Just a Moment

by Ven. Jinmyo Renge sensei
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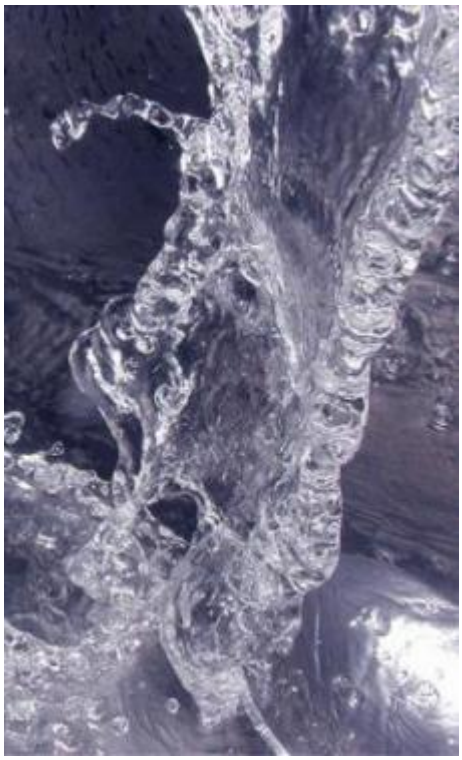

Excuse me. Just a moment. I thought you might like to know that

In the Genjokoan, Dogen zenji gives us this instruction:

> *"Allow each moment to take its own time".*

Joshu Dainen roshi provides further explanation in his teisho, "Water Burns the Stone":

> *"One moment of just sitting is one moment of enlightenment." These are the words of the Buddhas and Dharma Ancestors. These are words of a dead baldman, Dogen Kigen zenji. One instant of true practice is one instant of enlightenment. True practice is true effort. True effort is true non-effort. True non-effort is without mind so it is Mu-shin (no-mind). Mu-shin is right this moment now. This is instantaneous enlightenment: enlightenment occurs in each instant. Without past, without future, without even "now", seeing clearly is practice. Anzan sensei has a phrase which I like: "It does not matter what is seen, it is the seeing that matters."*
>
> *"Now what do I see? I see you. Peek-a-boo. I see a bunch of ragged monks trying to struggle to get into the next moment; away from fear and pain or into bliss or Mu or something. But this moment holds your quivering bodies and minds firmly, hai? Now, this moment is not a thought you can hold to. It is just now. Practice in this way.*

"Shug-yosha! (Practitioners!) Where are you going in such a hurry there in your lotus postures? To the washroom? To the kitchen? To dokusan? If you come to dokusan, I won't be able to get you out of this. Dokusan is still this moment. The Sensei won't be able to get you out. You're here, in this moment. Dokusan is face to face meeting with the Teacher's mind. Zazen is dokusan, is face to face, with this moment. This moment, any moment is true dokusan with all the Buddhas and Ancestors because the mind of all Buddhas is this moment.

"Your smelly bodies and smelly minds are this moment. Smelly Buddha! (laughs) this moment is your body and your mind. All of your karma of past minds, past actions, has unfolded into this moment and is this moment. Hai, you don't have karma, whether good, whether bad; this body, this mind is your karma. So here it all is! Here it all is! These thoughts, these struggles, these joys. All of you is here, right now.

"Breathe in, breathe out, okay? If you try to make some "nirvana" your home, you only hide forever in your own in-turned minds, your personal safety. Nirvana has no place, no time. You cannot get to it. It is always HERE (shouts and bangs teisho table with staff). Breathe in, breathe out. If you make struggle your way, you lose your way in a dark forest of tense muscles, tense thoughts. Relax."

Anzan Hoshin roshi said it this way:

"If not now, when? If not here, where?"

We have NOW, this moment to practice. Just this moment. And just this moment. And just this moment.

Eihei Dogen zenji said in "Uji":

There is nothing but this moment and so each moment is all of being-time… Each moment of now is all of time, the entire world. Do you think any being or world can be excluded from this "right now?"

And further, also from "Uji":

This mind moment is the moment of Awakening within and through the display of Reality. Dropping the moment of words is the key to going further. Dropping off the body has arrived at this moment. Not arriving is this moment of "one with this, free from this." You should understand and actualize this being-time.

In Shinjin Gakudo Eihei Dogen zenji said,

In this moment, this true human body is you and I as this moment, as the whole world of ten directions.

The root of our practice is shikantaza or "just sitting". "Taza" means "just". Just this moment.

In the Satipatthana sutta, the Buddha said,

Forget the seven years monks. If one practices these Four Foundations of Mindfulness for six years, for

> *five, for four, for three or two, even for one year, one of two desired fruits can be expected: direct insight into here and now or, if there are still some traces of grasping, the condition of no returning. Forget the year monks. If one practices these Four Foundations of Mindfulness for seven months, one of two desired fruits can be expected: direct insight into present experiencing or, if there are still some traces of grasping, the condition of no returning. Forget the seven months monks. If one practices these Four Foundations of Mindfulness for six months, for five, or four, or three, or two, or one, or even for half a month, one of two desired fruits can be expected: direct insight into here and now or, if there are still some traces of grasping, the condition of no returning. Forget the half a month monks. If one practices these Four Foundations of Mindfulness for seven days, one of two desired fruits can be expected: direct insight into present experiencing or, if there are still some traces of grasping, the condition of no returning.*

Eihei Dogen zenji said in "Gyoji":

> *…the ancient sages treasured each month, each day, each, moment more than their own eyes or more than their native soil. Wasting time is being stained and confused by the fame and gain of this floating world. Not wasting time is acting for the Way within the Way.*

And this in Shinjin Gakudo:

> *In this moment, this true human body is you and I as this moment, as the whole world of ten directions.*

Just a moment. Excuse me, just a moment. Pause, stop whatever you are doing and let it be just this moment. The Buddha is often depicted holding out a hand, palm out. This is called the abhaya mudra, the gesture that shows that you can be free of fear. As Roshi has pointed out, it means, "Stop that." Just stop following that thought, stop telling yourself stories about the world. Listen to what the Buddhas and Awakened Ancestors are telling you.

Just a moment. This moment is not merely a moment. It is just this moment. It is just this. The Japanese word "tada" or "just" means purely so, completely so, decisively so. This moment is the reality of your life. So, please, excuse me, but just a moment. Stop. Let go. Sit up straight. In this moment and in each moment of this Dharma Assembly.

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