experiencing, allow a thought to complete itself by allowing it to liberate itself. Thoughts are self-liberating. They arise, dwell and decay, exerting themselves and vanishing. If you string them together, you bind up your life. If you allow them to fall as they may, as if you took a bundle of straw and simply sliced into the core and allowed the straw to fall as it may, then you could begin to see each thought completely. The arising of thought is simply part of the display of the basic energy of mind. Recognize it as such and the energy of your practice is recognized to be more and more pervasive.

Where does a thought come from? Where does it go? Within each thought is a world view. Within each thought there is something which becomes. With each thought is a self and just as these thoughts arise and vanish endlessly, endless selves, endless beings arise and vanish. Respect each of these beings by not mixing them up, bundling them up, like loading them into a subway car, packing them tight. Allow each thought to express itself as a thought. See it clearly and then more and more even the content of the thought becomes less and less biased. The thoughts start to become more and more about what is going on. But even so the thoughts are simply interpretation so you don't need to listen to them too much. Just see them [in a whisper] as thoughts. See them more and more completely. Allow yourself to recognize more and more completely who and what this is.

Enjoy yourselves.

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### 3: Complete Speech

*Daijozan, March 1, 1989*

Good morning and welcome to the third day of the Winter 1989 Zen Training Session.

One thing that you might have noticed, over the months and years that you might have been doing this, is that it is always a good morning here in the Zendo. So: good morning. Here, this morning, in this moment, breathing in and breathing out, there is this body of breath, as if the cells breathe, as if the hair breathes, as if the wall breathes. Don't get carried away by the windiness of the breath because this is just sinking mind. Don't try to manipulate the breath and don't lose the breath, be carried off by gusts of thought. No matter how many clouds of thought might arise there is still that wind of breath, so come back to it. Don't be carried away by the windiness, but feel it blow. Feel this breath and enter into this moment: this moment of questioning into Mu; this moment of body and mind and world emerging and vanishing. As this moment displays itself truly and openly before you, where does it come from?

Seeing the ways in which thoughts, feelings, perceptions and so on interrelate, once more we begin to lose some of our certainty about the ways in which we have defined ourselves and we begin to understand in a more direct way the Buddha's various Teachings on what body and mind are, what this world is. We begin to understand the five skandhas: form, basic reactivity, symbolization, patterning and consciousness as a direct description of the ways in which self-image conditions itself. We begin to notice the arising of "this" and "that" or subject and object as localizations, as boundaries, as structures that are imposed within awareness

and that apparently limit awareness. And yet even as we recognize that limiting, we begin to gain the width, the breadth, of the limitlessness of Awareness itself. When you can resolve “this” and “that” into this Awareness, then the Buddha calls this “Entry into deathlessness”, when all conditions simply cease. What is this? When all conditions are seen and penetrated with a Complete View, when each thought is a Complete Thought, when each aspect of the Path, each aspect of the Way, each aspect and facet of our lives is complete and without distortion, when “this” and “that” no longer arise, when we realize there to be no body, no mind, no wall, no floor, no boundaries, no time, no space. The Buddha might call that “deathlessness” or “nirvana”, but what can you say about this right now?

When confusion has vanished, what is left? In zazen, facing the wall, polish with your direct practice each facet of your lives, each facet of the Way.

This morning we will briefly consider the third factor or third aspect of the Eightfold Path, that of Complete Speech or Sama-vacha, Shogo. When our lives are based upon self-deception, our communication with our world, our sense of meaning and the meanings that the world presents to us even in terms of colours, even in terms of breath, are all incomplete, are all deceptive. “Speech”, I believe, can refer to not only words but our basic communication, our basic interaction, our basic inter-dependence.

When our lives are not lived, when they do not emerge from and vanish into Things as They Are[fn]Tathata, Immo. Suchness or Thusness or Things as They Are.[/fn] — Things as They Are meaning directly seeing, directly hearing, feeling the floor when you step, feeling the tongue against teeth when you talk, really listening to someone when they speak, really speaking to the person that you are speaking to, then this is Things as They Are. But Things as They Are as well, means that which is present when you penetrate into the formlessness of forms and realize that the person that you are speaking to, the act of speaking, the act of hearing, the looking, the floor, the wall, are simply Buddha dressed up as the person that you are speaking to; Buddha dressed up as you; the universe expressing itself as this wall. Then you enter yet more deeply into Things as They Are. Then your activity, your speech, emerges from Things as They Are.

Once more, to understand the completeness of Complete Speech we must also understand the incompleteness of deceptive speech, of being deluded with our speech, lying to ourselves and to others, distorting our world, editing it, reframing it in various ways, framing it and holding on to it, pretending that words are things or that things are just what we name them and are just what they mean to us. When our speech is self-centred, then it is a lie. When our speech is slanderous, that is to say, when it is based or rooted in ignoring the basic dignity of all beings, of each and every being, when it is speech that emerges from a separation between self and other, speech that emerges from isolating oneself from the object of slander, then this is a very grave distortion indeed. “Double-tongued speech,” as it is called, “creating discord between members of Sangha” – that is to say, between beings – and so, disrupting, damaging, the harmony of the community of all beings throughout all times in all directions.[fn]Roshi is referring to the Forty-Eight Supporting Precepts of the Brahmajala sutra (Bonmo-kyo) which monastics of WWZC’s Northern Mountain Order receive at ordination.[/fn] This is very grave indeed.

Once more we can see that incomplete Speech is based upon ignoring Things as They Are, distorting Things as They Are and distorting it in terms of the three klesas (once more: passion, aggression and stupidity). Understanding this we must also understand that no matter how fully the three klesas might distort a situation, the situation is still as it is. It is this moment and the accuracy, the vibrancy, the sheer dignity of this moment is always available in the midst of each and every moment of incompleteness. This complete

moment, this whole moment expresses itself and is completely available. It embraces you, it embraces your self-deceptions. Completely.

Seeing this, your view becomes yet more complete. When we realize Complete Speech then everything that we hear, everything that we speak is Buddha-vachana, the word of Buddha. Everything that expresses itself is Dharma, presentation of truth, presentation of Things as They Are. And when we become most intimate with this truth we realize that it is the expression of the Actual Nature, the expression of the Unborn or of this Deathlessness, the Unconditioned. When our lives are lived incompletely, based upon striving for certain meanings, based upon striving for certainty, based upon self-centred meaning, then nothing means anything, truly. But what does this breath mean? What does this wall mean? What does this morning mean? To find this is to understand the meaning of the Buddhas and Dharma Ancestors and to Transmit this very body and mind, this very moment, to yourself, most intimately and realize this body to be the body of Buddha, stretching in all directions and in all times.

I've said enough.

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## 4: Complete Activity

*Daijozan, March 2, 1989*

[Note: Tape ends before the end of the teisho]

Welcome to the fourth day of the Winter Training Session.

Attending to this moment, we begin to uncover a mind and a way of being which is both settled and flexible, unshakeable and yet pliable or adaptable. Attending to what is simply arising in this moment, attending to our confusion, attending to our clarity, we must renew our mindfulness in each and every moment. We must apply the Teachings in each and every moment and in this application, actualize them, discover them, renew them for ourselves. It is only in this way that our practice can be vital and that we can revitalize the Buddha Dharma. When our practice is vital then our lives are vital. We recognize the freshness and splendour of this moment and the Dharma is made fresh each time that it is applied anew. Practicing without expectations, without hopes, without fears, but practicing as we are, we can begin to understand the truth of the Teachings. And this means questioning into everything that we assume to be true and taking responsibility for what we find out through our practice. The more complete that our view becomes, the more that thought becomes Complete Thought. Then speech can become Complete Speech and activity can become Complete Activity. In the very beginning of the Dhammapada, the Buddha says that "mind is the forerunner of all mental states" and he Teaches that mind is the forerunner of all activities of body and speech.

Opening to a Complete View through attending to what is going on and then questioning into what is going on, seeing the arising, dwelling and decaying of the processes of this very bodymind, seeing more and more clearly the arising, dwelling and decay of our experiences, of the world of our experiences. Questioning into the structures with which we have defined and bound our awareness, experiencing more and more directly

this Awareness Itself, we must take responsibility for what we discover.

The first two factors of the Eightfold Path deal with that aspect of practice called “prajna” or “wisdom” or “direct and radical insight” or in Pali, “panna”, in Japanese, “e”.

The third factor, Complete Speech, together with the fourth factor, Complete Activity and the fifth factor, Complete Livelihood, deal with “sila”, or “discipline”. “Discipline:” Perhaps in the sense of avoiding confusion and cultivating clarity which is certainly, undoubtedly necessary for us in our practice. But also, if we can base our practice upon this moment itself, recognize our lives to be the expression of this moment itself, then we can contact the deeper meaning of discipline and a deeper, subtler, pervasive discipline. A discipline which is simply according with Things as They Are, expressing Things as They Are. A discipline which is as natural as the way that a wall holds up a ceiling or the way that a bird’s song sounds like a bird, the way that breathing in gives rise to breathing out. And so this morning we have come to the fourth factor of Complete Activity, or Sama-camanta, Shogu.

To understand Complete Activity, once more we must understand incomplete activity which in the suttas is described when talking about this fourth factor as the incomplete activities or unwholesome activities, akusala, unwholesome, of killing, stealing and sexual misconduct. Taking life, killing, taking that which does not belong to us through greed and avarice and sexual misconduct which in the traditional texts seems to mainly deal with seducing young girls who are not yet out of their father’s house or married women and so on and so forth. These three akusala activities can easily be understood as activities which arise out of confusion, out of the three klesas of passion, aggression and stupidity, out of territoriality; activities that could not possibly arise without the delusion of self and other. In our consideration of these incomplete activities we must understand killing to be severing life, taking life, and this must include killing as an unwholesome activity not only in regard to killing human beings or even animals or even insects, but of course, killing time, killing the vibrancy of our lives, killing Buddha. Stealing must be understood not only as taking that which is not given, but manipulating situations for one’s own gain at the expense of others; taking the biggest piece of pie and so on; taking opportunity; taking the wind out of someone’s sails in conversation so that you can make your point and so on.

Sexual misconduct is sexuality which becomes the meaning of one’s life. Sexual misconduct is the search for some place to surrender into and to be safe. Sexual misconduct is manipulation and seduction, is dominance and submission, in other words, a game, a strategy.

Now Complete Activity is not simply the absence of incomplete Activity or confused activity. If one removes incomplete Activity and the motives for incomplete Activity, then there is not simply an absence, there is a presence of wholeness and completeness. When one does not impose confusion and contraction, then there is vibrancy, there is clarity, there is compassion, there is wisdom. So not only should there be the absence of taking life, of killing, there should be the understanding and the expression of life: The understanding that, as Dogen zenji says, “Life does not kill”, that life and death are this living and that as it says in Kyojukai-mon, “The life of Buddha is increase.” It is this realm, this generosity of being, the splendour and wonder of sights and sounds; the sheer exuberance of wind moving through branches, the blueness of the sky, the hardness of rocks.

Not stealing is not enough. Being free of territory is not enough for one to realize and actualize Complete Activity. Compassion and generosity are the expression of Complete Activity.

The absence of sexual misconduct and lust is not enough for this to be the expression of Complete Activity. We must love completely with a completely open heart. Not just one or two people, but each and every thing that arises as our world must be understood as the expression of this love; this love that is present when there is no barrier, no boundary, no self and no other. Then we can begin to understand the active love of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva as our own hearts, the compassion of the Buddhas and Awakened Ancestors. We strive effortlessly and ceaselessly and continually for the liberation of beings.

Complete Activity means to do everything as thoroughly as you possibly can: to chew your food well, to breathe this breath. But it also means to uncover activity which is free from the klesas. We must understand that just because an activity or speech, something that one says or something that one does, that just because these are not based upon passion or aggression, that does not make these complete. Neutral activity, lukewarm activities are not enough either. There must be this completeness, this living with the whole body. You must mean everything that you do and everything that you say, even "Pass the salt."

Considering the third, fourth and fifth factors of the Eightfold Path involves the consideration of karma, positive karma and negative karma. Karma, however, meaning how we make ourselves who and what we are and recognizing that incomplete activities..

[End of tape]

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## 5: Complete Livelihood

*Daijōzan, March 3, 1989*

So, good morning and welcome to the fifth day of the Winter Training Session. At this point, one is somewhat settled into the Training Session. It hasn't quite reached the conclusion. Perhaps we are conserving our energy for something, but by doing so we rob ourselves of deep and clear practice now. So please make every effort.

At the conclusion of yesterday's teisho, I was discussing karma or causality, which is a description of how we make ourselves who and what we are, moment after moment, through everything that we do, every thought that arises, the way in which we hear each sound, and the choices that we make. Complete Speech, Complete Activity, and Complete Livelihood within the Eightfold Path are concerned with recognizing unwholesome activity or incomplete activity, and releasing it, and cultivating wholesome activity or good karma. And I was commenting on how neutral karma is of no particular aid in this, that lukewarm activity might not be based on the klesa of passion or the klesa of aggression but it is certainly rooted in the klesa of stupidity or ignorance.

Now this whole matter of karma, of good karma or bad karma, wholesome karma and unwholesome karma, is one that a lot of words have been spent on throughout these 2,500 years. But fundamentally, Buddha has absolutely nothing to do with karma. No matter how wholesome one is, how squeaky clean one is in everything that one does, this has nothing at all to do with being Buddha, which is recognizing radical

freedom from all conditions, the freedom so radical that we speak of it as shattering the mirror of mind,[fn]Fourth Daikensho in Anzan Daiko zenji's Teachings.[/fn] or as a candle blown out so that the flame can no longer be spoken of.

It is beyond reference.[fn]A reference to the meaning of the word "nirvana".[/fn] No matter how much good karma that one might produce, this has nothing at all to do with being Buddha. And yet, obviously, this whole thing about wholesome or kusala activity must have something to do with being Buddha. But the point is that being Buddha is not something that is constructed out of anything, not something that is composed out of anything, or fabricated out of anything. It is not something that you can attain. It is who and what each and every thing is.

In order for us to recognize this, it is much easier for us and we are much more willing to look when there is a state of wholesomeness. So therefore, cultivating wholesome conduct, wholesome karma, is conducive to liberation but it does not produce liberation. Beyond that, wholesome conduct or complete conduct, Complete Activity of body, breath, speech and mind, is simply that which takes place when we recognize that this is Buddha and when we embody this recognition. Because remember the point about "complete" and "incomplete", is that acting on the basis of the three klesas can only occur when one ignores the freedom of being Buddha, because the activity of the three klesas is rooted in craving and fear, rooted in poverty.

Cultivating wholesome karma is mistaken unless it is rooted in our recognition that confusion is something extra. Confusion is something that we impose both upon our situation, and upon who and what we are. Within the basic space of this moment of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling and thinking, within the arising of these sensory bases and fields, within the arising of this world, in this moment, there is no room for anger, no room for guilt, no room for greed. It is only when we localize, when we contract upon bits and pieces of who and what we are, that incomplete action, that unwholesome karma is even possible.

But as for the Buddha, Buddha does nothing at all. Beyond reference, we can only refer to this as non-dual. Who is it that does what is being done in each moment? Who is it that does this breathing? What is it that gives rise to the thoughts? What is it that does "wall"? [The Roshi pounds on the wall three times] Look.

Our practice is this process of looking, this process of examining directly. And one of the things that we see, is how completely each and every thing makes every thing else what it is. And how every thing makes each and every thing what it is. The vast interdependence, the vast mutuality of this being is something that we discover more and more, which is what must be brought into consideration with the fifth factor of the Eightfold Path, that of Complete Livelihood.

The Buddha taught that there were various forms of livelihood which were not conducive to practice, to your liberation, or to the liberation of all beings. These are means of livelihood, means of gaining one's living through distorting reality, through deceiving others, or through taking advantage of others, taking from them what is theirs by the right of need: livelihood through warfare, through dealing in lives, through intoxicating others, through witchcraft and sorcery. A form of livelihood that takes place without the recognition of the mutuality of our life is a livelihood that kills and a livelihood that we can only engage in blindly.

Whatever we do, sitting on the cushion, facing the wall, going to work, coming home, getting married or buried, each of these are how our lives expresses itself, and how this living manifests this life of all beings.

Looking clearly into this moment, into each and every moment of our lives, we see our lives to be the expression of this mutuality. And in our living, even in our livelihood, we must try to express this mutuality and account for this mutuality.

The universe nourishes us and in turn we must polish this universe, polish it with each and every breath, with each and every movement.

This is the fifth factor of the Eightfold Path called in Pali, Sama-ajiva, in Japanese Shomyo.

We will end here for this morning.

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## 6: Complete Effort

*Daijozan, March 4, 1989*

Good morning and welcome to the sixth day of the Winter Training Session.

Over these six days a lot of things have come and gone and, at this moment, are coming and going. Thoughts, feelings, perceptions, cognitions, arising, falling, and decay; constellating themselves in various patterns, various combinations; and then not so much recombining as vanishing – vanishing into the arising of this moment. One moment of discursiveness can give rise to another moment of discursiveness, one moment of guilt to another moment of guilt. But each and every moment is this moment.

As patterns of projection and tendency exert themselves, we might feel overwhelmed by their exertion, but each pattern is a constellation of factors. Examining these factors, seeing these factors directly – seeing how they are within your seeing, within your hearing, your touching, tasting, smelling, and thinking, feeling the textures of them, coming close to them, directly – you can touch them, you can grab hold of them, and then you can uproot them, for they are grounded in nothing. They arise, dwell, and decay in this moment. This moment has nothing solid about it, nothing fixed about it.

The more that you look at the forms that arise around you as your world, the closer that you get to them, the more that you see that they are formless. These formless forms that appear as this world, that “world”, this world. And yet, truly, they are no where to be found. They are ungraspable. The patterns and projections of reactivity, age-old story lines and games, patterns of relationship that were formed in the cradle, or in the school yard, or in the marriage bed, that exert themselves . . . now . . . are just simply this exerting, just simply this arrangement.

Come close to them, see them clearly. Know that they do not encompass you. You do not stand within them. They arise within you. Whatever pattern, whatever projection, whatever reactivity might be present, arises within the whole field of your experiencing. Allow the vibrancy of the whole of your experience to exert itself.

Practising the Way with this whole bodymind is the sixth factor of the Eightfold Path, Complete Effort, called in Sanskrit Samavayana in Japanese Shoshoin.

This Complete Effort is like a leap into space. It is like coming out into the open. It is like exposure. It is the arising of this moment in all directions around you, the arising of this moment within you, and your arising within this moment. This moment itself has complete integrity. Wall is wall, sitting is sitting. Sometimes you feel good about it, sometimes you feel bad about it. Sometimes you are reluctant, sometimes you are inspired. But sitting is sitting. Find this within your sitting and you will know zazen. Feel the step when you walk and you will know kinhin. Be aware of your life and you can penetrate into the Unborn.

Complete Effort is the application of Complete View and is that which can allow us to Complete Thought, speech, activity, and livelihood. Seeing that which is broken and scattered with view, through effort, make the leap in the very moment of hesitation. Recognizing, do not hesitate. Through this effort you can complete your life. You can bring together the whole world. You can feel it around you and you within it. Exerting yourself yet more fully, closing each and every gap – the gap between self and other, between thought and action, between intention and event – you realize that this world is you, this moment, is just this.

Please, enjoy yourselves.

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## 7: Complete Mindfulness

*Daijōzan, March 5, 1989*

Ice on snow. this morning of the seventh day of the Winter 1989 Zen Training Session. Ice on snow, water locked with water, a thin layer, a shell. You step down on that shell, it breaks. Just taking a step, it breaks. The shell is more slippery than it is thick. What seems like a barrier is the same as what is underneath: ice and snow, emptiness and emptiness, Buddha and Buddha. We say in this Lineage that only Buddha can Transmit Buddha to a Buddha; only a Dharma Ancestor can Transmit the Dharma to the Dharma Ancestors. Only sitting can sit sitting. And only you can penetrate to who and what you are.

One time the Buddha called out, “Monks.”

And the monks answered, “Sir?”

And the Buddha said, “Monks, there is but one way to liberation and this is mindfulness.”<sup>[fn]</sup>See the Satipatthana sutta in “The Straight Path” by Anzan Hoshin, Great Matter Publications.<sup>[/fn]</sup>

Complete Mindfulness or Sama-sati, Shonen, is the seventh factor of the Eightfold Path. Complete Mindfulness, right mindfulness, true mindfulness. Mindfulness is to make the mind full of what is going on now, of what is arising here in this place and as this place. Whatever thought arises as breath whistles through the nostrils, as the stomach knots, as the hair on your heads grow, whatever arises as this world is the very place of practice and the very place of penetration into that which is Unborn, that which is Deathless,<sup>[fn]</sup>These are terms that Sakyamuni Buddha used.<sup>[/fn]</sup> that which is the very nature of all Buddhas and Dharma Ancestors, the very nature of all beings, the very nature of freedom itself. Complete Mindfulness is to be mindful of what is present in this very place. Mindfulness of body, mindfulness of environment, of

feelings, of mind; mindfulness of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling and thinking; mindfulness of form, basic reactivity, symbolization, patterning and consciousness. But however you want to slice it, you must cut deeper. You must cut into, bite into and chew this very life, like a dog worrying at a bone, perhaps, gnawing to get the marrow. But it is actually quite simple. It is like taking a step and shattering the thin layer of ice. Each step shatters confusion. Each breath shatters the moment of the last breath. This moment shatters that moment, spits out the coming moment.[fn]Roshi is referring to this passage in Dogen zenji's text Uji: " Presencing chews up that time and spits out this time." See the Wild Time teisho series for commentary.[/fn] This coming is immediately this going with nothing left over. Please practise this nothing left over, practise this tracelessness, completely, and this will be Complete Mindfulness.

Getting lost in thought, sinking in fatigue or dream, in expectation, self-judgment, self-criticism, self-aggrandizement, self-image, and seeing this is Complete Mindfulness. Have no image of what your mindfulness should be like. Simply attend as clearly as you can to what is arising and these structures that attention appears to be bound in; attend to these, attend to attention itself as completely as you can. And this then, is sama-sati, Complete Mindfulness.

Complete Mindfulness has nothing left over, pushes nothing forward. It simply works with what is most immediately present because what is most immediately present, what presents itself as this very moment, is all that you need to penetrate the Way, to penetrate into your own freedom.

This completeness shows you that body and mind arise right here in the same place and in the same time. Even though you might wander into memory, play out your lost loves, be chased here and there from dark room to dark room within your mind of thoughts and discursiveness, whether you are waiting for that damned bell to ring or hoping that this will never end, you are right here, right now. Practise this because it is the simplest thing in the world, because it is that which gives rise to the world, quite simply. Complete Mindfulness is the application of Complete View and the deepening of Complete View. Please apply the full Dharma to this whole moment. Take a clear look and see what's what.

Please, enjoy yourselves.

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## 8: Complete Practice

*Daijōzan, March 6, 1989*

The Teachings of the Tathagata are like a wheel, the Dharmacakra. This wheel has eight spokes, eight factors. In considering them we began with Complete View and then Complete Thought. These first two factors are associated with prajna or "e". Complete Speech, Complete Activity, Complete Livelihood and Complete Effort, these are associated with sila, discipline, "kai". The seventh factor, Complete Mindfulness together with the eighth factor, Complete Practice, are associated with samadhi.

Samadhi means "complete concentration", to be fully and completely engaged. In the Buddha Dharma, it is taught that concentration, dwelling upon any particular state, any state whatsoever, is simply part of the

game of self-image, the charade of self-image, the charade that there is anything that can be held on to. Dwelling within a samadhi state and propagating and continuing that state, it is taught, does not lead to liberation. The Buddha taught that in order to penetrate into the actual nature of all Dharma, one simply had to look clearly. As one looks, as one practises vipasyana or direct insight, one's mindfulness deepens into concentration and this concentration can even reach what is called "access concentration", the state just before jhana, just before true jhana, true enfoldment within a concentration state, and still penetrate. So Complete Practice, if it means complete in the way that we have been using this word throughout these teachings, means simply whole, simply vast, simply unadorned and exposed, unafraid. It does not mean "ideal practice". It does not mean heroic practice, practice with banners and bells celebrating your amazing achievements. Complete Practice is to practise completely.

When in each and every moment we practise this Way with the whole bodymind and in this practising of the Way, in this practise of this bodymind, drop this very bodymind,[fn]Shinjin-datsaraku.[/fn] this is Complete Practice. But even just fully exerting oneself as much as one is able to, recognizing a thought as a thought; recognizing projection as projection, practicing with deep, true sincerity, this is Complete Practice. This is Zanmai and Zanmai is our Way, not a way of concentration, not a way of looking for any particular state but observing clearly, observing completely, practicing this observation of each and every thing that arises, seeing clearly this arising, dwelling and decaying, entering into the formlessness of forms. Complete Practice, then, is not confined to the breath, to a koan, or even to chanting, kinhin and oryoki. Complete Practice is completely exerting ourselves in our lives.

In discussing the Eightfold Path we were speaking of wholesome and unwholesome states. The Buddha regarded complete practise of vipasyana or even access concentration as being wholesome states, states conducive to liberation; practices, aspects, facets of experience that would help to penetrate into the nature of experiencing; and the jhanas themselves as being neutral states. But because they deepen self-image's tendency to want to hide within something, self-image's tendency to take on costumes, to fold itself up within itself so that it need not notice anything at all, I think we must regard these jhanas as unwholesome states. I don't think that there is anything neutral in our practice, although it is not a matter of either/or. It is a matter of doing each thing as completely as you possibly can, no more and no less.

Zazen is zazen. You might feel good about it and inspired about it, or you might feel horrified, but one way or the other zazen is zazen. But this does not mean that it is neutral. This means that it is just this. The wall is wall; breath is breath. This is not neutral. This is not lukewarm or mediocre. This is Things as They Are. This is your life and this is the ground of Awakening, the ground of penetration of all apparent states, no matter what state they may be: fear, joy, waking, sleeping, dreaming, dying, standing up, sitting down, lying down, walking. Whatever arises, its very arising shows that it is completely intimate with you. So enter into this intimacy and you will begin to enter most deeply into your very nature. Take it a further step and tell me what you see.

Practising this Eightfold Path is basically the same as penetrating eighty-thousand Dharma gates. Practising the fifty-two stages spoken of in the Avatamsaka sutra,[fn]The Kegon (Huayan) school has a schema of fifty-two (actually fifty-three) stages of the path divided into groups of ten. The first group of ten are the stages of faith. The next three groups of ten and the three virtuous stages. The last group of ten are the ten wisdoms.[/fn] the Four Foundations of Mindfulness or the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, this Eightfold Path is the practice of realizing Buddha in this very life.

Please, take care of yourself and enjoy yourself. Enjoy this practice, this practice of sore knees and aching bones and frightened minds and turbulent feelings and extreme beauty and clarity and simplicity, warmth and compassion and direct insight into ourselves and into the nature of all that lives.

Please, enjoy yourself.

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## **9: Closing Comments**

*Daijōzan, March 6, 1989*

Before we close this Winter 1989 Training Session, I would like to thank everyone who made this possible:

The Buddha and his Teachings of the Eightfold Path and the Successive Lineage of Buddhas and Dharma Ancestors down to my Teacher, who have given us as a gift of practice and to each of you who are giving yourself this gift.

The Wheel of Dharma turns without cease and yet it never moves because it is right here.